

THE INFLUENCE OF PALESTINE ON BIBLICAL THOUGHT.

Lecture by Dr. Benzion Mossinsohn.

Under the auspices of the Philosophical Society of the Witwatersrand University, Dr. Benzion Mossinsohn delivered an extremely interesting cultural lecture on the subject of "Land and Scripture: The Influence of Palestine on Biblical Thought" in the Chemistry Theatre of the University on Monday evening.

Mr. P. Heimann, Chairman of the Philosophical Society, presided, and introduced the lecturer. With him on the platform was Mr. H. M. Gluckman, the Honorary Secretary of the Society.

Confining himself to the Old Testament, Dr. Mossinsohn emphasised that he would not deal with the Bible as Holy Scripture, but in a scientific manner as the production of a given people at a certain period. The Old Testament, with the creation of old Israel, developed over a period of at least a thousand years. It contained the history of Israel and their struggles against nature and against other peoples. It was deeply rooted in the soil of the country where it was produced.

Word pictures and figures of speech were often dependent on the soil where a language was developed. Palestine had impressed itself on the language and the imagery of the Bible. The people of Israel in their wanderings came into contact with other nomadic desert tribes and the language employed by the prophets of Israel was coloured by their physical surroundings. The conceptions of their poets and prophets were largely those of the people they met. It was often impossible to understand the language of these poets and prophets without a knowledge of the country and the conditions in which they lived.

Many of the expressions, at first peculiar to the Bible, had been absorbed by the literatures of other peoples. By expressions occurring in particular books in the Bible it was often possible to recognise the period during which it must have been written and the place where it was written.

"In Palestine, we do not want explanation," declared Dr. Mossinsohn. "The rocks talk to you, the mountains advise; you live over the same emotions as the old prophets, and you realise what they felt. If you want to understand a poet, you must go to his country."

Dealing with the influence of Palestine on the thoughts of the creators of the Bible, Dr. Mossinsohn said that students of history could not understand the sudden changes in the life of the people of Israel, who did not see, in the beginning, any difference in worshipping Jehovah or Baal.

In times of suffering they turned to Jehovah, but in peace they worshipped Baal, and only when Israel at last conquered the Canaanites did Palestine become the land of Israel and Jehovah.

The most interesting of all the prophets to show the connection between Palestine and the Bible was Jeremiah, stated the lecturer. He was the first to speak of Palestine as a living being. He was a lyrical poet, and there lay his tragedy.

Jeremiah loved the country, apart from the people. When he saw the destruction of the people, he saw the destruction of the country. Jeremiah became the prophet of destruction, and when the majority of people carried hope in their hearts, he killed their hopes. But when they lost hope, he sang songs of hope. He believed that exile was a terrible punishment, but one that purified Judah.

"The Bible is built on Palestine, and Palestine has made its impression on the Bible," asserted Dr. Mossinsohn, in conclusion. "Palestine is the cradle of the Bible, and as long as Palestine exists and the Bible is alive, Israel will carry on."

The Chairman, in moving a vote of thanks to Dr. Mossinsohn for his most interesting lecture, expressed regret at the poor attendance. He felt sure that those who had not been present would regret their absence when they learned of the treat they had missed that evening.

KEREN HATORAH AND BETH JACOB.

A meeting was held at the Hebrew High School on the 12th inst., under the chairmanship of Dr. J. L. Landau (Chief Rabbi), to foster interest in the above institution.

The meeting was well attended, and the Chairman not only touched on the good work accomplished by the institution, but also on the character of Rabbi Emanuel Zimmermann, who has come over to South Africa to raise funds.

Rabbi Rosenzweig also appealed for support.

Rabbi Zimmermann then described the work carried out by him during his tour in South Africa.

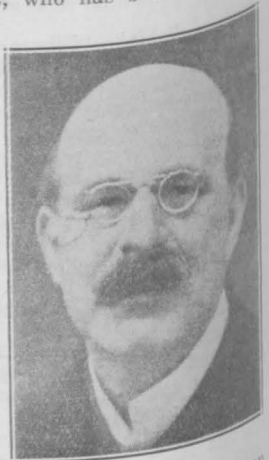
SIR ISRAEL GOLLANZ.

Death of Jewish Savant.

We regret to announce the death, in London, of Sir Israel Gollanz, the Jewish savant, who has been fellow and secretary of the British Academy since its foundation in 1903.

He was the son of a rabbi and was born in London in July, 1864, being educated at the City of London School, University College, London, and Christ's College, Cambridge. From 1892 to 1895 he was Quain student and lecturer in English at University College, London, and in 1896 was appointed university lecturer in that subject at Cambridge. In 1906 he became professor of English language and literature at King's College, London. On the foundation of the British Academy in 1903 he was elected a fellow and appointed its secretary.

His published works include "Pearl," "Cynewulf's Christ," an edition of Lamb's "Specimens of Elizabethan Dramatists," the "Exeter Book of Anglo-Saxon Poetry," and "Hamlet in Iceland." He was general editor of the "Temple Classics," the "King's Library," and the "Medieval Library" series, and the "Book of Homage to Shakespeare," which appeared in 1916. In 1919 he was knighted. He was president of the Philological Society from 1919 to 1922, and honorary director of the Early English Text Society.



Sir Israel was a brother of Rabbi Sir Herman Gollanz.

SUCCESS OF VICTOR CHENKIN.

The ability of a single artist to attract large audiences is well demonstrated by Victor Chenkin, the celebrated interpreter of international folk songs. His performances at the Standard Theatre, Johannesburg, are giving continuous delight to an increasing number of admirers. In his slight changes of programme he demonstrates a further versatility in the interpretation of international types.

At his concert on Tuesday night, Chenkin introduced a number of new Yiddish Folk Songs, and these were interpreted in his inimitable manner. Perhaps the highest point of perfection was reached in the song without words. Out of a mere old Jewish chant, Chenkin was able to express the very depth of feeling.

This gifted artist is due to give a further concert at the Standard Theatre on Saturday evening.

CHARLEY'S AUNT.

Frank Neil and his company of comedians are delighting audiences at His Majesty's Theatre, Johannesburg, with a modern and up-to-date presentation of "Charley's Aunt," the comedy which set our fathers and mothers laughing many years ago.

Originally produced in 1892, the play has had a consistent run throughout all these years and has been presented in many languages. Frank Neil himself has played the title role over 1,500 times, and in this he gives one of the most excellent interpretations ever seen in this country.

A CHESS MATCH.

Jewish Guild v. S.A.P.

On Wednesday evening the S.A.P. Chess Club was at home to the Jewish Guild for a friendly match. The result was as follows (Jewish Guild players first named): Broer 1, Veenstra 0; Wilkin 1, Weddell 0; Dr. Spiro 0, Dunton 1; A. Behrman 0, Love 1; B. Grinker 0, Friedman 1; Kruger 1, Mellet 0; Ettlinger 0, Gould 1; S. Behrman 0, Anderson 1; Cohn 0, Quoit 1; Ling 0, Furniss 1. The totals were: S.A.P., 7; Jewish Guild, 3. Mr. Charles Wood, president of the S.A.P. Club welcomed the visitors. At the conclusion of the match Mr. L. Wertheim, captain of the S.A.P., expressed the hope that though the Chess League was now established, friendly matches would still be held frequently, as they did much to promote good fellowship and popularise the game.

DRINK CHANDLER'S CROWN LAGER