

Let's Go Places

Inland Children's Chorus Thrills Large Audience At Art Institute

WITH A. S. KANY

Dayton's pride and joy in junior musical circles, the Inland Children's chorus, as usual came through with a thoroughly satisfactory account of itself when it sang yesterday afternoon at the Dayton Art institute. The concert was the first of a series of Sunday afternoon programs arranged through the music committee of the Dayton Chamber of Commerce, of which Herbert Nonneman is chairman.



Richard
Westbrook

The full chorus of 50 girls and 50 boys, such as appeared before Christmas with the Philharmonic orchestra, participated, the same arrangement of tiered platform being used. Raymond Sovey, New York stage designer, who originated this setup some seven years ago when Wallace Whittaker, general manager of Inland, first proposed the idea, came on to see that the effects were carried through properly yesterday.

The children sang in their finished fashion under the eagle eye of their director, Richard Westbrook, voices blending beautifully and all the pertinent points of splendid singing being handled to the utmost satisfaction of everyone. For many of those who packed the auditorium it was a first performance, and to them not only the singing but the entire decorum of the youngsters was a revelation. Mr. Whittaker, who is now in service, should feel proud

of his proteges when he receives a report of the concert—and "Whit" will, for there are few things closer to his heart.

The children sang the "Invocation to St. Cecelia" reverently. They put joy into the lilting measures of Tschaiakowsky's "Sleeping Beauty" waltz. Their "Prayer" by Humperdinck and Vittoria's "Ave Maria" again found them in more serious mood, from which they turned gaily to the lighter measures of "Cossack Cradle Song"; "A Violin Singing in the Street," an Ukrainian folksong, and Lasso's "Echo Song."

With the lights revealing hardly more than their faces, they concluded the program with their annual masterpiece, "Silent Night," which the children do so effectively that it touches something deep inside the listener. Mary Werner McCash and Isabel Herbst were the efficient accompanists.

Sovey, who among his recent work staged "Arsenic and Old Lace," declared in a short talk that what he does for the chorus here is more exciting than any of his other tasks. "What is going to become of our culture if children have not learned the joy of singing?" he asked—which seems a fair question with only one satisfactory answer. Siegfried Weng, museum director, characterized the institute a community living-room with its varied activities. He told us afterward that more than 1,400 persons visited the place yesterday, almost a record.

Next Sunday at 5 p. m. a group from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music will present a comic opera, "The Devil Take Her," in costume.

Sigmund Romberg, America's famous operatic composer, who set a capacity audience into nothing short of spasms of delight with his performance in Memorial hall Saturday night, will play a second engagement there tonight, repeating practically the same program. If you didn't hear it the other evening we advise you to make your way in that direction tonight. Hearing the famous and familiar Romberg melodies as played by the composer himself—and he's definitely a grand pianist—and as sung by vocalists who know how to handle them to best advantage, is a rarity that may never come again.

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*January 10, 1943: The first performance at the Dayton Art Institute (DAI) sponsored by the music committee of the Chamber of Commerce. The Chorus performed at these concerts for 26 years and enjoyed "the largest following on the Sunday Afternoon Series." See the 1954 DAI program.