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THE SWISS MALE CHOIR AT THE 1950 WEMBLEY MUSIC AND DRAMA FESTIVAL.

On Saturday, 25th of March, the Swiss Male Choir competed in Male Voice Choir singing at the Assembly Hall, Town Hall, Wembley, before Mr. Edric Cundell, C.B.E., Principal of the Guildhall School of Music, the Adjudicator.

Although our Choir did not win the Wembley Corporation's Challenge Cup they did win the Festival Certificate, earning 80 points as against 83 points of the Cup Winners. Many were the compliments paid to the Swiss Choir by the Adjudicator and these are another feather in Mr. Paul Dick's cap, the Choir's Conductor, who again has done a very good job..

The set test piece was the music set by Grieg to the Norwegian Saga "Landeserkennung". This was followed by the Choir's own choice "Zieh mit mir in den Lenz hinein" by G. Angerer. A large and appreciative audience gave our Choir hearty and prolonged applause.

The Adjudicator praised the imaginative quality. He enlarged on this by saying that it was refreshing to hear a choir whose conductor subjected the given piece to his imagination as against ideas being strictly subjected to the music as written. He praised the Baritone solo (sung by Mr. G. N. Ross) but added that this should be somewhat less disjointed, saying that the texture must be kept up. Mr. Cundell regretted that loss of pitch marred the Choir's singing in two places and told them to consolidate pitch on every note as here and there, there was a parlando approach. He said that the singing had warm quality of tone, but the first tenor needed more support to their vocal line, there being a definite thinning-out in the upper register. (Unfortunately one of the tenors was unavoidably prevented from being present which accounts at least for part of a thin top line.) The final remark was that the Swiss Choir sang the songs artistically but must get their technical achievement up to their imaginative achievement.

Here I wish to add that the Choir was most ably assisted by Miss Ruth Huggenberg, the well known pianist, whose accompaniment to the test piece was colourful and energetic and the technical difficulties easily overcome in a masterly way; indeed, Miss Huggenberg earned the Choir's full admiration and gratitude for her valuable co-operation.

As the Adjudicator turned to the criticism of the winning choir, the Swiss choir was given as an example for the singing of various triplets in the test piece as well as for imaginative execution.

I wish to turn now to something else which is of interest to the Swiss Colony and if some of the above technical parlance is not readily understood, the Wembley test piece will be sung by our Choir at a concert to be given on Wednesday, 3rd of May, at 7.30 p.m. at Queen Mary Hall, Central Club of the Y.W.C.A. in Great Russell Street, W.C.2 (one minute from Tottenham Court Road tube station). Please reserve this date; full details will be given in the next issue of the Swiss Observer.

And now, Boys of the Swiss Male Choir, take courage from your achievement at Wembley, pitch up a little, good luck and good cheer!

F.S.

PIANO RECITAL — ALBERT FERBER.

Once again we had the pleasure of hearing our distinguished Swiss pianist, Albert Ferber, at the Wigmore Hall, on March 16th. We are glad to say that, in spite of the various important concert events, which took place on the same evening, the hall was very well-filled.

The setting-up of Mr. Ferber's programme was a new departure and we consider that it was extremely well-chosen, showing his versatility in his power of interpretation, from the classics to the romantics. The recital ended with Debussy. The Variations on Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen — Bach — Liszt were played with great brilliance, followed by Minuet in G Major by Mozart. A great impression was made by the interpretation of the Sonata in C minor, Op. 10, No. 1 by Beethoven and the first part of the programme was rounded off with the Davidsbündler Dances Op. 6 by Schumann, which earned him great applause.

The second part of the programme consisted of: — Sonatina in D flat major and Sonatina in A major by Sibelius, Nocturne in C Minor, Op. 48 No. 1 and Mazurka in C sharp minor, Op. 50 No. 3 by Chopin and Voiles, Ce qu'a vu le vent d'Ouest, La fille aux cheveux de lin and Minstrels from Preludes Book 1 by Debussy. We admired the terrific force developed in the Chopin Mazurka, contrasted with the ephemeral and delicate playing of the "Voiles" by Debussy. We need not speak of the enormous technical mastery of Mr. Ferber, which was so evident, but congratulate him chiefly on his deep musical understanding and on his courage in presenting to us such a difficult programme. He well deserved the great ovation to which he responded with two beautifully played encores.

P.A.M.

OUR NEXT ISSUE.

Our next issue will be published on Friday, April 14th, 1950.

We take this opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donations, over and above, their subscription: J. H. Meyer, O. Roethlisberger, J. Wanner, L. Jobin, W. Graf, A. Vaterlaus, F. Conrad, J. E. Margot, A. Hinderling, H. Hafter, J. Häusermann, W. O. Bosshard, J. H. Ungricht, Mrs. A. Rietmann, A. Burckhalter, M. E. Lichtensteiger, Mrs. B. Hossack, G. Marchand, P. Bucher, G. T. Groats, Miss M. Paly, R. J. Keller.

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CHEAP AIR TICKET FOR SWISS FAIR.

The Tariff Office of the Swissair in Zurich have informed us, that "special event fares" will be charged on the occasion of the Swiss Industries Fair, which is to be held in Basle from the 15th—25th April, 1950.

She validity of airway tickets issued under this scheme is limited to 15 days, and they must be stamped at the box office of the Fair. The first day on which their holders may travel will be April 13th, and the last day for the return journey will be April 27th. The price of such a ticket is £25.12.0, instead of the normal fare of £28.9.0

CENTENARY OF A WATCH MANUFACTURING FIRM.

We are informed that the "Cie. des Montres Marvin" of La Chaux-de-Fonds, celebrate their centenary this year. —

On this occasion they have issued a very attractive and richly illustrated catalogue.

Marvin Watches Ltd., in London, is a subsidiary company of which our compatriot, Mr. J. Heimerding, is the Managing-Director.

FRITZ SCHEIDEGGER †.

We deeply regret to announce the passing away of Mr. Fritz Scheidegger in his 80th year.

The deceased was born in Huttwil (Ct. Berne) and came to this country in 1895, where he entered into the service of the Polyglot Printing Company, of which firm his late brother was Managing-Director.

In 1898 he became a member of the "Schweizerbund" (Swiss Club) of which he was a member for 52 years, and of which he became an Honorary Member in 1930.

Fritz Scheidegger, was of a retiring and modest nature, and a true and faithful Swiss, well beloved by all those who came in touch with him.

He leaves a son, to whom we tender our sincere sympathy.

PERSONAL.

We deeply regret to announce the passing away, on the 6th of March, after a protracted and painful illness, of Mrs. Ethel Henley Bernoulli, wife of John D. Bernoulli, of 8, Dunkirk Road, Birkdale, Lancs., a well-known member of the Swiss Colony in Liverpool, to whom we express our deepest sympathy. The deceased was a native of London. There are no children.

* * *

Monsieur and Madame Ch. Weibel have, previous to their departure, given a cocktail party, on Monday, March 13th, at the Swiss Legation, to a large circle of friends both British and Swiss.

* * *

We wish Mr. E. A. P. Bircher, son of Dr. E. W. Bircher, Secretary of the Swiss Legation, the best of luck in to-morrow's Oxford and Cambridge boat race, where he will row No. 6 in the Cambridge boat.

* * *

The Swiss Colony and the Swiss Bank Corporation lost another stalwart member, when Mr. Paul Isacco, accompanied by his charming wife, left the shores of this hospitable country, in his newly acquired Hillman Minx car last Saturday, 25th March.

Mr. Isacco, who had already had years of experience with the Head Office of the Swiss Bank Corporation in Basle, came to this country in 1922 to take up a position with the London Office. Subsequently he was put in charge of the Arbitrage Department and in 1930 was promoted to the position of an Attorney of the Bank.

He is now going back after 28 years to take up a position with the Swiss Bank Corporation in Zurich. Mr. and Mrs. Isacco leave many friends behind, as both were well known and active members of the Swiss Colony in London.

Their many colleagues and friends wish the fortunate travellers God's speed, good health and happiness in their new sphere of activities.

SWISS SUCCESS IN ICE HOCKEY FESTIVAL.

In the great Ice Hockey Festival, Canada has taken the world, and Switzerland the European title, in place of Czecho-Slovakia, who won both last year.

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