

on the **Bookshelf**

"When Smuts Goes"

A Historian's Forecast

WHAT is going to happen in South Africa in the next 60 years? Most people might make a very good guess, but Dr. Arthur Keppel-Jones, a historian, believes that he can make the forecast with a fair degree of accuracy.

It is set down in his book, "When Smuts Goes" (The African Bookman: Cape Town), and there can be no doubt that the prediction sounds extremely plausible and convincing. After all, history does not occur haphazardly. It is the product of historic tendencies and trends, and the trained mind of the historian should be able to take those trends to their logical conclusion.

To that extent, therefore, "When Smuts Goes" is not written in the manner of a Wellsian fantasy. It purports to disclose an inevitable sequence of events if existing human attitudes in South Africa do not undergo a profound change. A glance into Dr. Keppel-Jones's "crystal ball" does not yield a very pleasant prospect.

In 1952, he says, the Nationalists will come to power. Their party, true to form, is "anti-everything", and attempts to consolidate its own position by oppressing every other section of the community. When all the enemies of the party are appropriately subdued, there comes, not unexpectedly, a split within the party itself, the forces of extreme reaction being in the ascendant.

South Africa now starts on the downward path with a vengeance. In the 1960's a major native rising is suppressed after much bloodshed. In the 1970's the United Nations, appalled by the way the South African Government is behaving, send Britain and America to conquer the country. They do so, and, after a brief military and civilian interregnum by the occupying forces, the country is handed back. Elections are held, and South Africa gets its first native Prime Minister.

That, briefly, is the outline of the "history", which conveys splendidly the picture of doom, disintegration and chaos that follow almost axiomatically in the wake of reaction and oppression.

Of special interest are Dr. Keppel-Jones's references to the Jews. "Always, in season and out of season, he says, 'the Jew was blamed.'" When in 1955, the economic life of the country was dislocated, the Government determined to strike at the Jews. It considered the Jewish strength in the universities the starting point of the evil. These were given powers to regulate the admission of students and to expel them when this was desirable.

Next, the Government introduced the Distribution of Occupations Bill, which was nicknamed the "Pogrom Bill". It aimed at reducing the participation of Jews in certain occupations to 4.65 per cent., which was the percentage of Jews in the total white population. The legal, medical, teaching and journalists' professions were specified in Schedule A. In terms of Schedule B no more trading licences were to be issued to Jews until the number in each branch of trade had fallen to the re-

quired level. No public company was allowed to have more than 4.65 per cent. of Jews on its board of directors after December 31, 1955.

"It is difficult," adds Dr. Keppel-Jones, "to estimate how widely this measure was supported in Opposition (English) circles." That it was widely supported is evidenced by his quotation from a book written by a well-known sportsman, Bouncer Harcourt. "The talk was as much of politics as of sport . . . Ribald stories and sneers about the Jews were bandied about with much laughter. I didn't like it. I have had many good friends among the Jews and I couldn't help thinking then of men like Reuben Batski, the cricketer, and Abe Kickoff, who played for the Dribblers—jolly fellows both. I thought we should pay dearly for this cruel policy, and said so."

In due course, too, the Jews were disfranchised, denationalised, and Jewish immigration prohibited. Jewish protests did not help.

Despite the gloominess of his prognostications, Dr. Keppel-Jones has nevertheless produced an extremely stimulating work. If it has the effect of making all sections in the country indulge in some serious introspection, it will have been well worth while.

The author, who says that it would be unprofitable to try to identify any of his characters, has mysteriously shrouded them in names after the manner of Bouncer Harcourt and Abe Kickoff mentioned above. The Nationalist leaders are named Juk-skei and Bult, two farmers appear as Messrs. Shorthorn and Coopers-dip, and many other names are played with in the same way. This method does give unnecessary flippancy to an otherwise serious work. Dr. Keppel-Jones might have got round his difficulty by printing on the fly-leaf this legend: "Any resemblance to any unborn person is purely coincidental."

M.

HOLIDAY COMFORTS SCHEME

The United Jewish Women's Benevolent Society wish to remind the public, once again, of the Holiday Comforts Scheme, under which food hampers and clothing are given to the Jewish poor of the city for the High Festivals. The hamper is made up in proportion to the size of the family.

In order to make a success of this scheme, additional funds are necessary, and an appeal is made to the public to send contributions instead of sending flowers and gifts to their relatives and friends.

New Year cards are posted, by the Society, with the donor's compliments to the relatives and friends in whose name the contributions are made. The minimum contribution per card is 5s.

Contributions may be sent or brought in to 33, Welfare House, 168, Fox Street, phone 22-8332, or to the Jewish Guild War Memorial Hall, cor. Bree and Von Brandis Streets, from Monday, September 8, to Friday, September 12, between the hours of 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays excepted.

"CHILDREN'S ROSH HASHANAH ANNUAL"

A Novel Publication



SAMUEL KAPLAN
Editor of the Annual

A NOVEL publication recently issued is the "Children's Rosh Hashanah Annual," compiled and edited by Samuel Caplan. The author, who is a member of the staff of the S.A. Zionist Federation, has for many years been closely associated with youth activities, and the knowledge he gained in this field has been turned to good account in the Annual. Mr. Caplan first took to serious writing after he had escaped as a prisoner of war from the Germans, and has completed an 80,000 word manuscript of his experiences. He is now busy completing a full-size novel with a war-time background.

NATZKA, PETROSSIAN AND RIBETTI IN ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

THE Johannesburg City Orchestra, in collaboration with the S.A.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, opened the concert on Sunday on a happy note with the well-known Oberon Overture of Weber, giving it all the warmth and brightness that was necessary.

Raffi Petrossian performed Rachmaninoff's beautiful Concerto in C Minor with feeling, particularly in the melodious slow movement and the last movement, which is based on Russian folk music. This work gave him plenty of scope as it ranges from liquid softness to powerful climaxes.

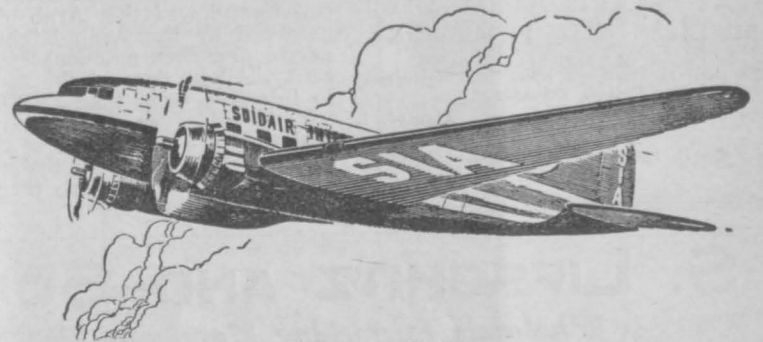
Oscar Natzka used his histrionic ability to the full in Arias from Meyerbeer's "Robert the Devil" and Mozart's "Il Seraglio." He has a powerful bass voice with a good range and in response to the enthusiasm of the large audience he sang "I love you" of Beethoven, the popular "Song of the Flea" and the "Blind Ploughman."

Elda Ribetti, soprano, sang Arias from the "Pearl Fishers" and "La Traviata," and as encores "Solveig's Song" and "The Lass with the Delicate Air."

The Orchestra, under the baton of Jeremy Schulman, played a Woolf-Ferrari Intermezzo and a Glinka Overture.

ZIONIST LUNCHEON CLUB

The speaker on Friday September 5, will be Professor J. Weingreen, a Professor at the Dublin University, Ireland, who was the Director of Education in the D.P. camps in Germany. His topic will be "the Educational Reconstruction in Bergen Belsen."



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