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In Cape Town

REPORTS OF JEWISH ACTIVITIES IN THE MOTHER CITY

From Our Own Correspondent.

All Communications relat-
ing to these pages should
be addressed to

"HASOFER,"

P.O. Box 3084,

CAPE TOWN.

A GREAT ARTIST.

We have been very fortunate of late. It is not often we are privileged to listen to an artist such as Victor Chenkin and the last week has therefore been an exceptional one in the cultural life of Capetown. Chenkin has enchanted his audiences here. His marvellous ability, his sincerity, his finish, the superb magnificence of his work all proclaim him as an artist of the first grade and he has certainly more than deserved the admirable press criticisms he has received.

For Jewry of Capetown the visit of this great personality was of particular interest. For Chenkin is a Jew and his interpretations of Jewish Chassidic and Folk Songs have been such as only an artist of his calibre and a Jew with a thorough understanding of his own people could have rendered. In this group the songs he sang were practically all those which every Jew knows by heart even if he has not sung them himself and yet, as someone very aptly remarked, they were the same and yet not the same. Chenkin, by dint of consummate artistry, transformed them into things exquisitely expressive of the life and soul of the Jews, read into them all the tragedy of an alien people. Jews amongst his audiences were almost swept off their feet with enthusiasm and even Gentiles were not unaffected by the excellent rendering of these melodies. It is worth while in this connection to quote the remarks on this subject of that undoubted authority, the *Cape Argus* musical critic:—

"The mood created by his (Chenkin's) Jewish Rabbi in the Chassidic songs was overpowering, and I have rarely been so thrilled by anything as I was by the heartrending tragedy of the song 'Mai Komashma Lo,' in which he had enshrined the whole history of a race to whom, through persecution, life had become a meaningless sequence of agony and disillusionment. Then came the Jewish folk songs which convulsed an audience who for the most part were conversant with Yiddish, but who, even if they were not, could not fail to be swept off their feet by the consummate acting and expressive gestures which accompanied one of the best pieces of character acting I have ever seen."

The above quotation goes to show that Chenkin is not only a very great artist but that even the description "Yiddish" may not prevent a thing from being artistic. It is certainly a term that has kept away not only Gentiles but also not an insignificant number of Jews—they are nominally, still this—from witnessing one of the finest performances that will come their way for many years to come.

Chenkin will not soon be forgotten in Capetown. He has brought a glow of happiness to not a few Jewish hearts and has lightened the burden of many who in dark moments may reflect with infinite pleasure on his visit here.

LECTURE BY MR. MIEROWSKY.

"The Theory of Nordic Race Superiority" was the subject of a lecture given by Mr. D. Mierowsky last Monday evening under the auspices of the Maccabean Guild. Mr. S. Noll, Chairman of the Association, presided.

Tracing the absurdities of the Nordic theory, the lecturer pointed out that the various attempts at a systematic grouping of the races of men were unstable and unreliable, with continually changing hypothetical theories. The Aryan theory, which based race relationship on similarity of tongue, had now been totally disproved and relegated to the dust heap of human fallacies. But a new theory had taken its place, no less fanciful and absurd, but more destructive and harmful than the one it supplanted—the Nordic.

According to this theory, the race value of any people depended upon the percentage of Northern blood which it contained. A greater fallacy of the theory, however, was that it made innate ability depend upon a race and that it attributed to each special group peculiarities which invariably clung to it for all times under all circumstances. But the latest results of investigation in the fields of evolution and heredity, said the lecturer established the doctrines of the adaptability and power of mutation of characteristics.

Mr. Mierowsky further showed that the quality of a nation's endowment depended not upon its race, but upon its

environment, upon the particular stage of evolution through which it had passed and upon other factors of circumstance. The quantitative value of a nation's capacity depended upon race, or, rather, upon the past experience of the ancestral stock.

An animated discussion took place after the lecture in which Messrs. S. Kahn, H. Zwejer, Wengrove, Levinsohn, H. Rogoff, B. Fine and Dr. J. Sacks participated. Miss Helena Hersman proposed a vote of thanks to the speaker.

ZIONIST "CONVERSAZIONE."

The second Zionist "conversazione," arranged by the Dorshei and Broth Zion Associations, took place in the Zionist Hall last Tuesday evening and was fairly well attended. Mr. and Mrs. J. Herbstein acted as host and hostess.

During the evening, which proved to be a most useful and enjoyable one, a lecture was delivered by Mr. M. Barnett on the first Jewish judge in South Africa, Judge Simeon Jacobs. Mr. B. S. Hersch narrated several interesting anecdotes of the days of early Zionism in Warsaw.

After tea was served Mr. Getz carried out his appointed task of dealing with current Jewish world events and Mr. Meyer Joffe delivered a short address in which he related certain of his impressions in Palestine. The evening closed shortly after his impressions in Palestine. The evening closed shortly after his impressions in Palestine. The evening closed shortly after his impressions in Palestine. The evening closed shortly after his impressions in Palestine.

The function was closed after Mr. H. Zwejer and Mr. M. Joffe had spoken on this subject, but there is every reason to believe that discussion on the latter will be re-opened at the next "conversazione."

PROPAGANDA COMMITTEE.

It will be remembered that at the Propaganda Conference held in Capetown some two months ago, it was decided to form a Cultural Propaganda Committee for the purpose of intensifying Zionist interest and activity in the Western Province and of considering certain definite schemes in this connection. The first meeting of this committee was held last Sunday morning in the Zionist Hall and was fairly well attended by members both from the country districts and local societies.

Much animated discussion took place on various subjects, such as a panel of speakers, a Zionist seminary, education of children, both in *cheder* and in school in Zionist matters, summer schools, etc., with regard to all of which certain arrangements were made. A very definite result of the meeting was the arranging of lecturers to visit various centres in the Western Province in the near future.

Mr. J. Herbstein has been elected Chairman of the Committee and Mr. and Mrs. L. Burman, Joint Secretaries.

REVISIONIST DEBATE.

A gathering of some thirty persons assembled at the Zionist Hall last Sunday evening to listen to or participate in a debate held under the auspices of the local Revisionist Organisation. The merits or demerits of Revisionism and General Zionism were discussed by Dr. W. Altschul, Mr. D. Schrire, Dr. J. Gordon and Mr. H. Zwejer, and by a fairly large number of those among the audience.

GENERAL.

The annual dance of the Observatory and Mowbray Hebrew Congregation was held at the Rondebosch Town Hall last Wednesday night and proved a most successful affair.

The marriage took place last Tuesday afternoon at Muizenberg of Philip, son of Mr. and Mrs. M. Herbstein, to Lily, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Haft.

Another marriage solemnised last week was that of Esther, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. P. Phillips, of Wynberg, to Harold Matthew Harris, of Capetown.

The World's Best Disinfectant—J E Y E S