

Musical Talent in Palestine

Special Interview for the "Zionist Record."

with

Jascha Heifetz



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THE arrival of Jascha Heifetz in South Africa is not only an important musical event, but is of special interest to the Jewish community. It is natural that we should feel a pride in the genius of one of the world's greatest violin executants. To-day Heifetz has reached the top of the ladder and the ascent has been made unassumingly by the sheer talent of his interpretations.

WORLD applause has not in any way interfered with the spiritual development of the great violinist. Not only has Heifetz never shown the slightest indication of a desertion of the race from which he has sprung, but as he matured to manhood, he demonstrated a fine pride in the accomplishments of his people. It will be remembered that in 1926 Jascha Heifetz visited Palestine and gave a number of concerts to thousands of Chalutzim. These recitals aroused the greatest enthusiasm in the Yishub.

ON his arrival in Capetown, on Monday, the great violinist granted an interview to a special representative of the *Zionist Record*. He expressed a deep interest in Zionist work in this country and began at once to talk about his visit to Palestine in the early part of this year.

"I may tell you," he said, "that since my previous visit in 1926, there has been much development in Palestine. I noted that the upbuilding work is steadily proceeding and that our people are in no way discouraged by all the events we read of in the newspapers. The energy of the youth and spirit of the country are wonderful.

"I was immensely surprised at the great change that has taken place during the few years in Tel Aviv. It is to-day a good sized city, with lots of buildings and many improvements. Tel Aviv has also grown immensely musically, and there is a fine interest displayed in all musical development."

ASKED to give some particulars of the Heifetz Fund—established in Palestine with the proceeds of his concerts in 1926—Mr. Heifetz said that the Fund was formed to foster musical development in Palestine by means of loans and scholarships to talented persons.

"I am pleased to say," he declared, "that the Fund to-day stands at £2,500 and there were seven scholar-

ships issued—three in Tel Aviv, two in Haifa and two in Jerusalem. I would appreciate if other Jews interested in this important work, would contribute to this Fund."

Mr. Heifetz was asked whether he was still as keenly in favour of the establishment of a Jewish Conservatoire of Music—a project he had advocated some years ago.

"No," he replied. "I am keener on providing talented students with an opportunity of studying. Whether they study in a room or conservatoire makes little difference. The establishment of a Conservatoire of Music means an enormous expenditure just for the building alone. Before we embark on such a scheme, the ground should be carefully prepared."

MR. HEIFETZ added that there was considerable musical talent in Palestine, and he had been impressed by a number of young people who had performed before him.

"As yet, however," he added, "I have seen no evidence of the development of a distinctive outstanding musical style. Of course, there has not yet been time since the beginning of the upbuilding work in Palestine, for such style to develop. I think, however, that our people in Palestine are striving towards this goal."

Our correspondent asked Mr. Heifetz whether he hoped to visit Palestine again, soon.

"I promised faithfully when I was there that I would come again," he replied, "and that I would not wait as long as six years this time. I hope when I visit the country again that times generally throughout the world will be more normal and that I shall be in a position to help the Fund further in a financial way, both from my own resources as well as contributions which I may be able to collect in America and elsewhere."

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