### 26 THE JEWISH CHRONICLE December 7 1962 About Books

## COMPARATIVE

By LEON ROTH

A. C. BOUGUST. Cassell. 14a.

Dr. A. C. Bouquet's well-known volume of selections from the secret books of the world was originally published in the Punguin series as a companies to his earlier volume, the a "Punguin," on comparative miligion. It now appears on its own, in a more parameter form and at a considerably enhanced price, apparently without

This is a pity. The book is of great interest and merits more care. Why should students waste their time trying to track down an unrecognisable "Midrath Yalkut" (p. 284)? Should not second thoughts have questioned the windom of the auggestion that it might have been a "studied solicy (!) on the part of the Baal Shom to make himself resemble Jesus of Nazareth (p. 275)? Need the complacent, and to non-Christians irritating, mottoes from Justin (p. 5) be retained in a book meant for a wider public than Justin could even have dreamed of?

Jewish readers will naturally turn to Dr. Bouquet's selections from the literature of Judaism. In the limitations of his space he seems to me to have done passably well with the Bible, admirably with the Prayer Book, most disappointingly with all the rest. He offers an excerpt from the Ethics of the Fathers; but why chapter v. Fig. From the Tahmud he gives a bit from Pesachim which is of importance only for the folk-lorist, and a bit from Baba Kama which deals with the definition of a Biblical term is civil law. Apart from these, he gives us only a few Hassidic anecdotes, and even these not of the best.

But Jews should turn to the book, not in order to deepen their know-jodge of Judalem, but to enlarge their general soligious purview. They will learn much from it of other religious, as indeed they have much to learn. And they will learn, too, of their own failings. For Dr. Bouquet, after quoting the monderful Ahava Rabba prayer from the evening service, the

These are bard words but they words to be they be then to be false? If block they be taken to be taken? If they have been be taken? If they work they be taken?

#### **OPERETTAS**

The Complete Book of Light Cheefs, by Mark Lubbock (Putnam Sée.) sells the story and describes the mosic of every important operatia from the time of Offenbach to the American muticals of the present-day. Arranged under the headings of Paris, Vienna, Berlin, London and New York, this facely produced and encyclopedic work provides an indispensable reference book. It includes many photographs of original productions and revivals and contemporary portraits of composers and stars. Jewish names abound, ranging from Offenbach and Halévy to Irving Berlin and Leonard Bernstein.

The Dancer's Heritage, by Ivor Guest (Penguin, 6s.), gives a short history of ballet. in which the names include Alicia Markova and Marie Rambert. Bertelt Brecht: Plays, Vol. 2 (Methuen, 25s.) contains three plays, including the masterpiece "Mother Courage and her Children."

kov (l. L. Peretz, Tel Aviv), is a Yiddiah novel, amply supplied with tragedy, in which three generations of in East European family are hurriedly

Shelubeky (I. L. Peretz. Tel Aviv). includes a short novel and some other stories by a talented Yiddish writer.



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### THE REPORT OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PARTY OF T THE LIFE OF

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# End with the

By MICHAEL MOTT

Case as Respective Introduction by C. P. Secret. Pick York New Distributors : W. J. Hall, 34 Breek Street, London.

The Inheritors and other Poems. Vencenta Minneson, Favil Press.

Both C. P. Snow, who introduces Charles Reznikoff's book, and Virginia beforeword to her own first book of poems, claim to find the strong forces of fashion working in poetry. Mine Minhaum attacks both the fact that there is a fashion and those poets she considers fashionable today. C. P. Snow is much less pertarbed. He accepts the situation as he finds it and seeks only to make enough of an adjustment so that good poets writing outside the currently accepted style are not ignored. For calling our attention to one such poet. Charles Reznikoff, there is reason enough to thank him. enough to thank him.

Superficially, both Virginia Mishnun of Charles Reznikoff share a liking for phems that are Imagist in form, if not always in feeling; that is they are short (often only two or three lines long) and concentrate upon making a single precise statement about an idea. an emotion, or a description of something seen. The best of Miss Mishnun's poems—"At Gay Head," "Circle." "My Mother"—are like this, striving for clarity and precision with some lyrical grace. Her longer poems are not successful in the same way. Often the emotion is sustained only at far too great a degree of only at far too great a degree of strain, the rhyming pattern is often an ugly jingle. Even "Visitor from Buchenwald" is moving only by associations every reader will supply for himself.

#### Twice an exile

The poems of Charles Reznikoff written over many years. Roughly the eartier poems are about New York, the later poems celebrate certain events in Jewish history. Reznikoff sees the city where he lives in short, intense glances. He sees the newspapers drifting across the vacant lots, the building the house-wreckers have left half-demolished overnight, the wet black rags of the cleaning woman. Such unlikely images ne to create a loved city through an exile's eyes. Americans are all, of course, recent exiles; Reznikoff, as a Jew, feels himself twice-an-exile, and an exile in a special sense.

He even, very movingly, feels himself far now from his Jewishness—
"Like Solomon I have married and
married the speech of strangers..."
"And even the Hebrew for
mother, for bread, for sun, is foreign.
How far have I been exiled, Zion."
All this enriches his feeling for a city
which demolishes its past over and which demolishes its past over and over, in far less time than a single generation. It enriches his feeling for traditional Jewish themes. One of the traditional Jewish themes. One of the finest poems in the book, "From Inscriptions." is a beautifully controlled but passionate attempt to examine the place of the Jew in history, his nature today. "Begin with the disgrace and end with the glory," he quotes from the rabbis in another, similar poem on the same theme. Without pretension, he himself builds from seemingly ugly material, poems of considerable glory. Fashion or no fashion, this is the work of a genuine poet—and one who should be read.

#### SHYLOCK AGAIN

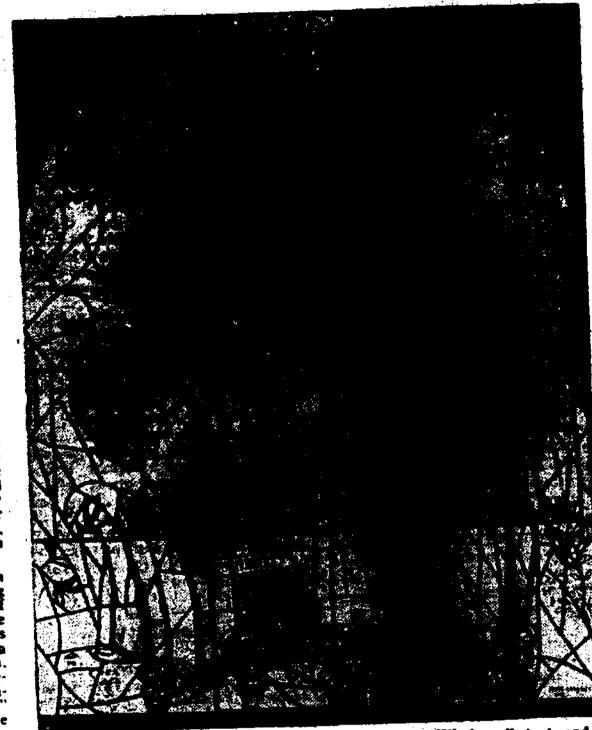
The Truth About Shylock. By BERNARD GRENARER. New York: Random House, \$4.15.

What was it Zangwill said?
"Queer people these commentators.
Who commentates on the commentators?" Could we now please have a rest from these commentators on Shylock? Close upon Miss Toby Lelyveld's exhaustive "Shylock on the Stage" here is a further work from America, chewing over the same ground "spain, exploring the possibility of an inner meaning in every word of Shakespeare's, and yet on the last page exhorting us to accept the work for what it is, a fantasy of genius, devoid of hidden symbol.

C.L.

### PSALMS MODERNISED

Praises Through Serrow and Praises in Faith, by Austin Turl (Mitre Press, St. 6d), gives a rendering in snodern English verse of some fifty Psalms. Rhyme has been discarded and sometimes the verses are written "to scan by whole lines and not by feet." Often a very broad rendering has been adopted "to suggest the ideas behind the verses."



litustration from "Mare Chagall, The Jerusalem Windows," text and notes by Jean Leymarie, Monte Carlo, André Sauret; London, Zwemmer, £10 f6s.

This lovely book is worthy of its inspiring theme. With over 100 magnificent plates (mostly in full colour) and detailed explanatory text, it gives a superb account of Chagail's now world-famous stained-glass windows in the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Centre Synagogue in Jerusalem.

The above illustration represents the tribe of Levi, and is splendidly pictured and interpreted in this beautiful volume. The dominant colour is pictured and interpreted in this beautiful volume. The dominant colour is yellow, solar exaltation and divine light, stressing the sacred duties of this yellow, solar exaltation and divine light, accound the Torah burn "like upon this tribe in Deuteronomy xxxiii, 10. Around the Torah burn "like flamboyant jacinthes" the candles which generate a mystic light. The two flamboyant jacinthes " the candles which generate a mystic light. The two flamboyant jacinthes " the candles which generate a mystic light. The two flamboyant picinthes " the candles which generate a mystic light. The two objects in the form of a candelabrum before the altar suggest the kiddush-objects in the form of a candelabrum before the altar suggest the kiddush-objects in the form of a candelabrum before the altar suggest the kiddush-objects in the form of a candlestick. The four heraldic animals of the synagogue, cup and the havdala-candlestick. The four heraldic animals of the synagogue, the Shield of David and a vase of offerings filled with flowers and fruits. The yellow ground is animated and made lustrous by a continuous vibration of little details painted with lightness and delicacy, like Oriental embroidery, and numerous accents of light.

#### LEGAL ADVICE

The Business Man's Lawyer and Legal Lexicon. By EWAN MITCHELL, Business Publications. 75s.

The nom de plume of the author of this book covers that of a well-known member of the Jewish community, who, in producing this volume, has supplemented his communal work by earning the gratitude of the business community at large. Written in a light, even at times rucy. style, it carries the intelligent man of commerce through almost every contingency in which he may come

up against the law. It is hardly likely that any book will replace the find it necessary to obtain professional advice. But with the aid of this book they will be better able to help their lawyers and will certainly understand very much more of what is happening.

Arabic Reader, by C. Rabin (Lund, Humphries; 12s. 6d.), is the second revised edition by H. M. Nahmad of a book which has become a standard educational work as an introduction to modern literary Arabic.

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### FROM EAST TO WEST By S. LEVENBERG

The Early Jewish Labour Move-ment in the United States. New York: Yivo Institute for Jewish Research.

Over twenty years ago Elias Tcherikower—a distinguished lewish historian—undertook to write a study of the lewish Labour Movement in the United States. In 1943 Volume I appeared in Yiddish. Two years later a second volume was 'published by Tcherikower's colleagues—after the historian's death. The present book in English—is a combination of the two Yiddish volumes; they were ably translated and revised by Aaron Antonovsky.

Antonovsky.

The study contains a vast amount of material about the pioneering days of the Jewish trade unions in America. The history of the Jewish working-class—its struggles and aspirations—is of considerable importance to a proper understanding of the Jewish community in the "New World." But for the British reader the first two parts of the book are of greater interest. One part deals with Jewish life in Eastern Europe and the background of the Jewish emigration movement. The other part describes movement. The other part describes

In 1880, 75 per cent of the Jewish people lived within the bounds of the Russian Empire (including Poland), in Galicia (which was part of Austria-Hungary) and Rumania.
Only 3 per cent of the Jews lived in America. Widespread despair, lack of roots and longing for a free life date back to the years before the "great exodus" from Taarist Russia started. The book quotes from a memorandum prepared by leaders of the Vilna Jewish community on the opension of a wirt in 1846 by Sir

occasion of a visit in 1846 by Sir

Moses Montefiore:

Before our eyes we have constant scenes of hunger and need; in every street one hears wailing. . . Do not leave us in this land, which hates and despises us. . . . Why are you silent, brothers in Germany, France and England? It will not take long before some will fiee across the borders in hunger, need and suffering, while the rest of us will starve to death."

Large-scale Jewish emigration from Russia began in 1881. The book



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Dr. E. I. COHN HEMPICE SPACIZ-IN HES TIME AND IN OURS

THESDAY, DECEMBER TO at 5 for 8.35 p.m. Communal Hall, Hampstood Synoghyus, Bussington Park Road, M.W.S. Chalrance: Robbi Sr. M. F. REHMIART gives a fascinating picture of the various trends within the Jewish community, especially among the radical circles. Of particular interest is the attitude of Jewish revolutionaries to their own people. A series of Jewish personalities are depicted in the book—radical minds devoted to the cause of freedom; some of them were concerned about the Jewish fate; some were completely indifferent.

The chapter on England deserves careful study. As early as 1850 Longdon was a transit centre for East European Jews en route to New York. For many it was simply a thoroughfare; for many others it was a preview of the American world of the sweatshop and the slum; for some others Britain became a permanent home. The life of Jewish immigrants in Whitechapel is vividly described. The great influence of working-class experience in London on the Jewish trade union movement in America is related in great detail. It also appears related in great detail. It also appears that Jewish socialists were active in England before there emerged an organised British Labour movement.

The book could be studied with profit by those interested in the historical background of present-day developments; it is heartily recommended.

### **MARX: DOCTRINE REVISED**

By LIONEL KOCHAN

Revisionism. Edited by LEOPOLD ABEDZ. Allen & Unwin. 37s. 6d. This is the first volume to be published in the Library of International Studies, whose Advisory Board includes Walter Laqueur, an author well known to readers of this journal. It sets a very high standard indeed; since there are nearly 30 contributors, the general level necessarily varies but it remains consistently acceptable. These "essays on the history of Marxist ideas" all deal with deviations and re-interpretations of the original doctrine of Marx. This is the somewhat vague common feature linking the various contributions. However, there is no clear statement of what is understood by revisionism It seems, in fact, more reasonable to look on these thinkers as exponents in very different circumstances, of various aspects of Marxism in appli-

#### Problems of truth

cation to the varying reactions of the

Thus this symposium falls into three categories. In the first come those thinkers who revised the actual theory of revolution. The second category deals with the problems of truth and alienation, of freedom and social change, of personality and history. Finally, the third part of the symposium deals with the origins and significance of revisionism in Eastern Europe, as it emerged after Stalin's death until its suppression in 1957. One notable contribution in this section is Alfred Sherman's study of Tito, whom the author calls "a reluctant revisionist."

Coming nearer home, another notable contribution to this symposium is that by G. L. Arnold, who makes the point that, whereas the British version of continental revisionism is at its weakest where international affairs are concerned, it more than compensates for this in the fields of sociology, literature and philosophy.

All in all, this symposium may well be looked on as a contribution to a highly significant component in twentieth-century thought.

J.P.A. News

#### TARGET REACHED

The event that brought this year's J.P.A. campaign to the £2 million mark was the annual dinner of the Chemists, Photographic and Allied Trades J.P.A. Committee.

The hosts were Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Levy and Mr. David Spier made the appeal which raised £8,000. Among the other speakers were Mr. L. Lubert, Mr. G. H. Grossman and Mr. K. Berg. Mr. H. Beck presided, and there was a cabaret compered by Alfred Marks.

"Miss Israel, 1962" and Mr. Yehuda Nedivi (the Town Clerk of Tel Aviv) were the guets of honour at a meeting of the Hackney J.P.A. Committee. About £650 was raised at the meeting, held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. Barden.

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