

## Maurice Samuel as Lecturer

(Some Impressions of Sunday Night's Meeting.)

GOING to a lecture in South Africa is usually a desultory affair. The art of public speaking has somewhat deteriorated in this country—as it has also in other parts of the world—owing possibly to the spread of the newspaper and the “talkies.” These present to us information direct and have caused us not to rely so much upon human speech.

In-so-far as Jewish life is concerned, it is a well known fact that the old type of *maggid* is gradually disappearing, for the Yiddish and Hebrew press have even penetrated into the remnants of the Ghetto. The message delivered by word of mouth is no longer so eagerly awaited.

The audience at the Standard Theatre on Sunday night was composed of many who had come out of pure curiosity, and others who were really hungry for some cultural word and some inspirational idea. It was not long before we realised that in Maurice Samuel we had a remarkably gifted personality, and a master in the delightful art of oratory. His command of language, fine diction, telling phrases and thought-provoking ideas, combined to make the listening to him a really enjoyable experience.

In a way, I suppose, Maurice Samuel was, to many of us, the modern representation of the old type of *maggid*—the difference being that he delivered his *drosha* in a classical English tongue, but his sense of Jewishness, his over-powering warm-felt sincerity was like that of the old Jewish preacher.

The thinking clearly on a platform, the able marshalling of facts, the *finesse* in delivery and the excellent manner of presentation—all helped to make this first lecture of Maurice Samuel a notable affair. While he gave us new angles of thought and brushed the cobwebs of our sub-conscious Jewish pride, he also illumined for us many of the things we already know. That is so vitally important to us in these days of Jewish inferiority complex.

Samuel the lecturer stood before us—an upright Jewish intellectual—facing our opponents with dignity and expressing a firm conviction of national revival and survival, upon which no hurricane of anti-Semitic onslaught could have the slightest effect.

We, in South Africa needed a Maurice Samuel at this moment. We have taken him intellectually into our minds, and the cultural seed he will sow must leave a deep influence.

No finer piece of work, in the long annals of the South African Zionist Federation, can be recorded, than the bringing to this country on a purely cultural tour of so inspirational a teacher.

D.D.

### TARZAN AT THE PALLADIUM.

All the breath-taking adventures of the famous Edgar Rice Burroughs story “Tarzan, the Ape Man,” have been brought faithfully to the screen in the film commencing on Monday at the Palladium. Johnny Weissmuller, world's champion swimmer, who was signed to play the title role owing to his tremendous physical build, is almost an exact personification of Tarzan, the English Lord who has been raised by apes as one of their kind, and meets a young English girl seeking ivory with her father. The animal scenes are some of the most unusual and exciting that have been shown on the screen.

### DECLASSED JEWS IN RUSSIA.

A reception in honour of Rabbi I. Soloweitzick was held last evening at the H.O.D. Hall. Rabbi Soloweitzick has come to this country in the interests of the declassified Jews in Russia.

### ORPHEUM THEATRE CHARITY CONCERT

The organising committee of the concert recently held at the Orpheum Theatre wishes to thank the following artistes: Cantor Berele Chagy, Cantor Rev. A. M. Kaplan, Mr. John Connell and his Orchestra, Miss Maie Merimsky, Miss Anna Donna, Miss Sylvia Baron, Master Lolo Aremband, Mr. Hyman Sachs, Miss Dolly Weinbrenn, and Miss Helen Kaplan.

All these kindly placed themselves at the disposal of the concert on this important occasion.

## Mr. Samuel's Address

### Some Questions

From “G.S.”

(To the Editor of the “Zionist Record.”)

Sir,—With the limited time at his disposal, it is obvious that Mr. Samuel, in his stimulating and provocative public address at the Standard Theatre, was able to glance only cursorily at various topics which arose out of his main theme, and not to develop them. I should like to refer to one or two, and put some difficulties before him that have occurred to me and to others in his audience.

1. Mr. Samuel's main thesis, as I understand it, was that antisemitism had its roots in, and was an inevitable concomitant of, the economic struggle: that so long as Jew will be pitted against non-Jew in the fight for “bread,” the non-Jew will find reason for polluting the “brain” of the Jew, and will not allow a large “assimilationist” movement by Jews. Is one entitled to conclude from these premises that there is an escape from Jew-Gentile rivalry—in a Communist social order (assuming that to be possible)? Or does Mr. Samuel believe that antisemitism will persist even there—because Jew-hatred has other roots apart from economic rivalry?

2. A moral which Mr. Samuel extracted from Jewish history, and which he intended as a practical lesson for the Jewry of to-day, was that there was a powerful survival value in the “mental discipline” which characterised Jewish education and life in the past. He noticed with concern the relaxation of this “discipline” to-day, and called upon Jewry (if I understand him aright) to resume that “mental discipline.” Mr. Samuel's meaning is not clear to me, in so far as he intended to give practical guidance. Did he mean to advocate (as some of his audience thought) a return to a spiritual and intellectual ghetto? “Away from the culture of the Nordics, from their literature, art and philosophy! Back to the Talmud and the Shulchan Aruch; to Maimonides and the Jewish philosophers, to Jewish literature and Jewish art!”—is that Mr. Samuel's message? If it is, I suggest that it is hardly helpful. Because Hitler is turning back the clock on the progress which mankind has made towards a real civilisation, is the Jewish reply to follow suit? Surely the Jewish reply must be: “All true achievements of the human spirit, be they Greek, German, Egyptian or Jewish, we treasure: because they are non-Jewish we do not treasure them the less, nor because they are Jewish we do treasure them the more.” Is not this the only way of avoiding the identical chauvenistic errors of Hitler and his ilk?

If, on the other hand, Mr. Samuel did not preach such a return to the Ghetto, his message leaves me completely befogged. Does he mean that Jews are losing their love for the “intellectual process” as such, that they are following the alien gods of sport and leisure and epicureanism, and that only by devotion to the “intellectual process” can the individual Jew survive?

3. Another question, akin to the last, suggests itself. Mr. Samuel's final word is: “Let us be true to ourselves.” If by that he means: “Let us not seek to conceal to ourselves or to others the fact that we are Jews,” I agree with his proposition. But he apparently means more than that. He urges us to live “affirmatively” as Jews, in a way in which our Jewishness supplies a positive content to our lives. Could Mr. Samuel convey some idea as to how he envisages this positive Jewish content in the life of a modern Jew of the Diaspora?

If Mr. Samuel could elucidate these difficulties (which may very well arise from my defective grasp of his meaning) either in the course of his further addresses, or through any other medium, I, for one, should be deeply grateful.—I am, yours, etc.,

G.S.

### MR. SAMUEL IN BULAWAYO

(Concluded from previous page.)

that his audience at the second lecture was even larger than at the first.

Although it was originally intended that Mr. Samuel should only deliver two lectures, nevertheless, so great was the interest aroused that another two lectures were arranged, one for the Women's Zionist League and one for the Literary Circle. His lecture to the Literary Circle was of a different type altogether. It was more in the nature of an academic address on two striking books by Joyce and Proust. Here Mr. Samuel scored an even greater triumph. He spoke for an hour without a note, often giving verbatim excerpts from his authors, and he gave a masterly review of an intricate subject in so lucid a manner that everyone present clearly understood him.

Mr. Samuel has personality and is a master of his subject. We certainly hope that he will be able to visit us again as we cannot have too much of his addresses. After this visit of his there can be no further question as to the necessity and value of such propaganda tours. Mr. Samuel appeals both to the mind and the heart. He is a fearless speaker who makes no attempt at glossing over difficulties.