

HEBREW HIGH SCHOOL, JOHANNESBURG.

SUCCESSFUL DANCE IN AID OF FUNDS.

About 350 people attended an enjoyable dance at the Selborne Hall on Wednesday, 28th instant, in aid of the funds of the Hebrew High School. The arrangements were in the hands of a special committee, composed mostly of ladies, with Mr. Bernard Patley as chairman, Mrs. A. R. Bradlow as hon. treasurer, and Miss Sarah Shapiro and Mrs. Bernard Patley as joint hon. secretaries. This committee worked well and harmoniously throughout, with the result that everything went with a swing.

The Novelty Stall was in charge of Mmes. Jacob Shapiro, B. P. Marks, W. Lipworth, — Belcher and J. Ratzker.

Special reference must be made to the assistance given by Mrs. A. Behrmann, Mrs. Rosenberg and Miss Goldberg.

The cloakrooms were kindly looked after by Mrs. Light and Mr. Witkin.

Miss Poppin Salamon and partner kindly gave special exhibition dances, and Clark and Adeler's band was in good form.

It is expected that the function will have yielded a profit of £200.

The Hebrew High School badly needs financial help. Established 19 years ago largely through the efforts of the late Sigmund Shapiro, it has filled a unique place in Johannesburg Jewish life and, indeed, stands alone among Jewish schools in South Africa, in that it combines a complete secular training with a full measure of Hebrew tuition. The secular curriculum brings the students up to the sixth standard, this department being controlled by a Government inspector, whilst the pupils receive 1½ hours tuition daily in Hebrew. In both directions the school invariably achieves excellent results, as is shown by the reports of the inspectors and examiners both for secular and Hebrew tuition. It possesses an excellent staff headed by Mr. David Mann, M.A. In the higher classes the Hebrew tuition is conducted on the Ibrith B'Ibrith method. The pupils leave the school at the age of 13 or 14, and the governing body realises that this breaking off of Hebrew studies at so early a stage is unsatisfactory. If finances permitted, it would cover this difficulty by conducting evening continuation classes in Hebrew.

There are at the moment about 300 pupils, from whom very little is obtained in tuition fees, the great majority being the children of poor parents. Amongst them are the children of the South African Jewish Orphanage, including a large number recently brought from Eastern Europe.

The expenditure of the Institution is about £300 per month. Against this it can only count upon an annual revenue of about £2,000. Until recently there was an additional income of £580 granted by the Provincial Council; latterly, however, the Council has withdrawn all grants to private schools, and the financial position of the Institution is therefore very serious indeed. It is compelled to lead a hand to mouth existence and is in constant financial difficulties of an irritating character, which impede the work and progress of the school, whilst the energies of the governing body, instead of being concentrated upon internal improvements, are necessarily absorbed in the quest for funds. An effort is being made to increase the regular membership with a view to relieving the financial burden, whilst the hard-working executive, headed by Mr. Bernard Patley (chairman for the past three years), Mr. Harry Teeger (vice-chairman), and Mr. L. K. Hurwitz (hon. treasurer), explores every venue for raising funds by means of functions and by influencing local residents to make special donations and to provide for the Institution in their wills.

In spite of these efforts, however, there appears to be grave danger of the school having to close its doors. This would be a thousand pities, as not only does the school stand for a conscientious effort to give attention to their Jewish training, but the closing of its doors would be tantamount to a confession by the Jewish community of Johannesburg that it takes no interest in the maintenance of a strong Jewish tradition in the rising generation.

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