

VICIOUS SPIRAL

UNTIL recently the recurring periods of tension in the Middle East, with which the world has lived so long, were nearly always due to Arab hostility towards Israel, and the question was constantly asked how long it would be before the Israelis became involved in war with their neighbours.

The gravity of the situation is recognised on all sides. Mr. Gromyko, the Soviet Foreign Minister, has given a warning that spread into a world war, and Mr. Dulles, like Mr. Nehru, has stated that the situation is "dangerous and explosive."

THE BUND

THE celebration this year of the 60th anniversary of the Jewish Socialist Democratic Party (Bund), is a poignant reminder that, despite the many vicissitudes it has passed through in this generation, the movement still valiantly carries on its activities.

Founded in Vilna in 1897 (by a coincidence; the same year as the first Zionist Congress) for the primary purpose of improving the conditions of Jewish workers, whose number grew with the increased industrialisation at the end of the nineteenth century, the Bund was at first concerned only with Jewish economic problems.

The Russians' aim in the Middle East appears to be to create the maximum embarrassment for the Western Powers and in this way to reduce what they regard as the threat which is levelled at them through the Nato treaties and the Baghdad Pact.

Like other Jewish organisations, the Bund, too, has suffered from internal rifts and splits. But one of the main causes of its decline was no doubt the fact that, despite its excellent work in fighting against the disabilities from which the Jew suffered, it rejected categorically the idea of political Zionism.

The position of Israel in this context becomes precarious in the extreme, as the latest messages from Jerusalem emphatically state.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ISRAEL

Progressive Party's Record

To the Editor of The Jewish Chronicle

SIR.—Your readers are indebted to you for publishing Dr. Zvi Kurzwil's most revealing and helpful article on the important subject of religious education in Israel, in which Anglo-Jewry, and in particular we Zionists, are deeply interested.

What kind of active help is possible? It is not, of course, to be done by financial support to those in Israel who are striving to bring about a change. This must, of course, be done by creating subsidies, as the Neturei Karta do, but by orderly democratic methods, using the ballot box and implemented by Israel's supreme legislative body—the Knesset.

This being the case, we must ask in Britain to give our moral and financial support? Dr. Kurzwil tells us that in Israel the voices of religious Jews are not only to Mizrahi, but also to Ashkenazi and other areas have been built, and religious education is being developed.

What is the record in this regard of the Progressive Party, which is so strongly favoured and supported by the present Government? It is worth noting that several of the Mafai leaders are themselves traditionally minded Jews.

PROCEDURE IN SYNAGOGUES

The Late Chief Rabbi's Siddur

To the Editor of The Jewish Chronicle

SIR.—With reference to the correspondence in your columns about procedures in synagogue services, I am greatly surprised that no reference has been made to the great work of Chief Rabbi Dr. J. H. Herz's authorised Siddur.

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

AMONG the happy events introduced by Rosh Hashana there will be, for our Jewish students, the beginning of a new University year. The attention of "Freshers" and of their parents is drawn to the particulars published in this issue of the Jewish Students Societies at the different universities.

NO RABBIS AT THE JAMBOREE

Scouts' Self-Reliance at Services

To the Editor of The Jewish Chronicle

SIR.—I was appointed by the Council of Jewish Scouts to look after Jewish affairs at the Jamboree, and as I am a Scout-Commissioner and not a rabbi, perhaps I may comment on the sting in the tail of your leading article of August 30.

The Council of Jewish Scouts records with gratitude the work of many of its chaplains, especially as most of their work goes unseen and unpublicised. We would have welcomed one or more of our chaplains to the Jamboree, but those rabbis who know scouting well thought that the scouts would themselves undertake such religious services as they wanted, and that the services of a rabbi were not essential.

The Jewish religious education of our children to the Zionist Federation day school.

We must stoutly resist all their misguided efforts to create an artificial barrier between Anglo-Jewry and Israel.

Innuendo Challenged

SIR.—Dr. Zvi Kurzwil's otherwise satisfactory survey of religious education in Israel contains an innuendo which should not be allowed to pass unchallenged.

The innuendo is that there is something unusual in an Orthodox Jew voting for Mafai presumably because that party is regarded as being religious.

It is worth noting that several of the Mafai leaders are themselves traditionally minded Jews. Mrs. Ada Maimon, a member of the Knesset, has also had a husband among its members of the Knesset.

In the circumstances it is hardly to be wondered at that the Israeli Labour Party is supported by many Orthodox Jews who are opposed to their religious belief being used as a political weapon.

4 Kenyland Way, Hendon Way, N.W.4.

EXPLANATIONS OF SERVICES

SIR.—In reply to Mr. Cyril Q. Henriques' recent letter deploring the lack of a suitable publication explaining the services and prayers of the synagogue, I would like to state that I have prepared a small volume entitled "A Companion to the High-Festival Machzor," which will be published in time for the next festival.

10/11 Barbican, E.C.1.

BORN IN LONDON AND EDUCATED THERE AND IN PARIS, I GREW UP IN THE ROSY DAYS OF FABIANISM...

As parents and even young grandparents, the vast majority of my generation have been slowly growing towards a reappraisal of Jewish values and seeking somehow to reinstate them not only into their own lives but into the lives of their growing children.

LOST GENERATION

I have just spent over a year in the United States of America, and several aspects of American Jewish life, negative no less than positive, made a deep impact on me.

HOPEFUL SIGNS

Nowhere did I find in the youth—and I travelled extensively—anything but a deep and sincere acceptance of our heritage as Jews.

My own life in England and even in Palestine and Israel never having been so full as it is now, I am not surprised that I have found and concentrated in my own total lack of relaxed, easy-goingness between

SPINOZA AND THE RELIGIOUS JEW OF TODAY*

By LEON ROTH

SPINOZA was born in Amsterdam on November 24, 1632, and died at The Hague on February 21, 1677. His reputation rests principally on two books, the "Tractatus Theologico-Politicus," published anonymously in 1670, and the "Ethica," published in 1677 by his friends as a part of his Opera Posthuma.

It is a well-known fact that there are many Orthodox Jews who vote for the General Zionists, Cherut, and even Mafai (my italics).

FREEDOM ESSENTIAL

The "Tractatus Theologico-Politicus" or the Treatise—as I propose to call it for short—is a reasoned plea (possibly the first, certainly one of the most striking, in modern political literature) for complete freedom of thought and expression (even John Locke's notable Letters on Toleration admit serious restrictions).

SIMPLE MORAL RULES

Taking the Bible in our hands then, and according as Spinoza says in its own light and at its own valuation, what do we find? Well, Spinoza finds a lot of unexpected things.

NOT IMPRESSIVE

Before discussing the Conservative and the Reconstructionist movement within it, I must apologise for the fact that my main contacts with the main stream of Orthodox Judaism in America did not impress me.

HEBREW IN SERVICES

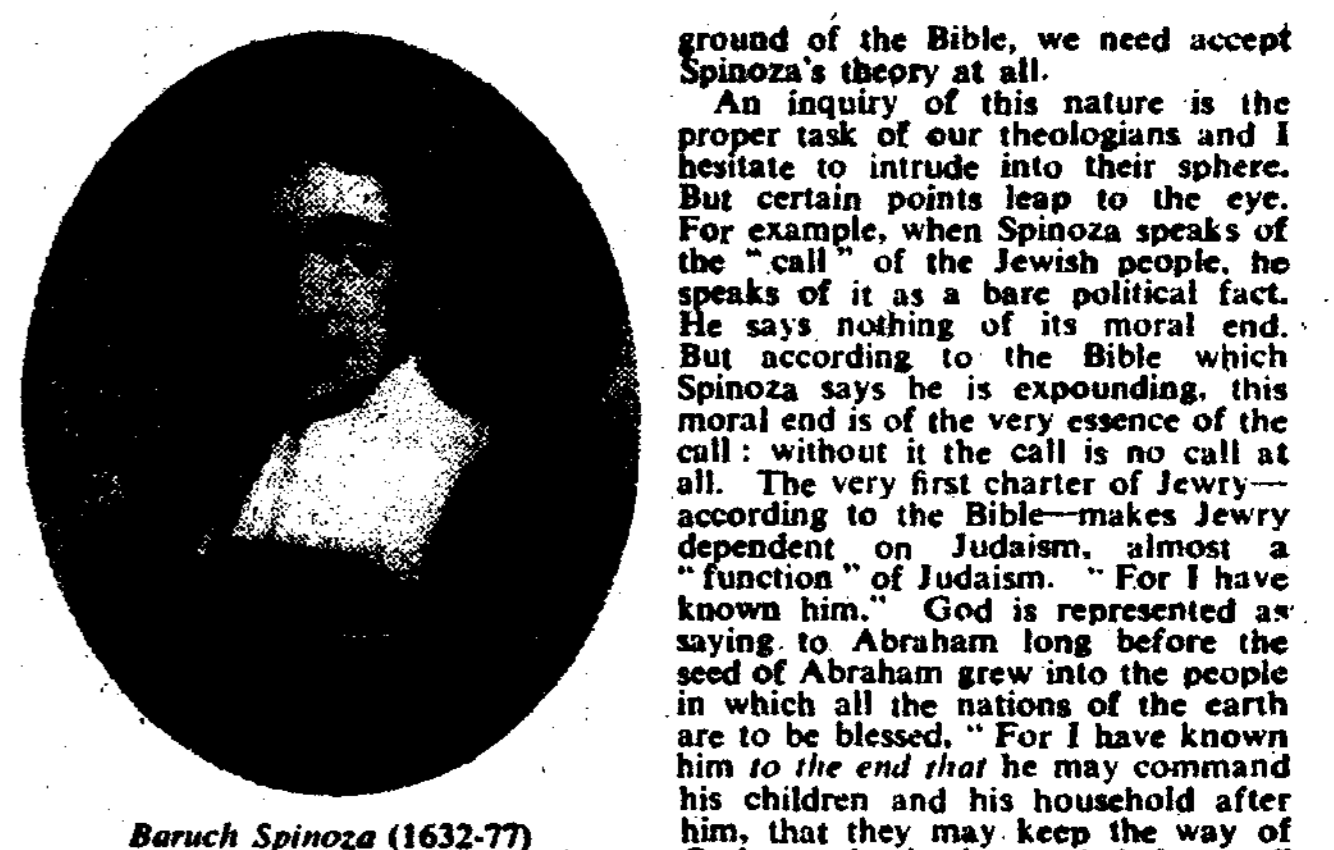
Of the Conservative movement as a whole the greatest single achievement is the Jewish Theological Seminary, which is producing a dedicated young rabbi with a genuine sense of the realities of today and of the eternal truths of Judaism and its universality.

REFORM MOVEMENT

The Reform movement sees itself not as a compromise but as a result of rethinking in contemporary conditions the fundamentalism of the past.

HEBREW IN SERVICES

Of the Conservative movement as a whole the greatest single achievement is the Jewish Theological Seminary, which is producing a dedicated young rabbi with a genuine sense of the realities of today and of the eternal truths of Judaism and its universality.



Baruch Spinoza (1632-77)

DEVICE FOR SURVIVAL

We are here (on Biblical grounds) at the general conclusion of the Treatise as a whole. So far as Spinoza's specific account of Judaism is concerned, it will be noted that in his view Judaism is universalist by accident and never so (apparently) for Jews.

HEBREW IN SERVICES

Of the Conservative movement as a whole the greatest single achievement is the Jewish Theological Seminary, which is producing a dedicated young rabbi with a genuine sense of the realities of today and of the eternal truths of Judaism and its universality.

REFORM MOVEMENT

The Reform movement sees itself not as a compromise but as a result of rethinking in contemporary conditions the fundamentalism of the past.

HEBREW IN SERVICES

Of the Conservative movement as a whole the greatest single achievement is the Jewish Theological Seminary, which is producing a dedicated young rabbi with a genuine sense of the realities of today and of the eternal truths of Judaism and its universality.

REFORM MOVEMENT

The Reform movement sees itself not as a compromise but as a result of rethinking in contemporary conditions the fundamentalism of the past.

HEBREW IN SERVICES

Of the Conservative movement as a whole the greatest single achievement is the Jewish Theological Seminary, which is producing a dedicated young rabbi with a genuine sense of the realities of today and of the eternal truths of Judaism and its universality.

REFORM MOVEMENT

The Reform movement sees itself not as a compromise but as a result of rethinking in contemporary conditions the fundamentalism of the past.

ground of the Bible, we need accept Spinoza's theory at all.

An inquiry of this nature is the proper task of our theologians and I hesitate to intrude into their sphere. But certainly the Bible makes Jewry dependent on Judaism, almost a "function" of Judaism.

For I have known him. God is represented as saying to Abraham long before the seed of Abraham grew into the people in which all the nations of the earth are to be blessed.

For a student of the Bible this is plain enough; and I need hardly remind students of the Bible that this verse, summed up in the principles of love and kindness and justice, was also intended to strengthen the society; but owing to the intuition of the Hebrew State survived its destruction and became the foundations of the religion of mankind.

TEACHING IGNORED

Yet of all this I find nothing in Spinoza. Nor do I find the prophetic conception of Witness, nor the not less striking and prominent doctrine of the Remnant; nor the constant Biblical emphasis that the fulfilment of the promises is dependent on the fulfilment of the conditions, the moral conditions under which the promises were given; nor the constant calling of the people back to the primary decencies of moral living.

DEVICE FOR SURVIVAL

We are here (on Biblical grounds) at the general conclusion of the Treatise as a whole. So far as Spinoza's specific account of Judaism is concerned, it will be noted that in his view Judaism is universalist by accident and never so (apparently) for Jews.

HEBREW IN SERVICES

Of the Conservative movement as a whole the greatest single achievement is the Jewish Theological Seminary, which is producing a dedicated young rabbi with a genuine sense of the realities of today and of the eternal truths of Judaism and its universality.

REFORM MOVEMENT

The Reform movement sees itself not as a compromise but as a result of rethinking in contemporary conditions the fundamentalism of the past.

HEBREW IN SERVICES

Of the Conservative movement as a whole the greatest single achievement is the Jewish Theological Seminary, which is producing a dedicated young rabbi with a genuine sense of the realities of today and of the eternal truths of Judaism and its universality.

REFORM MOVEMENT

The Reform movement sees itself not as a compromise but as a result of rethinking in contemporary conditions the fundamentalism of the past.