

# Froman

## Hats off to producers

STAR OF A magnificently staged show for which hats are off to Producer James Hatcher and his staff, Miss Froman shared the spotlight with a glittering array of Alabama talent.

The Birmingham Symphony played a program of light classical music and selections from Broadway shows, and accompanied the singers and the parade of lovely models as they displayed smart Spring and Summer fashions. Conductor Lipkin and the orchestra were in fine form.

A hit of the evening was the colorful "Miss Alabama Parade" that opened the show. Wearing Old South pastel frocks and carrying parasols, Gwen Harmon, Miss Alabama 1952, Virginia McDavid, Miss Alabama 1953; Patricia Huddleston, the reigning Miss Alabama, and her alternate Peggy Taylor Bailey, made a charming picture as they paraded down the long runway, with Baritone Andrew Gainey singing "Dixie" with the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

Sterling Brewer did an excellent job as emcee and kept the show moving at a fast pace throughout the evening. He did the fashion commentary as well as the introduction to the stars and production numbers.

## All join voices

GWEN HARMON'S lovely soprano voice was heard later in "In the Still of the Night." She won a big hand. Then she sang again with the entire cast, including Miss Froman and Patricia Huddleston, in the finale. Miss Huddleston, who will sing with the orchestra in March, did no solo work, but was heard with Miss Froman and company in the colorful closing numbers. As "hostess" of the evening, the reigning Miss Alabama paid tribute to Conductor Lipkin and the Birmingham Symphony.

Mr. Gainey's fine baritone won

warm applause when he closed the first half of the program singing "Soliloquy" and "You'll Never Walk Alone" from "Carousel." Acting as singing-narrator, he took a dramatic spotlight in the telling of the "History of Cotton," a beautifully-staged "production" story of cotton from the day Alexander the Great discovered the "cotton wood tree" in India to the present day in America. Live "dolls" paraded cotton fashions with the influence of the various periods, and Lola Mae Jones and Tabby Culberson dance a colorful tango in the Spanish sequence.

Climaxing the 1956 Symphony in Fashions, Miss Froman, the Miss Alabama girls, Mr. Gainey, and the entire company, with lovely models, each wearing the piece de resistance of the various stores that sponsor the benefit show, came to the long runway singing the theme song of the event, "I'll See You Again."

## Surprise presentation

THE EVENING developed a surprise that won hearty applause from the big audience. Mayor Jimmy Morgan presented Mrs. David Roberts III, chairman of the Festival of Arts with a handsome silver bowl.

"THE EVENING," he pointed out, was "an appropriate one for the award, since it climaxed the greatest of all of our Festivals." The award was given, he said, "in recognition and deep appreciation of Mrs. Roberts' magnificent accomplishments in making the 1956 Festival the most outstanding in the nation, in drawing the eyes of the world of the arts on our industrial city, in setting a pattern for the rest of the country to follow, and for her tireless devotion to Birmingham and all that makes it a better place to live."