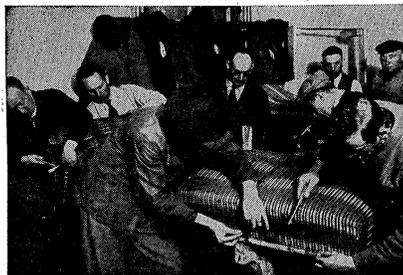
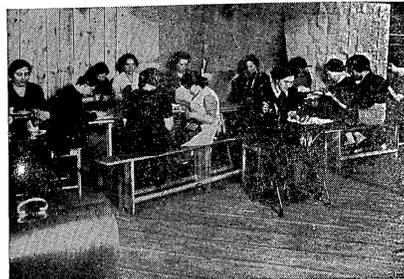


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Turning Misfortune to Advantage—Classes are conducted by ORT in the large camp at Zbonczyn, on the Polish border, to teach the refugees trades to facilitate their emigration to foreign countries which will admit skilled workers



and farmers. Above, at left, is a course in upholstery; at the right is a dress-making class.

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We gladly join in extending to the Jewish Community of Greater Winnipeg our heartiest greetings and best wishes for

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Why Jewish Studies?

By PROF. NATHAN BUBER

Professor Buber is one of the foremost Jewish thinkers of our day. Before the advent of Nazism Dr. Buber was professor of religious philosophy at the University of Frankfurt. Now he is teaching at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. In this article, the eminent scholar points to the importance of the preservation of Jewish culture.—The Editor.

People frequently ask me why it is important for young Jews to acquire a Jewish education. There are many reasons, but, I believe, it suffices to point out the most important ones: The Jewish community rests a collective memory which has kept us intact and preserved us. This does not imply that our national life is anchored solely in our glorious past, but

only that, throughout the generations, the store of our memories has been growing by being constantly replenished with new destiny which changed and affected us vitally. I think I am right in maintaining that this collective memory had even biological consequences; for the Jewish soul has always been drawing new strength from it.

To forestall misunderstanding, it is necessary to clarify two things:

First, our collective memory is not the same as the historical sense which is part of the spiritual life of every nation. On the contrary, the spiritual life of the Jewish people is part of its collective memory.

Secondly, our collective memory is by no means a sentimental reminiscence. It is the living bond between the generations. The sons, the grandsons recall to life the experiences of their fathers and ancestors. Naturally, such a power of remembering does not thrive in some mystical way, all by itself; an arousing, unlocking force is required to call it forth. This power is "the passion for tradition" which used to seize every Jewish son as soon as he became a father. The mass of tradition handed down to him, plus his own experiences, he in turn transmitted to his son. There was no Jew so ignorant as to be incapable of instructing his children. The institution of the "Seder" proves this most conclusively; the head of the family was always capable of conducting the "Seder," and enthusiastically, to boot.

The decay of the collective memory and the passion for handing it on is the most dangerous phenomenon within the present-day deterioration of the Jewish people. All the many moral or formal substitutes for this vitalizing power have failed—and are bound to fail. It was a mistake to believe it possible, or rather desirable, for us to go on without our collective memory. Some of us believed we should start all over again in Palestine; why be burdened with tradition when we have the opportunity of becoming a nation like all the rest? However, the advocates of these ideas suffered shipwreck. For, after all, the magnetic power of Palestine which inspired us to heroic sacrifices is based on our organic collective memory. The Yishub is bound to learn,

either from today's youth or from the future generations, that there cannot be a new Jewish continuity, unless it is built on the ancient collective memory. This applies even more so to the diaspora! Without the revival of the consciousness of the oneness of all our generations, and the realization that "all of us went out from Egypt," there cannot be a revival of the organic bond connecting all of Israel.

How is this to be accomplished? If the fathers are no longer capable of transmitting the tradition, the sons must acquire it without their help: they must "study." Formerly, all that required study was the "Oral Law," the rest was acquired by transmission from father to son. In nowadays, however, the disciplines which were formerly matter-of-fact equipment, as the Hebrew language, the Bible, Jewish history, form the program of study proper. The paternal passion for transmitting must therefore be substituted by the filial passion for studying. The sons must work indefatigably to gain access to the ancient treasure and to be able to commune with the collective memory. It was always only an endeavor striving to be a continuation of and a link with the past which could become a "beginning" among our people.

Our collective memory is intimately tied to our earliest history. The mass of our earliest recollections has been gathered in one large basin: the He-

brew language. The mass of our early memories has risen into a mighty well:

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