

ISRAEL ALTER, CANTOR, MAKES DEBUT HERE

Tenor From Germany Especially Impressive in His Hebrew Songs.

Israel Alter, tenor cantor from Hanover, Germany, appeared in his first American recital last night at Carnegie Hall. The program included items in German, Italian, Hebrew and Yiddish, and ranged from operatic airs and folk songs to traditional synagogal chants. Manifestly a difficult feat to interpret successfully such widely separated works, it was no less difficult for the average auditor to arrive at a just estimate.

In an aria from Mendelssohn's "Elijah" and Hummel's "Hallelujah" the recitalist revealed a voice of varying qualities. The upper octave was that of a lyric tenor, of warm and liquid timbre. In the extreme top the singer seemed to find some forcing necessary. The lower registers sounded reedy.

The diction of the German text was extraordinarily clear, though a trifle exaggerated, and the singer displayed a fluidity of style which suggested that he would be most happy in lieder.

The clarity and phrasing of Mr. Alter in the Hebrew text of three of his own compositions in traditional style were impressive. He succeeded in creating an almost mystical atmosphere, and the sincerity of his emotion which he communicated to his hearers was the outstanding part of the evening. Interesting especially was the harmonic background which combined modal effects with incongruous modern altered chords.

It was in Italian arias by Donizetti and Meyerbeer and in the lynching aria from Puccini's "Girl of the Golden West" that the singer was least happy. He gave no evidence of possessing any conception of the content or style of this school of song.

Both the soloist and his accompanist, John Mandelbrod, donned the orthodox skull cap in the liturgies.

A fair-sized audience greeted the singer cordially in the German and Italian groups and recalled him twice enthusiastically after the group in Hebrew. Mr. Alter responded to the applause with a short speech, in which he said that the arduous sea trip had made his appearance a matter of doubt until just before the concert. He added that he hoped to do himself justice in the near future.