

Annabelle's Florist

Wedding and Presentation Bouquets a Speciality
 Fresh Flowers Twice Daily, Delivered to all Suburbs
 Logs, Ferns and Nursery Requirements
 8th King's Court, JOHANNESBURG King George Street,
 Telephone 22-7172.

Belmont

(LILI KAPLAN)

For
Exclusive Fashions

5th FLOOR ANSTEYS BUILDINGS
 JEPPE STREET JOHANNESBURG

"There is a wider choice at Greenacres"

DURBAN'S COMPLETE STORE
GREENACRE'S
 Harvey Greenacre & Co. Ltd
 Established 1869

FURS

Made to Measure on the latest New York styles
 arriving regularly.

KOSEFF & Co.

OLGA BUILDINGS
 119 PRESIDENT STREET, JOHANNESBURG
 Phones 22-9381-2 — Tel. and Cable Address: "Kosefco"

Established 1900

SHAPIRO'S WHOLESALE

O.F.S. Distributors to the Trade of All Brands of
CIGARETTES, CIGARS AND TOBACCOS

1, MAITLAND STREET, BLOEMFONTEIN
 Telephone 242 (3 lines)
 Telegrams: "Shapiros"
 Box 205

NEW STYLE of Jewish Music

By
R. DA COSTA

IT has been an amazing experience to find, after fourteen years spent in the midst of Palestine's musical life, that the music which strikes me as the most authentically "Palestinian" has been written in London. Shula Doniach's "Voices of Jerusalem", the fruit of her two-years' visit to Palestine, is a work that radiates the unmistakable atmosphere of the Palestinian landscape and a good deal of the spirit of its new life. And it contains quite a few grains of that "something", undefinable but precious enough, for which we in Eretz Israel—composers and critics alike—have been groping and working for some time now: namely, the elements of a new and genuine Palestinian musical style.

Of what sort will that music be?

Birth of a Style

No definite answer can, of course, be given to this question. But we can predict and, to a certain extent, influence the course of its development. Unlike the other and more obviously articulate form of the Yishuv's self-expression, the Hebrew language, a future "Hebrew" music cannot build upon the ready and magnificent heritage of the holy tongue, which had only to be taken into the hands of a committee of language experts to become the malleable instrument of the daily life of the Yishuv. Rather has it to tackle similar problems to those with which architecture is confronted in Palestine. The architect and the composer (I maintain, by the way, that music and architecture are the most closely related of all the arts) have to adapt the immense tradition and material brought over from Europe to the utterly different world of the Middle East.

The ultimate goal is a synthesis of East and West in which surely "the twain shall meet" and even be fused into an organic style. There can hardly be any doubt that the greater part of this process will take place automatically in the course of many generations. The atmosphere and the climate of the country, on the one hand, and our material and intellectual involvements with the West, on the other, are bound to interact and intermix, according to the law of natural needs and available substances. But there is also a margin of conscious interference and direction. Wrong beginnings made now may lead to architectural chaos for countless future generations, and to a musical style typical of everything but the country and the people whose spirit it is supposed to express.

"Mediterranean"

It is for this reason that a "school" has come into being in Palestine—Max Brod and the present writer are its initiators—which aims at getting rid of all our superfluous musical baggage. Too many ingredients from the Slavonic sphere, this school suggests, are used in the bulk of our musical production. The thematic and rhythmical patterns, even the trend of harmonisation and choice of scales, are Russian, Polish, and most of

them Ukrainian. The beauty, familiarity and nostalgic quality of this music are readily admitted, but it is maintained that, if there is no "purge" to-day, Palestine's music of 2048 will be far more representative of the countries of origin of the majority of its present population rather than the real character of the country itself and of the new life created there.

What is recommended instead is a conscious leaning towards what must be called, for want of a better term, a Mediterranean Style; that is to say, a "musical realisation" of the country's geographical position by means of a thinning out of the accompaniment, a stress of the melodic types of the Oriental and Sephardic Jews, and a use of the Provençal and Spanish heritage of rhythm (there is an interesting affinity between Spanish and Arabic music). These should be combined with elements of our synagogal tradition and used with full realisation of the developments of modern music in Europe and America.

"Voices of Jerusalem"

This may sound a tall order but the "Mediterranean" School of Palestinian music has already achieved some notable works by Ben-Chaim, Partos, Kaminski and Boskovitch. And now, to return to the subject of this essay, we have "Voices of Jerusalem" by Shula Doniach, which, strangely enough, combines the above-mentioned characteristics in the clearest and most impressive way. This work is a cycle of six songs, set for soprano, baritone, string quartet, oboe and piano. In form and emotion recalling Mahler's "Song of the Earth", the "Voices" derive their moving atmosphere less from the three Palestinian melodies (one Arab, one Sephardic, one Yemenite) which are "borrowed", than from a rare blend of intuition and artistic intelligence. In listening to these songs one has the impression that the very essence of the air over Jerusalem has been caught by the composer, who has given us, too, a work of the most subtle and intricate craftsmanship, firmly rooted in the Jewish tradition by means of its genuine Jewish spirit and by the use of the short synagogal "tropes" or melodic fragments, which pervade the whole work and give it its homogeneity.

"Voices of Jerusalem" is representative of the best and most original of recent Jewish accomplishments in the field of music and I do not hesitate to rank it on a level with the work of important and well-known modern composers. Here is music of a quality and style which should make it the obvious choice for Jewish organisations who seek genuine cultural and propaganda material. Indeed no better musical subject could be chosen for a full-scale sponsoring campaign. This music should have every support and should be made known as widely as possible.