

**Joseph Plaut Concert**

**A NOVEL PERFORMANCE**

IT was a novel experience for a Johannesburg audience to see, at the Colosseum Theatre last Sunday night, dramatic fare usually performed by several people, condensed into the repertoire of one man. The occasion was the first Johannesburg concert of Joseph Plaut, the German-Jewish artist who has recently arrived in South Africa, and has already had a couple of successful concerts in Capetown.

Mr. Plaut's talents are varied. He is an impersonator, a story teller, a humorist, and an operatic artist; but it is as a character caricaturist that he makes the strongest impression. That is to say, he does not simply present different people or different scenes; he searches out their human weaknesses, their vanities and illusion, and plays upon them. In this he differs widely from Ruth Draper, to whom some reviewer has compared him. The essence of Ruth Draper's art was the re-creation of character. The essence of Joseph Plaut's is burlesque.

He was probably at his best on Sunday night in his burlesque on "Tannhauser," and an "Oratorio in a Provincial Town," in which, with delightful sarcasm, he painted vividly the foibles of the various performers taking part in the opera and the oratorio. Here, with an amazing corresponding modulation of voice, he burlesqued tenors, sopranos, altos and baritones, and did them all very well.

In the rest of the programme he revealed a different talent in little character sketches, ranging from people on a tram to crows in a tree. Among the best in this group were "Bohmann's Dog," "The Pear Tree" and "Old Soldiers." He also impersonated various Central European types, among which the delightful little sketch of Bavarian peasants engaged in the pastime of yodelling was particularly pleasing.

In another item, "Music Hall Memories," Mr. Plaut gave a good performance impersonating an impersonator who impersonated Napoleon, Frederick the Great and Goethe, though it cannot be said that his memories of "The Programme Girl" and "The Clown" were up to the same standard.

Another delightful item was Mr. Plaut's impression of an incident in Max Reinhardt's "Salome."

Mr. Plaut gave his performance entirely in German, except for explanations in English, and it was rather a pity that this fact was not mentioned prior to the performance, for a number of people came thinking he would perform in English and were consequently disappointed at not being able to follow him.

Mr. Heinz Hirschland, at the piano, gave a pleasing rendering of items by Schubert, Chopin, and Mussorgsky, and accompanied Mr. Plaut during his operatic burlesques.

E.-B.

**"IS A CHILD A PERSON?"**

Interesting Addresses by Miss Van Gelderen and Miss Purwitzky.

THE visit of Miss Roza Van Gelderen and Miss Hilda Purwitzky to Johannesburg is of considerable interest to those who are interested in the bringing up of children. The former is the principal of the Central Girls' School in Cape Town and the latter is in charge of the English Department at the school.

The two ladies are practical educationists whose approach to an old subject is arousing considerable interest in educational circles throughout South Africa and also overseas.

Their present visit synchronises with an exhibition of children's drawings shown at Leon Levson's studios. Many of the children have never been troubled by art lessons of any kind and the productions are of startling interest. It seems impossible that these paintings and drawings were done by children of their own volition without any guidance except that of happy encouragement.

On Wednesday evening, Miss Van Gelderen and Miss Purwitzky lectured at the New Library hall on "Is a Child a Person?" From these addresses, one got a closer view of the unique ideas of a system of schooling which does away with homework and allows the children practically to choose subjects which chiefly interest them. Some of the extracts from essays by the children proved delightful and also demonstrated how frank and unabashed a child can be in writing English, when it is not troubled by the ordinary rules of direction.

It is a pity that Miss Van Gelderen and Miss Purwitzky can only make occasional short visits to Johannesburg. Further addresses by them would undoubtedly prove of great advantage in improving the present educational system in the Transvaal.

D.

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**A.B.C. Orchestra**

Last Tuesday's concert of the A.B.C. Symphony Orchestra was devoted to chamber music, which included the famous Bach double concerto for two violins and orchestra. These were played by Jerry Shulman and Bram Verhoef. Both these excellent musicians possess fine styles and they gave a delightful rendering of the composition. During Mr. Shulman's playing, the orchestra was left without its conductor and suffered a little on this account.

The first performance at these concerts of "Serenade for Strings," by Tschaikowski, was rendered by the orchestra under Mr. Shulman's direction in the latter part of the programme. There is a grace and ease about this work, which the orchestra conveyed to the enjoyment of a discriminating audience.

Miss Helen Deacon evidently suffered from a cold, but in spite of this handicap, she sang a number of operatic airs with fine effect. The accompanying by Jose Roderiquez Lopez was well-nigh perfect.

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