

Tel Aviv Fifty Years Hence

A Revue by the "Matate"

WE shake our heads in bewilderment. The thought of the expansion of Tel Aviv makes us breathless. It is sheer wonder that one can still go through its streets, in spite of their narrowness and heavy traffic. And it is hardly believable, that now and then a corner can still be found which is free from building noises and flying dust. No one knows how vast the population is, as yesterday's figures are already out of date. It increases by hundreds and thousands. How long will it take for this town to become the largest in the country? Amazed, one wonders perplexedly how things will be fifty years hence! And the answer is given in a revue, produced by the Hebrew theatrical company, "Matate."

For two hours one sees in colourful scenes the town in fifty years' time. It has grown upwards, and only skyscrapers can be seen. There is no space left and miles of sea have been filled up to obtain building ground. One goes from the town to the beach by aeroplane or by underground railway. . . . The town itself is crowded with hotels, cafes, dancing clubs and cabarets. Everything has followed European standards aiming at increased comfort and magnitude.

The show, which sparkles with humour and wit, and which again and again astonishes by its resplendent, colourful stage-effects, reveals the healthy ability of the Tel Avivians to laugh at themselves. The growth of the town causes them great amusement and yet they realise quite well that the waves of this expansion are closing over their heads. In this Tel Aviv of fifty years hence, two Chalutzim make an appearance. They are ancient, tottering, little people, she in skirt and working blouse, he in short trousers—and they present an extremely amusing spectacle. They sit in the Hebrew literary club, where only poetry and modern art are cultivated. Yet here, in this club, a few remaining Hebrew books have been kept, and also a small number of Bialik's poems, which everywhere else have been forgotten. The Oneg Shabbath, which had been an attempt to give the day of rest a cultural Jewish aspect by lectures on Jewish themes, has been changed into a dancing club! Only the "Habimah" still produces the same play in 1983 as in 1933, namely, the "Dybuk," which is now, however, played in an ultra-modern way.

So with clever, witty and harmless raillery, the Hebrew cabaret is shown. The term "cabaret" is, however, not quite correct, for these performances have a far wider scope. They are produced in the largest halls, to which thousands of all kinds of people come, from the Yemenite carrier to the rich American and the bank director. Everyone of these thousands is quite well informed, knows all the jokes and understands all the innuendoes. They cheer at the political allusions and at the skits on eminent personages. The gifted company, which has already existed for years, and which started from practically nothing, has tried, in an unassuming way, to picture the daily life of Jewish Palestine, and has thus, perhaps, created the finest art produced on Palestinian soil. It strikes an original note; it goes to life itself for its material. It comments on events with a healthy mockery, which admirably suits the performers as well as the public. They are Jews mocking themselves. They laugh at the Mayor, who is in town only four times a year—to attend prize-giving; to open the exhibition; at Chanukah and at Purim (when he appears on horseback, leading the carnival). They laugh, also, at the Yemenite girl, who likes to be Europeanised and calls herself Florence, instead of Ziporah. They are amused by the parodies on their newspapers, their public organisations, their weakness for comfort and elegance.

Considering all this originality, ingeniousness and wealth of imagination, the technical faults are quite easily overlooked. It is of small consequence if this or that is not quite right, or if the modern dances are not quite correct, since we find not only imagination and wit, but also an astonishing amount of unspoilt dramatic talent and temperament. On leaving a performance, we are no longer disturbed by the unbearable hooting of the cars and the frightful noise in the streets—for how will Tel Aviv be fifty years hence?

—Translated from "Judische Rundschau."

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Some Nordics

By Charlotte Perkins Gilman

*Swollen with pride of race they stand,
Exulting in their little land,
The little tribe whence they came;
Hoping to dominate the earth
With one high power, one highest worth,
The Nordic name!*

*Only by what a race achieves,
By the world-useful works it leaves,
Can any human stock lay claim
In the long list of those who give
The lasting gains by which we live
To well-won fame.*

*And these? One branch of that great race
Winning indelible disgrace,
The whole world's blame;
Showing for all historic time
In folly, cruelty and crime,
Their Nordic shame!*

Johannesburg Women's Zionist League

ABOUT twenty of the women who are making the trip to Palestine next month on the s.s. Dunluce Castle were entertained by the Johannesburg branch of the Women's Zionist League on Tuesday afternoon last at the Langham Hotel.

The Chief Rabbi and Mrs. Landau head the list of those who are traveling, and other tourists who were present were Mesdames Katzew, Kirson, Adelson, Miss Adelson, Mesdames Miller, Gamsu, Epstein, Miss S. Mendelowitz, Mesdames Perlman, B. Gordon, S. Gordon, Kalmanson, Joffe, Cormack, Alexander and daughter, Olga Guinsberg, Broude, Millstein, Miss Schochet and Mrs. Grevler.

Some of the women intend settling in Palestine, and in the course of a speech bidding them farewell, Mrs. B. Patley, president of the league, said how sorry they all were to lose such good workers.

Certificates representing trees planted in Palestine were presented to six well-known workers of the league, who are among those making the trip. They were Mrs. Adelson, who was the originator of the Belgravia branch and is now a valued member of the Houghton branch; Mrs. Olga Guinsberg, who was responsible for starting branches of the league, thereby augmenting its numbers very considerably; Mrs. E. Gordon, chairwoman of the Parktown branch, and Mrs. S. Gordon, vice-chairwoman of the branch, who have both done yeoman service in the cause of Zionism; Mrs. Kirson, who organised the Doornfontein branch and kept it going for many years; and, finally, Mrs. Miller, who has filled the onerous position of secretary for the Berea branch for a long time, and who deputised for Mrs. Alma Cohen during her recent visit to Palestine.

In adding her good wishes to those of Mrs. Patley, Mrs. J. L. Landau, hon. president of the league, complimented the league and its branches on the excellent work accomplished.

The Chief Rabbi also spoke on the commendability of the work done by Zionists in all parts of the world.

Members and guests were then entertained by some pleasing music rendered by Mrs. Steele, who delighted her audience with her rendering of Chopin; Miss Shulman, who played two lovely violin solos; and Miss Rose Kowarsky, who sang with her usual charm and ability.

After thanking the artists, *Hatikvah* was played and the ladies dispersed after a very successful afternoon.