

Echoes

THE late Deney's Reitz was a severe critic of narrow nationalism and chauvinism. But he excepted Zionism from his censure of such movements. Writing in Johannesburg in 1933 to a Jewish correspondent he stated: "... As to Zionism, in so far as I have come in contact with the movement... I have always found it to be an exalted idealism containing nothing of the overbearing spirit of the false nationalism of the world. Whether Zionism will be able to retain its high hopes... remains to be seen." The Commissioner had become acquainted with Jewish nationalism through Lord Melchett in England.

Left Out

THREE Jews from Chelm were waiting for a train, and as they were sitting in the railway station they became engrossed in a conversation regarding the war, the future of Russia and Palestine and problems affecting the Hebrew language and literature. They were so engrossed in the conversation that they did not notice that the train had arrived.

But as the train began to pull out, they became aware of its presence and all sprinted for it. Two of them got on the train.

As the third stood there dejectedly, a bystander consoled him: "Why are you so sad? Two out of three made the train and that's a pretty good average."

"I know," sighed the dejected Chelmiter. "But my two friends came to see me off."

Diaspora raising funds for the Talmudical colleges of the Holy Land.

"Grandsons of the Baal Shem" were at one time extraordinarily numerous, and therefore the term should not be taken literally. Grandsons of the first disciples of the Baal Shem, great-grandsons of the Baal Shem himself, and pious old Chassidim with a Chassidic family background—any of these might be represented as Grandsons of the Baal Shem." It was, in fact, a loose term, and nobody dreamed of examining the genealogy of a claimant to the title.

Serious and Otherwise

by ben dor

Priestley Play at "Ohel"

I WAS interested to notice, in the Hebrew press that the Ohel Theatre has opened its winter season with J. B. Priestly's famous play "Desert Highway," which had such a tremendous success in England. The playwright some months ago sent the original manuscript of his play, which has not appeared in print, to the Ohel Players.

In an accompanying letter, Priestly said that the play had at first been written only for the Forces. It was, to his mind, suitable for performance in Palestine more than any other play he had written.

"The action is in the Syrian desert; the time—two acts during the present war, and the second act in the time of the Prophet Isaiah." Priestly gave his full consent to the translation of "Desert Highway" into Hebrew and its presentation in Eretz Israel. It was his hope that in so doing he could render some little help.

On a previous occasion I urged the importance of having this play presented in South Africa. So far none of our theatre-groups seem to have taken up the matter.

Another play which is now being shown in Palestine (by the "Matate") is "King of Lampeusa," a comedy translated from the Yiddish. The playwright, Charendorf, lives in London and is, by the way, a regular correspondent of the "Zionist Record."

A Government Publication

A PUBLICATION, which is, I think, unique in Hebrew journalism, has come my way recently from Palestine. It is a fortnightly, entitled "Hagalgal" (the wheel) and is published by the British Government.

A footnote on the last page reads: "Issued by the Government Office of Information on behalf of the British Ministry of Information." Nevertheless, the journal has none of the drab appearance of a government gazette. It is a bright and lively magazine and probably better illustrated than any other periodical in Hebrew.

The cover and the inside pages carry photographs from Palestine and from many other parts of the world. The articles are devoted to the war-effort, to topical political subjects and to social life in various Allied countries. Literature is not neglected, and there are Hebrew short stories, poems by men like Shimonowitz, and reviews as well as descriptions of social life in Eretz Israel.

There is one other aspect of the journal which is unique: *Not a line about party-politics.* Frankly, I found it most refreshing.

Refugee Who Could Play

SOME time ago a young Jewish refugee came to Jerusalem from Bulgaria with his mother, and friends found them a shelter. The lad—for he is still in his 'teens—asked the friends if they could find him a piano on which he could play.

"You can play at our house," they said kindly.

The boy of 15 opened the lid of the piano—not since leaving Bulgaria as a fugitive to undertake an arduous journey had he played—and, rubbing his fingers, sat down and touched the keys. Then his hosts were astounded to hear a magic volume of notes rising as he launched into one of his own compositions.

Sigi Weissberg, 15-year-old Bulgarian Jewish refugee, is the latest juvenile prodigy in Eretz Israel. Not only has he the sure touch of the master pianist, but he is a brilliant composer. The friends invited a small group of music-lovers to hear him play and they, too, were amazed at the depth of his interpretations of the classics which he played almost effortlessly and his own compositions.

Steps were taken to enable the young genius to continue his studies. The Palestine Conservatoire of Music at Jerusalem were opened for him, and a grand piano placed at his disposal. The best possible teachers available are guiding his studies, and he is also learning Hebrew, English and general subjects.

A new musical genius has arrived, born out of the stress and sorrow of his tormented people.

Pope Speaks in Hebrew

PTE. MOSHE ZINNAMON, serving with a Palestinian Jewish unit of the British Army in Italy, had a conversation in Hebrew with His Holiness the Pope.

The Pontiff was giving his usual weekly audience to soldiers of the United Nations. When Zinnamon's turn came, the Pope asked him in English what country he came from. The young soldier replied: "I am a Jew and I come from Palestine."

The Pope's eyes twinkled and he started speaking fluent Hebrew with a Sephardi accent, saying: "Your people have suffered greatly in this war. But there are good days coming for the Jewish people and the entire world."

Beaten in Palestine

A CROWD of sport lovers in Tel Aviv thrilled during August to an exhibition match played between the South African tennis star, Pieter de Beer, and the Palestinian champion, I. Finkelkraut. Finkelkraut beat the visitor in three straight sets by 4-6, 6-2, 4-6.

De Beer was given a rousing ovation by the large gathering present to watch the game.

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Passed by Shaef Censor

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