

# AJR

# INFORMATION

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## BEHOLD THE DAY

### Reflections on the Days of Awe

On the Day of New Year, the verdict is pronounced, recorded; and on the Day of Fasting, of Atonement, it is promulgated and confirmed. Thus runs the familiar formula of the ancient liturgical poem which occupies so central a place in the religious services conducted in celebration of both Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. *Unetaneh tokef* it begins; and its call to the celebrants to proclaim the awe-inspiring sanctity of the occasion is intoned with a penetrating solemnity which leaves few worshippers unmoved. 'Behold the Day of Judgement' it declares; and this notion is carried forward and reinforced by the reference made in some prayer books to the legendary association of this hymn with the mediaeval martyrdom of the pious and steadfast Rabbi Amnon of Mainz.

#### Contemporary significance

Remembrance of Jewish martyrs has, by tradition and legend, attached itself also to another highly emotive passage in the New Year services — the reading of the chapter in *Genesis* which deals with Isaac's near-sacrifice at the hands of Abraham, his own father. This subject, the so-called '*akida*', the beloved son's binding upon a hastily erected altar and his last-minute rescue by divine intervention, is a recurring theme in early Hebrew poetry. One set of verses by an anonymous author, and dating from a period between the 4th and 7th centuries, recounts the biblical tale without any embellishments, in straightforward, unembroidered language. By contrast, certain poets of the 12th century, writing in Germany, and clearly much affected by the outrages committed by crusaders against Jews in the Rhineland and elsewhere, describe the sequence of the story in highly emotional, mystical terms and with extravagant imagery. Yet another poem of that epoch, now part of Sephardi liturgy, sees Abraham and Isaac 'knocking at the gates of mercy'.

Justice and mercy, martyrdom and sacrifice, these are the correlative issues which characterise so much of the ritual and philosophical content of this, the most important phase of the Jewish

yearly cycle. In the time which has passed since we last reflected in these columns upon the meaning and the message, for us here and now, of these ancient days of meditation and prayer, we have had cause to be concerned, in different contexts, with these concepts. The coming year is likely to provide us with at least one more occasion to contemplate them in a matter which inevitably touches us more than most. The recent capture of the French Nazi collaborator Paul Touvier, after years of hiding (mostly in the shadow of religious institutions), is bound to lead to another war crimes trial and the revival of controversy — concerning the part played by Frenchmen of his political persuasion in the systematic persecution and murder of French Jews, and of German Jews imprisoned in Vichy-operated concentration camps, like the one at Gurs in the Lower Pyrenees; concerning, too, the implications of the fact that he was able to evade the forces of the law for so long with the help of elements of the Catholic Church in France, that same Church which provided not a few of its own martyrs in the cause of anti-Nazism; and, finally, concerning the rights and wrongs of holding such trials at all, so long after the events when witnesses are few and getting fewer and memories

no longer unimpeachably reliable. Maître Jacques Vergès, the resourceful defender of Klaus Barbie, the last Nazi to be tried in France for crimes against humanity, went even further by arguing that, since French courts could not, as the law stood, penetrate the amnesty granted to persons who had made themselves culpable by committing inhuman acts during the colonial occupation of Algeria, they were disqualified, on legal and moral grounds, from pronouncing sentence upon Nazis and stood similarly indicted.

#### Hope must not fade

On the eve of the French Revolution, exactly 200 years ago, the Comte de Mirabeau was moved to declare: 'History has too often recounted the actions of nothing more than wild animals, among which at long intervals we can pick out some heroes. Now we are given hope that we are beginning the history of man.' The trial of Paul Touvier will show how greatly he was mistaken, how, to this day his hope has, alas, remained unfulfilled. But this hope must not be allowed to fade. For us, as Jews, it is nourished and renewed each year by the reading of the *akida* story, with its teaching that no creed, however sacred, no ideology, however exalted, is entitled to demand

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a human sacrifice, that even martyrdom must not be sought, but only suffered as a last resort. It was this precept, this uncompromising stand against the taking and giving of human lives in the name of religion, which distinguished Judaism from its pagan contemporaries and encouraged its followers to resist the blandishments and coercions of an alternative dispensation. If only all mankind would learn this lesson soon!

D.L.M.

### STAB-IN-THE-BACK AD INFINITUM

The programme which German television transmitted on the 45th anniversary of the Officers' Plot provided a disconcerting eye-opener. It took the form of a confrontation between Count von Einsiedel, who in 1943-45 headed an anti-Hitler organisation of German officers in Soviet PoW camps, and an erstwhile Wehrmacht colleague since transmogrified into a Bundeswehr — and NATO — colonel. This Colonel Zank charged that von Einsiedel's actions had run counter to the German national interest and imperilled the lives of his former frontline *Kameraden*.

In other words, half a century after the continent-wide eruption of German aggression a senior military figure in the Federal Republic regurgitates the Goebbels-inspired identification of Hitler's cause with that of Germany, and dubs von Einsiedel, whom the senseless bloodletting at Stalingrad had turned into an anti-Nazi, a traitor. It seems that the danger to the future of a democratic Germany does not emanate solely from the beerswilling xenophobic rednecks who form Schönhuber's electoral constituency.

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## CATHARTIC ENCOUNTER

I, who had been 9 at the time of the Kristallnacht, was invited back to Germany by the municipality of Höchst in the Odenwald, a district still very rural in its outlook and conservatism. It was relatively easy for the larger German cities to invite their surviving erstwhile Jewish citizens from abroad. Firstly they could afford to do so, and secondly the antisemitic atrocities were probably not carried out by immediate neighbours. There were plenty of volunteers to do the looting, beating up and burning who for the most part did not know their victims — and if they did, can avoid recognition today through the anonymity of the urban environment.

It is not so in the less populated areas where *Kristallnacht* may have been organised by the official Nazi party, but the marauding mobs were mainly locals who knew their victims. It was not in their interest that we should return to Höchst; our return was by no means universally popular, and even resisted in some quarters. It was therefore to the greater credit of Höchst, that the *Bürgermeister*, spurred on by a local history group, who had worked tirelessly to trace those who had escaped the holocaust, invited us to spend 5 days in the town. It was a brave gesture, undertaken with some trepidation. What did they know about us and our feelings? Research revealed that there had been about 120 Jews living in the town in the Thirties. About half that number managed to flee the country; the others, were eventually deported in trucks to Theresienstadt. No one returned. But they are remembered. For a long time they were unmentionable, becoming the town's secret. Now, 50 years on, they are discussed and talked of as individuals with names. The older generation still avoids the subject, does not answer questions, and says 'Lass es sein' or 'Was geht das Dich an?' when young researchers want to find out.

Finally, only 9 of us came. Some were clearly too old and too frail, and some felt unable to face the emotional ordeal. We hailed from Argentina, Paraguay, U.S.A. and Israel. I was the only European representative from England.

We were welcomed warmly in the Town Hall by the *Bürgermeister* and local worthies. It was not a fulsome welcome, but fearful and hesitant, obviously concerned about our reaction, and it was genuine. They wanted, honestly, to stretch out their hands 'across graves and frontiers' and hoped we would accept them. They had considered our needs and our fears and our susceptibilities; they showed understanding and compassion, and shame for their parents' generation.

We were well cared for in a quiet Gasthaus outside the main village, to which Kosher food was brought (at some inconvenience, I imagine) from Frankfurt. Our busy programme included a visit to the rebuilt synagogue of Michelstadt, a mere museum now. On arrival, we found two men laying an unofficial wreath at the synagogue on the 50th anniversary of its destruction. Teachers from the local grammar school, they were surprised to see us, and explained that theirs was a private action. They had already spoken to their pupils of the events and had brought some of them to visit. At receptions in other localities we were aware of the embarrassment with which officials faced us (but one needs to bear in mind

that these encounters lay outside their official duties; they could presumably have refused). We were constantly astonished to find that the incidents of the Kristallnacht are still alive in people's memories. We who have been through that night remember the events as though they happened yesterday, but so do the witnesses — and no doubt the perpetrators.

### Truth had been concealed

We attended an 'Any Questions' session with a panel of speakers on the topic of how it was possible for the Kristallnacht to occur. Given the size of the community the audience was huge, and the two hours set aside became almost four. I asked the panellists what their parents had told them about events — and in particular the representatives of the churches what their predecessors had told them of their sermons on Sunday 13 November 1938. Their answers, inevitably, were not very clear or happy. The Catholic priest chose not to reply, and the Protestant minister told me that he had asked that very question of the then preachers who now regretted what they did not say. A 15-year old had the courage to announce before the several hundred people present that he regretted having been taught so little history. A middle-aged man asked to interview a Jewish 'returnee', so that he might be told truthfully exactly what had happened in his home town in those dark days. He clearly wished to know how far his own family had been implicated, and suspected that the truth had been concealed from him.

We were invited into the local school, where what at first sight looked casual and uninterested adolescents quickly listened to us with fascinated attention. They knew little but were determined to find out. I suggested they should persevere with questioning their grandparents, and refuse to be fobbed off with devious replies. Having been shaken and visibly affected by the tales we told I think they will.

We attended an ecumenical church service, where the preacher stressed the imperative need to break the silence. The victims needed to talk he said, but so, even more, did the perpetrators.

After the service came the dedication of the memorial to the synagogue destroyed 50 years earlier. The *Bürgermeister*, giving an exact account of the destruction, did not spare the citizens of Höchst im Odenwald; he reminded them of how their parents and grandparents, if not actually involved, had come to gawp at the spectacle, to give tacit — as well as vocal — approval. Again we prayed, including a Hebrew prayer for the dead. People stood silently. Some wept. Strangers came to greet us with clasped hands or embraces.

What we witnessed was goodwill and a longing to come to terms with what had happened — not to rule off this past and say 'it is behind us'. The Bishop of Trier, commemorating Kristallnacht, put it thus: 'We, as Germans and Christians, are not in a position to offer reconciliation, let alone demand it; it is up to us to open our hearts for a reconciliation that might come to us'.

RUTH FINCH

## OAKTREE FROM REFUGEE SHUL ACORN

### The Story of Belsize Square Synagogue

Arrivals in a strange land tend to form enclaves of neighbourly companionship; and so it was that the hostels and boarding houses, the bedsitting rooms and modest flats around the Swiss Cottage area of Hampstead became the first homes of many of the refugees who came to London — most of them to stay, some to go on to other destinations — between 1933 and 1939. Those who stayed were, by and large, anxious to resume their religious commitment and sought to do so within the framework of established Anglo-Jewish congregations. But some were determined, despite a precarious existence and an uncertain future, to rebuild at least one synagogue in the image of those which had gone up in flames in November 1938 lest their tradition should be lost.

#### Beginning Again

A handful of them found each other. They met privately in small groups to talk, to play a game of chess, perhaps; and on Friday evenings they stayed together for a service with prayers said and chanted in the manner they remembered. In Germany they had belonged to the mainstream, so-called *liberale* communities (not to be confused with English Liberals), and had thus been adherents of a less uncompromising interpretation of Jewish tradition than that of the more strictly orthodox, with whom, however, they shared all the values of the faith and, in essence, most of the observances. The Liberals of Anglo-Jewry, on the other hand, pursued a much more radical line. But Rabbi Dr. Israel Mattuck, the then leader of the Anglo-Jewish Progressive movement, and a dedicated supporter of the refugee cause, invited the *ad-hoc* worshippers to hold their Shabbat Eve services more formally at the Liberal Synagogue's Montefiore Hall, St. John's Wood. The date of the first of these was 24 March, 1939; and soon it became a regular event. Rabbis and cantors, now bereft of their former congregations in Berlin or Frankfurt, Breslau or Hamburg, came and went as visiting preachers or to lead the worshippers in prayer. But one person above all lent strength to the endeavour: the Hon. Lilian H. Montagu added the cares of this pioneer band of congregants to her numerous other self-imposed concerns for the welfare of her fellow human beings, Jews and non-Jews alike. She had greatly assisted the formation of organised Jewish Liberalism in Great Britain and abroad; and when, in June 1939, the refugees at prayer became the 'New Liberal Jewish Association' within the World Union for Progressive Judaism, she took on the chairmanship of the new congregation. Dr. Georg Salzberger became its rabbi and Magnus Davidsohn its cantor. As yet, it had no 'place of its own', and the Montefiore Hall remained the venue for Friday evening services right up to 1950, while from 1942 Shabbat morning prayers could be held at the two-room congregational premises at 30 Buckland Crescent. High Holidays were celebrated with a main service at St. John's Wood and an overflow service in the Wigmore Hall. In 1948 it was possible for the first time to bring all

worshippers together at St. Pancras Town Hall for the most solemn days in the Jewish calendar. Then came the opportunity to acquire the former St. Peter's Vicarage at 51, Belsize Square, where the congregation's own synagogue and communal offices were inaugurated in 1951.

Rabbi Salzberger retired in 1956. He had served the New Liberal Jewish Congregation for over 17 years, bringing to its members inspiration and encouragement in their endeavour to cling to their familiar form of Judaism. He had helped them to find their way back to normality, both as Jews and as human beings. He was uniquely qualified to perform this task because he was one of them, had indeed known some personally during his 30 years as rabbi in Frankfurt-am-Main. He had shared with many the indignity of *Kristallnacht* and the ordeal of the concentration camp, as well as, subsequently, the lesser ordeal of the London Blitz. He led the new congregation with wisdom and vision, assisted throughout his ministry by Cantor Magnus Davidsohn, whose *chazanut* and teaching skills earned deep and lasting respect.

#### Transition

Dr. Salzberger was succeeded by Rabbi Jakob Kokotek. He, too, was among the last Jews to leave Germany, having remained with his congregation until the position had become untenable. In 1958 a new synagogue, seating 300, built with some help from restitution funds, but otherwise financed by the members themselves, was solemnly consecrated. Under its roof, Rabbi Kokotek led the congregation into a new stage of development. Gradually, English replaced German as the language of the sermon and of those prayers which were not recited in Hebrew. Gradually, also, the Sephardi pronunciation of Hebrew was introduced. A new generation was now growing up and into the life of the congregation. One of the early members recalls that, being a young mother, she was at first reluctant to join a synagogue which at that time had hardly any youngsters of school age or below. But by the time her son celebrated his barmitzvah in 1946, the congregation's youth activities — education, children's choir, youth groups — had taken off and ten years later they were in full swing. Other changes, too, were taking place. Sadly, in 1963, the congregation lost the person who had been its guiding light for almost a quarter of a century: Lily Montagu. Fortunately there were others able and willing to take over from her the direction of a community now some 2000 strong.

This was indeed a time of transition and integration. The 'refugee shul' was in the process of becoming part of Anglo-Judaism, while still retaining a distinct identity and character. This development was reflected in the consolidation of all aspects of the practised ritual. Rabbi Kokotek's scholarly translation of the German *Einheitsgebetbuch* to meet the needs of an increasingly anglicised body of worshippers went hand in hand with the musical arrangements of

the liturgy undertaken by Rev. Joseph Dollinger, Magnus Davidsohn's successor as cantor and teacher.

#### Consolidation

No less important were the milestones which the congregation passed during the fourth decade of its existence. In 1971 it changed its name to 'Belsize Square Synagogue'. In 1973 a new communal hall was opened. In 1975 Rabbi Kokotek gave a notable series of lectures on 'Ways of Jewish Survival' and in the following year the first of the annual Salzberger Memorial Lectures was delivered. Rev. Dollinger retired in 1977 and was succeeded by Cantor Louis Berkman of Cape Town. In 1978, ex-Prime Minister Harold Wilson (defying an attack of influenza) addressed the Synagogue's JIA fundraising function as guest of honour. With the death of Rabbi Kokotek in September 1981, an era came to an end.

The new rabbi, Melbourne-born Rodney Mariner, a graduate of Monash University, brought to the ministry secular as well as Judaic erudition. The new incumbent's Anglo-Australian background fitted well into the contemporary shape of Belsize Square, not least since his mentors included rabbis whose roots lay in the same soil as that from which it had itself grown. His charm, energy and enthusiasm were to confirm the view held by many congregants, of all ages, that theirs was not just a *shul* but a family, supportive of their private needs no less than of their expectations as members of a religious community. Within a year of his induction, Rabbi Mariner was joined by Rev. Lawrence Fine, a New Yorker with considerable musical gifts and cantorial experience.

Since the death of Lily Montagu, lay leadership had passed through a line of distinguished chairmen — Ernst Levy, Fritz Levy, Ernest Nathan — to one born in this country rather than in Central Europe: Liverpudlian Harry Davies.

In the year of its Golden Jubilee, Belsize Square can point with some pride to its achievements: a lively branch has been established in one of the Northern suburbs of the metropolis where monthly services attract highly gratifying attendances. The very young are catered for by a toddler group for under-threes, and junior services are held for older children. There is a youth choir and teenagers are invited to take part in a number of activities. Teaching at the religion school, and barmitzvah tuition, are of the highest standard, as the highly competent performance of ritual offices by young members demonstrates. At the opposite end of the age range one finds many congregants serving on AJR House committees and giving voluntary help at the Paul Balint Day Centre. And now one more milestone has been passed. After much heart-searching, and with due gratitude to the Progressive Jewish movement with which it had lived in friendship for so many years, the congregation chose to seek its future as a truly independent community, mindful of the wishes of its founders and comfortable in its own brand of non-orthodox conservatism.

'The story of the beginning of a community must always be preserved', said Rabbi Salzberger. This article is intended as a modest contribution to that aim. DAVID MAIER

## PEDAGOGUE AND HUMANIST

Hans Deichmann: 'LEBEN MITPROVISORISCHER GENEHMIGUNG. Leben, Werk and Exil von Dr. Eugenie Schwarzwald. (Gutmann & Peterson, Berlin/Wien, 1988.)

For 37 years, from 1901 to the Anschluss, Eugenie Schwarzwald was known by the half-affectionate, half-sarcastic epithet 'a Viennese Institution'. The private school she had founded was quite unique. Naturally it had to meet official requirements — the *Abitur* came under Ministry supervision — but the teaching staff went out of their way to ameliorate exam pressures and foster individual talent. They turned a blind eye if a pupil who did well in arts subjects lagged behind in the sciences, or vice versa. In addition, the school offered a rich programme of extra-curricular activities: play reading, choral singing, piano lessons, etc. Teaching was designed to promote all-round development, independence of judgement and harmonious interaction.

By the 1930s the school functioned like a well-oiled mechanism. The alumni of those years only saw the famous founder once annually (when, handing each girl a bonbon, she wished us Merry Christmas) and had no conception of the difficulties she had encountered in her early life.

Born Eugenie Nussbaum at Palupanowka (a tiny village in Bukowina) in 1872, she attended a single class primary school accommodating 70 children. She found the atmosphere there depressing and conceived a vision — which she ultimately turned into reality — of a 'happy school'. Subsequently she attended the *lycee* and teachers' training college at Czernowitz, a stimulating reservoir of talent for the multinational Habsburg Empire. At the time women were not admitted to higher education in Austria; she therefore enrolled at the progressive university of Zürich, where she read Philosophy, English, German and Educational Theory. Her Zürich years were marked by privations barely mitigated through income from private lessons and translation work.

In 1900 she moved to Vienna and married a colleague, Dr. H. Schwarzwald, who rose by his own merits to a senior post at the Finance Ministry, which he was to occupy throughout many changes of government. Because her Swiss degree was not recognised in Vienna, she only received a provisional — annually renewable — licence to teach. However, despite such official chicanery, she managed to build up the Schwarzwald Schule into an internationally renowned institution.

Her imagination and organisational talent prompted her constantly to launch new projects; she also achieved a great deal by dint of delegating authority. During the Great War she initiated a project for sending Viennese children into the countryside, and set up a network of soup kitchens that could feed up to 70,000 people. During the first grim postwar winter she contrived to procure food from Romania, Denmark and Switzerland. No sooner had one aid project been launched, then she set about starting the next: hostels for girl apprentices, day homes, summer camps and the 'Youth-helps-the-Old'

Association. Specially valuable was her students' meal service, from which the author himself benefited. When Austria made a quicker economic recovery than Germany in the mid-Twenties, she founded a committee to help feed needy Berliners by means of four Austrian-financed soup kitchens. Later, after Hitler's accession, she also increased the number of grants for refugee pupils at her school.

The methods she used to promote all these activities were often quite unorthodox. Elias Canetti and Friederich Torberg have both accused her of 'importunate pushiness' and 'relentless pursuit of prominent patrons' — but workers in a good cause cannot be finicky about the means that serve their ends.

Among those she employed at her school were Oskar Kokoschka (whose appointment as art instructor the local education committee vetoed on the grounds that 'no provision has been made for geniuses in the syllabus'), Arnold Schönberg, the architect Adolf Loos, and Rudolf Serkin, whom she allowed to teach piano at the age of 15.

When the Germans marched into Austria in March 1938 Eugenie Schwarzwald was on a lecture tour in Denmark. It took her husband months before he could emigrate to Switzerland, where he died in August 1939. Suffering from cancer, she only survived him by one year. During that period she subsisted on 100 dollars monthly sent her by the famous U.S. journalist Dorothy Thompson. The latter wrote 'Having squandered your whole life on others, you will have learnt that gratitude is among the rarest of human virtues. But, dear Genia, it is also a virtue to accept something that is given with profound affection and gratitude'.

It is gratitude that we, her former pupils, share.  
EVA FISCHER

### HONORARY DOCTORATE

Professor Brian Shefton of Newcastle upon Tyne University recently received an honorary doctorate of the University of Cologne in connection with their 600 years jubilee celebration. Professor Shefton, a classical archaeologist, was born in Cologne where his father, the late Professor I. Scheftelowitz, had been Rabbi and professor of Sanskrit and Iranian Philology until dismissed by the Hitler government in 1933. He and his family then emigrated to Oxford.

### CALLING OPERETTA BUFFS

An association, the *FRIENDS OF ROBERT STOLZ*, has been formed to increase the knowledge of Stolz and his music, to collate and disseminate information regarding publications, recordings, etc, and to support and promote performances of Stolz music in this country.

Applications for membership — Single: £7, Double: £10 — should be addressed to Robert Keys, Red Lion Court, Stalbridge, Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 2LR Tel: 0963 62999.

## FROM NEWGATE JAIL TO THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION

### A page of Jewish-Australian history

On 27 July 1786 16-year old Esther Abrahams had gone into Joseph and Charles Harrap's haberdashers shop in Coventry Street in Westminster and whilst the shop assistant's back was turned, she was said to have hidden two cards of black lace, valued at fifty shillings, in her clothing. When challenged, she attempted to leave the shop, the cards falling from her skirt on to the floor, as witnessed by two customers. She was brought back and charged with theft. The case against her was heard at the Old Bailey on 30 August 1786, where the jury found her guilty. Asked before being sentenced whether she had anything to say, she replied that she would 'let my counsel speak for me'.

The transcript of her trial, to be found in the Guildhall Records Office, does not reveal what her counsel said, nor does it give the names and details of the testimony of the three witnesses who testified as to her good character.

### Transported 'beyond the seas'

She was sentenced 'to be transported to parts beyond the seas for seven years'.

It transpired that she was pregnant at the time of the offence, but no reference to this fact was recorded, nor any mitigation of her sentence allowed.

She was consigned to Newgate Prison to await transportation where, according to the list of female convicts held at Newgate Prison to be seen at the Public Record Office at Kew, on 18 March 1787 she gave birth to a baby girl, whom she named Rosanna.

On 30 April 1787, Esther Abraham and her child were discharged from Newgate 'to be sent to New South Wales'.

The first fleet of sailing ships carrying convicts was being mustered at Portsmouth under the overall command of the compassionate captain Arthur Phillip. His father was Frankfurt-born Jacob Phillip, and his mother the widow of an English naval captain.

### Campaigner for human treatment

He campaigned tirelessly for humane and healthy conditions on board his ships, insisting on clean dresses to replace the rags of the women prisoners, on fresh meat for prisoners and crew alike, and on wine as a measure against scurvy.

His firm view was that on arrival in New South Wales, the prisoners should be set free to work for the good of the new settlement and of themselves, unless they committed fresh offences.

Esther was sent to join the 750 convicts, boarding the *SS Lady Penrhyn* together with her two-month baby. They set sail on 13 May 1787 on a journey that was to take them via Tenerife, Rio de Janeiro and the Cape of Good Hope to Botany Bay — a journey lasting eight months.

A petition for pardon had been sent on behalf of Esther to the Home Secretary, Lord Sydney,

## REMEMBERING THE KINDERTRANSPORTE

In this anniversary year the Kindertransporte, which brought 9739 children to Britain between Kristallnacht and the outbreak of war, have been widely recalled. Newspapers carried features on the topic, and TV screened documentaries; above all two commemorative events were organised by — and for — the Kinder themselves.

The organisers of the two functions designated them as a 'reunion' and 'commemoration' respectively. Despite the different connotations of these terms the events naturally had many features in common. At both childhood traumas were recalled, memorial prayers recited and pent-up emotions assuaged through liturgy and music — and participants sought out others from their hometown, transport or refugee hostel.

This said, there were also considerable differences:

### Reunion

Standing in a seemingly endless queue outside the Harrow Leisure Centre on one of the hottest June days in living memory, one was immediately struck by one of two things: Here was a group of over 1000 disparate people, ranging from late 50's to late 60's, who either had never met each other or, if they had, probably met once in their lives some 50 years ago. As they stood there, some accompanied by spouses, others quite alone, waiting to enter, they were mostly silent. Those that talked, talked mainly about the weather (after 50 years, how appropriately English!) but many were simply silent, even apprehensive.

And the silence became entirely explicable as one entered the little vestibule that leads to the enormous hall, gave one's name, received some literature, and a small identification badge which was to be filled in with details, present address, town of origin, present name, former name. As the badges were fixed on to lapels or dresses I heard someone say: 'That's an improvement on the cardboard and string they tied round our necks 50 years ago'.

Then suddenly one was inside, looking at 120 tables with place cards — Berlin, Hamburg, Vienna, Leipzig — and one had crossed the threshold into yesterday. People quietly looked for their tables, i.e. those bearing the name of their town of origin, and began to get their bearings. The opening conversations were predictable: 'Where from, *welcher Bezirk?*' (if one came from Vienna) or 'Bayerischer Platz?' (if one sat at a Berlin Table). The second question followed quite naturally — place and date of arrival: 'Dovercourt?' 'No, Liverpool Street Station'.

The proceedings began with a short and moving memorial service, then, after speeches by Clemens N. Nathan (Anglo-Jewish Association), Hugh Dykes, MP, and Home Office Minister Tim Renton, MP, the principal architect of the reunion, Bertha Leverton, addressed the gathering. And strangely, from the moment that this warmhearted woman extended her first words of greeting — 'Hello *Kinder*' the mood in the hall perceptibly changed; people began to speak to each other, sometimes frantically, communicating, searching, sharing experiences. It was as if a valve had released the tension induced by 50 years of silence, about an experience that could only be properly communicated to those who had shared it.

After the words 'Hello, *Kinder*' echoed round the hall, everyone knew in which boat they still were, the difference being that they were no longer alone. There followed moving tributes to those who had worked so devotedly to make the rescue possible.

On the second day the pent-up emotions and pre-occupations of the *Kinder* themselves were given expressions in a series of impromptu questions from the podium. Many confessed to problems of identity, alienation and loneliness. Perhaps the most moving testimony came from the woman who said 'no one hugged me for years'. Much the worst examples came from those who were suddenly thrust into a totally non-Jewish environment, although the hosts did their best to cope.

Looking back over the two days, one phenomenon which, to some extent, dominated the proceedings, stands out. This was the emotional release that many participants experienced. Some are now able to talk about their experiences to their own families for the first time.

### Commemoration

'This is not a reunion, but a commemoration'. With these words Mrs Bianca Gordon, the organiser, introduced the concert on 16 July, at the Festival Hall.

In her terms, it must be said, the concert was well organised and successful. The Jewish Male Voice Choir (conductor Ronald Rappaport) achieved its customary degree of excellence in its singing of two liturgical pieces and the Warsaw Ghetto song, *Den letzten Weg*. The mood of the event was captured by Robert Cohen's moving rendering of Bruch's *Kol Nidrei* and the playing of Barber's *Adagio* by the young, but extremely professional, members of the Menuhin School of Music orchestra.

Charlotte de Rothschild sang a number of well-chosen items with great delicacy, Ruth Rosen read appropriate selections of poetry, and the whole programme was suitably compèred by Robert Rietti. The robust playing of Bach's double concerto and parts of Grieg's Holberg Suite provided a positive note on which to finish.

But what hung over the whole proceedings was the unmistakable air of Holocaust, and not even Mr. Rietti's account of three miraculous — and, alas, totally atypical — postwar family reunions could dissipate the impression that what was designed to commemorate the *Kindertransporte* had become transformed into a Shoah commemoration.

Now it is extremely difficult, in an event of this sort, to strike the right balance between destruction and survival. But survival most certainly has its place in the *Kindertransporte* story. And in this respect, it is difficult to conceive of telling the story of the *Kinder* without at least a passing reference to those whose selfless devotion made that survival possible; people like the late Rabbi Schonfeld, the recently deceased Mrs. Lola Hahn-Warburg, Nicholas Winton and Lord

Sainsbury — not to mention the many anonymous individuals who acted as hosts for the children, or worked in reception centres and hostels. To omit their contribution is not only to present Hamlet without the Prince; it is to write out the parts of Ophelia, Polonius and the Queen as well, and leave us with the grave-diggers. The Quakers, who did magnificent work at the time, have a full page devoted to them in the concert brochure; others deserve mention no less.

The concert nonetheless succeeded because it answered a deeply felt need of those who wanted a dignified and moving way of commemorating an event which, in the words of the historian David Cesarani, is, for them, neither 'all over', nor 'in the past'.

FRED BARSCHAK

*Continued from p. 4*

but it was a year or more before she heard the result, which was a refusal, and by which time she was already on the Australian continent, having landed at Sydney Cove on 6 February 1788. Thus we know the date of the first Jewish settler in Australia!

On board the fleet, in addition to the convicts and crew, were a contingent of marines whose task was to provide a military presence for the new colony about to be established. On board the *SS Lady Penrhyn*, Esther formed a relationship with an officer of the Marines, Lieutenant George Johnston, to whom she was to remain attached for the rest of their lives.

It was only after a period of more than 25 years, during which time she bore him seven children, that they were married in the church at Sydney, and Rosanna, now a married woman, Mrs. Nicholls, was a witness at her mother's wedding, which took place in November 1814.

In 1808, after Captain Bligh (of the *Bounty*) was removed as Governor of New South Wales, George Johnston took his place and Esther, then his *de facto* wife, became the First Lady of the burgeoning colony. Rosanna had two sons, Isaac David and George, who in 1848 was elected to the legislative council of New South Wales. In 1854 he, Esther's grandson, successfully pleaded for Jews to be placed on the same footing as Christian recipients of State Aid for Public Worship, and £200 was made available to pay the stipend of a minister to Sydney's Jewish Congregation.

In 1856, New South Wales was granted responsible government, and George Nicholls became Auditor General, those many years after his grandmother had been convicted and transported for stealing two cards of lace.

CYRIL SILVERTOWN

### MANOR HOUSE SOCIETY

There will be an *Evening of Jewish Songs* — ranging from the liturgy and folksong to Mendelssohn and Kalman — at the Sternberg Centre, 80 East End Road, Finchley N.3, on Sunday 17 September, at 8 pm. Members: £5; Non-members: £6. Tel: 01 346 2288.

A discussion on *Blasphemy* — with Muslim pedagogue Dr. Badawi, the Anglican Bishop of Oxford, Rabbi Louis Jacobs and Ivan Lawrence M.P. — will take place at the same venue on Tuesday 3 October at 8 pm. Members: £2; Non-members: £3.

## 'EVENTIDE HOMES FOR SENILE MONSTERS'

This, putting it crudely, seems to be the solution advocated by the MPs who have argued against the proposed prosecution of East European Nazi collaborators resident in the U.K. When the institution of proceedings against the latter was first mooted the anti-prosecution lobby contended that retrospective legislation concerning crimes committed abroad ran counter to the principles of British justice. As though the postwar admission into this country of thousands of Baltic and Ukrainian anti-Communists — irrespective of whether their anti-Communism had expressed itself through attachment to democracy or the murder of Soviet Jews — had not itself been a slap in the face for British justice!

The executants of that policy could not have been ignorant of the fact that the Nazi extermination programme had so strained Germany's 'human' resources that many East Europeans had been recruited to assist in the massacres. The present government, mindful of its predecessors' derelictions, decided that the case for prosecuting alleged war criminals now domiciled in Britain should be investigated. Sir Thomas Hetherington, the former Director of Public Prosecutions, conducted a year-long investigation at the end of which he advised that there were no fundamental obstacles in law to the holding of war crimes trials in this country. HM Government, while accepting the advice, still wants Parliament to rule on the issue. Anti-prosecution MPs (and others) meanwhile argue that trials held 48 years after the event will be vitiated by the paucity of surviving witnesses and the unreliability of their evidence; the accused, moreover, will be pathetic old men, too moribund to be affected by lengthy prison terms. Finer legal points are also raised. Ivor Stanbrook M.P., a vociferous spokesman for the anti-prosecution lobby questions the admissibility, in any projected trial, of statements by deceased persons, as well as of unverifiable Soviet documents; he also fears that it will not be possible to cross-examine Soviet witnesses properly.

The Member for Orpington is nothing if not a doughty fighter. Having previously warned Jews that their insistence on holding war crimes trials might prompt an antisemitic backlash, he now (see *The Independent* 26 July) dubs Sir Thomas Hetherington 'a retired bureaucrat who has probably never actually prosecuted or defended anyone in court in his life'.

Sir John Stokes, Member for Halesowen and Stourbridge, does not believe in pulling his punches either. He told fellow MPs that the British are not a 'vengeful nation', which statement carries the unspoken, but unmistakable,

implication that others — namely the Jews — are. Thus is the archetypal image of Shylock claiming his pound of flesh resurrected, and re-arraigned, before the Court of Parliament.

Clearly, the coming debate is going to be quite stressful for us who are — not through our own volition, but through the ineluctable workings of destiny — witnesses, in every sense, for the prosecution.

It therefore behoves us to be well briefed. What are the facts? Both Australia and Canada, countries with British-inspired legal systems, have put laws on their statute books that allow former non-nationals to be prosecuted for war crimes committed overseas. As to the contentious issue of retrospective legislation: although genocide was not defined as an offence till after the Second World War the massacres perpetrated in the course of it already ranked as an offence under international law at the time. The argument that the Soviets may manipulate evidence for their own political advantage loses much of its force amid the current thaw of the Stalinist ice age.

Lastly, what of the point that putting doddering old men in the dock might turn them into objects of public sympathy, and lay their accusers open to the charge of vengefulness? Such considerations have not deterred the French authorities from bringing Klaus Barbie to book, nor will it inhibit them from pressing on with the case against Paul Touvier. Actually the premiss that an alleged criminal's pensionable age should make the statute of limitations operable is hardly persuasive in a period that has seen 'grand old men' (in several senses of the word) like Adenauer, de Gaulle and Reagan shape the destiny of continents. The anti-persecution lobby needs to take on board that Winston Churchill — incidentally another septuagenarian world leader — dubbed the holocaust 'probably the greatest and most horrible single crime ever committed in the whole history of the world'.

### NAME DROPPERS

Participants in the latest municipally sponsored visit of Jewish Stuttgarters to their hometown included the four brothers Silberstein. Today only one still bears that name; the others are known, respectively as Silvon, Silberton and Silverton.

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## DIPLOMATIC IMPUNITY

The blatant lies that formed part of the standard repertoire of Soviet diplomacy for 70 years are increasingly being disavowed by the Gorbachev regime. Old habits die hard, however. The Soviet Foreign Ministry's statement on the Israeli seizure of Sheikh Obeid accused the Jewish State of having infringed the sovereignty of Lebanon. What one wonders (even without mentioning the Baltic States) is Moscow's definition of sovereignty?

Lebanon certainly cannot be described as a sovereign state — or, indeed any state at all. After years when its government's writ hardly ran in most of the country it now has no government whatever. Present-day Lebanon is simply a confused patchwork of militia-run statelets — Sunni, Shia, Druze and Christian — bent on 'mutually assured destruction'.

The country is, moreover, in imminent danger of physically losing what was once its capital. Beirut — approximately, almost a homonym for Bayreuth — is the scene of a current *Götterdämmerung* worthy of the lurid imagings of Wagner. Fratricide-minded Druze and Christians, assisted by fraternal Syria and Iraq respectively, are systematically destroying the town block by block with artillery fire.

This is the sickening reality behind the pious platitudes about Lebanese sovereignty which the Soviets, rulers of the last Empire left on earth, found it expedient to employ in their condemnation of Israel.

### SOMMER 1939

Ich sitze im Garten und denke an Euch  
Wo ich auch bin — es ist überall gleich,  
Die Tage kommen und sie geh'n-  
Wann werden wir uns wiederseh'n?

Ich fragte den Wind — er stobte davon  
Mit leisem Lachen — es klang wie Hohn  
Da kam die Sonne aus den Wolken hervor  
Und flüsterte mir leise in das Ohr:

'Ein Wiederseh'n gib't's, ich weiss es bestimmt;  
Drum frag nicht mehr den bösen Wind!  
Nun will ich immer zur Sonne nur schau'n.  
Und wieder, wie eh'mals, in Gott vertrau'n.

HELENE RISCHAWY  
(aged 95)

### WILL SCHÖNHUBER BE THERE?

10,000 microscopic slides currently lying in the vaults of the Max Planck Institute for Brain Research at Frankfurt are to be cremated and the ashes scattered at an appropriate site — possibly one of the memorials to the Holocaust. The action follows disclosure on West German Television that some university medical schools were teaching with slides of brain tissue received from Nazi killing centres.

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## THE CITY THAT BECAME FIRST JUDENREIN — AND THEN DEUTSCHENREIN

Michael Wieck: *ZEUGNIS VOM UTERGANG KOENIGSBERGS — EIN 'GELTUNGSJUDE' BERICHTET*, Verlag Lambert Schneider, Heidelberg. DM 24.80.

This book is not an ordinary survivor story. It goes beyond it because of the antecedents of the author and the location of the city to which it refers. Michael Wieck, born 1928, is the son of two musicians, who, as members of the avant-garde *Koenigsberger Streichquartett* played a prominent part in cultural life. Kurt Wieck, the father, was a non-Jew, distantly related to Clara Schumann-Wieck, and an uncle of the actress Dorothea Wieck; the mother, Hedwig Wieck née Hulisch, was Jewish. Whilst mixed marriage partners usually chose the dominant Christian religion for their children, Michael and his sister Miriam (!) were brought up as Jews. This became decisive for their status when the Nuernberg Laws were promulgated in 1935. As a half-Jew of Jewish religion the author was not classified as a *Mischling* but as a Jew — *Geltungsjude* — subject to all anti-Jewish measures of the Nazi regime (including the obligation to wear the Yellow Star).

### Between two worlds

Michael was first put into an ordinary state school, where his Nazi woman teacher missed no opportunity of cruelly humiliating him and isolating him from his classmates. Eventually the position became unbearable and he was enrolled in the Jewish school. The classrooms were in the building of the main synagogue in the city centre and, after the November pogrom, in the adjoining orphanage. The book features a photo of five teachers, two of whom managed to emigrate to Palestine, whereas the other three perished. Another member of staff exempted from deportation as a First World War hero was later killed by the occupying Russians because he had belonged to the Baltic Free Corps.

There was a close relationship between teachers and pupils and an atmosphere of reciprocal understanding in face of increasingly terrible persecution. Lessons were augmented by gatherings in the homes of teachers, where the children were made aware of the beauty of literature and art.

After the destruction of the main synagogue, the only venue where Jewish services could be held was the Orthodox Adass Yisroel Synagogue (in the old part of the city which had not been burnt down, because the fire would have endangered neighbouring houses). Here Michael Wieck became a *barmitzvah* — which for him was more than the social event it had become in many middle-class families in Germany. He took the preparation under the guidance of the Rabbi, who evoked the rabbinical background of the Hulisch family, very seriously. His observance included the laying of *tefillin*, and attendance at the Sabbath service, necessitating one hour's walk.

Within limitations, Jewishness still played a visible part among his maternal relatives; they met on Friday evenings, and the mother celebrated Chanukah with the children. At the other

end of the spectrum were the connections of his father: a half-brother, much-decorated officer, who visited the house while on leave, and Dorothea Wieck, sometimes a guest at Hitler's table, who successfully intervened when the father's dismissal from the Municipal Orchestra was under consideration. Yet, with few exceptions, non-Jewish friends and acquaintances refrained from visiting the house.

Among the most moving chapters of the book is the description of the deportations. Though a *Sterntraeger*, Michael escaped the summons, because he was 'only' a *Geltungsjude*. Yet for some time he made it a habit to accompany his fellow Jews from the Assembly centre in a Riding Hall of the *Festungsanlage* to the railway station. The procession was bound to be noticed. 'Innocent outcasts, they made their way through the streets, in which, with few exceptions, their former fellow citizens, patients, customers, friends or neighbours watched and looked the other way.' Many victims were old and sick, and he tried to help them. Yet he is still plagued by feelings of guilt, because he had been unable to come to the aid of a much beloved aunt. Quite a few deportees had difficulties in carrying the few belongings they were permitted to take with them. When they arrived at the station, they were ordered to put their luggage into the last carriage — which was disconnected before the train left.

Like other *Sterntraeger* he suffered insults and also physical attacks, from which he sometimes escaped by dint of cycling very fast. The Gestapo would employ pupils of the Jewish school on errands, such as collecting articles — electrical appliances, furs, even caged birds — which Jews were no longer permitted to possess. Afterwards, the pupils would return to school and the lessons, possibly devoted to the works of Goethe, continued.

Michael's school education, however, came to an end when he was 13.

He wanted to pre-empt a call-up for heavy forced labour by taking on a job which was not

quite so strenuous. He found work in a carpenter's shop but was soon directed to heavy labour in a chemical factory; undernourished by the meagre food rations allowed for Jews he coped with it.

The situation became catastrophic when Koenigsberg came under attack by the Russians and the inner city was totally destroyed. Yet even when the major part of the town had already been conquered, the Commandant refused to surrender, thus causing the gratuitous deaths of thousands of German soldiers and civilians.

### Postwar vicissitudes

In April, 1945, Koenigsberg came under Russian occupation. Soviet soldiers wreaked, as is humanly understandable, their own form of revenge. As the author put it: after the Nazis had made Koenigsberg *judenrein*, the Russians made East Prussia *deutschenrein*. Notwithstanding the bitter experience which had marred his youth, Michael Wieck retained his love for his home town, from which, in 1948, he was transported to the then Soviet Zone of Germany. The arrivals were told that they might now look forward to a life of happiness in a democratic community. The younger men were put under pressure to sign on for labour in the uranium mines. The author managed to get through to West-Berlin, where he studied at the *Hochschule fuer Musik* prior to a successful career as violin player and music teacher.

Yet he was not happy with life in a post-war Germany still overshadowed by the Nazi past, and decided to emigrate with his wife and four children. He contemplated Israel but, being married to a Christian, feared exposure to the intolerance of the religious establishment. In the end he took his family to New Zealand, but, unable to strike roots in a foreign country, returned to Germany. He now lives in Stuttgart, where he is a member of the Radio Orchestra.

Michael Wieck has made an essential contribution to German-Jewish historiography; his unique position enabled him to witness what otherwise would not have been recorded. His literary gifts and capacity to assess events in their wider historical context enhance the value of this absorbing book.

WERNER ROSENSTOCK

## STAR

(Survivors of Terezín, Association of Remembrance)

We, the children of Terezín (aka Theresienstadt), are searching for you: other child survivors who were 15 years of age or under 15 at the time of the liberation, to make an international directory of Terezín children.

When we receive your information, we hope to send you, in the near future, a questionnaire so that you can be included in this directory.

Please forward your name and address to:

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## The AJR at Work

### 3. CLEVE ROAD

'Ask anyone', they will tell you. 'It really is something special.' They are some 50 or 60 members of the Association enjoying the amenities of the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre at Number 15 Cleve Road on an average Monday, or Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. 'Yes', they will say, 'it has become a part of our lives. We certainly would not wish to have to do without it any more. It is difficult to imagine the time when it did not exist.'

It has, in fact, existed only since January 1986. For about 18 months, it operated on one day per week in the Hall of Belsize Square Synagogue. Now, its permanent home is a suitably converted house in West Hampstead and it is open 'for business' on four days each week. Its 'customers' come from their own homes, mostly in North West London, from sheltered flats and from the residential homes. The latter are brought from Bishop's Avenue by 'their' minibus, most of the others by cars driven by volunteers, and occasionally by taxi. When they arrive they are welcomed by other volunteers and by members of the staff. 'That's another thing', they say. 'Whenever we come, we are always sure of the same friendly reception. There is a lovely atmosphere all the time.'

#### Wide range of activities

Now that there is no longer any need to limit visits to one attendance per week on a specific day, members are entirely at liberty to come when and as often as they like, and some have, indeed, taken to looking in several times a week as a regular practice. It is clearly worth it. The activities which await them range from games to art classes, from flower arranging to participation in discussion groups. Card playing is allowed throughout the day for those whose interests lie in this particular direction. Morning coffee is served. It may then be time to keep a hairdressing appointment, or, if the weather is fine, to spend a pleasant hour chatting to friends in the beautifully kept garden. Or it may be a good idea to go along to the Day Centre shop where goods not readily available elsewhere, mainly items of confectionery, preserves or some special delicacies, are on display and offered for sale at prices which, needless to say, do not place too heavy a burden on the purchaser's purse. At half an hour past midday, lunch is served. This is a three-course meal, prepared in the well-equipped kitchen by contract caterers and taken to table by volunteers. Menus, designed by and large to appeal to continental tastes and often offering a choice of main course, are changed each week. When the plates have been cleared, the activities are resumed. There is usually a 'full house' for the ever-popular bingo session, with prizes for the lucky ones; but much enjoyment, too, is experienced by those who did not win, but only played the game. After all, there is always next time! The session over, a call is made to join the audience in the large glass-domed conservatory for the day's main entertainment. There is a new programme every afternoon. Musical performances are always welcome. As one of the artistes

recently observed: 'The acoustics here are fantastic. And so is the audience.' Opera, musical comedy, songs from the shows, classical pieces with a ring of familiarity, tunes which evoke a little nostalgia (or, for that matter, a lot) — such offerings from single players or from ensembles of instrumentalists, from vocalists or -choirs, are always acknowledged with appreciative applause. No less popular are humorous turns, magic shows, indeed any kind of artistic performance which may be in the repertoire of the professional or amateur entertainers who make their appearances on these occasions. There is also a slot for demonstrations of special skills or crafts, as well as for talks on a variety of subjects, from travel to foreign parts to advice from a member of the local constabulary on 'Security in the Home and Personal Safety'.

#### Personal touch

The Day Centre is run by the two longest-serving members of the Association's staff. Sylvia Matus, the Organiser, can look back on 13 years of work for the AJR in various senior capacities; Assistant Organiser René Lee served in the Homes Department for nearly ten years before taking up her present assignment. Between them they direct the volunteers, allocating specific duties to each member of the four teams of 20 or so who share their workload on a daily basis, performing all manner of sometimes mundane, but never boring and always vitally important tasks. Medical attention, should it be needed, is available from a trained nurse who is in attendance on each of the four days. So, too, are social workers Susi Kaufman and Eleanor Angel, who make a specific point of checking the daily register of people present against the card index of regular visitors, so that the reason for any unexplained absences, say four times in a row, can be checked and followed up and any action which may be necessary taken. Both Mrs. Kaufman and Mrs. Angel go to great lengths to ensure that they personally know all the visitors well enough to detect any signs of a troubled mind or disturbed feelings, or the onset of any condition which may require attention, and they will initiate such steps as may be appropriate. Says Sylvia Matus 'We really try to cover all eventualities; and we know that those in our care know that we are their friends whom they can trust and on whom they can rely. We make a point of remembering all their names because we believe that it is so very important to treat them as individuals and to look after them as individuals.' Asked about the next stage in the development of the Centre, Mrs. Matus expresses the hope that the plans now in hand for doing more by way of outings will all come to fruition. 'We already organise visits to theatres and concerts and day trips to places like Carmel College and York. Now we are working on spreading our wings and undertaking something a little more ambitious, and residential weekends at the seaside are high on our list of priorities.'

The house in Cleve Road does not only accommodate the Day Centre: there are also

eight sheltered flats, capably looked after by a residential caretaker. One of the tenants is Mr. Franks, who no doubt speaks for all the occupiers of the flats when he commends the competence and conscientiousness with which the caretaker discharges his duties. Mr. Franks is in a good position to judge since he himself held such a post for many years. He has also been a hospital caterer and still likes cooking, but nevertheless takes advantage from time to time of the open invitation which the Day Centre extends to the tenants of the flats to take meals there. Indeed, all the tenants have full access to all the facilities of the Centre and Mr. Franks is full of praise for the staff. 'We are welcome at any time and very much appreciate the opportunity to participate.'

#### Dual role

It is plain to what important extent Cleve Road fulfills a dual role. Firstly, by offering to Jewish refugees a place where they can meet in an ambience congenial to them; and secondly, to provide the special kind of sheltered accommodation in which independence for the tenant is combined with on-the-spot support if and when a need arises.

DAVID MAIER

#### LIFTING THE CURTAIN

The disappearance and death of Raoul Wallenberg was 'a dark page in Soviet history', a Soviet diplomat told a Paris human rights conference. Yuri Kashlev went on 'We deeply regret the death of this noble man . . . and we would like to sanctify his memory'.

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### MOROCCO-BOUND BARD

Acting on the realisation that in the age of *glasnost* dictators no longer enjoy complete job security Colonel Gaddafi is currently looking around for other career openings. Fortunately, like his colleagues pop singer Imelda Marcos and swimming champion Idi Amin, the Colonel has talents outside the sphere of politics: he is a stand-up comic.

He recently told an audience at the Tunisian parliament, a popular Muslim music-hall, that Shakespeare — real name Sheikh-speare — had been an Arab. (Eat your heart out, Marlowe, Bacon and the Earl of Oxford!)

What Gaddafi doesn't realise is that he has opened a can of worms of Elgin Marbles sized proportions. If he gets the Bard of Avon repatriated to Benghazi other nations, who have similarly had their most talented offspring filched away from them, will surely raise a clamour. The Irish will reclaim the sculptor Mick Elangelo and the shipper O'Nassis, the Scots the politicians MacIavelli and Robbie Spierre, the English the dramatist Dan Unzio, the Dutch the poet Ohm Arkayam, the Swedes the impressario Sven Gali, and the Germans the philosopher Karl Eil.

The main beneficiaries of wholesale reclamation, however, will be the Jews — aren't they always? — with the writer Rabbi Ndranath Tag-

ore, the confectioner Ben Sdorp, the composers Mo Zart and Berl Ioz, the mathematician Leib Nitz and the lady physicist Ruth Erford added to their tally. You have raised a bogey, Colonel!

### THE GILLETTE GUIDE TO HISTORY

Esau was an hairy man, the Bible tells us — and readers draw the appropriate inference, namely that hair connotes uncouth, crossgrained, not to say downright vicious. Amazingly, the way in which the Bible used that adjective has retained its validity right up to the 20th Century, and especially the period of *glasnost*.

We can learn more — at a glance — from the presence or absence of face fungus on a Soviet head than from reading reams of political analysis. The worst of the Red Czars were all visibly hairy men: Lenin the Bearded, Stalin the Moustached, and Brezhnev the Beatlebrowed. The only two relative reformers in the Kremlin, Khrushchev and Gorbachev, had (have) hairless faces, and crania resembling billiard-balls in smoothness.

The same holds good if one looks at key figures in recent German history: compare the Kaiser's martially bristling waxed moustache ends, Hindenburg's soup-strainer, and Hitler's obscene tuft of hair under the nose with the cleanshaven

### 'REVOLUTION' COMES TO CLEVE ROAD

In the anniversary week of the French Revolution Hans Freund, better known to our members for his rendering of German rather than French songs, handed out sheets with the text of the *Marseillaise*; he was pleasantly surprised when the audience responded with a hearty rendition of this, perhaps the world's most rousing, tune.

The theme of the afternoon was 'Music lasts forever', and the programme included songs by Brahms, Schubert and Lehar, as well as an aria by the much neglected Albert Lortzing (*Vater, Mutter, Schwestern, Brüder, hab' ich auf der Welt nicht mehr*) from his opera *Undine*.

Geoffrey Steinitz, the accompanist, also showed himself a highly competent soloist with a sensitive rendering of Schubert's *Impromptu in A flat major*.

However, for most people the highlight of the afternoon came when Louisa, Hans Freund's 13-year old granddaughter, played a number of solos on the harp. She also accompanied her grandfather's singing of Carl Böhm's *Still wie die Nacht*. Slightly exhausted by their own vocal exertions, the audience listened in rapt silence to the young girl, seated at her large and beautiful instrument, playing items that included a moving *Andante* by the 18th Century composer Petri. Music does, indeed, last for ever!

### SERVUS WITH A SMILE

The Day Centre at Cleve Road will be having an Austrian Week — along the lines of the Chinese Week reported in July last issue — from Monday, 18 September. All schnitzel scoffers, gughupf guzzlers, soft schuhplattl shufflers, dirndl divas and lederhosen lotharios zonked out on zither music are cordially invited.

countenances of Adenauer, Brandt and Schmidt. In Iran, rumour has it, Khomeini has bequeathed his beard to the beardless Rasfanjani.

Even in Britain's recent past we witnessed the contrast between the vulpine appearance of the moustached Chamberlain and the razored smoothness — signifying stiffness — of Churchill's upper lip.

In China, of course, the above criteria do not apply, since individuals only attain leadership positions at such an advanced age that all their hair has fallen out during the climb up the greasy pole. Nor can one automatically apply the 'hairy equals baddie, and non-hairy goodie' formula to another group of world leaders, such as Prime Minister Thatcher and President Aquino. We are, however, going to submit their personal beauticians to some searching questions. So, watch this column!

### SCHERZI

When Richard Strauss told Siegfried Wagner that he had been staying at the Hotel Adlon in Berlin the latter asked incredulously 'Is your business so profitable?' Miffed, Strauss replied 'It is — and what's more it is my own, and not my father's!'

One Berlin Philharmonic player to another during a break in rehearsal 'Have you heard the latest? Now God thinks he is Karajan!'

## IN SEARCH OF TIME PAST

In May, we held a reunion of as many girls/women as we could muster from the Tynemouth refugee hostel run by the Jewish community of Newcastle. On the average we were 24 refugee girls, aged 4-15. The hostel was intended as a shortstay home, a temporary refuge for children from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. The war overtook us and the Newcastle committee was faced with the task of looking after us for the duration, so the hostel slowly turned into an orphanage. There can be no doubt that the committee treated us warmly and generously, and we now feel that when we left, seven years later, we did not really acknowledge the sacrifices made by them.

In July 1940, enemy aliens being debarred from coastal areas, we were despatched to Windermere. I for one am grateful to this day for the chance of encountering the beauty of the Lakes at an impressionable age, though it must have made life more difficult for the committee.

Two of us who have remained friends over the 50 years and live within meeting distance, started to search for the others. We had little to go on; we only knew maiden names and details of post-war emigration as vague as 'Canada' or 'Australia'. However, we found all the girls but one, Eva Less, from Berlin, born circa 1925, a trained nurse, emigrated to Canada(?). *AJR Information* helped us to trace Lore Ball (Freitag) in New Zealand, and Marion Karpf (Mendelsohn) in W. Australia. Our quest involved many letters, some advertisements and even a broadcast. Each find was a triumph.

Ten of us finally met at the North London home of Margot Dykierman (Hirsch). As expected, it

was a curious get-together. Surprisingly, many of us still have foreign accents (overlaid with American in some cases). We were moved to see each other again, having spent an important part of our childhood and adolescence together as sisters and sharing a common past of discrimination which set us apart from our English contemporaries.

Babel began. To overcome this we each told our tale to try and bridge the gap of the intervening 43 years. It took many hours.

We found we were now able to talk of matters that had been too painful to mention then. Some of us managed to relate how we had left our homes and what we had felt. Edith spoke of her father whom she had not been able to mention when we were children because of the pain it caused. (He had died of forced labour in a concentration camp.)

Sophie recalled, with a degree of bitterness, her attempt to run away when she was victimised in the hostel. At 14 she had drawn her savings from the Post Office — all of £1.18s — to buy a single ticket to London. Apparently Elfi and I met her in the village; she confided in us and we went back and spilled the beans. I should like to think we did this out of concern for her safety, but I am not sure.

I found myself venting my own resentment by reminding the others that I had had no support from them during a week of *Zimmerarrest*.

My last few years at the hostel had been unhappy ones. I had been allowed to stay at school beyond the statutory leaving age of 14 at the special request of my headmistress. In actual fact, my continuing education was barely tolerated by matron; I was constantly scolded for still

being a schoolgirl who was not earning her living. On my 17th birthday I received an ultimatum to choose school or hostel. I told my headmistress I would have to leave school. She solved my problem by allowing me to live with her. I was unable to disguise my delight and relief. However at *Pesach*, two weeks later, I was summoned back to the hostel since 'a Jewish girl must spend Passover in a Jewish environment'. I went back reluctantly, expecting trouble. I was kept locked up for a whole week, not allowed to communicate with the other girls. Today my friends do not remember this bizarre incident.

We also remembered some amusing incidents such as police inquiries about Elfi and Ruth who had been putting messages for Edith into a dry stone wall near the hostel. Edith had by then left; someone seeing us at the wall had concluded we were passing messages to the enemy and reported us as 'probable German spies'. (We were 12 years old at the time.)

I feel sure this sharing and talking was of healing benefit to all of us. We thought of the others who could not, or did not wish to, come and fully understood why some should feel too wary to join us. It was a risky thing to do, but I for one, am grateful we made the effort.

RUTH FINCH (Oppenheimer)

### CULPABLE CHURCHES

Simon Wiesenthal commented on news that Catholic clerics had assisted Touvier in cheating justice 'The Church has always helped Nazi war criminals. Catholic Nazis addressed themselves to one of their bishops, and Protestants to another. . . . Even Mengele was helped to escape by the secretary to Cardinal Siri, Archbishop of Genoa'.

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## ART NOTES

The recent death of Berthold Wolpe OBE, RDI at the age of 83 is a reminder of the enormous contribution that he and some of his contemporary German Jewish artists made to the art of graphic design in this country and worldwide. Sir Francis Meynell (1891–1975), the book designer and publisher, once said that the best thing he had ever done was to facilitate the entry to this country of Berthold Wolpe and Elizabeth Friedlander, both of whom are, alas, no longer with us. On reading of Wolpe's death, I got out the catalogue of his retrospective exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1980. If copies of the catalogue are still available, they should be snapped up because they are a sheer joy to browse through. Of all the illustrations, I delighted in the extract from *Aus den Gebeten Israels*, published in Offenbach in 1948 and set in Hyperion, a type designed by Wolpe in 1932, and only available for general commercial use after the Second World War.

The art of Scandinavia has justifiably increased in popular estimation over recent years. The Victoria and Albert Museum is now adding to our knowledge by showing the outstanding influence that Scandinavian design has had on international taste, in its exhibition *Scandinavian Ceramics and Glass in the Twentieth Century* (until 7 January 1990). The exhibition is entirely drawn from the Museum's own vast collections and is accompanied by a catalogue listing every object in those collections. Also at the Victoria and Albert (until 28 January 1990) is an exhibition of the work of the Victorian photographer, Clementina, Viscountess Hawarden. Another photographic exhibition at the Victoria and Albert is *Andy Warhol: The Factory Years 1964–1967* (until 12 November). These are revealing photographs by Nat Finkelstein, the son of a Brooklyn cabdriver who became a photo journalist and who stayed with Warhol and his associates for two years recording their activities with his camera.

The Royal Academy has a tremendous programme this autumn including *Gauguin and the School of Pont-Aven 1888–1896: Prints and Drawings* (until 19 November). This exhibition demonstrates the innovations in the art of printmaking introduced by a group of artists led by Gauguin who abandoned Paris and settled in the windswept landscape of Brittany. The exhibition also includes a selection of paintings directly related to the prints included in the show.

A full and detailed catalogue written by Dr Caroline Boyle-Turner, discussing each print shown, is available at the exhibition. The Royal Academy is also mounting a photographic exhibition 'The Art of Photography 1839–1989' (until 23 December). 480 photographs will be on display showing the achievements of 85 photographers from Europe and North America. Furthermore, a small exhibition of the work of S. W. Hayter, one of the greatest innovators in the art of printmaking, will be on display in the Friends' Room at the Royal Academy (until 27 October). Incidentally, Hayter himself was a pupil of Joseph Hecht, a great printmaker in his own right.

While the Victoria and Albert is concerned with Scandinavia the Barbican has turned its attention to Hungary and is mounting an exhibi-

tion *A Golden Age: Art and Society in Hungary 1896–1914* (25 October 1989–15 January 1990). This exhibition is part of 'Magyarok: Britain Salutes Hungary' (until 21 November), the largest British celebration of Hungarian art and culture for more than fifty years. The Hungarian celebration also includes *Four-Poster Ages: Hungarian Poster Art* (until 30 November). This is a collection of over 200 posters advertising ceramics, circuses, night clubs, champagne, tobacco, and cultural and political messages, highlighting Hungary's turbulent history over the last century.

The Honor Oak Gallery (proprietor John Broad), 52 Honor Oak Park, London SE 23, has now been in existence for about three years and, apart from exhibitions by promising artists, keeps a stock of works by German and Austrian artists. The gallery has recently acquired a group of early watercolours and drawings by Margareta Berger-Hamerschlag, and also has works by the young Viennese Jakob Demus, etchings and lithographs by Kortokras and screenprints by Gerd Winner.

Works by a lot of our old friends will be on view at the Manor House Society's *Twentieth Century Masterprints* exhibition (25 October–26 November). They include Auerbach, Naomi Blake, Bomberg, Chagall, Alfred Cohen, Bernard Cohen, Gabo, Herman, Kossoff, Agate Sorel and Sutton. Camden Arts Centre will be showing works by young Russian artists (until 29 October). The Scottish Gallery will be exhibiting the work of Jock McFadyen at Forum Hamburg (13–18 September). McFadyen is an accomplished artist with a somewhat cynical approach to his art. He focuses on the margins of society and depicts the people he sees in characteristic, and uncharacteristic, poses.

If holidaying in Eastbourne, an added attraction is *Paul Nash's Places* at the Towner Art Gallery (until 29 September). The exhibition then moves to York (11 November–17 December), Exeter (6 January–11 February 1990) and Colchester (17 February–31 March). The exhibition marks the centenary of Nash's birth and contains 65 paintings, watercolours, etc reflecting his attachment to certain landscapes which he painted throughout his life. The Ben Uri Art Society will be holding its Annual Open Exhibition (14 September–4 October 1989). Sending-in days Monday 4th–Wednesday 6th September. A large number of selected entries will be on view, including works by many accomplished artists who rarely exhibit their work.

The exhibition *Sculptures of the Twentieth Century* from the Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum, Duisburg, is now on tour. It can be seen in Sheffield (14 September–28 October) and in Cardiff (9 December–28 January 1990). The exhibition traces major movements in sculpture

over the last eighty years from the Expressionism of Lehmbruck, Barlach and Kathe Kollowitz, to the object sculpture of Andy Warhol and Dieter Rot. The human figure is the major theme. Included in the group of steel sculptures is David Smith's *Blackburn: Song of an Irish Blacksmith*.

The 113th exhibition of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers will be held at the Bankside Gallery (29 September–22 October). There will be new works by many members of the Society and most of them will be for sale (framed or unframed).

ALICE SCHWAB

## SB's Column

**60 years ago.** In 1929 the ideal collaboration of composer Richard Strauss and the Austrian author Hugo von Hofmannsthal was ended by the untimely death of the latter. Whilst the results of this collaboration, the operas *Elektra*, *Ariadne*, *Rosenkavalier* and *Arabella* were performed throughout the Nazi years, Hofmannsthal's name was deleted; nor was Stefan Zweig's name ever mentioned when his *Schweigsame Frau* (premiered 1935) appeared on a German stage. The correspondence between Strauss and Hofmannsthal, conducted during the early years of this century, was recorded and published in 1961; it shows great mutual respect. A particular highlight in the success story of those two celebrities was the casting of the premiere of *Frau ohne Schatten* in 1919 with Maria Jeritza, Lotte Lehmann and Richard Mayr.

**Birthdays.** One of the most charming sopranos of the post-war period, Anneliese Rothenberger, celebrated her 65th birthday. Introduced to BBC Television in the Fifties by the late Eric Robinson in his unforgotten *Music for you* programmes, British audiences were also familiarized with many of her recordings of waltzes, songs and operetta excerpts. Rothenberger's opera parts included Sophie, Zdenka and a light-hearted *Fledermaus* Adele. Hermann Prey, who was 60 in July, is both a popular opera and Lieder singer. In this country his singing of Schubert cycles is as much appreciated as his — all too rare — appearances at the Royal Opera House, when the finesse of his lyric baritone combines with his notable acting capabilities.

**Obituary.** Anton Difrting, who has died at the age of 71, was a fine character actor who spent the war years in this country, and excelled in playing villains, and often German officers or Nazi officials, parts for which he seemed predestined on account of Teutonic looks and accent. In *Colditz* he was able to demonstrate it to perfection, and many British films of the post-war years provided rôles for him. Later, he returned to Germany where he continued working in the acting profession for many years.

**On a personal note.** This column was established in September 1974, suggested and assisted by the then editor Werner Rosenstock, initially under the heading *Theatre and Cultural News* and carried on under subsequent editorships. May I thank all those readers who during those 15 years have shown their interest through their letters and enquiries which have provided a welcome echo and are appreciated. This column will attempt to continue to inform about prominent personalities, their data and their activities.

### WALTER NESSLER

Art historian from West Germany seeks information about the work of **Walter Nessler**. The artist was born in 1912 and emigrated 1937 from Dresden to London.

If you own a work by **Walter Nessler** or can help complete the catalogue, please contact: Ralf Hartweg, c/o Rosoux, 1 The Riding, London NW11 8HL. Tel. 01-455 2649.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### A CHANCE TO TALK IT OVER

Sir — Larry Mandon's advice has come at the opportune time when many of us of the Kindertransport generation are living through our middle years, and have more time for reflecting on the wounds inflicted on us at the time.

May I suggest that the rattling of our skeletons, or closer examination of them, might enable us to recognise the real disease from which we now suffer as a consequence of our past experiences. I. R. Hingston's preference for facing past traumas rather than psychotherapy surely indicates her precise need for such therapy.

Psychotherapy is not a mental striptease for the edification of any psychotherapist — but a slow exploration of present emotional responses in the light of past experiences. This can only be a healing agent for the real pain some of us still feel.

Lower Hillmorton Rd SUSI STOCKEN  
Rugby, Warwickshire R.N.S.C.M.

### CONVERSATION STOPPERS

Sir — I feel a reply is called for in response to the letter by Mrs. L. Engelhard (July issue). To refer to 'effective conversation stoppers' when talking about the dreadful experiences suffered by all of us is astonishing. Not being 'a wailing ninny' it is

on rare occasions only that I do refer to our sad and unforgettable fate. I have yet to encounter an embarrassed look on the faces of either Jew or Gentile on such occasions. Did Mrs. Engelhard really experience what she so eloquently describes in her letter?

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### CHEERS!

Sir — The review by Walter Manfred of Geoffrey Green's Book *The Royal Navy and Anglo-Jewry* was interesting, and I was particularly impressed that he highlighted the details of Lemon Hart. I would assure Mr. Manfred that the brand name 'Lemon Hart Rum' is most certainly still in existence and the firm that he and his cousin (and nephew!), Lemon Woolf, established is still very much thriving, indeed, the collateral descendants, at least of Lemon Hart, are also plentiful and in many cases much involved in the life of the Jewish Communities of both England and Australia, amongst whom I am pleased to number the correspondent who writes you this letter.

Westbourne Road DR. A. P. JOSEPH  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham

### KINDERTRANSPORT MEMORIES

As readers no doubt know, our reunion, held at the Harrow Leisure Centre in June, brought together former refugee children from the four corners of the world.

To close the two days' event, a concert was held in which I was the only performer resident in Britain; the other three came from Canada and America. This occasion was very emotional, memories were revived and the tears flowed.

I only broke down one month after. At a music summer school in Berkshire on the last day extracts from oratorios were performed by members of the school. The final item on the programme was an extract from *A Child of our Time* by Michael Tippett, which deals with Hershel Grynszpan and the events leading up to the Kristallnacht. In the oratorio after the disaster the spiritual *Let my People Go* is featured; I remembered everything and hid my face in my hands. Afterwards I spoke to one of my tutors, showed him the reunion souvenir booklet and said 'That's what happened afterwards'. He nodded his head silently and understood. After lunch he said a very tender farewell to me, which I shall never forget.

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## OBITUARY

### LOLA HAHN — WARBURG

With the death of Lola Hahn-Warburg at the age of 88 the refugee community has lost an outstanding personality — and one of its greatest benefactors. As a daughter of the Hamburg banker Max Warburg (and niece of the art historian Aby Warburg) she grew up in a family that was at one and the same time culturally assimilated and deeply concerned for the welfare of fellow-Jews. A founder-member of the *Hilfsverein der Juden in Deutschland*, Max Warburg introduced his daughter early on to the tasks of organising help for Jews coming into Germany from Eastern Europe. This work kindled her interest in Zionism and made her focus her attention more and more on the needs of young people.

In the 1920s she married the industrialist Rudo Hahn (brother of Kurt Hahn of Gordonstoun fame). From 1933 she played a key role in organising emigration from Nazi Germany, becoming so involved that it was only the love and sense of duty to her family and small children that persuaded her, rather hesitantly and almost too late, to emigrate to England, leaving behind an uncompleted task.

Once arrived here she became one of the initiators of the 'Movement for the Care of Children from Germany' which saved the lives of nearly 10,000 children; a related cause very dear to her heart was Youth Aliyah.

After the war she helped resettle concentration camp survivors, providing for disabled children and those in need of special tuition and care. In addition she brought inspiration and organisational flair to the work of Self Aid for Refugees (whose president she became in 1984) and of the Central British Fund, as well as of such educational institutions as Atlantic College and United World College.

Lola Hahn-Warburg's entire life conformed to the spirit of her late friend Wilfrid Israel's legacy: the Iron Obligation to Serve.

### FREDERICK HACKER

Dr. Hacker, who died in West Germany, aged 75, was a psychiatrist with an international reputation both in academe and the wider world. Renowned for researching the psychology of terrorists, he appeared as an expert witness in the notorious Manson trial (following the murder of the actress Sharon Tate). Hacker's expert advice was also sought by the West German authorities after the murder of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972 — and by Randolph Hearst over his daughter Pattie's kidnap two years later.

Hacker had been born into a Jewish middle-class family in Vienna where he began medical studies. A refugee after the Anschluss, he graduated at Basle, Switzerland, before going on to America. He became a U.S. citizen, founded a clinic and taught at the University of Southern California.

He never lost his links with Austria, however. As president of the Viennese Freud Society, he played a key part in the establishment, in 1971, of the Freud Museum in the former home of the 'father of psycho-analysis'.

### LOTTE BLUMENFELD

With the death of Lotte Blumenfeld at the age of 82 one of the longest serving staff members of the (now defunct) London URO Office has passed away. She joined the organisation shortly after its foundation in 1948 and rendered devoted and widely appreciated service until she retired in 1983. As a sincere and helpful personality she will be gratefully remembered by all who knew her. We extend our deepest sympathy to her husband, the cellist Paul Blumenfeld, well known for his invaluable participation in functions of the AJR, and to her son Dennis, who now lives in the U.S. and who joined his parents to help, when his mother's illness had reached its critical stage.

### ERNST KUSCHNITZKY

Ernst Kuschnitzky who died on the 2 June aged 95 at his home in Hull, was a well-known specialist in the tanning industry. From 1952 until his retirement in 1968 he was Managing Director of the leading tanneries in Hull and continued as their consultant until he was 80. He was involved in the development and modernisation of the British tanning industry since the Second World War.

He came to England in May 1939 from Gleiwitz, Upper Silesia, where he had managed the family business, which included a tannery and the manufacture of belting and textile leathers. He started as a foreman in a tannery in Keighley, Yorkshire, where he and his wife Marianne set up their home. A highly cultured man with a wide range of interests, especially in literature and rare books, he is survived by his wife Marianne. They would have celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary this coming September. Ernst Kuschnitzky had been a member of the AJR since its inception.

### SCHMUEL RODENSKY

The Lithuanian-born actor Schmuël Rodensky has died in Tel Aviv at the age of 83. After arriving in Israel in the Nineteen-Twenties, he did a succession of labouring jobs before finding employment in the theatre. In 1950 he joined Habima, where he helped perpetuate a somewhat outworn tradition in terms both of Russian-accented Hebrew diction and acting technique.

In the late Sixties Rodensky toured the Federal Republic in a much-acclaimed production of Scholem Alejchem's *Anatevka*, in which he played Tewje. He was a recipient both of the Federal Cross of Merit and of the Israel Prize, the highest distinction awarded by the Jewish State.

### HERBERT VON KARAJAN

Von Karajan who died, aged 81, in his native Salzburg, attracted one superlative after another throughout a busy life. He was the wealthiest, as well as, reputedly, the greatest conductor of the last 30 years. His rivalry with fellow conductors — e.g. Furtwängler — was the most bitter, and his skill in outmanoeuvring contenders for the same post — e.g. Celibidache — the most Machiavellian. In addition Karajan was uniquely perfectionist (or, as others put it, dictatorial) in

handling his orchestras, which, whether in Vienna or Berlin, were the world's finest. His autobiography approximated more closely to a printed smokescreen than any other work of that ilk; it conveyed the impression that he had been obliged to join the Nazi Party in Germany in 1935 to be allowed to continue conducting — whereas in fact he had joined the (illegal) Austrian Nazis two years earlier, just as Hitler was consolidating his power across the border. This opportune move, coupled with impressively honed musical gifts, smoothed Karajan's ascent to the peaks of a profession bereft of the talents of Jews and Democrats like Klemperer and Kleiber.

In keeping with such a superlative-laden life the obituaries prompted by Karajan's death were, in the words of *The Independent*, 'the most critical of a public figure since George the Fourth'.

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## Births

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**Newton:**—Irene and Anthony Newton are delighted to announce the birth of Sophie Clara Francesca on 4 June. First grandchild for Henry and Ilse Newton and third grandchild for Konrad and Gertrude Blumenfeld of Auckland, New Zealand.

**Singer-Meier:**—Helen and Jonathan are happy to announce the birth of their daughter Rachel on 23 July. A welcome grandchild for Hanna and Peter Singer and for Trude and Arnold Meier.

**Strauss:**—Paula Charlotte, born 7 August, to Sally and Edwin. A sister for Claire Emma, second granddaughter for Charles and Inge, fourth grandchild for Harold and Barbara Ragol-Levy.

## Birthdays

**Fried:**—Ludwig Fried celebrates his 70th birthday on 12 September. Im Ettingerhof 8, CH-4055 Basle, Switzerland.

**Graetz:**—Johanna Graetz (Weil am Rhein), Basel, mother of Marianne Fried-Graetz, celebrated her 95th birthday on 31 August.

**Tichauer:**—Gerard Tichauer, of 108 Chapman Crescent, Harrow, Middlesex. Happy 80th birthday wishes to Gerard on 11 September. With love from Hilda and Lydia, relatives and friends.

## Deaths

**Elsbach:**—Agnes (née Boheimer) born in Attendorn, Westphalia, long resident in Gelsenkirchen and for the last 50 years in London, died peacefully on 6 August, just after her 95th birthday. Mourned and missed by her daughter Marion and all who knew her.

**Marshall:**—Wera Marshall (née Goldschmidt) died 28 July after a long illness. Sadly missed by husband Frank, daughter Irene, son Robert and their families, also brother Curtis, and many friends.

**Philippsthal:**—Gertrud Philippsthal (formerly Hanover) passed away 7 August after a short illness, aged 92. In loving memory — all her friends.

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## Miscellaneous

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## PILGRIMS' REGRESS

In spite of being officially proscribed by the Vatican and the local diocesan authorities the cult of 'ritual murder victim' Anderl von Rinn persists. 500 Austrian and Bavarian pilgrims recently participated in the annual procession to Anderl's birthplace at Judenstein in the Tyrol.

## HARMONIOUS RETURN

When Rabbi Felix Carlebach was made an honorary citizen of Lübeck, in 1987, he expressed the wish to conduct a concert in his Hanseatic hometown. This wish received fulfilment: in June the Lübeck Musikhochschule orchestra played Wagner and Schumann under the rabbi's baton.

## FOR YOUR DIARY

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Monday 18	'Souvenirs Of Vienna' — Rita & Jack Davis, The Singing Duo
Tuesday 19	'The "Hobellied" & Other Austrian Gems' — Hans Freund
Wednesday 20	'Dulwich Piano Trio'
Thursday 21	'Eine Kleine Akkordeon Musik' — Barry Dawson
Monday 25	'Sing-Along With Jack Harris & Gerald Benson'
Tuesday 26	'Dorei-Duo'
Wednesday 27	Music By The Trinity College of Music — Joanna Brockbank (flute) and Ian George (guitar)
Thursday 28	'The Joys & Sorrows Of An Editor' — Richard Grunberger

#### OCTOBER

Monday 2	'Romantic Piano Music by Schubert & Chopin' — Michael Runge
Tuesday 3	'Shelly Weldon Entertains'
Wednesday 4	'Baline & Gershovitz — Story & Music of Irving Berlin & George Gershwin' — By Audrey Samson
Thursday 5	'Music For Your Pleasure' — Esther Orden
Monday 9	CLOSED
Tuesday 10	'Some Musical Refugees — An illustrated Talk About Them' — By Herbie Goldberg
Wednesday 11	'On the Road — Reflections of a Tour Guide' — Otto Deutsch
Thursday 12	'A Programme Of Classical Music' — Sheila & Daphne
Monday 16	'Maurice Reisman Entertains On His Electronic Accordion'
Tuesday 17	'How To Get The Most From Your Bank!' — Joanna Hewitt of Barclays Bank
Wednesday 18	'Popular Violin Recital' — Marianne Olyver & Jonathan Honeyball
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## GUSTAV MAHLER — THE DIALECTICS OF CONVERSION

The life and career of Gustav Mahler symbolised the situation of the Jew in *fin de siècle* Europe. The composer's immediate family circumstances — his father ran a distillery — represented a marked advance on the petty trading pursued by earlier generations. Even so Mahler's birth in a rural Bohemian backwater hardly conduced to intellectual growth or artistic attainment. (In addition, personal circumstances — an ailing, put-upon mother, ill and dying siblings — made the 5-year old, asked what he wanted to be when grown up, reply 'a martyr'.) He nonetheless pursued his studies, particularly of music, with a diligence that gained him admission to the Vienna Conservatoire at the aged of 15. Here the renowned Professor Epstein taught piano; other Jews, or half-Jews, prominent in Viennese musical life were the musicologist Guido Adler and the critic Eduard Hanslick (whom Wagner pilloried as Beckmesser in *Die Meistersinger*). Jewishness, though, had little positive meaning for Mahler who probably never set foot inside a synagogue after being *barmitzvah* at the age of 13. In the negative sense it was to be a burden, though not an insuperable one, to him throughout life. 'I am thrice homeless' he later said 'as a native of Bohemia, as an Austrian among the Germans, and as a Jew throughout the world. Everywhere an outsider, never welcomed'.

### Kassel, Budapest, Vienna

Antisemitism, a newly minted term for an age-old condition was gaining ground in the German-speaking countries, and elsewhere, towards the end of the century. In 1885 he encountered it in considerable force at the theatre in Kassel where, aged 25, he was second conductor. That year's Kassel Festival centred on a performance of Mendelssohn's oratorio *Paulus* with massed orchestras and choirs. The Festival organisers' division of labour between the first and second conductor — the former to take charge of rehearsals and Mahler of the performance — prompted antisemitic outbursts. 'Germans' it was said 'will do all the work and a Jew will stand in the spotlight and take the bows'. The theatre orchestra boycotted the Festival, but Mahler went ahead and hired musicians from elsewhere. On another occasion the director of the theatre said to him 'You are not only a Jew, but a perfidious one!' Not surprisingly Mahler left Kassel at the earliest opportunity. By the age of 29 he had progressed sufficiently to be appointed principal conductor at the Royal Opera, Budapest. During his tenure he aroused admiration as well as venomous enmity. While many critics praised him, a *claque* of detractors charged Mahler with favouring Jewish artists over others and with pandering to the taste of Jewish opera-goers. After only two seasons the newly appointed director of the Royal Opera, a fanatical Hungarian nationalist, contrived his dismissal.

Mahler moved on to Hamburg, where after some years he entered into the musical succession to Hans von Bülow, and from where, early in 1897 he started the negotiations with Vienna that were

to lead, within a matter of months, to his appointment as conductor at the *Hofoper*.

Some time earlier he had written to a friend 'The way things are in the world today my Jewishness debars me from a position at any court theatre — whether it be Vienna, Berlin, Dresden or Munich'.

Now, in February 1897, negotiations with Vienna having got under way, he converted to the Catholic faith at a ceremony in St. Michael's Church, Hamburg.

At the end of the 19th century, as Freud proved — though at some cost to himself — conversion was no longer the *conditio sine qua non* for Jews seeking acceptance in the Gentile world it had been at the beginning. Even so the roster of Austrian contemporaries of Mahler who converted comprised the Socialist founding father Viktor Adler, the philosopher Otto Weininger, the journalist Karl Kraus, the composer Arnold Schoenberg, the novelist Franz Werfel and the father of the philosopher Karl Popper.

What, other than career considerations, motivated such conversions? Popper senior thought that living in an overwhelmingly Christian society imposed the obligation to give as little offence as possible by deviation from the norm. Werfel felt emotionally unfulfilled by Judaism. Weininger, an unbalanced near-genius, abhorred the faith of his fathers and apostatised to extirpate, as it were, the Jew within himself.

Just as the motives for conversion differed, so did the *modus operandi*. Of the two alternatives available to would-be defectors from Jewishness — Catholicism and Lutheran Protestantism — the latter was generally preferred in Austria, being considered the middle way between the perceived opposites of Judaism and the Catholic faith. Some Jews actually first converted to Protestantism and, after a decent interval, took the 'smaller step' of becoming Catholics, i.e. joining the Established Church. Others became Protestants for good, deeming membership of another minority group more appropriate for themselves, and others again went over directly to Rome. (Some of the latter entered the priesthood; around 1900 Bishop Kohn was the incumbent of the diocese of Olmütz.)

The particular route to conversion varied according to personal predilection or the pressure of circumstances. Werfel embraced Catholicism out of a hankering after the mystical mingled with nostalgia for nursery days spent among pious Czech nannies; Weininger opted for the Lutheran faith, with its Germanic roots, as antithesis

to execrated Judaism. Schoenberg, initially a Catholic convert, became a Lutheran in protest at an attack on his 'subversive music' by a Clerical Party deputy in the Austrian parliament.

Gustav Mahler, like Schoenberg initially, became a Catholic. Asked by friends why he had not taken the 'middle' path to Protestantism, he replied '*Wenn schon, denn schon*', a phrase roughly translatable as might as well go the whole hog, or, in for a penny, in for a pound.

Three months after his baptism in St. Michael's, Hamburg, Mahler was installed at Vienna despite attempts by Cosima Wagner, the custodian of her husband's Bayreuth legacy, to block the appointment of a Jew to 'the premier opera house in the world'. Hers was only one voice in the antisemitic chorus raised against the new conductor. The *Reichspost*, Vienna's Catholic daily wrote on 14 April 1897:

In our editorial of the tenth we printed a note on the newly appointed Opera director, Mahler. At the time we already had an inkling of the origin of this celebrity and we therefore avoided publishing anything other than bare facts about this unadulterated — Jew. The fact that he was acclaimed by the press in Budapest of course confirms our suspicion. The Jews' press will see whether the panegyrics with which they plaster their idol at present do not get washed away by the rain of reality as soon as Herr Mahler starts his Jewboy antics on the podium.

Concurrently the *Deutsche Zeitung* inveighed against the 'frightening Jewification of art in Vienna' and asked,

Is a Jew capable of defending our great music . . . our German opera even if like Gustav Mahler he has just been baptised three weeks before?

The *Deutsche Zeitung* returned to the attack again in the following year:

Herr Mahler has now reached the point of wanting to improve on Beethoven. In one of his Philharmonic concerts he is to perform the A minor Quartet Op 132 — with the prayer of thanksgiving on recovery from illness — as an orchestral work.

If Herr Mahler wants to make corrections let him set about Mendelssohn or Rubinstein — that's something, of course, Jews will never put up with — but let him just leave our Beethoven in peace.

### Treble mixed marriage

Mahler was also the target of scurrilous comments emanating from inside the opera house. A leading member of the company, the bass Theodor Reichmann, dubbed him a 'Jewish monkey' on account of his habit, during rehearsals, of leaping from the rostrum and scurrying through the double basses onto the stage.

However, none of these attacks truly pierced Mahler's carapace; still reasonably healthy, he was immunised against the sapping of morale by a profound conviction of his musical mission both as a conductor and as a composer. Early in the new century Mahler met the 22-year old Alma Schindler, who subsequently became his wife. The groundwork for their mixed marriage — a conjunction of three opposites: age and youth, spirit and beauty, and (most importantly for the purpose of this study) Jew and Gentile — had been laid by the society hostess Bertha Zuckerkandl, daughter of a Jewish newspaper proprietor.

R.G.

*Continued in next issue*

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