

Life and Works of Maimonides

Women Zionists Addressed by Rev. Shrock

view of the imminent celebration of the eight hundredth anniversary of that great mediaeval Jewish Rabbi and philosopher, Moses Maimonides, a timely and attractive lecture on the life and achievements of the Rambam was delivered by the Rev. T. Shrock, B.A., before a largely-extended gathering of the Women's Zionist League on Tuesday afternoon last at the Langham Hotel. Mrs. B. Reinhold presided. Previous to Mr. Shrock's address, Miss Reinhold appealed to those present to support the "Purim Carnival," which is being organised by the Zionist Youth Council.

There was a Talmudical saying that Israel was never widowed," said Rev. Shrock, referring to the various centres of Jewish culture throughout the ages. Particularly so was the case during the sixteenth centuries when renowned academies had their habitation in Babylon. Later on they had to meet with conditions which led to the flourishing state of Jewish learning in Spain.

Moses Maimonides, that renowned luminary of the Middle Ages, was born at Cordova on 14 Nisan, 4859—March 30, 1135—at a time when the fortunes of Spanish Jewry were, indeed, dark. The Almohades, a fanatical Moslem sect, had threatened the existence of the Jews there, and many a Jew had to choose either Islam or death or exile. Thus it came about that Maimonides and his family had to leave Cordova in 1148, journeying first to Fez, then to Palestine, and finally settling at Fostat (old Cairo). It was at Cairo that Maimonides, apart from being an outstanding figure among his fellow-Jews, was also the physician to the famous Sultan Saladin's household.

After detailing the genealogy and the upbringing of Maimonides' father, the speaker called attention to the early career as well as work of the Rambam, notably on the

Jewish Calendar and Logic, which presaged the future activities of the illustrious author of "The Guide to the Perplexed." Especially, at the age of twenty-five, when he wrote in Arabic a meaningful epistle on Jewish apostasy in Islamic countries, did Maimonides first secure the attention of the Jewish world as to his merits of authorship. In 1168, there appeared his first monumental work on the Pentateuch, which was penned in Arabic. Also, in the latter language, there was issued, in 1172, his masterly letter to the Yemenite Jews, who to express their gratitude for his services on their behalf, have incorporated his name in the Kaddish in their prayer-books.

Explaining at length the systematic conception of law, ethical and theological theories propounded in Maimonides' "Mishna," "Mishna Torah" and "Moreh Nebukim," Rev. Shrock showed how the Rambam attempted to reconcile the ideas of Aristotle with that of Judaism. After his death, December 13, 1204, strong hostility for a while was evinced against Maimonides' teachings.

A man of prodigious industry, he, while as the Sultan's physician, wrote much on medicine, astronomy, and responsa. His earnestness, deep knowledge, tolerance (especially to the Karaites) and genius had won for him an enduring place in the history of his people. Equally renowned in the non-Jewish circles of his age, many of his volumes were translated into diverse tongues shortly after his death. Above all, he taught the world that Judaism had nothing to fear from other cultures—a factor which was of value to-day when perusing his writings.

After Mrs. M. Jacobson had proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Shrock for his illuminating address, the meeting concluded with the singing of Hatikvah.

כשר לפסח

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Habonim Purim Service

A splendid Purim service for Habonim will be held at the Berea Synagogue on Monday next, the 18th inst., at 6.30 p.m. The Rev. A. T. Shrock (Rav. Habonim) will address the congregation. The Mayor and Mayoress have accepted the invitation to be present at the celebration of this festival.

After the service, Habonim and other children will adjourn to the adjoining hall for Homentashen and other refreshments.

The Union of Jewish Women is organising a Masque Ball in order to endow a cot for the Crippled Children's Home. This will take place at the Carlton Hotel on Wednesday, April 10, and is under distinguished patronage.

Witwatersrand Jewish Aged Home

SOME RECENT ACTIVITIES

The monthly meeting of the Witwatersrand Jewish Aged Home was held on Sunday afternoon last. The hon. life president of the institution, Mr. I. Heymann, presided.

It was reported that during the month there had been one admission and two deaths, the total number of inmates now being 111, 83 men and 28 women. The February revenue included special donations of £100 from Messrs. Schneier and London, and £50 from Mr. Sam Kruger (both received per Mr. I. Heymann), and £119 sundry bequests. During the month a "farewell tea" was given at the Home to Mr. P. Myers, a member of the committee, on the occasion of his departure for Europe and Palestine, at which a presentation was made to Mr. Myers by the president, on behalf of the committee. The annual meeting of the Germiston branch aid society will be held on Sunday, the 24th inst., and will be attended by members of the central executive.

The committee would be grateful for gifts of clothing for the old inmates, especially for the men. Gifts can be sent to the Home, Louisa Street, Doornfontein, and will be gratefully acknowledged.

A Musicale

The Sisterhood of the Johannesburg Jewish Reform Congregation have arranged a Musicale to take place at the Langham Hotel on Tuesday, March 19th, at 8.30 p.m. Miss Jean Gluckmann (contralto), Mr. Leonid Birsan (violinist), Mrs. Lena Morrison (soprano), Reuben Goldberg (cellist), and the choir of the congregation, under the direction of Mr. J. Idelsohn, will contribute to the programme.

The function is under the patronage of the Mayor and Mayoress of Johannesburg.

PURIM BALL

Under the auspices of the United Zionist Jewish Party a grand Purim Ball will be held at the Selborne Hall on Wednesday, the 20th inst. Al. Benjamin's Personal Orchestra will be attendance. An enjoyable evening is assured.

Randfontein's "Grand Purim Ball"

IN AID OF DUNAM DRIVE

The Randfontein Zionist Association will hold a "Grand Purim Ball, Bridge Drive and Rummy" on Saturday, the 23rd inst., at the Robinson Hall, Randfontein. The affair is being organised in aid of "The 1935 Dunam Drive," and it is hoped that many will be present on that enjoyable occasion. Alec Benjamin's Personal Orchestra will be in attendance.

Address by Adv. Bertha Solomon

Under the auspices of the Parktown branch of the Johannesburg Women's Zionist League, a social function will be held at the residence of Mrs. J. Goodman, 17 St. Andrew's Road, Parktown, on Monday, March 18, at 3 p.m. On this occasion Adv. Bertha Solomon, M.P.C., will deliver an address. Miss Jean Gluckman will sing.

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