



A Lyrical Interlude in the life of a great Scientist.

THE two hundred, and more of us, who sat in our best clothes (perhaps I should be speaking only of myself) in the ballroom of Mr. Adolph Lewisohn's residence recently and heard the world's greatest scientist tickle the strings of his fiddle to the music of Bach, Beethoven and Mozart, were delightful not only in the performance, but in the inefficaciously naive delight of the performer.

It wasn't only Albert Einstein who played. There were others, quite a number of others, and some of them virtuosi of the first water. There was Toscha Seidel, who counts his admirers by the thousands and who was content to play second fiddle for a night to Einstein. There was Harriet Cohen, pianist, who had performed the night before in Carnegie Hall; and then there was Leon Barzin, orchestra conductor, who worked at the humble viola, while Ossip Giskin was the 'cellist. In addition, there was, for the first number, the Bach Concerto No. 3 for two violins, a string orchestra of ten pieces which Emil Hilb conducted.

But all eyes were on Einstein, and ears seemed to be attuned only to his solo passages. Even when his instrument was heard with one or more others, the ear tended instinctively to extract from the musical design only the passages struck by him and to savour them for themselves—as notes of music having a particular meaning because they were brought into sound by him. And the eye caught his smiles of pleasure at certain passages, in the Bach and Mozart pieces especially, and the ear suspected chuckles of delight even when there were none, for there were times when he looked as if he might be chuckling. Those who sat in the first row made perhaps a more accurate count of chuckles.

THE other performers sensed the emotional value of the concert and sought by no device to take glance away from the concentrated gaze at the haloed, tousled head. Once or twice, I believe, Emil Hilb, in conducting the first number, caught himself giving the cue to Einstein as well as to members of the string orchestra playing with the quartet, but remembered that Einstein needed no cue, that even if he came in a note late—and there was no player more vigilant of the demands of the

Einstein's Musical Debut

By Harry Salpeter

We have received from an American correspondent the following delightful impression of Albert Einstein's performance in an orchestral concert held recently in New York in support of the Fund for the relief of German Refugees. The article is interesting as casting a light upon a little-known aspect of the great scientist's character.

score, vigilant without being keyed up—there would not be the slightest detraction from the beauty and the value of the performance. At the end of the first movement of the Bach Concerto, however, Einstein relaxed a bit to smile his delight to friends who were smiling at him, and to express his pleasure at the music, but seeing that the other performers were ready and that Mr. Hilb was all but raising his arms to start the second movement, he pulled himself into an attentive posture, ready to do his share.

So notable a virtuoso of the violin as Toscha Seidel might have been forgiven had he made a more flourishing descent upon the strings than he did, or squeezing from a run of notes all its exhibitionist opportunities, but he bore in mind not only that he was playing quartet with Albert Einstein as first violin. Concert virtuosis do not always play well in the harness of a quartet, but Mr. Seidel had no difficulty in curbing himself, and I believe—from the expression that sometimes I observed flit across his face—that he was deriving a pleasure in the occasion, beyond the joy in the gift of the music itself. Needless to say, there was delighted applause, and when Einstein trooped in, at the beginning, with violin tucked under his arm, there was an immediate response on the part of both auditors and collaborating performers; all rose, while Einstein bowed and smiled his thanks and recognition of the ovation.

Curiously enough, the only solo performance of the evening was given by Miss Cohen, who played two of Bach's choral preludes and, as an encore two additional Bach pieces. Perhaps nothing better illustrates the friendly informality of the occasion than Miss Cohen's saying, just before she played the encores, that she would play them provided she could remember them, and then bowing her head in a kind of concentrated inner gaze. Her memory, needless to say, served admirably.

NOW, without reflection on Miss Cohen's performance as soloist, there was the hope that Einstein would play a solo, and he had promised newspapermen he would do a Schubert Sonata. No solo was announced on the printed programme, and when the last notes of the Mozart quartet had been heard the audience rose, applauding and preparing to go. Einstein was standing with his fiddle under his arm. Mr. Morgenthau begged the standers to be seated, as Professor Einstein was going

to play a solo. I overheard the phrase Schubert Sonata and was ready for a treat, but the audience was for the most part pressing forward to shake Einstein by the hand, and by the time any showed an inclination to sit down and hear some more music, the violin had been taken from Einstein and there was no Schubert Sonata that night. He had practiced for three hours before the concert and had played in the first number standing.

Professor Einstein's scientific achievements belong to the world, but his violin playing is his private affair, his private relaxation. If he chooses to play the violin, for the benefit of friends in distress in Germany, his playing remains a private affair which need not concern the music critics who pass comments upon the performance of professionals. Furthermore, I have no particular standing as a critic, and do not choose to make any further answer to the question, "But how did he play?" than to say this: that he played competently and easily and correctly, without pretentiousness, without a single flourish. He played with pleasure, with a pleasure no less distinct than that which his playing gave. He played as a delighted amateur. By his playing, by his mere appearance, he fixed himself more deeply in the affection of those who were acquainted with him and created a fresh set of admirers. He radiated the simplicity and grandeur of greatness.

A CLASSIC OF THE SCREEN.

FEW films that have been exhibited in Johannesburg recently have drawn such crowded houses as "The Road to Life," which is now nearing the conclusion of its local presentation at the City Hall.

The film is, without question, a classic of the screen. It represents cinema art at its highest. The photography is superb, the story is vibrant with drama and purpose. The acting is brilliant throughout.

"The Road to Life" tells of the manner in which Russia reclaims her outcast children, the thieves and ragamuffin waifs of the streets. It presents the work in the form of a very human story centred on the lives of a few such children. The story has all the elements of good drama—pathos, comedy, tragedy, tenseness—and, skilfully unfolded through the genius of a great producer, it absorbs the attention of the audience, stamping upon their mind an indelible picture of commendable human striving.