

Contrasts Between Israel's Chief Cities

By IRVING FELLNER

Although Haifa, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv are geographically very near each other, they differ markedly in their characteristic features. In this interesting article, Mr. Fellner discusses these differences and opines they are such that the three cities almost belong to countries far apart. — Editor.

ISRAEL is a very small State compared to most countries in the world. Yet, strangely enough, her major cities are greatly similar and each has a distinct personality. Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem might each be thousands of miles apart, so diverse are their characters. Of the three, the one that belongs most to Israel is Haifa. Tel Aviv and even Jerusalem, could be located elsewhere, but not Haifa. Anyone who has ever read the exciting stories of Israel's pioneers and their epic struggle to build a new life; anyone who has heard their proud songs and dances, feels that Haifa is their home.

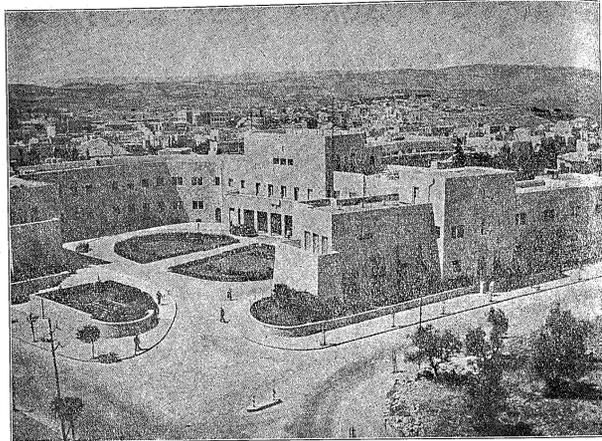
The Port of Haifa

It is pleasant to walk through Haifa, and one can see a great deal of the city in a short time. Starting high up on Mount Carmel with its beautiful homes and famous restaurants, one can walk down the steep, twisting road to the Mediterranean in a few hours. From Mount Carmel the panoramic view is breath-taking, with the blue Mediterranean twinkling between the white of the houses. The city itself looks like a scrubbed baby in its whiteness. Although Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer is building an elegant theatre in the heart of the city, and the Haifa Technical College is striking architecturally, most buildings are unpretentious.

The main streets are wide. In contrast to the levelness of Tel Aviv, one is always walking uphill or downhill in Haifa. Down past the main streets of the city, lined with their small and neat shops, the roads wind and turn in descent. The approach to their harbor once was announced by barbed wire and sand bags mutilating the streets. The port was the life-line of the British in Palestine and the many soldiers guarding it mirrored their fear. Although the British made commerce difficult with their many restrictions, the port area continued to expand and it is expected, some day, to be the New York of the Middle East. Here, a dreamer as well as a practical man can visualize the tremendous growth which is inevitable. For that reason, the lovely workers' communities in the suburbs of Haifa are rapidly expanding. Jewish Haifa remains rough and friendly, and the pioneer spirit is still dominant. One hopes that, somehow, it will remain a city of pioneers, even when she will take her place as a leading world port.



"It is pleasant to walk through Haifa."



"Jerusalem is really two distinct cities."

Holy Jerusalem

Jerusalem is really two distinct cities, as many people learned for the first time when the Arabs captured the Old City. The Old City, as its name implies, is composed of the edifices of antiquity. There is a great deal of historical and religious value to this section, surrounded and separated from modern Jerusalem by thick walls of cracked stone. Jews and Arabs live in the poor houses lining the narrow, dirty streets, and here are concentrated the majority of the very religious Jews of Israel. Men in long beards and Hasidic attire, and young boys wearing forbidding black hats over their curled sideburns move to and from the synagogue all day.

Around the Old City stretches modern Jerusalem, first started by Sir Moses Montefiore. Although the New City is much like the other cities of Israel, it maintains a subdued dignity which is anomalous to the carefree spirit of the native Israeli. Quietest of the cities and the least spirited, Jerusalem suggests the spiritual values her history connotes. The main streets are lined with attractive stores, and modern apartment houses look strong and clean. Some of the residential sections are inhabited by both Arabs and Jews, one of the reasons Jerusalem is so difficult to defend. Before the outbreak of hostilities, Jewish defenders had to guard individual houses surrounded by Arab neighbors. Now the lines have become fixed, with Jews evacuating certain points and Arabs fleeing other districts.

One might consider Jerusalem a combination of Washington and any university town. The Jewish Agency, a modern, low-roofed, horseshoe-shaped set of buildings, contain hundreds of offices. The Hebrew University on Mount Scopus, and Hadassah Hospital a little way off, also provide for many of the city's inhabitants. Through the beautiful halls of the four or five buildings of the university, pass students from every part of Israel as well as from many other countries. Built with American money, the university looks down on the heart of the city, and has one of the loveliest campuses in the world. About 15 minutes' walk away is Hadassah Hospital, the best hospital in the Middle East. Her staff is composed of important names in European

medicine, who fled from persecution. Lacking industry, and careful in its use of water, which must be pumped for many miles over the mountains, Jerusalem is, nevertheless, a popular vacation resort during the summer. Situated in the mountains, it is comparatively cool in summer and even sees snow about once a year.

Modern Tel Aviv

Tel Aviv is the centre of Israel's economy as well as her new culture. It is a very busy city, with hurrying business people and shoppers filling the downtown streets during the day. In the evening, the streets refill with the entertainment minded, and Tel Aviv is well prepared to satisfy their appetites. Besides many movie houses, which show mostly American films, with French or German as well as the Hebrew translation, there are a number of legitimate theatres which present the offerings of the high calibre dramatic groups. In addition, the excellent Palestine Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as programs by visiting artists, provide a variety of stimuli for appreciative audiences. Night clubs resemble our second-class ones, and American music is played for the most of the evening. In the daytime, one can visit the museums and become acquainted with the efforts of Israeli artists. The homes of Chaim Nahman Bialik and Ahad Ha'am, past literary greats, are now public museums. In the summer the people crowd the white beaches and cool off in the Mediterranean. A miniature Coney Island, with rides and games, lines the beach streets. For children, Tel Aviv offers a very respectable Zoo.

Tel Aviv is cosmopolitan. So much so that she could easily be mistaken for a European city. More German, French and English are heard on the streets here than anywhere else in Israel. The wearing of ties, a custom Israelis resisted for decades, is gaining in popularity in Tel Aviv. European type of cafes dot the streets, and for the price of a cup of tea or coffee one can sit at a table and read newspapers or play chess all day. Book and newspaper stalls, a la Paris, feature Hebrew magazines and pocket-book editions of American best-sellers translated into Hebrew. Because Tel Aviv is the only all-Jewish city in the world, arriving there is always an emotional experience for a Jew. She has often been spoken of as the most beautiful city in the world — her people are certain of it.

Pesach Thoughts Dwell On A Tale

The Story of the Four Sons -- A Beloved Pesach Tale

By MAURICE SAMUEL



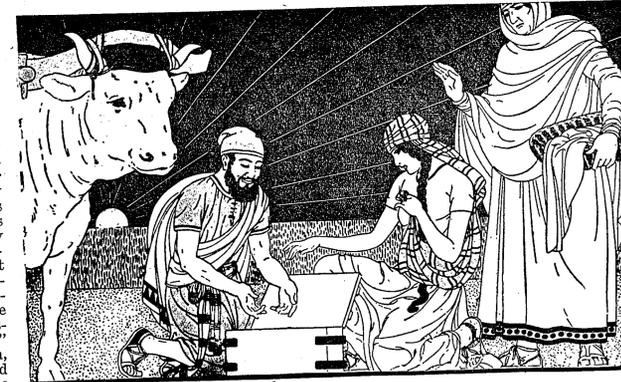
MAURICE SAMUEL

AS a child I often used to wonder why the writers of the Haggadah had picked on exactly four sons — especially since it was my impression that in ancient times no self-respecting Jew had less than a round dozen. I was slightly dissatisfied, too, with their arrangement. It seemed to me that the wise son did not, in the question addressed to his father, display any unusual brilliance; the wicked son, who said "your customs" instead of "our customs" was, it is true, a trifle stand-offish, but not to a degree which merited the punishment indicated in the text: a retort so devastating that

his teeth figuratively fell out. The simple son, who inquired vaguely, "What's all this about?" was in character, but the fourth son, who never opened his mouth, except presumably for the four cups of wine, was a disgrace to the Jewish people. I resented such dumbness in Israel, and wondered where the sages had picked up the half-wit. Surely not among the Jews.

As I grew older, and began to realize that in ancient times things were written more carefully than today, I looked more closely into these four children who, from year to year, never grew any older, and I have become reconciled to them as the four and only genuine types of mind. As in so many other instances to be found in our ancient writings, a trifling fable is the resume of a great deal of thought and feeling; and behind a playful facade there is concealed a world of experience.

I have acquired a modified liking for the wise son. True, his brief line may be read to mean anything. But he is called the wise son because he makes inquiry in a positive spirit. He takes for granted only the process which is summarized in the Seder. He feels his kinship. And yet he permits to inquire. He represents a great deal that is Jewish, both in himself and in the way he is presented. He is the intellectual freeman, never discouraged by the Jews, if only one thing is taken for granted — namely, that he is to remain Jewish.



Drawn from the rushes — Moses is found by the daughter of the Pharaoh

The second son, who used to arouse my sympathy largely because of the unfriendly atmosphere in which he moved, is even more familiar to me than the first. I have met him in a thousand places. He also inquires, but not for the purpose of increasing the affirmative things in life. He is the Verneiner. Of course he always has an excellent excuse: "You must destroy before you can build," he says, "I only inquire because I want to get at the truth." And sometimes he means this; but most of the time he is only a pretentious nuisance. He has no interest in the subject; he asks questions to annoy, and not to get at the truth. In the last analysis, if you manage to convince him that something is true, he will finish up cleverly by asking: "Ah well, what is truth?"

I have met him at Zionist meetings. He always rises to inquire what sense there is in our remaining Jews at all, as though this question had any meaning for a Jew. He pops up now and again in magazine articles, an "objective observer." He does not get excited; he sees coldly in the heart of things. He calls it self-control, and everyone knows that it is indifference. It is bad to argue with such a man, except for the purpose of wasting time. I have often felt that the sages were mistaken in taking him seriously, and in according him the distinction of a considered retort. It is very bad to lose your temper with this person; for nothing delights him more than to see you in a rage.

The tam, the simpleton, is a neutral. He asks neither positively nor negatively. He is merely bewildered. Something is going on around him. A people is celebrating its liberation; a thousand memories are evoked by a complicated oriental symbolism. He is interested as a child is interested. It would seem that he finds the whole business quite charming, and given a chance, he will develop an affectionate attitude toward the masses. Among all peoples the masses are neutral, at least as far as their conscious perception is concerned. It is true that the masses furnish the substance of a people; by mere dint of numbers they fashion a pattern. But they are unaware of the forces which they represent, and which mould their lives. They ask, in the simplest way, and are ready to listen. They are the material on which teachers can work best and most fruitfully. The wise son's question is formal; he knows the answer at least as well as his father. What he is after is something deeper, and he will discover it for himself. The bad son's question is a teaser. He, too, knows the answer his father will give him, and has the second objection (and the third, fourth and fifth) on the tip of his tongue. Only the tam's question is forthright and heartfelt. His mind is limited, but the good impulse is there.

The fourth son, the half-wit who does not open his mouth, is the lost soul. He is too sunk in business to have even a perfunctory interest. Born without much stamina, he has been so battered about by the ordinary problem of making a living, or of accumulating money, that he has become impervious even to curiosity. He watches things in a dull hebetude to which large problems cannot penetrate. It was charity alone which prompted the sages to say: "Open his mouth for him." Here and there, among these thousands of the sunk, lingers a last glimmer which the breath of inquiry might yet fan into warmth. The attempt is worth while, though the returns are rare.

I need hardly say that of the four sons I like the third, the simpleton, best. Like the English word 'simpleton,' the Hebrew word 'tam' has many fine implications: simplicity and wholeness and integrity are among them. It is a wicked world which has degraded both 'simpleton' and 'tam.' The simpleton is not eaten up by curiosity like the wise son (who may yet come to bad end), nor filled with intellectual rancour, like the wicked son, whose path is the path of Elisha ben Abuya. Nor has he become "goofy," like the fourth. He is filled with wonder. He does not really ask for explanations of the ultimate. He wants to be told in a general, normal way the relationship of daily things to the superb and fascinating pageantry of the Seder table.

Try as I will, I cannot think up a fifth type of intellectual reaction to Jewish life. On other planes the types are innumerable, but as often as I create a new mental approach to our history, I discover it, upon analysis, to be a combination of two or more of the four immortal sons. I do not know whether the exact authorship of that passage in the Haggadah is known; but even if some name is attached to it, I doubt whether it

(Continued on page 22)



The Seder Table — the silent moment