

## Traditions and Gayety of Christmases Gone-by Recalled by Appearance of Children's Chorus

Starlight above the whiteness of deep, soft snow—the stillness of a winter night too cold for wind—clear, sharp, stinging air that tingles in the throat with every breath—cottages breaking the monotony of snow, showing squares of pale candlelight here and there in the white world—sound of singing, far away at first, then nearer and more distinct—young, high voices and deeper, older tones—a group of boys and men, standing in the snow in a square of reflected candlelight, singing songs they've known forever—because it's Christmas. And the singing ended, something hot to drink and something good to eat inside the cottages—laughter and more singing—gayety and comradeship, beginning and ending in a song—Christmas in England.

Perhaps it's just a myth in 1937—like the Santa Claus that sophistication cannot touch. Perhaps it's only something suggested vaguely by a page from Washington Irving's "Sketch Book." Perhaps even England has forgotten.

But there is a peculiar appeal in this simple expression of the meaning of Christmas—carol

singers standing in the snow outside the window—that creates a desire to revive it. Realists would tilt their noses and sniff, "Sentimental!" Well, maybe. Yes—obviously. But, after all, Christmas is admittedly the romanticists' holiday, and if we are honest we will confess that, looking backward, we see our "ghosts of Christmas past" not bearing the expensive and lovely gifts we have received, but holding out to us the satisfying memory of the confusion of excited voices, the fun of helping to trim the tree, the pleasant glow of softly tinted lights against green branches, the sudden magic of "Silent Night, Holy Night" that leaves us breathless, a little wistful and perhaps a little older.

We like our Christmas, in spite of the realists. And we like believing that England has not forgotten, and that we will never forget. We would not sacrifice the enjoyment of hearing children's voices singing the lovely old carols that we remember from our very first Christmas for the questionable satisfaction of being practical and realistic. We would remember all of these things as we listen to the Inland Children's

*(Concluded on Page Four)*

### Traditions--

*(Concluded from Page One)*

chorus Tuesday night at Memorial hall—100 young voices singing together the same songs that cut through the still, cold night outside the cottage windows in old England. This, perhaps, may be described as Dayton's preservation and interpretation of the best traditions of Christmas.

One hundred youngsters, between the ages of eight and 15, the boys dressed in neatly cut long trousers and the conventional Eton jackets with white collars, the girls wearing long dresses of French blue taffeta, will create again that desired Christmas atmosphere—"Peace on Earth"—as they remind us in familiar rhythms of the significance of this holiday that is both gay and serious. They represent the children of the world, the children of this

century and of ages past who have walked through the snow under starlit skies singing, exultantly, sincerely, reverently — because Christmas was their greatest gift.

The chorus, directed by Richard Westbrook, was founded by the Inland Manufacturing company to give the children of its employes an opportunity to develop one of the most satisfying forms of self-expression and to make them conscious of the value of music—and to create a group which might contribute to the cultural life of the community. Children's choruses have played an important role in the history of musical development, but very little has been done thus far in our own country. The Inland chorus, since its founding in September, 1936, has come to be recognized as one of the outstanding groups of its kind in the United States. Its appearance Tuesday night with the Philharmonic orchestra, directed by Paul Katz, will be one of its few public performances.

## Inland Children's Chorus Will Be Heard With Philharmonic Orchestra



A sectional photograph of some of the children who make up the Inland Children's chorus, which has made several public appearances, and will appear Tuesday night at Memorial hall as one of the main attractions on the current season's series of subscribed concerts by the Dayton Philharmonic orchestra. The chorus has been trained by Richard Westbrook, with the public appearances staged by Raymond Sovey of New York, while Mary Werner plays the accompaniments. Paul Katz will direct the orchestra Tuesday night.

\* \* \*

*Continued on the following page.*

*Continued from the previous page.*

**A** GAIN we will have the opportunity to hear the Inland Children's chorus, that beautiful organization established last year through the ambition and generosity of Wallace Whittaker.

Ambition we say, advisedly, for when a commercial organization of the size of the Inland devises and executes an accomplishment of the artistic attainments of the Inland Children's chorus we term it ambition.

The appearance of this chorus last spring, in the first joint appearance with the Dayton Philharmonic orchestra was a brilliant occasion. It was a pleasant experience, and we have anticipated this occasion with considerable eagerness.

The arrival of Raymond Sovey from New York on Friday morning was the signal for workmen to start enlarging the stage at Memorial hall. Special lighting and staging is the forte of this well-known expert, and to him must go the credit for the effective placing of this large group of youngsters last year.

A gasp of pleasure was heard all over the hall at the quaint and charming costumes of the boys and girls; and we are delighted to hear that these have not been changed.

The concert Tuesday night is being changed from the Victory to Memorial hall, and Miss Rosenthal's office mailed the tickets, comparable in location to those held by the subscribers for the concerts at the Victory.

The Inland Children's chorus was organized by Mr. Whittaker and Richard Westbrook, and has been trained by Mr. Westbrook.

To him must go the credit for their excellent work, and Mr. Sovey was most enthusiastic in his praise of Mr. Westbrook's ability with these youngsters. Incidentally the children all belong to families of the Inland personnel.

Sunday afternoon the youngsters will be given their annual Christmas party, and this affair is taken so seriously that Mr. Sovey expends no little effort to make this a huge success.

There are so many to entertain that three performances of the party are to be given on Sunday, 12:30, 3 and 5 o'clock.

The concert will open with the overture to Mendelssohn's opera "Ruy Blas" (Opus 95). This will be followed by two parts of the Jean Sibelius suite, "King Christian" (Opus 27) (a) Elegie and (b) serenade.

"The Dance of the Buffoons," from Rimsky-Korsakoff's "The Snow Maiden," complete the orchestral portion of the program for the first half.

The Inland Children's chorus will sing "Glory to God in the Highest," by Pergolesi, and six numbers from Humperdinck's "Haensel and Gretel," and no Christmas is complete without this musical charm.

The second half of the program includes Moussorgsky's Gopak from his opera, "The Fair at Sorochinsk," Borodin's "At the Convent" and the suite espagnole, "Le Ferial," by Lacombe.

Again we hear the youngsters, this time in three famous Christmas carols, "The First Noel," "O Holy Night," and "O Come All Ye Faithful."

Paul Katz will direct.