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ARAB COMPENSATION

"Haqqi man badi—haqqi tou sahlest"—You pay me now; I shall pay you in due course. This Persian saying describes the type of compensation deal the Arabs are about to get from Israel.

Justice Minister Shapiro seems determined to pass the law of compensation to the Arabs that will enable the Israeli Government to stuff 300 million dollars in the pockets of East Jerusalem Arabs while disregarding completely the overriding claims of Jews from Arab countries. The idea is, perhaps, to soften Arab hearts towards the re-unification of Jerusalem. Appeasement never worked before; it will not work now.

Many people were under the impression that with the annexation of East Jerusalem, its population automatically became Israeli citizens. But in fact only **two persons** have opted for Israeli nationality—the remainder do not wish or are afraid to renounce their Jordanian citizenship, do not wish to hold Israeli bonds and consider the terms of compensation not good enough. So even if the Bill is passed, all indications are that it will remain a dead letter; but, as the *Jerusalem Post* points out, what the Israel Government intends as a good gesture towards the Arabs will be presented by Arab propagandists as an attempted robbery of Arab assets. No good can come out of this legislation. It is also a violation of the rights of one million Jews from Arab countries. It makes nonsense of the fund-raising campaigns for Israel. It is a rare act of folly. Knesset members should have the farsight, honesty and courage to throw out this Bill and direct the government to deal with compensation on an overall basis ●

ISRAEL IS OUR BUSINESS

Some Israelis are touchy about non-Israeli Jews taking an active interest in Israeli politics and policy and they say that with the establishment of the State of Israel the Galuth has come to an end and Jews outside live in voluntary "tefutzoth" or dispersions. But in fact two conditions have to be fulfilled in Israel before we can say that the Galuth has come to an end:

Firstly, that Israel shall live in security, within secure borders. (Jeremiah 23 : 6)

Secondly, that Israel becomes self-supporting.

Until then, Israel is the concern of the diaspora which must be responsible to defend it, support it, and also to populate it.

Until then, Israel is everybody's business ●

NAPOLEON WAS RIGHT

One hundred and seventy years ago, Great Britain refused to join the Common Market that Napoleon established and fought him tooth and nail, until he was defeated and exiled. In January this year Britain, after building and losing her empire, finally joins Europe's Common Market. Trafalgar and Waterloo were in vain. Napoleon was right.

The present terms are not better than those offered by Napoleon. In addition, we would have been spared two world wars, the rise of Communism in Russia and China, the advent of Hitler and the Holocaust which will remain for ever a black stain on Europe's history ●

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BESIMANTOV

Heartiest congratulations and best wishes to:

STANLEY	and	DIANA
FRANK	and	LINDA
EZRA	and	AMANDA
SAMI	and	MONICA
SAMMY	and	LILY

on the occasion of their wedding or engagement.

RECENT IMPRESSIONS OF ISRAEL

by P. S. GOURGEY, M.B.E.



The writer being received by Israel President Zalman Shazar in Jerusalem.

There is perhaps no better way of recharging one's spiritual batteries in the Jewish sense, and possibly other ways too, than by a visit to Israel. Having had the privilege of being in a position to visit Israel at an average of once every two years since 1949, my recent trip in November was probably among the most fascinating.

The occasion was as a member of the Board of Deputies delegation led by its President, Ald. M. Fidler, M.P., and Honorary Officers representing and associating Anglo-Jewry with the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Jewish State and also making a first-hand study of the prevailing conditions. Perhaps of most interest to readers of this journal would be a commentary on the position of Sephardi-Oriental and, particularly, Iraqi, Jews in the country. Before dealing with this a few words about the general nature of our trip.

As representatives of the Anglo-Jewish community—the Board being its premier organisation, established in 1760—we had the opportunity of meeting, and talking to, at length, President Shazar, Premier Golda Meir, Deputy-Premier Yigal Allon, Foreign Minister Abba Eban, Jewish Agency Chairman Louis Pincus, Knesset Speaker Israel Yeschayahu, Transport Minister Shimon Peres, new Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren, Histadruth Secretary-General Itzhak Aharon, and many others including those working with the underprivileged, including the Black Panthers! It was a real study in contrasts. We toured the Golan Heights, and narrowly missed the Syrian shelling, and went to the West Bank, especially the Allenby Bridge and spoke to the Arabs crossing it in pursuance of Defence Minister Dayan's "open bridges" policy. We met Christian leaders and the Christian Arab Mayor of Beit Jallah, and later I met briefly Sheikh Mohamed Ali Jaabari, Mayor of Hebron. We had the moving experience of meeting Soviet immigrants arriving at Lod Airport, talked to veteran British settlers and the efficient Israel Office

of the British Zionist Federation as well as the magnificent Weizmann Institute of Science, where I had two unforgettable interviews with President Weizmann in 1949. We attended the Israel-Commonwealth Association Dinner addressed by the British Liberal leader, Mr. Jeremy Thorpe, and presided over by prominent Tel-Aviv lawyer, Max Seligman, formerly of Wales, who made an eloquent plea for the re-entry of Israel into the Commonwealth with the advantages accompanying Britain's membership of the Common Market of Nine. A pleasant experience was attending a service at Hanucah—the "Sabra" festival and my first in Israel—with the Army "somewhere in Israel"!

Regarding the problems of Jews in and from Arab countries, I had extensive discussions with Ministers (including Mr. Shlomo Hillel, the first Iraqi Jewish member of the Cabinet), members of the Knesset and officials in various Government departments. Inevitably there arose the question of compensation for Jews stripped of their assets and property by various Arab governments, especially Iraq. I recalled in my talks the statement made by the late Mr. Moshe Sharett, then Foreign Minister in the Knesset on 19th March, 1951, when he declared that "... by freezing the property of tens of thousands of Jewish immigrants to Israel—stateless today but citizens of Israel the moment they arrive—the Government of Iraq has invited a reckoning between itself and the State of Israel. There already existed an account between us and the Arabs for compensation due to Arabs who left the territory of Israel and abandoned their property there as a result of the war of aggression by the Arab world against our State. The act now perpetrated by Iraq with regard to the property of Jews who neither violated Iraqi law nor in any way threatened that country's position nor undermined its security compelled us to link the two accounts. The Israel Government therefore has decided to inform the appropriate United Nations institutions—and I hereby make this public—THAT THE VALUE OF JEWISH PROPERTY FROZEN IN IRAQ WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WITH REGARD TO THE COMPENSATION WE HAVE UNDERTAKEN TO PAY ARABS WHO ABANDONED PROPERTY IN ISRAEL."

I asked about the matter of compensation for East Jerusalem Arabs whose properties were lost during and after the wars of 1948 and 1967 and it was explained that the purpose of this was to put the East Jerusalem Arabs on an equal footing with the Arab citizens of Israel, although East Jerusalem Arabs have never accepted Israeli citizenship. At any rate, it is time an accounting was made in respect of compensating Jews deprived of their property as it is now over twenty years ago that they lost their all. An interim payment could be made pending a full settlement to Jewish claimants from Arab countries who could establish the validity of

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THE BAGHDAD HANGINGS

On the morning of 27th January, 1969, Jewish children went to school as usual, but returned within half an hour weeping and crying. They informed their families that the nine Jewish prisoners had been executed, their bodies suspended in Tahrir Square, and that their schools were closed as a sign of mourning. An atmosphere of gloom reigned over the whole community.

On switching on the radio and television they heard joyful announcements calling on all the citizens of Baghdad to go to the Square for sightseeing of the suspended corpses of the 15 "spies". Later on, the television showed the horrible scene, with faces uncovered, among them nine Jews—each bearing the label "Jew!" Huge gatherings of the populace surrounded the gallows, joyfully dancing, chanting and picnicking. These 15 innocent Iraqi citizens were mercilessly executed at midnight on the electric gallows, installed near the Jewish section of the prison. The other Jewish prisoners could hear them crying loudly together:

"We are innocent,"

"We are innocent,"

"We are innocent."

Then they heard the nine Jews loudly making their last prayer to God, "Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Ehad!" and then they heard the terrifying loud sounds of the electric gallows, each sound signifying that one innocent victim was executed. The whole procedure was carried out hurriedly and without ceremony and, according to one report, even without properly making sure that they were dead.

In the early hours the corpses were transported for suspension in Tahrir Square and at the end of the day of festivity, nine corpses were handed over to the Chief Rabbinate for secret burial.

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their claims. The payment can be made from assets and moneys held by the Custodian of Arab property which can be taken into account when, if ever, a full settlement is made.

I was present at a moving ceremony at the Western Wall in Jerusalem when Prime Minister Golda Meir met the relatives of eight imprisoned Iraqi Jews in Baghdad who had undertaken a 24-hour fast in protest at this unjust treatment. Also present was Mr. Eliachar, President of the Sephardi Council.

I also met briefly during a visit to the Western Wall the newly-elected Sephardi Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef who was born in Baghdad, brought to Israel as a child and studied at the Porat Yosef Yeshiva in Jerusalem which was founded in 1905 by Joseph Abraham Shalom, a Calcutta Jew of Baghdad origin. It has developed into a splendid institution and deserves full support.

All in all it was a most interesting and useful trip!

The nine Jews were:

1. Ezra Naji Zilkha
60 years old merchant in Basrah;
2. Charles Raphael Horesh
45 years old commission agent in Baghdad;
3. Fouad Gabbay
35 years old forwarding agent in Basrah;
4. Yeheskel Gourji Namerdi
32 years old clerk in BOAC in Basrah;
5. Sabah Haim Dayan
25 years old university student in Basrah;
6. Daoud Ghali
21 years old student in Basrah;
7. Naim Khedouri Helali
21 years old student in Basrah;
8. Heskell Saleh Heskell
20 years old student in Basrah;
9. Daoud Heskell Barukh Dellal
20 years old student in Basrah.

The ages here given were those announced in the broadcast. However, the actual ages of the Jewish students were 17-19 years, but as Iraqi law prohibits the execution of persons under the age of 20, it is evident that the military court forced them to declare a higher age and to confirm this in their "confessions" in order that their execution could be carried out.

At the same time, two more Jews were hanged in Basrah. They were:

10. Yeheskel Eliahou Dellal, 48 years old merchant;
11. Yeheskel Raphael Yacoub, 42 years old banker.

Their corpses were likewise suspended, with faces uncovered, in a Basrah square, to the delight of the populace. Indeed a giant crowd milled around, dancing and singing in like fashion to those at Baghdad.

The government's plan to incriminate innocent people can be shown by the following:—

(1) Contrary to justice and to basic human rights, the court never allowed its victims to appoint lawyers to defend them, nor were lawyers permitted to take on their defence.

(2) The Jews were restricted to their residential quarters, and no Jew could have gone to the frontier as alleged.

(3) One of the prisoners, Jack Atrakchi was forced to lie on the ground and a truck was driven over him which crushed him into paste before the eyes of the other victims. Thus the authorities could obtain any "confession" they desired.

[As we recall the events of four years ago, our mind turns to the fate of 10 or more Jews who have been held incommunicado in Iraqi jails for several months. Contrary to promises, the Iraqi authorities have failed to release them. Ed.] ●

In January Dr. Shmuel Moreh of the Institute of Asian and African Studies at the Hebrew University paid a visit to our Community on a fact-finding mission and for co-ordinating efforts towards the release of ten imprisoned Jews in Baghdad ●

HOLY SHRINES IN BABYLON by Abraham Ben-Jacob

From his book in Hebrew *A Brief History of Babylonian Jewry*. The author will shortly publish a new book on the subject.

In Iraq are found some very early holy shrines, from Biblical and Talmudic days, whose location was fixed by ancient Jewish traditions, and many legends are woven around them. Until recently the Jews of Iraq used to visit these tombs and prostrate themselves over them each year during the festival of Shabuoth and at other times. Babylonian Jewry called Shabuoth "Id el-Ziarah" (the festival of the visit). These shrines are also regarded as holy by the Moslems. Riots and disputes often occurred over their ownership when Moslems attempted to take them over from the Jews. They are:

1. The shrine of Seth, son of Adam—by the ruins of Nineveh, near Mosul. In 1816 the governor of Mosul built a mosque here called "Jami el-Nabi Shith" (Mosque of the Prophet Seth). Kurds and Christians visit the place, but the Jews have no interest in it.

2. The shrine of Benjamin, son of Jacob our father—situated on a mountain top near Qasr-Shirim on the Iraqi-Persian border, on the Persian side. Local Moslems, claiming descent from the tribe of Benjamin, prostrate themselves over this shrine. They venerate Benjamin greatly and call him "Piri Benyamin" (Holy Benjamin).¹

3. The shrine of Job—found three miles south of Hillah, and is called "Nabi Ayub". The Moslems alone worship there and the Jews have no interest in it.

4. The shrine of Ezekiel—situated in the village of Kifil,² or Chifil, near Hillah in a man-dug cave. Over the stone walls of the cave is a dome. Above, around the catafalque, there is a magnificent building with high walls and a stone ceiling. The building is extremely old but quite artistic. According to tradition, it was set up by King Jehoiachin after his release by Evil Merodach. In 1170 Benjamin of Tudela visited it and found the names of Jehoiachin and Ezekiel the Prophet and all who came with them engraved on the wall. Visitors re-

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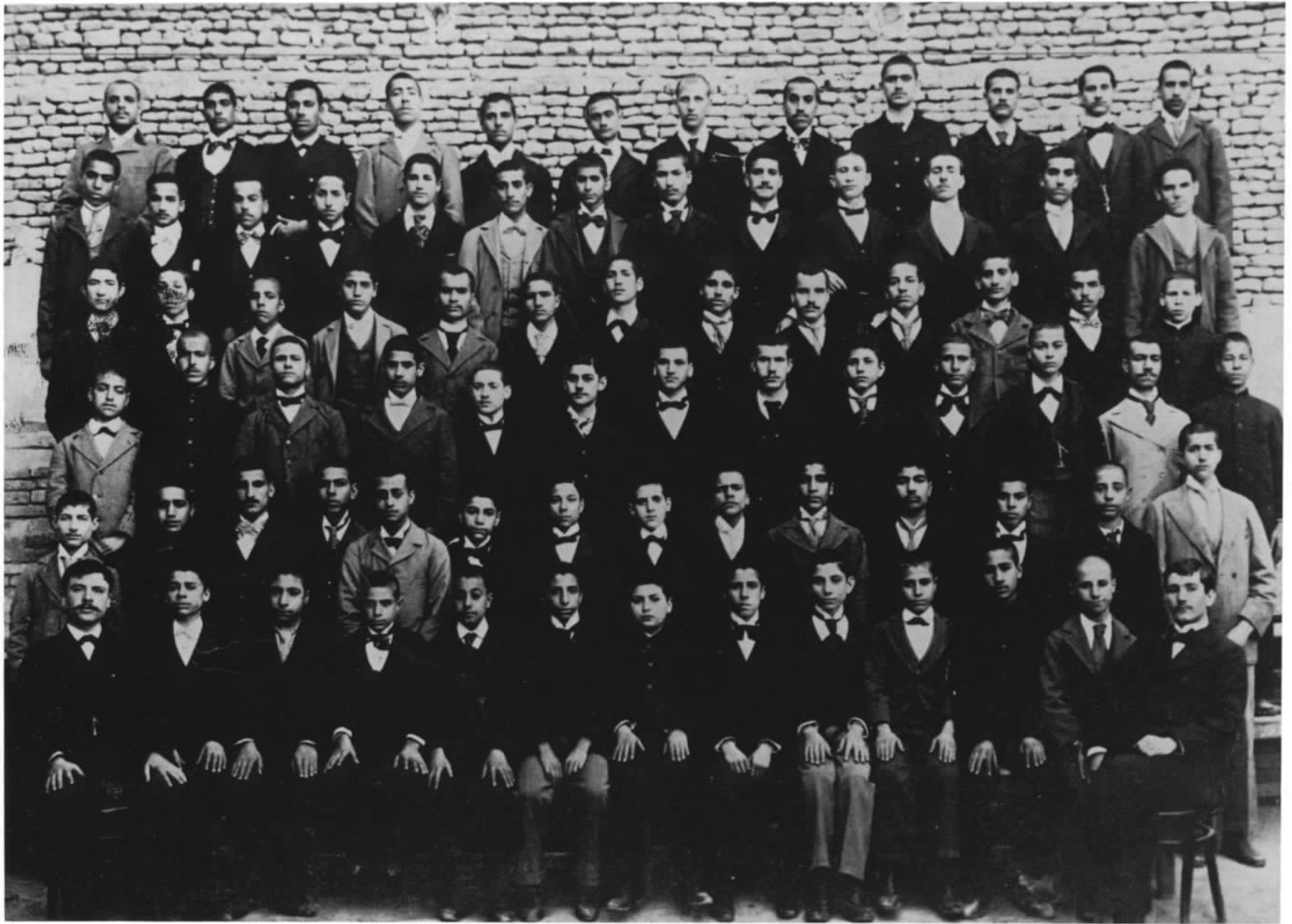
Mr. Hillel and friends

Mr. Shlomo Hillel, the only Minister of Iraqi origin in the Government of Israel, made a memorable 10-day visit to Great Britain in January. He tirelessly attended a large number of fund-raising functions and gave interesting views and information on Israel and Jewish-Arab relations—a field in which he is an expert. He gave forthright and elucidating answers to the challenging questions that were put to him.

At the Sephardi dinner he expressed the need for more involvement in the welfare of Israel, where 90 per cent of our community have come to live.

Some asked: "Why should we give and not the other fellow?"

—Our answer is that to give to a good cause is not a penalty but a privilege. There is pleasure not only in receiving but also in giving. That is not all. Whatever you gladly give to a worthy cause you get back tenfold. This is the inner interpretation of the Law of Tithe. With the obligation to plough back into the community one-tenth of one's income, there is also the promise that if you pay one you will again get ten ●



BAGHDAD ALLIANCE SCHOOL 1902

Z. G. Donatozian

Front row: Mr. Raffoul, — Setty, Yusef Belboul, Nissim Somekh, Victor Somekh, Fathalla Abboud, Shaoul Smouha, Saleh Zelouf, Ezra Kadouri, Daniel Qalabchi, Christian, Mr. Behar.
2nd row: Shimon Moshe, Dawood Aboudi, Nissim Somekh, Nounou Dawood, — Sadqa, Eliahou Chwela, Meir Qarakilla, — Somekh,
3rd row: Sion Dangoor, Shaoul Hoogi, Moshe Salem, Yusuf Ghanima, Eliahou Basous, Nissim Zilkha, Abraham Elkabir, Selman Nathan, Yusef Bashi, Christian.
4th row: Yahouda Smouha, Menashe Shlomo, — Obadia, Haron Zilkha, Saleh Mouallem, Shaoul Saleh, Christian.
5th row: Shoua Hanania, Sion Dellal, Sasson Anbarchi, Selman Bekhor, Ruben Ini, Shemail Shashoua, Eliahou Shohet, — Tweg, Haron Somekh, Sion Nalhumi, Abraham Shashoua, Ezra Sopher,
Back row: Sion Baruch, Meir Gurji, Dawood Tweg, Sion Hanania, Isaac Anbarchi, Sion Gurji, Hayu Baruch, Ezra Sopher, Eliahou Yahouda, Eliahou Khazzam, Saleh Shukur, Eliahou Sehayek.

ARAB POKER

by EXILARCH

Why is the struggle in the Middle East not coming to any decisive conclusion?—Because the two contestants are not playing the same game. And if two parties play different games, you can hardly expect to get a meaningful score.

The game that Israel has been made to play for the past twenty-five years is Russian Roulette. In this game

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move their shoes and prostrate themselves while reciting verses from "the Scroll of Ezekiel". In the vicinity of the shrine is a spacious courtyard with twenty rooms; some were occupied by the scholars of the yeshiva, which was supported by the Baghdad community—the other rooms were used by visitors. In the days of the Geonim it was customary to visit the shrine during Rosh Hashana and Kippur. The large multitude of pilgrims, headed by the Exilarch, camped in the open for many miles. In the last centuries it was mostly visited in Shabuoth. Next to the shrine of Ezekiel is a vaulted room called "the Room of the Geonim" in which are the tombs of five Geonim whose names are unknown to us. Here also is found "the Cave of the Prophet Elijah" about which many legends have been spread.

5. The shrine of Jonah—by the ruins of Nineveh, near Mosul. It has been mentioned by many travellers since the 10th century and is in the hands of the Moslems, who built a mosque around it called "Jami Nabi Allah Yunis". Over the catafalque are suspended five gold and silver fishes, the largest being five feet long—symbol of the great fish that swallowed Jonah. The Jews of Mosul used to make a sort of pilgrimage during Hol Hamoed of Succoth in accordance with the verse, "and he made himself a tabernacle there and sat beneath it" (Jonah 4, 5). During the pilgrimage, the Moslems brought their sons to be circumcised by a Jewish "mohel".

6. The shrine of Obadiah the prophet—situated in a Jewish area of Mosul, inside a dark cellar. Only Jews were allowed to enter—Moslems stood by a lattice window by the eastern wall and whispered their prayers.

7. The shrine of Nahum the Elkoshite—situated in the village of Elkosh, near Mosul. It was mentioned by travellers since the 12th century and is venerated by Jews, Moslems and Christians. It was in Jewish hands. By the shrine there is a synagogue and also the cave of "Lady Sarah", reputed to be the sister of the prophet. Many Jewish pilgrims went there during Shabuoth.

8-11. The shrines of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah—situated in the town of Kirkuk. The tradition is from the 19th century.³ They have been under Moslem control.

12. The shrine of Ezra the Scribe—situated in the village of Uzair, on the Tigris, 60 miles south of Amarah.⁴ Large numbers of Jewish pilgrims came on Shabuoth by steamboats. By the shrine, which was under Jewish control, was a yeshiva, a synagogue and inns for the travellers. The place was mentioned by writers from the 10th century.

13. The shrine of Joshua the High Priest—situated in Karkh⁵ (Baghdad West). This tradition originated in the 16th century. The shrine was under Jewish control. In 1889 the Moslems tried to appropriate it.

14. The shrine of Rabbi Judah ben Bethira—situated in Nisibin, north of Iraq. It was venerated by the Jews of Kurdistan.

15. The shrine of Sheikh Isaac Gaon—situated in the old Jewish quarter of Baghdad. It was first mentioned in 1848 by the traveller Benjamin II. Beside it is a yeshiva and a synagogue.

With the emigration of the Jewish community from Iraq, these holy places were abandoned and were taken over by the Moslems.

[It is our duty to ensure that our holy places in Iraq are kept in good repair and properly maintained—possibly through the good offices of UNICEF.] ●

1. All Jacob's other eleven children were born in Iraq.
2. Ezekiel is referred to in the Koran as "Dhul Kifil".
3. Different traditions place them in other localities.
4. According to Josephus he was buried in Jerusalem.
5. From Karkha, in Jewish Aramaic, meaning "town".

**THE ARABS, BY NATURE,
ARE TOTAL GAMBLERS:
WIN ALL OR LOSE ALL. AND
SINCE THEY WILL NOT BE
ALLOWED THIS TIME TO
WIN ALL—THEY CAN ONLY
END UP BY LOSING
EVERYTHING!**

a player can only lose once and if he wins, he survives for the next round.

Not so the Arabs. They have been playing Arab Poker in which a player can lose

any number of times and only stops when he has won everything.

The Arabs can afford to play this game because they reckon that in the long run they have nothing to lose: they can still subsist in conditions not suitable to their opponents. This was the pattern of their strategy and politics throughout history.

It was only immediately after the First World War, when they emerged broken and weak from Ottoman oppression, that the Arabs were in a reasonable frame of mind willing to identify themselves with the aspirations of other persecuted peoples. But in the thirties they became intransigent and reverted to their traditional uncompromising policy against minorities—the Assyrians, the Armenians, the Kurds and the Jews. They had no qualms about siding with the Nazis during the Second World War and indeed played a major part, through the mufti Amin Huseini and others, in Hitler's programme of Jewish extermination. Since the War they rejected all proposals for Palestine: partition, federation, or even plain immigration to an Arab Middle East.

When Nasser said on 26th May, 1967, on the eve of the Six-Day War, that the war with Israel would be "total" he meant that the Arabs would accept nothing less than the complete destruction of Israel. Arab mobs were all the time sustained by visions of murder, rape and looting. More recently, Gaddafi said, "The Arab-Israeli conflict can end only with the disappearance of one of the two sides."

There can be no prospect of ending the struggle in the Middle East unless both sides play the same game. The Arabs are not inclined to change their tactics: they consider that they have lost a battle but haven't lost the war. They will fight again—next year, next decade, next century.

As for Israel, it must be clear that no one in his right mind should continue to play Russian Roulette indefinitely. That is why Israel's survival depends on an early and decisive settlement of the conflict. If that is not forthcoming then the only course left open for Israel would be to play the Arabs' game—WINNER TAKES ALL—although Israel need not pursue an anti-Arab policy in the process. This course is feasible and battles were won against greater odds.

"Be strong and resolute; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." ●

Babylonian Genealogy

Babylonian Jewry is the oldest surviving community of the Middle East—perhaps of the whole world, with a continuous history and tradition that go back more than 5,000 years, and all this time we lived in the same region. Such a record cannot be matched even by the Chinese nation.

Genealogy played an important part in our Babylonian tradition from very early times, both before Abraham's emigration and also after the Captivity, on the dictum that every fruit is distinguished by the tree that bore it—a simple and indisputable proposition. Genesis presents a fascinating family tree for all mankind which continues through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the Twelve Tribes without interruption. Priests and public figures were required to trace their genealogy without fault and it can be safely stated that all Kohanim today, especially those from Babylon, are direct descendants in the male line of Aaron, brother of Moses.

Mar Samuel Yarchinai (177-257 CE) who was head of the Nehardea academy (destroyed by Arab raiders in 259) cited Hillel, who taught that Ezra the Scribe purified the Babylonian lineage before he emigrated to Israel, which meant that those remaining in Babylonia were able to marry one another without hesitation.

Genealogical tables, which may seem boring at times, also meant for the Hebrews (and subsequently the Jews) land-titles and inheritance. Until recent times there was no official land registration (Tapu) in Iraq and the Jewish community had its own department for such transactions. (The writer's grandfather was in charge of this office until 1886.)

A feature of our genealogy is that family surnames were not used continuously. This is understandable as, after 50 or 100 generations, "Smith", "Baker", or "Tailor" which denoted an early ancestor became meaningless. Instead, we used a pattern of first names with one or two distinguishing names threading the line such as:

Ezra — Menahem — Saleh — Menahem — Daniel — Menahem (Beit Menahem), 1-2, 1-3, 1-4 (descending).

Sasson — Moshe — Nissim — Moshe — Sasson — Moshe — Nissim — Moshe (Beit Dangoor), 1-2, 1-3, 1-2, 1-3 (descending).

David — (Sheikh) Sasson — Saleh — David — Jacob — Saleh — David (Sassoon family), 1-2-3, 1-2-4, 1 (descending).¹

Reuben — Mordecai — Sasson — Mordecai — Moshe — Mordecai — Abraham — Sasson — Abraham — Sasson (Shindookh family), 1-2, 1-2, 3-4, 3-1, 3-5 (descending).

Ezekiel, Reuben,
Menashe — Reuben — Menashe — Ezekiel — Menashe — Ezekiel — Reuben — Menashe (Zbeida family or Beit

2 3
Menashe), 1-2-3, 1-3, 1-2, 1 (descending).

Families confined themselves to only a few names which were thus repeated in different patterns. Secondary branches established new patterns.

Unfortunately most of the ancient records of our community disappeared in the constant warfare that plagued the Land of the Rivers, notably the Mogul

conquest in 1258, Tamerlane's in 1400, and the subsequent Persian-Turkish struggle over Iraq. There is little doubt that many interesting records lie buried on the sites of Nehardea, Sura, Pumbaditha, Mahoza, Metha Mehasia and in Baghdad which must await future archaeological searches. Thus most Jewish families can only trace their lineage to the 17th century when relative calm ruled after Iraq's conquest by Sultan Murad IV in 1638. Babylonian Jewish children were taught at an early age to memorise as much of their family tree as possible—at least to a well-known ancestor, who would remain a landmark for several generations that followed him.

Babylonian congregations were administered by, (a) the *hazzan* as president (*hazanu* = governor), (b) the *gubbay* as treasurer, and (c) the *shamash* as secretary—positions which were normally held for life. The various Gubbay families were among the wealthiest in the community and provided, in recent times (since the death of Moshe Shindookh in 1744), the *nasi* or president of the community who was also the *sarraf-bashi* or treasurer of Iraq—a position held in our community for many centuries and was continued in modern Iraq when (Sir) Sasson Heskell held the post of finance minister in successive governments.

One of the main Gubbay families was that of "Shoua Gubbay" who, like the Daniels, was of Georgian origin—hence "Gurji" often followed their name. Of this family Sheikh Isaac Pasha was *sarraf-bashi* and *nasi* from 1745 to 1773. He was succeeded by his brothers, first Michael and then Abraham.

It might be of interest to reveal here that the family name of the Sassoons was also Gubbay—the line being: Sheikh Sasson Saleh David Jacob Saleh David (Gubbay). Saleh David Gubbay (17th century) was also the ancestor of Elkabirs, Shlomos and Abrahams (of Bombay) but Sasson's was the main line, from the pattern.² There are several reasons for drawing this conclusion: (1) Saleh David in both lines would be contemporaries and in view of the small size of the community at the time, they could only be the same person. (2) Inter-marriage within a family was the rule and Heskell Shoua—6th generation from Saleh David Gubbay—married Aziza Albert Sassoon—7th generation from Saleh David. (3) The fact that Sheikh Sasson himself became *sarraf-bashi* and *nasi* (1781 to 1817) perhaps also confirms that he was a "Gubbay".

It is impossible to tell at this stage if the Sassoons were of the Shoua Gubbay family; however, this is probable because Sheikh Sasson married the daughter of Abraham Shoua Gubbay. A son of this Abraham, Joseph Gurji, also known as Abu-Moshi or Segnor Gurji, was the uncle of David Sassoon (1792-1864), although he lived till 1900.

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1. It is sad but noteworthy that when Sheikh Sasson broke the pattern, Reuben did not survive and was succeeded by David who fitted the pattern.

2. The other line is: Heskell (Elkabir) 1740-1816 — Abraham — Nissim — Shellim — Saleh David Gubbay.

FRANCE: A CRYING NEED FOR JEWISH EDUCATION

by Rabbi S. D. Sassoon

Following the independence of North Africa from French rule, and the spread of anti-Israeli feelings in Arab countries, the old Jewish communities of the Southern Mediterranean lands started a mass emigration that brought over 350,000 Jews to France from Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.

The main reasons that determined the choice of France are the facility of language (already spoken in the country of origin), subsidies for a location granted by the French government to Jews of French nationality, and generous social security benefits.

Dispersed throughout France, mostly in the large urban centres such as Paris, Marseilles, Strasbourg, Toulouse, Bordeaux and others, the new immigrants, preoccupied mostly with resettling, did not re-organise themselves as communities. Because of the additional difference in ritual, these Sephardic Jews did not integrate with the existing Ashkenazic communities. This state of affairs soon resulted in one of the greatest tragedies of assimilation in our history. Uprooted from their communities and abandoned to a hard struggle for their existence, their youth became the prey of all isms, and intermarriage, unknown to them heretofore, reached the frightening figure of 70-80 per cent.

The only conceivable remedy is solid Jewish education but the established communities were themselves trailing far behind countries like the United States as far as Jewish day schools and had nothing to offer the newcomers. In the face of this desperate situation a few pioneers set out to establish Jewish day schools. Most of them had worked with the Ozar Hatorah network in Morocco, with a total of over 4,000 pupils from primary school to postgraduate level. In these schools, Jewish as well as secular studies were on a very high standard and success at government examinations was much higher than the country's average. Inspired by what they had been able to accomplish in Morocco, the founders of the Eshel High-school in Strasbourg, the Torath Emeth High-school in Marseilles, and the primary and secondary school in Villeneuve and others set out to do what they could do with their own two hands and without the support of any organisation. While in Morocco, Ozar Hatorah benefited through the substantial financial assistance from the American Joint Distribution Committee and of its own New York office, the new budding schools

in France had to struggle for survival. Despite all this, their success in quantity and quality drew the attention and respect of those concerned with this serious plight of the second largest community in the free world. Most of all, they had proven the vivid interest of the average parent for the Jewish day school as their only link with Judaism and as the shield against the degraded morals of the street.

In June 1970, Moses J. Lasry was appointed Executive Vice-President of Ozar Hatorah in New York. He immediately set out to focus Ozar Hatorah's influence on France contending that this organisation is the only one in the world with a proven record to tackle the problem of a balanced Jewish and secular education for Sephardic youth on a mass scale. This writer, a long-time friend of Isaac Shalom, the late president of Ozar Hatorah, took upon himself to give the cause of Jewish education in France the public voice it needed. After visiting France several times and ascertaining at first hand the needs and the availability of competent educators, he obtained the sanction of the New York committee of Ozar Hatorah to place France as its high priority. In June 1971, accompanied by M. J. Lasry and Mr. M. Pardo, the founder of the famous Or Hachaim College for Girls in Israel, he started a crash campaign for funds in the United States. The success they met made possible the implantation of the Ozar Hatorah organisation in France immediately. An office was opened in Paris, the existing institutions received subsidies and were organised and co-ordinated, and three new institutions were opened in September 1971. Today, after barely a year and a half of activity, Ozar Hatorah is the most dynamic factor of Jewish education in France. The task is tremendous as there are still over 90,000 children between the ages of six and fifteen who are not receiving any Jewish education at all. In this race against rampant assimilation and even outright conversions, the need for funds, personnel and buildings is staggering. On the other hand, the results already obtained are so encouraging that expansion must go on at all costs. We have good reasons to believe that the time will come when substantial assistance will be forthcoming from the J.D.C. and the French United Appeal, as Jewish education is the cornerstone upon which rests the future of Jewish communities of the diaspora and their support for Israel ●

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Sheikh Sassoon's rival, who in the end made him leave the country and took over his position as sarraf-bashi and nasi, was another Gubbay—Ezra (Rahamim) Joseph Nissim Menahem Gubbay—also known as Ezra ibn Rahel or Abu Yusuf. His brother, Heskeli Pasha or Heskeli Chalabi was the Sultan's favourite, Keeper of the Seal, and nasi in Istanbul and wielded immense power. His story, however, requires another article ●

"Cellar Club"

A new Committee has been elected by the Cellar Club for 1973:

Chairman: Mr. Jack Atraghji.

Secretary: Miss Vivien Shina.

Treasurer: Mr. Samy Dallal.

Committee Members: Miss Dora Tawfik, Miss Nadia Shina, Mr. Danny Dallal and Mr. Sabah Rashty.

We congratulate the new Committee and wish the Club continued success ●

A Man's Home is his Wife (Talmud)

One thousand nine hundred years ago Rome and Judea fought a bitter war. Very often, the conqueror adopts the beliefs of the conquered, and so it happened that eventually (through the genius of Rabbi Shaul, better known as St. Paul) Judaism, through Christianity, conquered the Western world.

But every action has an equal and opposite reaction, and, as a result, Jews have greatly suffered in Europe. In any case, the Roman-Jewish encounter was of vital historical importance.

The Talmud relates that a Roman lady once asked a Rabbi, "In how many days did the Holy One Blessed be He create the universe?"

"In six days", was the reply.

"What has He been doing since then, till now?"

"He has been arranging marriages."

"Is that His occupation?" she further inquired. "I, too, could do it. I possess many male and female slaves, and in a very short time I can pair them together."

"If it is a simple thing in your eyes", he said, "it is as difficult to the Holy One Blessed be He as is dividing the Red Sea."

Thereupon he left her. She, on her part, summoned a thousand male slaves, and a thousand female slaves, set them in rows, and announced who should marry whom, arranging marriages for all in a single night. The next day they appeared before her, one with a cracked forehead, another with an eye knocked out, and another with a broken leg.

"What is the matter with you?" she asked them.

"I don't want him", answered one female.

"I don't want her", answered another male.

The Roman lady forthwith sent for the Rabbi, and said to him, "There is no god like your God, and your Torah is true. What you told me is quite correct." (Gen. R. LXVIII, 4)

Although Disraeli once observed that every woman should marry, but no man, to marry and rear a family was regarded as a religious command: indeed the first of all commandments addressed by God to Man (Gen. I, 28), and this is the view that the Talmud stresses. A wife meant a home; hence the saying, "A man's home is his wife" (Yoma 1:1). R. José said, "I always called my wife 'my home'." [Until recently in our community a man often referred to his wife as "beitna" (my home).]

A recipe for a happy home, intended for men, women and children, was forwarded to us by a *Scribe* reader in Montreal:

Take 2 cups full of Patience
1 heart full of Love
2 full hands of Generosity
1 pinch of Gaiety mixed with 1 cup of Understanding.

Now add 2 cups of Loyalty; mix all the ingredients with Tenderness. Spread this irresistible mixture on a Life and serve it to all you meet ●

Letters to the Editor

From Mr. Joseph Yahuda, London

May I add a footnote to the interesting article, "Two Grandmothers", by Mrs. Olga Somech Phillips in your issue of September-October 1972?

I knew Moshe Somekh and his mother Khatoon née Yahuda when my family stayed in Cairo between 1911 and 1920. He was a prominent importer of textiles from Manchester—with an office and warehouse off the Mooskee—whose integrity was matched by his shrewdness. To encourage us in the study of the Bible, he used to quiz my younger brother Solomon and myself, and would most generously reward us when we answered his difficult questions. As to Khatoon, she was indeed a remarkable woman. At over 70 her looks were still striking, while her scintillating wit and rare sense of humour rendered her company enjoyable to youngsters and adults alike. She never left her flat, except to go to synagogue on high festivals, so she could tell the time almost to the minute all the year round by the position of one or two shadows on an adjoining roof—such was her power of observation. Her clear memory stored up the history of three generations of Baghdad Jewry, and she trotted out the genealogy of several families back to about ten generations. Both mother and son were excellent cooks, and their Baghdadi pastries and jams were famous, especially halek and zlabia. I am most grateful to Mrs. Phillips for reminding me of them, for of them it can truly be said: Zekher Sadik Librakha ●

From Rev. Monty R. S. Ezekiel,
44 Fountayne Road, London N.16

It may be of interest to your readers to know that I am a qualified surgical mohel with certificates from former Israel Chief Rabbis Nissim and Unterman and the London and Sydney Batei Din. My father and mother were born in Baghdad and so were all my ancestors. I do brith milah according to the Baghdadi rites, minhag and tunes.

I performed my first milah in Saigon, then I practised in Singapore and Bombay where I circumcised hundreds of boys from our community. From Bombay I went to Australia and then to Israel where I performed many circumcisions including two thousand Arab children. I have been in this country since 1953. My telephone is 806 7331 ●

From Mr. Manuel Cansino, London

May I correct an error in Mrs. Olga Somech's interesting article "East Meets West"? Alice Pinto, my mother's aunt, did not marry Josh Gubbay but Yahya (York) Gubbay—uncle of Mr. Solly J. Gubbay and grandfather of Mr. Alan Rose, Director of the Canadian Jewish Congress ●

Comments and articles welcomed. The views of individual contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the journal.

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