

A Day School?

I HAVE just been perusing the latest volume of that unique publication — the American Jewish Year Book. A most interesting contribution is that dealing with Jewish education in America. From this I learn that some 200,000 children receive Jewish education of various sorts. New York has 300 Talmud Torahs, 36 Sunday Schools, 124 Yiddish schools and 16 parochial schools. The latter are institutions where secular as well as Hebrew subjects are taught. It is acknowledged that such schools are best suited for an intensive Jewish education since the pupils need not attend separate schools for their Jewish and general subjects.

As far as I know there is no such institution in this country. Some years ago there were two schools similar to the parochial school. The Hebrew High School, of Johannesburg, gave its pupils tuition in all primary school subjects, and the same was done by the Oudtshoorn Hebrew School. The Johannesburg Hebrew High School has been functioning for some time past as an ordinary Talmud Torah, and I believe the same has happened to the Oudtshoorn school.

That South African Jewry should not be able to maintain at least one school where children will find themselves in a Jewish atmosphere is a sad commentary on the state of our educational activity. A school of this type requires a great deal of energetic work. It can succeed only if run on proper lines, and in a suitable building. Experience of the past, especially as regards our orphanages and aged homes have shown that with goodwill and energy great things can be achieved in our community. I consider that a good day Jewish school should be the next great communal undertaking.

The success of a project of this nature is not as problematical as it seems at first glance. It needs, of course, courage, energy and a tremendous amount of spade work to get the idea to sink in amongst our congregational workers, who appear to be convinced that South African Jewry can never have a day school of its own.

"Rassejuden"

HOW many "racial Jews" are there in Germany? When the new regime was established, Jewish leaders were alarmed by the possibility of being obliged to cope, not only with over a half a million professing Jews, but with many more who had departed from Jewry, and were still regarded by the Hitler Government as members of the faith. Speculation was rife as to the exact number of people whose grandparents were Jews, or of "meshumodim" and their children. There were those who suggested that these ran into millions, and newspapers in America asked indignantly whether Hitler was going to put upon the Jewish people an added burden of two million descendants of "meshumodim," who are no longer part of our people.

I understand that full details are not yet available, but figures compiled by Dr. Buechner, Director of the Statistical Department of the city of Berlin, give some idea of the position in the capital. There are in Berlin 150,000 professing Jews, about 40,000 "Jews who are not of Mosaic religion," and 60,000 of mixed blood.

Current Communal Comments

By
"Hamabit"

While the figures are not as considerable as was expected, the proportion is nevertheless startling, for it would appear that to every three pure Jews there are two "meshumodim" or descendants of apostates.

If one is to be guided by Berlin, and assuming that the number of Jews in Germany is to-day 450,000, it would seem that in addition to the pure Jews there are another 300,000 "racial Jews." I wonder what will become of these people, who are outlaws in Germany? Will they also have to be provided for by Jewish institutions? Most of them are suffering through no fault of their own, and if ever there was room for benevolent work by Christian Missionary Societies, it is surely to be found amongst this new mixed multitude.

To Tokio!

ON the whole the Palestine Soccer team has done well in America, and particularly in New York where it beat the "All Stars" by six to one. This has naturally stimulated a movement amongst the Palestine sportsmen to widen the scope of their international fixtures.

I hear that the next world Olympiade is already being discussed in sporting circles in Palestine. The Olympiade will be held in 1940 in Tokio, and it so happens that this year will mark 21 centuries since the death of Judas Maccabeus. In honour of the date the Palestine Maccabi wishes to make a good show of itself at the Olympiade. According to an interview published recently with Mr. Joseph Yekutieli, one of the leaders in Palestine sport, Maccabi is already making the necessary arrangements for training. Great emphasis is being laid on swimming and soccer, which are the most popular games in Palestine. Boxing, which until recent years was not widely spread in Palestine, is now being taken up by the youth, and it is possible that Palestine will be able to send to Tokio a few good pugilists.

Maccabi representatives are also likely to participate in the Eastern Asiatic Games which will be held in Kabul in 1938. The late and beloved Mayor of Tel-Aviv, Mr. Dzenogoff, was always keenly interested in Palestine sports and it is hoped to arrange a special fund in his name, in order to finance the various international fixtures of the Maccabi.

A Singer

THERE died in Palestine recently a person who had had a most romantic and adventurous career. Joseph Vinogradoff was a typical Jewish prodigy of pre-war Russia. As a youth he left the home of his father, a poor cap-maker in Vilna, and went to Moscow. He possessed nothing but a promising voice. As he came from the "pale of settlement," he had no right of residence

in the town, and was hunted by the police. Ultimately a well-known teacher of music took an interest in him, and gave him lessons. At that time Moscow was visited by a famous Italian opera company. Owing to the severe Russian winter, both the first baritone and his understudy caught a severe cold on the day of the opening. Vinogradoff's teacher recommended him for the part, but there was one difficulty: he knew no Italian, and his Russian was faulty.

The singer asserted in later days that a compromise was arrived at, and that he sang in "Vilner Italian," i.e., he started off the first line in Italian, and for the rest he used the Sabbath service which he knew by heart. "Yekum Purkan"—the Aramaic prayer, which is recited before the closing of the Ark, was most useful, since it sounds "almost like Italian."

After the performance, he was presented to Prince Dolgorukoff, Governor of Moscow. The latter was asked to do something in regard to the singer's right of residence. The prince complimented him on his performance, and stated curtly that he "would be pleased to act as his godfather." Vinogradoff would not take this hint at baptism, and went to London, where he sang in Covent Garden and made a name for himself. He was afterwards engaged by the Royal Opera in St. Petersburg, in which company he was the only unbaptised Jew. During the war the singer found himself in his home town under German occupation. Here again there was a question of language. The military authorities wished to arrange an opera in the town, and invited Vinogradoff to sing. As a loyal Russian he refused to use German, whilst the military authorities naturally would not have him sing in Russian. A way out was found: Vinogradoff sang in Yiddish!

The Last Three—

A POOR immigrant from Lithuania was on his arrival in London "financed" by his "landsleit" to the extent of the purchase of a basket containing a few hundred lemons which the immigrant sold in Petticoat Lane. His command of the English language was small indeed. All he knew was how to hold four lemons in the palm of his hand and shout all day: "Four a penny, lemons; four a penny! four a penny! lemons."

Once on a late afternoon, he was faced with a difficult problem. He had sold almost all his lemons, having had only three of them left, and was puzzled as to how to make his announcement, in view of the fact that the only call he knew was, "Four a penny!"

Finally, after a good deal of puckering of his forehead and with a smile of enthusiasm on his face, he began shouting: "The last three, four a penny! The last three, four a penny!"

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