

**THE TIFEREETH JERUSALEM "PAPINEAU" PINKAS, WRITTEN IN YIDDISH BY SYNAGOGUE GABAY ICHIEL HERMAN, TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY DAVID ROME, WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY DAVID ROME**

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**INTRODUCTION TO THE TRANSLATION, BY DAVID ROME**

One of the continent's gems of folklore is a long illuminated manuscript record of the first Jews of Papineau prepared in the 1950's by Ichiel Herman, the self-conscious archivist of the complete minutes of the gloriously named Tifereth Jerusalem Congregation of Rossland, which he founded and whose minutes he kept, and later enriched with dozens of humorous tales from Yiddish lore. The dating and the order of the huge hand lettered, bound, illustrated volume, the Pinkas of the Tifereth Jerusalem Congregation, is difficult to determine. Marie Poirier defined the area which the Jews called Papineau as bounded by Garnier on the west, Chabot on the east, Belanger on the north and the CPR tracks on the south. The district is also sometimes known as Rossland. (Paper presented at the Jewish Public Library, March 12-14, 1988)

As she investigated the origins, differences and the composition of the Jewish groups in the peripheries and the circumstances of their settlements, she asked: "Were those living in the densely Jewish area in the centre different from those who went out towards the periphery?"

The Baron de Hirsch Institute noted in 1905 the diversification of the professions of the arriving immigrants: carpenters dispersed throughout the suburbs of greater Montreal and stamped their folkloric mark on the literature and theatre civilization of Papineau.

Like other ethnic immigrants to Canadian cities, such as Italians, who also were attached to their rural background, some Jewish newcomers to Montreal missed their Shtetl households, cheap land, gardens, kine and goats. They compromised proximity to their factory workplace and were ready to walk long distances to the smelly factories; they set up small businesses or found jobs in such nearby heavy industry as the CPR - especially as steel workers, tinsmiths, carpenters - close to Papineau.

Their attachment to rural spots cost them the intellectual pleasure which they might derive from the proximity of the already considerable cultural and religious circles present in urban Montreal, and marked them as distant "provincial" society, soon reflected in Canadian literature.

If educational activism in Quebec is not surprising in this context, its precise territorial scene early in this Jewish school history is startling. It highlights a modest suburb in northern Montreal which was relatively distant from the Jewish ghetto, yet has an important place in the annals of Montreal's Italian and French Canadian nationalisms and that of its immigrant Jews.

Mile End at century's beginning was distant from its needle trade sweat shops, yet within its tramway lines - and even within walking distance. Chickens and cows could be raised, much as they were raised in small Shtetlach, some little distance from the busy ideological centres such as Peanut Park, the employment centre in the Jewish ghetto. The newly arriving Italians, always seeking modest treasured little homes could develop their ethnic church which defended local claims in schooling and language within the parish.

Those who read the macrocosmic history of Montreal's urbanism will be less surprised, for the district plays a remarkable part in French Canadian nationalist history through Father Philippe Perrier (as told by Chanoine Groulx in his Mes Mémoires) and in Italian Québécois history.

Mile End has entered into French with its anglophone pronunciation as a strange linguistic monument recalling this English contribution to the construction of Montreal.

In the proximity of these alien folklores from the continent, the cosy cultural and clerical aristocracy centring on Father Philippe Perrier, and Groulx and Henri Bourassa began to feel

uncomfortable with the aggression and alienness of European migration and the encroachment of the industrializing downtown.

The author of the Papineau Pinkas, Ichiel Herman, writes: "During the Russo-Japanese War many young Jews who did not want to participate in bloodshed migrated to many lands, including Canada, and a few found it necessary to settle in Northeast Montreal, in Papineau, where they organized a small Jewish community.

"When the group expanded and built a small building, they decided to set up a Pinkas and to inscribe in it all the events that occurred there since it was established and that will happen there, not only among Jews but in all peoples in the world. Wherever there are societies of whatever language such books exist; they are called registers, and are hidden where thieves cannot reach or damage them. Such books are called Archives. In Hebrew the books are always, and today, known as Pinkas. Such books are often lost or destroyed. We hope that every member will be interested that his stories and his history will be communicated to the heads of our group to inscribe and to remain in eternal memory for generation after generation." (I. Herman, Papineau)

His hundreds of pages begin in 1906...

**DAVID ROME'S SELECTED TRANSLATION OF THE TIFERETH JERUSALEM  
SYNAGOGUE "PAPINEAU" PINKAS, WRITTEN BY ICHIEL HERMAN**

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1906

Title Page in Hebrew :

And they shall build me a temple and I shall remain in their midst.  
Praise to the God of the first  
The flower of our community shall gather together.  
Eleven days passed and they recognized  
That they need to join to bring their prayers before the Lord of the lords.  
The Jews of Papineau gathered in storm and trial.  
They all rested.  
From elders to youth they chose the year 1907 to build a temple to the Lord of Heavens  
As a place where our prayers shall arise and succeed  
Until our Messiah, the Messiah of Justice, when we shall all return to Jerusalem  
And this book introduction.

It is a custom in Israel and all the lands of Israel, when an association is formed  
They prepare a book of memories  
To record all the events that occur  
And call it a Pinkas, and therefore we, the members of Tifereth Jerusalem  
Have prepared such a book  
With the name of members  
And this book is called Pinkas  
And we also, the men of Tifereth Jerusalem  
Have also made ourselves such a book  
Where can be found the names of members  
And other matters which shall necessarily be written.  
May this society exist forever. Amen.  
(quoted in Canadian Jewish Archives, New Series no. 45, pp. 81-82)

Signed, Ichiel ben Menachem, the prime type of Jew who speaks and screams in loud voice. No matter how he labours, he never tires. Writes and erases before the public but as all be ended, often I recite in rhyme, young and old, Mordecai ben Israel. Written and composed by the Rev. Gabbay Herman

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The population of Papineau consisted of Ichiel Herman, Joseph Nebesh, Joseph Laferman, David Dov Lazanick, Simon Applebaum, Birenbaum, Isaiah Engel. ... As we are too few to form a congregation for the New Year and the Day of Atonement, we all went together to the city for communal services and left the women and small children in the little homes we had just began to construct. When we returned we were greeted by nearly all our young wives in one house with a cheerful 'Happy Holiday' and wishes that by next year we shall have our own synagogue, to which we responded 'Amen.'

On the tenth day of Tebeth in 1907 the following district committee consisted of Joseph Nebesh, Ichiel Herman, Joseph Laferman, David Lazanick, Engel, Applebaum and Birenbaum including Rabin, Flack, Mandelman, Mordecai Trebosh, Chaifetz, Weizman, Maier Psotzky, Kovshoff, Greenberg, Rednikov, Milman and Davis Chaim.

"A meeting was called by Mr. Nebesh and by Mr. Herman at Mr. Miller's home to discuss a society by the name of Tifereth Jerusalem, with each member paying five cents weekly to rent a house for prayers; to elect officers. Mr. Miller was chairman. Every member went to his little home satisfied. Mr. Chaim Rabin was accepted as member.

"This month, the first of the month of Adar, with Mr. Miller as president temporarily, an engagement was made with the Ross Realty to undertake the right to build a synagogue for the district committee without asking anyone on condition of the committee, the treasurer finds \$9.40 in the treasury.

"Note that the Ross Co. donated two lots for a synagogue, secured a charter. All papers are at Miller's."

**ICHEL HERMAN'S PINKAS ITEMS AS WELL AS A FEW PUBLISHED ITEMS ABOUT PAPINEAU AND THE TIFEREH JERUSALEM CONCREGATION, FROM THE CONTEMPORARY JEWISH PRESS, COMPILED AND TRANSLATED BY DAVID ROME.**

*Jewish Times*

Jan. 24, 1908

Rabbi Joshua Simon Glazer spoke at the Tifereth Israel (sic) Congregation at Mile End on the need of a synagogue there which would operate a Hebrew school.

*Keneder Adler*

Oct. 23, 1908

A Talmud Torah was founded in Mile End with instruction from alphabet to Talmud by experienced teachers: I. Abramson, Goldberg and M. Sobol, secretary.

"A mass meeting for inscribing pupils will take place on October 25th."

Oct. 25, 1908

General meeting of Congregation, October 25, 1908 in home of Yanovsky. Joseph Neback elected president, Kovshoff vice-president. Room rented at Herman, at \$2 monthly for services and meetings, and a Scroll rented for services for \$10 annually, to be bought for \$50 after three years.

Mr. Miller sent a registered letter that unless the congregation unites with him, he will make trouble for the congregation.

Mr. Trebosh proposes a cemetery be secured. Chaim Rabin proposes a sick benefit society in association with the congregation at 30 cents a month. Members of the Congregation without the sick benefit, 10 cents monthly.

Jan. 9, 1909

Ahavat Shalom Congregation decided to consult a lawyer to learn whether the congregation of Ahavat Shalom is responsible for expenses that Miller has incurred for the synagogue.

A loan fund is to be set up of one dollar each, with \$5 to be lent each week. the keeper of the fund shall pay 5 cents weekly. \$20 was raised.

Rubber stamp of Congregation Tiferes Jerusalem, Rossland.

Mar. 18, 1909

Congregation meeting about the Miller case. Mr. Miller was called and he conceded all the demands, he surrendered all the documents, the charter, and the deed, and the plans and all that belonged to the Congregation Tiferes Jerusalem. He is to receive \$100. As the Congregation had no more than \$50, Mr. Ichiel Herman lent the synagogue \$50 for five months.

May 5, 1909

Tiferes Jerusalem Congregation meeting, Aug. 5, 1909. Decision to rent Mr. Shapiro's house for the High Holy Days for \$15, him to supply benches. Mr. T. Vazonovsky presented a pair of candlesticks, Mr. Trebosh a reading stand; tickets at \$1, and \$1.50 for non-members. Those who separated from the congregation

because of *kibbud* (honours; being called to the Torah) shall be excluded from our membership.

May 30, 1909

Congregation meeting May 30, 1909. Mrs. Weinstein presented to the Congregation a gift of half a calfskin for a Torah. It was decided that the Congregation conclude the sacred task.

It was also decided to conclude the building and to inspect the foundation. The inspector reported that the foundation is not satisfactory.

Aug. 5, 1909

Meeting of Congregation Tiferes Jerusalem. Decision to found a Society for the Care of the Ill, whose members shall remain at the bedside of the sick, with a Ladies Relief Association.

Because Mr. Miller had caused much trouble, it was decided to exclude him from the Congregation forever.

Jan. 2, 1910

Committee appointed, regarding synagogue, to meet with contractor.

May 6, 1910

Committee reported that the proposed lot for the construction of the synagogue, as presented by the company, is totally unsuitable. It is suggested that a lot be purchased and a modest synagogue be built that will not be a public disgrace.

Aug. 5, 1910

Decision to buy two corner lots - Papineau and Beaubien - to build on earlier plan. Mr. Loferman offered his home without charges for Holy Days. Decision to purchase *Shofar, Kitel, Esrog*.

Talmud Torah in good order.

Decision to build on Cartier St., 351 x 50 feet.

Proposal of B. Neback that his lot be purchased at corner Papineau and Beaubien.

B. Krechman proposes two lots be bought for construction of synagogue. Lauferman offered his home for services for free seats. Herman will officiate mornings; Markovitch for Musseff. Shofar and Kittel will be secured.

Oct. 24, 1910

Lawyer Tritt consulted to examine all Miller papers, with Tritt named as honourable member; proposed to build on two lots on Cartier Street, 35' x 50' lots.

Nov. 10, 1910

When the synagogue decided to build the structure 35' x 50', according to the mortgage plan, Herman and Yachnikoff were to collect from members. Mr. Torkewitz presented gift of Ark valued at \$100; Truheb and Torkewitz granted hanging lamp over the reading table. All members

too picks and shovel to destroy the old foundation and replace it with new foundation. The contract was sealed and the president will sign the contract. Mazel Tov!

Mar. 25, 1911

Decision to accept a mortgage for \$2,000 for five years; the building to be insured for \$4,000; the synagogue to be prepared for Passover with the permission of the contractors, but to be completely ready for Shavuot.

A Chazan, a tall man with fine beard and a loud voice calling it "Borchu" as all arise cheerfully and fraternally.

Discussion on the Sefard ritual as being permanent.

Abraham Miller presented an Eternal Light over the Ark.

May 8, 1911

The president reported from committee received in silence, everybody drew images of the picnic in the synagogue. Whoever has not seen a gathering in the congregation like this has never seen anything as joyous in his life in the greatest and in the religious sense imaginable.

Since there was some liquor left at the tables they entertained with a dance all night.

1st of month of Shevat, 1911

Decision to raffle the seat next to the Ark, 3 tickets compulsory. Every member must sell two tickets to other members. Report of sale of tickets is excellent on Sunday Purim. C o l d weather in cold synagogue, two naphtha lamps on the floor, stones cover half of the floor. A man with respect for the synagogue stands on a barrel of chalk on the site of the reading stand.

Jan. 5, 1912

Decision to prepare a fine Pinkas for Chevra Mishnayoth.

May 25, 1913

Sick Benefit Society, Chaverim Kol Israel Congregation, cemetery

Ruling that Tifereth Jerusalem members may belong only to one Papineau Congregation and to no other except for special reasons.

A sick benefit society has been founded in Papineau, and the second synagogue, the Chaverim Kol Israel.

A conference of the three organizations met to buy a plot of land for a cemetery. It is not easy to explain what happened at the conference. Each committee proposed its own plans.

**MORE WRITINGS OF ICHIEL HERMAN FROM THE PAPINEAU PINKAS:  
(SELECTED AND TRANSLATED BY DAVID ROME)**

(Most of these items are undated.)

Thin (*Din*) and Justice:

Reb Naphthali Ropshitzer had many guests about his table, but there was all too little bread. Reb Naphthali called to his *Gabbay* who was slicing the loaves, "Cut it thin and eat with mercy."

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In his youth the *Gaon* of Vilno had experienced exile of wandering. He came to a small town where the wealthy buerger was marrying off his daughter. The young *Gaon* also attended, but was not noticed and he barely tasted a piece of fish as a ceremonial token. After the dinner the poor left, but he did not hurry.

In the meantime, it was noticed that a silver spoon was missing, and the servants proceeded to search him. Later he commented on the passage, "I was forgotten as I had died from the heart. A poor man is forgotten, as if he had died. When I am not something, I am like a lost vessel."

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In the city where the great *Malbin* officiated as rabbi, there was an impertinent ignoramus who desecrated the Sabbath in public. Once it was necessary to call upon him as the tenth for a *minyán*. The rabbi did not invite him to join the group. Several in the group did not agree with the rabbi. They objected, "In the list of incenses in the Temple, there is one listed *Chelboneh* which is malodorous."

The *Malbin* explained, "That is why the text reads, 'There are eleven listed,' not ten."

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The great scholar, Rabbi Abraham Danzig, author of many volumes of law, had a wild young student who studied with several other children, but found it difficult to bear this son of the scholar.

Once he asked the young man: "Your father has many fine Adam volumes: The Life of Adam, The Wisdom of Adam, The Soul of Adam. How could he have A Wild Adam?"

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A man is collecting charity in a box on Main St., calling out "Charity will save from death." Passersby, toss coins into the box, but one pauses to ask, "Who has died?" "No one." "So why do you say that charity will save from death, if no one has died?" he asked angrily, replacing his coin in his pocket.

"And if no one has died, people should not give charity? The nerve of a Jew! For his piggish nickel he wants a Jew to die!?"

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A famous rabbi called on the noted Gaon of Brodi, the author of many volumes and Rabbi Shlomeh Margolis, who was a man of means, for a charitable cause.

Rabbi Ephraim gave the rabbi a donation that appeared somewhat sparse and unsatisfactory. Rabbi Ephraim then invited him to spend some time with him and to examine his books, many of which bore "the name of Ephraim:" The House of Ephraim, The Gate of Ephraim, and The Hand of Ephraim.

The rabbi commented, "All these books appear very impressive, except for one." "Which?" "The Hand of Ephraim seems a little heavy."

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The famed Rabbi Iseleh Chariff was invited by a couple to divorce them and, as usual, to straighten out their difference. The woman, by the name of Rashe, did not permit any discussion; she objected to whatever the rabbi proposed.

"It is strange - all the difficult Rashi passages I met up with, I could learn to understand, but I doubt whether I shall ever be ready with this difficult Rashe."

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A doctor in a village was a freethinker who never attended synagogue. When his mother was about to die, she made him promise that he would observe the anniversaries of her passing.

One year the anniversary occurred on a Sabbath and he was called to reading. "May our teacher and our rabbi, the rabbi the doctor appears first.

Members of the congregation were offended, but the rabbi quieted them. "He is entitled to the honour even before the rabbi. The sages said, between his father and his teacher, the father has priority, because the father brought him into the world."

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A group of wealthy Christian gentry met at one of their friends and praised "their" Jews. "Mine is loyal to me and he would carry out any command." "He would even convert?" "Yes, he would."

The Jew was sent for. Master was sent for and the master said, "I demand you convert to my faith." The Jew was confused and frightened, unaware of how to act, but, the fear overcame and he decided to convert.

The master converted the Jew and his family.

Several months later the master called the Jew and said, "I know your conscience trembles. If you wish you may now revert." The Jew was satisfied and returned to his home where he told his wife that they are permitted to return to Judaism. But she now was heartbroken. "Woe is me. This is just before Passover. We shall need Matzoh, Passover dishes and worse. Run to the master and ask him whether we can delay our return to Judaism until after Passover?"

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The expression is current when we meet a person who is not appropriate, or an undesirable person in the house.

The story of a king, a priest and of a rabbi.

In a village there lived a Russian priest who had the repute of a wise man. Once the king travelled through that village and recalled the priest living there of great repute. He wanted to test the wisdom of the priest. He asked to be taken to him. When he met him, he asked him three questions: Where is the centre of the world; who is more worthy, God or the king; whom is the king thinking of just now?

The king left with a message ordering the priest to bring the responses to Petersburg within ten days.

The priest could not think of the answers, but he remembered that Jews were reputed to be wise, and that the rabbi is the wisest of the Jews. He went to the rabbi with tears in his eyes and told him of his ill fortune.

The rabbi told him to be at ease. The rabbi disguised himself as a priest and went to Petersburg, where all the great men of the state had assembled. When the king saw the priest, he called out, "This is no priest, it is an angel." The king asked the priest the same questions. The priest asked all the assembled to follow him into the courtyard where he pointed to a spot on the

ground and said, "This is the centre of the earth." The king asked, "How do you know?" The priest said, "Measure the earth and you will see."

The king posed the second question, "How much is the king worth?" The disguised priest took a small icon from his coat, and asked its value. The king responded, "Two ruble."

The rabbi in disguise said, "If the icon is worth two rubble, the king must be worth one ruble."

Came the third question, "What is the king thinking of?"

The rabbi said, "Your Majesty, you think that I am the priest, but in reality I am a rabbi." As he discarded the priestly garments, while the king called out, "You are no angel or priest" and bestowed valuable gifts upon the rabbi.

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A stranger entered the synagogue and went directly to the reader's stand to lead the service. There was confusion. When the Shamass approached him, he explained that he had legal and due right. "What is right?" "A strong right," pointing a fist. "In that case, you may lead the service."

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A Jew in the old home was visited by two policemen for non-payment of taxes and they seized his pillows and books from the house. A neighbour who was watching the proceedings commented, "If the policemen followed one legal principle, that the night is for sleep, why did they seize the pillows. On the other hand, if the night is to study, why did they seize the books? The response is that there were two policemen; one acted on one Talmudic principle, the other policeman on the other."

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In Lightheartedness:

I confess, I repent before you, my God, in lightheartedness, a mocking gesture, even though I am not one to mock anything, certainly not at a sacred object. But I am afraid I was trapped by this one.

Some small matter: I saw a large synagogue built for synagogal purpose, with a corset store downstairs and a beauty parlour upstairs, where they worked and did business on the Sabbath. Upstairs, Jews in prayer shawls were repeating "And the Sons of Israel shall keep the Sabbath," and below they were fitting corsets, fixing pompadours and powdering faces.

Passing this Holy place I remembered an old joke,

The Torah tells us that the sons of God, angels, saw how beautiful were these human daughters and they took women whom they desired. The question arises: how come angels among these?

The response: On a Sabbath or a Sunday or a festival, they came to a synagogue to engage in Jewish prayer, and wandered down into the corset shop or the hairdressing parlour and fell in love with the girls fitting corsets or fixing up their locks. Thinking this, the Evil One tickled me and I had to laugh, although this was laughter out of order.

In fact, it is forbidden to laugh at a sacred place. So I repent and beat my breast in due course, "For the sin that I have committed before you in humour."

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A Yeshiva student asks another, "What is the difference between Purim and Yom Kippur?" The response is that on Purim Jews drink and eat very much, but they fast on the Yom Kippur. The difference is that on Purim the Jews disguise themselves as gentiles, but the opposite is true on the Kippur.

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During the Rosh Hashanah services, the man who blew the *Shofar* made lengthy preparations in the intentions of the spirit of the festival. But Rabbi Bunem told him, the intention is according to the initial SB.

"Stupid, blow."

Little David learned that Eve was born from a rib out of Adam's bones. In the morning he woke with a great pain. He explained, "I am afraid I had a wife born from my side."

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A beggar asked for charity, claiming to be victim of a fire. The philanthropist said that even the beggar's father had been seen begging for a living, why was he now entitling himself a victim of a fire.

The beggar explained, "We had always been begging, but the towns where we were living had burned down, so we are now fire victims."

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The world is beautiful but cannot be seen.

Money is Worship of false gods, but without it there is great trouble.

Better to look aside than to imprint on the heart.

Truth must always conquer, but a true judge is rare to find.

With a good living, life is sweet.

It is fine to walk behind a full waggon.

A horse travels the entire world, and remains a horse.

When we prepare for Sabbath Eve, we have the Sabbath.

It is better to eat dry bread at home than cake elsewhere.

A blow passes but a word remains.

If you have, you are; if you have not, you are nothing.

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Benjamin: You hear, Reb Leiser, if there were nine more Jews like you, Messiah could come.

Leiser: Thank you for the honourable mention.

Benjamin: Yes, Leiser. But the others would not be Our Teacher, Moses.

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Some comedian asked the rabbi, "Why does the Haggadah refer to the plagues with the phrase 'And he shall give you?'" The rabbi explained, "If it were only 'give you' it would apply to you. But the text reads 'to you and even to you,' and 'For to you' pointing with his fingers to each of the wits.

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Rabbi Levy Isaac of Berdichev was calling on a wealthy citizen, during the nine August days of abstinence, for charity when his host was eating chicken. "Chicken is permissible?"

"Yes," the rabbi conceded, "but if you eat chicken, you will be without it on the eve of Yom Kippur, without atonement."

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How Rabbi Judah calculated. A Yeshivah student happened to be invited to the *Seder* table of a stingy man, where the food was sparse and the cups of wine were small. The scholar was offended. At the point in the *Haggadah* where the counting of the plagues were listed and counted, Rabbi Judah was cited as abbreviating them. The host asked the student to explain. "In the case of

a poor guest, the ten plagues should apply to the rich host, but the three abbreviation terms should apply for the poor scholar."

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When Rabbi Yoshe Ber was rabbi in Slutzk during a dry summer day, it was decreed that the community should gather in the synagogue in the afternoon for Psalm reading and to pray. A notorious sinner who was observing the anniversary of the demise of a member of the family proceeded to the Readers desk to lead the services without permission.

There was a commotion as some wanted to remove him.

But Rabbi Yoshe Ber indicated that he should be left alone. After the services the rabbi explained with a smile, "Such sinners once brought a deluge on the world. Maybe he can at least bring some rain."

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The Pinsker Rabbi was invited to a circumcision ceremony. When it came time to name the baby, the father forgot the name he had agreed on with his wife. While he excused himself to consult with her, the rabbi told the officiants to proceed with the name of Abraham. It so happened that that was the name the parents had chosen in the first place. When all was cleared up, many of the guests believed that the rabbi had performed a miracle. But the rabbi said it was natural; if the father is Terach, the son must be Abraham.

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The famed Rabbi Chaim Sonenfeld of Jerusalem was informed that a nearby Jew who was not strictly observant had fire and was cooking on the Sabbath. He dressed briskly, but by the time he reached the house the members of the household had put out the fire and cleaned the room.

The men even accused the Rabbi of discourtesy, for not knocking at the door before coming.

"You understand, in case of fire all the laws of discourtesy are void," the Rabbi explained.

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The Ostrovitzer Rabbi was descended from a simple family, the son of a baker, but he was not the less highly regarded by his thousands of followers.

Once he met at a gathering of eminent Jews who exchanged tales of their parents and their ancestors. When it came to his turn he said, "And my father of blessed memory thought that fresh bread is better than old."

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Before Reb Yosele of Slonim was ordained rabbi he was living at the home of his father-in-law, Reb Eizekel

His father-in-law once teased him, "Tell me, Yosele, which of us both is the Slonim rabbi. Neither of us hands down rulings of rabbinical law. This is done by the official judge, Reb Feitel. We both sit as arbitrators. We both live from our salaries. So who is the rabbi? How can we tell?"

"Reb Yosele answered, "Go into town and listen. Who is being criticized? That one is the rabbi."

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Rabbi Shlomeh Mintz received a visit from a scholar of the same level and showed him a document in which they referred to him (the visitor) as Gaon. In the course of conversation it became clear that the visitor was not an expert on Rashi.

Rabbi Mintz indicated, "I know why they refer to you as Gaon. The first Gaonim also did not know of Rashi (Rabbis Saadya, Tzemach and Hayi died before Rashi was born). So they knew no Rashi."

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[One of the episodes in the I. Herman Papineau Pinkas document deals with the late Simon Wilensky who was, if I am not in error, the first religious Jewish bookseller in Montreal.] (D.R.)

I was told that one late Friday he was visited in his home on De Bullion Street near St. Catherine by a Reform Jew who was in need of a psalm book, the Song of the Degrees.

It was a tradition that pages from this sacred book were hung about the bed of a woman who was about to give birth, to protect her from evil influences.

Mr. Wilensky, at the Sabbath eve table, singing the after-dinner songs, told him that on the sacred hour of rest he would not engage in a business transaction.

The Reform Jew's insistence did not help, though he needed the Song of Degrees to hang in the room of the pregnant woman. Angry at Mr. Wilensky's refusal to sell him the Psalms book on the Sabbath he called out angrily,

"Just because of your damned Orthodox piety my wife will have to lie an entire Sabbath without the Song of Degrees."

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A Yeshivah inspector came into the school and listened behind the door as the students smoked cigarettes and exchanged stories. He revealed himself with the Hebrew alphabet, calling them wild youths, ignoramuses of each letter.

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A country resident arranged for a son-in-law to marry his daughter and promised several years of upkeep, but later complained to his rabbi, "He is intolerable."

"What is your complaint?"

"Don't ask, all day long he studies and prays. He must be insane."

"Why do you say so. I, too, study and pray. Would you say a bad word about me?"

"Of course not." he said, scratching his head. "You are doing so for a living, but my stupid son-in-law is doing this seriously."

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A Chassid petitioned to his Rebbe for icy weather ("Shelleg") to enable him to get lumber cut from the forest. He promised the Rebbe some 330 rubles, the number 330 meaning snow. When in fact, the weather turned rainy, he was disappointed and told the Rebbe so, and the Rebbe was as much until they compared notes.

The Chassid had given the Rebbe "Geshem" hoping for an equivalent of snow.. But in gratitude the Chassid gave the Gabbay an additional ten rubles and the total gift of 340 "Geshem" "for rain" merited further moisture in the form of rain.

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The Gaon Rabbi Azriel of Lublin, the Iron Head, noted the remarkable modesty of the rebbe. "Rebbe, if you think so little of yourself, who does conduct the Rebbe's offices? You shall mount the ministry and announce, 'I am not a rabbi; do not come to me.'"

The Lubliner Rebbe promised to act accordingly.

The effect on the Chassidim was in reverse. They became more attached to him.

The Gaon admitted, "I see the Chassidim like a modest man. My advice is to announce that you are a very saintly man. The Chassidim will flee from you, hearing that you are vain."

"That is true," the Rebbe admitted in all innocence. "Indeed, I am not a Rebbe, but I am also not a liar to claim I am a great saint."

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Our sages say that after a man concludes the Eighteen Benedictions no one may cross his passage by three paces. Why?

A very wise man explained: "because during this prayer he has transacted a number of affairs. If someone crosses the line, he may violate the border line of his friend."

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A speaker who considers himself a great orator invited the rabbi to attend his sermon. At the end of the sermon the rabbi asked why he had selected so poor a text. "As you selected your text, you could have chosen one of the best.

The orator explained, "Silly matters remain in the mind."

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One evening an author invited the sharp Reb Aizele Charif (Sharp) to ask for a commendation on a composition. The rabbi took some time to examine the book. The author was talking to himself, "It is late. The law forbids a scholar to walk out at night for fear of robbers."

Reb Aizele advised him, "Fear not. Take your composition with you. They will see what a scholar you are and will not touch you."

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The story is told of Little Reb Itzhak Drabitcher who was very poor and very charitable and would give to the poor all that he possessed, including the most precious things which his wife had as an inheritance gift from her family: a golden ring in which a rare brilliant gem was set.

Fearing that her husband would give it away, she wrapped it in a fine shirt at the bottom of old torn laundry.

Once she noted that the chest was open and she understood what had happened; the Rebbe searched among the torn shirts and discarded the unclean but he found a discarded shirt which he promptly gave to a poor man. The Rebbetzen raised an alarm, and the Rebbe followed her crying loudly, "My dear Jew, you should be aware that with the clean shirt there is a precious ring and gem. As you sell it, do not let anyone deceive you."

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Hershele Astropolier used to say that after all he only calls for a loan, and it is clear that the Lord is able to grant his request for it states, "For mine is the silver and mine is the gold." Again, it is only for several hours, and with Him, "A thousand years is like yesterday's day." A loan of a few hours would suffice for an entire life.

But what does the Lord tell me? He tells me, "Wait several hours."

---

Rabbi Chaimke of Brisk was very humane and compassionate of the poor.

A poor woman consulted him on a chicken she had had slaughtered for the Sabbath when she found gall in it, a very bitter gall and therefore not permissible for the Day of Rest.

The rabbi examined the chicken, the gall and the very poor woman, and asked the woman to taste the gall. She did so and reacted, "It is very bitter, like my life it is bitter and dark."

The Gaon was relieved that he could rule by the truth of the woman's claim.

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The Gaon of Kovno was walking from the Sabbath synagogue prayers; he met a wealthy Jew returning, not particularly observant, with a parcel from the bathhouse.

"A good Sabbath, Rabbi," the man greeted Rabbi Isaac.

"A good Sabbath, and a good year."

"I just came from the bath."

"May this be an omen of good health."

"I desecrate the Sabbath, and you wish me health."

"Why not? The world says that the cure comes before the plague. So you have the cure. The plague will come in due course."

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An author by the name of Moses brought to Rabbi Israel Salanter a work entitled "The Hands of Moses."

Rabbi Samuel looked inside the volume and suggested that work should have been entitled, "The Face of Moses."

"Why "The Face of Moses?"

"Because no one could look in the face of Moses."

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A preacher in a Shtetl announced that he would deliver a sermon in the synagogue. An ignorant impertinent who was not his friend tore away the announcement.

When the preacher became aware of this he announced that he sent a Christian butcher for a tongue. The butcher packed the tongue with a note and sealed it. When the tongue lay on the table a dog tore off the label. "It bothered the preacher not at all that the dog had torn off the label for the tongue remains with me."

---

In Posen where Rabbi Akiva was the rabbi, a wealthy Jewish moneylender, and not a generous man at that, passed away, the Chevra Kadisha demanded a substantial sum from the family for burial costs. The heirs appealed to Rabbi Eiger for lenience against the Chevra Kadisha.

The rabbi explained, "the others will arise, as we believe, after the resurrection. Normally the grave is not eternal, and for a certain undetermined period it is not proper to demand undue funeral charges. But the sages teach us that a lender of moneys on interest will not rise at the resurrection. His grave is permanent. It is proper to pay much for it."

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Reb Arele Sandegerer was known throughout Galicia for his piety, but no less for his generosity.

A widow came to him for aid in marrying her daughter while she had dowry funds. The Rebbe asked her to wait awhile.

In the meantime one of his generous Chassidim came in, and the discussion turned on the need of all of a hundred guilder for the widow's case. The Chassid agreed.

He called in the widow, gave her the gift, and wished her Mazel Tov.

Then he looked at the Rebbe and prophesied about him, "Rebbe, you will never be a success."

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Can you explain the expression "By the sweat of your brow you shall earn your bread." It is a curse that God has imposed upon all equally. So why do the wealthy get away with it so lightly, whereas we the poor suffer with gall to earn the slice of bread?"

"You are in error. The rich also suffer over their bread. I know a wealthy man who sits at his table with his appetite so that his face pours sweat."

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An antiquarian called upon a rabbi for an approbation for a work he had composed. After some examination he called the author and presented the text, "You have returned the Crown to its ancient state." The writer left happy.

When his close associates inquired of what the rabbi meant he explained, "He has returned the paper back from rags to rags."

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Reb Naphthali of Vilno came into the synagogue on the eve of Yom Kippur, Minchah time, after the Eighteen Benedictions. Next to him stood a well-fed German who repeated the prayers "Because of our sins" with an indifference as if he had just had a good meal. Reb Naphthali gazed at him. The German looked at him, "You look as if you had never seen a decent man."

Reb Naphthali responded coolly, "When I was in Cheder my Rebbe told me that if I find something incomprehensible I should look into the German text. I look at you now, and I understand `all of our sins.'"

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As is known, Reb Levy Isaac of Berdichev was the great defender of the Jewish people, and barely tolerated a critical word of them.

Sitting with friends he heard a discussion of people of our time and current style dressed in shorts. He listened for the comments of Reb Levy Isaac. "What is the excitement? Are we not all waiting for Messiah who is to arrive in short?"

---

A driver to his Polish village from Warsaw boasted that he knew the road like the "Ashrei" prayer. That was not a figure of speech because "the prayer is said three times daily, but the Warsaw trip was made over a week." The driver defended his concept: "The Warsaw trip was made there and backward, but the "Ashrei" prayer was never said in reverse."

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The Creator of the Universe wanted to learn what is going on in the lesser world, so he sent down an angel from heaven to earth. He stood and considered how false the world is, full of deceit and swindle. He returned to report that it is not satisfactory.

So He sent a second messenger who also returned with a similar report.

So He decided, "I will descend myself and decide if their words are true."

So the Almighty disguised himself as a human being walking on Main St. and saw a Jew walking in the morning with a prayer shawl under his arm, on the way to the synagogue.

"Good morning Mr. Jew. How are you? On the way to the synagogue? You owe an early obligation for a Yahrzeit? Or are you a mourner?" The Lord inquired sympathetically.

"No," the strange Jew murmured.

"No, I am really interested to know what brings you out so early in the morning?"

"So, I will tell you, a daughter. My daughter, as a matter of great luck, has given birth, so I am about to go to the synagogue to give her a name."

"So, excuse me, where is the man?"

"Excuse me, there is no man."

"What do you mean? How can it be?"

"Probably from God," the Jew replied with certainty.

Now I am certain. I have been on earth but several hours and already they have conspired a blood accusation against me, a blood libel. I cannot be on this false world."

And He returned to Heaven.

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The wife of Rabbi Lavy Isaac of Berdichev complained to the local rabbinical court that her husband is not providing her with the family livelihood according to their common wedding Ketubah which stipulates "As Jewish husbands are wont to do."

The rabbi explained the custom by citing the following words, "to provide for their wives in honesty. A man should provide for his wife honestly, with moneys earned honestly, by truth, without swindle. Such income is nowadays not one of the common things."

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A greenhorn came into an American synagogue and saw only old Jews at prayer.

"Where are your children?" he asked.

"You must be a newcomer. Children do not come to pray."

Another time he visited a synagogue full of young people.

"Where are your fathers?" he asked.

"You must be a greenhorn. If our parents had not passed away we would not need to be here to say Kaddish."

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The Gabbay of the synagogue, sensing that the preacher was slow in his sermon, decided to point to his watch.

The preacher was quick to reply, "The watch is good, but the pointer is bad."

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1906

A scene of a Jewish woman on the eve of the New Year in a book store in search of a new prayer book, the Lord of the Universe, a fine thought not to laugh at.

"I have come to you, Mister, for a new Lord of the Universe. You deal with sacred books, so you probably have a Lord of the Universe as well. I come from uptown, where I live; they told me that I can get it from you.

"All year round I can get along, but now it is near the New Year. Such sacred and fearful days are coming when even the fish in the waters are trembling, we have to remember the Creator of the Universe and I need, for the sake of His Beloved Name, a new Creator of the Universe.

"At home I had an old Creator of the Universe; it had remained a heritage from my old mother, may she rest in peace. My mother inherited it from my grandmother. I had loved the ancient Creator of the Universe. Baked into my heart I had brought it with me to Canada, but my own children took it away from me piece by piece, tore it up, my treasure, pulled it apart until they ruined it from me altogether.

"When they began to pull and tear my old Creator of the Universe which I had brought with me from home, it was as if they had cut my flesh with knives. I pleaded for death more than once. My life had become hateful to me. What does it mean, they take my dear beloved book from me, my Creator of the Universe? I could not imagine that I could get along without a Creator of the Universe. But we can get used to everything, and I became accustomed to being without a Creator of the Universe. That is how it went like a song, slowly my children robbed me of my old Creator of the Universe.

"Mister, I want to talk my embittered heart out to you. I was a poor woman at home, a dark waste and lone widow; the children live here in the golden land and they sent me something here from time to time to live on. But how did I live? Those who wish us ill should live no better than I lived. What did I eat? Those who wish evil upon me should eat no better. I had a room, one that we wish upon our enemies.

"But, nevertheless, it was not so bad for me. When all became cloudy on my heart, I found comfort in my Creator of the Universe which I had inherited from my mother and from my grandmother, may they have a brilliant Garden of Eden. I would weep to Him and would feel better. The Creator of the Universe was always before my eyes, in the sacred synagogue, and I had Him in my mind. He was my life, my soul and it never occurred to me that we would ever separate

for an hour, a minute, a moment. I brought my Creator of the Universe with me; I never let it out of my mind, on land or sea.

"Cursed be the day that my children sent for me, the day I left my home. You understand, Mr. Jew, that I came here to luxuriate with my children. They immediately demanded from me that I forget my Creator of the Universe.

"At my first welcome they demanded that I discard my wig and wear my own hair like a 'goyeh'. I refused, and they called me 'Wig the Thief'. This first beginning was hard on me. I wept in my silence, and wished death upon myself, like the enemies of Israel. But then I surrendered. For a while I was ashamed of myself, but the shame and the fear slowly disappeared. I began to uncover my head and go like a 'goyeh', with my own hair. That was how it began. Then my children began to tear my sacred Sabbath. My children sat at the table on Saturdays, heads uncovered, and they pushed my Sabbath candles into a corner out of shame. My daughters were no better. They helped to desecrate my Sabbaths and to distance me the more from my old Creator of the Universe. They were unmarried at the time, and I had to wake them early on Saturday mornings to go to work and later they trained me to prepare for them a Sabbath breakfast. So it went worse from day to day with my Sabbaths and with my festivals. They tore me from my Creator of the Universe until I gave up my praying, my Sabbath, my Yiddish liturgies and remained with nothing.

"Now my children are married. I stay with a son, sometimes with a daughter. But I never find the old Creator of the Universe which had once so sweetened my life. I am so used to it that I sometimes yearn for the old Creator of the Universe.

"But now, uncle, on the eve of the New Year I am missing Him, more than all the New Year eves I had survived. The troubles we hear about from home have brought us to this. When I remember that Jewish blood is pouring like water there, how bitter and black it is in my old home I think of my friends, pals with whom I prayed in one chapel, poured our hearts out in one woman's prayer book, who are now wandering without a slice of bread to still their hunger, and particularly their small children, all this draws me back to the good taste of the tears of once upon a time.

"So I come to buy a new Creator of the Universe, and I want to go to the synagogue on New Year's day and remember my days of long ago.

"How much is a Creator of the Universe here? Two cents? If you can get me the old Creator of the Universe, not the paper one which sell for two cents, you would do me a great favour; if you can make me feel like I once felt, I would never forget your favour.

"But I am afraid that it is too late, and that I can never be what I once was. So give me please my change and let me go home and have a Happy Year."

1908

At about three in the afternoon, a day before Passover Eve, Yudel the Shochet, a tall bony Jew, ceased to accept chickens for slaughter.

"Itke," he said to his wife, "tell the women to come with the poultry after the Inspection for Chometz. I have to go for Matzo water, then to afternoon and evening services and then do my inspection."

Dressed in his Sabbath "capote" and his high satin hat, he went to the rabbi which was the gathering place of all the Chassidim and Men of Action who went thence together to the little stream to gather "our water" for the Matzo guardians for tomorrow.

Entering the rabbi's, an old short man with a small beard and long grey hairlocks and pale little face of an old woman; none of the leading householders had yet arrived. Naturally there could be no idleness, so they began to speak of affairs of the day and neither of the two scholars noticed that the Court of Judgement room had filled with Chassidic Jews who had come for Matzo water and who were listening respectfully and reverentially to the discussion between their rabbi and their Shochet. Who knew how long they would have thus talked if Leibel, the blacksmith, had not come in with an alarm. Black-bearded, with his twisted feet, he had just torn himself away from his forge and his peasants all about him, some to shoe a horse some to repair a wagon and one to

sharpen an axe. Leibel rushed in, crying out, "Jews, it is late. The sun is setting. We have to go for Matzo Water."

Only then did the two scholars notice that it was truly late, and rose to prepare to go away.

The vessels of new fresh Passover-ready pails, hand dishes and a pair of long poles to carry the pails had been prepared. The younger men, scholars from the classes, received them, and the crowd, the rabbi and Shochet at their head followed for Our Water, Matzo water.

They went in pairs, some scholarly, some not, deep in their discussions, told Chassidic tales or the customs of Rebbe'im. Without noticing they were soon beyond the church, beyond the town, past the fields where it had been possible to hear the distant peasant girls with their tucked-in skirts above their knees who were beating their wash.

The fresh air smelling of the grasses awakened the crowd and a Chassidic song floated over the fat Polish fields, a praise and thanks to the Creator of the Universe; it rose higher until it passed from expression to action, from song to dance, as each man felt that he had himself witnessed the great miracle of the exodus from Egypt, the first step of the liberated Jewish people.

The first handful of water was drawn by the Rabbi, and with it began the Song of Praise, May the Name of God be blessed from now until eternity, was spread by Hirsh Ber the butcher who appears rather to be a teacher in a seminary, a man gifted with a charming little voice and leader in prayer, with the melody of the Prayer of Praise. The crowd gathered courage and drew water. By the time they reached, "I love my God to hear my voice," my pleading is the pails were full and the fine procession of the festive Jews who bore on their shoulders the yokes of water began to move, not by the same path, probably not wishing to profane the waters by passing the church they went back along the small wooden bridge which pregnant women avoided to pass without aprons because of pucky spirits or cursed souls in general who lie there and seek a way of entering a Jewish body so that they find perfection. They walked another road where Moshe Leib the carpenter lived, and they brought to his forehouse the water covered by a fresh peasant cloth, then went first to the synagogue for late afternoon and evening prayer.

At the rise of the morning, after the first services carpenter Moshe Leib began his preparations for the first Passover Eve Matzoth, split the heavier lumber pieces for the finer, prepared much royal lumber to make fire, cleared the boards and rolling pins.

Moshe Leib permits no one to the work. He does it all himself. It is a privilege inherited from his late father-in-law, the old Abraham Ber Yenkatz (They called him this because he stuttered so when he spoke.) who on no condition would let no one else do it.

About noon on Passover Eve the crowd began to arrive with their linen sockets for the Guarded Matzo flour. They came in full festive dress in satin capes, atlas Kapotes, bells, with newly purchased kerchiefs sticking out of their pockets, beards and forelocks combed, shining faces, not relying on Moshe Leib's cleansing. Each one separately with his own piece of glass stood and scraped the boards on which the matzos would be rolled.

On Passover Eve it is compulsory to guard against the least possibility of error or of the forbidden and there is need of excessive kashruth. They cleansed and scratched until the Rabbi entered when they mixed the first dough. "Jews, be particularly careful of the crumbs." Leiser Abraham Leib's, a Chassidic young man with a small light brown beard, called out. He stood at the head and cut the pieces of dough for the rollers. With this they began to say the Hymns of Praise in unison. They kneaded, rolled and prayed. In the next room where the oven stood we heard the old suppressed voice of Elijah Feivel the painter who had been a Matzo Guardian with the old Amnisher Rebbe. He sings, half tired from the oven heat, "He who raises the poor from the dust, he shall raise the paupers from the dust." The world forgets where they are in the universe. Hands move quickly. An enthusiastic Song of Praise rises higher and higher. No more concerns of revenue, no more exile, cleansed of the entire world. So the few souls released Jews are elevated from the simplicity of the concrete and entered into perfection in the sanctity of the festival as all together they thanked and praised the Creator of the Universe singing, "Let all the nations praise. Let all the nations praise the Lord, let all the peoples esteem Him, for his Grace has dominated over us, and the truth of God is forever. Praise the Lord."

Having baked the Matzoth, each put his portion in the neat pillow case which he had brought from home, they had a bit of festival drink and cake or sat down for a whisker together; when Chassidim drink it is just as the uncircumcised do, or drinkers who pour their whisker down all at once and gaze at the bottom of the glass, to see if there is anything left. They do not hurry, deliberately, they discuss the Torah, repeat a beloved lesson, sing a traditional melody. Naturally, everybody was happy. So they sing "The King whose Peace it is." The rabbi called to Hirsh Ber who responded and the crowd with them.

A warm Passover Eve, sun outside, a pleasure, with some peasants about who must have made a mistake in the calendar and had come on the eve of Passover afternoon with eggs and chickens, not knowing that in Jewish homes all had been prepared, with no evil eye watching.

In Archie Becker's corner there were remnants of unsold fish. At Berele Katzap there were several Jews, hurried, with bottles of wine for the Four Glasses at the Seder, with horse radish.

In the midst of it all, the hoarse voice of the Shamos calling,  
"Jews, into the synagogues."

Hear What I will Tell You.

Were Moses to rise from his grave and looking at the type of Judaism dominant in Montreal, he would not break the tablets under the mountain but rather on the heads of Montreal Judaism, and that's all. The affair is finished. You understand me. It is simply a shameful disgrace. Faces flame on what Judaism has been founded, as they say, on chicken's legs, upper things at the bottom, lower matters uppermost.

Tell me, among ourselves, did the Bar Mitzvah of a Jewish lad in the Old Home bear the same character as in Americhka, Montreal?

Jewish boys there studied in the Chadorim with Gemara teachers, the Bible with Rashi, Gemara with Tosefoth and at times the Maharsha. They could pray like water, almost off by heart, and the environment, the home was Jewish, the Jewish child grew up as a true Jewish Jew without bluff or reservations. He saw no deceptions, no falsehood. All was natural. Father closed the store or shop on Sabbath. He prayed every morning in prayer shawl and with phylacteries, and the child looked forward to becoming a Jewish Jew, an adult, a Bar Mitzvah, a responsible man, although this smelled of fire. Some joke, facing punishment for every little sin. After all, we are only human, of flesh and blood, and young at that. We are tempted to sin, sometimes to skip some lines in our prayers. When father is not watching, even to jump some pages, sometimes to forget the benedictions after washing our hands.

And sometimes we play with friends and forget that there are afternoon prayers and evening prayers in the world and other little sins which no man can escape. A man is, after all, a product of blood and flesh and not a saint. In short, as you say, becoming Bar Mitzvah was an important event in the life of a Jewish child, for afterwards he is a man equal with all others, a Jew among all Jews, a link in the great Jewish chain.

But take little Montreal. What a face does it bear? It is only to make itself ludicrous. For, forget it not, a quarter of our children don't know a word of Yiddish and don't even know how to read Ivry-Hebrew. And neither mother or father care about it. Do they need to turn him into a rabbi? Do you know when they think of their child being Jewish? When he becomes twelve, and they think of the big Bar Mitzvah party which they will have for his thirteenth birthday when he will become Bar Mitzvah, a party in one of the biggest halls with music, drums and dancing. Ask him what it is all about? May goats know about jumping fences into other people's gardens as he is ignorant of the concept. In fact, he does not recognize a letter from the Hebrew alphabet. His parents never sent him to Talmud Torah, and if they sent him, does he know anything as a result? He cannot pray, and he never saw his father pray in prayer shawl or with phylacteries. And suddenly, here is a Bar Mitzvah! No, it smacks of leaving the benedictions of Torah reading, off by heart, and the singing of the Bible chapter with a music and a speech.

A sermon which the Bar Mitzvah boy must preach to the congregation on the Sabbath in the synagogue and then repeat Sunday at the party. What is to be done? The time is short, only a year, and so much to do.

So you send for a Jew with a prayer book or a stupid half Shochet and you tell him, "Listen, excuse me, this boy will become Bar Mitzvah so he must sing a beautiful Maftir and finish off with a splendid speech. Can you undertake to do the job within a year?" The poor man with the prayer book, or the half Shochet, considers his reply. "Does he know a little Ivry?" The mother answers, "If he could read Hebrew he would have become a rabbi a long time ago in America."

So what does a Jew not do for a living? So the poor man undertakes to teach the Bar Mitzvah boy the Maftir service with the benedictions and a speech, all according to the custom of the Land of Montreal. Imagine, it does not get done as quickly as it is said. You need not envy him, the Jew with the prayer book.

Such beads of sweat drop from him as he sits with the boy at the table. Talk today or talk tomorrow, it clings like beans to the wall as the head is not inclined to remember anything. Better give him a ball and you will see wonders. Now he bargains with the rabbi about how many lines he would read from the prayer book. "Four lines are plenty." All right, he will do the man a favour. "One more line. It is plenty. That's all!" After all, he cannot give all his time for Hebrew. She stands at the side and enjoys it all from her brilliant son, while the blood flows from the rabbi and the prayer book. His wife is looking forward for the few dollars because she, literally, needs, and here, literally, a piece of wood before him. There is no beginning. May my enemies be destroyed.

A month before the Bar Mitzvah the bright boy already knows the benedictions and the Maftir Bible readings by heart, and the speech flows like water.

"He does not need phylacteries," she said. "First of all he will not put them on. Secondly, we have a new pair in the house which we had bought for our eldest son on his Bar Mitzvah, and we used them for the second day and now we will use them for him."

His little prayer shawl must be new, to be photographed and for the synagogue. You will be pleased with what goes on in the synagogue that Sabbath. In-laws, uncles and friends drive up in their cars, frank and free, bringing drinks and cakes and freshly baked kugels, and the Gabbaim and other officials dance about them and pay them respect and pledges are made for synagogue needs and smile to them. You would enjoy hearing the lad's Haftorah reading and his speech, a virtual parrot which the rabbi had drilled into him with lofty germanized words which no one begins to understand, and were it not for his tutor standing high near the pulpit, whispering quietly from the Bible he would have wandered off into the sixth millennium in his speech on high ideals and divinity and in his thanks to his beloved parents for their fine Jewish education, and in his promises to follow the paths of justice and to be a faithful son of the Jewish people and to study the sacred Torah (this dear scholar).

Then comes the reception and the birthday party with the large cake and its thirteen candles, music playing well into daylight, eating and drinking and dancing till the smoke rose, a great festivity. The boy is Bar Mitzvah.

Since there are many rooms in the large hall for weddings, Bar Mitzvahs and other festivities, to keep the guests from wandering, they put a sign on the door of one room, with large letters "Bar Mitzvah". You laugh. Woe to such laughter and to such education in Montreal, and even if you tell me that it is all right, better that nothing there remains in the child's memory of such a Bar Mitzvah ceremony, I say "No" with a capital "N" to such memories, worthy of a blown out egg, for Judaism is standing on chicken legs.

1908

There is a sacred stillness in the heaven. The jury of the High Court are seated in fiery chairs about a fiery table and their eyes and ears are intent on the complaint testimony of Angel Samuel, the divine prosecutor delivering a fiery speech on the sins of the people of Israel.

The Angel Michael, the divine defender of the Jews, has his defence prepared. The side of commandments and offenses is even to a hair. The Books are open and the divine scribes are at the table, fiery quills in hand, noting each word from Satan's mouth. And the Judge of the entire world on his fiery chair watches that all proceed punctually in truth and by law.

Satan had concluded speaking and the testimony of the witnesses is to begin. The Prince of the Sea appears; he has something to state and is accorded his opportunity.

"King of the Kings of all Kings, I, your slave, minister of waters, will say a few words in regard to the complaint against the Jews, the people you have chosen of all peoples. Lord of all universes, you have placed in my hand all the seas, all the rivers and waters.

"But I do not mind that your Jews often use my waters for good and honest ends. I do not mind that their milkmen pour water into their milk, that their innkeepers pour water into their drinks. That is their income and the men on earth have to eat, have to live, and it could be that if one of our world were as tempted, he would not do better. I also excuse your Jews if they do not follow the laws which they are commanded about water, if they do not wash their hands before eating or after eating or walk more than four paces before washing. I forgive them these offenses absolutely, and I believe that you, the creator of all universes, are not so watchful with all your children if they do not follow these water laws, for the war for life often prevents them from following everything properly.

"But I have another complaint against the sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, a complaint which is just. I have known your Jews over three thousand years ago, before they accepted the Torah and you have chosen them as the elected people of all the peoples, when they left Egypt. I heard them sing in my territory, at the Red Sea. Within my territory they sung, There they sang the beautiful melody which is still theirs to this day. I would not speak evil of them. But if they do me an evil personally I cannot be silent.

"Creator of all Universes, remember what I have done for them, who was responsible for the seas, I told the Red Sea to accept the blows of Moses' sceptre, who eventually commanded it to split and make a dry path to escape the Egyptians, a path with conveniences for each of the tribes. The water stood like a glass wall as they crossed in peace. Then the same water swallowed the Egyptians with their horsemen and chariots.

"Later again, when Joshua led the people to the land of Israel. I told the Jordan, also under my command, to dry up and make a path for them - and it seems that that is doing enough for them.

"And how do they thank me? Each day they remember the Egypt exodus, and instead of being grateful to me, instead of thinking kindly, they dirty my waters with their sins which they cast into all the rivers on Rosh Hashanah when they go to Tashlich, 'And you

shall cast into the depths of the sea all your sins,' they plead to you, standing Rosh Hashanah at the waters and shaking the corners of their garments and throwing into the rivers all the jealousy, hatred, evil speech, gossip and other ugly filth.

"I ask you, Judges of the entire world, should it be thus? Have I earned it from them? How ungrateful they are, those your Jews. Have they no other place for their filth?"

"Your complaint, my faithful servant is a just one," the All-Powerful thundered as his voice was heard from one end of the world to the other. "But do it for my sake, and for my people Israel whom I love, and make no fuss about it. I assure you that their sins will not remain in your water and in your sins very long. So look and be silent."

The eighth day of the festival, Jews stand in the synagogues and pray for rain hoping that yesterday they received, on Hashanah Rabba, that they received a good accounting. Jews' prayers mount to the heavens and reach the angel destined to give rain, who consulted his chief minister, the Prince of the Seas, about what is to be done.

"Collect your clouds and let there be rain," the Prince commanded.

The clouds assembled over the world and they were commanded to do the wishes of the People of Israel. The clouds flew to the seas to fill themselves with water. They swallowed all the sins which the Jews had cast into the waters on Rosh Hashanah. The clouds spit out all the jealousy, the hatred, the gossip and the other sins, great and small, together with the water which they had soaked up, and a rain fell on the sinful earth, mixed with sins.

Whoever had cast something into the water on Tashlich on Rosh Hashanah received his share back with great distinction. The waters of the seas became crystal clear, not the slightest dirt remained there and the anger of the Prince of the Seas was stilled.



**MORE FROM THE PAPINEAU PINKAS:  
WRITTEN CIRCA 1951, ICHIEL HERMAN RECOLLECTS HIS CHILDHOOD  
(translation by David Rome)**

My birthplace named Wiskwich, near Warsaw in Poland; I am close to seventy. I left it. When I close my eyes, it seems colourful, rich as of yesterday. The fine old Beth Hamidrash with its ancient tables and bookcases, with Vilno, Zhitmer, thick Gemorath, and the long hard benches where young scholars sat as parents and elders as older traditional families.

My older was known as Mendel, Mendel the Cohen, and as in all small towns, the small centre each has a nickname there. Three Shochtim. The free pious the Reb Pious Lipke who spent all his life on the Torah and the Torah was a decoration on the Community of Israel.

My father was a respected man, but was far from a man of income. He was far from wealthy. He was satisfied with his share. My mother was known as Gitel Mendels, the daughter of Cohen.

My parents had five children; three daughters and two sons. My brother Eliezar was eight.....a Jew with all virtues in all Jewish life.

The Shtetl had several Melamdin from ABC to Gemara to Tusefoth. When I was placed in Cheder, to the yellow teacher, tall as the Great Sabbath. When I was eight I began to study Gemara with Rashi at Reb Gedalyah, a scholar of his first ..... who had tried (?) hard.

The winters' nights all sat at penny candles lights, as the Rebbe taught the Genesis events of the fine history of the patriarchs, but when it came to Haftorahs of the order V'Yetzeh, and when Jacob fled to the land of Canaan. On the road he met the red hairy uncle Esau. He had to kiss him. Another accident with him in Shechem at the attack on beautiful Dinah. The attack on rich Simon and Levy who attacked the city of Shechem and pulled out all the men of the city; all the men including Chanor (?), the present of and his sister Dinah.

With our childish brain we could not flee the scandal of Shechem, the story of Joseph and his brothers let our children's minds with our hellish fire and tore our young hearts. A coat of many colours to sell their own brother.

The Rabbi told us how the Ishmaelites ..... the seven-year-old Joseph passed his mother Rachel's grave, all of them wept.

Before we had wept with joy when .....

When I recall my Cheder years, the poor Jewish school years with his great riches. Every evening of the.....was more beautiful, but more interesting. Mother kneaded a small piece of dough, tore off a piece of ..... and threw a piece with a blessing into the flaming fire with a warm blessing as I remember the noble fire with enthusiasm, the enthusiasm as she took Challah, as father ..... blessing ahead for an easier life for his family and for all Israel, better understand the Good Name as they took the name of God in learning and His Name.

It is Sabbath and all is ready, clean in all its corners. The sacred Sabbath is arriving. Father is arriving in his festive garments, ready for synagogue. Mother has already blessed the candles.

The table has been set with a snow white tablecloth; the fresh loaves on their plates. Not far from them, my cute loaves, a bottle of raisin wine at the centre of the table.

And there is Friday night with father at the synagogue. How much Jewishness, love of parents was planted in the young heart of the Jewish child. Little Jews for the old times, as he held the

Learning and learning. We knew father in prayer every day, in phylacteries and in prayer shawls, observing the Sabbath as God commanded. How else? The child had hoped at Bar Mitzvah to contribute a ring, like the others to Judaism, and at the right time, without fuss and ....., with no ceremony. He was invited to the Torah on Sabbath. Father blessed "Him to release him from the punishment of this one." He becomes an equal, an adult, and carries the duty of being a Jew with all others.

Completed, the Bar Mitzvah. There were more advanced studies. I left to Skernovitz. The younger Rabbi conducted a Yeshiva with many was called Reb Mayer Ichiel. All Polish Jews knew of him. Later he became a rabbi of Chassidism in Ostrovitz, a great man in Israel. One man in his generation. When I was sixteen .....

.....as more Thursday when the week's studies had ended, and the days....., especially winter time seasons.

We were eight, almost all of the same age. The teacher watched all over us, to be well dressed when we went out not to catch cold. Each had a small lantern to light the way.

As we came home mother undressed and kissed us all, hugged all of us, gave us supper, made our supper, made our beds, kissed us again, "Sleep my child quickly. Tomorrow is Friday. I will bake you two small loafs and you will make Kiddish over them. Sleep well." with a smile.

I slept well until five, and awoke when the day arose.....Mother was awake over the white dough, kneading the Challoth in honour of the Sabbath..... from my head, my father cried, "It slips from my head."

My loyal mother looks at my father in loyalty without end. "God give my son health and years that he may grow up a son of the Law, a Rabbi."

Ashamed, I went to school to study in the Beth Hamedrash. There were young and older men engaged in Torah in study, not younger than ten. Those who had made their choice before ten or before thirteen had hoped to perform the great deed of T'filin did not know of falsehood. All that was about knew about was truth.

.....in synagogue planted in hearts of Jews, in young Jews in love of hearts of young; to keep love the prayer books in young without help of fathers. (?)

Cheerful, lively sounded our good Sabbath. Our father sounded the guest's. The mother sounded with.....on her lips, the pious lights and baking.

Today Sholem Aleichem to the angels service and the army to the .....mother who spurred.....

The father's Kiddush, the festival, the melodies created a divine joy.

When I was ten years, at sleeping, dreaming .....sleeping my pious .....without a Yarmulke, he called out to mother, "Look out, your Goy. Something will come of him, a sinner in Israel will develop with him, a great Goy." Out of noise, I awoke from the sleep. Nothing helped, no excuses, a sinner. By error, in my sleep, my Yarmulke had slipped from.....

This will bring no particular end, and my parents had no end. I consent with my elders that I should become a craftsman. A Jew should believe in all. It is all told in the tales. Forty tales before Genesis tell a story.

The question arises: what craft? A shoemaker? A tailor? Certainly not. My father went to the Rabbi and asked counsel. Here came the great marvel. He told my father that the candidate should go to Warsaw as a tractorman.

When the Rabbi commands, this is a command. She packed everything up in my father's sack and bade farewell, and commanded him to pray every day and obey all Jewish law.

Mother kissed me and the tears flowed, and I am off to Warsaw.

The travel is not always the same.

.....from knowing are not even, travel from the wasteland to Warsaw is related with a series of projects such as preparing for cheeses, crackers and hard eggs. Some preparation - going to Warsaw. From the wasteland to Warsaw the fare is a ruble and 66 kopecks. You joke! Woe to the joke!

My father's friend who prayed in the chapel of the Chassidim, Reb Gershon, asked for a favour. His occupation was not so kosher; curving canes. He travelled every week to Warsaw.

"What favour?" Reb responded. "What favour, to half the kingdom, I shall grant it. Two great friends? Is it not so?"

"I will exchange, as my youngster Ichiel need to get to Warsaw, take him with you. So that no trap may happen to him. So that the hint is sufficient. As for expenses will be needed. There were no monies available."

Mother took me to the train, with the pack. The Shofar blew. The passengers were in the train.....for the first time in my life. Reb Gershon motions with several Jews and points to me. The train began to move under the bench where there were sitting, excuse me. You can imagine how I was surprised I was of the entire trip at the entire funeral voyage (?) Thank God I arrived in Warsaw, alone, without an address, with a red parcel in hand, nearly lunch time, without a penny in my pocket. I regretted the voyage.

But as a Chassidic youth I had perfect faith in the Rebbe to come an attakarsh, and no other. I enquired about a place for prayers for Mincha and Maarev. How can there be no prayer? Soon a youth pointed to the place which was sheer light and delight, a new world of youth of sweet learning, friendly Sholem Aleichems. The full Chassidic chapel, full of enthusiasm, the fall of belts. After the prayers, the crowd dispersed.

The Shammass, Reb Gedalyah, a man of vision, recognized me as a man of the province, had heard all details of my life and had invited me to his home for supper and the grace prayers and to sleep there.

In the morning I prayed and opened my pack which my loyal and loving mother had packed for me. After the meal Reb Gedalyah showed me where a Takarsh lives, after I thanked him.

Here began the miracle of the Rebbe. A Jewish man lived in Warsaw, the capital, Leibush Feivel by name, a son of Ben Zion, Ben Jacob, Ben Moshe (Men of Right, all of learning), of skill. Shaindele, the beautiful orphan whom the parents Leibush Feibush (?) adopted as a daughter.....the daughter opened the door (Kleinekel) without hesitation as she led me in.

The master, uncle to the girl and kept her as her own Prayers to the Great Sabbath. A letter to one other.

Tuesday, for the week of Lech Lechah 1651 was my beloved mother, the modest mother, Ghittel, may she live long.

First I write you that I am well, may I hear as well. I lie in bed and shed tears as I remember our ..... and parting with you. Your shining face. When I think ..... happening during the weeks since, and the letters I shall write you, to sustain and respect my honour of my mother and my father to the end.

Respect my father from his son Ichiel, the craftsman and everybody and he loved the Hadassah, Shaindele his new, the beautiful, the orphan who took Leibush Feivel as a daughter, to open the doors and I was not bashful. The master of the house with the black bead asked me what I wanted. "What do you wish?"

My reply was that I want to learn a trade. The master considered me from foot to head as for instance when we buy a horse and questioned me what it all refers to the case, of the Yeshiva and the craft.

And on the .....are apprentices he began to question me about his wife, ..... her name was, tall at a ..... red as my wig, prayed every day, mornings and..... whispered in his ear that Ichiel found in her ears, and as she was Cossack in her eyes, and her cossack husband was impressive. She asked me. Come to me, fearfully about my name, about my work, my messenger work, and about keeping my messenger work, my parents, my distresses, the nature of work, and I asked as ..... A woman who was living there whose parents died at the age of seven as an orphan.

\*\*\*

1950

Usher Feivel is residing in Papineau for some 35 years and he wrote me a letter with an address and gave it to me to take with me so I shouldn't have any difficulties there. But it really is a problem for ten thousand Kaporahs. so I've left virtually without money saying farewell to my wife and my two children. My pen - so much can be written - the great sufferings which I have undergone because it would take too much space and too much labour but since I am at risk to whom to travel it has already been easier on the heart. So, I travelled without money from city to city, from village to village, from country to country until Grand Trunk Station that is in the city of Montreal.

A man came to me, a small short man in my appearance, it had already been a Nichoravsky Russian soldier with dress buttons in his jacket in.....on his hat, his genuine name was Ginsberg and he says to me, "Hey." Imagine him addressing himself to me this way. I took an address to whom to turn.

This happened on the 12th day of the month of Adar in 1905, the second period of my recollections as they say in the Great Sabbath of 1905. The way, the pertinence of this Nich..... soldier of 1905 was incredible but I was not afraid of him. Above all, he addressed each person in his own manner. In my case he told me to wait until he was finished with all the people there. It

was like one family. Almost four hundred people: men, women, Polish, Romanian, Russian of all the creeds who appeared in the Yom Kippur Prayer Books. There were many young Jewish people, people of rabbinical families - scholars, Chassidic young people who were quite learned. At the end he said to me, "Hey, you, have you got any money because you have to travel by train. That costs money. Two dollars and fifty cents." I'm no great expert in money so I opened my Polish pocketbook and he pulled out what was left of all the monies, whatever I had. How much there was there I do not know even to this day. A question appeared in my thoughts. What shall my name be? Moishe R.....told me that in Montreal his son was there and there is a trip. I suspected that it was a kind of swindle. The man came to me and gave me a ticket for seven coins. "This will get you to Huntington." And he told me that there at a corner there is a man and that man there will point out to me..... But he suddenly disappeared.

Making myself sort of an accounting and the voyages of the road at seven o'clock, the man came to me and told me with a smile because the train is about to come. I went into the train and the man told the conductor that he should let me pass at Huntington. There was a loud blow of the train and the train passed. At eleven at night, the train stopped and the conductor told everyone to get off. I had no choice. The train ..... further and the little station is big as a ..... The lamp stopped in the dark and it all seemed like one big cemetery. The stories told of Visket about a reformer whose name was Simcha. He had ruined the whole village. when he died the rabbi referred to him as "Simcha to your land and sorrow to your city." When he was asked what he referred to, the Rabbi said, "Simcha was lying in the ground and the whole city was in joy."

Continuing my recollections of a young man all alone with no one to ask questions. And could I understand the Aramaic language of the land? The frost was burning ..... Hope was never lost. From the distance a stranger approached me and asked me what I am doing here. I could only give my address. He waved his hand and he told me to come with him.

A cemetery cold, a desert of white snow, of no language, did I have a choice? The man went with me and when he came to a special house, stopped at the door. Someone came out and both of them talked. They invited me to their home and the man suddenly disappeared. In short, they had been looking for me for three days and the treasure was not found. Now we can understand how much I suffered unwillingly for coming to Montreal.

Four weeks later I became a Shamas for two dollars a week in the Galicianer Shul on Clark Street at Ontario and taught youngsters the Maftir. The great fortunes were not mine. I sent immediately for my family and by Shavuot they were already here. That's what happens without luck. And I was better not to be born and gold becomes in his hands as mud and the story that I want to tell you will prove my veracity.

This happened thirty-eight years ago immediately on my arrival in Montreal. As they say in Jewish in seven shuls, in the old palace which they called the shanty is still in my heart and on the marketplace. In a corner of a building protected from sun and light. My palace was all furnished with old antiques which you never see any more. I bought them at a sidewalk exhibition not far from my home. They were Yiddish style and based on whole piece. They shook with me when I sat and studied. They showed, my wife and I, when we put our child to sleep, and they creaked with my students as we said the Maftir. So, I became a Maftir teacher which I needed when I went to their homes to give lessons. How could God do otherwise than send us a find, a kosher Mitzvah will make all our troubles disappear.

One day it was the fifteenth date of the month of Shevat in a frosty, sick snowstorm, the wild ones began to chase us over the streets. The snow creaked in the pockets and croaked under walls, knocking in the windows. The heart was alone as my customers creaked as soon as they got their Bar Mitzvah diplomas. Payments were none. My creditors did not choose to wait and except

for a synagogue bench I and my bank credit were non-existent. In short, since we are not of the best, my wife even wanted to settle with me for fifty cents a dollar I should give her cash I couldn't afford. That day, before going off to my lessons my wife propositioned a note since Esther needs shoes and Solly needs a coatleh, etc., the landlord wanted his money and the coal is virtually all gone. I gathered courage. I suggested to my wife, "Don't worry, we have a good God who has performed quick miracles for our ancestors. He will also perform miracles for us. His Purim miracle is coming. Comes the Passover, this is eventful days is not the season when God sends great eventful days. He will find in this season, all the miraculous events to respond to you. She said, "Halivei, Rabbonisher Eilem, I hope from your mouth into God's performances." Therefore, I told my wife and "from your mouth into God's ears."

I muster eventful days and torn boots and rubbers which screech in the snow a prayer for the benefit of the poor man. And so a father helps the squeaking poor man in the stormy wind. And we preach and we pray again. Esther needs shoes, Solly needs a coatleh, the landlord needs his payments for rent and there's virtually no more coal left. I angrily squeaked energetically in order to help my weak rubbers to scrape a loud prayers to insist even more loudly than my wife against the angry snow. Suddenly I looked out and I couldn't believe my eyes. Opposite him, on the ground, something sneaking from under the snow and winked as if to say, "What are you standing here like a fool? Right in front of you, look, grab and run." You will never guess if you had ten heads what I picked up: a horseshoe but with all its nails. You laugh; you think it's a big deal. So your faith. You're big fools. I have in this horseshoe a sign of a good fortune, a horseshoe they say brings luck to the world, rising fortune. I didn't need to wait very long for a streetcar. "Fare please." I was confused. I hastily put my hand in the pocket. I had forgotten that I had put a bargain with pointed nails. I grabbed back quickly with a painful "Oy" a burned hand. It had met the sharp nails of my lucky horseshoe which had been well-bitten by a piece of skin. Ashamed, I withdrew my hand and barely cursing the angry priest from the warm home and with the good hand I began looking for my carfare but there was no carfare. How can it be there was no carfare. I myself put a silver quarter in the pocket as I left the house. I myself had pulled the money in my underlining pocket but no sign of a quarter. Now I grabbed the whole pocket back and forth. Then came my new neighbour with the sharp nails had drawn a little window out of the pocket through which he took out my quarter and he disappeared. You wouldn't believe that quite a few tore the flesh from my leg. It wouldn't have run out of disgust with me standing in the middle of a packed streetcar, my pockets pulled out with their inside out, of my bloody hand grabbing the lucky horseshoe. My eyes were stuck on the conductor. Such eyes on me. And all eyes on both of us. Then the conductor apologetically invited me out of his car. Did I have a choice?

I came home a few hours later as usual. My wife already didn't know what to think had happened to me as I came in with a torn hand, a torn pocket lining and my face swollen of the thick snow and the storm. She broke her hands with deadly fear screaming, "God is with you. What has happened?" I let myself down on the nearest chair, held my breath and told her the whole story of my lucky voyage. "You see, my wife, you need luck for everything even to a lucky horseshoe. May God's blessing be fulfilled." I had found a lucky thing and in a lucky hour but what good is that, I am not a lucky man and when a man has no luck even gold in his hands becomes mud and the Jonah found rest for its own feet.

But it is not true. A bit of help came unexpected. An advertisement in the English papers (You might notice that there is no Yiddish paper in the great city of Montreal at that time.) advertised that a piece of land is available to any person for rent or real estate. The city of that place is Papineau today.

**LAST ENTRIES ABOUT PAPINEAU, FROM THE PINKAS**  
**WRITTEN BY ICHIEL HERMAN**  
**(translation by David Rome)**

November 1950

The synagogue sat in mourning on the passing of Rabbi Zvi Hacoen, may his memory be blessed. Rabbi Zvi Hacoen passed away after a lengthy illness, Friday, in the home of his daughter in Mount Vernon, New York at the age of ninety.

With the passing of Rabbi Cohen the din of rabbis in Canada and Chief Justice of Montreal, Canadian Jewry, and we in Montreal, in particular, lost one of the most important, of the wisest and respected leaders that community can wish to have. Rabbi Cohen was the address of religious Jewry and the pride of fifty years of the community. Enjoying the greatest respect on the part of the entire city, it is painful that the last several years because of this grave illness over so many years, he separated from his community of Montreal. Montreal didn't know what Rabbi Cohen represents in his leadership and even his opponents had to bend their heads for his wisdom and for his common sense and for his ability to enter into a project and its control. In him we have lost the wisest rabbi that Canada has ever had.

Feb. 10, 1952

Purim in Shtetl Papineau. As you see I have already thanked the Lord, a man of seventy-five and time is not yet ready with me. I hope that He will still have fun with me as I am happy in nature you can imagine what a Jewish playboy I have been in the city of Papineau at all times when we had joyful Purim festivities to celebrate the greatness of Mordecai and the fall of Hamen. But, unfortunately, all has come to nought in the city of Papineau but has remained of the small ..... who have fun by the blows that have fallen over Hamen. Signed by Ichiel Herman.

September 1952

Papineau usually spelled out "i" "f" together with a number of green young people moved to Papineau. As the years spies in the Bible story .....went on foot on Shabbos and for Shabbos it was not such a big distance because it is beyond the forbidden walking distance and the whole world didn't include a single house, from Montreal to Papineau.

Papineau. At the beginning God created Heavens and the earth and Papineau was "tohu and vorhu". Scarcely a person was visible from the CPR tracks where it began: wild grasses and wilder forest and great rocks. But it had one advantage that land was a joy for all Montreal with Succoth ..... and a lot of..... all together as we were discussing it everyone of us bought a bit of property and everyone of us immediately took to the task. They are the brothers of the brothers of the Sons of Israel ..... of the secret and Jews began to stream from all corners of Montreal where they began the city of Papineau.

This is the beginning of the Hakofas of the year 5666 of the Rosh Hodesh of the month of Sivan.

And if anyone is interested what happened to the city of Papineau we invite you to turn the Pinkas on the right side you will know what happened to the Jewish "Kibbutz" in our country.

This Rabboysai who will read the Pinkas shouldn't have in their mind that I have written the Pinkas in order to win a prize and in order to glorify my hands. It was written by my own free will Ichiel ben Reb Menachem Mendel Herman Katz, a simple learned and respected beloved in the

eyes of God and man who has gone to his world, whose affairs were always in activities in faith who has departed Ichiel ben Menachem Hacoheh Herman, 7th day of Shevat of the counting of mankind January 20th, 1956. His repose we will all say "Amen". First remain in good health as I travel to the alley that God may help that you shall survive in good health. Amen and Amen.

In the old Beth Hamidrash in Jerusalem during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur pray before the Amud and a poor Jew as a Bal Tefillah he would receive payment once he assisted the Gabbay of Beth Hamidrash would lead the services without charge. The group appealed to Rabbi Salios Salant for a judgment. The rabbi told the Gabbay that in Tillim we have three Baale Tfilloth: Tfillah leMoshe a prayer for David and a prayer for a poor man. Can he be such a leader at prayer as Moshe Rabbainu was? "Rabbi, you're making fun of me. How can I compare to Moses or to King David to pray before God as they are?" The Gabbay wondered. In that case Rabbi Shmuel said, "We must apply to the prayer of the poor man and the poor man who needs the money for the holidays, he should be the leader in prayer."

In a description of the Tifereth Jerusalem synagogue, Rabbi Folk Dubrofsky as Gabbay and the second Gabbay David Tkatch.

President Baruch Bros, Vice-President Joshua Herman. On the 15th day of Kislev at the Chevra Kadisha Synagogue, Gabbay Folk Dubrofsky, December 3rd Secretary Baruch Bros.

As it is customary in today's ..... to arrange a party of Mitzvah and especially in the Tifereth Jerusalem synagogue we are following the custom.

B. Follet, the Gabbay, could not attend the meeting so Joshua Herman was honoured by presiding. Herman opened the meeting with three blows of the hammer and paid respect to the former members of the synagogue. The meeting opened with a rising of the members as a symbol of sorrow. Chevra Kadisha association expressed the hope that there shall not be any departures from the congregation and that all wicked people shall be punished.

September 23rd, 1952.

The dedication of the fence of the Tifereth Jerusalem Synagogue Papineau, September 1952. A memorial on the death of my never-to-be-forgotten dearest wife, Jenny Herman deceased on the 20th June 1952 in memory of the noble woman, a crown of the house Mrs. Shaindel the wife of Ichiel Herman Hacoheh. A sad event occurred in the home of the elder Cohen, Ichiel in 1952. As is known, Mr. Herman and his wife Shaindel were elderly people who lived in peace in the best order but as we felt that age is approaching we decided to pass the winter in Florida and we, with the consent of our children, wanted to have a farewell party for a time with my brothers from the Tifereth Jerusalem Synagogue. But we didn't plan the exact moment and when we would be away from Papineau. We arranged a farewell for December the 6th, 1951.

A report that the Gabbay is coming home in the city of Papineau. We arranged very fine celebration in the Jewish manner and we returned to Papineau on the first of April. On October before (?) Passover 1952. Soon after Passover at a meeting of the synagogue it was decided that a welcome party should be arranged for brother Ichiel Cohen with his wife who returned from Miami. Naturally Mr. Herman didn't know what the synagogue was arranging for the event. It was all done in confidence that the family should be done to attend the banquet. It was passed on June 15th, 1952 that the banquet was to take place in the synagogue. All present members of the synagogue and many good friends and the Rosh Yeshiva, Reb Shmuel, from the Besifter Yaishish Hochmah, and many other guests. The congregation had a very pleasant evening spiritually and morally.

c. 1952

The humorous charter of the synagogue which was founded in 1906 in humour and in suggestion that when there is no luck gold becomes mud and a man is better off not born than to appear without luck or a synagogue without proper officials would be better off without assistance because from gold becomes mud without a true story.

I speak of practice and the story I am about to tell you will indicate to you that I know whereof I speak.

I am a truly honest Jew, not a comedian God forbid, no robber, no desecrator of the Sabbath, no liar, no flatterer, no teller of evil stories, no double-faced man, no eater of forbidden food, no epicurus. I am a believing Jew, a man of faith who prays every day, who puts on phylacteries, who bears the (aburcamfut?) which has Messuzahs on all doors, who washes his hands before he eats, who says Grace after eating and prays the Shemah, who studies every day a chapter of Mishnayes, who says a chapter of the Psalms. It seems a straightforward, honest soul. To this truly honest soul has occurred this story in our synagogue, Tifereth Jerusalem.

Everything was in the best order with the officials of the synagogue for the synagogue has its own officials but since the last half-dozen years the good luck has passed away from us. We have prayed to the Lord that he should have mercy on us and accept our prayers and send us an official and the Lord listened to our prayer and sent us a Shamass, a Chazan Baal Korei, a bit of gold but bit by bit the colour of gold became mud. The name of this ben Adam Moishe Yoisef Glick of whom we have said "May he pass from us number one." Noticing when he ..... noticed about the nature of his work and how satisfied we were with him the synagogue gave him a present - one hundred dollars - for his good work.

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#### **DAVID ROME COMMENTS:**

The scribes of the Pinkas of Tifereth Jerusalem Congregation, Papineau, the elderly Gabbay, Ichiel ben Menachem Herman-Cohen, recorded that his wife Shaindel (Jennie) and he determined that, although they were in reasonable condition, with onsetting age, they should spend the winter in Miami and become twenty years younger; this with the consent of their children.

When word reached the famed Papineau metropolis of their return soon after Passover, the synagogue decided to honour them at a surprise banquet on June 15, 1952. The event closed happily. But a week later, on June 20, 1952, after lighting the Sabbath candles, Mrs. Herman sat down and shut her eyes peacefully forever as the candles continued to burn.

Her husband passed away on January 20, 1956.

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