

IN THE DAYS OF THE POGROMS

(Concluded from previous page.)

when his turn would come. After a month he was let out to consult his Committee. Soon the Bolsheviks left the town.

The White Army.

In August, 1919, the White Army came again and bombarded Odessa from the sea. They hit the synagogue, and it was the Jewish thieves who saved the Scrolls of the Law. The White Army was 15,000 strong, and the Jewish Self-Defence was disbanded. On the Steamer "Russlan," on which he was to sail for Palestine, Mr. Jacobi was arrested by the White Guards, but was released after three weeks in prison on the demand of the leading politicians, and with the assistance of the British Consul. The same day he left for Palestine.

The main reason why the Jewish Self-Defence was successful in Odessa was because it was backed by a strong Jewish community who were nationally conscious and ready for sacrifices. A third reason was the non-political character of the Jewish Self-Defence. Altogether they lost 50, 8 killed and 42 seriously wounded. All the powers and armies who occupied Odessa was dissatisfied with the existence of the Jewish Self-Defence, but none succeeded in destroying it. "I think," said Mr. Jacobi, "that to-day when the hatred of the Jew has penetrated into highly cultured nations like the Germans, when university students are the leaders of the pogrom movement, when mankind seems to be rapidly approaching the morals of the Middle Ages, when pogroms occur even in Palestine, when no one cares to protect the Jew, or even speak for the Jew, to-day, more than ever before, we are our only true friends and guardians, and it is for us to learn to defend ourselves. In this respect the story of the Odessa Self-Defence, the only effective self-defence, is worth knowing."

Mr. Alexander Lipworth said he had much pleasure in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr., or, should he say, Colonel, Jacobi, as for lesser valour and lesser bravery people had been promoted to that exalted rank in times of national danger. Mr. Jacobi had given them a most lucid and instructive lecture. He had dealt fully with the pogroms in Russia for the last fifty years. He had dealt with physical pogroms perpetrated on the Jewish masses, with the connivance and tacit consent of the Russian Government.

The excuse for the pogrom, an excuse sanctioned by the Government of Alexander III, was that the Jewish people were exploiting the Russian peasants. And, because of this excuse, the Russian Government was prosecuting ever since an economic pogrom on the Jewish population, much more hurtful and of much greater consequence even than the murderous pogroms so vividly described by Mr. Jacobi. There was a wise Jewish saying, "The remedy comes before the visitation of the disease." And not seldom did this saying come true during the many centuries of Jewish martyrdom.

At the very time when the Jewish nation was threatened with extinction, when the Temple fell and the national independence was lost, there arose in Palestine a school of sages with Johanan ben Zakai at the head, who founded the Vineyard of Jabne, and through the teaching of the Law prevented the disintegration of the Jewish nation. Strange enough, just at the beginning of the Russian pogroms, or, rather, a year or so earlier, an organisation was formed in Russia by the best elements of the Jewish intellectuals, whose aims and ambitions were to do away with the precarious economic existence of the Jewish masses by making them productively and industrially useful. That organisation—the ORT—was founded in the year 1880 and has performed remarkable work on the lines of healthening the Jewish masses

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economically and morally. Yet, in this country, the work of the ORT was hardly known until a few years ago, when Dr. Bramson first brought to light to South African Jewry the wonderful work and great usefulness of that institution. To-day Mr. Jacobi was here with us to further the cause of the ORT, and it was hoped that he would meet with that success which his mission warranted. The danger of the economic pogroms was serious enough, and defence must be augmented by the help of South African Jewry.

Mr. J. H. Barnett, the President of the Guild, moved a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

The Chairman, in his reply, said that usually people like Mr. Jacobi, who had been in prison and sentenced to death, were separated from him by the width of the court room. This lecture, however, was a unique experience.

CONCERT AT THE JEWISH AGED HOME.

On Thursday evening, June 4th, a delightful concert was held at the Jewish Aged Home in Louisa Street, Doornfontein, Johannesburg. The inmates assembled in the large hall of the Institution and a programme of music and concert items were carried through under the direction of Mrs. E. Ashberg. The artists were introduced to the audience by Mr. Meyers, a member of the Committee.

Mrs. J. Miller opened with a pianoforte solo. Miss Penn and Mrs. Faigo sang Yiddish Folk songs and Miss Rose Liker interested the audience with a fine display of whistling items. The five Bradshaw sisters obliged with harmony singing which was much enjoyed. Miss Gertrude Cohen gave special pleasure in items on the piano-accordion and the Misses Levinson played a piano duet very cleverly. A special feature of the evening's programme which delighted the old people was the dancing of the two shadow pupils of Signor and Madame Canale. They were Master Cecil Schneider and little Miss Gwen Fraser, who gave exhibitions in the latest modern dances.

At the conclusion of the evening, Mr. Meyers expressed appreciation to the artists for a most excellent concert and he made special reference to the untiring labours of Mrs. E. Ashberg in organising so successful an affair.

During the interval refreshments were served and altogether a most happy evening was given to the old people at the Home.

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