

Two Evenings In

YOU open your morning paper and you notice a special column headed "Going on in New York," and you turn to it with amusement and interest, for everything seems to be going on here. However, you scan the column and your eyes alight on this heading "Free Palestine League to hold Exodus 1947 Rally" and you become interested for you have heard of this league and Ben Hecht and you know you must learn all you can while you can, so you go off to Carnegie Hall and reserve a seat. The night arrives and you see hundreds of Jews, quite a number of Negro men and women and you recognise a sprinkling of non-Jews and so you gather that all are interested in what is to follow. You pay quite handsomely for your ticket and are presented with a pair of binoculars for the hire of which you pay two dollars. You are also handed a paper called "The Answer," an American weekly dedicated to the Struggle for Hebrew National Liberation and the Independence of Palestine. Carnegie Hall is fairly well packed and the people round you look no different to those one sees in the Coronation Hall in Johannesburg or those in the Zionist Hall, Cape Town. The crowd is quiet and orderly.

Presently Mr. O'Dwyer, the Mayor of New York, appears on the stage and announces the programme. Mr. Guy Gillette (a non-Jew) will address the gathering, a film on Palestine depicting the British soldiers and the terrorists will be shown, and the narrator is Quentin Reynolds, the journalist. Mr. O'Dwyer apologises for the absence of Ruth Chatterton, who

was going to recite but could not come owing to an attack of pneumonia. She sent a message which the Mayor read and Miss Stella Adler, also a well-known personality, deputises for her. Then they stage a play, "The Terrorist," by Ben Hecht.

The programme begins with the film, "Last Night We Attacked," a documentary film of the Hebrew underground. The Hon. Guy M. Gillette speaks on "Palestine and the United Nations." He does not

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condone terrorism but he is not against their actions. The film shows Jewish suffering in the German concentration camps, the barbed wire fences in detention camps in Cyprus and Palestine, and Mr. Gillette enlarges on this. Of course, your heart is sore; of course, you know it is all true, but . . . you just sit and wonder whether this feeling of stirring up hate is going to achieve anything and with the United Nations sitting a few miles away you just wonder and keep your thoughts to yourself.

PROPAGANDIST PLAY

Then the play. Powerful, yes. It is a short play centred round the execution of Dov Bela Gruner. It opens with two dead men talking to each other, one the spirit of Yehuda Halevy, the other Tevya, just a simple Jew who meets Yehuda Halevy in the other world. The dialogue is on the Jewish people, why should they die, why should they die. Then there is a prison cell with Gruner lying on his bunk. Enter a Scotch sergeant and two British sergeants and an English major. They do not treat Dov Gruner too well and he is not allowed a Rabbi. Then there is the execution block and Dov is seen mounting the steps slowly with the British sergeants behind him. Below stand the spirits of Yehuda Halevy and on the other side of the stage the figures of dead persecuted Jews and they go on revealing the tragic history of Jewish persecution throughout the ages until they all shout that here is someone who has at last shouted to the world about our suffering, someone who has had the courage to fight for our rights. Is one upset? Yes, because it is the truth. But . . . one realises this play has made a martyr of Dov Bela Gruner and one wonders whether he would have wished this and one feels that he is not the only Jewish martyr and that one has not the right to make a martyr of this young boy for one's political purposes, and one is stirred and one is revolted and one's feelings are mixed but one must keep a level head, there is too much at

stake and again one looks round the hall and people applaud and feelings seem to run high . . . then the curtain goes down and Mr. O'Dwyer is again on the stage and this time he asks for funds to send the boats with our people to Palestine and you see people leave the hall, some quietly, others

New York

quickly and presently he says who will give the first 100 dollars, and soon the money comes in and then you leave the hall yourself and you don't feel happy, because hate has been stirred up and you don't like hate and you say to yourself "where is all this leading to?"

PALESTINIAN FOLK SYMPHONY

The following evening you go to the City Centre of Music and Drama to see Leonard Bernstein, the brilliant young music director, conduct the New York City Symphony Orchestra. The programme is dedicated to the resurrection of Palestine, and Symphonia Amarith, a Palestinian folk symphony by the Palestinian musician, Manuel Mahler-Kalkstein, is the first on the programme. This was the first time this symphony was performed in America; it is lovely and you realise with pleasure you are listening to Palestinian folk music. You watch Leonard Bernstein. He does not use a baton—music is in every movement of his hands, his fingers and his body as he calls the orchestra to do his bidding. He is brilliant and critics predict a great future for this young genius. Before the second half of the programme Leonard Bernstein told us that this evening dedicated to a great cause was also suitably dedicated in the second half to La Guardia, the man who did so much for humanity, this man who devoted a life time to love, kindness and generosity and who worked for all irrespective of race or religion, who was buried that afternoon. Then you sit spellbound and listen to Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 2 in C Minor (the "Resurrection") with the chorus of 80 men and women and the soloists, Elizabeth Davis (Negress), soprano, and fair-skinned, red-headed Nan Meriman, mezzo soprano, and you are carried away to the heights of beauty and wonder and enjoyment. The symphony is over—and the applause is terrific and Leonard Bernstein has to appear many times to receive this overwhelming ovation which he has so richly earned. A dedication to the resurrection of Palestine—how much happier you feel, sad, yes, of course, but happier.

Two nights . . . but contrasts. Lionel Bowman Meets Mae West

LIONEL BOWMAN, the gifted Cape Town pianist, who is at present in England, has been studying and appearing at concerts in many cities there. He has also been heard in B.B.C. programmes.

The "Cape Argus" recently featured a photograph of Mr. Bowman together with Mae West, taken at a party which they both attended. Apparently Miss West urged Mr. Bowman to visit Holly-



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widespread honours upon him that Polish historians are at a loss to explain them. There was Rabbi Mordechai Jaffe, who was born in Prague in 1530 and died as the Rabbi of Posen in 1612. He was codifier of all rabbinical law and one of the most powerful Jewish spiritual leaders. The history of the Jews of Poland, Russia, Bohemia, Germany, Italy, Great Britain and the United States is bespangled with great and shining personalities who were members of this distinguished family.

In our own days we have seen a German Jew, Sir Otto Jaffe, become Lord Mayor of the largest city of Ireland. He was the Chief Executive of Belfast twice.

When Russia first emerged into the world's diplomatic arena after the Revolution of 1917, it was another member of the family, Adolf Joffe, who led the peace delegation of Brest Litovsk. Joffe also signed for Russia the peace treaty concluded with Poland in Riga in 1920.