

Olsvanger's Collections

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Olsvanger, Immanuel, collector and editor: Rosinke Mit Mandlen;
Aus der Volksliteratur der Ostjuden: Schwänke, Erzählungen, Sprich-
wörter und Rätsel; Verlag der Schweizerischen Gesellschaft für Volks-
kunde, Basel; 1931

Description of Volume: This is a regular sized, hard cover, book. It has 371 pages, including a 5 page preface, a forward to the first and second edition (1 page each), a 32 page introduction; 10 pages of grammatical and orthographic notes etc.; 293 pages of tales, riddle songs, riddles, jokes, children's tales, sayings, + proverbs; a 12 page glossary, a nice page index, and 1 page of printing corrections.

Description of Contents: The preface (by Olsvanger) is in transliterated Yiddish (for the German reader). It is a rich, folk Yiddish, in the style of Sholom Aleichem's *Tevye de Milkhiger*. Olsvanger speaks of how he personally collected the stories. He mentions that this 2nd ed. is different from the first in that it leaves out the folk songs. It also includes 50 new stories: newly printed as well as more recently told. He states the purpose of the collection, comments on his choice of the Lithuanian Jewish dialect, gives 9 examples of parallel stories found in other cultures, and gives a short summary of the international-ness of some stories, and also the Jewishness of stories. The introduction is basically an interesting discussion of Jewish life in Eastern Europe. It is a historical, sociological, religious, and political account. He states re: the Jews of Eastern Europe: "Their virtues and shortcomings, their characteristic qualities - are also met with among other peoples. But how the various qualities of this people comes to expression, how they interact, how the folk draws itself to its many qualities: that is what makes up its own, unique character" (p. XL). Olsvanger devotes much space to

Rosines mit Mandlen (cont.)

discussion of Jewish humor: when & where jokes and stories are told; the psychology of Jewish humor; ^{and} the influence of the listeners & their comments to the success of the story. The grammatical & orthographic notes also include pronunciation aids and transliteration key. The glossary is a small Yiddish-German dictionary, and the index is a list of the tales, etc., by name.

Nature of Collected Materials: Sources: "I am presenting only those stories which I have heard with my own ears, ..." (p. v). The dialect used is that of a representative section of ~~the~~ Lithuanian Jewry. The titles are made up by the collector.

Documentation: None

Supplementary aids: footnotes, with translations and explanations of special terms. Also, books and articles are mentioned in the introduction, dealing with various aspects of Eastern European Jewry.

Composition of Collection: tales, riddle-song, riddles, jokes, children's tales, ^{and} sayings and proverbs.

Analysis: None