MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NORWAY'S GREATEST PIANIST IS GONE

Death of Erika Nissen Whose Fame Was as Wide as Europe—Restoring the Ancient Trondhjem Cathedral—Celebrating the Anniversary of the Day of Swedish-Norwegian Union.

Correspondence of The Journal.

Christiania, Norway, Nov. 5.—Norway has but a few persons known to the world at large; most of them are artists. One of these is now gone to rest forever. On Oct. 27, Erika Nissen, the prominent pianist, died of pneumonia.

Erika Lie Nissen was born at Kongsvinger in 1845. Her father was a lawyer, and both her parents were musical and highly cultured people. At the age of 15 she came to Christiania. The house of her parents was a very hospitable one, where some of the best known men in art and literature of the time met. Ole Bull, Bjornson, her cousin, Jonas Lie, and others were among the friends of her youth, and in their society she was at an early age carried into idea-life, which, of course, had influence on her future development.

When her father died and the family moved to Christiania, Halfdan Kjerulf, the composer, became the teacher of Erika Lie, and he soon predicted that the world at some future date would hear of his pupil. But she herself did not seem to have much faith in her own abilities at that time.

ERIKA LIE NISSEN.

Kjerulf succeeded in opening her eye and ear for many of the fundamental rules in music, but in technique she was behind.

Then it happened that her mother inherited about $1,000 and this mother and this legacy should be remembered with thanks in the history of Norwegian art. She gave the money to her two daughters and told them to spend it for their education, and so Ida and Erika went to Berlin to take lessons from Professor Kullak.

The years spent at Berflin cover besides the memory of pleasant happenings and acquaintances made also a sentimental incident in the life of Erika Nissen. It was there that she met her genial young countryman, Rikard Nordraak. He spent much of his time in the company of the two Lie girls, who never had met a man more original and interesting than he. After they had been spending the evening together he would often sit down and compose a song or a romance, which he would send by a messenger the next morning to one of the Lie girls. The melody to the Norwegian national song, "Ja vi elsker," was one of these morning messages. Then he and Erika Lie became betrothed. It was, however, on her side a mere child engagement, and it suffered the usual fate of such affairs. After a number of years they met again—at his death bed. She nursed him during those last days of his life, but death had already put its stamp on him. One day when she returned to his sick bed, she found him dead forever.

In the meantime she herself had become a developed artist, and in 1866 she gave a concert in the "Schauspielhaus" at Berlin, and it was a great success. This was her farewell to Berlin. From now on she gave a series of concerts in the Scandinavian capitals, which made her known as a master of the piano, and among other distinctions, she was elected an honorary member of the Academy of Music at Stockholm.

In the winter of 1866 she went to Paris to study Chopin. Thru one of Chopin's most distinguished pupils, Thomas Tellefsen, she was brought right into the traditions of that great master, and this afterwards was of the greatest value to her as a player of Chopin music, her specialty.

From Paris she went to London with letters of recommendation from King Oscar and the Danish crown prince to the Princess of Wales, under whose protection she was introduced by a concert in 1889. In England she made the acquaintance of Jenny Lind, with whose personality and art she was deeply impressed.

In 1870 she was called by Mr. Gade to Copenhagen as teacher at the conservatory of music there, and the following year she made her debut at Leipzig, with a brilliant concert at the "Gewandhaus." In the following years she won equally high honors in different places in Germany, Holland, Belgium and Switzerland.

In 1874 she was married to Dr. Oscar Nissen, after which she again went out givng concerts in different European cities. Of late years she has, with exception of a few trips to Germany and Denmark, mostly played in Norway, where she has visited nearly every town in the country.

Eight years ago she celebrated her 50th birthday. Her health has been poor, and she has had much to contend with to keep her art at the highest standard. With never-failing kindess she has always given her assistance when and where it was requested.

With her the most spirited and the finest performer of the musical art in Norway has passed away.

Her funeral was held on October 31. Our Savior's church was crowded. In the throng were seen the minister of setate, several cabinet officers, Bjornstjerne Bjornson, Edward Grieg and others prominent in art and literature. The coffin was buried in flowers sent by admirers of her art from all over the country. Henrik Ibsen sent a beautiful bouquet of orchids.

After the funeral sermon Edward Grieg himself conducted the orchestra of the National theater, playing his composition, "The Spring," which made a great and solemn impression. In his sermon the minister laid special stress on the charitable and kind disposition of Erika Nissen, how she regarded it her happiest and most sacred duty to give a concert for the benefit of the poor, and this she had done time and again without being asked to do it, always saying that as she had nothing else to give for the relief of those who suffered, she would gladly give what she had,—her music.

To the cadences of Chopin's funeral march, played by the Second brigade's military band, the great procession moved toward Our Savior's cemetery, where her remains now rest. It was said about Erika Nissen that she could play Chopin's funeral march so that it would bring solace to the sorrowful, and make the listener forget his distress. No wonder, therefore, that this was the last piece of music ever played for her sake.

The flags were at half-mast on all public, and on many private, buildings. The music dealers kept their stores closed on account of her funeral, and it was not a single family only that mourned its bereavement, but a whole nation.

Throndhjem's Cathedral.

The best-known historic building from the early days of ecclesiastical architecture is the old cathedral at Trondhjem. It is one of the landmarks for the foreign traveler in Norway, and Trondhjem's main point of attraction. Just now the old building, or, rather, its reconstruction, is a much discussed subject in Norwegian newspapers. This building work was begun in 1869 and has cost 2,600,000 kroner so far, and its completion will require about 2,250,000 more. The whole building is expected to be finished in about sixteen years from now, this on the basis of an annual budget of 150,000 kroner and ninety men kept working steadily. Of the amount already used, about 1,250,000 kroner has been furnished by the Norwegian government, some 50,000 by King Oscar, several thousands by the German emperor, 500,000 by the sale of city prize mortgages, about 600,000 has been donated by Trondhjem's savings bank, the balance is made up by private donations and by the means belonging to the church.

The first beginning of this magnificent building was a small chapel, which the farmer, Thorgils Hjalmesen, built over the place where he had buried the corpse of St. Olav (the patron saint of Norway in the days of Catholicism). King Olav Kyree replaced the chapel with a stone church, called the Christ church, which was dedicated July 27, 1093. On its high altar was placed the shrine containing St. Olav's bones, and it stood there for 500 years. In the middle of the twelfth and in the thirteenth centuries several changes and improvements took place in the building. When at its best the length of the church was 324 feet, with five towers, 316 windows, 3,360 pillars, about 40 statues and at least 25 altars. But hardly had a generation passed before the destruction of this—the finest church building of the time in northern Europe—began. Easter week, 1328, a fire destroyed a large portion of it and in each of the two following centuries it was again harassed by the flames. In 1708 and 1719 the building for the fourth and fifth time respectively was burnt down. First in the year 1760 was it restored to such an extent that it could again be used for divine service, and the appearance it then had was maintained until the work of restoration began anew in 1869.

The principal point of argument now seems to be whether a plan of restoration, or one of reconstruction shall be followed, and many seem to think that according to the specifications submitted by the man in charge of the work the new building will differ altogether too much from the one of which it should be as exact a copy as could be had. Some even suggest that when the church finally is completed it should be called "Trondhjem's New Dome." For the future welfare of the town of Trondhjem it is to be hoped that this will not be done, for what foreigner cares to travel all the way to Trondhjem to look at a new church completed in 1919? To be able to say, truthfully or otherwise, "this church was erected in 1093," that is something that will take quite differently with the man out hunting for the odd sights of this world.

The Union Day.

Nov. 4, 1814, the amended constitution of Norway became law, the union with Sweden was a reality, and immediately after, Charles XIII. was chosen King of Norway. Altho the 4th of November, therefore, is a day of significance in the political history of Norway, it has till now passed almost unnoticed every year. It has been customary for a few conservative clubs to remember the day by some special meeting or entertainment in the evening, but the people in general took no notice of the day whatever. A large number even thought it unbecoming for a good Norwegian to celebrate the day of the union with Sweden. But everything earthly is subject to change, political views and judgment of things of the past included. Now a very few people in Norway, if any at all, look upon the union with Sweden as a curse and a humiliation. On the contrary, the public opinion, that this union is a blessing, seems to be gaining more and more ground. In Sweden the situation is the same. The small states of Europe receive, so to speak, daily lessons that each them the necessity of sticking together as best they know how.

In a former letter to The Journal I told about the organization of "Broderfolkenes Vel," a society for the promotion of a better understanding and a more brotherly feeling between the two countries. Sweden also has a society by the same name and with the same purpose. No wonder therefore, that Nov. 4, the first union day in the existence of these societies, was chosen as a day for making some showing that they were alive and doing something.

Bjornstjerne Bjornson, who by so many has been held up as an enemy of the union, which he has never been, as he fights only for a clear understanding and equal terms, made the suggestion that something should be done this year to show that the good work was progressing. It was agreed that a Norwegian concert should be held at Stockholm and a Swedish concert at Christiania. Therefore, Mr. Halvorsen, leader of the orchestra at the National theater at Christiania, went to Stockholm, where his majesty, King Oscar, was present at his concert. The Stockholm leader, Tor Aulin, gave a Swedish concert here at the National before a distinguished audience. Afterwards "Broderfolkenes Vel" gave a "sexa" at Hotel Continental, where some 500 were present. Among the Swedish guests of honor ought to be mentioned the celebrated actor, Anders de Wahl, who has become everybody's favorite. Certainly a man who can present acting of the kind he does as Prince Carl Henry in "Old Heidelberg," is entitled to public favor. With all due respect for Richard Mansfield and his art, I cannot see

ANDERS DE WAHL.
The Prominent Swedish Actor.

how he very well can make a finer Heidelberg prince-student than the one Anders de Wahl has been giving. The piece has been played twenty-five times here with crowded house at every performance, and in Christiania that is a record breaker.

But let me return to the feast. Professor Dr. Jaeger delivered the oration of the day, saying that a new era had begun in the history of the union between the two countries, and never before has there been such a reason for the celebration of the day as this year. The work of the societies "Broderfolkenes Vel," both in Sweden and in Norway, had already shown good results, and the prospect for still higher achievements was the best. He finished by proposing a toast to the future happiness of and benefit from the union between the two countries. It was drunk amid enthusiastic cheers.

The judge of the probate court at Christiania, Mr. Esmarch, thanked the Swedish guests for being present, and Anders de Wahl responded by a toast for the art, which he said, had reconciled France and Germany thru Wagner. He hoped it would also prove a powerful factor in uniting Norway and Sweden more closely.

After the speechmaking was over, and refreshment was taken, the dance began. But so many more were present than expected, it was rather crowded. However, the fun was kept up till about 3 a. m., and everybody who had been there felt proud of having taken part in this first real celebration of the day ever held in Norway. Also in other Norwegian cities the day was remembered this year more openly than ever before, and the reports from Sweden indicate that also there was the day fittingly observed. —M. A.

AN INTERESTING SEQUEL.

Washington Star.

"I wisht I knowed whether there was any sequel to that prodigal son story," said Farmer Corntossel as he looked thru the open door at the young man who was swinging in a hammock smoking a cigarette.

"What do you mean?" asked his wife.

"I'd kind o' like to know whether the original prodigal son settled down an' went to work steady or whether he got into the habit of makin' them trips once or twice a year."

THAT WOULD SETTLE IT.

Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"Just think of it, George. Both your maiden aunts are coming to make us a visit to-morrow, and cook has just left."

"Can't you get them to postpone their visit?"

"It's too late."

"And what do you propose to do?"

"Why, I suppose I'll have to put on an apron and do the cooking myself."

"Will you? Then you needn't worry any more. They won't stay long."

A DELINQUENT.

Philadelphia Press.

"Thought I'd drop in an' give ye a bit o' news," said the visitor, "about one of your subscribers."

"Yes?" queried the country editor.

"Yes. My old Uncle Henry Todd passed in his checks to-day."

"Indeed? Well, if he passed any in this direction it hasn't reached us yet, altho it was due years ago.

DISCOURAGING.

"Did you make any impression on the young professor?"

"Goodness, no. Three of his aunts, his sister and a cousin were there, listening to every word I said to him."

The Mayflower pitched upon the waves,
The seasick pilgrim swore:
"Thanksgiving is deferred," he said,
"Until we reach the shore."

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Minneapolis Nov 2/03

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In the name of X.

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CURZON HOLDS A DURBAR

Indian Viceroy Delivers a Significant Address to Arab Chiefs at Shargah.

Bunder Abbas, Persia, Nov. 26.—While on his way here the viceroy of India, Lord Curzon held a durbar at Shargah, which was attended by many prominent Arab chiefs of that coast. He made a significant speech, reaffirming the intention of Great Britain to maintain her supremacy in the Persian gulf, and declared the government adhered to its policy of guardianship and protection of the chiefs.

The viceroy reminded the chiefs of their engagements not to enter into agreemnts or correspondence with any other power than Great Britain, not to admit agents of any other government, and not to alienate any part of their territory. If the chiefs adhered to these engagements, as they had done in the past, he said, no one would be allowed to tamper with their rights and liberties.

The speech of the viceroy to the British Indian traders, who have arrived here, similarly asserted British ascendency in trade and other interests in the Persian gulf, which had been won in competition with other nations who held "or aspired to hold," ports on the India seas.

ANCIENT WRECK

Purchased for Four Dollars Is Found to Be Massed with Gold.

New York Times.

By the aid of a diver from St. John, Thomas Burns, a fisherman of Sea Wall, N. S., has recovered nearly $18,000 in gold from the hull of a wrecked vessel for which he paid twenty-one shillings, and he expects to find even more treasures in the hull if luck and fair weather continue.

The wreck was that of a brig which was lost a mile below Centerville seventy years ago. She is said to have been the Barberie, which was wrecked on her way home after a three-year' trading cruise in South American waters. It is said that her commander and his son had on board for the owners $60,000 in gold, the profits of the trip.

Thomas Burns bought the hull as it stood for twenty-one shillings for the sake of the copper nails and fastenings which he secured years ago. Knowing that a diver was exploring other wrecks in that vicinity, Burns engaged him to look into his own, with the fortunate results recorded.

Most of the gold coin recovered is Spanish. A good deal has seemingly fused into a mass by being submerged so long in the sea water. One piece bears the date of 1824, and is stamped Republicael Colombia. Others are dated 1817. Burns was a man of very limited means. By his find he now becomes one of the richest men in his village.

[illegible]y $32.90 to California.

If [illegible] are contemplating a trip to Cal[illegible], remember that after Decer[illegible] first, the cheap rate tickets at $3[illegible] will be withdrawn from sale. Th[illegible] urist cars over the Minneapoli[illegible] St. Louis to San Francisco and Lo[illegible] Angeles without change, each Wednesday via the popular Santa Fe Route and on Thursday via the "Scenic Route" thru Colorado. For particulars call on J. G. Rickel, City Ticket Agent, No. 1 Washington avenue S, Minneapolis, Minn.

CLUBS AND CHARITIES

Club Calendar.

FRIDAY—

Mothers' league, Mrs. Smallett, 3115 Harriet avenue, 3 p. m.

St. Paul's guild, Mrs. A. R. Rogers, 923 Summit avenue, afternoon.

Workers' committee of the Eighth Ward W. C. T. U., Mrs. Foster, 2732 Stevens avenue, afternoon.

Leotta camp, No. 112, R. N. of A., evening; officers and degree staff, 7:45 p. m.

Willard W. C. T. U., Mrs. Watson, 2832 Garfield avenue, afternoon.

Cassiopeia club, Mrs. S. J. Bowler, 303 E Fifteenth street, 2:30.

Cosmopolitan club, Mrs. Harvey F. Haynes, 2713 Blaisdell avenue, 2:30 p. m.

Friday History club, Mrs. W. S. Hughes, 2620 Third avenue S, afternoon.

Travelers, Public Library, 10 a. m.

OLDER THAN SOROSIS

Minerva Founded by Robert Owen's Granddaughter in 1859.

The oldest women's club in the United States is said to have been in New Harmony, Ind., in 1859, nine years before Sorosis. Mrs. Constance Faunt LeRoy Runcie, the founder and first president, is still living in St. Joseph, Mo. She was a granddaughter of Robert Owen, who founded in 1825 the socialistic colony of New Harmony. As a community it lived but two years, but the Owen family retained much of their original prestige, and the town became known thruout the west as an intellectual center.

Miss Faunt LeRoy was sent to Europe to be educated, and it was soon after her return that she organized a club of nine young women, with a regularly drawn-up constitution, a full list of officers, and weekly meetings for reading and general culture. "We called our club Minerva," writes Mrs. Runcie, "because we hoped to increase in wisdom. Our motto was 'Wisdom in the crown of glory.' One of our members, Mrs. Ella Dietz Clymer, afterward became one of the charter members of Sorosis and one of its presidents. Mrs. Clymer was the only member of Sorosis who had previously belonged to any club, and in drawing up the constitution for that club, her recollection of Minerva was used as a model."

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Y. W. C. A. and Y. M. C. A. to Celebrate.

For the first time the Young Men's Christian association and the Young Women's Christian association will have a joint celebration this evening in the new building of the Y. W. C. A., as these union gatherings have heretofore been held in the men's building. The members of both associations have been bidden to come at 8 o'clock and a full program has been prepared for their amusement. Miss Douglass and Stanley S. Staring are chairmen of the reception committee and will greet the guests on the second floor while in the parlor Messrs and Mmes. Hilleary Murray and Arthur Stevens will extend a welcome. A novel guessing contest, "A Shoppers' Guide, issued by the Y. W. C. A.," in which the names of the prominent stores in the city are hidden, will furnish entertainment the early part of the evening and Hilleary Murray will sing. The guests will then be ushered to the gymnasium where a clever burlesque on the annual field meet will be held between the Reddies and the Yellers. There will be banners and megaphones and some amusing contests will be seen. Miss Idella Bachman and Mr. Maylott will be timekeepers; Hilleary Murray, starter; Dr. Weston, referee; Miss B. Woodcock, scorer; Miss Douglass, Mrs. Walrath and Mr. Sandburn, judges. Mr. Fonken and Miss Witchie will be captains of the Reddies and Mr. Knox and Miss Meyer of the Yellers. Score cards in red and yellow have been prepared with yells for both sides. After the contests, chocolate will be served in the dining-room and Mmes. Stanley S. Staring and M. K. Bachman will pour, assited by a group of young women.

Thanksgiving at the Y. W. C. A.

The Young Woman's Christian association building was the scene of a jolly party this afternoon for the members of the association who had no family ties in the city. The arrangements were made by a committee formed of one member each of the Bible groups, Misses Julia Martin, Georgia Drost, Rose Reiter, Lilian Smith, Anna Hanno, Cordelia Paul, Gladys Wilson, Emma Erickson, Sadie Schultz and Selma Hoagland. They were assisted by the association secretaries and the old-fashioned games, proverbs, consequences, charades and twenty questions were played. At 6 o'clock a chafing dish spread will be served and Miss Christine Dahl will preside over the blazer. She [illegible] be assisted by a group of young women from the waitress' class. The menu will include oyster rarebit, nut sandwiches, coffee and ginger snaps. Red tapers in candelebra and chrysanthemums will make the table pretty and while the rarebit is cooking the guests will be amused with a contest in which questions are answered with the names of magazines.

At the meeting of the Willard W. C. T. U. to-morrow, Mmes. Hall and Clark will speak, making reports of the charities and corrections convention.

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Defective Page