

Lag B'Omer Celebrated at Balfouria

THE dancing of the hora around a huge bon-fire . . . Hebrew songs bursting from hundreds of throats . . . a watch-tower in the distance—thus was the atmosphere and spirit of the Yishuv brought to Balfouria Village last Monday night for the celebration of Lag B'Omer. The last of the four mass functions in Johannesburg's Enlightenment Drive month, it was arranged co-jointly by the Johannesburg Women's Zionist League and the Johannesburg Zionist Association, under the able convenership of Mrs. A. Franks.

Torches illuminated the path leading to the scene of the celebrations where the warmth of the fires was in harmony with the spirit of the many hundreds, both young and old, who participated in the festivity. Community singing continued throughout the evening under the able leadership of Mr. Himmelstein, and to the accompaniment of a piano-acordion played by Miss Gittleson.

The inner-man was well catered for. Apart from a "braaivleis" there was a large variety of foodstuffs for sale at the stalls run by members of the J.W.Z.L., and purse-strings were freely loosened.

Mr. M. Spitz, Chairman of the Johannesburg Zionist Association, acted as Master of Ceremonies and conducted the proceedings throughout the evening.

Rabbi Rabinowitz

Rabbi Dr. L. Rabinowitz addressed the gathering on the significance and the history of Lag B'Omer. He stressed the importance of unbroken and sustained effort. "We have always had our own 'Quislings' and doubters, but we have been fortunate in that the courageous element has always predominated. This has enabled us to survive our difficulties and brought nearer the final goal."

Mr. Israel Dunsky, Chairman of the Information and Organisation Department, said that every period of great agony in Jewish history has been followed by a period of forgetfulness, of deadly amnesia. The Enlightenment Drive is designed to fight against this fatal precedent and to mobilise around the Zionist banner an enlightened and well-informed public opinion. The Jewish people must follow the example of the great nations of the world by achieving mastery over their own fate and thereby attaining a measure of security for the future.

Cantor Breitman's New Appointment

CANTOR P. BREITMAN, who for the past five years gave delightful renderings of Chazonut at the Mayfair Synagogue, left for Cape Town last week to take up the position of Cantor at the Roeland Street Synagogue.

Before their departure Mr. and Mrs. Breitman were the guests of honour at a farewell function. Mr. M. Sadowsky, Vice-Chairman of the Mayfair Congregation, presided and tributes to Cantor Breitman were paid by Mr. Sadowsky, Cantor I. Alter (on behalf of the Hagudas Hachazanim), Mr. S. Moch (President of the Congregation), Councillor A. Bloch, Rev. O. Altshuler, Messrs. J. Ben (President of the Fordsburg-Mayfair Congregation), M. Lazar, I. Gross, Weinstein and Davidowitz.

Mr. Sachs made a presentation to Cantor Breitman on behalf of the Congregation.



Part of the crowd around the bon-fire

BACKGROUND OF DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN HEBREW

PROF. RABINOWITZ DELIVERS LANDAU MEMORIAL LECTURE

"THE Background of Development of Modern Hebrew" was the subject chosen by Prof. Rabbi L. Rabinowitz, when he delivered the second Chief Rabbi Prof. Dr. J. L. Landau Memorial Lecture to a large gathering at the Carlton Hotel on Thursday evening, April 26. The function was held under the auspices of the S.A. Friends of the Hebrew University on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Hebrew University.

The Hon. Mr. Justice L. Greenberg presided, and expressed the hope that Rabbi Rabinowitz would stand in the same relation towards the Friends of the Hebrew University as his predecessor. "A high standard has been set for Rabbi Rabinowitz, but I am confident that he will measure fully up to that standard."

Justice Greenberg referred also to the death of Mr. Henry Kallenbach, and paid a warm tribute to the work of the deceased on behalf of the Friends of the Hebrew University.

"The theory that the development of Hebrew as a living language ends with the Bible," said Rabbi Rabinowitz, "is a commonly-accepted fallacy, for Hebrew shows a continuous development for at least 600 years after the close of the Bible."

In the Mishna, continued the speaker, we found various new directions in the language. There are new terms, new grammatical expressions and new grammatical forms. The view that the language of the Mishna was purely a literary medium and not a living language has been completely exploded.

Rabbi Rabinowitz referred to the remarkable development of Hebrew in Spain which reached its climax with Yehuda-ha-Levi; to Sa-adia Gaon,

who was the founder of Hebrew prose, poetry and grammar—in fact everything not included in the Talmud; to the school of Achad Ha'am, who proved that Hebrew was able also to express abstract thoughts; to Ibn Tibon, the leader of the school of translators of Jewish-Arab literature into Hebrew, and who created a complete glossary of words for the language.

Another great movement of Hebrew was the school of Rashi. They were fine poets, but suffered from one great fault—their ignorance of the rules of Hebrew grammar. Despite the literary atrocities they so often committed, they were the first to give some flexibility to the language, making at the same time a noteworthy contribution to its literature.

Rabbi Dr. M. C. Weiler thanked Professor Rabinowitz for his lucid and informative address. He mentioned that the function was held also in celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Friends of the Hebrew University, and referred to the forthcoming campaign of the Society in August. Professor Mayer, Rector of the Hebrew University, and Dr. Senator, Administrator of the University, he stated, were coming to South Africa to assist in the work of the campaign and to make South African Jews Hebrew-University-minded.

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S.A. JEWISH ORPHANAGE.

Annual Distribution of Prizes and Six Barmitzvahs.

The public are invited to the Orphanage, "Arcadia," Oxford Road, Parktown, for Sunday afternoon, May 13th, at 2.30 p.m., when the Barmitzvahs of Six Orphanage boys will be celebrated, and the Annual Distribution of Prizes will take place. Refreshments will be served. The Rosebank and Dunkeld Buses pass the Orphanage gates.

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