

IN AND AROUND THE PENINSULA

The Zionist Conversazione.

"Jewish Migrations To-day" was the subject of a lecture delivered on Tuesday night at the Zionist Conversazione by Adv. M. S. Comay.

Urging the need for Jewish history to be studied in relation to world history as a whole, Mr. Comay showed that the tendencies in population rates during the last century or so were the same both among the Jews and the European races generally, and that the results of this had set the tone to present conditions in the Jewish world.

At the beginning of the 19th Century there had been an enormous jump in the population figures of the European peoples. There had been a decreased birth rate, it was true, but there had been a still sharper decline in the death rate. The same tendency was to be noted amongst the Jews. At the time of the Exodus their numbers had been something like four and a half million. During the Middle Ages the figure had dropped to roughly about one and a half million. By the beginning of 1800 there were some two and a half million. To-day the figures of world Jewish population were sixteen million.

This sudden growth of populations meant an overcrowding in the countries of the world and a seeking for elbow space. This fact, coupled with the resultant decline in economic conditions and with political persecution led to a mass movement westwards of Jews during the last century. There had been opportunities for emigration then. The age had been one of imperial expansion and the new countries opened up provided a means of outlet for the Jews.

This period of expansion came to an end with the close of the Great War. Europe was shrinking and freezing. The countries of immigration were closing their doors one by one. The League of Nations had ceased to be an effective instrument for international co-operation, whilst the nations found themselves saddled in practically every case with surplus populations impossible to absorb in their own economies.

As far as the Jews were concerned emigration had come to a stop but never before had the need for an outlet been so great. In Eastern Europe where they were engaged mainly in trade the ground was being swept from under their feet by the organisation of big industrial combinations. In Russia the Jewish population was being absorbed into the general population and would most likely disappear in the course of time. In Western Europe the process of freezing had tended to exclude the Jew as well.

The only one bright spark was Palestine which had recently jumped to the head of the outlet countries for European Jewry. But it could not absorb all the Jews and for the immediate future it seemed as though Jewry in the Diaspora could not but

suffer a decline in numbers and importance unless unforeseen developments took place.

In the discussion which followed Mr. D. Getz and Mr. B. L. Rubik participated.

Mr. and Mrs. L. Burman acted as host and hostess and during the evening Miss Ruth Cohen gave a pianoforte solo and Miss Hannah Oblowitz recited.

Fascism and Jewish Youth.

That Fascism was spreading through practically the whole world, that it could only be put back by the recognition of what it stood for and by the establishment of those economic forces which were its negation, and that it necessarily meant anti-Semitism, were arguments put forward by Mr. A. Z. Berman on Sunday night in a lecture delivered to a large gathering of members of the Zionist Socialist Party.

Fascism was extremely popular to-day, said Mr. Berman. It stretched from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, besides having gained considerable prominence in practically every other country in the world, including South Africa. But it was difficult to pin anyone down to a definition of it for the simple reason that it had neither a philosophy nor a programme of its own. Fascism both in Italy and Germany had moved a long distance from the days when their programmes had been laid down, which, particularly as far as the former was concerned, included liberty of conscience and religion, freedom of the press, abolition of private property, compulsory disarmament, etc. No good results of Fascism had yet been observed. Socially and culturally no improvement could be seen in Italy, whilst the movement had killed liberal thought, destroyed the press, trade unionism, literature, the theatre and so on. Democracy had been put out of existence.

Fascism was to a large extent a post-war reaction—an outcome of the aggressive and imperialistic national sentiment that arose in every country. This nationalism, which expressed itself in Fascism, did not lead to co-operation among the peoples of the world but to a war of destruction, for its basis was militaristic and a desire for the subjection of other peoples.

Nationalism, such as was reflected in Fascism, was moulded out of the concept of unity. That was why it necessarily implied anti-Semitism. There would always be Jews scattered all over the world regarded as "different" from the people among whom they lived. If Fascism arose they were bound to be persecuted in the name of "unity."

But the spread of Fascism was not inevitable. It was so only if we did not fight it. What we had to do was to define our hostility to those who were sympathetically disposed towards it and have no contacts with them at all. Secondly, we

had to build up strong working class organisations which would astound the Fascists. The Jews had to take particular note of these facts for they had more to lose by Fascism than even by a working class revolution.

A discussion followed the lecture in which a large number participated. Adv. Snitcher proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer before the meeting dispersed.

Welcome to Mr. Avin.

Mr. Z. Avin will be welcomed on his return to South Africa by the Histadruth Ivriith (Hebrew Circle) at a reception to be given in his honour on Monday night, 23rd inst.

Mr. Avin will speak on his impressions of Palestine.

Lecture at Orphanage.

Mr. Ronald F. Miller, Principal of the Radiant Health School, will lecture to the children of the Cape Jewish Orphanage at the Home to-morrow evening on "Talks on Health to Boys and Girls."

Mr. Issy Berkovitch will preside. All are welcome.

Observatory-Mowbray Jewish Guild.

A meeting of the above Society was held at the residence of Dr. and Mrs. S. Lizerbrum, Mowbray, on Sunday evening last. An enthusiastic gathering was present to hear Mr. M. Wolozinsky, B.A., deliver a lecture on "The Introduction to Hebrew Language and Literature," being a preliminary to Hebrew classes to be started in that area under his tutorship.

Mr. Wolozinsky gave a survey of the different periods of Hebrew culture, commencing with the Biblical period, continuing with the Talmudic period and the Golden Age of Spain, and then coming to the modern Hebrew Age as sponsored by Ben Yehudah. He then spoke on the development of the language and literature in Palestine.

Many students have enrolled for the classes which are open to all at the fee of 5s. per month.

The next meeting of the class will be held at 8 p.m. on Sunday, 22nd April, at 63, Main Road, Mowbray.

Woodstock-Salt River Junior Zionists.

At the annual general elections of the Woodstock and Salt River Junior Zionist Society held at the Talmud Torah Hall, Woodstock, on the 10th instant, the following office-bearers were returned: Chairman, Mr. D. Lazarow; Vice-Chairman, Mr. M. Weintroub; Hon. Secretary, Miss T. Ruskin; Hon. Treasurer, Miss I. L. Ruskin; Committee: Misses S. Basker and D. Hurwitz, Messrs. G. Baigel, H. Kalmanowitz, V. Resnekov and L. Meyerowitz.

The first function decided upon by the Committee is a lecture by Advocate M. Oblowitz, to be held at the Talmud Torah Hall, Argyle Street, Woodstock, on Thursday, the 26th instant.

