

IN MEMORY OF



SHALOM NAMALI

SHALOM NAMALI (PORT)

Shalom, grew up and reached maturity within the framework of the English movement. He reached his adolescence at a bitter period for World Jewry, during the nineteen forties.

The frenzy of World War II was sweeping across the face of Europe, and day by day the flame of resistance was being extinguished in State after State. The Nazi armed forces gained control of Countries and Nations, brutally subjugating them, and began annihilating the Jewish Population. England remained a lone light in the grey fog, and the English Nation decided to continue fighting and not to submit. The spirit of British society penetrated into the ranks of British Jewry and to their central youth movement, "Habonim."

At the time when many of the movement's leaders and senior members were being called up for military service, many of the younger members stepped forward to replace those who had left.

Shalom was a member of this schichvah.

He joined the Habonim **Hachhasrah** on Eder Farm, which was situated in the South of Kent, opposite the northern coast of occupied France.

The group on the **Hachsharah** stood together during the darkest days of the war. Working to exhaustion during the day and standing guard duty at night within the framework of the British Home Guards.

A strong character and lack of fear were prerequisites to continued existence under these conditions. Shalom was amongst those few chaverim who bore the yoke of the **chevra** and who did much to order and unify the chaverim. He continued to bear this burden despite deteriorating health.

He absorbed the best of English culture and way of life in England. With his bright sense of humor he helped to disperse

the fears and burdensome worries of the **chaverim**, though he knew what life meant, its lights and shadows. Witness to this many wonderful stories and articles scattered throughout the English movement publications of the period.

After spending four years at Eder Farm, Shalom, at the end of the war, immigrated to Israel, where he was amongst the founders of Kibbutz Kfar Hanassi. In Israel as in the diaspora, Shalom continued to work for his community: and to enjoy the company of his friends.

Shalom was of the first generation of those born in England, he was a symbol that the chain stretched from Russia and Poland has not been broken, but has had new links added to strengthen the **chalutzic** strivings of the Jewish people.

He himself gave expression to this in the pages of "Binyan," which he edited during the last months of his life.

All those who knew Shalom, will see in him a symbol of the generation of English Jews, who did not lose faith in the face of difficult public and personal life, but paved a road for himself and for others — for the State of Israel.

BARUCH TAL

ISRAELI TAKES A REST

Very little is known about that admirable institution of Kupath Holim, the Beth Havra'ah. I feel it my duty, after a short visit to one, to drag it out of obscurity and give it the publicity it deserves. There must be close on twenty, if not more, of these Batei-Havra'ah in Israel, all situated in the most delightful spots: close to the sea: on the crest of a wind-swept mountain: in or near a large town; or isolated in the green splendour of some old, long established kibbutz.

It is difficult to define the Beth Havra'ah as I don't think it's equivalent exists outside this country. It is as if a rest home and convalescent home had been poured into a luxury hotel, spiced with liberal doses of Butlin's Holiday Camp and garnished with a soupcon of Miami or Westcliff beach. (South African or Australian readers will have to find their own beaches). If my lucid description of a Beth Havra'ah is still unclear to a few dimwits amongst my readers I can only suggest that they cease nodding their tired heads over this paper and take up something more bracing like 'Little Orphan Annie'.

Any person in this country who is a member of Kupath Holim, the Histadruth health service (and has paid his dues), is eligible for vacation at a Beth Havra'ah. In many of the large firms, each worker has a small sum deducted from his monthly wage-pocket, which is placed in a fund especially devoted to this purpose. At the end of the year, the Israeli worker, leaves his job in the factory, in the mines, the fields, the railway, the buses, the office and the operating table or the science lab., packs his bag with best clothes and departs for the Beth Havra'ah, where he may spend a week, ten days or even more. Many people, after operations, also, take advantage of this scheme and spend their convalescent period at one.

We 'poor' kibbutznickim, although members of Kupath Holim, have no special fund set up for this purpose and the number of kibbutznickim sent to a Beth Havra'ah each year depends upon the financial straits of each individual kibbutz. Many of the older kibbutzim, being relatively well-to-do, are able to send their members at least once in two years. On the other hand, the younger kibbutzim are rarely in the position where they can afford it, and only special cases, such as convalescents, are sent.

Being a member of a younger kibbutz, I was lucky, or unlucky enough (see above) to have the privilege of being sent to a B.H. For weeks beforehand I was very busy; shirts had to be cleaned and ironed; socks patched darned; jacket taken out of mothballs; trousers borrowed or stolen; cases taken down from dusty attics to be examined and rejected. By the time I was ready to leave the wife was in hysterics, the children black and blue, the dog had taken cover under the house and the furniture reduced to a mass of splintered matchwood. Although I am a calm and gentle soul, I did lose my temper slightly, when I found that a razor blade was missing. At last I left on the six o'clock bus, destination Haifa, with half the kibbutz at the bus stop waving farewell, and smiling fondly, (or were those first clenched and those mouths snarling viciously?)

I finally reached my destination about noon; a large, numerous-storied building that, during the Mandatory period, had been a luxury hotel for rich tourists and Government officials. It had been bought by Kupath Holim and now converted into a Beth Havra'ah. As I walked up the wooded drive I encountered a resident who, after extracting my life story, informed me that only a few years ago, these very flagstones had been trodden by the pampered rich and that now, we,

the proletariat had taken over. That in those rooms above, where once the bloated plutocrat had staged wild orgies we, the proletariat and the peasants are now taking a well earned rest and discussing cabbages and machine tools.

I waved him a fond farewell as he climbed into his car, ordering his chauffeur to take him into town and I continued up the drive and into the impressive foyer of the ex-hotel. Thick luxurious carpets under feet, well padded armchairs, sofas and settees placed under the colourful paintings or by the side of low, coffee tables; their marble or glass surfaces reflecting the subdued, coloured lighting. To one side stands a long mahogany counter and reception desk, dominated by an impressive rack of pigeon holes and keyrings, left over, presumably, from the degenerate plutocrat days.

Technicalities over, such as paying up, registering, being measured, fingerprinted and photographed, I was escorted to the lift by a pretty nurse, but not before running the gauntlet of a thousand, penetrating eyes who judged, weighed, determined my social status and approved or condemned — all within a timeless moment. There are four storeys to the hotel, three of them devoted to living rooms and the fourth, or ground floor to dining room and general communal rooms. I was escorted to the third floor by my pretty companion, drifted along miles of richly carpeted corridors, passed alcoves filled with armchairs, tables, flowers and absorbed chess players and finally arrived at my room.

Inside the room I was greeted by my room-mates, a pleasant enough pair, one a carpenter from Jerusalem and the other a hospital orderly from Tel-Aviv, the first born in Poland and the second in Yemen. Here, perhaps, one may find the true gathering of exiles. Under this roof one may find a product of every country under the sun, representing every grade and

walk of life. There is the labourer from the Potash works, the Government telephone designer from Lydda, the doctor from Hadera, the mechanic from Acre, the grizzled farmer from Nahalal, the bank-clerk from Beersheva, the kibbutznick from the Negev and the M.K. from Jerusalem. Young and old, male and female, from Russia, Yemen, England, Lithuania, America, Irak and India — they all find their way to the Beth Havra'ah. In the last year or so one finds an innovation in the social structure of the Beth Havra'ah — the presence of the Israeli Arab. Since the Histadruth opened it's ranks to the Israeli Arab, he also takes a well earned vacation at the B.H. where he tries to converse in Yiddish with the Polish building worker.

Despite the picture painted above I would not like to give the impression that everything in the B.H. community life is rosy. One finds the Ashkenazi doctor complaining of the increase in 'dark faces', year by year. How he pines for the old days when the dominant second language was Yiddish and not Arabic as it is today; when the wireless blared out Western tunes instead of the Arabic dirges; when a social evening ended with a staid waltz and muted strings instead of a wild Debka and drum beats. But I believe that this outlook is gradually disappearing, particularly with the younger folk, who have been educated together in the same schools, speak the same language, have the same background and above all, have trained together in that rigorous school — the Israeli Army.

Choice of room-mate can make or break one's stay at a B.H. Despite their variegated origin I have managed to divide them into two simple grades — Snorers and Non-snorers. If your room-mates are non-snorers your stay is a guaranteed success. Category 2, subgrade 1 — Light Snorers, may irritate but are sufferable. It's Category 2, subgrade 2 — Medium & Heavy Snorers that one has to fear and shun. They are usually

small, round, large-chested men with rubicund features and pleasant smiles. At about midnight, when you turn out the light and snuggle happily into the bed-clothes the programme starts. Light grunt from one bed answered immediately by clearing of throat from the other. The symphony or tone poem begins when a small compressor pipes out the main theme which is taken up and developed by a light machine gun. The music reaches it's crescendo as the room shakes and groans to the percussion and thunder of the big guns. There are numerous variations on the ordinary back of the throat snore, such as the chocked in the nose; full, rounded straight from the chest; long drawn-out whistle and grunt and others. The nasal virtuosos may prove to be very crafty because once you grasp the rhythm and lull yourself to sleep on its wave they will change the beat and adopt a completely new timing.

The routine at the B.H. is a very simple one. Breakfast between seven to nine, milk and cake at ten, dinner at twelve-thirty, tea and cake at four, supper at seven, light drink at ten and in bed by eleven. In between one rests in the morning, sleeps in the afternoon and participates in some organised activity in the evening. Two or three times a week there is some organised outing in the morning to an interesting spot in the area, be it a trip round the bay, a visit to a local beauty spot or archeological dig, or just a tour of a wellknown institution. On the staff there is usually a full-time cultural organizer who conducts the tours, arranges the evening programmes and sporting activities, works up joke sessions, dances and games and supervises the library.

The library itself is something of a surprise. One pushes open two green, plush doors and steps into a large, low-ceilinged room connected by an arched doorway to a smaller room. The walls are of red and blue plush; the smooth mosaic floor

dotted with white and blue leather-and-plush chairs; the arched alcoves furnished with comfortable settees and coffee tables. Dominating all is the long, polished mahogany bar, complete with brass foot-rail, that takes up the length of one room. One goes up to the bar, places a foot on the rail and, as if by instinct, orders a whisky. The organizer, who has heard this witticism a thousand times before, smiles wearily and opens the gaily decorated cupboards, to reveal — a well-stocked library. One is then told that this room and bar is a left-over from the time of the plutocrats, but now . . .

The food is always excellent and served in a large, airy dining-room that holds some 150 people; from the long, bay windows one has a magnificent view of hilly, woody Haifa and the shimmering deep-blue sea. Here too, the choice of eating companions can make or mar one's stay. My companions were a large matronly woman with a limited vocabulary and the appetite of a horse; a thin cadaverous man with a large vocabulary, a shaky hand and a number of teeth missing; a small, plump, red-faced man proved to be the local know-all and Good-time Charlie. He asked me who I was and where I came from; I opened my mouth to tell him and found that he had vanished. He had just popped over to an old acquaintance some 20 tables away. He was back within a minute and I began again; only to find that he was off on another social call. Meanwhile Thin-man opposite began to talk through his missing teeth. After wiping the fine spray of soup from my shirt-front I found that the lady of few words had swiped all the greens. Meanwhile, Charlie was leaning over my shoulder shouting to the person behind me; Thin-man deposited an extra layer of potatoes over the soup on my shirt-front and knocked over the water carafe; Silent-matron was sidling my meat from its place on the tray; Thin-man added dessert to the goodies on my

shirt-front; Charlie disappeared under the table and I silently slid plump matron's meat on to my own plate. Altogether a battle for existence.

Apart from the dining room and the bar there are numerous other communal rooms at the disposal of residents; one, complete with stage, is used for performances, recitals and lectures that are part of the evening programme; another, the reading room, containing all the local papers, games and of course — the radio. I would obtain a programme on some foreign station and would be swamped by numerous anxious enquiries as to whether "that was Kol Yisroel". I would reply in the negative and they would shake admonishing fingers, obtain Kol Yisroel — and walk out. I would sneak over to the radio and get my programme back, only to be pounced upon once more with the same question. The enquirers, once Kol Yisroel had been returned, would inevitably leave immediately or fall asleep in their armchairs. The reason for this fixation appears to be that they are frightened that they will miss the news, be it only one minute or four hours away: there is no more avid news listener in the world than the Israeli.

Round the main building are spacious grounds, covered with lawns, woods and well-kept flower beds. Dotted amongst the trees are various outdoor games, such as a croquet lawn, handball court, ping-pong table and others. The social life of the residents is carried on in the shade of the trees. Here one finds small or large circles of deck-chairs, their occupants absorbed in a game of chess, draughts or dominoes; swopping life stories; non-stop joke sessions. Here, one can hear stories of the old Palmach days; stories from the towns and villages of Galicia or from the mysterious lands of the East. Here one can capture the atmosphere of such dissimilar places as Minsk and Baghdad. Here the jokes pour out in a never ceasing flow,

mostly in Yiddish, many in Hebrew, some in English, polite and tame at the beginning of the session, in deference to the mixed company and ending in bawdy, Rabelaisian, dirty stories — also in deference to the mixed company. Here, the new dresses are exhibited and the bathing costumes parade for the first time before a very critical audience. Here too, one may also find the recluse, the lonely one, who voluntarily or otherwise, keeps himself aloof from the general gaiety and retires into a silent, lonesome, bitter — or perhaps happy -- world of his own.

The week, or 10 days over one returns with a feeling of satisfaction and an extra two kilo. The Beth Havra'ah, with the help of an overworked and willing staff has achieved it's purpose — an enjoyable holiday or convalescence; but more so, it has allowed the Israeli to catch a glimpse of the life, thoughts and background of his fellow citizens. The following story may illustrate the above remarks more clearly. While we reclined in our deck chairs the Arab from some small village near Haifa was telling us of the wonder worker from his village. How, if someone was missing and the police had failed in their search the desperate family would turn to the wonder worker. He would look at a photo of the missing one, place it in a Holy Book and within a few moments would tell them where he would be found, if he was alive or dead, or injured. In all cases the information was correct. The next talker was a young scientist from a prominent scientific institution who told us something of the wonders being cooked up in his laboratory, miracles of the test-tube, dreamed up by cold, logical minds. Here was the contrast — mysterious wonder-works and superstition, straight out of the Middle Ages; on the other hand the giant brains, the cold test tubes and the complicated apparatus of the 20th Century laboratory pouring out

fantastic benefits or cold deterrents in the name of Progress. This is Israel, a hodgepodge of primitivism and ultra-modernism, mixed up, well-stired and poured into the melting bowl of the Beth-Havra'ah. One leaves after dipping deep and well into the flowing bowl. And for long after it is difficult to lose the taste — not that one really desires to.

THAT'S DEMOCRACY ?

It was after midnight and I wandered through cold, empty Jerusalem streets, debating whether to find a hotel or spoil some beautiful relationship by waking up some friend. I had come from Tel Aviv that very evening in order to address a youth group and had forgotten the time. I suddenly heard a long, drawn-out "Psssst", followed by the query, "Tel Aviv?" In a side-turning stood a battered, rusty taxi and as I drew near I made out two sprawling figures occupying the front seat.

"How much?" I enquired.

"Six pounds."

"What! A hotel cost me less."

They laughed. "Not in Jerusalem."

"And not at one o'clock in the morning."

"Hotel bill, breakfast, taxi to Tel Aviv in the morning. We're doing you a favour, Mister."

I handed over six pounds and climbed onto flapping upholstery, jabbing springs and oozing stuffing. We sat in garlic-soaked silence for twenty minutes. "When do we leave?" I asked.

"Soon as the taxi fills up."

"At one o'clock in the morning," I screamed. "Who'll come along now?"

"You came."

I retired, defeated. Another taxi drew up, its doors flew open and the driver followed by two bears, staggered onto the pavement, where they clasped each other in tearful embrace and sang maudlin ballads. This finished, the two "bears", who were no more than human beings in long, heavy coats and astrakhan hats, weaved over to our taxi. "Tel Aviv?" they giggled.

"Yes."

How much?"

"Ten pounds — each."

They whooped and fell into the taxi. Long, drawn-out farewells, much weeping and biddings of "God speed" and we clattered away from the curb in the direction of Tel Aviv. The "bears" giggled, slapped each other's backs and sang songs in what seemed to be Arabic.

"You're Persian, aren't you?" This from the front-seat passenger, who in the light from the dashboard was revealed as a very young man.

"Yes. How did you know?" Suspiciously.

"I was in Persia not long ago."

"He's from the Foreign Office," said the driver. "Up here," he tapped his forehead, "that's where you need it."

"Meaning?" said the Persian belligerently.

"I know Persia quite well," cut in Foreign Office. "I was there with a delegation last year. We had a lovely time. A long, black limousine with a flag on its bonnet took us everywhere and the people couldn't stop cheering us. A... was with us" (he mentioned a well-known Tel Aviv restaurant owner) "and he threw coins out of the window every time we stopped."

"Did you get to Shiraz? That's where we come from. Haven't been back for fifteen years. He's only been here a year." He pushed his now slumbering companion in the ribs.

"No, we didn't go there. But Teheran was marvellous. Went to all the night-spots. Never got to bed until three in the morning. Singers, cabaret stars, musicians..." He lapsed into silent reverie. I racked my brain for some penetrating question on Israeli-Persian relations but couldn't think of anything.

"Wish I'd never left Persia. I hate Israel." We stirred un-

comfortably for there was venom in the Persian's voice. "And I'll tell you why. Look at the children!"

What's wrong with them?"

They're hooligans, that's what they are. Wild, with no respect for anyone. My son calls his teacher a pig. Laughs at her. An educated woman! Plays football on Shabbat, runs around with criminals and won't listen to a word I say!"

"They need a taste of the belt," said the driver. "That would teach them some respect."

"Lay a finger on them and you'll have the police down on you. That's what it's come to. His own parents have no rights in this country."

"The world's changed, you know," said Foreign Office. "It's not Persia here. The kids grow up free and independent."

"Free! In Persia we did what our parents and elders told us — and grew up to be good Jews. Here they won't listen and grow up like Goyim. And you know why — because they've lost their religion!"

"Oh, don't talk rot! Times have changed. Religion is not so important for us any more. Now we have a State. If you want to be religious — good luck to you! If I don't want to be religious, I needn't be. That's democracy."

"Democracy! I spit on your democracy! Look at the women here. Where else in the world can't a man have two or three wives if he wants to? That's what you call democracy?"

"But at least they're free. Why should two or three women be shackled to one man?"

"Free! Of course they're free — too free, and that's what's ruining **our** lives. They go out to work, earn their own living, get hoity-toity, sneer at us, pick and choose. They even argue with us!"

"He's right," the driver exploded. "Oh, how right he is." He smashed his hand down onto the wheel and we swerved.

Foreign Office rallied his forces despite this treachery. "That's progress, men, that's progress. Women were oppressed for generations and now they're coming into their own. And why shouldn't they? Are they so different?"

I thought that a little joke here about "Vive le difference" would not be out of place but Foreign Office was in full career. "In Israel, as in any democracy, they have tasted emancipation and equal rights. Isn't that better than having to share their husband with numerous other wives, with no rights of their own, completely dependent on their husbands for everything and tied to the kitchen and the bed?"

"Equal rights is what they have alright; too many equal rights. A few years ago I wanted to buy a new flat — so I sold the old one. I went to a lawyer and signed here and signed there. Then he said, "where's your wife?" "At home, where she she ought to be," I said. "Well, she's to come here and sign too." "What for?" I asked. "It's her property as well as yours." I banged on his table. "Her property? It's mine, all mine. I worked and slaved for years to buy that flat. I did it all by myself and it's mine to do with as I like." "Sorry," said the lawyer, "that's the law." The law! I spit on the law! Once it was the Rabbis, the holy men, who settled everything and told us what the Law says. Now it's snotty-nosed lawyers. Women have the rights and we've got nothing."

"We should do something about it," said the driver. We swerved.

"You can't stop progress," said Foreign Office, lamely.

"And what's more, they spit on you for it. They go out to work and earn good money. And if they can't get work they

waggle their little bottoms up and down the main streets of Tel Aviv at night. Jewish girls! You wouldn't have found a Jewish girl doing that in Persia."

"We should do something about it," said the driver. "Here I am on the road at two in the morning and who knows what my wife is doing now?"

"You see? We've got no respect left for our women. That's democracy? I remember a famous case in Persia. A man came home late one night and found his wife in bed with his best friend. He threw the friend out into the street. The next morning, the friend came back and stabbed the husband. At his trial, he stood up and said, I killed him because he has no respect for his wife. A decent man, coming home and finding a man in his wife's bed would kill the man. What did my friend do — he threw me out. A man with so little honour, so little respect for his wife, has no right to live. So I killed him and his shame." The man was acquitted. Here he would have been sent to prison for life."

"We should do something about it," said the driver. "But what?"

We sat in silence. The dubious morality of the case cited by the Persian had confused us a little. But Foreign Office could not be silenced for long. "But you can't blame the women for such a state of affairs. Nor can you go round killing people for not having killed you for sleeping with their wives. It's not right."

"You're young yet and unmarried, I bet. Wait till you grow older and settle down before you start preaching what's right and what's wrong."

We had now reached the outskirts of Jaffa. The taxi stopped at the entrance of an alley and the Persians climbed out. There

were fond farewells and lavish invitations and they vanished, weaving, into the night.

"Good people," said the driver, "although a little primitive. But he's right about the women. Something must be done." Foreign Office told us of the women in his life. These are my brothers, I thought, warmly. I dozed. The driver was shaking me. "Tel Aviv," he said.

I looked out. "But this is the entrance to Tel Aviv. I live at the other end of Tel Aviv. Can't you take me a bit further?"

"I said I'd take you to Tel Aviv and I have. Give me another five pounds and I'll take you to the other end."

"Give him the five pounds," said Foreign Office. "You can't walk there, it's too far."

"But I haven't got another five pounds."

"Then you'll have to walk, won't you?"

I glared at my brothers and climbed out of the taxi. The door slammed and they drove off. "That's democracy?" I shouted after their receding rear-lamp. I plodded the cold, empty Tel Aviv streets.

THERE'S A STRANGER CLOSE BEHIND US

"I was there two-three years ago and believe me it was wonderful — wonderful! Such a country you have never seen. Marvellous! Such marvellous people — everywhere. And those kibbutzes — wonderful! If only I was twenty years younger I'd be with them — you may not believe me but I would. I made myself a promise; when I get back I'll shake the foundations of Hampstead Garden Suburb. I'll make it black in the streets. And you think I didn't? Twenty pounds a couple to the U.P.A. Is that a record or not? If you ask me."

Mr. Klein's voice rolled, dipped, drifted and steadied with the ship. From the upper deck I caught glimpses of waving arm or bobbing head adding emphasis to vital points. I smiled, lazily stretched my legs, snuggled deeper into the deckchair and allowed the sun to caress this long-cold flesh; for who could be annoyed by the sound and fury of the Klein saga? Even the wide expanse of warm, blue sea showed it's approval of Klein's patriotic memories by providing him with a series of white-crested waves. "He's off again," I remarked.

There was no answer from my neighbour. She was a small, rather drab woman who seemed to prefer the loneliness of the upper deck and an obscure piece of knitting to mingling with the crowd or participating in the general merriment. I had noticed her drifting through the narrow corridors, always alone or hovering insecure on the fringe of some jolly group; like some ghost transported from it's tranquil, spiritual world into this maelstrom of jostling, raucous activity. One felt awkward in her presence.

"Wonderful trip, isn't it?" I tried once more.

"No it's not," she snapped. The conversation had ended for she stiffened her dumpy body and turned the pages of

a magazine with a great deal of rustling and adjusting of spectacles. But she too must have felt the need for company and conversation for within seconds she had relented sufficiently to add, "If I'd known it was going to be like this I would never have come, that I can assure you."

"I'm very sorry to hear that, but I must say that I am surprised. Most people seem to be enjoying themselves."

She sniffed. "If you're amongst your own people I suppose you can be happy."

I straightened in my chair. "What do you mean by that?"

"I don't want to be insulting or anything like that but I'm a woman who likes to speak her mind. All I can say is that if I'd known that there were so many people of," she hesitated, searching for the right word, "— of the Jewish persuasion on board I certainly wouldn't have come."

I must have stiffened in shock for she tried to soften the impact of her statement. "Not that I have anything against your People, you understand? I know some really nice Jewish men and women. My grocer is a Jewish man and he always sees me right. But you do like to be amongst your own people, don't you, especially on holiday?" The last remark was almost a plea.

"But didn't you know that this cruise was only for Jews?" I came down savagely on the last word.

"Of course not. How was I to know?"

"But it was advertised as a special Pesach trip."

She looked rather embarrassed. "That's right but how was I supposed to guess that Pesach had something to do with the J... your holidays. Ever since my Harold died I've been promising myself a nice sea trip and a look at some of those foreign places. My Harold left me fairly comfortable, you see,

he was a newsagent and tobacconist, you understand, and I could afford it. Mind you I didn't want one of those really posh trips with all the trimmings laid on so I started looking through the papers for something nice but not too expensive, you understand? Well, there was such a lot; Hellenic cruises and Caspian and Mediterranean and then there was this Pesach cruise which for my money, seemed the best. Marseilles, Cyprus, Haifa and a visit to the Holy Places, Greece, Turkey and then home. What more could you want and cheap at that." She stemmed the flow of talk for a moment to peer anxiously into my face. "Well, I booked for the Pesach trip."

The fantastic humour of the situation suddenly hit me; I wanted to burst out laughing but somehow managed to control my feelings with the help of a whipped-out handkerchief and a series of coughs. I could visualise the poor woman seated at her kitchen-table, sipping a cup of tea and scanning the holiday advertisements, not sure what she wanted except that it should be reasonably cheap and cover as many places as possible. She would study this one, reject that one, put this one aside as a possibility until the Pesach cruise in all its glory had hit her.

"When did you wake up to the fact that you had made a mistake?"

"Oh! Not until I got onto the boat. Crossing the Channel I was too sick to care. On the train across France I had a lot of your people in my carriage but you would expect a French train to be full of foreigners, wouldn't you?"

The last with a desperate plea in her voice. I hurriedly agreed with her for I could sense a gathering hysteria.

"On the boat," she continued, "I was put into a cabin with a Jewish lady. As I said, I've got nothing against them but you do like to be with your own people, don't you? I went

to the Purser to see if I could get something better but you can imagine my surprise when I saw he was a Jewish man. And all the sailors are Jewish, did you know that?" she ended in a whisper.

I think she was so carried away by the horror of her story that she forgot I too was one of the 'Chosen People'. "And that first night when we all sat round the tables and all the men had little hats on their heads and another man stood up and chanted for hours on end in a foreign tongue." She shuddered. "What was that in aid of? And all that funny food!"

I explained to her the idea of the traditional Seder that Jews have celebrated for thousands of years in memory of the Exodus from Egypt; that we eat bitter herbs to remind us of the bitterness of slavery; that we read or 'relate' from the Haggada the story of our forefathers departure; that the four cups of wine are drunk as a sign of freedom and rejoicing; that the service is called Seder, or 'order' because the proceedings are in strict order and, of course, the reading and the singing is in Hebrew.

"Oh! So all that mumbo-jumbo was Hebrew, was it? And what was that wafer stuff they were all eating?"

I told her of unleavened bread, or Matzo which we eat during the whole eight days, for tradition has it that the Israelites left Egypt in such a hurry that there was not even time to prepare leavened bread. At this piece of information she paled and slumped back into her chair. "Does that mean that we wont be seeing a piece of bread for another five days?"

"That's right," I replied, "Not on this ship".

"My God," she mumbled. "My God!"

I was forced to leave her for I had arranged a game of

bridge with some acquaintances at that hour. I tried to soothe her before I left but she sat there as if carved of rock, gazing into the sea with a look of total despair in her eyes.

I played a terrible game as I could not rid myself of the vision of that forlorn, lonely soul experiencing, all unwittingly, the frustration and impotence of a Kafkaesque character. Finally I excused myself and tried to make up for ruining the game by telling my fellow players the whole story.

"The poor woman, the poor, poor woman" cried Mrs. Green, a distinguished, well-preserved woman in the middle fifties. She was the nearest to aristocracy we had; the product of a good finishing school and married to a wealthy importer-exporter. Having never being fully accepted by her upper middle-class English circle she had settled for being a wolf amongst the sheep and was now extremely active in the Jewish community, working for the various Zionist appeals, and was a name to be reckoned with on the board of charitable organisations. "What a ghastly situation. We really must do something for the poor woman. Shocking!"

Mr. Klein was of a different ilk entirely. He was the only one amongst us who had laughed whilst I was telling my story. Mr. Klein was a product of Belsen, had managed to survive the war and come to England where he became a naturalised citizen. He had never lost his bitterness and the only time I saw him in high spirits was when he talked of Israel.

"Poor woman," he spat, "for a change one of them will feel like we feel. It's like as if one of us was trapped in a Catholic Convention with all doors barred for a few days. I tell you, it's a scream." He burst into raucous laughter whilst we looked on disapprovingly. Mrs. Green fixed him with one of her cold 'committee' looks that would have silenced a lesser man than

Klein; but he had faced even harder opponents than Mrs. Green in the jungle of Belsen.

We pretended to ignore him and carried on with the discussion. Mrs. Green was ready to rush out and bring the poor lady into our fold immediately. Mr. Goldman, a successful property and estate agent, thought that we should keep the whole thing quiet, for once the story had spread she would undoubtedly become the focus of some embarrassing attention. Having nothing better to propose we finally agreed to Goldman's suggestion and dispersed without making positive plans for the unsuspecting lady's future.

Within half-an-hour, of course, the story had spread all round the ship and when Mrs. Collins, (our minority's name), entered the crowded dining room at one o'clock conversation ceased, and every head turned to look at her. She must have been a woman of tremendous courage for instead of turning on her heel and fleeing, as I'm sure I would have done, she stood transfixed for a moment, then pursed her lips and walked straight to her regular place at the table. I'm sure that we were more embarrassed than her for the conversation broke out once more, but this time at an even higher pitch and pace.

During the course of the meal she became the centre of attention; her table, usually half empty, rapidly filled and from afar one could see the heads bobbing up and down, the mouths opening and closing in rapid time, the bodies leaning forwards and closer to catch every word. The meal finished she rose from the table and swept jauntily from the room with a train of courtiers at her tail, and was stared at with unabashed curiosity by the still seated diners.

For the next day there was little to be heard on board except the subject of Mrs. Collins, or 'our little Christian' as

she was so fondly called. From my short conversation with the lady I had an idea that the courtship would not be too prolonged and the following day saw the beginning of the reaction I expected, slow at first but rapid towards the end when she sat high, dry, grim and solitary during the evening meal. Mr. Goldman, a shrewd but kindly man, summed it up in his chat to me at the bar.

"She is different, you know. I do a lot of business with them during the day, but they don't invite me to their homes in the evening and I don't invite them to share my holidays. You try to get near her but it's impossible; it's as if she belongs to a different world. Funny, but here she even looks different."

Mrs. Green was not her efficient self at the evening game. "I tried, I really tried, but — it was so difficult. She's not really a **nice** woman."

Mr. Klein had another phrase for it. "An anti-semitt, that's all she is — a bleddy anti-semitt! We need her? What we need is a pogrom."

The next day we docked at Cyprus for a few hours and most people went ashore to take in the sights. I saw Mrs. Collins striding off into town, very much by herself. That day the great bread scandal broke.

We returned to sit down to dinner in a lively mood; the walk ashore and the glimpse of strange, exotic parts, (despite the fish-and-chip signs), seemed to release a general mood of hilarity. Mrs. Collins entered almost unnoticed and may have continued to do so if she had not been so blatant in her ultimate actions. From a large shopping bag she extracted a small loaf of bread, placed it in the centre of the table and with rapid, deliberate movements proceeded to cut it into waferlike slices.

It took but a brief moment for a dead silence to fall, spread-

ing outwards from that calm bread-eating centre to the immediate vicinity where passengers sat transfixed, mouths open, forks poised aimlessly in the void; past the craning heads and furtive heads of the further sections until it reached the outer periphery with it's pushed-back chairs and half-standing spectators.

Like a still from a motion film the scene remains in my memory; as if the rejected godmother's curse had fallen upon us at that very moment, leaving us transfixed for eternity, (or until the young prince broke through the barrier,) in our normal everyday poses; in the middle of a sentence; in the act of leaving the table; with a forkfull of food on the way to half-opened mouth. The spell was broken when the young prince, in the guise of a steward, walked hurriedly to Mrs. Collin's table, releasing a furious volume of sound in his wake. We could see him bending over the table, talking, pointing to the bread, moving his hands and body in rapid, accelerating motion. Mrs. Collin's face changed from one colour to the next, now deep pink, next yellow then a chalky grey. Her mouth opened in occasional speech but finally her lips compressed into the thinnest of lines. The steward raised his hands in a gesture of absolute futility, turned on his heels and walked rapidly out of the room.

As if at a given signal most of the passengers rose from their chairs and amidst a great deal of noise left the dining room. A few remained in their places, talking excitedly, and yet another smaller group led by the redoubtable Mr. Klein converged determinedly upon the solitary figure at the isolated table. Somehow or other I felt a certain responsibility for her and the turn of events; I had been the first to extract her story and inadvertently, had spread it all over the ship. I rose from my place and moved hurriedly over to her, intent upon

preventing what might become a nasty scene. Being quite close I managed to get to her first.

"Mrs. Collins," I urged, "please allow me to escort you to your room."

She turned dead eyes upon my face and after a long pause replied. "Thank you." I helped her to her feet, waited until she placed the remains of the loaf into her bag and ignoring the small group of aggressive passengers, made our way to the door. As we passed Mr. Klein, he murmured contemptuously, "Goy-sucker," and turned his back. Behind us we could hear indignant voices mouthing futile protests: "She shouldn't be allowed to get away with it. What an obnoxious woman. One of Mosely's bloody lot."

On the way to her cabin she didn't say a word. She waited while I opened the door then turned to me with bewilderment in her eyes. "I didn't mean anything. I just couldn't eat any more of that horrible Motse stuff, for the life of me. They don't like us, do they? We just can't do right, can we?"

The last I saw of Mrs. Collins was the following morning around ten when we docked at Haifa port. The sky, or what could be seen of it, was a slaty grey and every few moments a heavy shower of rain swept across the open deck and the wide, cluttered pier, drenching everybody and everything. Claspings umbrellas, macs', or outspread coats we ran down the gangway, dashed across the pier and into the large Customs shed. We stood in small groups near the wide, open doors and waited for the coaches and taxis to convey us to the hotel that had been placed at our disposal.

All around us was the bustle and noise of a busy port; the porters trundling their heavy loads across the floor; the hum of conversation between Port officials and new arrivals; the shouts and screams as someone recognised a friend or

relative waiting behind the barrier. One could hear a hundred different tongues, Yiddish, Arabic, Spanish, German, English, (American accent predominating,) and others. But what made us forget the bad weather that we had not expected in 'sunny Israel', and that the lady from up North summed up in gloomy tones, "Just like Manchester, isn't it, Luv?" — was the Hebrew. There were signs in Hebrew, advertisements in Hebrew, the wording on the officials' hats was Hebrew, the radio blared in Hebrew, the porters cursed in Hebrew and the policemen, soldiers, sailors and taxi-drivers were Hebrews. One felt comfortable and at home, with even slight feeling of superiority for being English as well.

But the glorious feeling dwindled when I saw Mrs. Collins approaching, followed by a porter trundling her luggage on a low trolley. She looked ghastly; ashen face, nostrils pinched white, grey hair falling in damp wisps over her forehead, body dumpy, squat and bowed. She came up to the door and stood by herself looking out at the rain. Finally she turned to stare at us, then took in the Hebrew signs, the gesticulating porters and the hum of foreign tongues. I heard her groan and a mumbled, "God, oh God!"

I took a step towards her, but at that moment a large car drew up outside the barrier and a young man climbed out, exchanged a few words with the Jewish policeman, ran across the open rain-swept yard, up the steps and into the shed. He was tall, slim, blonde and carried that quiet, assured confidence of a member of the British upper-class. He looked around for a moment, his glance sweeping over us and our surroundings until it fell on Mrs. Collins who had taken a hesitant half-step towards him. He strode over to her, a smile on his lips and within seconds was escorting her from the building. She seemed to bloom, the colour returned to her face, one hand

pushed the streaky hair into place and the other straightened her skirt. As they walked down the steps I heard the young man say, "... a nice cup of tea..." I could imagine Mrs. Collins settling into the cushions of the warm car and softly sighing, "It is nice to be amongst your own people. It is nice."

VISION FOR THE YOUNG

Fifteen years ago, three of us left the crumbling village of Mansura-el-Kheit on the Syrian border and made our way to a hotel in Tiberias. The purpose of our mission was to see the first President of Israel and obtain his permission to name our kibbutz for him. Our kibbutz consists mainly of English pioneers and ever since that fateful day in 1948, when we settled on the rocky site, we had searched for a way to identify our settlement with a man whom English Zionists have always called their own — Dr. Chaim Weizmann.

I remember the excitement of going; the search for suitable garments — a borrowed jacket here, a pair of flannels there, the uncomfortable bus ride and the final ushering into a darkened room where sat the old man in dark glasses, clasping his stick. But within a few moments the room seemed full of light, the discomfort forgotten as that powerful personality made itself felt. We chatted and joked and talked kibbutz or England. We left, having obtained his permission; our kibbutz being officially recorded since then as "Kfar Hanassi", in the name of the first President of Israel, Dr. Chaim Weizmann.

Fifteen years later a helicopter descended on Kfar Hanassi, raising clouds of dust and scattering the scores of children and adults who had turned out to welcome the widow of the President, Mrs. Vera Weizmann. The occasion was the opening of a permanent exhibition dedicated to his memory. It was November 8, 1964. Weizmann had left us and our kibbutz had changed, but Kfar Hanassi had not forgotten its loyalty. Gone are the crumbling ruins, the tiny pockets of land snatched from a hostile, rocky land. Here now are orchards and fields of corn, trees and dwelling-houses, lawns and swimming-pool and dominating all — the community centre, with its clubroom,

dining-room, arcade, offices, library and clinic. In this centre an exhibition was to be opened to the public, honouring the life and work of Dr. Weizmann.

SOME MEMORIES OF THE EDER FARM

The David Eder Farm, Ringlestone, Harrietsham, Kent, England was perched on the crown of a very steep hill in the no-man's land between the hop growing area of the South and the apple growing area of the North. The inhabitants of that farm were some 30 Jewish youth who would look to the South and dream of large quantities of foaming beer or to the North where their thoughts would dwell upon large vats of sparkling cider. For on the David Eder Farm the crops were cabbages and brussel sprouts — not exactly the stuff of dreams.

Despite this lack of forethought in planning on the part of the founders of the David Eder Farm, this group of youth, though close to being penniless, were exceedingly happy. They were Socialist-Zionists, born and bred in the British Isles, the sons and daughters of middle-class Jewry, educated to be doctors, lawyers, tailors, secretaries, merchants and housewives. They had revolted against their education and formed a society based on hard physical labour, social equality and the ultimate aim of uniting with Jews from the rest of the world in Israel — or Palestine, as it was then. In order to achieve these aims a form of basic training was needed, not only in physical labour but for the communal life of the kibbutz — and this the Eder Farm provided.

The Farm consisted of a picturesque, 16th century farmhouse, a number of long, wooden bungalows, a dining room and communal centre and various sheds, barns and out-houses. There were some 85 acres of land that were put down to vegetables, potatoes, sugar beet, fodder crops and corn. The livestock consisted of a small herd of cows, a flock of sheep, 2 eccentric horses, 2 even more eccentric dogs, some nervous

chickens and hordes of cretinous, dwarfish cats — the product of intense inbreeding.

To our neighbours we were known as the 'Jew's Farm'.

There was S. who was a middle aged, sunken-cheeked, unshaven, slovenly rake of a man with a fondness for chewing tobacco. He would sit hunched over his cows, ejecting gobs of "baccy" and moisture at regular intervals, over cows, open bucket and audience. He would confide that he was actually the son of the Duke of Westminster, born on the wrong side of the blanket and heir to the valuable land and properties of Westminster — if he could only prove his claim. Once he had a difficult calving for which he needed assistance. At 3 o'clock in the morning he pounded on the doors of the Eder Farm, shouting "Any Jews here? Any Jews here?" There were.

There was Darkie — no-one knew his true name. He was part of the threshing gang, very small and round and always sporting a gay, yellow and brown, striped sweater — he reminded you of a very busy, elegant bee. His real job was walking horses; he'd walked them from London to Manchester and from Maidstone to Folkstone. Why he walked horses is anyone's guess but his sole purpose in life seemed to be the walking of those horses the length and breadth of Britain. Perhaps he is still trudging down some country lane leading his horses.

Milky was the leading revolutionary spirit in our district. Well in his seventies, a small, bent, fiercely-moustached old man as sturdy as a rock. He lived in a caravan and maintained himself by poaching and scrounging. He received a small pension, being an old soldier and once a month we would hear shouts and bellows and the sound of breaking glass from the pub across the road. Milky would stagger out, take up a safe position in the middle of the road and proceed to hurl abuse

at the capitalists and blood-suckers of this world or recall the fiery old days of the I.L.P. He would keep a paternal eye on us, tell us what to do, extract a few cabbages or potatoes as part payment and stagger off to court the Widow Brown, a lady with a local reputation for being willing.

We met most of our neighbours at the Home Guard parades. We never cut much of a figure at these parades because of an unfortunate incident at the beginning of our career. The sergeant informed us that at the word of command we were to produce gas-masks and "'and it in." At the word of command, we stepped forward smartly and thrust our masks in the sergeant's face. Like some uninterrupted tableau, we maintained this position for five minutes until we noticed that everyone, apart from us, had extracted a small tin and was busy smearing its contents on the celluloid vision-plate of the mask. The sergeant had ordered us to "anti-dim" and not "'and it in" as we had presumed. From then on we were as mud.

But enough of the neighbours. Let us return to the peculiar inhabitants of the Farm. There were the animals... Two white cart-horses — Sam, a gelding and — Dori, a high-spirited mare. Sam, a dull, plodding animal with a sunny disposition. At some time in his life he must have been frightened by a large, stationary object for on a walk to the blacksmith he would suddenly stop dead, twitch his ears, contract his nostrils and rumble in his belly. Finally he would turn on his heels and bolt as if all the devils in a horse's hell were at his heels. The cause of this excitement would be a steam-roller, or a wagon or machine covered with a tarpaulin at the side of the road. The solution was to catch Sam, turn his head in the direction he came from and inch him slowly backwards past the fearsome object. This could prove embarrassing as a small

crowd would suddenly appear to watch the operation in silence.

Dori, on the other hand was just mean through and through. She would leave in the morning dragging some machine and horseman to return triumphantly at dinner time dragging a few mangled pieces of wood and iron and no sign of the horseman. On Saturday night her favourite sport was to beat up poor, docile Sam; a few kicks on the rump whilst she laughed her head off. A beating would only make her raise her upper lip in a sneer and there's nothing more infuriating than being sneered at by a horse.

There were the sheep, dominated by a wily, cunning Roman-nosed leader. They rampaged over the Kent countryside like a plague of locust and many were the phone calls from irate farmers demanding justice and retribution. The way we brought them in was most lacking in decorum. At first we tried to drive them in but their leader would lead them on a gay stampede through every gap in the hedge. Then, someone placed an empty sack on his back and staggered across the field shouting "come and get it." When the leader realized that it was a trick he showed his contempt by yawning. Finally, we were forced to fill the sack with something bulky and walk bent-backed across the field in order to convince the Doubting Thomases. We selected our shepherds more for their acting capabilities than their knowledge of animals.

The dogs were similar in disposition to the horses. Teddy, placid, docile and dreamy and Pat, irritable, mean and short tempered. Teddy would sleep and dream except for the mating season when he became a veritable lion waging pitched battles with hordes of neighbouring dogs. The only time he moved quickly was when the buzz-bombs, on their way to London, decided to give up the ghost over the Farm. When the buzzing

stopped overhead, we humans would dive under the beds. At the same time, the door would fly open with a bang and a huge furry object would join us under the bed. He would edge us closer and closer to the wall until there was no option but to seek sanctuary somewhere else.

Lastly, there were the human animals — the residents of the David Eder Farm. On outside work we were always asked the same question — "What do you young boys and girls do in the evening in that farm of yours?" This accompanied by a leer and a wink. Our answer would be "we come home, wash, have supper, read, listen to records, study and attend meetings." This would also be accompanied by a leer and a wink in return. All are satisfied but funnily enough, that's exactly what we did do. There was a grand collection of classical and jazz records. We studied agriculture, Hebrew, politics and Jewish and Zionist subjects. There were the administrative bodies that organized the life and in which most haverim participated. There were the committees: Work, Social, Entertainment, Finance and others. Occasionally there were visits to a film in Maidstone, some ten miles away. We would be picked up from the neighbouring farms and conveyed, still in our working clothes, to the cinema. The people of Maidstone became accustomed to the black van that appeared from time to time in their midst to eject a group of louts clad in hob-nailed boots and a motley assortment of patched garments into the main street. They probably thought that the convicts from the local prison were having their weekly outing.

We never had any money and our diet consisted of cabbage and potatoes for years. But once a week, on Friday evening, the Spartan diet was thrown to the winds and we were presented with a rich dessert consisting of cake crumbs, a trace of fruit and a blob of cream. As some people were

usually missing, having gone to London, their dessert was placed on a high shelf until 11 o'clock at night, which was the last possible time to return. The kitchen, just before 11, took on the appearance of an Army Headquarters a few moments before zero hour. Meanwhile, outside in the dark and cold, the late-comer would be dashing madly up the hill or taking frantic short-cuts through thicket and bramble. As the clock struck 11, the afters would be solemnly removed from the shelf; the door would then burst open to reveal a tragic figure proclaiming "take your thieving paws off it."

Occasionally the doors would be thrown open in order to welcome visitors from the Movement or parents. A few days before Parents Day the Farm would be tidied up. Dust would fly from every window, furniture would be polished and painted and scruffy flowers placed in jam-jars. Once the furniture was painted late and was still tacky when the parents arrived. With what tact and diplomacy we moved startled parents, poised over gleaming chairs, to the safety of the bed. What expensive dresses we saved from ruin and how many staid business suits we saved from the addition of colourful stripes. Our parents must have considered us completely neurotic as we twitched and jerked them from chair to chair, or pushed furniture out of their reach with quick, spasmodic movements.

Perhaps the most nerve-racking experience was attending a sale in the district. A farm would be sold and with half-a-pound in our pockets (our treasurer was a mean man) we would pop down to see if there was anything worth buying. One of the "buyers" was wasted in a kibbutz for he could have had the leading role in a Burmese dance troupe. He was unable to talk without waving his hands, later his feet and finally his whole body. He couldn't say a simple "yes" without conducting a 12 movement symphony. As the auctioneer

would dwell upon the wonders of a battered, rusty plough I would sense a twitch by my side. I would turn my head slowly so as not to catch the auctioneer's eye for he had started the bidding and my companion would whisper "no good." But the damage was done — the hands would be thrown in the air and the body bent yearningly towards the auctioneer. We would usually return to face the treasurer with an old plough, a canary and other useful articles

The memories are still piling up, fast and furious, good and bad. How can I, a middle-aged Halutz in a kibbutz in Israel, attempt to recapture or convey the experiences and impressions of a group of exuberant youth with the world still at their feet? I have been told that the David Eder Farm, Ringlestone, Kent no longer exists; that its bungalows have been converted into chicken-houses, the farm-house modernised, the animals — Sam, Dori, Teddy, Pat, the long-nosed sheep and the hordes of cats — scattered to the winds or dead. The residents of the Farm during the war years are in Israel or settled in middle-class English homes; some lie dead on the battlefields of Europe and the East. Despite all this, the David Eder Farm continues to exist and will remain fixed eternally exactly as it was — in the minds of the few who participated in this dream-world of the past. It is still perched up on that no-man's land between the hop growing area and the fruit growing area of Kent; a happy hunting ground for a few middle-aged Israeli farmers.

KIBBUTZ

The "United Tours" bus pulls into the sleepy village of Rosh Pina, and stops in the shade of its ancient trees. A stream of tired-looking tourists pour out onto the road and stand for a moment, looking at the typical, Galilean scenery with its rocky terrain and undulating hills, dominated by the snow-capped Mount Hermon.

The spirit being satisfied, they turn to more material pursuits; photos to be taken, cold drinks and picture postcards to be bought, perhaps a short stroll to relax their cramped limbs. Some spot the gaily decorated pavilion at the side of the road, with its bright sign inviting them to buy "fresh fruit."

In the pavilion they see a long counter, filled with different varieties of fruit, pears, apples, plums, peaches and others, all packed in plastic bags, all clean, fresh and appetizing and clearly marked with the price and weight. Behind the counter, stand two young men, one tall, dark and bespectacled and the other short, red-faced and blonde, both wearing open-necked shirts and smiling — typical Israelis, except perhaps for the smile.

The tourist examine the fruit, select their wares and speak a very slow, precise English to the salesmen.

"It's alright, mate, I understand you," answers the tall one, in a broad, Cockney accent.

"You speak a good English," says the surprised tourist.

"Well, I should, you know, coming from Notting Hill."

"Go on! I don't believe you."

"Here, Henry, this bloke doesn't believe we come from England."

"Blimey!" says the short one. "Let's show him. One, two, three..." and they break into a busker's dance, up and down

behind the counter to the bawled out strains of "the Old Kent Road." The tourists are overwhelmed, laugh and clap and finally burst into excited conversation with the "Cockneys from Rosh Pina." Meanwhile, the busdriver takes out his notebook and writes down on his programme sheet "Galilee tour, kiosk Rosh Pina — must!"

The above is only one of the ways that the haverim of the English kibbutz, to whom the pavilion belongs, drum up trade for this rather unique outlet for their produce. But it's not all bus loads of tourists and money jingling merrily in the till. "Sometimes, you can sit for days and just watch the rain teeming down, or swelter in the summer heat without taking in a penny," says a gloomy Henry, who is the equivalent of manager of this kibbutz enterprise.

It all began just over a year ago. With the price of agricultural produce going down and the quantity on the market going up, farmers found that they had to knock down their costs of production and/or find a novel marketing technique. After a lot of hard thinking, research and study of the local market, the fruit branch of this kibbutz, hit on the idea of setting up a fruit stand in Rosh Pina, on the main road to the North. One of the worst aspects of local marketing, they found, was the extremely poor quality of packing. Another was the discourteous salesmanship, a third, lack of cleanliness and the fourth — bad grading that in some cases descended to actual cheating of the unsuspecting house-wife. A notorious example was the practise of marking "Galia," a variety of apple that closely resembles the "Jonathan" with the latter name, despite it being an inferior fruit.

So the kibbutz was the first to pre-pack in plastic bags or netting, and to present the fruit in convenient packages, marked with price, weight and variety. The fruit is generally sold

cheaper than the town markets and always cheaper than the retail shops. Every few weeks one of the salesmen travels to town and compares prices with the markets.

The problems are many and in the words of Mossy, the Cockney salesman, "it's not just a job, but a profession that needs years of study. You've got to order and estimate the right quantity of fruit from the orchard, or you'll land up with rotten fruit on your hands at the end of the day, or no fruit to serve a sudden rush of customers. You've got to know how to price the stuff, just that little bit cheaper; fair to the customer as well as leaving that little bit of profit. You've got to know what lines to put out and when, what's hard and will last and what's soft and has to be sold immediately. You've got to be courteous to the customer and guide him in his buying, so that he goes away satisfied."

"And it's difficult to be courteous to some of the customers," chimes in Henry. A lot of them demand "a reduction," particularly those who at some time had some remote connection with the kibbutz. They come from Solel Boneh, Mekoroth, Hevrat Hashmal, Kupath Holim, Keren Kayemeth and even the Police and they say, "we put up this building," or "we installed that pipe line" or "we installed that electric cable," etc. "Surely we are entitled to a reduction." Sometimes they ask if Moshe is still on the kibbutz, and if he is then he knows their brother who has a cousin who once served with Moshe in the reserves. Surely that deserves a reduction? Or "What do you care if you give me a reduction? The kibbutz won't go bankrupt. You'll still get your plate of soup!"

Mossy picks up where he left off. "It gives us a chance to meet other people, something you don't get so much in the kibbutz. You meet all kinds and types on this road. Sabras and new immigrants, professionals and casual workers. They also

get to know what a kibbutznick is, instead of hearing about him from the papers or from an antagonistic Party. I think we get on well with the people of Rosh Pina; at first they were suspicious, but as we made a point of not taking other people's business away, they've kind of got used to us. We've made a lot of good contacts since we've been here. All in all, it means a lot of hard work, plenty of knowledge and organisation. During the season a large part of the orchard is geared to our little shop; there's the picking to be done, packing to be organised, transport to be ready on time, materials to be ordered. We also rope in the oldest kids to give a hand during the busy season and for them it's a real eye-opener. After all, they were never brought up to be salesmen."

"And how do you feel about being a salesman?" we asked.

"Twenty years ago, I was nursed on Borochoy and weaned on Gordon. For years I worked with a turia. Now," he added sadly, "I have a 'back' and sell fruit from a stall. At least it satisfies my mother. She's come here from England a few times and always leaves again looking bewildered. She always refers to the kibbutz as 'the camp.' But this time she wrote back that this at least she understands; that a Yiddishe boy's place is in a shop and not with the rest of the 'meshugannes' in the fields."

On customers they have plenty to say. Lots of celebrities stop off at the pavilion, stage and screen stars, amongst them Miriam Makebe, politicians, nobility and others. Tourists get a chance to talk in their own language and a little bit of Yiddish always helps with the locals, or the foreigners. Once an Arab parked his camel on the path approaching the pavilion, and calmly proceeded to feed it. Nobody could get in or out, despite the pleadings and threats in Henry's best Arabic. Only the advent of some tourists, who paid a pound a time for a ride

and the right to take a picture, managed to move it from its place. The final insult was when the camel spat contemptuously on some proffered "seconds," held out by a kindhearted Henry..

The summing up was short and to the point. "Too early to say whether it's a profitable or successful venture. It's good fruit, fresh fruit and comes within the limits of most people's pockets. It's an outlet for our orchard's fruit, provides work for "unfit" people, gives up a chance to meet other people, gives the tourist a chance to talk his own language and provides a good, reliable service to the customers. The kibbutz is dynamic; agriculture, industry and now trade. Excuse us now, there's a bus drawing in. Evening, ladies and gents'. Alright, don't push now, plenty for everybody. Henry, how much is one pound thirty and one pound ninety? Have to be a bloody mathematician as well in this job."

