

Serious and Otherwise

* by ben dor *

President Truman Helps G.I.

WHEN Mrs. Landau, who lives in Rehov Sheinkin in Tel Aviv, fell ill some time ago, she wanted to see her son. But her son, who went to the United States several years ago, was serving in the American armed forces and had been among the first invaders of the Normandy beaches.

Not knowing where he was, Dr. Landau, the father, decided to cable President Truman himself, asking him to help in getting the son to see his mother while there was still time.

Friends thought it was a waste of money. But a few days later Dr. Landau received this cable: "Your son is not a soldier but a lieutenant. I have done as you wished. My best wishes for the complete recovery of your wife." The signatory was "Harry Shippe Truman."

American military police from a Command Post in Palestine visited the happy parents shortly thereafter and inquired as to the mother's illness. And within a week an American staff car drew up outside 74 Sheinkin Street and out jumped Lieutenant Landau, who had been sent by special plane to his mother's bedside.

He Is Still Seventy

NOTED Zionist raconteur and playwright, Sammy Gronemann, Chairman of the Zionist Congress Court of Honour, who has just celebrated his 70th birthday, has sent a witty letter to the "Ohel" Theatre which is presenting his play "King Solomon and the Shoemaker."

"It reminds me of a story," he wrote, "when the German Jewish author, Berthold Auerbach, died in 1882, it made a deep impression on Arthur Levison, editor of the 'Berliner Tageblatt,' who was his close friend. For many weeks there was no issue of the paper without mention of Berthold Auerbach. One of the veteran members of the staff, who was copy-boy between the editorial rooms and the press, once came in and was given some manuscript to take down. Just as he was leaving the room he ran his eye through the manuscript, stood for a moment, and then shook his head, saying, 'Berthold Auerbach again? Is he still dead?'"

And that, added Gronemann, was the same way he felt. Was he still seventy years of age?

New Maranos

Addressing the 56th convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, which represents the Reform Rabbinate in the United States, Dr. Salo W. Baron, Professor of Jewish History and Literature at Columbia University, predicted that there may be a resurgence of a Judea-Christian religious sect, such as that of the Maranos, as a result of the influence to which thousands of Jewish children in Europe have been subjected during their stay in Christian homes under the occupation.

Rashi Relics Intact

PRICELESS historical and religious relics of the ninth-century Worms Synagogue, oldest synagogue in Europe, were preserved from the Nazis by the curator of the Worms museum, in a dark sub-cellar beneath the Worms City Hall. It was at this Synagogue that Rashi, foremost biblical commentator, studied and perhaps taught.

The curator took Major M. A. Braude, U.S. 7th Army Chaplain, underground where the famous illustrated Machzor, dating back to 1272 and still in excellent condition, was hidden.

Also found underground were the Letters of Patent and Imperial privilege dating from the 15th and 16th centuries.

In the debris under the Worms synagogue, excavators found boxes filled with scrolls, Torah crowns and the Torah written in prison by Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg.

Famous Composition

WHILE in Cairo during July, the director of the Palestine Orchestra, Mr. S. B. Lewertoff, met the head of the Cultural Affairs Section at the French Embassy, who promised to help the Orchestra in getting scores as well as guest-conductors from France.

Among other matters it was agreed that the French Government should send to Palestine in the near future the score of the Swiss composer Arthur Honegger's oratorio "Le Roi David," of which the premiere performance, under the baton of Palestinian choir-master Fordhaus Ben-Tzissi, will be given in the first half of the coming autumn season.

stayed with us," he said proudly. He was a pearl diver by calling, but unlike other pearl divers, disposed of his haul himself. He had been in England disposing of his pearls when the war broke out, and he joined the British Army, while his brother proceeded to Australia and joined the Australian Forces.

It was all very interesting but so far he had said not a word of his Judaism.

"But are you a Jew?" I asked. "Of course I am, Sir. My father was a Belgian Jew, a diamond-dealer in Antwerp, who came to settle in Paupa to do trade at its source. My mother—a broad grin spread over his face—"There's no need for me to tell you who my mother was."

Technically, and according to Jewish law, this did not make him a Jew, unless, an unlikely possibility, his mother had been converted to that faith. He had, however, attested as a Jew, which meant that of his own free will he had declared himself so. Eschewing therefore all dogmatic theological tests, I decided to "accept" him on a simple, empirical one.

"Dou you know what Yom Kippur is?" I asked.

He smiled slightly and began to explain, interspersing his exposition with a wealth of Hebrew words and phrases. He harked back to Rosh Hashanah, and carried himself on to Succoth.

And there, in actual sight of the enemy who could be discerned with the naked eye, crawling like ants on the prominent ridge before us, he repeated the lessons his father had taught him. Respect and admiration took the place of my previous contempt for a renegade Jew who had departed from the camp of Israel and married a native Polynesian. It was an arresting thought that this son of Israel, isolated from all and every Jewish contact, presumably "gone native," yet in the remote island of the South Seas, imparting a knowledge of his faith to his sons of which many an Anglo-Jewish parent would be proud.

(To be continued)

South Africans in Eretz Israel



This photograph was taken at a reception given to Mr. Harry Lourie on his arrival from New York en route to South Africa. Standing is Dr. A. Goldstein, who presided. Next to Mr. Lourie is Mr. E. Perlson, the vice-Mayor of Tel Aviv, Mr. Danciger-Korn, secretary of the Press Club, and Mr. David Dainow.

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