

Echoes

Aachen Jews Invited to Return

HERR ANTON STUMPF, newly appointed Mayor of Aachen, extended an invitation to the Jews to return to his city when hostilities cease. Expressing regret over the "evil treatment of Aachen's Jewish population at the hands of the Nazis," Mayor Stumpf stated that he wished to welcome back the Jews and to have them assist in rebuilding the city.

"We pray for the day when the destroyed synagogue will be restored," he said.

When Allied forces moved into Aachen, a woman interviewed by American correspondents said that Aachen's Jews "had been wealthy and had brought prosperity to the city."

—Independent Jewish Press Service.

The net results of this rough-and-tumble relationship were, as I have said, all out of kilter with our modern concepts of upbringing. Love was taken for granted; the difficulties of life were understood early; little egos were not pampered. And we are tempted to odd reflections. Is it possible that our mania for "understanding" is a self-indulgence and a sentimentality? Is it possible that a child does not want grown-ups to be on a level with him, that he resents this intrusion on his privacy? Does he feel it to be a fake, a subtle form of tyranny which is all the more irritating because it is accompanied by such obvious moral superiority? However this may be, it is certain that young individualities were not crushed, spirits were not broken, love was not destroyed. We do not encounter twisted and stunted children in the world of Sholom Aleichem, either as he describes them or as we find them in other records, including those of our memory. We remember them to have been healthy, active, and imaginative. The authentic magic of childhood was there, too, the innocence, the trust, and the affection.

Sad Stories

Still, it is true that the best-loved children's stories of Sholom Aleichem are predominantly sad. He writes about Methuselah, the broken-down old horse that belonged to the water-carrier of Kasrievky; about Rabchek, the homeless dog; about the grandfather-clock which died a painful and lingering death after many generations of service; about a stolen penknife, and about the sickness into which the little thief declined under the pressure of his conscience; of the little boy (he who debated the moral issue a few pages back) who bought himself a flag for the festival of Simchas Torah, only to have it burned on the day of his triumph; about another youngster, an older one this time, probably fourteen or so, already engaged to be married, who passionately wanted to learn to play the fiddle, and got himself slapped by his father and jilted by his bride.

These little ones had to get their laughter—and they did get it, just like their parents—out of what seems to us to have been a sad world. It was a good training for the life they would have to face; for they were not simply human beings growing up; they were, throughout, Jews, Kasrievkites, in the making.

Serious and Otherwise

* by ben dor *

"Fratelli Rosselli"

I WAS interested to learn that a street in Florence has lately been named "Fratelli Rosselli" (Brothers Rosselli) in honour of the two staunch anti-Fascists, Nilo and Carlo, who, it will be recalled, were assassinated in France in 1937. The crime came as a great shock to the democratic world.

The Rossellis belonged to a prominent Jewish Sephardic family in Italy. At an early age both brothers were granted professorships at the University of Florence. Carlo lectured on economics, Nilo on History. Both professors met their wives while lecturing at the university. Carlo married an English girl, Marion, who had been studying at the Florence University, and Nilo married Marie, a young student from Padua.

Carlo resigned from his post at the university shortly after Mussolini assumed power. It was of little avail, he said, to lecture passionately on economic rights when these were daily violated by the Fascist regime. Politics became Carlo's sole interest. Like Garibaldi and Mazzini he, too, battled for a republic in Italy. In the great industrial centres of Florence and Milan he carried on an intensive campaign for democratic restoration in Italy.

He was a brilliant orator. At the market-square he would start talking to a small group of men. Soon others gathered and before long a mass of working men would be listening to his words. When Carlo spoke he neither shouted nor gesticulated. His calm and confident manner inspired the men to renewed hope.

Carlo was the hero of the labour class and a menace to Mussolini and his henchmen. They realised that Carlo was daily drawing more recruits for his new Italian Republic. Time and again Carlo was arrested. The prison became his second home.

During all this time Nilo, though he still continued lecturing at the University, was his brother's right-hand. He was no orator, but he was a master at organisation. He, too, became an ardent worker for the new Italian Republic and the Fascists watched him as closely as they did his brother.

Then one day Mussolini lost patience with this little Jew who was causing him so much trouble. Carlo Rosselli was banished to L'Ussita, Italy's devil island. Here he met over 500 other prisoners—many of them great men, who had been banished from their country because they were anti-Fascists. Finally Carlo managed to escape to the shores of France by motor-boat.

When the Italian authorities heard of Rosselli's escape they immediately interrogated his wife. In spite of shrieking and threatening she refused to tell them anything. Ultimately, on the intervention of the British ambassador, she was given permission to leave the country and joined her husband in France.

Carlo spent eleven years in France. During that time he left the country only once when he set out on a mission to Spain, at the outbreak of the civil war, to mobilise men for the Italian Republic. In Paris, Carlo was the editor of the anti-Fascist Italian newspaper "Gestitsa a Liberata" ("Righteousness and Freedom"). Special issues in miniature type were

smuggled across to Nilo in Florence, who saw to it that the newspaper was read by thousands of workers.

In Italy Nilo carried on the work his brother had started. Twice he was sent to a concentration camp, but on his release immediately continued his task of encouraging the Italian workmen and the youth to fight for their civil rights. Carlo pleaded with his brother to leave Italy, but Nilo would not hear of it. He accepted, however, an invitation to visit his brother in France.

It was then that the tragedy happened. The two families had gone on a holiday to the South, little realising that they were being tracked down by Mussolini's agents, the notorious band of "Gaguellas." The Rossellis had just finished lunch and Carlo and Nilo decided to take a short stroll. They had hardly walked a few yards when a hail of bullets hit them from behind. Both brothers fell down dead.

Schonberg's Music

ONE of the most provocative figures in modern music is Arnold Schonberg, whose seventieth birthday is now being celebrated in America. His compositions caused a revolution in the music-world, and to-day heralds a new phase in modern classics.

Schonberg now lives in Los Angeles. He was born in Vienna and started composing while still in his 'teens. At that time Wagner ruled supreme. Young Schonberg became a faithful disciple of the great master and his music bore a predominant romantic note. But as he grew older he banished all romantic tendencies from his work, and evolved a new type of music that was unique and in many respects quaint.

His music is constructed out of a tonal system invented by him and consisting of twelve set tones. People laughed at him. His system, they said, with its absolute limitations would entirely smother the composer. But Schonberg with his humble stubbornness, put the formula to test, and to-day his system has been the source of a whole library of wonderful music . . . music that is captivating because of its great power and originality.

One has got to get used to Schonberg's music. At first hearing, it is not pleasant and is difficult to understand. It is harsh and often strikes the ear as over-sharp with the moods being too strongly contrasted. In Vienna his music had been the talk of the day, there were many arguments about it which led to fights, and in one case even to a court action. A noted psychologist of the time insisted that people who listened to Schonberg's music were in danger of becoming neurotics.

Even to-day it is still hotly contested whether or not Schonberg is a great composer. But it is indisputable that his "Ode to Napoleon" and "Theme and Variations" have dramatic power and an irresistible dynamism. His music has revealed a new world of sounds. He has exercised a colossal influence on modern composition and enjoys a monarchial place in the music world of our time.

SAM GOLDWYN is playing with dynamite . . . has purchased "Earth and High Heaven," the Graham novel on intermarriage. It's a serious treatment and may well be the most controversial film of the year.

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