

BERLIN

The Matinée Musicale given by the Ladies' Union of the American Church on Thursday afternoon of this week was in every way a brilliant success. The Ambassador, Dr. David Hill, and the entire Embassy staff, were present. Hostesses of the afternoon were: Mrs. David Jayne Hill, Mrs. J. P. Wisser, Mrs. R. R. Belknap, Mrs. Hitt, and Mrs. Grew, all of the U.S. Embassy; Mrs. Dean Mason, of the American Consulate in Paris; Mrs. Felix Adler, and Mrs. W. M. Davis, the wives of the exchange-professors; the Executive Committee of the Ladies' Union (consisting of Dr. Alice H. Luce, President; Mrs. J. H. Honan, 1st Vice-President; Mrs. MacElwee, 2nd Vice-President; Mrs. F. W. Hessin, Recording Secretary; Mrs. Geo. Watson, Corresponding Secretary; Mrs. S. H. McFadden, Treasurer; Mrs. Fred W. Keppler, and Mrs. Culwer); hostesses were also, finally, the Entertainment Committee of the Ladies' Union, who had so effectively arranged the function of the afternoon—Mrs. Bernard Goldsmith, Chairman; Mrs. Edgar Stillman Kelley, Miss Frances MacElwee, Countess von Linden, and Mrs. Olga von Haskell. Mrs. T. St. John Gaffney, of the U.S. Consulate General in Dresden, who had been asked to assist on the Reception Committee, regretted her inability to do so as her own reception took place on the same afternoon.

The three American artists of the occasion, Mr. Theodore Spiering, of Chicago, Mr. Francis MacLennan, of the Berlin Royal Opera, and Mr. Rudolph Ganz, of Chicago, were in excellent form, and rendered the following interesting programme, which was unusual in its admirable adaptability to the occasion, and included numbers which concert-goers rarely have an opportunity of hearing. The artists were most generous in their responses to enthusiastic encores:—

- (1) Devil's Trill Sonata, Tartini (Mr. Spiering). (2) Aria from Joseph in Egypt, Méhul (Mr. MacLennan). (3) a. Melodie, b. Polichinelle, Rachmanninoff (Mr. Ganz). (4) a. Nocturne, Chopin; b. Barcarole, Ondricek; c. Zephyr, Hubay (Mr. Spiering). (5) My Dreams, Tosti (Mr. MacLennan). (6) Polonaise, Liszt (Mr. Ganz).

Mr. MacLennan's popular "extras" were: "My Pretty Marquise" (West) and "Songs of Araby" (Clay).

Mr. Anton Hekking, the cellist, was unfortunately prevented by illness from appearing as expected. Among those who attended were:—

Rev. Dr. Cresser, Pastor of the American Church; Mr. Adler, and Mr. Davis, the American exchange-professors; Mr. McClure, of the celebrated New York publishing company; Frau Geheimrat Bratring, of Westend; Mme. Kirsinger; Frau Consul Hermann Schmidt, and her daughter, Frau Hauptmann Krag, of Thorn; Mrs. Berthold Israel; Mr. and Mrs. Julius Ollesheimer; Miss Amy Hare, a well-known English pianist, accompanied by Miss Portman, daughter of Lord Portman, of London; Mr. L. Arendt, of the English Customs Service at Shanghai; Herr Professor Emerich, the well-known vocal teacher; Baroness von Beust; Mr. D. J. Partello, and Miss Partello; Mr. F. Cauldwell, U.S. Vice-Consul General; Mr., Mrs., and Miss Wolff, of New Orleans, who are spending the winter at Hotel Palast; Mrs. Putnam Griswold, and Mrs. Jessie L. Gaynor, of Missouri, the well-known children's musical educator, with her collaborator Mrs. Alice C. D. Riley, both of whom are spending the winter in Berlin.

Mrs. Francis MacLennan (Florence Easton) was prevented from attending by her *première* as *Eva* in the "Meistersinger" falling on the same evening. U.S. Consul General Thackara was obliged to send regrets at the last moment, owing to a severe cold.

Among the Press representatives present were Mr. Arthur M. Abell, of the New York *Musical Courier*; Miss C. V. Kerr, of the Chicago *Musical Leader*; Mrs. Maximilian Siepen, of the London dramatic paper, *The Era*, and Frau Dr. von Huhn, of the *Vossische Zeitung*.

As for the American Colony in general, it was represented *en masse*, apparently in the gayest of spirits, and certainly in the most gorgeous of gowns. It was noteworthy that men were not so much in the minority as is usual at afternoon functions.

Through the courtesy of Mr. Louis Adlon, the beautiful Kaiser Saal of the hotel was utilised as concert-room, while the beautiful Fest and Spiegel Säle adjoining were thrown open as reception and tea-rooms, for which they were admirably adapted and arranged. An experienced German decorative artist who was among the guests of the afternoon declared that these rooms were the most sumptuously artistic and elegant of any he had seen in Berlin. The general opinion was similarly one of warm admiration and appreciation, and it is expected that the halls will be largely in demand for functions of like kind in the future.

This first large entertainment given by the Ladies' Union has been such a notable success that similar affairs given by the same progressive Church organisation will be eagerly looked forward to. Plans are, indeed, already on foot for the next, which we have reason to believe will take place in the Spring. One of the best-known and most popular artists both in Germany and America has already promised her services for the occasion.

Eugen Bachmann Master of German elocution Tempelherren Strasse 17, IV.

On Tuesday last Miss Marie Sloss, a pupil of Vernon Spencer of the Stern Conservatory, established a record in the pupils' recitals at that institution by her fine musicianly and pianistic performance of Chopin's F-minor Concerto. Although applause is prohibited at these recitals, the audience was so carried away with her spirited playing that they forgot the rule for the nonce and rewarded this talented young pianiste with a spontaneous demonstration which must have been gratifying to both her and her teacher.

Miss Sloss, though but a miss of eighteen, played in two successive recitals recently in America, in one week, the Chopin D-minor, Schumann A-minor, Rubinstein D-minor, Tschaiowsky B-flat minor, and Grieg A-minor Concerti, and the twenty-four Preludes of Chopin. In Chicago, on the occasion of her playing the Tschaiowsky Concerto and a miscellaneous programme on July 16th, the papers were unanimous in prophesying a great future for her as a pianiste, and bestowed a great deal of praise on her teacher and his methods. Miss Sloss is not only becoming very well-known in the American Colony through her playing, her remarkable repertoire, and her technique, but has already found her way into some of the best and most representative German musical circles. Her playing recently at Madame Kirsinger's and the Baroness von Jungenfeldt's drew considerable attention to her well-developed talent, and the Anglo-American Colony will be interested in her progress whilst in Berlin.

Mr. Spencer has just concluded arrangements for her appearance with orchestra in Dresden, Frankfurt, and Wiesbaden for next season; while she will play the Tschaiowsky Concerto with orchestra in the Beethoven Hall here in January.

Mr. Richard Stower, a nephew of Dr. Pracy, of New York, who has been studying with Teichmüller in Leipzig the last two years, is coming from Dresden to Berlin regularly now to continue his piano study with Vernon Spencer, the well-known teacher here.

The cold weather of the past week has brought joy to many thousands of skaters, and reminds one that the festive season of the year is close at hand. All the shops have taken on their festal attire, and perhaps no where else in the wide world do these establishments present

such a picturesque appearance during Yuletide. The cafés are also doing a brisk business, and we learn that one in particular, Steiner's Weinstube, in the Kurfürstendamm, is literally besieged every evening. Small wonder, since this resort has become a synonym for comfort and quality, two attributes which the jovial Berliners are not slow to appreciate. To hear the latest news, to enjoy the best drinks, and to meet everybody who is anybody, go there!

BERLIN CONCERTS.

(By our own critic.)

In the Saal Bechstein on Saturday evening, Dec. 5th, Gustav Bumcke gave the first of two chamber-music concerts for wind instruments. The programme contained much that is rarely performed in public, and the music itself had much of the old-time spirit about it, recalling instinctively the art of Watteau and later of Menzel in his "Flöte-Konzert" at *Sans Souci*. The instruments used were flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, French-horns; and the composers represented were Mozart and Schubert. The conductor, Gustav Bumcke, lays great stress on perfection of detail and balance of tone. The *ensemble* under his baton was all one could desire. But he is not stirring, and both temperament and verve fail him—however, one is very grateful to him for giving us the opportunity of hearing such seldom performed works. The assisting artiste was Anna Reichner-Feiten, who has a mezzo-soprano voice of rich and sympathetic quality. Her range is limited and to a certain extent the same applies to her art; but a well-trained voice and clear enunciation make up for much, and these qualities she has. Her rendering of Brahms' "Feinsliebchen" was charming and *naïve*, but the Bach numbers were somewhat marred by the poorly played clarinet obligato. This concert drew an unusually large number of musicians, especially those interested in instrumental music.

In the Philharmonie on Monday evening, Dec. 7th, Eugène Ysaye played to a sold-out house and had as usual a phenomenal success. He was assisted by the Philharmonic orchestra, and his programme consisted of Corelli's "concerto grosso No. 8" and concertos by Bach (E-major), Bruch (No. 2), and Mendelssohn. In the Corelli concerto—written for strings only—he dispensed with a conductor and when not playing himself wielded his bow in lieu of the baton. I cannot say the effect was satisfactory, it recalled too much the café-band. Nor is the solo-part suited to such a very great violinist. First of all it is so interwoven with the other instruments that the solo instrument seldom stands out. An occasional ray of sunshine, however, breaks the monotony. After this came the Bach concerto. The first movement he played very poorly but in the "Adagio" we had the *real* Ysaye, and with what exquisite tenderness, delicacy, and purity of tone he played this! The last movement in his hands was brilliant and witty. But the *chef d'œuvre* of the evening was undoubtedly the Bruch concerto which suits Ysaye from every point of view—indeed, it might have been written for him. Here he has every opportunity to use his luscious, throbbing tone, and with what a sweep he played that passionate theme in double-stops in the first movement! It was dazzling in its brilliance! Occasional technical slips fade into oblivion before such a master-hand. There is no doubt, Ysaye is the greatest technician on the violin from the fact that he is the only violinist who makes you for the time being forget that such a thing as technique exists. He has, too, extraordinary spontaneity and strength of conception and, even where one does not agree with the latter, one is nevertheless carried away. A magnificent rendering of the Mendelssohn concerto and, as encores, the Svendsen "Romanze," and Vieuxtemps' "Balade et Polonaise," brought a memorable concert to a close.

(Continued on following page.)

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