

Zionist Conversazione.

ADDRESS BY Mr. S. GOTZ.

The fortnightly Conversazione at the Zionist Hall on Tuesday night was held under the auspices of the Western Province Zionist Cultural and Organisation Council.

Mr. J. Weinreich was in the chair and extended a cordial welcome to the speaker, Mr. S. Gotz, who is visiting Western Province centres on a Zionist lecture tour.

Mr. Gotz, speaking in Yiddish, on the subject "To-day and To-morrow," said that Zionism was as old as the Jewish people; it changed only in accordance with external events. Forty-five years ago a new form of Zionism had been created which has had tremendous influence.

Zionism took full account of the realities of to-day but thought of the morrow as well. Zionists realised that if Jews were to exist in the Diaspora, minority rights must be respected and they must have cultural freedom. For these rights Zionists fought; they accepted the autonomy idea, and were largely responsible for the spread of Jewish culture in Lithuania and other countries. They also created the Chalutz movement which has had so powerful an effect on the youth.

But Zionists also realised that by these means alone the Jewish people could not be saved. The only salvation lay in Palestine, and to the upbuilding of the National Home they devoted themselves with the greatest zeal and enthusiasm. The result is that to-day when minority rights no longer exist for the Jews in the Diaspora, Palestine is in a very strong position and the Jews there form a third of the population. Industry and agriculture have progressed by leaps and bounds and the country is making a very great contribution to the war effort thanks to the initiative and foresight of the Jews.

Politically there had been setbacks, but even the White Paper could not put a stop to Jewish immigration and land purchase.

Victory for the Allies, continued Mr. Gotz, would not solve the Jewish problem. To-day nine million Jews were absolutely destitute and homeless. Palestine alone could offer them a refuge and the opportunity of rehabilitating themselves. All other territorial plans had been proved futile and illusory. Eretz Israel had been built up on the foundation of labour and idealism, and in accordance with the most progressive social movements in the modern world.

A great responsibility, said Mr. Gotz, rested on English-speaking Jewry to-day. He hoped the response to the forthcoming Keren Hayesod Campaign would show that South African Jewry was conscious of the important part they were called upon to play.

An excellent musical programme was provided by the following: Miss C. Fainsinger (accompanied by Miss M. Serebro) flute solos; Miss N. Wissema (accompanied by Miss C. Fainsinger) violin solos.

THANKS.

ZIEPER.—Mrs Esther Zieper and Family wish to convey their sincere thanks to relatives and friends for kind expressions of sympathy during their sad bereavement. Lion's Head Mansions, Sea Point.

Woodstock-Salt River Hebrew Congregation.

SPECIAL FUNCTION.

The Woodstock and Salt River Hebrew Congregation held at "At Home" on Sunday, the 12th April.

Mr. P. MARKS, Chairman of the Congregation, extended a cordial welcome to members and guests. He pointed out that the evening had a dual purpose, viz., to present Rev. S. Kassel, ex-Principal of the Talmud Torah, with an Illuminated Address, and Mr. M. Kaplan, assistant teacher, with a cheque on his retirement from the staff, and secondly to welcome the new Principal, Mr. Lederman, and his assistant, Mr. Smolensky.

Dr. C. RESNEKOV addressed the gathering and stated that he wished to associate himself with the opening remarks of the Chairman. He referred to the history of the Congregation during the last twenty-five years, with which he was always actively connected. He pointed out that the progress the Talmud Torah made was through hard and difficult work and at times it became very difficult and trying to carry on. The Congregation, however, could be proud of the fact that it always endeavoured to maintain a high level of Hebrew education. The Principal and his assistant devoted themselves zealously and unselfishly to their labours, and their work had reaped a just reward. This Congregation was one of the first to establish a Hebrew kindergarten, and had maintained same for the last eight years. He appealed to parents to take an active interest in the Talmud Torah and to see that their children attended Cheder regularly. The whole basis of the existence of the Jewish people during the past, the present and the future depended on Jewish education. The parents must remember if they wished to have "Nachas" from their children it depended upon the encouragement they give to their children in the right sphere of Jewish learning. Then would the saying of our sages truly come true, viz.:—

"Happy is the youth who will not disgrace us or spurn us in our old age."

Tribute to Rev. S. Kassel.

The Chairman, Mr. P. Marks, then presented Rev. S. Kassel with the Illuminated Address, and stated the Congregation was proud to hand over this token of appreciation in recognition of services devotedly and unselfishly rendered to the Talmud Torah and the Congregation. Although Rev. Kassel had severed his services with the Talmud Torah he still remained the spiritual leader.

Dr. A. Birnbaum read the Hebrew inscription and Mr. A. Rubin the English translation.

Dr. A. BIRNBAUM addressed the gathering and stated that he was very pleased to associate himself with the pleasant task of the evening. He outlined the work of Rev. S. Kassel and Mr. Kaplan in imbuing the youth of Woodstock with a true and living Judaism bettered by no Talmud Torah in the Cape Peninsula. He very much regretted that these two capable teachers should relinquish their posts. He was, however,

happy that their posts had been filled by such excellent teachers as Mr. Lederman and Mr. Smolensky, who would uphold the high standard set by Rev. Kassel and Mr. Kaplan.

Rev. S. KASSEL replied in very moving and stirring terms. He thanked the Congregation for their support given him throughout his term of office; he could safely say without this help the success the Talmud Torah had obtained, would never have been accomplished. He also thanked the various speakers for their sincere and kind words expressed both to Mr. Kaplan and himself. He felt very proud and pleased to announce that Captain Weinstein, Chaplain to the Forces in the North, had written to him that the following boys from the Talmud Torah had given him excellent support during religious services and had conducted services on their own on numerous occasions, viz., Hyman and Harold Kalmenowitz, Greenblatt and Morrie Lazarow. These boys had shown that their labours in the field of Hebrew education had not been in vain.

Cantor Katzin then rendered two songs, which were highly appreciated by all present.

Tribute to Mr. M. Kaplan.

Mr. A. J. BASKER, the Vice-Chairman, presented Mr. Kaplan with a cheque for £300 on his retirement after 24 years of teaching in the Talmud Torah. During this time Mr. Kaplan gave of his best, a service of devotion and sincerity, unflinchingly and unselfishly, which will be hard to equal. Mr. Kaplan left with the proud record of never having had a quarrel or harsh word, with his pupils or with the parents. His pupils loved and respected him. The parents respected him. In conclusion he wished Mr. and Mrs. Kaplan long life and happiness on behalf of the Congregation.

Mr. KAPLAN suitably replied, and thanked all the speakers for their kind words. He and his wife would never forget this evening as long as they lived.

RABBI I. ABRAHAMS then addressed the gathering. He congratulated Rev. Kassel and Mr. Kaplan on their excellent services to the Talmud Torah. He knew their work was well done as ample proof was given by the sincere words expressed that evening. Rev. Kassel had never spared his labours, nor had he sought for rewards or honours, as could be judged by the devotion and energy displayed in his work as part-time Chaplain to the Jewish members of the Forces. He further stated that the chaotic conditions in which this world finds itself to-day was because Jew as well as Gentile had neglected their religious teachings and had set up a standard of selfishness, pettiness and self-interest. He pointed out the folly and danger of parents who neglected the Jewish education of their children. He hoped and trusted that the parents of the Woodstock and Salt River community would always uphold the teachings of their Bible and Prophets, and carry on the light of the Torah. Through the love of their Torah, their language, and Judaism the Jew would find everlasting peace and bring peace and goodwill to this war-torn world.

Mr. A. RUBIN (Hon. Treasurer) moved a vote of thanks to the various speakers, to Cantor Katzin, to the Chairlady, Mrs. A. L. Furman, and members of the Jewish Ladies' Society for their co-operation.