

OUR PALESTINE LETTER.

(BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT).

University Graduation Ceremony.

The Annual University Graduation Ceremony which took place to-day was an exceedingly impressive occasion. A very large gathering filled the National Library Hall to witness the ceremony and to do honour to the seventeen students of the Faculty of Humanities who received their M.A. degrees. A well-trained orchestra struck up the British National Anthem as the High Commissioner, the Chancellor, Dr. J. L. Magnes, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of the Board of Governors, Dr. Shmarya Levin, Mr. M. Ussishkin and other Palestine notabilities entered the Hall and took their seats on the platform, and after a small choir had given a suitable rendering to the accompaniment of the orchestra, Dr. Magnes rose to deliver his Graduation address. Prof. Klein, the Dean of the University, then called out the names of the seventeen students, each of whom in his turn mounted the platform, received his certificate from the Chancellor, shook hands with him, the High Commissioner and Dr. Weizmann, and returned to his seat amid loud applause. Perfect silence reigned as the High Commissioner delivered his address (which was afterwards translated into Hebrew). He was followed by Dr. Weizmann who received an enthusiastic ovation (it was his first appearance at a public function of the University since the opening) and who in a short address congratulated the successful students. The ceremony concluded with the playing of the Hatikvah by the orchestra.

The whole function was marked by dignity and simplicity. It had nothing of the meretriciousness of a South African Graduation ceremony—there were no colourful academic gowns and hoods to brighten the scene, no formal ceremony of kneeling and capping, no College songs and war cries. Yet for all that it had a character and impressiveness of its own. The sight of those seventeen students, simply clad, of all ages, receiving their degrees, the quiet dignity of the speeches, the orderliness of the whole affair, the Chancellor's closing words impressively uttered, "*Tchi Ha-Universieta Ha-ivrit*," all helped to make the occasion as effective as any Graduation Ceremony in South Africa and one of which any Jew might well be proud.

Two generations of students were among those receiving their degrees. There were young students of twenty-one and twenty-three years old and men aged forty-two and thirty-nine. Among the graduands were two German Jews, both of whom had been at the University only since the middle of 1933. One of them, aged twenty-three, was compelled to leave Berlin University on the eve of his graduation but he received special permission to sit for his examination in Jerusalem after one year's study. He passed his examinations brilliantly. The other German student was formerly at Koenigsberg University and has been supporting himself in Palestine by means of teaching. This, however, is by no means uncommon among the students. Many of them have suffered great hardship in pursuing their studies and have worked as unskilled labourers, etc., in order to enable them to attend the University.

Recent developments at the University include the appointment of two newcomers

who have arrived from Germany. They are Dr. G. Wolfsohn, senior assistant in Experimental Physics, and Dr. H. J. Polotzky, instructor in Egyptology. There are now twelve German-Jewish scholars on the University Staff.

Municipal Agitation.

Excitement prevails in Palestine as a result of a crisis which has been reached in the Jerusalem Municipal Council. The beginning of the crisis dates back some three months when the Jerusalem Municipal elections took place and when Ragheb Bey Nashashibi, the Mayor of Jerusalem, was heavily defeated by his opponent, Dr. Khaldi. On the grounds that the voters for Dr. Khaldi were not all members of his municipal division, Ragheb Bey contested the elections, the meanwhile remaining in office, and during the last few weeks considerable interest has been evinced throughout Palestine in the Court proceedings. Last week an interim judgment was given, the upshot of which was to rule out most of the objections of Ragheb Bey but granting him a period within which to prove that the majority of voters in Dr. Khaldi's division were wrongly entered in the register of voters in that division.

Now a new turn of events has taken place in the resignation of three Arab members of the retiring Municipal Council, in disgust against what they consider the irregularities of Ragheb Bey Nashashibi's Council which persists in office three months after its defeat at the polls. In a strong indictment against the unwanted Municipal Council, which is contained in a letter to the Mayor and copies of which have been sent to the High Commissioner and the District Commissioner, the three Councillors have made it clear that they can no longer bear any part of the responsibility for what they allege to be the irregularities practised by a body headed by a Mayor who was defeated at the polls. These irregularities practised, for instance, they allege, are the giving of wrong information concerning public works let out on contract, the causing of great loss of tax-payers' money, the creation of new appointments without the authority of the Council's majority.

Curiosity as to what is to happen next is everywhere evident; curiosity as to what steps will be taken by the Government, to whom the Municipality is responsible. At present there is no quorum in the Council and meetings, therefore, cannot be held. It is expected that the Government will announce the expiration of the Council, and early in the New Year appoint the Town Clerk to carry on alone, if the alternative suggestion of allowing the indisputably newly-elected members to function, is not adopted.

As far as the Jews are concerned, their attitude on the whole has been one of neutrality. Apart from one glaring instance, when Ragheb Bey Nashashibi last year gave every indication of his being in sympathy with the Arab demonstrators against the Government and was a member of a deputation that waited on the High Commissioner, urging a curtailment of Jewish immigration and a general restriction of Jewish endeavour, they have not as Jews had reason to complain of his attitude towards them on general political grounds. He never,

with the exception of the instance quoted above and other minor incidents, took an active part in the campaign against the Jewish National Home which was energetically prosecuted by all Arab authorities and particularly by the Arab Executive and the Mufti party. In regard to Dr. Khaldi, his relations with the Mufti are unknown but suspected of being sympathetic.

Royalty Visits Palestine.

Palestine is now being visited by royalty and though the gala atmosphere with which such visits in South Africa are generally associated is absent, public interest is no less keen.

The visitors are the Crown Prince Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, the Crown Princess, Princess Ingrid and Prince Bertil. Their stay in Palestine is a very short one—about two weeks in all—but arrangements have been made for them during that period to see the country from every angle.

While in Jerusalem a visit was paid by the Royal party to the Hebrew University. They visited the Library, the open-air theatre, the geological collection and the museum of Biblical Botany and displayed deep interest in the University. At Tel-Aviv they were received by the Mayor, Mr. Dizengoff, and were given an enthusiastic greeting by the crowds in the streets. Bus lines in the vicinity flew Swedish, British and Zionist colours and all balconies and windows were crowded with eager spectators.

The party visited a number of institutions, groves and factories in Tel-Aviv and at all of them the Prince showed great interest in the work being done. At a luncheon party given by the Swedish Consul and Mrs. Tolkowsky in Tel-Aviv, H.R.H. requested Mr. Dizengoff to express to the Jewish community his high admiration for the enterprising and hard-working spirit which was so manifest to him in the course of his visit.

A visit of particular interest was that to the Jewish Agency Agricultural Experimental Station and the Daniel Sieff Research Institute at Rehovoth. Here the party was met by Dr. Weizmann and Dr. Volcan, who explained the objects of the Institutes and the results hitherto attained.

A special performance by the "Habimah" in honour of the Royal guests was given in Jerusalem. The play—"The Eternal Jew"—was selected by the High Commissioner. The hall was crowded and a festival atmosphere prevailed. Prominently displayed were the Swedish, British and Zionist colours, and as the Royal party entered, the orchestra struck up the Swedish National Anthem. This was immediately followed by "God Save the King," and the Hatikvah. The Prince subsequently expressed himself as deeply impressed by the performance.

The Railway Junction.

The transfer of the main Palestine railway junction from Lydda to the Jaffa-Tel-Aviv area has been under discussion for some years now and has been urged upon the Government from many quarters. Both from the point of view of its position and its importance in the industrial life of Palestine to-day it has fast become apparent that Tel-Aviv is decidedly more suitable as the site of the chief railway junction than Lydda.



“Chronicle” Seaside Camp Closed.

A GREAT SUCCESS.

It is of interest, therefore, to learn that the financial and economic considerations in favour of creating the junction at Tel-Aviv, are to be studied shortly by a British expert, Sir Felix Pole, who is due to arrive in Palestine some time in January. His visit is to be followed by an additional two experts who will advise the authorities on the financial and technical aspects of general railways administration.

It is believed that the decision of the Palestine Government to proceed with the study of the proposal has been prompted by a recommendation in the interim report submitted by the Rail and Road Transport Committee appointed some months ago to advise on a co-ordination of both systems of communications.

Reception to Mr. Morris Kentridge, M.P.

Mr. M. Kentridge, M.P., was the guest of honour at a reception given him this week in the Keren Hayesod Board Room by the Jewish Agency, the Keren Hayesod and the Keren Kayemeth. Many distinguished leaders of Palestine Jewry, including Mr. M. Ussischkin, Dr. Schmarya Levin, Mr. M. Shertok and Mr. L. Jaffe were present whilst among the guests was to be seen a large number of South Africans.

Mr. Leib Jaffe presided. He spoke appreciatively of Mr. Kentridge's activities in South African Zionism and of the excellent quality of South African Jewry generally. Palestine, he said, eagerly looked forward to the large influx of South African tourists who were expected during the coming spring.

Dr. Schmarya Levin referred to himself as one of South African Jewry's first teachers. He had learnt, he said, a great deal from his pupils. He paid tribute to Mr. Kentridge, who, unlike many other Jews in public life, did not dissociate himself from his people but was of and with them.

Mr. Kentridge, in responding, said he regarded this function as an honour both to the S.A. Zionist Federation and South African Jewry generally. He was pleased to see around him so many South Africans—they were proof of the fact that South Africa was helping in the upbuilding of Palestine not only financially but by the sending of human material as well.

Referring to the previous speakers, Mr. Kentridge drew attention to the fact that they had been the first and the last visitors to South Africa on behalf of the Keren Hayesod. Now another campaign was shortly to be held on behalf of the J.N.F. and he was sure S.A. Jewry would do their utmost to ensure its success. But he would like his audience to realise the difficulties which beset this little community—particularly the difficulty involved in its distance from Palestine itself and the scene of the actual upbuilding. At that distance S.A. Jewry often lacked inspiration and became depressed. During the last eighteen months particularly the friction in Zionist ranks had had a depressing effect upon them. In this connection Mr. Kentridge made an urgent plea for a united political front. He congratulated the Executive on their recent achievements in this direction but hoped that they would be followed by others.

Mr. Kentridge spent some two weeks in Palestine and visited various parts of the country. During the course of his stay he was the guest of the High Commissioner at lunch.

The 1934 “Chronicle” Seaside Camp has come to a close. On Sunday morning the happy family in the Strand Park broke up with many regrets and the children returned home looking very much better and brighter for their fortnight's holiday. The camp has been a great success from every point of view and the Committee takes this opportunity of expressing its deepest thanks to all who contributed to the Seaside Fund and also to the large body of men and women who assisted in the running of the camp. Without them the 1934 “Chronicle” Seaside Camp would have been an impossibility.

Spécial thanks are due to the following firms and individuals who supplied conveyances for taking luggage and camp equipment to and from the Strand: Mr. M. Rosen, Messrs. S.A. Cabinet Works, Globe Furnishing Co., Sam Newman Ltd., J. Zucker- man & Co., Ltd., M. Harris & Son., Ltd., National Furnishing Co., Heneck Sacks & Co., E. Sacks, Futeran & Co., Mr. I. Cohen.

The following is a list of assistants who rendered very valuable services: Judith Berkovitz, Annie Harris, Nancy Jacobs, Zeld

Jacobs, Sylvia Lipshitz, Sadie Lipshitz, Fanny Friedgood, Charlotte Surovsky, Molly Kupowitz, Millie Block, Miriam Joffe, Paulo Katz, Ethel Epstein, Sylvia Revenson, Harry Jacobs, Meyer Koseva, Alec Gordon, Jack Braude, Joseph Opland, Monty Cohen, A. Rossman, A. Marcus, Roy Jaffe, L. Fagan, Claude Reitstein, Benny Fortes, Gershon Gitlin, C. Levy, M. D. Yeller, W. Kodesh, H. Levenson.

This Week's List.

	£	s.	d.
Previously acknowledged	309	15	0
Mrs. M. Setzen, Muizenberg			
Collected	2	10	6
Mr. J. Lehrman, Muizenberg	0	5	0
	£312	10	6

Gifts in Kind.

Mrs. Friedman (Strand).—Sweets.
Mr. and Mrs. E. Honikman.—Fruit.

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