

Zionist Conversazione.

Mr. I. M. GOODMAN ON "CURRENT EVENTS AND EVENTFUL CURRENTS IN S.A. JEWRY."

The fortnightly conversazione took place at the Zionist Hall on Tuesday night.

Adv. H. M. BLOCH was in the chair.

Mr. I. M. GOODMAN gave a very interesting and thought-provoking lecture on the subject of "Current events and eventful current in South African Jewry." In the glaring light of what was happening in Germany, he said, it behoved South Africans to choose a new path whose pursuit is very difficult, but whose goal is worthy of the best efforts of Jews and Gentile—the path of a better understanding between Christians and Jews. By better understanding was meant something more than the intellectual grasp of facts. It meant the finding of a bridge for individuals, groups and races with acknowledged differences in customs, beliefs and modes, a bridge over which by mutual co-operation all might cross over the river of distrust and reach the goal of better understanding. It meant the bringing together into harmonious relationship and abiding goodwill the Christian and the Jew.

Mr. Goodman said he had no royal road by which racial and religious prejudice could be permanently removed. He had no magic medicine which would destroy the forces of ignorance, envy and malice which now form a factor in South African life. He would, however, give an examination of our position in the light of current events and it would perhaps be realised that the forces against us were not of a trivial nature and the movements not merely passing phases but eventful currents in our lives.

Anti-Semitic Movements in South Africa.

Mr. Goodman then went on to give an exhaustive survey and analysis of the anti-Semitic movements and organisations in South Africa. The picture he drew was by no means a pleasant one and showed clearly the strength of the anti-Jewish feeling in the country. There were six separate anti-Jewish organisations, he explained, each of which had but one plank in its platform, and that was hatred of the Jew and the hope for his destruction in South Africa. All these organisations had a certain sphere of influence and received financial backing.

There were other signs such as the introduction by the Government of the Immigration Amendment Bill, which showed clearly which way the wind was blowing. No amount of protest would help to destroy the prejudice against the Jew, said Mr. Goodman, for to destroy the prejudice we must destroy the foundation of economic injustice. The Jew and his problem was not understood by the non-Jew, as was seen in recent books published on the question of anti-Semitism.

The Solution.

For the solution of our problem we are thrown upon ourselves, and a little self-examination would show that we had accretuated the problem. The Jew in South Africa, said Mr. Goodman, was too ostentatious and too fond of being in the lime-light; he did not try to understand his neighbours and to take his full share in the cultural life of the country. The fostering

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Book Review.

Addresses by the Chancellor of the Hebrew University. (Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1936).

This book, containing address by Dr. Judah L. Magnes, Chancellor of the Hebrew University from 1925 to 1935 and now President of the University, is a most interesting and instructive one. The addresses, which are arranged in chronological order, give a most comprehensive picture of the growth and development of the University from every angle. There are thirty-one speeches and three memorial addresses (Joseph Horovitz, Chaim Nachman Bialik, Shmaryahu Levin) and each one deals with a different phase of the University. The addresses cover the period from the opening of the Institute of Jewish Studies in December, 1924, to the first address of Dr. Magnes as President in November, 1935, and show clearly the various stages through which the University has passed.

The addresses, however, are not only a record of the progress of the University but a revelation of the great good fortune the University has enjoyed during the last eleven years in having at its head a personality like Dr. J. L. Magnes, who has dedicated himself to the interests of the University with a rare and single-minded devotion. In each one of the addresses, apart from the beauty of language and fine flights of oratory, one feels the sincerity and earnestness of one who has sacrificed all his powers and energies for the realisation of an exalted ideal. To him the University is not only a place of learning; it is the symbol of the intellectual and spiritual emancipation of the Jewish people. In the address delivered on the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the University he said: "Is it not providential that the Hebrew University in Jerusalem exists? How poverty-stricken, how naked would the Jewish people be morally and spiritually if just in these days of renewed barbarism and persecution there had been no Eretz Israel, no Hebrew University. What a comfort and source of strength to every Jew everywhere should be the thought that here, in this Holy Land, there is the striving to build up a homeland, that here on this hill of the Holy City there are the beginnings of a true Hebrew University."

Dr. Magnes has at various times differed with other Zionists in his interpretation of the meaning of Zionism. His strong pacifist sympathies have on occasion been regarded as somewhat unpractical, but we think no one would quarrel with the expression of his idea of what the function of the University should be as contained in the following lines:—"We want the University to be a place where Judaism in all its phases can be studied, but where at the same time it is possible to study the humanities and that which constitutes our modern civilisation. . . . Not assimilation among the peoples, but the absorption into Judaism of mankind's spiritual treasures, in so far as the law of the Jewish soul permits this. We want the aid of scholarly, fundamental research without arrogance or chauvinism to look out upon humanity through our own eyes. True to ourselves we want to absorb and work over in our own way what humanity has to give us. Perhaps then we may be able to give humanity a larger portion of our own soul."

Anti-Semitism in Business.

The following leading article, written by Mr. John Neville, was published in the May number of "South African Retailing":—

"It has come as an unpleasant item of information to us that various members of the several anti-Semitic organisations in South Africa are touring the country towns, appealing for donations from Gentile firms in order that they may continue their 'work.'

"Still more unpleasant has been the information that several shopkeepers have supported the movement as requested.

"The bait, or lure, laid down by these agitators is that if support is forthcoming, they will start a boycott of Jewish shops in the particular districts in which the supporters carry on business.

"This is no place to discuss the extremely flimsy foundations upon which anti-Semitism is built, or to refute the manifold lies that have been spread about the Jews in South Africa. Sufficient is to say that anti-Semitism is a leprous growth, which under no circumstances should be allowed to take a hold in South Africa.

"These anti-Semitic agitators are finding that the public in South Africa are beginning to look with extreme disgust upon them, as the introducers of something entirely foreign and un-South African, to our shores. They see the soft living that has been provided for them by gullible and unthinking people for the past eighteen months, disappearing, and so, in desperation, they are turning to the storekeepers, hoping that he will prove to be the milch-cow which will keep them in luxury for a while longer.

"As we have said before, we cannot discuss here the reasons for anti-Semitism, but we can discuss the economic side as applied to the storekeeper.

"Figures issued in Germany show that retail sales have fallen by 25 per cent. since the Nazi anti-Semitic boycott. Is there any reason to think that here in South Africa the position will be different if anti-Semitism is allowed to spread?

"The argument of the agitators that they will start a boycott of Jewish shops, and that this will increase the turnover of the Gentile stores, is fallacious.

"Experience has proved, over and over again, that competition is the very breath of life to the retail trade. It has been proved that the shopping public always shops where the shops are thickest, and where the biggest array of goods are on display, at the largest range of prices.

"To encourage this pernicious movement in any district, is merely to encourage a movement which will eventually force customers to purchase in other districts, or to do their shopping by mail-order.

"Whilst we do not believe for a moment that any responsible, enlightened shopkeeper of thought and education (for enlightenment and education are the bitter enemies of anti-Semitism) is in any way connected with such a movement, we deplore the action of those misguided retailers, who would seek to place the retail trade in a worse position than it is in to-day. Anti-Semitism is not the panacea of our troubles in South Africa."

See "LAND OF PROMISE" Film
at the Majestic Bioscope, Plein St.,
8th, 9th and 10th June.
Popular Prices.

OUR CHILDREN'S CIRCLE

Conducted by **COUSIN HELEN.**

Our Motto:

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

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

P.O. Box 2000, Cape Town.

My Dear Little Cousins,

This week I want to tell you about the Children's Village in Palestine called Meier Shfeyah, which is maintained by Junior Hadassah, the Young Women's Zionist Organisation of America.

One hundred and fifteen boys and girls who come from many countries of Europe and the Near East live and work and study at Meier Shfeyah. Some are orphans, some are neglected children and others are children of sick, poor or quarrelsome parents. Meier Shfeyah, which is situated in the beautiful Valley of Sharon, in the northern part of Palestine, is a very healthy place for these boys and girls. The children govern themselves and have their own council, the decisions of which are binding not only on the children but on the teachers and directors as well. The children study four hours a day and work four more. Their work is done, for the most part, in the outdoors where they conduct a farm. Most of them have their own pets. The children visit many places that are of historical interest; they climb mountains to get a view of the entire country; they visit electric works, factories, vast forests that are being developed.

Meier Shfeyah is a very up-to-date little village. It has the only tractor in the neighbourhood which it loans to nearby farms. It has a brand new threshing machine, an irrigation plant that is admired by all the farmers of Palestine and the newest improvement, electricity in the buildings and on the streets of Shfeyah.

The children issue their own weekly newspaper in Hebrew (Hebrew is the only language the children use) and in this the children write about all of the things that happen and that are planned in their own community.

The Nobleman and the Pious Man.

While travelling on the road, a nobleman saw a pious man, whom he knew very well, engaged in prayer. He saluted the man but received no recognition of his greeting. The nobleman became annoyed but waited for the man to complete his prayer, after which he said to him: "You are a stupid fellow. Your law commands you to take care of yourself, yet when I greeted you, you did not reply. If I had split your head for it, I would not be blamed."

"Sir, I beg of you to control your anger," replied the pious man, "for if you will allow me, I will show you wherein I was justified. For instance, if you were in conversation with your king and a passing friend greeted you, would you like to be interrupted in your conversation to give answer to that salutation?"

"Woe unto me, if I did so."

"Now, sir, consider the respect you thus pay to a mortal king who is here to-day and gone to-morrow, while I was facing the King of Kings, the immortal. What should I have done?" And so the nobleman forgave him and was wiser for it.

Clouds.

Sometimes when the wind blows,
I see the clouds go drifting by.
They look large and fleecy
As they float up in the sky.

The sky is like an ocean deep,
In which the clouds go sailing,
The clouds take forms of many things
Until they all start wailing.

Miriam Markman,
Humansdorp.

"Land of Promise" Film.

I hope you will all go and see the "Land of Promise" film at the Majestic Bioscope, Plein Street, Cape Town, next week. This is one of the most interesting talkies ever shown, and gives you a beautiful picture of life in Palestine. Everyone who has seen it thinks it is marvellous, so do not miss the opportunity of seeing it. There will be matinees on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Correspondence.

Miriam Markman.—Many thanks for your letter and poem. As regards compositions, I cannot tell you whether I could print them till I see them. I should be pleased to receive one from you—especially if it is on a Jewish subject.

Please write again soon.

Your loving,

COUSIN HELEN.

ZIONIST CONVERSAZIONE.

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of a South African national pride was often neglected by him, and South African national questions scarcely touched or examined. The Native Question the Coloured Problem and the Poor White Problem, were overlooked, and it was in connection with the last, said the lecturer, that there was scope for the Jews to regain the confidence of their Christian neighbours. Those who had organising and administrative experience should form themselves into a committee for the purpose of co-operating with the Poor White Commission and act in co-partnership with the Dutch Reformed Church in this great work of the rehabilitation of those of our neighbours who had sunk below the bread level. The scheme would require men, women service, sacrifice and also a great deal of money, and he submitted it for the consideration of South African Jewry as an answer to the slanders and defamations to which they were being subjected.

Mr. B. Padowich, Adv. Gerald Gordon and Mr. Kottlowitz took part in the discussion, to which Mr. Goodman replied

Mr. Koorland rendered a pianoforte solo, and Miss Bernardt songs.

Cape Zionist Youth Executive.

Paarl Junior Zionist Society.

After a long interval, the Society held a fairly successful Oneg Shabbat in the Talmud Torah Hall on Saturday, 23rd May. Miss Fanny Gross was in the chair, and the speaker was Mr. Jacob Levinsohn, ex-Chairman of the Society. Mr. Levinsohn chose for his lecture "The History of Chassidism," and dealt very eloquently with the subject.

Other speakers were Rev. Strelitz, Mr. J. Geffen and Mr. Melamed.

Hebrew songs were sung by the members of the local Habonoth Gedud.

Claremont-Wynberg Junior Zionist

A meeting of the above Society was held in the Claremont Talmud Torah Hall on the 31st May.

Mr. Meyerowitz, who presided, welcomed the large audience and the lecturer, Mr. Natas. At the opening of the meeting reference was made on the death of Dr. N. Sokolow and also to those who fell in the recent disturbances in Eretz Israel, and the audience was asked to rise as a mark of respect to the dead. The Chairman then introduced Mr. Natas, who gave a very illuminating and vivid address on Shmarya Levin, dealing particularly on his superb qualities as a man and as a member of the Jewish nation. Mr. Natas, too, sketched a vivid parallel between the late Dr. N. Sokolow and Shmarya Levin and showed that both these leaders had great influence over Jewish life. Shmarya Levin was, too, one of the most ardent followers of Achad Ha'am, believing most staunchly in the spiritual values of Eretz Israel.

Following the tea interval, Mr. S. Masters, of the Maitland Junior Zionist Society, and Messrs. A. Roberts and S. Krige, of the above Society, discussed the Legislative Council, each from a different point of view, the Arab, British and Jewish respectively. The audience was thus presented with a good account of the proposed Legislative Council and this, together with Mr. Natas's excellent lecture, provided a very instructive and interesting evening for the members present.

Mr. L. Mendelsohn, Vice-Chairman of the above Society, proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Natas and the speakers, which the Chairman heartily endorsed.

The meeting closed with the singing of Hatikvah.

Muizenberg Young Israel Society.

On Saturday night the above Society held a Members' Social. Inspiring addresses were delivered by Messrs. P. Lurie (supervisor), E. Levinsohn and M. Sacks, urging the members on to their work and emphasising the importance of the Young Israel Movement.

During the dancing which followed, lots were drawn by members to arrange items within five minutes. After tea had been served, games were played and an enjoyable evening terminated with the singing of Hebrew songs and the dancing of the "Hora."

On June the 20th, the Society is holding an "At Home" in celebration of its eleventh anniversary. Societies are asked to keep this date open. Details later.