

In and Around the Town.

100, St. George's Street,
Thursday.

EXIT 1926..

To-morrow night at twelve, old man 1926, will depart to the accompaniment of ringing bells, carillons, fireworks, the blowing of ship's syrens and mechanically made noises by the crowds that will parade the main thoroughfares of the City and who will hilariously speed the parting guest and welcome the birth of yet another year. Hardly recovered from Christmas festivities the New Year festival will be the excuse for more gaiety and good fellowship. The flowing bowl will be freely circulated to-morrow, and the time-honoured greeting of "A Happy New Year" will be heard on all sides.

WELCOMING 1927.

Whilst the volume of trade done is not on the large scale as was the case during the days preceding Christmas, shopkeepers report steady business. Purses were severely strained last week and as a consequence there was not such a great demand for "New Year Seasonal goods" as there was for Christmas novelties. Nevertheless a spirit of carnival is abroad, and the signs are that New Year's Eve will witness the determination of the populace to enter 1927 in a gay and boisterous manner. The many hotels in the towns and suburbs have made elaborate preparations for New Year dances and lively affairs may be anticipated.

A SPIRIT OF PEACE.

So far as the Jewish community is concerned the past week has been particularly devoid of social events. Of course the non-Jewish festivals have overshadowed everything, but many co-religionists participated in house and dance parties with their Gentile friends. The mingling of members of both races is not undesirable and the spirit of good fellowship and friendliness that is fostered thereby can be productive of nothing but good. May the New Year see efforts redoubled by all sections of the white population to work in harmony, to eliminate every vestige of racialism and work together wholeheartedly for the benefit of the country. "Peace on earth and goodwill towards men" should be the motto for all time.

THAT HOLIDAY FEELING.

The hub of Jewish social activity has been temporarily removed to Muizenberg and other seaside resorts whilst inland centres have their quota of Jewish visitors. The nearly unbearable heat makes one long for the sea's cooling breezes. I envy those lucky ones who can for a time get away from office and store to be able to exchange office clothes for seaside negligée. I long for slacks and glad neck shirts, the golden strand and the open sea. I have the holiday feeling but must perforce stifle it; not for me are those joys. A stuffy office is my lot, and at the end of a tiresome day a feeling of limpness and tiredness that only a seaside holiday can dispel.

AN ENGAGEMENT.

Miss Dolly Hartstone will be congratulated by her many friends upon her engagement to Mr. Solly Lange, of Worcester, of which happy event I have just been informed. Miss Hartstone, who is a sister of Mrs. Sam Goldstein, is very popular among the younger section of the local Jewish community. Mr. Lange is a well-known communal worker and has been President of the Worcester Hebrew Congregation for the past ten years. I tender them my hearty felicitations.

"BARMITZVAH."

An important event in the life of a Jewish boy is the time when he reaches the age of thirteen, and is then regarded as a fully-fledged member of Jewry. For months before he is specially coached for his confirmation ceremony, and many are the preparations made by his parents for the "coming of age" celebrations. At the Synagogue he is "called up" and proudly mounts the *bimé* where he reads his portion of the Law, and makes his offerings for charitable objects. Following the religious side, a reception is usually held at the fond parents' residence where grown-up and play-fellows of the "barmitzvah" boy are entertained. It is here that he makes his first public utterances, usually prefaced with "My dear parents, grand parents, uncles, aunts, cousins, relatives and friends!" There is never any variation on such occasions, and the oration invariably reeks of midnight oil. Still, no one expects anything different, and the speeches by father, the boy's Hebrew teacher and others are only what one is prepared to hear.

ORPHANAGE "BARMITZVAHS."

The event is always a popular one at the Cape Jewish Orphanage, and the Committee endeavour to celebrate the occasion in such a manner that it will always be remembered by the boy concerned in the years to come. The little inmates eagerly anticipate these events, and the reception arranged is also attended by members of the Committee and friends of the Institution. Last Saturday three boys celebrated their "barmitzvah," one reading his portion at the Gardens Synagogue, another at the Roeland Street Synagogue, and the third at the Constitution Street *Beth Hamedrash*. Owing to the holidays, and so many of the Committee being out of town, the reception has been deferred until a date in January, when the three boys will be the guests of honour of the Committee.

TURKISH BATHS.

Meeting my friend Councillor Sam Goldstein the other day, I asked him when the Turkish Baths, which, owing to his perseverance and persistence were sanctioned by the City Council, would be available for public use. He told me they would be ready by the end of February, and thus a long felt want will be filled. It is a long time since Mr. Goldstein initiated the movement for Turkish Baths, and it was some time before he was able to convince his fellow Councillors of the desirability of the innovation. So now it will not be long before "Sam's baby" is fully matured.

A STEAM ROOM.

But Councillor Goldstein is not yet satisfied. He tells me that he has been approached by many ratepayers who desire a steam room added to the Baths. I understand a well-signed petition has been presented to the responsible committee urging them to agree to this addition, but apparently they do not feel disposed to vote the necessary funds. The amount required—about £225, is not a great deal to ask for, particularly as £4,000 was voted for the establishment of the Turkish Baths, and there is no doubt a steam room will prove a great attraction, and will help to make the Turkish Baths a popular and payable proposition. Those devoted to the cult are looking forward to the opening of the Baths, and it is to be hoped that, whilst there is still time, the "powers that be" will agree to the addition.

THE "CHRONICLE" AND ZIONISM

In refusing to accept the CHRONICLE Cake, Mr. I. Schwartz complained of the attitude of this paper towards the Zionist movement. That Mr. Schwartz was not justified in his attitude is seen by the following, addressed to the Editor, received from Mr. S. Lennox Lowe, of Johannesburg. "Your services to the cause of Zionism in South Africa since its inception have been of incalculable benefit, and as the founder and first Honorary Organiser of the Movement no one can know better than I, how you have helped to keep the spirit of Herzl alive in this self-made Ghetto."

THE TEN PLAGUES.

The Talmudical saying "Never cast stones into wells from which thou didst drink" accounts for the fact, despite the general disbelief that all the ten plagues were visited upon the Egyptians through the agency of Moses. The first three were executed by Aaron by the wishes of the Almighty conveyed to him by Moses.

Thus we turn to this week's *Sedra*, Exodus, Chapter 6-9, and we read in Chapter 7, verse 19, in regard to the plague of blood. ". . . say unto Aaron, take thy staff and stretch out thy hand upon the water of Egypt . . ."

In Chapter 8, verse 1, the second plague (frogs) is referred to. ". . . say unto Aaron, stretch forth thine hand with thy staff over the streams . . . and cause the frogs to come up over the land of Egypt."

The first two plagues affected the river Nile by which Moses was saved from the Egyptian agents who were searching for the newly-born children of Israel. The third plague (Vermin) is referred to in Chapter 8, verse 12, in these words. ". . . say unto Aaron, stretch out thy staff and smite the dust of the land that it may become gnats throughout all the land of Egypt . . ."

It was the soil that naturally aided Moses by covering the Egyptian he had slain ("and he turned this way and that way and when he saw that there was no man he smote the Egyptian to death and hid him in the sand," Exodus, Chap. 2, verse 12).

Therefore Moses could not execute the first three of the ten plagues because having benefitted from the waters (Nile) and soil, the punishment could not be meted out by him. "THE AFFAIRE DREYFUS."

Twenty years ago the whole civilised world was stirred to its depth by the Dreyfus case which was the *cause celebre* of that time. Alfred Dreyfus, it will be recalled was a French Staff Officer, with the rank of captain, but owing to his being a Jew he was surrounded by many enemies who took great pains to inflict their anti-Semitic venom on him. In the autumn of 1894, he was arrested on what was a "trumped up" charge of high treason, it having been alleged that he offered important army secrets to a foreign power. His trial took place by court martial in December, 1894, and he was condemned to Devil's Island for the rest of his life. He suffered extreme degradation and indignities were heaped on him.

A WRONG RIGHTED.

Powerful friends, however, were working on his behalf. Clemenceau, Maitre Labori, Emile Zola, Colonel Picquart and Jaurez, the great Socialist Deputy, each fought tenaciously for their friend's liberation, and whilst a second court martial reduced the sentence to ten years, President Loubert eventually gave the much injured Dreyfus a free pardon. Many years elapsed before his innocence was established and it was only in 1916 that the Appeal Court decided that he had been wrongly condemned. Dreyfus was then reinstated in the army and fought in the Great War, advancing to the

rank of major, and being retired after the Armistice with the rank of Lieut.-Colonel and membership of Legion D'Honneur.

PUBLICITY NOT WANTED.

I see that a representative of the British United Press approached Dreyfus, who is living a quiet life in the Parc Montceau quarter of Paris with the request for an interview, but this man whose *affaire* caused such a stir, refused to refer to a matter that caused so much hurt to him, his family and his friends. Publicity was not his desire; only to live a quiet and retired life, to leave in-limbo of the past what was the most painful episode in his brave and useful life.

A SILVER JUBLIEE.

On the 23rd December Zionists the world-over celebrated the Silver Jubilee of the Jewish National Fund. I notice from a very interesting circular issued by the S.A. Zionist Federation that during the past twenty-five years, the Jewish National Fund has collected nearly £2,000,000 more than half of which was raised during the last four years. With this amount it has so far acquired over 200,000 dunams of agricultural land in Palestine. On this territory there have been established, with the help of the Keren Hayesod thirty-four flourishing settlements. The National Fund has carried out drainage operations converting more than twenty-five thousand dunams of malarial swamps into fruitful soil; has built roads and installed water supplies; and has planted more than 400,000 trees. It has become the standard-bearer of the rebuilding of Jewish Palestine.

BUILDINGS AND SETTLEMENTS.

The Hebrew University stands on the land of the National Fund, as well as such institutions as the Bezalel Art and Crafts School in Jerusalem, the Technical Institute and Secondary School, Haifa, the Great Synagogue, Herzliah High School, and Hospital in Tel-Aviv. Four Yemenite settlements have been built upon land provided by the National Fund, thus facilitating the settlement of this almost lost element of the Jewish people, which is so valuable a factor, coming from Southern Arabia, in the upbuilding of Palestine. An Agricultural Experimental Station, two Girls' Training Farms, and one large Agricultural School for Girls, as well as the large Children's Village at Givat Hamoreh for Ukrainian Orphans (maintained by South African Jewry) are all situated on the land of the Fund. The Jewish National Fund, of supreme social and economic significance, has become the chief factor in the creation of the new Jewish Palestine.

A SUCCESSFUL ARTIST.

It will no doubt be recalled that when she was but twenty-one years of age, Mrs. Scott-Forbes's first picture was hung in the Royal Academy, London. I am told she has now had a picture hung in the English Art Gallery, and has called it "So tired." It is a portrait of her own little baby. Mrs. Scott-Forbes, who will be better known as Miss Ulrica Kirsch is the wife of Dr. Scott-Forbes who practises in London.

SOME HUSTLER.

I notice from an overseas paper that Major M. Gluckstein, one of the Directors of Messrs. J. Lyons & Co., the world-famous caterers, together with the advertising manager of that firm has just completed a seven weeks' tour of the United States of America, and during this time (which included the ocean voyage) ten thousand miles were covered. They visited ten of the largest factories, saw twenty-two plays, nine superkinemas and five music halls. They took food in fifty-two restaurants and heard thirty orchestras. This is beating the American at his own game!

MR. GOSSIP.