

that rang through the forest like a pledge of resurrection for the Church.

At the end of the hymn there was not a dry eye in the crowd, not a shred of haughty bearing, not a suggestion of arrogance in that group of SS men who had once been the most disciplined and savage soldiers on the Continent, whose insignia was the emblem of irreligion and pride. But it was the feast of Pentecost, 1945.

POST - WAR JEWRY

ONE thing is certain: the total population of the Jewish people has been considerably reduced. For the last twenty years it has been customary to reckon this roughly at sixteen millions, now the two or three millions ruthlessly and wantonly done to death by demons, will have to be subtracted. This ghastly process cannot be regarded as a winnowing; as the avowed intention has not been to eliminate undesirable elements, but to exterminate all who could, in the widest stretch of the term, be designated Jews. *Non licet esse vos* has been the guiding principle. The arch-fiends who adopted this worse than barbaric policy have not been able to carry out their fell design to the full; but their failure is not due to any lack of malice: they have made a desperate attempt and seem to have been backed by diabolic assistance. The account of a Rabbi-survivor—one of a tiny remnant—rescued from the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp, published in *The Times*, of June 21st, 1945, is a lurid, but exact summary, of the nightmare horrors perpetrated there until the Nazis were forced to relinquish their grip on Bavaria. In this Ghetto, as he styles it—compared with which the worst mediaeval ghetto was an earthly paradise—it was normal that there should be at least a hundred burials, or burnings, a day, most of these the result of what was morally murder. During his three years as an inmate of this inferno, he estimates that fifty-five thousand perished. Such a violation of the primary instincts of human decency has already suffered a nemesis which, though severe, is mild compared with the crimes that provoked it. But the mills of God have only commenced their work of retribution.

In stressing this one set of victims of homicidal maniacs we are not for a moment claiming—nor will they—that Jews are the only sufferers. God, who has chosen individuals to testify to their faith in the shedding of their blood, has also willed to have nations dedicated to martyrdom: Poland, Ireland, Armenia and Assyria, are notable examples. Nor would any critical student of history

dare to assert that the martyr-nations have been wholly blameless; though, as a rule, the provocation given by them compared with the guilt of the aggressors, has been a negligible quantity. Indeed, in the days of Roman anti-Christian persecution, there were Christian writers who looked on these pagan outbreaks as partly a punishment for some relaxation of morals in the persecuted community. This admission, which may be resented by some, has, at any rate, the advantage of throwing a ray of light on the problem of evil.

Again, those slain in a massacre are not all martyrs. Many of them, poor wretches, will have met their end like sheep in the shambles. Such, to quote Israel Zangwill, are at best, "passive martyrs". But, as amongst Jews the ideas of race and religion are almost inextricably interwoven, we may hope that a considerable proportion of those that have been slaughtered have, at the last, implicitly or explicitly, rallied to the God of Israel. At any rate this orgy of wickedness, with its untold aftermath of misery, would not have been permitted unless some good fruits were to follow. The analogies of nature, always so recuperative, suggests that the last ten years of fiery persecution will exercise a purifying and stimulating influence. Pessimistic writers depict the survivors from this deluge of fire and water as demoralised beyond all hope of recovery; but those who know the resiliency of human nature, especially in Jews, will be slow to believe that all gleams of faith, hope and love, have been extinguished and that there is no rainbow in the sky. All those who are working for the redemption of Israel, as for the restoration of Germany, must do their utmost to secure that the Swastika, an odious symbol for a heartless creed, shall so be buried that it may never rise again. Would that its place might be taken by the Cross.

There is a text—"The citizens have been multiplied, but not the joy of the city", that has been applied to religious orders in which quality has declined with numerical increase. Even if, as seems likely, the copyist has, through carelessness, given the second half of the sentence its negative form, the sentiment may be sound in either version. However that may be, may we not pray with St. Paul (*Romans* xi, 12) that the "diminutions of Israel"—only temporary—may lead to greater happiness.

It is reported from several centres, notably Paris—Notre Dame de Sion—that the number of Jews seeking baptism has been, for the last five years, extraordinarily large. Some may have done so from mixed motives, but the majority are undoubtedly sincere. This denotes a move towards religion. The fact that so many

Catholics, at great risk to themselves, befriended the persecuted Jews, has necessarily lessened the gulf between the two. The Chief Rabbi, Dr. Hertz, accuses many Christian foster-parents of the crime of "spiritual kidnapping". This charge calls for impartial investigation which should also be sympathetic to both sides. Another Chief Rabbi, Dr. Zolli of Rome, has recently been in the limelight. Perhaps, in the account he gave to the Press of his conversion, he exposed himself to misinterpretation. At any rate some critics, indignant at his becoming a Catholic, made his expression of gratitude to the Pope an excuse for insinuating insincerity. They also, somewhat spitefully, recalled the facts that he had started life in Gallicia and that his name, originally Zoller, had only blossomed into Zolli under the influence of Italian skies. The former is surely no offence and the latter, judged in the light of ordinary Jewish standards, should not be too harshly censured. Such tirading against "apostates", on flimsy grounds, is unworthy of high-class journalism. And surely it might also be argued that the right to choose or change one's religion is an important element in genuine democracy. No exercise of freedom should be unduly curtailed.

On our side, too, there is room for improvement: we might well discourage the view that Jews cease to be Jews on becoming Christians. Indeed we might even encourage our recruits to maintain, as far as that may be without prejudice to principle, their connection, if they have had any, with their co-racials. For is it not desirable that they should retain a reasonable savour of Jewishness? To be called a "typical Englishman" would scarcely be received by the best type of Jew as a compliment. In a review of a memoir of the late Dr. Eder, in the T.L.S., he is accorded this doubtful distinction. He was a leading Zionist and a well-known psycho-analyst. In both these capacities he took a kindly interest in Hans Herzl, the son of the famous Theodore.

Anyone who surveys the tragic scene of the last ten years in Jewish history, though tempted to despair, will soon find some solid grounds for a more hopeful outlook. The devastating character of their misfortunes cannot fail to make a deep impression on all concerned. The memory of this revolting period must surely stir the conscience of the world and check any further outbreaks of such fanaticism. It has not been at the hands of Christians, properly so called, that Jews have suffered these barbarities and the descendants of great grandfathers, who had become Christians, shared in the indignities. Catholics, lay-folk, priests and religious, have experienced similar ill-treatment, and in spite of

this have extended sympathy and support to their Jewish brethren. Such experience will foster mutual good-will.

Without wishing to justify all the methods of the Inquisition, we will, most of us, agree that Torquemada was an angel compared to Hitler, Streicher and Co. The inquisitors dealt mainly with those who, having become, at least nominally, Christians, reverted secretly to Judaism and so put themselves within the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical court. They sincerely hoped that the ceremony that was styled an "Auto de Fé"—an act of faith—would be a genuine recantation on the part of the so-called "heretic". Their severity too was the result, not of antiracial prejudice, but of religious fervour. It is some extenuation also that they conducted their proceedings according to the recognised standards of the period. Our own "Star Chamber" was inquisitorial. Perhaps this contrast between the two systems may help the descendants of the Maranos to soften their condemnation of the Spanish tribunal. That would be a substantial gain to the cause of good-will.

To pass to a pleasanter subject: no one can deny that, quite apart from the great legacy of Israel, we owe much in the domain of science and philanthropy to our Jewish brethren. In the case of several prevalent diseases we are forced, if we desire to be cured, to have recourse to remedies for which we are indebted to Jewish research. The invasion of Jewish refugees—we have had, all told, from Germany and Austria, about seventy-three thousand—has already proved a blessing; as they have introduced improved methods of industry. They may also be able to open to us fresh markets for our wares. Indeed their services as path-finders ("Radanites": see *Our Friends the Jews*, p. 75) may be considerable. If both sides try to learn some of the chief lessons of the War, neither will have reason to regret this addition of some thirty thousands to our population.

An anecdote was told recently in the *Tablet*—by the Editor's "Talking at Random"—of a descendent of a Jew banished from Toledo, in 1492, to whom the key of the family home in that city had come from father to son for all those generations, who returning from Germany let himself into the old house. This story is at least symbolically true: the Jew is wondrously retentive and extraordinarily resilient. Our earnest prayer must be that mindful of all that is best in the annals of his people and forgetful of all that is best forgotten, he may enter into a far brighter heritage—for his good and for ours.

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