

COMMUNITY CENTRE AT SAVANNAH

Isidor Kadis

The magnificent new home of the Jewish Educational Alliance at Savannah, which was completed the 1st of January, was formally dedicated with a week of festivities, which began Sunday, January 23d. The Convention of District No. 5, I. O. B. B., which took place at Savannah January 23d to 25th, acted as a sort of informal opening. The literary evening of the conference, which was attended by more than 700 people, was featured by eloquent orations delivered by Rabbi N. Calisch, of Richmond, and Mr. Julius Peiser, of Washington. The dedicatory exercises proper began Wednesday afternoon, January 26th, with the official flag-raising ceremony in the beautiful square opposite the new building. The address of the day was made by the Mayor, Hon. W. J. Pierpont, who welcomed the institution as a civic force in the community. A splendid address was also delivered by Judge C. N. Feidelson, who spoke of the civic ideals of the Jew in America. The unfurling of the flag, which was performed by little Miss Hazel Fay Lichtenstein, was a thrilling moment to all those present. The exercises closed with the singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner," which was participated in by the 400 children of the congregations of B. B. Jacobs and Mickve Israel.

The formal dedication of the new home Thursday night will remain a memorable occasion for Savannah Jewry. With every seat in the auditorium filled and the gallery also crowded, the auditorium presented a most impressive assembly. The stage and walls were draped in the national colors and in the center the blue and white banner of Zion symbolized the spirit of Americanism and Judaism, for which the building was being consecrated. The stage was backed with large floral offerings, presented by the numerous societies, clubs and organizations connected with the Alliance. The exercises opened with an invocation by Rabbi George Solomon. He was followed by Col. Sigo Myers, chairman of the Building Committee, whose initial gift of \$25,000 in memory of his brother, Hon. Herman Myers, made possible the foundation of the building.

"I am happy," Colonel Myers said, "not so much because of the beauty of this building and the knowledge of the great good it must work for the people and the city I love, but, frankly, for the inestimable benefit it has been to me. When first the plan of consecrating my beloved brother's memory by presenting something for the public welfare took shape in my mind many were the objects that were urged upon me. I deem it an inspiration that led me to adopt this of the Jewish Alliance. Nowise could I better have honored that memory than by making this institution possible.

"Herman Myers was a loyal American, a devoted and loving citizen of this fair city, but in his patriotism and his deep civic pride he never forgot the priceless heritage that was his as a member of the household of Israel. So this building, erected and maintained by the Jewish people of Savannah, offering its great advantages to all who wish them, regardless of creed, becomes a municipal institution making for the welfare of the whole community."

At the conclusion of his remarks, Colonel Myers turned over the keys of the building to Mr. D. A. Byck, president of the institution. The scene was one to be remembered. Mr. Byck paid a glowing tribute to Colonel Myers and in turn presented the keys to Rabbi George Solomon, chairman of the Board of Trustees. Dr. Solomon, who was the dreamer and visionary of the Alliance, was very much moved, and in a few simple but impressive words expressed his gratitude to the Almighty for the realization of his ideal.

"The dedication of the building will only become real," Dr. Solomon said, "when it is worked out in the lives and spirit of its members. It is yet young, what it will be in the future is yet to be worked out by those connected with it."

Greetings were brought by Bishop F. F. Reese and Bishop B. J. Keiley, who extended fraternal and civic greetings to the officers of the Alliance and the Jewish community. Bishop Reese was full of praise for Rabbi Solomon, the man who lived for his vision, which was that night being realized. Judge Samuel B. Adams made

REPORTS

By Maurice B. Hexter

Reports sent to Mr. Hexter, Milwaukee, will be reviewed in these columns

Jewish Educational Alliance
Savannah, Ga.

The Jewish Educational Alliance of Savannah has issued a most remarkable monthly paper, *The Scroll*, which is intended to serve as a bulletin for the Educational Alliance and a news medium for the entire community. The number under review—the first—is given over to the dedication services of the new Educational Alliance. It contains also a review of the social service and religious organizations of Savannah. *The Scroll* is a fitting concomitant of the magnificent building which Savannah possesses for Jewish cultural purposes.

Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid
Society

During the year just past the organization made notable progress, considering the economic situation. Three hundred and ninety-six loans were made, as compared with 327 the year previous. The increase in number of loans is 21 per cent., as compared to an increase in amount of 11 per cent., is indicative of the manner of retrenchment. More than 1000 laborers were placed upon farms during the year. *The Jewish Farmer*, which is the organ of the Jewish agricultural movement, has now a circulation of about 4000. Through it is established a community of interests between scattered farmers and makes possible co-operation between them. The organization has not neglected the religious and communal life of the farmers in settlements and has enlisted the active co-operation of such organizations as the Jewish Chautauqua Society, the Hebrew Union College and the Kehilla, recognizing in this respect the innate tendencies of congregate Jewish families.

The whole report shows that its work in the field of agricultural colonization, extending as it does to every part of the United States, shows the latent possibilities of the immigrant—city-bred and farm-bred—as an agricultural factor in this country.

an appealing address, in which he pleaded for religious and moral training, which alone are capable of developing character. Judge Adams, who is the president of the Board of Education, made a plea for the respect of the law.

"I am glad that your institution is not confined to the Jewish people alone and that it is American and democratic. It stands for robust Americanism and we need it. There was never a time in the history of this country when we needed them more than now; there was never a time when we needed undivided citizenship, undivided nationality more than we do now, and there is no need for a boy, no matter how poor he is, with such an institution as this, to limit his ambition; but I say that it is better not to educate your children at all than to develop their minds at the expense of their spiritual character. Better leave them in ignorance than that, for ignorance can work less harm than misdirected knowledge."

The concluding remarks were made by Rabbi Charles Blumenthal, who pleaded for the conservation of Jewish ideals and culture. A return to Judaism, Jewish traditions and the inculcation of Jewish loyalty among the young, Rabbi Blumenthal pointed out as the best way in which to show our Americanism, because the Jew cannot be a good American unless he is a good Jew.

As a fitting souvenir of the dedication, the Council of the Jewish Educational Alliance issued a dedication book known as "The Scroll." This historical volume, containing histories of Jewish organizations in Savannah, is profusely illustrated and serves as a fitting souvenir for the occasion. The volume was edited by Isidor Kadis, the superintendent, under whose supervision a host of social, cultural and educational activities are now being inaugurated in the community centre—the Jewish Educational Alliance.

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