

## Opening of the Liberman Institute in Cape Town

### Bequest to the Coloured Community.

(From A Special Correspondent)

A LARGE and distinguished gathering, representative of the citizens, University staff and social workers of Capetown, assembled at the Hyman Liberman Institute on Thursday afternoon to receive the Report of the Management Committee for the period April, 1934, to May, 1937.

The Institute is a source of particular pride to Jewry as the late Mr. Hyman Liberman, some time Mayor of Capetown, a man who knew and sympathised with the needs of the coloured people, left a bequest in his will for the establishment of a reading room in District Six. For several years there was no satisfactory way of using this bequest, but at last, with the Rev. A. P. Bender's help, ways and means of doing so were devised. A suitable building was found, the City Council voted an annual grant and on April 19th, 1934, the Hyman Liberman Institute was formally opened by Mr. L. Gradner, then Mayor of Capetown, and the first President of the Institute. A Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. A. Liberman was responsible for the management of the Institute.

The Institute now boasts of a large library, the reading room of which is in frequent use, a Nursery School, an afternoon play centre for children, classes in physical culture, dress-making, sewing and domestic science, and a boys' club. In addition, the Institute serves as a social centre for debates, theatrical and communal evenings.

Mr. A. Liberman, who presided, welcomed those present and said that this was the first public meeting since the opening ceremony three years ago, and during that period the success of the Institute had far exceeded the expectations of those who had founded it. He paid tribute to the devoted service of the Hon. Organiser, Mrs. M. Overbeek, and the Hon. Warden, Professor E. Batson, of the Department of Social Science of the

University of Capetown, to the City Council for their annual grant, and for a sum of money voted for the erection of a new building on an adjoining site which had been purchased by the Liberman Trust, and to Mr. Bender whose inspiration had brought the Institute into being.

Mr. P. M. Heneke presented the report of the Institute.

Mr. W. C. Foster, Deputy-Mayor of Capetown, expressed pleasure at the work achieved by the Institute since its inception, and referred to the late Mr. H. Liberman as the man who "blazed the trail for the intellectual and cultural emancipation of coloured citizens."

Sir Carruthers Beattie, Principal of the University of Capetown and Vice-President of the Institute, also paid homage to the late Hyman Liberman who had laid the foundation for this great public service.

"Hyman Liberman was a great South African, a man of deeds and few words. The man who helped on the idea and saw that it was translated into fact was Mr. Bender. Mr. Bender and the Liberman family will be remembered in this town for generations to come," said Sir Carruthers.

Sir Carruthers concluded his address with a strong plea for the compulsory education of all sections of the community.

Professor E. Batson moved a vote of thanks to the speakers, and expressed the appreciation of the Management Committee to their Chairman, Mr. Liberman, for the devoted manner in which he had carried out his duties.

At the conclusion of the meeting tea was served in the Library in which stands a bust of the late Hyman Liberman, presented to the Institute by Councillor A. J. MacCallum, M.P.

#### COLOSSEUM THEATRE ATTRactions.

Fernand Gravet, a new screen star, makes his debut in "Romance in Paris"—a delightful French revue with Joan Blondell and Edward Everett Horton in the supporting roles. After the run of "Romance in Paris," Colosseum audiences will have the opportunity of seeing Rider Haggard's immortal story "King Solomon's Mines," which has been brought to the screen by Gaumont-British, and parts of which were filmed near Pietermaritzburg. Sir Cedric Hardwicke has the chief role as Allan Quartermain and he is well supported by a large cast including Paul Robeson.

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#### Temple Israel Children's Congregation

Special children's High Holyday services are to be held at Temple Israel on the mornings of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur from 9 a.m. till 10 a.m. On each day, the rabbi is to deliver a sermon, and he will be assisted by the choir and the children are due to take active part in the service. All children are welcome.

#### Yeoville Literary Society

The above society held an enjoyable function at the residence of Mrs. S. Tollman on the 11th ult. Mrs. Schatz presided. A welcome was extended to the speakers, Mrs. Fredman, Mrs. Levy and Mrs. Soreson, who read papers in a symposium on Jewish history. The addresses were well received and keenly enjoyed.

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## A BOOK OF SYNAGOGUE MUSIC

Fine New Work by Distinguished Chazan

FROM Palestrina and De Lasso, through to Bach and Verdi, the Catholic Church service has inspired major masterpieces in sacred music, and the Church of Rome, in earlier days a generous patron of the arts, can boast of a Bach B Minor mass and frescoes by Michael Angelo which are among the world's treasures. Not only the Church of Rome, but others have had a strong influence on the arts, not the least of these influences being that exercised on the art of music.

The Hebrew liturgy cannot boast of wealthy patrons or an influence on the art of the great composers, and one cannot find a Beethoven D Minor mass influenced by the Hebrew text. An isolated example by Bach on the text "Eili Eili" has no relationship with the dirge of that name which we know so well.

There are many reasons to account for the lack of major works in the literature of the synagogue. Not the texts, but the nature of the service, with its insistence on the dominance of the chazan have much to do with this. The lack of accompaniment too confined the liturgy within rather narrow limits, and the small part played by the choir and the total absence of organ accompaniment hindered any growth in the western sense and certainly did nothing to enlarge the forms used.

We must consider then the liturgy of the synagogues in relation to sacred music only as a limited form, and not in comparison with that of other religions, which ranges from Moody and Sanky to the Missa Solemnis. Apart from the flagrantly obvious borrowings of some cantors, who did not balk at intoning a *Veshomru* to the tune of an operatic air, the earlier collections showed little originality and it was left to the cantor to ornament with roulades the rather thin parts scored for him.

Sulzer and Levandowski brought a new dignity to chazones and can be counted as the classicists in this field. They wear well, despite their academicism, which suggests strongly the lamp of German romantic harmony. Outstanding among modern recitatives are those of Weisser, Rosowsky and, most important of all, Solomon Rozumni, of Odessa. These are notable for their freshness of melody, faithfulness to the text, and modern outlook.

Newest addition to these is Tefiloth Chagy, a welcome contribution to a select library. Known and loved in America and Africa as an incomparable chazan and a peerless singer of folksongs, Chagy here gives proof of his innate musicianship, a quality rare in singers and almost non est in chazzanim. This work invites comparison from two viewpoints, that of the musician and that of the lover of synagogue music.



[Photo by Gold]

CANTOR B. CHAGY.

From the musician's viewpoint have melos triumphant, always ing and singable, free of cliché with a freedom of rhythm which substitutes a rare feat in synagogic music. Another virtue is that the many inherent in cadence and progression can be strongly felt, enriches what must of necessity be an unsupported vocal line with wealth of overtones.

From the worshipper's point of view the adherence to the music the twofold merit of being true to tradition without losing the sense of individuality which the work must look for and prize.

From a short Yismecho, per its brevity and proportion, triumphant Adonoi Moloch, florid Hashkiveinu, a Kidush, a noble Av Horach right through the distinguished ume, Chagy shows a fertility of invention, a happy turn of phrase, an aptitude for augmenting heightening the mood of a text shows him to have an inspired scholarly pen. The work sets a high level for others to aim at.

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