

Serach Bat Asher Goes to Palestine.

A New Series of Pen-Pictures

By E. DAVID GOITEIN.

I: Tabak—The Egyptain Arab—Zahava—Love.

"Sit down, Habib ibn Suleiman, sit down. As you have asked me I will tell you what I think of your country."

He shook his head. "It is not my country any more. It was my country, but now the Jews have come and taken everything away."

"My worthy Habib—why are you so pessimistic? Are there not Chinese and Italians and Frenchmen and Germans in England, does that make England any less English? Come, come. You know well that a very small part of your country is in the hands of the Jews—one-tenth, is it not?—and you must know, too, O Habib, that your own people are improved by these Jews."

"Dear lady, you say so. Others say so. But why should we want to be improved from outside? All improvement must come from ourselves. You are bringing Western ideas, you are making my people restless. Till now have they ever complained against us, the effendis? Have they ever demanded better conditions? No. They lived like dogs and like dogs they were content. But now—you Jews Dear lady, it makes my heart bleed to think about it. Tell me, rather, what you saw and what you did in the Holy Land. I cannot speak."

"If you sit in that chair till midnight I shall not be able, my noble Habib ibn Suleiman, to tell you more than a tittle of what I saw and what I heard and the things that befell me. Please will you hand me those cigarettes—the Turkish. Take one yourself first. That's right. You will listen more attentively if you are smoking."

"It is good to breathe the fragrant odours of a cigarette. Tabak is in truth one of the greatest blessings that Allah has graciously bestowed upon men."

"Tabak. Let me begin with Tabak. We call it tobacco, Habib. Tabak is symptomatic of modern Palestine . . . I will tell you a thing that happened to me. I was staying at Safed, and there stands a little hotel run by a Jewish lady from Germany. And the hotel is beautifully clean—which is not true of many hotels in your country—and the food was well cooked, but it was not as delicious as Arab food."

"Ah, dear lady, you know the subtle flavours of our native food?"

"As I was sitting at breakfast—a thick layer of ribbah on my bread, shamen on a little glass dish next to me—an Egyptian came in. He bowed politely and sat down. In time he began talking—for you know, Habib, how an Egyptian talks on the slightest provocation, much more so than a Palestinian Arab. He told me that he was the agent of the largest manufacturer of cigarettes in the world—and I am paid five hundred pounds Egyptian a year," he said. He was proud of his salary. "I have come to Palestine, not like your ladyship to see the sights, for there are no sights to see, but to discover whether I may buy Palestinian tabak. But although it is the Jews who have introduced tobacco into the country they do not understand. They produce rubbish—for which I would not pay one piastre for a cart-load. Will they listen to me who am an expert? No! They think they know best. They are promised by some German that all their crop will be bought up. Ha! Let him buy it. I don't want it!" But there was, O worthy Habib, a note of dis-

appointment in his voice, anger at a trade rival having stepped in first—"If they would listen to me they would produce the right tabak in the right locale—but these Jews are all politicians, they think that if they plant everywhere the Arabs will be afraid of them. They are not agriculturalists, they are politicians, your ladyship." And he brought his hand down on to table with a bang and broke a plate."

"Ha! ha! ha! Those Egyptians!" said Habib ibn Suleiman contemptuously. "But what do the Jews say of their tabak?"

"I once reached one of the Jewish colonies late at night. They offered to put me up—for let me tell you, Habib, in hospitality they outdo even your people."

"Muhammed—on whom be peace—declared that hospitality is more precious to Allah than prayer."

"So be it. And the lady under whose charge I was put invited a number of friends into her 'house' that night to entertain me. One man—Mosheh Uri was his name—described to me the colony. ". . . now we grow tobacco. The Arabs do not understand tobacco," he said, "they produce rubbish. They will not take sufficient care, but we Jews give all our attention and use our intelligence—when we are working at the plant. And we have a beautiful crop—I will show you." Then he called to one of his friends, "Aharon—bevakasha le havi panas"—and Aharon returned a few moments later with two oil lamps. "Come out, geveret, we will explain everything to you." And Uri and Aharon and Shemul and the ladies Zahava and Margot and Haviva—all came out with me to see the tabak plantation. Mosheh Uri was my dragoman, he explained how careful you had to be in what you planted, when you planted, how you weeded, how you got rid of pests. "The gates of America are closed. We cannot sell our wine. What do we do? We do not grouse and complain. Lo! geveret, we turn to tabak and we find it pays better. And if the world stops smoking we Jews will find something else to plant in this land of ours." "Is it not true that you are all politicians and don't care a bit whether your tabak grows or not, provided you impress the Arabs?" And they all laughed. They did not trouble to answer me. Notice too, Habib, my people are optimists, and yours are fatalists."

"But not pessimists. The two things are not the same And how did you spend the rest of that evening?"

"Zahava, my hostess, told me somewhat of what these colonists have gone through and are going through to-day for an ideal. 'You live in England,' she said to me, 'you do not know what it is to feel a pariah in decent society, to be told everywhere that you are a Jew and that you are not wanted, that you are no better than negro and that you ought to get out. You do not know the burning shame that we feel. Our fathers, our grandfathers shrugged their shoulders and let things go by. We cannot do that. We have come here so that we may feel we are living in our own country with our own ethos—he mevinah?—so we are willing to go hungry, we are willing to live in huts like these, we are willing to interest ourselves in tobacco leaves rather than in philosophy or science or art

—that we may attain our goal.' And it was not Zionist dope that she was giving me. Her eyes flashed as she spoke—she meant every word of it. When the men had gone and only Zahava was left I said to her, 'Tell me—you speak of work and sufferings and semi-starvation and a dim-distant goal of nationhood—does Love play no part in your lives?' A blush suffused her pale face. 'You are the first visitor to this colony who has asked a question like that. They all ask the same sort of thing—as if they had learned their questions by heart. I suppose it is the difficulty of language, or because tourists are always in a hurry, or perhaps because the men do the talking and the few women who trouble to come all this way out—leave it to their husbands.' She dropped her voice to a whisper. 'Yes—there is room for Love. And here it is not as in Europe. For money matters nothing. There are no dowries, no marriage settlements. If we are married it is because we love one another . . . but we women are few as compared with the men and that causes bitterness and jealousy. Did you see that lad, Mosheh? He is a fine fellow, is he not?' 'A splendid man as far as I could judge.' 'We have come to like one another—and, one day'" Habib ibn Suleiman, you understand? It is not only tobacco that engages the thoughts of these young agriculturists, nor is it only politics Please take another cigarette." — (Reprinted from the "Jewish Guardian" (London) by arrangement—American rights reserved).

Jew Controls Sixty-five Millions.

The Imperial Chemical Industries has been registered with an authorised capital of sixty-five millions sterling. This is the biggest initial capital of any company in Britain hitherto. Sir Alfred Mond is the chairman.

The British national exchequer will benefit to the extent of £1,500,000 as a result of the formation of the Imperial Chemical Industries, by means of stamp duties, property transfer, and other duties and fees.

More "Ritual Murder."

Several Jewish residents of the town Dobryzn in the District of Warsaw were injured in anti-Jewish excesses resulting from a ritual murder tale. The agitation started when a four year old Polish girl, Julia Goman, was found injured at the Jewish cemetery near the town. Rumours were spread immediately that the girl had been attacked by Jews for ritual purposes. The Christian population stormed Jewish houses, attacking many. The police intervened and restored order.

Einstein no Speaker.

Einstein, despite his lectures about his complicated theory of relativity, is a poor impromptu speaker and hates to be called upon suddenly for an address. At a dinner of the Intellectual Co-operation Committee of the League of Nations at Geneva recently, Einstein was unexpectedly called on by the toastmaster. Instead of speaking, the great scientist went quickly to the musicians' box, borrowed a violin and played magnificently for the astonished guests.

The Jewish World-Population.

There are more Jews in the United States of America than in any other country in the world says David Trietsch, a German-Jewish scholar and authority on Jewish statistics, in the *Jewish Tribune*. Estimating the Jewish population of the world as 18,080,000—an increase of 150 per cent. since 1881—Mr. Trietsch says the number of Jews in America is 4,400,400. Poland has a Jewish population of 4,000,000 and Russia is next with 3,600,000. New York leads the cities of the world with a Jewish population of 2,000,000. Warsaw is next with 400,000, followed by Chicago and Vienna with 300,000 each.

"Poetry is the only verity—the expression of a sound mind speaking after the ideal, and not after the apparent."—Emerson.

An interesting advertisement by Mr. F. Baskind, introducing to our readers "The Russian Papyrus Tube for Cigarettes," appears in this issue. This cigarette tube or cigarette has a Cardboard Mouthpiece, rolled in such a way as to prevent the tobacco getting into the mouth, at the same time saving as a cigarette holder, dainty and hygienic way of smoking a cigarette and there is no loss of tobacco. An ordinary holder is clumsy and after a few days' use gets filled up with Nicotine and produces a taste of Pipe Smoking, whilst the usual cork-tipped cigarette gives one the unsavory taste of cork. The Papyrus type retains the sweet rice-paper taste on the lips and is always clean and dainty as you get a fresh mouthpiece with every cigarette you smoke.

Chemists & Druggists.

FOR SALE BY TENDER.

The entire Stock-in-trade of the BORDER DRUGGIST, LIMITED, East London (in Liquidation), comprising:—

Patent and Proprietary Medicines: Formula for 1914 Eau de Cologne and Para Hara Hair Restorer—Good Selling Lines; Pills, Tablets, Soaps, Powders and Perfumes, Drugs, Acids, Essential Oils, Surgical Appliances, Veterinary Instruments and Remedies, Brushware, Gas Tubes, Empty Bottles of all sizes.

Further particulars, Stock Lists and inspection may be had on application to the undersigned.

The highest or any Tender not necessarily accepted.

Tenders to reach the undersigned not later than 17th DECEMBER, 1926.

G. C. STARKEY, Liquidator.

East London Board of Executors and Trust Co., Ltd.,

J. G. SMOOK, Cartage Contractor.
Trolleys for hire. For deliveries of all kinds ring up Telephone 247 Germiston. Livery and Bait Stables. Horses, Mules and Vehicles bought and sold on Commission. As Market Agent I am prepared to execute Buying and Selling Commissions. Furniture stored and insured.
Everything done at Moderate Rates.
VICTORIA ST. NEAR MARKET SQ.