

A Palestine Notebook

(Specially Contributed to the "Zionist Record")

The Arlosoroff Murder Trial.

ALTHOUGH more than seven months have passed since the tragic death of the Labour leader, Arlosoroff, and although the trial has been protracted from month to month, public interest in the Law Court proceedings shows no sign of abating. Each hearing of the case is followed by lengthy and sometimes verbatim reports in the Palestine Press.

That the proceedings are still being watched in partisan spirit by Revisionists and their opponents was shown in a most deplorable way by the new "turn" recently given to the defence by the evidence which was adduced to the effect that a young Arab, Abdul Majid, had confessed to the murder. Tel-Aviv has for a long time not witnessed scenes of such excitement as occurred on the day that Mr. Horace Samuel, the Counsel for the Defence, first made public the news of this alleged confession. The news spread like wild fire through the town—passing from mouth to mouth in the most garbled and distorted form. Soon the whole city was seething with excitement. People left their houses, shopkeepers their shops and clerks their offices—all rushing through the streets thirsting for news. Special editions of the newspapers—"Haretz," "Davar" and "Chazid Haam" (the Revisionist Organ) followed each other in rapid succession.

It took a long time before the precise import and meaning of the evidence became known, but that did not stop partisan feeling from asserting itself. The Revisionists and their followers immediately proclaimed in the streets and in their press that the accused had been proved not guilty and that the "Blood Libel" was at an end; the Labourites and their press took up a contrary cry.

What happened in Tel-Aviv was repeated throughout the whole Yishub and found a considerable echo also among the Arabs. This new turn in the trial bids fair to rouse again partisan bitterness to the same heights which marked the days immediately following the tragic murder. The Labour people have been hurling accusations against the Revisionists of deliberate bribery on their part in order to divert the course of justice; and the Revisionists have, of course, not been slow to retaliate. Things have become so bad that the courts have had to intervene in order to prevent the press making serious allegations and bringing the court proceedings into contempt. All reasonable people are longing for the day when the judicial verdict will at length be given, and it will be known whether the accused are guilty or not. Then, at last, there may be a chance for these deep passions to subside, and for this tragic rift in the life of the Yishub to be healed.

Two Visitors.

THE Yishub has become well-known for its hospitality; and when its visitors have the additional claim to gratitude on the part of Jewry, the Yishub knows how to give them a royal welcome.

Two such visitors have recently come to our shores. They are Bronislaw Hubermann—the world-famed violinist—and Josiah Wedgewood—the veteran English Zionist.

This is Hubermann's third visit to Palestine. He readily admits that the country and the new Jewish life have a deep fascination for him. His concerts have been outstanding successes, and there was a wonderful mutual feeling of admiration and friendship between the audience and the artist. For the audience still had fresh in their memory the proud and dignified stand which Hubermann had taken on behalf of art and Jewish artists in his reply to the invitation of the

German conductor, Furtwangler, to give concerts in Germany.

In the interval at the first concert Mayor Dizengoff—who is always "on the spot" as eloquent spokesman of the all-Jewish city—extended a warm welcome to the visitor, and after the concert at a private gathering Dr. Glickson and Dr. Goldstein expressed in words to him, the Yishub's appreciation and gratitude of Hubermann as artist and man.

The artist himself is full of enthusiasm for the musical achievement of Tel-Aviv. He feels that the musical progress of the city is quite unique. The cultural growth of the city is keeping pace with its phenomenal material growth. But, he says, the city must have a first-class orchestra and a first-class concert hall, large enough to hold several thousand listeners. Only then will its musical future be safe.

Colonel Josiah Wedgewood has also received a very warm welcome. The papers have given full reports of his activities and speeches in the country, and lengthy accounts of his services on behalf of Zionism. In a public address, which Colonel Wedgewood delivered at a reception given to him by the City of Tel-Aviv, he had some very sharp words to say about the attitude of the Administration to Jewish endeavour. He said: "After passing through the length and breadth of Eretz Israel and comparing the present position with that of seven years ago, I was not impressed so much by the economic progress and the increase in European population, as by the fact that relations between Englishmen and Jews have not only not improved but have become worse. My whole ambition was not merely to help in the up-building of the National Home, but also to create a permanent friendship between the two peoples. But my hopes have not been fulfilled. I had hoped that relations would improve and that the Administration would understand the ideals which fundamentally actuate English people. The increase in the European population in a new country must improve the position of the residents; but that is not so here. The local Administration has not appreciated what the Jews have done to the natives of Palestine. Take for example, the disarming of the Jews in 1929, the "tourist hunt" of last year and so on. You yourselves are partly at fault. It is not my fault or that of people in England nor that of the Mandatory Government. The Jews, it seems, are despairing and are shrugging their shoulders—not at a National Home, but at the possibility of winning the friendship and understanding of the Englishmen. But such friendship would be of advantage not only to Jews and Englishmen themselves, but to all mankind."

Tel-Aviv's Cantor.

CANTOR Shlomo Rabec was, I believe, associated at one time with a prominent Hebrew congregation on the Rand. To-day he is officiating at the Great Synagogue of Tel-Aviv and his interesting achievements in the field of Jewish liturgy will be a revelation to many Johannesburgers who have known him as an unassuming, though distinguished Cantor.

In the course of his comparatively short stay in Tel-Aviv he has managed to create an altogether different atmosphere round the services of his synagogue, so much so, that he has become a favourite even of those who are not confirmed synagogue-goers. This has been achieved not by seeking public favour on the concert stage nor by resorting to "reform" of the Service which would not be tolerated in the strictly orthodox Prayer House of Tel-Aviv. Mr. Rabec looks for the salvation of the synagogue

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There's a Wealth of Health in CHANDLER'S BEER

Arrival of Excursionists in Palestine

Life of the "Pilgrims" on the "Dunluce Castle"

CABLE information has reached Johannesburg to the effect that the s.s. "Dunluce Castle" arrived at Port Said on Thursday afternoon last. The Palestine excursionists from South Africa, who were on board, proceeded immediately to Tel-Aviv, arriving there on Friday morning.

THE Zionist Federation has received some interesting details of the doings of the Jewish tourists to Palestine on the "Dunluce Castle." Of the 300 or so passengers on the boat no less than 130 were bound for Eretz Israel. By all reports everyone spent a very happy time aboard.

The Captain, officers, crew and staff of the ship did their utmost for the comfort and enjoyment of the passengers; whilst every effort was made to comply with the general desire to make up time so as to enable the voyagers to participate in the Purim festival in Tel-Aviv.

The final contingent of South African passengers boarded the "Dunluce" at Beira, and on the ensuing Sunday morning, February 11th, a meeting was held of the Jewish tourists, 70 or 80 attending. Having elected Mr. B. Weinronk of Port Elizabeth as chairman, Mr. A. I. Miller of Johannesburg as hon. treasurer, and Miss Jessie Cohen of Johannesburg as hon. secretary, the meeting proceeded to pass its first resolution, namely that nobody was to speak for more than three minutes. Various proposals were then made for activities to be set on foot during the voyage, and an Executive Committee to represent and act for all the Jewish passengers was appointed, consisting of the above-mentioned together with Mrs. O. Guinsberg, Mrs. I. Adelson and Rev. B. Schechter of Johannesburg, and Mr. B. S. Bloch of Springs.

At this same meeting it was decided to collect the necessary sum for the inscription of the tourists in the Golden Book, whilst large numbers of telegrams from the Zionist Federation, Zionist Societies and individuals were read. Mr. Weinronk kindly offered to give an illustrated lecture, whilst Mrs. Gordon and Miss Hanna Rabinowitz of Capetown and Mr. M. Levenstein of Johannesburg volunteered their services in connection with the holding of Hebrew classes. "Hatikvah" and "God Save the King" concluded a 40 minutes' meeting at which a maximum of business seems to have been done in a minimum of time.

Notes of Interest.

The previous day (Saturday) there was an *Oneg Shabbat* at 4 o'clock in the third-class lounge, by the Captain's kind permission. About 100 of the tourists participated. The small tables were laden with tempting refreshments kindly supplied by the ladies. Speeches were made by Mr. B. Weinronk, Mrs. Gordon of Capetown, Mr. A. I. Miller, Rev. B. Schechter, and Mr. Louis Cohen of Johannesburg, and the proceedings were most enjoyable.

Services were held regularly on board, morning and evening. Thanks to Rev. Schechter and Mr. A. Kirson of Johannesburg a *Sefer Torah* was available.

A sports committee was set up with Mrs. H. Moss-Morris of Durban as convener, and an entertainment committee with Mrs. S. Millstein of Johannesburg as convener.

The whole party reached their destination before the end of last week, and numerous people have already received cables from their relatives and friends indicating that they are already settled down and enjoying to the full their experiences and impressions in Eretz Israel.

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A PALESTINE NOTE BOOK

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in other directions. He makes every effort to renew and bring back to the Jewish Service many of the now extinct traditions of *Chazanot*. The cantor and his choir lay great stress upon Hebrew diction and pronunciation both of which are sorely neglected by the bulk of the members of this reverend profession, and in a country where Hebrew is the spoken language a step of this nature cannot fail to gain the admiration of the public. In addition special care is being taken by him to use for the liturgy only such music as is essentially Jewish in character. Every tune is carefully examined and only those that are based upon traditional and original Jewish cantillation are chosen.

This deviation from the stereotyped form of Jewish service has been taken notice of by lovers of *Chazanot* and by musical critics in Palestine and has been the subject of very favourable comment by writers in the Hebrew press. Cantor Rabec does indeed utilise modern methods for his purpose and at the recent *Chanukah* Service there was an orchestra of 25 instrumentalists playing in the Synagogue. But he never forgets that every innovation must be within the framework of a purely Jewish expression of worship.

A rather interesting venture is the appearance of Cantor and Choir at the more intimate celebrations of a national character, whether it is an *Oneg Shabat* or an anniversary of a Hebrew poet. He has also reintroduced the old Jewish custom of the cantor and choir visiting the home of the *Parnas* on Simchat Torah, with, however, one little change, namely that the honour of such a visit is bestowed not upon a worthy "committee-member" but upon the home of Ch. N. Bialik where it is customary for the Jewish youth to congregate for the Rejoicing of the Law.

MOSMARK MATZOS—THE KOSHER MATZO