

Marian Anderson Tells Audience:

# Artist, Parents Have Responsibility

"We have an opportunity tonight which would be envied by people all over the world, to see and hear a person who has attained and earned world-wide renown."

Those words were part of the introduction given by Governor Harold LeVander in presenting Marian Anderson to her audience in the auditorium of the Little Falls Junior High School Sunday evening.

"In addition to bringing joy and inspiration to more than seven million persons who have heard her sing," the governor continued, "now after her retirement she has brought inspiration and understanding through service to the United Nations, and is now promoting better understanding between

... races and between nations."

He expressed his thanks and that of the others present to Laura Jane Musser for bringing Miss Anderson to Little Falls, and his own personal appreciation because he "had never introduced anyone with such a worldwide reputation."

A standing ovation was given to Miss Anderson as she came to the stage, and she in turn thanked the governor, Mayor Kenneth Flolid and Principal Dean Urness, who had also given introductory speeches, and gave a special word for her "very dear friend," Miss Musser.

Although the announced subject of Miss Anderson's talk was "The Artist's Responsibility to Society," it might well have been re-phrased to include the responsibility of the family.

She began by telling of her early childhood, and her mother, who "lived religion." She had known love, she said, before she could spell the word, and as her first opportunities to sing came with the church choir she learned that "if you give love, you get it in return." She made affectionate reference to her first voice teacher, Mary S. Patterson, whose usual charge for lessons was set aside when she knew that the singer's family could not easily pay for them.

Touching only lightly on the years after being told that "We believe you to be an artist," Miss Anderson described her feeling on her first trip to Europe. She realized the great interest people abroad felt in America, and how important it was for her to do all possible to promote understanding. That, she said, was one of the responsibilities of the artist to society.

The need for understanding is evident, said Miss Anderson, in the relationship between generations. She recalled attending ceremonies at a college which had awarded her an honorary degree, and hearing a talk by the valedictorian, who made the statement that the gap between the young and their elders is such that it is impossible to get together.

Obviously disagreeing with that remark, Miss Anderson said it need not be impossible, if parents are willing to expend energy to keep the barrier from forming. "There is no need," she said, "that the life you have brought into the world should be moulded by others more energetic than you." Toleration for loud radio music, knowledge of popular musical groups and recordings, familiarity with the events and beliefs which interest young people, are areas through which understanding can be built.

Miss Anderson said that she had been taught, early in life that "a supreme being is one to whom we can go when all else fails. We have seen miracles wrought because he is all wise, all knowing, and compassionate."

A depth of feeling for her country was expressed also when she said, "There is so much to love in America—it hurts when anyone puts a blot on it. If we can hope to keep it as clean and as glorious as it can be, it is our responsibility to do our part in that direction." No one, said the speaker, is more important than the parent who raises the future American, and a great deal can be taught in the very early years, when it will be accepted without rebellion.

"Somewhere, somehow," declared the famed singer, "I know that within the breast of everyone there is a heart—and

the heart has no color, no race. . . I believe we have one thing in common—love for the best there is for this great land."

A bouquet of roses was presented to Miss Anderson, as she received another standing ovation at the close of her address.

Miss Musser, who was Miss Anderson's hostess during her stay in the city, entertained after the program, at a reception in the Pine Edge Inn, where many were given the opportuni-

ty to meet and talk with Miss Anderson. In addition to Governor and Mrs. LeVander, there were a number of distinguished visitors from the Twin Cities, Brainerd, and other nearby areas.

Miss Anderson, a gracious and friendly person, willingly gave autographs and posed for photographs. She exhibited the warmth and depth of character which has endeared her to countless communities.