

## Folk-Songs

WE are the possessors of such a wealth of folk music that it is a pity so little of it is heard in our community. I was delighted, for this reason, to hear the excerpts rendered by Cantor Berele Chagy at a charity concert last Sunday evening. Rarely have I heard our folk-songs interpreted in such an exquisite style. The performance was a revelation in its subtle characterisation of Jewish types, outside of the pure musical richness of it all.

Another interesting indication of the beginnings of a Jewish musical revival here was the splendid male choir, in which the famous Cantor himself joined as a humble chorister. This combination of boys' and men's voices rendered a few folk-songs in perfect harmony, with a fine nuance.

From time to time efforts have been made to establish a Jewish Choral Society here. The nucleus has certainly now been established. The present rare opportunity should not be lost, and all local singers should co-operate. A well-established choral society would be a welcome addition to Jewish life here. Its harmonious rendition of many of the treasures of our folk-songs would give great pleasure to thousands.

## A Doorway

I WAS sorry I could not be present on Tuesday at the unveiling of the Lieberman Memorial Doorway in the South African National Gallery in Capetown. The late Hyman Lieberman was the first Jewish Mayor of the Mother City and was elected to office soon after the Anglo-Boer War. He was a man of strikingly benevolent disposition and is still remembered by a host of friends.

There is an essentially Jewish idea conveyed in the Lieberman Doorway. I am told that on the right-side architrave are depicted the wanderings of the Eastern Jews in Babylon, Morocco and medieval Germany. On the left of the door are the Jews of Rome, Egypt, Spain and Holland. In a panel above the door the Jews are shown as united in the hospitable land of South Africa. The four panels of the door show the Cape as a country of plenty.

This is a fine way of expressing appreciation of the Jew in this country to the land of his adoption. The artist who did the panels is H. V. Meyerowitz; it took him four years to do the work.

## Reading

I WAS pleased at the news of Lord Reading's appointment to the office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. The appointment is a fine tribute to a great personality.

It will be of interest to recall a delightful anecdote that is told of Lord Reading. When he was Chief Justice of England he had occasion to attend a banquet at which he was seated next to the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Archbishop smilingly remarked to him: "You know, I have much more power than you have."

# Current Communal Comments

By  
'Hamabit'

"How so, my Lord Archbishop?" the Chief Justice enquired.

"Well," said the Archbishop. "You can only sentence a man to death, but I can damn his immortal soul for all eternity."

"Er—quite so," the Chief Justice drily commented. "But when I sentence a man to death—he gets hanged."

More generally known, perhaps, was his smartness at the Bar as a barrister-at-law. The then "plain Mr. Isaacs" was once cross-examining a witness, who replied to his questions in a somewhat abrupt and offensive manner.

The future Chief Justice bore patiently with the witness for a while. Then, suddenly, he asked: "Do you drink?"

"That's my business," the witness replied.

"Yes," came Reading's sharp retort, "but is that your only business?"

## In a 100 Years

THAT fine writer, H. G. Wells, has made some challenging statements about Jews and Judaism in his book, "The Shape of Things to Come." In this he refers to us as a people which keeps to itself, eats peculiar food and practises distinctive religious customs. The writer refers to Judaism as an "antiquated obdurate culture." He prophesies that within a hundred years "this peculiar religion will disappear."

Propheying events which are to occur between 1940 and 2059, Mr. Wells records the disappearance of this same antiquated obdurate culture.

"It and its Zionist state, its kosher food, the Law and all the rest of its paraphernalia were completely merged in the human community. The Jews were not suppressed; there was no extermination; there were world-wide pogroms during the political and social breakdown of the Famished Fifties, but under the Tyranny there was never any specific persecution at all; yet they were educated out of their oddity and racial egotism in little more than three generations. Their attention was distracted from Moses and the Promise to Abraham and the delusion that God made his creation for them alone, and they were taught the truth about their race. The world is as full as ever it was of men and women of Semitic origin, but they belong no more to Israel."

On reading the above lines my mind turns to the pages of history and I cannot help but think of the legion of men before Wells who prophesied the disappearance of our race.

We always appear to have been a problem but we were never a problem to ourselves. The world by imposing upon us difficulties and disabilities was the direct cause of the Jewish problem as such. Without dealing with the merits of Mr.

Wells' contention but taking it at its face value, we may ask what guarantee has he that the shades of Jewish grandmothers will not be evoked a hundred years hence by those of Semitic origin who no longer belong to Israel? In Germany to-day the "Jewish Grandmother" plays an important part in the persecution of the hundred-percent Germanised Jew.

What guarantee has Wells to give us that the myth of Aryanism will not be revived by other nations, who we now look upon as quite civilised? It must be recollected that many of us until very recently placed an enlightened country like Germany in that latter category.

## Toscanini

IN a modest building on a hill in Jerusalem lies the Golden Book of the Jewish National Fund. In this volume are inscribed in everlasting memory, the names of men and women—Gentiles and Jews—who have given service to the people of Israel. Some of the world's greatest names are to be found on this honour roll.

Upon this same roll there was recently added the name of Arturo Toscanini, master musician, noted conductor and distinguished artist. Although the formal presentation of this certificate was conducted in the presence of a few people in the city of New York, it may be said that world-Jewry was present in spirit.

It will always be remembered that Toscanini was among the first of the righteous among the Gentiles to declare his abhorrence of the violation of human rights in Nazi Germany. His attitude was a signal to other artists in all parts of the world. In this manner he served not only the Jewish people but all civilised mankind.

Toscanini will always be remembered by this one action as a valiant champion of the spirit which dared to challenge the powers of reaction and bigotry. I think it is well that his name should have been inscribed in the Jewish Roll of Honour.

## Too Early.

A MOTOR salesman was trying to sell a second-hand motor-car to a Jew in Poland. The latter was a most unwilling customer.

"Just look at that car! What couldn't you do with a car like that for speed! You could leave here at ten o'clock at night and be in Warsaw at four o'clock the next morning."

The Jew asked: "But what should I do in Warsaw at four o'clock in the morning?"