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PALESTINE AS IT IS

By

M. J. LANDA

Author of
"The Jew in Drama," "The Alien Problem."

With a Foreword by

The Rt. Hon. Sir Herbert Samuel, M.P.

First High Commissioner for Palestine.

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To
My Daughter,
RUTH.

"Behold, our children shall be our sureties."

MIDRASH: SONG OF SONGS.

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The Wailing Wall

Where stands the Jew there stands the Wailing Wall;
But here, behold, his Temple's fragment fane,
A glamour of dead splendour numbing pain,
Judaea's scattered tribes to hold in thrall.
In front, a shadowed courtyard desolate—
Of Israel's life symbolic, strait, unprized,
By guards mistrustful ruled, by laws despised—
To daily censored rite is dedicate.

Is it not time this anguish should erase
The stain of record false from hist'ry's page?
Cannot two thousand years of weeping days
The votive fires of bigotry assuage,
And desert wrack and sacred soil redeem,
Till ev'rywhere turns Jordan's cleansing stream?

M. J. L.

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FOREWORD

MR. LANDA is a trained observer who describes for us the present conditions in one of the most fascinating of all countries. Perhaps I ought to say "processes" rather than "conditions"; for even in the rapidly developing world of to-day there is no land which shows such fundamental changes in so short a time, or bears so strongly marked the stamp of transition as Palestine. There is no land so full both of past and of future, in which the present is so clearly a mere link, a conscious endeavour to revivify what is gone and to plan and construct that which is to come.

As a consequence of this, Palestine is packed with problems. A small country, it is safe to say that it has more problems to the square mile than any other. It has economic problems and political, racial problems and religious, all of them pressing for speedy solution. It is full of energetic activities, splendid enthusiasms, vehement hostilities. Jews do things, whatever the things may be, with somewhat greater intensity than other people. The large and sustained Jewish effort in the post-war Palestine is bringing visible and striking results; they may be approved or possibly disapproved, but they are stirring and remarkable, and no one can be indifferent to them. And underneath the bustle and controversy that spring from the impact of this effort upon the former Palestine, there is steadily going on a great deal of quiet and effective work—agricultural, industrial, intellectual—in which

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Arabs are sharing as well as Jews; while over it all there presides a hard-working British administration, honest, well-intentioned, active, sometimes harassed, always patient.

Mr. Landa furnishes us with an excellent description of all this. He does it, not by means of statistical graphs, but by pen-pictures. He draws with a sure hand. He has had a life-long interest in Palestine, and has now been able to check his expectations by personal impressions, and to verify or modify them. He helps us to understand and to weigh the gains and the losses of this remarkable period of swift development in a land illustrious in the past and endowed afresh in our own day with brilliant possibilities.

HERBERT SAMUEL.

London, *August*, 1932.

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Introduction

This is a record of a unique tour in Palestine in the summer of 1931, preluded by an equally eventful, although unplanned, journey of exceptional character. A lifetime of yearning was suddenly realized by permission to join a party which travelled light (knapsacks only), third class—some actually sleeping on deck as fourth class passengers in the Mediterranean. In Paris we joined the Jewish group of athletes, men and women, returning from the Socialist Olympiad at Vienna, who gave zest and added interest to the voyage. We toured Palestine by motor bus, with a remarkable Jewish driver. We were the guests of the Jewish colonists, whose hospitality was touching, making us regret that in some places we could do little more than leave our cards. Where water was scarce we were allowed to fill our bottles: urged to do so; where sleeping accommodation was scanty beds were given up. Once only did we sleep in the open. The trip was pluckily and splendidly organized by the Paole Zion, the Jewish Socialist Labour Party of Great Britain; but no declaration of faith was demanded, and I am afraid the generous doping of propaganda produced disappointing results—with me, at any rate. The opportunity, however, was afforded of a close insight into an aspect of piquancy and importance, as yet little known—the communal colonies where the co-operative system is in vogue. Our days, which frequently began before dawn, were

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ablaze with brilliant sunshine and crowded with incident. The nights were radiant with moonlight that prolonged our activities beyond the 'witching hour,' keeping us wakeful with the charm, the novelty, the wonder.

My thanks are due to the editors of the *Jewish Chronicle* and the Starmer group of newspapers in which parts of this book appeared, and are here embodied and expanded into a conspectus of the Yishub (Jewish Settlement) after eleven years of civil administration.

M. J. Landa.

Press Gallery,
House of Commons,
July, 1932.

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CHAPTER I

The Wonderful Journey

We were twenty-three all told, five belonging to the other sex. There was not a complete muster at the preliminary meet at the Paole Zion office near the British Museum. All I can recall of it (I could only look in for a few minutes) was an unrelated mass of handshakes and rucksacks with tea and biscuits spilling over them. We were not even a total roll-call at Victoria Station for the night journey to Paris. Dr. Ivor Kinsley, of Brighton, whom I then met for the first time, and who became my special chum on the expedition, joined us at Newhaven. The only one known to me—Mr. J. L. Cohen, economist, and authority on Unemployment Insurance—attached himself at the last moment that muggy evening (normal in the 1931 wretched summer!) at Victoria. Until then he was a doubtful member. He was the only one who had visited Palestine before—the only one, that is, besides Adoph Myers, the secretary of the Paole Zion—he had held a position at Haifa, was offered it again while we were there, and returned to it shortly after we got back to England.

Except for a contingent from Manchester, we were all strangers to each other, almost an epitome of the amor-

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phous mass of Jewry. We differed in our concepts of Judaism; we varied in our interpretation of the Laws of Israel, and obedience to the Mosaic ordinances. We were an adventitious group temperamentally. Yet we were united in a spirit of eager adventure by a bond that is Zion: to which, again, we rendered allegiance with marked distinctions. It was more than a holiday for all of us, even for the one who persisted that this was his sole interest, and who surprised us (on the return journey!) by announcing himself an Assimilationist—one who does not believe in remaining in the Fold. He was lacking in sufficient imagination to 'pull a leg'; he was the most matter-of-fact person in the company. Perhaps it was bravado.

Of the five females, one was married, a schoolmistress. One was a medical student, one a dress-designer—a hoyden who became exceedingly popular. The remaining two hailed from Manchester, spoke Hebrew well, and were otherwise accomplished; both were professionally in Education. The males were more heterogeneous. Most were still students, two of them scholars at Oxford. Of this couple, one was the solitary member without a knapsack, and his quaint portmanteau was a troublesome casualty homeward. Two or three were in business, and one—a lively lad of sixteen—a tremendous favourite with the girls everywhere. And didn't he enjoy himself! The portmanteau carrier and another young man—both of them, like myself, born in Leeds—were splendid Hebraists, but not on a par with Myers, whose command of modern Hebrew was perfect in accent and fluency. All

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but one knew Yiddish, most of us managed German fairly well, and several spoke French excellently, while the other Oxford student practised his Greek assiduously. Altogether an interesting combination, which soon welded itself into an astonishingly genial set of good companions, replete with a strong sense of humour, quick adaptability, and loyal friendship transcending divergencies. We were never dull, hardly ever bored with each other. We crammed the hours with full sixty minutes of entertainment and observation—sometimes more! We had the time of our lives, our minds highly sensitized, our bodies keyed up in unison.

Adventure began in Paris, where the weather was as unsympathetic as in England. That added to our disappointment at the miserable display in the Palestine Pavilion at the Exhibition, which must have given all visitors a pitiful impression of Jewish activity in the Holy Land. A jolly Jewish restaurant adjoining mollified us to such an extent that two of our girls, who had fallen asleep in chairs in the Pavilion, got up a dance between the courses. There was much more of the exuberance of the Palestinian spirit in the farewell at the Gare de Lyon when we left by the night train for Marseilles. All the Parisian Zionists seemed to have gathered on the platform, determined to exercise their lung power to the full for the edification of the Palestinian athletes returning from the Socialist Olympiad at Vienna. They were Paole Zionists, highly interested to meet us: we shared a carriage.

The community singing of Hebrew songs was sufficiently deafening to drown the shrill hissing of the engine.

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The dancing of the Hora was wild, almost fanatical; it must have made many onlookers wonder whether the terpsichoreans were part of the Exhibition, and glad they were departing.

About that Hora. We came to pronounce it the 'Horror.' It is a round dance—primitive, crude; the emotional expression of ebullient and well-nigh hysterical spirits. A circle is formed with arms linked on shoulders. The movement begins slowly, quickens, with heavier stamping of the feet, with erratic swaying as the numbers increase—for any one can join in—until it becomes unwieldly or collapses from sheer general exhaustion. Before then the vocal accompaniment has trailed into the unrecognizable, and has developed into a medley of staccato shouting.

Our boys and girls gazed on fascinated. They were caught up in the fervour of the wondrous joy of life which the Palestinians manifested from that moment onwards with undiminished gusto until the end of the voyage. They tried to join in the dance that night; they practised it ecstatically on board, only to find that there is not so much of it in Palestine, where some people deprecate it as derived from the Debka, an Arab dance. I can imagine it as the spontaneous outburst of a fierce communal, or tribal, joy.

Marseilles next morning provided a smaller but more poignant indication of Jewish hearts beating in unison on the meridian of Jerusalem. Cohen, Miller (one of the Oxford youths), and I walked from the station to the ship. Passing a little Jewish restaurant, we stopped

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for coffee. The Yiddish-speaking proprietor nearly embraced us when he heard we were going to Palestine. He rushed out into the street in great excitement when told we were but the overflow of a bus-load from England, and that other vehicles contained the genuine Palestinian settlers and pioneers. I shall not forget the longing in his voice, the regret in his eyes, because he missed the spectacle, nor the warmth with which he wrung our hands and bade us God-speed.

The days on board the *Lotus*, blessed with fine weather with a cloudless sky overhead, and a smooth deep blue sea around, were chock-full of joy and drama. Scarce had we got out of the harbour than a Jew from America approached the Palestinians who travelled on the fourth-class deck, with an American-Yiddish paper in his hand.

'This,' he said, 'is a picture of your group at Vienna. My son is among them, a cyclist. Can you tell me where and how he is? I am going to see him.'

A lithe, fair-haired boyish youth in racing shorts, lying half asleep on deck, raised himself, gazed in startled wonderment at the eager questioner.

'Father?'

'My son!'

They were in each other's arms, and we who looked on, turned hastily to contemplate the sunbeams scattering jewels on the placid Mediterranean. There were other Jews in the weird league of nations aboard. One had an iron bedstead which he set up nightly on the fourth class deck. Little by little parts of it went missing. Another confided to me, in English, his hope that pro-

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pitiary prayers at the tomb of some remote ancestor would turn the evil decree that appeared to have fallen on his family. He spoke with a simple faith that gave dignity and solemnity to his mission.

We were not the only pilgrims. There was a host of pious Christians who must have regarded us as mere merry-makers. Wearing red crosses, they trod sedately, with averted eyes, when they had to pass our boys and girls and the Palestinians interminably dancing on deck. One, a morose youth, found it difficult. It must have been harsh upon him to have to resist the inviting eyes that would lure him to join in the innocent mirth. A contrasting attitude was the fraternal charm of a Spanish priest fleeing from the Revolution to sanctuary in the Holy Land. What a freak of Nemesis! Once his ancestors drove mine from Spain. To-day he found solace in our company, a foretaste of his hope of peace in the Land of Israel!

Our group, with its command of languages, made friends with everybody. There was a pretty little comedy overture the first night. We sat on the third class deck in the cool of the evening apart from a number of French officers and their wives—two couples were rapturous honeymooners going to Syria. We started choral singing. They, perhaps satirically, countered with a French nursery song. They were startled when our boys and girls took it up lustily. They challenged with the soldiers' chorus from 'Faust.' We showed them we knew opera. We became the best of friends for the rest of the journey: I think they danced rather better than our lot. One of

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the officers sang saucy songs to his banjo accompaniment, and exchanged language lessons with our boys and girls. Our party spent a lot of time with the Palestinians studying Hebrew. They found the girls earnest teachers; one of them, nicknamed 'the Shiksa' (a term loosely used to mean a non-Jewess) because of her accent and her flaxen hair, was reputed to give excellent lessons for chocolates!

One of the Franco-Syrian soldiers asked us to sing 'Hatikvah' (The Hope), the Zionist anthem, a request that proclaimed him a Jew. We sang the religious anthem, 'Adon Olam,' to its melody at a service which we held on the Friday night. Some of the Palestinians laughed at the idea of the service. One of their girls when asked to attend, sneered, 'I have no business with God.' It was a first intimation of an attitude encountered definitely in the communal colonies in Palestine. Still, they were extraordinary, these Palestinians—graceful of limb, alert in mind. Their companionship transformed our journey into a marvellous prelude. They were alive every minute of the day and most of the night—dancing, singing melancholy songs out of keeping with their vivacious spirits; playing games, practising athletics, holding meetings—and then sleeping contentedly, rolled up in blankets, or in each others' arms, on the bare boards of the deck, the stars their coverlet. They shamed the French officers of the ship into a concession of bathing facilities! They held an indignation meeting against insufficient washing accommodation in the fourth class, sent a deputation to the captain, and virtually compelled

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him to capitulate and permit them to have douches in the third class bathroom. Their leader, Perlstein, a remarkably genial fellow, read the Friday evening service, and one of our boys sang the Sanctification over the wine splendidly.

We were a racial raree-show, yet surprisingly free from friction. But we were treated to a foretaste of the Jew–Arab problem. A number of Arab boy scouts were returning from the Kandersteg jamboree to Palestine, and were on friendliest terms with our party. One of them spoke Hebrew very well. One of our girls in conversation with him used the term, ' Erets Israel ' (Land of Israel). ' Erets Ishmael,' he remarked quietly, with the unmistakeable emphasis of correction. It was the first time any of us had heard the phrase. It betokened an older claim. Later, I saw this scout lying on a rug on deck, reading. Our boys and girls and some of the Palestinians were dancing to music of the orchestra stationed in the first class just above—happy, care-free, in the beautiful Mediterranean night.

' Why don't you join them? ' I asked.

' This is more interesting,' he replied. He held up the book, *Those Ancient Lands*, Louis Golding's Palestine sketches which the girl had left there. A trivial episode, but it lingers in memory. So does another, which might have been unpleasant. Instead, Perlstein's cool daring and tact turned it into a neat *coup*.

It was Saturday night. Before dusk swooped down Perlstein's brought his party just within the second class deck, where actually they had no business to be, for

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choral singing—a traditional method of 'escorting' the departing Sabbath. One of the girls, Shashanna (Lily), had an excellent singing voice, and this, in particular, attracted a crowd. A group of Syrian Arabs collected close by, immediately on the other side of the barrier between second and third class. This was ostentatiously provocative. Singing parties had kept courteous distance. Senegalese soldiers crouched round a gramophone, listening to their native melodies; Armenians gathered about one of their number chanting Eastern tales—and each invariably had its circle of admiring and wondering listeners. This night, led by a truculent obese Syrian, overdressed in European clothes, and with an old man with a violin in their midst, the Arabs deliberately started a competition. They began with plaintive droning melodies. They worked up *crescendo* with hand-clapping.

We reinforced the Palestinians. Shashanna's voice rang clear and sweet. We trolled robustly, and with a hearty 'Hallelujah' chorus, silenced the Arabs. Then, with quiet dignity and without even a glance at his discomfited rivals, Perlstein collected his comrades and trooped back to the fourth class deck, just as the fat fellow in grey returned from making a complaint to the purser. His face, as the victors filed slowly by, was a delicious study in baffled vengeance. The quiet, orderly walk of the Palestinians past him, as if he did not exist, was a demonstration of perfect good temper and discipline.

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CHAPTER II

Light in Egypt

ARRIVAL at Alexandria brought sharp contact with the East—impact vitalizing all preconceived notions, and fulfilling them. We anchored in the harbour to take aboard an army of officials, and while being towed to the landing-stage could observe all the Oriental love of leisurely officialdom in the examination of passports. I could see, as I noted when I ventured into Russia in Tsarist days, that life is contraband, to desire entry into a country an offence, a contest between unconscious smugglers and human beings reduced to robots by satrapy.

The moment we touched the landing-stage, we hit the East with a bump, the East of the Arabian Nights as seen at Drury Lane! The whole mixture was there, the riot of colour, the babel of raucous voices, the bizarre impatience against order. Europe and Asia rubbed shoulders violently—in Africa. Smart European clothes were inextricably jumbled with the picturesqueness, much of it frowsy and ragged, of the Orient of travel books and the stage. A straggling line of coolies, looking like cheap pantomime supers who had been queued up by khaki-clad and fezzed policemen, broke loose and overran the ship. Porters and pedlars, touts who looked starved; money-changers, greasy and fat—a medley of race in all

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the pigments of Nature's palette—spread themselves over the vessel with acrobatic celerity. They popped in and out of the cabins and appeared with irritating suddenness from holes and hatchways like harlequins out of trapdoors.

As if by magic a market sprang into feverish activity on the quay. We were offered cigarettes and carpets—what on earth for?—shawls and sweets, purses and pocket-books, coffee and cakes, lemonade and lithographs, lollipops and lapis lazuli—the alphabet of trading ware by the oddest collections of coons I had ever seen. They ranged from tiny children to be-whiskered nonagenarians. They grew tiresome.

We were glad when, all dawdling ceremonial ended, we were allowed ashore about eleven o'clock, in charge of a Jewish guide who spoke Engish with a Whitechapel-Yiddish accent. He was a queer amalgam of East and West, a philological curiosity whose endeavours to serve Orientalism with his eagernes to meet our Occidental objections to a retinue, got him into trouble with an imporunate Arab claiming to possess some sort of firman to attach himself to our party. The Arab's fluency in non-dictionary English led to a row in the Post Office which we invaded, necessitating the intervention of a police official who fancied himself an assize judge.

From the moment we escaped the attentions of the Customs officials, who 'searched' us by running their hands up and down our sides—we took care to guard our pockets—we must have been as entertaining a sight to the populace as they were to us. We looked like a troop

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of boy scouts, goggled and straw-hatted, bent, seemingly, on capturing the town. The streets presented a bewildering panorama of the restless struggle for existence—pathetically pestering. We had the utmost difficulty in persuading everybody that we were not there to purchase the wild assortment of commodities that would have furnished a house and decorated it into the semblance of a museum, and that we had no intention of halting to have our boots cleaned every two minutes. I never saw so many shoe-shiners promenading with their boxes. Later in the day they persuaded our boys to submit to their skill. It was an astounding spectacle when half a dozen, inside and outside a restaurant, had half a dozen artists at their feet simultaneously, with several others looking on, ready to offer to do the polishing all over again! This is an Oriental trait betokening a fatalistic faith that I cannot profess to fathom.

I was as much interested in the deportment of my companions as in the behaviour of the Alexandrians. Never before had the opportunity presented itself of seeing a band of young Jewish tourists abroad. There was nothing specifically Jewish in their demeanour. No diffidence, no sign of 'inferiority complex.' They were exactly like groups of high-spirited English touring parties out to enjoy themselves on the Continent. Their 'Englishness' oozed from them. Alexandria was to them an unalloyed entertainment. They gloried in the experience; they wanted everybody to note it and take pleasure in it. Their Anglicization—a characteristic of English Jews on which I have always insisted as natural

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and inevitable—was complete, and magnificent. We 'rubber-necked' the city in carriages and on the trams with thoroughness and with a festive abandon that communicated itself to the whole place—to shopmen whom we visited, to attendants at the museum and other sights, to hawkers, drivers, tram conductors—everybody. We 'did' the catacombs, traversed the native quarter, where we saw a school in the street, looked in at the beautiful synagogue, disported ourselves on the beach where our leap-frog and other games, in which we indulged without the slightest self-consciousness, must have made the Alexandrians believe we were a circus let loose. Even at the Nouzha Gardens we danced during tea.

The sun was fierce. We were glad of the breaks indoors. Our first, at a Jewish restaurant in a principal street, presented us with the contrast between Western and Eastern Jews. A benign old man, looking (to me) like Ali Baba or his Grand Vizier, offered me his glass of wine with some remark about Zion. I touched it with my lips and returned it with a hearty 'Shalom'—the Hebrew salutation, 'Peace.' The aged fellow was so delighted that he offered me a fork-full of his food! I firmly but politely declined, much to his disappointment. I hope he was not offended.

We finished up a hectic day at the Zionist Club, where we received a tumultous welcome in several languages, including perfect English and fluent Hebrew. Alexandria is a polygot city—polymorphous, too. The Jewesses whom we met at the Club, good looking, stately, and tastefully dressed in European fashion, treated us with

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gracious courtesy and hospitality, not embarrassingly Oriental. We were thoroughly at home. Where our ancestors in a land of darkness and slavery had worked unto bitterest sweat, we, coming from a land of sombre and weeping skies, were a mass of perspiration as pilgrims of freedom and pleasure in an atmosphere of overpowering sunshine and human kindness.

Then came climax. Some of our boys bought fezzes from tenacious street-hawkers, and wore them proudly back to the ship. The Palestinians frowned. 'Take them home and wear them on Purim,' exclaimed one reprovingly. 'Purim' is the minor festival commemorating the events related in the Book of Esther, when a spirit of carnival and misrule is permitted. In vain it was pleaded that the Sephardi Jews in Alexandria—and even in Jeruslem, as we noted later—wore the fez: to them it was Arabic, and consequently taboo.

But naught could mar the joy of that hilarious day. Dog-weary as we were, we sang as we walked through the cooler night air to the vesssel, which we reached about midnight. I was for immediate sleep, but the consumption of diverse purchases by some of our lads—marmalade, sardines, cocoa, and fruit—necessitated visits to my cabin companion, the doctor. Others came to say, 'Wasn't it a wonderful day?' And it was not until this had been said for the hundredth time that the last visitor was kicked out.

Next day was a repetition on a smaller scale, with variations. It began with a colic queue at our cabin; it ended, on shore, with a pageant—a procession of open

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taxicabs—five of us in each for a shilling!—cheering ourselves and everybody to the *Lotus*. The farewell on the quay was a dazzling spectacle. The ladies of Alexandria donned their smartest clothes (mostly black) to say *bon voyage*, and there was a stream of flowers and bon-bons —not for us. The Zionists gave us a hearty send-off. They envied us.

By the way, we had been warned of pick-pockets, but not one of us suffered.

Port Said, where we spent a few hours next day, afforded further Jewish adventures, including the most amazing of them. We started by crowding into a shop in the main street. The proprietor, a Jew, said he would charge special (lower) prices because we were bound for Palestine. This may have been 'business,' but I got a pair of leather slippers for half a crown—English money; far less than the price asked in Paris and Marseilles. Most of the shops in this street, leading up from the quay, appeared to belong to Jews. Outside one of them, a man asked who we were—not an unnecessary query, for again we looked like invaders taking possession of the place.

'We are English, we are Jewish, we are Zionists,' he was informed.

'It cannot be; it is impossible,' he replied, vehemently in Yiddish, revealing himself as one of the those who regard English Jews as a special class of freaks.

I demurred.

'I'll explain why such a combination cannot be,' he persisted.

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'Don't,' I retorted. 'It is enough that you are Russian.'

'How do you know?' he protested. 'May I not be Rumanian?'

'No,' I rejoined. 'Only a Russian could be so cocksure about others.'

Not knowing the Yiddish for 'cocksure,' I used the English word, but he understood.

We were subjected for a time to the unsavoury attentions of a particularly obnoxious tout, oily of tongue, who spoke English well, and said he was a Jew who wanted to be of service to us. I doubt if he was a Jew. He struck me as an offensive half-caste. His wiliness was too palpable to enable us to be victimized.

The final incident was extraordinary. There had been some trouble about our going ashore. We had heard we would not be permitted to land, and the intimation was conveyed to the ship's authorities that there might be some excitement if we were cooped on board while the vessel was at Port Said. Matters reached dangerously near the point of trouble when Cohen told me he had been threatened with arrest for protesting. I let it be understood he would not be alone, and made some remark about the companion way leading down to the pontoon connecting ship and shore being barred by an Egyptian policeman wearing British war ribbons. He said something about having to do his duty, and I thought he looked reproachful when finally we were permitted to land, and he examined our passports.

On our return, Cohen and I were told he desired to see us and explain. It was also hinted that it would be

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advisable to assuage his feelings by apologies. We readily agreed, and shook hands. His explanation was almost sensational.

This Egyptian policeman, tall, well-built, trim in his white linen uniform, and wearing a fez with dignity, was a Russian Jew, born in Kieff, and had served in the British Army! He was married in London, where he had an uncle, a photographer, whom he was delighted to hear I knew.

And as he stood on the pontoon when it cast off, we saluted each other: '*Shalom, achi!*' (Peace, brother.)

Russia, Egypt, Whitechapel, Palestine! How surprisingly the peregrinations of the Wandering Jew had come full circle at the junction point of the two ancient lands of his destiny.

In the swift twilight, we slipped quietly away from Port Said without any fuss of departure. We also were subdued. Escorted by a crescent moon we were on the last stage of our journey, soon to be in sight of the Promised Land. We found the cabins sweltering—an excuse for most of us to stay on deck. Dawn came—a new dawn —for the eastern horizon was a coastline, Palestine! All the jarring noises of a ship in early morning faded into an indistinct murmur at that realization. Silently we descended for a few hours' sleep. Jaffa was a tumbling group of houses and domes rising from the sea, with Tel Aviv, hidden in the heat haze, when we anchored a mile or so from the shore. A doctor came on board. His examination was absurd. He merely put his hand to our throats. Passport examination, also on board, was

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more thorough. I slipped into the cabin to watch them looking for our names on the black-list! We were passed quickly. I was the first to descend into the big surf-boat into which our rucksacks had been thrown. To the tune of the Volga Boat Song, our picturesque oarsmen were urged to beat the boat containing the Arab boy scouts, who had left a minute ahead of us, each proudly wearing the native headgear, the keffiyeh. They did, steering through the narrow gateway of the teeth-like rocks deftly, well in front. The moment my feet touched the shore I uttered the collect, '*Shechiyonu*'—'Who hast kept us in life, and hast preserved us, and hast enabled us to reach this season'—more fervently, and with more meaning, than ever before. We were hurried by Hebrew officials in khaki and black astrachan fezzes to a room above the landing-place. I answered the roll-call in Hebrew, '*Hinneni*' (here am I)—saw my name inscribed as a permitted visitor, stepped aside, free to enter the Land of Israel. A thrilling moment!

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CHAPTER III

The Hebrew City, Tel Aviv

THE half piastre (penny-farthing) Hebrew bus between Jaffa and Tel Aviv is the link between the old East and the new. You enter by the door at the front, hand your fare to the Hebrew polygot driver, who gives you a Hebrew paper ticket, and find it possesses the power of the genii of Aladdin's lamp. In a few moments you have left behind the sinister-looking streets, their smells and their beggars, one of whom drags himself along on his knees, trailing a pair of useless legs—the ghastliest spectacle unfolded in all Palestine. In a few moments you are in a new world, the East that is changing.

Jaffa means 'beautiful.' To-day the term is a pitiful irony, mocked by its prepossessing appearance from the sea. Jonah embarked here on his famous adventure, and classic tradition localizes the rescue of Andromeda from the monster by Perseus. To-day, Tel Aviv, the Jewish suburb grown into a separate township, is the visible saviour from an ignoble concept of existence. Tel Aviv is all Hebrew. Even the khaki-clad special English policemen—there are a few, but the town's force is Jewish—understand Hebrew. One of them told me he finds it much it easier to learn than Arabic. He appreciated the free classes provided by the Zionists. Also, he told

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me he found Hebrews easier. They don't drink, they don't fight, they don't use daggers. In Jaffa a café was pointed out to me where—so I was informed—an Arab was done to death in broad daylight, although it was known he was living under threats.

The spaciousness of the Tel Aviv streets, the whiteness of its buildings, the open balconies, are concrete indications of a new era, a nobler outlook, wider possibilities, and a cleaner existence, consonant with Jewish ideas. They proclaim that where the Jews have self-determination they do not herd in evil ghettoes. Tel Aviv is a city of censure on the practice of the past which is not entirely eradicated yet.

Sabbath (Saturday) is the great day that emphasizes the character of Tel Aviv. It is totally different from anything I have ever seen elsewhere—an extraordinary amalgam of the cloistral peace of Sunday in an English cathedral city and the Blankenberghe front, and yet unlike both. There is no clanging church bells of the one, no noisy jostling of the other. Neither the abandon of the Belgian coast nor the glamour of an ancient Minster can provide such an atmosphere as that of Tel Aviv on Friday night. Sabbath candles illumined the houses. Windows were open to the warm air, which becomes refreshingly cooler the nearer you get to the sea and can be sweltering at a distance from the beach. Through the windows and from the balconies, where family parties were gathered, came the singing of Zemiroth (table hymns), and of Grace, to the traditional melodies. In the Hebrew city Israel was pronouncing his

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joyous faith in the ancient ordinance that gave humanity the priceless boon of a weekly day of rest. On the Front, was a happy, sedate parade to the swish of the sea, whose calm breaks into ceaseless murmur in its caress of the shore of the Holy Land.

Sabbath morning was a revelation. The very air was still. All the shops were closed, the post office also. No buses were running. There was scarce a vehicle to be seen, hardly a sound to be heard. Everybody seemed to be dressed in white. There was an immediate sense of repose and happy consciousness of the difference between this day and others such as I had never experienced—a communion between a workaday world and a divine command that recognized the benign influence of the latter. Let me at once confess that this did not absolutely persist all day. It was varied by a manifestation that Biblical ordinances, even in their Homeland, are subject to human dispensation, and—why deny it?—mundane whim.

We went to the Great Synagogue, a lofty and impressively plain structure in the Allenby Road. Three services were in progress. The one in the main building was just finishing. In the one in the hall below a boy was reading his Confirmation portion of the Pentateuch. In the third, some of our boys were in time to be ' called up ' to the reading of the day's scriptural chapters. They were in shorts, which would have been considered irreverent in England, but their garb aroused no comment; it is normal wear in Palestine. One of the lads being a Cohen was duly honoured with the first ' call '; proud he was of it.

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Wandering down to the beach, we opened our eyes—as much as we could in the dazzling sunshine—in blankest amazement. Here was something startling in its novelty, the Brighton of Erets Israel: again with a tremendous difference. It was Oneg Shabbat (Sabbath pleasure) up-to-date, with a vivid flash into the future. The deserted streets were explained. All Tel Aviv was here, parading and bathing—thousands, happy without noise, joyous without boisterousness, merry with no trace of rowdiness. Crowds promenaded in bathing costume, not one of them bizarre in character. There was variety, but not vanity. Only one pair of beach pyjamas did I see. Tel Aviv is no Lido. It has no kursaal, no 'cercle.' There is more real joy of life. Coloured cloaks and gowns were few; eccentric headgear was absent. For a piastre you get the use of a dressing-room, costume, and towel; for half a piastre you have a camp chair on the sands with head cover and a Hebrew ticket handed by the sharp-eyed Hebrew attendant.

I lolled in my chair before the bluest sea on which I had ever gazed, under the serenest blue sky, and wondered whether I was dreaming. The picture was incredible—a denial of Jewish history! Thousands of Jews and Jewesses of all ages, Hebraists in the intensive sense of speaking Hebrew, yet Hellenists in the abandonment to the day's pleasure; dressed like athletes and looking magnificently athletic and the embodiment of health; totally different in appearance from every picture of Jews, drawn by artists, or limned by writers. A people free, truly liberated—after thousands of years of celebration

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of the Deliverance from Bondage! A day of true recreative rest. No niggers, pierrots, raucous pedlars, or boat touts. No tripper element. I was seeing more through my darkened glasses than ever suspected—more than the most powerful illuminant could reveal. Was I seeing Jews freed from their shackles for the first time? I collected myself.

Was this Sabbath? Well, not in the traditional sense. Many people were smoking, a few cafés and restaurants were open. There was a complete absence of that austere Sabbatarianism that is all prohibition and restrictive law; it was the antithesis of dogma translated into a rigid code and stereotyped by convention. On the face of it, this was mass violation. Away from the front there was not the same sense of wholesale defiance. What was perhaps more remarkable was the fact that there was no dying away of the Sabbath in the afternoon. The same restful spirit persisted, with just an occasional reminder that some people are troubled by the new phase.

A benevolent-looking old man, his beard nearly as white as his Sabbath garb, stopped one of our boys in the street, shook hands with a cordial ' shalom,' pointed reproachfully to his pipe! To do the lad justice he was not smoking but holding his pipe out of sheer habit.

It is not my intention to sermonize. I am, however, sad as I turn over the pages of one of my souvenirs—the *Book of Tel Aviv*, compiled by the Town Clerk, issued by the Keren Hayesod (Zionist Foundation Fund), 1929, and autographed by Mr. Dizengoff, the Mayor, who entertained our party at the Town Hall on

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our first night in Palestine—a delightful evening. The book is full of information—of the romantic history of the town, its struggles, its institutions, hospitals, schools, theatres, libraries, newspapers, welfare organizations. Tel Aviv is a progressive municipality of 46,000 inhabitants where, a quarter of a century ago, was a waste of sand dunes. One thing only appears to have been overlooked in the compilation.

Is it mere carelessness that there is neither picture nor mention of synagogues? Is it to be assumed they have no place in the official record of this almost magical Hebrew city that is the symbol of the restored life? On its civic arms are the words, *A Light to the Diaspora and the Gate of Entry into the Country*. I saw that spirit in the beautiful little cameo of half a dozen men sitting in the street outside a small synagogue in the main Allenby Road, studying the Talmud in the calm of the summer night. They had placed a table on the pavement and were gathered round it, conscious of their freedom. Their candles shed a radiance far beyond the tomes over which their heads were piously bowed.

There are other things about Tel Aviv that call for mention. The sanitation is far from perfect. Mr. J. Schiffman, the chief municipal engineer, a B.Sc. of London University, a man of great personal charm and culture, did not minimize that aspect in conversation with me. He is a Tel Aviv enthusiast with big ideas for the future. He showed me his map of the Greater Tel Aviv, told me of his hopes of carrying out a main sewerage scheme that must cost £150,000—perhaps

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£200,000. Others have told me it will cost more the longer it is delayed, and that it will soon become imperative. That is the measure of Tel Aviv's wondrous development.

Tel Aviv has grown too fast. It has slums, an unpleasant legacy of the hasty jerry-building in the boom years, 1921–26. Locally, they call them 'barracks' and are worried about the problem. Vested interests, old covenants, lack of alternative accommodation, stand in the way of improvement. It is the old, old story. In adopting modern civilization, Tel Aviv has discovered that it has taken over some of its ancient lumber of which even England cannot divest itself—as witness its overcrowding problems under the very shadow of the Houses of Parliament in the City of Westminster. Local Labour and Socialist leaders talk of the urgent need of bye-laws and regulations on the English model. They even say they have demanded them, but have been turned down by the municipality and the Government officials. This was denied in other quarters. I was not there long enough to plumb the deeps of the politico-municipal complications. They made Tel Aviv ultra modern. And it has no gaol!

Mr. Schiffman and Mr. Dizengoff will succeed in improving the town. They are keen on town-planning, not merely its future developments, but some of its existing features. They want a better and brighter Front. The beach is not good enough. It is too haphazard, cumbered with absurd wooden structures. It suggests an unenterprising village, rather than a beautiful, go-ahead

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town, which, whatever criticisms may be offered, remains the triumph of ideals, a monument of Jewish faith and endeavour, a beacon of enlightenment 'twixt East and West—for both.

And, for Jews, Tel Aviv represents the essence of regeneration more than anything else in Palestine.

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CHAPTER IV

Jewish Peasant Colonies

SMALL in extent, but as varied in its contour as in its history of ascent and decline, is Palestine. And as illustrative in its oases of fruitfulness amid areas of sterility. On the first day of its tour, in a few hours, our motor bus traversed the Bible, from Jaffa to the Book of Revelations —to the Plain of Armageddon. Along roads that were curling ribbons of blinding sunlight, over bare brown and scorched rocks and hills, speckled with patches of bright green as if the ground, asserting it birthright to fertility, was declaiming its determination to defy the dazzling but parching splendour. We were surrounded by the undying monuments of the Book: Mounts Carmel and Tabor, Nazareth peeping from its lofty nest; the Gilboa Range; and, across the deep declivity of the Jordan Valley, the heights of Transjordan.

Here in the region of Crusading battles, and more recently of Allenby's great victory, the millenial struggle between the forces of good and evil is already being fought—the evil of centuries of neglect disrupting before the energy and enthusiasm of the Jewish colonists, without bloodshed. Here, where the Witch of Endor said to Saul, 'I saw God's ascending out of the earth,' and conjured up Samuel before the Jewish king, a modern

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Samuel—the first High Commissioner of the new Palestine—beheld the majesty of Israel in his report of 1925.

'When I first saw it (the Valley of Esdraelon, which the Jews simply call the Emek, the Valley) in 1920, it was a desolation. . . . What five years ago was little better than a wilderness is being transformed before our eyes into a smiling countryside.'

It is a reclamation that is steadfastly proceeding. The Jewish colonies, with their charming modern cottages, the gardens, the farms, the plantations, and their sturdy and cheerfully hard-working population, are patiently multiplying. The people have consecrated themselves to a voluntary bondage that is happiness to them and a demonstration of human fortitude and power over circumstance that must rank high in the annals of colonization. The settlements are thriving despite difficulties and some misguidance. They are something more than a refuge. They are proving a true home in the restoration of manhood to the hunted and the persecuted; they are the centre of indomitable courage and a great experiment.

At Kfar Yeladim we saw the children's colony founded by South African Jews for Russian pogrom orphans. The children run it themselves under the guidance of instructors, one of whom took a two years' course at Reading University. A cowboy, without sombrero, was a fine figure on his gaily caparisoned pony.[1] At Merchavia two

[1] A few months after our visit it was reported that this colony is to end because the children are growing up and are being transferred and events have made it impossible to bring other children from Eastern Europe. There is also a financial problem. The colony is to become a central school for the Emek.

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middle-aged men of the type who might be seen any day in a Whitechapel synagogue, bearded and skull-capped, said: 'Our lives are hard and narrow. We have to struggle without water, but existence is sweet. We are tilling the soil of the Land of Israel.'

At Tel Josef we saw the greenest piece of lawn in Palestine, so alluring that several of our party flung themselves down on it, although it had just been heavily watered. This is about the neatest and most attractively laid out of the colonies. At Kfar Ezekiel—where we were treated to splendid apples, and told that the workers were inspired by a poetess named Blaustein, who had lived among them—expert advice led to the failure of vine-yards, and could not foretell that corn was difficult. Now grape-fruit is flourishing. I have been told that the expert who advised against grape-fruit is still unconvinced—and puzzled. But then Palestine is puzzling.

A more glaring instance of the inexpert was at Daga-niah, where there are two attractive colonies where Lake Galilee enters Jordan. They grow bananas, and learned by bitter experience that the trees will not bear more than three or four years in the same spot. Yet I am told it is common knowledge in India that the tree needs trans-planting. I shall not readily forget the two Daganiahs. We bathed in the lake by moonlight, and in the Jordan in the broiling sun. I had an encounter with mosquitoes, sleeping on the roof without a mosquito net, and the news of the formation of the National Government hav-ing just been received by radio, Cohen and I were com-pelled to give addresses on the English political situation.

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Daganiah is one of the Kvutzoth Socialist communal colonies, and we had a most attentive audience of about 250 men and women in the fine electrically-lit dining-hall. This was the gift of Joseph Baratz, the leader of the colony, a practical dreamer, a magnetic personality, who was in the chair.

We spoke in Yiddish, which (although Hebrew is the universal language) is still much in use. It is even thrusting tentacles into Hebrew. 'Oi vei!' has become a Hebrew idiom. It was rather an ordeal for me to speak for about twenty minutes in Yiddish, but with sundry promptings—and the sympathy of intelligently keen listeners, who were most anxious to grasp the unexpected situation—I got through without mishap. Incidentally, a suggestion that I should give addresses to remove some unfortunate misconceptions anent Anglo-Jewry could not be carried out for lack of time. It will need many discourses to dissipate the fixed notion held by many that Jews in England are scarcely Jews, and that, while possessed of tremendous influence over the British and other governments, are obstinately indisposed to exercise it on behalf of their unfortunate brethren. It does not appear to be known what Jews in England have done for the cause of Jewish emancipation and the uplifting of their co-religionists everywhere. The idea was conveyed to me by some of the more stubborn to whom 'Jewish Nationalism' is a fetish—a sort of invisible secular totem—that Anglo-Jewry is an execrescence of spurious growth. I abandoned the effort to disabuse unbelievers. I was usually greeted with amused smiles, displaying gold-

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filled teeth, a tribute to the many dentists in the country.

The obsession had its amusing facets. In Petach Tikvah, the largest colony—not a Kvutza—where we wandered through seemingly endless orange groves, I was inveigled into conversation on the political crisis by an elderly settler. I confessed to him that with the scanty information to hand it was difficult, if not exactly impossible, to understand the situation. He sympathized with my perplexity, and proceeded to question me as to my personal status. I answered promptly, knowing I was virtually under cross-examination. I think I coughed up everything, except details of my income and the size of my boots. As if to repay me for my readiness, he proceeded to explain the situation. He noticed that my attention was wandering, and asked if I understood him.

'I am not sure,' I replied. 'You see, it's like this. Happening to be a Parliamentary journalist, I was under the impression I was conversant with the political situation in England. But since I have been here and have talked with some of you, I am having grave doubts.'

'So,' he returned, with sympathy. 'A journalist in the Parliament. And you have doubts. I will enlighten you!'

This was too blazing an illumination from the East. I fled.

A Yemenite Jew who guided us through the groves and demonstrated the irrigation system, appeared to

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know all the trees personally! To him they were living things.

The intelligence of the colonists is of a high order. The well-thumbed books on the shelves in their rooms are miniature international libraries, as diversified as that of any public institution catering for all classses. They read Shaw and Galsworthy as well as Karl Marx, Ibsen, and Tolstoy in three or four languages. Literature—and of first class quality, including the eclectic and academically tough—is their chief recreation, not merely because amenities are limited, but due to that inner urge which has always characterized the Jew, and drove him to books long ago when nearly all else was denied him.

The Kvutzoth colonists eat collectively; they have their separate family dormitories, and they take no wages. They pool their earnings, get what they require in the way of clothes—their needs are simple—and when they go out to work in other colonies, or on the roads, or at any works, they bring back their wages entire and put them in the common pool, which goes to upkeep and development.

We visited several of these colonies and found the people idealists with advanced views of freedom, in religion among other things. Here is a new type of peasant; the reverse of the clod-hopper: educated, eager to learn, straight limbed, clean minded, living an open-air, healthy life, denied to most Jews for centuries. That is true of the colonists as a whole. They are without the ghetto-bend, and their Palestine experiment, with its applied idealism, is one to which the world cannot afford

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to be indifferent. Quite apart from its Socialist wing, which gives it an added claim to interest, it is a manifestation of independence and the determination of a people to be itself—and happy—in its historic land that is impressive. An encouraging feature is the growth of the smallholders' settlements (Mowshavim).

The Emek is a vivid illustration of what the modern Jew can do to transform the starved raw material of country into fertile territory with up-to-date social services when inspired by an ancient faith, animated by unselfish devotion and backed by the confidence of his people the world over, expressed in a steady stream of hard cash.

The land is being reafforested. The Balfour Forest in the Emek is a patch of green, every individual shrub of which represents a gift paid for by some Jew in some part of the world as a tribute to the British statesman who signed the 'Balfour Declaration' promising the establishment of the Jewish National Home. At present it is in its infancy. When complete and full-grown, it will be a noble monument of inspiration, far more in keeping with the object of the man it commemorates than any effigy in stone.

Swamps have been drained by the planting of eucalyptus, which the Arabs call 'the Jew tree.' It has converted malarial marshes into beautiful orchards. Dainty, idyllic Daganiah, where some of our party would gladly have been marooned, is one of such miracles.

In the Emek we bathed in the pool of Ein Harod, where Gideon chose his army. It is now in the midst of a glade quite like an English dell. That similarity was

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heightened by the twittering of a multitude of birds, sounds (I was told) unheard years ago. The return of the birds and the presence of sturdy young children are visible signs of a reborn Palestine. The birds seem to know who are the benefactors to whom they owe their readmission. The way they flew about the communal dining-halls during meal-times is one of my pleasantest recollections. The joyous kindergartens everywhere are the human complement to the tree nurseries, where saplings are nurtured and research conducted into the vagaries of plant life. And most of the children are born under the best possible auspices.

On a bracing open space in the Emek stands the hospital of Ein Harod, one of the institutions of the Kupat Holim (sick benefit fund) of the General Federation of Jewish Labour—the Socialist organization—based on the lines of European sick benefit societies, and taking the place of health insurance. It is visible for miles around—a beacon of healing, a source of rejuvenation whence comes much of the new life actually. While we were at lunch there, a doctor was called away from the table to bring a babe into the new world that is being created out of the derelict remains of a realm that seems to have been foully punished for breathing the faith that is the spark divine unto mankind.

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CHAPTER V

The New Jerusalem

First seen from the road, Jerusalem presents itself a huddled jumble on its hills—no magic Eastern city of glittering minarets and placid domes, but a meaningless chaos of architecture. That impression deepens, implants itself indelibly. Jerusalem has no character—it has too much. It is a Holy City without a holy day. It has three —Friday for Moslems, Saturday for Jews, Sunday for Christians—which means that it has none. Jerusalem can never be either a Christian or a Jewish or a Mohammedan city. It belongs to all religions, to the world; and world history has left the permanent impress of its coarse thumb.

Jerusalem summaries the past, the present, and the future. Nothing is ancient. The past is not dead—it merely slumbers, and at times snores harshly. Nothing is new. There can be no novelty where nothing is *outré*, where electric light illumines old-time shrines, and the motor bus takes you to the tomb of somebody who died centuries B.C. Nor is anything in the way of language or dress out of place to-day.

The khaki-clad English policeman with whom I talked at the Damascus Gate stopped a befezzed Arab, otherwise immaculately clad in Europen costume, bestriding

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a miniature donkey and carrying a big open umbrella as a sunshade.

'*Insell*' [dismount], he commanded, explaining to me that it is forbidden to ride through the narrow streets of the old city.

'*Imshi!*' (Arabic for ''op it!' he muttered in an aside), and that was his fiat of discipline against all the pleading of gesture and grimace.

It was safe enough, the policeman told me, to wander by day through the interminable labyrinth—picturesque but smelly—of the alley ways, some almost like stair-cases, some partially covered, with their bewildering conglomeration of bazaars and shops where everything is sold, from fresh meat to Birmingham-made holy relics. I was warned, however, against venturing into this fascinating, albeit partly repellent, region unchanged for centuries, after dark—'when we boys [police] go loaded.'

I saw an armed military policeman, his gun slung on his shoulder in the Jaffa Road at night, striding unconcernedly through the throng in a most amazing 'monkey parade.' It is a post-War development. The Jaffa Road is the longest, widest thoroughfare in the new Jerusalem —a city, by the way, without public squares or open spaces and no parks!

It was Saturday evening before twilight. It seemed as if a fancy dress pageant had been let loose. No organized carnival in England was ever half so complete. Almost every kind of world costume, except the uncivilized savage and Chinese, appeared to be there. Everything

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was *de rigueur*—naught out of place in this racial colour congress.

Sheiks, not on camels, but on bicycles; berets and blazers, shorts and khaki shirts; droskys and donkeys; Bedouin in flowing rags—I think they must have a law prohibiting any wear but tatters; pedlars in clothing varying from Petticoat Lane to Port Said, offering chewing gum, fruit, flowers, beads, or Arab sweetmeats; Galician gabardines, silken and many-coloured, covering be-whiskered Jews crowned with fur caps; a negro selling balloons; women in short skirts, silk stockings and high-heeled shoes, but with their faces completely and thickly veiled; Armenian gipsy-looking women with gay shawls and rings on every finger; a Persian belle with a string of coins braiding her hair and drooping on her shoulders; Arab dandies in garish shirts and fancy knickers, but with European jackets; sturdy young Jews in white ducks or flannels and bareheaded; shapely young Jewesses, hatless, almost all of them without jewels, in light short skirts and bare-legged—Jewish youth has little use for headgear and stockings in Palestine—and, by way of contrast, a polygenous get-up composed of khaki sun helmet, Russian white smock shirt partially embroidered with red cord girdle, plus fours, cycle stockings and sandals! Nobody thought it incongruous.

There was not the faintest suspicion of rowdyism or horseplay. Everything was sedate and orderly—except language. It was Babylon without Babel—mixture without confusion. Three languages are official—English, Hebrew, and Arabic; but much Yiddish is heard, a good

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deal of Russian, some Polish, German, French—Spanish even—and a catena of Oriental tongues which I could not pretend to detect or distinguish.

Everything is currency in Jerusalem. The motley collection of religious, philanthropic and other buildings of the various nations, European and American, seem dumped to emphasize the paradox of the Near East. The growing segments of this expanding city do not dovetail any more than its five calendars—Jewish, Mohammedan, Coptic, Gregorian (for Western Europeans), and Julian (used by the Eastern Churches). It is an exhibition city doomed to be ever unfinished, with side-shows innumerable, many doubtful, and no amusement annexe.

There are no modern shops in the manner of London or Paris, no cabarets or dance palaces, and the few cinemas appear to have had their frontages sobered by the nearness of the sacred dead. But the new Jewish population has established garden suburbs, among them Beth Hakarem (middle-class), Rechavia (teachers and officials), Talpioth (aristocratic), daintily built of the attractive pink stone of the locality, which is soft when quarried but soon hardens.

I met many from these suburbs at a *neshef* [soirée] in the illuminated grounds of the Jewish Workers' Athletic Association, in the delightfully cool evening. Nights can be cool in Jerusalem, owing to its 2500 feet above sea level. They were a vivacious gathering, while the Hebrew police band played a Gilbert and Sullivan selection, Puccini, the Volga Boat Song; and young Jews

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and Jewesses gave a gymnastic display that linked the continents and the seas, and buried the feud of the centuries in Swedish drill and Hellenist eurythmics. That symbolized the new Jerusalem succinctly.

But the Old Jerusalem stands, a monument of reproach to civilization, a ghastly problem for future town-planners that must become intensified as the years pass. It is horrifying to discover the world's most sacred shrines: the Holy of Holies of the charter of humanity, the seat of the Word of the Lord that has redeemed man in the past whatever may be his future state Here and Hereafter—embedded in a mass of misery nauseating to every one of the senses, deadening to the imagination. The nearest place to Heaven upon this Earth, the symbols of it, and the guiding posts to a Higher Life, surrounded by an inferno that is no outer purgatory but clings close, hugging it with clammy embrace that must be defiling.

Clustered round the relics and the emblems of that which gave divine pity and love and brotherly sympathy to the world is man in the animal mass, a sordid chaos, struggling, cringing, grovelling for his crust of bread, a downtrodden, degraded creature, some of his specimens repugnant. The number of blind, the many in filthy rags, the dozens of extended palms, and the still more uncannily silent, almost immobile mendicants, squatting, fakir-fashion, each with a bowl in front for alms, depressed me with a feeling of deep physical discomfort. Are these God's children, or merely the dross of unfinished mankind, failures and cast-offs from the mould

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of His image, the derelicts and the off-scourings of our elemental congeners who have penetrated into the inmost court of the fountain of purity and have been overlooked? Are they the living proof that man has not yet entirely risen superior to the beasts, and in the temple where his ethical evolution stands sanctified? A terrible warning of what can happen in Heaven's earthly annexe.

True, I did not see as many beggars to the square yard as I had feared, nor the exposure of sores as is the habit of the unwholesome wretches who defile the doorways of churches in certain parts of Europe. I did not hear the same raucous, pitiful appeals. But the mendicants were mingled with a host of importunate, petty traders, hucksters, hawkers, and porters, some of them children —all competing and haggling, a composite picture of the fiercely squalid scramble for the dregs of life at the central node where mankind should be nearest to the sublime. I could not resist comparing this—not excluding the Jewish elements that still exist in the *chaluka* system of charity that maintains idlers in the Holy Land—with the New Jerusalem, little more than a stone's throw distant: I saw in the contrast an epitome of the Zionist hope, promise, and solid achievement justifying all the Jewish claims.

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CHAPTER VI

The Wailing Wall

We visited the Wailing Wall on Saturday (Sabbath) morning. It was the place we were all most impatient to see—the one I was fearful might prove disappointing and conducive to unpleasant thoughts. Approached through a maze of mean, winding alleys, it seems to have been purposely tucked away in a corner, and yet not permitted its melancholy seclusion. On no recess in the world beats so garish a light, not direct and illuminating, but aslant, breaking prismatic into all the rainbow gradations of intolerance. A positive crazy inversion of the light that should shine from the Sanctuary. There is no dignity in such an approach. Solemnity is impossible in the hurried jostle along those narrow, congested pathways. I was not the only one to walk with hesitating, trepidant footsteps.

The moment was perhaps not altogether fortunate. The Galician Jews, striking figures in their Sabbath gaberdines of different colours and big fur caps from which their side-curls hung pendant, made an imposing group at the far end of the long narrow pavement in front of the Wall. They had just gathered for the Musaph—'additional,' or second part of the Morning Service—having held the first part in synagogue. But the

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Cantor, their leader, intoned the Kedusha—(the prayer 'Holy, holy, holy!' akin to the Trisagion in the liturgy of the church)—in a fierce, strident voice as if it was a frenzied appeal for mercy instead of the Sanctification of the Name. It jarred on me as theatrical, inexcusable. Surely, he could not be ignorant of the meaning of the words that gushed from his lips in tones of heart-broken but stentorian agony. One of the wonders of modern Palestine is the thoroughness of the revival of Hebrew as a living language. Its use for prayer as a sort of religious gibberish, read with ease, uttered with fluency, but without a word being understood, was always grotesque. In Palestine to-day, where *Loshen Kodesh*, the Sacred Tongue, is the dominant secular language of the Jews, its misuse was an unpardonable vulgarity, an outrage.

Nevertheless, it is imposible to stand at the Wailing Wall unmoved. We reverently said the responses to the prayer. We trod the pavement with some awe. We forgot—or tried to overlook—the too zealus Cantor, surrounded by his swaying congregants, and turned to the more impressive worshippers. There was a man walking up and down reciting psalms in a scarcely audible voice. He glanced at us momentarily. We were merely one set of an interminable succession of visitors: respectful, careful not to disturb. More moving still was the spectacle of some women, several of them sitting on the ground in tears. One who seemed oblivious to everything but her own devotions, stroked the grey stones of the Wall with gentle hands.

Somehow, I felt unable to murmur any prayer. All

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I could do was to touch the Wall, as others did, and steal slowly away. Shrine worship does not appeal to me, and is not Jewish. Admittedly, it is a compelling human sentiment, defying reproof and prohibition. It has its value—within bounds. But here the bounds were unconscionable, cruelly visible, a galling menace and travesty of holiness.

Near the entrance, but out of sight round the corner, were the police, English and Jewish. At the other end, demonstratively visible on the stone stairs just outside the alley of the Wall and above it, was an Arab policeman. It seemed an unnecessary and even provocative supervision, suggestive of smouldering mistrust, watching for a pretext to withdraw grudging permission. Coming from England, with the glorious sense of freedom suffusing every fibre of my being, its glow of pride accentuated by what I had already seen, was now swelling into resentment and wrath against this senseless display. It was fanaticism degraded by insolence into iniquity under the guise of holiness.

It is easy to indict the cult of the Wailing Wall as iconolatry, as fetish-worship incompatible with Judaism. If carried to excess, if regarded as an integral feature of Jewish faith, it is indefensible. But as an exhaust for a deep-felt emotion, as an expression of historic consciousness, it is innocent and even of value. It occurred to me, as I walked away, sorrowful and sceptical, that what I had witnessed could afford to be undeterred by hasty criticism, that it was well not to be captious, and that no people, with interest in Palestine, could afford to cast

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a stone. After all, was it not but a symbol of the position of Israel? Not merely is the effort ceaseless to cast a shadow between him and his God, Whom he has not kept for himself but has given to all mankind, with no denial of the gracious concomitants of salvation and future bliss as is the doctrine of other faiths: he is not allowed to mourn in peace in a tiny corner where exists—as he and others believe—the relic of his great Temple. And is there not something to be said for the hallowing of a spot where man may indulge in introspection and moral chastening of the spirit in the presence of something that recalls transience and gives courage for the endurance and hope that alone can make destiny progress?

I was somewhat comforted as I walked through the Jewish quarter close by and noted the shuttered shops, the deserted narrow and crooked alleys, Sabbath calm—the weekly day of peace and rest that is one of Israel's priceless gifts to the world.

Since our return, two or three others of the party have admitted to me that their emotions at the Wall were akin to mine. A few, and particularly one of the girls, came surcharged with sentiment, and probably were oblivious to everything but their own overwrought feelings. It is a condition as natural, perhaps, as any, for which full allowance must be made, and entitled to due respect.

Jews are forbidden to enter the adjoining area of the Mosque of Omar, where the Temple stood, and although it was hinted to us that the decree can be over-

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come by a monetary consideration, we restrained our naturally eager curiosity and kept away. We were not disposed to give the least cause for 'incidents,' and infraction of the regulation is, I understand, practically unknown. I inquired about the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and being informed that there is no prohibition against individual Jews visiting this Christian shrine. I ventured there alone. I was unmolested, but deemed it advisable to cut my stay short.

Compare all this intolerant atmosphere with the openness with which we visited the Jewish shrine, the tomb of Rachel, on the road to Bethlehem. It was almost ostentation, an excursion. There were twenty of us for the trip on donkeys by moonlight! It was the maddest, most enjoyable freak imaginable, scarcely a religious pilgrimage. The start from the Jaffa Road occasioned some slight excitement. We were a noisy lot in our endeavours to keep our saddles. We had a considerable sense of the incongruity and humour of the spectacle we presented to ourselves, no matter what the onlookers thought. We attracted much attention as we straggled through the streets, wobbling from side to side as the animals erratically willed. Our shrieks of laughter at our inability to control the obstinate creatures and when somebody actually tumbled off—I didn't—our nondescript urgings and objurgations, mingled with the pungent English oaths of the donkey boys, filled the night air with strange sounds.

At one spot, an Arab camel-driver, squatting on the ground by his resting team, seranaded us with a plaintive

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droning melody on a pipe. We acknowledged the compliment with some totally inappropriate English chanty. I think it was, 'What shall we do with the drunken sailor?', our favourite choral number because of its nonnautical variations. By the time some one had thought of 'Where my caravan has rested,' our fractious steeds had carried us beyond earshot.

Outside the tomb was a varied and far from silent crowd, and two armed, and loquaciously friendly, Arab policemen. Inside was solemnity and the usual touch of the theatrical. I signed my name in Hebrew in the visitors' book, got a receipt for a small contribution for which the white-robed and skull-capped janitor also recited a memorial prayer, and gave me a taper to light at a candelabra of oil dips in glasses providing the illumination. The tomb itself is a plain structure, and I saw no one praying at it. We left before the arrival of the 'pious' crowd, who, we were told, were coming, to recite the Selicoth (Penitentials), ordained for the month prior to the Jewish New Year. My mother's name was Rachel, and that made me stand a moment in silence by the tomb.

But the expedition was merely a gorgeous outing. I happened to be at the head of our cavalcade just outside Jerusalem on the return; the little beasts seemed to have an understanding that each one of us should be accorded the leadership for a while. In plus fours and pullover, bareheaded, and trying to mimic the chants of the donkey boys, I was feeling singularly light-hearted. I contemplated my shadow on the sandy road, a clear-

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cut and chummy albeit unfamiliar escort in silhouette. I was thinking of other ineffaceable moonlight nights—sitting on the balcony of the new communal hall at Ein Harod, joining in the group-singing, listening to the speeches; lying full-length on the school verandah at Kfar Gileadi; bathing in the Lake of Galilee at Daganiah, and gazing entranced from the roof on which I slept there at the expansive landscape, almost as sharply etched as in the day. Nights of peaceful memories that will linger always, of happy convocation, with their stories of struggles amid fears lightened by unflinching hope; nights cloudless and serene, yet with menace skulking in the shadows. Had I not seen the *Shomer* [Watchman] patrolling with his gun at some colonies? And as if gifted with comprehension, my ass suddenly bolted. The others swiftly caught the infection. I led a whirling rush into the deserted streets of the sleeping Holy City. A few belated stragglers stood in surprise, perhaps alarm, at this delirious but intoxicatingly happy entry. I nearly ran down a courting couple. Oh, yes! these are by no means rare in Palestine, and on astonishingly lonely roads too.

Let this be an augury: not one of us lost his head—or seat—in that unholy stampede. We pulled up at our destination, gloriously elated, just as the clocks heralded the new day. A roll-call proved us to be two short. Some of us set off on foot in search. The married woman of the party had been too far behind to be drawn into the stampede. Cohen had dropped back to accompany her, and then had got lost in trying to find the post office.

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He had suddenly remembered a letter in his pocket. But it was anatomy that worried the rest of us. The doctor told us it would wear off!

What did not wear off was a revulsion against the concomitants of religious ecstacy and fear, the ancillaries that are unrestrained emotions expressed in undeniable superstitions; they prevented me bringing back a packet of earth. I had intended to do so, but the display of little bags marked 'Genuine: from the Mount of Olives,' or some other spot, so jarred on me that I could not bring myself to purchase or gather a handful.

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CHAPTER VII

The Dead Sea—Resurrected.

BATHING in the Dead Sea is the weirdest experience conceivable. I walked into the warm clear water, now greyish-yellow in appearance, not blue as it seemed from above, and felt some singular resistance. Suddenly my legs were lifted up. I found myself virtually lying on top of the water unable to get my legs down. One of our party had to pull them down, for I am no swimmer, and it was essential to keep the water out of my mouth and eyes. Soon I was comfortably sitting in the water. Others were practically reclining on it, or bobbing about like corks. It was enjoyable, it was thrilling, but it was not advisable to stay long.

We left reluctantly, photographed, exhilarated, and in the primitive wooden dressing-rooms adjoining an equally simple restaurant ashore enjoyed the luxury of a fresh-water shower with water brought several miles on donkeys. The charge was five piastres—one shilling!

We were in a vast trough of mingled desolation and beauty 1300 feet below sea level. It was only eight o'clock in the morning, but the sun was beginning to blaze fiercely. With the intense refraction on the expanse of the sea, a purple haze was spread over the stern rocks of Transjordan on the oppostie bank. The crags and hills

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through which we had descended looked Dantesque and forbidding in the blazing sunshine. No birds circled over the sandy stone plain where not a blade of grass was to be seen. Through the stillness came the snort of motor lorries, the faint tap of hammers on stones being broken by girls for roadmaking across the desert. A thin vapour was dimly visible on the condensing basin of the Novomeysky-Tulloch chemical works. Salts were forming all round the edge.

Coming down was in itself an adventure. Our party left Jerusalem at six in the morning past the Via Dolorosa and Gethsemane, through Bethany, and into the very bowels of the earth. It is not unusual in Palestine to come across a board by the roadside marked in three languages, 'sea level' and still go on—downwards. It accentuates the impression that the Holy Land is a country that has been tip-tilted, and that the stark barrenness of the arid landscape is due to niggard nature having emptied all the water and the baby—life itself—in the impish process. The earth is all contorted, gnarled, and twisted as if still in pain—awesomely impressive. The road corkscrews down the ravine, boring into the entrails of the naked land.

Here is the lonely Good Samaritan's Inn, and the tomb of Moses, according to the belief of the Arabs, who foregather at the spot at Easter. This suggests that the prophet of Israel crossed the Jordan after death. At the foot of this descent, which might well have given birth to conceptions of hell, is a signpost—surely the most intriguing in the world. Its three arms read:

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'Jerusalem, Jericho, Dead Sea.' There is no definite road yet to the Novomeysky Concession. Our motor bus made it for itself, lurching and lumbering like a tank over the rough plain.

We visited Jericho, a few miles away, the lowest town on earth, a vividly green oasis, proving that where there is water there is fertility in this wondrous land. Elisha's Fountain is a still pool, and as we stood by it a flock of black goats driven by a Bedouin tried to get down to the water with pitiful bleating. It is astounding to see sheep and goats grazing on apparently parched and sterile ground. Just outside the present city are the ruins which may be the remains of ancient walls near the Mount of Temptation, where there are eerie looking caves and a monastery is perched. Faint spirals of sand rose from the scorched surface of the valley, suggesting incipient whirlwinds.

It is a tropical region, but Dr. Von Vriesland, the manager of the Concession, spoke of it to me with enthusiasm as a future health resort. The workers at the Concession and on roadmaking are healthy. The one thing from which they are liable to suffer is the bite of a night fly—*leishmanniasis*. They call the mark which it leaves by the picturesque name of the Rose of Jericho. The workers are housed in concrete huts, they have a canteen where their food costs them ten piastres a day—about two shillings—and I was told that the nights are cooler than in many parts of Palestine.

One exceedingly curious result is that engines have a six per cent. greater efficiency owing to the lower baro-

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metric pressure at this depth. For the same reason the area is said to be good for people suffering from heart disease. The waters of the Dead Sea are declared to have healing properties for rheumatism and skin diseases. I can say this for myself that after my bathe I felt considerable easement from the irritation of mosquito bites inflicted on the banks of the Lake of Galilee some days earlier, and the marks quickly disappeared.

There are warm and hot springs at different points to be exploited. Whether it may prove practical or possible to develop the district as a health or even as a tourist centre remains to be seen. Dr. Von Vriesland thinks it can, and looks forward to an hotel being established on the lakeside. At present, visitors go down from Jerusalem early in the morning and hurry away before the heat becomes unbearable.

We were off before nine in the morning, making an extraordinary unbroken, coiling climb of over 4000 feet to the top of Mount Scopus, the highest of the heights around Jerusalem, to the War Cemetery and the Hebrew University. From the amphitheatre in the grounds of the latter we had a beautiful view of the Dead Sea, a placid jewel of blue in the depths below sixteen miles away—as the crow would fly if he were there, but about twenty-five miles by the sinuous road.

Of the future of the Dead Sea as a source of chemical supply, Dr. Von Vriesland spoke with calm assurance. The main product is potash. The final processes of extraction are still in the experimental stage. Bromides and bromines (as stated in answers to questions in Parlia-

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ment) have already been exported. There are other deposits; fertilizers will be exported. It has been found best to take the water from the sea at a distance of about three hundred feet from the shore, and at a depth of about 160 feet where it is highly concentrated. It is conveyed to the condensing basins on shore where salts form by evaporation.

Highly speculative—and not in precisely the conventional business spirit—the Dead Sea project is a chivalrous adventure. It may prove profitable, it may not. That must depend on the market value of products. And magnificent though it is, romance does not go so far as to suggest that it will provide a big field for labour. When in full working order, the process of obtaining the chemicals will be largely automatic.

The Jews call the lake by its Old Testament name of Salt Sea; and salt is not only an indispensable condiment, but, symbolically, the antithesis of death. As a preservative, it is the emblem of constancy, of life and of vigour. In the Jewish home ritual, it is a purifier.

There is oil in the region, but it is doubtful if its extraction is a commercial proposiion. One of the problems is that of transport. A fleet of lorries would be very expensive, and the solution may be to link in some way with the railway, or by ropeway to Jerusalem. Water is obtained from the Jordan, a few miles away; but boring is in progress. Anyway, Dr. Vriesland is confident.

'You must come here again,' he said, in his perfect English. 'You will enjoy some boating; you will go across and see the gorges and ravines on the Transjordan

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side—well worth exploring. You will find the Dead Sea a fount of new life inexhaustible.'

And that epitomizes the position of the whole of Palestine where human ingenuity, skill, tenacity, and resource—mainly Jewish—are coaxing Nature into generous renaissance and reproductivity, where she had too willingly yielded to centuries of inhuman neglect and criminally cruel denudation.

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CHAPTER VIII

The New Judaism.

EVERYBODY knows there is irreligion among the Jews in Palestine. The knowledge reveals itself increasingly in conversation and in writings. It does not surprise many people any more than the circumstance does in any country at the present time. Its occurrence in the Jewish Homeland was foreseen from the beginnings of the Zionist movement in the 'cultural' controversy in the early Zionist congresses. Nationalism seized large numbers in its tenacious grip long before the Great War with secularist implications that were deemed alarming by those to whom a regenerated Palestine was inseparable from Judaism in its most intensive religious connotation. The notion of a religious hegemony is abhorrent to some Jewish 'Nationalists' to an extent that has postulated a future 'Judaism' that will enable a man to be a Jew by nationality and a non-Jew—a Christian, a Mohammedan, or a what-not—by religion!

No such view did I hear expressed in Palestine, but I was not quite prepared for what I saw. Even the foreshadowing in the contempt expressed by one or two of our Palestinian fellow-travellers on the outward journey was insufficient premonition. I found the attitude wider than the area of the Socialist communal colonies. The

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latter number about twenty-four, which is about one-fifth of the total settlements. They do not, however, comprise one-fifth of the inhabitants—far from it. Sir John Hope Simpson's report on Immigration, Land Settlement, and Development[1] states (Appendix viii, p. 158) that more than one-fourth of the rural Jewish population is found in Petach Tikvah, which has nearly 6000, and Rehoboth. The secularist—and Atheistic—views are excused and sometimes endorsed as unavoidable by people elsewhere. The Kvutzoth ideas appeal to youth. I heard more than one young man and woman in the towns express yearnings for the life of the co-operative villages. The Socialists maintain that the Kvutzoth are among the most successful of the colonies, and that they are bound to increase. On the other hand, I was informed that they are not to be accounted among the most prosperous settlements. It is too early to pronounce definitely. Sufficient for me to say that I saw happiness in hard work and simple lives in the Kvutzoth.

My first surprise was to find no synagogues in the communal colonies. There was frank laughter when I asked to see them. It was too pleasant to be offensive. It was amused and polite intimation that there was no use for a house of worship. Anybody who desired to say prayers was at liberty to do so, or to walk to the nearest colony possessed of a synagogue.

Sabbath? Oh, that's the Day of Rest; that is observed by abstention from toil. Festivals? They are national, a tradition to be maintained, to be honoured for their

[1] Cmd. 3686 of 1930.

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historical significance, but not with prayer. The Day of Atonement, the most solemn of the calendar? 'Anybody who wishes to fast can do so,' was the simple reply.

The dietary laws? The answer was a patient, tolerant shrug of the shoulders; they don't count. There has been some trouble, but since 'kosher' meat, slaughtered according to the ritual laws, is universal, it is accepted. The subsequent domestic preparation, part of the ritual, is not always practised. Indifference to the dietary laws extends far beyond the Kvutzoth. In a conversation with a bright young girl, Palestinian born, her mother, who came from Poland, intervened with the remark, 'My daughter hasn't the slightest notion of the meaning of the dietary laws.'. 'Oh, yes, I have!' was the girl's response. Her mother was amazed, wondered how she had picked it up.

These 'new' Jews don't argue. They are amiable in the extreme. They reply to questions without hesitation and with the most engaging candour. They intimate that other Jews—especially in England, they understand—are not so frank, and do not practise what is preached at them, and what they subscribe to—at least in the form of synagogual contributions. This retort, submitted without asperity, has already become a shibboleth. It was repeated so regularly, with such uniformity, at different places, and by people who do not live the Kvutza life as to make me wonder whether the formula proceeds from a common centre. The complete lack of diffidence among the communalists encouraged me to ask other questions.

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What about marriage? The replies were straightforward. They do not believe in a religious marriage ceremony, but since there is no civil marriage for Palestinian citizens, they have to resort to a Rabbi. The late Attorney-General of Palestine states that in the interests of freedom of conscience, steps are under consideration to repair the omission.[1] Anyway, the people in the Kvutzoth made it clear they would prefer civil marriage. I gathered that there are some instances of free cohabitation, recognized as a form of marriage, and I was told in Jerusalem that there have been some cases of legal trouble arising out of separation involving demands for alimony, and in connexion with the children. The father invariably acknowledges parentage, but how far this ensures legitimacy I cannot say. These problems are still in their infancy, as well as the children. When I asked what is to happen in certain eventualities the disarming, naïve reply was, 'The problem has not yet arisen; when it does then will be the time to deal with it.'

When I first put the query, at Givat Brenner, a new colony near Rehoboth, I was told the eldest child was only three years of age. Seemingly, there have been no cases yet of cohabitants separating for the purpose of changing partners. That also has not arisen, I was informed.

I was impelled to ask whether they were assured that this secularism—some dub it Jewish paganism, a misnomer—would be a sufficient bulwark against drift from

[1] *England in Palestine*, by Norman Bentwich (London, 1932), p. 292.

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Israel, or, as they term it, assimilation. Even after my visit to Palestine I cannot make out whether, in the minds of those who use this word most freely, there is any difference between apostacy and that form of assimilation in which they appear to sweep all who are certainly within the fold in England but are not Zionists. The latter are frequently regarded with the greater aversion. The invariable response to my question was that they had no fear: existence in Erets Israel was held to be a solid guarantee, countersigned by the Hebrew language.

But I found this complacency not fully general, even among those who are not themselves strictly religious. I was told that there have been cases of intermarriage with Arabs; that instances of young Jewesses going out with wealthy young Arabs are not unknown. If this is so, it is a reversal of the position in Hugo Bettauer's satirical novel, *The City Without Jews*, in which, after the expulsion of the Jews from Vienna, the non-Jewish girls were in despair, 'for to have a Jew as one's lover meant to be taken to the theatre and to nice cafés, to be well treated, and to receive generous gifts.' There are no wealthy Jews in Palestine—not in the sense of being able to 'scatter it'—but there are gay sparks among the Arab dandies. And an increasing number of Arabs speak Hebrew well and are indistinguishable from Jews. I had already been brought face to face with that on the *Lotus*. Interfering zealots sometimes make it uncomfortable for Jew-Arab couples, but this 'solution' can only turn the evil into a most alarming danger.

Language—the Hebrew language!—is becoming a

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bridge, not a barrier. It would be absurd to draw conclusions. It would be equal folly to ignore. The new Palestine and the new Judaism are propounding fresh problems—unsuspected tendencies—which call for careful study.

Socialists are convinced that the steady growth of co-operative movements is proof that the whole of their beliefs are sweeping onward and making converts. They have done—and are doing—remarkable work in education, health, and other welfare activities by means of their organizations; their Kupat Holim (Workers' Sick Fund), which is part of the General Federation of Jewish Labour in Palestine, has 15,000 members, and is the combined equivalent of our friendly societies and health insurance. Its magnificent hospitals, its clinics, and its dispensaries, are an invaluable and impressive feature of the life of the country. Cleanliness—and all that it means in the way of purity and health—is not next to Godliness, but in front of it in their Decalogue. But they have their idiosyncracies just as much as those they deem pharisaical, and akin to them. One excused his contempt of some of the religious precepts by terming them mere taboos. When I asked him, in return, whether some of the Socialist interdictions were not really taboos, and cited instances, he confessed himself unable to deny the impeachment.

But their Judaism is not the Judaism of Palestine as a whole. By no means. There are gradations—unto the fanatical and intolerant. And much searching of heart and misgiving in between the extremes. The synagogue

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is still the centre of cultural activity and inspiration in most colonies. We saw one being built at Magdiel, on the Plain of Sharon—the most prominent structure in the settlement—embracing school, institute, gymnasium. Nor, when I heard of the manner in which the children in particular celebrate the festivals in the Kvutzoth, by gathering at historic spots and reviving ancient customs, could I believe it possible for the new generation to divest itself entirely of tradition. Already it is being discovered that children who read the Bible in Hebrew and other sacred works amid the scenes described, ask to be enlightened as to practices and ceremonies. Pedantically religion is derided, but regenerated customs are invested with a new holiness, the glamour of 'tradition.'

The position is one of flux, in the melting-pot, a condition which has become perennial for Jewry. Judaism has weathered too many storms, some real, many artificial, within and without, to find occasion for alarm. During the past century, to take only modern times, it has been asserted repeatedly, and with malicious glee, that Mendelssohn, in begetting 'Reform,' smote Rabbinism —meaning the vital core of Judaism—a deadly stroke. Every new move of 'Reform Judaism,' which has deleted the Zionist passages from the prayer-book, has been hailed, with unholy unction, as another inoculation of a virus that must prove fatal to the ancient belief, its laws and customs. Yet to-day prominent 'Reform Jews' are among the leading Zionists, and he would be a daring anti-Semite or satirist who would posit that the movement that has brought renaissance to world-Jewry and

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has vivified and united it to the extent that it has become the almost natural topic wherever Jews congregate, privately, or publicly, carries in it the seed of final disintegration. Judaism is not to be destroyed by anachronisms: it has outlived paradoxes enough to justify the prediction that every one of its enemy epigrammists is doomed to burial in the cemetery of those falsities. Jazz Judaism bears the same relation to the eternal tenets of Israel that jazz music does to Bach.

Jews and Judaism are merely undergoing a new phase of transformation. It may have tremendous import for the future, and not only in Palestine. Jews everywhere, and more definitely as the numbers increase of those who visit Palestine, will have to attune themselves, as the new Orientals are doing, by bringing Western ideas and modern thought into a land that has been permitted to stagnate and is now awakening. The act of awakening is sometimes an anxious or abnormal process. Jewish elements, however isolated by circumstance as well as geography, were never insulated, not even in the days when, as Marranos in Spain, they were compelled to an outward Christianity, but were secretly loyal to Zion.

With unconscious and unintentional selfishness, a few Jews in Palestine may be in dalliance with the notion that they can entrench themselves apart from the rest of Israel, barraged with a codex of their own. In their hearts they know they cannot, and that Israel is more firmly but more loosely knotted than for centuries. Erets Israel is a nerve centre vibrant with swift broadcast message and reflex. It surprised us to discover that there

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was less fuss in Palestine than outside anent the question of Saturday football that had disturbed the Orthodox. It produced echoes all over world-Jewry. But these had undoubted effect on Palestine where they bred a movement for a Friday half-holiday.

What I wrote in the *Jewish Chronicle* on the new Judaism in Palestine attracted considerable attention, and brought me correspondence. I also met a few Palestinians in England eager to justify what I had described. One of them was anxious to argue that marriage out of the faith was permissible. Their confirmation of the view that it is the term 'religion' that raises resentment as something outworn, but that the same thing is laudable when dubbed 'tradition' was endorsed by a letter I received from Jerusalem, from the head office of the Keren Hayesod, written by Mr. Leo Herrmann, my former colleague in the Zionist Organization, London. He had unhappily been absent ill from Palestine when I was there, and he gave me permission to quote his letter, which I did in the *Jewish Chronicle* of June 10th, 1932:

> Of course I realize to the full the impression made on visitors like yourself and others by the apparent abandonment of the traditional tenets of Judaism. But do not forget that this is more apparent than real. The youth which came over here some ten or twelve years ago was in revolt against the rigid orthodoxy practised in their homes, and naturally enough, rather overdid the reaction against certain restrictions. This attitude, however, is in course of modification. We who have been watching it for some time are struck by the change which is coming over the settlements in this respect. Partly it is due to the presence of

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quite a number of the parents of the settlers to be found in most of the settlements up and down the country. There they are enabled to live according to Jewish tradition and usage, and in many cases it is merely a question of money which prevents the majority following suit. This applies, for instance, very strongly to the observation of Passover. Where older people are concerned, the traditional Seder (home service on the first night) table is set, and Matzot (unleavened bread) provided for the whole of the period (of the festival). The children were always given the latter, but since it is twice or three times the price of ordinary bread, only a very few settlements could afford the quantity required. It is to be seen, however, now, that great efforts are being made of late years to manage to provide Matzot for the whole of the week for the whole village.

Moreover the question of bringing up the children in the spirit of Judaism is engaging the very serious attention of the settlers, involving, as it does, the adjustment of old customs and usages, which, necessarily, have not the same meaning for the children as for their elders, to the new spirit which is inevitably emerging from the contact with the soil and the new conditions of life. These matters are becoming far more real as time goes on, as I found just now on a few days' visit to Galilee, where extensive preparations were going on everywhere for the coming (Passover) holidays.

There is still a wilderness to be crossed to celebrate the ancient deliverance from the oppressor in the old–new land of freedom. The economic desert is a more treacherous quicksand than the obliging Red Sea. And the enemies of Israel are not all beneath its waters.

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CHAPTER IX

The New Generation.

PALESTINE is a land of youth as well as sunshine, both of them apt to be overpowering, particularly to those who have been denied them and have come under the the effulgent influence of warmth and freedom with imported theories. The land will be more normal—and healthier—when it is reafforested and the trees are mature —offering beneficent shade and performing their natural functions in connexion with climate and rainfall. Similarly, there will be more mellowing when the present self-conscious youth passes into middle-age. It is a wonderful youth, brisk of mind, vigorous of sinew, of athletic physique, with no ghetto stoop; healthy in body, mentally clean, and keenly conscious of its mission and its opportunity to create a new life and spirit.

I took pains to note the impression created on other members of our party. Admiration was tempered with anxiety, even infected with some symptoms of distress. It was remarked that the settlers were Palestinians rather than Jews, that they did not reciprocate that concern for the Diaspora which the Jews of other lands have strongly cultivated for Erets Israel in recent years—that, in short, the spiritual centre of Jewry was inclined to be indifferent to the welfare of Judaism as a whole,

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although expectant of the homage vital to its existence. It may be a phase, a transitional stage, 'growing-pains.' I am describing a condition difficult of analysis, calling for circumspection in that effort, and not based on personal observation alone. At one colony we were taken into a synagogue, and a few of the inhabitants went out of their way to say to me, somewhat sneeringly, 'Well, you have even seen a House of Prayer.' The tone implied that it was a sort of museum for visitors only, far less interesting than the remains of the synagogue discovered at Beit Alpha, 1300 years old, with a mosaic floor—really Mosaic, with Hebrew drawings and inscriptions. Our interest in this place puzzled some people. Some of our party tried to excuse the attitude, setting it in the scale as being outweighed by the other qualities. A few, however, found it difficult to overlook or palliate.

There is a certain *naïveté*, almost childish, among these 'Palestinians.' It is notable in their upbringing of children. The latter are delightful in the extreme when young, entrancing to the eye, captivating in their freedom from restraint—happy, healthy, a glorious promise of the future. Our girls made a tremendous fuss of them—on one occasion with quaint consequence. At one colony they pounced upon an exceptionally bright-looking boy with the exclamation, 'What wonderful children these Palestinians are! Where were you born?' 'London,' was the disconcerting reply. He was an exception. The enthusiasm was always justified and hard to withhold.

As they grow older, the children are inclined to be

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thoughtless and selfish. They thrust themselves forward embarrassingly. I was amazed at the coolness with which a few looked over one's shoulder at a private letter. They were shocked at being told not to do so. They are not accustomed to being admonished or repressed. Some older people voiced deep concern at the results of 'this freedom.' But they are to blame. Their theories are being carried to stupid lengths in practise.

We were invited to a 'reception' at which Dr. Arlosoroff, one of the leading official Zionists and the new head of the Jewish Agency Executive, was to speak in one of those big hollow halls, which, owing to Palestinian methods of building, are filled with a loud buzz as soon as three or four people converse. While he was addressing us, the children of the settlement were allowed to play at the other end of the hall. They were even encouraged to sing by the admiring adults. One had an iron hoop which he kept clanging on the concrete floor. The result was a howling noise which drowned every word spoken by Dr. Arlosoroff. Everybody took the din as a matter of course. The gathering was supposed to be in our honour: we were totally effaced by the children. I think we felt smaller than they did.

More revealing of parental empiric ineptitude was the remark of a child who climbed on to our bus in one of the colonies: 'Only the *bourgeoisie* travel in such a bus.' The little fellow could not possible have understood what he was saying. He could only have been echoing the ineffably inane babbling of some adult. The vehicle was one daily engaged on the Jerusalem—

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Tel Aviv service, and hired for our tour. There is, clearly, a lack of reticence in the remarks made in the presence of children.

There is calculated spoiling of the young, who are brought too early into contact with adult life. Privileges are claimed, and enforced, by girls in their teens in a manner that betokens an absence of self-consciousness, but also a disregard of the feelings of others. At Tel Aviv, where we attended performances in semi-open-air theatres, they have a custom of turning off the lights for a moment about ten minutes before the commencement. It is the signal that the unreserved seatholders may come forward and take any front and reserved seats still unoccupied. For some minutes a frightful clatter ensues with a scrummage-like rush and scramble. Young people lurk around waiting for that moment, their eyes searching out the places they intend to seize. We were always generously accorded front seats, but were not always able to retain them. It was awkward to have to sit under the gaze of those who were stalking us and made to feel that we were illegally in possession of that which they intended to have. We were not able to keep the places of those of our party who happened to be late, or were momentarily elsewhere. We were dispossessed in the dark by expert 'crashers.' It was useless to argue with the prowlers. They were place-seekers who would not be robbed of what they deemed their rightful prey, their lawful loot. The manner in which they dumped themselves in front us, and their skill in pushing some of our party into the background, at the *neshef* [soirée] in the

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Workers' Athletic Ground at Jerusalem indicated both experience and unblushing effrontery.

It seemed a great pity. These young people, with their graceful forms, their clear, healthy skin, are splendidly attractive—and without artificial aid. In a region where modern cosmetic is shown to be the oldest of fashions, to the extent of making women's faces mere palettes that are repellent with their superimposed mass of paint —this was startling in Egypt—it was refreshing to find Jewesses original enough to discard the practice. I did not see a solitary instance of lipstick or power-puff or mirror being used in public. As far as I could note, these things appeared unknown. Fresh, neat, and simply clothed, with jewels only rarely seen, the girls and the women looked all the more winsome and natural.

I saw no Jewess with her face muffled up in the manner of Arab women, sometimes with eyes peering, as if guiltily looking out upon the world, through a slit in a shawl held closely in front of the face, and often with the more uncouth gripping of one edge of the shawl in the teeth. Nor did I see a solitary Jewess in an exceedingly short skirt with silk stockings and dainty modern shoes, but with the head enveloped in thick black lace as if encased in a fencing mask. This singular sartorial compromise is, presumably, the Oriental tentative advance toward feminine Westernization. It is not due to nervousness, for where the veil is a *yashmak*, covering the lower part of the face only—this was very common in Alexandria—the eyes above are often brazenly curious. One or two of our party maintained that they conducted

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quite a duologue of 'eye-talk' with ladies without a murmur from lips so carmine that they veritably blazed through the *yashmak*.

'What's Arabic for a wink?' inquired our brightest lad.

If any Egyptian ladies wondered why I smiled—I have in mind one who stood by me on the crowded platform of a tram—they might have been surprised to know that I was recalling the regulation complaint—'shibboleth' is a useful Hebrew word that has long been Anglicized—that Jews are 'Orientals' and treat their womenkind with Eastern contempt and degradation as a lower order of being. We were amusingly eyed as flamboyant Occidentals, and in Alexandria it certainly was not unknown we were Jewish as well as English.

The complete emancipation of the Jewess in Palestine is one of the most definite triumphs of the new spirit. Yet, such is the eternal paradox of the Jewish position due to a traditional coarseness of outlook by the rest of humanity—a negation of all its pretensions—that in Palestine, where there is least justification for misunderstanding the Jew, he is deemed a Westerner by the Orienals and an Oriental by Westerners more stiff-necked than the original Hebrews who brought down upon them that historic denunciation. Jewish female freedom was not born in Palestine: it has been in force in western lands for a long time—and all but a small proportion of Jews, be it remembered, live outside Asia. In Zionism women had the vote and a place in the counsels of the movement, as something natural and incon-

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testable, years in advance of the suffragette agitation in England. Furthermore, the apotheosis of woman is not restricted to the younger generation in Palestine. Neither is it resented by the old, except perhaps that small and irreconcilable clique of ancients to be found among all peoples. If the world does not happen to be aware of the fact, it is not the fault of the Jews, who have ever tried to live a life of unconcealment. Palestine presents perfect sex equality with comradeship, confidence, and a rare understanding of the need of partnership. Whatever the legal position, there is no question of differential rights in social life. But I should hesitate to affirm that the younger generation is not already formulating problems of the future. How could it be otherwise?

I can only speak of what came within our ken without going out of our way to look for it. We encountered one or two instances of young people who did not come from areas of repression with opportunity and determination to glory in a freedom of which they had dreamed. There was a Manchester family on a plantation near Tel Aviv. Incidentally, plantation or orchard is *pardes* in Hebrew, which cannot repress speculation as to the origin of the term ' paradise.' The boys said they found life lonely, but were getting used to it. In a sense they were apologizing for a yearning note which crept into their conversation: they could not help envying the wondrous holiday freedom of their old school chums who were in our party. We talked with London settlers at Kerkur, in the Plain of Sharon. One said he was happier than in England because he had no need to

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worry about conventions of dress. Another said he was contented in a wider sense, and getting to feel more at home. Happy, indeed, did he look in white linen trousers, white shoes and a white sleeveless singlet—healthy and sturdy, a sight to make our eyes sparkle with admiration, as he leaned against the rose-covered porch of his house. That rose of Sharon was grown from seed sent from England.

Here is another episode imprinted on memory. The day we passed through Lydd on our one train journey—from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, to enable us to experience third class travel in company with Arabs—a young man approached our carriage. He was glad to meet the English party mentioned in the papers. Our peremptory demands for cheap melons, our raid on iced drinks, always made us conspicuous. Was anybody there from Manchester? Cottonopolis seems to be the most Zionist town in England, actually and by repute. There was mutual satisfaction. He came aboard. I cannot forget the melancholy in his eyes, the sadness of his voice. He was a boy of about eleven when taken to Palestine. He is now a skilled mechanic, but unhappy because one of the few who has to work on the Sabbath. He told us his wage was £6 per month, that he had virtually no social life; he asserted he saw little hope of a brighter future. His one desire was to 'escape' from Palestine.

He may be an exception. But is he a forerunner—a warning? He was not a grouser. He seemed an intelligent lad, with justifiable ambition to have a small place in the sun; but the burden of his threnody was that he

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was up against a blank, unscaleable wall, doomed to a robot existence. A lad of about twenty; and he had come to the conclusion that there was infinitesmal prospect for betterment, if any at all. It was an event to meet somebody from the outer world, to express himself for a while.

What is to happen to the boys and girls—and of a surety there will be many—with dreams and visions which Erets Israel cannot find scope for realization? If the ghetto bred them in abundance, will not the more effulgent atmosphere of Palestine do so? Many will help to build the Jewish Home, to brighten it, to furnish it with comforts and amenities. Many will be placed out in the wider world—rich material for the advancement of humanity. That number, however, must be small, restricted, by modern legislation, to the few lucky ones and the supermen who can evade or surmount the exclusionary walls with which nations, in a throwback to concepts of preservation based on timidity, are girding their territories. What of the generality? Already they are no ordinary peasants. Erets Israel is producing a super-peasant, to whom mere bucolic life, in the non-poetic and regulation pitying term invariably applied to the condition, will be insufficient, even when garnished with every up-to-date appurtenance.

Perhaps I envisage the prospect from the townsman's standpoint, from the attitude of one who knows the Jew as he has been impelled under duress to a cramped urban existence for ages. But I know also he is pastoral at heart with an inborn love of open spaces and blue skies and

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with the scent of the fresh-turned earth always in his nostrils, vivified by his daily prayers, accentuated by his festivals, intensified by his dreams, his literature, his history, and the poetry that has been woven about him through the centuries by his own and other writers. It was Disraeli—somehow not regarded as an apostate despite his conversion to Christianity in boyhood—who said, in *Tancred*, 'A race that persists in celebrating their vintage, although they have no fruits to gather, will regain their vineyards.' That prophecy is being fulfilled in Palestine to-day. We visited, of course, the famed wine cellars of Rishon-le-Zion; four bottles were quickly emptied.

Perchance there is no need to look far ahead. Palestine will be long settling down. It will take years before the experimental stage is over, but the position of the villager will be bound to thrust itself to notice between now and the time when the toddlers of to-day will be propounding new problems as yet concealed in the womb of the future. At present there is confidence which is consoling and reassuring. Those to whom I put the query whether the rising generation will be content with the life of the settlements did not hesitate to answer, 'Yes,' supplementing it with another question, Jewish fashion: 'If they are happy, what more will they want?' Just so. To-day the amenities of the colonies are restricted. They are bound to grow. Palestine is, furthermore, a small enough country with good transport facilities already available on its fine main roads to warrant the view that it will always be possible to be in contact with the towns

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and thus prevent that flight to the big centres of population which has been the bane of modern rural life. Many colonies are at present off the road map. That will be altered. And the answer to the question, 'What more will they want?' is perhaps to be found in the ghetto philosophy, expressed in a shrug of the shoulders and the fatalistic phrase, 'Let God worry.' Human nature however, has always found it necessary to anticipate the realization by Providence of its responsibilities towards its charges—and in that direction lies the only solution of the problems of the Jewish colonies in the days ahead. Beyond that it is impossible to lift the veil.

Filial affection, as well as love of the land, may count for much. What impressed, but did not surprise us, was the presence everywhere of old people, sent for by the young settlers, delivered from regions of persecution to end their days in peace and with a vision of a nobler future for their children.

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CHAPTER X

The Arabs

"We have taught the Arabs one thing, propaganda," so said a leading Jew to me apropos the view that in all the years of activity in the agricultural colonies the Arabs have learned nothing from the modern methods adopted by the Jews. Bitterly cynical, the remark concealed rather than revealed the whole truth. It was from Jews that I heard praise of the Arabs, and the statement that they possess all the capacities for success that the Jews are displaying but that they are slow in moving. Not all Jews agree with this, and I spent a piquant half hour in the office of two professional gentlemen in Jerusalem listening to their contention on the point. As far as I could gather, Arabs are superior in cereal cultivation, while Jews excel very markedly in fruit growing.

It is at the same time true that many Arabs are successful fruit planters, and that they have terraced much ground to good purpose. They are far behind the Jews, however, in dairy farming, which is mostly carried on by Amazonian girls, who run some colonies almost entirely alone, and are heard joyfully singing at their work. Arab cattle, sheep, and goats are not attractive looking animals. Those on Jewish farms are healthy stock, the progeny of scientific cross-breeding. The

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result has been to produce much more milk than given by Arab cows. Far more eggs are produced too, on the Jewish farm, where the white Leghorn is the most satisfactory hen. We had proof of the abundance of eggs by their appearance at nearly every meal.

If we did not find Palestine a land 'flowing with milk and honey,' we had good reason for concluding that it had undergone metamorphosis to a region rolling in eggs and tomatoes! We almost lived on them! Fresh vegetables are dispatched nightly by motor lorries into Syria ready for the morning market. Fish, so popular and varied by culinary arts as to become almost a legendary diet connoting Jewishness, was not plentiful.

There was not a copious supply of milk, but that is because in a number of places it is reserved for the children, always the first care among the Jews. The difference in the appearance of the Jewish and Arab children is even more patent than the contrast between the garden villages that are the Jewish colonies and the almost sinister looking collection of hovels that are Arab settlements.

The shower-bath is an indispensable feature of the Jewish colony, despite the shortage of water; and although in some places the sanitary arrangements are primitive, they are continually improving. In Jerusalem on the Sabbath we found the water-taps workshy!

In the neighbourhood of some of the Jewish colonies —as at Rehoboth—a new, healthier, and more open type of Arab village is springing up, and Arabs are learning to utilize the services of Jewish doctors and nurses with

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no small advantage to their physical well-being. Still, a Jewish doctor told me with deep regret, that Arabs rarely went to see a medical man.

The remark on propaganda was doubly cynical. It was made on the day of the Arab strike against the proposal to place sealed armouries of shot-guns with a fifty-yard range in the outlying Jewish colonies for use in emergencies, the first Sunday I was in Palestine, which was a fiasco. Except in Nablus, the stronghold of Arab feeling, it did not materialize. In Tel Aviv, Arabs actually played football on the Jewish football ground the previous Saturday, the date for which the strike was first fixed!

In Jerusalem I was told there was a little trouble, but the policeman who mentioned it did not regard it seriously. The day indicated that the majority of the Arabs are getting tired of the incitement of certain leaders. It showed that propaganda is not always successful and that influence of agitators can be exaggerated. We passed through Arab villages every day in the week following the strike: nowhere did we encounter the slightest semblance of ill-feeling. Arabs were friendly, eyeing us with idle curiosity, jumping on to the splashboard of our bus to direct us on our way. In Jerusalem too, there was irrefragable evidence that although the organ of the Grand Mufti, *Al Jamina al Arabia*, had suggested the boycott of the farewell reception given by the Mayor that week to the departing High Commissioner, 'there were more turbans and tarbooshes than any other kind of headgear in the hall.' This is a quotation from a Jeru-

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salem paper printed in English, the *Palestine Bulletin*, of Thursday, 22nd August, 1931, the day following the reception.

We saw many instances of Jewish-Arab friendliness that suggested definite hopes of an *entente*. In more than one Jewish colony Arabs were at work, especially in connexion with expert details; joining in the meals—in one instance in the communal dining-hall, the day after the strike—trading amicably. True, the Jews do not relish the presence of the poorer paid Arab worker, who is content with several piastres a day less than the Jewish labourer, about twelve as against twenty. That is why the Labour movement and the Kvutzoth are extending.

There are also signs of Jew-Arab co-operation against 'exploitation by capitalism.' Our party was to have been welcomed at Haifa by a company of Jewish and Arab workers. Unfortunately we were delayed by night overtaking us suddenly during the leisurely method of coffee-making in an Arab garden-café at Nazareth, and were so late that the company had given us up and dispersed. It was a great disappointment to us. A fortnight before our arrival Jewish and Arab motor drivers combined in a strike against some Government proposals, and with effect, due to the moderating influence of the Jewish section which limited the protest to twenty-four hours. It passed off quietly.

Mention of Nazareth prompts me to tell this story. A host of children gathered round us as we sat in the café-garden. 'I go Catholic school,' said one of them to a teacher in our party, who put questions as to where

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they learned English, adding naïvely, 'I good Greek Orthodox.'

We saw Jew and Arab working together on the roads where we did not relish the spectacle of Arab girls carrying stones on their heads, more especially as the men who placed the stones there could with hardly more effort have carried them to the spot where they were dropped. We saw Jew and Arab working side by side at the Rutenburg works on the Jordan, where that river and the Yarmuk have been dammed to provide force for the turbines generating electricity that will furnish power and give a fillip to the regeneration of Palestine.

Mr. Rutenberg himself greeted us, entertained us to a lavish tea in the big canteen, and put us in charge of a Manchester-Canadian (not a Jew), who showed us round the Cyclopean structures, the vast switch room, about as spacious as a super-cinema, and the pretty garden suburb by a cypress grove, where the workers are housed. They pay twelve piastres a day (about 2*s*. 4½*d*.) for their meals.

Jew-Arab fraternization is puzzling in the face of racial antipathy and Jewish resentment against the others' acceptance of lower wages and the bitterness against the Jewish planters who employ them where Jewish labour is available. An American-Jewish writer whom I met submitted the explanation of community of interests based on the theory that the Socialist class war in Palestine is not inspired by Jewish ideals, but is the outcome of sheer economic pressure and necessity. He was unaware, strangely enough, of the views of Theodore

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Hertzka, the lesser-known colleague of Theodore Herzl, the founder of the modern Zionist movement, on the *Neue Freie Presse*, Vienna. Hertzka, in his Utopia, 'Freeland,' which he placed in British East Africa, promulgates Socialistic theories based on self-interest and not on ethical motives. I was amazed by this argument suggesting a combination of Herzl and Hertzka at work in Erets Israel; but I could not accept the view that idealism was absent from what I saw. I had noted Herzl's portrait too frequently in the colonies to believe that his memory was without influence, and in one place where I happened to mention that I had known him, I was overwhelmed with demands for a character sketch. And it is difficult to find a Jew who has ever heard of Hertzka, notwithstanding that Israel Zangwill wrote of the extraordinary juxtaposition of these two sons of Israel.

Two heads of the Hebrew University—Dr. Magnes, the principal, and Dr. Bergmann, the librarian (a fellow-student of Einstein, and whom I knew in London) are responsible for the *Brit Shalom* (Covenant of Peace) movement to secure a better understanding with the Arabs. This is regarded in some quarters with suspicion, as a surrender policy, not altogether surprising in the light of some Arab opinions under its ægis.

Jews are learning Arabic. There is an affinity between the two languages. Even the donkeys know *yamina* is 'right' in both tongues.

All very promising. Would it were as easy as it sounds. Each side blames the Government for laxity, and accuses it of favouring the other. Jews hold that the Govern-

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ment could have prevented the massacres of August 1929, and are they to be blamed if they look furtively over their shoulder and wonder when the next attack will be made? The danger, alas! is ever-threatening.

Late one night at Tel Aviv, Dr. Kinsley and I were taking a stroll when we were advised not to wander far. Our attention was drawn to a notice at a police post. It offered a reward for information concerning a young man and woman who had disappeared. We read the leaflet with pained interest: we looked at the portraits of the couple. We had heard of the matter, and also the suggestion of a suicide compact. Two months after our return it was reported that their bodies had been found near a Bedouin camp, that five Bedouin had been arrested, that three of them had confessed the crime, admitting that the girl was first outraged. The discovery was only made as the result of information by an Arab who evidently succumbed to the temptation of £200 reward, raised by the Mayor of Tel Aviv and the *Doar Hayom* newspaper. The Jews were indignant that the police had not made discoveries earlier. There have been questions in the House of Commons by Colonel Wedgwood on the matter.

A member of the Transjordan frontier force, in an interesting chat with some of our lads, described a startling habit of some Arabs testing a gun by firing straight ahead without taking the least precaution of seeing whether anyone happens to be in the line of fire! That frontier is now a definite barrier. Some neighbouring colonists told me that once they used to wander happily

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into Transjordan for a stroll. Young couples would tramp across with light heart. Now they dare not.

The Arab has yet to learn that his ready response to the lure of loot—and the Jewish colonies are increasing in attractiveness—his fondness for arms and his proneness to use the knife in a quarrel, are neither compatible with religious teachings nor modern secularist rule—in short, that the belongings of others are not to be had for the brutal asking, and that human life is the most sacred thing on earth and the greatest treasure to be preserved to ensure the Future State. That tremendous ethical factor is largely the crux of the Arab problem.

Little importance can be attached to the innuendo that the Arab resents all Western innovations, including the motor car, which he regards as some Jewish *jinn* emitting pestilential vapours and road-hogging his stray chickens. The Arab's own immediate environment has fortified him with bodily antidotes to foul odours. It is not unreasonable that the driver of a caravan should unload a pack of curses when one of his over-burdened camels throws the whole file out of gear and into panic by stumbling or deliberately lying down in front of a motor bus. Evil looks are only to be expected when a woman with a baby has to dismount hastily, and awkwardly, from a donkey that has nearly run into the bonnet of a car: her husband, at the moment is best left to exhaust his vocabulary uninterrupted. But, more often than not, the bus is laden with his own folk, and the car, if sumptuous, is almost certain to belong to some Effendi. Our bus was several times hailed by Arabs who thought

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it was on the service. The most swagger cars are driven by prosperous Arabs—dandies when young, obese when past that stage. The Arab, too, does not boycott other modern inventions. The chug-chug of the exhaust at a village denotes the use of a motor to pump water.

The motor is changing Arab life, willy-nilly. The petrol tin is the most conspicuous feature of domesticity in Palestine. When emptied of its contents, it is put to multifarious uses—portmanteau, market-basket, receptacle for all manner of commodities. It is a water-butt, sometimes with tap attached, a cupboard; it is the raw material of dozens of tinkers who fashion it into a great variety of utensils, often with the label left adhering, as a guarantee of genuine quality, no doubt. This is excellent adaptability, to the credit of the Arab. But, alas! the petrol tin is also displacing the shapely home-made water vase, artistic and attractive in appearence, adroitly poised on the head of the Arab girl who fetches the water supply. Nothing is more flagrantly indicative of the changing East. Nothing so sharply accentuates the incompleteness of the mutation. It makes the girl look more ragged than picturesque, not a graceful link with the past, but an anachronism, inelegant and poverty-stricken in a manner which is an offence to modern ideas. The petrol tin may disappear if wayside oil-pumps are to be erected as elsewhere. In any case, the fable of the 'unchanging East' is no longer poetry, but a gross impropriety—an affectation of æstheticism condemning a people to perpetual backwardness.

If the education of the Arab is improving, as con-

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tended, there is bound to be a betterment of his condition. He cannot remain indifferent to modern advantages demonstrated all round him. How far it is true that he is content to go on scratching the soil in the manner of his remote forefathers, satisfied with the resultant meagre product for his simple needs, none can say. None, or few, would dare maintain that the Arab peasant can remain unperturbed while some of his own people are enjoying the modern adjuncts to comfort. Whether the Arab learnt propaganda from the Jew or not—and there is at least India to discount that theory—it is more likely that he is learning from the hardworking Jews with whom he is coming more and more into contact, that the better things of this world and an easier existence—often a specious and idle one where his own upper class is concerned—are not to be denied to the 'common people' of to-day. He can already traverse the roads swiftly and with ease in a motor bus. Soon he will want a house that is not a hovel. And why not? Not all are Bedouin in tattered flowing robes that may delight an artist, but makes one wonder if it is general knowledge that soap is made in the land of the olive, and content with the barest necessities. Arab children are growing up with different modes of life around them, although they still present the ugly spectacle of collecting dung for fuel. One of the most pitiful sights we saw was Arab children at play, picking up scraps of paper and dirt in the streets. They are far from deficient in intelligence. They are bound to see that the world does not intend them to be doomed to a miserable existence that is a degraded

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serfdom, totally neglected by an 'upper class' that has no concept of *noblesse oblige*, or social responsibility, individual or collective. That is an appalling moral gap.

Prone though they may be to quick response to fanatical and 'holy' incitement by such unscrupulous stories that the Jews have designs on the Moslem holy places, I venture the opinion—with some diffidence—that the Arabs generally are not as fully influenced by the unbridled and violent language of their agitators as we are frequently asked to believe. How unprincipled the preaching can be has been made evident even in England where a few persons—the egregiously limited coterie of anti-Semites (overlooking the fact that the Arabs are also Semites)—have been taken in by it. Or they have, of set purpose, endeavoured to use the Arab visiting agitators for their own nefarious ends. That conclusion was irresistibly forced upon me over ten years ago when an Arab delegation was in England to present a case against the Balfour Declaration and all that it implies. This group and the British anti-Jews fooled one another. This was obvious from the manner in which, as good Nelsonites no doubt, the English (temporary) lovers of the Arabs applied a blind eye to the palpable anti-British character of the Arab appeal.

I happened to be present, in a journalistic capacity, at a luncheon at the Hotel Cecil on Tuesday, November 15th, 1921, when Mousa Kazim Pasha El-Husseini, the leader of the delegation, claiming direct descent from the Prophet, and speaking in Arabic (which was interpreted)

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declared that he had heard the voice of the Spirit of the Glorious Dead at the Cenotaph, where he had laid a wreath, express sympathy with his mission, adding, 'Fear not. You have many supporters in England who will assist your cause.' It was astounding to note the English ladies and gentlemen sitting at the table, calmly listening as if they believed. Probably they were not so gullible, but accepted it as part of the dope they had to swallow for this assistance to their own cause. There were some notorious Jew-haters present. One sat next to me, and regaled me with some extraordinary views. I was present also in the Grand Committee Room of the House of Commons on April 10th, 1930, where the late Lord Brentford presided on the occasion when the Grand Mufti and others spoke. Neither the Grand Mufti nor the Mayor of Jerusalem, nor the other Arab speakers, had a single word to say regretting the massacres of a few months earlier—in August 1929. The utter callousness of these Arab leaders is proving—so it would seem—its own undoing. The boycott of the reception to the High Commissioner, which failed, was incited in *Al Jamia Al Arabia*, with the plea that no one with an atom of respect 'would drink tea with the British High Commissioner at a time when the blood of the nation's youth is being poured out by British bullets.' There was not a scrap of foundation for so grossly scurrilous, so wickedly stupid a perversion of the sealed armouries proposal. That it failed in its object we were able to note for ourselves. As far as it was possible for us to see, the inflammatory writings of those days did not rouse the country

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—and we covered well-nigh the whole of it in about ten days—but we did not visit strictly Arab centres, like Nablus or Hebron, the last-named town the scene of the horrible massacre of students in 1929.

We heard that there was some likelihood of the annual one-day general strike against the Balfour Declaration not being organized in the coming November. This proved to be the case. This decision, against the advice of the Grand Mufti, has been interpreted as an earnest of a change of mind on the part of 'the Arab in the street,' that he is tired of the vain annual protest against the British and allied declaration for the establishment in Palestine of a Jewish National Home. The Arab business man has discovered that his own trade has suffered abrasion by these senseless demonstrations, that his own interests have been prejudiced. He is learning that it is impossible for Jew and Arab to avoid intermingling in trade and industry; and with a very old mercantile shrewdness, he cannot be indifferent to the world-teaching that warfare carried into commerce is the most imbecile of human vices.

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CHAPTER XI

The Courageous Experiment

WHAT do I remember most of Palestine? Everything! It was all new, entrancing, much more novel than I had anticipated, hardly like the picture I had conjured up beforehand. The more I have pondered, the more I have re-read with freshened interest the books and pamphlets, collating all that was written with all that I saw, the more have I marvelled that so much was unexpected. That is the paramount impression. Clearly the reason is the revelation that Erets Israel is much more in an experimental stage than I, for one, had imagined. Perhaps the litter of scrap iron, barbed wire, and loose boards lying about almost everywhere asseverates a sense of the unfinished—like an exhibition on the opening day. It imbued me with a deep desire to see Palestine again in ten years—and before, if possible—to note the progress; it inculcated the burning hope that conditions would be more stable—in the economic, and still more, in the political sphere. The two combined, interlaced and interwoven, will solve the subtler social problem: they are its weft and its warp.

The second impression, more poignant, is that so much courage and splendid endeavour is not yet on a secure basis and therefore incapable of being properly applied

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to produce the best and most permanent results. Palestine is not yet a Jewish Home. There is a shadow over the whole land, that of an unbidden, an unnecessary squatter—apprehension. It is not due to the shortcoming of the Jewish settler. The fault lies with his overseer, an officialdom woefully, almost continually, lacking in imagination. Such persistence as we saw everywhere, such cheerful and intelligent application, such irrepressible optimism—all the best elements of the noblest will to live, of unswerving pluck and the purest spirit of peace in the service of reclamation and civilization, call for better treatment and for that generous encouragement which English rule can give and is bound to bestow when it is permitted to see the situation clearly. They are self-evident—to those who do not deliberately ignore.

We were in Beer Tuvia, our most southerly point of call, on the second anniversary of the sack of 1929. The gaunt ruins of the colony, its shattered, gaping houses, its broken machinery, were like a corner of the battlefield as I saw it in Belgium a year after the Armistice. But hardly a mile away a new and bigger Beer Tuvia had sprung up. We saw the Diesel engine for the water supply being fixed into position; we scaled a difficult ladder to the top of the water-tower to gaze on the panorama, which, in the clear air and the still treeless condition of Palestine, unfolds itself with the appearance of a superfluity of untenanted hill and plain—the naked, raw material of land in the 'human' sense. Beer Tuvia, not far from the site of Gath of ancient days, is isolated near the region of the desert. What indomitable faith to

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remain there ! What an inspiring example to mankind !

At Metulla, over 3000-ft. high, hugging the northern border, with the Syrian frontier at the end of its main street, we saw a thriving village which, because of its vivifying mountain air, should become a health resort. Yet this and the two adjoining outpost settlements of Tel Hai and Kfar Gileadi, had been abandoned after a wanton attack by Druses in 1920. At Tel Hai we saw the grave of the one-armed Captain Trumpeldor, who gave his life in the defence on that occasion; at Kfar Gileadi we heard the story of his sacrifice. All three places have been long re-occupied. At Safed, for picturesque setting and scenic splendour, the gem of Palestine, its square white houses clustered in terraces, tier above tier, on its several hill-tops, we saw them rebuilding the Jewish quarter viciously destroyed in the cruel outbreak of 1929, when forty-five Jews were killed. What irony that a spot to lure artists and tourists, which is reached over a fascinating serpentine mountain road, giving glorious views of the Lake of Galilee, should be selected for pillage and murder. Calmly the people were effacing the scars of dastardly wreckage, as we walked down the staircase of streets, from the height above where we had gazed on the expansive landscape, and were devoting themselves to the task of renaissance and friendship.

Everywhere the same—the impossibility of convincing Israel he has no right in the Land of his Fathers, and his ineradicable insistence that he is no usurper, and means to demonstrate it by the only method that humanity is entitled to stake such a claim—by the arts of peace and

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the sweat of his brow and the intelligent application of his muscles to the cultivation of the land. It needs no Carlyle to preach the dignity of labour to the Jewish peasants of Palestine, although many of them know the work of the Sage of Chelsea and appreciate it, despite his insolent unfairness to the Jews. But many who have never heard of Carlyle apply the Biblical injunction, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.' That suffices for their mandate and the right to work, and they interpret the concluding part of the same verse, 'for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return' (Gen. iv, 19) as a divine exhortation to make of that dust a thing of beauty —a joy to behold, as well as a source of food supply.

What I saw in Palestine was a revival of the epic of Israel: a few pages, a chapter of a New Book of promising grandeur. Palestine is still the land of miracles. There are many yet to be performed. Miles upon miles of waste with no sign of life are a reproach to the marvels achieved. The Huleh marshes in the north, which the Jews wish to drain, may be as Hedera on the maritime Plain of Sharon, whence malaria has been banished, and half a million trees have altered the face of the land and its climate. Beisan, near the Jordan, where land given to the Arabs is neglected, is rebuked by the neighbouring Jewish colonies.

In the murderous excesses of 1929, Arabs attacked Motza, near Jerusalem, perhaps because a Jew transformed barren rock there into a profitable orchard; Sir John Hope Simpson mentions this and similar miracles in his Report (p. 78). At Motza, in the grounds of the

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Jewish Convalescent Home of the Kupat Holim, there is the stump of the cypress tree planted by Dr. Herzl, and cynically cut down by the Turks in the War when it had grown to stature and beauty. By its side we saw a young new cypress, a symbol of Jewish determination. Where Turks and Arabs ravaged the land, the Jews have quietly set to work to repair, to restore and rejuvenate. That makes it difficult and hazardous to estimate what has been done and to venture a forecast based on those valuations. Romance invades the territory of cultivation and economics, and succeeds—according to its vocation—where realism cannot undertake. Palestine, for the time being, is outside scientific computation. Appraisement must be tentative and cautious.

There is the Socialistic side. Much of its work I can honestly appreciate and commend. Some of it frankly puzzles me. When I put the point to Mr. Ben Gurion, a man of noble aspiration and high intellect, that there was a belief that with some people Socialism came first and Zionism afterwards, and asked whether there was not a danger of exploiting Zionism for Socialistic experiment, I got in reply something more than candour. I got a long dissertation, annotated by a disquisition, in rapid and fluent English, from Mr. Shertok, the editor of the English section of the *Dvar*, the Hebrew newspaper. Mr. Shertok, shortly after our visit, became political secretary to the Jewish Agency executive, and the supplement for which he was responsible, an excellent publication, was suspended. Whether the two gentlemen are responsible, or I am, for the fact that the position was

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not clarified is immaterial. Two such long speeches were significant, also eloquent in an unintentional sense. I suspect the position cannot be made clear—yet. It is still experimental.

It was, however, impressed upon me that the development and success of co-operation are deemed important. Obviously they are of moment. The Socialists, if they are responsible entirely, as they claim to be, for the circumstance that an eight-hour day is becoming general by moral consent, are entitled to full recognition for that victory. But an eight-hour day is not an exclusively Socialist dogma. And if Socialist-Zionists mean that Socialism is prevailing now, or must inevitably prevail, they are postulating a very debatable point. Non-Socialists do not agree with the Socialist conclusion. Co-operation, nevertheless, is imperative to the success of Palestinian life. It is extending among individualists who do not share the Socialist faith. It is commended by Sir John Hope Simpson, who, in his Report, regrets that there is no Arab co-operative society.[1] Socialists carry their doctrines into emphasis of opinion. They dislike—'despise' would not be too strong a term—philanthropic activity; in that category they place the work of the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association (Pica), the Baron Edmond de Rothschild Foundation. That seems neither fair nor wise. The communal colonists are still dependent on Zionist funds, the money subscribed by Jews of all grades of opinion the world over. The fact that these contributions must be maintained and not

[1] p. 93. But Jews and Arabs now co-operate in fruit-canning.

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allowed to flag is enough to indicate that nobody contemplates the possibility of the New Palestine, the Yishub as a whole, becoming self-supporting and economically free in the near future.

That need not cause alarm. Steadily, a growing number of settlements no longer receive subsidies. Palestine is not the only country in financial travail. And whatever its future system of life, it cannot be permitted to become like other lands, something apart from its people elsewhere. Palestine is unique in that it must mean something more than a Jewish colony or Home, to millions of Jews who will never see it. Nor can Palestine be ordinary territory to any people, especially Christians. Its appeal to pilgrims and tourists must increase as the years roll on and as it conditions grow settled. As the real magnetic pole of humanity, its future is beyond all range of comprehension. Stark, inhospitable rock, it would remain the world's religious lodestone, but it is not without beauty which must become enhanced with cultivation that will clothe hill and plain with forest and bedeck the earth with colour. With the variations of climate due to the extraordinary gradations of contour, it produces a bigger floral range in a small space than most countries, including the tropical, and the Jewish colonists are coaxing English flowers to adorn their farmsteads. The Lake of Galilee is surely alluring tourist ground of the future. With æsthetic taste, the late Lord Melchett built a dainty residence on its border at Migdal (Magdala), and surrounded it with a vast garden that justifies the other name of the lake, Genasseret, which means

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'luxuriance.' We had permission to visit the house. We over-ran it with delight, and from the flat roof beheld a view that is entrancing, comparable with some of the lake scenery of Switzerland, but different and more enthralling, because of the enduring association of every spot in the ambit of vision. There are hot springs at Tiberias, which is to become an important air station, close by; there are prehistoric caves in the neighbourhood. The lake is very shallow for a good distance from shore.

For enchantment the region vies with Haifa. Our bus climbed Mount Carmel, past charming villas, for breakfast at the Workers' Convalescent Home at the spacious summit. The picture of the town below, the graceful curve of the bay, the blue Mediterranean, the peaks and valleys inland, is unforgettable. When the harbour is finished and the oil pipe-line to Mosul laid, Haifa will be one of the principal ports of the Middle East. Jaffa may suffer; landing there is an ordeal, to women in particular. The day of our departure only one boatman fell into the sea. His grin as he was fished aboard indicated that he was only an average statistical, dripping unit. Haifa is bound to become an attractive seaside resort. The abundant trees and vegetation on Carmel suggest that Palestine can be verdantly normal. Haifa, despite its Oriental aspect, gave us a more definite savour of homeliness than any place in Palestine. There was more green; and in the neighbourhood we heard the sound of factories, accompanied, as we entered after nightfall, with a glare from the Nesher cement works where overtime was in progress.

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It is here that the heavy industries possible in Palestine are concentrating; the lighter types are clustering at Tel Aviv. There we visited a busy hosiery factory; a printing works, where, among the publications, we saw *The Forsyte Saga* being produced in Hebrew; the 'Tnuva,' the co-operative dairy establishment; and the Rutenberg electric power station, where under a spreading banana tree, a Hebrew smithy stands! And the smith, not a mighty man, 'after Longfellow,' but a little chap, dexterous and wiry. The machinery at this station is English, and I was told that the cost of electricity—1*s.* a unit—was shortly to be reduced to 7*d.* There are in Tel Aviv small foundries, brick and tile factories, furniture, clothing, and leather works; soap, oil, perfume, and candle-making; the manufacture of ice, various foods and confectionery, chocolates, and mineral waters. In the vicinity we saw also tobacco and cigarette factories. There are other possibilities, as witness the surprising success of one who dared to start an artificial teeth factory. Power is mostly electrical, and this spares the land the hideous aspect of tall chimneys and their belching smoke.

Palestine's development, however, must be mainly agricultural. This raises the land problem. We were there at the wrong season to see work on the soil in full swing. But I could not resist the feeling that the country is very thinly peopled, with vast tracts derelict. We traversed mile upon mile daily without seeing a living thing, or habitation, or sign of labour. It was like a depopulated territory, or wilderness that had never yet come under the influence of man. The occasional

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Bedouin camps, primitive, casual, temporary—a few poles with reed matting slung across to afford shelter from the sun—only heightened the desolation. How much of this land will respond to cultivation it is impossible for a mere visitor to say—especially where expert investigators vary to an extent that suggests totally different standards of measurement and leads to conclusions as diversified as their languages. But what is visible even to the passer-by is the proof of the amazing reaction of the earth to effort, as if it has been patiently awaiting the labour that is imperative to a revival of its natural functions. Sir John Hope Simpson has acknowledged the marvel; he mentions,[1] in addition to Motza, Dilb (Kiryath Anavim), between Jerusalem and Jaffa, and Beth Hakarem, formerly a 'hopelessly bare and arid' hillside near Jerusalem, where the achievement is almost a miracle. These man-made oases only throw into greater relief the desert tracts awaiting the touch of the modern magician, who is no other than the willing, eager, and intelligent lover of the land, ready to place his strong arms at its service, directed by science and organization. And when a comprehensive hydrographic survey of the whole country is made—already overdue—the possibilities will be better known, the outlook vastly improved and rendered more certain. Experience indicates great possibilities for mixed farming, and confutes the pessimists and unbelievers.

What is visible in Palestine, what stamped itself indelibly on my mind, is something more than the foun-

[1] p. 78 of his Report.

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dation of the Jewish National Home. It was nothing less than the long-delayed beginnings of the redemption of the human race from the refuse-heap which has fouled its intellectual cradle and the nursery of its conscience. To regard it as only a quarrel between Jew and Arab for the right to a stony relic invested with holiness as a place of tears, or even as a contest—a scramble—for land, is a mean evasion of something of far greater import. It does not appear to have entered the minds of some people invested with authority that Palestine is not a mere British colony, or protectorate, or native compound in the traditional—and supercilious—sense of being inhabited by a restless 'subject' people who are to be awed and even bullied into sullen acceptance of the cynical shadow of a solemn covenant. The Balfour Declaration and the British mandate are not scraps of paper, nor is the trusteeship of the League of Nations to be pigeon-holed in Downing Street as a 'minute' to be forgotten. They are noble documents, welding history and promise to wipe out the stain that the Holy Land has been for centuries, to right the wrong of Israel's deprivation of its certificate of manhood, and re-enthrone Zion as worthy of its proud record as the seat of the Law of Humanity. The Word of the Lord already goes forth anew from Jerusalem—carved in stone in a literal sense, graven by man on the indurated soil of the land. The patient fortitude that is cutting that inscription, a message proclaiming an insistent will, and right, to live, cannot be ignored by the world.

Palestine at every turn—at sea-level, in the deeps below

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it, on the consecrated heights above—presents new parables in the realm of the oldest. Magnificent youth delivered from a thraldom no whit lighter than Pharoah's cruel constriction, is conducting one of the most inspiring experiments in social regeneration. A despised and persecuted people still regarded by many who profess to be followers of Him who gave them Light in this land, as a folk not entitled to the ordinary rights of man—their own teachings!—is demonstrating its love for the soil, its deep attachment to the home of its ancestors, and its capacity to express its ancient faith in modern terms. That activity, with fervour and passionate love behind the arm that drives the spade, is wresting from the hitherto reluctant earth that which is was ordained to yield in response to labour, intensified by intelligence and ingenuity. Modern appliances and research are stimulating greater production. I saw English machinery at work; and at Tel Mond, not far from the coast in Sharon, an enterprise initiated by the late Lord Melchett, where the deepest ploughing in Palestine is practised, the director told me it was no longer necessary to send students to California. He maintained that the Holy Land itself now affords every opportunity for the acquisition of agricultural knowledge and for the conduct of research. There is perhaps some danger in that view, and I was glad when on the returning vessel a young Jew, an amazing linguist, with experience of Kenya among other acquirements, told me he was proceeding to Spain to investigate orange growing and packing. These young men were two splendid specimens of modern manhood,

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types of whom Jewry has cause to be exceedingly proud. The one going to Spain, in addition to his many accomplishments, is a fine tenor singer: his rendition of Rubenstein's 'Der Asra' in Hebrew at our impromptu concert one night was artistic.

Under the stimulus of all this energy is a demonstration that the land can give a richer yield and hold far more people. Israel has turned his long-blunted sword into a ploughshare of shining steel and is obeying the noblest of behests, not merely inducing two blades of grass to sprout where one was feeble before, but to call into being something more useful than grass where none has grown for centuries. In an age clamant for a higher standard for mankind, the Jew in Palestine is leading the way more boldly and definitely than by any people in the East, and indeed by few west of the Holy Land. The world must note the monument of Truth that is steadily being erected. Recognition may be slow, justice hesitant and tardy. Humanity, demanding of Jews the abandonment of tradition and a totally new outlook, clings to the worst of bad habits, disbelief and intolerance. But given peace—which ought not to be beyond the province of the League of Nations as trustee and England as the mandatory power, and indeed is their sacred duty to ensure—Palestine in another ten years should become the show-country of the world, its new attractiveness grafted on to its unrivalled magnetism as the land where the Word became Life and Law, transforming chaos into order and progress.

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CHAPTER XII

Art—and Nature

THERE is no art yet. It is too soon to expect it. So far there has been, in addition to scant opportunity, hardly the sort of political and social equipoise that is conducive to artistic endeavour. It was something of a shock, when, attracted by a shop-window in Tel Aviv, I found myself bewildered by what seemed a strange development, and at length discovered that I was gazing at Chinese products! They seemed alien—and superior!—in design to anything conventionally Near Eastern. So far, the Jews have not succumbed—happily—to that which passes for some sort of art with Orientals. It is to their credit. The cheap, garish gee-gaws seemed out of place in Palestine—tawdry eyesores. It is a hopeful sign that their influence has, for the most, been kept out of Jewish costume and ornamentation.

Clothes are definitely European, with some leaning, on the part of men, to the Russian blouse, bedizened with embroidery and a gaudy girdle. It appeared to me meaningless in a dual sense, for it did not seem to be disported as an act of faith. Some women favoured heavy Oriental embroidery, which jarred on our dress-designer. Furniture is European and modern, household appurtenances plain. One or two shop windows in Jerusalem indicated

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some popularity for the coloured glassware which English manufacturers of table plate are always expected to supply to the East.

Architecture is apparently stabilizing itself on European lines of modern simplicity with no intention of embodying some Eastern traits, as is done with skill in Alexandria. Beyond the plain, dignified dome, nothing Eastern in character has been absorbed. There is no tendency to compromise or to the composite. Simplicity and utilitarianism are evidently the objectives, and they are achieved by straight lines, effective and tasteful, with no rococo ornamentation to offend the eye. The workers 'garden suburb' which is springing up at one end of Tel Aviv is severely plain, in the up-to-date English manner. The somewhat better houses in the Jerusalem suburbs are not so puritanical, but they do not run to the bungaloid-type of villa. Both styles are very attractive. In the colonies, extreme simplicity, expressed with neatness, is the keynote. The aim of life's harmony is seen in planned orderliness; the villages are not growing up higgledy-piggledy.

There is no freakishness, no disposition to accept some of the newest tendencies as incontestably established, as in the case of the theatre. We had no opportunity of seeing the Habima Hebrew Players, formed in Moscow, now located in Palestine. I had seen them in London, and impressed though I was with the high intelligence of the company and with the rare beauty of the voices, I saw no reason for their strange metamorphosis of *Twelfth Night*, and I could not help but compare their

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performance of *The Dibbuk*, a play of superstition but dramatically arresting, with that of the Vilna Troupe of Yiddish actors, very much to the advantage of the latter. The Russian stage treatment uglified the character of the 'Messenger,' surely a celestial figure meant to represent Conscience and not a shuffling *chiffonnière* of death, and transformed the Rabbi's table in the chamber where the evil spirit (the Dibbuk) is exorcised from the suffering girl, into what looked like a toboggan slide. This aim at pictorial perspective is ridiculous.

One dramatic performance we did see, that of the Ohel company of semi-amateurs, in a semi-open-air theatre at Tel Aviv. The play, unfortunately, dealt with American life, and the actors and actresses, while playing with intelligence and sincerity, were inclined to exaggeration of character; it bordered on over-acting. But it is a safe prediction, based on the world-famed achievements of Jewish actors and actresses in all countries, that Palestine will before long produce a brilliant theatrical constellation. The emergence of a real Hebrew drama of distinction is a more difficult matter, but there is no reason, with the proved versatility of Jewish playwrights in different lands, their adaptability and their literary and dramaturgical capacity, why Palestine should not give to the world a drama of worth.

Another performance that we witnessed in Tel Aviv was a recital of Yemenite songs by a woman, named Bracha Zpirah. She gave the whole programme herself and held her audience, in an open-air theatre, from beginning to end, a remarkable display of execution by one

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and appreciation by the other. With a good voice, a fine presence, delicate mobility of countenance and expressive eyes, she rendered a series of characters with artistic perfection. In one, that of a youth, she gestured with her hands and fingers to an extent what would have made the manipulation grotesque—even to Jews!—but for the delicacy and grace of the movements. In another she wore a black dress of European design set off with Oriental trimmings so daintily as to prove the possibility of combining the two into a perfect ensemble. Her rendition of 'Moladeti' ('My Native Land'), roused the audience to enthusiasm, and there was equal pleasure in her lighter and vivacious youthful ditties. She is an artist who ought to be seen in England.

To a large extent the Jews of Palestine start fresh with a mind not entirely free of preconceived notions but with no harrassing bias. If they are 'going slow' they are, unconsciously perhaps, waiting on nature. What will the future Palestinian be? What colour?—in the first place. At present many of the Jews are very fair of skin. It made the girls additionally prepossessing. But I wonder if it will be within the power of the Jew to withstand the effect of the burnishing sun, and to remain impervious to the needs of donning his 'shadowed livery.' Doctors to whom I put the question hesitated to say whether the Jews of future generations in Palestine would tend to become darker in hue, approximating to the Arabs. Deep differences there always must be; they may well counteract outward semblance, but racial similarity in a land in which the Jew is, or should become, more

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definitely at home than elsewhere, may prove to be a factor which has not yet entered into the 'Jewish question.' Arabs themselves are not all of one shade. Even some of the Bedouin are comparatively light, and there are gradations of tint extending almost to blackness; all—so I was informed—the product of the land, and the offspring, obviously, of past mixtures. It is a fascinating theme for speculation, but I have in mind what other Eastern lands have done. I have met Jews born in India, with one parent European—Lithuanian in this particular instance—whose type was scarcely distinguishable from the Indian.

India is cited as an illustration of the tendency of Nature to adjust Jews to climate in different parts of the world. Those anti-Semites addicted to the sneering habit of terming all Jews Asiatics with the deliberate intention of relegating them to a lower category of humankind, based on unscientific and prejudiced disparagement, which ignores achievement, are up against the incontrovertible fact that of the fifteen million Jews in the world, about fourteen millions are a white race, about nine and a-half millions of them being in Europe, and over four millions in America. Only a little over half a million are in Asia, and a somewhat smaller number in Africa, where, as far as the 60,000 or so in South Africa are concerned, they are virtually all migrants from Europe and their descendants. The Asiatic belittlement theory has to explain away, if it can, the vast number of blonde Jews in all parts of the world, and these are now bringing their type into the Palestinian pool.

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An analogy with Palestine Jewry may perhaps be drawn from Egypt. The Jews whom we met there were mainly the reverse of dark. Many were not of Egyptian birth. The darkest, who approximated somewhat to the Arab cast of countenance, were among some Jewish boy scouts from Cairo who stayed at the Zionist hostel at Tel Aviv at the same time as we did. Their behaviour, by the way, was peculiar. They had an annoying habit of generating liveliness in the middle of the night. There were a few girls in the party; a couple of them, after spending much time in colouring and anointing their faces, conducted their courting in the small hours of the morning. And not whisperingly. They and their boy friends were determined that the whole hostel should know that their love-making was innocent and not clandestine.

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CHAPTER XIII

The Hebrew Bus

ABRAHAM, the driver, leaned out through the open window by his seat on the left, to scan the curve, to judge to an inch how near the edge of the coiling mountain road he could take the bus. It was a characteristic attitude almost as studiously nonchalant as his garb. He was the most unchauffeur-looking motorman. He wore long trousers and shoes, a blue collared-shirt, open at the throat, no vest or coat, and a dark straw Trilby hat. Rarely was he goggled.

With memories of motor tours over Swiss mountain passes, I gasped the first time he swung coolly round a loop without slowing. I grew indifferent, or pretended to be so, and clung to my window-seat just behind Abraham. The others also grew accustomed to the gyration round the hair-pin bends. The girls no longer uttered suppressed screams, and ceased to close their eyes. They were as proud of the driver as of the original Patriarch. They even ventured to crane their necks to see how far it was to the drop below, or whether there was anything but harsh, craggy sterility in the sideways landscape. When we met another motor, Abraham's estimate of space—especially when we were on the outside edge—made us realize that the Holy Land is truly a small country with

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the scantiest of interstices between this world and the next, and rather too many opporunities of communion between the two.

'*Mayyim*' [water], he would murmur: in a moment one of us had placed a water-bottle to his lips. In the same way a lighted cigarette would be administered. Always, some one would ostentatiously draw his attention to the notice in front of him, the Hebrew correct but the English reading, deliciously: 'No smoking no spit!' Abraham would only gaze into the strip of sloping mirror above his front window and smile at everybody.

There was a moment when an angry Arab whose ass backed suddenly into the bus, and then nearly pitched him overhead into the *mesha'a* (unpartitioned land) below, taught us a lot of swear-words. I doubt if the fellah (or he may have been an effendi) grasped the significance of the last phrase hurled at him by one of our Cockney boys.

'Garn! We've entered Aby for the bus-driver's Derby. We've put our shirts and shorts on him. Your measly moke wouldn't be allowed to disgrace the Epsom Road. . . . *Imshi!*'

There never was a happier bus. Ordinarily, it spins along the Jerusalem—Tel Aviv road. The bus is quicker, cheaper and more popular than the train, but the latter afforded an interesting experience on our one railway journey, Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, third class. What looks like a luggage-van seems also to be a travelling harem, with Arab women squatting on the floor. Not all the

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women shunned the ordinary carriage. The male Arab has a quaint manner of occupying a seat—one foot flat on the floor the other flat on the seat, with the knee nearly touching the shoulder. I saw one man sitting like that for over an hour. He did not seem in the least degree stiff when finally he extricated himself. His eyes were a study when I bought a huge water melon at a wayside station for a piastre and cut it up into a dozen slices and offered him one. The price slumped when the train began to move—apparently a regulation Oriental tendency—and the way the boy-trader raced alongside to dispose of his stock was a glorious sight.

The motor bus is the real revolutionary in Palestine. It has gobbled up distances and exorcised space which, formerly, must have been as wearisome to the flesh as if it were possessed by an evil spirit. Journeys which, pre-War, involved an overnight break and a circumlocutionary route, can now be done in a few hours—Jerusalem to Nazareth, for instance. We left Haifa after lunch, and passing Nazareth, reached Jerusalem comfortably by tea-time. All due to the first class military roads, and the others, which have transformed the surface of the land. By their means the bus more than supplants the train. It is supplanting the older locomotion. Where there are no tracks the train cannot go. Our bus went everywhere—literally so.

It is no ordinary bus than can curl itself up the seemingly interminable hills that lie between Nablus and Jerusalem, plunge down the corkscrew path to the Dead Sea and along the primordial Jordan Valley, over hum-

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mocks and holes which a tank might jib at negotiating. Abraham and his vehicle, with its twenty-four aboard, —sometimes more, for occasionally we gave somebody a lift, or had a guide—jibbed at nothing. Abraham was often an entertaining guide.

'This land is good for corns,' he remarked once, taking a hand for a moment from the wheel; and he laughed because we did, without understanding why.

'Plenty bandits here—shoot with guns—hide in caves,' he intimated in the region between Nablus and Jerusalem, adding, 'Not to-day.' It happened to be Friday, the Moslem Sabbath, and we asked if the robbers were religious. Smilingly, he assured us his remark referred to the past. The outlaws selected their region well—ideal ground for depredation and defiance, a natural maze, with difficult rocks, trees too. Still, banditry is not obsolete in Palestine, and not long after our return there was a wholesale outrage on the Jerusalem—Jericho road, where, in Scriptural times, men fell among thieves.

Once we swerved past a tree-trunk laid across the road. Abraham wondered whether it meant mischief, but it turned out to be a rough-and-ready notice that the road was under repair further along. That necessitated swerving into the trackless waste alongside. All very well in the daytime, though even the sunlight could be obscured by each whirling little sandstorm raised by a motor, compelling a respectful distance when another was on the road. At night it was eerie. We had to deviate near the Huleh marshes after sunset. The ground was swampy,

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the district not exactly a pleasure area guaranteed absolutely safe in the blackness. Abraham and the guide went prospecting for a road. The guide was one Freedman; he had been a mere watchmaker at Manchester; now he is a peasant-idealist, happy in a smock shirt, a most charming companion for several days, with just too much fondness to expatiate Socialist propaganda. There was, however, always a touch of poetry in his English discourses. He and Abraham wandered away out of sight. We got tired of whistling 'Won't go home till morning,' and began to wonder how many of us would be able to sleep on the roof—we had quickly arranged to give the interior to the girls. And we would have to post guards, without even a stick as a weapon! We gave uproarious welcome to the couple when they returned. They had found the road, but had nearly lost us!

We decided never to cease community singing again when Abraham was on furlough, although we were adjured it was inadvisable to raise the roof with our vocal prowess in strictly Arab areas. Oddly, the bus became a dormitory for half a dozen boys that night; Kfar Gileadi could only offer beds to the girls. The rest of us bivouacked on straw-stacks in the mountain farmyard, guarded by dogs which seemed half jackal, and with no evil effects from the heavy mountain dew which saturated our blankets and our hair.[1] We woke gloriously refreshed. And our arrival, together with the moon the previous night, to be welcomed by the whole of this

[1] We were on a flank of Mount Hermon, famous for its dew, as mentioned in Psalm cxxxiii., 3.

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outpost settlement, was exceedingly refreshing too. It was an event for all of us—and relief from some anxiety owing to our lateness.

Real anxiety came the day we had to push. That was on the Plain of Sharon. We had to make our own tracks and we sank into the sand as if it was soft mud. That was fun, especially for the others, when the vehicle started suddenly in response to our exertions, and I was flung just clear of a cactus-hedge, which the Arabs grow for its fruit—a kind of prickly pear. It took another complexion at night. We were misdirected on leaving Hedera as darkness descended. We got entangled in the one real forest in Palestine. It was weird. Round and round we spun; we asked whether the trees were mulberry bushes. We dodged them, we ducked under branches, ripped off one or two, scratched the precious bus, marked a little bridge as a rallying point after we hit it the third time, struck an extraordinary number of railway lines—the map had not half so many—thrice crossing them on the level, and once darting back when we found we had to go under it into something mysterious. How the driver managed to pick his way through that jungle of trees and ditch-fissured sand was a marvel. This appeared to be a part of the country where it is essential that the Jews should sow grasses, as they have done elsewhere, to check the encroachment of the dunes. There was no light beyond that cast by the head-lamps, no sign-posts, not a dwelling or vestige of life, save a rabbit scurrying across the beam of our headlight, or a creature which our helpless guide—not Freedman—

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from his retreat at the back of the car said was a jackal.

In the midst of this whizzing and swerving came a cry in three languages, 'Stop!' One of the girls had fainted! The doctor sitting next to me clambered over the seats. A teaspoonful of water was left in one of the bottles. The moment we stopped and switched on the interior lights we were invaded by a million mosquitoes, gnats, hornets—goodness knows what they were. The girl came round. We started again, twisting, backing, bumping, jolting—all of us dolefully silent now. Beads of perspiration were coursing down the driver's face. His eyes were bulging, his face stern. I could see by the shaking of his arms that he was near complete exhaustion. Suddenly he stopped. We were back at the spot on the edge of the forest where he had started, whence we had been misdirected. Over an hour had been spent. We were forty miles from our destination, and famished. It was pitch dark.

'Now I go my own way,' quoth the driver, exultant. 'The moon will rise soon.'

But our mishaps were not at an end. We reached Kerkur. According to the map we were further from Tel Aviv than before. The moon was not yet up. Our plight caused some consternation. An excited woman warned us not to proceed because we would have to pass through two Arab villages. We rejected multifarious advice, decided to push on. We were nearly misdirected again on to the Haifa road. We were saved by a youth who went some way with us on the splashboard. We tra-

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versed the first Arab village without the slightest notice being taken of us. In the second the bus stopped! Petrol was exhausted.

'I think I have a spare tin on the roof,' said the driver, quietly. He had! He filled up, we resumed. Whether everybody was asleep in the village I don't know. We were not molested; nobody troubled about us.

The driver let the bus rip. The moon was now our torch. Worn-out as we all were, those of us who were not asleep—and I kept a careful eye on the sorely-tried driver—we enjoyed that moonlight race. Donkeys shied out of the way. Caravan drivers stared at us in wonderment as we flashed by. The camel may still be the ship of the desert, and the donkey the canoe, a craft difficult at times to navigate, but it was the motor bus—ours!—that beat all Palestinian records that night. Road, or no road, we moved.

Next day various exaggerations of our adventure were in circulation. We heard the remark, again by a woman, 'Thank God, it ended as it did. But you should not have gone through those villages.' We could not muster any sense of danger, nor agree that we had been reckless, but we were only visitors, elated pilgrims who were finishing a wonderful tour which was an unbroken joy. It is not for me to be critical and say the people are unduly nervous. The affair gave us some idea of the atmosphere of mistrust that has been allowed to grow up.

Came the day when we said good-bye to Abraham and the Hebrew bus. We parted with deepest regret. It had

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been almost our home for nearly a fortnight, our shelter from scorching sun, our refuge from prying eyes, our resting-place and comfort, even a lecture hall! This, at least, was preferable to standing in the sunniest and hottest place in a plantation to listen to much that was interesting information, but to much, also, that was propaganda. Socialists are relentlessly thorough, combining hospitality and 'education' with pleasant skill. A deputation of youths waited upon us immediately on our arrival in Jerusalem with an invitation to join them on a moonlight singing stroll round the walls. The tramp soon ended, the singing gave place to speeches.

The bus welded us together, an adventitious party, into the jolliest group imaginable. For the last time we lifted down our knapsacks from the top, realizing that our remarkable trip through Erets Israel was ending. It was curious that on our final day we should see the bus in Tel Aviv setting off on its normal daily avocation. Strange that it was only on its regular route that it did not carry us. That gave it uniqueness.

Abraham, the driver, leaned out through the open window by his seat on the left. He, too, was sorry it was all over.

'*Le-bitraot*,' he called, cheerily, giving us the Hebrew 'to see you again.'

'*Le-bitraot*,' we echoed heartily.

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CHAPTER XIV

The Spell Retrospective

BEGINNING with the prospect of unpleasant delay, the return journey happily proved uneventful. Scarcely had we left Jaffa than we heard, to our dismay, that an engine of the *Angkor* had broken down, and that we should be days late at Marseilles. An interview with the purser confirmed the report. We did not call at Port Said, we were a dozen hours behind schedule at Alexandria. An angry Englishman told me he was transferring to the P. & O. liner from India, the *Rajputana*, due at Port Said next day, and advised me to do the same. Easily said. I raced round Alexandria only to learn that my financial standing was not equal to the demands of agents. My budget would not balance. But Alexandria did not impress me as a business place. Goods were dumped from ship to quay and handled with a casualness that ruptured many packages; the air-mail notice board at the G.P.O. bore the previous month's date, and a letter I sent by this medium got to London only an hour before I did—so that even aeroplane travel would not have helped me; and our passports were stamped to enable us to go ashore a month later! We overcame that stupid little difficulty by rushing the sentry at the gate on the quay-side. We were all impatient—I most of all; the political crisis in London

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demanded my presence at my post in the Press Gallery of the House of Commons on the re-opening of Parliament on September 8th. It was now the 5th! Alexandria, by its sublime indifference to exactness, however, gave me some happiness. A newspaper I got there, printed in English, stated that the opening of Parliament was postponed to the 15th inst. My exertions ceased. I resigned myself to a lazy Mediterranean trip.

Rumours of a stay for repairs proved false; unexpected hustle enabled us to leave Alexandria at the appointed time. With a shrug of the shoulders, the gestural equivalent of the comforting Jewish proverb, 'This also for the best,' we accepted the inscrutable decree of fate. A small party had called at the synagogue at Alexandria and came away thankful, with gifts of prayer-books to enable us appropriately to celebrate the solemn New Year festival which we now fully anticipated we should spend on board. Myers and Cohen quickly arranged a syllabus of discussion on our trip to occupy the days. The purser was polite, but fearfully frank: we were likely to be at sea over a week instead of the customary four and a-half days. The first day's log showed that we were at least one hundred miles short of our twenty-four hours' quota. Spirits sunk below zero. Suddenly, there was a different note in the throb of the engines. Swift flew the report—the machinery had been repaired. A notice was posted that we would arrive at Marseilles on the appointed day!

And we did—not in the morning, but at 5 P.M., nearly a day ahead of the *Rajputana* with Gandhi.

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Still, the voyage lacked the romance of the outward course. The two boys who had been practising the traditional chants of the New Year service, intending to act as amateur Cantors, put away the prayer book. I think we all suddenly were overwhelmed with a sense that we were tired out. And homesick! No wonder. Our exertions had been truly colossal. The stimulant sensation of the Holy Land had gone. It was behind us: we were committed to the task of comparing impressions, tabulating memories, and, by the agenda of the daily conferences, to put them into words. The last-named duty, I was not surprised to note, proved the reverse of easy. I was immensely intrigued by the endeavours revealed daily in the short papers read as the basis for the discussions. I watched the writers, sitting in odd corners, cogitating deeply, pondering, with intense seriousness, all anxious—as their efforts subsequently indicated—to subjugate predilection to observation. They afforded fascinating glimpses into the minds of my comrades. Most of the little essays were delightfully candid. Each had accepted the subject apportioned and had tried the utmost to do it justice. Only one person failed—or funked the task—the assimilationist. It was no small regret to me. A truthful confession by him would have been the most enlightening of all. Only one or two betrayed evidences of a desire, or incapacity, to avoid the issue they were asked to face without reserve—that of saying, with perfect verity, whether Palestine had come up to their expectations, or had disappointed them. It was, perhaps, asking too much in the circumstances. The glamour still

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enshrouded us: I could think of nothing else, and with all my experience as a journalist, trained to swift committal to paper of all manner of impressions, including many visits abroad, I found myself dawdling with pencil and notebook in my hands. I, too, was eager to be loyal to ideas implanted by tradition, strengthened by study, and faithful also to the evidence of my own senses, now to be marshalled by critical faculties into logical channels.

Never, I think, had I found myself so keenly solicitous to delve into the depths of my own mind and to rake out whatever elusiveness I might detect there. I was told I was the most persistent questioner at our little debates. I certainly endeavoured to elucidate everything in the minds of the others. And if some could not quite put into speech what perchance puzzled or agitated them, it was only natural. We were all under an unparalleled spell, and most of the party untutored in the direction of self-research at bidding. These daily debates were illuminating—and they killed time. We were all desperately anxious to get home: we were all, secretly, if not avowedly, yearning for a change in weather—for a refreshing English shower to vary what, not captiously, may be termed the perfervid neighbourliness of the blazing sun. For nearly five weeks it had been our constant companion. It was wonderful—but it was getting too much. We welcomed its modification after we passed through the Straits of Messina. In that beautiful transit I got a shock. The newspaper published aboard told me that Parliament would re-open after all on Tuesday, the

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8th. And this was about the actual moment when the reshuffled assembly was resuming. That night we watched Stromboli popping fireworks into the sky. My emotions could have given a fiercer display.

We did not lack pleasant company. Some returning French officers from Syria, their wives and children, were charming. There was also pretty much the mixture as before. But we were preoccupied, impatient, lazy; and we did not dance so much. A volatile acrobatic young Frenchman did most of the entertaining. We made Marseilles on the Thursday afternoon; we travelled through the night to Paris; and, next morning, in the dash across the city to catch the boat train for England, we got separated without leave-takings. As informally as we had been united, we faded apart. My little section got to London just as the Jewish New Year was ushered in.

With hasty good wishes we broke up, our packs on our backs and the Palestinian sunburn that drew attention to us, the outward symbols of a new and deeper bond of the Brotherhood of Israel.

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Earth of Palestine

Earth of Palestine, psalms in grains of sand,
Back in my shoes unknowingly I brought—
I who against the superstition fought,
Beloved graves to link with Promised Land.
I walk elated through the city crowd,
The pavements sing Hosannas to my tread,
Proclaiming for the living, not the dead,
Was sacred soil in Holy Write avowed.

I know no miracle to-day will hap
From pray'r or tears; by toil that sentience
That draws from sweat of brow and arms the sap
To strengthen hope, will come our Providence:
In faith restored by earth of Palestine,
Man's noblest gifts, now take, O Lord, for Thine.

M. I. L.

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