

# ZIONIST CONVERSAZIONE.

YITZCHOK L. PERETZ.

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## Welcome to Rabbi Dr. E. W. Kirzner.

The fortnightly *Conversazione* at the Zionist Hall on Tuesday night was held under the auspices of the combined Zionist Societies and took the form of a welcome to Rabbi Dr. E. W. Kirzner and Mrs. Kirzner.

**Dr. S. E. Kark** was in the chair and extended a cordial welcome to Rabbi and Mrs. Kirzner on behalf of the Dorshei Zion Association. He trusted that Rabbi Kirzner would be a source of light to the Jewish community and a pillar of strength to Zionism in Cape Town.

**Mr. J. Herbststein, K.C.**, extended a welcome on behalf of the W.P. Keren Hayesod Council. The fate and future of the National Home, together with the rest of the world, gave cause for anxiety. There were dark days ahead, but we must have faith in ultimate victory. To this end we must play our part, as the Jewish People were doing all over the world.

Mr. Herbststein went on to refer to the statement issued by the N.Z.O. with regard to the formation of a Jewish army. He regretted that the statement had been issued in this form at this stage of the world's history when the most essential thing was unity. Since the beginning of the war the Zionist Organisation had placed its whole resources at the disposal of the British Government. Every man and woman in Palestine had rallied to its support. They had prayed and entreated to be allowed to form a Jewish legion to fight on the side of the Allies, but for political reasons this had been refused—the Jews of Palestine were not allowed to fight as Jews. The Zionist Organisation realised they must do their utmost towards attaining final victory. The chief need of the Jewish People was unity everywhere.

He was sure that Rabbi Kirzner as spiritual leader would lend strength to Western Province Jewry and be a source of strength to the Keren Hayesod. In spite of the difficult times, work for the rehabilitation of Eretz Israel must go on, and he felt he was not appealing in vain to Rabbi Kirzner to assist.

**Mrs. L. Segal** welcomed Rabbi and Mrs. Kirzner on behalf of the Bnoth Zion Association. In these dark days we needed spiritual guidance more than ever. In Rabbi Kirzner we had a man who would give faith and moral courage to all and who would, she was sure, be an inspiration to the youth.

**Mr. L. Traub** extended a welcome on behalf of the Cape Town Mizrahi. The Rabbi, he was sure, would help greatly to strengthen this organisation. He hoped the time would soon come when Jews would have a say in the councils of the world, and the Mizrahi also would have to play their part.

**Mrs. S. Weinstein** welcomed Rabbi and Mrs. Kirzner on behalf of the Cape Zionist Youth Executive. Many of the young men

were on active service and the women were trying to take their place. They fully realised that Zionist work must go on. She was sure that Rabbi Kirzner would be a great source of strength to the youth. His "Talmud Simplified" gatherings were already proving a great attraction and were very well attended.

**Rabbi Kirzner** expressed sincere thanks on behalf of Mrs. Kirzner and himself for the very hearty welcome. The question today was how to help in the great task of keeping the strength of the community intact. Our national revival was not only for ourselves. We had been the greatest spiritual force for thousands of years. While scattered all over the world we had been unable to impart the great lesson of God. Only when we were again settled in our own land, Eretz Israel, would the word of God from the pages of the Bible go forth once more and silence those who stood up against God, and the greatest spiritual inheritance of humanity, Zion.

Eretz Israel was not only a country to us; it had become the watchword of revival and unity. Zion was the name of a hill in Jerusalem, on which the Temple of God was later built. Zion came to denote the whole of Jerusalem, the whole of Israel. The ideal of Zion is the national ideal of our people. Zion is founded on unity, and he was pleased that the welcome to him had been arranged by the combined Zionist societies. The ideal of united activity was the foundation on which Zionism stood and on which the whole future depended.

They were meeting under anxious conditions and passing through days of danger and darkness for the whole world. Humanity was at stake and the ideals of Judaism and religion were threatened. Only by uniting and keeping together could we help the world. Our major duty was to be united for our own cause and for the great British Empire of which South Africa was a part and which stood for dignity and human right and freedom.

Jewish societies and institutions all stood on the same basis; it was only a question of approach. Judaism in historical traditional form would surmount all obstacles and survive. Rabbi Kirzner went on to pay a tribute to Cape Town Jewish institutions, particularly the Talmud Torah, which was doing wonderful work for our Torah, land and language.

Concluding his address in Yiddish, Rabbi Kirzner expressed appreciation to the various speakers who had welcomed him and to the societies they represented. "Let us in these dark days," he said, "study our ancient treasures which will give us strength and hope and ensure Eretz Israel for future generations."

Miss R. Rabinowitz rendered a piano-forte solo and Mr. H. Rabinowitz several Yiddish songs.

associate in this census taking. At the completion of the survey, such as it was, Peretz was again without a regular occupation. Fortunately a vacancy presented itself at the Warsaw Jewish Community House, and he accepted a post as book-keeper or auditor, where he was later assigned, of all things, the task of serving as mortuary clerk.

His sudden death during the Passover week in 1915, plunged not only the Warsaw Jews but all Jewry into deep mourning. It is estimated that more than 150,000 people participated in the funeral. There was scarcely an organization in Poland which did not send a delegation to represent it. Only the Community officials were conspicuously absent. In the minutes afterwards, the death of the clerk of the tax department was baldly recorded; but there was no Peretz to transform the scene into a scorching satire.

Thus lived and died, and yet continues to live a beacon light in Jewish culture, a warrior and artist at the same time, a man who throbbed with life and created lasting values, while he was attending the needs of the dead.

By courtesy of "The Jewish Frontier."

## Keren Hayesod Campaign.

### Swellendam.

There was a good attendance of the Swellendam Jewish community on Saturday evening (15th June) at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. J. Blumberg. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Blumberg; addresses were delivered by Mr. Bunim in Yiddish and Mr. Hareven in English, and enthusiasm for the cause of Am Israel and Eretz Israel was aroused. The response to the warm-hearted appeal for the Keren Hayesod was good.

A vote of thanks to the speakers was passed with acclamation on the motion of Dr. Katz.

### Riversdale.

Mr. Bunim and Mr. Hareven, accompanied by Mr. Disler of Heidelberg, addressed a gathering of the Riversdale Jewish community on the 16th June at the Shul Hall. Mrs. Shemer presided and the speakers made a strong appeal for support of the Keren Hayesod; the response, in the circumstances, was fair.

Mr. Disler proposed a vote of thanks to the speakers.

## Union of Jewish Women of South Africa.

The Union has decided to present an ambulance to the Red Cross Society and appeals to members to support this effort whole-heartedly by sending in donations and raising money for this purpose. The need is urgent and the required amount must be raised as soon as possible.

Contributions should be sent to Mrs. H. Mandelbrote, Hon. Treasurer, "Merton," Forest Road, Oranjezicht.