

OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

By Rozilda.

Shura Cherkassky.

A REAL BOY.

Shura Cherkassky, the young pianist who delighted audiences all over the country recently, is a real boy. There is nothing sophisticated or blasé about him. He has not been coached to say clever things. He is spontaneous and genuine, like any schoolboy one might meet with any day. Obviously his parents do not spoil him, nor do they pamper him and treat him as if he were something fragile and rare. He speaks English well, though with a slight accent, and is a trifle impulsive. He has a splendid sense of humour. The peculiar droop of his head which characterises his stage appearance disappears in private. It must be a sign of nervousness.

feel that the audience is with one. There is an under-current of sympathy."

Neither does appreciation depend upon the size of the audience. "In some little villages I played to a handful of people and yet I felt that they understood and appreciated my playing."

"Some of my experiences are, I believe, typical of this country. In one little dorp I called on the manager about an hour before the concert and inspected the piano.

"Your show starts at 8.15," he said, "but the people will arrive at 7.30. So I'm going to give them a little Harold Lloyd first!"



SHURA CHERKASSKY.

A Globe-Trotter.

"I love travelling," says Cherkassky. "I can never get enough of it, by boat or train. But I do not like an aeroplane. I have visited all the big cities of Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Ceylon and now South Africa. Last year we joined an American tourist party and visited Algiers. We stayed at a wonderful hotel in the heart of the desert. The place was an oasis, called Bou-Saada. Somehow it made me think of bible-stories."

Young Cherkassky is not at all impressed by the railway facilities in this country. He finds the trains "most unpleasant, because they are so dirty."

Audiences.

Cherkassky enjoyed his musical tour in South Africa very much. He liked the audiences in Cape Town and Johannesburg best. The Durban audiences he found colder. "It is not the clapping that makes one

Amusing Experiences.

At one place Cherkassky had to choose between walking through a crowded hall to get to the platform or climbing through a tiny window which opened on to the stage. He chose the latter! He climbed on to a paraffin box, squeezed through, and then made his bow!

One kind manager, actuated by the very best intentions, offered to dim the hall and play the limelight on him—mauve for soft music and red for loud! But Cherkassky preferred to play without such sympathetic treatment.

In another village there was not even a window to climb through. He had to creep on all fours through a dark cellar, and then look as if nothing unusual had happened!

At a certain dorp he had an experience which might have hurt his susceptibilities sorely had he not possessed a keen sense of humour. He was playing a very fast piece of music in which he had to cross one

hand over the other. Apparently such acrobatic feats were new to the audience. Thinking he was doing it on purpose to amuse them they burst into loud laughter. "He's making tricks!" was whispered on all sides. Needless to say, Cherkassky laughed with the rest.

Schubert and Liszt!

At East London he was told a story the truth of which was vouched for. A lady pianist called Theresa Carino and a partner were playing a Schubert-Liszt duet on two pianos.

Two members of the audience began very audibly to discuss the performance. Scrutinising the programme one remarked—

"Schubert-Liszt? But how can they play one piece on two pianos?" "Don't you see?" replied the other. "One's playing Schubert, the other Liszt!"

Child Prodigy.

Cherkassky is really a child prodigy. He first began playing when he was two years old. At the age of four he could play little melodies. By the time he was seven and a half he was studying music seriously with his mother, who is a very able pianist and teacher. Shortly after the family moved from Russia to America, and he continued his studies with Joseph Hoffman at Philadelphia.

"When I was very young I used to improvise often. I never do now. I am happy to study the compositions of the great masters." He has not got a favourite master. "It depends on the mood one is in as to what music one enjoys most. I like every composer.

"Bach is pure music, but it is not often that an audience occurs which appreciates a good deal of Bach.

Bach may be described as the mathematics of music."

"My mother's family is very musical, but my father plays nothing but chess!"

Given Up Girls.

Young Cherkassky had a round of gaieties in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Durban. Dances and parties were arranged in his honour every day. Nobody enjoyed them more than he did.

"Of course, you are very fond of girls?" I asked.

"Oh, no," he said decidedly. "I was, but not any more. I've given them up!"

At this stage somebody came in to discuss his forthcoming departure on the "Kenilworth Castle."

"I hope I shall have a cabin to myself," he said. "If they put another boy in with me I shall pretend that I am terribly temperamental. I shall soon be alone after that!" Which proves that he has all the capacity for mischief in him that the average boy possesses.

The London Symphony Orchestra.

Discussing his last concert with the orchestra, Cherkassky said: "The Cape Town Orchestra is very small but very good."

At the conclusion of this concert it was difficult to tell who was more pleased—Cherkassky with the Orchestra, or Mr. Pickerill with Cherkassky.

He and his parents left South Africa last week for Berlin, Vienna, Paris and Liepzig, a tour which they propose taking as a holiday.

In October he is due in London. He is booked to give twenty-five concerts with Lionel Powell and the London Symphony Orchestra, with whom he will tour all over the British Isles.

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