A Birthday

A N INTERESTING birth-
day is to be celebrated next month. The occasion will be a luncheon to mark the twenty-first year of ex-
istence of the Women's Zion-
ist League in Johannesburg.
I feel sure that Zionists all
over the country will extend felicitations to the women of
Johannesburg on the occa-
sion of their unique simcha.

The League began in a
small way and has carried out consistent service to
Jewish nationalism throughout this
long period. It has incidentally produced some fine and excellent workers, who have not only assisted in local Zionist
activity, but have helped the movement in general throughout the country.
It is no secret that Johannesburg pos-
sesses no men's Zionist society on a large scale—although this fact is art
evidence of any lack of the intense Zionist
atmosphere among them. It is the
women, however, who are well organ-
ised, and to them must be extended the heartiest congratulations on the completi-
tion of two decades of devoted service.

Flying
TRAVELLING by air to Palestine
is becoming a popular means of
transport on the part of our people here. At dawn yesterday three stepped to the aeroplane at Germiston three
good and loyal Zionists in the persons of Mr. N. Kirschen and Mr. and Mrs. Wolf
Senior. In some five days' time these people will be traversing the streets of Tel-Aviv.
It seems almost incredible that this should be so, but such is the mechanical advancement of the times due to man's inventive genius that the miracle has become real. When a Zionist in Johan-
nesburg can talk of being in Jerusalem "next week," it is obvious that the National Home is being literally drawn closer to us.
I feel sure that flying to Palestine will become even more frequent as the months and years pass. Added effici-
cy may increase the speed of aeroplane and it may yet be possible that a journey to Eretz Israel from South Africa will come to be a matter of "a wave of the flip." Kohtut

A LOSS to Jewish scholarship has occurred in the passing away in
America of George Alexander Kohtut. He was a shining star in the history of modern Jewish letters.

Among the books which he wrote were "Early Jewish Literature in America," "Jewish Martyrs of the Inquisition in South America," a bibliography of the writings of Professor M. Steinshneider, "Eza Stiles and the Jews," "A Hebrew An-
thology" (two volumes), and "Beside the Still Waters," a volume of poetry. He was an authority on Lessing, the German poet; on the early annals of the Jews in America, and in the belles-lettres field.

As a bibliophile Dr. Kohtut acquired a notable collection of his own and through the years bestowed hundreds of rare items on appreciative friends and

to various library collections. Through-
out all his interests was the thread of his Jewish sympathy and he unearthed
numerous footnotes to Jewish history and sidelights on Jewish personalities in the byways of the literary world. Numerous articles of diverse nature came from his pen from time to time.
An indication of his love for books was the following really beautiful poem which George Alexander Kohtut wrote in his twenty-ninth year:

A Farewell to My Books.

If I must die, eat my time in cosmic
O take me not, great God, as I recline
In ease upon my pillow, soft and free,
Nor to the sound of knife and battle-drawn
Shall you unwearily spirit journey home;
Nor in the hush of prayer, when the divine
Blends gently with the human, for a space

Do I beseech this final boon of grace;—
But rather let me perish as I stand
Before my treasured shelves, my kind-
ing eyes

Fixed fondly on my books in last good
hope.

A well-thumbed tome closed tight
within my hand—
Thus would I pass into the Promised Land.
If I must die, great God, if I must die!

"Union" Cantors

Is a Chazon a reverend, or is he merely
a worker? This thought has come to me in view of the news that the Chazonim in Chicago have organised themselves into a union and have affili-
ated themselves with the American Federation of Labour.
It would be instructive to know upon
what basis they intend to carry out their work. In ordinary labour, there are such contentious points as piece work, overtime and other phases which have to be taken into consideration. The question, however is whether the "unionised" cantor will look upon the Sabbath morning service as overtime, when compared with the Friday night service? And is he to be paid at the rate of "time-and-a-half" for any extra vocal pyrotechnics? If the chazon
would be paid on the basis of a schedule of hours, is it not possible that he may just finish when he is in the midst of a charming coloratura display—or even a falsetto demonstration? Will he have to cut his exhibition short, or will the union allow him to finish his gymnastics?

The position is full of difficulties. One chazon will complete his work during the High Holydays at one o'clock and another continue his warbling until three o'clock. There is a strange unfairness here. One possible advantage will ap-

Peel down the law and telling the cantor
what he should do and what he should not do, may pos-
sibly disappear. It will be the business of the union to—but I had better stop, for I am getting into an unholy maze.

Adar

THE month of Adar has just been ushered in, and I find it has an interesting connection, with the Jewish calendar as well as with Jew-

ish folklore. The origin of the name is still shrouded in mystery. According to most scholars, it appears to be derivable from an ancient Assyrian source, meaning "cut down, reaper." If that is so, then it tallies with the description of Adar being the month which witnessed in Eretz Israel the reaping season in spring.

On the other hand, the Midrash de-
clares that the law-giver Moses was born and died on the seventh of Adar. Like other instances in other world-
wide romances, Moses represents in Hebrew belief the typical saviour-hero type of humanity. The Samaritans be-
lieve that Moses will come again, for they are of the opinion that he is their Messiah.

Purim falls on the fifteenth of Adar; and the origin of the name of Purim is, too, still unsatisfactorily explained. There is no good Hebrew word "purs" meaning "fox," and Purim appears to depend upon a far-fetched parallel with the Assyrian "puru." Some scholars think that it might come from the Assyrian "pukhun" and Mandaic "pukhun," meaning "assembly," being the name of an original New Year when the gods assembled in heaven. Others, again, say that the word is a transliteration of the Greek name "Khoutrii," sugges-
ting "pots," the name of a Greek festival of wine casks.

Sooner or Later

HERSCHELE OSTROPOLER, the
famous Jewish wit, once rushed into the office of the burial society and tear-
fully announced that his wife had just died and that he was in urgent need of money to buy a coffin and shroud. The society immediately gave him the money and appointed a committee to visit Os-

tropler's house and prepare for his spouse's burial.

When the committee reached Ostro-

poly's house it was amazed to see the "corpse" engaged in the ungodly occup-
ation of peeling potatoes.

The speakers for the committee then turned to Herschele and angrily asked:

"I thought you said your wife had died. What's the joke?"

The wag then replied:

"You'll get her sooner or later. What difference does it make if she stays with me for a little while."