The Man Who Stayed in Texas

The Life of Rabbi Henry Cohen

by

Anne Nathan and Harry I. Cohen

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THE MAN WHO STAYED IN TEXAS

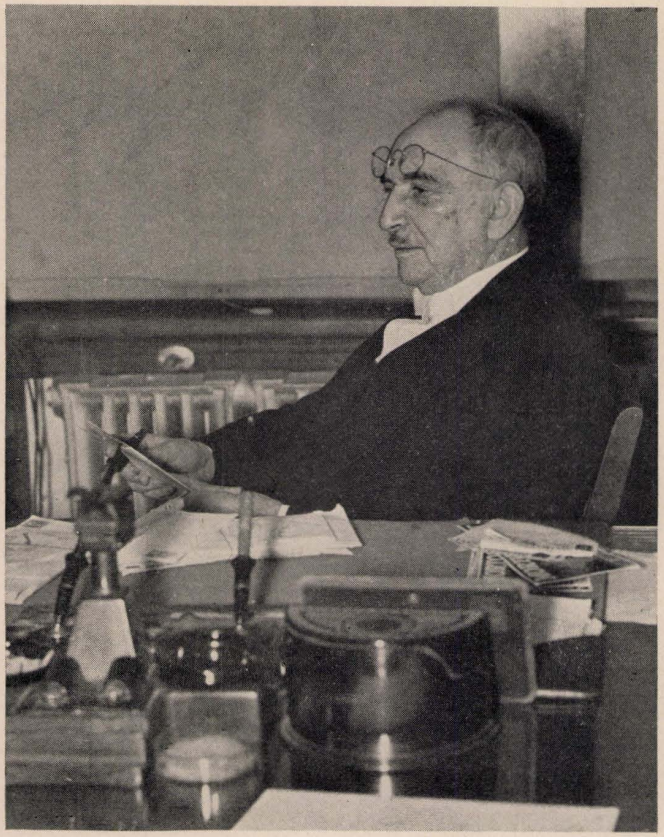
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The Man Who Stayed in Texas



RABBI HENRY COHEN

At his desk in the Community House

(*Frontispiece.*)

For David and Henry

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The Man Who Stayed in Texas

Galveston, 1941

RABBI COHEN in Galveston sits at his radio and listens to London's being bombed, to the voices of Englishmen singing in an air-raid shelter. He sits silent, his eyes red-rimmed. He doesn't say any of the thoughts that whirl through his head, which he holds to one side, listening.

He is seventy-seven. He has been in Texas so long that people forget he ever lived anywhere else.

Many of them don't know that he was born in London. Some of his oldest friends have never heard of his adventures in Africa and of the young lady he nearly married in Jamaica. Only a few people recall that he served a Jewish congregation in Woodville, Mississippi, ten years before the turn of the century.

This may be because he has become a part of the state in a way that few men have. Through his head —now bent to one side, with the bald top exposed in its ring of white fuzz—have passed the troubles of hundreds of people who have been his neighbors and friends in Texas for fifty-two years. In that time he

has made their cares and problems literally, actively, his own. They have come to him for every conceivable kind of aid and advice, and with his keen, intuitive mind and out of his apparently bottomless pocket, he has helped them. He has served Jew, Gentile, white, colored, indiscriminately, never asking who a person was or what he had, if assured only that the need was real.

In Texas, he is no longer a man, but a legend. During his lifetime, he has become an American folk character. There are hundreds of stories about him, many that actually happened and some that didn't. People in Texas don't care; they tell them all with gusto, with big, hearty laughs that go with long, loose-jointed frames and wide, open skies.

Incongruously, against the background of hard, rough Texas lore is set the short, rounded figure of Henry Cohen. But he has held his own with the loudest and roughest Texans; and he has made his fights alongside the bravest—for social justice, against bigotry, for the unpopular cause of prison reform. He has been called strong names, and his life has been threatened. But now he is seventy-seven, and people think mainly of his humor, gentleness, and kindliness. Just the mention of his name brings a light into the faces of the people who know him in Texas. It is a light rarely seen in the world, these days. It is a reminder that man, the common man, wants desperately to love, not maim, and that, through the mazes of modern life, he still reaches

out toward the hope of a solution founded on service, in which violence and cruelty have no place.

The Rabbi sits quietly listening to London in war. He is growing deaf now; so he sits close to the radio, his head bent to one side, listening. And it is possible that he is thinking of another day, years before motors were heard on Trafalgar Square, when the clatter of horse-drawn omnibuses on cobbled streets was the noisiest sound in London.

PART I

"Little Henry"

In the year 1881, by the grace of God and Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, the Board of Guardians was a smoothly running charitable institution that looked after London's Jewish poor. The office at 13 Devonshire Square, E. C., was used for clerical work and distribution of funds, a sort of clearing house for human needs. Out from there went the five clerks who were employed in dispensing bread tickets, calling on the needy in Whitechapel, running errands up to St. Swithin's Lane to the firm of Nathaniel Rothschild, who was treasurer of the Board.

One of the almoners was a young man named Henry Cohen. He had been in the employ of the Board of Guardians for three years, and in that time his pay had been raised from five to fifteen shillings a week. Such largesse on the part of the conservative custodians of this public trust was a tribute to the energy with which the young man of eighteen pursued his duties. And perhaps the Board was not

insensible to the fact that after hours he attended the Jews' College evening classes, in order to prepare himself for the rabbinate.

Henry waited impatiently in the morning for his tasks to be assigned, secretly hoping that they would not be clerical. He had much rather go chasing through all kinds of weather on the longest errands than to sit at a desk all day, making out bread tickets.

Mr. Stephani, who was in charge of the office, handed him a list of the places he was to visit. Scarcely were the orders given him before Henry was out the front door, marching in the direction of Whitechapel.

Mr. Stephani looked with approval after the small, hurrying figure topped with a shiny black beaver; then sighed sharply and frowned. Little Henry was a model of conduct as far as Mr. Stephani was concerned, except for the distressing fact that he rode and occasionally smoked on Shabbos. There was no telling what the younger generation was coming to when a young man of Henry Cohen's spirituality and background deliberately broke the fourth commandment and, when pressed on the matter, simply said that his interpretation differed from that of Mr. Stephani. It also differed from the interpretation made by the Chief Rabbi of England, Mr. Stephani had the satisfaction of replying.

Henry's thoughts were far away from such considerations as he sped down the street, mumbling rapidly to himself, "Brooch. Do you know what this

is? Brass. Do you know what metal this is? Bone. Do you know what this is made of? Book. Do you know what I have here? Bonnet. Do you see what this is? . . . " The strange gibberish continued to issue for blocks from the mouth of the rabbinical student of the evening classes in Jews' College. He stopped in at Mrs. Pollack's.

"One, two, three, four, five, six bread tickets. And six shillings and tuppence. How is Isaac's croup?"

He was off again, walking slower now, for the stops would be more frequent. He was in the ghetto end of Whitechapel.

Each street was an alley, hidden from the light. The sight was a familiar one, but he had to watch out for sudden turns, crooks, and corners. The hovels that people lived in here looked all alike. One watched the doorways carefully . . . he still mumbled between his teeth, "Draper. Find out business. Doctor. Find out business, please. Fishmonger. Have you any idea, business?"

He broke off suddenly when he came to the door of Mr. Solomon—an old man, a student of Talmud, who sat buried in his books all day. He never saw the sun; his skin had a greenish pallor. Henry admired his learning, yet wondered how a human being could smother himself so completely in thoughts remote from the actual scene of life.

Mr. Solomon and his house reeked with the stale, musty odor of old books, at times mingled with pungent whiffs from the herring that was being pickled in the kitchen. Henry walked in, because

he knew that knocking would not be heard. He put his hand on Mr. Solomon's frail shoulder and said good morning and was rewarded with a glance of recognition.

"Your wife in? Well, here, Mr. Solomon. Now, don't forget to tell her. See that she gets this." He placed an envelope in a conspicuous place on a table littered with books. Henry picked up a thin volume with gold markings. His fingers caressed the dark leather as he opened the brittle pages carefully.

Pursing his lips, he said, "Would you sell me this—this *Hebrew Tales* by Abraham?"

Mr. Solomon looked up at the mention of the name. His eyebrows were raised and his small eyes blinked open and looked searchingly at Henry, who had the sensation of seeing the sun come suddenly through a London fog. The bright little eyes in the tired face looked at Henry.

"You take it," Mr. Solomon said.

"No, indeed. I want to buy it," Henry answered.

"With what?" Mr. Solomon asked, shrugging.

"I'll make two guineas tomorrow. My brother Mark and I are doing our clairvoyance act at Mr. Sidney Samuel's in Regent Street. Mark owes me a guinea; so I'm to get the two."

"Clairvoyance, that's a fine thing for a yeshiva bocher to be doing," Mr. Solomon said, shaking his head in disapproval.

"We do it only at charity affairs," Henry said.

"You should be spending your time with Torah," Mr. Solomon said.

"You don't waste any time on clairvoyance. When you once know the code, there's nothing to do. I repeat it to myself while I'm walking or riding in the bus. It goes like this: 'Brooch—' If Mark, who works in the audience, touches a brooch, he says 'Do you know what this is?' Then I (I'm blindfolded) know it's a brooch. We have a different question for each common object. We must have a thousand. We have names, occupations, colors, makes of watches."

Mr. Solomon continued to shake his head. He lapsed into Yiddish on the duties of a student toward the Talmud.

Henry listened patiently, his eyes still on the slender volume.

"Well," he said, after a while, "I have to go now."

"*Birshuscham*," said Mr. Solomon abruptly, and sank back into the volume before him.

"How about the book for eight shillings?" Henry asked, lingering at the door.

"What?" Mr. Solomon rasped.

"Abraham's *Hebrew Tales* for eight shillings?" Henry said, quaking.

"Eight shillings . . . Clairvoyance . . . pfui!" Mr. Solomon exclaimed. "All right. You take it now. I trust you. But get out. *Heraus!* Clairvoyance for a yeshiva bocher! . . . "

Henry didn't wait to hear more. With the book in his arms, he ran out into the street, breathing the murky air of Whitechapel with relief.

The next stop was Jenny Ephraim's. She was from Plymouth and knew Mary Nugent, who had

helped with the cooking in Henry's family as long as he could remember. He had to be firm at Jenny's, for she would like to keep him all day, plying him with questions about Mary Nugent's news from home and asking whether her rheumatism was any better since the winter days were definitely over.

"But these March winds are just as bad," Jenny said, limping to the door. "And what with the morning fog! Tell Mary a good rub with liniment is what I use. Tell her maybe she could come down here on her day off."

"I'll tell her," Henry answered. "But I think she's going home for a few days before Pesach."

"Well, I might come out and see her, if your mother doesn't mind."

"No, no. Come along. Any time. Well, good-by," Henry said, hurrying out.

He glanced at his list and found that he had to go to the blind girls' home. This meant taking a bus. He whipped out a pencil and wrote on his shirt cuff, "Tell Mary Nugent to visit Jenny." Then, "Pay Mr. Solomon eight shillings."

On the bus he whispered to himself, "Bennett. Do you know the maker's name? Benson. Do you know maker's name, please? Campbell. And what is maker's name? . . . " Makes of watches was a new routine he and Mark were going to try out tomorrow night at Mr. Sidney Samuel's. There was to be a considerable gathering there, including the young literary man, Mr. Oscar Wilde, who had become quite the thing since it was rumored that Gilbert

and Sullivan were producing an opera about him. It would have to be pretty good to beat the *Pirates of Penzance*, Henry decided, as he stepped down from the bus, humming the Policemen's Chorus.

The Home for Blind Girls appeared at the end of the street, a mass of dull gray stone, and Henry felt a lump rise in his throat as he thought of the sad lives inside that never could hope to be brightened by seeing a D'Oyly Carte production.

He was cheer itself inside the building, laughing and joking with the girls, teasing the Matron about her weakness for sweets.

The sound of the laughter he had aroused followed him as he hurried out into the street again. He paused and wrote on his cuff, "Get sweets for Mrs. Cass."

Back at the office, he was sent on one of his favorite errands. He had to go up the street to St. Swithin's Lane to the firm of N. M. Rothschild, to collect the funds that kept the Board of Guardians running. He hoped Lord Beaconsfield would be there today.

Disraeli was a sick man, these days, and very ancient looking, even for his years. He had gout and suffered from severe attacks of asthma. When he was able, he liked to come down to St. Swithin's Lane and would sit for hours talking to Nathaniel de Rothschild.

Henry, running in-and-out on errands for the Board, had become a familiar sight to Lord Beaconsfield, to whom he was always "Little Henry." The

imagination of the young man of eighteen was stirred by the bizarre figure of the great dying man, whose strange contradictions of life and background made him a fascinating conundrum to Henry. Now that this remarkable life was drawing to its close, Henry wondered what vague stirrings toward the religion of his fathers were hidden behind that yellow, mask-like face.

Mr. Green, Henry's godfather, had told him that once, when asked to say grace before dinner at Rothschild's, he had begun in English, and Mr. Disraeli, who was present, had stopped him, saying, "Sing it the old way, *chazan.*"

Walking up the street, Henry was thinking how magnificently Lord Beaconsfield had spoken just the week before in the House of Lords. Ill as he was, a slave to medicinal drugs, he had risen to old heights when he spoke, it was reported, with prophetic fervor: "My lords, the key of India is London. The majesty and sovereignty, the spirit and vigour of Parliament, the inexhaustible resources, the ingenuity and determination of your people—these are the keys of India."

Henry stepped in the office of N. M. Rothschild and Sons, and there, in a corner, the former prime minister sat talking to Sir Nathaniel. Henry stated his business to the junior clerk and stood waiting to receive the package of money for the use of the Board of Guardians, noticing out of the corner of his eye that Lord Beaconsfield was brandishing a cane as he talked. The gout must be worse today.

Henry lingered, his beaver in his hand, after he had received his package.

The gaunt, heavily robed figure happened to turn in his direction. The small, tired eyes lighted up briefly.

"Well, it's little Henry again," said Lord Beaconsfield, and turned to continue his conversation with his friend.

Henry put on his beaver and went out.

After work, there was the journey through town to Jews' College for the evening classes. Henry had stopped for tea on his afternoon rounds, and dinner he would get in later, or maybe skip, knowing his mother would save a bite for him at home. He bought a baked potato, hopped on a bus, and sat with the wind blowing on his cheeks while he ate the hot, mealy food. He had just time to finish it and throw the peel away before he reached his corner and got off.

He looked forward especially to the history period during the evening, for there was to be a paper on Ibn Ezra. At the door he met his friend Israel Zangwill walking in. They sat together, going through the routine Talmud and Torah assignments, in pleasurable anticipation of Dr. Adler's paper.

In a previous lecture, the teacher had given the background of the famous poet and commentator of the Middle Ages. It was not new to them, the glorious record of Spanish Jewry from the tenth to the fourteenth century. Members of their own families used the Sephardic pronunciation of Hebrew,

having ancestors who preserved it for four centuries from the Dispersion in Spain, through the mazes of Central Europe, to England, where the two students sat and listened to the record of the fiery spirit of Ibn Ezra.

Walking home, heedless of the time and an empty stomach, Henry discussed with his friend certain points of interest in Dr. Adler's lecture.

Zangwill laughed and quoted Ibn Ezra in one of his lighter moods, "On My Tough Luck":

I strive to succeed but I cannot
For the spheres of the heavens oppose;
Were shrouds my trade,
Men would never die,—I suppose!

"Yet he was an optimist despite everything, through all his wanderings from Spain, through North Africa, Palestine, Baghdad, Rome," Henry said eagerly. "I think Robert Browning caught his spirit exactly."

"Romanticized him slightly, perhaps," Zangwill responded.

But there was no stopping Henry now. He marched on through the London fog, reciting in his earnest, high-pitched voice:

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth showed but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!"

Home

HENRY'S day was begun with prayers in the small synagogue in the back of his home. Here his father sat with ten men in a small, badly ventilated room, where the *scharchris* was read by the *maggid*, a poor fellow, who was given a few shillings a week for his services.

The presence of this synagogue in the back yard of a house in a London middle-class neighborhood had its roots back in Russo-Poland. Henry's mother and father were born, betrothed, and married near Rava. Their ancestors, like Ibn Ezra, had left Spain and wandered extensively over Europe and possibly a part of Asia, as well, before slipping into the inertia of ghetto existence in Russo-Poland.

While they were still young and their family was in the making, David and Josephine Cohen decided to come to England. They brought with them little but their faith in God and a definite set of rules for the conduct of life for those who would worship Him. David Cohen was inclined to attach less

importance to the minutiae of certain dietary rules than was his wife; but after a quarter of a century of life under English skies, in a land where a Jew could walk to his place of worship like any other man, he was still holding religious services in the back of his gray stone house on Lancaster Road as his father had done in a wretched hovel in Poland.

The family had lived in a succession of houses in various sections of London. When they moved into the one on Lancaster Road, the children had already begun to marry, but the narrow, two-storied house with basement kitchen was crowded to capacity with those who remained. There were six children at home besides Henry, aged nine, who was to be sent to Jews' Hospital, a free boarding school for the children of the poor.

The Cohens were considered "poor." David, a tinsmith by trade, had advanced himself to foreman at the gas-meter factory where he worked; but he was a dreamer, an inventor of profitless patents in his spare time. He liked to work with his hands, fashioning Jewish ceremonial objects in silver and gold. He had considerable skill in this avocation and filled several orders for gentlemen in Regent Street.

A thrifty wife might have made his supplemented earnings go a long way, but Josephine Cohen believed in giving away one's worldly goods. She did not go into the intricacies of the giving, and probably had never paid much attention to the eight degrees of performing charity as set down by Maimonides for all good Jews to follow. She gave

indiscriminately and abundantly to anyone in need around her. She was completely free from any worry or concern over the security of her own family, because she knew, as surely as she lived at 204 Lancaster Road, Notting Hill, that for those who give, the Lord will provide.

When, at the age of nine, Henry left his home to go to boarding school, he found himself only in a larger home. The manner of life was changed, of course—the routine of study, regulations, companionship with other boys—but when the walls of *N'vei Zedek* (the House of Righteousness) closed about Henry, he felt secure and happy. He was still in the midst of an unbroken stream of Jewish life and thought. Food habits were the same; the same prayers were said; familiar religious holidays continued to enliven the calendar.

The school, located in West Norwood among wooded hills, was a well-regarded institution, with the Dowager Queen heading a list of distinguished patrons. The four-storied, turreted building, which originally had been a hospice for the aged, continued to be known as Jews' Hospital after it was turned over to the education of the young. Mr. Chapman, the headmaster, was generally recognized as maintaining standards superior to those of average board-school education, since his higher grades were connected with the University of London.

Henry remained at Jews' Hospital for seven years, studying. The time passed quickly. His mind was a sponge, taking in everything the school had to offer.

A photographic memory and an unusual flair for languages made him outstanding as a student. He took the Evelina Rothschild prize of five pounds.

But when the seven years were over, his lasting impressions were those of experiences, rather than of the knowledge he had crammed into his dark, cropped head—the beloved headmaster, storming in righteous wrath against the dishonorable act of an erring student; cold fried fish for breakfast on Visitors' Day; gathering blackberries on the hills; an exciting "battle of potatoes" with the village roughs; their taunts,

I had a bit of pork,
And I stuck it on a fork,
And I gave it to a Jew-boy Jew.

and the retort,

I had a bit of beef,
And I stuck it on a leaf,
And I gave it to a Christian thief.

On Thursday nights from the dormitory windows, he had seen the fireworks at the Crystal Palace, watching till the Prince of Wales' feather ascended. "Old boys," who had got on in the world, returned to give a feast, and were unfailingly recognized by John Chesterman, the porter. The house dog, Lion, who raised his paw in greeting; terrible stomach-aches and a physic by Nurse Defries; the Christmas number of "Our Young Folks' Weekly Budget";

swimming twice around the school plunge, somersaults, races; and Sabbath morning in the synagogue when the school, led by Mr. Chapman, prayed regularly for "Our Sovereign Lady, Queen Victoria, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, Princess of Wales, and all the royal family"—these were indelible impressions.

When Henry left Jews' Hospital, he was expected to continue his studies at the University of London. One day when he was fifteen, he happened to place his hand in his father's and was shocked at the hard calluses that he felt there. He had always known that his father worked hard, but the sudden touch of the gnarled, work-scarred hand released in Henry a flood of dismay. He looked at his own smooth palms and made a vow that never again would he cost his father a single shilling, that he would make his own way and continue his studies as best he could.

He applied for work at the Board of Guardians. Mr. Lionel Cohen, who was president, remembered him from Visitors' Day at *N'vei Zedek*. Henry was accepted, to start at five shillings a week, and made arrangements to attend the evening classes at Jews' College.

David Cohen used to marvel at his son Henry, whose mentality and well-directed energies far surpassed those of the other children. Mark, who was twenty-five when Henry was eighteen, was a bright fellow, but he was inclined to hang around the music halls and do a lot of talking about going out to the Cape.

"What would a Jewish boy want to go to Africa for?" was David's constant query.

Henry often said he wished he were foot-loose like Mark and could go out to the Cape and make a study of the mixture of languages found there. David Cohen smiled and nodded his head, saying, "But one could spend a whole lifetime studying the language of the Bible and only gain a fraction of the knowledge of the divine tongue in which God had chosen to reveal Himself."

Henry liked nothing better than to sit with his father before the open fireplace in the basement, which served as kitchen, dining room, and sitting room for the family. There was usually a piece of beef roasting on the spit, and his mother, with Mary Nugent and the girls to help, was busily shining up pots and pans and cleaning the different sets of dishes. Father would smile and wink at him when a culprit who had got the meat and milk dishes mixed was being roundly scolded by his mother, to whom such carelessness was an act of sacrilege.

To the warmth of this basement Henry would come every night after school and eat the cold fried fish or plate of soup meat saved for him, and talk himself out. The pleasant, homely atmosphere, after the intellectual discussions at the college and the brisk walk home, eased all the tensions of the day. Henry grew expansive as he gazed into the crackling fire and breathed in the savory aromas that rose to the smoke-blackened ceiling.

He told his father about his experiences at the

Board of Guardians and discussed any happening that had troubled him; sometimes he had a new lampoon to recite from the facile pen of his friend, Israel Zangwill. There were endless discussions on the interpretation of the fourth commandment. Henry contended that riding, when necessary, on the Sabbath was permissible; he thought it was old-fashioned to believe otherwise. And certainly smoking to a moderate degree could not be so terrible a sin if one felt like relaxing a bit with a cigarette or a pipe between Friday sundown and Saturday night.

His father, whose opinion on the subject was similar to that of Mr. Stephani and the Chief Rabbi, told Henry that as he was a rabbinical student it would be more fitting for him to conform to the existing official interpretation. He gave this advice consistently, but with emphasis moderated by the quiet humor that lurked behind all his words. He always was careful to spare Henry's feelings and did not even smile when asked one night if he didn't think it would be a fine thing for a young man to marry one of the blind girls in the Home and spend the rest of his life making existence more bearable for her.

Mark

AFTER morning services, Henry and Mark doffed their prayer shawls quickly and started down Lancaster Road to catch the bus.

"Have you got that watch routine down pat?" asked Mark.

Henry replied that he had, and rattled off a long list of makes.

Mark shook his head. "You're wasting your time studying to be a rabbi. With your memory, you could be the best clairvoyant in the business."

"I'll only do it at charity affairs."

"I'd like to see you get away from this atmosphere for awhile and see some of the world. Gives a fellow perspective."

"I've always wanted to go down to the Cape for a year or so," Henry said. "That's one place I'd go if I had a half a chance."

"I don't know why it should be so impossible," Mark said. "Other fellows go. Some of them settle there. I don't think I'd mind being a bookkeeper in a spot like Cape Town."

"I guess you'd get as bored with it as you do here."

"Not if I were paid well," Mark said wisely. "We ought to go out there together."

"How would I support myself if I went?" Henry said.

"Oh, you could do lots of things," Mark said airily.

"For example?"

"You might be interpreter for the British Government."

"That sounds very well," Henry said, "but what would I interpret?"

"Native languages," said Mark. "You could pick 'em up in no time."

As he made his rounds that day, Henry had an extra lilt in his step. It was spring; he was eighteen, and Mark had put a bee in his bonnet about Africa. Instead of London streets, he could see miles of open veldt, bathed in sunlight or mysterious and quiet in the dark of the moon. All he had ever read about Africa came back vividly to him—the strange melee of peoples and languages, Stanley and Livingstone, the Boers, Louis Napoleon and the Zulus, Captain Carey.

All day long, as he walked the narrow streets, colorful names and pictures half a world away came between him and the familiar sight of London. He had never known anything but London, crowded with rows of buildings or thinned out to meet the hills of West Norwood. It had no more occurred to him that he would ever go very far from this great

sprawling city than that the Queen would die or his mother eat *trefa*. But Mark's words made things seem different.

There were links as tangible as the trans-Atlantic cable between the Cape and England. An Englishman like himself could go half around the earth and still be on familiar ground, that of the British Empire. Henry felt a warmth of emotion stealing over him as he thought Lord Beaconsfield was right—Africa, India, the key to all of it was London.

"I'm excused from evening classes," he said to Mr. Stephani when the office was closing. "Mark and I are doing our second-sight act at the charity affair at Mr. Samuel's."

"You'll have time to go home and change, won't you?" Mr. Stephani said. "It's to be quite a distinguished gathering."

"Well, I guess so," Henry said, noticing his crumpled suit for the first time.

"Oh, yes," Mr. Stephani said. "Mr. Samuel Montague's to be there. Quite a gathering."

"Mr. Oscar Wilde was completely mystified. He said he knew it was a trick, but he couldn't figure it out," Henry said as he and Mark stepped out on Regent Street after their show.

"It went off well, but when I said, 'Observe maker's name,' I thought you hesitated. Did you?"

"No, I was trying to keep from stuttering. I find that I stutter sometimes when I speak in public."

"You'd better get over it if you intend to be a

preacher," Mark said. "Here. Here's the guinea I owe you."

"I feel like making a night of it," Henry said. "Let's hear Lily Langtry. Come on! I'll treat you."

"Well, you are feeling tops," Mark said, laughing. "Before I know it you'll be making arrangements for both of us to go to Africa."

"Funny thing! I mentioned it just quietly to Mr. Samuel tonight. He took it up right away. He said he thought it would be a fine experience for a young man."

Mark stopped dead in his tracks. "You don't mean it. Did he really?"

"Yes, but what's so much to that?" Henry asked.

"Well, you can't tell. He's influential, might get us cheap passage."

"Look here, are you serious?"

"Yes, aren't you?" said Mark.

"I suppose so."

"Well, don't blab about it to Father, because he thinks the whole idea's foolish. It isn't, and before you know it, something will turn up."

"Maybe I ought to save these two guineas," Henry said. "I owe Mr. Solomon eight shillings out of it for a book."

Mark shook his head. "You'll never get anywhere in the world buying up old books. Come on. Let's hear Lily. We'll get a sixpence seat."

The two brothers jostled their way through the Piccadilly crowd.

"You'll certainly have to get some more clothes,"

Mark said when they were in their seats high up in the gallery.

"For what?" Henry said.

"When we go out to the Cape," Mark said, in a voice loud enough to be heard by the people around them.

There was a round of applause as two young women appeared on the stage, jangling tambourines.

Henry knew Mark spoke as he did just to draw a little attention. It wasn't exactly the right thing to do, but Henry found himself rather pleased on being regarded with interest by the spectator on his right.

"You're an awful young one to be goin' out to the Cape now, aren't you?" said the man.

"I'm eighteen," Henry said, and was relieved when the duettists began to sing.

The audience laughed and applauded as the song began. It was "Rhino," a sophisticated ditty in which one of the "Sisters" gives the other cynical advice interspersed with tambourine rattling and step dancing.

The audience showed clearly where it stood by applauding Sister Number Two and giving the horse laugh to Number One, who begins the third verse by singing:

"There are girls you can't tempt with title or gold."

Second Sister: "There may be—but I've never seen one."

First Sister: "Some much prefer love in a cottage, I'm told."

Second Sister: "If you swallow that, you're a green one!

"They'll stick to their lover as long as he's cash,
When it's gone, they look out for a wealthier mash.
A girl on the gush talks unpractical trash—
When it comes to the point, she's a keen one!"

After a few steps of dancing to emphasize these remarks, Sister Number Two, with the audience's eloquent approval, triumphantly concludes the refrain to the effect that her lover must be "rolling in the Rhino."

"The next verse is for you," Mark whispered to Henry, as the Sisters swung into it:

"Philanthropists give up their lives to the poor."
"It's chiefly with tracts they present them."
"Still some self-denial I'm sure they endure."
"It's their hobby, and seems to content them."
"But don't they go into those horrible slums?"
"Sometimes—with a flourish of trumpets and drums."
"I've heard they've collected magnificent sums."
"And nobody knows how they've spent them!"

Henry threw back his head and laughed till he cried. "Mr. Stephani should hear that one," he gasped, wiping the tears from his eyes. "And nobody knows how they've spent them! He keeps track of every single penny!"

By the time blackberries were ripe in West Norwood Henry and Mark had decided definitely to go to Africa.

Henry rode out to *N'vei Zedek* a few days before the time set for their departure. The light summer air and familiar places, the children doing the same things that he had done there, the thought that he was uprooting himself from the scenes of his childhood, all combined to place in the realm of the unreal the exciting days to come.

He felt as if not he and Mark but two strangers were going to embark on the ship "Arab" and sail away down to the Cape. They never would have been able to manage the journey had not a number of gentlemen, headed by Mr. Samuel, made up a sizable sum to pay for the passage. Besides the sixty-five pounds six shillings collected and the additional personal gift of a gold pencil case, the implied approval of the step he was taking by such men as Mr. Sidney Samuel, Sir Nathaniel de Rothschild, Mr. Lionel Cohen, Ferdinand de Rothschild, and the other donors supplied a firm moral support to Henry, who needed some other prop in confirmation of his adventurous undertaking than Mark's perpetual enthusiasm. Their father still could not understand why two Jewish boys wanted to go to Africa; but, with his habitual philosophic outlook, he was resigned to the fact that they actually were sailing.

Henry was very busy the week before their departure. Besides visiting *N'vei Zedek*, he called on all the donors to thank them in person for the opportunity they were affording him and his brother. He called on his old headmaster, Mr. Chapman, who now had his own school out at Ealing.

He made his familiar rounds in Whitechapel, too, to tell all his friends good-by. He didn't miss seeing a single one of them. Their pale faces lighted up when they heard that "little Henry" was actually about to start for the Cape. Mr. Solomon shrugged his shoulders and smiled a little and said, "You'll come back to your studies yet, yeshiva bocher." Mrs. Pollack, Jenny Ephraim from Plymouth, all the people of the ghetto whom he had known and visited in sickness and need followed him to their front doors smiling and shaking their heads, as they wished him Godspeed, *Zu Mazal*, when he left them. He walked off fast as usual, for he still had two more calls to make—at the Home for Blind Girls and to see Dr. Adler at Jews' College.

At the Board of Guardians, Mr. Stephani, his long face looking longer than usual, handed Henry a letter of character commendation, just in case he should ever need it. Henry felt the tears well up in his eyes as he understood more fully than ever before how much the three years' association with this office had meant to him.

"I'll never forget you or this work, Mr. Stephani," he said, as he made ready to go.

"Or the fourth commandment," said Mr. Stephani suggestively, but there were tears in his eyes, too, as for the last time he watched the small figure, topped by a shiny black beaver, hurrying down the street—this time to go home to pack for Africa.

On the Road to Burghersdorp

HENRY was in South Africa traveling on horseback, alone, in the dark of the moon, from Molteno to the neighboring town of Burghersdorp. Though the road was mountainous and the night was pitch-black, he jogged easily along because his horse knew the way, and he had been told to give the animal free rein.

Henry never had imagined that anything could be so black—he smiled at his own pun—even on the Dark Continent. He wondered what his mother and father and sisters would think of him now, his mother particularly, for she had been reconciled to his departure only because he was going under the protection of his older brother, Mark. Well, Mark was miles away in Cape Town, and here he was all alone, traveling through the dark African night he had dreamed about in London.

It was just as well that Mark had stayed in Cape Town. He was satisfied to be a bookkeeper there, just as he had said he would be. He liked the cos-

mopolitan life, and he was paid well. He laughed when Henry said he wanted to see something of the country and to continue his Jewish studies at the same time. That was a pretty big order, Mark retorted. Where did he think he was—at the Board of Guardians?

Henry had made a start by visiting the Dutch farmers. He found them ready to talk about their ostriches, and he listened to their complaints about the market, his ear soon becoming attuned to the Dutch expressions they mixed in with their English. He liked their way of speaking and he liked them, but country life seemed a little dull after the excitement and color of Cape Town.

Henry had written down all his impressions of Cape Town in a journal. He never wanted to fail to recall a single detail of them: his arrival, when he couldn't wait for daylight with the other ship's passengers and went ashore at night, setting foot on the crowded docks; his first view of Table Mountain —as flat on top as his mother's kitchen table—rising high above the city; and the city, itself, built into the hills; the view from the mountain down on Table Bay, where half of the British fleet could anchor and be safe. But it was the strange conglomeration of people in Cape Town that interested him more than the splendid public gardens or the huge, gloomy stone edifice that served as barracks for Her Majesty's troops or even the Governor's handsome residence. The markets were teeming with people of every nationality that you could imagine, and some

that you never had heard of. Each spoke his own language, and the babel that resulted was like nothing heard outside a menagerie—the soft cadence of Italian and Spanish mingling with the harsher English, German, and Dutch, together with Arabic, Chinese, and the Negro click dialects.

As his money began to run low, Henry decided that it would be better for him to look for some work. He went up to Kimberley, where he found shafts of the diamond mines sunk in the middle of streets, where everybody expected to make a fortune overnight. A number of people were doing well, among them, Barney Barnato and Solly Joel. Kimberley was exciting, raucous, intriguing. Henry went down into the mines, made friends with a number of people, and saw that there were plenty of jobs to be had if he wanted to remain. But he couldn't find a Jewish scholar for miles around; so he moved on. At last, in Molteno, he discovered Mones Davis, studying the Talmud with the same fervor as his old friend Solomon in Whitechapel and keeping a dry-goods store, as well.

Davis gave Henry a job at stacking dry goods, with just enough pay to support him, and agreed to study with him after hours. So Henry found himself on the road to Burghersdorp in the blackest African night, delivering goods for Mones Davis.

As he jogged along, he practiced the click language of the Kaffirs. He had been listening intently to their manner of speech when they came into Molteno to trade at Davis's store. He had practiced

until he could click with the best of them, and before long he hoped to be able to qualify for a post of interpreter for the British government. Besides being keenly interested in that type of work, he felt that he would like to make a little more money to send home, to help with the support of his family.

While he was riding along, clicking his tongue and making staccato sounds between clicks, he suddenly felt his horse quiver beneath him. Then the animal rose up on his haunches, nearly throwing Henry. The horse backed up in the road and came to a dead stop. A gopher must have frightened him, Henry thought, patting the animal.

"It's all right, old fellow," he said kindly. "Rest a bit." He took out of his pocket a lump of sugar and, leaning forward, fed the horse. Then with a gentle nudge of his heels, urged him on. The horse would not budge; he stood like a statue, moving neither left nor right nor forward.

"Oh, come now," said Henry, "this will never do. I have to deliver these goods for Mr. Davis by morning. We still have twenty miles, half of the way, to go." Then he gave the horse a good, stout kick.

The animal remained a statue. Henry began to get angry. "Nothing could have frightened you that much," he muttered, dismounting. "If I have to pull you all the way to Burghersdorp, we're going on."

He felt the bundle of goods, to be sure that it was firmly attached to the back of the saddle; then he took hold of the reins and tried to lead the animal forward. But the horse stood as if he were rooted in

the ground. Grasping the bridle firmly, Henry tugged and pulled with all his might. It was like trying to move a mountain; the strength and determination of the animal not to budge were amazing.

Henry sat down in the darkness and scratched his head. He could see no point in beating the horse into submission. There was only one thing to do—wait for daylight and possible help. He released the pack of goods from the saddle and let it slide down into the soft dirt of the road. With a shrill neigh the horse sank to his haunches. Henry sat down again, leaning his head against the animal's side, and fell asleep. When he awakened, it was daylight. He opened his eyes, moved his stiff body, and recalled his predicament of the night before.

The explanation lay but a few yards in front of him, on the road to Burghersdorp down which he had tried in vain to urge his horse in the blackness of the night. A deep crevasse lay in front of him where his path should have been. The road had caved in, and in its place was a pit that seemed bottomless to Henry as he stepped forward cautiously, peering down into what would have been the scene of his death except for the miraculous sight that God had given this beast of burden.

Henry remained in Molteno, reading Talmud with Mones Davis and picking up the click dialects while stacking dry goods in Davis's store, until he felt that he had mastered the language of the Kaffirs. Then he decided to move to a larger place, where he

might possibly find the position Mark had so glibly suggested to him when they first spoke of coming to Africa—that of interpreter. Henry could now speak Dutch, too, with reasonable fluency, and he hoped to utilize this knowledge as well as his ability to deal with the Zulus.

He went to Robertson, and, while attempting to make some contact with the government offices there, he took a job waiting on customers at the general store operated by the Steinmans. Through letters of introduction from friends in England, he was able to get the first opening on the interpreter's staff, a position half civil, half military. Then he at once arranged for his pay check to be issued at home to his parents, while he continued to support himself by working during his spare time for the Steinmans.

Robertson was a garrison town with a population that was largely military. When Henry had made friends with some of the junior officers, he was permitted to join them in rifle practice. He had a good eye and, before long, he could hold his own with the crack shots of the regiment. When he proudly wrote about this to Mark, he received an answer suggesting that he go in for soldiering in earnest. Henry smiled over Mark's letter. Shooting was just a game of skill as far as he was concerned. He hoped that it would never be necessary for him to point a gun at another human being.

On a hot day in February, Henry was going about the business of waiting on customers at Steinman's.

It seemed as if all the women in town had been in the store, that day. He stepped outdoors for a breath of air. The streets were deserted except for a few shoppers who stopped and gossiped shrilly with one another over their market baskets. The regiment was away on maneuvers, leaving only about a dozen men in town. "There'll be three days of this comparatively maleless existence," Henry thought, going back in the store. He thought of the shrill chorus in *The Pirates of Penzance* when the Major General's daughters first appear on the scene, reveling in the apparent absence of masculinity. While the lilting tune ran through his head and he could see the maidens scurrying barefoot over the stage, a sudden shout rang in his ears.

"Pirates!" Henry exclaimed, without thinking.

"The Zulus are on a rampage!" Mr. Steinman shouted, dashing into the store. "Follow me. Only a dozen men are left in the town. We'll have to hold them off." Henry ran after him into the street. Steinman called breathlessly, "Women and children, we're putting in the post. We don't know how many Zulus, but those black devils know right enough we're short of men."

The warning call of the bugle rang through the street. Henry and Mr. Steinman found a skeleton force at the barracks, ten men. Six more came in.

"See here," said the sergeant in charge, "I'll give you each a Martini Henry rifle and show you where to take your stand. You must hold it no matter what happens to you. Understand? Don't move

from your position until I tell you to. It's our only chance until we know their strength."

Henry was shown where to take his stand. He stood at his post near the barracks, his rifle poised. Fantastically, the end of that chorus from *The Pirates* kept running through his head.

There was dead silence over the town of Robertson. Henry had stood at his post for hours, it seemed. He began to think, perhaps it was a false alarm, perhaps—Henry's optimism suddenly was plunged into total oblivion. A black arm coming out of nowhere reached round his throat; his gun was wrenched out of his hand, and the butt of it smashed over his head. He fell unconscious to the ground.

"There weren't as many as we expected," Mr. Steinman's voice was saying. "Maybe fifty."

"Fifty is fifty too many," his wife answered. "Poor little Henry! I hope he comes round soon. I'd hate to write his mother—"

"Hush! he's moving now."

"I hear you," Henry said. "What happened?"

The Steinmans leaned over his bed. "Keep very quiet. You're all right. The doctor said you should be quiet."

"The Zulus! Where are they?" Henry asked, rising up. He sank back in his bed. Suddenly he realized he had a terrible headache; his hand felt that his head was bandaged.

"You must lie down and be very quiet," Mr. Steinman said. "The danger is over. The Zulus

went away, and the regiment's back again. You do not have a serious wound, but it could have been very bad for you. The doctor says that everything depends on taking plenty of rest and care of yourself now."

"But what happened?" Henry asked. "You must tell me about the fight. How did we run them off?"

"We frightened them with a clever ruse and the help of God Almighty," Mr. Steinman said. "The sergeant used an old African trick, old but good. He generated a lot of rifle fire while he was sending out fast-moving scouts to recall the column, out on maneuvers. When the Kaffirs finally found out what was happening they ran out of town, pell-mell."

"Were many people killed?" Henry asked.

"No. There were several casualties—five, I think, including yourself. A couple of our men have nasty spear wounds. The Zulus left one of their lot dead, shot in the heart."

Henry shuddered. "What happened to me?" he asked. "Will you please tell me that? I don't remember firing a shot."

"You didn't," Mr. Steinman answered dryly. "I was stationed a couple of yards away from you. I saw a Kaffir come in behind you, and before I could say Jack Robinson, he'd reached 'round your neck, grabbed your gun, and hit you over the head with the butt of it. And you went down like you were dead."

"Praise be to God that he isn't!" Mrs. Steinman quickly interposed. "Now that's enough conversa-

tion about the matter. Henry should take a little tea now and rest. And think, Henry, what a hero you'll be back home!"

The War Office made the mistake of listing Henry as dead instead of severely wounded. He felt very bad about it when he finally had the matter straightened out and heard from his father how they had grieved over him for a whole week and held services in the little chapel behind the house. It was as if he had been born again, his father wrote, when the mistake was discovered, and his thankful mother was giving extra to the poor, all week, as a *mitzvah* offering.

Henry found that even Mark was impressed by the deep nick in his head, which the doctor said he would have until the day he died. When, after his recovery, Henry went down to Cape Town for a brief vacation, Mark showed him off to all his friends, and the convalescent enjoyed himself thoroughly.

Mark was quite at home in the gay night life of Cape Town. He had been talking about his second-sight act with Henry, and they went through their old routine before an enthusiastic audience. Among the people that the visitor met in Cape Town was Frank Fillis, a young showman who was collecting wild animals and Kaffir types for a show he was going to call "Savage South Africa." "Better take Henry along as an example of the native savage instincts," Mark said to him, laughing. "Who ever

heard of a rabbi with a nick in his head from a Zulu?"

Henry had to walk thirty miles from Robertson to Worcester in order to reach a synagogue on Rosh Hashana. It took him eleven hours, and he carried his fresh clothes slung across his shoulders. While he was attending the New Year services, he made up his mind he was going back to London to continue his studies at Jews' College.

He sailed for England on the Royal steamer "Spartan" in the month of June, 1883. His last entry in his African journal read:

> "On our way home we put in the island Ascension, which is only seven miles in circumference and three in diameter. Population 106 men and 5 women. It is a military station of the English Government. The place is noted for its turtles and beautiful sea shells. Five days after, we touched St. Helena. When I looked round the island I certainly thought that Napoleon's punishment was greater than he could bear. We touched once more at Madeira on our return, and five days later I reached English soil, having been away a part of three years."

PART II

Jamaica

AFTER Henry's return to England, he plunged into studies at Jews' College with renewed fervor. He was twenty years old, and he had had his fling at adventure. Now he turned his collar backward and dedicated himself in earnest to the rabbinate.

He was not altogether pleased with the rules and regulations set down by the Chief Rabbi of England. He never had been in accord with some of them, and his journey to Africa had widened his horizons to such an extent that his good sense told him he would never be satisfied to spend the rest of his life within the narrow bounds established by the community of English Jewry. At the same time that he revolted against certain restrictions, he was imbued with the dignity, the ethical fervor, and the social application of his native Judaism.

His old friends at the Board of Guardians continued to show an interest in him. It was through Mr. Lionel Cohen that he met a gentleman formerly of Kingston, Jamaica—Mr. B. A. Franklin.

After several meetings, Mr. Franklin was sufficiently impressed with Henry to urge him to consider taking a post in his own former home, Kingston. Henry thought over Mr. Franklin's suggestion carefully. By summer, he would be ready to receive his *semicha*. Any homesickness he had felt for England when he was in Africa was assuaged for good, he knew. London would always be the dearly remembered home of his childhood, the abode of his parents, but already associations that he had looked back to when in Africa had changed.

Disraeli no longer came into Sir Nathaniel's office with his ancient's gait; the Queen placed primroses on his grave. Israel Zangwill wasn't at Jews' College lectures, waiting to walk through the fog after evening classes. And, of course, there was no clairvoyance without Mark, and, without the accompaniment of his hearty laughter, the music halls and the D'Oyly Carte players seemed not quite the same.

After considerable correspondence, over a period of months, between Mr. Franklin and the Jewish Community in Kingston, Henry received a formal offer to become their religious leader.

This time, armed with a rabbinical degree and letters to show that he was proficient in the required tasks of Jewish ritual, Henry once more embarked from England. His destination was the British West Indies, and he was twenty-one.

After Oliver Cromwell sent an expedition to take Jamaica from Spain, the Admiral Venables made

arrangements with Don Acosta, a Jewish native of the island, to provision his troops. This was in 1655. As early as 1623, Jews had settled there after fleeing from persecution on the Iberian peninsula. They adhered to the Sephardic Jewish tradition and, distinguished from other Spanish settlers, were known as "Portugals" when the English arrived. They fought the special taxes assessed on them by the British conquerors and petitioned the Jamaican House of Representatives for equal rights throughout the eighteenth century. The "Portugals" created the vanilla and sugar trade. Although they continued to be taxed, eventually they were made freemen under English law.

Jews of varying national backgrounds came to live at Kingston, Spanish Town, and Montego Bay. A number of Ashkenazim arrived from Central Europe; this group based its traditional observances on customs that had grown for eight centuries in a Germanic environment and differed in ritual interpretation from the Sephardim, who had come direct from Spain and Portugal. The Sephardic Jews were the aristocrats of the island, for it was they who had come in the wake of Columbus when "the land of wood and water," Xaymaca, lay in primitive quiescence, stirred only by earthquakes and hurricanes. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century they had been so long on the island and were so much a part of its physical as well as its economic history, that no one was surprised when a black

Jew with aquiline Spanish features appeared in synagogue, wearing a silk top hat.

When the Reverend Henry Cohen arrived in Kingston, he knew he was to take charge of the Amalgamated Congregation of Israelites. The Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue in Princess Street and the German one in Orange Street, both having been destroyed by fire, Mr. Franklin had explained, they were now united and would eventually construct a joint synagogue. If the young Rabbi had any illusions about the peace and amity with which the two separately rooted branches of his new congregation would grow together into one body, these were soon dispelled. The two groups at once became opposing factions, and there was a bitter cleavage of feeling between them that Henry found difficult to understand.

One Sabbath, right in the middle of the recital of the Torah, a Portuguese gentleman began to rail at the new reader fresh from Jews' College. Henry was forced to interrupt the services. The Portuguese member told him bluntly that he was using the wrong pronunciation of Hebrew. Henry answered from the pulpit that since there were Ashkenazim in the congregation, he intended to alternate their way of reading the Law with the Sephardic interpretation of the Portuguese members. Henry finished the services using the same pronunciation with which he had begun.

When he went to his rooming house, after temple, he told his landlady, who was a Portuguese Jewess,

what had happened and asked her please to explain to him why they could not do away with such petty bickering. "I contend," Henry said, "that Sephardim and Ashkenazim are bound to agree basically, since they both adhere to the Orthodox Jewish faith.

"Now, it would be different if one of them were of the Reform movement, the kind that is beginning to get a hold in the States. I have heard that in this new movement they have done away with a number of forms and ceremonies, dietary laws, and so on, and have made the ritual observances more adaptable to the mode of living in America. But at the same time, they have kept the spirit implicit in Jewish faith. It seems to me not to be such a bad idea," Henry added, sighing.

His landlady apparently had not been listening to his comments on the new Reform Judaism. Her dark eyes opened wide and her whole body grew tense as she said, "If I had one drop of Ashkenazim blood in these veins," she stretched out her wrist to Henry, "I would kill myself."

Henry walked away, shrugging his shoulders. It was something he couldn't figure out; perhaps it was the persecutions the forebears of these people had undergone during the Inquisition in Spain that made them so proud of their particular strain; still, in England there had been Jews of both Spanish and German origin, and they managed to get along together. It might be the tropical climate or the peculiar inversion of life on an isolated island like

Jamaica that made people there so intense in their emotions.

Henry had had one close call that he did not like to think about. On his arrival in Kingston, he had been wined and dined by one of the "Portugal" families. They were charming people, and Henry felt that here at last was the ideal existence, as he sat in the moonlit patio of their Spanish house, sipping the native wine and watching the young *señoritas* of the household grouped at one side under the watchful gaze of their black-gowned duenna. After the wintry climate of England and the hard frontier life of South Africa, Henry found it delightful to be always warm and comfortable and listen to low, cultured voices in a setting of glowing hibiscus hedge and scented orange trees.

One of the three unmarried daughters in the family was allowed to engage Henry in conversation from time to time, and he found that they had many interests in common. She usually sat with her eyes cast down, and on the whole, had a rather meek appearance. However, one day they had a few moments together alone, and Henry, because he had begun to take their relationship seriously, started to speak of his family in England, of their humble life in the Polish ghetto, and his mother's simple faith and piety.

When he had finished, the young lady raised her head proudly and said with unmistakable emphasis, "The man I marry must have no family. He must

forget he ever had any family ties outside of my own."

Henry pursed his lips. He said no more of England. That evening, the wine served to him appeared to have a cloying sweetness, and he thought he would give anything for a taste of bitter Bass's ale.

He continued to call on the "Portugal" family, but was careful to keep a safe distance between himself and the daughters of the household, particularly the one who had confided in him her thoughts on a husband.

After his experience with that young lady, Henry confined himself to less romantic phases of Jamaican life. He learned to speak Spanish with fluency, and he was interested in tracing the origins of Iberian folk songs which he discovered in Jewish ritual on the island. Tropical profusion of vegetation against the background of the high Blue Mountains, the variety of trees, the thriving rum and cocoanut trade continued to impress him, and he visited plantations in the interior and saw firsthand everything that he could.

All his life he had heard of the famous Jamaica rum. On a special occasion, a Sabbath dinner at the home of the president of his congregation, Hyam Barrow, Henry was told that he should partake of the finest and oldest rum on the island. His host, to honor the young Rabbi, went down in the cellar and brought up a bottle of rum that had been in his family for three generations. Hyam Barrow poured

a small glassful and, passing it to Henry, asked him to say the blessing. Henry immediately did so, and, with his usual dispatch, downed the oily liquid at a gulp. The family told him the next day that, within a few minutes after he had taken the drink, he rose sedately, walked over to a near-by couch, and proceeded to sleep the clock 'round. It was Sunday afternoon when Henry discovered the potency of a thimbleful of old Jamaica rum.

Henry remained in the West Indies for a year. Besides fulfilling his duties as a rabbi of the congregation in Kingston, he was in and out all the island settlements, for births, marriages, deaths, performing the variety of ceremonials necessary to satisfy the demands of the heterogeneous Jewish population. A sermon that he delivered upon the death of Sir Moses Montefiore was quoted in full by the *Colonial Standard Jamaican Dispatch* with the comment that it was "characterized by earnestness and impressiveness of delivery . . . from beginning to end, listened to with close attention."

Henry optimistically dedicated the cornerstone for the synagogue of his Amalgamated Congregation of Israelites: "I scatter corn on this stone as an emblem of plenty and abundance . . . I pour wine upon this stone, the emblem of joy and gladness . . . I sprinkle oil on this stone, the emblem of peace and unanimity . . ." He continued to pray regularly for "Our Most Gracious Sovereign Queen Victoria, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, the Princess of Wales, and all the Royal family." And it was as a

visiting Englishman that he went to the United States after giving up his post in Jamaica.

When he arrived in New York to book passage for home, he wasn't very happy about it. He had left Kingston because he had grown tired of the continual bickerings of his congregation over religious ritual, and he didn't want to go back to England and be under the thumb of the Chief Rabbi in matters of strict observance.

While he waited, disconsolate, in New York, to hear from his passage reservation, he met the Reverend Henry Jacobs of that city. Jacobs suggested that Henry take up a position that was vacant in Woodville, Mississippi. This was in the cotton belt, the Reverend Mr. Jacobs explained, nice country, charming people, Southern homes. Henry said that was enough.

He canceled his passage and, with traditional Portuguese music still in his ears and the soft cadence of Spanish-sounding names—Delyado, D'Azerado, De Cordova—fresh on his lips, he turned his back on the Old World for good, and went to Woodville.

Woodville Idyl

HENRY soon discovered that, when he so suddenly canceled his ship's passage and went to Woodville, he was making a more fundamental decision than he had at first realized. On his arrival in Mississippi, he found himself the leader of a Jewish Reform congregation. Now he was on the reactionary side of the fence, and despite his former glib assertions that he did not approve of much of the traditional in Orthodox Judaism, he was profoundly shocked when he discovered that the members of his congregation kept their places of business open on the Sabbath. He told them in no uncertain terms that he could not possibly consider remaining their spiritual leader if they continued to engage in business dealings on Saturday mornings while he was holding services. His stand threw the whole community into a state of confusion.

Woodville, with the adjacent city of Natchez, was the center of the rich cotton belt in Mississippi. The Jews in Woodville, a small percentage of the

town's population of 1,200, were, like everyone else there, either engaged in the cotton business or in lines directly connected with it. Most of them owned plantations that had been in their families for a long time before the War, and the names Rothschild, Leyman, and Stern were well-known on the New York and New Orleans cotton exchanges.

During the week, Woodville led a charmed, sequestered existence in fine homes, which had grown old gracefully in their background of moss-draped Southern gardens. But once a week, the population of the surrounding countryside came into town to buy household supplies and farm implements on cotton credits, and Saturday was market day in Woodville.

The Woodville congregation did not send the young Rabbi packing, although at first they considered his ultimatum well-nigh impossible to meet. They appreciated the sincerity and forthrightness with which he spoke to them. He was no orator and even stuttered a little when he was excited, but when he told them what he considered their obligation to Judaism and the respect that they owed the faith of their fathers, they listened and were impressed; so, too, were their Christian neighbors with whom they discussed the matter.

It finally was decided by the Jewish merchants and storekeepers that they would not open their places of business until after the close of the Saturday morning services. The brevity exercised by the

Reverend Mr. Cohen in all manner of ritual, including such usually lengthy matters as marriage and burial services, was noted and appreciated by his congregation; and they knew he could be depended upon to finish the final blessing, on Saturday, as the town clock struck eleven.

The Christian businessmen soon followed the lead of their Jewish fellow merchants, because it became apparent that no farmers were coming to town until all the stores were opened and they could shop around. Then, since their stores were closed anyway, the Gentile merchants began to get the habit of accompanying their Jewish friends to Sabbath services.

The Reverend Mr. Cohen took an active interest in everything pertaining to the community life of Woodville. Before he had resided many months in his new home, he was writing letters to the Mississippi press, suggesting civic improvements just as Englishmen write to the *London Times*. The *Centerville Nickel* printed a letter, primly observing:

> "We give place in our columns to the communication from the Rabbi of Woodville, who is at once a cultured and popular gentleman, and whose opinion as to the advantages of a reading room for the public should meet with general approbation."

After his somewhat vagrant existence in South Africa and the bickerings of his congregation in Jamaica, Henry basked in the mellow charms of

Woodville. He had never met kinder and gentler people. They seemed even to have taken on the beauty of their surroundings, and Henry thought that he had never seen so many pretty girls.

He read a great deal of poetry in his spare time, and he steeped himself in the popular works of Mark Twain. He liked nothing better than to take the stage to Natchez, climb the high bluff on the edge of the city, and look over the swirling currents of the Mississippi, two miles across, to Vidalia in Louisiana.

About a year after his arrival in Woodville, he was sounded out by the Natchez Jews on the subject of becoming their rabbi, but he explained that he was too attached to the people in Woodville to leave them. His congregation, hearing that the offer had been made to him and realizing that he was refusing to better himself financially, felt closer than ever to their young rabbi.

Henry began to organize Jewish religious classes in the surrounding countryside. He went regularly to teach in Feliciana parish, and he trained some Sabbath-school instructors in the little settlement of Bayou Sara, where he was frequently called for marriages and funerals. He refused to be recompensed for any of his out-of-town work, considering it a part of his rabbinical duties for which he was paid in Woodville. His religious school pupils showed their gratitude by diligent study, and in Bayou Sara, their parents gave him a testimonial dinner and a gold watch chain.

As he became known throughout the state, Henry was called on to speak as far north as Vicksburg. His talks varied from subjects based on his experiences in Africa to the ethical teachings of the Hebrew prophets, and on one occasion a local newspaper remarked that " . . . he handled his subject—'Women,' in his usual masterly manner, and was especially pleasing to the female element."

When it became known in Woodville that he spoke half a score of languages—and the Reverend Mr. Cohen was never reticent about his linguistic talents—he was offered the post of language instructor at the Female Seminary by Charles G. McGehee, President of the Board of Trustees. He went for two hours every day to teach the young ladies of Woodville the Romance languages which he had studied in London and of which he had gained a practical knowledge at the Cape and in Jamaica. But sometimes when Mrs. Neilson, the principal, walked past his classroom, she would hear noises emerging that sounded more like the African click dialects than the polite French conversational terms her charges were supposed to be learning.

In September, 1887, Rosh Hashana in Woodville was a decided contrast to the last one Henry had experienced in Africa. The Woodville correspondent of the *American Israelite* gives a sociable account:

"On Sunday evening, the 18th inst., at 6:30 o'clock, our Jewish community was seen wending its way toward the Temple, House of Israel,

which has just been repaired and repainted, adding much to its appearance. Of course, this gathering was for the purpose of ushering in the Jewish New Year in a proper manner. The Rev. Henry Cohen was at his post, and on this occasion far eclipsed all his former efforts . . . There were a great many of the best Gentile citizens present, among them your correspondent noticed the Hon. H. S. Van Eaton and his wife, the Hon. D. C. Bramlett and family, Capt. Geo. T. McGehee, the Rev. J. W. Turner and family, Dr. Jno. F. Terrell, Capt. Jno. S. Lewis, the Hon. Chas. G. McGehee and sons, M. B. McGehee and Dr. E. L. McGehee. . . . Services were also held on the 19th, *Rosh Hash-onash*, and the Israelites of Woodville entered 5648 with very satisfactory prospects."

In the spring of the next year, the Reverend Mr. Cohen was invited to speak before the Jewish congregation in Galveston. He had never been in Texas. He found its people and their customs quite different from his friends in Mississippi and their mode of life. Texas reminded him somewhat of South Africa. Here he was in young country again—country that you could see growing—vigorous and a little rowdy.

Galveston he found to be the most flourishing city in the state. It seemed like another New Orleans, smaller, tropical in appearance, but less Southern. It was a city marked by a distinctly cosmopolitan

atmosphere, and the people were a cultured lot, many of them sending their children to be educated abroad. Yet, withal, it was a Texas city looking ahead, not backward, and the residents did not date things "before the War." Galveston was full of millionaires whose fortunes, made in cotton and shipping, were not more than two decades old. They were, in large part, people whose fathers had come direct from Europe to Texas, sturdy middle-class stock, with a sprinkling of disinherited royalty.

Henry spoke in the Galveston synagogue on his experiences in Africa, and then he went home to Woodville; but he was restless on his return. Suddenly, life seemed a bit pale, even though spring in the gardens of Natchez and Woodville and in the lovely country estates of his friends was once more the thing of beauty that he had known now for three years. The great Azalea bushes opened their flowers in brilliant masses of orchid and red. Tall camellia trees were covered with perfect blossoms, which fell to form rose and pink carpets on the earth. The flamboyance of color was tempered by the heavy ground ivy, sweeping gracefully up to the plants, and giant oak trees veiling the gardens with their long gray moss. But in Woodville, that spring, Henry's thoughts were of Texas.

A fortnight after his visit to Galveston, the congregation there offered him the position of their rabbi. Henry read over their communication and showed it to his friends in Woodville. However much they disliked the thought of his leaving them, they felt

he could not possibly reject the opportunity to serve one of the largest and most important Jewish congregations in the South.

With the president of his Woodville congregation, Mr. Hart, leaning over his shoulder, Henry wrote out his letter of acceptance to Congregation B'nai Israel in Galveston. The Woodville correspondent of the *American Israelite* dipped his pen into the well of rhetorical fervor to record the Reverend Mr. Cohen's departure:

> "Fortune with its fickle smile, and fate with its stable qualities, has ordained that our community shall lose one of its brightest jewels, and that jewel no less person than our beloved young minister, Rev. Henry Cohen. The allegiance he owes to God, his religion and his fellow beings has prompted him, irrespective of self feelings, to enlarge his sphere of usefulness and his fields of labor, and in accordance with these views he has accepted the position of spiritual leader of the Galveston congregation. My imaginative powers can scarcely portray to you the unanimous regret we experience at his leaving, and today's event will be a memorable one in the annals of this community's history. It seems today as if the very heavens shared in this our universal feeling, for just at the moment of his departure the purifying waters from above dropped upon us, reminding us forcibly of the

scene at our Temple while delivering his farewell address.

"His kindness, conscientiousness and unceasing charity and benevolence has implanted in our breasts a reverential feeling for this noble man, and to say that the Jewish people of Woodville will look with anxious care and eye to his future doings, and wish for his continuous prosperity would be putting it too mildly. His departure will cause a deep void in the life of your correspondent, for he was to me as a brother, and it indeed causes me much sorrow to cast asunder the golden links of friendship that for the past three years have bound us so closely together. As a testimonial of the high appreciation in which he was held, the ladies of his congregation last evening presented him with a beautiful jeweled watch. The worthy president of the congregation, Mr. J. T. Hart, made a touching presentation speech in his usual happy manner, which was ably responded to by Mr. Cohen, and in closing, all I can say is that what Woodville loses Galveston gains."

When Henry departed from Woodville, he proceeded by stage to Centerville and boarded the Yazoo and Mississippi Valley train. He was laden with gifts of home-cooked food and odds and ends of baggage containing possessions accumulated over a period of four years, since his departure from

England. He had shipped his books and small household effects ahead by freight, but in the excitement of packing he had failed to include a number of cherished objects that now accompanied him, stuffed into odd corners of suitcases or bulging from carpet bags that the ladies of the congregation had pressed into his service.

The young Rabbi quickly settled himself among his packages, then dived into one of them for a book of *Favorite Poems*. He opened it to read, but a late copy of the *Woodville Republican* caught his eye, and he decided to glance through it to see if there was anything about him in it.

Before leaving for Galveston he had grown a small mustache and had started wearing his collar with the opening in front, and over it he tied a narrow white linen bow tie. While he was in Jamaica he had stopped using his beaver except for state occasions, substituting a flat-crowned hat more suitable to the tropical climate. His face, rounded and endowed with a small but determined-looking chin, still looked twenty, despite the wispy moustache. And his blue eyes now glancing swiftly over the Woodville newspaper, had a candid, fearless look, which, coupled with the clipped way he accented his words (when he didn't stutter), proclaimed to the world that he was an Englishman. If you had told this to the Reverend Mr. Cohen, he would have been pleased; but he would have added immediately that he had already taken out his first papers.

When the conductor came for his ticket, he was

cutting out for his scrapbook one last notice of his departure in the *Woodville Republican.*

"Going to Texas, and this time with no return ticket," said the conductor. "I remember you taking this trip in the spring."

"Yes. This time I'm going there to live. In Galveston."

"Well, you sure picked the best city on the west side of the Mississippi. Biggest cotton center of the South exceptin' New Orleans."

"Yes, it's true," Henry said. "But," he sighed, "it can't be a nicer place to live than Woodville."

"Now you're talking," the conductor said, seating himself across the aisle. "I was born in Natchez. I used to tote baggage on the ferry across the river to Vidalia."

"'Tote,'" said the Reverend Mr. Cohen. "Do you know the origin of that word? It comes from the Latin verb *tolla*, meaning to lift or remove and the Anglo-Saxon verb *totian*, which means to lift up. It's what you call a colloquialism—used only in speaking, you see? Did you ever study Latin?"

The conductor shook his head. "That was a huckleberry above my persimmon."

"Ah, if I'd met you out on the Veldt in Africa, I should have known you were from these parts. The first time I heard that expression was at a political rally. Somebody asked the local congressman why he didn't run for the United States Senate. His reply was like yours. 'Why that's a huckleberry above my persimmon.'"

"That must have been old McLemore," the conductor said. "Sounds like him. I never will forget a reception they gave for him in Natchez. He went around the room shaking hands with everybody and asking about every member of the family. When he came to me he said, 'How are you? How's your father? How's your mother?' I told him that my mother was dead. 'Oh, yes,' he replied, as if he were going to burst into tears, 'I remember.' Well, he walked all around that durned room and came back to where I was sitting and went through all his questions again. When he came to the one about my mother's health, I got sore and said, 'She's still dead.' That sure stumped the old windbag."

"How long did you stay in Woodville?" continued the conductor.

"Three years," the Rabbi answered. "And I must say I've never met finer people."

"By the way, did you know Col. Denson that died last year?"

"Yes; we were great chums. I spoke at his funeral, at the family's request."

"Well, I'll tell you one on him you never knew about. After the war he was interested in a little one-horse railroad over near Glouster. He wanted to get it on its feet again; so he goes to New York and into the biggest bank there. He tells 'em he wants to borrow money for his railroad. The officer of the bank who he was speaking to said, 'Fine, that's what we're here for . . . and how much do you want, Colonel?'

"The old boy mustered all his courage and blurted out: 'I want fifty thousand dollars.'"

"The banker looked at him disgustedly and in his arrogant Yankee manner said, 'What do you mean by taking up my time on an insignificant little matter like this? Fifty thousand dollars! Why you ought to go to a pawn shop.'" . . .

After the conductor left him, Henry finished cutting his clipping and slipped it into his vest pocket. He looked at his watch. It was a good five-hour run to New Orleans; about half of the time had passed. He looked out the window and watched the giant oak trees and towering pecans they were passing.

He thought back to a home in Natchez where he had visited. It was named appropriately, "Green Leaves," for the house was built around a courtyard in which a single great oak spread its drooping limbs over the entire enclosure. The Indians used to hold powwows under its shade, he had been told. He had sat on the long gallery that faced the court, marveling at the age of the tree hoary with moss and bright with green leaves, and he remembered remarking feelingly to his host that here, indeed, was a fitting symbol of the Creator's greatness.

As the train flew along, water started appearing between the trees—long bayous, choked with lavender water hyacinths, that emptied sluggishly into Bay St. Louis, Lake Pontchartrain, and the Mississippi Sound. It was hard to see where the swamps ended and the bayous began; there were

moss and swamps as far as the eye could see. As the day grew dark, Henry refreshed himself with the fried chicken and *Lebkuchen* provided by the ladies of Woodville. Then the moon made its appearance, large and red, on the edge of the swamp.

"There's nothing in the world like our Southern moon, is there?" remarked his friend, the conductor.

"Ah," answered the Rabbi, with a twinkle in his eye, " 'But you ought've seen that moon before the Wa'h.' "

When Henry had changed trains in New Orleans and his Pullman had been ferried across the Mississippi, he climbed into his berth and slept soundly. But he was awake at daybreak and raised his shade to get a good look at the Texas landscape. He no longer was an interested traveler passing through; this was a part of his new home.

The country he saw was flat, stretching for miles in a straight, unbroken line. There were neither trees nor houses. Henry opened his window and sniffed the air. He could tell that they were drawing near to the sea. Gulls appeared from time to time overhead, and in the low marsh grass he could see an occasional slender white line that he knew to be a crane. A strange-looking bird—a pelican, he thought—flew close to the lumbering train.

After he had washed and dressed, he kept his face glued to the window, for he wanted to get a glimpse of Galveston Island before they crossed over the two-mile span of bay.

Now there were small pools of water in the flat marsh, and a south wind bent the grass until you could see that it was bright green only on top and had dirty-looking brown stems. Henry glanced at his watch. They were on time and should already be nearing Galveston Bay. Still he could see nothing except the flat plain, which was beginning to seem endless. There are no vistas here, he thought, as there are in Cape Town, where you can look down over the whole harbor.

Suddenly out of the marsh grass, Galveston Bay appeared, a great smooth stretch of water, light green and cobalt blue reflecting sun and shadow. In a moment the marsh had disappeared. Beyond the railroad trestle Henry could see shining in the morning sun a thin finger of land that looked almost as if it might be a mirage on the edge of the horizon.

It was no mirage to Henry. He knew it was a semitropical, sandy island, practically at sea level, about twenty-eight miles long and one and one-half to three and one-half miles wide, stretching along the Texas coast in a northeasterly and southwesterly direction, with the city of Galveston, population 22,248, located on the east end. Before leaving Woodville, he had looked up all these facts in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

PART III

Galveston

DURING the Reverend Henry Cohen's trial sermon in Galveston on the subject of "Africa," two young ladies sat together in the Temple, giggling every time the Rabbi stuttered, and whispering under their breath a current stage line, "Kick it out," until they were poked with a cane by an irate gentleman in the row behind them.

There were others who had objected to engaging a rabbi who stuttered. But these were overruled by Mr. Leo N. Levi, the president of the congregation, who seemed to enjoy the variation from the usual theme of Jewish subjects in the sermon, was favorably impressed by the kind words spoken about young Cohen in Woodville, and finally closed the whole matter by booming out at an objector in a voice trained in oratory on the University of Virginia debating team, "He'll get over it, and if he doesn't, we'll get used to it."

When Henry arrived in Galveston he knew at once that he was dealing with a more high-spirited,

less amenable group than his flock in Woodville. Fortunately, he had grown accustomed to the relaxation of ancient customs that characterized Reform Judaism. His three years in America had made him ready to serve conscientiously and happily in this ultrareform congregation. He understood that in Galveston it would be futile to ask his congregation to close their places of business on Saturday. They attended synagogue in large numbers on Sabbath eve, Friday night; so he held his tongue and made this the time for his major services, wondering to himself, as he did so, what the Chief Rabbi of England would say to that.

As soon as he became accustomed to his routine congregational duties in Galveston, he looked around for additional tasks, and he at once found more than enough to occupy even his apparently insatiable energies. He discovered that the state of Texas covered an area of 260,000 square miles, in which were some 12,000 Jews, many of whom lived in country towns far from the ministrations of a rabbi. This was considerably more travel territory than he had had in Mississippi, but Henry started methodically to cover it, going once a week to towns from Nacogdoches on the east to Brownsville on the border, teaching, marrying, burying, preaching the words of the fiery Old Testament prophets.

He soon became an active participant in civic and welfare work in Galveston. It was, he discovered, a city of philanthropists—men who had made their money fast in the abundant flow of

commerce through the port, and who gave schools, churches, statues, drinking fountains for man and beast, orphans' homes, and hospitals, as casually as if these were nothing at all. Henry thought it amazing.

He counted the churches—sixteen Protestant and five Catholic (besides two convents and a Jesuit College). He was told that one cotton millionaire who had found the local Episcopal church too "high-falutin" had started his own, Low Church. Whether true or not, this was a good story, Henry thought, and one that certainly fitted in with this atmosphere of hearty individualism. The spontaneous way of giving that he saw here was entirely different from the quiet, carefully directed method of sharing one's worldly goods that he had known in England; but this was the New World, figuratively flowing with milk and honey, and Henry found himself admiring the ways of these men who gave with the same largesse with which their fortunes had come to them.

In politics, there was a less genteel and considerably more robust element here than in Woodville. In Galveston, although it was admittedly on a higher cultural level than the rest of Texas, men still shot on sight, and political parties were not averse to bringing a visiting contingent from Fort Bend County to stir up a little trouble at election time.

A man of great charm and unquestioned medical ability, whether sober or mellow, Dr. A. W. Fly,

was being talked about for mayor when the Reverend Mr. Cohen arrived. One of the doctor's chief assets as claimant to the office was his ability to handle men, and his friends cited as an example the time when a dock strike was threatened and Fly went down to the wharves with a couple of six-shooters, drew a line across the dock, told all non-strikers to stay on the other side and said, "I'll shoot the first son of a bitch that crosses the line." It was reported that none did.

Dr. Fly liked the new rabbi from the start, and this gave rise to no little local surprise because his opinion of Englishmen was generally known all across the Island. He didn't like a certain outstanding surgeon of Galveston, to whom he always referred as "that British bastard" and, if he had several whiskies under his belt, he usually added, "Yessir, I'd shoot him at the drop of a hat."

But he regarded this Cohen as a different sort of Englishman. "None of that sissy, scotch-and-soda stuff for him," Fly was known to have said at Toujouse Bar. "He takes his liquor straight, and he does everything else straight, too."

When Henry heard, through a mutual friend, of Fly's opinion of him and the reason for it, he could not help thinking about the day in Kingston when a thimbleful of Jamaica rum at Mr. Hyam Barrow's table had put him out of the running for twenty-four hours.

He found a number of British subjects in Galveston. They were for the most part in cotton and

shipping, representing their firms out of Manchester, Birmingham, and Liverpool. They formed themselves into the inevitable British Club, which Henry joined, and where they made much of him, since he was the only minister in the group, and was considered liberal for his calling.

The Reverend Mr. Cohen made friends with the Protestant ministers as well as the priests and the Bishop of the large Catholic community. Down at the cathedral, there was a lanky young priest named Jim Kirwin, who hailed from Circleville, Ohio. He said to Cohen when they met, "You have to believe it all like I do, or none of it, like your boys. The rest of them, who believe a little of this and a little of that, will find themselves running out of the money. It's a fifty-fifty bet, either you or us."

A short time after Henry arrived in Galveston, he made the acquaintance of Miss Mollie Levy, whose family were old and respected members of the community and participated actively in congregational life. As far as Henry was concerned, they could have been prominent in Timbuktu. After he had looked once into Mollie's candid, brown eyes, he knew that she was the only person in the world he could possibly marry. He called on her daily while she was working in her father's store and went every night to her home. And Mr. Levy had to walk the floor outside the parlor to get him to leave at the unheard-of hour of midnight.

Everybody in the congregation talked about the young Rabbi's scandalous courting hours; then they

smiled and wished him well, because it was considered proper and fitting that he should have a helpmate as soon as possible, to share his duties.

His congregants who at first had been surprised by his many-sided activities in the communal life of the city, began to feel pleased over the Reverend Mr. Cohen's participation in civic affairs. It was pleasant to read in the *Galveston News* that their rabbi had spoken at the Y.M.C.A., was on the program of the board meeting of the Protestant Orphan's Home, or had organized a system of relief for the city's poor. Even the critics of his stuttering got used to it, as had been predicted by his president. And a year after his arrival in Galveston, the Reverend Mr. Cohen married Mollie Levy, one of the two young ladies who had giggled through his trial sermon and whispered, "Kick it out."

When Henry married Mollie Levy, he was wedding himself to native Texas stock and, in a way, to Galveston Island. Mollie, though born in Houston, considered that she had not lived anywhere but in Galveston, except for a brief period during the War between the States. When the Confederacy advised civilians to evacuate the Island, she had gone away with her family in a covered wagon, and she vaguely remembered playing with a big doll on a sunny public square in Matamoras.

Under her thick rolls of light-brown hair, Mollie had the brains to add up a column of figures in a hurry, having helped with the bookkeeping in her

father's general store. Soon after the wedding, she took over the Rabbi's financial affairs, which were not in the orthodox state that she considered respectable for anyone—above all, a minister. He had bought his set of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* on the installment plan and was still struggling with the first few payments. How she did it, Henry never knew, but Mollie paid off the entire indebtedness in a few months.

He was not inclined to take much notice of clothes, or he might not have approved of the fact that their cook on her days off went out dressed up in his bride's trousseau finery, which his bride was not above parting with at a price.

Indeed it was fortunate that Mollie had managed to pay off the *Encyclopaedia* debt because Henry found himself in constant need of books. Since there were no libraries available for his use, it became necessary for him to purchase reference books, pamphlets, and at times rare books, in order to continue his studies begun at Jews' College. As his collection grew, the Reverend Mr. Cohen began to take a pardonable pride in it.

It was with considerable anticipation that he waited one afternoon for a visit from that eminent minister, Edward Everett Hale, who was in the city and had said that he would stop in at the rabbinage for a cup of tea.

Henry busied himself rearranging the volumes on the shelves while he waited impatiently for his visitor's arrival. Most of his books had come from

London bookdealers that he had known, though recently he had bought some things from Brentano's and had opened an account with Kaufman at Frankfort on the Main. He still had a weakness for English names and places; he liked to trade with David Nutt on the Strand and to send off for Jewish works to Valentine and Company; he ordered from Maags Brothers and Bernard Quaritch, and was frequently represented at auctions in New Bond Street. He beamed now over a new acquisition, bought for him at auction—a set of the Mermaid series that had been the property of Coningsby Disraeli. The personal card of Lord Beaconsfield's nephew pasted in the first volume of the set . . . a faint, asthmatic voice saying, "It's Little Henry again."

Once when he was on shipboard he had picked up a paper-bound book, a publication of A. H. Wheeler's Indian Railway Library. The book was *Plain Tales from the Hills* and it was written by an unknown Rudyard Kipling, who seemed to know his subject, India. As soon as he saw a notice of *In Black and White* by the same author, Henry sent away for it. He kept the two slender blue-green paper volumes on a lower shelf and was in the habit of pointing them out to people and saying, "That man will be heard from."

He now put these out on his desk so that he wouldn't fail to call them to Dr. Hale's attention, and he had made up his mind to give the gentleman a copy of an article written for *The Bookman* by Silas Howes of the *Galveston News*, entitled "An

Ecclesiastic's Library." It was an interesting account of his own collection. Henry was highly flattered that Howes, congenital bookworm that he was, should wax enthusiastic over his budding library and had immediately sent off for a dozen copies of *The Bookman.*

Henry was peering through a pane in the front door when Dr. Hale arrived at the corner of Twenty-fourth and Avenue I and stepped out of his hack. He walked slowly up the steps of the raised cottage where the Cohens lived and was ushered into the parlor in which pictures and knickknacks had been shoved off the walls to make room for shelves with books.

The eminent visitor looked around the parlor with a critical glance. He sat down to tea, which Mrs. Cohen served with anise cakes. Henry noticed how the caller's eyes continued to stray over the shelves, and he himself could scarcely drink his tea in his impatience to be up and about, showing off his treasures. Several times during the refreshments his hands fluttered toward the article from *The Bookman*, but Mrs. Cohen, who had the situation in charge, asked him to pass the cakes.

When the Reverend Edward Everett Hale had finished his tea, he put down his cup, wiped his lips, and said decisively and with evident finality, "Young man, you have too many books."

The next day, Henry was not in the best of humors. He had not enjoyed the remark made about his

library by Dr. Hale, and the morning paper gave him an excellent opportunity to let off steam. In the *Galveston News* there was an account of a fire upcountry which designated that the owner of the store that burned down was a "Hebrew" merchant.

"I notice that when it isn't a Jew that has a fire they never mention what his religion is," he stormed over his breakfast coffee.

"Yes, and when you read about all these burglars and murderers, they never say what their religion is," Mollie replied.

The Rabbi bided his time. One day, a few weeks later, he read in the paper that a merchant upstate had had a fire. This time there was no "Hebrew" tag. Henry didn't wait to finish his morning coffee. He snatched up his copy of the *News* and rushed downtown to the office of Maj. Lowe, who ran the paper.

The Major was a good-natured fellow, an able journalist, who prided himself on the fact that the *Galveston News* had always been and continued to be the number-one newspaper of the state. He was startled when the Rev. Henry Cohen burst into his office with a red face, thrust a copy of the *News* under his nose, and demanded of him, "What's this fellow's religion?"

"What fellow?" answered Maj. Lowe.

"Here, on the front page of your paper. It says he had a fire upstate. His place of business burned down. But it doesn't say what his religion is."

"Look here, Rabbi Cohen, you're talking in

riddles. What the hell's the difference what his religion is?"

"That's funny," said the Rabbi. "I notice whenever it's one of my coreligionists that has a fire your paper's correspondent always takes the trouble to mention what church he belongs to." The Reverend Mr. Cohen waited while his remark sank in.

Major Lowe was silent for a moment. Then he offered the Rabbi a cigar and lighted it for him. "I think I understand what you mean," the Major said, his face turning as red as Henry's, "and I can tell you, Sir, on my word of honor as a gentleman, it will never happen again." They shook hands on it, talked a while about other matters, and the Rabbi left the office of the *News* puffing happily on the Major's cigar.

He went from the *News* office to the temple, where he was expecting to meet a congregant who didn't want his children to have to study Hebrew in the Sabbath school. Henry couldn't understand that. The Hebrew language was part of Jewish history; you couldn't remove it from a study of that history any more than you could lift Chaucer out of the Old English of his *Canterbury Tales*. It was right and proper; he was surprised and shocked that a person of education should object.

As he hurried up Twenty-second Street to meet his objecting congregant, a sentence flashed through his thoughts. It was connected with the time when he and Mark were talking about going to Africa and Henry had said that he would like to study the

mixture of languages found there. "But one could spend a whole lifetime studying the language of the Bible and only gain a fraction of the knowledge of the divine tongue"—those were his father's words.

That evening he said to Mollie, "Well, I'm in for a fight. Mr. Lasker doesn't want his children to study Hebrew. I shall insist on it if they continue to come to my religious school. Hebrew! A stirring language, a folk language, in itself a commentary on the history of the Jewish people. Shows how they felt about things. For example, Mollie, did you know that the word for 'charity' in Hebrew is *Tsadoka*, which also means 'justice.' There, in a word you have all the feeling of the Jews throughout the centuries for social justice. Isn't that interesting?

"Hebrew!" The Rabbi pursed his lips. "I told Mr. Lasker of Cardinal Satolli's visit last week; a great Hebrew scholar. Mr. Lasker hadn't heard about the details of the visit. I told him about my being called on to say grace at the banquet for his Eminence; and when I said it in Latin the Cardinal responded in perfect Hebrew. Well, Mollie, I told him his children would have to study Hebrew like everyone else in my Sunday school."

Two years after the Rabbi's arrival in Galveston his wife gave birth to a girl, whom they named "Ruth." By this time Henry had stopped stuttering, having practiced sermons on the beach with pebbles in his mouth. But probably no one in his congregation noticed when he stopped, because they had grown to like him as much as Leo N. Levi had in the

first place. He had had his little tilts and his troubles with members, many of whom were older than he was and accustomed to having their own way. But like the gentleman who didn't want his children taught Hebrew in the Sunday school, most of them acceded to the Rabbi on any differences that they had.

As a matter of fact, all these men were at first mildly astonished, then pleased and rather awed, as they began to discover that they had engaged a minister ready and willing to make a fight for the principles he preached.

* * *

"The day is fading, the sun is setting; the silence and peace of night descend upon the earth. Vouchsafe rest, O God, unto our disquieted hearts," read Rabbi Cohen, "Lift up the soul that is cast down."

A man walked down the red-carpeted aisle of the temple as fast as decorum would allow, and came up the pulpit steps. The congregation stared in surprise. This was the *Neilah* service, the most sacred moment in Jewish ritual, the end of the Day of Atonement; the Rabbi had not left his pulpit all day.

The man waited until the prayer was ended, then, while the choir sang, "Who is the King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of glory," he handed a note to the Rabbi. He looked at it, thrust it into his pocket, and walked before the open ark, in which was placed the Torah containing the Ten

Commandments, and planting his feet wide apart, read:

"O Lord, whither shall I go from Thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in the nether-world, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uppermost parts of the sea, even there would Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand would hold me. . . . "

When this prayer ends, the congregation rises for the final rites of the day.

Rabbi Cohen said, "Before pronouncing the Shema, I must tell you I have just received word that Dreyfus has been granted a new trial." Then he launched into the Shema, going through the Hebrew and the English with the congregation's response,

"Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God, the Lord is One."

"Praise be His name whose glorious kingdom is for ever and ever."

"The Lord, He is God."

The Rabbi repeats the Hebrew of the last phrase seven times, his small frame swaying slightly to the rhythm of his words: "*Adonoi Hu Hoelohim*" . . . "*Adonoi Hu Hoelohim*" . . . his voice becomes stronger with every repetition . . . "*Adonoi Hu Hoelohim.*" He pauses a moment; then cries out in high staccato, "*Tekioh!*" There is the blast of a ram's horn from the choir loft, and the service is over.

Besides the usual stir of persons going up the aisle

to speak to the Rabbi and of slowly moving queues making their way to exits in the back of the narrow building, there was an undercurrent of suppressed excitement. The dramatic news about Dreyfus was in everyone's thoughts; it was as if a great weight had been lifted—a pent-up flood, released.

A number of these people were of French origin, and for them the Dreyfus case had been a kind of special nightmare. They had lived with it for the past five years. It was incredible to them that anti-Semitism should show itself deep-rooted in half of the French Republic. And now this man Zola had done the trick; he had turned the balance to the side of truth, aroused public opinion, started guilty consciences pricking. The symbol on Devil's Island was going home.

Members of Congregation B'nai Israel stepped into waiting carriages or walked down twenty-second Street, going home to their long, heavy dinners with relaxed emotions. There was justice abroad in the world. Nations had national consciences which spoke out through their articulate individuals; as the Lord Mayor of London, backed by petitions from the House of Lords and the Commons, had done during a Russian persecution of Jews; as President McKinley cited the cruelties of Spain in Cuba; as Zola had spoken in *J'accuse*. Queen Victoria was still alive and the year was 1898.

Galveston was well out of the depression of 1893 when the *Galveston News* had headlined a midnight

visit of Mayor Fly to the station house, where 100 men were forced to go for want of lodgings, and Rabbi Cohen had organized a system of meal tickets for the homeless in the city. New fortunes in cotton had been made on the ruins of the old. By 1898, cotton men who had lost everything had committed suicide or worked themselves into another fortune. Galveston was booming.

The Strand was the heart of the city. It was a brief street, paralleling the wharf front, and it was lined with banking houses that did business all over the world. Cotton factors and wholesale grocers, who were also on the Strand, had connections with the private banks that financed them in order that they, in turn, could supply the planters in advance of delivery. This had been going on since the first sailing ships, following the example of the pirate, Lafitte, took advantage of the natural harbor afforded by Galveston Bay, and anchored there a few months to wait until full cargoes of cotton made slow treks down from the mainland over muddy trails or navigable bayous.

People who came to live on Galveston Island put up their houses near the wharf front, with sheds for cotton, and kept stores of supplies for planters who needed food, tools, and credit. The needs of the planters grew; storekeepers became bankers and cotton factors, who sent their agents into the country for cotton samples. And the vast stretches of red and black lands in Texas yielded cotton in abundance.

A railroad bridge was built over Galveston Bay and trains went down the wharf front, a block from the Strand. During the Civil War the Federal blockade diverted commerce across the Mexican border, but afterward Texas—the mecca of the broken South—boomed mightily, and the Strand responded like a sensitive plant.

In the seventies, Galveston became a city. This meant a city of Victorian Gothic architecture, which was well adapted to flamboyant display of the wealth emanating from the Strand. Offices and club buildings were built to look as much like Gothic cathedrals as possible. Strand wholesale houses had doorways with pointed arches.

Stanford White built a mansion for a cotton man, George Sealy. Henry Rosenberg, who gave the city library, had a home with eight Italian marble mantels—in classic style for the bedrooms, ornate for the parlors. Religious groups that, a few years before, had met in warehouses and private homes found themselves in fine buildings with stained-glass windows.

Tropical plants were imported from the West Indies. One plant in particular, the oleander, when stuck in sandy soil, grew like a weed and flowered through half of the year.

Prostitution flourished in a well-regulated district near the wharves on Post Office Street. Sailors and stevedores received good pay and spent it lavishly in that district. There was a range of houses from

dollar ones to elaborate places of assignation, fit for millionaires.

The people who had flocked to Galveston from European ports, New Orleans, and industrial cities of the East brought along cultural interests from their former homes. While the rest of Texas was still emerging from frontier days, Galveston had opera; heard Bernhardt, Mansfield, Patti, Booth; drank vintage wine. Galveston voted in a Republican Congressman, a contrast to the Democratic tradition of the state.

Galveston looked down its nose at near-by towns that had tried to kill its commerce by quarantine regulations against yellow fever, and deliberately sent its home-financed railroad, the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe, around Houston, which was blocked in mud at the head of Buffalo Bayou.

In 1898, the Rabbi was living temporarily at the Tremont Hotel while a parsonage was being constructed for his use, a gift to Congregation B'nai Israel by one of the members.

There were four Cohens now, and in the interim before the birth of the second child, who was a boy, the Rabbi had taken his wife and daughter—not yet on solid food—to visit his parents in England. He was thankful that he had, because in the next four years both parents had died. He had paintings of them, gold-framed, waiting to be hung in the new parsonage. The artist was Philip Snowden, member of the Royal Academy. He had done the portraits as a labor of love, because he had known David and

Josephine Cohen for the simple, righteous people that they were; and the paintings, particularly that of the mother with her plain, pious face, were obviously inspired pieces of work.

After the death of his parents, Henry Cohen continued to keep in close touch with happenings in England. He had a stack of the *London Jewish Chronicle*, dating from his Woodville days, and on the occasion of the Centennial of his childhood school, Jews' Hospital, he contributed to the pages of that thick weekly an article of reminiscences in which he apostrophized: "Under African skies I have thought of thee, beloved 'Habitation of Righteousness!'* Amid West Indian plantations, I have called thy name, on Texas prairies I have dreamt of thee . . . " and signed himself "An American Correspondent."

While he was traveling through the Texas prairies performing the functions of his calling in the rural settlements, the Rabbi had an opportunity to visit the far-flung places where history in the state had been made. He saw the tan-colored, crumbling walls of the Alamo; the fields around Goliad, where the red blood of Texans had flowed in the historic massacre of the Revolution; the courthouse in Nacogdoches, scene of the earlier Fredonian Rebellion. He looked up a few facts for himself when he was in the capitol building in Austin and was impressed by the prominent role that Jews had played

* N'vei Zedek.

in the settlement of the state. He decided to do some serious research in that field.

Twenty miles west of San Antonio there was a town called "Castroville," after its founder, Henry Castro, who was a Frenchman by birth and had dauntlessly colonized the wilderness, bringing settlers from the Rhenish provinces of Europe to live on the cypress-shaded banks of the Medina River. They put up houses with high-pitched roofs, the kind that shed the snow of Alsace Lorraine, and built solidly of stone with good lines, and included such niceties as built-in cupboards.

Through correspondence with Phineas de Cordova, who had known Castro in the forties in the trying period of his colonial project, the Rabbi learned that during the months that the latter had led his colonists from their ships in Galveston to their new home, he had gone daily into seclusion in the Texas wilderness and said Hebrew prayers, accompanied by symbolic gestures of placing phylacteries on his wrists.

Rabbi Cohen went to Austin and studied the land grants in the state archives. He also traced the Castro family and discovered they had held high state office in their former home in Portugal. After considerable research, he wrote *Henry Castro, Pioneer and Colonist*, which was published by the American Jewish Historical Society.

As early as 1838, the Rabbi wrote, Henry Castro had shown his interest in Texas by attempting to negotiate a loan to the new republic. On Jan. 15,

1842, he entered into a contract with President Houston for settling a colony west of the Medina. President Houston appointed Castro Texan Consul General to France, where he

> " . . . did yeoman service in aiding General James Hamilton, the Texan minister, to popularize the cause of Texas in that country. He encountered great obstacles to his colonization scheme, as the French government was using immense efforts to encourage migration to its colonies in Algiers. On November 13, 1842, despite opposition, he dispatched, at his own expense, the ship 'Ebro' from Havre, with 113 emigrants for Texas. . . . Between the years 1843–1846 Castro introduced into Texas over five thousand emigrants—farmers, fruit and vine-growers, transporting them in twenty-seven ships. The settling of the colony was a bold step, exposed as the location was to the attacks of bandits and Mexicans on the west and to the hostile Indians on the north. . . . Castro confronted dangers unknown to the first American colonists in 1822, for besides Indians, now accustomed to the use of firearms, the settlement challenged inroads from the whole Rio Grande Mexican frontier, which in 1822 furnished friends and not enemies to the foreign colonies in Texas. It was doing that which both Spanish and Mexican power had failed to do in the one hundred and fifty-two years (1692–

1844) since the first settlement at San Antonio. It was founding a permanent home for civilized men between San Antonio de Bexar and the Rio Grande. . . "*

The Rabbi diligently traced out everybody in the early history of the state who was Jewish, his findings subsequently to be published by the American Jewish Historical Society.

A colorful character he unearthed was the Alcalde of Nacogdoches by the name of Adolphus Sterne, an adventurous soul who had run away from Cologne to escape military service when he was sixteen; he went to New Orleans, then came to Texas in 1824. Because he spoke French, German, Spanish, and English, and quickly picked up the Indian dialects, he was considered generally to be a useful fellow to have around.

As a punishment for joining the English settlers in the Fredonian Rebellion against the Mexican government, he was sentenced to be shot and was chained for two weeks in the courthouse in Nacogdoches awaiting execution. On being pardoned in a general amnesty, he became a trader and did business with the government that had come near to executing him.

After the Texas Revolution, he studied law and became Alcalde of Nacogdoches. He was a close friend of Sam Houston, who visited him frequently and must have enjoyed his waggishness when,

* *Henry Castro, Pioneer and Colonist,* by Henry Cohen.

serving in the legislature of the Republic of Texas and being bored by a long harangue on some inconsequential subject, the Alcalde rose in his seat and delivered a speech in Choctaw.

To show for the careful research, there were five small pamphlets meticulously compiled, one a year for five years. When he had finished these, the Rabbi thumped his fist on his desk and said that nobody could say that Jews hadn't helped to build this state from its earliest beginnings. They had been massacred at Goliad; had fought at San Jacinto and worked to build its first governing bodies; they had traveled to Manchester, England, to tell of the vast possibilities of its cotton empire.* There it was in black and white, compiled from the records in Austin.

During the time that his children were very young, he and his wife stayed at home a good deal in the evenings. Besides his work in Texas history, he translated from the German of Nahid Remy *Prayer in Bible and Talmud* and compiled a book of Talmudic sayings. These were published by the Bloch Publishing Company.

Books from which he read aloud were Longfellow's poems, the *Essays* of Emerson, and the operas of his old favorites, Gilbert and Sullivan. He read from Lewis Carroll frequently, and one of the first memories his children had was of their father reading to them the lines that end *Alice:*

* Jacob de Cordova.

" . . . *Children three that nestle near,*
Eager eye and willing ear,
Pleased a simple tale to hear—

Long has paled that sunny sky;
Echoes fade and memories die;
Autumn frosts have slain July.

Still she haunts me, phantomwise,
Alice moving under skies
Never seen by waking eyes.

In a wonderland they lie . . . "

And the book packages with London postmarks that still arrived in a steady stream now included such items as *Chatterbox* and picture movables from Raphael Tuck.

On Foot

THE RABBI glanced down at his left cuff, where he had written a number of places to which he intended to go. He started down Tremont Street because he had to be at Sealy Hospital at eight o'clock. The Mayor, Dr. A. W. Fly, who was passing in his buggy, pulled up and said, "Hop in, Rabbi. By the look of you, you must be on your way to a fire or an operation."

"Operation. At Sealy," said the Rabbi, getting in.

"One of your Jew boys?" asked the doctor.

"No, no. Not a member of my congregation. Friend of mine. As a matter of fact, he's a Baptist. Pretty ticklish job. Gallstones in a man of sixty. He asked me to be present during the operation."

"Who's doing it?" asked Dr. Fly.

"Johnson."

"Well, he's all right," said Fly. "That's more than I can say for some others around there."

"What are you talking about?" exclaimed the Rabbi. "We have some of the best men in the

country in Galveston. What with John Sealy's bequest, and the Medical branch of the University of Texas here, besides the opportunities for studying tropical diseases. There would be something wrong if we didn't. Keeler, Graves, Thompson, Randall, Allan Smith . . . "

"Is that so?" said Dr. Fly. "Well, I just want to tell you a little story." He passed his hand over his mouth as he hiccoughed. "I met your friend, Philo Jones, the other day. He went East one summer and now he's a goddam diagnostician. I met him at the hospital as I was coming out of the operating room. He says to me, 'How you feeling, Doctor?' 'I feel like hell,' I say. 'I must be getting old.' I'd been out kind of late the night before.

"He says, 'Don't say that. You're O.K. You know, Doctor, you're just as good as you feel.' Well, Rabbi, I look him up and down in his white starched suit, and I let him have it.

"I say, 'See here, Jones, if you'd just add that Christian Science to the rest of the goddam crap you learned from the Yankees, you'd be a world beater.' "

"That's putting it a little strong, Fly," said the Rabbi. "Philo is one of the best men we have."

"The trouble with you is you see good in everybody."

"No, no. I've got a couple of tough ones down in the jail."

"Baptists?" asked Fly.

"No, 'Jew boys,' " said the Rabbi, hopping out of the buggy.

He went into the wards to visit a while with the patients.

"Thanks for the magazines, Doc," a fellow with a broken hip said. "Say, I'll be out of here in another week."

"What are you going to do? Got a job?"

"Nope. Stevedoring's a little tough on the bad hip now."

"Got any money?"

"Not much. I'd like to find something else to do."

"Ever worked any place but the wharves?"

"No, I ain't. I guess I'm not fit for much now. I don't care so much for myself, but I got a wife and two kids. I—I just don't know where to turn, Doc." There were tears in the man's puzzled eyes.

"See here, you get well first. Leave the job to me." The Rabbi scribbled a few words on the already crowded cuff. "I'll see that you get something."

The man grasped the Rabbi's hand. "I feel better already. Thanks, Doc," he said.

"You'll hear from me before next week," said Rabbi Cohen as he went on to the next cot.

After witnessing the gallstone operation, the Rabbi hurried down to the jail.

"I want to see Isadore Lipsky and Jacob Feder—in for vagrancy and minor theft."

The jailer said, "They look like tough mugs, Rabbi."

"So I've heard," he said. "Where are they?"

"This way," said the jailer, going on ahead.

"The Rabbi to see you two fellers," he said to the prisoners.

Both of them began talking Yiddish at the same time.

"Shut up," the Rabbi shouted at them. "You speak English, don't you?"

"Yes," said the two men.

"This is the United States of America," said the Rabbi. "Speak English. What'd you steal for?"

"We was hungry," one of the fellows said.

"Were you at the Jewish Benevolent Society?"

"Yes, they give us a little money."

"Then why didn't you spend it on food instead of beer?"

"How do you come off puttin' us on the spot?" the other fellow said. "It ain't none of your business."

"The good name of the Jewish people in this city is my business," said the Rabbi. "Where'd you come from?"

"Pittsburgh—and all we ask, Rabbi," he said whining, "is money enough to get back there. I got an old mother."

"You should have thought of her before you stole from Mr. Clark. Clark says he caught you red-handed but since he got his fifteen dollars back he won't press any charges; that is, if you'll get out of town."

"How about a little cash, Rabbi?"

"You're no good," said the Rabbi. "I know your

kind. You get out of Galveston in a hurry, and stay out."

"We'll get you, you dirty hypocrite," said the pugnacious one, shaking his fist at the Rabbi.

"You ought to look out for those guys," the jailer said, following him out. "They're liable to do you some harm."

"That kind do a lot of talking," said the Rabbi. "That's all." He shook his head. "What have you done with that first offender? The one that was in the cell with the fellow up for murder?"

"I separated 'em just like you said," replied the jailer.

"Good," said the Rabbi emphatically. "Society will never get rid of its criminals until it learns to treat them with some degree of reason. First offenders should be helped, not stuck in a cell with some hardened criminal, who'll teach him the A. B. C. of crime. A murderer confined with a boy of eighteen in for stealing a few loaves of bread so his family can eat. That's bad, bad. I'm glad you separated them," he said to the jailer as he went out.

He looked down at his cuff and read "See Mrs. Mintz." Mollie will want to go there, he thought. He went by way of the hotel and called for Mrs. Cohen. They took a streetcar because they had to go a mile or more toward the west end of the Island.

"She's eighty-one, today," Mrs. Cohen said. "I remember her from the time I was a child. I always

remember her as an old lady. She's remarkable, isn't she?—the way she gets around."

"Mollie," the Rabbi said abruptly, "Do you think your father could give a job to a crippled stevedore, cleaning up the store?"

"How can he do any work if he's crippled?" asked Mrs. Cohen.

"He's too crippled to work on the wharves," said the Rabbi. "He'd be all right in a store."

"Father's already taken on two people for you," she said. "I don't know if he has room for any more extras. Maybe at the Christmas season."

"No, no," said the Rabbi. "I have to get something for him next week. Never mind. I'll find someone else. You're right. I oughtn't ask your father."

"Why don't you go to Mr. Kempner, Henry?" said Mrs. Cohen. "He's bound to have an opening somewhere."

"I told you the man can't be a stevedore any more. He's got his hip broken."

"Maybe Mr. Kempner could give him a job as night watchman at one of the warehouses. They're getting in all the cotton now. They'll need extra help."

The Rabbi banged his fist on the seat. "There!" he said. "You've fastened on something. That's just the thing to do."

He was in high spirits at Mrs. Mintz's birthday party, sampling her homemade wine and famous

dill pickles, along with other delicacies spread out for the occasion.

Mrs. Mintz, seated in a great chair, her mounds of fat gracefully covered with woolen shawls, regaled him with reminiscences of the early days in Galveston.

"We used to have taffy pulls," she said. "That was in the days when young people had real fun. Even during the War, Mollie," she said. "Your folks left and went down to Matamoras. We stayed on the Island. Such excitement when Captain Sherfius used to run the Yankee blockade. He'd bring us silks and satins and the finest Madeira wine."

"It mustn't have been much fun when the 'Harriet Lane' shelled the town," Mrs. Cohen said dryly, "And you had to run and hide behind the sand dunes. My family left when the Confederacy asked civilians to evacuate the Island. My father was in the Home Guard."

"His gun went off backward once, didn't it, Mollie?" asked the Rabbi, teasing her.

"Yes, it did," she said, and laughed with the rest of them.

In the afternoon the Rabbi went to see Mr. Kempner, who said he thought that he could find a place for the man in the hospital ward, that in about a week they'd need to put on some more night watchmen. The Rabbi was able to cross out a number of items on his cuff.

Next, he walked down Church Street and looked in on Father Kirwin at the rectory of St. Mary's Cathedral.

"You know, I'm still hearing from Cardinal Satolli's visit to Galveston," the Rabbi said, clipping a cigar and sitting down to face the tall, square-jawed priest.

Kirwin laughed. "Yes, they're building legends around it already. I heard a story the other day pinned on you and the Cardinal. You may have heard it."

"I don't know. What is it?"

"Well, the story goes that the Cardinal offered you a piece of ham and, when you refused, he kept pressing it on you. Finally, you are supposed to have said, 'All right, your Eminence, I'll take a piece—at your wedding.' "

"Ah, that's an old one. The father of that story really has nothing to do with the Catholic hierarchy. It's about a Jew who entered a restaurant on a beautiful, balmy spring day. He emerged an hour later to find it raining pitchforks. 'Oh, Lord,' said the Jew, 'Ain't this a hell of a lot of fuss to make over a little piece of pork?' " The Rabbi smiled. "What really happened at the banquet seemed a simple enough thing to do. When the Cardinal asked me to say grace, I said it in English and Latin; then he finished it up in Hebrew."

"I know," Kirwin said. "It seemed the natural thing to do, but to those who witnessed it, there was considerable drama in the occasion."

"I'll tell you just quietly what I liked best about the whole affair," said the Rabbi, leaning back and puffing away at his cigar. "It was what Cardinal

Satolli said at the end of his address. I recall his exact words: 'Let us hope that at some future time all men will be brothers in heart, even as I am one in intention with the Rabbi this day.' Ah, if that could be true, Kirwin, then Russia wouldn't be persecuting the Jews and Spain wouldn't be persecuting the Cubans."

"What do you make of the situation in Cuba?" Kirwin asked, and they talked of the possibility of war.

When the Rabbi rose to go, he picked up a book lying open on the priest's desk.

"What's this—Anatole France?" he said. "I thought that was on the Index Expurgatorius."

"Sure it is, but who do you think writes the Index for this diocese?" Kirwin said, ushering his visitor out.

The Rabbi walked down the street until he came to a small shop with the sign "London Tailor" hanging above the door.

"Rabbi Cohen, Rabbi Cohen!" A woman, a Russian Jewess, came forward to meet him on the threshold. "Come in." She started to moan. "My boy is so sick, Rabbi. He is burning up with fever. Do you think it could be some terrible sickness that you get here, yellow sickness?"

"Yellow fever? Let me have a look at him," said the Rabbi. He followed her to the living quarters of the family, back of the shop.

The Rabbi felt the boy's head.

"Your stomach hurt, Sammie?" he asked.

The child nodded; he was doubled up with pain.

"What'd you eat yesterday?"

"We found some bananas that fell off a wagon; a wagon takin' 'em off a boat from Central America." The last words drawled out into a wail of pain.

"Yellow sickness?" said the mother, her frightened eyes on Rabbi Cohen's face.

"No, possibly green bananas," he answered. "Have you got any castor oil in the house?"

The wail on the bed grew louder, registering protest as well as pain.

"Yes, I got some," said the woman.

"Well, get it. Give him a good dose. Where is your husband?"

"He's in back, pressing."

"I'll call him for you. You may need some help." He glanced at the squirming figure on the bed. "You want to be better, don't you, Sammie?" Two large brown eyes looking reproachfully at him over the mass of bed covers were his reply.

He went out and called the "London Tailor" who was pressing clothes in the back.

"Did you know that Kransky is expecting his wife on the boat tomorrow?" the tailor asked as he went into the house.

"No. That's fine, fine. I knew he had sent over the money for her to come. Tomorrow, you say?" the Rabbi made a note of it on his cuff. "I'll go down to the immigration station then. No doubt she'll need an interpreter."

He made another trip out to the hospital, to find

out the condition of his friend who had been operated on in the morning for gallstones.

The man, kept under the influence of morphine, saw the shadowy form of the Rabbi step into the room and come up to the bed.

"He looks all right to me," Rabbi Cohen said afterward in the hall to the nurse. "Where's his chart?"

She showed it to him.

"Everything holding out all right; pulse, heart. Johnson did a good job. He took out six stones. I counted them."

The nurse smiled. "I don't know what we'd do without you, Rabbi Cohen. The doctors always say they'd rather have you in the operating room than an interne."

At the risk of being late for supper he stepped into the wards to tell the ex-stevedore that there would be a job waiting for him when he was dismissed from the hospital.

After supper, the Rabbi and his family went to visit with some friends who lived in a raised cottage on Avenue Q. The Rabbi's children played in the front hall while their elders conversed in the parlor.

During the evening the colored servant came in and said there was someone at the door asking if Rabbi Cohen was there.

The children followed their father to the front gallery to see who it was. They saw two men, both larger than he was, advance on him as he stepped to the edge of the gallery. The children heard one

of the men say something about wanting money to their father in a gruff voice, while the other assumed a threatening attitude as if to hit him.

The Rabbi bent over, looking down fixedly at the first man's shoes. Unconsciously, the man looked down, himself, to see what the Rabbi was staring at. In that split second, the Rabbi gave him a right to the chin and the man fell backward and rolled off the gallery. This proved enough for his companion who lost no time in getting down the steps, picking up his running mate and hurrying off the premises.

"Now, get out of town," the Rabbi called after them. "And stay out."

"A bad lot," he said, straightening his clothes. "I knew it as soon as I laid eyes on them at the jail."

Turning around, he saw the two wide-eyed children behind him. "Oh—I'm sorry you were there. You see, children, I had to do it. Those two men are a bad lot."

Early in the morning he went out again to Sealy Hospital to have a look at his friend of the gallstone operation. A "norther" had blown in during the night, and the hospital, located in the extreme east end of the city on a narrow point of Galveston Island exposed to north and south winds, got the brunt of it.

When he left Sealy, the Rabbi wrapped his muffler around his neck and started out in the direction of the wharf front. The ship carrying

Kransky's wife was due in port, and he wanted to be present when the woman arrived. He had met a few ships with Russian-Jewish immigrants in the steerage; the poor creatures were confused and usually got into a frightful mess trying to understand government officials, who were hardly adepts at speaking Yiddish.

The Rabbi passed by Pier Twenty, where the mosquito fleet tied up. The small fishing craft with gray nets tangled on their spindly masts were backed up to the dock, where fish, shrimp, and oysters were spread out for sale. The smells on the wharf reminded him of London fish markets. He waved to the wind-blown wives of fishermen standing behind their wares, and made a mental note to tell his mother-in-law to cook him some fried fish in the English style, so that he could take it back to the hotel and have it cold for breakfast the next day.

As he passed on, the sun came out of the murky "norther" clouds and the masts of the boats were silhouetted against the lighted sky like crosses in a religious procession. He had been extremely interested by this fleet of mosquito boats when he came to Galveston. Whole families lived on the boats, fished from them, and made trips up bayous, when they were navigable, to exchange sea food for cordwood and the produce of the inland settlements. This was primitive bartering, which had begun with the earliest settlements on the Island and still continued alongside the world commerce that now filled the port.

The wharves were noisier as the Rabbi progressed in the direction of the Strand. Trains steamed out on piers to discharge their freight into the holds of waiting ships. There were usually twenty or more ships in port. The Rabbi counted the flags of five different nations strung out in the breeze. He saw British freighters, two ships of the Nord Deutscher Lloyd, a French liner, several coastwise steamers, and a three-masted schooner out of New Bedford.

When he saw a banana boat from Nicaragua, he thought of the son of the "London Tailor." He didn't blame the mother for being frightened into thinking that the boy's stomach-ache might have been yellow fever. It was a real threat, although most people were positive it was caused by filth, and certainly the citizens of Galveston were alert and kept their town cleaned up. Still, nothing had been proved about it, and every once in a while an epidemic broke out in New Orleans or Florida, and Galveston had had its share in the past.

He met a friend of his coming down the Strand—an Englishman who was Galveston agent for a group of British manufacturing concerns.

"Well, Rabbi," the man said, "my wife and I are still talking about the speech you made at the Queen's Jubilee celebration out at Wollam's Lake; gave us a nice warm feeling, all that about the progress of the human race."

"What news do you have from Birmingham?" asked the Rabbi.

"My old governor passed out this year, you know."

"That's too bad," said Rabbi Cohen. "Were you home?"

The man shook his head.

"I'd like to discuss something with you, Rabbi, if I might take the liberty."

"Anything you like."

"My wife and I admire your speaking so very much," the Englishman said hesitatingly. "You see, I'm called on occasionally to speak at banquets since I'm president of the British Club, and I'm rotten at it. I feel like a fool getting up there and stuttering and stammering."

"Stuttering?" said the Rabbi. "I used to stutter. I overcame it—practiced with pebbles in my mouth. When I came to Galveston I still stuttered at times when I made a public address. In fact, one of the members of the congregation didn't want to have me as rabbi here for that reason. I got over it in time. You can. Come over sometime and I'll help you practice speaking."

"Would you? That would be first rate. That's what I wanted to ask you. And I'm speaking for lots of others in this city when I say I'm glad that chap who objected to your stuttering didn't have his way."

The rabbi smiled. "I'll tell you just quietly what happened. Mr. Leo N. Levi, who is president of the congregation, said to the gentleman who objected

to me: 'He'll get over it, and if he doesn't, we'll get used to it.' "

"Hear, hear."

"Did I ever tell you what happened the year I was president of the British Club?"

"No, I don't recall that you ever did."

"Well, a man named David Lamb had a heart attack in the lobby of the Tremont Hotel and died out of hand. Nugent, the British Consul, reported it to the Home Office the same day by cable."

"Naturally."

"It wasn't twenty-four hours later," the Rabbi continued, "that I got a cable direct from Whitehall asking me, as acting president of the British Club, for a detailed checkup on this Lamb's death. You'd have thought the consul's report would have been sufficient."

The man smiled appreciatively. "That's one thing we can always be proud of. Wherever a decent Englishman sets foot, a little Union Jack is planted and his government never forgets him. Yes, Rabbi, dead or alive, they never forget him at home."

The ship with Kransky's wife arrived during the morning. Rabbi Cohen was on hand to interpret for her and to settle the small difficulties that arose. By nightfall she was able to go off with her husband to the rooms behind his small carpentry shop, which had yielded the money for her passage.

That night the Rabbi boarded a train for Victoria, Texas. While he had been on the docks, Mrs. Cohen had received a message that one of the

oldest residents of the Jewish community in Victoria had died. The Rabbi had been there on several occasions, and the family wanted him, now.

As the train bounded jerkily through the night, the Rabbi sat in the darkened Pullman and watched the large expanse of Texas plain swirl by. He had not had his berth made up, preferring to doze with his clothes on until his station was reached at two o'clock in the morning.

The events of the day passed through his thoughts: Kransky's wife . . . now he was taking her home to his little shop on a nice quiet street in a pleasant city . . . out of the misery of Russia . . . as hundreds could come . . . they did come by the hundreds through Ellis Island, but they weren't so fortunate as Kransky's wife, because they had only one place to go—the East Side of New York. He had seen it when he was there, and one visit was enough. He could see it yet—the crowded quarters, the peddlers who still lived their real lives in the Talmud. They had not progressed from the ghetto any more than had his old charges in Whitechapel.

These plains, this country, all that it stood for—its ideals that were wide and open as its plains—how could an immigrant crushed into the East Side of New York understand this? Now, Kransky's wife, that was a different matter. She had a fine chance, and her children would, too. They would play in the pleasant, oleander-lined streets of Galveston.

It would be a fine thing, the Rabbi thought, if other immigrants from Russia could come through

this port . . . maybe not stay in Galveston particularly; there was Victoria . . . all the other small growing towns of Texas . . . the whole West that needed people to settle them: artisans, carpenters, tailors, shopkeepers. Given room to breathe, these people would make fine citizens.

They had been stultified throughout the Dark Ages in Europe, they had been forced to turn inward for life; but the United States of America was built upon the ideals of religious freedom and consideration for the individual human being, and here, given a chance, they could live a full life, enriched by the heritage of the great ideals of their past.

He had been to Washington and had seen in the rotunda of the central reading room of the new Library of Congress a symbolic figure of "Judea," typifying "Religion"—the figure in a sitting posture, with hands uplifted in prayer, a scroll on her lap, and a censer and a breastplate at her feet; on her right, a tablet of stone inscribed in Hebrew letters: ואהבת לרעך כמוך ("And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself").

He himself had furnished that inscription to the artist. He also had written in Aramaic the paraphrase by Hillel; but Blashfield, who decorated the rotunda, had preferred the Biblical version, no doubt because it was earlier, over a thousand years before the Christian Era—and there it was, inscribed in stone for all men to see: the Jewish people had given the world "Religion," with its fundamental law, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." To think that

he, Henry Cohen, an immigrant, had been asked to suggest the inscription! This was a wonderful country.

Tears flowed freely from the Rabbi's eyes as he leaned back in the darkened Pullman, and he pulled out his handkerchief to wipe them away.

A postal card, which Mrs. Cohen had handed him just before he left, fell out of the pocket with the handkerchief. The card had a London postmark—Kilburne station. He had not had a chance to read it in the rush to catch the train. He smiled now, for he recognized the signature of his friend Israel Zangwill,* who had a penchant for keeping a drawer full of postal cards and conducting his personal correspondence thereon. The Rabbi lighted a match in order to decipher the pencil scrawl, in the dimly lighted car.

He had been anxious to know what Zangwill would have to say in answer to his letter pointing out an error that occurred in an early part of *Without Prejudice*, in which Zangwill quoted "a verse of Fred Coyne," of whom he wrote: "Let me recall the name from the oblivion which gathers over the graves of those who live amid shouts of worshipers." The Rabbi, remembering the verse and knowing that its author was Fred Albert, not Fred Coyne, had written this to his friend. He read the reply on the postal card, holding it as steady as possible

* This postal card was postmarked May 21, 1897. Zangwill rarely dated his cards.

on the jerking train, in the flickering light of a match.

"Yes, I think you must be right, and I must alter 'Coyne' to 'Albert'—not that it matters. They are both dead, poor lions, and a living donkey is better than they.

"My Oriental experiences were pleasant, but fatiguing. 'Pilgrimages' have not ceased to be a form of penitence. With thanks. I. Zangwill."

A few minutes before the train was due at Victoria, the conductor awakened the Rabbi. He put on his overcoat and muffler, picked up his valise and umbrella.

A relative of the deceased was at the station to meet him. They got into a carriage and drove down dark streets to the family home. Light came from all the windows of the house, and there were several people on the front gallery waiting for the Rabbi.

PART IV

1920 Broadway

THE FOLLOWING summer, the Rabbi and his family were comfortably installed in the new parsonage. It was a gray frame house, with the first story raised twelve feet off the ground on stout foundations. Sturdily built, it had plastered walls and floors of wide pine boards. Part of the area under the house was floored in and used for storage and washing.

The plan of the house proper was based on a traditional arrangement of Texas farmhouses, having a long hall, known variously in the country as "hog run" or "dogtrot," that cut the house in two from the front to the back door. On the right of the hall as a person entered were a series of four rooms: the parlor, where the piano stood; the library, lined with books; the dining room; and directly behind that, pantries and kitchen. On the other side were two bedrooms and a bath. The rooms of each row were separated by sliding doors and could be closed off like a series of doctor's consulting rooms.

The Rabbi's desk, a large Sheraton reproduction,

stood in the east corner of the library. The rest of the furniture was a conglomeration of Victorian "sets," rattan chairs, overstuffed French pieces—all gifts from friends—and one low rocker, with a line like an unfinished copybook flourish, which had been given to Mrs. Cohen by her family's former slave, who used to rock her to sleep in it.

At that time Mrs. Cohen had heavy, blue-plush draperies hung in the openings between the rooms, and the rugs spread over the wide pine boards were bright new Brussels carpets.

Although the house was the property of the congregation, Mrs. Cohen had been asked to plan it for her own needs. With an eye to the book-collecting proclivities of the Rabbi, she reserved the long hall of the second story for additional bookshelves and magazine stacks. The rooms on that floor were unfurnished, except for maid's quarters. The children romped up there to their heart's content, and held neighborhood jamborees and plays, with an admission charge of one pin.

The house had a narrow front gallery that faced the long esplanade of Broadway, planted with palms and oleanders imported from the West Indies. A streetcar track ran between the lines of tropical foliage, and on summer nights the Rabbi with his friends and family seated on the gallery often saw the "pretty car" pass down the line. It was a festive sight, strung with many-colored electric lights, filled with a cargo of young people singing and laughing as if they hadn't a care in the world.

The Spanish-American War had come and gone with its comic-opera situations, ironic tragedy, and papier-mâché arch for the hero of Manila Bay. Galveston sent its regiment of volunteers, and Father Kirwin went along as chaplain. All except a few who had died of dysentery or fever were home again, and the town had turned out to welcome a popular hero of the war, Captain John Phillip, who was presented with a sword and a Bible by the school children of Texas in impressive ceremonies at the Harmony Hall. His famous remark to his men from the bridge of his ship, the "Texas," in the Battle of Santiago, had swept the country: "Don't cheer, boys; the poor devils are dying." It seemed to strike a fitting note, in keeping with the righteous and sentimental spirit of the times.

Galveston was in its heyday at the end of the century. The Strand had received over 2,000,000 bales of cotton during the season. It hummed with compresses running overtime. Cotton receipts had doubled in the last nine years. Money from the Strand was spent up and down the sandy streets of Galveston: it changed hands in the "District," known as "Post Office Street," in the theaters, social clubs, over shop counters and poker tables.

On the edges of this well-oiled economic machine were always a few human beings in real trouble. Illness, family misunderstandings, gambling, excessive drinking, or downright poverty were usually the causes.

It became known that the Rabbi of the Jewish

congregation was the person to go to if one needed help. It didn't seem to matter to him whether you were white or black, Jew or Gentile—he always was ready to help you. He never asked you what church you went to; he didn't seem to care. He wanted to know what your trouble was, and it was wonderful the way he could straighten it out. If it was a hand-out you needed to tide you over to a job, he'd reach into his own pocket and give it to you; if you were a young fellow in trouble with a gambler in town and you didn't want your mother to know about it, he gave you a good, stiff lecture and went himself to see the gambler, who was ready to settle the debt because he didn't want any minors around his place anyway.

The fact that the Rabbi helped people out soon came to be widely known. It traveled the way most news does, by word of mouth, through the back streets of Galveston. A family who needed food heard that they could go to 1920 Broadway. A Madam of a house of ill fame asked the Rabbi to say the burial service over a girl who in dying had requested a decent Christian funeral. The Rabbi didn't inquire whether the Madam had asked any other minister, or whether she had asked and been refused. He went out to the cemetery and, in the presence of a good part of the population of West Post Office, performed the last rites with prayers from the New Testament.

Gradually, a steady stream of people who needed help of some kind began to come up the steep, high

steps at 1920 Broadway. It wasn't always monetary aid that was asked. The walls of the east side of the house, which could be closed off by sliding doors into a series of private rooms, echoed to their high ceilings with stories of maladjusted human beings who came to the Rabbi to complain about their sex life, their parents, their children. The heavy plush portieres muffled the halting words of visitors, in stiff Victorian clothes, who sat on slippery horsehair cushions and told the Rabbi about difficulties that were never spoken of in polite society.

One day, the Britisher who stuttered when he spoke in public came to the house. That was the beginning of a series of visits during which he practiced with pebbles in his mouth until there was some improvement and he had gained confidence in himself as a speaker. After that, he practiced at home, but he and his wife continued to come to visit.

There was a young man with little or no means, who wished to enter the Episcopal ministry. He was in a dilemma because he had no way to learn the subject of Christology; he came to the parsonage to tell Rabbi Cohen about it.

"I'll teach it to you," the Rabbi said immediately, and sensing his surprise, added, "just as I learned it at my university in London." When the young man entered the Episcopal ministry, in filling out his blank to the question, "Where did you study Christology?" he wrote: "Under Rabbi Henry Cohen."

There was Charlie Brown, who wanted to learn Hebrew from its original sources for his Masonic work.

The Rabbi wouldn't take a penny for any of his services rendered. He considered helping people out to be a part of his job; he always said that his congregation paid his salary. He had never taken money for marrying, burying, confirming, either at home or in the country, where he was frequently called. If people were grateful for anything he did, he told them to give something to charity. Often, they would give him the sum that they wished to give away, because they said he knew so many people who needed help. And they began to send old clothes to the parsonage because Mrs. Cohen knew so many who could use them.

Mrs. Cohen worked hard from morning till night, for besides her household duties, about which she was meticulous, and her garden, to which she gave a great deal of care, she had additional tasks of sorting old clothes to be given away, receiving visitors in the Rabbi's absence, making soup for the sick whom he was always visiting, and answering the telephone, which rang all day long and part of the night. By summer the Cohens needed to go away for a rest.

After a two weeks' vacation at Lampasas, they came home again, and light flooded the house on an evening in July. Mosquitoes had driven everyone indoors. The family with some visitors, the Laskers, were seated in the library. The Rabbi was talking

on his favorite subject—"Africa." He was telling stories for the benefit of the children, who crowded around him, their eyes widening as he talked to them in the click languages of the South African tribes.

"When I was working in Molteno," he told them, "I met a lot of them and soon learned to talk with them in their various dialects."

"Click some more, Dr. Cohen," Albert Lasker said.

The Rabbi went into a series of vocal gyrations, pronouncing strange words interspersed with rhythmic clicks of his tongue: "inye . . . isibili . . . isitatu . . . isive . . . isihlanu . . . isitupa, isikombisa, isishiyangalobili . . . isishiyangalolunye, ishumi—that's how the Kaffirs count to ten."

"But how do you know when to click, Dr. Cohen?" asked the little girl named Florina.

"Ah," said the Rabbi, "if you knew that, you could be interpreter for the British government, just as I was." The children laughed. With a sudden movement he leaned over and showed them a mark on the top of his head.

"Do you see that?" he said. "I was hit over the head by the butt end of a gun. There was a big commotion. The Zulus were on a rampage."

"I didn't know you were in Africa during the Zulu Wars, Rabbi," said Mr. Lasker.

"I wasn't. This was just a local disturbance, at Robertson, where I worked for the Steinmans. The soldiers were away on duty and the Kaffirs made a surprise attack because they knew that there were

very few men left in the town, mostly women and children. So every mother's son of us was called out and we gave it to 'em hot and heavy, I can tell you. They didn't come back for any more."

"What other interesting experiences did you have in Africa?" Mrs. Lasker asked.

"One close call I had out there was on a visit to the Kimberly diamond fields. I went deep down into one of the mines on an elevator shaft which, after it had deposited our party, went up again. When our visit in the mine was finished and the time came for us to go up, we gave the signal but we could not hear the shaft coming down. Instead, we heard the noise of churning chains. I knew that when the shaft did drop it would jump its tracks and come down at a terrible clip; so I backed myself as flat as I could against the wall. I thought I was a goner. Finally it came down just as I expected, like an express train, and ripped off the tip of my hat and all my shirt studs. It was a lucky escape, I can tell you."

"Did you ever meet Barney Barnato when you were out there?" Mr. Lasker asked.

"Yes, and Solly Joel, too."

The children were given cookies; then taken into the bedrooms to sleep until their elders parted for the evening.

"I had an interesting experience in the Madeira Islands," the Rabbi said. He jumped up and climbed on a stepladder to get down a book from a high shelf. "Here's a book about the marranos."

He handed it to Mrs. Lasker. "You know who they were, of course—Jews who were forced to turn Christian to save their skins in fifteenth-century Spain. Many Jews left the country; many were burned at the stake by Torquemada. Those who were baptized were known as 'marranos,' which means 'swine.' They usually practiced their Judaism in secret, but gradually they became ardent Christians, although they never were really accepted by the 'old Christians.' These 'new Christians' were marked for four generations as Jewish converts. Some of them left Spain for other countries in Europe and the New World. Wherever they went they carried with them a strange intermingling of customs.

"If I hadn't seen it with my own eyes!" the Rabbi exclaimed. "On the Madeira Islands. Our ship tied up at Funchal, the capital of the Madeiras, and we went ashore. As I was walking through the market place I came across some folks buying a special kind of greens. I was curious and asked the vendor who these people were. He said they were Catholics and that they had come to market to buy greens with which to celebrate a feast they called 'Passover,' Pesach!

"I had another experience at Funchal," he continued. "I'd stubbed my shoe on board ship and wanted to have the sole mended. I inquired and found a cobbler's place on the island. I told the cobbler what I wanted in Spanish. I'll never forget

it. He stepped back three paces and called up to his wife, 'Sarah! Tiene Vd. tabac en casa?'

" 'Si,' she called down.

"He came back to me and said straight out, 'Yo tengo tabac, yo no trabajo ahora!' (I have tobacco. I no work today.) He wouldn't do a lick of work. He had tobacco in the house!"

Mrs. Cohen brought in some refreshments, and while they were sipping glasses of sherry there was a ring at the front door. The Rabbi went out to see what it was.

"Surely not visitors at this time of the night," Mrs. Lasker said. Mrs. Cohen shrugged her shoulders. "People come here at all hours," she answered.

In a few minutes the Rabbi returned. He was pale with rage. "I tell you it's a disgrace," he shouted, "the way a discharged prisoner is treated. That man that came to the door—all you had to do is look down at his feet." The Rabbi leaned over and touched his own shoes. "Prison shoes," he said through his teeth. "Every cop on the beat knows it; they pick him up for no good reason. How can they expect a fellow ever to go straight again when they dog his footsteps as soon as he gets out? That man just came to the door—he's been trying to get a job for a week and nobody'll have him. He got out of Huntsville; he served his time for forgery. I know his case; his wife was sick, going to have a baby. Well, she's got a baby now, and he's trying to get a job, and he'll do the same thing over again if somebody doesn't help him!"

"Henry," Mrs. Cohen said, "Stop shouting."

"He came 'round here after one of the cops threatened to pick him up because he was walking the streets looking for a job—hungry, desperate."

"Send him around to me in the morning, Rabbi," Mr. Lasker said. "I'm willing to give him a chance."

"He'll be all right, I promise you. I'll keep an eye on him."

"It's too bad every discharged prisoner in Texas couldn't be looked after this way and given some sort of chance," Mr. Lasker said.

"They have the Howard Society in England," the Rabbi said. "It's named after John Howard, the famous eighteenth-century criminologist. He stressed in his writings the aftercare of prisoners. We're going to have to work out some way of helping these men in Texas. I do what I can. I have those I know about report to me at regular intervals after they get out. I get them jobs. My God, how can you expect a man like this fellow who came here tonight to my door ever to go straight again, if they won't stop treating him like a criminal! Ah, but that isn't all. The prisons." He shook his head. "Have you ever been in one of those state farms? On trips upcountry I had occasion to visit some of them." The Rabbi's voice shook. "They use a bull whip to punish men on those farms. It's a three-prong whip that's dipped in wet sand to inflict additional pain." He stood up and stamped his foot. "If you read about it happening in the Middle Ages!"

"Now, Henry," said Mrs. Cohen, "Just change the subject. We want to sleep tonight."

The Rabbi decided to buy a bicycle. After he had purchased it he wondered why he had never thought of using one before. He was able to make his rounds twice as fast, and that left him more time for work at home. Soon, his small figure with flying coattails could be seen on his Cleveland at any hour of the day or night, cycling through the city on all manner of errands.

People continued to flock in increasing numbers to the house on Broadway. Whenever he came in, there was usually someone waiting in the front hall to see him. The fact that people from all walks of life came to his door prompted one neighbor, from what was considered a "first family" of Galveston, to tell the Cohens she was sorry but her children could not play in their yard—for fear of contagion—but other children came, and there were always games and fun and flying feet in and out of 1920 Broadway. The Rabbi's little girl, Ruth, seemed to have inherited her father's singular energy; her brown pigtails bounced in play all the afternoon, but hung quiet while she bent seriously over her schoolwork in the evening, when the family sat together, each with his individual task.

One evening Rabbi Cohen had a sad duty to perform. Isaac M. Wise, the founder of Reform Judaism, had passed away; a sermon in doleful commemoration must be written.

The Rabbi sat with his glasses raised on his forehead. He hit his fist on his desk.

"I just can't believe he's gone," he said, "a fine man like that. Remember, Mollie, how he put his arm around my shoulders in Atlantic City, and blessed me, a stranger to him, as if I were his own son. Your mother saved up pennies so we could make that trip, children," he said to Ruth and Harry. "I went there to the convention of rabbis just so that I could see Dr. Wise. I told him so. I told him so." The Rabbi wiped his eyes, replacing his spectacles, and began to write rapidly in a copybook on his desk.

He turned after a while and said, "You see, children, Dr. Wise is the father of Reform Judaism in this country. It's a wonderful thing, the relationship of the reform rabbis in this country. We meet, we discuss our problems, and we come to definite conclusions about certain things; then we try to follow along the same lines in our different communities. The Union prayer book, we all use. But there's no rabbinical hierarchy as there is in England. We are all responsible to ourselves and our Maker. That's as it should be. That's the way Dr. Wise wanted it. Listen," he paused, arching his brows. "Isaac M. Wise will be remembered and revered as long as Jews and Judaism exist."

The Storm

On a Saturday morning in September, before the Rabbi and his wife went to temple, she noticed a smudge on the freshly plastered white walls of the parsonage. "I must clean that off before we go, Henry," she said.

"Wait until services are over. You don't have to do it now."

But she went to get a damp cloth and rubbed until the soiled spot had disappeared.

Five hours later there was no plaster left on the wall; it lay in heaps of broken pieces scattered over the floor of a groaning house caught in the path of a West Indian hurricane.

There had been hurricanes in Galveston before, that came out of a gray haze of sky after hot, breathless days, and burst suddenly in a torrent of wind and rain; but these had been faint rehearsals for the great Storm of 1900.

The Gulf rolled in and met the Bay over the flat sand island of Galveston. Houses on the southeast

shore went down as pasteboard toys do at the brush of a child's hand. By the time the waves were beating on the inner portion of the island they pushed before them a battering-ram of debris tossed high toward the gray, teeming sky. Whatever this ram on the crest of ocean waves struck it devastated utterly. Trees, human beings, animals, buildings were felled in its path. Wind, too, played its part in the horror symphony of the elements, roaring in with the flood, picking up pieces of slate from shattered dwellings, shooting them into the air like rockets. There was a rhythm to this: wind, rain, and sea struck at regular intervals. There would be a lull, a pause in which the rain carried sound; then the wind would rise shrieking, and the waves would strike and rise higher over the Island.

The Rabbi's home was about a mile from the Gulf, and the first he knew of the rising water was when he returned from temple and saw the long exodus of people from the east end passing down Broadway. He went out into the street and talked to them. They said that their homes were under water and they were going downtown to one of the public buildings, where somebody had told them they could stay until the tide went out again. They came in a long line, carrying odd pieces of household goods and clothing; but some of them had been unable to take anything because the water had risen more quickly than they expected.

Rain, which all the morning had been sporadic, began to come down in torrents. The Rabbi went

into his house and brought out umbrellas and blankets, which he gave to some of the people who had no protection. Mrs. Cohen found a bag of apples in the house, and he gave these away to the children. They were in a holiday mood and had fun sliding in the esplanade, which had become muddy from the continual rain.

Mrs. Cohen finally persuaded her husband to come inside to put on some dry clothes. It was like twilight outdoors; and in the house, with shutters closed tight, it was even darker. They sat down to lunch by candle light, because the electricity was off.

"We had a storm like this in '86," Mrs. Cohen said, after they had eaten and were sitting in the parlor. "My father's store on Market Street was flooded."

As if to emphasize her words, a sudden gust of wind surged against the house, and that was when the plaster started falling off the new white walls of the parsonage.

"It's just a little blow," she said to quiet the children, who were frightened by the noise that the wind made. She picked up the pieces and put them in a small heap. After that the wind struck harder and at closer intervals, until the house swayed, groaning, on its foundations, and plaster fell in showers from the east walls.

"It looks as if the water had reached Broadway this time, Mollie," the Rabbi said. He stood at the front door and stared out. It was impossible to see

beyond a few feet in the thick, dark rain, but he discovered that water was flowing through the street. As he watched, it rose about a foot, covering the first step of his front gallery.

He turned away abruptly as his children came to see what he was looking at.

"Come in the parlor, Mollie, let's have some music."

Mrs. Cohen looked at him, bewildered; he indicated the children with a quick turn of his head. "I don't want them to see the water rising," he said softly. She nodded and went to the piano.

She opened at random the first book she found. Her fingers were trembling, but she schooled herself to play. The Rabbi lighted a candle and stood by her side, with one hand on his daughter's dark hair.

"Ah, *Patience*," said the Rabbi, and began to sing in his rollicking, high-pitched voice.

When the water had reached the sixth step of the front gallery, the Rabbi decided to move his family to the house next door. He waited for a lull in the Storm; then, carrying the children, he and Mrs. Cohen struggled through darkness filled with flying debris, in water to their shoulders, and climbed the stairs of their neighbor, Mr. Lee, whose house was on the corner and was considered stronger than their own.

The Rabbi and Mr. Lee immediately set to work boring a hole in the first floor of the house in order that the flood might rise through it, so that the

building would not be carried off its foundations. Then everyone went to the second story, while the water rose steadily inside the house.

They stood huddled in the dark. Their children fell asleep in their arms. The house rocked and swayed like a storm-tossed ship, groaned, and cracked its joints, pulling at its anchorage in the ground.

Time was an unknown quantity; there was only primal force beating on a crust of earth, a strip of sand where men had come to live and had built to fit their aspirations, their dreams of grandeur, their churches spearing into the sky, simple gardens with green hedges, statues in bronze, streets, and parks, with the animals they used and cared about. How long the hurricane lasted, no one knew; there was only the constant prayer that it would end—somehow end—before the rising water and the wind tore their shelter away and swept them out on Broadway in a sea of towering waves.

Gradually, the groaning of the house lessened; at first the people in it thought this was a periodic lull, but finally into their pounding heads slowly crept the realization that the Storm was abating. Plaster was still falling around them; it was too dangerous yet to take boards down from windows; but a great thankfulness rose in everyone as the force of the wind lessened and the rhythmic rise and fall of the Storm was noticeably of a slower pace.

"The center of the hurricane is well past," Mr. Lee said at last. There was a murmur of thanks-

giving. Fright had dried tears long before. Relief allowed them to flow again.

The Rabbi was the first to put his face outside the front door. "It's all right; we can go out," he said. His voice had a hollow sound. When he stepped through the doorway, he saw that it was daylight and that the house was standing on land again. But what a land, choked in debris, gutted out; all night, it had been the floor of an ocean.

The Rabbi scarcely glanced at his own home. It was standing, and he saw to it that Mrs. Cohen and the children were taken care of and could stay inside the house. Then he started out.

It was like walking through a wilderness in a fantastic dream; the street he lived on was filled with masses of soaked debris, piled, in places, as high as a house; it was no longer a street; it was a series of yawning holes filled with ocean silt. He tripped and fell as he went along, struggling to get his bearings, as if in a jungle.

He had one thing in mind, and that was to reach the hospitals. They would need supplies for the sick; they were on the east end of the island, exposed to north and south winds; they were bound to have had the brunt of the Storm. He stopped suddenly as he thought: suppose they weren't there, suppose this debris—it was from buildings—was part of a hospital; whether it was part of a hospital or not, it was from someone's house, and gradually the

immensity of the catastrophe that had befallen them struck deep into his consciousness.

A few yards farther on, he came upon the swollen corpse of a drowned woman. The sun came out, and its heat crystallized faint stenches into a pervading odor of rottenness: the rancid reek of wet wood and stagnant silt combined with the sharper smell of dead flesh.

He met other men who were doing the same thing he was, trying to get somewhere to give help. Every familiar face he saw sent a thrill of relief through his throbbing head. Men began to congregate in small groups on street corners; somebody suggested that they go to a central place and formulate plans for relief. Word must be sent to the mainland; someone said that the bridges were down; there were volunteers to go by boat.

The Rabbi finally was able to secure a dray and two mules (how they had been saved from the Storm, nobody knew). He loaded it down with what medical supplies and food he could get his hands on and clambered up to start for the hospitals. Somebody put a pistol in his hand as he gathered up the reins.

"What's that for?" he asked.

"Just in case, Rabbi," the man replied. "Already there're a bunch of bums going through the city, stealing jewelry off the dead, taking over everything they can get their hands on."

The Rabbi slipped the gun into his back pocket. "What are we going to do about the dead?" he said.

"There won't be time for separate burial. The whole city would be polluted."

"There's talk about taking the bodies out to sea on barges."

"It ought to be done at once," the Rabbi said. He clicked to his mules, and they started on their tortuous path toward the east end of the Island.

The day after the Storm the estimate of the dead was placed in the hundreds; but to the men working at their grisly tasks of mass burial, it soon became apparent that the number could be reckoned by thousands. They had been sending the corpses out to sea on barges; the labor involved was stupendous. Responsible citizens armed themselves and marshaled groups of men to the job of searching the wreckage for drowned persons and proceeding on with the burial. Men worked, rebelled at their horrible task, were encouraged, fortified with whiskey, forced on at the point of a gun. Word had been sent to the mainland; the governor was declaring martial law, but in the meantime the dead must be removed.

Finally the point was reached where the carcasses of animals and men were piled up and burned. It was necessary, everyone said, to think first of the living.

The living. They walked the crazy, pathless streets, searching in desperation for family and friends among the dead; stood in long lines to get food and clothing; compared fantastic stories about

the Storm; and began to crack jokes about the catastrophe.

Gradually the work of reconstruction assumed form and shape. The hospitals—which the Rabbi had found partially wrecked, with their share of dead, and in dire need of supplies—started to function again. Patterns by which men lived were rearranged to suit the emergency. A central relief committee of twelve was formed and began to arrange for the setting up of commissary houses and the erection of temporary shelters. Saloons were closed; citizens lived in safety under the rule of martial law. Streetcars ran again, and people held religious services in the churches that were not wrecked. The makeshift arrangements brought everyone closer together. Four Protestant denominations worshiped in Rabbi Cohen's temple, which by some freak of the Storm had escaped serious damage, its chief casualty being the neat amputation of Abraham's foot from one of the stained-glass windows.

Money for reconstruction purposes came from all over the shocked, sympathetic country. The Red Cross, under Clara Barton, was on the spot as soon as was humanly possible. William Randolph Hearst conducted a rousing campaign in his chain of newspapers to raise money FOR THE SCHOOL CHILDREN OF GALVESTON.

It was natural that after such a catastrophe a part of the population of the Island should leave—some who had no property there, at once, and others, who

had property, as gracefully and as advantageously as they could get out of their holdings. One day the Rabbi ruefully showed Mrs. Cohen a note that had been tacked up on his doorstep and was signed "the London Tailor." It read: "Dear Rabi Cohen, Have gone back to Russia where they don't have storms."

"Only pogroms!" was the Rabbi's comment. Like everyone else who was working hard for the rehabilitation of the city, he resented the fact that some people left. But he wasn't bitter about it, as a number of other Galvestonians were. For one thing, he was too busy to think much about the so-called "deserters." A livery stable had turned over for his use a horse and buggy, and from early morning until late at night he was out supervising commissary work, seeing to individual needs, keeping up morale. His early training at the Board of Guardians stood him in good stead; he knew something about the organization of relief work and brought into play all that he knew for the benefit of the Central Committee, of which he was a member.

Working side by side with the Rabbi was Father Kirwin, who had gained experience in the war in Cuba and was a man of great moral and physical stamina. His long legs kept pace with the Rabbi's flying short ones, and they made a sort of team. Though individually immersed in fundamentally opposed religious creeds, the two men had a code of service to mankind that bound them together

like brothers. It was the closest friendship of the Rabbi's life.

When the day's work was over, they had a drink together, compared experiences, and checked the progress of their work. And before parting there was usually time for a few good stories.

Kirwin glanced down and smiled at the Rabbi's son, who sat on the floor of the library playing with Abraham's foot.

"That's what he'll remember about the Storm," the priest said. "That and the fact that his father had a buggy and a horse named 'Senator.' Well, Rabbi," he leaned back and dangled his long legs forward. "It won't be the same for us. I've never had a chance to tell you about my experience over at St. Mary's.

"In the early afternoon, like everyone else, we began to feel the serious effects of the Storm. The tin cornice flew off the Cathedral, and the air was filled with slate from roofs. The statue of Mary, Star of the Sea, high over the Cathedral, began to sway like a stalk in the wind. It was erected, you know, in 1875 as a protection against storms from the sea. The water rose, and entered the lower apartments of the rectory; we were compelled to seek refuge on the second floor. In a few moments the janitor announced that the roof of the school next door had broken and a large section of the east wing had fallen in. Crowds began to congregate in the church, and we feared that the tower

surmounted by the immense statue of Our Lady would topple over and entail a great loss of life.

"Down the street a fine horse rushed in the surging water, and in front of the rectory a beam from the building opposite caught the poor animal and killed him.

"The fierce wind, the creaking framework of the tower, the prayers of the people congregated in the Cathedral mingled into a deafening roar. The sexton rang the Angelus, and it sounded not like a salutation of praise but a warning knell of death and desolation. Then the immense two-ton bell tore loose from its iron bands and clasps. The iron crosses topping the front towers of the Cathedral were wrung from their fastenings and carried into the street below. Shortly afterward, the retaining wall of the immense central tower gave way, and the destruction of the church and rectory seemed imminent."*

"Where were you then?" the Rabbi asked.

"I was in the rectory. It was then that the Bishop turned to me and, indicating the two assistants who were there, said, 'Prepare these priests for death.'"

Kirwin took a drink and continued: "For an hour or more we waited for the end. It seemed inevitable. By now the wind had veered to the south-east, and slate from the school roof began to cut into the rectory windows."

"What happened to the bell that fell? Did it injure anybody?"

* From Kirwin's statement in *Galveston in 1900.*

"No. Fortunately it landed on the flooring of the tower. Everyone in the Cathedral was spared."

"And what of the statue of Mary?" the Rabbi asked.

"She weathered the Storm," the priest said. "And there was great thankfulness among our people all over the city, though to many of them on the south and southwest ends of the parish, she was invoked as Mother of Sorrows."

"Yes," the Rabbi said. "I know. Kirwin, I can't bear to listen to *Patience* any more—not that we have much time for Gilbert and Sullivan these days," he added, glancing at the stained furniture and stacks of books that smelled faintly of mildew. "You see, as the waters rose, in order to keep the children from being frightened, Mollie sat at the piano and played, and I sang—we went right through *Patience*."

"How about your books?" Kirwin said. "Were you able to salvage many?"

"Mollie got to work immediately and dried them out. They'll be stained, but you can read 'em all. Fortunately, I keep these Kiplings in my desk drawer. I have everything he's written. See, they're in perfect condition."

"*The Phantom Rickshaw, The City of Dreadful Night,*" Kirwin read the titles. "No worse than our dreadful night."

Putting down his glasses, he asked, "Did you hear the tale about the poor fellow who couldn't bury his mother-in-law?"

"No, what was that?"

"Well, she was missing," Kirwin said, "and after searching the wreckage for several days, he found her. She had been a large woman, and from floating around in the water for some time, was terribly bloated. He had to hire a dray, and with the help of several stout Negroes, he got the body on it and carried her down to a barge that was going out to sea. The poor chap sighed with relief as he saw the barge put out to sea with its pitiful cargo, to be dumped ten miles out.

"A few days later, a friend of his sent word to him saying, 'Your mother-in-law's back.' He thought the fellow had taken leave of his senses until they go down to the beach together, and there, stretched out on the sand, as big as ever, is his mother-in-law. She'd floated back in. This time they buried her right there in the sand."

"What's the latest estimate of the dead?" the Rabbi asked.

"Counting in the entire island and surrounding mainland, I'd say eight thousand. But we'll never know, Rabbi. And we'll never know the individual tragedies of that night. Those priests I told you about were looking into Kingdom Come!"

Afterward

THE RABBI and his family went on a visit to Woodville to recuperate from the effects of the Storm. It was like another world, peaceful, serene. They visited the Aaron family, and spent much of the time just sitting with the children under the big pecan trees on the grounds of the Female Seminary.

Of course, the Woodville people were delighted to see Dr. Cohen again. They said that every cloud had its silver lining, and certainly their having him for a visit was the one happy result of the terrible catastrophe.

The Rabbi enjoyed himself immensely. He began all his close friendships where they had left off twelve years before. Woodville seemed smaller to him than he had remembered it. Some of his former congregants had died; some had moved to New Orleans; others, to New York, with seats on the Cotton Exchange. But people he had married in Feliciana Parish brought their children to see him. His former religious school students of Bayou Sara

were grown now. They came, too, and brought husbands and families. They told him that they would never forget what he had taught them and that they would see to it that their children understood the Jewish religion and its fine, ethical background, just as he had taught it to them.

Woodville people recalled sermons he had given —one, in particular, based on a passage from Jeremiah, seemed to have stuck in their memories. The Rabbi expounded it all over again for them under the pecans at the Female Seminary.

"Yes, Jeremiah, twenty-ninth chapter, seventh verse," he said. "'Pray for the welfare of the city whither I have banished thee, for in its welfare shall ye fare well.'

"Ah, Jeremiah," he went on. "He was a great prophet. Intensely Jewish. You know he lived in the seventh century before the Christian Era, at the time of the fall of Nineveh and the rise of Babylon.

"Jeremiah knew that 'the old order changeth.' He told the Jews that they should stop fighting to regain Jerusalem. They had their religion, their God. That was enough for them wherever they went. Remember, this was a heathen world. Jeremiah told them to preserve religion in the world. That was important, not the actual possession of Jerusalem. Jerusalem could be their sanctuary, their symbol. But they were a hard-shelled lot.

"Indeed. History tells the story. The Jews tried to regain Jerusalem and failed. But what Jeremiah

said stuck with them and their descendants—the spark that kindled the ethical fire of the Jewish people through the ages."

Old friends who had taught with the Rabbi at the seminary came out and sat with him between classes. Students came to meet him, having heard of him from their teachers. Everyone wanted to hear about the Storm, but the Cohens begged that they might be excused from relating their gruesome experiences. They wanted to forget them, they said. Dr. Cohen, however, was eloquent about plans for the reconstruction of Galveston.

In the first place, he told them, there was to be a gigantic sea wall constructed, a regular rim around the Gulf side of the city; it was to be built of granite and similar materials. There was also talk about building a concrete bridge to the mainland. But the most ambitious plan of all, the Rabbi explained, was the raising of the city. This was very important, because the main destructive force of the storm had been the huge battering ram of debris which swept against them on the Gulf side. Raising the city about nine feet above sea level and grading it down toward the Bay would do away with this menace.

"But what an undertaking!" someone said. "Has it ever been done before?"

"Not in this country," the Rabbi said. "But in Holland they've done that sort of thing."

"But what would you do with the houses and buildings, Dr. Cohen? And what will be used for filling?"

"Ah," he said, "if I knew the answer to that, I'd be an engineer. And then I wouldn't know all about the Bible. Who was the smallest man in the Bible?" he said suddenly to a little boy who was there.

"I don't know," answered the child.

"Ne-hi-miah," said the Rabbi, and everybody laughed.

PART V

Normal Times

ONE EVENING in the third year after the Storm, the Rabbi came home in a state of great excitement. Mrs. Cohen was waiting up for him. He had been out to the Medical College to give an address on the Medicine and Hygiene of the Talmud, and it had been received with real acclaim.

"They applauded, Mollie; you should have heard them! And do you know? They have asked me to publish it in the *University Record.** It isn't so much the honor that appeals to me as the fact that there, in the records of the University of Texas, will be a statement of the Jewish attitude toward hygiene and medicine dating from the Babylonian captivity. It will pave the way for a better understanding—some of those doctors told me afterward that they had no idea that dietary laws of the orthodox Jews are actually based on hygienic rules laid down centuries ago. One young interne said he was glad

* The address was actually delivered in 1901 and published in *The University Record*, December, 1901.

to know of the laws about cleanliness, because he grew up thinking all Jews were dirty . . . he's from the country; he never saw a Jew till he was sixteen. You should have seen his face when I told him in detail about the ceremony of the washing of the hands before meals.

"Well, it was worth it—all the work I did. I think, Mollie, that was the most difficult paper I have ever written; but it was very interesting. Think of it. Cancer—they knew about cancer. Prescribed garlic as a remedy for it. Of course, the Israelites picked up what they knew from all the peoples that they lived among. Garlic was known in Egypt. Juvenal in one of his Sarcasms speaks of it. Listen to this from the Talmud. [He read from his paper] "'As a specific for earache, oil obtained from the maybug and poured into the ear; for headache, an application of pitch; and for toothache, a paste of garlic, salt, and oil, rubbed on the gum or pressed into the cavity.'

"Ah, they laughed at this one. I used this example to show that dental surgery was known. 'A man once vowed that he would not marry his sister's daughter, as she had lost a front tooth. On hearing this, Rabbi Ishmael supplied her with a gold tooth, and naturally the couple lived happily ever after.'

"Isn't this interesting, Mollie? 'A soft-boiled egg gives more nourishment than six ounces of fine flour.' 'Three cups of wine during supper are recommended to aid digestion.' 'Use no pot for cooking which another has already used.' Listen.

'Water that had been left uncovered should not be emptied in a public thoroughfare, nor be used for the purpose of laying the dust of the floor of the house, nor for making mortar. No man should allow his own beast nor that of his neighbor to drink of it, nor should anyone bathe his face, hands, or feet in it for fear of the poison that it may contain.'

"And over and over again there is reference to the washing of the hands—that impressed the young interne. Those Talmudists wrote vividly. 'It were better to cut the hand off than to touch the eye, the nose, the mouth, the ear, without first having washed them. Unwashed hands may cause blindness, deafness, foulness of breath, or polypus.'

"Well, they're going to publish it, Mollie. That's very nice of them. Everyone said it was a fine paper."

In the morning the Rabbi received a message to go over to the county jail. As he approached the building, which was down by the wharves, he pedaled faster on his bicycle, for a crowd had gathered. When he drew near he recognized a couple of Texas Rangers walking around, a reporter from the *Galveston News*, a number of local "sports," and small boys, including his own son.

He knew immediately what the trouble was. He had read in the *News* that Joe Choyinski, the famous heavyweight boxer, and Jack Johnson, pride of the local stevedores, had been arrested by Ranger Captain J. A. Brooks for participating in a pugilistic

exhibition at the Harmony Hall, they or their friends having overlooked the fact that prize fighting was illegal in the state of Texas.

The details in the morning paper had been more than sufficient to help the Rabbi reconstruct a charming bit of Texana. It seems that the Ranger captain arrived at the beginning of the bout, sat back, smoking a big cigar, and watched Choyinski and Johnson do a nice piece of boxing, until the famous heavyweight knocked out the black hope of the wharf front in the third round. Then Captain Brooks put on his big hat, stepped into the ring, and called loudly for the sheriff and the chief of police. Neither gentleman being present, the Ranger captain made the arrest himself.

As the Rabbi came up to the jail, the reporter from the *News* was prodding Captain Brooks with questions.

"If it was against the law in Texas, Captain, why'd you let 'em fight in the first place?"

"Well," the captain said, "I've been in Galveston a few days lookin' over the lay of the land. We didn't want any technical objections such as that the contest was 'spoken of,' 'proposed,' or 'about to take place.' I waited," he concluded, "until something actually happened."

"That is, till the third round," the reporter said. There was a general laugh.

"You watched the fight pretty closely, didn't you?" the reporter continued.

"Yes, I did."

"Think Johnson put up a good fight?"

"Yep."

"Just when did you decide to make the arrest?"

"When Johnson took the count in the third round."

"I see. What's your personal opinion of prize fighting, Captain?" asked the reporter.

The Ranger didn't answer him, turned his back, and lighted a cigar. The crowd hooted and laughed. Rabbi Cohen pushed his way to the entrance of the jail. Inside, the sheriff said Choyinski had been calling for the rabbi, protesting about his bail, making a fuss generally.

"What's his bail?" Dr. Cohen asked.

"Five thousand dollars cash bail, and the same amount for Johnson."

The Rabbi pursed his lips. "Well, let's see what we can do." He went in to have a talk with Choyinski.

When he came out, he said to the sheriff, "See here, you know they can't make that bail. It's a shame for them to be cooped up like this. How about letting 'em go about their business in the daytime and return at night to sleep at the jail? I'll see that they get in on time."

"That's a little unusual, ain't it, Rabbi?" asked the sheriff.

"So's the case unusual," the Rabbi said. "You think it over."

There was considerable stir all through the state about the Choyinski-Johnson internment. Governor Sayres, when pressed on the matter, said, "I'm

going to leave it to the good people of Galveston to say whether or not the law shall be enforced."

The sheriff decided to let his pugilistic charges go abroad during daylight hours; the dead-line for returning was eight P.M. Local sport fans, in the meantime, had equipped the fighters' cell with the accouterments of a good gymnasium and spent evenings watching Choyinski give Jack Johnson a thorough course in prize fighting.

When the day of legal reckoning came around and the jurors couldn't find the fighters guilty, cheers at the verdict were mingled with regret that the halcyon times were over when Choyinski and Johnson walked abroad in the daytime and returned at dusk to their sparring in the county jail. However, everyone felt pretty good about the fact that when Choyinski left he took Jack Johnson along, being convinced that the ex-stevedore had the makings of a great fighter.

The Rabbi came home, on the day of their departure, and told Mrs. Cohen about the farewell party at the jail.

"Who gave it?" Mrs. Cohen asked.

"The sheriff," said the Rabbi. "It could happen only in Texas."

From the time he first came to Galveston, Dr. Cohen had come into contact with medical students who were having difficulty financing their way through school. The four-year course was a drain on any family's budget, and there was usually some-

one out at the college who had got to the point where he didn't see how he could go on.

The Rabbi conceived the idea of a loan fund,* because he felt sure that the students in difficulty would eventually be self-supporting and could repay any money advanced to them in their immediate need. It was simple enough to get the money to lend. People of means were always asking Dr. Cohen to give away money for them; he would tell them to wait and say that when he had a case he would let them know about it.

He did this in the instance of loans to medical students; the "loan fund" didn't have a name, there was no interest payable, and the only record of it was scribbled in a small, black-backed memorandum book that Mrs. Cohen kept locked in her armoire. Nobody but the Rabbi knew who the donors or the beneficiaries were. This was particularly the wish of those who gave the money.

Hundreds of dollars were paid out to medical students in this way. Most of the students returned the loans. The money would come back in small dribbles, as former students became established in their profession. Since the original donors would not take any of the sums that were returned, and asked the Rabbi to continue to put the money to good use, he kept the fund going all the time and never had to refuse a student who was in real need.

* In later years when these funds had been entirely used, the Rabbi found it necessary to discontinue this personal loan work, which was then taken over by interested organizations.

A young man named Cass came to see him about some help in going through the college. The Rabbi saw that he received what he needed, and Cass said that some day he would return it with interest. It was all in the day's work for the Rabbi; he never thought much about it. Then, one spring day Cass appeared at the rabbinage and told Dr. Cohen that he had come to pay back the loan and that he, himself, wanted to establish a scholarship for medical students.

"But can you afford it?" Dr. Cohen said.

"Yes. I've done well. It's the first thing I want to do with any extra over what I need for myself." The Rabbi thought it was a fine thing. He went with Cass to call at the Medical College and made arrangements for the fund; after Cass had left, the Rabbi went to see the original donor to tell of the interesting developments of the case.

The Rabbi looked over his brandy glass at the member of his congregation who had helped Cass out in the first place and had done other deeds of philanthropy through the Rabbi that no one else knew about.

"There you are," said the Rabbi, wiping a tear from his eyes, "Cast thy bread upon the waters. . . ."

The Rabbi sped toward home on his bicycle in wonderful humor. It was April; there was a certain lightness in the air. How different from spring in England! he thought. Here, there was really no winter—a few fresh "northers," and that was all.

They didn't know what it was to see green again after it was hidden long months under snow. Here plants kept blooming all year 'round—like Jamaica.

There were also hurricanes, as in Jamaica; but, as he had predicted on his visit to Woodville, a great sea wall was being constructed, and the city was going to be raised nine feet. There was talk all over town about "floating bonds" and how much the city, county, and federal government should pay. Well, he never could understand complicated money matters; fortunately, Mollie looked after his own affairs; he didn't know exactly how the wall and the grading were to be financed. But the people of Galveston would rise to any occasion; they had proved that.

As he pedaled past the Rosenberg School, a little girl ran suddenly in front of him, and his bicycle knocked her to the ground. While he was recovering himself, she got to her feet and started for home in tears. The Rabbi followed her leaving his bicycle behind. The child turned in at Judge Kleberg's house and ran around the back way. Dr. Cohen waited a moment; then stepped up on the front gallery, and rang the doorbell. When the door was opened on the Rabbi, the child stood whimpering by her mother's side.

"That's the way with you maniacs, you speed riders," was the good lady's answer to the Rabbi's explanation of what had happened. "She won't be able to go back to school for a week."

"I'm very sorry, Mrs. Kleberg; I'll tell the Judge as soon as I get downtown."

"And who might you be?"

"Why—I'm the rabbi . . . Rabbi Cohen."

The rest of the scene was short and swift. Little Emmy Kleberg got a good "patch," with maternal admonition to return to school immediately, and the Rabbi received an unexpected apology which perhaps he didn't altogether deserve.

"You know how children are," concluded Mrs. Kleberg, fanning her flushed face, "anything to stay out of school."

The Rabbi went on his way, smiling over Mrs. Kleberg's expression, which had been a study. He glanced down at his shirt cuff. There was a meeting at the Seamen's Bethel for that night. They had asked him to speak on Africa; the director had heard him give a talk on the subject some time ago, had remembered it, and wanted him to repeat it tonight for the sailors. The Rabbi was glad to do so; he considered the Seamen's Bethel one of the most valuable institutions in the city. In a building donated by the Adoue family, it took care of men off ships who were out of work temporarily, ill, or down on their luck in some other way.

He reached the Protestant Orphans' Home and parked his bicycle to go in and discuss with the Matron arrangements for the employment of one of the boys, who was ready to leave.

When he turned in on Broadway, he noticed Mrs. Cohen on the front gallery reading the paper.

She didn't see him until he had walked all the way up the steps.

"Something terrible's happened in Russia," she said. "Terrible!"

He took the paper from her hand and read it. And all the warmth of feeling about the spring afternoon—Cass's return, "Cast thy bread upon the waters," Mrs. Kleberg's face—vanished as he read that hundreds of Jews were wounded and dead, murdered in the streets of Kishineff.

Rabbi Cohen sat huddled in the great chair on the left side of his pulpit. The choir was singing Yigdal. The blend of singing voices rose and fell in the crowded synagogue. No one was listening for the sake of the music, but the sound pressed against the senses, and its quavering sadness mingled with the silent thought that was in every mind.

Rabbi Cohen raised his head as the music ended. His eyes were red rimmed. His face, which had been so young with undefined features, quite English in its caste and expression, when he came to Galveston and spoke in this pulpit for the first time—on Africa—was lined with deep creases. He looked old, troubled, Semitic.

He stood up and began to speak in a conversational tone of voice, too low to be heard on the back rows. His congregants leaned forward, listening intently. He spoke to them as if he were thinking out loud or engaged in conversation with one or two of them. He grasped the edge of the pulpit stand and

held on; anyone could see that his small frame was shaken to its depths.

He began to talk to them about Kishineff, a Russian industrial city, set in the middle of tobacco plantations, wheat fields, and vineyards. There Jews had lived for years, sharing in the industrial developments of the eighteenth century—engaged in the export of grain, wine, tobacco. Numbers of them were artisans: cobblers, cabinetmakers, printers, watchmakers. Many worked their small market gardens in the surrounding countryside, peaceably tending their vineyards, pressing their grapes into wine. They lived at peace with their neighbors.

On this sentence Rabbi Cohen's voice rose. He smote his fist on the pulpit stand and no longer held back.

"They lived at peace with their neighbors, as we do here in Galveston. Then the Russian government—for reasons of their own, no matter, to cover up their own weakness—sent agitators into that countryside to stir it up against the Jews. We have the facts." He put his hands on his hips and planted his feet wide apart. "The *Besarabetz*," he fairly shouted, "a journal subsidized by the Russian government, protected by their vice-governor, Ostrogov, told the people lies, lies, lies about the Jews. It was very clever. It started gradually to build up hatred. And then it accused the Jews of the most terrible, inhuman acts—too sickening to mention—on this altar of God.

"This thing has been done. The populace have

been inflamed by their decadent government; mobs have gone through the streets of Kishineff murdering men, women, and children, pillaging—Ah, we have had pogroms before! When the Czar's Cossacks rode down upon a helpless village and killed a Jew or two as if they were hunting for sport. But I tell you this is a different matter—although the other is bad enough. This is organized, carefully planned mass murder.

"What are we going to do about it? The governments of the civilized world have sent in their formal protests. Our own President has been entrusted with a petition signed by thousands of our fellow countrymen of all religious faiths, to be transmitted to St. Petersburg—The Russian government knows how the world feels about it. In the meantime, 2,000 Jewish families are homeless, bereft of their means of livelihood—their homes pillaged, burned to the ground. They are starving, with no hope.

"We must help them. They are our coreligionists. They have no one to turn to but us. Here, across miles of ocean and half of the world, here we are sitting in peace and freedom, worshiping God as we see fit. How can we be comfortable, how can we live our lives in peace while those people are cold and go hungry?

"They were peaceably tending their vineyards, mending shoes, making watches, minding their own business, when this terrible thing befell them. They were singled out because they are a helpless minority, because their God is the God of Israel—

because they have gone forth from Zion as Jeremiah said they should: 'Build ye houses and dwell in them; plant gardens—' because they have been faithful to their religion and their God."

His voice dropped. "We are sending them money so that they can live. A committee has been formed in New York City—I think they will send it through Germany—No matter!—It will reach them. The important thing is to give." He held up his index finger and pointed straight at his congregation.

"We must give. Not just a little—what we feel we can spare and not deny ourselves anything. Of course. We sit here in safety and comfort. We can spare a few dollars without its hurting us. We won't miss it. We'll go on doing the things we're accustomed to—No." He shook his head. "That's not the way. The need is too great.

"We must give until we are hurt, until we give up something from our own comfortable, sheltered lives, until we know what it is to do without." Tears started to his eyes. "They are our brethren. We must help them. I appeal to you, the members of my congregation.

"We are not alone. The whole civilized world is behind us, the whole of civilized history, all the enlightenment that man has attained through centuries of struggle toward the ideal of justice—righteousness—the ideal that the prophets told the children of Israel to preserve at all cost in the world."

People in Galveston talked for days afterward of

the scene in the temple when Rabbi Cohen finished his sermon on the Kishineff massacre. Women took off their jewels; grown men in tears offered large sums. Everyone pressed near the Rabbi to tell him—each person seemed to want to tell, himself, then and there what he would give.

Finally, the Rabbi thanked them and explained that he could not take money or jewels or promises of money in the temple. But the next day there would be a meeting to raise funds; he would be there, and they should come.

Vacations

By summertime many of their friends protested that this year the Cohens should take a real vacation. The Rabbi looked worn and thin after a year of hard work, with its tragic climax of bad news from Russia. Mrs. Cohen was exhausted. There was scarcely a week that he didn't tell her to pack his bag because he had to go upstate. Jews in country towns had come to take his services for granted and sent for him on all the significant occasions of their lives. While he was gone, Mrs. Cohen had the responsibility of receiving urgent messages at home, and people continued to come to the house and telephone at all times of the day and the night.

Port officials had begun to make use of the Rabbi's capacities as interpreter, and frequently a stranded sailor who spoke an out-of-the way tongue or confusing patois was put on the telephone to the Rabbi, who usually was able to straighten out the man's meaning and translate his words back to the officials. He had an ear for languages, just as some

people have an ear for music; he could ferret out a key to almost any strange dialect and was able to make himself understood by a man who spoke a confusing Slav tongue or one whose Arabic had been crystallized in some desert spot for hundreds of years.

The Cohens decided to go for a rest far from the distractions of city life to a watering place in East Texas, where the Rabbi would have only the piny woods on which to expend his restless energies. This was Mrs. Cohen's idea. The place was advertised as quiet and inexpensive—the latter an important consideration, since the Rabbi had given beyond his means to the Kisheneff Fund.

Traveling up on the I. and G. N. they met the head of the State Militia, Gen. Oppenheimer. He and the Rabbi were old friends, and they spent their time swapping stories. One of the General's favorites was an experience he had during the war with Spain.

It seemed that Oppenheimer, who was in command of a National Guard unit, had found his rations running low. He notified the nearest regular army commander of his predicament, only to receive the reply that no rations could be spared—in other words, nothing doing.

With great relish, Oppenheimer said to the Rabbi, "I sent him back a message, four words only: 'Put that in writing.' We got the food instead."

When Gen. Oppenheimer heard where the Cohens were going, he threw up his hands in horror

and begged them not to go to that place because the accommodations were impossible.

But Mrs. Cohen explained that this was their vacation, that all of them badly need a rest, that they didn't expect anything fine, and that they intended to stay at least a month. The General predicted that they wouldn't remain more than the night.

Early in the morning the Cohens left the train at their station, with a dozen pieces of baggage, odds and ends of vacation paraphernalia, books for the Rabbi, umbrellas, rubbers, fly swatters, and a variety of wraps, because someone had told them that nights in the country were cool.

If Rabbi Cohen had been keeping a journal, as he had done on his African trip, he might have written that it would be better to draw the curtain on the next twenty-four hours and to ring it up again on the morning of the following day, when the family were back on the I. and G. N. returning to the Gulf breezes and sanitary devices of Galveston Island.

The next summer they had a better vacation trip. Mrs. Cohen saved up through the whole year, and in June they betook themselves in some style to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis.

Immediately on their arrival, the Rabbi made a beeline down the Pike to Frank Fillis's Boer War Exhibit, where he burst, unannounced, into Fillis's office.

"What's your business?" he was asked gruffly.

"Don't you know me, Frank?" he said, and added

a line of the routine from the second-sight act that he and Mark had done in Cape Town.

"Well, rawther—it's little Henry Cohen!" the Englishman shouted, and the two began to talk both at once, telling each other what had transpired since they last met in South Africa, when Fillis was collecting wild animals and Kaffir types and Cohen was recuperating from his hero's part in the Zulu uprising. Then they started arm in arm through the concession.

They stopped first at the Kaffir kraals, exact copies of the ones that the Rabbi had seen in Africa. As they walked in, a party of Southern school-teachers were teasing a tall Kaffir to say something in his native tongue. He said a few words, but that did not satisfy his interested audience. Then he let out the first line of some obscene native doggerel. The Rabbi, who had been listening closely, finished it for him.

Fillis laughed heartily as they went on to the main part of the concession.

"That black nearly turned white," he said. "They'll never get him to say another word."

In the arena, surrounded by a large wooden grandstand, was a replica of the battlefield of Paardeburg, where, Fillis explained, three times a day Gen. Cronje, whom he had been able to secure in person, surrendered to the British as he actually had done in the Boer War. The Rabbi watched the spectacle, which employed several hundred men, including native types. When it was over, he had a

long talk with Cronje, a dignified, black-bearded gentleman, whose mufti in and out of the act consisted of a three-piece business suit and a beaver hat.

"But how can you go through the humiliating experience of surrender three times a day?" the Rabbi asked him.

Cronje answered by rubbing his thumb against his middle finger and saying, "I do it because I have nothing left. I need the money." It developed later during the Cohens' stay that the General also was contemplating matrimony. The bride was a countrywoman of his, a widow from Pretoria, and under Fillis's subtle touch, the marriage ceremony developed into a spectacle in its own right, taking place with pomp and ceremony on the balcony of the "Boer War" grandstand. All four Cohens were present.

There was one unpleasant interlude during their visit to the fair—when they went in to see a panorama on the Pike entitled "The Galveston Flood." The city of Galveston was shown as seen through a raging storm; then a tidal wave came and washed all the buildings away, leaving a bare, flat sand island.

The Rabbi and Mrs. Cohen were indignant at such a travesty of the hurricane, which they knew at first hand. They spoke their minds to the barker at the door of the exhibit, and the Rabbi detailed the measures of reconstruction already taken in Galveston, as well as future plans. The barker listened politely but did not appear to be interested.

Whenever the Cohens passed his stand on the Pike, the Rabbi would stop and explain to him again. The barker said he was sorry, but the spectacle was made that way.

"But it's not true," Mrs. Cohen would interpose. "Our house was still standing, and so were lots of others."

"Sorry, ma'am," was the stock answer. And little Harry, shielded from sight of his parents by his sister's starched skirts, thumbed his nose at the offender, all unperturbed.

The Rabbi spent most of his time at the exposition talking Cape Dutch to the Boers and clicking with the Kaffirs, and he liked nothing better than to stand about near the kraals and interpret for gaping visitors. There was a chance to use his Arabic, too, in the Oriental exhibit area, where he became so friendly with an Arab that the man insisted on giving his son a free ride on a camel, up and down the "Streets of Cairo," until the child's insides were thoroughly churned.

Mrs. Cohen, when telling of their trip, always mentioned this incident and her indignation the following day when the Rabbi came rushing back to their boarding house, where she was nursing Harry's shaken stomach, to say that he had been highly honored—a friend of his friend the Arab, on hearing his Arabic, had taken him for a native.

The Rabbi was determined that his children should know their country firsthand. With this in mind, he took them traveling every year. There

were times when they didn't get far from Galveston, when the Rabbi had given away more of his salary than usual. One summer, they rode fifteen miles up the Santa Fe line to Arcadia. The great attraction at Arcadia had been that the people who owned the hotel grew their own strawberries. The Rabbi and his family spent another vacation in the old, dusty hotel at Lampasas, the scene of healing mineral springs and the tarantula. But gradually, they were able to manage their affairs so that they could travel in comfort and go where they wished. The fact that the Rabbi traveled on a pass was a helpful factor in their plans.

The little family group usually traveled on the train at night and planned daily stopovers in cities along the route. They stayed over in Montgomery, Alabama; Charlotte, North Carolina; or Spartanburg, South Carolina, on the way east. Going west, there were stops at Newton, Kansas; Trinidad, Colorado; Salt Lake City, Utah. A favorite stopping-off place was Washington, D. C.

On one visit there, at the Raleigh Hotel they ate breakfast across the dining room from the Wright brothers, who were in Washington to make flying tests at Fort Myer. Every morning for a week, the Cohens were among the spectators who watched Wilbur and Orville Wright come out on the field, peer into the sky, and shake their heads. People in the crowd moved restlessly about, murmuring to each other that flying would never be practical. The

Rabbi scraped acquaintance with the celebrated brothers and inquired in detail about their aeronautical problems. However, Orville and Wilbur Wright had very little to say. They just continued to go out to the flying field every morning; and the day after the Cohens left Washington, they read in the newspapers that the Wrights had gone up.

A vacation when Mrs. Cohen wasn't well took the family to Hot Springs, Arkansas. Dr. Fly, who had ended his term as mayor, went with them. He did not stay very long, turning over Mrs. Cohen to a colleague, whom the family referred to as the Indian herb doctor.

Mrs. Cohen eventually improved, after a complete rest, and the following year, hearing that a family could live in Mexico City at less expense than they could at home, because of the rate of exchange of the peso, the Cohens went off, four strong, armed with letters to the American Ambassador, President Porfirio Diaz, and members of the Catholic hierarchy.

It was a gay, happy summer. The family enjoyed the easy-going Latin mode of life and they prowled from one end of Mexico City to another, seeing everything possible—from the famous shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe to out-of-the-way points of interest where tourists seldom went. In one secluded grotto on the outskirts of the city, the Rabbi pulled impatiently at the gate bell, and finally an old, bent "mozo" came to the door. He opened it part way, and, peering out through half-closed eyes, said in

Spanish that no one was allowed to come inside the sacred grotto.

"Nadie?" asked the Rabbi.

"Only priests," came the answer.

"But I am a priest," the Rabbi said.

"How can I tell?" asked the old man.

"Look at my tonsure," said the Rabbi and, leaning over with a quick gesture, he showed the round bald spot on the back of his head.

The Mexican seemed quite satisfied, and opened the door. "This is my sister and her children," the Rabbi added hurriedly, ushering his family in with him.

The Cohens made several trips out to the Pyramids; they had picnics, and the children hunted for souvenirs in the ruins. They found pieces of stone on which were carved faces of the Aztecs who had built the Pyramids of the Moon and the Sun, and their father told them that these ancient feats of engineering were as remarkable as the Egyptian pyramids, although the latter were more famous. He explained the Aztec calendar to them, the meaning of Sun and Moon worship, and spoke of the strange similarity between some of the characters of Aztec writing and those of the ancient Hebrews. One afternoon he found another resemblance between the Aztecs and Hebrews—a small Aztec head that was the image of his friend in London, Israel Zangwill. The Rabbi sent the head to Zangwill, who wrote back that he found it an excellent likeness.

Amid all the impressive display of the Catholic Church—the cathedrals with interiors coated with gold and lined with great, dim paintings—and the fascinating, ancient Aztec civilization that lay like a sleeping giant under the streets of the gay, brilliant city, the Rabbi did not fail to search for his own coreligionists, the Jews of Mexico City.

They were not easy to find. He discovered finally where some of them met for prayers behind closed doors on the third floor above a saloon. He went there on Saturday morning and took his small son along.

He found a group of Sephardic Jews, poorly dressed, harassed-looking people, who told him that they had to worship in a secluded place because they could not be sure from day to day what attitude the Mexicans were taking toward them. The Rabbi's son drew closer to his father as they shouted their troubles at him in shrill Spanish and Arabic. Finally, their complaints subsided, and services were begun.

The Rabbi being a visitor, was asked to read the portion of the Torah for the day. His son knew the short blessing that was repeated beforehand, and the Rabbi called on him to say it.

Harry stood up and began to recite the *Brocha* as he had learned it at Sunday school in Galveston. He had said only a few words when, to his terrible distress, the audience began to hiss and boo and shake their fists at him.

The Rabbi held up his hand, told his son to sit down, and then began to recite the blessing himself, chanting it, "davening," going through a gamut of sounds which appeared to satisfy the outraged Sephardic congregation.

The Cohens had other trips as far north as Canada and east to New York City, and always, either going or coming, they made a week's stopover at Washington, D. C., where the Smithsonian Institution drew the Rabbi like a magnet. He finally sent to the Smithsonian, from his own collection, ancient Jewish ritual in Marathi and Spanish.* He never could seem to get enough of Washington; it was to him the hub, the meaning, the greatness of the whole country. One felt it, somehow, in the air on Pennsylvania Avenue.

His children, whom he took everywhere with him, Ruth in pigtails and Harry, whining at inconvenient moments to go to the rear, imbibed that same feeling before they were old enough to understand it. They had stood in line five hours to shake hands with President McKinley; they had spent days in the Capitol building and going through the White House; their father pointed out the figure of Judea, representing "Religion," in the rotunda of the Library of Congress. They were shown the giants of Congress: Speaker Joe Cannon, Senators Joseph Weldon Bailey from Texas, Chauncey M. Depew of New York, Guggenheim of Colorado. The

* Deposit 260260.

prospect of seeing Washington never became dull to them. They would press against the train window, crowd each other, and go tense with excitement every time the skyline would appear—the Capitol dome and the thin white monument gleaming against the blue haze of Virginia across the Potomac.

Prelude to the Galveston Movement

WHEN THE Rabbi was in Hot Springs he had gone over the ground where a charity hospital was to be built in memory of Leo N. Levi by the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith. The former president of the Galveston congregation had died in 1904, after a brief, brilliant continuance of his law career in New York City. Shortly before his death he had prepared the Kishineff Petition, sent by President Theodore Roosevelt and Secretary of State John Hay to Czar Nicholas the Second, who had declined to receive it.

Concern over the fate of the helpless, innocent members of their faith ran in a deep, troubled stream through the thoughts of Jewish leaders all over the world. In England, Israel Zangwill made plans for a settlement of thousands of persecuted Jews in an autonomous state. Land for the "state" was to be purchased, and as if he were choosing the setting for a play, Zangwill decided on Uganda, East Africa.

Zangwill worked prodigously over his plan. He started a movement in Europe, known as the Jewish Territorial Organization. It was a federation rich in idealism and limited in funds, but it was able to make contact with the Russian Jews and give them hope of deliverance for themselves and their children. Henry Cohen in Galveston was an American representative of Zangwill's organization.

The Rabbi and Zangwill kept up a continuous correspondence on the details of the project, and one day a letter with the familiar Kilbourne postmark arrived saying that Jacob H. Schiff, head of the great banking firm of Kuhn, Loeb, and Company was prepared to assist in a plan for the amelioration of the condition of the Russian Jews; Zangwill was coming to America to discuss it with him.

The Rabbi carefully followed the meeting in New York. It soon developed that Mr. Schiff was not in favor of an autonomous Jewish state. He thought that it was impractical, that it would take years to get under way, and in the meantime the Russian Jews were suffering. But he had another plan.

Although sympathetic with Zangwill's ideas, the Rabbi saw Mr. Schiff's point of view and was particularly pleased when he heard that this gentleman had said that he believed the Jews' problems should be settled in the respective countries in which they lived, that no doubt the reaction following the forcible dissolution of the Russian Duma would not last, and that the immediate task

was to alleviate the unhappy existence of as many individuals as possible and do it with dispatch.

The Rabbi might have spoken these words himself; he looked on the Jews as a religious group and believed that the whole world was gradually coming around to the ideals fostered by the eighteenth century, which would make religious intolerance nonexistent; and that eventually these ideals, of which America was the living proof, would free all persecuted peoples everywhere. He had often said that the treatment of Jews, because they were a minority, was a barometer that measured the integrity of the country in which they lived. But in the meantime—as Mr. Schiff had pointed out—people were suffering.

They were emigrating to America, but they sank into the East Side ghetto of New York City. He wanted them to go to other parts of the country—to the Southwest and the Middle West—and grow up with the country. With this in mind, he asked Zangwill to abandon his other plan and cooperate in the distribution of immigrants in America. Through the Territorial Organization in Europe, Zangwill could make contact with the Russian Jews and direct them to Southern ports, instead of the gateway of Ellis Island, through which they followed each other like sheep into the corral of Hester Street.

Zangwill agreed to give up his own plan for the time, and to work with Mr. Schiff. And because the

Reverend Mr. Cohen had been delayed in New York on his way home from Jamaica, there followed a chain of circumstances that culminated in his being called on to play a role in Zangwill's drama, as revised and produced by Mr. Schiff, the small, gentle-mannered man with clipped gray beard, who sat in state at 52 William Street.

The focus of the plan did not settle itself at once on Galveston. Mr. Schiff's thought was to choose some port of entry from which immigrants could have easy access to sparsely populated portions of the country that needed hard-working citizens to help build up economic and cultural life.

At a meeting in Mr. Schiff's office, a young social worker, Morris Waldman, made the suggestion that Galveston be used as port of entry. It was the terminus for rail lines into the West and Northwest; its steamship connections with northern European ports were of long standing, and there was not the temptation for immigrants to remain in a large city, like the port of New Orleans. Mr. Schiff concurred, and Waldman was sent down to Galveston.

He arrived there in the autumn of 1906, and was delighted with the tropical beauty of the Island, the port facilities, and the Rabbi.

It is impossible to imagine how anyone could have bestowed upon Henry Cohen a greater gift than the opportunity to be of service to Mr. Schiff's plan. After Waldman's preliminary visit and departure,

the Rabbi fell into his part of the work as eagerly and spontaneously as he had made the rounds in Whitechapel and looked after people in Galveston who were down and out.

Here was a chance to do something specific and constructive for these people of his own faith who were in real trouble. They were coming straight to Galveston—men, women and children—coming out of the hell of Russia; and he was going to help them, to see that they were lodged, clothed, fed, taught something of their new language, then sent on their way to become useful citizens in a free land. He had promised Morris Waldman that he would meet every boat himself and that he would see to the welfare of every single person.

Concern for the individual had always been the guiding method of the social work he had done. He could never think coolly of man in the mass. It was scarcely more than a coincidence that the following year, in the autumn, there came to the rabbinage in Galveston a man, who by his life and his writings, was the exponent of individualism of his time. Ambrose Bierce, who had been visiting Silas Howes in Galveston, was taken by that inveterate bookworm to see the Rabbi's library.

On the way to the rabbinage, Howes told his friend something of the life and work of Dr. Cohen. And when the tall, soldierly Bierce stooped over the small form of the Rabbi to shake his hand, there was a softened expression in the eyes that had flashed fire, from the battlefields of Shiloh and Missionary

Ridge to the battle of wits in San Francisco's newspaper row.

Bierce listened closely and said very little, as the Rabbi pointed out the first-edition Kiplings, his collection of early Texana, some Elzevirs and Plantins he had picked up, and the *Comic History of England.* He and Howes stayed for dinner. He complimented Mrs. Cohen on her Creole dish, fish court bouillon. The Rabbi gave him a copy of *Talmudic Sayings.*

When he left, he thanked the Rabbi for showing him the library, which he considered a prime book collection of the South; and he, in turn, presented his host with a pamphlet that he had written called "Write It Right," and inscribed it:

As those who hunger are not those invited to the feast,
This morsel of instruction comes to one who needs it least.

There was an epilogue to the Bierce visit which the Rabbi, busily engaged in the furtherance of Mr. Schiff's plan and the routine duties of his work in Galveston, did not know about.

While he was completing his last literary effort, his edition of *Collected Works*, and as if making ready to exercise "the right of taking one's self off," Bierce gave the Library of the University of California the few books he had liked to keep with him. It was largely a collection that anyone who had followed his life might have expected him to value. Friends and writers whom he had influenced were represented: George Sterling, Gertrude Atherton, James

Hopper. But there was a volume in the collection that might seem incongruous to those who remembered the Bierce invectives against organized religion and the men who administered it—a book of *Talmudic Sayings*, by the Reverend Henry Cohen.

PART VI

The Galveston Movement

I

BULKY dredge boats glided down the newly made canal that started at Galveston Bay and followed the swelling curve of the sea wall north. The canal, instead of seeming strange and out of place, now gave the illusion of having been there always. And the heavy, ocean-going boats with their wet-sand cargoes, moving, halting, moving on, had become a familiar fluctuating background to the local scene. Even the contortions of temporary sidewalks, churches, and houses on stilts were taken as a matter of course; and everyone was saying that a city is not raised and graded without some slight inconvenience.

The engineers of the Dutch firm who had the job under contract had told the recently instituted Board of City Commissioners that the only way the project could be carried out successfully was by the use of a canal cutting the island and serving as a means of transporting the filling from ocean beds

and distributing it throughout the city. Pipes from the dredge boats were to shoot out the dripping sand-silt over large areas, the water was to drain off, and eventually the city was to rise the few important feet above sea level.

District after district swelled under heavy, elongated pipes that lay flat to the ground and converted normal soil surfaces into masses of delta that wallowed over green plants and created a mud-soaked panorama for everyone in the vicinity. As the water drained into prepared ditches, the filling dried under houses on their stilts. Gardens were replanted and carriages passed doorsteps again. But the work only had shifted; the canal was dredged longer, and the big boats with heavy, lumbering machinery discharged their cargo in other parts of the city.

People had come to take it all as a matter of course, and to make light of discomforts. It was considered good sport when schoolboys, heedless of the warning that pipes were going to "shoot," found themselves in danger of being sprayed with sand and had to run like the devil. It was shady and cool under houses raised on stilts; children did their schoolwork there and played, hugging the damp, cool ground on warm summer afternoons.

On a summer afternoon when the July sun was casting a blinding glare over the city, the Rabbi rode his bicycle down to the Nord Deutscher Lloyd docks and waited for the arrival of the "Cassel," out of Hamburg. He had in his pocket a list of sixty

steerage passengers, the first considerable group of immigrants to come through the port of Galveston.

Meigs Frost, star reporter of the *Galveston News*, was on the dock.

"My last big story was when they raised the L School. And the one before that was when they raised the Garten Verein," he said to the Rabbi. "It's even refreshing to meet a ship."

"Stick around, Meigs," said the Rabbi. "And you'll see something. 'The Old Lady' sends you all over Texas to dig up human-interest stories, and now I'll give you sixty stories the like of which you've never heard before."

"Okay, Rabbi, what's the setup?"

"You've heard of Jacob Schiff, haven't you, Meigs?"

"Sure. Kuhn, Loeb, and Company."

"Well, the old gentleman is spending a young fortune right here in the port of Galveston. He has sent us enough money to establish what we call a 'Jewish Immigrants' Information Bureau.' "

"And that means exactly what?"

"Its function, Meigs, is to receive these immigrants properly and to insure against their becoming public charges."

"Fine," interrupted Meigs.

"That's only half of it. We have already found out what these sixty people have done in Russia—here's the list—and we're seeing that they go to a part of the country that needs them. We've worked out every detail. A shoemaker goes where shoemakers

are needed. Likewise a butcher, a baker, and the candlestick maker. All through the great Middle West."

"And Galveston is to be the sole port of entry for this movement, Doctor?"

"Yes, exactly so, Meigs. Have you ever seen immigrants, entering through Ellis Island, herded into the New York ghetto?"

Meigs Frost nodded in the affirmative.

"Well, that's what Mr. Schiff is trying to correct. What you will see today is the first batch. Hundreds, thousands may come."

"What part of Russia do they hail from?"

"Ah," said the Rabbi, "I know you've heard of Kishineff. The majority of these immigrants come from the territory around Kishineff and other sections where they have been the scapegoats for the rotten regime in Russia. They have been butchered for years and years by the Black Hundred."

"I never heard of that organization, Doctor."

"It is supported out of the private purse of the Czar, who uses Jewish persecutions as a diversion for what he is doing to the rest of the country."

Frost made some more notes and then asked, "Just exactly what do you do with them from here?"

"Well, after the ship's authorities and the government are through with them, we take 'em over, bag and baggage, to our headquarters. We've rented that vacant building at Twenty-fourth and Mechanic. They get a bath, a square meal in their stomachs, and are furnished with papers and magazines in their own

language, so they won't feel too strange. But," quickly added the Rabbi, "we start teaching 'em English from the first day."

"But I understand they'll only be here for a few days."

"One day or one month, it's not too soon to start them learning English. Wherever they go, they can continue learning. In every town we're sending them to, teachers are waiting. We haven't missed a trick," said the Rabbi enthusiastically. "Ah, there's the mayor."

"The mayor?" said Frost.

"Yes, I asked Mr. Landes to come down and greet them."

The "Cassel" docked according to schedule. The Rabbi immediately set to work collecting his charges from the steerage. He got them above deck as soon as possible, hurrying them along with friendly pats on the back, directing them in a fluent, staccato Yiddish. Meigs Frost had let slide his assignment to interview the ship's more important personages and was at the heels of the Rabbi; for he was right—here were sixty stories.

They had come from the steppes of Russia into the tropical warmth of a strange country. They were still dressed in woolen smocks; some were booted for snow, and a tall young fellow wore a high-crowned Russian hat. They huddled together on the aft deck—men, women, and children—and Frost thought he had never seen such human misery before.

The hot Texas sun beat down on them; perspiration flowed in streams down their faces; the odor of their foul-smelling clothes was intensified by the heat. But besides the temporary discomfort, there was the look of misery in their eyes. He couldn't describe it to himself, this lanky American reporter who had seen plenty of trouble on his treks through the state for the *News*.

He had seen human beings mistreated. He had seen a Negro knocked unconscious because he failed to stand up when a white lady walked into a railway station; and he had seen poor white trash who were hungry and cold, and people homeless after the Brazos River went on a rampage, cotton farmers who had lost everything in one bad season. But the Negro came to and went about his business, and the poor white trash went on to another town and somebody helped them. And people got to work and rebuilt their homes and planted some more cotton. But there was a look in the eyes of these Russian Jews of utter despair, blurred with hopelessness.

The Rabbi had been busy translating for the immigration authorities. He asked them to wait while the Mayor spoke briefly to the immigrants. Meigs Frost stood back from the crowd and watched.

Landes said in his even Southern drawl, "I congratulate you folks on coming to a fine country like the United States."

Rabbi Cohen said the same in Yiddish to the immigrants.

"I hope you appreciate the privilege of becoming American citizens," said the Mayor.

"Ich hoppe zie werd ein gute Americaner sein," the Rabbi translated.

"And I want to say that I am proud to be here with my good friend, Rabbi Cohen, to greet you personally. I also extend to you the welcome of the city of Galveston."

The Rabbi translated. Then the Mayor shook hands with all the men.

The immigrants huddled back in a group again. Meigs doubted that they had half understood the meaning of what had taken place. The tall young Russian in the high-crowned hat stepped suddenly out of the crowd. He began to speak in English that was halting, guttural, charged with emotion, in contrast to the even, matter-of-fact tones of the Mayor.

"Mr. Mayor," he said with painstaking effort, "in the country which we come from this scene could not happen. The mayor in the town which we have left would not greet us—" The Russian frowned as he tried to find his English words. Suddenly he bared his right arm which showed long, thin, red scars. "The knout," he said, "was our greeting. You have clasped our hands. A time may come when your country will need us; we will not hesitate to serve you with our blood."

"Meigs got his story," the Rabbi said in the morning to Mrs. Cohen. "He writes well and has a fine understanding of these things.

"Well, you should have seen them, Mollie, when they had their baths and were given comfortable clothes. They looked like different people. That young man who made the speech to the Mayor. It showed such fine feeling. He's a cabinetmaker. We're sending him to Grand Rapids. He'll find himself a job there. He'll make a good citizen right enough. They all will. I wish Mr. Schiff were here himself to see the gratitude of those people. He would be more than repaid.

"Look, Mollie, on the same page as Meigs' story there's a fine article about Ike Kempner and his work as Finance Commissioner. He's worked hard on this grading project. Well, Ike's father was a Russian immigrant, too; he got here earlier, that was all—in time to fight in the Civil War. He made a name for himself. These immigrants that came in yesterday will do the same thing."

The Rabbi rode on his bicycle to the Immigrants' Information Bureau, which was housed in the two-story building on Twenty-fourth and Mechanic. As he put up his Cleveland, he was greeted by the janitor, Littman, who clicked his heels together and saluted, "Excellency."

"Stop it," said the Rabbi. "I told you not to salute me. And if you ever do it again when you meet me on Market Street, you'll hear from me."

Littman did not appear in any way affected by the rebuke. "Those Russians have been asking for you all the time," he said. "They want you."

"The staff here is excellent, Littman. Two specialized social workers. The best in the country."

Littman shrugged his shoulders. "They want to talk to you."

When the Rabbi went in, he was greeted uproariously. Everyone had questions to ask, comments to make. They all wanted to know where they were going and when.

"You will know everything in time," the Rabbi said to them. "And now, how would you like to have your first lesson in English?"

There was general rejoicing at this, and they forgot all their queries and troubles, as they sat in a row like school children before him and twisted their lips on the strange English sounds.

"It's good for them in more ways than one," a staff member said aside to Rabbi Cohen, "because it takes their minds off their own problems, besides the very important fact that they are learning the language."

"When do the first batch leave?" asked the Rabbi.

"In the morning we are sending two families to Kansas City and Fort Worth, respectively. They are butchers. Then there is a tanner. We'll get him off to Omaha in a day or two. The cabinetmaker will go to Topeka or Grand Rapids. We get another ship in two weeks, you know."

July fourteenth, the "Frankfurt"—twenty-six arrivals; the "Hanover," on August sixth, with seventy; the "Chemnitz," on August twenty-fourth,

with eighty-nine; on September fourteenth, eighty on the "Koehn." The "Chemnitz," the "Frankfurt," the "Hanover," the "Chemnitz"—autumn, winter, spring, summer again—Mr. Schiff's organization functioned like clockwork. The results were gratifying. The immigrants were adjusting themselves wherever they went. And there had been only twelve cases in the whole lot that were refused entry because of trachoma, poor physique, and tuberculosis.

"These deportations are necessitated to safeguard the health of the American people," the Rabbi said over his dinner table to the staff members of the Bureau, who took most of their meals at his home. "But I have a case of a fellow down at the immigration detention station—he's supposed to be deported for illegal entry. He was a boilermaker in Russia; got into trouble with the government. He escaped as a stowaway. If he's sent back, it will be to face a firing squad. They say they can't do a thing about it here." The Rabbi put down his knife and fork and pushed his plate back. "Here, Mollie, take it away. I can't eat.

"They're sending him back on the next ship. His family are starving in Russia. If he could stay here I could get him a job at the boiler factory, and he could send for them in no time. He's got four children. If he goes back on that ship, the whole family's doomed. They can't do any more about it here. They say they've wired Washington and got the answer that he has to be deported."

The Rabbi didn't sleep much that night. In the

morning, he said to Mrs. Cohen: "You can pack my bag. I'm going to Washington." He had just time to catch the morning train, and the banks were closed. He borrowed $100 from a congregant on the way to the station.

Forty-eight hours later he walked up Pennsylvania Avenue to the office of the Department of Labor. They were very sorry, but it was a clear case of illegal entry; there was nothing to do but deport the Russian.

The Rabbi called upon his congressman and said he wanted to see the President on a matter of life and death.

President Taft was friendly and kind. He told Rabbi Cohen that it was too bad he had made this long journey to no avail, but this was clearly a case for the Department, and they had given their decision. The Rabbi saw that he was beaten. He stood up to leave, and thanked the President for seeing him ahead of other appointments; he was sick at heart, and it showed on his tired, haggard face.

"I'm sorry this had to happen to you, Rabbi Cohen," President Taft said. "But allow me to say that I certainly admire the way you Jews help each other out—traveling all the way up here from Galveston, Texas, when a member of your faith is in trouble."

"Member of my faith! This man is not a Jew," Rabbi Cohen said. "He's a Greek Catholic."

President Taft's usually placid expression changed

to one of surprise. "You mean to say, you traveled all the way up here at your own expense to help out a Greek Catholic?"

"He's in trouble; they're going to deport him on the next ship, and he'll face a firing squad when he gets back to Russia. He's a human being, Mr. President; a human life is at stake. That's the way I see it."

"Sit down, Rabbi Cohen," said the President. "Wait just a minute." He rang for a secretary.

He was silent till the man came in. "Take a telegram," he said. "It goes to the Chief Inspector of Immigration at Galveston. Say, 'Hold Lemchuk in Galveston and release in the custody of Rabbi Cohen on his return.' Say they'll hear direct from the Department," said the President of the United States.

The Galveston Movement

II

RABBI COHEN became so completely an integral factor in the work of the Jewish Immigrants' Information Bureau that the people of Galveston, Zangwill in England, and the office of Jacob Schiff in New York came to think of the Galveston end of the movement in terms of him, although a staff of competent social workers continued to be employed. Finally, it came about that in the fall of 1911 the Rabbi and his wife both decided that he had taken enough time from his communal activities, for which, after all, he was employed by Temple B'nai Israel, to warrant his retiring from the immigration work.

The Rabbi felt that the movement had now approached the automatic stage, that a number of the men sent from New York were competent technicians in their line, but that was all—they didn't even come to synagogue—and that in lieu of

such conditions, the once pleasant task was becoming burdensome.

Dr. and Mrs. Cohen had been talking over, too, the financial drain of the movement upon the Rabbi, not in large lump sums, but in dribs and drabs. Just about this time, all unknown to the Cohens, someone else in Galveston had the same thought and proceeded to do something about it. I. H. Kempner, the Rabbi's friend and banker, wrote direct to Mr. Schiff that something had to be done to put a stop to the continuous drain that the movement had imposed on Dr. Cohen, or that Dr. Cohen had imposed upon himself because he did things that way.

When the Rabbi's letter of resignation reached 52 William Street, simultaneously with Mr. Kempner's note, there was the devil to pay. Not only Mr. Schiff, but all his associates in the work, such as David Bressler and Morris Waldman, who had been to Galveston, set up a spontaneous protest. Of course, Rabbi Cohen should never have had to go into his pocket for a five-cent piece. Lack of funds had never been a problem of the Bureau. Why hadn't something been said about it long ago? And as for his resignation from the work—that was unthinkable.

Along with letters from these men directly responsible for the Bureau, came a personal and forcefully worded protest against the Rabbi's resignation by Alfred Hampton,* Immigration Inspector

* Son of Wade Hampton.

of the Port of Galveston. Mr. Hampton wrote that a severance of the Rabbi's connection with the Bureau might seriously impede any future work that it hoped to accomplish.

When the future welfare of the Bureau was thus placed in his hands, the Rabbi could see only one course open for himself. That was, to reconsider his resignation. He did this quickly and without further ado—as he did all things. The whole affair was over in a fortnight.

After that, the focus of the movement shifted perceptibly to Galveston. Mr. Schiff, who had unbounded faith in the Rabbi's criticisms, acted at once upon any suggestion that he made, whether it had to do with the *modus operandi* of the Bureau or some detail of steerage accommodations inimical to the comfort of the immigrants.

As for the Rabbi, he was flattered that the movement required the continuation of his services, which he had given spontaneously, without compensation, and with no thought of recognition in high places. And he was repaid in a hundred and one ways for the physical strain that he had voluntarily placed on himself.

Zangwill, writing with candor from London, said: "Your kindness retailed in many a letter to Russia will be of greatest benefit in inducing emigrants to prefer the new route. If only our German friends had been equally careful to accord a brotherly treatment to the wanderers, their number by now would have been greater."

A note that was addressed to "Rev. Cohen, City," read: "Dear Rabb. Chon. We scholars of the English class are very thankful for all you have done for us. You are truly to us better than a father to his child . . . " signed in straggling hand: "Joseph Shtumer, Raphael Shtumer, F. Mandel, I. Wechter, L. Framer."

And not the least of these gratifications was his friendship with Jacob Schiff, begun in correspondence and strengthened by a visit to Galveston of the New York banker.

There had been considerable excitement in Galveston when it was known that Mr. and Mrs. Schiff were coming on a visit to view in person the workings of the Bureau. They were to travel in their private car and they would be at the Galvez Hotel during their brief stay, but everyone knew that the greater part of their time would be spent at the rabbinage. Mrs. Cohen was questioned about the way she intended to entertain them. Would she hire a butler for the occasion? What townsfolk would be honored by being asked to meet them?

Mrs. Cohen's replies were brief and to the point. The Schiffs were coming to see the Bureau—not Galveston social life. She was sure that they would be interested in meeting everyone who helped with the immigration work. As for a butler—if she had extra help every time the Rabbi brought folks home to meals, she'd employ one every day.

When the Schiffs arrived, even Mrs. Cohen was impressed, not by the aura of fabulous wealth that

went with their private car and the Kuhn, Loeb and Company background (after all, millionaires were not uncommon in Galveston), but by the fact that they were charming, simple people with the middle-class virtues—*Gemütlichkeit*. Mr. Schiff said to Mrs. Schiff: "Isn't that a new cape you have on?" Mr. Schiff went carefully over the accounts of the Bureau. When he came to the price they paid for pencils, he looked up and said to the Rabbi, "I buy them cheaper in New York."

The Schiffs took their meals at the Rabbi's home, where staff members of the Bureau had also been invited, together with townspeople who had volunteered their services since the start of the movement. Friends and neighbors of the Cohens who wanted to meet the Schiffs popped in without ceremony.

The Isaacs lived a block away. Ben Isaacs, a colorful, crusty gentleman, who superintended the Rabbi's Sabbath school with an iron hand, set in his ways as an oyster embedded in its shell, came to pay his respects to Mr. Schiff. He found the Schiffs and the Cohens finishing their dinner. Without apology or ado, he pulled up a chair to the corner of the table and seated himself between Mr. Schiff and the Rabbi.

"I just wanted to shake your hand," Ben said to Mr. Schiff. "You know—it's very funny—I've got a son named Mortimer, too—Mortimer S. Isaacs, and since your immigration office has been operating in Galveston, the whole family calls him Mortimer Schiff Isaacs."

"Very funny," quietly answered Mr. Schiff.

"You know, Mr. Schiff, the Cohens here and ourselves have been friends and neighbors for over a quarter of a century; yessir, twenty-five years, without a single fuss."

"That's the way it should be," calmly asserted Mr. Schiff.

"Now, Mollie Cohen there was born in Houston, but when she was two years old, had sense enough to leave that mudhole."

"Mudhole?" said Mr. Schiff. "We passed through Houston, and it didn't look like a mudhole to me. How are they getting along with their ship channel?"

Ben Isaacs laughed and said, "It'll never amount to anything."

The few days that Mr. and Mrs. Schiff spent in Galveston went by quickly. Mr. Schiff was favorably impressed by the way the Bureau was functioning; he had the satisfaction of seeing with his own eyes the tangible profits in human welfare resulting from the thousands of dollars he had expended. He went over the follow-up files of the Bureau, which gave firsthand reports on the progress of immigrants after they left Galveston. Without exception, they were becoming good Americans, had managed to support themselves, and in some instances had been able to send for other members of their families in Russia.

Mr. Schiff was satisfied that the good start they had received from the Bureau, the fact that they were directed by it to parts of the country with low

population densities, had everything to do with their being able to adjust themselves economically and ideologically to their new country. And not the least of their moral and spiritual support, the old gentleman knew, was the welcome, overflowing with kindness and sympathy, which they received, before they had even set foot on these shores, from Henry Cohen.

The Jewish Immigrants' Information Bureau continued to function until the start of the World War. When the Bureau closed, the records showed that over 10,000 persons had passed through its portals at Twenty-fourth and Mechanic. Rabbi Cohen wrote a booklet about it; Morris Waldman published an article in the *Jewish Social Service Quarterly.*

But the full record of the Bureau could not be represented by tabulations of facts and figures. Mr. Schiff, deeply stirred by a visit to a night school for immigrants in Kansas City, read out at a meeting of the Missouri Bankers' Association a paper on Abraham Lincoln written by a Russian who had come through Galveston. He then proceeded to explain to the surprised bankers, who had expected a talk on finance, the history and spirit of the Galveston Movement.

People in Galveston never forgot it. Meigs Frost and the Mayor always remembered the joy and terror of that first boatload on the "Cassel." Friends of the Rabbi who had dropped in at headquarters

kept in their minds pictures of the eager faces of Russians struggling over the lesson in English.

There were echoes of the Schiff visit for years. Ben Isaacs went around saying, "Shake the hand that shook the hand of Jacob Schiff." People told about how Mr. Schiff and Mr. Lasker took a walk together on the sea wall, talking quietly—Kuhn, Loeb and Company and the godfather of Lord and Thomas. And there were numerous stories about Littman, "major-domo" at the Bureau—how he continued to click his heels together, salute the Rabbi with outstretched arm, and bawl out "Excellency!" wherever they met, until one day on Market Street, Rabbi Cohen took off his hat and put it on Littman's raised hand, and walked on.

Meigs Frost told the story of a particular immigrant, a giant of a fellow, who arrived in a steerage group and, on being questioned by the Rabbi, had turned curtly away from him, not knowing who he was.

"I'm not surprised that the Russian didn't guess it was Rabbi Cohen, because you know the Rabbi has never been known to think much of his appearance. He looked like anything but a person in authority. His favorite dress was an old black alpaca coat that hung on him like a rag. He'd board that ship in a hurry and, working around in the steerage, get dirty enough. Well," Meigs continued, "this tall guy was very curt. The Rabbi didn't say anything; he knew the fellow was confused and befuddled. Later on, they were brought above deck.

And I saw what happened then with my own eyes. That big fellow came charging like a wild bull down the length of the deck. He threw himself at the feet of the Rabbi and kissed his shoes—kissed his shoes, with the tears streaming down his big, dumb face. Somebody had told him that this man he had turned away from was Rabbi Cohen."

PART VII

1920 Broadway Again

THE RABBI'S daughter was grown up now and had her young men friends; his son was working on *The New York Times* and came home only for visits. But routine in the Rabbi's household remained essentially the same, as it continued to administer to the needs of the community, which, in maladjusted sections, climbed the high, steep steps of 1920 Broadway.

There was room for people to wait in the front entrance hall (that ran in a straight line through the middle of the house), and visitors were often in both the parlor and the library, which could be shut off by sliding doors to allow privacy. Frequently, the things that people came to see the Rabbi about were personal matters, such as insanity in the family, or a prison sentence that was considered too severe. They came to him and talked about troubles that they had thought they never could voice to another human being. He would look at them quizzically and say simply, "So, what's the trouble?" or put a

friendly arm on a trembling shoulder—and words, which had been choked by taboos or natural reticence, would come in a flood.

He was a pretty good judge of human nature, and when he had made up his mind that a prison sentence had been too severe or should be mitigated because of unusual circumstances, he'd raise heaven and earth to get something done about it.

Rabbi Cohen's methods were plain and went straight to the point. He would find a case where a family was in dire need of support from a father who was in prison because he had needed money and had committed a crime to get it. The Rabbi would go into the man's background, and perhaps discover that he was not a bad sort, just a weak character that gave way when pressed too hard. The Rabbi then assembled the maladjusted elements in the case: here, the man's in prison; his family's starving; if he were out and had a job, they wouldn't starve; he'd go straight if somebody got him a job, then watched him—perhaps, had him report at regular intervals. The whole case would be settled then . . . The Rabbi would at once take up the matter with the proper authorities. Who would be responsible to the state? they asked. The Rabbi, without batting an eye, said that he would.

It was unusual procedure; but Texans had always been individualists, even in the way they chose death in the Alamo, one by one crossing Travis's line until Bowie was carried over—in the way they turned up at the Battle of Galveston, in a bunch of "cotton

clads," bayou steamers with boilers lowered, fixed up partly with fake guns and manned by a crew of sharp-shooting Texas Rangers, and captured the "Harriet Lane," prize ship of the Federal blockade fleet. Texans still didn't mind taking chances and doing the unprecedented. Rabbi Cohen's proposal was really up their alley. As the Rabbi's work in rehabilitating prisoners became known, federal and state judges consulted with him and placed in his care men who, they thought, could be straightened out if they had suspended sentences.

In the spring of 1913, a crime of heinous brutality ending in murder had been committed against a fifteen-year-old girl in Atlanta, Georgia. The body was discovered in the basement of a pencil factory, which was run by a young man named Leo Frank. He was a graduate of Cornell University and had always borne a spotless personal reputation. In Atlanta, he was known as a Yankee. The name still connoted an era of bloodshed and suffering in Georgia. Frank was accused of the murder on the evidence of a Negro night watchman.

Rabbi Cohen, down in Galveston, followed accounts of the case with misgivings. A year later, it bore the marks of becoming an American Dreyfus affair, because Frank, besides being a Yankee, was a Jew.

The Rabbi, from the start, was convinced of Leo Frank's innocence, and, as he had done for many other men whom he considered unjustly or unwisely treated, he put himself on the case. He wrote for

details to Rabbi Marx of Atlanta; he read everything that was written in Atlanta papers, and discussed his findings with members of the Lasker family, who happened to know Frank. He wrote to Leo Frank himself, telling him to be of good courage.

"I wrote him twice," the Rabbi said, sitting in his library, one afternoon in that August, shortly after the outbreak of war in Europe. (The English couple who had come to him several years before about the husband's stammering were there now to say "good-by.") "About three months ago, and then again when his father-in-law died," the Rabbi continued. "He answered at once both times—the most beautiful letters.

"He's in a bad way in Atlanta, you know. He's a Yankee. And being a Jew is never an advantage when a fellow's in trouble. Public opinion will figure largely in the trial. It's not easy for us to understand how those folks feel up there. Issues of the Civil War, dead and gone. It's 1914. But they don't forget a terrible thing like Sherman's March to the Sea. And lost causes have a habit of simmering for years. Of course, the people won't even realize why they're so incensed against Frank. And it isn't the fault of the common people."

His voice rose in anger. "They've good impulses underneath their prejudices. People don't want to harm each other. It's the rabble rousers that are to blame—men that keep public passion at a pitch by printing over and over again such horrible things. Some do it for money; some, because they have a

lust for power. I believe some do it because they believe it themselves, but, whatever the reasons, the innocent suffer. I tell you, this Frank is in a bad way."

"I hope," the Englishman said, "You have done so much for people, never asking their religion or nationality—I hope you will be able to do something for this young man."

"And now, Henry, suppose we change the subject to pleasanter topics," Mrs. Cohen said. "These folks are getting ready to face their problems at home. We have ours here. This may be our last visit together for some time."

"You're jolly well right, Mrs. Cohen," the Englishman said. "Come, Rabbi, I want to hear the one again about the time you were hit over the head by the butt end of a gun."

"It was in Robertson, when I was working for the Steinmans," the Rabbi said. "The Kaffirs made a surprise attack." He leaned over and showed them the mark on the top of his head. "There's the nick. I'll tell you how it happened. There was a big commotion. The soldiers were away on maneuvers, and every mother's son of us was called out. . . . "

They were having tea when he came to the one about the mender of shoes on the Madeira Islands.

"I'd stubbed my shoe on board ship, wanted to have the sole mended. I told that cobbler what I wanted in Spanish. I'll never forget it. He stepped back three paces and called up to his wife, 'Sarah! Tiene vd. tabac en casa?' 'Si,' she called down.

"He came back to me and said straight out, 'Yo no trabajo ahora!' ('I no work today'.) He wouldn't do a lick of work. He had tobacco in the house!"

Everyone laughed.

"And about the visit to Galveston of the chap who worked with Gorgas in Cuba on the discovery of the cause of yellow fever?"

"Guiteras," said the Rabbi. "Ah, we take it for granted now that the bite of a mosquito of the stegomyia variety carries the germ of yellow fever. Fifteen years ago, everybody thought it was caused from filth. Even after the discovery was made, folks wouldn't believe it . . . the same as they wouldn't believe that the Wrights had gone up.

"I took Guiteras around, showed him Galveston. I'll never forget it—Remember, Mollie, Mr. Labatt said, 'you'd better not, you'll be criticized' —It wasn't," the Rabbi pursed his lips, "considered quite respectable to have anything to do with these folks who supported the mosquito 'theory,' when, as a matter of fact, it was no longer theory; it was proved fact. Dr. Gorgas and Reed had done their magnificent work in Cuba. Well, Reed has been honored by Harvard University. Truth," he paused, and a disturbed look came over his face, for he was thinking of Leo Frank, "Truth will out."

When his English friends made their last adieus, they said it was "au revoir" because, in those first August days, no one could take the idea of a long, severe war quite seriously. They left with a large bouquet of blue plumbago from Mrs. Cohen's

garden—plumbago, which bloomed through the long, hot summer when everything else dried up—and some of the fresh coffee cake they had enjoyed with their tea. After they had left, Rabbi Cohen busied himself at his desk. But, despite all the matters that claimed his attention, his eyes kept wandering to the letters of Leo Frank, addressed in a firm, clear hand and sealed in reddish wax, the color of Georgia earth.

That night, after he had been to bed and slept for several hours, Rabbi Cohen got up and walked around the house in his dressing gown. He went into the kitchen and made himself some coffee. He stepped outside to see if the paper were there. Then he went into the library and, turning on the light that hung from the ceiling directly above his desk, picked up two letters and started to read. The words seemed to leap from the page in the light's sharp glare.

> "I am of good cheer, as I know that the Truth will out. Already it is lifting its head to the light of day.
>
> "I am confident that, ultimately, all will be well.
>
> "With every good wish . . . "

And again:

> "May I thank you for your kind words of sympathy and condolence? Your courteous note was deeply appreciated by my dear wife and me.

"A merciful God saw fit to call my dear Father-in-law to the great beyond, and who is there among us to question His mandate!

"This, too, I know, 'the Truth is on the march!' The clouds that have surrounded me must give way to rays of the light of God's eternal truth!

"I am of good courage for God has been my strength and my comfort.

"The forces of error and evil cannot withstand the phalanx of God's eternal truth!

" . . . LEO FRANK"

The Rabbi had graduated from a bicycle to a Model T Ford, which he found waiting at his curb one morning, a gift from friends. It was a great boon to his work, but people in Galveston soon had their doubts as to the ultimate outcome of the gift, for the Rabbi proved to be an eccentric driver, too intent on his errands to give any thought to the traffic rules. And if he had someone in his car, he was likely to get interested in conversation and pay no attention to which side of the street he was on. Finally, the Chief of Police made a personal appeal to him.

"Rabbi," he said, "please don't stop in the middle of Market Street to have a talk with a friend. We have some new men on the force who don't know you—they might arrest you."

But the Rabbi's momentum was such that it communicated itself to his car and he went careening down the streets of Galveston, continuing to

stop, unabashed, in the worst possible situations and for his own good reasons. He was not arrested, and he never had an accident. When people saw him coming, they simply stopped walking or driving, and waited to see what he was going to do.

He had been in Galveston over a quarter of a century; there was scarcely a person in town who did not know him and his work, who had not been in direct contact with him, had not supplied him with funds to give away, or been helped by him with advice, money, or a word spoken in high places.

His daily visits to the hospitals became legend. He came with magazines and with flowers from the pulpit of his synagogue. His white-clad figure was a common sight in the operating room, and when a patient requested his presence there, no Galveston physician demurred. The Sisters at St. Mary's welcomed his ministrations; a dying nun asked to see him. It was said that a look of peace came over her face when he had been there.

The orphans in the Protestant Home and the Lasker Home knew him as the "ice cream man." He was friendly with the colored people, and they knew they could go to him for help in the same way as anyone else.

Partly through the contacts he had made in Washington during his work with the Immigrants' Information Bureau, and partly through the channels of general information, the Rabbi became known to the federal government as the person in Galveston to use in situations of national emergency.

Such a situation arose in the spring of 1914, when the Mexican Senate upheld General Huerta's decision not to salute the American flag as demanded by Admiral Mayo, following a gratuitous insult to a paymaster and ship's crew of the U. S. "Dolphin" in the harbor of Tampico. President Wilson had ordered the American fleet to Tampico, and on April nineteenth, in a special message to Congress, asked approval to "use the armed forces of the United States in such ways and to such an extent as may be necessary to obtain from General Huerta and his adherents the fullest recognition of the rights and dignity of the United States, even amid the distressing conditions now unhappily obtaining in Mexico." By April twenty-second, both houses concurred. Vera Cruz was captured by United States marines and sailors, and on April twenty-fourth, over 3,000 troops and twelve machine guns embarked from Galveston for Vera Cruz, under General Frederick Funston.

The same day, Rabbi Cohen received a telegram from the Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan:

> DEPARTMENT WILL APPRECIATE IF YOU WILL CONSULT WITH FRED M. BURTON AND GIVE HIM SUCH AID AS YOU CAN IN CARING FOR A LARGE NUMBER OF REFUGEES FROM VERA CRUZ AND TAMPICO WHO WILL SHORTLY ARRIVE IN GALVESTON.

The Rabbi immediately wired back that he would be glad to give all assistance possible to Mr. Burton, who had already consulted him.

This was the beginning of a continuous series of communications between the State Department and 1920 Broadway. When it became known that Rabbi Cohen was helping with the refugees from Mexico, friends and relatives of Americans stranded there came to him with frantic inquiries, because the government of the country, besides being unfriendly to the United States, was unstable, passing from one general to another. General Huerta had been forced to resign; Carranza was next, and the rebel army of Pancho Villa had raided border towns from Columbus, New Mexico, to Nueva Laredo.

Rabbi Cohen sent all inquiries direct to the State Department, which was represented in Mexico City by the Brazilian Minister; he was able to make personal contact with Americans in the vicinity, would look after them as well as he could, and send word back to the Department, which would relay it to the Rabbi. It was roundabout, but people in his part of the world knew that Rabbi Cohen moved quickly and they had confidence in what he could do for them.

Thus, there were inquiries for Dr. Edward Ryan, who was interned in Mexico City. The stack of telegrams about Edward Ryan piled up on the Rabbi's desk. The Brazilian minister was able to contact him and see that he was made comfortable in prison until he could be put on a refugee train. Dr. Ryan and some 600 others left Mexico City for home. There were other inquiries. Americans kept

coming out. In the spring of 1915, they were still coming.

In April, Rabbi Cohen notified the American Red Cross through the State Department that a number of destitute refugees were expected in Galveston, that no funds were available to look after them, and that foreign consuls would not take care of their respective subjects among the number.

He received an immediate reply from Red Cross headquarters in Washington:

> THROUGH STATE DEPARTMENT WE LEARN TRANSPORT SUMNER WILL HAVE SIXTY DESTITUTE AMERICAN ADULTS AND THIRTY CHILDREN REQUIRING TRANSPORTATION AND ASSISTANCE TO THEIR HOMES ABOUT FIFTY MEN DESIRE EMPLOYMENT VICINITY GALVESTON AND OKLAHOMA OIL FIELDS ALL WHITE STATE DEPARTMENT ADVISES US GOVERNMENT AID ENDS WITH DELIVERY OF REFUGEES GALVESTON WILL YOU CONFER WITH UNITED STATES INSPECTOR IMMIGRATION AS TO POSSIBILITY OFFERING ALL ABLE BODIED MEN WORK EITHER IN OIL FIELDS OR NEW MEXICO TIMBER WORK. . . .

The National Red Cross sent funds to Galveston to be used at Rabbi Cohen's discretion. He saw to the welfare of the refugees, got them jobs and transportation; when possible, communicated with relatives who could send for them. Eventually, the government, on the recommendation of the Red Cross, appropriated the sum of $75,000 to be used

for the relief of American refugees coming out of Mexico. The money was to be distributed by Rabbi Cohen.

The responsibility of taking care of the government appropriation entailed a period of intensive work for the Rabbi. He was, in a sense, in business —buying large quantities of food supplies, arranging for the distribution of aid where it was needed. Often it was necessary to send help direct into Mexico.

All this time, while he was working for Americans coming out of Mexico, he was fighting for justice for Leo Frank in Atlanta, who had been tried, convicted, and sentenced to be hanged on June twenty-second. His friends, desperate now, felt that at least a commutation of the sentence to life imprisonment would give them a chance to work for his vindication.

It was with some relief that the Rabbi learned that Governor Slaton of Georgia had commuted the sentence to life imprisonment. Relief was tinged with foreboding; Governor Slaton had to call out the state militia to protect himself against a crowd that stormed his home in protest against his action. But Frank lived, and while he lived, there was a chance for his vindication and freedom. The country outside of Georgia relieved itself editorially. There was a strong belief everywhere except in the deep South that Frank was innocent.

During that same hectic June when Frank was to have been hanged, Rabbi Cohen had occasion, in connection with his Mexican work, to play a major

role in another scheduled execution. It was to have been the fate of an American citizen by the name of Richardson, sentenced by the Mexican government, to be shot. Friends of Richardson got in touch with the Rabbi in Galveston; he immediately wired to the State Department, which communicated with the Brazilian minister in Mexico City—it was a matter of forty-eight hours before the execution.

The Rabbi scarcely left his telephone, he sent messages thick and fast to every possible source of help; he went over answers and pressed for more help wherever probable aid seemed forthcoming; he relayed hope back to Richardson's friends. Washington made itself felt, the Rabbi's work brought results, and persons in control in Mexico City stopped the execution. Richardson was told that he could leave the country.

He came to Galveston when he was freed, up the high, steep steps of 1920 Broadway, to thank Rabbi Cohen for his life.

By midsummer Mrs. Cohen decided the family needed a vacation. So they closed the house and went east to be near their son in New York, on the staff of the *Times*.

But their vacation was short-lived. For two days, August sixteenth and seventeenth, a severe tropical storm raged over Galveston Island. Communications to the outside world were shattered. New York was filled with wild rumors of havoc and destruction.

The Rabbi knew there was need of his services at home, and he started back immediately.

It was a long, hard journey back to Galveston for him. They took the southern route, passing through towns where they used to stop over when the children were young, in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia.

When they came to Georgia, the Rabbi scarcely could contain his bitterness and sorrow. On the second day that the tropical hurricane was raging in Galveston, a group of twenty-five men had forcibly removed Leo Frank from prison and lynched him. A shock went through the country; the nation's press was taking up the rights and wrongs of the case again. The *New York World* wrote sharply, "Georgia has vindicated her *Kultur*, too." In Marietta, scene of the lynching, the *Journal* declared "The people demanded that the verdict of the court be carried out, and saw to it that it was. We insist they were, and are, law-abiding citizens of Georgia."

The Rabbi sat hunched in his corner of the train. He pushed the papers aside and stared out at the vast stretch of red, rolling country, thinking of Frank.

The forces of error and evil cannot withstand the phalanx of God's eternal truth!

Reform Rabbi

WHEN the Cohens drew near Galveston, they discovered that it was necessary to secure passes to get onto the Island. But any fears they had for the safety of relatives and friends were soon dispelled, because every newspaper in Texas was announcing that there had not been the loss of a single life in Galveston from the hurricane. This helped to raise the spirits of the Rabbi, though he could not break away from thoughts of the Frank case, which he found himself reviewing in his mind, as if it were not over—finished violently by twenty-five men.

The Rabbi started to work as soon as he set foot in Galveston. He found a number of buildings damaged and some people who needed looking after, and he immediately threw in his efforts with relief work that had been undertaken locally.

It was like play acting to those who had been through the great Storm, so small was the amount of damage this time, by comparison. The new sea wall had held intact. The causeway to the mainland was

only half down, and they knew how to rebuild it now, using hollow arch supports, because that kind had not given way during the hurricane. The 1915 storm was hailed jubilantly as a satisfactory test of the protective work completed over a period of fourteen years of expense and discomfort. In no time, a week—people were congratulating each other—water was running from faucets again; danger of epidemics was pronounced past.

Before the Cohens knew it, September was in the offing, with the Jewish high holidays that came ten days apart. The Rabbi closeted himself in his study to think over what he would have to say to his congregation this year.

The background of the times was unsettled; it was becoming apparent that the war in Europe, at times muffled by national and local problems, was to be of long and serious duration. It had already struck like lightning on the American scene in the sinking of the "Lusitania." The Rabbi had a letter from the wife of the Englishman who used to stutter; he had been killed at Verdun.

It was impossible for Americans to close their eyes to the long lines of refugees from Belgium, old men and women and children turned from their homes by the steadily advancing gray machine of German soldiers. Belgium, uprooted and helpless—the victim of brute force—people didn't go on enjoying themselves, living as usual when such things were happening in the world. Americans didn't. They formed committees of mercy and worked for the Red Cross;

they gave of their means until the giving hurt, in order to alleviate the suffering of harmless, innocent people. But was this enough? The Rabbi disliked war, but he believed in fighting to secure justice for the downtrodden.

Well, what was there to say to his congregation this year, with such a background of events staring out at them? For one thing, he would tell them they could thank God that there was a man of Woodrow Wilson's caliber in the White House. And in a troubled world they could stop and review once more the faith of their fathers, which had withstood 4,000 years of human history, much of it on the darker side.

Yes, he would stress again the cardinal precepts of the Jewish faith as he saw them. Ah, that was the fine thing about Reform Judaism; it was democratic, held together loosely but firmly by the ethics preached by the Hebrew prophets. There was no hierarchy in American Jewish faith, and the Reform movement was united by the belief that the Jew's mission in modern civilization is to work for the welfare of all mankind because all men are equal before God. It was simple and natural for a Jew to subscribe to this belief. A man is a man, no matter what his race or creed or color.

When he visited the hospital and went through the wards, he never inquired whether the patients he talked with were Catholics, Jews, or Protestants. My God, when a human being's in trouble

you don't stop to inquire into his theological belief before helping him out.

And why shouldn't people believe differently about religion? It doesn't really matter, as long as they lead decent, moral lives. He often had explained to non-Jews who were curious about the tenets of his faith that he never proselytized, that a good Christian is as acceptable to God Almighty as a good Jew or a good Mohammedan or, for that matter, an agnostic. The important thing is for men of all creeds to work together for social justice.

Social justice! He could write a dozen sermons on the subject. He had told his congregation before, and he would tell them again, that when they gave to what is commonly known as charity, they should not think of it, should not speak of it as charity. The word for charity in Hebrew is *tsadoka*, which also means "justice."

Legislation for the benefit of the unfortunate in their land, that was social justice; and one didn't just make glittering generalities about it—it was necessary to work, often to make a fight for it.

He wouldn't speak of it from the pulpit, but many of his congregation knew that when he came to Texas the age of consent was ten years. A girl of ten could consent to her own ruin. This had been brought forcibly to his attention by the trial of a man who had raped a girl of twelve and was allowed to go scot-free. That was a terrible thing—a child of twelve, who ought to be playing with dolls. He didn't do anything but go up to Austin and

stand before the state legislature and get that law changed. It wasn't easy; he went month after month, year after year. (One legislator called him a crazy Englishman and told him that in Texas their girls were big and strapping and could take care of themselves.) Finally, they changed the law. The age of consent in Texas was raised gradually until it was eighteen.*

People often asked him if there was a Jewish creed. He would tell them what he taught his confirmation class, stressing the fact that these were the precepts of the Jewish religion as he saw them, not a generally accepted credo, and that there were thousands of deeply religious Orthodox Jews in this country alone who believed in a more traditional observance of Judaism.

He had taken his "Creed" partly from the teachings of Maimonides, partly from the Hebrew Prophets, and expressed it in a few simple paragraphs, in order that the children should have something definite and specific in mind concerning their religion. He always thought of the words as coming from the lips of the children he had confirmed, when he walked round the pulpit and stood before each of them in turn and said, "What are the cardinal precepts of the Jewish faith?"

I know there is a God. He is One and Only One, Indivisible, Eternal, Holy, and Perfect.

I believe in a future life in which God will

* Statute changed in 1918 to eighteen years.

deal with man according to His justice, wisdom, and mercy. We do not know how the future life is constituted for Scripture says the secret things belong to the Eternal our God, but we glory in the teachings of our religion that all good and moral men, no matter what their religion, will share in the blessings of a future life.

In the Bible we find all those teachings which, if faithfully carried out, will lead to contentment in this life and to happiness in the life to come. Foremost of these is the Prophet Micah's great definition of religion with its call to personal and social responsibility: "It hath been told thee, O man, what is good and what the Lord doth require of thee: only to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

The serious, upturned faces of children answering:

The supreme Command of the Bible is: Love thy fellow man as thyself. Or, as the great Hillel said: "What is displeasing unto thee thou shalt not do unto another."

The so-called time of the Messiah is the time in which all men will unite in worshiping the One Only God, and will live together in brotherly love, peace and harmony. Therefore, we Jews assert the common Fatherhood of God and the common Brotherhood of Man. Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us all?

But there was more to Jewish faith than creed. Judaism, many students thought, was primarily a way of life, a system of conduct, set down centuries ago when the scribes of Israel felt that they had to give their people a body of dogma to cling to, since they no longer were a nation. Ah, he had seen how unnecessary is the dogma that once governed conduct, when it is in a setting of modern life. His father's household, where dietary laws were observed! Of course, he himself still adhered to some of them. He had never tasted ham or bacon or shellfish, because he had never had any desire to do so; but it had not occurred to him to tell his children not to. The dogma no longer was necessary, but the spirit of life was still hot in Judaism. It pulsed with life; it hoped in its darkest hours, and it cried out on the New Year: *Zochrenu lachayim*—"Remember us unto life, O Sovereign, who delightest in life, and inscribe us in the book of life, for Thy sake, O God of life."

Seated on the left side of the pulpit, on Sabbath and holidays, as familiar a figure in temple as the Rabbi, was Robert I. Cohen, who had been president of the congregation for many years. He was of English birth, had come to Galveston when he was a young man, in the seventies, and had married a gentle-mannered schoolteacher, Miss Lord, of Mississippi. In the raucous decades before the turn of the century, Robert I. Cohen established himself as a merchant, was able to survive the hurricanes and disastrous fires that swept over the town, yellow

fever epidemics, and the ensuing quarantine regulations. He raised a family of three children, took care of his wife's relatives and some of his own, who occasionally came over from England. He cut a striking figure in middle age, with his stalwart build, fierce-looking nose, shaggy white eyebrows and matching hair, and his flashing blue eyes that could turn cold with anger or warm with humor and friendliness.

Robert I. Cohen took his religion seriously. Although he was older than the Rabbi, they had known each other when both were young, in London, and had imbibed the spirit implicit in English Jewish life of dignity, ethical fervor, and philanthropic endeavor. There was little in the life of the congregation that the Rabbi failed to share with him. Robert I. considered no detail about the upkeep of the temple or the workings of the Sunday school too insignificant for his personal attention. There was a board of men elected by a vote of the members of the congregation to assist the president, but he scarcely ever called on them for help.

The Rabbi and his president spoke the same language when it came to philanthropic work. Robert I. gave in large measure to every cause, and he called on his fellow members in the congregation to do the same. He hounded the charitably frugal until they contributed somewhat in accordance with their means; he never bit his tongue when it came to telling people what he thought of them, regardless of the effect it would have on his private business enterprises. Jews in Galveston respected him and

followed his leadership. It was an ideal relationship for the Rabbi, who never could have devoted so much time to extracongregational affairs if it had not been for his hard-working, straight-talking president.

They stumped the state together on big drives and tackled between them the difficult members of the local congregation who failed to recognize their obligations. A favorite story of the Rabbi's was about the time when he and Robert I. went to the place of business of a congregant who had flatly refused to give to a charity drive.

They were told that the gentleman was not in, and made up their minds to wait until he appeared. Time passed, and they sat down on some bales of dry goods and waited. The Rabbi's sharp eyes caught the movement of a shadow lurking behind one of the bales of dry goods. He had his suspicions, which he did not confide to his president, fearing an embarrassing scene. After waiting half an hour longer, the Rabbi told Robert I. to go about his business, that he'd stay.

As soon as Mr. Cohen left, the Rabbi stood up and said, "Now you can just come out from hiding behind that bale of goods." And, sure enough, out came the sheepish congregant, who grudgingly gave his share.

Fort Crockett

When the United States entered the World War, Rabbi Cohen was fired with the thought of saving democracy in the world, and he threw himself wholeheartedly and without hesitation into his part in the conflict. He became a "four-minute man" in the vast army of George Creel, who mobilized the oratorial talent of the country to give brief, pungent addresses on any given subject that was needed at a particular time to inform and inspire the American public. The Rabbi spoke between motion-picture reels, to clubs, at luncheons, in church gatherings.

It was work that he liked to do, and he always had been in favor of brevity on all occasions. Besides, he was convinced that here at last was a "war to end wars." His own son had volunteered, the day after the country entered the conflict; the father could speak with feeling when he said to an audience that their boys were willing to give their all, and

that they should keep the home fires burning, and BUY LIBERTY BONDS.

Fort Crockett, located at the west end of the city, became, at the outbreak of hostilities, an important post for the Marine Corps and National Guard, as well as the Regular Army units that normally were stationed there. The post fronted along the Gulf of Mexico for over a mile. Houses where officers lived were large and airy, built for tropical weather, with deep window spaces and long galleries. The parade ground was surrounded with palms and, on its southern edge, mortar batteries and long-range disappearing guns pointed out at an imaginary foe in the Gulf.

Townspeople could recall that at the beginning of the Mexican trouble the old one-eyed Indian fighter, General A. L. Mills (whose glass eye was known as his kind eye) had been in command of a brigade that was being whipped into shape on the Crockett reservation, and on sunny afternoons when the Gulf sparkled beyond the batteries, he could be seen putting his mount over the home-made hurdles on the parade ground. There were a number of good local stories about General Mills; one had to do with a lady living in the west end of town, who came to see the General and complained that the soldiers at the Post were annoying her daughter. Thereupon the old General turned his kind eye on her and replied,

"Madam, you have one daughter and I have 3,500 men. I believe your job is easier than mine. Suppose you get going."

For use in Mexico, a mountain battery had been stationed in a far corner of the post under the command of Lieutenant Nathan Horowitz, a ghetto boy who received his appointment to West Point direct from the sidewalks of New York. He was bright and personable and met the townsfolk at the Rabbi's home, where he was a frequent visitor. He became quite the socialite when his mules were safely put away for the night. The Rabbi's son, writing from France in 1918, told the family that one of the chiefs of the artillery school in Angers was Colonel Horowitz.

In wartime the fort took on a stricter mode of regulation than formerly, when the public had been allowed to come and go at will and occasionally caught sight of such visiting bigwigs as Generals Frederick Funston, "Ding Dong" Bell, and Leonard Wood. People no longer were allowed to bring their children on Sundays and holidays to stare at the intriguing batteries, and it was considered poor taste to mention the story that had gone around that once, when fired at a target in the Gulf, a projectile had torn up a vegetable patch on Bolivar Pennisula. There were other stories to take its place. Much was made, locally, of the internment in the guardhouse of a small number of enemy aliens (or those suspected of being in that category). As a matter of fact, they were treated well and nothing was required of them.

One of the number, however, appeared not to appreciate a soft thing when he had it and at roll

call each evening went out of his way to annoy the incoming officer of the day by loudly complaining of the pronunciation of his name. Finally, one of the junior officers thought that a little work might have a salutary effect and ordered the man to take a mop and get behind it. Early the next morning this lieutenant was sent for by the commanding officer, who began by telling him that he not only agreed with the lieutenant's course of action but would have done the same thing himself. "However," he concluded, "my advice to you is to forget about the whole thing. Washington is bending so far backwards to be fair that they might give you the short end of this deal if some damn busybody reported it."

The "good old German spirit" was not confined to the inmates of the guardhouse. A Regular Army colonel was sent to Crockett and for a short time was commanding officer there. He took a martinet's delight in humiliating the National Guard and Reserve officers. Someone called his conduct to the attention of Father Kirwin, who telephoned to him and asked him to come down to the rectory, to which request the priest received the answer, "If you want to see me, my address is Fort Crockett."

Kirwin's rejoinder came sizzling over the wires, "It'll be a damn sight better for you to see me in my office than to have me see you in yours, and it'll save you a hell of a lot of trouble."

The stunned officer arrived in short order, and Kirwin opened up on him. He knew the man's army record.

"We're fighting this war against the Prussian system," he said, "and I'm not going to have you or anybody else bully our Texas boys who are giving everything they've got."

Eventually the young officers at Fort Crockett got wind of what had occurred and were able to understand the change in their colonel's actions.

Most repeated of the local war stories was the one about a businessman of German extraction who had been visiting Galveston frequently over a period of twenty years. He had been in the German army as a youth at home and was well aware of stiff, German military regulation. After the advent of the war, he gave Fort Crockett a wide berth; in fact, when he was in Galveston he positively refused to go anywhere near the west end of town. When he was chided by another German-born friend for being too cautious, his reply was,

"You can say what you want, Sigismond, but before this war is over you and I are going to be playing checkers together at Fort Oglethorpe."

The Rabbi's friendship with military men stationed in Galveston was of long standing, dating from the Spanish-American War days. A particular friend of his was Colonel Riche, of the Engineers, who became so attached to the Island during his residence that he claimed perennial Galveston citizenship.

The Colonel, the Rabbi, and Father Kirwin were known as the "Three Musketeers." All three men, seriously engaged in their particular fields of work,

never had allowed themselves to forget that they were normal, fun-loving human beings. They got together and had a good time at the expense of one another or some stuffed shirt who they thought needed deflating. The erect, well-groomed figure of the Colonel, tall, loose-limbed Kirwin, and short, energetic Henry Cohen were indelibly impressed in the memory of people in Galveston.

Colonel Riche had been moved to the engineering command of the Canal Zone when the Bishop of the Galveston Diocese died. Believing that elevation in the church was along much the same lines as promotion in secular organizations, the Colonel, a member of the Protestant church, immediately communicated with Rabbi Cohen, suggesting that they two should get together and "boost" Kirwin for Bishop. He said to call on him if any funds were needed and that it would be a good idea to get in touch with Frank Holland (another Protestant), publisher of Holland's *Farm and Ranch*, who he knew would also be anxious to contribute. When the Rabbi laughingly repeated it to the priest, Kirwin did not smile; he choked up and said, "Well, I'll be damned."

During the war, two marine colonels with the typical American names of Mahoney and Moses were stationed at Fort Crockett. The Rabbi was good friends with both men, and they regarded him as their ex-officio chaplain, so to speak. When any of the Jewish boys at the post got into trouble, he was sent for, and when something had to be done in Washington and the usual routes were hog-tied with

red tape, the officers had a habit of appealing to him to get action. They knew that President Woodrow Wilson had sent him the pen that had been used to sign the Naval Jewish Chaplain Bill, for the Rabbi had fostered this bill, aided and abetted by Senator Morris Sheppard.

But it was in his usual capacity of pastor that the Rabbi was best known out at the fort. His quick step and clipped English accent were familiar in and out the cantonments and tents, and one day he was sent for by Colonel Mahoney, who had come upon a prize poser in his career of army administration.

A Jewish boy had refused to raise the flag for a religious observance in which his battalion was taking part.

"I don't know which is the dumber," said Colonel Mahoney to the Rabbi, "that young Jew boy for not doing what his captain told him or the captain, himself, for selecting that kid from the East Side, the only Jew in his company, for that particular flag raising."

"Let me have a talk with him," suggested the Rabbi.

He was closeted with his coreligionist for a quarter of an hour, and the Colonel smiled, as he could not help hearing through the closed door one of his soldiers getting the bawling-out of his life. After that, the Rabbi spoke quietly to the Captain about the Jewish boy's orthodox religious background, which accounted for his actions. The charges were withdrawn, and the Rabbi went home pretty

sure that this particular situation would not arise again.

When he reached the house, he found a private in uniform waiting for him in the front hall.

"And what do you want?" he barked, glancing at the young man, who obviously was a Jew.

"Don't you know me, Rabbi Cohen?" said the soldier. "I'm one of the Russian immigrants that came through the port of Galveston."

"So you are; so you are," said the Rabbi, lowering his voice. "I remember you. Mandel. Come in and sit down. You'll have to excuse my bad temper. I've just had a bad half an hour out at Fort Crockett with one of our coreligionists. Well, I'm glad to see you. I want to call Mrs. Cohen. Mawlie!" he called. "Sit down. She'll be in, in a minute. Well, well! It's very affecting to me that you've joined up. Where are you stationed?"

"At Camp Logan in Houston," said the boy.

"Ah, General Bell. I know him. Mrs. Cohen will be here in a minute. How's your family getting along? You had two sisters and your mother was expecting, as I remember it."

The soldier laughed. "You sure remember everything, Rabbi Cohen. My folks are fine. My father has a little cabinet shop in Springfield; does well enough. The new baby was a boy. He's five now."

"That's right," said the Rabbi, "you were among the last to come through, weren't you? Well, I want to tell you about the first shipload we got—on the 'Cassel.'"

"I had the mayor of this city come down to greet the newcomers. His name was Landes, a fine fellow. He shook hands with all of them. It was a natural gesture. There was a young immigrant standing there on the aft deck of the ship." The Rabbi stood up.

"We didn't even know he could speak English. He said to the mayor, 'Mr. Mayor, in the country which we have left, the mayor of our city would not shake our hands. He would beat us with the knout. You have greeted us like men. A time may come when your country will need us, and we will not hesitate to serve you with our blood.' And so, Mandel" (the Rabbi arched his brows), "here you are!"

PART VIII

Fighting the Klan

A SHORT time after the signing of the Armistice, Father Kirwin was in Houston to take part in the burial ceremony of a Catholic war hero. On his way to the services, the priest had passed a newly erected flagpole at the intersection of two busy Houston streets, Main and McKinney.

Father Kirwin got up to speak to the throng gathered to do honor to the boy who had died. No one who saw it ever forgot the picture that Kirwin made as he stood bareheaded, saluted the American flag that draped the coffin, and said,

"This morning for the first time in my life I refused to salute the flag of my country. It was hanging from a pole at Main and McKinney. That flag has a dirty spot on it!" His voice rang out over the crowd. They understood what he meant. The raising of the flag at Main and McKinney had been sponsored by that thriving, businesslike organization, the Ku Klux Klan.

At midnight of Thanksgiving Day, 1915, on top of

Stone Mountain in the outskirts of Atlanta, the Ku Klux Klan was formally revived under the blaze of a fiery cross and the guidance of William Joseph Simmons, one-time preacher, traveling salesman, promoter of fraternal organizations, and professor of Southern history in a Southern institution. The organization posted notices reminiscent of post-Civil War days; broke up a strike in Mobile, Alabama; and seemed in general to be against alien enemies, slackers, strike leaders, and immoral women. Simmons was more dreamer than organizer, and his society, numbering at the most 4,000 or 5,000 members, appeared ready to collapse because of financial trouble, when it was taken over in 1920 and put on a business basis by Edward Young Clarke, who had promoted drives for such organizations as the Anti-Saloon League, the Roosevelt Memorial Fund, and the Near-East Relief.

The feeling of national and racial exaltation prevalent in the country after the war was a great help to the new promoter. The "Knights of the Invisible Empire" made an appeal to imaginations stimulated by wartime propaganda, and many a small soul felt glorified as he clothed himself in a white sheet and went secretly out into the night to make plans to discipline his neighbors. He gave little thought to the carefully planned promotion scheme of which he was the paying end. Headquarters in Atlanta were pictured to him by Imperial Wizard Simmons, sitting at his desk with a big American flag draped dramatically at his back.

"The country was divided into some eight or more 'domains,' or geographical areas, such as Southeast, Southwest, Northeast, the Mississippi Valley, the Pacific Coast. Each 'domain' was divided into 'realms,' or states. The head of the promotion department as a whole was Imperial Kleagle E. Y. Clarke. The head of the 'domain' was called a Grand Goblin. The head of the 'realm,' or state, was called a King Kleagle, and the house-to-house solicitors, or legwork men, were called Kleagles. . . .

"The membership fee was ten dollars, which was divided as follows: four of the ten dollars went to the Kleagle, or local solicitor, when he signed up a new member; one dollar went into the pocket of the King Kleagle, or state sales-manager; the Grand Goblin, or district salesman, had to be content with only fifty cents, while the remaining four dollars and fifty cents went to Atlanta. It will be seen that the inducement to the solicitor was liberal."*

It was generally conceded that the chief prejudice of the Klan was against the Catholic Church, although officially its program of 100 per cent Americanism included anti-Jewish and anti-Negro clauses.

But the country, while apparently supporting the organization in its rapid and widespread growth,

* *The Ku Klux Klan: A Study of the American Mind*, by John Moffet Mecklin, Ph.D.

reacted in a diversified, heterogeneous fashion, in contrast to the Klan ideas about regimented Americanism.

Thus, in Oregon, which had a population of eighty-five per cent native white, the Klan came into being in Medford, Jackson County, January, 1921, with the incentive of helping the officers of the law enforce prohibition in the county—a live issue at that time. In Houston, Texas, because of a riot among the Negro soldiers during the war, the Klan became vocular as the protector of the whites. In Arkansas, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan formally resolved

> "That we condemn in the strongest possible language the vile mouthings of this writer [*i.e.* H. L. Mencken], to whom virtue, patriotism and decency are only a subject upon which to expend the venom of a poisonous pen, and that we protest against the calumny as too degrading and false to come from the heart of one who is not himself a moral pervert."*

In Galveston, the Klan never had a chance to raise its head, hooded or otherwise. There were various reasons. Galveston had a cultured, cosmopolitan population. It had a large Catholic community. Rabbi Cohen was one of the best-liked men in town. The Negro element had always been well treated, and they voted in the local elections. The newspapers were anti-Klan, the afternoon

* Mark Sullivan, in the *History of our Times.*

paper now being published by the Rabbi's son. Galvestonians were an insular people. They had been through major hurricanes together, fought quarantine regulations in the old days, started their own railroad, built their sea wall, raised their city nine feet. There had been two Jewish mayors during these trying times. In front of St. Mary's Cathedral, seven pioneer priests were buried who had lost their lives in the scourge of yellow fever.

The momentum of the Klan was such that it did organize in Galveston, but it never amounted to anything. Upstanding Protestants and leaders of the Catholic and Jewish faiths saw to that.

When the Klan entered the political stage in Texas and Klan-indorsed candidates for national and state offices won out in the Democratic primary, Galveston political life showed an opposite trend. It happened that the sheriff who had served Galveston County for many years tried to straddle the Klan issue and, over the protest of a local newspaper publisher, permitted the Houston Klan to hold a meeting and burn a fiery cross down the Island. It was his last year as sheriff. A police sergeant was run against him, and, despite the fact that the sheriff had been in office ever since anyone could remember, he was enthusiastically sent back to private life.

Another effort of outside Klansmen to drive an entering wedge into the tolerant trend of Galveston life was stopped when their scheduled parade down Market Street was called off by the threat of Father

Kirwin and another priest, Father Marius Chataignon, to give the paraders an ample dose of lachrymal gas from St. Mary's Infirmary.

The Rabbi believed in stopping a "hate" organization before it could gain ground, whether the hate were anti-Catholic, anti-Jew, anti-Negro, or anti-foreign-born (all of which were covered in the Klan's sales plan). He spoke out against the Klan at public functions and his leadership counteracted the influence of people who wanted to keep mum about the organization and close their eyes to its rapid spread through the country.

At a luncheon given to Sir Harry Lauder by the Galveston Rotary Club, the Rabbi electrified the audience by saying to the Scotch comedian, who was an old friend:

"You were all through the war, Harry. You know that nobody asked a man's religion when it was time to go over the top!"

"The 'Rabi' is right," said Sir Harry, as he got to his feet. "All that should be behind us now because, if we do not make a better world, all our sacrifices are in vain."

The Rotarians knew exactly what Sir Harry meant because all over the world the papers had flashed that the Scotch comedian had lost his son, a captain in France.

There was a preacher up in North Texas, who, though not a professed Klansman, proceeded to give a series of sermons addressed first to Catholics, then to Jews, to tell them what was wrong with them, why

there was prejudice against them, throwing in some advice on how they should mend their ways.

The Rabbi got a report on the talk about the Jews, which proved to be a bombastic diatribe filled with glittering generalities delivered in a condescending vein. The Rabbi exploded privately, and bided his time.

Months later, he was at a public gathering and, seated near him at the speakers' table, was the minister who had proffered the Jews his gratuitous advice.

The Rabbi got to his feet to speak. Everyone applauded vigorously, and there were scattered whispers in the audience, "It's Rabbi Cohen from Galveston."

"Before proceeding to the subject assigned me," he began, "I would like to say a few words to a fellow member of the cloth here with us, who took it on himself to tell the Jewish people from his pulpit what was wrong with them, why they are militated against, how they should conduct themselves, what they should do and what they shouldn't do."

The Rabbi was silent, pursing his lips. There was a general clearing of throats in the hall. He continued:

"And he chose a time for his self-appointed task that was no compliment to his courage. The minister started out by explaining his good intentions toward the Jewish people, and then proceeded to damn them with faint praise, bad taste, worse history, and little regard to present-day fact."

The audience, still uneasy, snickered nervously,

and the usually smiling and bland divine mopped his brow, which had broken out in sweat. The Rabbi fixed his eye on him and said,

"The Jews are no better or no worse than their fellow citizens of other denominations. They are not white; they aren't black, but gray, like everybody else. In a country that gives them equal opportunity they rise to the general level and sometimes surpass it. They give more than their share of blood in time of war and their equal share of wealth and service in times of peace, as witness in your own state and your own community."

The Rabbi began to warm up to his subject: "And I consider it a fine piece of cheek for you or any other Christian minister to tell us *our* duty. I quote you from your own New Testament, from the words of Him you call your Savior, 'Let him who is without sin cast the first stone.'

"You get up in your pulpit and damn out people of other faiths and of other cultures. If I wished to avail myself of this same opportunity, I could put some questions to you that might prove a lot more embarrassing than your glittering generalities against Jews. I might ask you to trace the history of your brother Christians for the past 2,000 years following the advent of the Prince of Peace. I might ask you to tell me just how they have followed their Master's word. I might ask you for justification of their slaughter of Moslems, Jews, and fellow Christians from whom they differed at a particular time, a slaughter not in the thousands, but in the millions,

through the darkest ages of history, and all under the banner of the Cross and to glorify the man they call the 'Prince of Peace.'

"But I don't ask these questions. I think my failure to do so shows that I know humanity a great deal better than you do, despite all your protestations. I will not libel a race. I will not damn out an entire religion because of the malefactions of a few of its professed members. As I said before, no one group is all black or all white; in truth, we are all gray.

"When I go into a ward in a hospital, I never think to ask what religion each patient professes or whether he has any religion at all. It's enough for me that he is sick. To me there is no such thing as Episcopalian scarlet fever, Catholic arthritis, or Jewish mumps."

The audience, eased up from their tension, permitted themselves a hearty guffaw.

"This is neither the time nor the place to answer in detail your observations made last year at a time when the Klan was stronger than it is today or will ever be again. I am merely calling public attention to it now, quite by accident, from this table, because I do not want you to think that you have gotten away with anything.

"I could go into the history of the Jewish people through the persecutions of the Old World up to their arrival on these God-given shores. I could trace the history of American Jewry up and down the Atlantic seaboard, from the days of Hyam Solomon to Judah P. Benjamin and on up to our own times,

but it can all wait. History, the record of accomplished fact, will not be erased. It is not subject to the same fate as the thoughtless word aimed at a minority group."

And then the Rabbi turned quickly toward the head of the table and said in a loud voice, "Mr. Chairman, I will now proceed to the subject that has been assigned me: 'Marriage Customs among the Ancient Greeks.' "

The Rabbi was correct when he stated that the Klan was not so strong as it had been. One of the chief reasons for this was the wave of terrorism sweeping the country, which rightly or wrongly was attributed to the Klan, but obviously was inspired by it.

In Houston there was a newspaper publisher by the name of Marcellus Foster, who had fought the Klan consistently from its inception. He brought his fight out in the open at a time when it took courage to do so. His life was threatened a number of times. The state-wide circulation of his paper, the *Houston Chronicle*, was subjected continuously to Klan pressure. He went right ahead filling his pages with detailed accounts of "secret" Klan meetings and every new outrage that was perpetrated in its name. His editorial column carried blistering comment. On an occasion when a fiery cross was burned on the front lawn of his home, his paper ran a front-page editorial which began, "For shame, Christians, they have put pin wheels on your cross." And the head

of the Houston Klan telephoned to say his organization had no part in it.

Foster was a Protestant. He grew up in the hilly, tree-shadowed streets of Huntsville, where Sam Houston lived in his shiphouse when the Texas Revolution was over. His folks were Texas newspaper men for two generations back. He had developed a lucid style of journalistic writing that people throughout the state liked to read. Through all the hullabaloo of the Klan—their blazing crosses, their tar-and-feathering—his cool, clear words came in an endless stream, day after day, in the columns of the *Chronicle.*

> "Boys, you'd better disband. You'd better take your sheets, your banners, your masks, your regalia, and make one big bonfire. Without pausing to argue over the objects you have in mind, it is sufficient to say that your methods are hopelessly wrong. Every tradition of social progress is against them. They are opposed to every principle on which this government is founded."

It was just such strenuous Protestant opposition that finally crippled the Klan in Texas and through the rest of the country. It took fighting and courage to do this, for the hold of the secret organization was strong; and mass initiations captured the hysterical fringe of society. The *New York World* and other newspapers kept hammering with factual evidence. An investigation by Congress started people thinking

that this Klan business might be a menace greater than the "Red scare" that had preceded it. In Atlanta, skirting Stone Mountain, whose black rock rising dramatically from the clay Georgia terrain was the setting of Simmons's revival in 1915, liberal and progressive elements among the Protestant clergy were said to be unfavorable to his organization.

In the political arena the Klan made its final stand and was decisively beaten. Candidates endorsed by the Kleagles and their cohorts were defeated all over the country—in Texas, by the amazing "Ma" Ferguson.

People began to laugh about the Klan, its gargantuan self-importance, its bonfires and ritual hocus-pocus. There was something that tickled the American fancy about the names: Kleagle, King-Kleagle, Grand Goblin, Imperial Wizard. Funny stories were told about it—the Rabbi had his favorites.

A Jew in a small town was visited by a Klan Committee and told to take down a sign that read: "A. Ginsberg, 200% American."

"You can't be 200 per cent American, Jew. We Klansmen are only 100 per cent."

The Jew replied, "Sure, you just hate Jews and Catholics, but I hate everybody."

On a chair car in West Texas a Jew was sitting opposite a big bruiser of a Klansman. Came noon, and to the Jew's surprise the Klansman pulled out his lunch and offered the Jew a sandwich.

The Jew looked at it and asked, "Ham?"

"Yes," said the Klansman.

"Don't eat it."

A little while later the Klansman brought out a jug of wine and offered the Jew a drink of it.

"Sacramental?" asked the Jew.

The Klansman became furious. "You Jews are a funny bunch. Here I offer you the best I've got, and you won't take it. By God, you're gonna drink this wine." The Klansman accompanied this statement by pushing the jug of wine out at the Jew with one hand while with the other he pulled a gun off his hip.

"Now by God, drink it," said the Klansman.

"Well," weakly replied the Jew, "as long as I'm trapped, I'll take the sandwich, too."

A sense of humor calls for a sense of balance and fair play. But the conviction deep-rooted in American thought that intolerance never does anybody any good, the Rabbi considered to be the underlying cause in the decline of the Klan. He frequently quoted from John Moffat Mecklin's book on the revised Ku Klux Klan a classic expression of this thought:

> "It [the Klan] has flourished by creating false issues, by magnifying hates and prejudices or by exploiting misguided loyalties. It cannot point to a single great constructive movement which it has set on foot. Men do not gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles."

Prison Work

THE YEAR following the Klan-controlled Democratic primaries in Texas, while that organization was still busily engaged, marching in parades and staging initiations in masked regalia, a group of citizens soberly and without fanfare were making possible an exhaustive scientific survey of the antiquated prison system in the state. Klan members, if any of them took time off from their strenuous activity to read the report, might have noted in the first pages of the Survey that more than half of the prisoners on state farms were native Texans. Reading further, they would have discovered that the conditions under which these prisoners lived subjected them to physical and moral retrogression, with the result that there was small chance of their ever emerging as socially responsible citizens.

Recognition of these conditions and agitation for their reform were not new in the state, but, until the Survey in 1924, all efforts had been sporadic, personal, and aimed at curtailment of surface ills.

While not getting at the root of prison troubles, the work of individuals did, however, stir up the subsoil of public opinion, getting it ready for the deep spading that was to come.

Scarcely anybody in Texas failed to remember the "bull-whip" campaign of short, powerfully built O. B. Colquitt, who stumped the state as candidate for governor in 1910. At a set place in his speech, a henchman would hand him the "bull whip," which was a "three-ply leather thong, several inches wide, with a heavy knot at the end, attached to a long wooden handle."* (The "bat" was to be dipped in wet sand and used to beat prisoners on their naked bodies, lacerating the skin.) Colquitt strode up and down before audiences in the state, cracking the blood-stained "bull whip," telling lurid stories of its misuse, and promising its abolition if he were elected governor—"by Jolly!"

Colquitt won the election, and Texans breathed more freely over the punishment meted out to their prisoners. The size of the whip to be used for certain proscribed offenses was defined by law, and the maximum number of lashes was set at fifteen, to be inflicted only in the presence of a physician. But the public conscience was not allowed to remain quiescent. It began to be prodded by a number of discomfiting individuals.

At a meeting of the State Conference of Social Welfare for 1917 in Austin, Rabbi Cohen, as chairman of the Committee on the After Care of Prison-

*Austin, *American Statesman*, December 7, 1924.

ers, gave a detailed report on the need of a bureau for the purpose of looking after discharged convicts, also emphasizing treatment of prisoners while serving their terms, and the obligation to help destitute families of the men interned by the state.

No immediate practical result came of the meeting in Austin, but the Rabbi didn't relax his efforts in behalf of prison reform. He arranged for Frank Tannenbaum, expert penologist, to lecture in Galveston on the subject. He wrote letters to people all through the state, asking advice and giving it: What could be done? Why wasn't something done? —and people answered him, thought the problem through, and made themselves as uncomfortable as he was about conditions.

Tom Finty, who edited the *Dallas Evening Journal*, and who, when he got his start as religious and sporting editor of the *Galveston Tribune*, had known the Rabbi intimately, answered him at length. Finty reviewed the failure of any sustained effort in aftercare of prisoners in Texas, citing the national organization of Maud Ballington Booth, which operated for a time the refuge, Hope Hall in Houston, and he suggested that if ever constructive work in the field were made possible, it would be through a Texas organization, run by home people. Without casting aspersions upon well-meaning and capable national leaders in prison reform, Finty explained, Texans liked to manage for themselves.

The chief drawback to his campaign for prison reform, the Rabbi discovered, was a common

tendency to dislike the idea of what some called "coddling" the prisoners. Marcellus Foster, a consistent supporter of the Rabbi's work, told him that he had encountered a more indifferent response to his agitation for prison reform than to any other social program the *Chronicle* had sponsored.

The Rabbi had a significant experience on a visit to one of the women's farms. He had gone there to ask specific questions about conditions, and when told that not a single inmate had been given "time off" for good behavior, he asked why. He discovered that all the women were put down as negligent (therefore unworthy of "time off" for good behavior) because, for four days a month, they could not do heavy work. It was clear to him that the officials who ran the farms were fair-minded people who didn't realize that the inmates were being cheated of free days because of a normal physical function. This was a rule that had always been followed, and nobody had ever given it a thought.

The Rabbi saw to it that the rule was altered and that all back time off due to the inmates who were still in prison was taken from their remaining sentences.

"It isn't the fault of the three prison commissioners at the head of the present system," Rabbi Cohen contended to a group of men seated in the smoker of a train going to Dallas, where he was to speak before the Open Forum on his favorite theme of prison reform. "Their hands are tied, the same as ours. What this state needs is some forward-

looking, constructive legislation that will leave the way open for reform of the entire system. It's a question of arousing people in the state to do something about it.

"If they saw the conditions I've witnessed they'd do something about it, all right." The Rabbi raised his brows as his eyes swept his audience in the smoker. "I'll tell you some things. I've been around to those river-bottom farms. Have you ever seen one of them? It isn't a nice sight—men bitten up by mosquitoes, the most primitive means of sanitation. Well, that isn't the worst of it. You put a man in prison to make him a better citizen when he comes out. You can't expect a first offender to improve when he's been interned next to a hardened criminal. I tell you that conditions existent on our state farms tend to make men come out of them morally and physically degenerated.

"Look here. We shut a fellow up in prison because he's committed a crime—a year, two years, ten years. So! What happens when he gets out? He's turned loose on society ten times worse than when he went in. He'll go back again, as sure as anything, and he'll end up a criminal of the worst sort. It's our responsibility to see that this does not happen. We can segregate the first offender; we can see that he's taught a trade, that his health isn't impaired while he's in the Walls. And when he gets out we can give him a start in the right direction." The Rabbi swayed with the rocking train, accenting his remarks with quick puffs on his cigar.

The men in the smoker listened attentively. Most of them were Texans, businessmen, cattlemen, and they had not given much thought to the subject of prison reform before.

The Rabbi was given full support in his views by a fellow Galvestonian present, John Darrouzet, lawyer and lobbyist, familiarly known through the state as "the Black Eagle of the Gulf."

There was in the crowded smoker one individual who did not like the tenor of the conversation. He was a high state official and, at this particular moment, full of corn liquor. He said a convict was a convict, America was for Americans, and no damned Jew was going to tell him his business.

In the sudden silence that followed, John Darrouzet got to his feet. He saw Dr. Cohen was red in the face and knew he wouldn't take the insult lying down. He pulled the protesting Rabbi by the arm into the corridor and propelled him in the direction of his Pullman berth.

"You stay here, Doctor," John said, planting him firmly in the seat. "You can't afford to get into an altercation with that drunk." Then the Eagle squared his shoulders and went back into the smoking room to take over the situation.

The Rabbi considered that his lecture before the Dallas Open Forum was well received. Dallas newspapers had reported it accurately and caught the spirit of what he had tried to instill into his audience. This somewhat made up for the distasteful

experience he had had on the train. He had not seen Darrouzet since the incident, and he was anxious to know what went on in the smoker after he left.

His curiosity was satisfied shortly, but not by Darrouzet. Soon after his return from Dallas, he received a letter from the bibulous official. It was as abject a letter of apology as one man could write to another. The Rabbi answered it immediately, telling the man to forget the whole matter.

"Poor fellow, I don't want to be too hard on him," he said to Mrs. Cohen.

"Mollie! Here is a very good account sent me from Dallas of the questions asked at the forum lecture. This is fine reporting. Listen!

> "The first question was asked . . . by a woman. She wanted to know what the state ought to do to keep men straight when they've been in the penitentiary.
>
> " 'There should be a commission, headed by a $10,000-a-year man to look after the interests of released prisoners,' Rabbi Cohen said.
>
> " 'Should not a man in prison be sent back to his home community?' another man asked.
>
> "The speaker said he had found it to the best interests of released prisoners to begin life in a new place.
>
> "Romance bloomed in the Forum when a woman, scarcely more than a girl, asked: 'Should a young man who has been in prison

reveal his past to a young woman he is about to marry?'

" 'When a man has fallen and has been lifted up and placed in the right way again, it is as if he had never fallen,' Dr. Cohen answered, rather cryptically, leaving to members of the audience to judge whether they should reveal their pasts.

"Another inquiry was directed toward the necessity of finding jobs for pardoned men.

" 'In some states those asking pardon for a prisoner must agree to furnish him with a job,' Dr. Cohen said. 'It should be that way in Texas.'

" 'How can we raise a man's morale in prison, so as to remove the "down and out" complex?' a man wanted to know.

" 'That should begin in prison,' stated the speaker. 'An expert psychologist should work on prisoners and should analyze every man. Some cases are mental defects, fit subjects for hospital care. Others are normal. Some deviate slightly from normality. All should be treated differently.'

" 'Should there not be a reorganization of the social system so as to provide jobs, not only for released prisoners, but also for the vast numbers of the unemployed?' a professional socialist wanted to know.

" 'My friend, there should also be a millennium,' Dr. Cohen replied, 'when every man

should be perfect, but that time, I fear, is not at hand. So we must do the best we can with what we have. Part of your question is serious though. About the scarcity of jobs. My organization in Galveston deprives no man of a job; we pay his salary to the employer who pays it to him. This is to save the prisoner's self-respect. And in most instances, the employer comes to us, and says that the man has made good and he has a legitimate place for him in his establishment.'

" 'Should not some sort of a sermon on helping prisoners out of jail be preached to the 165 preachers in Dallas churches, stirring them up to the kind of work you're doing?' a prominent Dallas citizen asked.

" 'I take it for granted there are men of my profession in Dallas who are quietly helping released prisoners. It is not a work to which one can call public attention in his own city. However, what is being done should be known and knowledge of it spread.'

" 'If you would treat prisoners as well as you describe will not they commit crimes so as to be sent to prison?' asked a sarcastic questioner.

" 'They arraigned a Chinaman in court in Galveston once,' countered the speaker, 'and the judge asked him, "Guilty or not guilty?" I might answer you like the Chinaman did the judge—' here Dr. Cohen, a master of 15 or 20 languages, spoke rapidly a long sentence in

Chinese—'but I will reply as did the interpreter, "No!" ' "

The National Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor had organized a branch in Texas, which was indorsed by clubs in the state* and operated by home people. In the 1923–1924 report of the Texas Committee for Prisons and Prison Labor, the executive secretary wrote that on the initial drive to collect funds for the Prison Survey, members of the committee went first to Galveston and talked with Rabbi Cohen. . . . They called on him at his home. He went to the telephone and arranged that same day for a meeting of four Galveston businessmen. In thirty minutes these men had agreed that the committee could count on $2,000 from Galveston toward expenses of the survey. The following week, when the executive committee met in Fort Worth, a telegram was received from Dr. Cohen, officially pledging the amount.

That was a small but encouraging beginning toward the $25,000 budget necessary to complete a scientific survey of the Texas prison system. The National Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor was to help by contributing part of the expenses, and all through the hot summer of 1923, the state

* Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, League of Women Voters, State Conference of Social Welfare, American Legion, Women's Christian Temperance Union, Parent-Teachers' Association, Professional Women's Club, Texas Graduate Nurses' Association.

committee canvassed Texas for additional funds. The report of the committee shows a painstaking effort to raise money, personal loans made quietly by interested citizens in order to tide the project over, and willingness to give voluntary service to the movement on the part of an ever-widening group of Texas people. The former religious and sporting editor of the *Galveston Tribune*, Tom Finty, Jr., turned out to be correct in his surmise that, if ever an active prison reform program were to be sponsored in the state, it would take a group of home people to do it.

The survey could not have been made without the aid volunteered by Texas physicians and dentists. They worked under the enthusiastic guidance of Dr. A. C. Scott of Temple, the president of the state medical association. In ten clinical units of seven doctors each they visited isolated river-bottom farms and under difficult circumstances made medical examinations of 3,811 men and women prisoners. Their findings made the survey sensational reading. Dr. Scott did not hesitate to place the responsibility of conditions squarely on the public. He didn't wait for the people of the state to read the survey, but spoke out before a meeting of the state Conference of Social Welfare in Austin:

"A sentence fixed by a jury of twelve men for a given term at hard labor in prison does not mean that the convict shall have added to his sentence a day's sickness or an hour's pain.

"Can any one question the responsibility of the

state when a man sentenced for a given term is made to work in the fields in a blazing sun while he has a blood pressure of 270?

"Shall we seek to establish an alibi if some young man, who has been infected with syphilis, is sent to prison say for five years, where he is unable to procure scientific treatment on his own account and the state does not furnish it, and if, in the meantime, the disease attacks his brain or spinal cord and he is finally sent home a hopeless wreck to be a further expense to his family, the county in which he lives, or the state?"

The survey, when it appeared in print, contained psychiatric studies of prisoners made by a staff of workers brought down from the National Committee for Mental Hygiene; an agricultural report, made by Texas A. & M.; anthropometric measurements, by the University of Texas. Psychiatrist Thomas Haines said that the survey set a new standard in prison study for the country.

Attention of the practical-minded in the state was arrested by the facts set down in the survey about the location of prison farms in river bottoms where there were regular overflows every five or six years, resulting in loss of crops and livestock. People in farm communities shook their heads over these accounts. It was language that they understood.

In 1925 a bill for the reorganization and relocation of the prison system passed the state legislature, but was vetoed by Governor Miriam Ferguson on

the usual grounds of "economy." The Texas Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor took on the task of mobilizing public opinion for further legislative action based on the findings of the survey. A Speaker's Bureau was set up in each of seventy-six towns and cities in the state, and men and women who were determined to see prison reform through in Texas addressed clubs, churches, schools, and the press.

On November 1, of the next year, the *Galveston Tribune* carried on its editorial page the following:

> "Last Call for Prison Reform. . . . Tomorrow is the day when Texas voters will have an opportunity to say whether they are satisfied with the present management of their $6,000,000 investment as represented by the prison system of this state . . . whether they want a continuation of the treatment convicts have been receiving under the existing regime . . .
>
> "Senator Holbrook of the Galveston district is the author of the proposed amendment. He and Rabbi Cohen of this city, a noted authority on prison reform, have been doing some effective campaigning for its passage."

The amendment passed the legislature, authorizing Governor Moody to appoint a new prison board of eight nonsalaried members, and one paid, highly trained worker. The Governor appointed men long interested in prison work in the state. Rabbi Cohen was one of the eight members, who

soon discovered that actually they were powerless to do any effective reorganization work in the state penal system because they had not been given authority to use state funds or dispose of prison properties. The fight for their ultimate goal had to go on. A meeting of the Texas Conference of Social Welfare, faithful sounding board for the prison reform movement, was apprised of the need of further legislation.

Rabbi Cohen spoke at this meeting, and he continued to place the problem before clubs, colleges, church gatherings, and forums throughout the state. He gave news stories to the papers. He made news.

> "Two Strong Allies. . . . The [Galveston] *Tribune* has two strong allies in its protest against making peons of the boys sent to training school at Gatesville. These are Rabbi Cohen of Galveston, who probably has devoted as much time and thought to prison reform as any man in Texas, and the *Beaumont Enterprise*, one of the influential papers of the state. There are others, of course, who regard the practice of hiring out these boys to the farmers of that section with as much horror as we do, even though they have not publicly expressed themselves . . . "

There were incidents involving the Rabbi which, because of their nature, never reached the press and the public. One concerned the flogging of a boy at a state institution. The parents came to Rabbi Cohen with their story of brutal punishment.

Realizing that the boy, no matter what his offense, would grow worse under the circumstances, Dr. Cohen made up his mind to get him out. He went to see the judge who had the authority to parole the boy, and was refused point blank. He was told that it was a bad case that needed detention. When the Rabbi continued his plea, saying that he would hold himself responsible for the parolee, the judge stated succinctly that the boy was no good and he intended to keep him where he was.

Rabbi Cohen went to the door of the office, locked it, and pocketed the key. Before the judge could demand an explanation for this highhanded action, the Rabbi stood in front of him and said, "I won't open that door until you agree to parole this boy. You are a fine one to refuse to give him a chance. We picked you out of the gutter dozens of times, a confirmed drunkard. Yet, you reformed. Here you are, in a position of responsibility in the state. How can you—of all people—refuse this boy a chance to become a decent, self-respecting citizen?"

The boy was paroled to Rabbi Cohen.

The new Prison Board did what it could without plenary powers to improve conditions on the farms. It remedied means of sanitation and started the Prisoners' Welfare League, an organization of inmates to provide for self-education and recreation within the walls. Two years after the board's inception, a series of prison breaks in the vicinity of Houston, resulting in the death of civilians, aroused the public to the necessity of long-delayed action on the Texas penal system.

Governor Moody took advantage of the state-wide furore created to tell the solons up in Austin in no uncertain terms that there had been enough dilly-dallying on the subject of prison reform. Newspapers in all parts of the state carried his admonition in headlines. The "Old Guard" of prison workers once more made the trek to Austin to tell the legislature what was needed. Dr. Scott and Rabbi Cohen addressed a joint session. A legislator made some headlines by charging the new Prison Board with extravagance. In committee, Rabbi Cohen was put on the carpet by a solon for an expenditure made on eyeglasses for a prisoner—a luxury, that's what it was—a convict didn't need to have glasses. The Rabbi showed that the cost to the state had been negligible, since a friend of his who was an optometrist had made the examination for nothing and secured the lenses at cost. When the legislator's comment became caustic and really insulting, Governor Moody, who had been sitting next to the Rabbi, got to his feet and said, "You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Instead of criticizing Dr. Cohen, you should get down on your knees and thank God we have a man like him in the state of Texas."

Nothing was done on the prison situation at that session of the legislature, and Governor Dan Moody called a special session. A bill he considered impractical was passed, and he vetoed it. At a second called session the legislature approved a bill satisfactory to the governor. The long struggle to make prison reform possible in Texas was over.

Rabbi Cohen remained on the prison board another year. Then he wrote to Governor Moody that he was forced to resign, because his rabbinical and other duties in Galveston made it difficult for him to attend board meetings throughout the state. The Governor urged him to remain, but finally accepted his resignation when the Rabbi told him that he felt he could do better work off the board than on, that he had no business being on a board which dealt primarily in the handling of real-estate, commodity purchases and financial matters in general.

Mrs. Cohen had really made the decision for him. Mollie said it was time he slowed down on his outside activities. He was getting old, she reminded him; in three years he would be seventy.

The Rabbi did not like to be told that he was old. He felt as chipper as ever, and he led the same active life that he always had. "But Mollie's right about the prison board," he remarked to friends with whom he discussed his resignation. "I can do more off of it now than I can do on it. What do I know about the price of beans? The time I've taken to attend all those meetings I can put in on discharged prisoners; that's what I know something about. When I think back what a time we had getting that survey. 'Coddling the convicts,' folks said, like that fellow in the smoker who had too much to drink. John Darrouzet sobered him up pretty quick . . . So! . . . It takes time to get social legislation through. Did I ever tell you that when I came to Texas, the 'age of consent' was ten?"

PART IX

The Rabbi Stays in Texas

I

OVER THE years, the Rabbi had received all kinds of "calls," as new jobs, usually with higher salaries, are referred to in church circles. He didn't like to speak of them because the congregations wishing his services were in the habit of asking him to name someone who might fill the position he refused.

"No amount of pecuniary gain," was the Rabbi's stock comment, "can compensate for the severance of those ties to which one is accustomed."

When offered the presidency of a theological college, he turned it down on the grounds that he had been out of classroom work too many years. To a New York congregation that assured him financial security, and more, for the rest of his life, he wrote he had that in Galveston. He refused another pulpit, explaining that he had left British Conservative Judaism for American Reform and didn't want to go back to cap and tallis.

But behind all the reasoning was the definite

stand of Mrs. Cohen, who never had any intention of leaving Galveston. Even when their daughter was married and moved to New York, and when friends from the East—among them Stephen S. Wise—did everything in their power to persuade Henry Cohen to move to their part of the country, she dismissed cultural and financial advantages and nation-wide recognition with the flat statement that the Rabbi was better off where he was. When Dr. Wise and others placed their invitations on the basis of the good that would accrue to American Judaism, Mrs. Cohen contended that the state of Texas offered a big enough field for any man.

The Rabbi listened to Mollie and, despite the considerable pressure put on him to leave Texas, elected to remain there to continue to work among the people who had come to know him since the days when he had traveled by stage and day coach from Woodville, Mississippi—a pale young Englishman with blue eyes and a habit of stuttering.

As it turned out, while staying right in Galveston, he received the honors and recognition—more than either he or Mrs. Cohen ever had given a thought to.

He received the Red Cross Reward of Merit for his work during the Mexican trouble, when President Wilson cited him as the state's outstanding citizen. The Hebrew Union College conferred on him a Doctor of Hebrew Law and the Jewish Institute of Religion made him a D.D. He was elected to a number of honorary historical, philosophical, and fraternal societies in the state and elsewhere.

When he had been in Galveston forty years, his congregation and friends erected a community house adjoining his temple, dedicated it, and named it for him. The building held a large auditorium, an office in which he could transact his varied social work, classrooms, and stage facilities. It was built in the same style of Saracenic architecture as the temple, and its outer white walls threw off the tropical glare scantily shaded by tall leaf palms. In the high-ceilinged, cream-colored interior, the Rabbi held forth in his religious school, his adult classes, the Temple Literary Society (founded in 1887), and saw to it that the auditorium was available for Open Forum lectures and other civic needs. It was an ideal gift, as far as his friends were concerned, an active memorial to him and his work.

That was the way they wanted it to be—flowers to the living! appreciation while he was among them to receive it—they said, as the years passed and the Rabbi approached his seventieth birthday. People in the state let him know their regard for him in their own ways, in simple gifts—grapefruit from the Valley, handmade objects from the prisons, group photographs of families he'd served in weddings or funerals. Hundreds of people whose lives had touched his since he came to Texas showed him in as many ways that they thanked him for what he had done. He received other gifts from friends who had traveled in Europe and the Orient: a Passover dish embossed in platinum and gold, which Mr. Lasker had sent from the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts in Pales-

tine; a book of poems inscribed to Sarah Bernhardt by Paul Fort, from a member of the Kempner family; a collection of Struck etchings, from Dr. Joseph Klein in New York. And there was always the gift of flowers in the rabbinage; it might be a superb hothouse plant or a spray of oleanders from someone's garden. Everyone knew Mrs. Cohen's love of flowers, and her regard for plants as if they were alive and could feel being uprooted or dying.

Whenever the Rabbi's automobile wore out, another appeared, standing bright and new in front of his doorsteps, donors unknown. Through the years, the makes had changed from Fords to Chevrolets, DeSotos and Buicks. The Rabbi had stopped using Fords during the *Dearborn Independent's* anti-Semitic campaign; but he never liked any gearshift except that of the old Model T, and had to get a chauffeur to drive him in his other cars. When someone regretted that he should be put to this expense, his president, Robert I. Cohen, answered that, considering the way the Rabbi drove, the expenditure was better than life insurance.

There was a steady flow of funds from people who knew about his work and the continued demands made on him and never wanted the fountain of hope at 1920 Broadway to run dry. Since it was well known that the Rabbi was set against the acceptance of perquisites, he received numbers of checks earmarked for private charity.

When he reached the age of seventy, services held in the synagogue were attended by rabbis from all

over Texas and members of the Galveston clergy. The Rabbi sat hunched in his big chair on the pulpit, thoroughly enjoying himself. The services were long; for one after another, men stood in the pulpit and, some in simple fashion and others with oratorical flourish, told of the work and deeds of Rabbi Cohen and what he had meant to them personally and to the people whom they knew.

The Rabbi's son-in-law, Ephraim Frisch, one of the upstanding liberals in the American rabbinate, spoke now of Dr. Cohen as a father as well as an inspiration to him as a younger rabbi. A lanky, sandy-haired man read in a dry, matter-of-fact way a poem about the Rabbi, written by President Benedict of the University of Texas; then added a few words of his own in tribute. Dr. Singleton did not speak long, but the quiet presence of the Southwest's outstanding surgeon was in itself a symbol; because, aside from his private practice, the doctor held the chair of surgery at the medical branch of the University of Texas, and anyone who had ever been out at the Medical School connected the Rabbi with it just as if he had been on the faculty.

In the first place, old students would say, graduation was nothing without Rabbi Cohen. He usually was asked to say a few words, whether he were on the program or not. Nearly anywhere in the state of Texas, in the small towns like New Braunfels and Paint Rock, you will find physicians who have graduated from the school and they will tell you about Rabbi Cohen—how they used to draw him

aside and get him to tell about his experiences when he was a young man in Africa: his hairbreadth escapes from the Zulus, when he was hit over the head with the butt end of a gun, and when he just missed being crushed to death in a diamond mine in Kimberley.

But what old students liked best to reminisce about was the Rabbi's "assisting" in operations at Sealy. "We'd be ready to witness an appendectomy," they'd say, "when someone said, 'Just a minute, Rabbi Cohen has to be fixed up.' Then everything would wait until the nurses gave him a gown and a cap, and he really looked funny, with his long cuffs hanging out—you know, he writes down all his memoranda on his shirt cuff. But the doctors liked to have him there in the operating room and the patients were a lot more satisfied."

There was a story about Singleton's doing a neurosurgery on an out-of-town patient. Just as the surgeon was about to start, a member of the patient's family said that their regular doctor was en route but would be a half hour late. Singleton rasped, "Dr. Cohen's here. We start now."

On the pulpit at the birthday services were members of the Galveston congregation whose fathers and grandfathers had been among the men who were told by Leo N. Levi in no uncertain terms that they would have to get used to the stuttering of the gentleman from Woodville. And Robert I. Cohen was seated there, still active president of the Congregation, fighting off illness and old age as he had

fought the fires and quarantine regulations when he first came to the Island from England.

There was a presence lacking on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary. Father Kirwin had died, eight years before, in his sleep at St. Mary's rectory, with Vespers waiting to be sung across the patio.

The Rabbi did not like to speak of Kirwin's death; instead, he spoke often of life with Kirwin, the fights they had made together, reconstruction work following the Storm, events of the War, the Klan years.

"The Klan never got anywhere in Galveston. When they said they were going to parade down Broadway, Kirwin and Father 'Chat' threatened to give 'em a dose of lachrymal gas from St. Mary's Infirmary! A great man, Kirwin, big in every sense of the word! Well, they made him a monsignor before he died. Riche wanted to make him bishop."

Col. Riche was dead, too, and a scant few months after his seventieth birthday, the Rabbi faced death within his own family.

His daughter, who had fought off for years the dreaded Hodgkin's disease, which is an enlargement of the lymphatic gland and can be arrested slightly by X ray, became extremely ill in the summer of 1934. Realizing that the disease was nearing its final stage, she arranged her household so that her husband and son would be taken care of, and went to Galveston, as if for her accustomed summer visit.

She felt wretched when she arrived, and after one

visit to the beach, where to the sun and sea of her childhood she had turned instinctively for strength, she was taken to the hospital, and did not go out again.

She never did give up fighting for her life. She voluntarily gave up seeing her husband and child, except at infrequent intervals, because the sight of them affected her so much emotionally that the vitality with which she fought the disease was diminished. She spent times when she was not drugged against pain reminiscing with her mother about the happy girlhood she had given her, the gay times they had had at the house, the careful planning for the first party dress, her mother's sacrifices and saving so they could have pleasant vacations together, plays up in the attic—admission, one pin.

Her intellectual interest was not lessened by the imminence of death. Shortly before going to the hospital, she had said to her brother, "I have discovered a brilliant new writer, James Boyd. A novel of his, *The Dark Shore*, is running serially in *Scribner's*. It ends, next issue. There are events in the life of the main character that are not revealed to the reader. You must read it and tell me what you think the secret is. His style of writing is very interesting. Listen to this description of the various kinds of wood found in a bedroom of the eighties, . . . "

While she was in the hospital, she asked her brother to get the new issue of *Scribner's*, to read the novel, and tell her how it ended. But the August

Scribner's came out too late for Ruth to learn the secret in the life of James Boyd's character.

Her last days were spent in intermittent coma. When she was conscious, she asked that her husband should sit in the room and read to her from the Book of Job.

The Rabbi officiated at his daughter's funeral from his own home. Friends begged him not to do it; they felt that the strain would be more than he could bear, but in his grief he could see no other way of laying his child to rest.

"Though He slay me, yet shall I put my trust in Him," his pain-wracked voice pronounced the words of Job over her coffin, where someone had laid a bunch of blue plumbago from her mother's garden.

Blue plumbago bloomed through the long, hot summer when everything else dried up. The Rabbi and his wife, two old and broken people, gathered up the parts of their life and started to go through the motions of their former existence, although for neither of them would the world ever be the same.

Outwardly, 1920 Broadway went on as it had before, the same number of telephone calls and visitors. The rooms on the east side of the house, which could be closed off by sliding doors like a series of doctor's consulting rooms, often had men and women with troubled faces sitting in them. It was illness or money troubles, or insanity in the family, or a prison sentence that they came to talk

about, and the Rabbi usually found that he could help them.

The Rabbi walked with a slight stoop, his shoulders thrown ahead of the line of his body, his head inclined forward. But his movements were quick and decisive, and he had the same swift gait that had carried him on errands for the Board of Guardians down St. Swithin's Lane to the firm of Nathaniel Rothschild. For nearly half a century he had been hurrying through the streets of Galveston on foot, by bicycle or car, to houses where people were sick or in want, to the hospitals, to orphanages, to the same county jail where Choyinski and Jack Johnson had been interned. And now in his sorrow, he seemed to find relief in making his daily rounds.

His shining black car driven by his chauffeur, Russell, sped daily through the town, with the Rabbi sitting hunched over on the back seat, writing and crossing out names on his cuff, flowers for the sick, ice cream for the children, magazines for the jail. And through it all, a bright-faced little girl with brown pigtails darted, laughing at play or serious in study, or standing up in her seat at school to tell the teacher she had no right to make fun of a child who had come to classes with ashes on her forehead because it was Ash Wednesday. "That is her religion, and we should not persecute her because she is different," Ruth had said when she was a little girl.

The Rabbi Stays in Texas

II

MEIGS FROST, who had graduated from reporting on the *Galveston News* to a Pulitzer award for distinguished journalism and feature writing on the *Times Picayune*, visited Galveston after many years' absence and was tactless enough to go up to Houston and give out a nostalgic interview. Meigs had gone by the *News* office in Galveston, he said, and nobody knew him. A cub reporter seemed to have remembered a guy named Meigs Frost had worked on the paper, but "he was sort of a legend." He had gone by to see his old friend, Rabbi Cohen, found 1920 Broadway locked and shuttered—the Cohens, out of town. And when he had looked for the little cottage he and his wife April had built when they were first married, the home in which his children had been born, Meigs couldn't find it.

When he was back in New Orleans, he had a letter from a Galveston newspaper man criticizing the interview Meigs had given in Houston, and

saying that he had called up the Galveston Chamber of Commerce, which unequivocably stated that no houses had been lost in the 1915 storm. Meigs and the barker at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, notwithstanding, there were numerous houses in Galveston that had weathered both major hurricanes, whole rows of them with deep windows and narrow balconies in the Latin style, a few examples of ante bellum Southern types, and the Victorian, bulging kind, which had been constructed in the decade before 1900.

The rabbinage was one of the latter type, and had remained unchanged to all outward appearances for over forty years. The inside of the house told a different story. Though kept in excellent repair, with painted plaster walls and immaculate dark woodwork, it had taken on the patina of age in a subtle fashion, like a highly polished piece of silver that has been used hard and long.

A great part of the original furnishings remained in the house, but they were altered. Top-heavy Victorian headpieces on beds had come down, with mosquito netting. Ends of a Louis Quinze couch had been sliced off and all dust-catching furbelows removed. The upholstery long ago had been changed from overstuffed plush and horsehair to slick, black leather, easy to clean and practical for hard usage. The Brussels carpet had been worn out by a previous generation, and the heavy blue portieres had been given away for use in other homes where sliding doors were not always being opened and shut.

White muslin curtains attached to windows were easy to keep clean. In the summer these came down. Color in the rooms was supplied in books, flowers, and ornaments, and the painted portraits of David and Josephine Cohen, which hung on the front wall of the parlor and looked benevolently through the rooms on the east side of the house.

The Rabbi's desk, set in a corner of the library, dominated the room, with its stacks of papers, statues of Goethe and Schiller, photograph of Mr. Lasker, charcoal sketch of Zangwill, and pictures of the Rabbi's family. Odd tables were covered with still more photographs of the family and old friends, and on the mantel in the parlor, facing the piano which she often had played, was a large picture of Ruth.

All the ornaments in the house, Mrs. Cohen was in the habit of saying, had a special meaning for Dr. Cohen, and she did not dare put any of them away, no matter how their number increased or how littered the house looked. They crowded each other on all available wall and table space: an Aztec calendar from Mexico; a paper cutter from Bayreuth; an ancient Hebrew spice box; a statue of Judas Maccabeus in full war armor, sword unsheathed; two paintings of camels in the thick of a desert fight with a sandstorm raging—set down on canvas by the artist from the Rabbi's verbal description. A special treasure was the metal sheath containing the bone-handled knife-and-fork set with which little Henry had eaten, all the time he was in Africa.

The Rabbi had a habit of going from one object to another, telling the story of each to his guests. He did the same with books in his library. He would balance himself at a precarious angle on his step-ladder, and come down with a rare book, of unusual interest, which might lead to a dissertation on anything from Egyptian hieroglyphics to Dickens's *Household Words*. He knew where to put his finger on every single item in his collection, which had grown to an estimated 12,000 volumes, including pamphlets.

When asked how it was possible for him to know where each book was without reference to a catalogue, he explained, "Well, to tell you the truth, it's sort of 'second sight,' like that act my brother Mark and I used to do. But for the benefit of my family and others who might be interested, the library is catalogued. One of my boys, Joe Rauch, did it one summer when he was home on vacation from the Hebrew Union College. He had a nose for it; smart boy, he's rabbi in Louisville, now."

He still kept his first-edition Kiplings in his top desk drawer. There were seven blue-green paper-bound volumes (Allahabad, Railway Edition) in good condition. "I picked up the first one on board ship. And I said then, 'This man will be heard from!' "

The Rabbi always took visitors interested in his library to the overflow upstairs, where a long hallway and two additional attic rooms were filled up to their high ceilings with books and pamphlets. If a shelf of *The Collected Works of Ambrose Bierce* caught

his eye in the upstairs hall, the Rabbi would pause and say, "He was here in Galveston. Silas Howes of the *News* brought him round. I gave him a copy of *Talmudic Sayings*."

When people were impressed to silence by the display of crowded shelves, the Rabbi often made them laugh with the tale of his discomfiture when he was a young collector, just getting started, and Dr. Edward Everett Hale had come to tea and said, "Young man, you have too many books."

"Of course," the Rabbi would say, "Young students have access to public libraries now. When I came to Texas, it was impossible to borrow books to continue my studies, begun in London. That's why I have this large collection of Judaica. And the same holds with my books on early Texas history. It was necessary to purchase books when I was doing research on the settlement of the Jews in Texas. I have *The Republic of Mexico in 1882*, by Lorenzo Castro, the son of Henry Castro. You see, this library was born of need. So, some of the books I bought years ago have become rare items now. Occasionally I get a request from a student for a book he cannot put his hands on anywhere else. I send it to him. No, I have never lost a rare book, doing that."

When he discussed his unique and valuable collection of Jewish music, he explained that his daughter, who had been a fine musician, had been deeply interested in it.

Having once visited the Rabbi in his home, people

looked forward to coming back again; sometimes they came from other parts of the country down to Texas.

Clarence Darrow had been entertained at the Rabbi's house. It was during a lecture tour in the days when prohibition was a live issue, and Mr. Darrow appeared to relish debating the subject with Dr. Clarence True Wilson. When they reached Galveston, Darrow went to the rabbinage, where he had been invited for dinner. While he and the Rabbi were having a drink, Mrs. Cohen inquired who was entertaining Dr. Wilson.

"No one that I know of," said Mr. Darrow. Then, in spite of his disapproval, Mrs. Cohen went to the telephone and got in touch with Dr. Wilson, who accepted her invitation to dinner.

"Then give me another highball now," Darrow said, disgruntled. "When he walks in, the drinking stops. I don't know why you want to bother with him. He hates Jews."

"Why, the idea!" Mrs. Cohen sniffed. She did not entirely approve of Mr. Darrow at times. She recalled his words, however, when it was reported in a national magazine that Dr. Wilson blamed Bishop Cannon's financial difficulties on the fact that he had got himself mixed up with a bunch of "Wall Street Jews."

Darrow came back again. It was years later, when he looked old and sick, and nearly all the life was gone from his tall, loose frame. He came down from Houston with Marcellus Foster, whom he was

visiting, and he sat in the library saying very little, but seeming to get a deep satisfaction out of being there.

The Rabbi was talking to him about prison affairs. The old fire flashed in Darrow's eyes as Dr. Cohen spoke of the responsibility of society toward the prisoner, the need of an adequate parole system.

"The present governor of this state, Governor Allred, has done a fine piece of work in setting up a voluntary parole board. Of course, eventually we must have professional workers to do the job, but in the meantime, we have made a start. Yes, Allred understands the importance to society as well as to the convicts themselves.

"Rehabilitation of prisoners!" He put his hand on Darrow's arm. "That's my special forte. I have been in that work from the time I first came to Texas. Almost fifty years ago. So! Judge Hutcheson would say to me. 'This fellow is not a bad sort. You look after him. I don't like to give him a prison record.' " The Rabbi swung round on his desk chair. "Paroled him to me. Judge Charlie Dibrell did the same, lots of times. They're human beings. They've saved numbers of men, kept them self-respecting citizens. Think what it's meant to their families. And I want to tell you, that of the cases paroled to me, only two or three went back on me. That's a pretty fair average, it seems to me."

"Have you been through the 'Walls' lately?" Foster asked.

"Yes," said the Rabbi, "I went up to Huntsville

last month to address the normal college, and went up early enough to see Warden Wade and to check up on some of the boys inside. The first thing Wade said to me was that he knew I'd be pleased with something he had finally been able to accomplish after many years planning and a lot of work.

" 'What is it?" I asked.

" 'A rest room for lady visitors,' he proudly replied!"

Darrow and Marcellus Foster smiled.

"Ah, I didn't laugh because he was so sincere about it. He's really a very good man and has done us a good job up there. It's well worth a trip to your old home, Marcellus, to see what's been accomplished. They have a system of classification of prisoners second to none. When a man comes in, they check on him in every way—physical, mental, his home background, heredity—attempting to discover why he committed a crime, what his possibilities for reform are. They take men who are third and fourth offenders, the desperate cases, and put them on a separate farm. That's what we fought for for years, segregation of other prisoners from these types.

"The hospital equipment at Huntsville is A-one now. They have a fine set of young doctors, tremendously interested in their work. They've developed a new, quick treatment for syphilis, my friend Dr. Abe Hauser tells me. He's the Houston psychiatrist who visits out there—one of the boys from our Medical School. Well, Darrow, it's like a dream

come true. When I think of conditions that existed when I first came to this state. It was no easy job getting the public to do something about it, eh, Marcellus? Dan Moody was our ramrod."

Clarence Darrow's sallow face became relaxed and mellow as he lingered through the afternoon. He left the Rabbi reluctantly, squinting affectionately down at him out of his small, wise eyes.

There were other great American liberals who came to the rabbinage. When Oswald Garrison Villard visited him, the Rabbi spoke of a number of the losing fights he had made.

"There are no losing fights," Villard said. "What are our reputations for?"

Norman Thomas, a friend of long standing, told the family that Dr. Cohen's life should be written, for three good reasons: he was an example of individual accomplishment in a world rapidly becoming collectivist-minded; the story of the Galveston immigration movement should be known; and his life, for its own sake, should be recorded.

Maury Maverick stopped in whenever he was in Galveston. Once, disguised as a tramp, on a tour of investigation of relief conditions in Texas, he made himself known at the Galvez Hotel and asked to have a check cashed. The clerk was dubious about him, and he gave Rabbi Cohen as a reference.

Telephoning to the rabbinage, Maverick found Dr. Cohen out and asked for Mrs. Cohen. He told her what he wanted and put the clerk on the wire. "I can't tell you that it's Maury Maverick, but if it

is, I'll be responsible for any amount he wants," answered Mrs. Cohen, placing the onus back on the hotel.

"I telephoned you, Mrs. Cohen," continued the clerk, "because he asked me to and talked so crazy—"

"That's Maury Maverick, all right," interrupted Mrs. Cohen.

When he championed Sherwood Eddy's right to speak in Galveston, the Rabbi was called a communist by an excited prominent citizen. The Rabbi sent him word that if he ever made that statement again he would take him into court.

Visitors from England were a special treat for Dr. Cohen. He was charmed with Zangwill's wife, who toured Texas on a peace mission years after the death of his old friend. Lord Morley, who spoke in Galveston on the ORT, vocational program for East European Jews, had, besides his personable attributes, a delightful Gilbertian sense of humor. Alfred Duff-Cooper, another titled visitor, said that on his tour of America he tried to take back with him an outstanding impression of every city he had visited and that the impression from Galveston was Rabbi Henry Cohen.

When the Rabbi learned that Dr. Cecil Roth, president of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Society of England, was going to lecture in Houston, he arranged his crowded calendar, weeks in advance, so that nothing should keep him from driving up to meet the eminent young historian. He knew Roth

through his books, a distinguished list of volumes on Italian History and the marranos of Spain. It was with boyish enthusiasm that he prepared to drive up on the appointed day. Roth was of another generation, but he was London—scholarly, restrained, traditional—that the Rabbi had left for wider, freer fields, and it seemed like yesterday that the Chief Rabbi had handed him his *semicha* and said, "You go to Jamaica."

Cecil Roth was in Houston for only a short time, and it was decided, when he and the Rabbi met, that they would drive around the city during their visit together, in order that the Englishman should see some of the sights that the Houstonians were urging him to get in during his visit. They started by going down to the turning basin of the Houston Ship Channel, where deep-sea traffic passed in an endless stream through a Texas prairie; then their car got a puncture.

While the tire was being changed on the busy wharf front, the Rabbi and Dr. Roth sat together on the rear seat of the car and talked about London. The Rabbi hung on every word. It had been over forty years since he had set foot on English soil. He wanted to hear about all his old friends. Finding that most of them were dead, undaunted, he wanted to know about their children.

He and Roth began singing Sephardic airs that the Rabbi used to chant in his boyhood. *N'vei Zedek*, was it still there, still the same? He used to pick blackberries in the hills of West Norwood. He

told Cecil Roth about his work at the Board of Guardians under Mr. Stephani; that he attended Jews' College evening classes, and studied under such men as Herman Adler and Dr. Friedlander. He spoke of his friendship with Israel Zangwill; of how he and Mark happened to go to Africa; and said that Lord Beaconsfield had called him "little Henry."

The Rabbi Stays in Texas

III

WHEN it became evident that Adolf Hitler was going to remain in power in Germany, the Rabbi sat down at his desk and wrote a letter to the bookdealer at Frankfort on the Main with whom he had traded for nearly fifty years, closing his account.

It was a sad task; he was profoundly hurt and disturbed. It was appalling to him that this new barbarism should spring up in the country of Goethe and Schiller, among a people who loved music and had given the world its greatest advance in medical science. As for the German Jews, the first scheduled victims of the new leader, they had served their fatherland faithfully, dying for it—12,000 of them in the World War—working and creating for it: the Mendelssohns, Heine, Albert Ballin, a list of Nobel prize winners that was a record of modern scientific achievement—for services in organic chemistry, Adolf von Baeyer; for work in physiology and

pathology, Robert Bárány; Albert Einstein; James Franck and Gustave Hertz, also in physics; Alfred Hermann Fried, Nobel prize winner for peace; Fritz Haber, organizer of Germany's chemical industry; Paul Heyse, writer of lyrics, novels, dramas; Karl Landsteiner, discoverer of human blood groups, who opened the means of saving life through blood transfusion; Otto Loewi, for work in biology and the mechanism of the digitalis effect; Otto Meyerhof, for work in metabolism; Otto Wallach, in chemistry; Otto Warburg, botanist; Richard Willstätter, in chemistry. In a book that he had, *Germany and Her Jews*, by Sidney Osborne, the Rabbi read these names and decided that perhaps the greatest was Paul Ehrlich, the discoverer of the serum treatment as the means to cure syphilis, which affects the unborn as well as the living.

So! Their fatherland was turning against them, tearing them from humanitarian work in hospitals, from teaching posts in the great universities, burning their books and the books of other Germans who refused to stoop to a Nazi level. All of this was bad enough, but to strike them through their children, stand little children before their fellow classmates and tell them they are inferior and vile—any man (the Rabbi thought in terms of Hitler, rather than the German people) who will do deliberate harm to a child is capable of the most horrible deeds.

He spoke from his pulpit on the plight of the German Jews, just as he had discussed in other days the Dreyfus case and the victims of Kishineff.

Giving, as usual, beyond his own means, he collected large amounts of money in Galveston and throughout the state. He conferred with other Jewish leaders on ways and methods of relief for the German Jews.

It was a different world from the days of Mr. Schiff's immigration bureau; a world less capable of heroic gestures such as the public condemnation of the Russian persecutions by the Lord Mayor of London, backed with petitions from the House of Commons and the House of Lords, when Queen Victoria was still alive. Because of his years of experience in immigration work, the Rabbi was consulted on difficult problems that arose in every part of the country. When someone was about to be deported back to the country that would execute him or throw him into a concentration camp, the Rabbi went to work, and had the unfortunate one sent to Galveston, where he would route him on a boat to South America or Shanghai, some place on God's green earth where he could live and not die or be forced to grovel like an animal before his fellowmen.

The Rabbi kept informed up to the minute on the rise of subversive activities in his own country. He never lost an opportunity to damn out Fascism and Communism as parts of the same revolutionary force striving for the disintegration of Western civilization. Anything that smacked of these elements in Galveston he made it his business to reveal and fight. He did not consider that anti-Semitism was the issue at stake. To him it was a larger issue—the survival of democracy and a civilized way of life.

Agitation against Jews could usually be found in the vanguard of destruction of a civilization. It had happened in Egypt and Babylon and Medieval Spain. It would not happen in the United States of America, the Rabbi was convinced, because this young and virile people had no intention of letting themselves be destroyed by decay within or attack from without.

The Rabbi didn't like it a bit when Father Coughlin started his Jew-baiting broadcasts. He wrote the radio priest a letter of protest and complained to the Bishop in Galveston. He considered the sly, insinuating remarks made about the Jewish people shocking from a priest in the Catholic Church.

He suffered silently at every new torture that Germany applied to the Jews, when they were mobbed in the streets of Berlin, their synagogues despoiled, when they were put on rafts to drift aimlessly down the beautiful blue Danube; and when full shiploads of them were derisively turned loose in the oceans without a destination.

The Rabbi began to have nightmares, during which he would fight fiercely. Mrs. Cohen had to put boards and extra pillows beside his bed, to keep him from injuring himself.

When a ship with refugees was being shunted around near Cuba, a neighbor of the Cohens came over to a commiserate with them on the fate of their coreligionists. The Rabbi wasn't home, and he found Mrs. Cohen in her garden. The white-haired

gentleman followed Mrs. Cohen through her garden, saying he never could get plumbago to grow as hers did. She gave him some of her plants to try in his garden, and they went around the back to the north side of the house, to see her giant hydrangea, which had a spread of over seven feet.

When her old friend spoke about the world-wide plight of the Jews, Mrs. Cohen turned on him and said, "Yes, it is too bad. Why don't you Christians do something about it? Day after day, they come to this house asking the Rabbi to help them. And he does it gladly. But I don't see why it should always be such a one-sided affair. You don't have to point to those poor miserable people on board that ship. There's plenty that can be done right in this country. I heard, the other day, that the son of a Galveston minister said the Jews were getting just what they deserved because they didn't believe in Christ. I'm not surprised at the young man. Probably he was taught in Sunday school that the cruel Jews killed Christ."

On the day it was announced from Berlin that Jews were to be ghettoized, the Rabbi went off to his Sabbath school classes without any breakfast. He came home about ten o'clock and ran into his son Harry, who said, surprised, "What's the matter, Father? Why aren't you at Sunday school?"

"I couldn't eat a thing this morning when I read the morning papers. I felt weak at school and came home—"

"I'll tell Mother to have some breakfast put out,"

Harry interrupted, for the Rabbi looked pale and shaken.

"No! No, I'll just take a drink of whiskey." He took a stiff drink and went right back to school. When he came home for lunch, he was puffing at his cigar and in good spirits.

When Harry Cohen repeated what had happened to a friend, the latter commented: "Your father has what is sadly needed in the world today—guts!"

Epilogue—Fifty Years

TEXAS is a big state; they do things there on a proportionate scale. When the Rabbi had been in Galveston fifty years, the celebration was large and long. It lasted all day and half of the night. The people came from every direction. They traveled east from San Antonio and the Valley, west from Beaumont and the country bordering on the Big Thicket, and south from Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin, Waco, and towns as far away as Nacogdoches.

Those in charge of the arrangements, who were hard put to it to know how to plan the program as well as how to accommodate the Rabbi's friends, had decided to hold a public luncheon and to reserve the city auditorium for the evening. The speakers for both occasions were carefully selected to represent a cross section of Dr. Cohen's life and work. At the midday meeting, the rector of Trinity Episcopal Church of Galveston spoke:

"In my church it is high honor when a minister

becomes a bishop, with the title Right Reverend and Father in God. To me, Rabbi Cohen always is Right Reverend, and, in all sincerity, my Father in God."

Father Marius Chataignon put his arm around the Rabbi's shoulder and said in his deep French voice, "I have seen this little body filled with plenty of fire. I have seen him fight for tolerance and freedom beside another great leader of ours, Father Kirwin. The battles are still being fought and, thank God, Rabbi Cohen is still with us to fight them."

That night, in the city auditorium, 5,000 people gathered in a public reception. The walls of the auditorium rang with the chorus of 100 voices, representing every church choir in the city, all of whom had given their services voluntarily. Adrian Levy welcomed the visitors in his capacity as Mayor of Galveston, then addressed the Rabbi as one of his own boys.

He was followed by Judge J. C. Hutcheson, of the United States circuit court of appeals, who had come from New Orleans to speak on a part of the Rabbi's life with which he had been in close touch during his years as federal judge, sitting in Houston and Galveston. After reviewing the life and times of Dr. Cohen, the Judge in a few words stated objectively the quality of greatness which he, a legal mind, had found in the Rabbi's work:

"No really philanthropic, no really humanitarian cause has ever called upon him without response. But it is not by his support of causes as causes that his measure may be taken. The very institutionalism,

the self-exploitation, the red tape and officialdom which too often characterize them, troubles his democratic, individualistic soul. . . . He is at his best when striking through the narrowing limitations of a technical legal justice; he appeals to the fountain head of mercy, pointing out that equal justice is no rigid rule, it is the constant, the perpetual disposition to render each his due."

"Rabbi Cohen is one of Israel," declared Jonah B. Wise, who had flown from New York for the occasion. "He is one of the great men of whom the Apocrypha speaks." And Rabbi Wise, the son of American Reform Judaism's founder, stood back on his heels and told the audience a few facts about the philosophy contained in the Apocrypha, instructing men to deal kindly and live peacefully with one another—a philosophy reappearing through Jewish history. Rabbi Cohen, Jonah Wise said, he regarded not as an isolated individual but part of the pattern of the history and tradition of a great people.

George Cohen, the son of Robert I., stood up to present the Rabbi and Mrs. Cohen with an honorarium.

"I represent the grown men and women, who were once children in your Sunday school. I represent Galvestonians and former Galvestonians, and some who have never resided here. I represent the Jew and non-Jew, and all those who have been reached by you, who have received your aid, your comfort, and your counsel. I bring a message from them and also a gift.

"Some of us you have clothed; some of us you have fed, but to all of us you have taught the ideals of charity, mercy, and justice—that there is one God who has created us all, and that, regardless of race or creed, we have the same Father. . . .

"On behalf of your friends and admirers, whose names are inscribed in this book, we present you this gift, with the proviso that this fund be not commingled with your charity fund." He continued, saying that every penny was voluntarily contributed as an evidence of the esteem in which Dr. and Mrs. Cohen were held.

When the Rabbi arose to thank all his friends for their presence and their kindnesses in word and deed, he spoke briefly and quietly because he was overcome with the reception and everything that had taken place.

"Ah, but there is another side to the picture," he said, shaking his finger at the audience. "If I have accomplished anything at all it is because I found good clay when I came here to Galveston and Texas. It is not difficult for the sculptor when he has good material. . . . " He thanked them for the gift and explained that he was turning it over to Mrs. Cohen, who always had charge of that part of his affairs. People in the audience smiled and some wept, as he paid tribute to his wife of forty-nine years, declaring that much that he had been able to accomplish had been due wholly to her and her patience in bearing the burdens of the wife of a minister.

Afterward, the audience of 5,000 formed in line and filed by the Cohens to shake their hands. It was a real triumph for the people who had taken part. Fifty years the Rabbi had refused anything of material value for himself outside his regular salary, and, though living simply, he had not accumulated an appreciable amount of the world's goods. They had now so arranged matters that they believed he would never want for anything as he grew older.

Time magazine carried the story of the semi-centennial celebration of the Rabbi's residence in Texas, and shortly afterward, the *Reader's Digest* sent its ace writer, Webb Waldron, to Galveston to see if there were a story in Rabbi Cohen. Waldron spent a few days in town, quietly seeing a number of people, including the mayor, the sheriff, social workers, and members of the clergy. He found several stories. In due time, the wide audience of the *Reader's Digest* were reading them:

"At a time when the world is full of racial hatred, Galveston, Texas, spreads a shining light of good will and tolerance. . . .

"Said the sheriff, 'There's nobody whose judgment I'd trust the way I do the Rabbi's. If he says there's good in a man, I'll take his word for it. He's never guessed wrong!' . . .

" 'My own creed!' said Cohen. 'What do you mean, Mr. President? This man is not a Jew! He's a Greek Catholic!'

" President Taft jumped. 'A Greek Catholic!

You came all the way from Texas to intercede for a Greek Catholic?'

"'Certainly,' said Rabbi Cohen. 'He's a human being, isn't he?' . . .

"'I would as soon preach on a text from Confucius as the Talmud . . . if the truth is there.' . . .

"In the recent mayoralty election, the two chief candidates were a Catholic and a Jew. The Catholic came to his padre seeking his support. 'No, my son,' said the padre, 'I'm going to vote for Adrian Levy. Levy has been a good mayor and I think we ought to keep him on the job.' The priest told me that hundreds of his parishioners voted as he did. Levy was elected, though the Jews form less than two per cent of the population of Galveston. The priest said to me: 'Why is it we judge a man in this town not for his race or his creed, but for *what he is himself?* The answer is—Rabbi Cohen.' "

The Rabbi began to receive letters from every part of the country in response to Webb Waldron's article; his mail, always heavy, jumped to about 1,000 letters a week. Many of the letters were commendatory, and the Rabbi had the pleasure of hearing from people he had not seen for years. He received a note from Frances Gunther, whom he remembered well. She had grown up in Galveston and had left to go to college at Columbia. He had heard previously of her marriage to John Gunther.

Ralph Hitz, head of a national chain of hotels, started as head-waiter in Galveston and had a specific remembrance of the kindness of Dr. Cohen. A message came, too, from Albert Lasker, who had learned Hebrew in the Sunday school over his father's initial protest.

A number of people wrote to the Rabbi recalling incidents in his past, recollected when they read the *Digest* article. He heard from immigrants who had come through the port of Galveston in the days of the Schiff bureau, and from rehabilitated prisoners to whom he had given a start in the right direction. A letter arrived from a man who told of the Rabbi's assistance to him in the havoc after the 1900 Storm, including full details of conditions and recalling the horse and buggy which a livery stable had turned over to Dr. Cohen's use. But the greater portion of the letters were from people who had never heard of the Rabbi before and were amazed, delighted, wanted to take advantage of his generosity, or asked to help him continue his aid to others by substantial offers of contributions.

There was, among the thousands of letters received, the usual proportion of "crank" mail. One Jewish old maid in Chicago took him severely to task because he as a rabbi was helping non-Jews at a time when most of the rest of the world was persecuting his own coreligionists. Another woman wrote that she had always had trouble with her daughter, but she was going to send her to Dr. Cohen, where she knew the girl would be

perfectly safe. A schoolteacher in Detroit did not bother to write, but got on a cross-country bus and came straight to the rabbinage in Galveston, expecting the Rabbi to get her a job in his city, and he had to pay her fare back home. A part of the letters asking for financial aid were obviously frauds, but some were strictly "on the up-and-up," as one individual described his plea. The entire number, placed end to end, would have made a folk saga of American hopes, fears, and desires: sentimental, opportunist, resentful, optimistic, and groping.

The Rabbi answered every letter that he received, and in many a case had an answer back and wrote again, acknowledging it, as was his custom in correspondence. Although this entailed a tremendous amount of work for him and his stenographer, in retrospect it would have become a charming and unique experience. But there was another part of the world yet to be heard from, where charm had died in moans on a raft in the Danube.

It was inevitable that the Jews of Central Europe, reading translations of the *Reader's Digest* article should jump to the conclusion that Rabbi Cohen could help them as he had helped the Russian Jews a generation before. So they wrote to him—mothers begging him to take their children out of hell; whole families, grown childish in their desperation, asking to be removed bodily to America. These letters came faster and faster, until thirty or forty of them in the morning's mail were not unusual.

It was almost more than the Rabbi could bear. He would stand at his front door and hold a fresh pack of foreign-stamped envelopes in his hand every morning. Speechless with sorrow, he would sit down and read every one of them; then write out the answers in German, Yiddish, Bohemian: "I can do nothing for you. The laws of this country have changed since the days of the Schiff bureau. You must wait your turn in the quota." "I can do nothing for you . . . " "*Ich kann nicht fur ihnen thun.*" "*Fur ihn's kann ich gurnisht machen*" . . . "*Ja nemuza nic protebo udelat*" . . .

After receiving and answering several hundred letters, the Rabbi put a statement in European Jewish publications saying that he was not able to bring refugees into the United States. His family took him away from Galveston, from the morning mail with its precise torture.

When he returned home, the statement in European papers had had its effect. The letters asking for help dwindled gradually until there was silence. The Rabbi didn't speak of it any more. Those who knew of the thousands who had come to him for help, to whom he always had been able to give substantial aid, advice, or even hope, were deeply conscious of the tragedy of the situation in which he found himself.

But the Rabbi has a way of suddenly straightening up after he has been bent in meditation on his pulpit. He will be bowed over, his shoulders cupped;

then he will shake himself, open his eyes wide; his small frame becomes infused with energy, and he will start his sermon.

Sometimes he will speak on the mountain warrior, Judas Maccabeus; sometimes on the Hebrew prophets and their message of social justice, *tsadoka*. On another occasion he will quote *Rabbi Ben Ezra*. His voice is as strong as when he marched through the London fog reciting the Victorian paean on the promise of life to the faintly skeptical Zangwill.

Those who know the Rabbi in Texas have a feeling that he cannot stop but will go marching straight through eternity; for they don't believe that the spirit in Henry Cohen will ever die.

Glossary of Yiddish and Hebrew Words

Ashkenazim—Jews of German and Polish descent.
birshuscham—Good-by.
Chasidim—Followers of Israel Baal Shem, who opposed the intellectualism of the Talmudists and stressed emotionalism in prayer and other religious activities.
chazan—Leader of the congregation in prayer.
davven—To pray.
Heraus—"Get out."
maggid—Wandering preacher, who often put ethical lessons into story telling and song.
mitzvah—Good deed.
N'vei Zedek—House of Righteousness.
Neilah—The concluding service on the Day of Atonement.
Pesach—Jewish religious feast of Passover.
Rosh Hashana—Jewish New Year.
scharchris—Daily morning services.

semicha—Rabbinical degree.

Sephardim—Jews of Spanish origin whose ancestors were driven from Spain in the year Columbus discovered America.

Sephardic (adj.)—Pertaining to the Sephardim.

Shabbos—Sabbath.

Talmud—Compilation of Jewish writing about 400 C.E. and also a century later.

Torah—Five Books of Moses (the Jewish law in general).

tsadoka—Hebrew word for justice and charity.

yeshiva bocher—Student in a Jewish religious school.

Zu Mazal—Good luck.

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