



Portrait by Levson.

The Poet of the Piano

A Chat for the Zionist Record
with
Mr. BENNO MOISEIWITSCH

A most welcome musical revival for South Africa is indicated by the arrival of Mr. Benno Moiseiwitsch, one of the greatest living pianists. His concerts in Johannesburg have drawn enormous audiences, which

have been deeply impressed by the remarkable talent of a gifted interpreter.

In a conversation with a representative of this journal, Mr. Moiseiwitsch expressed his pleasure at noting a virile Jewish life in South Africa.

"During the last three years I have circled the world on three occasions," said Mr. Moiseiwitsch, "and in each country I visit I study the position of our people. It is pleasant to know that there is growing up a healthy Jewish community in South Africa. As you have so many Zionists in this country, I think you should tell them that I am ready to offer an annual scholarship for two students in Palestine to study in the conservatoires there. I am willing to give in each country special concerts to raise further funds for the Moiseiwitsch Scholarship."

Mr. Moiseiwitsch added that he found Jews were everywhere keen supporters of music. The love for music was ingrained in the Jewish soul, and to-day the greater percentage of distinguished executants were Jews or descendants of Jews. The finest woman piano player in the world is a Jewess—Myra Hess. Not only has Europe acclaimed her to this distinguished position, but America has endorsed this opinion.

"In the province of composition," added Mr. Moiseiwitsch, "there is no doubt that Ernest Bloch has done some outstanding work. Not only is his music great in itself, but it is excellent propaganda for Judaism. Bloch's music has tremendous general value, and is of special interest to us because it is mostly based on Jewish inspiration. There are a number of other Jewish composers, but generally Jewish genius to-day demonstrates itself in interpretation rather than in creative composition.

"Another phenomena is the fact that a great percentage of the young musical geniuses are Jews. There are many more in the world, but their parents will not exploit them, as there is often no necessity. On the other hand, there are parents who feel that such divine gifts should be given to the world. We then have a Yehudi Menuhim to-day, as years ago we had a Mischa Ellman and a Heifetz."

"I suppose," concluded Mr. Moiseiwitsch, "the reason why Jews love music so much is that they are members of a race which has had a long story of suffering. There is always a depth of sadness in music which naturally appeals to us and to which our souls vibrate."

Mr. Moiseiwitsch is accompanied on his visit to South Africa by Mrs. Moiseiwitsch, who is a member of the well-known Gensberger family of Shanghai, China.

"Israel in Russia."

By Isidore G. Ascher.

No hate can stifle our religion's birth,
This gift eternal, like the stars that shine
Point heavenwards, yet light each clod of earth,
Our footsteps press, when care and sorrow line
The groping paths of life; our souls shall knead
The visions of the past, the day's desire,
And all that beautifies our simple creed
In one eternal, and ethereal fire!
The flame that vivifies the Jewish race,
That consecrates the joys of common life,
Which time's corrosive touch can ne'er efface,
The boon in toil, the sweetness in the strife,
The truth that animates like Heaven's sun,
Our prayer in life and death that God is One.

By courtesy of Jewish Exponent.

S.A. BOARD OF JEWISH EDUCATION.

Visit of Organising Secretary to Free State Communities.

Mr. D. Mierowsky, organising secretary of S.A. B.J.E., has just now returned from a short inspection tour in the Free State. Besides Bloemfontein, a number of smaller communities have been visited by him and everywhere his visit evoked great interest in the cause of Jewish Education. Besides carrying out extensive examinations and conferring with teachers and committees, he addressed a number of public meetings which have helped to stimulate a lively interest in Jewish Education. Wishes have been generally expressed for more frequent visits on the part of the organising secretary, and it is hoped that the Board may, in the future, be in a position to accede to the wishes of these communities. Another tour by Mr. Mierowsky is contemplated in the near future, of which an announcement will be made in a subsequent issue.

NEW SYNAGOGUE FOR THE STRAND.

Laying of Foundation Stone.

Another milestone in the history of the Jewish community of The Strand occurred on the 21st ult., when the foundation stone of the new synagogue was well and truly laid by Mr. B. Friedman, chairman of the congregation.

The ceremony was not only largely attended by the local Jewish community, but by visitors from Somerset West and other neighbouring places. The proceedings were opened by Mr. Cantor, who, in the course of an interesting address, drew attention to the original formation of the community in 1899, when the present chairman, Mr. Friedman, was already a member of the committee.

Speeches were delivered by Rev. Hirshowitz, of The Strand, and Rev. Schlomow, of Somerset West. Mrs. L. Fuchs, the President of the Ladies' Society, drew attention to the assistance given by the ladies of the community towards securing funds for the building of the synagogue, and said that they had been amply rewarded for their work and were pleased to be present at that significant function. A letter of congratulation in the name of the Somerset West Jewish community was read by Mr. W. Miller.

On being presented with the silver trowel by Mr. M. Nurok, Mr. Friedman then laid the foundation stone.

Make a New Subscriber for the Zionist Record.