

IN AND AROUND THE PENINSULA

Oneg Shabbos.

Dr. H. W. Altschul delivered a lecture on "Sfirat ha-Omer and Bar-Kochba." The lecturer first dealt generally with pagan customs associated with the season of the year, the festivals of spring, the Roman Floralia and its development into the Christian May Day. But underlying this happier motif was a more sombre one as witnessed in the Feasts of the Dead which took place in May in ancient Rome, and Walpurgis Night of the Teutonic mythos.

Next he briefly sketched the customs and laws appertaining to the Counting of the Omer and the customs still prevalent in Europe on Lag B'Omer customs which implied an association with Youth, Rabbi Akibah, War and Death. No one really knew why the Days of the S'fira was a period of mourning and why Lag B'Omer was permitted as a respite.

The lecturer then dealt with the apocryphal Book of Tobit and analysed it and drew from it the association of the S'fira period with a period when Jewish corpses lay unburied in the fields, by command of the ruler, and the encouragement to every Jew to perform this last sacred rite at the risk of his own life as an act of merit in the eyes of God.

After this Dr. Altschul outlined the conditions in Judaea prior to the Bar Kochba Rebellion. He related how a new and virile generation had grown to manhood since the destruction of the Temple by Titus, and how its national ardour had been stirred by the activities of the Tanaim, who in the rabbinic schools, moulded Judaism to suit the altered needs of the day. Rabbi Akibah in particular did great service in this respect travelling to all the Jewish communities of the Near East.

Illustrating his talk with anecdotes from the Hagadah, "the mine of Jewish history," the lecturer told of Bar Kochka, the man and the patriot, and the war which he waged so successfully for two years. Finally the Romans sent over Julius Severus, the greatest general of his day, and he, following the tactics of Vespasian, was able to surround the Judean army in the fortress city of Bethar. Betrayed here by his Samaritan allies, Bar Kochba and the flower of the Jewish youth were slain. Moreover, the revenge of the Romans was the most terrible in all the annals of our people. The corpses of the slain were to lie on the fields and hillsides and not buried; the practice of every religious law (even the minutest) was forbidden; and the rabbinic schools were closed. At one blow Hadrian, the Emperor, struck at the Jewish people, its land, and the Torah.

That is why to this day we count the days of the Omer in sorrow.

United Hebrew Schools Annual Ball.

The annual ball in aid of the United Hebrew Schools took place at the Zionist Hall on Thursday night, 2nd inst., and

was very successful. Mrs. A. Stodel was the Hon. Organiser and was assisted by Mrs. S. Zuckerman and Mrs. A. Silbert.

The hall was tastefully decorated with red and blue streamers, and dancing took place to the music of Al Roberts and his orchestra, presented by Felix de Cola.

Paarl Young Israel Society.

On Sunday, 5th May, the Junior section held a Cultural Evening in the Talmud Torah Hall.

The news was read by Mr. H. Bloom, and this was followed by three interesting papers written on various subjects dealing with Palestine, read by Miss J. Kramer, Mr. M. Sacks and Mr. M. Lewinsohn.

Mr. I. Cohen, who was in the chair, then conducted a debate which passed off very successfully.

Union of Jewish Women.

Members are asked kindly to note that the annual general meeting of the Union which is taking place on May the 14th will start punctually at 3 p.m. and not at 3.15 p.m. Dr. Benzion Shein, the distinguished lecturer from overseas, will deliver a lecture on "Important Jewish Problems," the same afternoon.

Members, their friends and all ladies interested are cordially invited to attend.

Dorshei Zion Association.

At a special general meeting, held on Sunday morning, the following delegates were appointed to the forthcoming S.A. Zionist Conference:—

Messrs. I. Ochberg, M. Alexander, J. Gitlin and Dr. S. E. Kark.

Alternatives: Adv. H. M. Bloch and Adv. J. Herbstein.

The following resolutions were adopted:

- (1) That provision be made to ensure that a large number of certificates be allocated to South Africa.
- (2) That in the settlement of lands acquired by the Keren Kayemeth with South African funds, preference be given to South African Chalutzim, all things being equal.

Woodstock-Salt River Talmud Torah.

The official opening of the new building by Rabbi M. Ch. Mirvish will take place on Sunday, 12th May, 1935, at 3 p.m.

His Worship the Mayor (Councillor L. Gradner) will attend the ceremony.

Supporters and friends are cordially invited to be present.

South Peninsula Zionist Society.

A very successful Maimonides evening took place at the Talmud Torah Hall, Muizenberg, on Tuesday, May 1st. Mr. D. L. Davidowitz presided.

Rabbi M. Ch. Mirvish briefly traced the life and times of the Rambam, and then went

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Social and Personal.

The marriage of Elizabeth, youngest daughter of Mr. and the late Mrs. M. Pevsner, of Beach Road, Muizenberg, and Paul (Paddy), youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Maister, 19, Woodside Road, Tamboers Kloof, will be solemnised at the Great Synagogue, Gardens, on Tuesday, 21st May, at 10.30 a.m. Reception at the Banqueting Hall (City Hall) at 11 a.m. Relatives and friends cordially invited. No cards.

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Mr. H. Schauder, M.A., son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Schauder, of Port Elizabeth, returned last week to South Africa after carrying out two years' research work in unemployment under the terms of the H. B. Webb Research Scholarship which was awarded him after he took the M.A. degree at the Rhodes University College, Grahamstown. He spent a good deal of his time in England, America, Russia, Palestine and Switzerland.

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Ittawar, son of Dr. Moses Romm, of Bloemfontein, was recently ordained a rabbi in Palestine at the early age of sixteen. He is a fine Talmudical scholar and is continuing his secular studies at the Hebrew University. He is known to be an excellent public speaker and frequently addresses audiences in Palestine in English, Hebrew, Yiddish and Arabic. It is his intention to visit South Africa shortly.

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Dr. Max Greenberg, of Johannesburg, is leaving to-day in the "Carnarvon Castle" for Europe. In September he will represent the Witwatersrand branch of the British Medical Association at the Congress in Melbourne.

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on to give a detailed and extremely interesting analysis of the Rambam's works in the religious, ethical and medical spheres. He stressed the most important points in his philosophy and urged his audience to make a personal study of that great figure.

Mr. B. L. Rubik also spoke.

At the conclusion of the address, refreshments were served by the Ladies' Society. After Mr. N. Wolman had proposed a vote of thanks, the meeting concluded with the singing of the Hatikvah.

Cabaret at Zionist Hall.

The cabaret in aid of the Jewish National Fund which is to take place at the Zionist Hall on the 12th June promises to be even gayer and more enjoyable than last year's.

Mrs. L. Burman, who is again Convenor, is most enthusiastic about the plans for the cabaret.

A bar will be open till midnight and dancers must reserve their tables well in advance. During the course of a full supper popular cabaret turns will be presented by a number of well-known professional artists. A card room is being prepared for those who do not wish to dance, and for this tables must also be booked in advance.

Stan Thomas' famous orchestra will provide the music.

J.N.F. Campaign Committee.

Rabbi A. R. Abrahamson has been co-opted on the Committee.

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OUR CHILDREN'S CIRCLE

Conducted by COUSIN HELEN.

"A little child shall lead them."—Isaiah xi., 6.

Our Motto:

"Do not unto others, what you would not have others do unto you."

P.O. Box 2000, Cape Town.

My Dear Little Cousins,

This week I want to tell you about a very famous Rabbi—Rabbi Meir, who lived in the second century and was a pupil of Rabbi Akiba. He was very clever and very good, and he was beloved by all his pupils.

He had a very clever wife, Beruriah, and two young sons. One Sabbath while the Rabbi was at Synagogue, his two sons died suddenly. His wife did not at first tell him what had happened, so that he might not be grieved by the sad news on the Sabbath. In the evening she said to him: "Some time ago two precious jewels were placed with me for safe keeping. He who left them with me called for them to-day and I gave them to him." "That is right," said the Rabbi, "we must always return cheerfully and faithfully all that is placed in our care."

Shortly afterwards the Rabbi asked for his two sons, and the mother, taking him by the hand led him gently into the room where the boys lay dead. When he realised what had happened the Rabbi wept bitterly, but his wife consoled him with what he had just said to her. "Weep not beloved husband, didst thou not say to me that we must return cheerfully when called for all that has been placed in our care? God gave us these 'jewels.' He left them with us for a time, and we gloried in their possession. But now that He calls for His own we should not be too much grieved, but even be thankful that they have been preserved to us so long." "True," replied Rabbi Meir; "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

The Fox and the Bear.

Rabbi Meir wrote a large number of stories and fables which are often told. Here is one of them:—

A fox said to a bear: "Come, let us go into this kitchen. They are making preparations for the Sabbath and we shall be able to find food." The bear followed the fox. But, being a big animal, he was captured and punished. Angry at this he wanted to tear the fox to pieces. "You knave," exclaimed the bear, "why did you deceive me?" "I am not at fault," replied

the fox; "you have, I think, been punished on account of your father's sins. Come with me again. I shall lead you to another place where we shall surely find food." The fox then led the bear to a well where two buckets were fastened together by a rope, balanced like a pair of scales. It was night and the fox pointed to the moon reflected in the water, saying: "There is a fine cheese. Let us descend and have some." The fox got in his pail first, but, being too light to balance the weight of the bear, he took a heavy stone with him. As, soon, however, as the bear had got into the other pail, the fox threw the stone away. Therefore he rose, whilst the bear descended to the bottom and was drowned.

Correspondence.

Fay Wyner.—I was very pleased to hear from you again after so long a silence. I hope you will write again very soon.

Your loving

COUSIN HELEN.

[To become a member of Our Circle write down your name, age, address and anything else you choose, and send it to Cousin Helen.]

(Continued from Third Column).

The Chairman, Mr. D. Gelfand, welcomed the guests, and particularly Dr. R. Resnekov.

After the usual singing, Dr. Resnekov delivered an excellent and succinct account of the life of the "Rambam." He laid more stress on the philosophic than on the other works of that great Jew, emphasizing the fact that Maimonides interpreted the Bible figuratively rather than literally, preaching a Judaism of reason rather than one of blind acceptance.

Mr. S. M. Kaplan proposed a vote of thanks to the speaker.

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Maimonides Children's Celebration.

The Zionist (Major) Hall was crowded with children on Sunday morning when a celebration in honour of the 800th anniversary of the birth of Maimonides was held.

Mrs. J. Mibashan, in English, and Mr. Z. Avin, in Hebrew, spoke to the children on Maimonides.

Miss L. Blumenthal and Mr. Seresman contributed to the musical programme.

Souvenirs were distributed amongst the children.

Zionist Conversazione.

The next fortnightly conversazione will take place at the Zionist Hall on Tuesday, 14th inst., at 8.15 p.m.

Dr. Benzion Shein will lecture on, "My Travels in Australia, New Zealand and the Far East."

Muizenberg Jewish Ladies' Sewing Circle.

The weekly meetings will commence with a general election on Tuesday, 14th May, at 3.30 p.m. at the Balmoral Hotel, Muizenberg. All ladies cordially invited. Tea will be served.

Conversazione at the Strand.

A Conversazione was held on Sunday evening, 28th April, at the residence of Mrs. Juter, Strand. Mr. W. Miller, who was in the chair, introduced the speaker of the evening, Mr. Hurwitz, who then delivered an address on the life and works of Maimonides, which proved very interesting. Rev. Berdin also spoke on the same subject, in Yiddish. His address was also very much appreciated.

Mr. J. Goldberg proposed a vote of thanks to the speakers, at the same time wishing godspeed to Mr. Ralph Rechtman, who was present, and who was about to leave for Palestine. The meeting then closed with the singing of Hatikvah.

Wynberg Jewish Youth Circle.

The first of the series of lectures which is to be held monthly at Wynberg and Claremont alternately, took place on Sunday evening, 5th May, at Cogill's Hotel, Wynberg, by the kind permission of Mr. J. Friedman. There was an excellent attendance of about a hundred members.

The speaker for the evening was Mr. I. Kluk, who addressed the gathering on his "Personal Experiences in Palestine." The Chairman of the Claremont Junior Zionist Society, Mr. M. Meyerowitz, introduced Dr. Lange, who took the chair, as Mr. L. E. Berman was unable to attend. After Mr. H. Anziska delivered the news service, Mr. Kluk addressed the gathering. The lecture was most interesting and instructive, and was excellently delivered.

Mr. M. Meyerowitz proposed a vote of thanks to both Mr. J. Friedman for kindly lending the hall, and to Mr. Kluk for his excellent lecture.

Oneg Shabbos at Wynberg.

On Oneg Shabbos was held in the Zionist Hall, Piers Road, Wynberg, on Saturday, 4th May. The function was fairly well attended, although a more representative gathering had been hoped for.

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