

FROM NEAR AND FAR

By Ben Dor

India's Jews—What of The Future?

WITH the partition of India into Pakistan and Hindustan in the immediate future the fate of India's 23,000 native Jews and her 6,000 refugee Jews will enter on a period of uncertainty. Fortunately, says a well informed correspondent, the majority of them live in the Hindustan districts of Bombay and Calcutta, headed by Nehru and Gandhi, who are known for their liberal attitudes and have a long record of friendship and understanding with the Jewish people. At the recent Pan-Asiatic Congress in New Delhi, at which Nehru played a very prominent part and at which Jewish delegates from Palestine were present, a statement was adopted which advocated complete legal equality and religious freedom for all citizens and racial groups.

Although Mr. Jinnah, head of the State of Pakistan, has so far made no statement that we know of, he has recently shown partiality for the Arab League. Yet numbers of his followers have expressed their aversion to anti-Jewish discrimination. The small numbers of Jews in the Princely States and in the north-west frontier region will be more or less swallowed up in India's teeming millions if they do not unite in some representative body.

The Jewish communities in India are concentrated largely in Bombay, Calcutta and Karachi (Pakistan) and large communities also live in the State of Cochin.

Those communities which emigrated from Bagdad and Yemen about three generations ago, have largely integrated themselves into Indian life, particularly the poorer among them. The wealthier communities, on the other hand, have made every effort to Europeanise themselves.

The Jewish community in Calcutta is arranging to get in touch with Bombay for some method of official State representation following enquiries by the Bombay community that a Jewish body be formed to submit memoranda to the Advisory Committee concerning safeguards for Jewish interests and the possibilities of Jewish participation in Indian life. The idea of forming an All-India organisation for Jewry is also growing.

Prefabricated Yiddish Theatre

THE Yiddish Theatre in London is about to reappear in a different form, and one that, for a theatre in England, is modern to the foundations which do not exist. For it will be prefabricated.

The Yiddish Theatre's Folk House in the East End was badly damaged by bombs and V-2 rockets, and the directors received notice from the London County Council to vacate their premises at the end of July. They already have plans for rebuilding a new theatre and a cultural centre as well, and in the meantime they have acquired a prefabricated theatre from an American Army unit.

Mr. Nathan Beitler, chairman of

the directors, visited the United States to arrange the purchase, and funds were subscribed in the United States. Shortage of shipping space held up the shipment, so Mr. Beitler enlisted the aid of Lord Inverchapel, British Ambassador in Washington, to arrange early shipping space.

The "prefab" will hold 1,000 people, but the directors plan to limit seating to 750 to allow for office space for the staff. At the same time subscriptions are being received for the new permanent theatre which the directors plan to build. At the back of the present theatre which stands amid bombed-out buildings, is an area of 20,000 square feet that has been allocated to the committee as the site for the prefab and the new brick theatre.

Between 60 and 70 per cent. of the actors and actresses taking part in the all-Yiddish and Hebrew programmes are concentration-camp survivors. Leon Blumenson, for instance, was captured by the Nazis after the fall of France and was imprisoned at Dachau and other concentration camps before being released by the Allies. His camp number, 38264, can still be seen tattooed on his forearm. Miss Jenny Lovich, who has come from Palestine, is there considered second only to the great Habimah actress, Royina. According to Mr. Beitler, the British authorities have been extremely helpful in giving and renewing temporary permits for members of the cast.

The theatre presents translations of such plays as "The Merchant of Venice" and "Tobias and the Angel," as well as plays written by authors who are unknown to London theatre-goers. The committee believes in giving a chance not only to writers from the United States and Britain, but also from Rumania, Poland and other European countries.

Imre Ungar To Live in Palestine

IMRE UNGAR, 37-year-old famous blind pianist and holder of the Chopin Prize at the International Paris Competition, arrived in Palestine recently, and stated that after having lived through the persecution of Jews in Europe, he wants to remain there with his wife and son.

Ungar was at the beginning of the war in Holland and remained there till 1942, when the Nazis entered the country. He then escaped to Hungary, his native country, where he was assisted by the Government. After the intensification of anti-Jewish measures, he chose to join the Jews in the ghetto, and stayed there until the Red Army liberated Budapest. He has been invited by the Soviet Government to play in Russia, where he may go on tour.



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Romance of a Name

By N. Pearlroth
LEVIN - LEVY

(This request name was sent in by Mrs. C. Levin, Coronation Hall, Johannesburg).

THE bearer is descended from the ancient and hallowed tribe of Levy. Both Moses and his brother Aaron were notable descendants of this tribe. In accordance with God's command Moses bestowed the priesthood (Kehana) upon Aaron, whose descendants have been priests (Kohanim) during the intervening 3,300 years. The remainder of the tribe of Levy were not given any land at the time Palestine was settled. Instead the Levites were designated as temple attendants and were to earn their living in this capacity. The very name "Levy" means "attached" (to the Temple). A Levin who is a member of the tribe of Levy, bears one of the two oldest family names on earth, (the other being Cohen). No king or prince on earth bears a name half so ancient and venerable. The name is variously spelled Levy, Halevy, Levit, Levitas, Levin, Levinson due to dialectical differences resulting from

the Jewish migrations. But a man named Levin is not necessarily a member of the tribe of Levy. In Eastern Germany particularly, where the spelling originated, Levin is often used as a given first name. This use is not restricted to Jews. There are many Gentiles who bear this personal name. It is very prevalent in the family of Prince Bismarck, once known as the Iron Chancellor of Germany. Many of his descendants still bear the given name of Levin. There is also an American Admiral (non-Jewish) whose first name is Levin. A Levin who is non-levitical obtained his surname in the same way as a great many other Hebrew first names were transformed into surnames, such as Simon, Israel, Reuben, etc. They were patronymics (father's names) before Jews had family names. Where the Government permitted it (as a rule it didn't) the patronymics became family names.



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