

AJR

INFORMATION

ISSUED BY THE
ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH REFUGEES IN GREAT BRITAIN

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POISON FROM MOSCOW

On January 13, Moscow Radio broadcast in 24 languages a surprising official communique of the Soviet TASS agency.

According to the statement, nine Soviet physicians, all of them professors, have been killing or trying to poison the highest personalities among the Soviet ruling class. They allegedly succeeded in killing two mighty men of the Kremlin: Andrei Zhdanov, Stalin's closest collaborator, and A. Scherbakov, the political Commissar of the Soviet Army.

Those of us who have not forgotten the colossal Soviet purges between 1934 and 1938, when among the innumerable victims of the Terror nearly all Bolshevik leaders of Lenin's generation were executed as spies, saboteurs, traitors and murderers, may now mutter only one word: Again . . .

But this time the purge started with a note which has a rather wicked originality. As in the Slansky trial, the Communist communique time and time again underlined the Jewish origin of the majority of the accused.

Moscow went one step further than satellite Prague. It made the arrested men not only work for foreign spying agencies, but presented them as common and vile criminals who, against the most primitive laws of humanity, used their high professional

position to murder sick men under their care. And they are said to have committed these shameful deeds on the orders of "the 'Joint' — the international bourgeois nationalist organisation," as the Soviet communique put it. In another part of the Soviet statement the "Joint" is described as "a terrorist-espionage organisation which gave the directive to exterminate the leading cadres of the U.S.S.R."

Cynical Pretexts

Readers of AJR Information need not be told what the "Joint" is. To present it, as the Soviet government does, as having been "set up by the U.S. Intelligence" is one more morbid fantasy of the Soviet Secret Police. This only proves again the endless cynicism of people who, as late as 1949, were still accepting millions of dollars donated by the same Joint in their satellite countries.

All those who were victims or witnesses of Nazi antisemitism cannot help asking the question: Is Communist Russia going to unleash the forces of racism? Will Nazi antisemitism now be followed by Communist antisemitism?

After the Prague trial the present writer was inclined to disagree with people who described it as a kind of a Dreyfus affair.

Every student of Bolshevik and Communist theories on nationalities knew perfectly of the Kremlin's basic approach to Zionism. From the beginning of this century, Zionism was looked upon as nothing but a cunning device of the Jewish bourgeoisie to prevent the Jewish Proletariat from taking part in the Social revolution. Zionism was and is considered a crime in Soviet Russia, punished with all the ruthlessness this State practises.

NEWS FROM EASTERN GERMANY

According to press reports, measures were *inter alia* taken against the following persons of Jewish origin who had held positions in Eastern Germany: the author Arnold Zweig was temporarily relieved of his presidency of the Academy of Arts; the composer Hanns Eisler, a brother of Gerhart Eisler, and Paul Dessau were strongly criticized for their "formalistic conception of art." The Information Office, headed by Gerhart Eisler, was dissolved.

The organ of the Communist "Socialist Unity Party" "Neues Deutschland" of January 4 attacks two Jewish chief editors in the Eastern Zone, Alexander Abusch and Erich Jungmann, and two prominent non-Jewish Communists Paul Merker and Kurt Mueller. Merker, who was recently arrested, is *inter alia* condemned for having advocated restitution and compensation to Jewish Nazi victims; he had done so, the paper says, in the interest of the "American-Finance-Oligarchy" and of the "Zionist Monopoly Capitalists." The Jewish former Chief of President Pieck's Secretariat, Leo Zuckermann, is accused by "Die Welt" of January 5 of having participated in "Zionist

When, in 1941, I was in the Soviet Hard Labour Camp, Onega, near Archangel, I met a 70-year-old Jew from the Bukovina who had been sentenced to 10 years' hard labour by the Soviet Occupation Authorities only because he had been the chairman of the Zionist Keren Hayesod in pre-war Rumania.

The Bolshevik Doctrine

In their pre-revolution times the Bolsheviks, including Lenin and Stalin personally, had been engaged in a bitter struggle against any recognition of special organisations of the Jews, even of Jewish socialist workers organisations. It was Lenin who wrote in 1903: "The idea of a separate Jewish people, which is utterly untenable scientifically, is reactionary in its political implications." And Stalin wrote in 1913: "How can it be seriously maintained that ossified religious rites and fading psychological residues have a greater influence on these Jews than the living socio-economic and cultural environment which surrounds them?"

But if the Kremlin wished to attempt a forcible assimilation of its two million Jewish subjects it would not, as in Prague and Moscow, display the Jewish background of the latest victims of its political purges. Even more sinister appears the intention of the Soviet government to make an impartial philanthropic organisation appear as the bogy Synhedrion described in the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion."

Are the two million Jews in the Soviet Empire threatened with liquidation as a national group? Or are the anti-Jewish notes in Moscow a temporary measure to woo the Middle East Arabs, just as the support of Zionism in 1947 was another manoeuvre of unprincipled power politics?

It is impossible to answer these questions with any assurance. LUCJAN BLIT

activities"; he has meanwhile escaped from East Berlin.

Jewish Communal Leaders Flee

Among the Jews who fled from Eastern Germany to West Berlin are the President of the Jewish Communities in East Germany, Julius Meyer, and the Chairmen of the Jewish Communities of Leipzig (Helmuth Lohser), Dresden (Leo Loewenkopf) and Erfurt (Guenther Singer). Other leading Jewish communal workers who escaped to West Berlin are Dr. Grunsfeld (Leipzig), Leo Eisenstaedt, Albert Hirsch (Adviser on Jewish Affairs to the East German Government).

Lest we forget

AJR REMEMBRANCE MEETING
on the 20th Anniversary of the
Boycott Day

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 1953

Details will be announced in the next issue
Keep this date free.

DAYS OF ANXIETY

It seems hardly possible to add to the manifold interpretations which the general and Jewish press give to the developments East of the Iron Curtain. The Prague Trial, some of whose aspects were described in our previous issue, has now been followed by victimisation of Jews in Soviet Russia and in Eastern Germany. The background of these new developments is dealt with in this issue by two authors who know it from their personal experience.

It is one of the tragic aspects of the events that those who are now "accused" of Zionist sympathies were, in a great number of cases, most violent in their anti-Zionist attitude. Following the old doctrine, Jewish Communists on the Continent were not satisfied with disbanding their Jewish affiliations, but actively fought against the continuation of any kind of Jewish group life, be it as a national or as a religious entity. Many Jews from the Continent, especially those who worked with the Jewish Youth Movement, will still remember the passionate discussions which took place in the twenties on the question of "Red Assimilation."

It adds to the tragedy that one of the countries in which Jews are now persecuted or feel endangered is Eastern Germany. For the second time, though possibly for different reasons, this soil has become unsafe for Jews.

Only a few years after the worst catastrophe in their history, Jews have again become the victims of a most cynical policy.

RESTITUTION NEWS

AUSLANDSBEAMTENGESETZ Fristablauf: 31. März 1953

Wir haben wiederholt ueber das Gesetz zur Regelung der Wiedergutmachung nationalsozialistischen Unrechts fuer die im Ausland lebenden Angehoerigen des oeffentlichen Dienstes vom 18. Maerz 1952 berichtet. Nach diesem Gesetz koennen diejenigen Verfolgten Ansprueche geltend machen, die im oeffentlichen Dienst eine pensionsberechtigte Stellung innehatten, oder aufgrund ihrer Beschaeftigung eine Pensionsberechtigung erworben haetten, wenn sie nicht entlassen worden waeren.

Die Antraege sind bei dem zustaeendigen Konsulat zu stellen—in London bei dem Generalkonsulat der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 6, Rutland Gate, London, S.W.7.

Die Frist zur Stellung dieser Antraege laeuft am 31. Maerz 1953 ab.

Die Antraege muessen auch dann gestellt werden, wenn die Ansprueche bereits im Entschaeidungsverfahren angemeldet worden sind.

PENSIONS FOR FORMER OFFICIALS OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES

Regulations about the administration of a fund for former officials of Jewish Communities in Germany have been drafted by representatives of the German authorities and of the Conference on Jewish material claims. They will come into force as soon as their final wording has been agreed upon. Former Jewish officials and their widows and children, who have already sent their particulars to the AJR or to its corresponding organisations abroad, are asked to refrain from inquiries at this juncture. They will be notified on any further developments.

As far as they come from Baden-Wuerttemberg they may obtain compensation according to an Order which has recently been promulgated by that Land.

AUSTRIAN OLD AGE PENSIONS

It is learned here from reliable sources that a representative of the Ministry of National Insurance will proceed to Austria in the course of January in order to take up and, if possible, to conclude negotiations with the Austrian Ministry for Social Administration on an agreement of reciprocity between H.M. Government and Austria as to the payment and transfer of old-age pensions and pensions to widows. It is to be hoped that these negotiations will lead to the payment and transfer of such pensions within the next months.

ENTSCHAEDIGUNGSANTRAEGE IN BREMEN

Die Antraege auf Grund des Landesentschaedigungsgesetzes in Bremen waren bis zum 30.9.1950 einzureichen. Auf Grund der damaligen Abmachungen waren die Formularanmeldungen auf bayerischen Entschaeidungsformularen einzureichen. Die Antraege sind von den Antragstellern zum Teil in Bremen, zum Teil aber auch beim Landesentschaedigungsamt in Muenchen eingereicht worden.

Soweit die Antraege nach Muenchen gesandt wurden, sind sie auf Grund der Verzoegerungen, die in der Bearbeitung der Antraege beim Landesentschaedigungsamt Muenchen eingetreten sind, zum Teil noch nicht nach Bremen gelangt. Antragsteller, deren letzter Wohnsitz in Bremen war und die Entschaeidungsansprueche nach Bayern eingereicht haben, sollten sich daher, falls ihre Antraege noch nicht bearbeitet worden sind, mit dem Amt fuer Wiedergutmachung in Bremen in Verbindung setzen.

ASSETS IN SWITZERLAND

It was announced in the November issue of "AJR Information" that an agreement about the release of certain assets in Switzerland had been concluded between Switzerland and Germany. In the meantime, the agreement has been ratified by the Swiss Government, but not yet by the German Government. A further announcement will be published as soon as, after ratification by Germany, the agreement has come into force.

BUNDESDARLEHEN IN RUECKERSTATTUNGSSACHEN

Durch den—noch nicht ratifizierten—Deutschlandvertrag hat sich die Bundesrepublik verpflichtet, die rueckerstattungsrechtlichen Geldverbindlichkeiten des Reiches (z. B. fuer konfiszierter Lifts) zu erfuehlen. Die Einzelheiten sind einer bundesgesetzlichen Regelung vorbehalten geblieben. Der Bundesminister der Finanzen hat sich grundsatzlich damit einverstanden erkluert, schon vor Erlass dieser Regelung dem Rueckerstattungsberechtigten ein Darlehen bis zu 10% der rechtskraeftig zuerkannten oder vergleichsweise anerkannten Foerderung gegen das Deutsche Reich zu gewaehren, vorausgesetzt, dass der Rueckerstattungsrechtberechtigte sich in einer wirtschaftlichen Notlage befindet und dies hinreichend nachweist. Die Entscheidung ueber Einzelantraege erfolgt durch das Bundesfinanzministerium.

REISE-DEISEN

Das Bundesfinanzministerium hat neue Bestimmungen zur Vereinfachung der Devisenregelung erlassen. Hiernach duerfen Devisenauslaender bei der Ausreise deutsche Geldsorten bis zum Betrage von 200 DM. (bisherige Freigrenze 100 DM.) und auslaendische Geldsorten bis zum Gegenwert von 300 DM. mitfuehren. Bei der Einreise von Devisenauslaendern brauchen auslaendische Geldsorten nicht mehr angemeldet zu werden, soweit sie nicht den Gesamtwert von 300 DM. uebersteigen und der Reisende nicht wuenscht, diesen Mehrbetrag bei der Ausreise wieder auszufuehren.

JEWRY IN EAST AND WEST BERLIN

The recent political development in Eastern Germany has, in a very deplorable manner, drawn our attention to the biggest post-war Jewish Community in Germany, the "Berliner Juedische Gemeinde" with its approximate total of 7,000 members, of whom roughly 3,000 live in the Eastern Sector.

Organised on the lines of a "Koerperschaft des oeffentlichen Rechts" the Jewish Community has been administered as an undivided unit. Under no circumstances did it want to be involved in any of the political issues resulting from Berlin's character as a Four-Sector City.

The implementation of this principle became increasingly difficult after the currency reform in 1948, when there was hardly any other institution left which was not split in two separate administrative bodies, each of them run in accordance with the respective political tendencies. It stands to the credit of the leading personalities of the Berlin Jewish Community that, in face of great difficulties and sometimes even of danger to their own security they were unyielding in their determination to maintain unity. Already four years ago, this appeared to be almost an anachronism in the annals of modern Berlin, and it was even looked upon as a curiosity when as late as 1951 high officials from East and West would represent their Governments at functions organised by the Jewish Community. Probably this was the only common ground where they met to bring messages of good will to the same cause. It was mainly in the interest of the Jews domiciled in the Eastern sector that the Executive strictly adhered to the principle of maintaining unity at all cost. This effort was certainly worth its while, as the preservation of an "Einheitsgemeinde" was the only means of extending support to the dependable members of the community who lived in the Eastern sector.

Institutions in all Sectors

As in former times, the Head Office was in the Oranienburgerstrasse, which belongs to the Eastern sector. In the West, there are three branch offices, one in the Iranische Str. (French sector) on the premises of the Jewish Hospital, and two in the British sector, Joachimsthaler- and Pestalozzistrasse respectively. Another important effect of the unity was that the Jewish Hospital and the Jewish Old Age Home, both in the Iranische Strasse, were open to all members of the community. Vice versa, the cemetery in Weissensee had to remain accessible to all members, and is, in fact, due to this principle

RESTITUTION IN FRENCH ZONE

The "Branche Francaise de la Jewish Trust Corporation," which is in charge of the restitution of heirless, unclaimed and communal property in the French Zone, may submit its claims by May 1, 1953. Individual claimants who know of restitution claims in the French Zone which so far have not been submitted, should get in touch immediately with the office of the "Branche Francaise," Mainz, Friedrich Schneider Str. 3, in order to enable it to submit the claim before May 1. Particulars and evidence should be attached. This will be the last opportunity for claimants in the French Zone who have missed the time limit of their individual claims. Details about the regulations by which the final arrangements between the Branche Francaise and the individual claimants are governed may be obtained from the Mainz Office.

IRSO TIME-LIMIT EXPIRED

At the end of December, when the January issue of "AJR Information" was already printed, the following announcement was received from IRSO Headquarters:—

"The Jewish Restitution Successor Organization has announced that no further petitions of persons who failed to file claims within the time prescribed by the existing restitution laws will be considered by it after January 1, 1953."

GERMAN VOICES FOR COMPENSATION

In "Das Freie Wort" of January 5 the Minister of Justice in Baden-Wuerttemberg, Renner, bitterly complains at the delay in the compensation legislation, especially in the British Zone. In a similar way, Senatsdirektor Erich Lueth, the initiator of the "Peace with Israel" movement, strongly criticizes the delay which may make compensation meaningless for the great number of old Nazi victims.

of the "Einheitsgemeinde" still the "Gemeindefriedhof."

In the same way also cultural functions run under the auspices of the Jewish Community, such as religious classes, lectures and social gatherings, were organised in a way which made it possible for all members in East and West to attend, a point which was always carefully considered with regard to entrance fees (East and West currency), subjects to be dealt with and personalities to be engaged for those functions.

Political Affiliations

It was entirely left to the discretion of individual members as to whether they were politically active in that part of the city in which they lived. There are quite a few members who hold or held offices in West and East Berlin respectively. *Inter alia*, Frau Jeanette Wolf is a member of the West Berlin Senate, and Dr. Hirschfeld, a returnee from the United States, is Director of Public Relations of the West Berlin "Magistrat." On the other hand, the former President of the Eastern Jewish Communities and a member of the Executive of the Berlin Jewish Community, Herr Julius Meyer, was prominent in the Socialist Unity Party and, in this capacity, a member of the East Berlin Senate.

The principle of unity was also duly reflected in the internal set-up of the democratically administered community. The Executive (consisting of four joint chairmen) lived in East and West Berlin respectively. The proportion of members in the "Repraesentantenversammlung" was in absolute accordance with the total of the Jewish population in the two sectors.

The picture of Jews in Berlin would be incomplete without reference to those Jews who held prominent positions in Eastern Germany, but who were not registered members of the Jewish Community. They include the playwright Dr. Friedrich Wolf (author of "Paragraph 218"), a returnee from Moscow, who two years ago became East Germany's Ambassador to Warsaw. There are also many returned refugees from Western countries who went back to Eastern Germany in order to help building up a Communist State. At the time of their arrival, a very hearty welcome was extended to them and in many cases they were given responsible positions in the administration of the newly founded People's Democracy of Eastern Germany. To this section of Jews belong men like Eisler, Nordmann, Zuckermann and Abusch.

L. SCHACHNE

TRIBUTE TO NORMAN BENTWICH

70th Birthday on February 28

Leo Baeck:

"READY AND FAITHFUL"

Two Latin mottoes: "semper paratus" — "always ready," and "semper fidelis" — "always faithful"—could be inscribed together on a portrait of Norman Bentwich. Nothing can be more indicative of the character of this man, of his personality.

He is neither one of those faithful who for all their firmness can never make up their mind, nor one of those who are always ready but who for all their steps never find their way. In virtue of a constant faith he remains ready, and in virtue of a resolute readiness he remains faithful—*semper fidelis, semper paratus*.

In various fields, as the jurist and the historian, Norman Bentwich has proved these qualities. It is not mere chance that on the one hand he has commented upon laws, and on the other hand has written on Philo and Josephus or on Solomon Schechter and Judah Magnes. It is the sense of justice that distinguishes the historian as well as the lawyer, and the sense of justice grows up ever afresh from the meeting of faith and readiness.

This is also the basis of the true politician who for the sake of the idea looks to the realities, and for the sake of the realities never loses sight of the idea. In such a manner Norman Bentwich embraced politics. In this way he steadily came to be the counsellor and helper of the wronged and the troubled—as Jews from Germany are also vividly aware, and the champion of any duty that had to wait for the answer—the Hebrew University is an especial witness thereof, *semper paratus, semper fidelis*.

Grateful good wishes go out to the septuagenarian, to this genuine Jew.

SERVICE TO MANY CAUSES

Jewish refugees from Germany have very good reason to join in congratulations to Norman Bentwich on his forthcoming 70th birthday, since, for the last twenty years, he has dedicated a great part of his time and energy to assisting German Jews—both as a community and as individuals, as the writer and many others can say from their own experience.

Norman Bentwich is the son of Herbert Bentwich, who was prominent as an English lawyer and as an Anglo-Jewish communal worker. The son follows in that tradition with a distinguished legal career and by his lifelong activities in Jewish affairs.

After having been a Whewell Scholar at Cambridge University he was called to the Bar and did outstanding legal research work, culminating in his editorship of the 7th edition (1925) of Westlake's leading Treatise on Private International Law. His most important position as a practising lawyer was that of Attorney-General of Palestine, an office which he held for 13 years, from 1918 to 1931. He was thus enabled to combine his legal interests with his work for Jewry in general and for Zionism in particular. He was an early adherent of Zionism, but one who by no means always toed the party line.

His work in Palestine led to his close association with the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He took the Chair of Professor of International Relations and, for many years, went to Jerusalem every winter to deliver his lectures.

The very name of that Chair (probably chosen by himself) indicates that Bentwich combines Jewish interests with an international outlook, mindful of the ultimate aim of peace and security for all mankind. Among his numerous publications are, besides many on Jewish themes, such subjects as "From Geneva to San Francisco" and "Commentary on the Charter of the United Nations."

James G. McDonald:

THE CREATIVE HUMANITARIAN

It seems incredible that Norman Bentwich is approaching his seventieth year. My close associations with him, when he was my chief colleague on the League of Nations High Commission for German refugees and during more recent years, made me feel that Norman is timeless. Always he has been so indefatigable, so creative and so utterly devoted to the interests of others that I was amazed that one person could accomplish so much.



As the historians concerned with an ultimate appraisal of the efforts made during the past and the present generation on behalf of refugees and the rebuilding of Israel are not deceived by Norman's innate modesty they will record that he has been outstanding in these constructive and humanitarian activities. He would be the last to ask that his work be given any special recognition, but I who owe him so many debts for what he did for me am happy to pay this inadequate tribute to him as a man and a worker.

For a long time he has also been the Chairman of the English "Friends of the Hebrew University."

From the beginning of Hitlerism, Bentwich made assistance to German Jews his particular task. From 1933 to 1936 he acted as Director of the High Commission for German Refugees, going to Berlin as early as 1933 to see for himself what help could best be given. From that time on he was active in all the relief organisations which under changing names worked at Woburn House and Bloomsbury House. When after the war the United Restitution Office was established he became its Chairman; in this capacity he is still most active in the task of establishing the property and compensation claims of those Jewish refugees who require help. He rendered conspicuous service to the cause of Jewish refugees in this country by his book "I Understand the Risks," where he told the story of the refugees who fought as members of the British forces.

All these activities could and can only be carried out by a man who, in the most simple and unpretentious way, incessantly and untriflingly gives his life to the work he has chosen for himself. This includes being ready for anybody at any time. He will see you at eight in the morning, and a meeting at lunch time with a few sandwiches or on Sunday will suit him as well.

The best that all those who admire his wide-spread and selfless services and profit from them can wish to such a man is that he may be able to work and to achieve results for the benefit of Jewry and mankind for many years to come.

W. BRESLAUER

OUR TRUSTED FRIEND

If you meet a quick-moving gentleman without a hat and with a fur glove on one hand only, whether in winter or in summer, here or in the Mediterranean area, the man is Norman Bentwich.

When, back in 1933, Ludwig Tietz asked Gustav Horn and myself to meet an English Jewish gentleman who wanted to get an impression of Jewish youth in Germany in those days, I met Professor Norman Bentwich in Professor Mittwoch's house for the first time. We talked about everything that was on our minds then and soon lost our understandable shyness on meeting a representative from a free country, a man so much older than ourselves, but, as we soon realised, a man very experienced and conversant with all details concerning German Jewry and Jewish matters throughout the world. He spoke to us in German and we rapidly unloaded our very burdened minds.

The next time we met was in 1935 on board ship crossing from Cyprus to Palestine. The boat was forced to wait outside Haifa in very heavy seas and most people had to spend their time below decks. Without regard to these circumstances, walking at considerable speed round the deck, Professor Bentwich invited me to a wide and explanatory discussion about the country we were presently to enter. Though I knew I would never be able to get a better and more interesting introduction to the country I was going to see, after two hours I had to apologise and join the others below.

When the first plans for Kitchener Camp were made, what could be more natural than that Norman Bentwich should have a leading hand in all the problems which confronted us. I will never forget our first practical meeting in the late Sir Robert Waley Cohen's house at which Otto Hirsch was also present. This meeting could very easily have been a very bad beginning to a great undertaking had it not been for Norman Bentwich who acted as interpreter and mediator between the heated parties, although it was, in one case, only a question of space which was or was not to be provided for lockers under the beds.

His wisdom and knowledge of the mentality of our people was often required during the days of our camp life. His boundless energy and mind was felt by those of us who came into close contact with him. He was never too busy to see anyone of us, to advise us, or scribble a note in his little diary for further enquiries. (How he could ever read the diary I have often wondered.)

Even during the years in the Services we had the pleasure of seeing him occasionally, either during private visits or when he was giving an official lecture to the "King's Own Enemy Aliens" as we called ourselves then, explaining English ways of life, administration and the like to us. I recollect one of his visits to our Company, then stationed at Weymouth, when, to our greatest surprise, he suggested a swim at 6 o'clock in the morning. We could not do otherwise but accept! He is a man whose days seem to be completely filled with work for others and who never seems to give himself enough rest for fear of wasting precious time. We have every reason to be grateful to him and to wish him many more years to enable him to fulfil all he has set out to do.

L. KEW

A VOTE OF THANKS

Among the many causes to which Professor Bentwich has given signal service none is nearer to his heart than the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. It has been decided, therefore, to establish a special Norman Bentwich Fund which will be used to give carefully selected graduates of the Hebrew University an opportunity for postgraduate research in this country. This serves an urgent need of Israel and at the same time strengthens the link between Israel and Great Britain.

Former refugees will certainly welcome this most fitting opportunity of expressing their appreciation of the work which Professor Bentwich has done so unceasingly in their interest. It is therefore hoped that AJR members will associate themselves with this fund.

Contributions should be sent to the Association of Jewish Refugees, 8 Fairfax Mansions, London, N.W.3, or to the Friends of the Hebrew University, 237 Baker Street, London, N.W.1.

Lutz Weltmann:

TWO POETESSES

Else Lasker-Schueler—Elisabeth Langgasser

The "Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur" in Mainz publishes a series "Verschollene und Vergessene" (Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden). One of the first pamphlets is devoted to Else Lasker-Schueler. Werner Kraft, a man of poetic gifts himself, and a connoisseur of German literature, who lives in Israel now, wrote a thorough introduction and made a fine selection of her poetry and prose. It is a critical essay which aptly states that the value of her poetry was not perfection, but its immanent truth. A German poet, one of the first to recognise her genius, Peter Hille, called her the "Black Swan of Israel, a Sappho whose world had been broken." It was the world of a child writing with the heart, a rare synthesis of a dreamlike oriental imagination and a German poetical tradition, which could be lived only in moments of sublime exaltation and found a suggestive expression in her poetry.

This little booklet of 106 pages will, certainly, induce many readers to buy the rich collection, "Dichtungen und Dokumente"—not complete, though, in spite of 631 beautifully printed pages—which the eminent Roman Catholic publishing firm Koesel (Munich) has entrusted to the well-known actor Ernst Ginsberg. This edition contains letters as well, full of poetic substance just as her poetry was like a collection of confessions in letters to God, to friends, and to the world, lavishing the gold of

her genuine sentiment upon them—and remaining poor throughout her life. Some of her drawings adorn the book, and there are contributions from contemporaries documenting both her singular greatness and the force emanating from her personality. There can never again be her like, as she was the product of a special spiritual situation in the development of the Jewish soul. The selection comprises the essential Else Lasker-Schueler; personally I miss "Der Wunderrabbiner von Barcelona," perhaps, because the poetess used to recite the story so well. The re-reading of her drama "Die Wupper" recalls impressive theatrical performances in Berlin, but this play is even surpassed by the drama "Arthur Aronymus und seine Vaeter," which was awarded the last Kleist-Preis distributed, but could not be performed any more in Germany. Inspired by memories of her childhood, the play deals with human relations between Jews and Christians in Westphalia in the middle of the last century. They become strained at times, foreshadowing events happening about one hundred years after, but the truly religious stand the test, and in the last scene the Bishop of Paderborn shares the Rabbi's Passover Meal. In this play Else Lasker-Schueler was a visionary showing her dramatic power at its greatest, and leaving a message to posterity.

Five years after Israel lost her greatest poetess, Germany lost hers. And just as Else Lasker-Schueler is to be rediscovered by German readers, it is very rewarding for Jewish readers to get acquainted with Elisabeth Langgasser, by whose premature death German Literature was deprived of her greatest poetess since Annette von Droste-Huelshoff and Ricarda Huch. She died at the early age of fifty-one, exhausted by what she had gone through and by the intensity with which her experience was conjured up by her creative genius. She mastered the suffering which she had witnessed and experienced through her firm and deep Roman Catholic belief. Her world is a closed one, confined in itself, which sets certain limitations to her first great novel "Das unausloeschliche Siegel," as it can be fully appreciated only by those who subscribe to her dogma.

Message of a Novel

Her posthumous novel, "Maerkische Argonautenfahrt" (Verlag Eugen Claassen, Hamburg), however, without giving up the religious source of inspiration, has a wider application. The Orpheus Myth plays an important part in it, with the message, "Don't look back!" and the idea of death and resurrection. Orpheus was one of the Argonauts, and the Brandenburg monastery, the destination of the pilgrimage of seven persons after the Russians marched in, is called Anastasia, which means "Resurrection." The motherly Earth-Goddess Demeter, who lost her daughter Proserpine to the Underworld, is blended with the Orpheus legend, and the modern Argonauts seek the Golden Fleece—to find their own soul. Christianity and Antiquity are shown as deep layers of European consciousness, whilst the storm rages at the Eastern outpost of Western civilisation. And as in Else Lasker-Schueler's prophetic Judaism there is a niche for Jesus, so in Elisabeth Langgasser's Roman Catholic world the Jews have their place *sub specie aeterni*. She does not forget over the new horrors those atrocities, through which the punishment of the sinners was provoked. And when in future time historians only will study the documentary evidence about the gas-chambers, the concentration camps and Gestapo prisons, the history of that time will still be alive in this poetic novel.

It is a German confession for Europe, and yet, in a way, outside the European tradition. It is German to the core, homely and hidden at the same time, with magic words full of meaning and mystery. "labyrinthine" in spite of Ariadne's thread which the reader is offered by the poetess, who knows as much of Dionysos as of the Christian God.

"Maerkische Argonautenfahrt" is almost untranslatable. But I foresee elaborate commentaries and treatises about it, and some men of letters may even feel compelled to learn German, in order to read this truly great book in the original.

RABBI DR. SIR HERMANN GOLLANZ
1852-1930

Rabbi Dr. Hermann Gollanz, although essentially an Anglo-Jew, by long association and education, owed much to continental sources.

His command of the English language was noted, as was his knowledge of Hebrew written and oral. Yet his parentage was continental. He was born in the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen on November 30, 1852, where his father then was a rabbi. The family came to London when the first-born, Hermann, was eighteen months old. Samuel Marcus Gollanz, the father, became minister of the old Hambro' synagogue in the City of London. Born in Witkowo, and his wife from Gorzyskowi, Posen, both sides of the family had been settled in that district for generations.

At the request of Lucien Wolf, Rabbi Hermann Gollanz collected signatures from the professors of University College against the blood accusations in Russia. His sympathy with causes in the Holy Land was outstanding for one who had succeeded Dr. Hermann Adler at the Bayswater Synagogue in 1892, and who was the first of his race to receive a doctorate of literature from London University in 1899.

His position in the Gentile world was exceptional in 1913 he preached a sermon on Moses Mendelssohn, Lessing and Lavater, at Westbourne Park Chapel, the text of the discourse being toleration.

It was at 12, Clifton Gardens, Maida Vale, where this distinguished rabbi and knight resided.

OLGA SOMECH PHILLIPS

LAW and LIFE

Legal Advice Hours (for persons with limited means only): Sunday 11 a.m.—12 noon by appointment.

LAWYERS AND CLIENTS

I.

The statement about English and German Law in the article "Lawyers and Clients" (December issue of "AJR Information") would, with respect, admit of some modification and amplification:—

1. English Common Law considers illegal any agreement to share in the proceeds of litigation in an English Court of Law.

2. Professional etiquette would consider as unprofessional also an agreement of a contingency fee in matters which could possibly become contentious in an English Court.

Neither of these two rules applies to matters which are not contentious in England. It is perfectly legal in England for a lawyer and a client to agree on a contingency fee with respect to litigation in America. Whether or not it is etiquette would depend on the particular circumstances of the case.

3. With respect to German Law, there are a number of decisions to the effect that an agreement with a German advocate which makes his fee dependent on the outcome of litigation is, as a rule, against public policy and, therefore, void, unless exceptional circumstances justify such an agreement. There is no judgment of the Reichsgericht or any higher German Court which has found that every promise of a contingency fee is illegal. An exceptional situation may justify a contract which under normal circumstances would not be advisable. It is open to the Courts to find that deprivation of all his assets has made it impossible for a persecutee to remunerate his advocate other than out of proceeds of restitution of such assets.

There is in the hands of the present writer a judgment of a German Landgericht and an Order of Arrestment of an Oberlandesgericht saying in effect that under the particular circumstances of German refugees abroad the agreement of a contingency fee can be valid and they found that it was valid under the particular circumstances of the case.

It is in my opinion in order for a person who has been deprived of a large fortune, and cannot reasonably be expected to spend the remainder of his means on legal fees, and for his advocate, to enter into an arrangement securing to the advocate a reasonable fee, provided that the client will be in a position to pay the fee without becoming destitute. And it may be a reasonable and honest way towards the solution of our problems to connect such agreement with the possibilities of restitution, provided it is done with tact, moderation and decency with

respect to a straightforward claim in the justice of which both client and advocate firmly believe.

P. C.

[An article on similar lines has been received from Mr. R. Graupner.—The Ed.]

II.

As the author of the note on "Lawyers and Clients," I may be allowed to comment on Mr. C.'s letter.

(1) As is well known, two lawyers have always at least two different views. As a matter of fact, still another view than that expressed by Mr. C. has been expressed to me meanwhile, viz., that "contingency fees," though not permissible in restitution cases are permissible in indemnification cases as not belonging to "ordinary litigation." I personally do not agree with either view, but opinions just differ, and it is not intended to be dogmatic on the legal points involved.

As to German law Mr. C. goes even further than I did in my note by pointing out that contingency fees, professional etiquette apart, should in German law be considered void, except in special circumstances, which may apply—and were held to apply in a case he handled before the German Court—in restitution (or indemnification) cases. I have no objection to that view.

(2) As to the merits of the whole matter I feel that there is not much difference between Mr. C.'s point of view and mine.

That the straitened circumstances of many of our co-refugees can, and should, be taken into consideration, is obvious. We both aim at professional fees calculated, as Mr. C. puts it, "with tact, moderation and decency." However the fees are calculated, it will also have to be considered that in both, restitution and indemnification cases, a great deal of preparatory work is to be done by the legal adviser: Wills have to be traced and proved, Declarations of Death and Certificates of Inheritance have to be applied for, heavy disbursements for postage, copying and translating are necessary. Scale fees charged for all that work not belonging to the litigation proper may bring the bill in quite a few cases to those 8% or 10% which others suggest to charge as contingency fees.

The exceptional circumstances Mr. C. has in mind certainly do not apply in cases of clients who are in a position to pay normal legal fees without having "to spend the remainder of their means on them." It is certainly not admissible to allow such people to litigate without risk on the back of their lawyer.

W.B.

Alice Jacob-Loewenson (Tel Aviv)

JEWISH MUSIC AND ISRAELI MUSIC

If we want to inform ourselves about the musical life of this country, we must first take a general look at the various sources from which it has sprung.

Those Jews who came to Britain as refugees from Central Europe are steeped in the German liturgical music, those from East Europe in East Jewish music and in Chassidic and East Jewish folk songs. Every ear reacts against the unaccustomed, and from this rule the Jews living in Israel are not excepted. There is in this country however a large additional influx of Oriental music, especially recently in the Maabarot, the transit camps, and also the body of contemporary composition known here as "Israeli Music."

How is all this music related? What is the difference between East Jewish and Oriental Jewish music? What is the relative position of "Israeli Music," composed for concerts, as against the other two kinds of music?

The characteristic of all Jewish music is its basis in the ancient motifs (Taymin or Neginot) which were used for the recitation of the Bible. We can only speak of Jewish music at all where some relationship with these Neginot is evident either in its melodic line or in its rhythm which is derived from speech. All the music produced in this country—whether accepted or rejected—must only be considered from this point of view. The fate of Jewish music is conditioned on the one hand by its continued proximity to this liturgical origin and on the other by its distance from it.

Common Origins

Like all music, Jewish music also started for the single voice. Both in the East of Europe and in the Orient the single voice of the Reader retains its place of eminence, and together with the unharmonised single part chant of the congregation remains the core of Jewish music from which issues Israeli music and particularly folk music.

We have to distinguish, however, between the Sephardic-Oriental and Ashkenase (Galut) music, two strains which have been continued separately in various Jewish centres, in some cases since the destruction of the second temple. The Sephardic-Oriental centres include Yemen, Babylon, Persia (also the Jews of Bagdad, who are Buchars with Persian traditions), Syria, North Africa (Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt), Italy, Spanish Sephardim, Holland and Greece. Ashkenase music includes East Europe and Germany.

Records of the remains of these music cultures have been made by A. Z. Idelsohn, the first great historian of Jewish Oriental music, by Dr. Edith Gerson-Kiwi for the "Ethnological Institute for

Jewish Music" at the Israeli Ministry of Culture and Education, and by Johanna Spektor for America.

There was originally only one kind of Jewish music which came from the Orient; under the influence of Eastern Europe the European character of Ashkenase music then developed with which we are now familiar. The Ashkenase tradition, in its later form, is distinguished from the Sephardic by a slower tempo, dignity and more emphasis on feeling; by triad chords, and regular European form and rhythm. The melancholic minor key, the solemn longwindedness, and the piety of Russia, all helped to form the character of this music.

The exact opposite is true of the Oriental Sephardic music. This latter is by far the older, more primitive, and has the features of middle Orient music. It has no triad intervals and no harmony, but is characterised by liveliness without sustained notes, simple forms and short phrases and church scales as a basis; from the Spanish Moors it has inherited an additional Oriental tradition, including asymmetrical rhythm and less than half tone intervals; it is hot-blooded, vital, cool, rough, intensive, and beyond feeling.

Affinity to Oriental Trends

Just as Zionism wants to rid itself in general of assimilation to the peoples of the Golah, so also does this country take a more and more negative attitude towards German Jewish and Eastern Jewish music. This corresponds with the rejection by Israeli composers of the emphasis on feeling in Eastern Jewish music, which also includes German Synagogue music of the emancipation period (Lewandowsky, Sulzer, etc.); and from this follows too the affinity of contemporary music to Oriental and primitive music. Musical preference is given to all which comes from the Orient, but this less for Zionist than for artistic reasons.

Current compositions draw their inspiration from contemporary European and American music. Their whole nature aims at overcoming the tonal system. This is what makes them related to Oriental systems, which are also, in a certain sense, "atonal." The composers of Israeli music, then, do not use the East Jewish motifs which are connected with classical and romantic themes, rhythm, forms and orchestration, but the intensive pantonal, atonal or polytonal Oriental ones. There is however no convincing, genuinely original unifying spirit running through it yet, for we are still at the beginning of Israeli music.

The general radio and concert public has not much time for this music. In the synagogue it likes to remember the music of Lewandowsky, and it sticks to the European pre-classical, classical and romantic composers, Bach, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn and Tchaikovsky. Orchestras serve the public in their tastes rather than educate them.

The concert public should indeed be educated for modern music, for this is related to the music of the Bach period. There are, it is true, branches of the "International Society for Contemporary Music," and for years the radio has been running a special record hour for this type of music. But this seems to have had little success, for the Kibbuzim are complaining that they do not understand the much too brief explanations. That is how it has come about that the music heard in this country resembles ever more obviously the standard programmes heard abroad.

INVOLUNTARY AUTHORSHIP

Much to her surprise and one day too late, Mrs. Margot Salomon, well-known London Zionist worker, learnt on her return from a short trip to Germany that she had just missed a rather important and pleasant event in her life as an author: the premiere of a film, the story of which is based on one of her books, published before the Nazi Regime in Germany. Her publishers to whom she had sold the copyrights had not thought it necessary to notify the author.

"Ich hab mich so an Dich gewoehnt" is the title of the German film adapted from Margot Daniger's (Mrs. Salomon's pen-name) "Winterkuehle Hochzeitsreise." The film has made a most successful tour both in Germany and Austria.

ANGLO-JUDAICA

Soviet Antisemitism

The now barely disguised antisemitism of the Soviet regime has aroused fierce indignation in British Jewry. The Board of Deputies passed a resolution condemning the "calculated attempt" made at the Prague trial of Rudolf Slansky and ten other Jews, to "exploit anti-Jewish prejudice among the people of Czechoslovakia." Two dissentients failed to secure a pro-Communist amendment. One of them, a Labour borough councillor, was criticised by his constituent, the Grand Order Sons of Jacob, which nevertheless re-elected him. A Communist Jew, Sam Russell, the *Daily Worker* representative at the trial, attacked the Deputies as being linked with "the blackest Catholic reactionaries of the Vatican."

The Anglo-Jewish Association expressed its "horror at the virulent antisemitic trends which are becoming daily more pronounced in Iron Curtain countries." To Mr. H. A. Goodman, the Agudist chief, it seemed that protest meetings could only do harm; at all events, he felt, protest was not enough: England ought to let in some of the people who might escape from the new persecution.

Mr. Benjamin Frankel, the composer, who resigned from the Communist Party, explained that he was acting not as a Jew but as a humanitarian who was offended by every aspect of the trial. In a reference to the proceedings' "ominous anti-Jewish tone," Mr. Eden said he "hoped that we are not going to see a revival under Communism of the evil race persecutions of Hitler."

New Year Honours

Among the New Year Honours was a C.B.E. for Mr. Norman Samuel Joseph, Director of Messrs. J. Lyons & Co. (for services to the Home Office), and O.B.E.s for Mr. Nathan Turk, chairman of the Westminster Savings Committee, and Mr. Edward M. Isaacs, the blind pianist and composer, director of the Manchester Tuesday Concerts Society.

Another part-time Dayan has been appointed to the Beth Din, Rabbi A. Rapaport, Principal Rabbinical Supervisor of the Kashrus Commission in London. A world-wide search for a full-time member has produced reasonable hopes of securing the services of Rabbi David Lifschitz, of the Yeshiva University, New York.

Hebrew Learning

Complaints that the community gave insufficient support to Jews' College, were made by the Chief Rabbi, its President. The College's Centenary Appeal of £200,000 has so far raised about £65,000.

An Israel rabbi, Moshe Yona Zweig, was appointed head of the Rabbinical College and Teachers' Seminary at the Judith Lady Montefiore College, Ramsgate. The new department is a joint venture of the Jewish Agency and the Sefardi community in Britain.

The number of Hebrew seminars is increasing. When the latest was opened at Carmel College, Newbury, its scope was explained by Mr. Levi Gertner, head of the Education Department of the Zionist Federation, as "a seminary of Jewish learning, from Biblical studies, medieval poetry, modern Hebrew and literature, to Jewish history, grammar and practice in Hebrew conversation."

The London Board of Shechita has protested against the Israeli Government's decision to lift all controls on the sale of pork in Israel.

Mr. Jacob Epstein, the sculptor, accepted an invitation to assist in the restoration of Llandaff Cathedral for which he is to make a figure of Christ in Majesty.

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PELTOURS

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A BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

It is one of the effects of Hitler's wholesale extermination policy that the total number of the victims is beyond human imagination. It is therefore gratifying that an attempt of lifting this veil of anonymity has been made in a recent German publication ("Den Unvergessenen," edited by Kreisdekan Hermann Maas, Lambert Schneider and the late Professor Gustav Radbruch; Verlag Lambert Schneider, Heidelberg). The book is presented to the reading public of the country where the destruction of European Jewry was initiated and where, on the other hand, once a Jewish community flourished which had given lustre both to the German people and to Jewry at large. The average German of the younger generation is still bound to be influenced by the distorted conception of the Jew which he had been taught for

ANOTHER "BY CHANCE"

It may sound phoney, but it is quite true: again I tried my luck on the foreign stations. On a rainy day you can get a reasonable reception of Continental broadcasts even without an aerial, only you must not mind rhythmical "booooo" or "brrrr" or Morse or whistles in the background. Anyway if you have picked up something worth while, you will get used to these untamed shrieks of the universe. . . .

This time I knew instantly whom this South-German voice was talking about. There was only one man who could be referred to as "the little man with the grand voice"—Joseph Schmidt of "Ein Lied geht um die Welt" fame. Remember him? You could not turn on the radio in the early 'thirties without having his big brilliant tenor voice thrust upon you, Grand Opera, Light Opera, Folk Songs and—Schlagers, they all were sung immaculately and with fine feeling, and reached from the hide-out of a studio right into your ear and heart. How often did we not ask ourselves why this wonderful singer, unlike his colleague Richard Tauber, could never be heard on the stage, in Opera, for there is no doubt that Schmidt was by far the more versatile artiste of the two; but always one was painfully conscious of an inhibition in his performances. Well, he was a Jew, was that it? No, much simpler; like Napoleon and Chaplin, he was tiny, and there is nothing more impossible than a tiny "Heldentenor." No wonder then, that the film in which the tale of the tiny singer's great heartache was told and in which Schmidt's manly wonderful voice for the first time came out without restraint, became at once an international hit, "Ein Lied geht um die Welt. . . ."

But what became of Joseph Schmidt under Hitler? His story was told the other night in a sympathetic kindly manner by one of his friends, a Pözl von Fehna, in a Remembrance Broadcast of the Südwestfunk. It was a weird experience to me hearing the story of the German Jew on the run intermixed with "Joseph Schmidt on Records." The fallacy of fame that ran short of immortality—was that the meaning? I do not know. Zuckmayer returned, but Joseph Schmidt pegged out—there is no other word for his unglamorous end. For he died on November 12, 1942, in Friesenburger, the Refugee Camp near Zürich, and his death certificate says he died of pneumonia. That may have been so, but I wonder, did the Swiss doctor in charge perhaps hide the fact that this was only one of the symptoms of a broken heart? Two anecdotes, told in the broadcast, need to be recorded here.

"He told me," said Pözl von Fehna, "he had met Mr. Brunswick (the gramophone magnate I presume) in town, and when he spotted him, he stepped into a house entrance and waited until Brunswick had passed. I asked him why. 'Why?' he said, 'well—I didn't want to embarrass him.' And tears were in his eyes when he said that."

The other one is grimmer still. While in Belgium, then already under German occupation, Schmidt was having a meal with several people in a restaurant. There was a Nazi doctor in the company who thought it a fine joke to attack the little Jew. "You know," he said, "we are just now working out a new law that will make it compulsory for folk over sixty to be exterminated. Not violently, of course, but once and for all. Just a little final injection." "Excellent," said Joseph Schmidt, "why don't you start with your own parents?" And he threw some money on the table and left.

MALA LAASER

twelve years at school and in the Hitler Youth. He did not know the emancipated Jew who was politically, culturally and, to some extent, also socially integrated into the life of the nation; and he has but scanty chance to meet this type in post-war Germany. The impressive contributions to the book may give him some idea of the mentality of German Jews and of their undeserved fate.

It may be due to the background of the editors that prominence is given to places and personalities in the South-Western part of Germany. The "Musterlaendle" Baden, with its liberal tradition, was a particularly fertile soil for a type of Jews who, deeply rooted in their and their forefathers' homeland, left their mark on the cultural, economic and civic life of their environment. An article about Mannheim by Friedrich Walter is meant to serve as an example. Names which have become familiar beyond the boundaries of the town are put on record, the Ladenburgs, Lenels, Darmstaedters, Hachenburgs, and many others. In another article, we are reminded that, in 1933, there were 45 professors of Jewish origin in Heidelberg; 20 of them emigrated, 19 survived as partners of mixed marriages, two were deported to Gurs and two committed suicide; the fate of the other two is unknown. Special articles are dedicated to outstanding personalities such as the lung specialist Prof. Albert Fraenkel (died 1938 in Heidelberg), the authority on Goethe Prof. Georg Witkowski (died 1939 in Holland), the educationalist Ernst Kantorowicz (perished 1944 in Auschwitz), the deceased jurist and sociologist Prof. Hermann Kantorowicz, and the democratic politician Bernhard Falk (died 1944 in Brussels). A number of other articles record the fate of unknown Jews and "non-Aryan" Christians, their sufferings as outlaws and their tragic end. Nothing can bring them back to life. Yet those who were their neighbours and fellow-citizens have no right to forget what has happened. For them the book serves an important purpose, and we too have to welcome its publication as a document of our past.

WERNER ROSENSTOCK

HOSTAGES FOR WAR CRIMINALS

Some time ago a "Letter to the Editor," published in the "Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung," suggested that volunteers should come forward to act as hostages in order to enable Gross-Admiral Doenitz and other war criminals to spend Christmas with their families. In a later edition the "Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung" announces that day after day innumerable letters arrived, in which writers put themselves at the disposal for the suggested purpose.

ANTI-SEMITIC LEAFLETS

A leaflet distributed during the district election campaign in Lower Saxony—conspicuous by a black Swastika—describes the Jew as the "Dictator of Democracy, of Bolshevism and of the Vatican."

FEDERATION OF JEWISH WOMEN IN NORTH WEST GERMANY

A "Verband der Juedischen Frauenvereine Nordwest-Deutschlands" was founded by eleven Women's Organisations representing more than 600 women in the district. At a meeting held in Dortmund on January 11, Mrs. Lilli Marx, Chairman of the Duesseldorf Group, recalled the outstanding services rendered before 1933 by leading women social workers, such as Lina Morgenstern, Henriette Goldschmidt, Jeannette Schwerin, Josefine Levy-Rathenau, Bertha Pappenheim, Henriette May, Sidonie Werner, Henriette Fuerth, Cora Berliner, Hanna Karminski and Paula Ollendorff.

The tasks of Jewish women in post-war Germany included the care for the aged and for the children. Women had also a special duty of taking an active part in the general work of the local Jewish Communities and in the relief work for Jews who had fled to Western Germany from Eastern Germany and Eastern Europe.

SYNAGOGUE BECOMES CHURCH

The former synagogue at Orb in South-West Germany, which was one of the few synagogues spared during the November pogroms, has been dedicated as a Protestant church. It had been the wish of the Jewish Community that the synagogue should be maintained as a house of worship.

HAND-PICKED . . .

Under this heading most newspapers and periodicals print short funny stories. Here it is to strike a more serious note, which may appeal to our readers.

Rudolf Pechel, editor of the monthly "Deutsche Rundschau," was seventy some time ago, and as a thanks for my congratulations he sent me a private publication, printed in 500 copies, as a birthday gift from his friends. This handsome volume has the apt title "Deutsche Gegenwart" and is a reprint of his most important articles written between 1945 and 1952. It is a pity that it is not available in a cheap edition and distributed among as many readers as possible in Germany. This genuine resistance fighter who used his pen as a mighty weapon—his essays "Zwischen den Zeilen" (1932-1942) make delightful reading, though it is less delightful that there have not been many more like him—upholds the spirit of resistance in an uncompromising way, lest it become diluted by those for whom it is a passing fashion of the day.

In a lecture "Judaism, Christianity and Western Civilisation" (1950) he said, amongst other things: "The decisive impulses given to the Western World by Judaism spring from the spiritual and human qualities of the Jewish people. Decisive is the fact that both the intellectual and the emotional life of the Jews rest fundamentally on their religion. Hence comes the awe for what is above us, the quest for truth, even a fanaticism for truth, and an outspoken urge for justice. Striving to penetrate into the last secrets of God's word, boundless search after knowledge has developed, a permanent seeking of solutions (somewhat formalistically at times), the final aim of which is redemption from the horrible frailty of man. Hand in hand with this goes a specific training of the intellect, of special modes of thought and of an intense emotional life influenced by a sense of some sound realism. That is why the Jew can incline both to outspoken individualism and to socialism, if we understand the latter as the striving for social justice. . . ."

The Jewish component is part and parcel of the spirit of the Western World; our Western Civilisation must preserve it. This is only possible if we rid ourselves of hatred. Without the fundamental and responsible Jewish discovery of the very essence of a human being, the idea of the West we cherish could not have been formed. He who has suffered most comes nearest to true knowledge, provided that he wrestles honestly to find out the meaning of suffering: the history of the Jewish people is a story of suffering!"

Pechel's beautiful words are complemented by a pamphlet "Höre, Israel . . ." whose author is no less a person than the foremost French Catholic writer Paul Claudel (Bodensee Verlag, Amriswil and Friedrichshafen, sfr. 3.65). This great writer has always been a zealous missionary. But now he does not insist any longer on the conversion of the Jews though he still thinks it desirable from his position. He proclaims that the curse which the Jews, according to Christian belief, brought upon themselves ("His blood be upon us!") has by now been atoned by the unheard of sufferings of the Jews. In the fact that the foundation of Israel was the outcome of the persecutions, he sees a very miracle, the sign of heaven that this alleged curse has gone. Zion has, in his words, been restored as the seat of God's teaching, and, being not a poetic rhapsodist only, but a professional diplomatist at the same time, he urges that Israel should resume the right of the Firstborn and rebuild the Temple as a message to the United Nations. L. W.

ORGANISATION OF FORMER NAZIS

An Organisation of Victims of Denazification was founded in Germany recently. At a rally attended by 300 former holders of posts in the Party, the General Secretary of the organisation, Fritz August, stated, *inter alia*, that the creation of the Third Reich was not the fault of the former party members, but of the politicians of the Democratic Parties before 1933, who had not prevented the rise of Nazism.

GOETTINGEN HONOURS JEWISH SCIENTIST

The Social Democratic City Councillors of Goettingen have introduced a motion suggesting that "Freedom of the City" be granted to Dr. James Franck, Nobel Prize Winner and former Professor at Goettingen University. He is now living in the United States.

Leo Kahn:

PROFILE OF AN ARTIST

LUDWIG MEIDNER

When I met Ludwig Meidner for the first time, at Cologne in 1935, he was already a mature artist with an established reputation. I knew some of his work, and had been particularly impressed with the vividness and insight of his portraits. He had been one of the most brilliant and most ecstatic in the group of artists and writers who, under the banner of Expressionism, revolted against the cynicism and shallow sensuality of their time. With his fellow-Expressionists he shared the spiritual ardour and the violent emotion which they had the courage to formulate in a violent manner; he excelled all but the best of them in keenness of eye and brain, awareness of basic, traditional values, and impeccable craftsmanship; and whilst to a large extent the appeal of Expressionist art faded with the excitement of the period, Meidner's earlier paintings, drawings and etchings retain their artistic validity. True, in the later twenties Meidner went through a period of creative uncertainty when his work seemed to lose some of its vitality. It was then that a deep religious experience which led him back to orthodox Judaism provided the inspiration for his future work. Gradually his style changed and matured. The fierce individualism of his youth broadened into something more subtle and more universal in spirit. Technically, his black-and-white work became more painterly; the nervous line was replaced by balancing planes and masses as the principal means of expression.

The Impact of 1933

The advent of the Third Reich interrupted a successful career which held every promise of still greater success. Meidner left Berlin and accepted a post as art teacher at the Jewish High School "Jawne" at Cologne. His teaching there was an exhilarating revelation to the more gifted of his pupils, whilst the insensitive rest regarded him with amused bewilderment. Meidner was by no means unhappy during those years at Cologne. The architectural beauties of the ancient city appealed greatly to him; he also appreciated the conviviality of its comfortable taverns. To meet him over a glass of beer: a rotund little man with strong, jovial features; polite, unassuming, though quietly assured of his abilities; a good talker with a dry sense of humour: one thought him strangely untouched by the atmosphere of decay and danger around him. Yet at this time he created a series of drawings—one of his major achievements—in which he gave visual shape to his foreboding of the approaching cataclysm: drawings of such desperate apocalyptic power that even now one could hardly bear looking at them were it not that the very mastery of their execution re-asserted the potency of the human mind. Here if anywhere the spirit of our darkest hour has found perfect expression.

After the pogroms of 1938 Meidner, assisted by Augustus John and other English artist friends, was given refuge in this country. Refuge—but no more. Meidner, then in his fifties, was like most of us faced with the task of starting his career afresh; he did not succeed. As far as art is concerned, England is still very much an island; with the exception of French Impressionists and a few fashionable celebrities, it is extremely difficult for foreign artists to catch the English art lover's eye. The refugee community, on the other hand, pre-occupied with material worries and eagerly trying to adapt itself to the English way of life, generally paid little attention to its own artists and writers. And if Meidner had hoped that his religious drawings would hold a special appeal to the members of Jewish congregations he overlooked that it was the spirit of the prophets and the Jewish mystics that lived in his work; a spirit that is often lost in the pragmatic Judaism of to-day. It is probably also true that Meidner has not the makings of a really popular artist. He lacks the pictorial elegance and the warm sense of natural beauty that are easily enjoyed. His work excites and inspires: it does not delight or soothe.

Whatever the cause, Ludwig Meidner, together with his wife Else—herself an artist of great talent and originality—has been living a life of artistic isolation and financial hardship for the last twelve years. There were very occasional commissions for

portraits, like that of Dr. Leo Baeck, and one or two exhibitions which received very favourable notices but failed to attract a wider public. Night after night the light burned in the barely furnished, though always neat and tidy, room where Meidner lives and works; his portfolios filled with hundreds of drawings and aquarelles known only to the small circle of his friends. For these a visit to Meidner is a very pleasant and stimulating experience. He has a profound knowledge of the history and theory of art. He judges the work of his fellow-artist, sometimes severely, often with generous appreciation; never with any trace of prejudice or spite. His approach to any human or social problem has the simplicity and directness which is typical of the true artist. He likes to show his work and to make his own dry, amusingly objective comments: "Dies ist mir nicht ganz geglückt," "Ein schönes Blatt, nicht wahr?" or "Humorvoll, aber nicht sehr wichtig." There are certain themes which occur again and again in his work with a profuse variety of presentation: Drawings of biblical subjects which have some affinity to the work of William Blake whom he greatly admires. Lively impressions of street and café scenes in water-colours, many of them with a nice, satirical touch. Macabre fantasies composed of human rabble. Coloured cartoons of rich, earthy, rather savage humour. But if Meidner's output remained prolific, the lack of a wider response inevitably caused some frustration. He considers himself first and foremost a portraitist, but this side of his artistic personality was perforce neglected for lack of commissions and models. Again, he could not exploit and develop his mastery of the art of oil-painting for the simple reason that canvas and oil-colours are expensive. He began to feel that his work was becoming flat and narrow in range compared with what he knew he could achieve under happier circumstances.

A Visit to Germany

A few months ago Meidner was invited to visit friends in Germany. He went and there, suddenly and beyond expectation, he found the response and encouragement he needed. Critics welcomed him back as one of the outstanding figures of contemporary German art. Publications of his earlier work were re-issued. He received more portrait commissions, many from leading public personalities like President Heuss, than he had time to complete. He regained his full creative joy and self-assurance, and we can believe him when he writes that his work profits accordingly in liveliness and certainty of touch.

It is a strange and sadly significant situation. Here is a Jewish refugee living in our midst, a considerable artist by any standard, whose work has to a large extent been inspired by our fate and our religion; yet he is almost completely ignored by our community which professes to be proud of its cultural interests. At the same time he finds recognition, and is claimed as her own, by the nation that once persecuted him as a Jew and "degenerate" artist. At the moment Ludwig Meidner feels—and who can blame him?—that his spiritual home is where his art is understood and appreciated. We may hope that on his return to London this state of things will change. If not, the loss will be ours.

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Old Acquaintances

Twenty Years Ago:—January 1933 was the end of an epoch in Germany not only in the political sphere, but also in the artistic life. A look upon the theatre programmes of those days reminds us of the upheaval. Grete Mosheim and Ludwig Stoessel, now in the United States, played Offenbach's "Liebling von Paris" in the "Lessing Theater," and Oscar Homolka, now in London, produced the show. Max Pallenberg, who died a long time ago, acted his famous "Schwejk" in the "Theater des Westens" and his wife Fritzi Massary sang Oscar Strauss' "Eine Frau, die weiss, was sie will" in the "Metropol-Theater." Otto Preminger, now a Hollywood director, produced in "Kammerspiele" "Essig und Oel" with Karl Stepanek, now in London, and Hans Moser. In the "Grosses Schauspielhaus" Alfred Rotter directed "Ball in Savoy"; he was later murdered by the Nazis in Liechtenstein. The star of the show was Gitta Alpar, now happily married and not singing any more. Hans Albers played "Liliom" in the "Admiralspalast." Karl Heinz Martin, who died five years ago in Berlin, showed Julius Hay's "Gott, Kaiser und Bauer" in the "Deutsches Theater," and Kortner, now back in Germany, the late Paul Wegner, and Mathias Wiemann acted in it. Instead of Gruendgens Alexander Granach played "Mephisto" in "Faust" in the "Staatstheater," and the late Max Adalbert starred in "Das Haus dazwischen" by Marcellus Schiffer and Felix Joachimson with music by Mischa Spolianski in the "Komoedienhaus." On the last day of the month the "Presseball" took place as usual—the last public appearance in Germany of Marlene Dietrich, von Sternberg, Roda Roda, Fritz Lang, Vollmoeller, Ellen Richter, Richard Oswald, Dr. Dr. Frey, and Dr. Sahm, to name only a few of the thousands. It was under sad auspices although many were not aware of it yet.

Behind the Curtain:—The first visible consequence of the Kafka-like Slansky trial in Prague was the resignation of Arnold Zweig as chairman of the East-German Academy; his place was taken by J. R. Becher. Zweig, who returned from exile in Israel, is as suspect as everybody who survived the Hitler years in the West. Like others, artists who returned from Mexico and London to East Berlin, are in danger now, especially if they are Jews. Two prominent actors have already left Eastern Berlin: Curt Bois, who returned from Hollywood, and Eduard von Winterstein whose son, Gustav von Wangenheim, lost his job some time ago. Those who are mainly threatened by the new drive are Alexander Abusch, Bodo Uhse, Ludwig Renn, Anna Seghers, Alfred Kantorowicz, Professor Meusel, Juergen Kuczynski, and Heinz Schmidt; Bert Brecht is still the "enfant terrible" of the East-German culture.

Home News:—Charles Goldner and Gerard Heinz scored successes in "Dear Charles."—Julius Gellner is going to Israel to produce "Macbeth" with "Habimah."—Producer Viktor Skutezky, who showed his successful and first independent film "Yellow Balloon," has bought the screen rights of Joan Henry's best-selling book "Who Lie in Jail."—Wanda Rotha will play in "Oedipus" opposite Donald Wolfitt in the "King's Theatre."—There is a French picture, "Jeux Interdits" at the "Academy" which you should not miss under any circumstances.—Weidenfeld and Nicolson will publish "Das Leben der Tiere" by Morus, whose real name is Richard Lewinsohn; he used to write about financial problems in "Voss" and "Weltbuehne," and returned only a short time ago from South America to Paris.

News from Everywhere:—Max Hansen is playing "Nitouche" in Malmoe.—Leo Mittler successfully produced the "Merry Widow" in Frankfurt.—Rudi Ball, the once famous Jewish ice hockey player, is living as an agent in Johannesburg.—Leopold Lindtberg, of "Last Chance" fame, is directing "The Pestalozzi Village" with John Justin in the English version.—Lilian Harvey will marry her Danish agent in Copenhagen.—Eric Godal showing his drawings and paintings in a New York gallery.—H. H. Carwin, formerly Karpeles, became chief lector of Berlin's Felix Bloch Erben agency.—Dela Lipinskaya went from London to New York to appear on New Year's Eve in New York's Town Hall.

PEM

PERSONALIA

Mr. Otto Lehmann-Russbuehdt recently became 80 years old. Between the wars, he was one of the leaders of the "Deutsche Liga fuer Menschenrechte," which he is now trying to re-activate in Berlin. He has always been a bold fighter for Freedom and Peace and became particularly well known by his courageous attacks against secret rearmament during the Weimar period. His numerous friends in this country where he lived as an emigrant wish him many years to come of unchanged vigour and successful activities.

Professor Dr. Salomon Levi (formerly Studienrat in Ludwigshafen, now London) became 70 years old. Prior to his emigration Professor Levi took a leading part in the work of the Jewish community of Mannheim. The AJR, whose member he has been for a great number of years, wishes to extend to him its heartiest congratulations.

Mr. Benno Sachs passed away in London recently. He was a Council Member of the "Israelitische Kultusgemeinde" of his home town Wuerzburg. In this country he took an active interest in the work of refugee organisations. Especially his services as board member of the Golders Green Refugees Club during the first years of the war will be gratefully remembered by many friends.

It is announced with deep regret that Mr. Adolf Landecker (formerly Berlin) passed away in the United States. In Berlin Mr. Landecker took a responsible part in the activities of the "Gemeinde," especially as Hon. Chairman of the Welfare District Offices "Friedrichshain" and "Osten" and as a Council Member of the Lindenstrasse Synagogue. Before joining his son in the U.S.A. he stayed for some years in London. During that period he rendered most valuable voluntary services at AJR Headquarters. Throughout his life he felt a genuine urge to advise and help people in distress, and innumerable persons gratefully remember the selfless and understanding assistance received from this most lovable man. His friends in many countries will join his widow (Mrs. Hertha Landecker, 338 Maynard, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.) in her sorrow.

After a long illness Dr. Bruno Huelse passed away in London. Before his emigration he was a lawyer in Bunzlau (Silesia), where he was also President of the Jewish Community and of the Town Council. He was a most lovable man whose death is sincerely mourned by his family and many friends.

Mrs. Marta Wertheim passed away at Bath at the age of 82. She was the widow of Wilhelm Wertheim, one of the founders of the well-known Berlin Department Stores. In this country, she looked after many refugee children who had found hospitality in English homes of the Bath district.

Letter from Jerusalem

Chicken Story: For the first time in years, butchers and poultry shops are full of chickens, "dressed" or alive, to be had without rationing or "protectie" by each and everybody—who can afford to pay 1/3 for a pound of fowl. It is not surprising that there are more chickens than customers, for the bare necessities of life have risen to such an extent that people must scrape together their budgets for paying electricity (if there is any) and basic foods (of which there is now plenty). Only potatoes make still rare appearances and fetch high prices on the black market.

Popular President: The new President of Israel, Ben Zvi, has not yet been long in office, but he proves to be immensely popular. He resides not in the seclusion of Rehovoth, as his predecessor did, but in Israel's capital which has become the centre of state receptions and official ceremonies, as never before. Moreover, Dr. Weizmann in his last years was forced by his failing health to lead a retiring life. His successor can fulfill all the functions of a President, and most of them are public functions which makes him so well liked with the public.

H. F.

EXHIBITION OF PALESTINE-ISRAELI STAMPS

It is understood that the Israeli Ministry of Transport will lend its beautiful collection of stamps to the British Association of Palestine-Israeli Philatelists. An Exhibition, particulars about which will be announced in due course, will be held in London shortly. Enquiries regarding the Exhibition and membership of the Association should be addressed to Major S. Denfield, 49 The Downage, Hendon, London, N.W.4.

FAMILY EVENTS

Entries in this column are free of charge. Texts should be sent in by the 18th of the month.

Marriage

Priester—Loevy.—The marriage took place of Mr. Victor Priester (formerly Regensburg/Saarz) to Miss Edith Loevy (formerly Breslau), 2 Church Street, Etherley Dene, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham.

Deaths

Mrs. Emmy Pottlitzer (née Fabian), of 10 Corringham Court, London, N.W.11, passed away on January 14, 1953, deeply mourned by Mrs. Mirjam Wiener (Tel-Aviv), Max and Margot Pottlitzer (10 Herga Court, Harrow-on-the-Hill, Middx.), and Henri and Ella Pottlitzer (Paris).

Mr. Berl Goldstein (formerly of Vienna) died on January 7, 1953, in his 80th year, at 8 Kingsley Close, London, N.2. Mourned by his children and relatives.

Mr. Max Aronheim, of 44 Aberdare Gardens, N.W.6, died November 23, 1952, deeply mourned by his wife Adele Aronheim (née Neuhauser) and his family.

Mrs. Tilly Faerber (née Merzbach) passed away on January 21, 1953, deeply mourned by her daughter Mrs. G. Feist (née Faerber), her son-in-law H. J. Feist, 73 Greencroft Gardens, N.W.6, and her brother B. Merzbach, 25 Eden Way, Beckenham, Kent.

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MISSING PERSONS Enquiries from AJR

Grebler, Max, from Berlin, N.W.87, Solingerstr. 6, for Henry Rosenberg, Muenchen.

Scheier, Mr. and wife Esther, and Lichtenthal, Mechulem, from Berlin-Charlottenburg, Uhlandstr., for Georg Kaczmarek, Berlin.

Friedlaender, Alfred, born 20.1.05 at Rastenburg, worked at Landgericht, Bartenstein, for Helene Strelow, Holstein.

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AJR AT WORK

AJR QUESTIONNAIRE

Together with the January issue of "AJR Information" a questionnaire was sent to all AJR members and donors. It was already pointed out in the explanatory note to the questionnaire that the outcome of the enquete will be of utmost importance, especially for assessing the social needs within our community. So far a very large number of questionnaires has already been returned. It would be appreciated if those who so far have not sent in the forms would do so in the course of the very next days.

LIBRARY OF GERMAN BOOKS

The AJR Social Services Department thanks all those who, in answer to the announcement in the last issue, have put books at the disposal of the newly established Library.

A good number of books are now available. Those who want to make use of the Lending Library may call at the AJR, 8 Fairfax Mansions, Room No. 3, on Monday-Thursday 10-1 and 3-6, and Friday and Sunday 10-1. There is no charge.

AJR EMPLOYMENT AGENCY

In January we were notified of more vacancies than during the preceding months. Even now, however, we are in need of more openings, especially for clerical workers, needlewomen, part-time domestic workers (cooks, companions, attendants).

CHEVRA KADISHA

The New Liberal Congregation, 51 Belsize Square, N.W.3, has founded a Chevra Kadisha which will be at the disposal of members and non-members of the Congregation alike.

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The Ex-Service (N.B.) Association, which represents the interests of those former refugees who served with H.M. Forces, recently celebrated the 10th Anniversary of its foundation. The date coincided with the publication of the 100th issue of their bulletin "The Ex-Serviceman." To mark these two happy occasions, the Ex-Service Association has published an enlarged issue of its Monthly, which contains a number of impressive messages of good will, *inter alia*, from Earl Mountbatten and other leading personalities. The AJR expresses its heartiest congratulations to the Ex-Service Association and is looking forward to many further years of happy co-operation.

Help us to complete our Survey

Return your Questionnaire

Give us addresses of non-members
to whom it should be sent.

JACOB EHRLICH SOCIETY

Resumption of Activities

The Jacob Ehrlich Society, which was founded during the war, has resumed its activities to represent the interests of Jewish refugees from Austria. The Society, which will closely co-operate with the AJR, appeals to former Austrian Jews to join its ranks. The Committee consists of Dr. H. Tauber (Chairman), Dr. F. Brassloff (Vice-Chairman), Mr. S. Ellenberg (Hon. Treasurer), Dr. E. R. Bienenfeld (Legal Adviser) and the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. Fraenkel, 45 Larkhall Rise, S.W.4, from whom particulars may be obtained.

Indispensable for all Jews from Germany are the

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DEBATE ON ALIENS ORDER

The "Expiring Laws Continuance Bill" which was recently adopted in Parliament, also provides for the continuance of the existing Aliens Orders. During the debate, several Members of Parliament stressed the need for having a thorough debate on the legal position of aliens at a later date and also for codifying the great number of supplementary regulations. It was recalled that the powers laid down in the regulations were delegated by Parliament to the Home Office at a time of emergency when World War I broke out. Several speakers pointed out that the decisions of the Government Departments, e.g. refusals of admission or orders of deportation, should be made subject to appeals before impartial tribunals. Furthermore, some of the present regulations were considered unnecessary in times of peace. It was stressed that the biblical principle that one law shall be to the stranger and to the home born should also be the guiding principle for to-day's aliens policy.

Notwithstanding this criticism it was unanimously felt that, during the past two decades, Britain had kept alive tradition by giving a home to her persecutees.

NATURALISATION OF EX-PRISONERS OF WAR

In a written reply the Home Secretary stated that he would deal with the applications for naturalisation from former prisoners of war, when those Poles who actively served the Allied cause during the war have had a reasonable opportunity of applying and when he is satisfied that the applications can be dealt with without prejudice to those of others who might be regarded as having a prior claim.

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