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THE  
JEW  
IN  
SOUTH  
AFRICA.

BY

RABBI DR. J. H. HERTZ

JOHANNESBURG :  
THE CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY,  
LIMITED, 1905.

For One Shilling.]

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**THE REV. DR. J. H. HERTZ.**

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## PRESS OPINIONS.

London *Jewish Chronicle* (Editorial comment):—

“Dr. Hertz’s Paper on the Jew in South Africa is a valuable contribution to Jewish history, not merely for the information which it embodies, but also for its practical bearing on current questions. Dr. Hertz has done a useful service to the Jewish cause.”

*Transvaal Leader*:—“A luminous record of the colonising history of the Jews.”

## P R E F A C E .

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THIS Paper, read before the First Zionist Conference in South Africa, on July 9th, 1905, deals with a chapter of Jewish history—the Jew as discoverer and pioneer—of which the outer world knows nothing, and even Jews themselves all too little. As it is, furthermore, the first attempt to present the story of the Jew in all the South African colonies, the author invites corrections of the facts enumerated. Such information he hopes at a later date to embody in a fuller account of the same subject.

J. H. H.

*P.O. Box 3206, Johannesburg,  
September 25th, 1905.*



# THE JEW IN SOUTH AFRICA.

BY RABBI DR. J. H. HERTZ.

**I**N all newer countries—countries like America, <sup>Introduction.</sup> Australia, South Africa—the Jew, according to popular fallacy, is a late comer who has arrived on the scene to reap in ease what others have sown in tears and travail. The Jew, it is held, is a recent immigrant, who has been unwilling to undergo the hardships of the pioneer, who has had no share in the building of any roads for the civilisation, in the creating of any new paths for the industry and commerce, of the younger lands he now inhabits. This being the universal opinion—and the Jew himself in his ignorance does not gainsay it—is it a wonder that the Jew's admission to these new countries comes to be looked upon as a matter of grace and bounty, that the cry of "Ours Land" is so often raised against the Jewish immigrant, that his rights are held to be inferior in antiquity and in kind even, to those of the population who have other racial and religious affinities?

The Jews of America, some fifteen years ago, began to realise the grave seriousness of leaving this universal fallacy unchallenged. Even if the facts of history seldom change the views of the anti-Semite, it was essential, they saw, that Jews at least should be taught the truth; that they themselves should no longer look upon themselves as interlopers, as exploiters; but rather as active participants in the upbuilding of the

Introduction.

national life. Our American brethren set to work and founded "The American Jewish Historical Society." In the twelve volumes that that Society has published so far, is to be found a complete and absolute vindication of the American Jew's position in the national household. The Jew, in New York, for example, it is now seen, had preceded the Irish and German immigrant, and was the contemporary of the proud Virginian, the reverend Puritan and the substantial Knickerbocker.<sup>1</sup> His communal life dates back 250 years, to the day when New York was a little village, New Amsterdam, with a population of 200 inhabitants, ruled by Peter Stuyvesant, under the direction of the Dutch West India Company.<sup>2</sup> Aided by the researches of men like the late Rabbi of Budapest, Dr. M. Kayserling, these scholars have brought to light an even earlier domicile of the Jews on the shores of the New World. Before New York was, learned Rabbis flourished and wrote *piyutin* and halachic works in South America; and scores of Jewish martyrs were cremated by the Inquisition in Mexico, Chili and Brazil. And to crown all, generations before these sages and sufferers, Jewish sailors were among the first to be lured by the cry of Westward Ho! For at least five Jews do we find among that stout-hearted crew that accompanied Columbus on his first voyage into the vast immensity of the unknown sea.<sup>3</sup>

It were well if the Jews living in this Newer World were to imitate the example of our American brethren. For in our case is it not the general belief, assumed as a matter of course, that the first Jews only arrived on the discovery of the Kimberley Diamond Fields, followed seventeen years later by the rush to the Witwatersrand Gold Fields? Only self-delusion

(1) See Louis Marshall: "The Jew as an Element of the [American] Population Past and Present," in the *American Hebrew*, May 5th, 1905.

(2) John Fiske: "The Quaker and the Dutch Colonies in America," Vol. II., pp. 330-337.

(3) See "America, the Discovery of," in the *Jewish Encyclopædia*, Vol. I., p. 511.

Introduction.

will blind us to the fact that, as a consequence of such prejudice, the respect enjoyed by the Jewish community of South Africa is not at all commensurate with its services and its sacrifices for this country. So far, next to nothing has been done to collect the various data, statistics and early events of the various Jewish settlements. "We are too busy making history to have time to write it," was the answer received from a leading South African Jew by an inquirer concerning the beginnings of our earliest communities. The wisdom of that answer is on a par with its modesty. Verily, not in such a spirit of folly and conceit will we Zionists undertake to win for the Jew that respect which is due him from his neighbour. It is in the hope of enlisting your assistance in this most important work of collecting the building-stones for a South African Jewish history that I venture to come before you, delegates of the First Annual Conference of the S.A. Zionist Federation, with this paper on "The Jew in South Africa."

Jewish interest in the sub-continent of South Africa, that part of the world to which the Jewish Diaspora has spread latest, goes back to hoary antiquity. Scattered over the plateau of Southern Mashonaland and Matabeleland, the mysterious Zimbabwe Ruins have been discovered. Though we cannot speak with any certainty of these archaeological curiosities, yet in all probability these are the vestiges which ancient Semitic gold seekers and Solomonic Ophir-explorers have left behind them, when at some unknown date, centuries ago, some inscrutable calamity compelled them to abandon their work in South Africa.<sup>1</sup>

South Africa and Semitic antiquity.

If, however, we leave the field of conjecture and confine ourselves to historical times, the connection between Jews and South Africa

Jewish participation in Portuguese Discoveries.

(1) Encyclopædia Britannica, Vol. XXXII, 711; T. Bent: "The Ruined Cities of Mashonaland."

Jewish Partici-  
pation in  
Portuguese  
Discoveries.

begins some time *before* the epoch-making discovery of the Cape of Good Hope by Bartholomew Diaz. The researches of Dr. Kayserling in the archives of Portugal and Spain have established the fact that the Jews of Portugal, in the period before the expulsion of 1497, as well as later in the Maranno period, have had a large share in those early voyages of gallant adventure, in those romantic discoveries and conquests which opened up the new worlds to civilised humanity.<sup>1</sup>

In 1438, Henry the Navigator, most brilliant of the Portuguese Princes, whose geographical explorations discovered Madeira and the Azores, appointed Mestre Jaime or JEHUDE CRESQUES OF MALLORCA (called "Map-Jew" or the "Compass-Jew"), a noted mathematician, cartographer and manufacturer of nautical instruments, as Director of the National Naval Academy. The improvement of the astrolabe and the invention of a means for determining the distance of a ship from the equator by the varying position of the sun in different seasons, an invention which alone made long ocean voyages possible, is largely due to Portuguese Jews under King Ioao II. In 1484, ABRAHAM OF BIJA and JOSEPH ZAPATEIRA DE LOMEGA (the latter, according to Mr Lucien Wolf,<sup>2</sup> an ancestor of the Montefiores) brought back to Europe the information that a new route to India could be found by sailing down the coast of Guinea. Towards the end of the fifteenth century we find ABRAHAM ZACUTO (died 1515, author of the Hebrew historical chronicle "Yuchasin") nautical adviser to Vasco da Gama, the discoverer of Natal in 1497. These were the years immediately succeeding the expulsion of the 300,000 Jews from Spain in 1492. For five years, till 1497, the Portuguese kings allowed the wretched refugees from the fires of the Inquisition to sojourn in Portugal. For this

1) M. Kayserling: "Christopher Columbus and the Participation of the Jews in the Spanish and Portuguese Discoveries," 1894.

(2) Lucien Wolf: "Sir Moses Montefiore," 1884, p. 12.

privilege they exacted from them, with fiendish cruelty, an exorbitant sum as head-money. It was this head-money, or rather "blood-money," of the doomed Jews which supplied the kings of Portugal with the funds required for the expeditions of Vasco da Gama, Albuquerque and Cabral to South Africa, Brazil and the Far East. It is, in fact, established beyond any doubt, that just as Jews accompanied Columbus westward to discover America, they sailed southward with Bartholomew Diaz and his valiant successors to discover and to double the "Cape of Storms" and the coast of Natal.

Jewish Participation in Portuguese Discoveries.

We have seen Jews in the company of the discoverers. We shall find them also among the colonisers and the pioneers. Unfortunately, this period of our history has not yet found its Dr. Kayserling, and still awaits research in the archives of Holland. It is, however, only logical to assume that as there were strong Jewish influences at work in the Dutch West India Company which established New Amsterdam (later New York), Jews must likewise have been interested in the administration and work of the Dutch East India Company at the Cape of Good Hope. Among the early families I find a large number of possible Jewish names, like Wassermann, Vogl, Straus, Meyer, Marx, Marais, Langerman, Kleyn, etc. Surely one or another of these will upon investigation turn out to be Jewish. Remember that the Jew is everywhere—Gibbon has found him on the Papal throne. Scholars have met him in the ranks of the Spanish Inquisitors, as well as in Mediæval England, during the 365 years when, if discovered, he was liable to the penalty of hanging. It would be nothing short of a modern miracle in Jewish history, if in such a half-way house to the East as the Cape (during 150 years a depend-

Cape Colony.



## Cape Colony.

ency of Holland, the first land to welcome them and grant them full liberty) no Jew should have lived, or Jewish influences been at work.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the State religion alone was allowed to be publicly observed. On July 25th, 1804, the Dutch Commissioner, General Jacob Abraham de Mist, established religious equality for persons of all creeds in the Colony, by a Proclamation which was annulled at the English occupation of 1806, and was not re-established till 1820. Jews, however, did not arrive in any numbers in Capetown before the twenties of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> BENJAMIN NORDEN, SIMEON MARCUS, together with a score of others arriving in the thirties, were commercial pioneers, to whom is due the industrial awakening of almost the whole interior of the Cape Colony. The development of the wool and hide trades, for example, will always be associated with the names of JULIUS, ADOLPH and JAMES MOSENTHAL. By their enterprise in going to Asia and returning with thirty Angora goats in 1850, they became the originators of the Mohair industry; Cape Colony to-day yields more than one-half of the world's supply of mohair.<sup>2</sup> AARON and DANIEL DE PASS were among the first to open up Namaqualand, and for many years (1849-86) were the largest ship-owners in Capetown, and leaders of the sealing, whaling and fishing industries. Jews were among the first to take to ostrich farming (*e.g.*, Joel Myers, in the Aberdeen district); the first rough diamond discovered on the Kimberley Diamond Fields was bought by Lilienfeld, of Hopetown; and Jews are among the Directors of the De Beers Consolidated Diamond Mines, which controls a great part of the world's diamond output to-day.

(1) Joel Rabinowitz: "Notes on Jews in South Africa," in *Jewish Chronicle*, May to August, 1895.

(2) S. Cronwright-Schreiner: "The Angora Goat," 1893.

These pioneers did not, however, confine their activity to trade. CAPTAIN JOSHUA NORDEN was shot at the head of his mounted burghers in the Kaffir war of 1846 ; LIEUT. ELIAS DE PASS fought in the Kaffir war of 1849. JULIUS MOSENTHAL (1818-80), brother of the poet S. Mosenthal of Vienna, was a member of the Cape Parliament in the fifties. SIMEON JACOBS,<sup>1</sup> C.M.G. (1832-83), was Attorney-General of British Kaffraria from 1861-66, when he became Solicitor-General at the Cape. He was Cape Attorney-General from 1874-82, in which year he was appointed Judge in the Supreme Court, and made a member of the Executive Council. As the acting Attorney-General of the Cape Colony in 1872, Jacobs introduced and carried the "Cape Colony Responsible Government Bill" and the "Voluntary Bill" (abolishing State aid to the Anglican Church), for both of which bills SAUL SOLOMON, the member for Capetown, had fought for decades.<sup>2</sup> Saul Solomon, for a generation the leader of the Liberal party, has been called the "Cape Disraeli." He several times declined the premiership, and was invited into the first responsible Ministry, formed by Sir John Molteno. Again, like Disraeli, he early left the ranks of Judaism, but always remained a lover of his people. He was born at St. Helena, May 25th, 1817, and was sent to London in 1822 to be initiated into the covenant by the then Chief Rabbi, R. Solomon Herschell, whereupon he attended the Jewish school of H. M. Solomon, at Edmonton. He went to Capetown when a lad, where with his brother Henry he started a printing office, and later founded and edited the "Cape Argus." He died Oct. 16th, 1892.<sup>3</sup> Descendants of these two brothers, Justice Solomon and Sir Richard Solomon, are to-day among the most eminent men in South Africa. The few

(1) See "Jacobs, Simeon," in *Jewish Encyclopædia*, Vol. VII.

(2) A. Wilmot: "History of Our Own Times in South Africa," Vol. I.

(3) The dates of Solomon's life I owe to the kindness of the Keeper of the Archives of the Cape Colony.

Cape Colony.

other St. Helena Jews who settled there during Napoleon's banishment, the Gideon, the Moss, and the Isaacs families, were all related to the Solomons, and, like them, mostly drifted from Judaism. The minor honours and distinctions which fell to the lot of these early Jews, or those won by another generation in recent years, are too numerous to mention.

The first congregation in South Africa was started in Capetown, in November, 1841, and the initial service was held in the house of Benjamin Norden, at the corner of Bouquet and St. John Streets, S. Rudolph, a German merchant, conducting the services. He was succeeded by the first minister, the Rev. Mr. Pulver, who soon left for Australia. In 1859 the congregation, then consisting of some fifteen families, extended a call to the REV. JOEL RABINOWITZ (1829-1902), who for twenty-three years worked indefatigably for his congregation, for the scattered Jewish families in the coast towns, and the interior of Cape Colony and the Orange Free State. Through his efforts the first Synagogue in South Africa was erected in "The Gardens" in 1862. Rabinowitz, as all know, was a veritable genius in collecting monies for every charitable cause, Jewish or non-Jewish; and he enjoyed in an exceptional degree the esteem and friendship of all classes, including such men as the High Commissioner, Sir Bartle Frere, Saul Solomon, and the elder Reitz. His successor, in 1883, the REV. ABRAHAM PHILIP ORNSTEIN<sup>1</sup> (1836-95), was minister at Melbourne from 1866-76, and from 1876-82, Principal of Aria College, Portsea. He died at Capetown in 1895. A generation ago, there was rarely a Minyan in Capetown on ordinary Sabbaths; to-day, there is a population of 10,000, with four large synagogues, a Zionist Hall and a Hebrew Public School. The President of

(1) See "Ornstein, Abraham Philip," in *Jewish Encyclopædia*, Vol. IX.



the Old Hebrew Congregation, Mr. Lieberman, is the Mayor of Capetown. Cape Colony.

For the sake of completeness I must condense some Jewish statistics of the congregations outside of the Cape Peninsula. There are synagogues in Worcester Road, Robertson, Steytlersville and East London; Graaff-Reinet, with a congregation since 1861, and Grahamstown, which seventy years ago was an important Jewish settlement, have no synagogue. Oudtshoorn, with a Jewish population of 600, has had a congregation since 1883, and a synagogue since 1890, a Beth Hammidrash with a Russian Rav and a Jewish Public School. Port Elizabeth (Jewish population 800) has had a congregation since 1862 and a synagogue since 1870, the former ministers being the Rev. Dr. S. Rappaport and the Rev. D. Wasserzug. In Kimberley, Jewish services started in 1869 and a congregation in 1873, with COL. DAVID HARRIS,<sup>1</sup> C.M.G. (he served under General Warren in 1885, in various Kaffir wars, and was prominent in the defence of Kimberley in 1899-1900), and G. H. Bonas, J.P., in recent years alternate Presidents. The new synagogue, 1901, to which Cecil Rhodes was a large donor, has a memorial tablet to all Jewish officers and soldiers in the British Army who fell in the last Anglo-Boer War. The former ministers were the Revs. M. Mendelssohn, A. Ornstein (born 1863, who died at the early age of 22, greatly beloved, and received a public funeral), M. L. Harris and E. Joffe. Two Kimberley Jews are known far beyond the borders of South Africa—one, the late B. I. BARNATO,<sup>2</sup> who, from the humblest beginnings, founded the house of Barnato; the other is ALFRED MOSELY,<sup>3</sup> C.M.G., who established the Princess Christian Hospital in Natal in 1900, and equipped and conducted the Mosely Industrial

(1) See "Harris, David," in *Jewish Encyclopadia*, Vol. VI.

(2) H. Raymond: "B. I. Barnato," 1897.

(3) See "Who's Who," 1904.

Natal.

and Education Commissions to the United States in 1902 and 1903.

In the story of Natal we come across a great Jewish traveller, and are reminded that in men like Nathaniel Isaacs, Emin Pasha, Louis A. Lucas,<sup>1</sup> to say nothing of a score of innominate who have travelled, explored and pioneered in all parts of Africa, Jews are still producing Benjamins of Tudela.<sup>2</sup> NATHANIEL ISAACS (born 1808) came to Natal from St. Helena in 1825. He was among the first to venture into the realms of Tchaka, the Attila of South Africa. Dr. Theal, the eminent historian of South Africa, pronounces Isaacs' "Travels in Eastern Africa" indispensable to the students of early events in Natal. He left Natal in 1831, when Tchaka's successor, Dingaan, had prepared to massacre the few whites, and spent the remainder of his life in Gambia, and on an island in the Gulf of Guinea. Isaacs warmly advocated the annexation of Natal by Great Britain, which course was adopted in 1842. Thus fourteen years before the formal annexation of Natal by the British, and ten years before it was reached by the Boers, Nathaniel Isaacs was "Principal Chief" of a large portion of Natal. The importance of the document warrants its reproduction in full.<sup>3</sup>

At Tchaka's Principal Residence,  
Toogooso, near the River Magatee,  
Sept. 17th, 1828.

I, Tchaka, King and Protector of the Zooloos, do hereby create in presence of my principal chiefs and strangers assembled, my friend, Mr. Nathaniel Isaacs, Induna Incoola or Principal Chief of Natal, and do grant and make over to him, his heirs or executors, a free and full possession of my territory from the Umlaas River, westwards of Natal, to the Umshloti, eastwards of Natal, with 100 miles inland from the sea, including the Bay of Natal, the islands in the bay, the forests and the rivers between the boundaries here enumerated. I

(1) Congo Explorer, 1851-1876.

(2) The Jewish Marco Polo, twelfth century.

(3) See J. Forsyth Ingram: "The Story of an African Seaport," Durban, 1899; and *Jewish Chronicle*, July 25th, 1895.

also make over to him the people he now has in his service, together with the Maluban tribe. I also grant him a free and exclusive right to traffic with my nation and all people tributary to the Zooloos. So does the powerful King Tehaka of the Zooloos recompense Mr. Nathaniel Isaacs for the services rendered to him to subdue Batia en Goma, for presents received from him, and for the great attention to my people in the mission sent with him and Captain King to conclude an alliance with his Britannic Majesty. All this and my former gifts I do confirm and wishing peace and friendship I sign myself,

his  
Tchaka X Esenzengercona  
mark.

his  
John X Jacob, Interpreter (a Hottentot).  
mark.

Witnesses: H. F. Fynn.  
John Hutton.

Later Jewish events in Natal merely reproduce those of Cape Colony on a smaller scale. Daniel De Pass was among the first sugar planters in Natal, and JONAS BERGTHEIL (1820-1902) took his seat in the Natal Legislative Assembly some years before Jews were admitted to Parliament in England. Since the introduction of Responsible Government, in the nineties of the last century, A. FASS was member of Parliament, and M. G. LEVY Mayor of Maritzburg. Congregational life started with a Durban Minyan in 1874, and a synagogue dedicated Jan. 1, 1884. The former ministers were the Revs. Feinstock and J. KRAM. The Durban Jewish population, which before the last Anglo-Boer War was only some 200, now numbers 1,250. A new synagogue was dedicated there in June, 1904. Through the annexation of the Vryheid district to Natal, in 1902, that Colony has now at Vryheid a second synagogue, dedicated in April, 1904. Some Vryheid Jews had lived there before the Zulu

War, and took part in the formation of the "New Republic."

Jews settled in what was then the Orange River Sovereignty when its white population did not exceed 4,000. ISAAC BAUMANN, born in 1813, arrived at Graaff-Reinet in 1837 and moved to Bloemfontein in 1847. He and Martin Pincus were for a long time the principal merchants in the Orange Free State. For forty years after the establishment of the Orange Free State in 1855, one or two German-Jewish families, many of them from Hesse-Cassel, were to be found in nearly every hamlet, together controlling the larger portion of the trade of the Free State. An annual Yom Kippur service was instituted in Mr. Baumann's house in 1871, in which year the first Jewish funeral occurred. The Bloemfontein Congregation was started in 1887; a beautiful synagogue was consecrated in March, 1904, in the presence of the Lieutenant-Governor, the Executive Council, and the Justices of the Colony. Despite their small number, Jews have from the first occupied an enviable position in the Orange Free State. Isaac Baumann was twice Mayor of Bloemfontein and Director of the National Bank. M. LEVISEUR, a veteran of the Basuto War (1864-66), has been connected with the State Museum and Volks Hospital since their formation; and W. EHRlich is Deputy-Mayor of Bloemfontein, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, member of the Inter-Colonial Railway Council, and President of the Congregation. Gustav Baumann was Surveyor-General of the Orange Free State during President Steyn's administration. The Jewish population of Bloemfontein is nearly 800.

A few Jews lived in the territory across the Vaal even before the seventies. M. DE VRIES, a Dutch Jew, was State Public Prosecutor in 1868,

Orange River  
Colony.

Transvaal.

member of the Volksraad in 1871 and Chairman of the Volksraad during the session of 1872 ; and again member for Middelburg in 1875. He received the public thanks of the State President for his services in connection with the ratification of the treaty of 1869 with Portugal.<sup>1</sup> DANIEL M. KISCH, born 1840 and died 1898, was a Justice of the Peace in 1875, and was Auditor-General of the Transvaal during the first British occupation from 1877-81. He held Yom Kippur services, often with Minyan, at Pretoria after 1876. Largely through the influence of ALOIS NEL-MAPIUS, a Magyar-Jewish friend of Kruger, Rhodes and Beit, a Jewish cemetery was consecrated at Pilgrims' Rest in 1878. A congregation started on the Barberton Gold Fields in 1883. In the following year SAMUEL MARKS (born in Neustadt Sugind in 1843) came to the Transvaal, and through his coal, copper, gold and diamond mines, model farms, glass, jam, brick and spirit factories, accumulated great wealth and contributed immensely to the development of the country. As an intimate friend of Paul Kruger, and enjoying the confidence of Generals Botha, De Wet and Delarey, and the respect of Earl Roberts, Lord Kitchener and Lord Milner, he played no inconsiderable part in the negotiations for the cessation of Anglo-Boer hostilities at Vereeniging, 29th May, 1902. Of the big mining houses which, since the discovery of gold, control the output in the Transvaal, the Barnatos, Neumann, Albu, and several members of the firm of H. Eckstein & Co. are Jews.

Of Johannesburg, the principal centre of Jewish life in South Africa, with the largest relative Jewish population, outside of Aden and Gibraltar, in the British Empire, it is not necessary to dwell at any great length. Jewish pioneers were here at the very beginning, as early as 1885, mostly

(1) Information concerning De Vries was kindly supplied me by the Keeper of the Archives of the Transvaal.

Transvaal.

hailing from the Barberton Gold Fields and Kimberley. Consequent on the first Jewish death on the Rand on 12th May, 1887, the Government made a grant of the present cemetery, in which up to date not far from one thousand burials have taken place. Religious organisation started on 10th July, 1887, with the formation of the Witwatersrand Gold Fields Jewish Association, of which later the Rev. Joel Rabinowitz was minister. In the following year the Association having changed its name to the Witwatersrand Hebrew Congregation, the building of the present President Street Synagogue was begun. Some three years later followed the Park and the Orthodox Synagogues. To-day, Johannesburg possesses a Jewish School, an Orphanage for all South Africa, a flourishing Gemillus Chasodim Society, and a model Chevra Kadisha which most effectively combines the functions of a Burial Society with those of a Board of Guardians. The Jewish population has always formed an integral portion of the business, intellectual, social, and political life of the town. Jews sat in the old Stadsraad and sit in the present Town Council, and Mr. HARRY SOLOMON is a member of the Transvaal Legislative Council. The Pretoria community, numbers over 1,000, has a synagogue (erected 1898) and a Jewish Public School (opened 1905), the former largely maintained by and the latter the gift of Mr. Marks. There are synagogues in Heidelberg and Volksrust (since 1901), Krugersdorp, Klerksdorp and Germiston (1903), and Roodepoort (1905).

A dramatic interest attaches to the fight, continued during a decade, for the removal of the special Jewish disabilities, over and above those to which the ordinary Uitlander was subjected in the old South African Republic. Though freedom



of worship was granted to all residents in 1870, the revised "Grondwet" of 1896 still debarred Jews and Catholics from military posts, from the position of President, State Secretary, or magistrate, from membership in the First and Second Volksraad, and from Superintendencies of natives and mines. All instruction was to be given in a Christian and Protestant spirit, and Jewish and Catholic teachers and children were excluded from State-subsidised schools. Though there were servile flatterers and concession-hunters who belittled these restrictions, there were seven Jews among the sixty-four reformers engaged at Pretoria in 1896: LIONEL PHILLIPS (sentenced to death), CAPTAIN BETTELHEIM, KARRI DAVIS, A. GOLDRING, S. B. JOEL, MAX LANGERMANN and FRITZ MOSENTHAL. The mass of Jews especially felt the educational disability very grievously. President Kruger and the Executive Council were approached before and during elections, in times of calm and in times of commotion, officially and unofficially, through individuals, deputations and committees. A blunt "non possumus," or, at the best, an admonition to trust to God and the goodwill of the President, were the usual replies. During the franchise discussions, consequent upon the Bloemfontein Conference, a mass meeting of the Jewish inhabitants was called 28th June, 1899, to protest against the exclusion of Russian Jews from the benefits of the franchise which was about to be extended. For addressing this meeting, as well the Uitlander meeting of 26th July, 1899, one of the Jewish ministers of Johannesburg was expelled from the Transvaal, December, 1899.<sup>1</sup> Aside from these political grievances, however, the relations between the Jew and the Boer have always been of the most cordial nature.

(1) See "The Uitlander Agitation," in *Menorah Monthly*, September, 1899; "The Jew and the Uitlander," in *American Hebrew* September 29th, 1899; and "The Boers and Religious Toleration," in *Jewish Chronicle*, February 9th, 1900—all by the writer of this paper.

Transvaal.

Some of the most heroic deeds of the three years' Boer War—such as the Gun Hill incident before Ladysmith—were due to the dash and daring of Jewish soldiers like Major Karri Davis. Over 2,000 Jews fought on the British side, and according to careful enumeration, the London "Spectator" declared that the percentage of Jewish soldiers killed in the war was relatively the largest of all races. Within the Boer ranks the story of the Jew is much the same. They were with the "Vierkleur" on every battlefield; Jewish "irreconcilables" fought to the bitter end, and scores of Jewish prisoners were to be found at St. Helena, Bermuda and Ceylon.

Rhodesia, etc.

Among the most ardent supporters of Cecil Rhodes' "Cape to Cairo all British Route" were Jews like ALFRED BEIT, and later the WEIL family at Mafeking. Daniel M. Kisch, later of Pretoria was Chief Adviser of Lobengula from 1868-73. Immediately after his fall in 1893, Jewish congregations were established in Bulawayo and even as far north as Salisbury. The former has now a Jewish population of 330, with a synagogue, a Zionist Society, and charitable organisations. In the Matabele rebellion of 1896 fourteen Jews fought, and their proportion among the defenders at Mafeking was exceptionally large. Annual services are held in a few places in Bechuanaland and the Kalahari desert. In Portuguese territory some Sephardic Jews in Lourenço Marques are attempting the formation of a permanent Congregation, with synagogue, *bet hayyim* and *hazzan*. There are as yet no signs of Jewish life in German South-west Africa.

Resumé.

To complete this survey of the leading facts in South African Jewish history, we must give as near as possible the statistics of the Jewish populations in the various colonies. To do that with



absolute exactness is not always possible, as the answer to the denominational question on the census enumeration paper is not compulsory, and many Jews seem to have a liking for the role of modern Marranos. Approximately Cape Colony has 20,000 Jews, Natal 1,700, Rhodesia 600, Orange River Colony 1,600, Portuguese territory 300, and the Transvaal some 25,000. This totals nearly 50,000 for South Africa, a number larger than the Jewish population of Italy and Belgium combined, or of Canada and Australia combined.

Does South African Jewry yet realise its position among the Jewries of the world? As yet that question cannot be answered in the affirmative. However, up to a certain degree, it is true that Jewish congregational life in South Africa is growing, not only extensively but *intensively*. This is largely due to the Zionist movement, which has 65 societies from the Cape to the Zambesi, federated into the South African Federation (S. GOLDBREICH, your President, was entrusted by Lord Milner with the gradual re-admission after the war of nearly the whole alien Jewish population of the Rand). Inter-marriage, alarmingly prevalent in former years, is diminishing; and Jewish religious education, in its present state a disgrace, is the most insistent topic of discussion in every Jewish centre. The fact is, Jewish communities on this sub-continent are still in the period of first growth, and merit neither the self-praises they have lavished on themselves, nor the sneers of hostile critics they have evoked. Unattractive sides of communal life now and then come to the surface, dissensions and rivalries occur, but these things have not been unknown in older communities. Unfortunately, neither the brief and often inglorious careers of various Jewish news-

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papers, nor the bitterly partisan correspondence in the London weeklies, have helped the formation of a sound communal public opinion. On all sides, however, there are signs of moral and religious awakening, and of a more earnest desire for concerted action. Thus, when it was found that the late war had left behind it a legacy of prejudices against the poorer Russian Jew, and the feeling of antagonism against him as an intending immigrant, various bodies, alongside the South African Zionist Federation, urged the anglicisation and naturalisation of the alien Jew, and attempted to vindicate him from false and imaginary charges. Thus, at the Inaugural Public Meeting of the Jewish Board of Deputies for the Transvaal and Natal, which was held on 28th July, 1903, and at which Lord Milner delivered a memorable address, it was proved by official figures that, notwithstanding the universal belief to the contrary, Jews furnished but five per cent. of illicit liquor offenders.<sup>1</sup> A similar Board of Deputies for the Cape Colony, which was started the following year in Capetown by Advocate MORRIS ALEXANDER, has done especially good work in fighting for the recognition by the Cape Government of Yiddish as a European language, one of the requisites of an immigrant.

Granted that none of these movements have fully justified the hopes set on them, still are they not so many proofs that the South African Jew is dissatisfied with the present, that the number of those South African Jews is growing who hold that *as long as one of us is not free, we are none of us free?* This sentiment alone contains within itself the possibilities of a better future. With God's help and our best efforts, that better future will one day be ours.

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<sup>1</sup> See Report of "Inaugural Public Meeting of Jewish Board of Deputies for the Transvaal and Natal."







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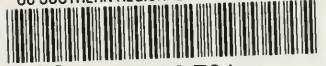
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