

Koulu toverit 12/25/1937

Maynard, Mass. A late mention of the Christmas program

We have waited for those in charge to mention the children's Christmas program which took place at the Taisto Hall on Christmas evening, but since we have not seen any mention of it, then as a reward to the children and teachers for their work, I will describe the event.

Let me first say that every seat in the hall was filled with children and their parents. The youngsters presented the program and the adults enjoyed their exceptional performances. Every number on the program was well rehearsed and the presentations were heartfelt and free as only children can be, without airs and current fads.

The program was as follows: piano introduction by Roy Helander; an opening speech (which we will print out at the end of this article) was given by the mistress of ceremonies, Irma Koivu, with art and ability, that being rare in a child of her age. Poems by Isabella Koski, Janet Klemola, Evelyn Walsh and Vivian Helander; singing by the children; poems by Bobby Ojalehto and Thelma Bourne; singing by Helmi Paakki and Irma Koivu; poems by Joe Walsh, Mildred Maki and Viola Kallio; dancing by the children and a poem by Roy Helander. This was followed by a two act play "Koulu Toverit" (The School Chums) by the youngsters and some of the children. The play was beautifully done, leaving a feeling among the adults that this interest among the youngsters should be developed so that they could take roles in plays, thus providing a firm group to continue the cultural work that their parents have begun. We offer our thanks to the children and the teachers on behalf of the audience and the parents for the substantial program they had arranged for Christmas evening.

#### THE WORDS OF WELCOME BY IRMA KOIVU

On behalf of the children I wish to welcome you all to our Christmas program this evening. I especially want to tell the children how happy they should be when they have a home and parents who care for them. We are not too young to understand that on Christmas, 1937 which we celebrate in peace, there are millions of children, their homes destroyed by wars. Large crowds of them wander about as war refugees in foreign lands without parents in strange environments. It is said that the future belongs to the children. Yet our future can be dark if we have not received at home the teaching that as children of the laboring class we must learn how to understand the paths of life, so that we can be prepared to work for a society that would choose total peace for all people and all nations. Only then the children of that future time can celebrate Christmas as a festival of peace. I wish you all a happy new year and thank you for having come to join us.

"KOULU TOVERIT" (THE SCHOOL CHUMS) a two act comedy by Fanny Ojanperä

Presented at Christmas party on December 25, 1937 and again on March 6, 1938

Cast included:

EVELYN SAARI, HELEN NYMAN, AILI NIEMI, IRMA KOIVU, VIOLA KALLIO, MAMIE HEIKKINEN, HELMI PAAKKI, EVERETT SAARI, HAROLD SIMILA, ROY HELANDER, LESLIE RIVERS, WALTER LUOMA AND KAARLO FILPPU.

DIRECTED BY IMPI RIVERS, STAGING BY REINO NIEMI, MUSIC BY OSCAR TOFFERI

{TRANSLATED BY ROY HELANDER, MAY, 2021}