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IMPROMPTU CHAMPAGNE AT THE CITY SWISS CLUB

Albert Ferber entertains

The City Swiss Club is the only helvetic institution of no specific aims in London whose ranks exclude women members. This is not the place to argue as to the advisability of admitting the fair sex. Especially as the ladies are always made most welcome at the two annual dances and the one or two *Soirées Familiales* organised every year, that is to say the ladies who are lucky enough to be invited by a member. A pity that quite a number of women who are on their own are not able to attend any of these pleasant gatherings.

One of these took place at the Orchid Suite of the Dorchester Hotel on 21st March. The President, Mr. Edgar Bonvin, was in the chair and welcomed a number of visitors and friends, especially our distinguished compatriot Mr. Albert Ferber who had kindly consented to give a piano recital. There was no printed programme, which added to the pleasurable expectation.

If the quality of the piano had come up to the standard of the dinner, it would have been excellent. As it was, it speaks well for Mr. Ferber's great skill and artistry to make his audience forget the shortcomings of the instrument and the clanging of crockery emanating from the pantries.

The recital was sheer pleasure to listen to. Mr. Ferber played Brahms, Chopin, Liszt and Debussy, a beautifully chosen selection, well-balanced to suit the occasion, opening with Brahms's second Rhapsody from Opus 79. The Chopin Berceuse followed the first Waltz from Opus 69, one of my special favourites which always takes me back to my youth. By the time he had rendered the delightful Chopin Study (Op. 25, No. 1) and the rousing "Revolutionary" from Opus 10, the artist was well established with his audience. But it was his Debussy Suite "pour le piano" which, in my humble opinion, showed him as the great player he is. Once again I felt that when Albert Ferber plays Debussy, he is above all technical considerations and simply expounds the full meaning of what the composer wanted to put into his work. No personal involvement, but complete harmony and agreement between composer and artist, with no possible argument about interpretation. This may be presumptuous on my part, but the tremendous applause accorded to Mr. Ferber when he had terminated the *Toccata*, seemed to bear me out. Already during the *Sarabande* I had the feeling that he was enjoying himself so much that he had even become reconciled to the imperfections of the piano!

The sincere appreciation of the audience was expressed by the Chairman when he thanked Mr. Ferber for his admirable performance. He said that he had given us champagne with his art, and he asked him whether he would let us into the secret of what was his favourite piece and to play it to us. The expectation was such that one could have heard the proverbial pin drop, and then the gentle, nostalgic strains of an Impromptu by Schubert (Op. 90, No. 3) filled the room.

Thank you, Albert Ferber, and we hope to be able to show you our appreciation by coming to your Recital at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on Tuesday, 2nd May.

MM

TWO SWISS ARTISTS GIVE SUCCESSFUL LONDON CONCERTS

Miss **Fernande Kaeser** of Geneva, who had began her musical studies at the age of seven and was a pupil of such famous artists as Dinu Lipatti, gave her first London Recital at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on 16th March. Like at her previous concerts in this country, her performance of Bach, Mozart, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Ravel and Debussy was very well received by the critics.

Mr. **Nikita Magaloff**, Swiss citizen by adoption, gave an extremely successful recital at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on 30th March. His programme consisted of Mozart, Chopin, Soler, Scarlatti, Stravinsky and Liszt, and it was especially the last four that found the critics' unreserved appraisal.

SWISS PROTESTANT MINISTER IN SCOTLAND

The Rev. M. Dietler of the German-speaking Community of the Swiss Church in London will be in Glasgow from 29th April to 10th May. The Minister of the Glasgow Community, Pastor W. Becher, will be in London during that period. Any Swiss living in Scotland who would like to meet Pfr. Dietler, should get in touch with him well beforehand (1 Womersley Road, London N.8, Tel: 01-340 6018).

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