

The Moiseiwitsch Concerts.

THE FIRST IMPRESSION.

It seems a pity that the art of a Moiseiwitsch should be hampered by the rather doubtful need of playing hackneyed and popular programmes. I hold that an artist, by virtue of his art, can get anything over—that it is an artistic crime to employ such great gifts on such poor material.

Moiseiwitsch's two programmes contained but one major work each—in one case the "Appassionata" and in the other the "Carnival" of Schumann. Box office needs perhaps! But surely it is not trifles like those of Moskowsky, Palmgren and Chasins that attract the public.

The Liebestraume and the usual Chopin items frighten away as many people on the one side as they draw on the other. Players of such stature as Moiseiwitsch owe it to music, to themselves and to the public to give of their best, not only in their playing, but in their choice of work.

Leave the "Tannhauser," however magnificently arranged and performed, to musicians who can do nothing better. Let us hear the less familiar but no less beautiful Fantasie of Schumann, the Hammerclavier sonata, the Brahms Paganinni variations.

Of Moiseiwitsch's playing, The Carnival was so outstandingly beautiful as to dwarf everything else. Here was playing that placed Moiseiwitsch—playing that roused the listeners to a glow of enthusiasm. Its warm, lovely tone, beautifully controlled and shaded, and a restraint in the use of technical means that was not always evident in other items. Starting the "Preamble" with great breadth and dignity, Moiseiwitsch carried the audience away with him in all the lovely moods and whims of Schumann. There was so much beauty in his playing of this that one wanted to hold it. Truly unforgettable playing and a lovely experience. Wonderful playing, broad and noble in conception and near perfection in detail and as a whole.

Many other items revealed new beauties, but there was a general impression of occasional lack of clarity, due more often than not to a sacrifice of true values to sheer technical agility. The etudes of Chopin, particularly, lose all poetry and breadth when played as fast finger exercises, however breath taking the speed at which they are played.

Moiseiwitsch is a pianist who at his best performs as the composer would wish to hear his work done, but we do want to hear him in work worthy of him. Nevertheless, we must give thanks for playing, the quality of which is rarely heard in this country.

H.S.

A SECOND IMPRESSION.

Moiseiwitsch's second appearance on Sunday night at the City Hall, before a large and justifiably enthusiastic audience, confirmed the impression gained at his first concert, that this artist has tremendous technical resources at his command, combining as he does sheer digital proficiency with finely adjusted dynamic control. Those whispered pianissimos gave us little thrills of ecstasy; that lovely mellowness that slowly wormed its way into our hearts, in spite of our earnest longings for an occasional point to the tone for purposes of expressive effect, made us realise the strength of the theory "tone at all costs."

But in truth it must be admitted that virility was often sacrificed under this never-changing purity—an occasional roar would have done the heart good.

Schumann's "Carnival" was a revelation in interpretive beauty, and even though one or two of the cameos did not quite coincide with the accepted interpretation, they were always interesting and quite frequently revealed new beauties and a new point of view.

When subjecting the purely interpretive side of this fine artist's playing to searching analysis, one is forced to the conclusion that he is frequently on the verge of becoming sentimental—only his fine shading and technical sureness serve to throw the listener off his guard and forgive an occasional lapse.

Particularly in Chopin is this noticeable where phrases must be so finely balanced and counterbalanced to avoid the sentimental. Was there not also an occasional overlapping of one phrase with the ensuing one?

It was in one or two of the smaller pieces that one wished for the sheer steel fingers of a Cherkassky—in the Chasins "Rush Hour . . ." where clear-cut brilliance was needed to prevent cloudiness.

But, withal, what a fine thing for listeners of this so-long-neglected country to have at last the means of fixing their standards or corroborating their imagined estimate of great artists and great playing. And, healthiest sign of all, how enthusiastically the public is responding to the training these visits are giving us.

Artists from abroad need no longer have any fear of their reception here—we have at last developed that concert-going mentality and look forward eagerly to the arrival of the artists that Mr. Cherniavsky has promised us for the future.

I.K.

WHY I AM A JEW.

(Concluded from previous page.)

may have seen, touched or admired some of these things, in the very place, in the very time, in which they were made for use, for work, for the sorrows and the joys of man.

That door with the grey nails, between two portals, in the gilded frame, is the door of the Synagogue of Geneva through which my father entered to pray and there, that bridge of boats on the Rhine over which my grandfather in Huningen crossed the river. And his grandfather, where did he live? Perhaps while calculating the mystic numbers of the Kabala in his verities he saw across the pensive panes of his window the sleds glide over the snow of Germany or of Poland. And the grandfather of the grandfather of his grandfather? Perhaps he was that weigher of gold in the Ghetto of Amsterdam painted by Rembrandt.

One of my ancestors may have drunk from that wine-cup on returning home after listening to the teaching of his master Rashi in the School of Troyes in Champagne; one of my ancestors may have sat in that armchair studded with jade when a Sultan bade him feel his pulse; one of my ancestors may have looked upon a monk in his cowl as he carried this cross of Castile while leading him to the *auto de fe*; one of my ancestors may have seen his children crushed beneath the hoofs of the crusader's horse, who wore that armour.

These crowns of plumes, were they placed in the hands of another ancestor by an American savage? These African ivories, these silks of China, were they bought by another on the banks of the Congo or of the Amur, to be resold on the shore of the Ganges or on the Venetian Lagunes?

One of them tilled the plain of Sharon with that plough hardened through fire; one of them ascended to the Temple to offer his tithe in those woven baskets. When this marble Titus was in the flesh, one of my ancestors, chained to his chariot, followed him with bleeding feet in the triumph of the Forum. This bearded magi, with the fringed garment, between these two winged bulls with human profiles—one of my ancestors breathed in the dust of Babylon beneath their feet, this Pharaoh of porphyry, with his two hands on his two flat thighs—one of my ancestors bowed himself before his slightest breath, before girding his loins and taking his staff in hand to follow Moses across the Red Sea; and that idol of Samaria, with spherical eyes and triangular jaws, perhaps that was the idol that Abraham smashed when he left his home in Chaldea to follow the summons of his invisible God.

And I said to myself: from that far distant father to my very own father, all these fathers have transmitted a truth to me, which ran in their blood, which runs in my blood; and must I not transmit it with my blood to those of my blood?

Will you accept it, my child? Will you transmit it? Perhaps you will want to desert it. Then may it be for a greater truth if there be one. I could not then reproach you. It would be my fault, for I could not have handed it on to you as I received it. But whether you abandon it, or whether you treasure it, Israel marches on unto the end of days.

SOMETHING NEW IN S.A.

רוזעווער

ROZEVER BREAD

(Registered)

Rich in Vitamins.

Easily Digested. Railed to any part of South Africa.

MADE FROM THE FINEST RYE.

Sole Manufacturers:

Levy's Bakery,

12, Kimberley Road, Bertrams - JOHANNESBURG

Phone Jeppe 710 for a trial order.