שירי זמרה

דרייסיג הערליכע בּאַוער לידער אין
ריין יודיש לשון. יעדעס ליעד בזינגט
זייער שיין אין אַ דרומטעניטון קלאם.
אונ זאגט אַקלאַראַט דעם קאראקטער
פון יעדען. אַז עס איז אַנגענעם פֿאַר
גנוגין צו לעזען. אונ אוך לערנט
מען דער פון זייער פיל חכמה

Schire simru.

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8			12	8	12	1
134		10	50	44	51	0

אינהאלט

אין דיזעם שירי זמרה גפינון זיך אלו שייני לידער וואס
דוא בראדער אין לעמבערג גיזינגען האבן . אונ און
דאס ליעד פון דעם פאר פאסר בעריל בראדער וואס המחבר
לידער פאר פאסטי געמליך ;

א ליעד פון איין פאסטוך
ב מאנ אונ נאכט
ג איין ארימאן
ד פעקילמאכער
ה ווי איין מאטי קומט צום קונד
ו פון איין גרעבער
ז שמש
ח קאמעט שטערון
ט שינדיל שלעגר
י שריפה אונ בראד
יא בלינדין
יב אפגקומונום עושר
יג גזירה חתונה
יד בעל עגלה
טו חזן
טז צוויא שטערון

בעריל

אינהאלט

יז בעריל בראדער
יח וויא איין חכם שמוסט צו דר וועלט
יט פון איין מלמד
כ שדכן
כא הויזגער וואס מען האט אום גשמאכון
כב איין בעל דרשר
כג שיסטער מוט איין שניידער
כד וואכן געלדער
כה וועכטער
כו גאלדינים ומארגון
כז וואנדערער
כח בהעלפר
כט גשטארבונום
ל וואסר טרעגער

אונד אלע לידער וואס היר אוף גרעכונט זונד זענון אויף דם פאפיהר אונ ווערטר צוואר אבער גאנץ וויא לעבענדונ פארגישטעלט ;

מקל נועם.

כולל שירי עם (פאלקס לידער) בלשון המדוברת בין היהודים בארצות פולין ומאלדויא עם העתקת לשון עברית

מאת

וואלף עהרענקראנץ זבארזער.

Makel-Noam.

Volkslieder

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בהוצאת המדפיס י. אלאפין

ЕВРЕЙСКІЯ ПѢСНИ

М. Гордона

ВАРШАВА

Въ Типографіи И. О. Алапина, Налевки № 47.

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טַבְּלִיצֶע

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Selected Songs of ELIAKUM ZUNSER

sung in Yiddish by Nathaniel A. Entin with Merienka Michna at the piano

By Abraham Cahan

The poetry of Eliakum Zunser is sometimes described as intellectual. If that were all that could be said about it, one would be at a loss to account for the immense fascination it had for the unintellectual masses. A similar query is suggested by a certain characterization of the music to which he set his lines. Composer and bard at once, he is said to have invested his verse in a species of recitative rather than in melody. But then common people, and more especially our common people, are passionate lovers of melody. Yet every new song that issued from Zunser's lips was sure to be hungrily seized upon by the multitude and to spread like wildfire over the ghettos of Russia, Poland, Galicia and Roumania.

To do justice to his unique genius, to appreciate the charm which his songs had for our people, one must be familiar with the combined effect of the text and music in them, with special attention to the peculiar witchery of the rhythm throbbing in both.

You would enjoy them separately, too. You would admire the pretty little parables he develops out of the simplest things of everyday life, the quaint moral to which he leads up his meditations, or the ardent love for Israel that glows in them. Likewise, you would admire the homelike, yet compelling cadences of his intonations on their own account. It is music of a high order. As for the appeal it has for me, it is heavenly music. If, however, you would realize the full spell which a song of Zunser's generally cast over a toiling shop girl or house-wife singing it as an accompaniment to her work, the poetic moods it would put her into, the intoxicating visions of beauty it would unroll in her mind, you must intone it as the great "wedding bard" Eliakum Zunser taught his unnumbered worshippers to do. The Zunser melodies which I remember best echo in my mind, in each case, as a vague, soulful recital of some ancient tale of woe and, at the same time, as a spirited argument in support of the particular bit of wisdom that forms the theme of the song.

Seemingly the height of simplicity and all but made up of accents of ordinary speech, I can never hum an air of his without succumbing to what impresses me as the magic mysticism of something hovering in the background.

Millions of Yiddish-speaking men and women sang his ditties and brooded over his thoughts long before terms like "Yiddish literature" or "Yiddish culture" were dreamed of. Thinking, singing and writing during a period when such things as Yiddish newspapers and other organs of publicity of modern times were utterly unknown, he achieved a popularity that would have been considered stupendous in our own day.

Eliakum Zunser is one of the most remarkable men I ever met. One of the scenes of my early youth which I cherish among the most precious gems in my memory is an occasion when I heard him perform some of his famous songs to the accompaniment of his then celebrated orchestra. That was in Vilna, in the latter part of the seventies. It was an evening of thrills for me and I beheld the entranced faces of the other members of the audience. A dense crowd was listening spellbound in the street outside. And for weeks and weeks afterwards I would often catch myself humming one of the tunes I had heard on that divine evening and evoking the never-to-be-forgotten image of the wizard of rhythm as he stood singing and beating time for his own voice as well as for the instruments.

Many years later I heard him at a concert at the Thalia Theatre in New York. The orchestra was, naturally, much larger than the one which accompanied his singing in Vilna in the seventies. As for Zunser's success, it was as great in the new setting as it had been in our old home.

We met occasionally, on East Broadway, where he owned his little printing shop and I had my office. We visited each other on several occasions and in one instance, we sang some of his early melodies together. A Gentile American was present, a literary man who had wanted to know the celebrated poet and whom I had introduced to him. As he watched us sing those wonderful melodies, our moist eyes telling a tale of yearning for olden times, the Anglo-Saxon was all but moved to tears as well.

Eliakum Zunser is one of the immortals in the history of Yiddish life. His marvelous gifts and enormous popularity, his original art and the unique character of the sway he held over the Jewish masses have secured for him a conspicuous place in the Pantheon of our popular literature.