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Cantor Gives Impressions Of Italy

CANTOR J. EIDELSON, of the Yeoville Synagogue, returned to Johannesburg recently after a visit to Italy. Mrs. Eidelson arrived with him. She was born in Vilna and was also an inmate of the Nazi concentration camps during the war.

Cantor Eidelson told the "Zionist Record" that there is to-day much depression among the displaced persons in Italy. There are about 15,000 Jews and they are all anxiously awaiting the day when it would be possible for them to go to Palestine. The displaced persons await the news from Palestine daily and Jewish newspapers are snatched up as soon as they leave the press. Cantor Eidelson said that small groups of newcomers still continue to reach Italy from eastern Europe, but owing to the strict control of the borders there is no mass influx.

Even at the time he left Italy, on March 19, election fever was already at its height, but the Jews took little direct interest in the elections because hardly any one of them expects to remain in the country. There is unemployment in Italy and in any case foreigners are not permitted to take up employment. Nevertheless, cultural life is being maintained. Lately there has come into being a "Concert Brigade", consisting of a group of artistically minded chalutzim, who give concerts. Their conductor was formerly a sailor of the Russian navy.

Modern Correspondence Course

DEAR Editor: I wish my wife would take one of those courses in DOMESTIC SILENCE you hear so much about.—Letter in "Liberal Judaism" (New York).



As Others See Us

THE position of the Jews in South Africa was not promising either from the political or economic points of view, declared Dr. D. Mowshowitz, foreign secretary to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Jewish Board of Deputies, when he gave a talk on South African Jews at a recent meeting of the London Jewish Graduates' Association, according to a report in the London "Jewish Chronicle."

South African Jewry, said Dr. Mowshowitz, were a young, prosperous and generous community. They had contributed very considerably towards the rehabilitation of Jews in Europe and were ardent supporters of all Zionist funds. Their Board of Deputies was in very close contact with the British Board of Deputies.

As a result of the Palestine troubles the English-speaking South Africans had become hostile towards the Jews, he declared. On the other hand, the Afrikaans-speaking section, who had been very anti-Semitic, was becoming more friendly, but only because the others were hostile. Both sections, however, were against Jewish immigration. Politically and economically the Jewish position was not safe, and more than 10,000 young Jews were ready to go to Palestine.

Romance of a Name

By N. Pearlroth

BRENNER

This request name was sent in by Miss Y. Brenner, 22 Tanner Street, Krugersdorp West

THIS Jewish surname is of occupational origin. The highly-respected trade from which it is derived is that of Silver Smelter ("Silber-Brenner" in Jewish).

The Brenners only used the latter half of the full trade title. The Silver Smelters also worked at refining the metal. Their status was highly fiduciary. For many centuries Jews were by law strictly forbidden to work as silver smelters or refiners in Europe. And yet such a paradoxical situation arose that Jews had a practical monopoly on the trade.

This was due to the extraordinary skill of the Jewish silversmiths with which non-Jews could not compete. The authorities were

helpless. If they were to insist on a literal adherence to the law, all business would stagnate because of lack of silver for coining and ornamental purposes. Therefore they chose to ignore the law between the 16th and 18th centuries and the Jewish Brenners flourished.

The surname Brenner has the honour of being commemorated in the Palestinian colony of Givath Brenner, founded in 1928 in honour of the Hebrew writer, Haim Brenner, who was assassinated by Arabs in 1921. Another distinguished namesake was Ernst Brenner, who was President of Switzerland in 1887 and 1894. Although the latter was a non-Jew he was frequently thought to be Jewish by his East-European namesakes.

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