

Mr. A. M. Abrahams Honoured.

Congratulations on Occasion of Seventieth Birthday.

Felicitations were heaped upon Mr. A. M. Abrahams, Hon. Life President of the S.A. Zionist Federation, at a reception given by the Dorshei Zion Association on Tuesday night in the Zionist Hall, in honour of his seventieth birthday.

Mr. ISAAC OCHBERG was in the chair and at the outset extended a hearty welcome to the large and representative gathering present, included in which were many visitors from the North. Among the latter were Mr. N. Kirschner, Acting President of the S.A. Zionist Federation, Mr. and Mrs. M. Kentridge, Mr. Benzion S. Hersch and Miss Anne Hersch, Mr. and Mrs. Senior, of Johannesburg, and Rev. and Mrs. M. Cohen, of Bulawayo.

Before referring to the event that had brought them together, Mr. Ochberg stated that letters of apology for their unavoidable absence were received from the Mayor, Councillor L. Gradner, Rev. A. P. Bender, Justice L. Greenberg, and Mr. A. Liberman. These were read out.

Mr. Ochberg then heartily congratulated Mr. Abrahams on this happy occasion. He was sure, he said, he was expressing the sentiments of all when he wished him many years yet of good health and happiness. He had been associated with Mr. Abrahams on many occasions in Zionist work, and it would be most difficult to find a more sincere colleague or a stauncher friend of Zionism.

Contributions to S.A. Jewish Life.

Mr. Abrahams had not only devoted himself to Zionist work. He had found time also to associate himself with many Jewish affairs on the Rand, notable among which were those of Education and the Board of Deputies. He had also played an important part in Freemasonry circles. But his most important contribution to Jewish life here had been in the national cause, and particularly on the S.A. Zionist Federation of which he had been President for many years. The fact that Zionism had made such great progress in this country was largely due to him. He had sacrificed the best years of his life for the national cause, and acted as an inspiration to us all.

Mr. Ochberg also spoke of the wonderful helpmate Mrs. Abrahams had been to her husband. She was a devoted partner who never spared herself in order to assist her husband. He congratulated her as he did Mr. Abrahams on this happy occasion.

Mr. MORRIS ALEXANDER, K.C., M.P., said that Mr. Abrahams had been a father in South African Zionism in more ways than one. In spite of his advanced years he had the vitality of a very young man and we could look forward to his public work yet for many years. His activities were many-sided, but were most prominently connected with the Zionist Federation. Even though his taking up residence in the Cape had necessitated his resignation from the Federation, he had not ceased to be an active Zionist. He was essentially a fighter, but he had nevertheless shown extraordinary

ability in keeping down unruliness at many South African Zionist Conferences. He had managed to rule with a firm hand and yet to pacify all sections, who inevitably became to believe in him.

Mr. Alexander, in conclusion, said he hoped Mr. Abrahams would be spared for many more years and that he would yet be able to celebrate his hundredth birthday; he warmly included Mrs. Abrahams in these congratulations.

Adv. MAGGIE OBLOWITZ, President of the Bnoth Zion Association, expressed the esteem of that body for Mr. Abrahams' sterling services to the Zionist cause. The ladies were deeply appreciative of the many kindnesses which Mr. Abrahams had so often shown them, and of the help he had never withheld. In common with other speakers, said Miss Oblowitz, it gave her very great pleasure to congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Abrahams on this happy event in their lives.

The Federation's Congratulations.

Mr. N. KIRSCHNER, in congratulating Mr. Abrahams, spoke of him as one of the teachers of Zionism in this country. The greatest appeal in Mr. Abrahams' work lay in the fact that he had carried the Zionist flag high in South Africa when Zionism had not been fashionable. He had carried it with great and passionate devotion, and in thus doing had given dignity to the whole of South African Zionism.

To-day we were passing through a period of storm and stress and it needed courage and a sense of responsibility to face conditions. For these qualities we could take an example from Mr. Abrahams.

On behalf of the Federation, said Mr. Kirschner, he heartily felicitated Mr. Abrahams and he hoped that he would yet live many happy and useful years.

Mr. M. KENTRIDGE, M.P., associated himself with the remarks of the previous speakers. It was a Jewish fault, he said, to throw the burden of Jewish work on the shoulders of one or two people who were willing to accept it. Mr. Abrahams had been a person who had shouldered such a burden for many years and he had done it wholeheartedly and ably. Mr. Kentridge urged Cape Town Zionists to utilise to the full Mr. Abrahams' services and experience in Zionist work.

Mr. Abrahams had shown his capacity, ability and enthusiasm when Zionism had still been unpopular. But he had shown these qualities in an even greater degree when he led the cause after it had already become popular, and when the responsibility was much greater. To-day we were actually building up our National Home, and this required qualities of great leadership; they had been shown by Mr. Abrahams.

Rhodesia's Appreciation.

Rev. M. I. COHEN, of Bulawayo, said that South African and Rhodesian Jewry were always united and were one in felicitating Mr. Abrahams on this occasion.

Rhodesian Jewry no less than South African Jewry appreciated Mr. Abrahams' work in Zionist and other Jewish spheres. Under Mr. Abrahams' leadership the Federation had grown enormously and one of the greatest things about his work was that he had always effaced his own personality in it. He hoped that Cape Town Jewry would make use of his presence in their midst.

Mr. Abrahams had brought about a real unity in Jewish ranks in this country, and he had co-ordinated the efforts of all stalwarts here.

Mr. BENZION S. HERSCH said he was able to speak intimately of Mr. Abrahams' two main contributions to Jewish life in this country—his educational work and his Zionist work. As far as the former was concerned, as first principal of the Jewish Government School in Johannesburg he had firmly laid the foundations on which the school had been built. He had given it a tradition which was still maintained to-day. The school was a source of pride to South African Jewry, and was the only Jewish Government School in this country.

As regarded his Zionist work, Mr. Abrahams was noted chiefly as an ideal chairman. He had done wonderfully at Zionist Conferences in this capacity, but there had been even more strain imposed on him in presiding at the regular private meetings of the Federation. It was a tribute to him that although there had during the years of his leadership been so many different types of people and opinions represented on the Federation, the members had all been one happy family thanks to the excellent guidance of the Chairman.

Sevnty Years of Jewish History.

To-day a new generation had arisen. It was time that the history of Zionism in this country were written so that it could be shown that South African Jewry had made very valuable contributions to world Zionism apart from the monetary aspect. Seventy years was a long time in a man's life, but they were even longer than seventy when, as in the case of Mr. Abrahams, they had seen the history of the Jews being rewritten by the Jewish people themselves. Mr. Abrahams had been an active figure in what had taken place during these years. He hoped, said Mr. Hersch, that he would continue to be an active figure and participant in Zionist work.

After the interval which then took place, Mr. Ochberg made a presentation to Mr. Abrahams on behalf of the Dorshei Zion Committee.

Mr. ABRAHAM'S RESPONDS.

Mr. ABRAHAM'S expressed his warmest thanks for the presentation and for the expressions of appreciation for his work that had been made that night. He would not be so hypocritical, he said, as to assert that his work had not succeeded to a certain degree. But when people worked in a cause like Zionism they did so without any expectation of a reward. The knowledge that they were doing their duty by their people was sufficient reward for their activity. To-day he was still prepared to give his services to the Zionist cause, and he expressed the wish that more use would be made of those services.

He had acted as President of the Federation for many years. In the early days there had not been present the enthusiasm

