

## In and Around the Town.

100, St. George's Street,  
Thursday.

### RUSSIAN COLONIZATION SCHEME.

Some time ago I mentioned in these notes that there was a movement afoot to form in this country an organisation to foster the Jewish Colonization Scheme in Russia. In Bloemfontein, recently, a branch of the "Ica" was formed, and it was generally rumoured that another section would be formed in Cape Town. To my knowledge nothing has, so far, materialised, although I have good reason to believe there are a number of Jews in the Mother City who are anxious to do something to help forward the project of settling co-religionists in the Ukraine and Crimea in colonies granted for that purpose by the Soviet Government. Now a definite move has been made. On Monday there arrived in Cape Town Dr. Leon Bramson, who, among his other activities, has done a great deal to further the scheme of settling on the land our stricken brethren of Eastern Europe. He has come to South Africa on an important mission and will discuss with the leaders of the numerous communities in this country the question of reconstruction and the settling of Jews on the land in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. In another part of this issue will be found interviews with Dr. Bramson and the reason of his visit and the importance of the organisations he represents are fully set out. It will, I feel sure, be interesting to my readers to learn something of this new arrival to our shores.

### DR. LEON BRAMSON.

Born in Kovno, in 1869, Leon Bramson studied law at the Moscow University. After having completed his studies, he practised law in St. Petersburg. During the first Russian Revolution and in 1906 he was elected Deputy of the first Russian Duma. For signing, together with a number of other Deputies, the Viborg Proclamation in which the Deputies protested against the brutal dispersment of the Duma by the government, Bramson was deprived of his electoral rights and imprisoned. But he always remained in touch with his political friends in the following Duma, and was elected Vice-President of the Troudivaja-Groupa (Labour Group). He organised the defence in many political trials. For these political activities, he several times served in jail. On one occasion he was indicted and condemned to prison together with a number of other Russian lawyers for their protest against the staging by the Czarist Government of the well-known Beilis trial.

### THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

He was in close political contact with the elements which made the March Revolution in 1917, which abolished monarchy in Russia. He served as a member of the Commission for drafting the Electoral Law for the Constitutional Assembly, and was elected to the All Russian Committee for its convocation.

Soon after the March Revolution, 1917, he called on the then Minister of Justice, Kerensky, his political associate and friend, pleading for the immediate granting of full rights to the persecuted nationalities. In consequence of this meeting Kerensky entrusted him with preparing a draft of the law which was promulgated by the Provisional Government on March

22nd, 1927, thus starting a new era for the minority nationalities, particularly for the seven million Jews of Eastern Europe.

### HONOURS REFUSED.

For the services rendered by him to modern Russia he was several times offered the post of Under-Secretary of Justice and Senator (the Senate is the Supreme Court of Russia), but he refused these honours and continued his cultural activities in the Council of Farmers and Workers, warning them against extremities and trying to direct them toward the establishment of a Free Republican Government.

At the same time he plunged himself into the social work on behalf of the Jews in Russia, constantly striving by cultural and educational measures to improve their economical situation and to turn their activities towards productive labour. In 1892 he joined the Society for the Promotion of Culture among the Jews in Russia and actively participated in its work. On the proposition of the Jewish Colonization Association, he organised and supervised a statistical investigation of the economical structure of the Jews in Russia, and the results of this investigation were published later in two volumes by the Ica, Paris, in the French and Russian languages; he induced this Society to begin methodical work for the promotion of trades and agriculture among Jews in Russia and during eight years, 1898-1906, a net of vocational schools and co-operative credit institutions were founded in the Jewish "zone."

### A VERSATILE WRITER.

These various political and social activities he also sustained by pen. He contributed articles to various magazines on political, social, educational and Jewish subjects. Among others he published "The Electoral Law for the Constitutional Assembly," "The History of the Labour Group," "The Laws Governing the Jews," in two volumes; a complete Bibliography on Jews in Russia, prepared with the aid of a group of young students; "The Judicature Act and the Jews"; "A Survey of the Jewish Vocational Training, Past and Present"; "Jewish Agricultural Settlements in South Russia," and a series of articles about the Jewish emigration and immigration.

When, after the October Revolution, the Civil War brought misery and despair to the Jewish population in the Ukraine, he headed a delegation of the Society Ort, of which he was Vice-President, to assist them in their economical reconstruction through a rational promotion of technical and agricultural trades. In Kiev, and on his way to Odessa, he personally underwent several pogroms and witnessed with his own eyes all the horrors of the epoch.

### TRADES AND AGRICULTURE.

In 1909 Dr. Bramson headed a delegation of the Ort (Association for promotion of trades and agriculture among the Jews) and departed for Western Europe and North America in order to acquaint the Jews of those countries with the plight of their brethren in Russia and to win their sympathy for the contemplated methodical and economical reconstruction. In New York he presented a detailed memorandum to the American Joint Distribution Committee developing his ideas and methods to the form of a rational and productive assistance in the devastated re-

gions. Under his direction were founded the Societies of Ort in eleven countries with sixty committees in different cities which were united at the Berlin Convention of 1921 in the Ort Association. This Association, of which he became the Chairman of the Central Board in 1923, succeeded in a short time to found a large number of vocation schools and has developed on a large scale the supply of artisans with tools and granted farmers loans for agricultural purposes.

### PROBLEMS OF JEWISH SETTLEMENT.

In 1924 Dr. Bramson was elected by the American Joint Distribution Committee Member of the Council of the International Organisation "American Jewish Reconstruction Foundation" and from 1925 he is a member of the Council of the Union of Jewish Emigration Societies. From the beginning of 1926 he entered the Board of the United Relief Committee, representing three central Jewish organisations in their combined collecting activities, i.e., the Ort (mentioned above), the Ose (society for preserving the health of the Jewish population), and the Emigdirekt (regulating Jewish emigration). As Vice-President of this United Committee he undertook the mission from the beginning of 1927 to visit a series of countries in order to establish a contact between their Jewish inhabitants and East-European Jewry and to create a unity of ideas and practical efforts by concentrating the mind and thoughts of the newly settled Jews on the problems connected with their old homes.

### A SILVER WEDDING.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Kadish have just celebrated their silver wedding and have been the recipients of the hearty congratulations of a host of friends in the Peninsula and elsewhere. Mr. Kadish has long been associated with charitable endeavour in Cape Town and his unselfish labours in the past have been generally recognised and appreciated. A past president of the Cape Town Philanthropic Society, now incorporated in the Board of Guardians, Mr. J. Kadish was one of the band of social workers who about fourteen years ago tackled the question of providing for local orphans. He was the first president of the Cape Jewish Orphanage, and he held that important office for seven consecutive years. Since then he has held other executive offices, and although debarred, through business reasons, from taking the same active interest as of old, Mr. Kadish is still a valued member of the Committee. He is a prominent Cape Town mason, is a Past Master of the Lodge Goede Verwachting and holds a high office in the Provincial Lodge. I join in wishing Mr. and Mrs. Kadish all that is good.

### A FOX-TROT COMPOSITION.

"Where was Moses when the Lights went out?" This is what Mr. Tobias Marks calls his latest fox-trot composition, and during the coming dance season thousands will be dancing to the lilting strains of this latest piece. I understand thousands of copies have been sold and local orchestras are already playing it. Jack Hylton's Band in London are popularising it and many thousands are buying it in gramophone record form—put up by the H.M.V. people.

### A YOUNG VIOLINIST.

A new violinist is shortly coming to town. I understand that Mr. Leonid Birsan, who recently arrived from Vienna and who is at present in Rhodesia, has obtained an engagement with the Cape Town Orchestra,

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## IN AND AROUND THE TOWN.

*(Continued from Page 487.)*

and will open at the City Hall on the 18th prox. Mr. Birsen is an excellent violinist, and whilst in Budapest studied under the celebrated master Hubay. He is quite a young fellow, but notwithstanding this he has an enormous repertoire of classical and other pieces. He is a finished artist and perfect technician. For some time he studied in Norway under Leopold Auer, and South African audiences will soon have the opportunity of judging for themselves the artistry of this new arrival in local musical circles. I understand that after playing with the Cape Town Orchestra Mr. Birsen will make a tour of the country.

## THE LATE MR. H. GAWRONSKY.

By the death of Mr. H. Gawronsky, the community has lost one of the best types of men it is possible to meet. Notwithstanding that he took no active part in public affairs in connection with the Jewish community, Mr. Gawronsky was known to a wide circle of friends and admirers, who appreciated his sterling honesty, his genial kindness and his considerable and generous charity. By these and by many others to whom he readily rendered his good offices in time of need, he will be genuinely and deeply mourned. He leaves behind a widow and a large family who have been bereaved of one of the most affectionate and sympathetic guardians and guides in the prime of his manhood. To them his memory should be not only a blessing but an inspiration to a life lived in as high a plane as was his own. May he receive full reward for his labours in the circle in which he was so widely esteemed in the life everlasting.

## THE FIRST BALL.

The first Jewish ball of the season will take place in the City Hall on Wednesday, 1st June. The function is the annual ball to raise funds for the United Hebrew Schools, and an energetic committee are endeavouring to make it a bigger success than ever. Certain it is that the Talmud Torah requires funds urgently, and, despite the many calls upon the charitably disposed, the appeal for support for their annual social event will, I feel sure, not fall upon deaf ears. In any case full value will be given for the money for I hear that special efforts are being made to provide an attractive and enjoyable affair.

## THE "SEDRA."

In this week's "Sedra," Leviticus, Chapter 26, verses 44 and 45, we read: "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am the Lord their God . . . . But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt . . . ."

There is a certain providential guiding hand which protects the Jew throughout all his troubles, trials, and tribulations. The Rabbis so beautifully expressed this idea of the guiding hand of providence when they said: "Before the sun of Moses set, the sun of Joshua had risen, before the sun of Joshua had set, the son of the elders had risen, before the sun of the elders had set, the sun of the judges had risen." Israel had never been left without leaders. The same also applies to centres of Judaism. No sooner did one Jewish centre go down, another one arose. To the student of Jewish history this idea is quite clear, and it inspires him with great confidence for the future. A great number of Jewish centres in Russia as well as in other parts of Europe has been destroyed within the last few years, but other

centres with great revivals of the Hebrew language and literature have arisen. Moderns and scientists are puzzled at this new revival; they argue that by all laws of nature such as the survival of the fittest (the strongest), the Jew should by now be a thing of the past, but our answer to all these puzzles and queries is the everlasting covenant in accordance with the above text.

## FOR EUROPE.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Rosen left for Europe by the liner "Toledo" on Monday. Other passengers were Mr. Abe Goldstein, Mr. Sieradski, Mr. and Mrs. Mendelsohn, Mrs. Wassenstein, Mr. Stern, Mr. and Mrs. Immanuel, Mrs. and Miss Stern, Mr. and Mrs. Hammerschlag, Mrs. Weinberg, Mr. and Mrs. Levin and Miss L. Hermann.

## A BARMITZVAH.

Isaac Judah, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Glantz, of Plein Street, will read a portion of the law on Saturday, at the Gardens Synagogue. A reception and dance will be held to celebrate the event in the evening from eight to twelve, at the Banqueting Hall, City Hall.

## C.T.D.T.A. CABARET.

Attention is drawn to the Cabaret which has been arranged by the Cape Town Dance Teachers' Association and which will be held at the Hotel Edward, Mill Street, Gardens, on Friday, June 3rd. It is the aim of the Association to make these cabarets a feature of the social life of the Peninsula, and to ensure their being a success, the support of Peninsula pleasure seekers is necessary. A splendid night's entertainment is guaranteed for the 3rd, and in addition to several well-known and popular artists, a special feature will be The Luck Girls, a chorus of superb dancers, and who will undoubtedly prove a great attraction. Supper on a grand scale will be provided, whilst provision will be made for non-dancers who will be able to view the spectacle from the gallery for a modest charge, which will include refreshments. Orchestral music will be supplied by Zabow & Moller's band. As a limited number of tickets will be issued, early application is imperative. These can be obtained at Darter's, Adderley Street, and at the Hotel.

## AN ENGAGEMENT.

The engagement is announced between Reuben, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. S. Shaskolsky, of Bowden Road, Observatory, and Jane, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. I. Miller, of Paarl.

MR. GOSSIP.

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