

New Settlement in Galilee.

Jerusalem.

A new Jewish settlement has been established east of Biryā, in Upper Galilee. Several armoured cars with a handful of settlers arrived at a marked spot at dawn accompanied by several truckloads of prefabricated huts and building materials. The armoured cars and trucks formed a circle around the place and the settlers started erecting a defence wall consisting of two layers of wooden planks filled with sand to prevent bullets from penetrating. A ready-made watch-tower was erected and a sentinel immediately went on duty on its top. Guards occupied their posts while the remaining settlers continued erecting huts.

The settlement was established in the record time of two hours, after which the trucks and armoured cars left leaving the settlers to work and defend themselves.—J.T.A.

French Arms Deliveries to Syria and Lebanon Continue.

Paris.

The French Government is in favour of establishing an international police force for Jerusalem as it considers such a measure to be the only means of keeping law and order in the Holy City and preventing a further deterioration of the situation after the termination of the Mandate, a Quai d'Orsay spokesman told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency here. He added that the French, American and British delegations at Lake Success had agreed to such a scheme in principle a few weeks ago but no agreement could be reached on its actual implementation.

Denying reports published abroad that the French Government has stopped all arms deliveries to the Middle East, the spokesman said that although France would not send any arms to Palestine as long as the situation there remains confused, this did not imply a general embargo on arms exports. The present attitude of the Government in this matter would not affect the carrying out of contracts for arms deliveries to the Lebanon no matter whether such contracts are of a public or private nature.

Three French destroyers sent out to intercept a Jewish boat recently seen at Alon Creek, near Toulon, were unable to carry out their task and returned to Toulon port. Following the discovery of crates with empty oil cans at the Creek, an enquiry was held at Alon. Eye-witnesses stated that they had seen several trucks proceeding to Alon on 16th April. It was believed that the ship was engaged in arms traffic but it could not be established whether arms had been landed in France or taken aboard. The possibility of the ship being used for transporting illegal immigrants was not ruled out.—J.T.A.

Negro Singer Visits Jerusalem.

Jerusalem.

On the eve of leaving Palestine after a concert tour the Negro singer, Mayme Richardson, said that she could not return to the United States without seeing Jerusalem. Braving the icy rain, a packed audience turned up to hear her sing popular ballads, Creole songs and Negro spirituals, including "O, What a Beautiful City"—a tribute to Jerusalem.

On a Kvutza To-day.

.. By ..

BATHSHEVA.

A bell strikes. The darkness begins to clear quickly and brisk steps gather company as more beds groan and tumble out the bakers, the cooks, the field workers and dairy workers, the truck drivers, the welders, the carpenters, the children's nurses, the wagon drivers and all the other lively "levers" who go to make up a complete day in a complete meshek.

I have been "night-watchman," and so I see it all. The children in our kvutza used to be freely left alone for hours while their families went to supper, to their meetings or lectures or whatever the course of their evening, but now they need attention and all kinds of very unbecoming protective arrangements, and I am their present "night-watchman." I am far from the only watchman at night. There are real ones besides me. We have always had a set number, and then an extra guard or so for our banana plantations a little distance away, or a prowling one to keep an eye on the whole meshek generally and its very vast fields. It was a friendly though watchful business before. But now it is something different.

There was a shot at night—only a little louder than the usual ones we hear now at any time of the day or night—and Ella, gun perched upwards on her back, came sauntering in from the dark into the big, lighted, communal kitchen, where eggs were sizzling and the "night breakfast," the highlight of any of our watchmen's lonely night, was warmingly in progress. It is cold here now. Winter tarried in coming to us; now it does not want to leave us. Quiet in the meshek and dark, and everyone that was not on duty asleep. For every guard in the kitchen then a gun rested—on the table, next to the eggs, anywhere, and someone had replaced him at his post for a bit. If only we had the bullets that "they" had, or the help necessary to get them. There was a guard at one post, a guard near him and then another guard. A guard, now, at the telephone at night, extra guards in the fields, and guards everywhere. And each guard means a person less for work the next day, that amount less of work, and the need for someone to fill it.

NOT OUR ONLY TROUBLES.

These are not our only troubles. Boys are away—many—and from a very young age. Husbands are away—all needed in other things in all the country. And still there is all our usual work to be done. Our drivers no longer can whistle off, loaded with goods, for a trip to Tel Aviv and back the next day. To be frank, who knows if they will come back as well as they left? To travel the roads of Eretz Israel to-day can mean anything. Maybe you will get there without incident. Maybe you will land on a mine devilishly laid or be attacked from afar by bullets or attacked at close quarters by an organised band—now, with the influx of coaxed foreigners, possibly of many hundreds, and now even thousands. But our people need products all over the country, to the north and to the south, and every day is a pang to see one of our boys drive off and an excitement and sob of relief in the big dining-hall, with all the community gathered around him to hear how he got back when he comes back, with his mother quietly waiting in her room. Many, many are the times he nearly did not get back. Only now one of our trucks in a big convoy to Jerusalem was attacked by 3,000 Arabs was burned out and had to be abandoned, but our driver escaped and is safe. Most times he does not only escape—he gets there and back, loaded to every corner with everything possible he

can take, nor will he wait one day between trips to rest. Our trucks are no ordinary trucks now. No one would dream of going or sending anyone in a glass-windowed pretty affair. Armour is the vogue now: armoured cabins for the drivers, buses armoured altogether, thick, grey, bullet-proof walls in the meshek, armour around things, everything armoured. We need our hands filled with a lot more; we need it very much. Vehicles usually go in long, winding convoys now. What building we could do with all the energy that has to be put into these things.

But "they" who attack us have no restful night's sleep for what they have done—if they arrive safely to sleep at all—for our people have straight eyes and heart, and there is a meaning to what they do and have to do. They are prepared for them and are being more and more prepared—for anything that comes. By now nothing that comes would surprise us. We are sure that "they" do not make, or obtain, or even have to bother about, their arms themselves. They themselves are merely the bullets aimed our way for other people's oil or strategy, or whatever it may be. We are sure that if our peace could be built just within Eretz Israel, we would have peace and happiness, and so would the others with us.

SHOTS IN THE NIGHT.

I was sitting in the children's kitchen ironing all night—that, too, filled a space in the work of the next day—and could hear all the quiet and often lack of it. Shots go out often: often we never learn the exact reason, often we know it more than enough as it comes our way—by bullet or by injured person from the road for refuge. We have an Arab village close by. And often we are the ones who have shot, because it was necessary. Jacob, our smiling, gaunt meshek night-watchman, clattered backwards and forwards, new beret proudly but anything but elegantly placed, now to put the light on to wake the chickens so that they would lay earlier, now to relieve a guard so that he could go and have something to eat, and after each two hours to go and wake up somebody whose two-hour turn it was to take duty at guard somewhere. And yesterday to burgle the big, urgently-needed-for-to-morrow refrigerator, as he had locked the key inside. Every member has his turn at guard at night now, and goes to work as usual at dawn the next day. Men, women, everyone. Everyone with his gun, and everyone very cold and very tired, but determined not to show it.

No news comes anywhere sooner than it does to our meshek. It starts in a whisper that "someone has heard," and is more than surely verified by the radio or by some more direct news shortly after—and not very pleasant news. Most times horrible news. Hearts are horrified, shocked and sore at these short months that have become so long.

There was a bonfire in our courtyard on the night that partition was declared. The bells had rung well after midnight, and people had rushed out of bed, shouting with joy, and danced in the dining-hall till it was crowded and dusty to choking—and until it sang. They knew it would be difficult, but they never dreamed it would be made so difficult.


ALL DOING THEIR SHARE.

You do not hear of anyone in Eretz Israel who is not doing every single thing he possibly can at the present time. Our schoolchildren have left school some months earlier than their final studies and begun full-time work

on the meshek. Our children's nurses find a way to save some hours and help in the kitchen now, and people who have no right to do strenuous work all insist on doing their share somewhere, and many, many are the unfamiliar faces in all sorts of branches.

We had a Youth Group from Europe, supposed to be here two years for agricultural and kvutza training. A year has passed, and they have been taken away to build up a new yishuv right from its beginnings—to build and to build, especially now. We have a new group—went through all of Bergen-Belsen, got here somehow, sent to Cyprus, and now back here. We have had to clothe them, to build them up in health and to teach them how to work. But they work—with a will and with all their heart. We have new little children from orphanages in Europe created by war—little things in pigtailed, chattering like wise little old people in their only familiar tongue, strange to us and to themselves and everyone. They study a great part of the day, and for sure will speak Hebrew in a few weeks, as others before them have done. They work, too. Each day our dining-hall holds some of them—placing dishes, drying things, sweeping, little feet all pattering to help, also over the fields and all the meshek workings. Any day after school or on Shabbat sees little hands and feet tidying here and working there with spades, with baskets, or just by themselves, trying to bring back to order all the ground and weeds muddled by the rains, in usual times the course of a day's work for a few people. This Shabbat was a big list of names of people of the meshek. Trenches had to be built.

Fuel is much shorter, food is much scarcer, and people have stopped thinking about many little things that they used to mention. Eggs in Tel Aviv are likened to gold. We have eggs, but we do not have some other things, nor do we even think about it. People go determinedly to their work and are even much prompter than usual, and our crops greet us golden and flourishing, with all the certainty that this will be.



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