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Herman Wald: a personal tribute

By Bernard Sachs

MANY an eye moistened with the news that Herman Wald had died in Salisbury, where he was busy on an assignment.

There was that something about Herman which it is hard to define. For he had a remarkable benign influence on people. Somehow, in his presence you felt more humane. Not a note of asperity issued from him during all the years I have known him.

Was it charisma? Not quite. For charisma is usually linked with political leadership—that mystic quality which brings out the most in followers. And it can also bring out the worst—as it did in the case of Hitler.

So it definitely doesn't fit Herman—who was as incapable of doing anything nasty, as Hitler was of doing anything good.

PUT simply, then, I would say that Herman irradiated humanity. And he did so without effort or contrivance. It was as natural to him as breathing. Never for one moment did he lose this divine gift. Adversity and hardship were his constant companions over many years. Others would have wilted, or expressed resentment, at an unkind fate. Not Herman. He remained his old equable, genial self.

When I saw him at the President Hotel, where he held his last exhibition, he said to me that the artists are the stepchildren of the commercial world. They are!



The late Herman Wald

FOR the last five years or so, I spent one Seder and one Rosh Hashanah night with the Wald family. The ritual itself would not have been a sufficient inducement. But when Herman conducted the ceremonial it became an occasion. He imparted that extra something to the evening. I often wondered what it was.

It was more than geniality and warmth. Somehow you felt as you listened to his reading of the Haggadah—not a word was omitted—that it was the fountain and source of his artistic inspiration. The Jew, in moments of joy and sorrow, was his metier—and he gave expression to it in works of an enshrining imperishable value.

For one Jew, who has wandered far from the religious fold, Pesach and Rosh Hashanah will never be the same again.

Mirjam Mandel makes good

Mirjam Mandel, daughter of Cantor Shlomo Mandel, is from all accounts carving out a splendid musical career for herself in Israel, where she now lives.

I have just come across a review of a concert she gave in Tel Aviv. Only an artist of considerable merit could have won such high praise from the JERUSALEM POST.

This is what he wrote: "One is not treated very often to such perfect singing as presented at this concert by Lella Shani and Mirjam Mandel. Miss Mandel's beautiful, expertly-trained voice is a very important addition to the country's vocal potential."

At Cantor Mandel's flat I listened to the tape-recording of a song recital Mirjam gave over the Israel radio, and I duly subscribe to the evaluation of the Post's musical critic. She has a mezzo-of-rare beauty, and with it a musical



Mirjam Mandel—up and coming.

sense of a very mature artiste. Mirjam will be visiting South Africa shortly. A recital by her, which is being contemplated, would provide music lovers here with a rare treat.