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CITY SWISS CLUB.

Albert Ferber at the Soirée Familiale at the Dorchester Hotel.

With the approach of the holiday season the social life of the Colony is entering into a period of relative calm; apart from the 1st of August celebration, one or two lectures, and a few occasional cocktail parties, all those who take an active part in the doings of the Swiss community can now relax a little, and gather new strength for the coming autumn and winter season.

As a worthy conclusion of the last winter and spring activities, which included quite a number of interesting features, the City Swiss Club invited its members to a "Soirée Familiale" and "Musical Evening" on Monday, June 3rd, at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1, in which, obviously, the ladies were asked to participate.

Nearly a hundred members, guests and friends assembled at The Dorchester to spend an agreeable evening in congenial company listening to good music.

Towards the end of an enjoyable dinner, and after the usual Toasts had been proposed and honoured, the President, Mr. Ch. Gysin, welcomed the company, and especially the ladies, who he said were a perfect match to the colourful flower decorations which are always such a feature at the Dorchester Hotel. He welcomed the members of the Swiss Embassy, Monsieur de Tribolet, 1st Counsellor of Embassy, and Madame de Tribolet, Lt.-Colonel W. Koch, Military and Air Attaché, and Madame Koch, and Consul J. Huber and Madame Huber.

As Mr. and Mrs. Huber are shortly leaving London for the United States of America, Mr. Gysin took the opportunity of thanking them for the interest they had shown in the life of the Club, wishing them God-speed and success in their new sphere of activity, and finally he extended a hearty welcome to Mr. Albert Ferber, who, he said "is no stranger to the Club, and can readily be called one of us". The President then shortly referred to the artist's recent concert tour in South America (which, judging from Press reports, he said, was a complete success) as well as to some of his recitals in this country and on the Continent.

Before the recital commenced a short interval was introduced, no doubt to allow the company to get into "the right frame of mind", after which the toast-master — suffering from a temporary lapse of memory by forgetting the name of the artist — announced that the recital was to begin. On ascending the platform Mr. Ferber was accorded a hearty ovation.

The programme which he had chosen was — befitting the occasion — a conventional one; it included works by Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Brahms, Smetana, Granados, Debussy and Chabrier.

Music lovers have, of course, their likings and preferences for certain composers; but the wide range chose by the artist, as far as grace, poetry and emotions were concerned, catered for almost everyone's taste — to each composer he brought the right sort of tone, the right range of dynamics and the right style. It was a reasonably short programme, everything was made to sound right, the playing had authority, and pleasure was the outcome; it was the close interpenetration of fine technique and refined interpretative insight that made his performance so impressive.

In my humble judgment Brahms' Intermezzo Op. 117 No. 2, and Capriccio Op. 116 No. 7, Smetana's concert étude "By the sea-shore", and "The Maiden and the Nightingale" by Granados were some of the most solid works chosen. All were played with splendid strength, assurance and well-balanced musicianship.

Chopin's "Barcarolle" Op. 60, was played with poetry and grace. In Debussy's three items, "Ce qu'à vu le vent d'Ouest", "La cathédrale engloutie", and "Feux d'artifice", the artist showed a keen sense of the rhythmic spacing of music; in the third item, he gave a dazzling account of his technique, which is his most impressive attribute.

Beethoven's Sonata Op. 27 No. 2 ("The Moonlight") was rendered with sympathy and mellow tone. In "Bourrée Fantasque", by the French composer Chabrier, he was cooing like a dove and roaring like a lion.

The splendid Sonata in B flat (K.V.570) in three movements found him neat and nimble of finger. The music was there in all its noble proportions.

Each item on the programme was deservedly applauded, and at the close of his recital he received a spontaneous ovation, which he gracefully acknowledged by an *encore*.

In summing up this most enjoyable recital, one fact emerges clearly, namely, that Albert Ferber is a thoughtful and all-round musician playing with plenty of musical feeling; his fluent, controlled fingerwork was a delight to behold.

It was a memorable and enjoyable evening indeed, which, as the President rightly said in his closing address, when he thanked the artist for the great pleasure he had given us, "will not soon be forgotten". "By our compatriot's brilliant performance", to use again Mr. Gysin's words "he has enabled us to dwell for a few fleeting moments in the noble realm of divine music".

ST.

CONCERT NEWS.

We wish to direct the attention of our readers to a piano recital, on Sunday, June 16th, at 3 p.m., at the Royal Festival Hall, given by Clara Haskil. The programme includes works by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann.

Of Swiss nationality, but of Roumanian parentage, Clara Haskil was born in Bucharest on January 7th, 1895.

She began her musical studies under Professor Roberts in Vienna, and even while still a child she was received by Carmen Sylva. At the age of fourteen, she was awarded the First Prize for piano in her class at the Paris Conservatoire, a class which included, as well, Alfred Cortot. It was shortly afterwards that she joined Eugène Ysaye in playing all the Beethoven Sonatas: she also performed as assisting artist with Pablo Casals and Georges Enesco. Ferruccio Busoni, when he heard her, invited her to Berlin, but family considerations interfered with this project. In the intervening years, Clara Haskil has appeared in all the musical capitals of Europe, where her success has been consistently great. A person of exceptional gifts, her sensibility as an artist is only equalled by her personal modesty.