

# History of Zionist Movement

**FULFILLMENT: The Epic Story of Zionism.** By Rufus Lears. Cleveland: World Publishing Co. 426 pp. \$5.

By SALO W. BARON

**T**HERE has long been a need for a comprehensive history of the Zionist movement in English, and this volume is apt to fill it. Mr. Lears, a veteran of Jewish journalism and communal affairs, presents here a dramatic picture of the evolution of Zionism since the first Basle Congress of 1897. He knows, of course, that only a few highlights could be covered in a single volume. "With the compass allotted for this work," he expostulates, "only the more significant events could be included, and the author can only crave forgiveness from the actors—living and dead—whose names have been omitted or whose roles have perhaps been understated. With reference to many of the controversies to which Zionism gave rise, the author will no doubt be found to be a partisan, but not, he trusts, a blind partisan."

Mr. Lears has indeed attempted to be fair to all parties within Zionism, although he shows little patience with anti-Zionists and even such Zionist deviationists as Israel Zangwill's "Territorialists." The latter split off the main movement in 1905 over the British Government's offer of the African colony of Uganda to the Zionist Organization, which marked the first public recognition of Zionism's international status. The majority, nevertheless, rejected the offer because it considered Palestine alone as suitable for large-scale Jewish colonization. Mr. Lears dismisses the ensuing splinter organization (the JTO) and its otherwise influential leader in two brief paragraphs, as he also disposes of Simon Dubnow's "autonomism" in a few lines. While admittedly these forces played a minor role within the Zionist Organization, they greatly influenced, and were mutually influenced, by the Zionist movement.

Perhaps it is ungracious to expect an avowed work of popularization to be also a contribution to knowledge. Good works of that kind, however, usually are. For example, Adolf Boehm's "Die Zionistische Bewegung"

(Berlin, 1935-1937), although written by an industrialist rather than an historian, offered a significant survey of the movement up to 1925. In many respects it has not been superseded by the subsequent literature, including the volume under review. The well-informed reader will find in Mr. Lears's treatment little new material, even with respect to the American scene which has hitherto been greatly neglected by Zionist scholarship. The uninformed but serious student, too, will note the absence of penetrating explanations of the causes underlying major events and of the motivating forces behind personalities. Neither will he find the bibliographical aids entirely satisfactory. The so-called "classics" of Zionism are listed only to the death of Herzl half a century ago. Among the "official" documents one misses, for example, the very important report of the Peel Commission in 1937, which included the first official suggestion for the partition of Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish state.

On the other hand, Mr. Lears writes with verve and lucidity. His volume should effectively supply to a host of "general readers" a glimpse of that vast and complex movement which has been a stormy petrel of controversy for two generations. Many will also be stirred by the book's emotional appeal as exemplified by the author's concluding credo, "For in a wider and truer sense Zionism is the sum total of the thoughts, emotions, and deeds to which the Jewish people the world over have been stirred by the land called Holy, the cradle and center of their national and spiritual life. And in that sense it may be safely affirmed that, whatever its forms and instruments, Zionism will not die but live."

## Passover Book Notes

**THE WISDOM OF THE TALMUD.** By Ben Zion Bokser. Philosophical Library. \$3.75. Next to the Old Testament, the Talmud has been the work of literature which has influenced most greatly Jewish religious, traditional, and cultural life. It is an enormous work (the Palestinian Talmud contains thirty-nine tractates and the Babylonian Talmud thirty-six and one-half tractates) and embodies ten centuries of Jewish thinking. As a necessary supplement to the Bible it is, in the words of Rabbi Bokser, a work of "authoritative exposition and implementation." Because of the

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## Passover Reading

**D**R. Ludwig Lewinsohn, leading novelist, critic, and Jewish scholar, now professor at Brandeis University, recommends the following books of Jewish interest for holy day reading.

**JUDAISM AND MODERN MAN.** By Will Herberg. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young. \$4.

**TWO TYPES OF FAITH.** By Martin Buber. New York: Macmillan Co. \$2.50.

**MAN IS NOT ALONE.** By Abram J. Heschel. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young. \$3.75.

**THE SABBATH.** By Abram J. Heschel. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young. \$2.50.

**THE WISDOM OF THE TALMUD.** By Ben Zion Bokser. New York: Philosophical Library. \$3.75.

**PSYCHOANALYSIS AND RELIGION.** By Erich Fromm. New Haven: Yale University Press. \$2.75.

**THE LORE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.** By Joseph Green. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. \$4.50.

**A BELIEVING JEW.** By Milton Steinberg. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. \$3.50.

**FALASHA ANTHOLOGY.** By Wolf Leslau. New Haven: Yale University Press. \$4.

**THE JEWS IN THE SOVIET UNION.** By Solomon M. Schwarz. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press. \$5.

**ETERNAL STRANGER.** By Lawrence Resner. New York: Doubleday & Co. \$3.

**UNDERGROUND: THE STORY OF A PEOPLE.** By Joseph Pennoque. New York: Philosophical Library. \$4.

**FULFILLMENT: THE EPIC STORY OF ZIONISM.** By Rufus Lears. Cleveland: World Publishing Co. \$5.

**WATCH FOR THE MORNING.** By Thomas Sugrue. New York: Harper & Bros. \$3.50.

**MY MISSION TO ISRAEL.** By James G. MacDonald. New York: Simon & Schuster. \$3.50.

**THE REVOLT. STORY OF THE IRGUN.** By Menachem Begin. New York: Henry Schuman. \$4.

**ISRAEL: THE BEGINNING AND TOMORROW.** By Hal Leharman. New York: William Sloane Assoc. \$3.75.

**AMERICAN JEWRY AND THE CIVIL WAR.** By Bertram W. Korn. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America.

**THIS LAND, THESE PEOPLE.** Edited by Nathan Ausubel. New York: Doubleday & Co. \$5.

**THE SECOND SCROLL.** By Abram M. Klein. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.75.

**POOR COUSIN EVELYN.** By James Yaffe. Boston: Little Brown & Co. \$3.

**QUEER SPIRIT.** By Zelda Popkin. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. \$3.50.

**THE CHAIN AND THE LINK.** By David Miller. Cleveland: World Publishing Co. \$3.50.

**THE ISLAND IN TIME.** By Ernst Pawel. New York: Doubleday & Co. \$3.

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# Broadway Postscript

CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD'S SNAPSHOTS

**W**HEN "I Am a Camera" opened last November almost everyone admitted it to be fascinating adult entertainment. However, there were those who claimed that the play had practically no plot and showed insufficient awareness of the Nazi menace that raged in 1930 Berlin, the period in which the play was set. Now that it has survived these charges and appears on its way to a run many a perfectly made play would envy, Christopher Isherwood, author of the "Berlin Stories" from which John Van Druten fashioned the stage piece, has this comment.

"I think the reason some people say we have no plot," says the forty-seven-year-old novelist, "is that they are used to a false convention in the theatre which assumes that characters must act out of conscious will. While I don't want to compare Johnny's play with Chekhov [Mr. Van Druten has said he would rather have written "The Three Sisters" than any play he ever wrote], I might point out he was very successful in tying things up without subscribing to a theory of conscious will."

Mr. Isherwood, whose short animated figure and shaggy head give him the look of an eternal schoolboy, is a novelist who, like Chris in the play, delights in observing the unconscious workings of people as they manifest themselves in minor details. "Actually," he notes, "I think the play has two very definite plots. First, there is the young writer with a neutral unjudging attitude about the facts of his

environment. Into his secluded life explodes Sally Bowles, who brings with her a number of cross-involvements that force the writer to evolve as a person. In the book other characters besides Sally helped in this, but in the play we focus on her.

"The second plot is Sally's. She is unhappy in her Bohemian existence because she's searching for something more important. In the play she is tempted to return to the English country life as the line of least resistance, but because of the integrity she develops she is finally able to reject this and go on to fulfill her greater potentialities."

As for the charge of indifference to the Nazi situation, Mr. Isherwood admits that the book went into it much more than the play does. However, he thinks the play goes into it enough. He explains: "We decided the play should be about Sally and not about the rise of Nazism. Johnny has done a wonderful job indicating the surrounding jungle of everything I wrote about Berlin without ever letting it engulf the plot. The bandage on the Jewish girl's cheek, the well-meaning but unwary landlady who symbolizes the whole German public, and the false gaiety of the tinselly German jazz of the period—which, incidentally, was the idea of Walter Starcke, the co-producer; he had to bully the orchestra to play it as if they were overworked and underpaid—all these show the large thing in small terms."

Two indications of the novelist's own attitude about that period of his life are his translation of one of these songs, "Just a Gigolo," which he recites with glee and delicious nostalgia, and the old German dolphin-clock described in "Berlin Stories," which he carries with him. His former landlady—to whom he was always Herr Issyvoo—gave it to him on his recent visit to Berlin. Although blown across the room during a bombing it has proved more durable than Hitler.

"I think I am much odder than Chris in the play," he says, crossing his knees and looking very much like the Mad Hatter. "But Johnny didn't try to make Chris resemble me too closely. He has my hypochondria, which I have since gotten over a bit, but really he's just there to be absorbed in the phenomenon of Sally as if he were a doctor looking at a patient with a rare disease. I think William Prince, who acts the role, gets that across beauti-



—Carl Van Vechten.

Herr Issyvoo—"delicious nostalgia."

fully. You know right off the bat there isn't going to be any boy-girl romance. I guess it's difficult for some audiences to take, because Mr. Prince and Julie Harris are such attractive young people and we have a sort of Hollywood convention that the handsome must always fall in love with the lovely."

While Chris in Van Druten's play may not be exactly like the life model, Sally is. "The way Julie plays, the part is more essentially Sally than she was herself. Julie has what Johnny calls 'an extraordinary luminosity of innocence' that keeps the character from becoming seamy, and she has fewer irrelevancies than the real Sally or the Sally I wrote. Seeing her in the play is as if the book were better written," confesses the novelist.

Mr. Isherwood refuses point blank to discuss the girl whom Sally was modeled after. He feels she has maintained her integrity, for while she is now an English housewife, she has nevertheless managed to have quite a career of her own. "We both did a lot of believing in each other in those days and I think the real Sally was born out my belief in her even more than I thought she would be."

"I Am a Camera" would probably have never been written if it hadn't been for Mr. Van Druten's pleasant habit of doing adaptations when he finds himself temporarily out of original ideas. "Almost everything in the play is his. I inserted an autobiographical line or two—'Imagine what it will be like to wake up without coughing, or feeling even the least little bit sick' is mine—but usually when I would suggest something he'd take it and change it to something much better before I had time to think about it."

Mr. Isherwood cites some of the changes made by Van Druten, who

## Just a Gigolo\*

(Christopher Isherwood's Version)

**H**ANDSOME gigolo. Tragic gigolo  
Think no more, no use repining.  
How that Hussar bold, rode in days  
of old  
Down the streets with gold braid  
shining.  
Uniform must fade, sweethearts  
say goodbye  
Bubble world broke and betrayed you.  
Though your heart also breaks  
Laugh don't show them how it  
aches  
And dance for they have paid you.

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