

## Port Elizabeth Hebrew School.

### CHANUKAH CONCERT AND PRIZE DISTRIBUTION.

(From a Correspondent.)

The annual Chanukah concert and prize distribution of the Hebrew School, which took place on Sunday, December 6, in the St. George's Hall, attracted a large gathering which filled the hall to its utmost capacity. The beautiful decorations of the stage, the rich and varied programme, and the spirit of enthusiasm animating the young performers contributed to make this function a great success.

The evening commenced with the lighting of the Chanukah candles by Mr. I. Silbert, accompanied by the singing of *Mo'uz Tsur* by the school choir. This item was followed by the lighting of candles by the pupils, who marched in a beautiful procession around a pyramid of "Menorahs." Hebrew recitations, very ably rendered by Masters Teddy Elion, Monty Shnier and Reuben Sougin Mibashan, earned hearty applause. The garden scene, enacted by eight little girls dressed as flowers, was very colourful and effective. Phyllis Bergman as a butterfly sang and danced very prettily, while Sylvia Bloch as gardener helped to enhance the beauty of the picture. The sketch of the "Halutsim" by eight little boys dressed as workmen elicited great applause, as did also a number of Hebrew songs sung by the school choir. Mr. J. M. Kantor, well known in musical circles in this town, accompanied at the piano during the performances.

The crowning item of the evening, however, was the Hebrew play "Hahashmonaim" by I. Katzenelson, artistically performed by the pupils Abe Lazarus, Aaron Redhouse, Leonard Bendelstein, Gerald Meyer, Fred Benjamin, Israel Segal, Sonia Stein and Esmin Barris. Speaking in Hebrew and dressed in multicoloured oriental costumes, these young actors and actresses for half an hour transported the audience over 2,000 years back to the heroic times of the venerable priest Matiyahu and his five valiant sons.

The public showed their appreciation of the successful performance of the play and rewarded the pupils by warm and prolonged applause. During the play Miss Reggie Elion rendered exquisitely on the violin Cui's "Orientale."

On behalf of the pupils of the Hebrew School Leonard Bendelstein presented Mrs. Mibashan with a letter of thanks and a beautiful bouquet as a mark of appreciation of her excellent work in training them for this concert and play. Mrs. Mibashan then distributed Chanukah presents—donated by Mr. and Mrs. Lazar Mirkin—to all the pupils participating in the performance. In a short and pithy address she thanked the children for the regularity and zeal in their attendance at rehearsals.

After the distribution of the presents and of sweets to all children in the hall, the Chairman of the School Committee, Mr. S. Weinronk, welcomed the audience and stressed the importance of this school for

the Hebrew education of the children, delighting in the fact that this successful performance added greatly to the prestige of the institution.

Dr. J. Mibashan, the Principal, then gave his report for 1931. The nearly ninety pupils were grouped in five standards and a junior certificate class. Tuition was carried out along the most modern system of education. Religion, Hebrew language and literature, Biblical and modern Jewish history and the geography of Eretz Israel formed parts of the curriculum. The institution was not only a modern Hebrew school but also a Jewish school par excellence. The progress made by the pupils in all the subjects was very remarkable and fully 25 per cent. of them obtained prizes. Great stress was laid on Hebrew conversation in all the standards. Some of the essays and letters written by pupils of the higher classes would do honour even to children of Eretz Israel schools. Dr. Mibashan then dwelt on the numerous and serious obstacles encountered in the way of Hebrew tuition, which rendered the work very difficult. He mentioned the devoted work of the assistant teacher, Mr. I. Silbert, and stated that his satisfaction was great upon looking back on the three years of his activity at the head of this institution. He made a strong appeal to the public to give their utmost support to the school, insisting especially on the crying need for a new school building. He thanked the Chairman and the members of the committee for their activity and interest on behalf of the institution.

Rev. A. Levy paid warm tribute to Dr. and Mrs. Mibashan for the brilliant success of the function and then went on to speak of the good work done in the school by the Principal and the staff during the year under report. Just as the young Hasmonean heroes fought for the freedom of their land so must the Jewish children of to-day strain all their forces for the continuation of Hebrew learning and tradition.

Rabbi A. Willenchyk spoke of the importance of Chanukah and pointed out that the life and culture of Israel have only been saved and prolonged thanks to the house of learning.

The prizes were then distributed by Mrs. H. Sammel. Diplomas as well as cheques from a special fund towards which Mr. A. Sher made a substantial contribution were given to Messrs. David I. Adler, Joe Levin, Wolf Mirkin, Abe Rosenberg and Hyman Zinober, all of whom matriculated in Hebrew in 1930. Book prizes were awarded to 22 pupils as well as six special prizes to pupils who took a course in Talmud under the able tuition of Rabbi Willenchyk. Cheques given by Mr. B. Levin and Mr. J. Schumacker were awarded to Abe Lazarus (for highest marks in Bible), Jack Hoffman and Minnie Bloch (for best behaviour in school).

(Continued in Third Column).

## The Talmud Torah.

### A LETTER FROM RABBI BERLIN.

We have been requested by the Committee of the Talmud Torah to publish the following letter received by them from Rabbi Meir Berlin prior to his departure from South Africa:—

To the Committee, Workers and Members of the C.T. Talmud Torah.

Honoured Sirs,—It is a great pleasure to me to express before my departure from this city and country my satisfaction with the state of affairs in your worthy Institution. When I visited it a few weeks ago, I could not fail to notice the guiding hand and watchful eye of a skilled educator, a devoted Principal, and teachers who know the art of teaching and educating boys and girls to an adequate standard of knowledge of our holy scriptures, and the practical use to a certain extent of our sacred national language. But I was particularly pleased to see that little children were accustomed to religious observances, to interest themselves in prayers, and to take delight in Jewish ethical teaching, and that the older and better adapted pupils were beginning to learn the Bible with Rashi's commentary as well as the sages of Talmud, *Pirke Avoth*, and the origin of Gemorah. It is self evident that it is impossible under present conditions (which I am convinced could be improved by continued effort) to criticise an educational institution in this country and to find even half of what is desired, but you, who are its guides, are to be congratulated that your Institution has accomplished more than many another of its kind. May you be enabled to increase the number of your pupils and teachers, at the same time extending and broadening your curriculum.

The Torah is life to those who find it, as well as to those who make others find it. In carrying on your sacred task, the work of education, faithfully, I would urge you not to be content with little. May the Lord be with you, and grant you long life, prosperity, and all good. May we be considered worthy of seeing the upbuilding of Zion and Jerusalem whence shall go forth Law and light.


With respectful greetings,

MEIR BERLIN.

(Continued from Second Column).

Mr. N. Lurie, Vice-Chairman of the Hebrew School Committee, proposed a vote of thanks to Mrs. Sammel for the graceful manner in which she had distributed the prizes.

With the singing of Hatikvah and God Save the King the function was brought to a close.



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