

## Letters to the Editor

### The Board of Education and Capetown

From Advocate J. Herbstein.

To the Editor of the *Zionist Record*.

Sir,—A very deplorable tendency has lately shown itself in the outlook of those who should lead our community. For this reason your comments on Rabbi Hirsch's attitude to the South African Board of Hebrew Education are very timely.

There are those who say that the Board is a wholly unnecessary institution; that it is a waste of time, money and energy to worry about Hebrew education in the Diaspora. And this criticism comes from two classes as wide apart in their Jewish outlook as the poles themselves. There is first the class whose interest in things Jewish is nil; these we can ignore. The other class is composed of those whose whole interest is concerned in the quick establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine. They believe that the problem of Hebrew education in the Diaspora can only be solved by a successful Palestine—a point of view I appreciate, but do not support.

The large majority believe that the Diaspora should not be neglected. It was this majority which established with high hopes the South African Board. That it has not functioned successfully is due to two causes. Firstly, the general Jewish public has not yet been educated up to the utilitarian value of Hebrew—one often thinks that the first step should have been to found a Board to educate the parents. The second cause is the one you have commented on—the parochial outlook of some of our leading lights. Every Jew is an expert on Hebrew education; he needs not the advice of anybody else. It is not only Rabbis like Rabbi Hirsch who object to accepting advice. Many of the ministers in the smaller dorps, encouraged by his attitude, follow his example. The experienced teachers, on the contrary, have proved wonderfully loyal.

Rabbi Hirsch's attitude finds its counterpart in that of some of the lay leaders whose objection takes the form of refusing to combine with the Board in any effort because the control is in Johannesburg. You rather excuse the attitude of Capetown. In my opinion, the action of the Western Province is deserving only of the strongest condemnation—a promise of co-operation, talk of "a considerable amount of local autonomy" mean nothing. In fact and in deed, Capetown has broken away from the Board, has cut off supplies except for a modest affiliation fee, and has destroyed by a hasty, ill-considered action the unity of South African Jewry.

It is time we faced the question fairly and squarely. Are we to have a South African Jewish community or are we to have the general body divided into a number of small centres? In the decentralisation which has shown itself in the Board of Deputies we have another example. Local committees at various centres, instead of a strong central body, is the present position. Yesterday, the Board of Hebrew Education disintegrated; to-morrow will come the demand for the "provincialisation" of the Zionist movement. And next week, various centres within the Provinces will follow Rabbi Hirsch's example and demand local autonomy.

Can we, in these circumstances, expect loyal, disciplined action from the general body? Rabbi Hirsch should ponder on the situation and sink his personal feelings for the greater good of the whole community. If he expects to lead he must learn to follow. His own disloyalty to established authority will serve only as an example to his own flock to flout his authority.

History repeats itself; even in the time of crisis, dissension amongst our leaders has been the greatest contributory cause of our downfall. Will Rabbi Hirsch not come into the ranks and do some constructive work instead of standing aloof and by his criticism destroying that which has already been built up?

Yours, etc.,

J. Herbstein.

### A Jewish Choral Society

From Miss Rita Gross (Johannesburg).

To the Editor of the *Zionist Record*.

Sir,—The attention of my committee has been drawn to an article appearing in the *Zionist Record* in your issue of March 16th on page 17, wherein it is suggested that there is no Jewish Choral Society existing in this city.

My committee desires me to point out that some months ago a society was formed in Johannesburg under the guidance of Mr. J. Idelson, which choral circle has as its object not only the study and general interest of all Jewish music, but also the rendering of Jewish Folk Music.

We wish to avail ourselves of this opportunity to invite members of the public to interest themselves in our society. Further enquiries can be directed to the undersigned, P.O. Box 5119, Johannesburg.

Yours, etc.,

Rita Gross,  
Secretary, Jewish Choral Society.

# CASTLE BEERS

### Third S.A. Reconstruction Campaign

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**KRUGERSDORP.**—A public meeting was held at the Krugersdorp Hebrew Hall on Sunday, the 1st inst. Dr. Leon Bramson gave a lecture on "Jewish Life in Eastern Europe and its Rebuilding," which was illustrated with lantern slides.

Advocate Maurice Franks, of Johannesburg, also addressed the meeting. Mr. S. Z. Susser, acting chairman of the United Hebrew Institutions, Krugersdorp, presided. As a result of the meeting, a group was formed, consisting of Messrs. P. Klawansky, C. Lurie and S. Z. Susser, with the object of launching an effort on behalf of the Reconstruction Campaign in Krugersdorp.

**VEREENIGING.**—A public meeting took place at Vereeniging at the Isaac Lewis Hall. Dr. S. L. Feldman presided, and introduced Dr. Bramson, and spoke eloquently of the cause of Jewish national and economic rehabilitation in Eastern Europe. Dr. Bramson addressed the meeting, and was supported by Mr. J. Sacks, president of the Vereeniging Hebrew Congregation. An effort in aid of the Reconstruction Campaign was then carried through very successfully with the help of Dr. Feldman and Mr. Benjamin.

**BLOEMFONTEIN.**—Dr. Leon Bramson leaves for Bloemfontein on Saturday night, the 7th inst., and, on the following evening, will address a public meeting which is being organised by a group of helpers in that town.

### EASTERN DISTRICTS JUDEAN SOCIETY.

On Sunday evening, the 8th inst., at 8.15 p.m., the Johannesburg Eastern Districts Judean Society is holding a symposium in the Communal Hall, corner of Marshall and Browning Streets, Jeppe. Four well-known speakers will deliver addresses on "Party Politics in Zionism."

### WELDON'S LADIES JOURNAL.

The April issue of this useful journal is now obtainable and contains many interesting features. The fashion section includes illustrations of all types of frocks, etc., while there are also special sections giving practical ideas for the home. An attraction is the magazine section, which is composed of short stories, a serial, and various articles. The sole South African distributors of the journal are the Central News Agency.