

Our Young Men.

THE gradual elimination of the older communal workers in all centres throughout the country, is creating a serious problem. It must be recognised with regret that the younger men of the community are not showing a keen desire to occupy the vacant places. In Johannesburg, important institutions are unable to secure leading honorary officers and one large institution recently held its annual meeting without finding anyone ready to undertake the post of president. That post is still vacant.

I am aware that many of the committees of communal institutions of importance are operating without full capacity. The greatest difficulty is being experienced in securing new people to take up the fine work carried out for many years by pioneers in philanthropic and communal endeavour.

I would urge upon young Jewish men to consider the situation seriously. New blood is needed in almost every angle of Jewish life in South Africa. The attitude of neutrality is a cowardly one in a time like the present when the oak trees are falling fast. Young men must declare themselves ready to take up communal positions, otherwise there is a grave danger of chaos. This would not only be detrimental to Jewish prestige, but may prove a calamity for the future generation—the children of those younger men. The communal ship must not be deserted at this grave stage when, owing to economic stress, many vital institutions are battling against tremendous odds.

The Next Commissioner.

There is much interest displayed in South Africa in the appointment of the next High Commissioner for Palestine. It is rumoured that Field Marshal Sir Claud William Jacob has been chosen for the post. This gentleman has been Secretary of the Military Department of the India Office since 1926 and for nearly forty years has been a ranking officer in the Indian Army.

Sir Claud, who is 67 years old, entered the army in 1882. He served with distinction in all the Indian campaigns, rising from a captain in 1893 to commander-in-chief of the Indian Army in 1925. For his services in the World War, during which he was wounded, he was decorated by the Russian, Belgian, British and American Governments. From 1920 to 1924 he was aide-de-camp to King George and in 1926 was named Field Marshal.

If he is appointed as Sir John Chancellor's successor he will be the fourth High Commissioner of Palestine, Sir John having been preceded by Sir Herbert Samuel and Lord Plumer. The pre-

Current Communal Comments

By
'Hamabit'

sent High Commissioner was appointed in 1928.

In view of the importance of the appointment, I hope the British Government will have discussed the matter with the Jewish Agency before making its decision.

Manischewitz.

A good deal of Manischewitz *matzos* has been eaten this year throughout South Africa. Some forty years ago, Rabbi Manischewitz founded in Cincinnati a small plant which has grown until today it is the largest of its kind in the world. To the pious old scholar, who first started baking *matzos* as an accommodation to his neighbours, the present huge plant, with its many additions, would probably seem unreal. The initiative of his sons has built a far-flung enterprise.

I understand that from the time the flour is poured from the barrel until the *matzos* are baked, ready for shipment, they are not touched by human hands. Of especial interest is the fact that the bearings of the baking machines are oiled by vegetable oils and not by mineral oils—thus a high standard of *Kashruth* is maintained.

The charge that Jews are not inventive can be disproved in the Manischewitz factory, where stands to-day the original models of baking machinery that have been copied in all parts of the world.

Ashkenazic Jews.

There are between twelve to thirteen million Jews of Ashkenazic or German-Polish descent in the world to-day, according to statistics published in Berlin by Dr. Felix Teilhaber. This statistician does not believe that all the Polish Jews originally came from Germany.

Dr. Teilhaber estimates that in the year 1096 less than 5,000 Jews lived in Germany, while in the year 1350, the German towns had only about 18,000 Jews. During the latter year there were about 6,000 Jews in Poland, but in 1569 Poland had from 30 to 50 thousand Jews. In 1900 there were about six million Polish Jews in Eastern Europe. During the past two years German-Polish Jews have emigrated to Roumania, Czecho-Slovakia, Hungary, Germany, France, England, North and South America, Africa and Asia.

A Boy Genius.

I marvelled on Sunday evening at the strange genius of Shura Cherkassky—the boy pianist who is now reaching the "mature" age of nineteen. His ability to overcome the intricacies of the most difficult compositions was enough to stir the imagination and wonder of a splendid audience. Yet Shura—whom I afterwards met—has not lost his charm and simplicity as a young boy

and is keenly interested in all things which seem important to a lad of his age. The fact that he had thrilled two thousand people at the City Hall during the evening—did not appear to weigh with him to any undue extent. Although everyone had been stirred, Shura indicated to me that he felt that he had not played his best.

The boy genius in music appears to be a specifically Jewish contribution, as witness the success of Yehudi Menuhin, the young violinist whose talent has shaken the musical worlds of Europe and America. There will be arriving in South Africa shortly Oscar Shumsky, a Jewish boy violinist aged thirteen. The lad is being brought here by Mr. Cherniavsky, the well known impresario. This young violinist has made a tremendous impression in musical circles overseas and will no doubt receive an enthusiastic welcome on his arrival in South Africa.

One is pleased to note in the cases of Heifetz, Elman and Cherkassky, that the "prodigy-worship" of them in their youth has not affected their later development.

Self Protection.

Chaim recently felt unwell and went to a doctor. After consultation, he paid the doctor's fee and then went to the chemist with the prescription. On securing the bottle of medicine, he went home and straight away threw the bottle with its contents out of the window.

A friend who noticed his action asked him why he behaved in this manner.

"I will tell you," replied Chaim. "It is like this. I was ill, so I went to the doctor and paid him, for after all *he must live*. When he gave me a prescription, I had it made up at the chemist, and I paid him, for *he must live*. Then I went home and threw the medicine out of the window, for, after all, *I must also live*."

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