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SYNAGOGUE

ANNUAL REPORTS

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APRIL 1968/5728

HAMMERSMITH & WEST KENSINGTON SYNAGOGUE

BROOK GREEN, W.6.

Secretary's Office: Noble 1405 Synagogue Hall: Noble 5238

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Reader: Rev. SAMUEL FORSCHER.

Emeritus Render: Rev. B. PALETZ.

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Mr. S. GROSE.

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Mrs. M. D. CAPLAN Dr. L. FREEMAN Dr. F. TYSH
Mr. G. EVNINE (Chairman) Rev. S. VENITT, C.A.

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Representatives at the London Board of Jewish Religious Education Mrs. M. D. CAPLAN, Dr. L. FREEMAN

Representative at the Standing Conference of the Welfare Committee of the United Synagogue : Mr. L. LEVY.

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> Representative at the U.S. Burlal Committee : Mr. D. H. VELLEMAN

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Mr. J. L. GODFREY

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A N N U A L REPORTS



Hammersmith & West Kensington Synagogue

ANNUAL REPORT

Your Honorary Officers have pleasure in presenting the Annual Report of the Synagogue for 1967-1968,

We begin with a short factual statement. At the end of 1966 our membership stood at 487. A year later the figure was 468. We shall finish with a comment on this subject. In between, we chronicle some of the happenings of the year.

Synagogue Services. We are happy to record that because of the willing co-operation of our Ministers, our Synagogue services have a harmonious dignity and an emotional warmth which combine to give spiritual sustenance to our regular worshippers. We have been happy to welcome visitors throughout the year from all over the world, and they invariably comment favourably on the happy atmosphere in our Shool.

J.P.A. We have no wish to usurp the place of other organisations in writing of the momentous happenings in Israel last year. Suffice it to say that the local J.P.A. Committee which is based on our Synagogue worthily played its part in fund-raising for Israel.

The grand total donated in 1267 was £30,000, a figure which, from our community, makes comment superfluous.

As this report is being written, Stage 2 of the Emergency Appeal has begun, and already £8,400 has been collected.

Classes. The Hammersmith and West Kensington Synagogue Classes Committee continues its important task of assisting in running the classes under the Superintendentship of Rev. S. Venitt, B.A.

Ladies' Guild. We are happy to record our gratitude to the Ladies' Guild, under the chairmanship of Mrs. S. Venitt, for their unostentatious but vital assistance in synagogual activities. In particular, we are mindful, of their preparations for the Succah, for the floral decorations on Shavuot, and their care of the mantles, curtains and other appurtenances. We note, too, their willingness to provide refreshments whenever required.

Silver Wedding Anniversary. In March, 1968, Rev. and Mrs. S. Forscher celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary, an occasion which, while undoubtedly giving them much happiness, was a source of great pleasure to the community who hold them in such high esteem.

Lectures. In the Autumn, the Rev. Irving Jacobs of Jews' College delivered a brilliant and stimulating course of lectures on "The Schisms and Disputes in Early Judaism." He combines a pleasing sense of humour with the disinterestedness of the historian to produce a refreshing impact.

Functions Committee. We are very pleased indeed to report that the Functions Committee is being re-activated under the Chairmanship of Mr. F. J. Gertler,

The late Mr. B. H. Busky. We record with deep regret the death of Ben Busky on 8th December, 1967, so soon after retiring from having served for all his life the London Jewish Community in general, and Hammersmith in particular. We extend our deepest sympathy to Mrs. Busky and her daughter.

Chasan Torah and Chasan Bereshis. Last year saw the retirement of Mr. J. Nisner and Mr. B. J. Benzimra as Honorary Officers after having fulfilled their offices with grace, ability and hard work, thus setting a fine example to us all, not least their successors, and so maintaining the high traditions of the Hammersmith and West Kensington Synagogue. We were therefore particularly happy that they accepted the honours of Chasan Torah and Chasan Bereshis, and gave us the opportunity of publicly thanking them for all they have done, and indeed, are continuing to do, for the benefit and well-being of the community.

Sub-committees. The Board of Management is ably assisted in its work by the activities of the House committee and Youth committee under the chairmanships of Mr. L. Levy and Mr. D. H. Velleman respectively. These committees work zealously and unostentatiously in the interests of the present and future well-being of the congregation.

New Sefer Torah. On Sunday, 17th September, a service was held to mark the completion and presentation of a new Sefer Torah by Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Godfrey in memory of their parents. A full report of the proceedings on that momentous occasion was given in the Rosh Hashana issue of the "Brook". On the same day a new mantle with presented in memory of Mrs. Bertram Topper's uncle, Samuel Morris Berg, by her aunt in America.

The Hon. Officers wish to tender their thanks to Mr. Bernard Davis for his gift of Prayer Books in memory of his parents.

Archivist. Towards the end of the year the Board of Management were happy to appoint Mr. M. DeVries, Honorary Archivist Extraordinary to the synagogue. The main purpose of this office is to ensure that the history of the community is fully and adequately recorded.

Inter-faith Relationships. Several groups have paid visits to the synagogue during the past year. Student teachers from Maria Grey College, and the Froebel Institute, another group from Stevenage, a number of Guide leaders, and in addition, several individual callers, were all most interested and impressed by what they saw and heard. Officials. The Hon. Officers and Board of Management wish to record their appreciation of the hard work and devotion to duty shown by our ministers, Rev. S. Venitt, B.A. and the Rev. S. Forscher, our Secretary Mr. Martin Friedmann, our caretaker, Mr. L. W. Short, and the members of the Choir.

Conclusion. We referred at the beginning of the Report to our membership figures. We have recently, together with our Ministers, been discussing and considering possible ways and means of more fully integrating our synagogue with our members. The Board of Management is anxious, so far as lies within its powers, to provide our membership with what they want, and to encourage you, the members, to participate more actively in a virile, viable community. Our synagogue is beautiful as a place of worship—we want you to fill it with spiritual warmth and friendly atmosphere. We urge you to attend the Annual General Meeting where you can hold the Honorary Officers to account for their stewardship, and make known your views on the sort of community you wish to be part of.

J. Brand

H. Sharpe

M. A. Amias

THE HAMMERSMITH & WEST KENSINGTON

J. P. A. COMMITTEE

The Hammersmith & West Kensington J.P.A. Committee may justly be proud of the involvement of our community in helping Israel and our brethren during the historic days. In October 1967 our delegation consisting of Dr. Denis Caplan, Sidney Grose, Bernard Davis and led by Joe Godfrey (and their ladies) were invited to participate in a Study Mission to Israel. It was on this occasion that Mr. & Mrs. J. Godfrey donated one million Israeli pounds to establish a Home for Mentally Retarded Children in Ashkelon and with which their names and the name of the Hammersmith Community will be linked with bonds of Jewish brotherbood.

Our delegation were guests at the State Banquet in the Knesset, were received in the home of the President of the State of Israel, were the guests of General Hod at a secret airforce base, apart from visiting the new territories now occupied by Israel and formerly a part of Egypt, Syria and Jordan.

A highlight of our mission was a special visit to lunch with Ben Gurion and his aide-de-camp Colonel Tsivion at Sede Boker in the Negev.

With the strengthened Committee, two J.P.A. Appeal Meetings were recently held, the first at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Sidney Grose, whose hospitality and charm as Host and Hostess created the warmth and climate to welcome General Shamir who gave a resume of current affairs in Israel. The second meeting at our Shool Hall was addressed by Colonel Tsivion and Colonel George Bean, who were both most enthusiastically received.

So far in this 1968 Campaign, we have raised £8,400, and it is hoped that those who were unable to attend will help to swell this total.

We need more Committee Members to help us in our work for Israel—will you join us and thus ensure that the distance from Hammersmith to Israel shall not be a wedge but a bridge to closer attachment with our people.

BERNARD DAVIS

Hammersmith Synagogue Religion Classes

Our religion classes now have an independent status under the aegis of the London Board of Jewish Religious Education. The overall communal migration within London Jewry towards the north-west and eastern suburbs of the capital has been responsible for a considerable drop in our class roll.

The members of the teaching staff are endeavouring to intensify the inculcation of religious knowledge and traditional practice amongst our pupils. The single session on Sunday cannot provide all the necessary spiritual calories. We entreat all parents to encourage their children to attend on Tuesday and Thursday evening sessions so that continuity can be maintained and the standard of knowledge raised to an adequate degree.

The annual Chanucah Service took place in the Synagogue on Sunday, 31st December, 1967. In the absence of Rev. Venitt (who was on a study mission in Israel), an address was given to the children by Mr. Moss Amias who endeared himself to the juvenile and adult gathering by his informative address enlivened by light-hearted commentary. We are most grateful to Rev. Forscher for his outstanding preparation of the children for the Chanucah Service. Under his guidance, the traditional chants were melodiously rendered by the pupils of the classes. The principal juvenile officiants were Richard Brown, John Clarke, Gerard Cohen, Ian Ohayon and Graham Verby. Appropriate extracts from the Book of the Maccabees were read by Karen Goss, Naomi Goss, Susan Williams, Adrienne Arram and Lorraine Smith.

Congratulations to David Marks on passing the Junior Examination of the London Board and gaining a prize.

Tea and entertainment expertly provided by the Parents' Association followed the synagogue service. We are most appreciative of all the amenities offered by the Parents' Association, which are a source of great encouragement to our children.

The annual prize distribution will take place on Sunday, 5th May, 1968, in the Hammersmith Synagogue Hall. Our guest of honour will be Dr. L. Collins, who is one of our outstanding members and a former Warden of the Synagogue. He is a profound scholar in the sphere of Jewish learning and has always displayed a lively interest in educational and cultural projects in our community. Mrs. Collins will distribute the prizes.

Hammersmith Synagogue Ladies' Guild

Soon after our last report had gone to press, the Guild suffered a great loss in the passing of one of our most devoted committee members—Millie Collins. She was a tower of strength to the guild, always ready and happy to be of service in any capacity. She was the lady visitor at the West London Hospital and her visits were a source of great comfort to the patients.

In April, the guild played the usual prominent part in helping to ensure a good local collection for the blind. The sum of £142, was collected, and our thanks to Mrs. Dinah Paros and all those ladies who helped to achieve this total. With the 6-day war in June, all activities were turned to Israel. The guild in line with other organisations responded to the appeal for immediate funds towards the Emergency Appeal, and we promptly gave practically all the funds available. This was apart from practical help given in connection with the thrift shop. The response was absolutely magnificent, both in obtaining of goods and also in assisting at the shop.

Arrangements for the floral decorations for the Shool on Shavuos were once again attended to by members of the guild.

To raise money for the Friends of Jews College, a very successful Bring and Buy, and Social afternoon was held at he home of our President Mrs. Frank Hodes, who provided an excellent tea. Mrs. Israel Brodie was the guest speaker, and £85 was made on that occasion.

Our thanks to members who came to help with the decoration of the Succah and to the ladies who attended to the cakes and drinks at each kiddush. There was much praise for the Succah this year, in particular to the trellis arrangement and floral decor.

The climax of the year was the Simchas Torah celebration.

An enthusiastic group of guild members spent part of the Sunday helping with the preparations for the evening function.

In November, the guild once again entertained the Standard Bearers of AJEX to tea.

In December, in spite of bad weather, a successful Card Evening & Supper was held at the Communal Hall, and £126 was made that evening. A second function was held in March—a luncheon and card afternoon, which realised £57 10s 0d.

Four times in the year parcels were delivered to St. Bernards Mental Home. Many thanks to the ladies who kindly made up the parcels and delivered them to the Hospital.

During the year the guild purchased new large white tablecloths, and Mrs. Apfel donated £25 towards new vinyl for the kitchen.

In answer to appeals, donations have been given to various institutions and charities.

Our grateful thanks to Mrs. Frank Hodes, our President, for having the Annual General Meeting once again in her home,

Thanks are due to the Honorary Officers and Board of Management of the Synagogue for use of the Hall and rooms for our meetings and functions. Our thanks to Mr. Short who is always of great service to us.

Congratulations were extended to Rev. and Mrs. S. Forscher on their Silver Wedding in March.

THE HAMMERSMITH SYNAGOGUE CLASSES

Parents' Association

Despite the lack of support from new members of our association, the half dozen or so hard working people on our committee, have continued to arrange teas and other functions for the children of the Hebrew classes.

Unfortunately since the resignation of our former chairman Mr. Godel our football team no longer exists but, if any father would like to take over, I feel sure the boys would give him every support. Our new chairman Mrs. S. Williams spends all her spare time patiently coaching the children for the various plays and pageants that we have presented during the year. If any parent feels like helping our worthy cause, please contact our secretary.

RITA VERBY. RENown 3731.

Lecture Series 1967-1968

The intriguing course of lectures given in the autumn of 1967 by Rev. Irving Jacobs, B.A. on "The Schisms and Disputes in Early Judaism" attracted a maximum weekly audience of 20 individuals which became depleted at times to a minimum of 11. As a pioneer centre for Jewish culture, these figures are not encouraging, and if the Hammersmith Synagogue is to retain its pre-eminence in this field of adult Jewish Education, greater support must be forthcoming.

The contents of the course was divided into four sections, two lectures being devoted to each of four major controversies, with their historical and theological challenge to the stability of Jewish tradition and faith.

Rev. Irving Jacobs delineated firstly the attempted infiltration of Greek ideas, attitudes and philosophies during the Hellenistic period. He proceeded to a masterly account of the politicoreligious differences between the Sadducees and Pharisees. The Western world today owes its dominant religious allegiance to the advent within Palestine of a succession of sects who did not conform with the main stream of Jewish practice. They were

brought into being by an emotive desire for a Messianic solution to counteract the oppression and attempted suppression of an ancient religion. The lecturer described most vividly the trend which led eventually to the parting of the ways and the secession from Judaism of that Christo-Judean sect, which subsequently converted the polytheism of the pagan Graeco-Roman world to the concept of Christianity. The final subject of the course was the direct clash between Rabbinic Judaism with its emphasis on the Oral Law as the authentic supplement of the Written Law, on the one hand, and the Karaite adherence to the literal interpretation of the Bible on the other.

The lecturer's comments and explanations from sources both modern and ancient were discussed and debated most fully during question time when members of the audience were able to obtain authoritative clarification of many fascinating facts of this early formative period of Judaism

We are now making the necessary approaches to arrange a vital course of Lectures next Autamn to be given by an outstanding spiritual leader in London on the subject of "Jewish Values in the Prayer Book." This past year has been one indicative of Divine protection for the remnant of our People. This contemplated course of lectures will indicate how we can prove ourselves spiritually worthy to meet the situation.

L. FREEMAN.

The Hammersmith Friendship Club

As we approach our 17th Anniversary we look back very happily on many friendships which have been formed. There is always a happy atmosphere and we continue to enrol new members from surrounding districts. Our membership now stands at 100 and between 50-60 in regular attendance.

Our 16th Anniversary was celebrated with a Chanukah Party and the Lights were kindled by the Rev. Forscher. All received a gift.

A full outdoor programme has been maintained including visits to Theatres, trips to various Seaside Resorts. These are very much enjoyed.

Two outstanding events took place, i.e.:

- (a) A visit to the Law Courts, Strand, 28 members were escorted in small groups to Courts in Session.
- (b) Tickets were obtained by Miss Morris for the Opening of the Courts at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, which takes place yearly, and the members were very thrilled to watch the procession.

Various competitions have taken place and members were very enthusiastic.

Visiting the sick is a regular feature and much appreciated.

I would conclude by quoting the following:-

"What is the best thing Life can give us

As its winding road we wend? Is it not the boon and blessing Of good and trusted friends?"

Miss SOPHIA MORRIS, Hon. Asst. Secretary.

Hammersmith & District Branch of A.J.E.X.

At the Annual General Meeting of the Branch on Tuesday, April 2nd 1968, the retiring Chairman, Mr. Cecil Hyams, opened his Report by stating that the period of the Six-day war had been one of intense activity for the Branch. Members had acted as stewards at meetings, helped to establish and maintain communications between AJEX Headquarters and the Community, assisted in disseminating the facts and discounting Arab propaganda, and the Branch had made a substantial contribution to the J.P.A.

During the year, the Branch attended Remembrance Parades at Willesden Jewish Cemetery, the War Memorial at Shepherds Bush and the Cenotaph.

The Social side had not been neglected culminating in a most successful Dinner & Ball,

The Branch donated altogether over £400 to AJEX Welfare and other charities during the year.

The newly elected Chairman, Mr. Conrad Easman, stated that he would welcome all Jewish Ex-Servicemen & Women in the area who felt they could make some contribution however small to the challenging day to day work of AJEX either in Welfare, Defence or Culture.

Hon, Sec.: Mr. Norman A. Mann, 61 Clifford Avenue, S.W.14. Telephone 876 3049.

YOUTH COMMITTEE

By now, most congregants will know that once again the youth of our area is very active in the community. During the services in the Synagogue they are performing numerous duties and their spare activities include a thriving youth club meeting regularly in the Synagogue Hall. Since the re-opening of the Wessix Jewish Youth Club, last September, more than 75 young people between the ages of 13 and 21 have joined as members and have partaken in the different club activities which include social, cultural and sports sections.

Just about one month ago a senior group was formed, named Wessix Jewish Nucleus, catering for the age group 18-25.

For information about the younger group, please contact Debby Marks, Chairman Members Committee, at 69 Sheffield Terrace, W.8. Tel. 01-937 1690. For the Senior group contact John Ashmele, Chairman Members Committee, at 16b Hyde Park Mansions, W.2. Tel. Pad. 6631.

Or for either, Mr. D. H. Velleman, 125a Earls Court Road, S.W.5. Tel. 373 7171.

The 1968 fund raising campaign for the Building Fund of the West London Jewish Youth Centre started with a Variety Show at the Victoria Palace Theatre on the 24th March. A three hour super all star professional show was put on, which was thoroughly enjoyed by a packed house. A considerable sum was raised towards the ultimate goal.

The Youth Committee has met at regular intervals during the year and a considerable amount of success in local youth work was achieved. But let us not get complacent. All the actual youth work in the community is being done by members of other communities, with one or two notable exceptions. I would like to repeat a statement in the magazine of Jewish Youth "Mosa c." "The future of the community rests with its youth, who have become increasingly disillusioned with adults unable to understand their ideas and problems."

There are times when I, although not belonging to "youth" but to "adults," feel exactly the same,

DAVID H. VELLEMAN, Chairman Youth Committee.

WEST LONDON YOUNG ZIONIST SOCIETY

The last six months have been very energetic for the Society, and during the Spring and Summer we hope to see our efforts pay off. The basis of the society's activities has been the weekly meeting, which is now on Thursday evenings beginning at 8.30 p.m.

The standard of speakers has been very high, and we have welcomed Percey Gourgey, Sidney Shipton, and Gordon Hausmann who have dealt most informatively with the political situation and events in the Middle East, and with the plight of Soviet Jewry. We have also played a very active part in the affairs of the Federation of Zionist Youth, to which we are affiliated. In the inter-society Debating Tournament, West London retained the Cup, winning the motion that A Jewish Communist is a Contradiction in Terms. In the Quiz Competition, we are now through to the Third Round, and hope also to retain this prize.

The major event of the last months has been the Society Seminar—the ninth in its history—held at the David Eder Farm near Horsham. This was a great success, both socially and culturally, and the theme at this weekend was Israeli Culture. We hope to hold another weekend away in mid-September, this time possibly at Seaford.

During the Pesach vacation we have launched an attempt to bring old members of West Side Hafinjan into the society, especially in the Kensington and Hammersmith areas. New members to West London are also very welcome in the 17-24 age group, and should telephone Judy at WIL 4133 for details of our programme and the venue.

JEWISH YOUTH STUDY GROUPS

Jewish Youth Study Groups is a nation-wide organisation for Jewish boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 18. It provides them with an opportunity to meet youth of their own age group with whom they can discuss topics of Jewish interest, listen to guest speakers on varied subjects, and learn and participate in Israeli songs and dances. They also have the opportunity to attend the annual Summer and Winter Schools held at Carmel College, and to visit the provincial groups of the movement (such as Birmingham, Manchester and Cardiff) at the same time making many new friends.

If you are in this age group, why not come along and see for yourself any Sunday, 5.15 p.m. at your local group which meets in the Herbert Samuel Hall (adjacent to the New West End Synagogue), Bark Place, W.2. Further particulars may be obtained from Mervyn Beth, 9, Campden House Court, Gloucester Walk, W.8, (937 2813).

ORGANISATIONS

- Hummersmith Synagogue Ladies' Guild. Meets first Tuesday evening in the month in the Synagogue Hall. For information Tel.; 603 4938.
- Hammersmith Synagogue Parents' Assn. Hon. Sec.: Mrs. S. Verby, 45 Ranciagh Gardens Mansions, S.W.6. Tel.: REN 3731.
- Hammersmith Friendship Club. Meets every Wednesday in the Synasogue Hall. Chairman: Mrs. H. M. Levy, 212 Goldhawk Road, W.12. 743 3276.
- Hammersmith and District Women's Zionist Society.
 Hon. Sec.: Mrs. L. R. Longhorn, 24 Linkenholt Mansions, Stamford Brook, W.6. Tel.: RIV 8577.
- Hammersmith, Shenherds Bush & Chelsen District Defence Committee (under the nussices of Board of Deputies of British Jews). Enquiries at, Jewish Board of Deputies, Woburn House, Upper Woburn Place, W.C.2.
- Hammersmith and West Kensington Branch of the Norwood Charitable Trust. Hon. Sec.: Miss R. Longhorn. 24 Linkenholt Mansions, Stamford Brook, W.6. Tel.: RIV 8577.
- West London Jewish Youth Centre, Snowsering Committee, Hammersmith, representative, Mr. D. H. Velleman, 125a Earls Court Road, S.W.5. Tel. 01-373 7171.
- Wessix Jewish Youth Club. Enquiries to Mr. D. H. Velleman, 125a Earls Court Road, S.W.5. Tel. 01-373 7171.
- West London Zionist Society. Enquiries to Hon. Sec. Miss R. Longhorn. Tel.: RIV. 8577.
- West London Young Zionist Society. Enquiries to Chairman, Mr. Colin Green, Tel.: POP 5333.
- West Side Hafintan. Enquiries to Hon. Sec., Miss Julia Lynn, 31 Jeymer Drive, Greenford, Middx. Tel.: WAX 4123.
- Hamishmeret Hatzeira—Forum for Discussions on Jewish Topics for the Over 18's. All enquiries to Mr. Leslie Venitt. 603 4938.
- Jewish Lads' Brigade—Hammersmith Coy. All enquiries to Brigade Secretary: Woburn House, Upper Woburn Place, W.C.1. Tel.; EUS, 5148.
- Association of Jewish Ex-Service Men and Women (Hammersmith and District Branch). Hon. Sec.: Mr. Norman A. Mana, 61 Clifford Avenue, S.W.14. Tel.: PRO 3049.
- Hammersmith and West Kensington Synngogue Library. Hon. Sec. and Librarian: Miss R. Longhorn, 24 Linkenholt Mansions, W.6. Tel.: RIV 8577.

TIMES OF SERVICES

WEEKDAYS

Morning ... 7.30 a.m.

Evening By arrangement.

SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 8.30 a.m.

SABBATHS AND FESTIVALS

Evening 15 minutes after the commencement of Sabbath.

During Summer Months, 7.0 p.m.

Morning ... 9.30 a.m.

Hammersmith Synagogue Religion Classes

(Supt.: Rev. S. Venitt, B.A.)

Classes meet every-

Sunday 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. Tuesday 5.00 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. Thursday ... 5.00 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.

The Secretary can be seen any Sunday morning between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. and by appointment.

The Ministers can be seen by appointment.

Rev. S. VENITT, B.A., 69, Brook Green, W.6, 603 4938.

Rev. S. FORSCHER, 70, Brook Green, W.6 603 8565.