

On the Way from Basle

By
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(Our Overseas Correspondent.)

Paris, July 19th.

I have fled from Basle. Travelled all night rather than stay one more evening in the dull Swiss city whence we received so many thrills in the past and so much pain in the present. No, this is not a review of the Seventeenth Congress. Not even a sketchy survey. Thoughts are scattered, emotions unchecked. It is too soon to collect, control and connect impressions. Moments of pain amounting to distraction, minutes of sorrow bordering on despair. But alive—and life-giving. Stirring scenes. Hours of perturbation and to some perhaps of disgust. But what adamant faith and burning zeal. Nerves are worn, bodies weary, souls sore. Yet beneath this restless agitation and shaken energies—firm purpose, solid determination.

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But for the present one cannot reason, one cannot collate and relate conflicting feelings, ideas and loyalties. A bundle of fragments. Confused fragments. Isolated unconnected scenes pass before your eyes and voices are in your ears. Voices that have for weeks been grinding their way deep down into your soul. Voices drawing and fierce, groaning and vehement, roaring and yelling. Rarely a low, slow note. Invariably a stream of violent discontent; a gaping and gasping of bitter resentment, a billowing of protest, a continuous and violent outcry against inexorable fate, controlling our national destiny. And a concentrated cry for a target which is discovered in the nearest and dearest—who is brought down from the mountain-cliff where, eagle like, he was resting for so many years . . .

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Floods of thoughts, bursting emotions, conflicting views. They oppress you; you cannot shake them off, they haunt you . . . throughout the journey from Basle to Paris. You seek relief in the Paris opera. You do not care for Verdi, but Aida is not so bad, so you seek refuge. Unfortunately the singing is not good. The magnificent building holds your eye, but the flowing tuneful melodies of Verdi escape you. Instead, the fierce scowling, the yells of fire from the Congress Tribunal, raging argumentation in the Political Committee, endless lamentation in the Financial Commission, and ruthless reiteration at the Standing Committee, euphemistically known as the *Permanenze Ausschuss*. You can escape from Basle, but not from the impressions you have absorbed.

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No relief from uneven voices, in varied language and different accents. They follow you from Congress proper to the numerous committees and from the Committees to the long and spacious corridors and innumerable rooms of the Mustermesse and thence to the Cafés and Restaurants. Mingled groups of friends and opponents, one might almost say foes for feelings run high and if you venture to differ you are a miscreant and a monster, and if you refuse to lose your sense of humour and dare to smile, you are a cynic. Fierce is the God of Zion at Congress. As fierce as life itself, our national life and the will to live—which finds expression through Congress. You are overwhelmed, baffled and bemused while it lasts. You yearn for its conclusion. When it ends you are overcome by confusion, but equally so by a strange feeling of loneliness. . . .

Second Conference of the South African Board of Jewish Education

Preliminary Announcements.

The South African Board of Jewish Education announces that the second Conference of its affiliated bodies will be held in Johannesburg on Sunday and Monday, 18th and 19th October next. The holding of a Conference has been decided upon not only for the purpose of reviewing the work done by the Board in the first period of its existence, but also in order to strengthen the forces which make for the progress of Jewish education in this country.

The Board has, during the last few months, launched out upon various spheres of activity, and contemplates entering upon a number of others. Many communities have, of late, been visited by the Board's officers, and the roll of affiliated bodies is steadily growing. It is, however, hoped that the holding of the second Conference will further strengthen the Board and help it to expand its activities into still wider spheres.

The names of delegates and resolutions to be submitted to the conference must reach the office of the Board not later than September 20th, 1931.

Further 1,500 Dunams of South African Tract Acquired.

As a result of recent remittances made by Jewish National Fund Headquarters in Johannesburg, the Palestine Head Office has been able to get transfer of a further 1,500 dunams of land of the South African tract of 15,000 dunams in the Sharon. This brings the area transferred so far on account of the 15,000 to 5,726 dunams.

In addition, contracts have been made on further stretches on which considerable sums in deposits have been paid. The Headquarters of the Jewish National Fund are confident that the Jews of South Africa will see to it that the commitments undertaken will be fully carried out and that the options on the remaining area will be taken up promptly as they fall due.

"Some Aspects of Zionism."

Mr. Kentridge, M.P. to Lecture in Benoni.

Under the auspices of the Benoni Women's Zionist League, Mr. M. Kentridge will lecture at the Hebrew Hall, Bunyan Street, on Sunday the 23rd inst., at 8 p.m. on the above subject. Mr. N. Kirschner will deliver a short address prior to Mr. Kentridge's lecture. An invitation is extended to all interested to attend.