

## PRETORIA NOTES.

*(Communications intended for insertion in these columns should be addressed to "Zionist Record," P.O. Box 1222, Pretoria.)*

### The Zionist Guild.

The work of the Guild is now beginning to take a definite shape, and it is confidently expected that, given the same measure of keenness and determination on the part of those who have pledged themselves to carry out the original programme, the foundations of the society will be well and truly laid. After several months of activity, the experience has been that a great deal of pioneer work still remains to be done in this town. The lack of a sufficient number of energetic workers to respond to the many calls which must be made on behalf of the movement, has somewhat militated against the complete success of the Guild. But in this respect the cultural and educational aims of the latter, by drawing attention to and concentrating on the problems and achievements of the movement, will, it is hoped, supply the deficiency in due course. In the meantime the main burden still rests on a few shoulders.

One phase of the Guild's programme which has recently claimed the attention of the committee has been the establishment of a Jewish and particularly a Zionist Library in Pretoria. The need for this has been so keenly felt that the matter may be safely commended to the notice of every member of the Guild, and, indeed, of every Jew in Pretoria. Donations in cash or kind for this laudable object will be gratefully accepted by the committee and suitably acknowledged.

The principal function of the Guild in July was a lecture by Mr. Maurice Schaeffer on "The League of Nations and its relation to the Jewish Problem," which was delivered in the Red Room of the Grand Hotel on the evening of the 22nd of that month. Mr. I. Gavronsky presided in the absence of the president, and there was a fair attendance of members and others interested. The lecturer, who spoke with a complete mastery of his subject, gave a lucid exposition of the constitution and functions of the League. He dwelt particularly on the potentialities of the International Court of Justice as an instrument for the preservation of peace on earth, and analysed in detail the Mandates clauses of the Covenant, as well as the terms of the Palestine Mandate, for which, he claimed, the League deserved the support of every Jew. In the course of an interesting and animated discussion which followed the lecture, some very divergent views were expressed as to the potency and ability of the League. Mr. Schaeffer put up an able and gallant defence on behalf of the latter, and in reply to various critics, urged that the League should at least be given a fair chance to justify itself. In any case, he contended, it was incredible that any one who claimed to have at heart the cause of world-peace should not give encouragement to the only institution which attempted to promote it, however imperfectly as yet. The meeting concluded with a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Schaeffer.

The August functions of the Guild include a concert and bioscope performance in the Town Hall on the 15th

of the month, when the great Palestine film, depicting the life and work of the Chaluzim and other phases of Zionist activity in the Holy Land, will be shown. The film will be supplemented by a strong concert programme, and a matinee performance of the picture has also been arranged for the benefit of the children. The net proceeds will, of course, go to the National Fund. [Since these notes were written, the function has duly taken place, and proved a great success, the Town Hall being filled by an appreciative audience. We understand the National Fund will benefit by about £50.—Ed.]

On the 26th August a debate will be held on a Zionist topic, Messrs. J. L. Saks and L. Hotz being the principals. Subsequent events which have also already been arranged include a gramophone recital and dance at the Imperial Hotel early in September.

### Board of Deputies' Congress.

The proceedings of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies Congress, which was held on the 5th and 6th August and was attended by delegates from all parts of the Union and Rhodesia, formed one of the most notable features of a crowded month. But primarily they belong to the history of South African, rather than to that of Pretoria Jewry, although it is pleasant to record that the latter threw themselves wholeheartedly into the congenial task of entertaining the visitors. A full report of the proceedings, as well as of the concert and reception given by the Pretoria community on the evening of the 5th August in honour of the delegates, will no doubt appear elsewhere in this issue.

### The Relief Fund Drive.

The great Drive in the interests of the Relief Fund was fittingly wound up in Pretoria by the concert which was given on the 5th August at the Town Hall in connection with the Board of Deputies Congress. This event, which was a conspicuous success, was the last of a series organised on behalf of the fund. Various other items in the series have already been reported in these columns. The concluding concert was preceded, on the 24th July, by an Eastern Evening which was held at the Imperial Hotel under the joint auspices of the Ladies Benevolent Society and the Judean Society, and which proved an entertainment of exceptional merit. Thanks are due to the organizers of the affair which resulted in the addition of an amount of about £60 to the Pretoria contribution to the Relief Fund.

### Literary and Debating Society.

The recent activities of this society which has staunchly survived a period of "Sturm und Drang," included a debate on free secondary education, which was held on the 18th July and which was ably initiated by Messrs. Osrin and Rostowsky. It is of interest to note that the system of free secondary education found many enthusiastic supporters and carried the day, in spite of some very severe and well-directed criticism. A journal, consisting of original literary contributions by various members of the society, was read by Mr. L. Hotz on the 19th August. An encouraging feature of the journal was the attention devoted to Zionism,

which formed the subject of several articles and a good deal of discussion.

#### The Cultural Association.

Commendable activity was displayed by this body, thanks to its very energetic executive. On the 26th July a successful concert was given in the Town Hall in aid of a library fund, and on the 1st August Mrs. Berthe Goudvis, of Johannesburg, delivered a lecture on "The Jew in Modern Drama," which was greatly appreciated by a good audience.

#### The Judean Society.

This society, which represents the younger and, therefore, not the least vigorous element in this community, has made an entire departure, for a Pretoria communal body, by publishing a compact little journal which bears the challenging title of *The Judean Critic*. Two issues of this journalistic bantling, which has been entrusted to the editorial care of Mr. S. Cohen, have now appeared and have aroused a good deal of interest.

#### FIANCAILLES.

**GALGUT — MIZROCH.** — The engagement is announced of Bessie, third daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. Galgut, of Doornfontein, to Elias Mizroch, of La Rochelle, both of Johannesburg.

**TOUYZ—EDELSON.**—The engagement is announced of Ada, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. T. Touyz, Rietgat, Jansenville, to Samuel Aser Edelson, Greystone, C.P., youngest son of Idel Idelson, Posvitin, Lietuvo.

#### DEATH.

**BLOOM.**—Gerald Bloom, aged three years and three months, passed peacefully away on July 24th; dearly beloved son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Bloom, of Middelburg, Transvaal. Deeply mourned by his parents, brother Moses and sister Polly.

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## MESOPOTAMIAN JEW'S GIFT TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

### FORTUNE OF £140,000 BEQUEATHED TO THE KEREN HAYESOD.

The June issue of *Zion's Messenger* (Bombay) contains full particulars of the princely legacy which Mr. Haskel Gourgey Shemtob, of Basrah (Mesopotamia), has provided, by a deed executed in April, 1922, for the Keren Hayesod. The facts are contained in the following letter addressed by Mr. Shemtob to the directors of the Keren Hayesod in London:—

"Sirs,—I have the honour to inform you that I have had the great pleasure of seeing your delegate here, Dr. A. Bension, who has explained to me the object of the Keren Hayesod, for whose benefit I have given under separate cover a letter bequeathing my entire fortune to the Keren Hayesod, subject to the following conditions:—

1. That my money should be utilised for public institutions to be erected in Erez Israel in my name and entirely out of my personal means (without being mixed up with monies of other individuals), such as hospital, school, colony or a faculty in the University.
2. That I desire that, in consultation with the Keren Hayesod, two gentlemen be appointed as advisors for the purpose, one to be Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the president of the World Zionist Organisation, and the other Dr. A. Bension, your Zionist delegate here. These two gentlemen will also be in a position to appoint their own representative, if they so desire, to replace them for the establishment of my institutions in Palestine.
3. That although I have stated in my will that my lands can only be sold after my death, nevertheless I shall allow you to sell a portion of the total of my property should you find something important to purchase for the establishment of the institutions.
4. That the details of all the conversations we have had on the subject will be fully given by Dr. Bension, and I shall feel obliged if you will take early steps to have my object accomplished at as early a date as possible.

Awaiting your favourable reply and in the meantime wishing you and all Jews a good success for the cause,

I beg to remain, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) H. J. SHEMTOB.

Basrah, 9th April, 1922.

In a duly witnessed letter addressed to Dr. Bension on the same subject, Mr. Shemtob states that his fortune comprises landed property, gardens, houses, shops, and hard cash to the total value of £140,000. The legacy has obtained legal sanction from the Court in Basrah.