

## 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.

**In Brief.**

Lieut.-Colonel J. H. Patterson, D.S.O., arrived in South Africa on Monday by the "Edinburgh Castle." He was met at the Docks by Adv. M. Alexander, K.C., M.P., Mr. M. Kentridge, M.P., Mr. Isaac Ochberg and Mr. J. Gitlin, and by representatives of the Revisionist Association and the Brith Trumpeldor.

Travelling with Colonel Patterson was Mr. Jacob Landau, Managing Director of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, who has come out to South Africa in the interests of the latter. Both Colonel Patterson and Mr. Landau left for Johannesburg on Monday morning.

Mrs. S. Gesundheit, who recently underwent an operation for appendicitis at the Tamboers Kloof Nursing Home, is now well on the road to recovery. Her father, Mr. D. Gordon, Sen., is still confined to his bed at her residence at 21, Rosemead Avenue, Oranjezicht.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Sonnenberg and their daughter, Mrs. H. Stern, are leaving to-day by the "Balmoral Castle" on a trip to Europe.

Mr. Z. Avin returns to South Africa on Monday, 23rd inst., by the "Winchester Castle" from a trip to Europe and Palestine.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Losman (nee Fanny Jacobsohn) are being congratulated on the birth of a daughter.

Mr. J. Aviv leaves to-day in the "Balmoral Castle" on a visit to Palestine.

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**April 19th.****A SIGNIFICANT JEWISH DATE.**

The fact that yesterday—April 19th—was a significant date for Jewry is probably hardly known. Yet the date marks the recurrent anniversary of massacre throughout the Jewish world from the eleventh to the twentieth centuries.

The record is begun by a massacre at Cordova—the first experience of the sort suffered by Jews in Moorish Spain—when Al Haqim, one of the pretenders to the Caliphate, stormed the city in 1013.

Precisely 270 years later, on the seventh day of Passover, 1283, a Blood Accusation took place at Mayence. In spite of the efforts of Archbishop Werner, the Jewish quarter was attacked and ten persons were murdered. Simultaneously twenty-six Jews were being massacred at Bachalah.

After an interval of sixty years, Saturday, 19th April, 1343, marked the inception at Wachenheim of a series of outbreaks which devastated, before the week was over, several of the neighbouring communities.

In 1506 the scene reverts to the Iberian Peninsula. The fatal date that year happened to be Eastern Sunday. A new Christian who had entered a church in Lisbon, doubted the recent miracle of a crucifix which was said to have become luminous. The populace, still unruly as a result of riots of ten days previous, vented their anger on all of the culprit's fellows in disbelief so that, within two days, over two thousand persons were killed. This was the notorious "Slaying of the New Christians."

Finally in our times, the terrible pogrom at Kishinev began on April 19th—Easter Sunday and the last day of Passover, 1903. As was common, an accusation of ritual murder was the pretext for the disorders.

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**THE NEW "MASSADA."** (Continued from Page 263.)

beneath it all: the conscious and subconscious unity and continuity of Jewish people, of Jewish history.

And the *Keren Hayesod* was one of the most powerful factors in fostering that sense of unity and continuity. Apart from its achievements in Palestine, it became the strongest link of scattered Jewry. It instilled an individual and collective sense of national responsibility. It inculcated a spirit of stern discipline. It imposed, by moral force, national obligations in the form of taxation. It invigorated Jewry; it brought a message of hope in the remotest parts of the globe; it interpreted the national dream into a score of languages; in every city and townlet and village where Jews reside the torchlight was carried, the Jewish indivisibility emphasised, the national will to live strengthened, and the national obligation invoked. The inner faculties of large sections of Jewry that were asleep were awakened. Jews of all kinds and of all climes were told and retold of their inescapable responsibility.

A most impressive and most dramatic chapter in Jewish annals. As you read some of the details, it becomes difficult to distinguish between fact and legend. Two Hebrew words—*Keren Hayesod*—have held the vast Jewish stage for a whole decade; have symbolised the aspirations as well as the determination of the Jewish people to return Home. Two outstanding words have made history; history no less romantic than the history of Troy as told in the Homeric poems. The story of the *Keren Hayesod* will remain inextricably interwoven with the age which will be known as the heroic age.

A trying and testing period; a period of immense national activity, of national vigour and emotional exaltation; of conflict with hostile forces and of rigid resistance. Looking round at this critical period you behold a considerable part of Jewry tragically prevented from playing the part which it would have played at such a fateful moment. It is as much part of the tragedy that Russian Jewry should be unable to fulfil its national destiny as the loss of the enormous help to the cause. Certain sections of Jews again, here, there and everywhere, jaded and

(Continued in Second Column).

**A NEW VISION.** (Continued from Page 262.)

"I believe it, and I have an intelligent right to my belief. For Jewish history has revealed the existence of this force more than once already.

"It was this same mysterious power which made of slaves a Holy Nation. It was this which in the times of Ezra transformed the 'dry bones' into a people of God.

"It was this same power, which many centuries later, brought down celestial bodies upon the earth and produced the 'Zohar.' It was this same creative force which, in an environment of shopkeepers, hawkers, and middlemen, produced 'Chassidism.'

"It has been this same force which, in producing the new Palestine has brought about the miraculous revival of a dead language.

"And I firmly believe that this same undying and creative force will shine forth once more, creating out of the broken, bent, starved, hopeless, maimed and bruised Jews of to-day, a people, noble and strong, not only on their own ancestral soil, but also in the lands of the Galuth. I believe that this mighty spirit will one day sweep away out of Jewish life all its miserable petty little leaders and diplomats.

"The salvation of Israel will assuredly come,' said Achad Ha'am, 'not through the diplomatists but by the Prophets!'

"Prophetism is the basic foundation of the Jewish spirit, and when Prophetism re-appears, the darkness will pass."

(Continued from First Column).

faded, are entirely out of the picture. They remain grasshoppers, though in their own arrogant sight they are lions. They include a great variety; timid deserters, callous sycophants, and mothy intellects. They cannot be anchored, they float. History will dismiss them with contempt, some as pathetic, others as ludicrous. There will remain those who in "the twilight of the world" returned to the front, to build, who grasped the hammer in one hand and in the other held the woes and travails of the age; and those who were at the back of the pioneers, who did something to help in the erection of the new "Massada," who were anxious to guard the fortress and make it impregnable.