

A South African National Anthem

A Jewish Composer's Effort

THE possibility of South Africa ultimately choosing its own National Anthem is a subject which has lately been often discussed. Nothing concrete, however, has resulted. It is, therefore, of interest to learn that a Jewish composer in this country has set the music to a contemplated South African National Anthem. The words have been written by Mr. J. de Waal, a well-known Afrikaans poet, and are of a fine inspirational character. The composer is Mr. Ernst Lowenherz, who has placed the patriotic poem into a stirring musical setting.

A representative of the *Zionist Record* was present the other evening at a little musical gathering at the home of the composer when Madame Hilda Neale-Weyhausen sang "Suid Afrika"—the name of the new National Anthem. He was considerably impressed by the vigour and patriotic tone of the new composition.

The public of Johannesburg will have an opportunity of hearing this composition at the recital to be given on Tuesday, May 17, at the Selborne Hall. The occasion will be an unique one, for most of the programme—vocal and instrumental—will consist of Mr. Lowenherz's compositions.

TO find that we have in South Africa, a composer of undoubted talent, was a matter of interest to a representative of the *Zionist Record*. He asked Mr. Lowenherz how long he had been doing musical compositions and learned that a piano quintet was

composed by him as far back as 35 years ago. Owing to the fact, however, that he is not a professional musician but a busy engineer, his composition work has been neglected for many years.

SOME 23 years ago, Mr. Lowenherz arrived in this country and has been engaged in his profession as civil engineer. During recent years, Mr. Lowenherz has suffered from ill-health and was laid up for a long period. Being compelled to limit his activities in his own profession, his previous urge for musical compositions again became evident. He has recently set to music a number of English, German and Afrikaans poems, specialising in the works of the Afrikaans poets, Visser, Leipoldt, Keet and Van Bruggen. Some of these songs and also a recently-finished violin solo entitled "Valse Romantique," will be heard at the forthcoming Lowenherz recital.



[Photo: Vera Elkan.]

Mr. Ernst Lowenherz.

Books for the Jewish Home.

From Chief Rabbi Dr. J. L. Landau.

To the Editor of the "*Zionist Record*."

Sir,—You no doubt, like many others who had left the centres of European culture for this country to establish a home here, have often realised the great and painful disadvantage of being so far removed from the influences of those centres and from the spiritual and social benefits one can derive from the factors of old and ever-growing human civilisation. We hail with enthusiasm the visit of even second-rate artists, actors or musicians, who enable us to catch a glimpse of the distant world and to derive both joy and inspiration from the works of great illustrious masters. But there is one, and indeed the greatest, factor of human culture which cannot be replaced by "mediums." And, how remarkable, the greatest and cheapest, that can easily be obtained. I mean the—Book.

"Books," says Emerson, "take rank in our life with parents and lovers, and passionate experiences. . . . Consider what you have in the smallest chosen library. A company of the wisest and wittiest men that could be picked out of all civil countries, in a thousand years, have set in best order the results of their learning and wisdom. . . . We owe to books those benefits which come from high intellectual action. Go with mean people, and you think life is mean. Then read Plutarch, and the world is a proud place, with heroes and demigods standing around us."

In this country, however, we are in the unfortunate position of having neither celebrated authors nor books. Neither the spoken nor the printed word. There are no libraries in South Africa—libraries compared with those glorious institutions in Europe, which are open to all, even the poorest who is unable to buy a book. And if this is true of other literatures, how much more of Judaica, of Hebrew books, and those in other

languages which enshrine the Jewish soul with all its ideals and cravings.

When I need a book which is not in my library—and I need one very often—it takes me two months to get it from Europe or America, if the book is obtainable in the bookshop. Very often it is not. One has therefore every reason to be grateful to European Jewish booksellers who conceive the idea of sending agents with whole libraries to this country to place very fine and some most excellent publications within our reach. And one is really amazed to see how little it is appreciated by most people. They fill the theatres and the concert hall, while giving no thought to the travelling bookseller, not realising that while the song to which they listen and the scene which they witness vanish with the moment, together with the money paid for the passing pleasure, the book remains in their possession, and its value never depreciates. They can hand it down not only to their children, but even to their children's children, who may be even better able to value and to cherish it. Just as we to-day value some ancient authors more than did their contemporaries.

With these few remarks, I wish to draw the attention of your readers to the visit of Mr. Erlichman, who represents the Central Publishing Co. in Warsaw, Poland, and who has brought with him a fine and large collection of Jewish books. These deserve to adorn the shelves of many a Jewish home, especially such Jewish homes where the children have no other opportunity of seeing the works of our modern master-minds, whose knowledge of Jewish literature begins and ends with the Prayer Book, used on very rare occasions. It would be not only a pity but a crying shame to allow those books to travel back again.—Yours, etc.,

J. L. Landau.

"Trip to Palestine."

The S.A. Zeire Zion announces that the result of "The Trip to Palestine" will be published in the issue of the *Zionist Record* of May 20th.