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THE JOHANNESBURG JEWISH GUILD.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

A RECORD YEAR'S ACTIVITIES.

The following is the presidential address delivered by Mr. Fred Cohen, the retiring and re-elected president of the above formation, at the annual meeting held on May 8th, last, and provides an excellent record of the services rendered, not only to the members of the Guild itself, but to the entire community by the Executive for the year 1917-18.

Mr. Cohen said: Once again it is my very great privilege to present to you the Annual Report of the Jewish Guild, and again I have to ask your indulgence to an indifferent speaker, who perforce must rely upon the reading of copious notes. The importance of this occasion will further excuse my adhering to that procedure. In all the activities which it will be my duty to detail, the criticism may be offered that the Guild has covered no new ground; on the other hand, I think it will have to be conceded that the ground of those activities has been covered to a fuller extent, and that the progressive advance of the institution has been further consolidated. Neither I nor any member of the retiring Committee will claim credit for the extension of the Guild's activities by reason of any innovations of policy. It has been our great pleasure to continue on the lines adopted by our predecessors in office, lines which to my certain knowledge have been continuous for at least the last eleven years. It is pleasant and honourable to have been able to carry on and further such a record. Undoubtedly the great factor enabling the increased activities of the Guild, has been the acquiring of these Club Rooms as a home—even if only a rented home—for the Guild. The increased work accomplished has been reflected in an increase of membership. Starting with 505 members at the commencement of our year we now have 674, an increase for the year of 169.

The corresponding improvement is shown in the Guild's finances. We commenced the year with an over-draft of £30. 13. 11. closed it with a credit balance of £49. 18. 10. For the careful custodianship of our funds, we owe our thanks to our Finance Committee under the direc-

torship of our Treasurer, Mr. Monto Smollan.

Anyone who has attended Guild events in these rooms must have been impressed by the fact that our accommodation here is inadequate. With the increasing membership the inadequacy has become a very serious problem, and again the question of permanent suitable housing has occasioned your Committee much anxious thought. To add to our troubles, the proprietors of this building notified us that we should have to pay an increased rental of £30., instead of £20., and it was only after some personal influence that the increase was reduced to £25. It is understood that the rental of these rooms is assessed at £40. per month, and there can be no doubt, therefore, that we are indebted to some personal sympathy of the owners for a financial sacrifice by which they have evidenced their goodwill to the Guild. That the problem of housing is receiving sympathetic consideration is further evidenced in the opinion which we hear continually expressed, that the time has arrived for the Guild to own its own building.

Our most important work is naturally devoted to the promotion of thought on Jewish subjects. In that connection I am proud to report that no less than 17 lectures and 2 debates on Jewish subjects were held during the year, these being as follows:—April 8th, "The Wandering Jew," Rev. W. Woolf; May 20th, "A Modern Jewish Philosopher—Bergson," Mrs. Asher; May 6th, "The Jew and the War," Mr. M. Kentridge; June 24th, "Dreams that come true," Rev. W. Woolf; July 8th, "Intolerance and its Effects on our History," Mr. A. L. Cohn; July 22nd, "Jewish Universities of Antiquity," Mrs. Asher; August 12th, "For the Jew after the War—What?" Rev. W. Woolf; August 19th, "Some aspects of Zionism," Mrs. Bertha Goudvis; September 9th, "Assimilation," Mr. A. L. Cohn; September 23rd, "The Jew in English Literature," Mrs. Asher; November 15th, "A South African Jewish Voortrekker," Mrs. Asher; December 9th, "The Jew in

South Africa to-day," Mrs. Millin; January 23rd, "Is the Jew a Semite?" Mrs. Asher; February 24th, "The Purim Mystery," Mr. A. L. Cohn; March 31st, "Jewish Genius," Dr. Landau; April 7th, "The words of Job—If a man dies—shall he live again," Mr. A. L. Cohn; April 24th, "Second Lecture on Judaism in Music—"Meyerbeer" with Musical illustrations," Dr. Landau; April 11th, Debate on Zionism, opened by Mr. Benzion Hersch; July 15th, "Is a reform of the Synagogue Needful and Practicable at the present time," Messrs. A. L. Cohn and N. Levi.

Another branch of the Guild's activities, certainly not a secondary branch, is the promotion of Jewish intellectual and artistic interest. Under the former heading I am able to report that 19 lectures were delivered, being as follows:—April 15th, 1, Science of Physical Culture, Tromp Van Diggelen; June 10th, 2, Socialism—True and False, Mark Lucas; June 15th, 3, A Criticism of the National Guild Scheme, E. J. Moynihan; July 29th, 4, National Guilds "An essay in reconstructions" R. T. A. Innes; August 26th, 5, "University Development," Dr. G. S. Corstorphine; September 2nd, 6, "The History of the Native Races in South Africa," Dr. Manfred Nathan; October 14th, 7, "Romeo and Juliet"—the tragedy of petty quarrels, Rev. W. Woolf; October 21st, 8, "Rotation," Prof. J. P. Dalton; October 28th, 9, "Some Facts and Impressions concerning the South West Protectorate," Mr. Emile Nathan; October 31st, 10, "The Violin—How it is made and played," Sig. Casiraghi; November 4th, 11, "The nature of Scientific Theories," Mr. P. Stein; November 11th, 12, "An Essay in Reconstruction,"—(continuation of lecture given on July 29th), Mr. R. T. A. Innes; November 18th, 13, "The Physical Basis of Music"—(with lantern illustrations), Mr. Leo Weinberg; December 23rd, 14, "Napoleon—The Warrior and Conqueror," M. Eugene de Senan; January 13th, 15, "The W.E.A. What it is and What it Aims At?" Messrs. G. M. Clark and L. Brown; January 20th, 16, "Secret Societies," Mr. W. T. Lee; February 13th, 17, "Youth and its Visions," Rev. W. Woolf; March 3rd, 18, "The Iniquities of our Jewry System," Mr. L. Harris; March 10th, 19, "Experiences around Verdun," Capt. A. M. Holloway. As well as three debates, Ten Minute Readings and four Meetings of