

The Wagner Society

Registered Office: 141 Dowling Street, Woolloomooloo 2011
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SUBSCRIPTION OVERDUE



Newsletter

No. 23. JUNE, 1986.

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PATRON: SIR CHARLES MacKERRAS
HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS:
WERNER BAER
RITA HUNTER
LEONIE RYSANEK
MICHAEL EWANS

COMING EVENTS

- Sunday June 29th Recital - David Parker - Tenor
Marie Van Hove - Piano
9 Lady Davidson Circuit
Forestville 2.30 for 3.00
Please confirm bookings by phone no
later than Fri. 27th June. 358 1919
- Saturday October 18th An Evening with Dennis Condon and *
his pianos. 8.00 p.m.
47 Station St. Newtown.
- Sunday August 31st)
- Sunday September 28th) Goethe Institute. 1pm - 5pm. *
- Sunday October 26th) Sunday afternoons with
Wagner on compact disc.

* See Details in Newsletter.

COMMITTEE

President	:	Richard King	358 1919
& Co-Editor			
Vice-President	:	Janet Wayland	357 4806 (B)
Editor			332 3926 (H)
Secretary	:	Judith Ferfoglia	938 2030
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			358 2763 (H)
Archivist	:	Jessie Anderson	449 8801
Committee	:	David McCulloch	

DONATIONS

RECEIVED DURING LAST QUARTER

Mr A J Ogrowsky
Mrs D Dupain
Mr & Mrs H Wayland

Our gratitude is extended to the above members who we hope will accept this publication of thier names as our acknowledgement for their support.

Donations to the Wagner Society are tax deductible if they are paid to the Elizabethan Theatre Trust and accompanied by the form below.

Donations to the Wagner Society are Tax-Deductible if they are paid to the Elizabethan Theatre Trust and accompanied by the form below.

To: The General Manager,
The Elizabethan Theatre Trust, P.O Box 137, Kings Cross, 2011

Dear Sir,
Please find enclosed a cheque for \$ representing my donation to The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust. This donation is given unconditionally. However, it would be appreciated if, when considering your appropriations to the performing companies, preference in the allocation of this donation could be given to The Wagner Society.

Signature.....
Name.....
Address.....

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 6TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - MAY 14TH, 1986.

It is with pleasure I present the sixth annual report to the Society, representing the financial year 1st April 1985 to 31st March 1986. As usual, it has been a full and fruitful year of activities.

We began with our 5th annual meeting and dinner, held for the first time at the Southern Cross Hotel. As a result of the confusion created by early arriving guests for the dinner and the disruption of the meeting, it was decided to separate the annual general meeting this year.

The dinner was an outstanding success. About 130 people were present and, apart from the slow serving of the food, I think everyone had a pleasant evening. Our guest of honour, Miss Rita Hunter, gave us some amusing insights into that world the other side of the footlights, and enthralled us with her superb songs, accompanied by Werner Baer, who also gave us a marvellous "Happy Birthday Richard Wagner." It was indeed a memorable evening.

During July and August the video recordings of the Boulez/Chereau 'Ring' were screened at the Goethe Institute in Woollahra and were, from all reports, well attended and thoroughly enjoyed. This 'Bayreuth in Sydney Festival' was helped along by the culinary delights supplied by our foundation member Mrs Jessie Anderson.

In October, as an added bonus, 'Tristan and Isolde' was also screened. November will long be remembered by those members who attended the seminar on 'Electra', again at the Goethe Institute. The speakers included Mr Richard Toop of the N.S.W. Conservatorium of Music, Professor Michael Ewans of Newcastle University, and Richard Armstrong, the conductor of Welsh National Opera who was visiting Australia as guest conductor for the proposed four concert performances of 'Electra' in Melbourne and Sydney. The organisation of the seminar was prepared by Dr Leonard Hansen and Michal Arnold. It was an event of which any professional organisation of paid employees would have been proud. When one remembers all the members of our Committee are acting in a voluntary manner and have many other commitments, I think we can be justly proud of the high standards achieved so far in all our endeavours. A report of the proceedings was published in the December Newsletter.

Those who were fortunate enough to go to Melbourne on the 7th of December all spoke of a fine performance by Victorian State Opera's first-ever production of 'Lohengrin'. I think we have to set up a separate organisation called 'Wagner Society Travel Inc.', or give items of this nature to a travel agent to handle. It is amazing how many 'variations' are required by members to suit their individual needs. Some days the phone would run hot! The Saturday night performance of 'Electra' was well attended by members. Both the ABC and Australian Opera are always happy to do business with us. We are the largest 'block bookings' they have. The cancellation of the Tuesday night performance was to be regretted, as Melbourne was able to fill both nights' performances - a lack of publicity by the ABC I think.

The calendar year ended with a Christmas get together at the Goethe Institute, again ably assisted, where it counts most, by Jessie Anderson our master chef.

In February our foundation President Dr Leonard Hansen took off for about ten months long service leave, and handed over the office to myself. I would like to take this opportunity to place on record the Society's very deep appreciation of his untiring efforts on our behalf. Leonard's love of the music of Richard Wagner opened many doors to friendship and contact with musicians, singers and administrators in the world of theatre and opera. It is through these associations he was able to enveigle many an artist to our doors. For little or no fee these people have given their talents to us because they saw in Leonard an enthusiasm which they later discovered was shared by all the members of the Society. In an organization such as ours it is the personal contact of like-minded individuals which makes the wheels turn.

Although David Wansbrough's talk was given in our new financial year, i.e. 1986-87, I should like to mention it now. Entitled 'Myths and Legends of the Germanic Peoples at the Time of Richard Wagner and their Influence upon the English Poets,' it was a

President's Report Cont. -

thought-provoking evening. David's talent as a poet and speaker is something approaching genius, and his enthusiasm for us to share his world was felt by all who attended. He demonstrated to us through poetry that inner world of inspiration where a universal well exists for any who are prepared to tread that path of inner searching. No committee or computer can create a 'Ring Cycle' or a Ninth Symphony - only individualists such as Richard Wagner and Beethoven could have given us these treasures. Often out of great adversity from their contemporaries and their environment have the great gifts to mankind been born. David showed us how many in the artistic world of that time were in tune with the spirit of man and his universe.

In September last year it was decided by our Committee to find an alternate printer for our Newsletter. I think you will all agree it is a marked improvement; less expensive and tentimes better than the predecessor. Michel Arnold and Janet Wayland created the cover, adding to the attractiveness of the Newsletter which I am sure is eagerly awaited and read.

Finally I would like to thank all the members of the Committee who gave so freely of their time and energy. We all have a livelihood to maintain, family commitments and so on, but I can truly say our Committee has worked hard for us all throughout this past year.

The Society will continue to thrive and grow if we maintain the enthusiasm already shown by you all here tonight.

Richard King
Acting President

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TREASURER'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - MAY 14TH, 1986.

From the Statement circulated this evening it will be noted that there has been a slight drop in membership since last year; there has been a significant increase in donations, due in particular to some very substantial amounts donated by some members; the cost of administration and running expenses, including the publication of the Newsletter, has been contained to approximately 65 per cent of the subscriptions received for the year; that lectures, functions, and all other performances have paid their own way, mainly through contributions made on each occasion by the participating members.

The policy of the Society is to use donations exclusively for the sponsoring of activities and aims as outlined in the Constitution.

The Committee will endeavour to contain running costs in the ensuing year, although there may be a considerable increase when insurance cover for public liability is taken out.

J Ferfaglia
Treasurer

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THE WAGNER SOCIETYBALANCE SHEET AS AT 31/3/1986

<u>1985</u>	<u>Assets</u>	<u>1986</u>
\$		\$
358.95	Prepayments - Friends of Bayreuth year 1986	160.65
1150.51	Cash at Bank	434.56
66.00	Petty Cash	61.00
13691.00	Investment	14582.00
	Stock - 34 books "Cosima & Wagner" @ \$25 ea. 850.00	
	2 books "Wagner & Aeschylus" @ \$28 ea. 56.00	
	2 Libretto & scores 506.65	
1006.00	1 "Elektra" tape 30.00	1442.65
	Filing Cabinet \$185.00	
157.25	Less Depreciation 64.75	120.25
<u>16429.71</u>	<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>16801.11</u>
	<u>Liabilities</u>	
1147.50	Subscriptions 1986/87 Received in Advance	439.00
336.00	Annual General Dinner Received in Advance	150.00
125.00	Annual General Dinner Competition - Received in Advance	50.00
486.30	Accrued Expenses	-
<u>2094.80</u>	<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES</u>	<u>639.00</u>
<u>14334.91</u>	<u>ACCUMULATED MEMBERS FUNDS</u>	<u>16162.11</u>

ACCUMULATED MEMBERS' FUND ANALYSIS

Accumulated Funds as at 31/3/1985	14334.91
Surplus for the Year Ended 31/3/1985 - As per Income and Expenditure Statement	1827.20
	<u>16162.11</u>

THE WAGNER SOCIETYREVENUE AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/3/1986

<u>31/3/1985</u>	<u>REVENUE</u>		<u>31/3/1986</u>
3427.00	Subscriptions - Paid in Advance to 31/3/85	1147.50	
	Paid After 31/3/85	2181.00	3328.50
2119.00	Donations		5004.00
52.69	Sale of Recorded Programmes, Books, etc.		25.00
736.00	Lectures and Functions		901.53
	Operas & Other Performances		
	Elektra 2255.00		
6033.00	Lohengrin - Melbourne 5906.00		8161.00
1438.00	Annual General Meeting & Dinner		3586.00
570.00	Annual Dinner Competition		490.00
7.49	Interest from Bank		2.33
1713.00	Interest from Investment		2476.00
42.32	Miscellaneous - Christmas Competition	145.00	
	Refund Stamp Duty 7.70		152.70
<u>16130.50</u>	<u>TOTAL REVENUE</u>		<u>24127.06</u>
	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
1396.40	Annual Dinner		4076.00
130.38	Annual Dinner Competition		158.95
-	Donations and Sponsoring		7000.00
1835.46	Lectures and Functions		538.80
	Operas and Other Performances		
	Elektra 2234.00		
5198.00	Lohengrin - Melbourne 5845.00		9079.00
28.00	Recorded Programmes, Books, etc.		100.00
1622.21	Newsletter - Printing and Distribution		1613.71
165.30	Stationery and Postage		92.85
613.80	Advertising		100.00
31.64	Bank Charges - Interest Payable		61.52
27.75	Depreciation - Office Equipment (20% p.a.)		37.00
-	Membership Friends of Bayreuth		255.03
-	Miscellaneous - Christmas Party and Competition		87.00
<u>11048.94</u>	<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>		<u>22299.86</u>
<u>5081.56</u>	<u>SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR TRANSFERRED TO ACCUMULATED FUNDS</u>		<u>1827.20</u>

I have examined the books and vouchers relating to the Wagner Society and hereby certify that the above Statement and the attached Balance Sheet represent an accurate account of the financial affairs of the society.

REG MALONEY

COMING EVENTSDennis Condon & His Pianos.47 Station St, NEWTOWN

We have been asked many times when another evening could be arranged with Dennis Condon and we are happy to announce that Saturday, 18th October at 8.00 p.m. has been written into our calendar. Numbers are definitely limited so chance will favour those who book ahead, and because we are asking you to make a long range forecast we are prepared to put names on a waiting list.

For Reservations:

Pn. 358 1919 (Bus. Hours)

- oOo -

Wagner On Compact Disc.

With the Chereau 'Ring' resounding, the Society has decided to catch the rising tide of Wagner at the Goethe Institute, which is fast becoming our Second Home.

We shall usher in the Spring on the last Sunday of the months of August, September and October with The Flying Dutchman followed by Tannhauser and then Mastersingers.

The "performance" will begin promptly at 1.00pm and, allowing for a short break for refreshments, it should finish at approximately 5.00 pm.

Members are invited to bring friends.
Reservations are not necessary.

- oOo -

South Australian Wagner Society.

We are delighted to know of the formation of another Wagner Society.

On the 5th June at the School of Musical Studies, University of Adelaide, the Wagner Society of South Australia was launched under the guidance of Professor Andrew McCredie, A.M., M.A., D. Phil., F.A.H.A.

We wish them well and look forward to a happy association in pursuing our common goals.

The recent performance of The Flying Dutchman, the first Wagner production by S.O.S.A., indicates an excitement and interest said to be equal to that in Sydney.

The Annual Dinner.Friday, 23rd May

If reactions on the night, followed by remarks after the event are any indication, our Sixth Annual Dinner was a success despite some shortcomings of the wine-waiters (see Letters to the Editor), and it is becoming more evident on each of these occasions how much Wagner Society members enjoy coming together, renewing friendships, and making new ones, with a positively genuine enthusiasm.

This year's Guest of Honour, tenor Ronald Dowd, delighted everyone with his strong yet tender rendition of Tannhauser's Narration, and later in the evening entertained us with tales of the early days of opera in Australia and of his exploits, musical and non-musical, throughout his long career.

Mr Werner Baer accompanied Mr Dowd in a memorable performance. The place Werner Baer holds in the affections of The Wagner Society will always be assured, and his support ever appreciated.

Dr Susan Kelly performed her last and agreeable duty as a Committee member in presenting gifts from the Society to Mr Dowd and Mr Baer for contributing in no small way to the conviviality of the occasion.

The Guessing Competition was drawn by Mrs Sybil Baer and the prize-winners were:

First prize - Margaret Hennessy, Second prize - Hugh Wayland, Third prize - Harry Darligton.

Janet Wayland.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

D. J. Triggs
Wollstonecraft.

It is with regret that I complain with some aspects of The Annual Dinner. Frankly, \$60.00 for two for an average smorgasbord is excessive. To have to queue for it and find the "hot" roast beef lukewarm, does little for one's appreciation.

There was hardly a startling array of salads and whatever happened to the entree? When it came to the desserts and cheeses the desserts had vanished - we had to be content with the last remnants of the cheeses.

The worst feature was the appalling lack of service of the wine waiters. it was necessary to go walkabout to find someone to refill our glasses.

May I respectfully suggest that when member(s) of the committee utter such euphoric pronouncements (publicly), that it is completely meaningless, unless they circulate and procure a few facts from the participants.

May I also respectfully suggest that next year some thought be given to sit-down dinner and perhaps sacrifice a little plush elegant surroundings which no doubt contributed to the cost.

If it wasn't for the redeeming presence of Ronald Dowd, the evening would have served as a wretched experience, and frankly \$60.00 down the drain.

26.5.86

Editor,

This letter seems to contradict the general impression of the Dinner that the committee gleaned from the guests during the course of the evening. Unfortunately our complaints had no effect on the tardiness of the drink waiters, but the quality of the food seemed to be generally praised.

The committee is ever conscious of cost and we assure Mr Triggs that \$60.00 for two left us with very little margin, as can be seen from the Financial Report. If Mr Triggs (or anyone else) can find us a venue that would be commensurate with the requirements and standards of the Society, we would be only too glad to hear of it.

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TRISTAN AND ISOLDE

From Dr Leonard Hansen, Cologne, 15th March 1986

The capacity audience assembled in the modern opera house for this new production seemed little affected by the retirement, for family reasons, from the title role, of Jeanine Altmeyer, or even by the announcement that Rene Kollo was still slightly indisposed. For them Kollo can not sing badly, and that veteran operatic heroine Berit Lindholm was quite an acceptable replacement as Isolde. Marek Janowski, whom we praised so much in Paris, was conducting the City of Cologne symphony orchestra.

And so to the prelude, which Janowski, rather renowned for his fast tempi, approached from a fairly neutral standpoint. However his concentration of the forces of the orchestra made for a rich sound and built up to a profound climax, from which one was gradually let down as the orchestra dissembled into silence. He led the large orchestra through the opera with great control and sensitivity, increasing tempo marginally where the action of the play moved quickly, and allowing the singers no quarter with volume. The Act II love duet and the Liebestod however received special consideration, the first lyrical and sumptuous, the latter tender and slow at first, then after the heart-rending climax, ethereal and serene.

As the curtain opened on the immense stage one was immediately impressed by the simple and stylish set, but could not help recall Ponnelle's recent Bayreuth production, with Isolde isolated centre stage, Brangane to one side and a large back-lit sail obscuring the deck behind it. In this case Isolde's prop was a large sea chest to sit on, instead of the outspread cloak, and there was no rolling of the ship. The sail lifted up when Brangane went on deck, to show Tristan at the helm surrounded by the crew, and it fell again for the ensuing scene in the cabin. As the potion was drunk the stage was plunged into darkness, with the deep blue sky sprinkled with a myraid of tiny stars. The act ended with the dazed lovers coming front centre stage to pay homage to an imaginary King Mark.

As the tormented Isolde, Berit Lindholm carried conviction, with a slim girlish appearance and secure stage gestures, only occasionally ruffled when she got caught up in her long dress. Her voice however was at times insecure and inaudible, but in general it was a fine performance, marred occasionally by some rather ugly screeched high notes. Waltraud Meier was a properly comforting Brangane, not afraid to physically soothe and caress her mistress. At times she became quite assertive and bossy, which seemed a little out of character considering her position and appearance on stage as a much younger person. Miss Meier is in fact a very attractive young lady whose voice has won many admirers. For my liking there is just a little too much vibrato and strain at the top, which I fear will not improve with time. Little else was demanded of Rene Kollo that he give his usual heroic performance, which he did admirably, although perhaps a little stereotyped now, with only a hint of his throat ailment showing through. Hermann Becht gives good support as Kurwenal, though he has added nothing new to his portrayal since Bayreuth.

The set for Act II was a sunken garden with tall trees on either side and a huge night sky. After Isolde extinguished the torch (with real flames) and the lovers settled down on the grassy slope, a wonderful display of stars appeared. Silhouetted in front of this brilliant panorama Brangane made a perfectly timed walk around the garden wall, while singing her Night Watch. Later, with the appearance of King Mark, a dozen soldiers stood in groups on the wall, spear in hand, against the dawn sky, to great affect. As Mark, Matthias Holle gave a superb performance, his big voice and body wracked by despair and disappointment in Tristan.

Act III was brutally lit by a strong afternoon sun, showing Tristan lying inside the castle wall at Kareol. Through the gate one could see down to the rocky shore and far out across a spume flecked sea to the horizon, under a lightly covered sky. Kollo mastered this difficult act with praiseworthy professionalism, his alternate emotions of hope (in seeing Isolde again) and despair (at having to live) being well transmitted to the audience, who dabbed at a few wet eyes. Finally, in the setting sun he mounts the castle wall to wave to Isolde with his bandages. Darkness falls as Isolde begins singing her Love-Death, standing with outstretched arms over the fallen Tristan. Slowly their images are seen to rise, and as her words fade so does the

Tristan and Isolde Cont. -

last light on her, and the two lovers are engulfed in the darkness of the most incredible starry night.

This production by Michael Hampe, the general-manager of the Colonge Opera, used basically one set, re-arranged slightly for each act. The costumes did not change throughout the opera except for a cloak for Isolde and bloodied jacket for Tristan. The rest was done with expert lighting and exquisitely executed backdrops. As Prof. Hampe has been invited by the Australian Opera to produce "Cenerentola" in 1987, and to prepare the 1988 "Meistersingers" production, one can only hope for equally spectacular results as he chieived with his "Tristan and Isolde".

"Die Meistersinger von Nuremberg", Nice, 15th April 86.

If Wagner were to know that any of his works would be presented in the Acropolis he would no doubt be very pleased. Even though this particular Acropolis is the Entertainment Centre of Nice, he would still feel very gratified, because it contains one of the newest, largest and most technically advanced opera theatres in Europe. Seating 2,500 the auditorium is accoustically and aesthetically most successful, with none of the seats being too far from the stage, which is almost the size of that in the Grossfestspielhaus of Salzburg. With all that space, it was rather surprising that the designer, Jean Blancon, was so sparing with his scenery and colour. In fact, all the abstracted sets appeared to be made out of tubes of white cardboard of different diameter and length, variations of the organ pipes which dominated the first act. The costumes - updated to Wagner's own period of the mid 19th century were mainly white, with fawn or grey as a contrast, except in the final tableau where four grotesque figures representing the guilds sported brilliant outfits in gold and primary colours. The lighting also was very white, creating some very spectacular moments, notably at the opening of the curtain for Act I (the unit choir downstage silhouetted against a background of almost translucent white organ pipes) and Act III Sc. II (a veritable shock to the eyes of intense brightness, the white clad choir on a completely white stage.)

Musically it was not quite so successful. The large orchestra, under Jean Perisson, played with energy and accuracy, but it did not achieve a satisfactory balance of sound, the strings always seeming dominated by the brass. In its turn, the orchestra dominated the voices, none of which were "big" anyway, so that they could only be heard with any clarity when the accompanying orchestration was reduced to a few instruments. The Hans Sachs of Victor Braun had the appearance of a bourgeois beat-nick in comparison to the other tense and easily agitated Masters. His "Wahn, Wahn, uberall Wahn" was particularly well sung. The Pogner of Hans Tschammer and the Beckmesser of Peter-Christoph Runge were also very good performances, and Maria Temesi as Eva was delightful to both ear and eye. It was unfortunately Wolfgang Fassler as Walther who disappointed most, as his voice was just not suited to the role, his upper register being rather unpleasant as well. However, on the whole, it was an extremely enjoyable performance, thanks mainly to the conductor and producer (Pierre Medicin), but not one for traditionalists perhaps, which was probably why, when the final curtain came down (at 12.30 am) there was only a short round of polite applause from the rather critical audience.

"LOHENGRIN" AT THE GRAN LICEU THEATRE IN BARCELONA 12TH FEB 1986.

The production, which came from the Wurttembergische Staatstheater, Stuttgart (costumes) and the Liceu Theatre (sets) worked very well and proved that you do not need elaborate sets and costumes for a production to work. Clever use of rear projection for the Swan's arrival and departure and ingenious use of light effects were absolutely magnificent, simple stylized Gothic architecture was most effective in establishing a medieval atmosphere - dark where necessary and bright and colourful when needed. Costumes were on a par and reminded one of Gothic stained glass windows seen in Cathedrals. The singing was wonderful. Pilar Lorengar, as Elsa, singing with great delicacy and accuracy, the tune throughout most Wagnerian and certainly this must be considered as one of her best roles. Nadine Denize (replacing Eva Randova at the last minute) was a revelation. An Ortrud of great strength, acting as well as singing, her beautiful Mezzo-Soprano voice coping with the extraordinary range which this role demands. The Herald-Franz Josef Kappellmann, King Henri-Erich Knodt, and Telramund-Franz Ferdinand Nenberg, all sang with beauty and force and makes us realise how starved we are of different styles of performers in Australia. Unfortunately Siegfried Jerusalem as Lohengrin was suffering with a cold and although bravely singing on, was not capable of giving us his best vocal sounds as we have come to expect from this fine Tenor. The drama, directed by Frideman Steiner, was acted out with the minimum of stage action, in contrast with the continual comings and goings of the chorus in the Melbourne production - Perhaps, directors and costume set designers in our local productions should learn more restraint. Orchestraly, the Liceu Symphonia, under the baton of Christof Perick was spellbinding, never have I heard a Lohengrin, so grand, so forceful and yet so delicate in orchestral tones. Maestro Perick seems destined to become one of the great Wagner conductors. Now, with our swan-like souls stimulated after Lohengrin, we await the opening night (17/2/86) of Naples National Opera Company's production of Das Rheingold, under the baton of Maestro Matthias Kuntzch.

MICHEL ARNOULD

- ooo -

NOW LET US STEP BACK ALMOST A CENTURY FOR A REVIEW OF
THE "RING" IN LONDON

from The Strand Musical Magazine for 1898

London, most backward of musical centres, has at last had an opportunity of witnessing this season a performance of Wagner's master-work "The Ring of the Nibelungen," under conditions similar to those instituted, and insisted on, by its creator. This possibility was arrived at by practically transporting Bayreuth to the metropolis as regards the scenic exigencies; and by giving the work in its entirety. There was a little disappointment at the first series, as the second condition was not absolutely complied with; but in the later performances the omissions were restored and the production has given entire satisfaction.

The scheme was suggested to the controllers of the already arranged Operatic season for 1898 at Convent Garden, and although the financial success was open to doubt, they decided on the experiment being made. Mr. Schulz-Curtius was plucky enough to take at his own risk all the seats that would have been offered to the general public (i.e. non-subscribers). The day following the issue of his prospectus, a sufficient number of applications had been received to justify an extension of the original arrangement, and accordingly another cycle was announced.

The demand for seats was again so satisfactory that even a third performance would not provide for the overflow of applicants, and a large public remains unsatisfied.

The prices of tickets held by outside speculators and box office agents soon reached a premium; some of the five-guinea stalls, for instance, being disposed of at fifteen guineas.

The "Ring" In London Cont. -

The longer operas commenced at four and five o'clock in the afternoon, with ample time after the first act of each for a light dinner to be obtained. There was no restriction as regards dress, excepting that all ladies were required to dispense with their hats and bonnets, or anything unnecessary in headgear that might interfere with a good view of the stage.

The scenic effects, under the superintendence of the stage manager of Bayreuth, were rather discounted by certain difficulties connected with the construction of the Covent Garden stage, but on the whole were very well carried out; and the orchestra, complete in every detail, frequently arrived at perfection of rendering under the sympathetic baton of Herr Mottl. It is a much argued question whether the long wait between the acts of the last three operas were necessary in London, the surroundings on leaving the theatre being so different to those at Bayreuth, where the mind has absolute rest and repose, and the continuity of the performance is practically undisturbed. Many ladies took advantage of the interval to change their afternoon gowns for the more elaborate evening dress, and possibly were the greatest appreciators of the long wait, as an adjunct to the demands of fashion. Here is given some biographical information about the conductor and the singers. Of the conductor Felix Mottl, we are told:

This distinguished conductor was born August 24th, 1855, near Vienna. Wagner himself was a great appreciator of the young man's talents, and in 1875 entrusted to him the revision of the score of the Nibelungen Tetralogy. In 1876 he was engaged as "solo repetiteur" for the first Bayreuth Festival, and ten years later conducted "Tristan" there, while in 1888 the illness of Levi gave him the opportunity of directing "Parsifal." Since then his post at Bayreuth has been permanent, and his concerts in London have secured for him an unassailable position in the hearts of the English cognoscenti. The singers included: Madame Emma Eames as Sieglinde, Fraulein Ternina, Miss Marie Brema and Madame Nordica as Brunnhilde, Frau Schumann Heink, Edouard de Reszke, Jean de Reszke as Siegfried, Ernest van Dyck as Siegmund, Anton van Rooy as Wotan (... he has rendered the seemingly thankless part with such individuality, and such an indescribable charm, that ... the entire rendering touched a point where only absolute genius could step in.)

The cycles, "Das Rheingold", "Die Walkure", "Siegfried", and "Die Gotterdammerung" have all been given previously in England, but the sequential performance has not been repeated since 1882, when at Her Majesty's Theatre it achieved but a partial success. Evidently, at that period the public was not prepared, and it is only in the last few years that a thoroughly appreciative and sufficiently educated audience has been found to support such an undertaking.

The concert of Hans Richter, and latterly those of Felix Mottl, have aroused the desire of the public for a better acquaintance with the works of the master.

Richard Wagner has appealed so strongly to the imagination, and so clearly called up the picture he intended to convey, that this acknowledgement on the part of the public to his genius is easily understood. Despite the popular impression, even in the most complicated passages, his meaning is never obscure.

Wagner is so versatile in his genius that he interests and attracts widely divergent appreciation; a popular promenade smoking-concert audience enjoys and applauds as well as the dignified and fashionable gathering at any strictly classical function.

In fact, it is becoming difficult for the managers of orchestral concerts to get together a financially satisfactory audience without the all-potent name affixed to a fair proportion of the numbers on the programme

Wagner himself was an appreciator of all his great predecessors, out of whose works and by the adaptation of whose principles he has built up the colossal temple where in the multitude have now set him up as a god.

The "Ring" In London Cont. -

The real reason for this enormous appreciation is that a great and clear preacher of the religion of Music and Art has at last spoken the gospel of Truth in trumpet-tones, and the People, for the first time, have arrived at the dawn of understanding.

G.H.C.

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