

From my Desk

... By ...

HASOFER



Celebrity.

An interesting visitor to Cape Town will be the well-known South African pianist, Isadore Goodman, who is arriving from England on Thursday next. The name of Isadore Goodman is so familiar that I was surprised to learn from his brother-in-law, Cantor N. Katzin, of Sea Point, that 19 years have passed since he was last in Cape Town.

Isadore Goodman, who is now 39, was born in Cape Town and soon became known as a child prodigy. He began learning before he was three years old. At the age of six he performed the Mozart Concerto with the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra under the conductorship of Theo Wendt. Shortly after leaving Cape Town to seek fame abroad he became a professor in London and then was appointed as professor of music at the University of Sydney on the recommendation of the Royal College of Music. Ten years afterwards he volunteered for the Australian Army during the war and performed for the troops in Australia, New Zealand and New Guinea. After the war he returned to England and has recently concluded a series of concerts at the Albert Hall as well as in other parts of England. Among the conductors with whom he played were Beecham, Sargent and Enrique Jorda. He has also played before royalty.

He is coming to South Africa to spend a few months here with his sister, Mrs. Katzin, and his mother, Mrs. Ch. Guttwoch, before leaving for a concert tour of Australia and New Zealand. It is hoped that South African audiences will have an opportunity of hearing him before he leaves.

Once More.

The different climatic conditions of so large a country as South Africa make it possible for various centres to have their "seasons" at different times of the year. The Cape season is almost upon us, and those whose businesses will permit of their taking a "spot" of leave will make another of their "pilgrimages" to inhale once more the "yam luft" of Muizenberg or Sea Point or some other local resort. The Western Province Zionist Council, as also most of its constituent societies, aware of the excellent opportunity for propaganda, will once more arrange numerous cultural and other functions. These functions are favoured with varying degrees of success, again proving that something has happened to a general public which seems to have lost all interest in more serious matters. I recall a time when our "up-country cousins" used eagerly to look forward to the opportunity of attending whatever cultural functions were arranged during their sojourn at the coast. Lest our inland fellow Jews take umbrage at what they might mistakenly construe to be a sly dig at them only, I must hasten to make it clear that the apathy is general. There is no centre in the whole of the Union where this apathy is not felt. It seems a sad commentary on the modern Jew's attitude to his great heritage, to his unrivalled reputation as being a member of the people of the book, that he has lost interest in the more serious aspects of Jewish life.

The Remedy.

Most synagogues have their various "chevra" as an adjunct to the services provided for their worshippers; it is either a Chevra Shas, Ain Yakov or similar study group. Whilst it is true that these remain as almost

customary from those bygone days when the synagogue was more than a mere place of worship; it was in fact the place which was the club and general social meeting place. America seems to have struck the right note in the inauguration of the numerous youth and other organisations which are attached to the congregations. The ill-fated "Synagogue Forum" was an attempt at overcoming the existing lack of interest in matters Jewish. I refer to it as an ill-fated experiment. Perhaps a more apt word might have been chosen, but, whatever the case, one of the few serious attempts at providing a cultural platform deserved a better fate than that of passing into almost utter oblivion. It can only be hoped that soon there will be an attempt at resuscitation.

One Never Knows.

It is strange how little we really know about even some of our oldest neighbours. I have personally known Mr. Arthur V. Jacob for many years. I have always known that he was an executive member of the Chamber of Commerce, and that he took an exceedingly keen interest in many of our communal organisations. I even knew that he was a keen fisherman, but only a few days ago did I learn that his real hobby was stamp collecting. I would appear that he is no ordinary stamp collector, he is in the "philatelist" class and recently won an extremely high award for his "Rhodesian" collection. This is all interesting from a general point of view. What was really interesting from a Jewish point of view is his connection with Maccabi. On the few occasions that I have been in his private office I always noticed a peculiar white pennant, but only recently discovered that it was the pennant of the first English Maccabi team ever to participate in a Maccabiad in Tel Aviv. Mr. Jacob travelled from England with that team as its manager. If it were not for the veil of anonymity which of necessity "enshrouds" this column, I would make the following suggestion in person. Under the circumstances, however, I would like to suggest, in the manner that I do now, that quite a useful purpose might be served if Mr. Jacob were asked to work together with some of those already interested in similar projects for the establishment of some club along the lines of Maccabi as it exists elsewhere. I do not in any way wish to appear to be derogatory about the organisation which already exists under that name. Perhaps their activities might spread.

Indecorous.

There is a certain type of person who will persist in making slighting references to the so-called lack of decorum which obtains at services and Jewish gatherings. Psychologists might possibly attribute this to some form of complex; my late grandfather, who was possibly an amateur psychologist, would have said, "Lang lebben zol der terez." These gentry make their so-called fastidiousness the excuse for studiously avoiding attendance at meetings and services (except perhaps on Yorzeit). One of these gentlemen recently sat next to me and maintained a running commentary on these so-called breaches of decorum, adding greatly to the ill-behaviour by his own unmannerliness.

I think that the answer I gave him bears repetition. I assured him that the average Jew felt so at home both with the Almighty at services and with his fellow Jews at gatherings that he behaved as though he felt really at home. After all, a man is entitled to talk in his own home. Nevertheless, it does still seem strange that those who are most vociferous in their attacks are those who least frequently make any attempt to associate themselves with anything Jewish.

One, Two, Three.

The Gabbai was extolling the marvellous sermons delivered by his Rabbi. "He has three methods of expounding the Law. When using the first, both he and his listeners understand what he is talking about. When he uses the second only he knows what he is talking about. Generally, however, he uses the third, and then neither he nor the congregation knows what he is talking about."

POLAND HONOURS JEWISH WRITER.

Warsaw.

For "writing in the most correct and beautiful Polish," Henryk Lukrec, veteran Jewish journalist, has been awarded the "Order of Grunwald" and the "Academic Laurels" by the Government and academic authorities in Warsaw.

Mr. Lukrec recently celebrated the 40th anniversary of his newspaper career. He received congratulatory messages from members of the Government, Polish literary leaders, and other Polish personalities.

The Jewish Book Week will be held in the Talmud Torah Hall, Cape Town, January next.

"Killed Jews Paying for Escape of Their Assassins."

London.

Mr. S. Wiesenthal, Chairman of the Central Committee of Jewish Displaced Persons in Linz (Austria) urged the World Jewish Congress to protest against recent I.R.O. policy, which, he states, allows ex-enemy nationals responsible for the murder and torture of thousands of Jews to obtain D.P. status and I.R.O. transportation to South America. Thousands of Russian subjects (formerly of the Wlassow Army), Ukrainians, Latvians, Lithuanians, former members of S.S. divisions, originally interned in the American prisoner of war camps in Linz-Wegscheid and Klein-Muenchen, who in 1945 were found to be "ex-enemy D.P.'s" and are not eligible for I.R.O. assistance, have since disappeared into the French zone of Austria, where most of them are living as "United Nations D.P.'s in and outside of D.P. camps. A list made recently, the statement goes on, shows that a number of these war criminals were about to emigrate. I.R.O. emigration schemes are financed by funds put at the disposal of I.R.O. by members of the United Nations, and by funds raised through the sale of jewellery and gold teeth of killed Nazi victims. It would thus appear that the Jews who were killed are now paying for the escape and re-settlement of their assassins through I.R.O.

In calling upon the World Jewish Congress to intervene in this matter, the Central Committee declares that it is determined to do everything possible to prevent this outrageous injustice.—W.J.A.

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