

Our Girls

WHILST in London recently I happened to be present at a conference where the subject of education of Jewish girls was discussed. It appears that most of the Talmud Torahs in London have a poor attendance of girls. As Mr. Nathan Morris, a well-known educationalist, pointed out "there were deeply rooted prejudices amongst the Jews going back twenty-five centuries concerning the education of girls."

As far as I know the same conditions prevail in this country. There must be hundreds of girls brought up in good Jewish homes who do not know an *alef*, never having attended a Hebrew School. There are many parents who will put themselves out to give their boys a Jewish education, particularly in anticipation of a *barmitzvah* celebration, but they do not bother about their daughters.

Some years ago one synagogue in Johannesburg arranged a confirmation ceremony for girls, and it would be interesting to learn why this practice has not been followed up. I would also like to know what is the percentage of girls in our Hebrew Schools? Our future mothers deserve to receive a sound Jewish education. Many of our women Zionists and communal workers deplore the fact that in their young days parents regarded the Jewish education of girls unnecessary.

Magnes

ONE of the most fascinating personalities in world Jewry is being congratulated upon his sixtieth birthday. Judah L. Magnes has been the centre of more controversy than probably any other living Jewish leader. Although seemingly retired to-day to the study of a University president, his views on Jewish destiny exert a profound influence in many parts of the world. In the days of the World War, he was virtually alone amongst Jewish leaders in daring to oppose America's entry in the world conflict.

Although Magnes is a person of seeming contradictions, he has always been true to an inner compulsion and has always spoken the truth as he saw it. In the days when Zionism was a cause for reproach he became its zealous exponent. Although American-born, he was eager to identify himself with the masses of his people and he undertook to master Yiddish. I remember hearing him speak in New York a number of years ago in that language.

Although Judah Magnes became the minister of a wealthy Reform congregation, he lived the life of an orthodox Jew, and later assumed the leadership of an orthodox congregation. Finding no spiritual satisfaction in the profession of a minister, he resigned and undertook important communal work.

Current Communal Comments

By "Hamabit"

Although Magnes raised in 1906 a large fund for Jewish self-defence in Russia, this did not prevent him from preaching Pacifism at other times. After the War, he removed himself to Palestine and has devoted the rest of his life since then to the Hebrew University, of which he is now president. In that country, he has always stood for the acknowledgment of the presence of the Arabs. He is still today in favour of an Arab-Jewish understanding as a solution of our difficulties there.

Where is Tel-Aviv ?

WHEN travelling on that rather lovely boat the ss. "Esperia," from Haifa to Genoa a few months ago with a number of South African tourists, we made the acquaintance of a charming English lady. She had spent eight weeks in Palestine and had enjoyed her stay there. When, however, she heard us refer enthusiastically to the great achievements of the all-Jewish city, she turned to us and asked: "Where is Tel-Aviv?"

It was strange! Eight weeks spent in Palestine and the visitor had never heard of the wonderful Jewish city which had sprung up like a miracle in the last twenty years. When this English visitor heard all we had to tell her of Tel-Aviv, she regretted that the tourist agency, under which she travelled, had not given her an opportunity of seeing anything of specific Jewish achievement in Palestine.

While I was in Jerusalem there was a big non-Jewish conference to which had gathered some 400 people from all parts of the world. I wonder now if any of these folk visited a Jewish settlement.

It's an old sore—this non-inclusion of Jewish Palestine in the itinerary of the average visitor to the country. Is it surprising, therefore, that the ordinary tourist knows so little of great Jewish achievements there?

A Music Hall Singer

I HEAR that Charles Coburn, the famous veteran of the old-time music hall, recently celebrated his eighty-fifth birthday. When a boy in London I often listened to this great singer who made his fame with two songs. They were: "The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo" and "Two Lovely Black Eyes." His audience would never allow him to get away from a performance without a repetition of these two songs.

I remember hearing Coburn sing in public when he was seventy. It was during a visit I made at the time to Canada. He had become a "recitalist" but even then his audience would not allow him to leave until he had given them the two famous old songs. After singing "Two Lovely Black Eyes," he informed the audience that he would render two lines of the chorus in any language they demanded. Accordingly he did so in French, German, Russian, Polish and a number of other tongues. Suddenly a member of the audience called out "Yiddish" and straight away Coburn began his lines with *Tzwei shoner schwartzer oigen*. This interpretation aroused tremendous applause from a section of the audience and when this had died down, a voice in the audience shouted "Hebrew." Straight away Coburn began *Shtei einaim sechorot yafot*. Again there was applause.

It was evident that the veteran music hall singer had made a point of learning the chorus of his famous song in almost every known language.

In Italy

ZIONISM has become *treif* in Italy. Some of the leading newspapers in Rome have been attacking the movement recently on the ground that it was a product of British Imperialism.

An interesting sidelight on the campaign against Zionism in Italy, is thrown by the latest issues of the Jewish press in that country which have just reached us. On the one hand, I notice that the *Dawar*, which is published in Milano, contains in the "Table of Contents" the title of an article on Palestine, but over the title there is a black printer's line—which shows that the article had to be "killed" before going to press.

On the other hand, the *Yisroel*, of Florence, has put up a most courageous stand against the anti-Semitic onslaughts. The paper attacks the cringing attitude of some of the communal leaders who hastened to denounce their Zionist ideals as soon as the movement lost favour in the eyes of the authorities.

This bold attitude on the part of a Zionist weekly, in a country where the press is muzzled, deserves to be applauded by Zionists throughout the world.

"In Arab Territory"

EVEN in the midst of the grave anxiety aroused in the Yishuv by the threatened partition of the Homeland, our people have not lost their sense of humour. It is said that a Polish Jew meeting another in the streets of Tel-Aviv, asked: "What is all this about cantonisation?"

"Don't you understand," replied the other, "it means that *men 'kan ton' mit uns* as they please."

It has been said by a *letz* in Palestine that every orthodox Jew is opposed to partition, because when he finishes the prayer with *oseh shalom bim'romov* and has to take three steps backwards, he finds himself in Arab territory.

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