

Menuhin

I WAS pleased at the announcement made that Yehudi Menuhin, the young violin virtuoso, is to visit South Africa next year. This little master of the strings was taken to his first orchestral concert when he was a baby in arms, because his parents did not know what to do with him for the evening. His bottle went with him in case he should wake up during the performance. He woke up and sat up when the orchestra got into its stride, and no amount of persuasion would induce him to look at his bottle; his attention was fixed on the music, which he followed absorbedly till the end of the concert.

At three years of age Yehudi received a toy violin in response to his entreaties for an instrument. To-day at the age of sixteen he has next to nothing to learn about technique.

When Yehudi made his first appearance in the Albert Hall, London, four years ago, the twelve-year-old Jewish lad held a crowded audience spell-bound for over two hours. Frantic applause drew encore after encore from the distinguished little player. Finally the lights had to be turned out and the audience reluctantly groped their way out of the hall in the darkness.

A splendid reception is awaiting this talented young player on his arrival in South Africa.

Shalom Aleichim

THE many admirers in South Africa of that inimitable Yiddish humourist, Shalom Aleichim, will be interested to learn that it is forty years since S. Rabinovitch (his real name) started his literary career. The event is to be commemorated by the Yiddish Scientific Institute of Vilna, which is staging a memorial exhibition to be opened on Chanukah.

Shalom Aleichim, who was born in 1859 and died in New York in 1916, began writing in Hebrew, his first tales appearing when he was only 15 in the Hebrew papers "Hamelitz" and "Hazefirah." In 1883, he published his first Yiddish writings in the "Yiddishe Folksblatt" conducted by Alexander Zederbaum in Petersburg. The nucleus of the exhibition in Vilna will be the large collection of Shalom Aleichim manuscripts, letters, books, newspaper cuttings, photographs, and personal relics.

It is intended to include also documents and objects primarily connected with persons who belonged to Shalom Aleichim's immediate circle, and which have some important bearing on his life and work. What a pity it is that an exhibition of this nature cannot travel overseas and visit South Africa!

"Graven Images"

I NOTICE in a symposium in a literary journal, a certain writer trumps out the old argument that the Jews are not artistic by citing the injunction against the making of graven images. It is rather absurd to use this argument. One

Current Communal Comments

By
'Hamabit'

might as well argue that the Greeks had no sense of poetry because Plato in his Republic urged the banishment of all poets.

The Jews forbade graven images, for the good reason that to the ancient, the first reaction to an image was to set it up and worship it. The very reason in fact that the Bible is so full of the warnings against idolatry may be evidence indeed that the ancient Hebrews suffered from an irrepressible propensity to make them.

One way to prove that Jews are without an artistic sense is to give evidence that their standing in contemporary art is lower than is that of the rest of the world. By that test it will be shown that Jewry will come off as well as any other people—probably a wee bit better.

An Optimist

A FRIEND of mine, who is engaged in the offices of the Zionist Organisation in New York, informs me that the most hard-worked official there is Mr. B.—the gentleman in charge of the Palestine Bureau.

Outside of the large number of applications for chaltzim certificates, there is a considerable number of well-to-do Jews in America, who are deciding to make their permanent home in Eretz Israel.

The other day, Chayim, a man of about fifty-five, came to find out particulars about going to Palestine.

"Have you got any money?" asked Mr. B.

"Money," said Chayim, "is no object to me. I have got plenty of money. I always saved my money, when others were spending it on automobiles and good times, and I never speculated in the Stock Exchange. But still I want something to give me an income in Palestine."

"Fine," said Mr. B. "You're just the kind of man that Palestine is looking for. If we could only get more like you, Palestine would soon be a second America . . ."

"I'll tell you what," continued Mr. B. "I would advise you to buy a twenty dunam orange grove. On that you could count on an income of 5,000 dollars a year, live in the open country, your nostrils sniffing the orange blossoms and you could even watch the bees gathering the blossoms and make a living?"

"I could go on and on. There is a great deal of building going on. You can become a builder. You might try to

erect some apartment houses. Maybe, who knows, the time is ripe for a skyscraper. Better still, if you don't want to work at all, just put your money in first mortgages in Palestine, and you can live like a lord . . ."

"That's fine," muttered Chayim.

You could see that Chayim was all-absorbed. He became tense, as his mind drank in all the possibilities of fortune making.

"By the way, how much money have you?" asked Mr. B.

"Two hundred dollars," replied Chayim.

Mr. B.'s disappointment was extremely keen. That he was angry can be forgiven him!

A Yiddish-Speaking Governor

THE chief citizen of Minnesota, in America, is Floyd B. Olson. He is a man of Swedish and Norwegian descent, but of special interest is the fact that this Governor of an important state is a fluent speaker of the Yiddish language. As a boy he was brought up amongst Jews. His attendance at Jewish functions is marked by the fact that where necessary, he addresses his audiences in Yiddish.

This son of a railway worker, a former newsboy, salesman, longshoreman and lawyer appears to be a colourful personality indeed. He is one of those Gentiles, who, having mixed with Jewish boys in his youth, has grown up into manhood without the slightest trace of prejudice in his composition. His love for Jews has only had the effect of making a really good fellow into something still finer.

Economy.

A SHADCHEN was relating the charms of a young lady he was recommending to the notice of a prospective chosan.

"She is young, beautiful and rich," declared the *shadchen*, "only she has a blemish. She is lame in her one leg."

The young man began, "In that case, I am not really interested . . ."

"Suppose you marry someone else," urged the *shadchen*, "and one day she slips on the stairs and breaks her leg. You will have numerous expenses. You have to send for doctors. There is the X-ray examination. Maybe she has to go to a nursing home. Then there are weeks of convalescence in Muizenberg or Durban. Throughout all this time you will have to hire a housekeeper to look after you and the children—as a matter of fact there is no end to expenses.

"Believe me, take this girl, whom I recommend to you, and look what you will save."

INSERT YOUR
FAMILY
ANNOUNCEMENTS
in the
Zionist Record