

Tribute To Mrs. Kettering Inspires Children's Chorus

May 4, 1946

The Dayton Herald

Last night's concert of the Inland Children's chorus in the Dayton Art Institute was dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Charles F. Kettering.

J. D. O'Brien, general manager of Inland division of General Motors, sponsor of the chorus, made the announcement from the stage, stating that the action was being taken because of the intense interest of the Ketterings in the welfare of the group.

We have never heard the 100 children—50 boys and 50 girls—sing so well as they did last night. It was one of four appearances in the third annual spring festival of the chorus. Two more concerts are to be sung tomorrow afternoon. Primarily they are for Inland employes and their families and friends.

For the festival, the children are immaculately clad in their usual manner and occupy the tiered platform originally arranged and lighted by Raymond Sovey, of New York.

Under the expert guidance of Richard Westbrook, their director from the start, 10 years ago, they sing with gorgeous tonal effect



Westbrook

and a responsiveness to directional demands that is nothing short of uncanny at times.

Rich In Versatility

Their first group includes three popular numbers, "In a Monastery Garden," "The Green Cathedral" and the "Valse Triste." For encore they give their marching song, the prayer from "Hansel and Gretel."

The second part of their program is picked from some of the best-known of operatic scores. They sing these with distinction, with moving effect on the audience, quite overwhelmed with the beauty of it all.

From Romberg they take the bold measures of "Stouthearted Men" from "The New Moon" and catch the magic of springtime in "Deep in My Heart" from "The Student Prince." From Friml they select the melodious "Indian Love Call" from "Rose Marie" and extract the humor of "The Donkey Serenade" from "The Firefly."

They catch the lilting love notes of "Summer Time" from Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess" and they make an outstanding contribution of "An Irish Lullaby," with an unusually fine boy soprano voice doing one chorus as solo. Hoagy Carmichael's "Stardust" is splendidly interpreted also.

Augmenting Westbrook's directorial finesse are the organ and piano accompaniments of Mary Werner McCash and Isabel Herbst, which background and bind the vocalization into a solid unit.

Serves a Dual Purpose

O'Brien, in a brief introduction, told the audience that more than 700 children now have reaped the benefit of training in this chorus, thereby gaining an appreciation of music and realizing the value of teamwork.

"We believe music to be a means of better understanding and a medium through which hate eventually may be abolished," he said. They sound like wise words.

This afternoon there will be a special private concert at which the chorus will sing for the 175 Negro children who are being trained for the Linden Center children's chorus under Inland sponsorship. No date has been set as yet for their initial public appearance, O'Brien said last night.—A. S. Kany.