

Women in the Palestine Orchestra

By Gail Hoffman

THERE comes a time when the finger of fate seems to reach down out of the heavens to some individual and to beckon: "Come along with me . . . I have plans for you." Mr. Huberman played the "deus ex machina" last summer for dozens of musicians throughout Europe. Among the 71 persons who received a sudden call to join the Palestine Orchestra were seven young women. All the world to choose from, and just these seven! Who are they, and what are they like?

When the orchestra conductor raises his baton, it is the remarkable ensemble that responds, and individuals are only components of a perfect symphony of sound. The women are simply dressed in black and form part of the general picture. But off the stage, one can see that Alice Fenyves is blonde and slim, that Dea Gombrich is dark and vivacious, that Shulamith Silber has dusky hair and dark eyes, that Renee Galimer seems remarkably young for her long musical record. In fact, they all seem very youthful with a fine mixture of earnestness and gaiety. And there is no doubt about their joy and satisfaction in being part of a musical organisation that has a future if not a past.

Not one of them hesitated about accepting Mr. Huberman's invitation. There was no time for hesitation. He generally suggested that they take the next boat. Dea Gombrich happened to be Switzerland when she received a letter asking her to meet Mr. Huberman in Basle for an audition. Could she arrange to leave in two weeks? Of course! even though she still had concerts scheduled in Brussels and London. In fact, she did not even have time to change

her dress before catching the train after her last concert in Queen's Hall, London. Miss Gombrich is a pupil of Adolph Busch and has often played for the B.B.C. and for gramophone records in addition to her concerts in European capitals. She plays first violin in the Palestine Orchestra.

Miss Gombrich is enthusiastic about her experiences in Palestine, especially her contacts with the people in the villages. She has given concerts in Beth Alpha, Mishmar Haemek, Ain Hahoreh, Maabarot, Tel Amal, Daganian, and Ben Shemen, and she declares that she has never before met such marvellous people or played before such understanding audiences.

Alice Fenyves comes from Budapest, where she has had the distinction of being the only girl under the direct instruction of Hubay. She started her musical education at the age of seven, and has received a master's and a professor's diploma from the Lizst Fenencz Academy of Music in Budapest. During her last three years at the Academy, she was leader of the Orchestra, and in 1931 she won the Municipal Prize. She was one of the pioneer soloists on the Budapest radio and has given concerts in Vienna, Czechoslovakia, Jugo-Slavia and Hungary. She has given command performances before members of the Royal Family in the palace in Budapest.

In Palestine she has found little time for sight-seeing and social activities while rehearsals were in full swing. She has been keeping house for her young brother Lorand, who is perhaps the youngest member of any large orchestra. After one audition of this brilliant young violinist, Huberman insisted that he join it, despite the

protest of his parents about his leaving home at 18. Now that his sister is with him, everyone is happy. They recently played together on the radio some fine Hungarian compositions.

Shulamith Silber hails from Tel-Aviv. Her parents came to this country from Russia in 1906. She was giving concerts in Egypt at the age of eight. She studied in Paris with George Enesco. In 1932 she went to Vienna, where she won the Honour Prize in an International Violin Contest. She and her brother, Ben Ami Silber, who is also a member of the Orchestra, have been connected with the Paris Broadcasting Orchestra.

Another brother and sister who are members of the Palestine Orchestra are Renee and Felix Galimer. They have played all over Europe and Egypt and Palestine as members of the Galimer Quartet of Vienna. The Galimer Quartet consisted of two more sisters besides Renee and Felix. One of them is now in Paris, the other in America. Renee accompanied Huberman when he gave his last performance in Vienna.

Lotte Hammerschlag also comes from Vienna where she was leader of the Vienna Concert Orchestra. She is a graduate of the Vienna Academy of Music. Dora Loeb was born in Cologne, and has been connected with the "Judische Kulturbund" in Frankfurt A/M. Raja Berson has been living in Palestine for the last three years, but previously her home was in Roumania.

So we have representatives from Austria, Hungary, Roumania, Germany and Palestine among the little group. Most of the young women can play the violin, but for the present, four of them are among the viola players.

SOUTH AFRICA'S DEBT

(Concluded from previous page)

Although he was not long resident here, Bishop Clayton recognised the contribution the Jew had made to the development of this country. The Jew should get a fair deal here, and it was certainly unjust to indict a whole nation for the misdeeds of a few individuals.

The speaker then went on to dispute the recent assertion of Mr. H. G. Wells that Palestine played a small part in world history. They had always to remember that Christianity owed much to its Jewish background; above all, it owed the ethical nature of its religion.

In conclusion, the Bishop stressed the debt that modern civilisation owed to the Jew. Much of our heritage to-day was of Jewish origin, and in science, art, philosophy and statesmanship, the names of Jews figured prominently. In South Africa, at any rate, we should make up our minds to repay the Jew for the good he had done.

Advocate M. Franks, K.C., who proposed the vote of thanks to the two speakers, declared that both inspiration and encouragement were sorely needed in advancing the Society's cause. They should take earnest steps to counteract the dangers of anti-Semitism, which appeared to be becoming increasingly fashionable here.

The existence of the Society showed that there was a considerable body of non-Jewish opinion here which had set itself against anti-Semitism in any shape or form. The work of the Society was to repel the forces of darkness, and their work could be best helped by the amicable co-operation of all concerned.

At the outset of the meeting Prof. Hoernle, in the absence of Father Runge through illness, read a report of the Provisional Executive Committee, reviewing the origin of the Society and its activities. This together with the results of the election of office-bearers, will be published in next week's issue.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the chair, proposed by Chief Rabbi Dr. J. L. Landau.

Muizenberg and Kalk Bay

The annual general meeting of the Muizenberg and Kalk Bay Hebrew congregation took place on the 31st ult., and was attended by a large number of members. The report and balance sheet for the year ended the 31st August, 1937, was adopted.

The retiring president, Mr. W. Satusky, delivered a short resume of the work done by the Committee during the year, the main item being the addition of a new wing to the synagogue.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President, Mr. D. L. Davidowitz, Vice-President, Mr. N. Emden, Treasurer, Mr. L. Rifkin. Committee: Messrs. W. Satusky, N. Trakman, N. Barnett, H. L. Stern, H. Woolfsohn, S. Schrire, M. Jankelewitz, and B. Wisenberg.

A vote of thanks was extended to Mr. L. Kaplan for his services rendered in connection with various collections and also to Mr. K. Jacobson, who, in conjunction with Mr. Kaplan collected for a hearse. Further votes of thanks were extended to Mr. M. Helfand, for his lectures to the Chevra Gemorrah; to Mr. N. Trakman for his supervision and attention and attention to the Talmud Torah Hall; and finally to Mr. W. Satusky for the excellent manner in which he had discharged the various duties of President.

JUDGE FRUMKIN AND MRS. FRUMKIN ENTERTAINED BY JEWISH WOMEN

The Johannesburg Branch of the Union of Jewish Women held a reception on Friday, the 12th inst., at the Langham Hotel, in honour of Mr. Justice Frumkin and Mrs. Frumkin of Palestine. There was an attendance of about 150 ladies.

Mrs. A. Behrman, president of the local branch, was in the chair, and extended a cordial welcome to the guests. The subject of Justice Frumkin's address was "The Amelioration of the Legal Position of the Jewess."

The disabilities of the Jewish woman had occupied the mind of the people for many centuries, he said;

and he proceeded to give an informative account of the difficulties that befel women in connection with the Jewish marriage laws.

He then spoke on the Hebrew University. The higher education taught there had inspired the intellectual life of Jewry, and served the interests of the Jews the world over. That was why world Jewry should take an interest in the University. He thought that in due time the University would also solve the political problems in Palestine; and the scientific research done there had already saved many lives in combating disease.

"Nor do women fail to play their part in this great cultural centre," Judge Frumkin went on. "They are to be found on the academic staff, among the students, and doing research work; and through the endeavours of a group of Jewish women in Rhodesia, a library in Orientalia lives in combating disease."

Mr. N. Kirschner, and Mrs. Max Geffen also spoke. It was announced that the Union would endeavour to raise a sufficient sum of money to equip a laboratory at the University. Dr. Manfred Nathan proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the speakers.

CUTHBERT'S FOR LADIES' PHOENIX SILK HOSE