

group not to conduct any more Jewish weddings outside the synagogue or home, not to officiate at weddings in hotels or rented halls. "At first there was some dissatisfaction and resentment, but since there was no choice the people soon accepted the ruling; it is now a recognized part of Jewish life here," writes a lady from Minneapolis to the Post. And recently the Minnesota rabbinate also set some stiff rules for the candidates for bar or bat mitzvah — the youngsters will have to go four years to a Hebrew school before they will be allowed to go through the ceremony.

Of course, the Jewish communities of Minnesota are small — even the communities of the "Twin Cities," Minneapolis and St. Paul, are not very large — and therefore what was relatively easy for the rabbis of Minneapolis would be

much harder for the rabbinate of large centres to accomplish. Nevertheless, it is not impossible, and the very effort would in itself be an accomplishment, since it would at least call the attention of Jews to these anti-religious vulgarities that have entered their lives.

House-Cleaning

But in this connection our rabbinate has to do a little house cleaning of its own, rid itself of the bad taste and touch of cynicism that often emerge from its own ranks. We have the self-seeking rabbis, those who are the opposite of dedicated, who are ready to pack up and leave their congregations high and dry and at a moment's notice as soon as they are offered a rabbinical post that pays more. We have, as mentioned before, the "do-it-yourself" rabbis who own their synagogues — mainly among the

Orthodox. We have the rabbis who insert "positions wanted" ads in the Jewish press, even though all the theological seminaries have rabbinical placement bureaus.

In these ads you will almost always find the rabbinical job-seeker praising his own qualities as an administrator, his experience, and so on — just as if the post of rabbi were not a sacred calling, different from commercial posts where praise of ones abilities is in order and does not violate the sense of the fitness of things. Worse still, you will find in these ads rabbis who proclaim their willingness to lead either Orthodox or Conservative congregations, either Conservative or Reform. Even if the theological differences between the three denominations in Judaism mean nothing to the congregations themselves, they should at least mean something to a rabbi, if he wants to be known as a man of principle and be respected as such.

The vast majority of rabbis in the U.S.A. are still idealistic, dedicated people who are anxious to preserve their own dignity as rabbis and the dignity of Judaism as well. It is this vast majority that will have to roll up its sleeves and, aside from the relatively easy task of cleansing its own ranks, assume the much

more difficult task of imposing a discipline upon American Jews such as will preserve American Judaism and rescue it from the new kind of assimilation — absorption in a sea of vulgarity — which threatens its very existence.

(A "World Jewish Affairs" Feature)

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On Wings of Song

JEWISH ARTISTS LEND DISTINCTION TO NORTH AMERICA'S OPERATIC LIFE

By JACOB BELLER

KURT BAUM, one of the youngest of the successful artists of the "Met" has already been recognized as a talent of a high order, and comes from a family of Cantors. His father, an Orthodox Jew, was a Cantor in Prague and his children, Kurt among them, were given a strict religious upbringing. Young Kurt absorbed Judaism in all its aspects, Jewish music included. This accounts for the pride he now takes in his Judaism. He came to America in 1939, right after Hitler's occupation of Czechoslovakia. He made his first appearance with the Chicago Civic Opera in Aida. After an extended and successful tour through Central and South America, he returned to New York where he was signed by the Metropolitan Opera Company.

This is the gift made by Jewish religious music to the world's greatest and most prominent opera company of our time. The contribution of the past to the operas of the whole world is so great that a thick volume might be written on the subject, let alone a short article. It must be acknowledged, with special gratification, that the most recent Jewish contribution to American opera in general and the Metropolitan Opera in particular now includes many artists, most of whom were born in the United States and received a fine Jewish education. We mention the two famous brothers-in-law, Jan Peerce and Richard Tucker. Both were born in the United States on New York's lower East Side, where they drank deeply of Jewish life. Peerce's mother, who was Tucker's mother-in-law, lived on Madison Street, to her last day, one of the oldest and liveliest streets in New York's

Jewish neighborhood. Both are loyal, upright sons of their people. Regina Resnik, who made her first appearance with the Metropolitan Opera Company and immediately became a musical sensation in the country, was born in Brooklyn of religious Jewish parents. Miss Resnik was given a fine Jewish background. She speaks Yiddish well and frequently converses glibly in that tongue with her aged grandmother, an immigrant from Russia. Her recent appearance in Toronto as Carmen brought her great musical talent once again to audiences by now familiar with the magic of her great vocal and dramatic artistry.

Thelma Altman, a Jewish girl from Buffalo, is one of the five American-born opera singers chosen to be honored at the Diamond Jubilee of the Metropolitan. She comes of fine parents and is constantly gaining strength as an artist in the musical world. Her favorite role is that of Carmen.

Christine Carroll, an important coloratura-soprano, who was en-

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