

THE MAGIC OF MISCHA ELMAN

Famous Violin Virtuoso at the Empire Theatre

IN a world convulsed at repeated intervals by the passions of politics and the anxieties of the exchange question, it is not a little heartening to find that a couple of thousand people will disregard the mercury at freezing level to enjoy classical violin music. The need for antidotes might be at the bottom of the demonstration, in which respect we may find that music and master musicians might play a role in the pacification of the world that politicians and money changers have failed at.

And so on Sunday night Mischa Elman, the violinist, stepped on to the stage of the Empire Theatre, raised his bow and with the first stroke banished time, place and perplexity and took his hearers into those realms where banknotes count not and nationality ceases to exist. Evidently the world still loves to have its heart strings touched, and any ten fingers that can compound the miracle are perhaps worthier today than those which fashion the most intricate machinery.

Does it matter what Mischa Elman played—can any but his peers criticise him? A man such as he fulfills the great function of presenting the works of masters in such a manner that the highest of brows shall not wrinkle nor the lowest be raised in puzzlement. The technique that has been evolved by a combination of natural genius, years of labour, a profound understanding and a polish that defies description combine in achieving that thing called perfection, and so we pay tribute to a gift veritably donated by the Gods themselves.

Elman is a Jew, one of that band of instrumentalists who transcend race in their powers, but who never escape it in their interpretative capacity, or so we feel, and especially in the music of the violin. And whether or not he had in mind that more than a fair percentage of his listeners would be men and women of his own race, the fact remains that the entire programme of Sun-

day night was a musical reflection of the travail of the spirit.

The concert opened with the Sonata in E. Major by Handel, in which the famous German composer poured the freshness of the youth that blazed in him when he composed it. That great favourite with virtuosi the world over, the Kreutzer Sonata by Beethoven, followed it, and although one regretted the enthusiasm of the audience which insisted on giving the violinist an ovation after each movement, thus spoiling the effect of the whole, the feeling after the final note was one of great satisfaction. It is more than a century and a quarter ago since Beethoven himself sat down at the piano for the first performance of the work in Vienna, and the pride he must have then felt has called forth humility and appreciation in every pianist since. Vladimir Padwa who accompanied Mischa Elman throughout the evening, played accordingly.

After the interval, during which local violin enthusiasts nodded meaningfully and commented extravagantly, Elman gave us the ever attractive and colourful Symphonie Espagnole by Lalo, and then presented a string of musical gems that for the seeker after sensual satisfaction of the less profound will long remain an abiding memory. In particular the well-known aria on the G string by Bach was a thing of deep beauty, and a Nocturne by Chopin a dream of magic and ethereal charm. Not without reason has Mischa Elman been called a master of tonal quality.

There were of course encores. Johannesburgers are not niggardly in applause for more of what they like, and Elman rose to the occasion. He finally went off after three or four more extras among which was a classical interpretation of "Eli Eli," and sent many hundreds into the streets with an inward warmth that not even ice cold winds could diminish.

H.G.

"IN THEM OUR HOPES"

"The Story of Habonim in South Africa."

LAST Sunday night a private audience saw the preview of a film produced and photographed by a young South African, Mr. Leon Schauder. This was "In Them Our Hopes," the story of Habonim in South Africa. The eighteen-year-old producer has made a film that does him indeed great credit. There was continuity, atmosphere and story, and never a dull moment in all the three thousand seven hundred feet of film. Clever photography, beautiful scenes, experienced editing and smoothness in production all went to make it an unqualified success.

Colour shots of the Victoria Falls from the air, a riot of colour portraying the Coronation floats in Johannesburg and spectacular cameos of the Golden City are the highlights of the production.

The story is simple, but delightfully told. The state of modern Jewish youth in Johannesburg before the Habonim movement began, and its Jewish revival under the influence of Habonim. Jules Browde portrayed the youth. He gave a true picture of the pleasure-seeking tendency of the boy of his day, happy-go-lucky, careless and carefree, uninterested in Jewishness and lazy.

From here Leon Schauder handles the simple plot with rare skill, breaking away from the stereotyped with symbolic scenes that make even the common-place interesting. The boy joins the Habonim movement, and from then onward his whole outlook on life is changed. He develops a Jewish consciousness that makes him proud of his race. Here the influence of the Habonim on Jewish youth in this country is stressed, without a jarring note. Scenes of the inner working of the movement are shown at Capetown, Port Elizabeth, Bulawayo, Salisbury and Johannesburg, each a stronghold of the movement. Culture and sport, physical and mental training, the dignity conferred by Zionism, and all the aims of the movement were pleasingly translated to the screen. Mavis Bloch, as the sister of the boy, was a typical modern girl following her brother's footsteps. Her acting was good.

The film ends with a fade out of the two children on the right road of life, ready to be good Jews and good citizens.

The production is not flawless; there are defects, but these do not take away from the achievement. Moreover, they are well compensated by unique shots which are alone worth going to see. When this picture is generally released, the public will be full of praise for its young producer.

J.M.B.

FINE WORK FOR ORPHANAGE

Benoni Branch's Activities

THE Benoni branch of the S.A. Jewish Orphanage held its 13th annual meeting recently. The chairman, Mr. H. Phillips, gave a comprehensive report of the year's work and thanked the committee for their excellent support.

In moving the adoption of the accounts, the chairman commented on the favourable increase of subscriptions. During the year £577 7s. 3d. was raised in the way of subscriptions, High Festival offerings and donations.

The following were elected as office bearers for current year:— Chairman, H. Phillips; treasurer, Chas. Feinstein; hon. secretary, Miss E. Peltz.

Committee: Mesdames H. Phillips, C. Feinstein, I. Cohen, J. J. Fine, H. Druian, Misses R. Peltz, V. Shames, C. Sakalovsky and Messrs. I. Cohen, A. Jacobson, B. Legator, S. Legator, J. J. Fine and A. Schneier.

There are at present 345 subscribers of the Benoni branch, this being the largest number outside of Johannesburg. Mr. H. Phillips, who occupies the chair for the thirteenth consecutive year, is chiefly responsible for the success of this branch. An indication of the progress that the branch has made can be seen by comparing the £280 raised during 1925 to £577 raised this year. During the period 1925-37, over £6,000 has been sent to the Orphanage.

Ort Oze Mass Meeting

On Sunday evening, the 11th inst., at 8 p.m. at the Alhambra Theatre, Doornfontein, a mass meeting of Jewish youth will take place under the auspices of the local branch of the Ort-Oze. Parents are being invited to join the young people at the meeting when some of the aspects of the problems of Jewish youth in South Africa will be submitted.

Mr. Israel Cooper will be in the chair and the speakers will be Rabbi I. Kossowsky, Dr. H. Sonnabend and Messrs. M. Schur, R. Feldman and G. Weinstock.

"CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS" AT THE METRO.

Kipling's famous tale of fishermen and their adventures is the current attraction at the Metro theatre. The film version of "Captains Courageous" is a brilliant piece of work and Freddie Bartholomew takes the part of a rich man's son who is rescued in mid-Atlantic by a Portuguese seaman, Spencer Tracy. Others in the cast include Lionel Barrymore and Melvyn Douglas, who both give excellent portrayals. The supporting programme is good.



TEA TIME

When In Town

Come to the Popular Cafe for your Morning or Afternoon Tea or Coffee. Restful surroundings. Courteous and Prompt Service.

TEA,
COFFEE,
COLD
DRINKS,
ICES
ALL DAY
LONG

Smartly
Served

PHILLIP'S CAFE

THE RENDEZVOUS FOR BUSY SHOPPERS AND BUSY BUSINESS MEN

CARLTON BRANCH — OPEN TILL 2 A.M.
RISSIK STREET BRANCH — OPEN TILL 3 A.M.
LIBRARY BRANCH — OPEN TILL 2 A.M.

WULFFAHT'S MATRIMONIAL AGENCY

Mr. Wulffahrt announces that he has moved from Beckett's Buildings to his own house

CONFIDENTIAL INTRODUCTIONS ARRANGED
Highest Integrity Assured.

6, WEBB STREET, Cor. HARROW ROAD,
(Opposite Nazareth Home), Yeoville

'Phones: Yeo. 2551-2.

P.O. Box 3845.