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Israel's Redemption

THE LORD SAYS, I NEVER SOLD YOU FOR CASH; AND WITHOUT MONEY YOU MUST BE REDEEMED. (Isaiah 52:3). This command applies to the totality of Israel—the Land of Israel and the People of Israel.

If the Arabs had sense

In the last issue, Chief Rabbi Jakobovits was quoted as saying, "If our Arab cousins had sense, they would simply fold their hands and wait" (till the Jews become a minority in Israel).

However, if our Arab cousins really had sense, they would open their arms and welcome Jewish settlement in the Middle East as the whole region could gain immensely by a partnership of the world's two Semitic peoples. The implication is, of course, that the Arabs don't.

The die is cast

Senator Fulbright expresses surprise that America, Iran and Israel might find it necessary to take over Iraq, Kuwait and the Gulf oil states.

Whatever the motives for America and Iran, Israel's participation in such a move would be dictated by the implacable hostility of the Arab states and their determination to drive the Jews out of the Middle East. By persistently trying and failing, for the last 25 years, to wipe out the State of Israel, the Arabs have made certain that the Arab-Jewish struggle could no longer be solved within a "Palestine" framework but in a wider Middle Eastern context involving the creation of a regional federation not dominated by the Arabs.

Senator Fulbright describes the Arab states as in a "power vacuum". Iraq and Syria (traditional enemies of Israel) also live in a "moral vacuum" where defenseless Jewish families are violated and massacred in their homes. Bakir and the Baathist Butchers of Baghdad may not get away with it for long ●

World Sephardi Federation

An agreement was recently made between Nissim Gaon, president-designate of the World Sephardi Federation and Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir whereby the Israel Government has agreed to match whatever money is raised by the Sephardi communities abroad for a fund to help needy Oriental Jews in Israel. The fund's target is \$50 million. The fund will go to build dormitories and provide other educational assistance, to help large families, and to hire additional social workers where needed.

This agreement, however important it may seem to Mr. Gaon, can only enhance *apartheid*—"equal" but separate development. Pressure, indeed political pressure, must be put on the government so that facilities are provided equally to all citizens, and ample allowances are made for large families through the Jewish Agency.

At a meeting in London Mr. Gaon rejected the idea that Sephardi and Oriental Jews use their numerical strength at the coming general elections to win an important voice at the Knesset.

BEN-GURION:

JEWISH STATE 'DOES NOT YET EXIST'

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Israel David Ben-Gurion declared that the Jewish state "does not yet exist". "In 1948 there were 650,000 Jews in the country—was that a Jewish state? Now there are less than three million—is this a Jewish state? Only if we bring in another seven or eight million Jews can we say this is a Jewish state" ●

With This Issue: SCRIBE PICTURE SUPPLEMENT No. 3
25 years ago

The New York Nadi 1949

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the founding of the New York "Nadi", we publish this photo taken on 24/6/49 on the occasion of its first birthday which was celebrated by a dinner/dance at the Riverside Plaza.

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

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FIRST WORLD TANAKH CONFERENCE

On the occasion of Israel's 25th anniversary, the World Jewish Bible Society held in Jerusalem (May 9th - 13th) the first World Tanakh Conference which was attended by distinguished delegates from many parts of the world. The conference was ably and successfully conducted by Dr. Haim Gevaryahu and Dr. Katzoff. President Zalman Shazar was re-elected president of the Society. Mr. Dangoor was elected to the Presidium to represent the U.K.

conference should explore ways to reverse this trend and give the Book of Books back to the Jewish masses." It was also interesting to note that other speakers referred to this era as that of the "Third Temple".

Apart from general world apathy to religion, President Shazar omitted to mention the two momentous events of Jewish history that happened in our lifetime, namely, the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel—events which are of great relevance to interest in the Bible and



President Shazar with Mr. & Mrs. Dangoor. To the right, Dr. Haim Gevaryahu, chairman of World Jewish Bible Society.

Two sessions were held at the Presidential Palace and the concluding one at the Knesset. We were greatly impressed and heartened by President Shazar's keen interest in the Scriptures: Bible discussion meetings were being held every three weeks at his residence. Israel's presidents have been described as elected monarchs. We found in Zalman Shazar more than a monarch—an upholder of the faith, a priest-king "after the manner of Melchisedek" (Ps. 110 : 4), king of Salem (which is Jerusalem) at the time of Abraham.

At the opening session President Shazar referred to the importance of the Bible in Jewish life and to the tradition of Bible reading which originated with Babylonian Jewry who would not let three days pass without some reading from the Torah, based on the verse, "And they went without water for three days and they thirsted". "We remember the time," Shazar said, "when every Jew high or low knew some Tanakh. But in our age all this has changed. Our

Judaism. Jewish religious leaders have yet to explain the phenomenon of the Holocaust. Did God approve that half His people should perish? If not, how could it happen? Many people conclude, therefore (as the proverbial fool), that there is no God. What is meant by God in this context is not only the Creator of the world but a Deity who takes interest in human affairs.

The relevance of Israel is that its re-birth is a fulfilment of the Torah. To be in Israel, to identify with Israel, is like fulfilling all the *mitzvot*, which seems to confirm the notion that for the Jewish people the Torah was like a government-in-exile.

Israel's re-birth may be just the dawn of a new era. For 2,000 years we have been marking time awaiting the coming of the Messiah. Israel's history is not so much in the past as in the future when new chapters will be added to our Holy Writ. Happy the eyes that will behold ●

THE MONTH OF RASHID ALI

In April 1941 a revolt, sponsored by pro-Nazi army officers, broke out in Iraq against the Regent Abdul Ilah and the government of Taha Hashimi. Rashid Ali became Prime Minister and the pro-British Regent fled with his followers—Jamil Midfai, Nuri Said, Ali Jawdat and Daud Haidari. Sharif Sharaf was appointed Regent.

On 27th April the British ordered the transfer of forces from India via Iraq in accordance with the Anglo-Iraqi treaty of 1930. The new government opposed, and fighting broke out on 2nd May. The events of the following thirty days resulted in the defeat of the Iraqi army and the collapse of Rashid Ali's government. The outcome was of significant importance to the Allied war effort in the Middle

East. At the same time, the Jewish community suffered persecution which culminated in the pogrom of Shabuoth, 32 years ago, in which hundreds were killed or wounded and much property looted and destroyed.

These treacherous and dastardly acts committed against a major partner in the state of Iraq were, more than anything else, decisive in the mass emigration of the Jewish community ten years later.

Here we review the events of what came to be known as the Month of Rashid Ali. It is appropriate to recall these events now when the Iraqi authorities find it fit to terrorise the remnants of the Community which has been depleted from 200,000 to only 400 ●

HISTORICAL NOTE

by N.E.D.

It is not generally appreciated by historians that in the Second World War the real battle for Iraq and consequently the rest of the Middle East was fought in Crete. British losses in Iraq were relatively very small but in Crete the British army lost 13,000 killed, wounded and taken prisoners as well as 2,000 naval casualties. The Germans likewise lost well over 15,000 killed and wounded and 170 troop-carrying aircraft.

General Wavell reiterated in May 1941 that he would be quite unable to provide any support from Palestine for a campaign in Iraq and so, even when the British government realised that Crete could no longer be held for any length of time, a stiff resistance was put up there to delay the eastward strategic advance of the Germans. The British force in Crete was evacuated only after it was clear that Iraq was under control and that German airborne troops would no longer be able to link up with the Axis forces in Syria or land in Iraq. That was on 29th May, 1941, when British and Palmach forces were advancing on Baghdad and Rashid Ali and his companions fled to Persia accompanied by the Italian and German ministers and the ex-Mufti Amin Huseini.

Throughout those anxious days we were glued to the radio to hear the B.B.C. news giving the progress of the war and I well remember that on that day (May 29th) news of the British victory in Iraq was followed, significantly, by the announcement of the fall of Crete.

In his monumental work on the Second World War Churchill makes allusion to the close connection between the campaigns in Crete and Iraq. He tantalises the Germans for failing to take Iraq but omits to mention that by their stand in Crete the British purposely and by calculated design prevented the Germans from reaching the Middle East in time:

"The price the Germans paid for their victory (in Crete) cannot be measured by the slaughter . . . The German 7th Airborne Division, which was the only one which Goering had, was destroyed and the whole structure of this organisation was irretrievably broken. It never appeared again in any effective form. The New Zealanders and other British, Imperial and Greek Troops who fought in the confused, disheartening

and vain struggle for Crete may feel that they played a definite part in an event which brought us far-reaching relief at a hingeing moment. The German losses of their highest class fighting men removed a formidable air and parachute weapon from all further part in immediate events in the Middle East.

The forces the enemy expended (in Crete) might easily have given him Cyprus, Iraq, Syria and even perhaps Persia. Hitler's hand might have reached out very far towards India, and beckoned out to Japan. These troops were the very kind needed to overrun large wavering regions where no serious resistance would have been encountered. He was foolish to cast away such measureless opportunities and irreplaceable forces in a mortal struggle (with British forces in Crete)." The Second World War III/268.

Churchill also omits to mention the serious anti-Jewish riots in Iraq in the wake of British victory over Rashid Ali. It was also perhaps more than coincidence that anti-Jewish riots of murder and looting took place in Tunis, Libya, Somaliland and other places upon their occupation by British troops.

On the morning of Monday, 2nd June, 1941, at the height of the disturbances in Baghdad, the governor of the Baghdad district, Khalid Pasha Zahawi, called on us and affirmed that he was still unable to obtain authorization from the Regent or the British command to open fire on the rioters ●

THE DIARY OF ABRAHAM TWENA

[Mr. Twena, who now lives in Israel, has been a dedicated worker in the interests of the Jews of Iraq.]

On Sunday 3rd May, 1941, the Red Crescent Society opened up a depôt in Shamash School and the Society's chairman, Arshad Umari, Mayor of Baghdad, appointed Moshi Yatah director of the storehouse with Jacob Ezekiel as assistant. I was called to act as secretary, and from then on most of the work dealing with the riots of 1941 was concentrated in my hands, until the last orphan emigrated on 2nd June, 1951.

A committee was formed headed by the lawyer Yusuf Elkabir to obtain donations for the Red Crescent in money or in kind. We began to receive merchandise and to register it, and to send some of it to the army against receipts, though I doubt whether any of it actually reached its destination.

4th May. One doctor by the name of Mudhafar Zahawi entered the picture. He came to Shamash School and began to give advice on how to collect money from the merchants. Moshi Yatah told him that our job was to receive merchandise from whoever would send it, and not to collect payments. The collection would have to be done by others. Mudhafar did

Continued overleaf

The Diary of Abraham Twena, *continued*.

not accept the reply. He started threatening about Jewish merchants, wanting money from them for his own pocket. Almost all through the month he would visit us and make us listen to his abuse of the Jews.

5th May. The same morning I was called to Rachel Shahmoon school in the Jewish quarter, and was requested to hand the school over to Kataib El Shabab (Youth Legions). They ordered me to hand over the cash register and the administration office. The Jewish Idadiyah school was also seized.

6th May. A number of British aircraft flew over Baghdad. The hostile population started accusing the Jews of signalling to the airplanes. The Jews suffered greatly that day. A large number of Jews were arrested. Amongst those who were sent over for investigation was the merchant Murad Juri. His nephew, Selim Abraham Juri went to his friend Yunus Sabawi, Minister of Information (a sworn Nazi who programmed destruction of the Jews, and who was the chief governor in those days), requesting him to free those imprisoned. Yunus acceded to him and liberated all the prisoners on the same day.

7th May. To-day there was a circumcision ceremony in the house of Jacob Shalom in "Shorjah" Street. A number of youths forced open the door, entered, knives in hand, murdered the boy Shinah Eliahou, brother-in-law of Jacob Shalom, and seriously wounded his brother Abed who was transferred in a serious condition to the government hospital. The hospital director, Dr. Saib Shawkat, did not wish to deal with him and only through the care of the devoted Jewish nurses did he remain alive.

That same day the patients of the Jewish hospital, Meir Elias, were accused of giving signals to airplanes. A large angry crowd broke into the hospital with cudgels and knives; the officials ran for their lives. The police intervened and restored order, and from that day the hospital was closed and its patients were sent to their homes.

On the same day they planned to murder the railway station-masters who were all Jewish, and started with Samuel Cohen. Terror struck the station-masters and they wished to leave the stations, but in this emergency their desertion would have been considered sabotage of the war effort, and their penalty death.

At noon a delegation, met Rashid Ali, Solomon and Murad Cohen, his business managers, headed the delegation and explained everything to him. He decided to restrain the people striving to take revenge on the Jews. He gave instructions to guard the railway stations, and also to release any Jew who could find a replacement. He promised that as long as he was at the head of the government, no harm whatsoever would come to the Jews.

8th May. From the beginning of the month the radio broadcasted every day from 6.30 till 1 o'clock in the morning, army songs, important news, victories in every place, and on this Friday it repeated the following information many times: "We wish to inform the public that in their joy over the victory they are spending their ammunition in vain. We wish peace to prevail in every place, and after the victory over the British, revenge shall be taken on the internal enemy, and we shall hand him over to your hands for destruction."

It was not difficult to guess who this internal enemy was, nor why this instruction was given.

10th May. Contrary to the wish of Yatah, our room in the school served as a meeting-place for the heads of the Community, and for those concerned with the affairs of the Red Crescent, for army officers in the company of their Jewish friends, and for every leader who sprung up in the same month and who wanted to show his strength to the Jews or his false defence of the Jews.

The same day, at 12 o'clock, Ezra Menahem Daniel visited us after his meeting with Yunus Sabawi, in accordance with Rashid Ali's direction. In the room were Yusuf Elhabir, Yusuf Aboudi, Moshi Yatah, Jacob Ezekiel, and Rabbi Sasson Kadouri. Ezra Menahem talked about the meeting thus:—

"I entered Yunus' room which looked like a fortress. In his room I also found six youths whom I did not know. Only Yunus stood up and extended me his hand. I sat down by his side. An open conversation started among us, and I knew that in an open conversation we would have nothing to lose. I asked him if they meant to destroy us and why they wanted to place us in the hands of the mob. Why were they inciting the crowds on the radio? For example, they had

started broadcasting libels against the British, saying, 'these are the British who sentenced a Palestinian sheik to death, and hanged him because he murdered the Jew, Moses Ezekiel.' What did Moses Ezekiel commit against the Arabs? He was murdered. Is that a sin? Your Excellency, a whole community is terrified by the instigation put out on the radio every hour; Jewish passers-by are molested in the streets, rumours are spread that Jews signal to British airplanes. Your Excellency should put an end to all this."

Yunus answered:—"Senator, we respect you and we have many Jewish friends; you may be sure that we shall take steps to restrain all the instigators!"

Ezra Menahem added, "I do not believe that they will restrain them; maybe our meetings on Thursday and today will bring calm but the danger is still hovering over all our heads."

After a short discussion, those present explained to the Jews that they should avoid going out into the streets if there were no essential need, and to wait for a miracle from heaven to save the Community from this great distress.

13th May. Today it was announced that a commander of the German Air Force in the Balkans had arrived in his airplane to Baghdad. Most people thought the plane to be British, and shot it, killing the Commander, son of Field-Marshal Blomberg. The commander thought that they were welcoming him with the fantasia well-known to the Arabs. He flew low and was hit.

Such a blow could not be endured, and it was desired to engage public opinion in other matters. The doctor, Mudhafar Zahawi entered our office and started phoning his friends, informing them that the Germans sent over aircraft to aid the Iraqi forces. Fifteen had already arrived and were at the airport, and he thought that this could bring the war to an end. After this he started asking, as usual, for the delivery of merchandise to the army. Moshi Yatah told him explicitly that only with Arshad Umari's written authorization would he be prepared to send aid to the army.

17th May. Today Captain Taher Yahya (Iraqi prime minister during the Six Day War) in the company of Yusuf Aboudi came into the office. There were at that moment ten people in our office. The well-mannered officer started to speak of the Iraqi heroism and of the British fear took out his revolver and placed it on the table, swore a three-fold oath in God's name that with that same sole revolver he had brought down five British aircraft. (All of us said Amen and blessed him on his accomplishment).

22nd May. It was heard today that a Jewish pupil with an English book in his hand was seized. The police accused him of spying. We contacted Rabbi Sasson Kadouri and he had him released.

25th May. Today it was announced that the Iraqi forces at Habbaniyah had started to withdraw and had suffered a hard blow. Rumours were spreading that a Security Committee was being organised to guard the security of the capital. The committee proclaimed Baghdad an open city.

28th May Today it was mentioned that the aforesaid Committee has been enlarged, and that the government will leave the capital this evening.

29th May. Moshi Yatah returned at 12 o'clock from a meeting with the Security Committee who had promised that nothing would happen to the Jews as long as they looked after themselves, and he added, "All of us are in danger, and only a miracle can save us".

Early in the day government members and the Mufti fled to Persia but before the Security Committee could seize power, Yunus Sabawi appointed himself as sole military governor in Baghdad, and his purpose was to massacre the Jews.

30th May. The town was quiet; we were sitting in the office when Rabbi Sasson came to visit us, saying that he was summoned to Yunus Sabawi at 10.00.

At 10.30 he returned to us and said, "It's better that you go home, Yunus told me to tell all the Jews to prepare food for three days and not to leave their houses." And he continued, "As I was coming down the steps of the government house, I saw Husamuddin Jumaah, the chief of police go up to Yunus' office, and police surround the building. I told the chief of police what Yunus had ordered me to announce to the Community."

By 12 o'clock the Rabbi had already informed the whole town that no-one should leave his house, but he returned



Scribe Supplement

New York NADI on its 1st Birthday
Picture taken at Dinner/Dance at Riverside Plaza on June 24th, 1949
(on the occasion of the Nadi's formation 25 years ago)

yet again, and notified that he had received other information.

We, who were at Shamash School, wanted to leave the place as soon as the Rabbi had left, but at exactly the same moment we received a telephone call from Arshad's secretary to stay in our place. At 12 o'clock Arshad visited the place and said to Moshi Yatah, "About an hour ago you were in danger, now the danger has disappeared; we seized power and nobody can maltreat you; it is forbidden to take any goods from the storehouse except at my personal direction." He added that Yunus Sabawi had been expelled and that the danger had passed.

It was also made known that at 12 o'clock on that same Friday, Yunus ordered the broadcasting station in Baghdad to call on the masses to rise up against the Jews and massacre them, but Arshad Umari prevented this call at the very last moment.

On Friday evening the radio announced that the government members had fled and that Yunus was removed. The war with the British would soon be finished; the security committee had taken the responsibility to enter an honourable agreement, with the British that would not harm the state's honour or dignity.

Saturday, 31st May. A tense silence prevailed in the city. Here and there policemen with guns in their hands were seen. The radio station began broadcasting the records of Arab singers instead of army songs. At 5.30 the announcer notified that the agreement had been signed, and that order was being restored. At 6 o'clock it was announced that the Regent, Abdul Ilah was returning and would arrive at the airport at 10 o'clock the following day, and that the people would welcome him.

This was on the eve of Shabuoth, and Jews filled the synagogues. Afterwards they opened up their houses that had been closed the whole month, and gathered together for the reading of "Tiquin Shabuoth". We were filled with fear, and hope that the worst was already behind us. In the synagogues warnings were given that the Jews should not appear happy on the streets.

From days long gone by, the festival of Shabuoth had been celebrated either at the tombs of the Prophet Ezekiel and Ezra the Scribe, or at the tomb of Joshua the High Priest on the other side of the city; but this year there was no worship at the Prophets' tombs.

Most of the Jews did not sleep all night, but it was understood that they would stay at home. However, this was not so, for a rock had been lifted from off their shoulders and everyone wanted to enjoy the streets. Everyone thought that if anything were to happen against the Jews it would have happened on Friday and Saturday at the time of the change-over. Now there are people responsible for the security and everyone can walk around, and had it been a workday they would have opened up their businesses as usual.

Sunday, 1st June (Shabuoth). Already at 10 o'clock people had gathered to welcome the Regent. Everyone was dressed festively. Moslem youths started to stone them.

At 2 o'clock Jews started going out from their homes in the old sections to the new neighbourhood and visiting relatives and sitting in cafés. They did not hear about the events on the other side of the town.

Inciters and rioters from the columns of Kitaib El Shabab, defeated soldiers, and enraged students gathered at Bab El Sheikh and started dragging every Jew off the bus and murdered him; he who was fortunate enough to look like a Moslem escaped miraculously.

I returned home from the storehouse at 2 o'clock; Rashid Street was quiet and no news reached us.

At 4 o'clock I went out and saw Husamuddin Jumaah, chief of police, and one of the security committee members getting out of his car and ordering the police not to let any crowds gather. Shots could be heard from afar; I reached the Battaween neighbourhood and saw the coffee-house full of Jews. A frightened Jew alighted from one of the buses and told us what had been done in Bab El Sheikh. The words were gone over in silence by everybody in the coffee-house, and we requested them not to travel by bus, not to walk in groups, and not to return through Ghazi Street.

By 5.30 the coffee-houses were empty, and whosoever delayed at night met his death on the way. During the night announced that gangs of youths and revenge seekers wanted screams were heard from the old Jewish neighbourhoods, and only after 2 o'clock was there quiet. It was later to break into Jewish homes, but when they were received

with a shower of stones and screams they turned on their heels. Shots were fired at the houses and it is likely that they wounded a number of Jews.

Monday, 2nd June. At 8 o'clock they started flowing in, group by group; the disturbances were well organized. The police removed their identity marks from their shoulders, began to fire and broke into the houses. The only instruction was to kill, and for this purpose they started with the streets populated by Jews.

The Jews who knew the purpose of the rioters had prepared for self-defence during the night. They had ready on the roofs heavy stones, pitch, boiling oil and rags from which they prepared weapons. They appointed themselves a commander and aides to give orders.

At 10.30 about fifty men entered our street, and my neighbour, the mukhtar, (sherriff), aged 65, stood before them and said, "Over my dead body will you pass through here," the rest of the families supported him. They spoke with him at first pleasantly, but then with threats, and they left the place.

Naive Jews, on seeing the police, were happy to receive them and opened up their doors to them, not knowing that treachery lay in their hands.

The whole night Kataib El Shabab and soldiers who had fled the battlefield were organizing themselves for the same moment, but they struck against strong opposition. The style of building used in Iraq prevented serious accidents, for the flat paved roofs made possible escapes from roof to roof, and in this way were many saved.

Above all, the rioters' greed rescued the Jews. Many of those who had instructions only to kill began to search the chests, and did not wait till the killing had ended, and while the commanders were starting to pillage the houses, many turned to Rashid Street to plunder the shops lest others get there first.

During the month of May the Jewish shops began to be marked with red paint and all of them were broken into.

The looting lasted four hours in the main streets, and in the Jewish streets it lasted until about 2 o'clock. The army entered and seized positions everywhere when it was feared that the rioters were planning to move on the Moslem quarters.

At 12 o'clock the radio announcer said that the army had entered the town with orders to shoot anyone who should break into shop or house. The army began shooting without consideration and thus the plunderers started fleeing and hiding.

At 5 o'clock it was announced that the Regent had appointed Jamil Midfai prime minister—the man was known for his humanity and he had no hatred of the Jews.

The Jews received the information with doubts; it was also announced that the government would punish mercilessly any who touched another's property or injured him, and lay a curfew from 5 o'clock in the evening until 7 in the morning.

Tuesday, 3rd June. In the morning the Jews left their houses to look for their relatives.

A sad and depressing sight met our eyes. Rashid Street was full of broken glass and it was difficult for cars to make their way through. We went to the storehouse and sent the flour, dates and oranges that were in the police station's storehouse where the Jews lived.

At 9 o'clock we were at Imam Taha's police station where about 1,000 people remained. We asked them if the food had reached them. They replied that they had received nothing.

But the compassionate Jewish neighbours went to every pain. That very night they opened up their stores and handed out food to everyone at the police station; also the Jews who were searching for members of their family received food with them and portioned it to anyone who asked.

At 9.30 we reached Beni Said's police station where there were about 400 people. We were informed that more than 2,000 slept there that night but in the morning the majority went to members of their families or to their homes.

The markets remained closed and the Jews stayed at home or circulated amongst their needy families.

Wednesday, 4th June. At 8 o'clock in the morning, Yusuf Elkabir, Yusuf Aboudi, Abraham Haim Muallem Nissim, and Ezra Menahem Daniel came to our office. We were invited by the special request of Arshad Umari. Rabbi Sasson was invited, but said that his house was full of wounded people asking for help and he could not leave his post. The rabbi did not move from his house for eight days, and at his side were

Continued overleaf

The Diary of Abraham Twena, *continued*.

helpers and messengers to every place required. People did not leave his house but at time of curfew. Arshad was late in coming and those present began summarising the past events. Their words cast light on what had happened.

Yusuf Elkabir demanded acting forcibly; he said we had nothing to lose according to his investigation. "All the factors were joined together so that the pogrom should take place. I know that Arshad is a strong man, and it is impossible that such things should happen while the government is in his hands. The chief of police, who was one of the security committee members ordered the proclamation of a state of war; but Arshad would not agree. *He would not say explicitly that the Regent and the British prevented him from doing so, but all the signs showed that the agents wanted to let the Iraqi people find an outlet for themselves in riots against the Jews, and not fight the British. We must do all in our power for the wounded, and as speedily as possible.*"

Yusuf Aboudi said that the chief of police had sent forces at the command of his faithful deputy and they were guarding the market entrances, not letting anyone enter, and thus he saved the commerce and the Jewish merchants. We shall turn to those who were not injured and ask them to aid the wounded and to rehabilitate them.

The standing question was:—If the Jews had not gone to welcome the Regent, would the pogrom have been avoided? The first to reply to this question was Abraham Haim who had heard these things from his neighbours. He said that the rioters had started organizing on Saturday evening; it was notified to the police and security officials, and they ordered the laying of a curfew and the arrest of a number of men, but those responsible behind the scenes said that this would bring the matter to the boil. *It was better to wait till they should begin, to arrest them in the act.* Eighteen hours passed between the organization and the reception because they had all gathered at Bab El Sheikh on the other side of the town.

At 9.20 Arshad Umari appeared; he started attacking himself by saying, "I started well, but the end was bad. The state today is in faithful hands, and today I hold the position of mayor and chairman of the Red Crescent Association, I am at your disposal. All the amounts that were contributed in the month of May and have not yet been paid are dedicated to the benefit of those wounded. He appointed me manager of the storehouse and wanted to co-operate with Red Crescent officials to offer aid to the wounded. He said that the numbers that had reached him were about 100 Jews murdered, and about 2,000 injured, and the plunder was estimated at 1½ million dinars. Of the Moslems, 800 had died and many were wounded. And at last he concluded, saying, "We could have managed even without pogroms." Amongst those present, Yusuf Elkabir was extremely angry and said, "If the sacrifices which took place were for the good of the state we would not complain, but they put the name of the state to shame. Arshad replied: "And everything has fallen on my head."

Friday, 6th June. All public places were free from Jews. The wounded and robbed returned to their homes or to the homes of relatives. The government strengthened the guard of Jewish streets. The chief of police was dismissed and in his place was Ahmed Rawi and Ali Hijazi, director of the desert police was appointed over Baghdad, and order was restored to the town. Both of them gave orders that anyone feeling the lack of security should go in to them and they would help him. Rabbi Sasson was in contact with them the whole month.

8th June. The government set up a committee on the authority of Maaruf Jiyawiq, the high court judge (a Kurd of pleasant manners and a sympathizer of Jews) to investigate the affair and to recommend ways of rehabilitating the injured. The government also gave out the order that anyone returning the plundered goods need not be identified and that he should bring them to the Mamuniah school or place them in the streets so that the government might collect them. The government set the period for so doing until the end of June.

22nd June. News of the German invasion into Russia gave out a new lease of life; that same afternoon Jamil El Midfaai spoke with Rabbi Sasson and said to him: "Tell your Community to open up their businesses and shops, and not to paralyse the city. He, in the position of Prime Minister, would intervene so that no trouble would be caused them."

Rabbi Sasson invited, as was his custom, a number of

people and repeated the words of the Prime Minister for the benefit of all those who were called to him. Those people who were tired of lying idle opened up their shops. Some began rebuilding the ruins.

23rd June. I received a telephone call from Rabbi Sasson to come to his house. There I saw Yusuf Elkabir, Moshi Yatah, Menashe Sehaiq, Meir Dangoor, Ezra Iny, Menashe Paniri, Abraham Shamia and Kedouri Shukhur. Yusuf Elkabir told me that now a committee had been appointed to collect money for the rehabilitation of the wounded and I had been chosen as secretary.

I accepted the assignment and appointed myself two helpers—Anwar Musafi and Salman Khdhair.

The committee categorized the merchants and estimated that it could collect fifty thousand dinars. It lay a payment on 20 people of 1,000 dinars each. On 40 it lay 500 dinars, and 10,000 dinars from the rest of the merchants.

Yusuf Elkabir himself visited the large ones; he received pledges from three people of a thousand dinars. These were Ezra Menahem Daniel, Kedouri and Ezra Lawi and Kedouri Zilkha, and the fourth in line was Menashe Saleh.

Menashe Saleh, a well-known philanthropist, would not accept the notion of being told how much to pay. He claimed that he was rehabilitating whole families and was uninterested in the committee.

Members of the committee, and at its head, Yusuf Elkabir, were insulted and decided not to turn to anyone else until they would receive the thousand dinars from Menashe Saleh.

The work of the committee was paralysed through honour; Yusuf Elkabir was unable to accept that he should not be hurt by people who refused to contribute. He at once ordered Menashe Saleh to pay the amount—and exactly!

29th June. The government cut off relations with Japan and prices rose tremendously and everyone who had merchandize benefited although his goods were not sold. The abundance began to show signs.

Meir Dangoor, who had experience with contributors told the committee: "We must not wait; continue to give us the authority to go round and get contributions; every minute is precious; we cannot still go according to criteria. He and Menashe Paniri began circulating amongst the merchants, receiving pledges from them, transferring them to us, while we, receipts in hand, went and collected the money. Each merchant pledged all that was within his power."

"7 Tammuz 5701"

This evening was considered the 30th day for all those murdered. Families gathered in the houses of those killed for remembrance ceremonies. I took part in that of my uncle, Ezekiel Twena, who was murdered on the second day of Shabuoth on his way home from synagogue.

30th June. The government extended the time of returning property for another fifteen days. The ministers and officials who had fled to Persia were brought like lumps to Iraq after Britain and Russia occupied Persia, and only the Mufti and Rashid Ali managed to escape to Berlin.

The head of the Community set up a committee for the division of money between the wounded.

The members of the committee were: Ezra Hadad, Benjamin Aslan, Salman Shahreban, Haron Bursnan, Ezekiel Ezra Hagouli, Sion Jiji, and Abraham Musliah.

20th July. Today Yunus Sabawi and two of his friends were hanged in the streets of the town, and from the army camp four officers who were called the Golden Square. Likewise Haj Amin Huseini, the Jerusalem Mufti, and Rashid Ali were condemned to death in absentia. The remaining ministers were sentenced to life imprisonment and to fifteen years.

27th July. Today six of the rioters were hanged.

4th August. Moshi Yatah returned on 2.8.41. Maaruf Jiyawiq wanted to meet him and confer with him. The three of us went over to him today at 8 o'clock, Yatah, Jacob Ezekiel, and myself.

Yatah, as his custom, spoke openly and hid nothing of what had happened that same month. Finally Maaruf asked him what his opinion of Arshad was, if he were responsible for the pogrom. Yatah answered him thus:—"Only the British are responsible in the matter." Five days after the pogrom, an Arab went up to Daud El Haidari and gave him a revolver saying that he was afraid to hand it over to the police. When Daud El Haidari asked him how he came into possession of the revolver, he answered that an official at the British Embassy handed him the revolver on Sunday, 1.6.41, and a

shot-gun to one of his friends, telling them, today you will be in need of these arms and I have already handed them out to six other men.

Daud El Haidari did not wish to deepen his investigation; Yatah asked him why he would not question him. He answered "All this has come from the British, and no-one will admit that it has come from the British. At the moment we have no time to get involved in any conflict with them and it is better to keep quiet."

The Judge wanted to understand whether Arshad would have been able to prevent this, Yatah said: Arshad no longer had the authority; the authority was in the hands of the Regent Abdul Ilah.

21st August. It was known that the government hid the report of Maaruf Jiyawiq in its sitting yesterday. When it was told to Yusuf Elkabir, he asked Rabbi Sasson to make an appointment with the Prime Minister.

25th August. After the meeting with the Prime Minister, the following picture was received:—

Jamil El Midfai summarized the matter thus:—"There is no man like me or better to care for the Jews. The incident occurred while the government was being transferred from hand to hand. No-one wanted to accept the responsibility of sending in forces.

"The circulation or the hiding of the report would not change a thing. We must think to the future to rehabilitate the wounded, to the care of the orphans, and to see that the occurrence will not make any difference. If things will rest in the past, and people brought to judgment it will only bring harm to the Jews."

"The military court continues and passes sentence on the rioters where it is proved that they indeed took part in the terrors. Everyone will receive just punishment, and it is worth the Community's while to turn its face to other affairs, and I personally am prepared to help, be the matter large or small.

"The responsible officials, whom I have appointed, are engaged only for the Jews' benefit."

Moshi Yatah summarized his words thus:—"If there is no profit from all this, it is our duty to respect Jamil El Midfai who has continually defended the Jews out of conviction that it is for the benefit of the State of Iraq and of the Jews.

2nd September. Today the schools were opened. The teachers had not received their wages for five months. We were able to collect money from the pupils who had not been injured.

I received instructions to leave the payments open.

1st December. Today we had an interim account:
(a) killed 167.
(b) injured 2,118.
(c) number of persons whose property was stolen about 40,000.

The sympathy of the Jews for their brethren was worthy of praise, especially from those in the middle classes. The women did a fine job in matters of rehabilitation. With the advent of winter all the injured and needy had been cared for ☉

SPOT AN ANCESTOR

We recently obtained from the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, a complete register of the Community in 1892 in connection with the assessment of military tax. Persons were graded from 30 piastres down to one piastre; those in the top grades being:

Joseph-Ezra Abraham Gabbai
(Joseph Gurji, uncle of David Sassoon)
Meir Eliahou Shlomo Dawid
Ezra Dawid Heskel Hayim
Ezra Isaac Saleh
Moshi Joseph Baher
Menashi Meir Shashoua
Eliahou Isaac Somekh
Joseph Elia Shaoul
Moshi Hayim Sabha
Joseph Eliahou Abraham
Moshiah Yonah
Shaoul Shmuel Chitayat
Saleh Abdulla Chitayat

We shall publish in future issues selections from the register in alphabetical order which should make interesting reading and should enable one to spot an ancestor or relative ☉

COOKERY CORNER

KICHREE

by **Gastronome**

Kichree, or kedgeree, is a rice dish that derives from India where it is eaten mainly for breakfast. The rice should be well dried so that it can absorb a good deal of butter which improves the dish.

Fish kedgeree has always been popular in England for Sunday breakfast. When well made it is suitable for a party dish for luncheon or supper. Fish and rice ought to be in equal proportions, the most suitable fish being smoked haddock.

Oriental kichree is made without fish. In the Baghdad version, garlic and cumin are fried, at the last minute, and added to the dish. The sharp, distinctive, aroma sets the palate for the enjoyment of the dish. In London the best kichree supper is served by Mrs. L. B., a hostess of international standards.

Kichree

1 lb. Patna rice
 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. lentils
 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. clarified butter
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon cumin
salt

Put the butter into a deep pan, and when boiling hot throw in the rice (which should be well washed in cold water and then drained). Fry till a deep golden brown, drain off the fat, and to the rice add the lentils (which should have been previously boiled), with sufficient salt to taste. Mix well and cover with boiling water. Place on a slow fire, repeatedly stirring till rice and lentils are quite cooked. Drain off any remaining water, place the pan, tilted up, on one corner of the stove, and shake well from time to time to separate the grains of rice. With the fat previously drained off, fry the garlic and cumin, pour over rice and lentils and stir. Serve in a hot dish.

Yoghurt or laban (drained yoghurt) make a good addition to kichree but hot double cream is even better. Another good accompaniment is *Hallumi* cheese fried with slices of onions and tomatoes.

Fish kedgeree

1 lb. rice
1 onion, finely chopped
 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. butter
1 lb. cooked fish, free from skin and bone and flaked
4 hard boiled eggs
seasoning
4 tablespoons cream
3 tablespoons chopped parsley

Put rice into pan of salted boiling water, and boil briskly for 12 minutes. Drain rice thoroughly, return to a dry saucepan and set on side of stove for another 15 minutes, shaking frequently. Meantime chop onion finely, soften in the butter without browning. Add the fish and hard-boiled eggs. Mix and heat thoroughly. Season well, add rice, and stir with a fork till very hot. At the last moment stir in the cream, turn at once into a hot dish and sprinkle with chopped parsley ☉

OBITUARY

Mr. ABRAHAM ELKABIR

by Prof. Elie Kedourie

Mr. Abraham Elkabir, O.B.E., died in London on 22nd May, 1973. With his passing away there disappears yet one more prominent member of the Baghdad Jewish community.

Abraham Elkabir was born in Baghdad on 8th July, 1885, the son of Saleh Heskell-Ezra Abraham Heskell Elkabir. He belongs to a generation which enjoyed the excellent educational opportunities provided by the Alliance Israelite Universelle, as well as those which the Ottoman state, under the far-sighted impulsion of Sultan Abd Al-Hamid II, was increasingly providing for its subjects. The Baghdad Jewish community produced in his generation a number of men, among whom he was one of the most eminent, who by their abilities, education and openness to the world, could provide leadership of a high order in

eminent career in the service of the Iraqi state in which, for almost thirty years, Abraham Elkabir devoted his great abilities to the creation of an orderly system of public finance for the new state. He was accountant-general in 1927-1934, and director-general of the ministry of finance for long periods thereafter. He played a prominent part in many national and international financial negotiations: he represented Iraq in the financial negotiations connected with the Treaty of Lausanne which settled the issues pending between the Allies and the Ottoman Empire and its successor, Turkey; towards the end of the second world war he represented Iraq at the Dumbarton Oaks conference which created the post-war world monetary system; he played a large part in the replacement of the Indian rupee by the dinar, the Iraqi national currency; he organised the flotation of the first public loan promoted by the Iraqi government; and collaborated in the foundation of the national bank of Iraq. This brief conspectus of his services to the state will indicate how great these



Mr. Abraham Elkabir, seated in the centre, with his staff, photographed in 1933, 40 years ago, when he was Chief Accountant of the Iraq Government.

communal and public affairs. The tragedy of the community is that political disorder in the Middle East and the world at large in the end made the efforts of these men come to nought.

After the Young Turk revolution of 1908 he formed, together with a number of his friends, a committee dedicated to the encouragement and improvement of education within the community. He was also taken up by the Nazim Pasha who served as *vali* of Baghdad in 1910-11, and who consulted him on many reform projects.

During the first world war Abraham Elkabir was appointed liquidator of enemy concerns taken over by the state. After the war and the formation of the kingdom of Iraq his services were secured for the ministry of finance by the minister, Sir Sason Heskell, who had him appointed as assistant accountant-general in 1921. This was the beginning of a long and

services were; they are rendered more remarkable by the fact that a high public servant of his ability, integrity and patriotism was the exception rather than the rule in a country where political venality and corruption ran rife, and where high office was usually the reward not of ability, but of intrigue and conspiracy.

Together with his friend Gourgi Haim he was a mainstay of the education committee of the Jewish community which cared for, developed and constantly improved a remarkable network of schools which were, by common consent, the best schools in the country.

He is survived by wife Renée (née Elias), his son Jemil, a fellow of St. Peter's College, Oxford, and his daughter Aïda. It is understood that he bequeathed his papers to the Or-Yehuda Iraqi Traditional Culture Centre, Tel-Aviv ●