

A DISTINGUISHED LADY PIANIST

Shaw and Einstein are Her Intimate Friends

By
Charles M. Grake

RECURRING news of Harriet Cohen has filtered to South Africa, especially amongst music lovers. Harriet Cohen is to-day one of the leading women pianists not only in Great Britain, but in the world.

IT is not surprising to learn that Miss Cohen grew up in a musical environment. Her mother was a pianist of considerable note, a pupil of Tobias Matthay with whom the daughter began her early lessons, and her father's name has long been identified with musical editing in England. At the age of twelve Miss Cohen won the Ada Lewis Scholarship admitting her to the Royal Academy and the following year made her first public appearance in Queen's Hall. Although the success of this debut led many to expect the announcement of an extended tour by the remarkable child, her parents discouraged the idea and she pursued her studies, appearing only occasionally in public during the next two years.

Sir Henry Wood was one who took an early interest in the girl and presented her with his orchestra in Queen's Hall on numerous occasions. For the first of his Bach concerts, given in 1926, he selected her and the impression she created at that time automatically stamped her as particularly in the spirit of Bach, although paradoxically enough she is and has been for several years a forefront crusader in the performance of modern works, notably those of Arnold Bax. In fact it was Bax who announced when Miss Cohen was but fifteen: "This girl must play my works." And ever since, each of his appearing piano compositions has had its first hearing at her hands.



Harriet Cohen is known throughout the European Continent for her consummate artistry as an interpreter of the classics. This is enhanced by her keen absorption of intellectual currents. She is a protagonist of British music.

"What the modern English composers who write for the piano would do without Harriet Cohen is difficult to imagine," according to a recent London article. John Ireland, Eugene Goossens, Arthur Bliss, Frank Bridge have all dedicated music to her, and just lately Dr. Vaughan Williams turned his hand to a piano piece especially for her repertoire.

WHAT the continent knows of British piano music is largely due to her programmes. At the Salzburg International Festival of Contemporary Music held in 1924 she was the first English pianist invited to appear, and with the viola virtuoso, Lionel Terri's scored what was recorded as "altogether a great triumph for British music."

There seems to be no division of opinion about her musical individuality and the brilliant many-sided mind that lies back of it. Even a passing glance through critical reviews from Holland, Germany, France, Spain and Italy is able to convey the vivid impression that he has created in these countries. Practically every important symphonic organisation in Europe has supplied the background for her concerts and needless to say her outright recital appearances have been many. And side by side with her music runs a kinship with the other arts and an attraction for writers and painters. It is said that her home in London is a meeting place for all the shining names, literary and artistic, and that her library is stocked with autographed first editions of countless volumes any one of which would fill the average mortal with pride.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW, and Professor Einstein are actually her cronies. Few people know that the great physicist is also an excellent violinist. His favourite composers are Bach and Mozart. When Harriet Cohen was last in the German capital, she spent a long and tranquil afternoon with the great scientist, playing works by these composers.

George Bernard Shaw may be frequently seen at the London recitals of Harriet Cohen. He regards her as the finest woman pianist living; indeed he once publicly declared: "There is only one Harriet." He has been urging her to become a conductor, convinced that she has superb qualifications. At the Shaw festival, at Malvern last year, Harriet and G. B. S. were seen walking arm-in-arm under the trees between the acts of his play Heartbreak House; they were discussing Shaw's love of and kinship to Mozart.

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Mosaics of Ancient Synagogue in Esdraelon.

HEBREW UNIVERSITY PUBLICATION ON SIXTH CENTURY SYNAGOGUE.

(From a Palestine Correspondent.)

ABOUT three years ago a number of Jewish workmen digging an irrigation canal at Beth-Alpha, the large communal settlement at the foot of Mount Giboa, in the Valley of Esdraelon, came across a narrow strip of multicoloured mosaic pavement showing Zodial signs and Hebrew inscriptions. The Hebrew University Press, Jerusalem, is publishing the results of the subsequent excavations conducted by Dr. E. L. Sukenik, Archaeologist to the University. The volume is written by Dr. Sukenik, and is named "The Ancient Synagogue at Beth-Alpha."

The synagogue dates back to the sixth century C.E. and is the first to be found with such perfect mosaic pavements. They had been excellently preserved under the debris of fourteen hundred years. Fragments of coloured mosaic pavements had previously been found in other places in Palestine. Near Jericho, for example, one such floor was found, but it was not intact and the designs were mutilated. The Esdraelon colonies, however, were the first to be unearthed in a whole condition, unspoiled by the ravages of Nature or the conflicts of man, especially those that occurred in that stormy period marking the end of the Byzantine period and the inception of the Arab conquest of Palestine.

Beautiful Colouring.

THE principal designs are in the central hall of the synagogue. This area is divided into three sec-

tions, which show in brilliant and beautiful hues a group of synagogue utensils, the Zodial signs, and the sacrifice of Isaac. A series of reproductions of human beings, animals, trees, flowers and carpets, are contained in the framework around these sections and other parts of the pavement.

The great importance of the finds is enhanced by two inscriptions, one in Greek and the other in Aramais, telling of the skilled craftsmen who laid the mosaics and the period in which they were made. The discovery of this first dated synagogue sheds light not only upon the existence of Beth-Alpha, but also upon other epochal events upon which opinion of historians had not been unanimous.

The rich and diverse material revealed in the course of the studies has enabled Dr. Sukenik, Hebrew University archaeologist and a leading authority on old Jewish synagogues of Palestine, to determine a second period in the development of ancient houses-of-worship in the country, and also to clear up a number of problems connected with popular Jewish art at that time.

Handsome Volume.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS, students of ancient art and religion, historians and others interested in Holy Land antiquities will find "The Ancient Synagogue of Beth-Alpha" of considerable value.

The book is being published in folio size, and is accompanied by twenty-eight full-page illustrations. Of these six are coloured plates, seventeen are in colourtype, and five are diagrams and plans. There are, in addition, about another sixty drawings and illustrations on full pages and in the text.

pole, Hofmansthal, Stephens, Lloyd George, and Ramsay MacDonald.

The distinguished British pianist gave her first recital in Paris, with Joseph Szigeti, widely known violinist. Among the foremost artists of the keyboard the late Busoni—in unison with many leading critics—hailed Harriet Cohen as the one feminine pianist posses-

Jewish Ex-Soldiers to March to Cenotaph

GREAT PARADE IN LONDON ON ARMISTICE SUNDAY.

The Sunday Times (Johannesburg) correspondent cabled from London last Saturday:—

The Kol Nidrei will be played on the Horse Guards Parade by the band of the Scots Guards on Armistice Sunday, November 6, when between three and four thousand Jewish ex-service men will muster there for a great Service of Remembrance conducted by the Chief Rabbi, Dr. Hertz, senior Jewish Chaplain to the Forces.

The Rev. Mr. Gollop will recite the Kaddish, or Mourning Prayer, and after the Last Post the men will march to the Cenotaph, where a wreath will be laid by two Jewish V.C.'s, Lieutenant Leonard Keys and Private Jack White.

Earthquake in Greece

SYNAGOGUE PRAYERS FOR CESSATION.

Salonica, October 10th.

SPECIAL prayers for the victims of the recent earthquake disaster in the Chalcidice Peninsula, where fresh shocks continued yesterday and today, were recited on Yom Kippur in all the synagogues of Greece, as well as that the earthquakes should cease.

Special appeals to recite such prayers were issued to all Jewish congregations by the Chief Rabbi, Haim Raphael Habib. There was some fear of earthquake also in Salonica where a few buildings were damaged, but no serious loss has occurred and there are no victims here.

The Salonica press, including the Jewish papers, have opened subscription lists for the victims of the earthquake disaster at Chalcidici. The Hirsch Jewish Hospital here has placed ten beds at the disposal of the authorities for the injured. The President of the Jewish Community of Salonica, M. Elie Benusiglio, has been invited to attend a meeting called by the Governor-General to devise relief measures. The Jewish scout organisations, Macabi and Hakoah, have decided to join in any action on behalf of the sufferers that will be taken by the Greek scouts organisations.

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Harriet Cohen's cultural absorptions may be glimpsed from the fact that her library contains autographed first editions of works by the foremost contemporary thinkers including Shaw, Bennett, Wal-

sing "an innate sense of beauty, perfect technique, remarkable architectural powers, and extraordinary delicacy of feeling."

The music room in the home of Harriet Cohen has become one of the most famous salons in London. Not only noted musicians meet there, but authors, statesmen, painters, scientists, etc.