

BUILDING A JEWISH NATION

Hebrew Education in Palestine



A pleasant lesson in the open air.

THE children to-day are the nation to-morrow. Nowhere is this fact realised more than in Palestine, where the education of the young is perhaps more thorough, more careful, more scientific than in any other country of the world.

The schools of Jewish Palestine are the especial trust of the Keren Hayesod, which contributes most towards their maintenance. The Keren Hayesod has established schools in every town, on every settlement where there are children. About 30,000 children attend these schools to-day, and on their staffs some 1,200 teachers are employed.

The Hebrew school is the pioneer and trail-breaker for the Jewish renaissance in Palestine. In its early days, it worked in an environment which could not give it the necessary vital Hebrew background, because Palestine lacked at that time sufficient numbers, and because Hebrew was not then the language of public affairs and private life. To-day this state of affairs is completely changed. Thanks to the vital core provided by the Hebrew school, Jewish Palestine has produced a thriving Hebrew culture. Hebrew is to-day the language of the home throughout Palestine. Among themselves, Palestinian children use no language but Hebrew. Public and private life is dominated by Hebrew.

In Palestine, the system of education goes further than in

other countries. Elsewhere children are taught reading, writing, mathematics, perhaps a language or two, such subjects as history or geography. But in Palestine the Jewish child is trained in addition to become a useful member of that intensely Hebrew world of which, as he grows, he will become more and more a part. He is taught agriculture, botany, principles of health. He is taught how to be economically useful to the Yishub.

Education in Palestine is far more pleasant than its counterpart in many other countries.



A Hebrew Kindergarten in Palestine.

Palestine is essentially an open-air country, and the principle of the open air is maintained in the schools. Many lessons are held in the open, in some shady glade of trees, with cool winds relieving the heat of the day, and beautiful natural surroundings to preserve the freshness of the mind.

The health of the school children is supervised by the Hadasah Medical Organisation, which, with the support of the Keren Hayesod, bears the responsibility of Zionist health work in Palestine.

An important part of the school system is the Hebrew kindergarten. The Hebrew kindergarten system is well developed, both in quantity and quality. These kindergarten serve prac-

tically as day nurseries for the children of mothers who work on the land. Excellent results have been achieved by the kindergarten in the building of a sound foundation for subsequent Hebrew education. The young children are taught Hebrew songs and Hebrew games. In many such schools, children's choirs have been formed, and the children learn to conduct the singing themselves.

For higher and more specialised education there are the Hebrew Technological Institute of Haifa, which specialises in engineering and architectural training, and the great Hebrew University on Mount Scopus, at Jerusalem. The University, which was opened in 1925, has made phenomenal progress, adding since its inception several institutes for scientific research, and the famous Department of Philosophy, which, in addition to general philosophic and humanistic subjects, also includes an Institute of Jewish Studies and an Institute of Oriental Studies. The University Library, which was erected at a cost of £50,000, houses one of the most noted collections of books in the world.

About 20 per cent. of Keren Hayesod funds is devoted annually to education.



Quiet studies in a corner of the Hebrew University Library