

## Glimpses of ERETZ ISRAEL

*Special Palestine Correspondence to the "Zionist Record."*

By HARRY LEVIN

Jerusalem, October 26th.

Avinoam Yellin.

THE death of the comparatively unknown Jewish labourer at the Dead Sea, of the two British consulates, and other victims of the recent recrudescence of Arab terrorism is not less tragic than the murder by an unknown Arab hand of Avinoam Yellin. But the bitterness is infinitely greater. For Avinoam Yellin, 37 years of age when he died, was the best-loved of men, of whom it could be said that he had no enemy in the world, a scholar of distinction who devoted his life only to learning and passing on to others and who kept himself aloof from political life. His great-hearted, cheerful and tranquil nature won him friends wherever he went, in Palestine among Jews, Arabs and British alike. For some months I lived in his house while he was abroad, and I was astonished at the variety of his interests who called, unaware that he was away. Simple village sheikhs would enquire with their hands on their hearts for "Hawajja Abinum," and have disappointed that he was not here. Christian scholars, poor students of the Hebrew University, Arab professional men, artists, archaeologists, scholars of Palestine from abroad, even the porters would enquire when he was due to return. These were the types of men who knew and loved him.

He should have been chosen as the assassin's shots is not only a tragedy; it is an irredeemable loss, which the Yishuv will not forget. The murder of Avinoam Yellin, the Administration of the country and a greatly-valued and loyal citizen towards whom it failed in its primary duty of affording protection. The Yishuv has lost a rare scholar. Those of us who were privileged to know him intimately have lost a precious friend. The Arabs themselves—a sinister force—have lost one who devoted his life primarily to Arab and Jewish learning.

terrorism. It could not be expected that after 18 months of rampant Arab terrorism, the Government could stamp it out. Since the beginning of the month it has taken various measures, but terrorism still exists in the Arab villages of the West Bank where terrorism has been rampant, troops and police have made hundreds of arrests, imposed heavy collective fines, denounced a moral, more than a political measure—and established police posts at the cost of

the villagers. All this has had definite effect; so, too, has the announcement that Sir Charles Tegart, the famous suppressor of terrorism in Bengal, is about to visit Palestine as advisor to the police. But the question that everyone is asking is: will the Government persist in the path that it has at last decided to follow until the evil has been uprooted completely, or will it suddenly weaken and collapse as it has done so often in the past? The Officer Administering the Government in Sir Arthur Wauchop's absence, Mr. Battershill, is understood to have declared that it will. That many Jews and moderate Arabs, fear that it will not is but the natural outcome of the bitter experience of the country since April, 1936.

### *The Flight of Haj Amin.*

THAT voices have been raised to criticise the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin el Husseini, for his escape from Jerusalem, occasions no surprise, for his enemies are numerous, and his critics, now that he has gone, even more numerous. But even among the rank and file of his followers there are many who feel that the "Great Man," as the extremist Arab press calls him, has not distinguished himself in this flight. He should have remained in the Mosque area and guarded his dignity—a precious possession among Arabs—and continued to fight his battle from within, they declare.

Nor was the manner of his escape illustrious. He slipped out of the Mosque dressed and veiled as a woman. Later he changed into the clothes of a Beduin, for to be found in women's clothes is a shame among Arab men that takes long to live down. Near the bay of Acre he boarded a motor boat that was awaiting him, and sailed away to the north. The plan had been that he should be met by friends in another boat off Saidon (the ancient Sidon of Phoenicia) on the Lebanese coast, but misfortune befell him in that the Lebanese coastguards were expecting another motor-boat to come up the coast carrying contraband hashish from Egypt. Sighting Haj Amin's vessel and believing it to be the smugglers, a cutter gave chase, but instead of hashish, the coastguards found a quiet-spoken man, apparently a Beduin, giving a name which they had never heard. But searching the boat, they found a revolver licence in the name of Haj Amin el Husseini, whereupon His ex-Eminence admitted his identity.

Although not under arrest—there being no legal grounds upon which the Lebanese can apprehend him—Haj Amin is under strict surveillance. Nor can he depart for abroad except for certain specified countries, including France, which he has no desire to visit. The Egyptian Government, acting on the request of the British Government, has refused him a visa; so, for the present, has the Iraqi Government. To Damascus, the new centre of extremist Arab propaganda, which was his intended destination, he is prevented from going by the French High Commissioner, who is still *de facto* ruler of Syria and Lebanon. What will be his next move is still unknown. Perhaps, as has been strongly rumoured, he may proceed to Italy where he will doubtless be made welcome as an acknowledged enemy of the British Government. But wherever he goes Haj Amin el Husseini will continue to be an active instigator against the Palestine Government and the Yishuv.

### *The Orchestra's Second Season.*

ON the day of the funeral of Avinoam Yellin, the Palestine Orchestra was scheduled to launch its second season. It was a sad beginning. Over the fashionably dressed gathering that filled the great Levant Fair Hall in Tel-Aviv a gloom prevailed that many of the gathering to whom Avinoam Yellin was only a name could hardly understand. The Orchestra played splendidly, revealing a definite advance even on its performances of last year, when the overwhelming number of instrumentalists played with each other for the first time. The Orchestra's permanent conductor, H. W. Steinberg, efficient and able, but, particularly in comparison with the great figures that led the orchestra in its first season, not notably inspiring, worked hard at the fine Beethoven programme and deserved a warmer response. No doubt the absence of the glamour of last year's opening was also felt. Toscanini, Huberman, these great personalities were missing. But their names are on the billboards, and both will appear with the orchestra at later performances.

In the meantime, the number of instrumentalists has grown, and today numbers 75. Some of the original selections, unable to harmonise with their fellow-players, have left and been replaced. The number of members of the Orchestra Society has also grown, being now close on 8,000, and including a number of British officials and three Arabs.

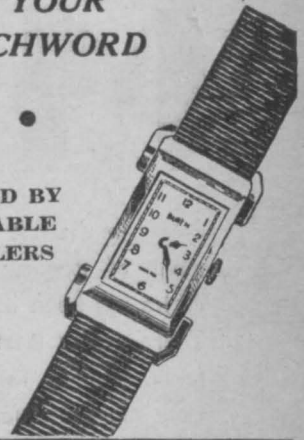
In the sphere of Drama, Habimah, before leaving on a tour of Europe to secure funds for the completion of its new theatre in Tel-Aviv, presented an original Hebrew Palestinian play for the first time. Hitherto it has translated plays for its purpose from Yiddish, German, English and French. Its new production is "Shomrim" (The Watchmen), by the Palestinian writer Ever Hadani. While it is by no means a masterpiece, it vividly presents the story of the heroic Jewish watchmen in the years immediately preceding and during the War, and has been received with wide interest. The Jewish stage cannot bide its time until it finds a genius before creating original drama in its own language. On the contrary, it is a fact that the great national dramatists of other peoples have arisen only after the stage for the production of their work was made available. The premiere of "Shomrim," characteristically enough, was presented not in Tel-Aviv, but in Kfar Giladi, in northern Galilee, the village founded by the Shomrim and named after their leader.

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