

UNITED HEBREW SCHOOLS OF JOHANNESBURG

Annual Prize Distribution

The annual prize distribution of the United Hebrew Schools this year took place in the upstairs hall of their recently reconstructed Doornfontein School. The hall was crowded to the doors with parents and pupils of the schools from districts in all parts of the city.

The chairman, Dr. Max Greenberg, welcomed the large gathering and congratulated the pupils who had by application of their Hebrew studies won the prizes which the institution was offering.

Dr. Greenberg appealed to the children to educate their parents to the value of the Hebrew education which they were receiving in the schools of the United. He said that the task of caring for the education of our children was always left in the hands of a small circle whereas it should be the concern of every parent to fit their children for the difficulties which they must face as Jews.

The chairman announced that the Victor Kark prizes to the three best pupils of the United Hebrew Schools would be awarded at a later date when the committee in charge had had time to select the successful candidates. This committee will also make the award of the Louis Landau Scholarship of £40 to the best Matric pupil of the United Hebrew Schools who took Hebrew for this examination and followed it up at a South African University.

Rev. Dr. A. T. Shrock (chairman of the Curriculum Committee) said the United Hebrew Schools were to be congratulated on their courage and sincere desire to give the best Hebrew education available by securing the services of so eminent an educational authority as Mr. D. Mierowsky as their Director.

It appeared to him that the attitude of the parents was that Hebrew education was an "unfortunate necessity" and he hoped that the fact that so many valuable prizes and bursaries had become available would be an encouragement for Jewish boys and girls to advance their Hebrew studies and would help to dispel that attitude on the part of the parents.

The annual concert then took place, each school being represented, and a varied programme was offered to an appreciative audience. The young performers proved that they were at home in the Hebrew language.

Mr. B. I. Joffe expressed the pleasure and appreciation of the audience to the performers for the enjoyable programme and he thanked the staff for their hard work in preparing the entertainment.

Mrs. A. T. Shrock then presented the prizes to numerous pupils of the schools. After the prize distribution, Mr. V. Rosenstein (chairman of the A. Board of Jewish Education) moved a hearty vote of thanks to Mrs. Shrock. He mentioned the pleasure it had given him to see so large a gathering of children interested in Hebrew and he hoped that the United Hebrew Schools would continue to progress.

A PICNIC ON DINGAAN'S DAY.

An outing to Robinson Dam is being arranged by the Judiths Paarl Zionist Youth Society for Dingaan's Day, the 16th inst. All those wishing to participate are asked to be at the tram terminus or at Park Gate, 1st Street at 7 a.m. sharp. A small fee to defer expenses will be levied.

TODAY IN JEWISH HISTORY

A Pseudo-Messiah

December 10.

ON the 10th of December, 1791, there died at Offenbach Jacob Frank, the last of the picturesque pseudo-Messiahs and one of the least attractive of them. Frank and his movement grew directly out of that of Sabbatai Zevi. He was born and brought up in a Sabbatain atmosphere and in 1755, when he was 29 years old, he first began to preach the new revelation. Both the Government of Poland and the rabbis tried to suppress the new movement which however, obtained the support of the Church which saw in it pro-Christian tendencies. The friendly bishop died, however, and the position of the Frankists became very difficult when Frank chose the moment publicly to announce himself the successor of Sabbatai Zevi entrusted with the mission to lead the Jews to Christianity. Baptism on a large scale followed, but the behaviour of the proselytes cast doubt on their good faith. Frank himself was imprisoned in a monastery where he remained for 13 years, his punishment serving to increase his influence among his followers. After his release he lived for a time in Austria, but afterwards settled at Offenbach where he lived a life of luxury supported by his disciples. He was succeeded at the head of the sect by his daughter, Eve. His followers ultimately became lost in Christendom.

A Hebrew Concert

Plays and musical items were the features of the programme presented by the pupils of the Jeppe Hebrew School at their Chanukah concert, held at the Jewish Guild on December 1. Mr. I. Badash, the Cantor of the Jeppe Synagogue, also sang a few folk songs.

Mr. L. Radus, chairman of the school, and Dr. A. Birnbaum, chairman of the Teachers' Association, congratulated Mr. Z. Infeld, Principal of the school, and the producer of the concert, on the success of the function. They also thanked the teachers, Mr. Bakst and Miss Hovsha, for their assistance, and Cantor I. Badash, who was in charge of the musical items.

A Sholem Ash Play

An interesting production of a Sholem Ash play took place at the Jewish Guild on Saturday and Wednesday evenings. Large audiences of lovers of Yiddish were present on both occasions.

The play chosen was "Motke Ganeff," which helped to make the author famous many years ago. There can be no doubt about the power, beauty and poignancy of Sholem Ash's great work. The production by local amateurs was of a high standard and much credit is due to Mr. Rene Shapshak, the well-known sculptor and painter, for the fine work he carried out in his capacity as co-producer and scene painter. His deft and artistic hand was also observed in the period costumes worn in the play. Sholem Ash's satire was produced under the auspices of the Yiddish Cultural Society.

"The Work Must and Will Go On"

Mr. Lloyd George Stands by the Mandate

GREAT BRITAIN'S TRUSTEESHIP

"GREAT Britain, as the Trustee of the civilised nations of the earth, has set her hand in Palestine to a great and noble undertaking, and it is inconceivable that she should relinquish her task half done."

THE current issue of the "New Judea" (London) publishes the following message from Mr. Lloyd George on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Balfour Declaration:

It is twenty years now since the announcement on the authority of the Government of which I was Prime Minister, of the Balfour Declaration. The Declaration was issued at a time of unparalleled stress and anxiety for the British people; but it was a document which had received the Cabinet's most careful and anxious consideration. It received the full assent of all the Allied Powers and of the United States of America. I am proud to have been associated with the initiation of a policy which represents an act of historic justice to an ancient people to which the world owes much.

That policy has already borne fruit in the remarkable economic regeneration of the Holy Land. It is a policy whose full significance can still, I believe, be only dimly apprehended. Great Britain, as the Trustee of the civilised nations of the earth, has set her hand in Palestine to a great and noble undertaking, and it is inconceivable that she should relinquish her task half done.

The Jews have shown that, given the opportunity, they can restore their never-forgotten Homeland to fruitfulness and create gardens out of its waste places. The achievements in this connection of the Keren Hayesod (Palestine Foundation Fund) as a major instrument in the work of national upbuilding in Palestine are well and favourably known to me, and I am confident that in the years that lie ahead the Jewish people themselves, who have responded so well to the calls thus far made on them, will continue to do all that in them lies to carry their task to a successful conclusion. The work must, and will, go on.

Churt, October 27, 1937.



David Lloyd George.

BEREA CONGREGATION Social Chanukah Service

There was a large attendance, including a number of members of the South African Jewish ex-Service League, at the special Chanukah Service held by the Berea Congregation, Johannesburg, on Sunday afternoon last. An impressive service was conducted by Chief Cantor S. Steinberg, assisted by the choir under the baton of his son, Mr. Steinberg, with Professor Drutman at the organ. Mr. S. Kessel, the president of the congregation, opened the Ark, and Rabbi I. M. Gervis, the minister, recited the "Prayer for the Royal Family."

Rabbi Gervis, in the course of his sermon on the significance of the festival, said that there would have been no justification for its celebration if it only commemorated an event of thousands of years ago, and if it had no relationship to the present life of Jewry. But the Jewish people throughout the ages and at the present day had displayed a spirit which, externally oppressed, was always internally determined to bring about the revival of the Jewish people as a nation.

Strangely enough, and ironically, as it were, the Maccabean village of Modin would not, in the British partition plan, be included in Jewish Palestine, and thus the village which had been made world-famous and historical by our Jewish heroes would not belong to the Jewish people.

Musical Society Concert

Madame Olga Ryss, the well-known soprano, gave a recital of an interesting group of songs at the concert of the Johannesburg Musical Society held at the Library Theatre on Monday evening. A series of songs by the brilliant English composer, Bantock, were of special interest. Madame Ryss showed her real artistry, however, as a dramatic singer in a number of "lieder" by Tschaikevsky. In the rendition of these her Russian temperament played an important part and her voice was full of power and beauty. The singer was accompanied by Miss Melanie Vale — a highly accomplished performer. More should surely be heard of this fine pianist.

Miss Olda Mehr, the young pianist, was the co-artist with Madame Olga Ryss. She gave a fine interpretation of Rachmaninoff's Prelude in G. Minor and showed remarkable fluency, ease and tone. Her exposition of the works of the modern composers like De Falla and Swinestead were comprehensive and mature. She also gave a competent performance of Bach's English Suite No. 3 in C. Minor. Although Miss Mehr was nervous at the beginning of her performance, she gradually got control of her instrument and demonstrated her inherent qualities as a gifted piano performer.

D.

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