

JERUSALEM DIARY

By David Dainow

A Singer

SOME fifteen years ago I spent a few days in Berlin whilst holidaying in Europe. My particular acquaintances were men and women who deeply enjoyed the opportunities of hearing great music. Three State opera houses were being crowded nightly in the capital and some of the world's greatest artists were to be heard on the concert platform.

Among those who were spoken of with great admiration was Herman Jadlowker, even then already past his prime as a gifted singer. Originally trained in *Chazanuth*, Jadlowker made a name for himself as an opera singer. When owing to advancing years, that career seemed to close for him, he returned to the synagogue. At the time I was in Berlin, he occupied the position of Cantor at a prominent house of worship. His rendition of the sacred liturgy was a religious-musical experience which inspired thousands of worshippers on Sabbaths and Jewish Holy Days.

The other evening, in the aesthetic surroundings of the Art Museum of Tel Aviv, I was a member of a large audience which came to hear Herman Jadlowker give a recital of Schubert and Brahms songs.

"In Hebrew"

THE aged singer held his audience throughout, not only by a charm of personality and splendid intonation, but by the superb control and nuance of his still vigorous voice. Although at his advanced age, the freshness of his singing is missing, he still affords rare delight by his masterly interpretations of the joint moods of the poets and composers he interprets.

Most of the members of the audience were from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and surrounding countries. There were sprinklings of folk from Poland, Rumania and Galicia, and a portion of the audience was Palestinian born. All enjoyed the programme equally, for these Schubert and Brahms songs had been rendered by Jadlowker in charming Hebrew translations. His intonation was a delight to those who have an ear for the beauty of the national tongue.

The next morning, as I came away from a sea-bathe to my hotel room, I heard young voices in practice

going through the usual musical scales. I looked up at the house and noticed the name of "Herman Jadlowker" on the painted sign-board. Later on in the day, some friends told me that the grand old singer of world fame was now eking out a bare existence by giving singing lessons to young folk.

A Star

IT was perhaps a coincidence that after contemplating upon the fate of an old opera giant, who had to teach singing for a bare livelihood, I was invited a few evenings later to meet a new star now rising upon the musical horizon. It was in the spacious home of a Jewish member of the French community in Jerusalem that I found myself among a specially invited group of guests listening to some wonderful piano playing.

Just over a year ago, there arrived in Palestine, with a group of refugees from Bulgaria, a lad of thirteen and his mother. In the temporary quarters they occupied in Jerusalem, the lad was heard to improvise on the piano. Listeners who became intrigued at the music the boy was playing, learned they were his own compositions. A private recital was arranged at the house of a well-known lover of music. It did not take those present very long to realise that in young Sigi Weissenberg from Sofia a rare musical "find" had been discovered.

Two Rubies

FRIENDLY hands began arranging the boy's immediate mode of life. A piano was placed at his disposal by a kindly patron. An even more kindly patron gave Sigi and his mother the opportunity of living in an artistically arranged home. A period of rest and study had been mapped out for him and now the young genius, after a year in which he has learned to speak Hebrew, was ripe enough to give a recital to a representative audience.

Sigi Weissenberg, at the age of fifteen, is a mature virtuoso and composer. His technique is superb, and his piano tone one of rare beauty. I predict a brilliant future for him when he starts a year or two hence on a career on the concert platform.

I talked with Sigi Weissenberg later on in the evening and noticed the simplicity and charm of his boy-

ish character. I could not help feeling that but for the fluke of circumstance, he might have been ground under with thousands of other children by the Nazi heel. It was an accident of an "underground" representative of the Jewish Agency over-hearing him improvise on the piano in a room in Sofia that caused Sigi and his mother to receive that which is more precious than rubies—two certificates for Eretz Israel.

An Incident

IT is but natural that the emigres from all countries, who have in the last decade or so entered Eretz Israel, should desire, as they settle down, to mix with folk from their own lands. This does not mean that the new arrivals are not gradually absorbing the life of the Yishuv and becoming Hebrew-conscious and Hebrew-speaking.

I had an interesting experience recently. As is well-known, the Aliyah Chadasha is made up chiefly of immigrants from Germany and Austria. They are often accused of being rather Germanish in their attitude and point-of-view. And so some time ago another group of Jews from these countries established an opposition organisation to the Aliyah Chadasha.

At the recent election for the Assefat Hanivcharim there was much electioneering. Among the meetings I attended was one organised by this opposition group. All the speeches that evening were made in German to explain the heinousness of the Germanish tendencies of the Aliyah Chadasha.

The next evening, I betook myself to an election meeting of that political party, where replies were being given to the accusations made by their opponents. It was intriguing to observe that all the speeches were delivered in robust and colloquial Hebrew.

From Italy

I LIKE occasionally—when I am not intruding—to mix with the various "land" groups here. There is, for instance, a group of Jews from Italy, who come together occasionally in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. There is not a large number of them and acquiring Hebrew is a difficult process. I do not think, however, that any of them will ever return to Italy. They are a proud type of Jew, who will never forget the sting of the insult perpetrated upon them by Fascist Italy. One couple among them I know have each records of Jewish family ancestry in Italy going back in four hundred years. But their lovely young children babble in Hebrew and are beginning to correct their parents' attempts at speech in that language.

A Surprise

THESE Italian Jews see about them here a living, vital self-respecting Jewry and they are impressed. It has all been an eye-opener to members of a community which never dreamt it would ever be necessary for them to think of Italy otherwise than their home for centuries to come. The rude awakening has shocked them into a consciousness of being members of a

greater and more ancient race. This new discovery has given to the Italian-Jew in Eretz Israel a reason for living and an aim for striving.

When the publication of Immanuel Olsvanger's excellent translation of Dante's "Divine Comedy" took place recently, a group of Italian Jews in Jerusalem celebrated the event publicly. It was pleasant to hear a young Jew of definite Italian appearance, declaiming in perfect intonation some excerpts from the Hebrew translation.

Policemen

LIKE many others, I have become a devotee of the performance of the Palestine Orchestra. The other night in Tel Aviv the hall was crowded. It was a hot evening. The members of the orchestra, in their shirt-sleeve attire they are permitted to play in on such occasions, were tuning up their instruments. The conductor was about to appear and the performance begin, when I noticed three uniformed Jewish policemen walk into the hall. At first I thought they had come on police duty.

It appears, however, that having finished their day's work, they had come like other members of the public to listen to a highly classical programme of music. They took their seats in the middle of the hall and stayed throughout the performance showing their appreciation by their keen applause.

As I left the hall with some friends I asked them whether in London or New York one could see three uniformed "Bobbies" or "Patrolmen" spend a quiet evening listening to performance of classical music by symphony orchestra? They had to quite see it that way, for they are used to seeing working men of all types enjoy the cultural amenities of the Yishuv with the rest of the population.

Sad Indeed . . . !

THE recent elections for the Assefat Hanivcharim aroused in a manner of recrimination between various political parties and groups. A sense of humour, however, was lacking—humour of a bitter kind, the following anecdote concerning Aliyah Chadasha (the party led by German Jews) will show:

The war is over. Goebbels and Hitler are thrown out of Germany and no other country will admit them. They finally come to Palestine. They only speak German, they are sent to the offices of the Aliyah Chadasha. On reaching the place, however, they find it is closed, and this notice stuck on the door:—"Go to Berlin."

Parkview, Greenside and District Hebrew Congregation

A successful function in aid of the Building Fund of the Parkview, Greenside Districts Hebrew Congregation was held Northcliff on March 21, thanks largely to the untiring efforts of the Ladies' Committee.

Excellent progress is being made in connection with the Foundation Member Drive. The congregation is building strong financial resources in order to be able to proceed immediately with its building programme as soon as a building becomes available.

Dinner in Eastern Europe.

A crust of bread, some weak soup, a bone. That is the chief meal of the day.

What—no more?

No—not in the devastated parts of Eastern and Southern Europe, where the South African Jewish War Appeal is bringing help. Men and women and children must LIVE on allowances like this, sometimes on even less. Often they are ill, too.

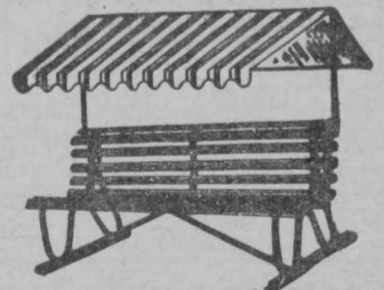
YOU—Mr. South African Jew—can help to improve those rations.

How? You know the answer.

WHEN YOU SIT DOWN TO A MEAL
THINK OF THE JEWISH WAR APPEAL.



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Phone 33-2010 P.O. Box 754
188, Bree Street, JOHANNESBURG