

A Letter from Eretz Israel.

(From Our Own Correspondent).

Jerusalem, 28th October, 1935.

Much Ado About Nothing.

The excitement in Palestine which I described last week as a result of the discovery of the illicit import of a large quantity of arms and ammunition gathered momentum during the week and came to a head on Saturday with an Arab strike. No discovery has yet been made as to the identity of the consignee, J. Katan, although the most careful investigations are being made by the police, but rumour has been rife, as it always is where the facts are obscure.

The whole matter assumed tremendous proportions in the public mind as a result of the Arab agitation which grew from day to day. All Arab parties—the Palestine Arab Party (the Mufti's faction), the Arab Youth Federation, the National Group of Nablus, the National Defence Party (Nash-shibi) and Dr. Khalidi's Reform Party—for once united in resisting the Jewish "menace." In Arab political parties and the Press an extremely threatening attitude was adopted and extraordinary anti-Jewish allegations were made. Numerous Arab meetings were held and petitions with amazing demands presented to the Government. Even a deputation of Arab women submitted a memorandum to the officer administering the Government, from which the note of threat was not absent.

They demanded that the Jewish population be ordered to surrender to the Government, within ten days, 10,000 rifles, 50,000 revolvers and 1,000,000 rounds of ammunition, or that failing such surrender Jewish leaders should be deported. Failing this, within one month the Arab Women's Federation would issue a call to Arabs of Palestine to arm and protect themselves.

The representatives of the Arab parties requested permission to organise frontier and coastal patrols, whilst the "Falastin," the well-known Arab newspaper, suggested third degree methods of extorting confessions from suspects in custody.

Saturday was chosen as a day of demonstration and protest by a general Arab strike—an understandable choice, since on Saturday there was little to lose from Jewish custom whilst the usual closing of Jewish business houses and cessation of activities were certain to add to the strike appearance. The air was heavy with conjecture as to the implications and the result of the strike and a slight feeling of tension was current. But Saturday passed off quietly like all other Saturdays, and in the non-Arab towns there was little indication that a strike was in progress. A few minor clashes occurred but were quickly quelled by the police, who were prepared for all contingencies. At sundown all shops were reopened and the towns resumed their normal appearance. And having discharged their fury, the Arabs have subsided and little has been heard of the matter since.

No definite results—at least as far as the public are concerned—have emerged from the police investigations as yet, but according to the local Jewish press they point to foreign suspects. It would seem that the cement consignment in which the rifles were found was preceded by two other large consignments, and the discovery of this fact has

led to another disclosure which "Haaretz" believes will have much influence on the present investigations.

It appears that captains of Belgian boats have received a statement from their companies in Antwerp to the effect that the French Consulate at Brussels has informed the Belgian Government about the smuggling of arms from Antwerp and Hamburg to the French Mandated Territory in Syria.

This smuggling is said to have been exposed as part of a systematic arrangement and the arms were consigned to Syria, the statements says, in barrels of cement.

A Remarkable Will.

Much comment of an exceedingly happy nature, has been aroused by the contents of the late Yizhak Leib Goldberg's will which has just been published. The estate is expected to realise not less than £P.150,000 and the executors have been instructed to realise all of his property and to turn over half of the net proceeds to his next of kin. The other half is to be given to the Keren Kayemeth which is to act as trustees for the Yizhak and Rachel Goldberg Permanent Fund.

The capital of this fund is to be administered by the trustees, who may invest it in land or securities at their discretion. If they invest in it land, as it is understood is their intention, they are required to pay interest at the rate of five per cent.

The annual proceeds are to be used, according to the wording of the will, "for the needs of Hebrew literature and Hebrew culture in Palestine."

A Board of Trustees is to be constituted, and will apply the annual proceeds of the fund for the purpose mentioned, in such a way as they may from time to time consider adequate, provided that they shall in any case make a certain number of annual payments specified in the will.

The more important of these payments are £P.300 for the Hebrew Language Committee (Vaad ha'Lashon); up to £P.300 each year for the publication of a Hebrew work on matters of Hebrew education; £P.100 for two scholars at the Hebrew University; £P.300 for school prizes; £P.100 for a scholarship at the Technical High School at Haifa, and £P.100 for the Palestine Society of Friends of the Hebrew University.

There are a number of further stipulations for scholarships and annual contributions.

Artists for Palestine.

At the end of a long and extremely hot summer Palestine is looking forward now to winter and to the round of musical concerts and other performances which take place during the season. This week the Palestine Symphony Philharmonic Union is opening the 1935-36 season with a festival concert in Tel-Aviv. The programme will be conducted by Professor Edmund Zygmant, well-known Polish conductor now living in Paris.

During the winter a number of famous artists are booked to visit the country under the auspices of the newly-organised M.K.B.L. (International Concert Office), a union of two large concert offices at Haifa. This organisation has arranged to bring to Palestine the following artists: Bronislaw Huberman, Mischa Elman, Vladimir Horowitz, Leon Zizra, Irma Ungar, Alexander Borowsky, Victor Chenkin and Gertrude Kraus. During

the season, too, the Palestine Oratorio will perform Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and the Hindu Ballet Company of Oda-Shan-Kai will also perform.

The concerts are all being eagerly awaited and there can be little doubt that they will be well patronised. Already practically all the seats in the Ohel Shem, Tel-Aviv, have been taken up for the first performance of Mischa Elman on November 11th.

The Tension Relaxes.

The tension which was prevalent here during the last few weeks in regard to the international situation has been relaxed somewhat, though conditions have not yet completely normalised themselves. Withdrawals of deposits from the banks have practically ceased and the panic is over, but activity in certain industries, notably the building industry is still comparatively quiet.

In authoritative circles the opinion is expressed that there is no cause for fear, and confidence is expressed in Palestine's financial stability. A calmer, easier atmosphere is noticeable everywhere, although war talk itself has hardly lessened.

Keren Hayesod.

The annual Keren Hayesod campaign is at present in progress in Palestine and that tireless campaigner, Dr. Alexander Goldstein, is in charge once more. Again, there is the division of the campaign into three sections—for the German immigrants, the "poalim" and "the rest," and for each of them a different method of approach is required. But Dr. Goldstein, with his almost uncanny understanding of the psychology of each section, is handling the matter most successfully. He confesses, however, that the campaign is a most wearing one, though interesting, taxing more of his patience and energy than the most difficult campaign he has experienced anywhere.

As one of the first "shots" in the campaign a Keren Hayesod film has been released this week and later will be shown in Jerusalem and Haifa. It is called "Haim Chadashim" (New Life) and gives a vivid idea of the achievements of the national funds in this country. There is much that calls for criticism in the film but it is certainly the best of the three or four of similar nature shown here lately and locally produced.

I understand that the film may be sent to South Africa, and it is certainly one that should be seen by every Jew and Jewess there. It may not show as much as it could of the activity in Palestine to-day—of the industrial growth, the building development and a number of other aspects; but what it does show is exceedingly good both from the point of view of photography and sincerity. It is a picture which does not exaggerate. And that is more than can be said of most propaganda.

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