

Monday, Contestants Will be Announced.

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Like the Swiss people in the Oberland, he pastures them on the lower slopes of the mountain ranges in the early summer, then higher up as the season advances and still higher when the August sun is shifting. The women follow them to the upper pasture and make the cheese, and when the summer wanes and the cold becomes intense and the snows fall upon the mountain there comes a day when the herds, with tinkling bells, led by the queen cow, decorated with Alpine flowers come home to the warm quarters that give them shelter from the storm.

It is winter now in Oberammergau as here and at the New Year time the weather is usually severe and the air very sharp and except for the noise made in driving the oxen that haul the woods from the hills it might be said that the peace which passes all understanding envelopes the little village.

But perhaps this would not be quite true, for already rehearsals have begun for the coming representation of the Passion drama.

It is a sacred religious service to them and they esteem it an honor to be given even a minor part.

The Passion play is one of the most interesting survivals of the Mediaevalism that can be found in the world today and Oberammergau is the one place where the sacred drama, once so universal and popular, keeps its original purity and simplicity. There is but one passion play and that is at Oberammergau. All others are mere imitations and poor indeed by the comparison. The origin of the modern drama is to be found in the plays given by the trade guilds of the middle ages and their plays were religious in character. Sacred plays are mentioned in the time of Charlemagne. They were enacted in churches and in churchyards. The religious drama found a congenial home in the monastic life and in both England and Germany in the fifteenth century the miracle and the mystery play became a popular and almost sacred institution. After a time the vices and devils represented in these plays became grotesque and they were forbidden. The occupants of the lower region and the devil had become the low comedians of the play and furnished the amusement for the audience. An Associated Press dispatch from San Antonio, Texas, at this Christmas time is interesting in the revelation it contains of the survival there of the mystery play in something like its original form.

The dispatch says: "All is in readiness in this city for the pastores—Bible plays in which the Mexican of the lower classes finds his special delight at Christmas. The pastores are a survival of the religious mystery plays of the middle age, and represent in tableaux recitations and hymns the birth of the Christ child. The parish priest usually picks the actors, and heretofore the play has been given at the Chapel of the Immaculate Heart, though in the early days San Fernando Cathedral was very often the scene of the play. "The play opens with the singing of 'In Bethlehem's Holy Manger,' a hymn interspersed with what to the casual observer looks like broad humor, but which to the simple Mexican has no such quality. Translated from the Spanish one of the verses reads:

"March on together joyfully, While the angels sing; or our Lord's nativity Hot tamales bring."

The finale of the play is very touching in its simplicity. The shepherds bid the Christ child farewell in a lullaby at once exquisite and tender. As the shepherds draw away from the manger they sing: "Hush-a-by, my little son, Hush-a-by, my little son, Softly slumber, little one. Night is dark and the winds blow cold."

During the play Satan and theimps of hell are introduced. To their tails firecrackers are attached, and when these are set afire the effects produced set the audience in uproarious laughter. Other parts

seen are: Mary and Joseph, the Archangel Michael, many other angels, Bartholomew, the sleepy shepherd and a score of others. Many of these are comic relief characters, but though the fun they provide is somewhat crude and savors of horseplay, nothing irreverent is intended. Formerly an old shoemaker was the impresario of the company giving the pastores."

For a long time the grotesque element lingered in the Passion Play. Satan appeared in the play and warned the people to pay no attention to the holy play, but to deride it and scoff as it that they all might come to him in hell.

Faust—immortalized by genius in music and poetry—was originally a mystery play that pictured the persecution of a soul that deliberately sold itself to Satan. All the levity has disappeared from the Passion Play.

Nearly three hundred years ago when Germany was devastated by the thirty years' war and the shadow of the plague hung darkly over the valleys and villages of the Bavarian Tyrol the people made a vow that if its ravages would cease, they would, once in ten years set forth the life, death and mediation of the Christ. And they have tried to be faithful to that solemn obligation. They live in its spirit, and the play is not a dramatic performance, but an act of worship.

To Daisenberger, who for nearly forty years was the faithful pastor at Oberammergau, we are indebted for much that in its modern survival is best in the Passion Play. By it he aimed to bring the living Christ once again to the sons of men. It is for us, he said to his people, to represent visibly and audibly a living repetition of what the Apostles preached, the most sacred truths of the Divine Teachers, the sublime example of the Lord, his suffering, death and victory.

Above the village on Mount Kofel the cross points upward to heaven, calling the villagers to that purity of life which the old pastor emphasized as the essential thing for all who would take part in the sacred representation of the Passion drama. The play is given on Sunday and Wednesday from May until the close of September. It commences at 8 o'clock in the morning and continues until 6 in the evening with two hours' intermission at noon.

This year will see a number of the men who took part in the play in 1900, either enacting their former parts or other ones. Anton Lang, who again assumes the character of Christ, his previous performance being in 1900. Jacob Rutz, who enacted the choir leader of that year, will have the same duty in 1910. Johann Zwink will play Judas for the third time, and Sebastian Bauer the part of Pilate for the second time. The prologue will be done by Anton Lechner; John the Baptist, by Albrecht Birling; Peter, by Andreas Lang; the Magdalene, by Maria Mayr, and Mary, by Attilie Zwink.

The Mayrs are one of the old families of Oberammergau and Joseph Mayr most wisely and appealingly portrayed in the role of Christus, the suffering Christ.

Another family which has gained only fame in the presentation of the play is the Langs. Three generations back Paul Lang played Herod, in 1860 and 1870. His grandson is Anton Lang, who will this year assume for the second time the part of Christus. He is a man of excellent gifts, both musical and literary—and of a deeply religious and peaceful nature. He is far removed from all that is vulgar and base. He is of the blonde, truly Christ-like type, such as Raphael so often painted, such as Overbeck, Stille and Fuhrich have created. The pure profile, the slightly curved nose, the small mouth remind those who see him of that figure of our Lord which is recognized by the church as being the only proper representation. He has grown up in the circle of a loving family, under the eyes of parents and grandparents, and has retained the native simplicity of childhood in his temperament. He is now 35 years old, has attended the school of Oberammergau, learned his father's trade, was a short time in Munich and Stuttgart and then returned to his home. He is an accomplished composer in both music and verse. We were guests at his home last July, and we found him a sincere, earnest man.

who daily toils at his trade of potter, but who in 1910 will be in the limelight of the world. He gave me this picture of himself and family, and his home life is a beautiful one.

About 700 people take part in the representation.

The theatre is situated near the railroad station in the northwest corner of the village. The classic model and idea is preserved to some extent in its construction. All of it, except the center, is uncovered, and the grand old mountains form a beautiful and natural background. They bring to mind the words of Holy Writ "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem", and when the thunder rolls and the lightnings flash (and this phenomena of nature is quite often the accompaniment of the Crucifixion scene on a Bavarian summer day) the effect is awe-inspiring and impressive.

The music is sweet and solemn and once heard will never be forgotten. The invocation is slow and solemn and its language is that of an appealing prayer. We quote from the opening chorus:

Eternal God, O hear thy children's prayer

Thou children like we pray with faltering tone

Those who to see sacrifice prepare Bow low in faith and worship at thy throne.

A poet who listened to it went away from Oberammergau and wrote: Ah, how that music lingers and again Returns the dying sweetness of the strain!

How clearly on my inner sense is borne

The fair fresh beauty of the summer's morn'

And cries of flocks afar, and mixed with these

The green delightful tumult of the trees,

The birds that o'er us from the upper day

Threw fitting shade and went their airy way,

The bright robed chorus and the silent throng

And that first burst and sanctity of song.

Seven parts or representations divide the drama, each one of which is preceded by a most impressive tableau. We append a few sentences from the garden scene:

Christ: "Now is the hour come over me, the hour of darkness; yet for this cause came I into the world. Father if it be possible, and all things are possible with Thee, let this cup pass from me. Yet, Father, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. Simon!"

Peter (as in a dream) "Ah, my Master!"

Christ: "Simon, thou sleepest canst thou not watch with me one hour? The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Yet if this cup pass not from me unless I drink it, Father, Thy will be done."

An angel appears.

Angel: "Son of man consecrated to the will of the Father let thy mind contemplate all the blessings which will flow from this conflict of thy soul. The Father has required it of Thee. Thou has freely offered Thyself."

Christ: "Yes, Holy Father, I pray not against thy providence, I will accomplish all, reconciliation, freedom, blessing. (To the three disciples) Now Sleep on and take your rest."

Peter: "Master, what is it?"

All three apostles: "Behold, we are ready."

Christ: "The hour is come. The Son of Man shall be delivered into the hands of sinners. Arise, let us go!"

Then follows the betrayal.

Judas: "Hail, Master!"

Christ: "Friend, wherefore art thou come? Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" (To the crowd): "Whom seek ye?"

Rabble: "Jesus of Nazareth."

Christ: "I am He."

In the crucifixion scene the gospel narrative is closely followed. We saw it in 1900 and it was intensely realistic, holding the great assembly in reverent silence and awe. We seem to see the wounds the nails are making, and we hear the strokes of the hammer. Out o'er the heads of the scolding multitude float the sorrowful words: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." The climax of the great tragedy comes in the pealing thunder over the heads of the startled throng who stand near the cross and then comes the entombment, the rolling away of the stone and Christ's glorious victory over death and the grave.

"Alleluja."

"He hath conquered, he victorious, He hath quelled the foeman's might;

Died, but found a life all glorious, Even in the grave's dark night.

Sing unto Him your joyous psalms, Wave before Him victors' palms,

Risen is the Lord of Life."

"Lord let the heavenly host unite, To hymn thy glory, wisdom, power, Worship, honour, kingdom, might, From evermore to evermore."

So the Passion Play ends. Quietly the people leave the theatre and the night shadows fall upon the hills and the peaceful valley.

But the memory of what the ear has heard and the eye looked upon will never fade and strangely constituted must be the man or woman whose privilege it is to witness a representation of the Oberammergau Passion Play who is not brought by it into closer communion with God.

Enter The Evening Times' Great European Trip Prize Contest

Two European Trips and many other valuable prizes are to be given away to the most popular young ladies in Raleigh and North Carolina. There will be two trips to Europe, with all expenses paid, two mahogany pianos, a \$400 suit of furniture, and two prizes to each one of the four districts.

The Largest and Best Contest Ever Offered by any Newspaper in this Section of the Country.

- THE FIRST GRAND CAPITAL PRIZE.**
A Trip to Europe For Two People—The first prize will be a trip for two people to Europe, with all expenses paid. These two trips will be awarded to the contestant in the entire contest who secures the largest number of votes. In other words the contestant securing the largest number of votes will have the privilege of taking a companion with her.
- THE SECOND GRAND CAPITAL PRIZE.**
A Beautiful \$400 Christmas Mahogany Upright Piano, purchased from and on display at Darnell & Thomas', will be awarded to the contestant securing the second largest number of votes.
- THE THIRD GRAND CAPITAL PRIZE.**
A \$400 Set of Furniture, purchased from Royall & Borden, not merely priced at \$400 but actually costing this amount. This Set of Furniture will be awarded to the contestant securing the third largest number of votes.
- THE FOURTH GRAND CAPITAL PRIZE.**
A Beautiful \$350 Farrand Mahogany Upright Piano purchased from the Weathers Furniture Company will be given to the contestant securing the fourth largest number of votes. This Piano will be on display at the store of Weathers Furniture Company during the contest.

PRIZES TO EACH ONE OF THE FOUR DISTRICTS.

After the Grand Capital Prizes have been awarded, the contestant in each one of the four districts having the largest number of votes will receive a Beautiful Diamond Ring, and the one having the next largest number, a King's Business College Scholarship, good for any one course.

NOMINATION PRIZE, \$10.00 IN GOLD.

The person who nominates the successful winner of the two trips to Europe will receive \$10.00 in gold. Any contestant can nominate herself.

CONDITIONS AND GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS.

Every lady over 15 years of age who can secure paid-in-advance subscriptions to The Evening Times is eligible to compete. The first thing to do is to enter your name as a candidate. Candidates may nominate themselves. Nominations will be received up to the last day of the contest.

After entering your name as a candidate or being nominated call, write or phone The Evening Times Contest Department and a receipt book for securing subscriptions will be given or sent you. Let all your friends know you are a contestant and request them to pay for The Evening Times and have the votes placed to your credit. No contestant will be permitted to transfer votes to another contestant.

No employe of The Evening Times or member of their immediate family can participate in the contest. Contestants should send in or bring in the subscriptions as soon as they are taken, as the party wishes the paper as soon as possible. The Great European Trip Prize Contest opened January 11 and runs about eight weeks.

Votes are allowed on all cash-in-advance subscriptions to The Times, whether old or new, but only 1/3 as many on old as new. See table as to votes allowed. Old subscriptions include all who were subscribing for The Times at the time the contest was announced. A request for ballots must be made at the time the subscription is paid. While it is necessary that a candidate compete in the district she resides in, it is not compulsory that subscriptions be secured within the district in which the contestant resides.

Anyone who desires to do so may vote in this popularity contest. Votes can be voted any time during the contest. Nominations should be endorsed by two responsible citizens of the town or county in which the candidate lives. Merchants or officials who can easily be reached are preferred.

Candidates must reside in the district or territory from which nominated. No candidates will be permitted to transfer votes from one to another under any circumstances. The right is reserved to withdraw the offer in any district where only one candidate is nominated or voted for.

All subscriptions must be sent direct to the Contest Manager, The Evening Times, Raleigh, N. C.

Paid-in-advance subscriptions will be delivered by carrier in Raleigh and by carrier if preferred in all towns where this service is established and all other towns by mail. Any question or controversy that may arise will be settled by the Contest Manager.

The Evening Times reserves the right to make any change or addition to the above conditions that may be deemed necessary in the interest of the contest. All candidates must agree to abide by the above conditions. For further information write to Contest Department, The Evening Times, Raleigh, N. C.

The Times Popular Voting Contest Nomination Blank.

While it is not necessary to send one of these blanks for each person who desires to compete, it would facilitate matters if each contestant would do so.

This blank counts as 1,000 votes when properly endorsed. Not more than one blank to be counted for any contestant.

I hereby nominate _____ Date _____
(Name of Candidate)

of _____ District No. _____
(Name of Town and State)

as a candidate in The Evening Times Popularity Contest

Nominated by _____
(Name of Sender) (Occupation or Profession)

Countersigned by _____
(Name) (Occupation or Profession)

DIVISION OF THE TERRITORY.

- District No. 1—Raleigh and Wake County.
- District No. 2—Counties of Franklin, Nash, Edgecombe, Warren, Vance, Greene.
- District No. 3—Counties of Durham, Person, Orange, Alamance, Guilford, Rockingham, Chatham, Moore, Randolph, Richmond, Montgomery.
- District No. 4—Counties of Johnson, Harnet, Wilson, Wayne, Lenoir, Craven, Cumberland, Robeson, and all other counties not named in other districts.

Address all communications to the

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