

## IN AND AROUND THE PENINSULA

### The Zionist Conversazione.

That democratic government can never lead humanity to real progress and that at its best it is only mediocre rule, was a thesis submitted by Dr. S. E. Kark at the Zionist Conversazione on Tuesday night when he delivered a lecture on "Democracy, the Hebrew Aspect."

Dr. Kark defined democracy as the expression in some definite form of the active will of a people interested in their government. But the will of the people, he argued, was the will of the mediocre, the will of the retrogressive. For the collective mind—even when composed of superior individual mentalities—was characterised by a sliding back to the more primitive, more elemental qualities of man. The motive forces of mass-behaviour were the earlier, lower and cruder elements of human nature. Under the circumstances the ideal of democracy could not make for advancement.

Turning to the Hebraic aspect of democracy, Dr. Kark stated that although democracy was based on the very principles so dear to the Jew, namely, justice and equity, Jewish history showed no striving nor tendency towards a collective rule, but rather a strong leaning towards individual leadership by an inspired personage or hero.

In the earliest days we had ancestor worship, as in the case of Abraham. Later on, when the Jews were forced to emigrate to Goshen, there was no general revolt against the oppressor but a leader, inspired by Jehovah, arose.

In Palestine there were three periods of government—that of the judges, that of the kings and that of the second temple. The judge was the head of the clan—life was still rather simple and primitive in those days—and by the time of Samuel his dominion extended over *all* Israel. During the time of the kings the whole of the civil and administrative government came under their care, but gradually the judge-prophets began to gain influence as the spiritual leaders. There was thus a dual sovereignty—a temporal and a spiritual one.

During the period of the second Temple both forces became united for a short time but they separated again, and under the domination of Rome the temporal power became weaker and the spiritual leaders became strong.

This non-democratic tendency in Jewish history was clearly shown in the Messianic ideal which rested on the belief that the ultimate sovereignty of the world would rest with him, the Messiah—the Hero King—who would not rule but guide.

The Hebrew people wished to be guided and led by the *best*. In that sense they were a true democracy, for they were ruled by those whom they wished to follow. But their government was actually an aristocracy, for their true leaders were of the highest and best.

Among those who participated in the discussion which followed were Messrs. Kotlowitz, B. Mirvish, M. Ben-Arie, B. L. Rubik and Dr. J. Sachs.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Weinreich acted as host and hostess. During the evening a number of songs were rendered by Mr. A. Robinson, who was very enthusiastically encored. He was accompanied by Miss Elma Feinhols. The Jewish news was read as usual.

### A Youth Meeting.

A youth meeting was held on Wednesday night in the Zionist Hall and was addressed by Mr. Israel Dunsky, Secretary of the S.A. Zionist Youth Council.

Mr. H. Zuckerman, the chairman, briefly introduced Mr. Dunsky and extended a very hearty welcome to him.

Mr. Dunsky, after thanking the chairman for his remarks, reviewed recent happenings in the Jewish world and the reaction of South African Jews to these happenings.

It was strange, he said, that we Jews, although a people of so much experience, had learnt nothing from our experiences. We in South Africa criticised the attitude of the German Jews, yet we were little different from them. To-day we were confronted with the same position as the Jews in Eastern Europe, Germany, etc.—the problem of a very much alive anti-Semitism. There was no doubt that there was a definite organised movement here to poison the atmosphere against us. There were agents working for it and spreading the most virulent and insidious propaganda. Whatever the Jew did was bad.

This propaganda had to have some influence. It was dangerous fire that could set the whole country ablaze. In Germany this movement had started twelve years ago, but the Jews had not and could not believe that a Hitler or a Goebbels would eventually capture the whole country.

We could not hope to argue with these people. We would never be able to eliminate anti-Semitism. Charity would not save the situation nor relief, for these were simply temporary palliatives.

The weakness of the Jew lay in the fact that he had not a country from where he could return the hospitality offered him by other countries. After the events of last year all the nations were very sympathetic but they unfortunately could do nothing. They could not disturb international relations, and they had their own problems. We had to have a country of our own. This was the only solution to our problem which had any possibility of success. It was a most difficult task, but it was essential. Zionism had to be our one ideal.

The situation was bad, but there was one bright spot. We had the foundation on which there was the possibility of building up a glorious structure.

There were immigration difficulties, but in spite of this Jews were coming into Palestine. There were immense possibilities but the future depended on every individual Jew and Jewess.

### Dates of Annual Balls.

At a meeting of representatives of local Jewish institutions held last week, it was decided that the annual ball in aid of the Jewish National Fund should take place on the 16th May, and the Talmud Torah Ball on the 25th July.

### Oneg Shabbos.

The next Oneg Shabbos will take place at the Zionist Hall on Saturday, 7th April, when Dr. C. Resnekov will deliver the first of two lectures entitled "The Structure of Jewish Life in the Feudal Days under the Influence of the Rabbinical Synods and the Bulls of the Popes." The function has been postponed until this date on account of the Oneg Shabbos which is being held by the Judean Central Council to-morrow, in honour of the delegates to the Young Israel Conference, and of the fact that the following Saturday will be Pesach.

### Cape Town Maccabee Organisation.

A musical evening will be held in the Zionist Minor Hall on Tuesday, the 27th instant, at 8.15 p.m. All are welcome. Prominent artists will perform.

### Bnoth Zion Meeting.

At the next meeting of the Bnoth Zion Association, which takes place on Tuesday, 27th inst., at 3.15 p.m., Dr. H. W. Altschul will lecture on "The History of the Maranos." Mrs. H. Lieberman will review Feuchtwanger's "The Oppermans." All are welcome.

### South Peninsula Jewish Club.

The annual general meeting of the South Peninsula Jewish Club was held at the Talmud Torah Hall, Muizenberg, on Tuesday night.

The Chairman, Mr. J. L. Pincus, in the course of his presidential address, announced that as a result of the Club's activities during the past year, a sum of £80 had been handed over to the Muizenberg Congregation towards the expenses of the Hall.

The elections which took place resulted as follows:—

Chairman, Adv. M. Barnett; Vice-Chairman, Mr. F. Lewis; Secretary, Mr. L. Berman; Treasurer, Mr. S. Frank. Committee: Misses E. and B. Jocum, E. Hessen, Mrs. M. Rifkin and Messrs. R. Cohen, S. Horwitz, F. Satusky, S. Apter.

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