

Echoes

Aged 13

SOME months ago Joshua Strankler, of Tel Aviv, composed a marching song named "Montgomery," and sent it to the famous British General somewhere in England.

The composer has now received a letter of acknowledgment from General Montgomery in which he said that he had asked for the march to be played for him, and it was indeed excellent.

This was not the first musical composition by Strankler, and Professor Kestenberg, of the Palestine Orchestra Association, who has read other pieces, prophesies a great future for the composer.

The point is that Strankler is only 13 years of age.

What is our impression of Teyveh so far? An indulgent and understanding father, something of a weakling, too. For he could not pretend to himself that he had acted in the best interests of his daughters. Who was to guarantee that either Zeitel or Hodel had character enough to justify their decisions? Love dies, revolutionary ardour cools, the bitter pressure of the world remains. It is so easy to play the tolerant friend: "She has her own life to live; who am I to interfere?" Teyveh was not happy in the recollection of what he had done for his two oldest daughters. And now the third took her place in the queue. "I tell you, Reb Sholom Aleichem, I thought I had known suffering and disappointment till then. But we have a loving and merciful Father in heaven, have we not? He said to me: 'Wait, Teyveh, my son; I will do that with you which will make everything that has happened till now look like purest happiness.'"

This time the calamity had to do neither with poverty nor with revolution, which are trifles in the eyes of God, but with apostasy, which is the sin beyond forgiveness. On this point Teyveh the tolerant suddenly reveals a hardness which an outsider would never have believed him capable of. We reach the core of obstinacy which has sustained his people for so many centuries. Disagreement on principle only amused Teyveh; indeed, he liked it; it gave you something to talk about. But apostasy with a purpose, betrayal, hypocrisy, cowardice, and selfishness wrapped in fine words—no!

When Pertchik railed against the accepted order, Teyveh respected him; for Pertchik was honest. But when Eve, his third daughter, fell in love with Chvedka, the village clerk, and turned equalitarian, with "God created all men equal" and "Isn't it the stupidest thing in the world that human beings should be divided into Jews and Christians, masters and servants, rich and poor?" Teyveh heard, not the authentic voice of protest, but the abject misuse of principle for a concealed motive. Very possibly Hodel's revolutionary passion had been two-thirds love of Pertchik. But Hodel paid the price. She identified herself with the persecuted. Not so Eve. Eve pleaded nobly for the levelling of the Jew-Christian barrier, but she contributed nothing toward it. She did not ask her Chvedka to defy his world, while she defied hers. Like Benjamin, the son of Israel the beadle, of Kasrievky, she made common cause with the persecutor. What she wanted from her father was at least his tacit permission to help perpetuate the barrier which she was pretending to weaken. She did not run off with Chvedka, in defiance of Christian and Jewish obscurantists alike; she fled to the village priest, sought sanctuary in a convent, and had herself baptised.

(Continued next week)

Serious and Otherwise

* by ben dor *

General Chernyakhovsky

AT the time of writing there has been no confirmation of the German report that General Chernyakhovsky's army had crossed the Prussian border. It is, however, clear from the latest news that Chernyakhovsky's shells are already landing in German territory. Thus the prediction that a Jewish General would be first to touch German soil is coming true.

General Chernyakhovsky is one of the several Jewish Generals who distinguished themselves in commanding tank units at the White Russian front, especially in the battles for Minsk, Vitebsk and Vilna. He is the son of an artisan (his father made his living by producing home-made wine for Sabbath and Yomtov), and was himself at one time a plumber and electrician. At the time of the establishment of the Soviet regime he was in the army. In September, 1917, he joined the Red Guards and took part in the fighting in which Zhmerinka was captured from the White Guards. He afterwards fought against Kolchak on the Eastern Front.

Chernyakhovsky then went to the Frunze Military Academy, and after graduation was placed in charge of the Tank School. He held this position for six years, and his school held first place among all the Tank Troops training schools for the Red Army. There are few Tank Troops officers in the Red Army who have not had training under General Chernyakhovsky.

At the outbreak of the war he was put in command of a motorised corps. He was then appointed Assistant Army Commander, and lately he has been General in Command of tank units. He also holds the Medal for Twenty Years' Service in the Red Army, and the Orders of the Red Banner and the Red Star.

Head of Tank Units

ANOTHER Russian Jewish soldier who has distinguished himself recently is Guards Lieutenant-General Samuel Krivoshein. He was born in Voronezh, where his father was a watchmaker. During the Civil War of 1920, Samuel Krivoshein, then a boy of 20, joined the newly-formed Red Cavalry as a volunteer, and fought with Budenny's Cossacks. At the end of the Civil War he decided to remain in the Red Cavalry.

He was sent to the Frunze Military Academy, and after graduation was appointed officer in a mechanised regiment. In June, 1940, he was appointed Major-General of the Tank Troops. When war broke out, Major-General Krivoshein immediately went to the front, in command of a motor mechanised corps. He was then made chief of the Department for training tank units, but later returned to the front, taking a leading part in the battles of Bielgorod and Orel in July, 1943.

The High Command in the Order of the Day for July 6th-15th, 1943, mentioned Major-General Krivoshein as "having displayed exceptional firmness and skill in directing troops. At critical moments Comrade Krivoshein repeatedly appeared on the battle-field in person. In ten days' fighting, the Corps inflicted severe losses on the enemy."

For this operation General Samuel Krivoshein was awarded the Order of Suvorov, 2nd Class. He had already, before the war,

received the Order of Lenin, the Orders of the Red Banner and the Red Star, and the Medal for Twenty Years' Service in the Red Army. In the later battles of the summer and winter of 1943, General Krivoshein's Corps won the high title of Guards' Unit, and by order of Marshal Stalin he was promoted Lt.-General.

"Frogs and Facts"

THE following are extracts from an editorial which appeared in a recent issue of the "Cape Times." Incidentally, a fine tribute is paid to two South African Jewish doctors for "one of the neatest and most useful pieces of research conducted in the Union":—

"Recent issues of those two somewhat omniscient American magazines, 'Time' and 'Life,' have both carried accounts, based on the recent work of two American doctors, of the test for pregnancy involving the use of the South African clawed toad, *Xenopus laevis*. This test is still the quickest and most reliable method of determining pregnancy during the early stages, a matter which is often of some consequence.

"Apart from one very cursory reference to the fact that South African scientists made the first experiments, the articles in the two American magazines completely ignored the fact that this valuable frog test was discovered and developed in the University of Cape Town by Dr. H. A. Shapiro and Dr. H. Zwarenstein. These research workers first reported the successful outcome of their experiments in the Proceedings of the Royal Society of South Africa in October, 1933, and the test was immediately put to practical use by Cape Town doctors.

"Curiously enough, almost simultaneously with the recent accounts in the American journals there appeared in 'Clinical Proceedings,' the journal of the Cape Town Post-Graduate Medical Association, a report on 'Ten Years of the *Xenopus* Pregnancy Test,' in which is described the early history of the test and the great improvement resulting from the work in 1940 of a British scientist who devised a method for cutting down the mortality among the frogs which often meant that the test had to be repeated. The test, by the way, is based on the fact that the South African clawed toad refuses to breed or ovulate in captivity, but will do so if injected with the hormone taken from the system of a pregnant woman. The test takes only a few hours. Of 1,407 complete tests carried out in Cape Town between September, 1933, and September, 1943, the result of no fewer than 98.6 per cent. proved correct where subsequent clinical diagnosis was carried out.

"The useful little *Xenopus laevis*, which is found in the vleis of the Cape Flats, and which is half-way between a toad and a frog, has thus achieved a worldwide reputation and has been exported to many other countries. At least one consignment has been airmailed to Toronto.

"The frog test, capable of detecting pregnancy within three weeks of conception, is one of the neatest and most useful pieces of research conducted in the Union, and it is just as well to keep the record straight. The first lay news of this work was published in the 'Cape Times' of September, 1934, and it may comfort our readers to know that they get their news ten years before it appears in 'Time' and 'Life.'"



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