THE ARENA

BY SHMARYA LEVIN

TRANSLATED BY
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THE ARENA

By the same Author

CHILDHOOD IN EXILE

YOUTH IN REVOLT

CONTENTS

I. THE DAYS OF THE NOTABLES	3
II. DIVIDED RUSSIAN JEWRY	16
III. THE BNAI MOSHE	22
IV. WARSAW FORTY YEARS AGO	34
V. FINDING MYSELF	54
VI. I REWED THE MUSE	68
VII. THE YIDDISH REVOLUTION	79
VIII. THE CURSE OF THE WANDERER	95
IX. FALSE HOPES	114
X. THE AVATAR	129
XI. HERZL, NORDAU, ACHAD HA-AM	143
XII. THE SOCIAL MÊLÉE	157
XIII. MENACHEM MENDEL USSISHKIN	183
XIV. RUSSIANS AND JEWS IN EKATERINOSLAV	198
XV. LAST DAYS IN EKATERINOSLAV	223
XVI. GATHERING STORMS	251
XVII. JERUSALEM OF LITHUANIA	268
XVIII. THE GREAT SWINDLER	291

THE ARENA

CHAPTER ONE: THE DAYS OF THE NOTABLES

IN HUMAN history, as in the processes of nature, there are no jumps. From a distance we see the epochs foreshortened, and they seem to emerge in sudden, blind upheavals. Actually, in great things as in small, there is a transitional period; and if we examine the period closely, we see old forces working parallel with new. Gradually the forces converge at an acute angle, and finally they run into one another. After a bitter struggle the old is swallowed up in the new.

Such a transitional period of struggle is contained in the history of Russian Jewry for the last two decades of the nineteenth century. The old epoch of Jewish passive resistance, or rather endurance, was coming to an end; it was being replaced by a new epoch of organized effort, of planned activity, having as its goal more tolerable human conditions. The old epoch is characterized by the Jewish *shtadtlan*, the notable who, by virtue of his wealth or of his private influence among the non-Jews, presumed to speak for the Jewish community, and without consulting its wishes, negotiated privately among the powers that were for what he alone considered were its spiritual and political needs. The new epoch is characterized by the organized representation of the Jewish masses.

The difference can hardly be grasped by those who have grown up in the democratic West. The *shtadtlan* was born of the utter helplessness of the Jewish masses. They were

abandoned to the random, irresponsible private whim of any one who had money and influence and cared to use them for what he thought was their good. I doubt whether there is an equivalent for the word *shtadtlan* in any other language, for I doubt whether any people in the world has ever thus been at the mercy not of rulers (that would be commonplace enough) but of backstairs negotiators without a genuine status. The *shtadtlan* can grow and flourish only in an epoch of darkness, like an obscure cellar weed. In the light of day he withers and disappears.

Such darkness, however, reigned in Jewish life. Six million human beings were at the mercy of every caprice of a tyrannical government, the playthings of great and petty officials. Confined in a narrow space, they could scarcely breathe, and cultural and economic life was almost squeezed out of them. They were held together more by the iron pressure of the common enemy than by an inner organized force. There was not even the shadow of an organization which could claim to speak in the Jewish name, even to the extent of voicing impotent protest against the oppressor. In this pent little world arose the system of *shtadtlanuth*, with its regular hierarchy of big and little notables. Every community, down to the tiniest, had its Jew who spoke for it, its self-appointed *shtadtlan;* sometimes it had two, competing with each other.

As a rule these Jews were of course the richest in the community, men whose wealth gave them access to the representatives of the government; riches alone were respected in a Jew. The individual *shtadtlanim* of the communities were in touch with each other throughout the country, and submitted to the rule of the upper *shtadtlanim* in St. Petersburg, a sort of miniature duplication of the Russian government—if the word government can be used in this connection. Among the Russians and the Jews the same irresponsibility and unaccountability to any one obtained. And if the *shtadtlanim* ever succeeded in obtaining a human con-

cession from the government—the tiniest mitigation of the infinite misery of the Jews—the news spread like wildfire through the towns and villages, and the *shtadtlanim* became the heroes of the day. And if the silent negotiations of the *shtadtlanim* failed, no one was any the wiser. For no one sent them; they went of their own accord, asked for what they thought was best, and owed no one a report of their methods and motives.

I do not wish it to appear that I consider these *shtadtlanim* corrupt or evil, men who deliberately chose to remain the self-appointed and irresponsible spokesmen of Jewry. Such a generalization would place them all in the class of the busybody who is actuated solely by the hunger for publicity and honours. There were undoubtedly among them individuals of larger calibre and cleaner mind, who desired solely to serve their people, and would have been happy if they could have appeared in the rôle of the properly elected representatives of Jewry. But they saw before them no such possibility; to serve at all, they had to serve as *shtadtlanim*. They had to bow to the system, for it was clear that the government had no intention of permitting the Jews to organize and to elect representatives. On the contrary, it aimed at the disintegration even of the Jewish community as it was; the dust of a people can more easily be scattered than can its fragments.

History, however, cannot pause over the occasional individual. Whatever a *shtadtlan* might be here and there, the system was one which was bound to corrupt the finest and most benevolent natures. All rule is a fearful danger to the character of the ruler; and though the system may be very evil and yet the ruler very noble, the latter is under the constant pressure of psychological bribery. In the end he almost invariably comes to believe in that system which raised him to his position of power. Power, the desire to dominate or at least to influence others, is in the last analysis the driving force in social life. It is the root of ambition;

and how frequently we see a man who has gained a victory in the name of a noble principle, fall victim to the mere lust for power. To remain in the place of power, he concedes point after point; the history of the social struggle of man abounds in illustrations.

It need not surprise us, then, that the *shtadtlanim* of Russian Jewry, who had concentrated in their own hands the power—such as it was—over the interests of the Jewish community, should have fought tooth and nail against the emergence of a democratic will. Through frequent contact with Russian officials they had come to consider themselves, ridiculously but naturally enough, *ex officio* leaders for life; and they really believed that salvation for the Jews could only come from "above," from the rulers to the people. They believed wholly in the omnipotence of the government, and not at all in the power that lies in the inner forces of the oppressed. Least of all could they conceive that a government might actually be overthrown by the oppressed. If they sometimes saw, as through a glass darkly, the possibility that the Russian masses might some day rise against their rulers, they could not admit such a thought for the Jews. Indeed, they considered the very idea dangerous. They were the faithful servants of the government, not simply as a method, but by psychological necessity. Their watchword to the Jews was "Patience and passivity."

The government liked these *shtadtlanim*. From time to time it even let them know that it was prepared, out of sheer benevolence, to administer some sort of relief to the Jews—always, of course, in homeopathic doses, so as not to arouse the resentment of the Russian masses. . . . The situation was one on which no traditional Jesuit could have improved. Through thousands of her secret agents the Russian government carried on a continuous campaign of slander and incitement against the Jews, keeping the rage of the Russian population at white heat. At the same time the government cited this "folk anti-Semitism" as an excuse for her

attitude against the Jews. The *shtadtlanim* were of course unable to break this vicious circle at any point; and they did their best, therefore, to instil into the Jewish masses the treacherous philosophy preached by the government. Unwittingly, they became the agents of the government, and the Jewish masses, without directives or leaders, were compelled to follow the only light they saw—the *shtadtlanim.*

This was the epoch which lasted until the eighties of the last century. Before that time, we look in vain for any sign of organization among the six million Jews who, with their cultural and spiritual forces, could have represented a not inconsiderable power. Jewish energy was in a state of abeyance; it could not be directed and harnessed. The government had seen to it that no spirit of rebellion should stir at any point in that powerful mass. Six million people submitted to an odious and malevolent despotism without a murmur, remaining passive and unprotesting. The government was profoundly cynical. From time to time it advised the *shtadtlanim* that of its own free will it would bring some relief into the life of the Jews. But the condition, open or implied, always was: "The Jewish masses must remain as they are. There must not be the slightest sign of a rebellious spirit."

The time came when that condition could no longer be fulfilled. Shaken to the foundations by the pogroms of the eighties, Russian Jewry lost the last vestiges of faith in the *shtadtlanim,* and began to organize its own awakening forces. The spirit of rebellion was at last astir. This revolt found expression in the double phenomenon of the Jewish labour movement and the Jewish national movement. I am not judging either of these movements, just now, by their ideological content—that is a chapter in itself; I allude to them only as the symbols of the break with the past, the sudden thawing of our frozen strength, the setting in of a new epoch, perhaps the epoch of greatest Jewish activity in all the history of the Diaspora.

The national movement, first appearing as the Chibath Zion, and later as political Zionism, had no direct connection with the struggle in Russia itself. It set as its aim, it is true, the "liberation of the Jews of Russia." But it spoke in the terminology of a second exodus from Egypt. How was this to be done? How could millions of individuals be uprooted from one country and planted again in another? Here was a difference not only of countries, but also of continents. The leaders of the movement did not pause to consider—perhaps they deliberately ignored—these difficulties. The wild despair of the Jewish masses left no room for logical thought. As in all such crises of a people, the power of calculation was thrust into the background by the awakening of a fantastic faith.

It is true that this Messianic passion could not take on ancient and naïve forms, as it had done before in great crises of Jewish history. No one believed in a Moses who would split the Red Sea. Instead, however, there was a blind belief that great, powerful, wealthy Jews would suddenly appear on the scene, and help to drag their unfortunate brothers out of the agony of Russia. The names of Baron Rothschild and Baron de Hirsch were mentioned everywhere. If today even this measure of faith has a touch of the naïve, we must remember that this was a generation which had either to believe or to go under. What is, in fact, much more astonishing is that one of these two powerful Jews, namely, Baron de Hirsch, should have considered the gigantic plan feasible! Equally astonishing, too, was the seriousness with which the Russian government took up the Baron's proposition, which envisaged the rapid removal of three million Jews from Russia. When such ideas dominated the public mind, they thrust out of the picture the struggle for Jewish emancipation *within* Russia. Not improvement, but migration *en masse*. This was the dominating slogan.

The labour movement, which came to the surface at the same time as the nationalist movement, also ignored the

struggle for Jewish emancipation, but for very different reasons. As a branch of the general Russian social democratic movement, it excluded from its programme the Jewish national motif. The leaders of the labour movement denied from the outset that there were such things as separate Jewish interests. They did indeed admit that the economic structure of Jewish life in Russia differed from the general economic structure; but they asserted that the national interests of the Jews were identical with those of the Russian people as a whole. It was only when these leaders came into more intimate contact with the masses that they learned their error.

But these two movements, labour and nationalist, were identical in one respect. They changed profoundly and for ever the foundations of the movement for emancipation. For the first time in the history of their struggle for human rights, the Jews spoke as a national entity. In its eager pursuit of civic rights west-European Jewry denied its origins, and threw away in advance its rights to a group existence. It "renounced" its association with the source of its existence, as though national identity were something that the individual can assume or relinquish at choice. The Russian Jews were the first with the courage to declare that they were not only individuals, but also the mass product of their history and their culture; and they were not prepared to deny their history and destroy their culture for the sake of civic rights—as the Jews of western Europe were doing. The awakening of the national consciousness went on apace in the eighties; the pace was accelerated in the nineties. Hence these two decades must be seen as the decline of the epoch of the *shtadtlanim*—who were a feeble echo of the "emancipated" Jews of western Europe—and the beginning of a new epoch, new in its entire philosophy of Jewish life, new in its methods and in its demands.

It would, however, be quite wrong to credit the new epoch in Russian Jewish life solely to these two movements, labour

and nationalist, and to ignore the general historical tendencies which at that time occupied the best political and social workers of Europe, and which produced a powerful sympathetic current among the Jews of Russia. In fact no group or people can today be regarded as isolated from the streams of world-thought and world-movement. To get a complete picture of the changes in Russian Jewish life, we must consider a third important factor—and perhaps the most important—namely, the general spirit of the times.

No new social theory has ever emerged as an entity from the head of a thinker or a statesman, or even from the collective efforts of a group of thinkers and statesmen. Every social theory is the product of the need of the time, and is born of the pressure of circumstance. Obscure forces bear upon the forms of life, and mould them anew. In this respect social theory is the grammar of life. The grammar of a language is "discovered" long after it has been in actual existence, the creation of an entire people. So a social theory is formulated long after life itself has given birth to its content, and has twined itself about its roots. The sanction of the lawgiver and the statesman follows the actuality. They prepare in tangible, intelligible form what is already in existence.

Were it not for the pressure of actualities, there would in fact be no formulated laws at all, for every law is a yoke. Its injunctions and prohibitions, a perpetual irritant to the individual, would never be accepted of free will, out of lofty motives. The sacrifice of his personal passions for the general good comes only when man realizes that without these sacrifices he loses everything. He must compromise in order to exist at all. Hence he accepts the law and its theory.

There is indeed a profound significance in that ancient Jewish legend which deals with the acceptance of the Law at the foot of Sinai. It symbolizes all human relation to law. The legend tells that before He came to the Jews God peddled His Law in vain among all the peoples of the world.

He had, indeed, created this Law two thousand years before He created the world, but there was no demand for it in Heaven. The angels are creatures without passion: in human parlance, they have no temptation to do wrong. The concept of sin is alien to them. To find a market for His Law, God had therefore to turn to the sinful human species.

It is a dramatic and even tragic theme: the Creator must appeal to His own creation. The ruler of the heavens must come down on earth, and apply for a favour to earthly man. And so God went from people to people, knocked at all doors, and was turned away with His wares. There was not a single people willing to accept the yoke. Every one of them had a distinct objection. There was one which was not willing to forego the delicious taste of bacon; another which objected strenuously to the restrictions on intercourse with women.

At last the Salesman came to the Jews, his last prospect. But the Jews too were shrewd enough to object to the six hundred and thirteen commandments and prohibitions of the Law. When God saw His last prospect receding, and saw therefore that He would have to return to the heavens an utter failure, He lost patience. In a moment of divine rage He lifted up Mount Sinai above the heads of the six hundred thousand assembled Jews, saying: "If you accept the Law, it is well; if you refuse it, I will bury you for ever under this mountain."

The Jews had been shrewd enough to refuse the Law; they were also shrewd enough to accept it when there was no way out. They calculated, simply enough, that it was better to live under the yoke of a Law than to be buried alive without one. Thus legend explains one of the great moments in human history. Not of its own free-will, but under the threat of extermination, did the first people accept the Law. It is a legend which perhaps dims the lustre of the romance; the free love-match was a *mariage de convenance*. But what it loses in romance, the incident gains in psychological historic truth.

The legend is isolated; its significance is, however, universal. It is less a legend than a formula. Every people has its Sinai and its God; and the story is repeated from age to age, and will be repeated from age to age as long as there is human history.

If a people has not been buried under the mountains of the past, it has accepted a law. It was part of its life before the social grammarian came to write it down. It is in the folk before it is in the parliament. Tradition precedes history, and folk-ways precede conscious ethics and legislation. But life does not stand still. The leaves on the "tree of life" change from year to year. New needs arise, and new forms must follow. New relations are created between individuals and groups. New formulations must follow. There are times when the rulers and formulators of the old régime refuse to obey the new necessity. Their old positions of privilege are threatened. They shut their own ears, and try to shut the ears of their subjects, to the cry of life. Then a life-and-death struggle ensues in the organism, between the new law, the new tradition, which is already in the life-blood of the people, and the old, hardened forms, which cannot or will not yield. Such an inner struggle is known as a revolution.

But in the general structure of life a social theory is not sufficient. In the world at large there are relations not only between individuals, but also between groups, peoples, and nations. We may admit, for whatever good it may do us, that it was a mistake on the part of history to divide us into groups and peoples. We may go further and regard it even as a scandal and an immorality. But there are not anywhere the artificial means to undo the effects of the immemorial process, scramble us up again and re-issue us without these divisions. And the society of the peoples, like the society of individuals, has its evolution. There are times when it too cries out for a new order, a new theory for the regulation of the relations between people and people, na-

tion and nation. The former struggle leads to revolutions, the latter to wars, to world-catastrophes. Neither of these struggles, the inner or the outer, adds anything to the happiness of mankind. For both of them it pays in torrents of blood. And so mankind cries continuously for a deliverer, for some one who will lead it out of the labyrinth in which it now finds itself.

The written theory of the eighteenth, as of part of the nineteenth, century was the theory of cosmopolitanism. According to this theory, the nation is a purely fortuitous phenomenon, destined to pass away in the course of history. The greatest thinkers, artists, and statesmen of that epoch dreamed not of an international order, a harmony and co-operation of various nations, but of the disappearance of the differences which constitute the nations themselves. They dreamed of a world inhabited by man the common denominator, the abstract man, the citizen of the world, a stranger to any of the bonds of race or origin. It was—perhaps—a beautiful dream. But it was nothing more. For the illusion on which it was based was ignorance of the organic nature of the human being and of the course of history. They went on dreaming, and life went on weaving its own pattern. The process of nationalizing, which began about the time of the Renaissance, reached its intensest activity precisely in the nineteenth century. So it was that the written theory was cosmopolitan, and the living theory and tradition were intensely nationalistic. New thinkers and artists, and particularly scholars in the field of culture, exalted the nation as the crown of human achievement. The factor of nationalism came into its own.

Now this theory needed exact formulation, and the formulation was bound to take place in those countries where it was needed most. England, France, and Germany were almost homogeneous unities in the matter of population. All that existed there, by the time in question, were the shadings of the dominant people, British, French, or German. But

the picture in Austria and in Russia was vastly different. These were specifically states built up on diverse nationalities. It came about, thus, that in England the concept of nationality did not differ from the concept of state. The bearer of a British passport was known to be, and thought himself to be, British by nationality too. In Russia, on the other hand, no Jew, and for that matter no Tartar, would ever have conceived that he was of Russian *nationality*—not even if he had assimilated. In Austria the process went so far as to lead him actually to contradict himself: the Jew occasionally designated himself as of Austrian nationality because there was no such thing. Austrian nationality was a pure abstraction. The state consisted of seventeen nationalities. The Pole, the Czech, and the Magyar always knew to what nationality they belonged.

With such a situation, it is only natural that the scientific theory of nationalism should have emerged not in England or France or Germany, but in Austria and Russia—and chiefly in the latter. There is a long row of names, both of theoreticians and of practical statesmen, which attests this truth. Every name here represents both a man and a school. There were Potebnia, Gradovsky, and Vladimir Soloviov in Russia, Masaryk and Springer-Renner in Austria. The significance of these men, their influence as pioneers in the struggle for the national principle, has not yet been understood. But each of these men has been, in his own way, a pathfinder and a teacher. Among Russian Jews too, there were some who helped to clear a path for national freedom. They came along convergent paths from scattered points: but they came together in their task of teaching Russian Jewry a new method and a new understanding.

One of these men was Dr. Chaim Zhitlowsky. His nearest parallel is the Austrian Springer-Renner. He issued first from the Socialist point of view, and came to understand that it is impossible to realize Socialism and at the same time ignore the nationalist or national factor.

Another was Simon Dubnow. It took this man a long time to rid himself of the cosmopolitan hypnosis, but the deeper his researches took him into the significance of history, the clearer became to him the force of the national factor. There is a strong similarity, in the matter of the development of their ideas, between Dubnow and Masaryk. The third, the most powerful of the Jewish figures, is Achad Ha-Am. He has had a profound influence on Jewish intellectuals, beginning with the nineties of the last century. His influence on his opponents was not less marked than that on his partisans. Without perceiving it, they assimilated the ideas which they combated. There is, again, a parallel between Achad Ha-Am and Soloviov. For both of them nationalism was above all an ethical problem, a question of supreme justice, in the highest sense of that word.

The Jewish world of thought stood, in those days, under the sign of Achad Ha-Am.

CHAPTER TWO: DIVIDED RUSSIAN JEWRY

IT WAS the custom, particularly abroad, to speak of Russian Jewry as of a close-knit unit, held together by community of interests, mores, education, and political fate. This was one of the misconceptions fostered by the position of Russian Jewry as an object of compassion and charity. As the most oppressed part of Jewry it called for pity, for the intervention of generosity; it exacted a dole—but not understanding. In spite of the long geographic frontier common to Russian Jewry and west-European Jewry, the former remained a stranger to the latter. Western Jewry did not seem to think it necessary to make a genuine study of the spiritual, cultural life of six million Jews on the other side of the frontier. It was as if an ancient legend had been translated into fact: the frontier was the fabulous river Sambattyon, which could never be crossed, and the Jews of Russia were the lost ten tribes on the other side.

Yet I doubt whether there was another Jewish group anywhere in the world that was as heterogeneous and as motley as Russian Jewry before it was practically destroyed by the great revolution. I shall not devote any space to the different shadings that were to be found even in small localities, but take three huge divisions: Polish Jewry, northwestern or so-called Lithuanian Jewry, and southern Jewry, which included New Russia, the Ukraine, Bessarabia, and the Crimea. In numbers the three groups were fairly balanced. Each of them had between one and a half and two million souls. Each of them also had its own character, the product of the

human environment in which it lived and of its historic development. There was a great gulf between the Lithuanian Jew and the southern Jew, both in their mode of life and in their outlook on it. The northwest was a poor district. The earth is lean, and the peasantry can barely wrest a living from it. The one natural resource of that district was timber. The vast forests were therefore cut down without pity, and it came about that while the Polish nobles were the destroyers, the well-to-do Jews were nearly always the purveyors. They were in the timber trade. But the Ukraine is blessed with a marvellously fertile soil; her fields probably have not their like anywhere in the world. They provide not only for all Russia, but for many a country beside. The Lithuanian peasant, then, was a depressed, worried creature; when he sang, it was of want and hunger. His brother of the Ukraine was well fed and care-free, and he sang of joy. The difference between these two great peasant groups was naturally reflected in the Jews. The Lithuanian Jew was a pessimist, his brother of the Ukraine an optimist. The former sought refuge in speculations on a world yet to come; the latter found his joy in this world. Lithuanian Jewry produced the Vilna Gaon, the pure intellectualist; Ukrainian Jewry produced the Baal Shem Tov, founder of Chassidism, and mystic lover of this life. For the former, the hard bench of the hungry scholar; for the latter, joyous prayer made up of song and wine.

And yet the difference between these two groups was not as great as that which divided both of them from Polish Jewry. Poland was a conquered country, yet it had always remained foreign. Poland was still "abroad." The Russian citizen needed no passport to go to Poland, but when he got there he found himself in a strange country. And the same foreignness was felt by the Russian Jew among Polish Jews. Even their pronunciation of Yiddish was so different that often they had difficulty in understanding each other. Lithuanian and Ukrainian Jews could mix, and be lost

among one another. But in Warsaw, as in other parts of Poland, two groups of Jews lived their distinct and separate lives. The line of division did not lie between Chassidim and Misnagdim, but between Russians and Poles. The division became particularly sharp in the nineties, when Warsaw was flooded with the refugees from Moscow and other interior districts. The majority of the ejected Jews were of Lithuanian origin.

Three centres sprang up that contained the best forces of the three groups in Russian Jewish life. All southern Russian Jewry stood under the influence of Odessa, while Polish Jewry turned toward Warsaw. Lithuania had no centre of her own, for the day of Vilna's greatness had long departed, and did not return until the time of the Bund. Lithuania therefore looked to a city outside herself—to the Jewish community of St. Petersburg. Thus this last city fulfilled a double function; it served as the centre for all Russian Jewry, and it set the tone particularly for Lithuanian Jewry. Odessa passed through a curious history. In the sixties and seventies it was a Russifying centre for Jewry, by which is meant that the intellectuals and the cultured classes used the Russian language as the medium of expression and creation. By the nineties, not a sign of this influence was left. It was replaced in toto by a Jewish-Hebrew centre. The heart of this centre was the giant figure, Mendele Mocher Sephorim, who opened a new epoch both in Yiddish and in Hebrew. Warsaw began its influence only as a Hebrew centre, and it was with the coming of Judah Leib Peretz that it developed as a Yiddish centre too. St. Petersburg, even after the best Yiddish and Hebrew periodicals began to appear there, remained a predominantly Russian language-centre. These periodicals were produced in the capital for political reasons, and not because it was the best or most logical place for them.

This brief analysis of the fragmentation of Russian Jewry

will indicate what a fearful task this group had before it in its struggle for cultural and political emancipation. The difficulties were inner as well as outer; I doubt whether any people has ever been faced by such a discouraging combination of circumstances. The Jewish thinker who wanted to address himself to his people had to bear in mind its three languages, two of them its own, one alien. The liberating word had to flow down a threefold division. It is impossible to calculate how much physical, nervous, and mental energy this fact alone accounted for. It was not the mere work involved; it was the constant emergence of frictions and misunderstandings, of useless conflicts and hostilities, such as have haunted the Jews in their struggle for emancipation even to this day. One great Jewish leader has characterized the Jewish struggle as a struggle with geography. He might have added that it was also a struggle with philology. The Jewish people is scattered geographically as a physical entity; and as a spiritual entity it is scattered linguistically too.

All these difficulties loomed large before me when I stood at the cross-roads, compelled to make my choice of a career. My studies in Germany had uprooted me from my own locality; for the third time I had begun my life anew. And I cannot deny that this third life of mine had taken a powerful hold on me. Five years had sufficed to develop in me a deep affection for the German milieu. I admired the orderliness of German life in general, and I was touched by the deep German striving toward knowledge. But I loved even more the German language and literature, which had become dearer to me even than the Russian. Another fact strengthened the bond: Germany was Protestant. I had studied the Bible under Christian professors, and I had marked with delight the passion and the earnestness which they brought to their researches in our ancient literature. I had more than once visited their churches, and had been

amazed to mark the awe and reverence with which they spoke of our heroes and Prophets.

True, when I had made allowance for all this, I still felt myself a stranger in their midst, without a portion in their mighty heritage. But was I not a stranger in Russia too? Was I any nearer to the authentic Russian than to the authentic German? By no means. As it happens, I found myself accepted and treated more humanely in the land to which I came than in the land in which I was born. I was in the midst of a people that made no pogroms!

I had friends and connections enough in Germany. The dean of the faculty of philosophy in the University of Königsberg urged me to stay on, and promised me his moral support. But something pulled me back to Russia: not the country, but my people. I felt that in the five years of my absence I had accumulated obligations to it. Again, I might have made my peace with the genuine German world, but the world of German Jewry, with its imitative Teutonism, I found intolerable. I longed anew for my own people, for the millions who lived in oppression and need, but who had not sold their souls. I wanted to be in the midst of those who had not bartered for petty bourgeois rights, for the middle-class conveniences of our time, the supreme right to their own language and their own life.

Among the three Jewish centres, my choice fell on Warsaw. I had no right of residence in St. Petersburg. I might indeed have found a way, as so many of my friends had done. I might have "taken a job" with some well-known magnate, as doorman or butler. The famous poet Frug had done no less. I might have got an artisan's certificate, and then paid monthly graft to the police. But I was repelled by the prospect of change from the free life in Germany to the life of the fugitive in St. Petersburg. Odessa was too distant and too strange to me. In Warsaw there had arisen a considerable group of "my" Jews, Lithuanians, among them many

Choveve Zion, and not ordinary ones, but members, like myself, of the secret order Bnai Moshe—Sons of Moses—founded by Achad Ha-Am. My choice, then, was along the line of least resistance, and I settled in Warsaw.

CHAPTER THREE: THE BNAI MOSHE

THIS famous organization, which played the leading rôle in the Chibath Zion movement before the latter was swallowed up in political Zionism, was founded on the seventh day of the month Adar in the year 1889. The chief founder of the order, who also remained its leader during the whole time of its existence, was the publicist who had sprung into sudden fame, Achad Ha-Am. Around this man there had gathered a small circle of kindred spirits, who looked up to him with affection and reverence as the personification of all that was best and finest in Jewish thought. In this narrow circle the idea came to birth of an organization of the elect, of men who sought the path of spiritual purification, who desired to build a new future for their people not because they wanted to be "like all the other nations," but because inner necessity drove them to it. These were men weary of the alternations of the desire to imitate and the desire to be one's self, the sickening swing of the pendulum between false adaptation and insecure self-assertion. The process of purification had to be begun there and then, among the members, without waiting for the response of the people. For it was only from this intense and disciplined centre that the will of the people could be awakened for the rehabilitation of its own soil.

The name of Moses was invoked—the name of the greatest leader and servant of the Jewish people. His own pillar of fire was to be our guide through the long wilderness of our labour. We chose the seventh day of Adar as the day

of the foundation of the order because according to an ancient tradition the leader was born on this day, and on this day he died.

The Chibath Zion, which had begun with mighty dreams of a general Jewish exodus, had retreated step by step into petty worries, and by the end of the eighties it had shrunk into a philanthropic institution. The Odessa centre of the movement, directed by Pinsker and Lilienblum, had become the collector of pitifully small donations, which were boomed in the press as if they really represented a great folk-movement. And yet it was these two men who, at the beginning of the eighties, had issued a lofty challenge to the will and the imagination of the Jewish people. Pinsker, in his *Auto-Emancipation*, had spoken of an enlightened Jewish manhood which should take upon itself the task which tradition used to assign to a half-divine leader, and as a collectivity play the Messiah to a people living in slavery and shame. Lilienblum had been even more specific. He wrote:

> We must try to colonize Palestine so rapidly that in the course of one generation the Jews as a whole shall be able to leave hospitable Europe; we must be able to settle as a mass in the land of our fathers, the land to which we never lost our historic right simply because we lost our freedom.

As to the means that were essential for the realization of this historic task, Lilienblum did not worry in those first days. "Eight million Jews," he said, "will easily give the sum of ten million." It is worth noting that forty-five years ago a leading authority like Lilienblum put the number of Jews at eight million, and considered the sum of ten million (roubles, probably) a gigantic treasury with which worlds could be built up. From this we may gauge the practical mentality of the Chibath Zion even at its magnificent outset.

And yet there were times when this movement actually had Messianic elements in it. I remember moments of exaltation and fantasy that have never been recaptured. We, the

Jewish people, were on the threshold of liberation. But these instants of brilliant illumination soon failed, and a mood of sobriety succeeded. While the idea is abstract, time and space disappear, and the path leads smoothly forward. There are neither mountains nor valleys nor seas. When the reality sets in, however, the stones and thorns on a level path are enough to deter the adventurer. Instead of seas, rivers and swamps hold up the march. The dream flies with the swiftness of lightning, and reality follows like a reluctant snail. And thus a noble idea, a lofty concept, enlists a thousand enthusiasts—but when the work sets in there is left a tiny handful of the choice. And even of these not all can endure the long, weary road. Some fall along the first mile; others hold out a little longer, then, when their patience and endurance have given out, they sit down by the roadside and become "sympathizers." This means that they watch the agonies of the others with great sympathy. They are even prepared to speak a cheering word now and again. . . .

The Chibath Zion followed the path of all ideals. The weakest elements, the easy enthusiasts, who had enrolled themselves in the early days of great promises, fell away as soon as the bitter task was unveiled in its reality. They had been willing to let the eagles of heaven carry them to the promised land; but the road turned out to be all too earthly. There remained the strongest, they who had indeed permitted themselves to speak of liberation as the work of one generation, in moments of passion, but who, in their subconsciousness, had always been aware of the severe truth. With this great change, there naturally came a change in the attitude toward the national movement. As long as a miracle is momently expected, there is no need to worry about the mass of the people, about its will-power and its training. Indeed, if the Messiah is at the door, there is no time for such a process of preparation. Besides, it is superfluous. But when it was understood that liberation would not come suddenly from Heaven, thrown down by a generous

destiny into the lap of waiting mortals, when it was realized that the miracle would have to be earned in labour and patience, then the leaders had to turn once more to the people, and begin their education. In the time of the belief in miracles, the centre of thought lies in the land that is to be provided; in the time of reality, the centre of thought lies in the body of the people.

It was in order to transfer the centre of attention from the objective to the subjective, from the geographic country to the psychological state of the people, that the Bnai Moshe was founded. It was in a sense a counterweight to the Chibath Zion, and the two organizations reflected the opposed but complementary personalities of their directors, Achad Ha-Am and Lilienblum. Superficially it appeared that Lilienblum was the optimist, Achad Ha-Am the pessimist. The former asserted that the Jewish people, as it then was, could execute the vast design; Achad Ha-Am asserted that the existent forces of the Jewish people were totally inadequate. They might suffice for experiments, for a score or so of little colonies. But not from these experiments would the emancipation come. Yet it was Lilienblum who was the real pessimist, Achad Ha-Am the real optimist. For Lilienblum assumed that what the Jewish people then was, it would remain for ever; it could not be trained to understand and to accept the discipline of great effort. He overestimated the present forces of the people, and underestimated its latent forces. His was, in fact, the forced optimism of a profound despair. Achad Ha-Am, who saw the condition of the people as it was, believed profoundly in powers which had been distorted and overlaid by the unnatural life of exile. It was this belief in the possibility of awakening to creative action the almost atrophied capacities of the Jewish people that stamped the philosophy and the life-activity of Achad Ha-Am. In his first public utterance he demonstrated, with the merciless logic that was peculiarly his own, that the methods chosen by the Chibath Zion

could not lead to success, that the way to the reconstructed land led first through the will of the people. He saw the people first—the land afterwards.

A second principle ran parallel with the first for Achad Ha-Am. Whether it was in the preparatory work for the exile, or in the experimental work in Palestine, it was quality that had to precede quantity. The truth is that the second principle was a logical accompaniment of the first. Had there been a possibility of transferring the Jewish people in an instant (a generation is of course an instant, historically speaking), it might have been permissible to yield a point here and there. But since the delay was in its very nature for the purpose of education, then every action had to be of a quality that would train the intelligence, the dignity, and the discipline of the people. Only high quality could achieve this purpose. A single book of quality enriches literature; ten books of no quality add nothing. One good school could awaken infinitely more love for Hebrew than ten poor schools. One good colony in Palestine, solidly built on firm foundations, would have infinitely more power of attraction than ten colonies on insecure foundations.

Within the order itself Achad Ha-Am also applied rigidly the principle of quality. He had worked out a system of exacting rules of conduct, and every member had to take a solemn oath to apply them to every circumstance of his personal and public life. In the days of its greatest extension, the order did not comprise more than one hundred members, but for Achad Ha-Am even this number was too high. Among these hundred members were the most distinguished of the fighters in the Chibath Zion, the tried veterans. In the beginning even Lilienblum was among us.

One element was lacking in the make-up of Achad Ha-Am. He was a great teacher but not a political leader, a guide but not an organizer. A moral personality alone does not suffice in political action. The political leader must have other qualities too. In the first place, he must have a pas-

sion for leadership, that is to say, he must desire to master and command. He cannot consider too closely the wishes of those he leads. He must be able to decree, to impose his will. Achad Ha-Am was not cast in this mould. He was too absorbed by his thoughts; he was, in a sense, too much the aristocrat of theory, and could not stoop to those petty everyday tasks without which an organization cannot be made to function. The leadership of the order was thrust upon him. But whenever difficulties arose, when there was friction among the members, he begged to be released from the leadership. His one wish was to remain free, and to devote himself wholly to the one task of his life, "the preparation of the generation," the illumination of the Jewish mind, the cleansing of the national idea from the superfluities and undesirable elements which had accumulated in it. A people that is purified, he argued, can think clearly: and a people that thinks clearly acts clearly. The first report of his visit to Palestine in 1891 (the stormy days of the Chibath Zion) ends with the following characteristic passage:

Filled with melancholy thoughts after what I had seen and heard in Jaffa and in the colonies, I arrived on the eve of Passover in Jerusalem, there to pour forth my sorrow and my rage before the stocks and stones, the remnants of our former glory. I went first, of course, to the Wailing Wall. There I found many of our Jerusalem brethren standing and praying in loud voices. Their haggard faces, their wild, alien gestures, their fantastic clothes—all harmonized with the ghastly picture of the Wall itself. I look alternately at them and at the Wall, and one thought fills my heart: these stones are the witness to the desolation of our land, these men the witnesses to the desolation of our people; and which of these two desolations is the greater? For which of them shall we shed more tears? When a land is destroyed, there may yet arise a Zerubabel, an Ezra, a Nehemiah, and bringing a people with them, restore the land. But when a people is destroyed, who can come to its rescue?

During its existence of eight years the Bnai Moshe was under constant attack. Militant Jewish orthodoxy was not in those days an organized power in the modern sense. But it had its branches in every larger city, and it stood on guard against every manifestation of energy that might endanger the ancient traditional outlook and way of life. The centre of orthodoxy was Kovno, and its adherents called themselves the Pillars of the Law. Their leader was Jacob Lifschitz, the so-called secretary of the famous and influential Rabbi Isaac Elchanaan Spektor.

The Rabbi himself was not by nature a fighter. His extreme piety had given him almost the status of a saint, but he was known to be amongst the most tolerant of the Rabbis, and he took no part in the struggle between the old ideas and the new. But Lifschitz used his name freely, and it was the universal impression that whatever Lifschitz did was with the approval of Rabbi Isaac Elchanaan. In the camp of the opponents of orthodoxy this centre was called the Black Cabinet. And this Black Cabinet declared war to the death on the Chibath Zion movement. Nor were the means invoked particularly choice. They included libel and slander, and even that worst of tactics, simple indication that Jewish nationalism was a revolt not only against the powers of Heaven, but also against those of earth.

This was the battle waged by ancient, orthodox Judaism, a Judaism petrified to the core, compact of servility, against the revolutionary spirit which sought a way into the open and called upon the Jewish people to action and daring. But apart from purely ideological motives, arising from a genuine conservatism and even reaction, there were other motives—the economic.

Reactionary Judaism had found a form of expression for its own particular longing for Zion, namely, the so-called Chalukkah, or Palestinian charity. Reactionary Judaism too had sent its "pioneers" into the Holy Land, and dreamed in its own way of the creation of a "strong" Jewish centre.

But it was to be strong in prayer and piety, for these alone could bring the last days of the Redemption. Immobile, passive, slavish, this type of Judaism could never conceive of earthly self-help.

Its "pioneers" were therefore mostly elderly people, heroes of prayer and of fasts, concepts which were both closely bound up with the Messianic concept of the Dark Ages. These Chalukkah Jews lived in Palestine on the charity which was collected throughout the Jewish world. Every country had its organization, called the Kolel, with travelling propagandists, and central officials who distributed the money in Palestine. These officials and propagandists constituted a regular army, for whom the Chalukkah system was a question of bread and butter. Until the rise of the Chibath Zion they were the only representatives of the Palestine idea; they occupied the pulpits of the Synagogues, and acted as the intermediaries between Palestine and the Diaspora. They brought greetings from Palestine to the exile, and the kopecks of the exile to Palestine.

And suddenly they became aware of formidable competition. A new time had come for the Jewish people; new delegates and propagandists appeared in the pulpits, new ideas were preached. The Mount of Olives (the Jewish cemetery in Jerusalem) and the Wailing Wall shifted into the background, and the foreground was occupied by talk of colonies, of fields sown with grain, of trees heavy with fruit. Life and death were brought face to face, the struggle was on between immemorial inertia and new-born energy. From Palestine the leaders of the Chalukkah issued an open civic denunciation of the entire Chibath Zion, and they did not rest until they had brought about the imprisonment, by the Turkish authorities, of the man who symbolized in Palestine the new spirit of Jewry—Eliezer ben Yehudah. The excuse was an innocent article which Ben Yehudah printed in his Hebrew newspaper in honour of the Feast of Tabernacles, or Maccabees. Here he made seasonal allusion, in

the ornate circumlocutions of the time, to the glorious deeds of the Maccabees—and that was enough. To the task of hastening the appearance of the Messiah, the heroes of fasts and prayers added a second, that of supporting the throne of Abdul Hamid against Jewish "revolutionaries."

It was perfectly natural that in the war between the Pillars of the Law and the Chalukkah on the one side, and the Chibath Zion on the other, the arrows should be aimed most thickly against the secret order of the Bnai Moshe. Achad Ha-Am was regarded as the poisoner of the Jewish youth, and the order as the centre of the mortal danger which threatened Jewry and Judaism. A stream of pasquinades and denunciations issued from the offices of the Black Cabinet and spread its malodorous waves over the Jewish world.

But we were attacked from both sides. We were not to the liking of the Chibath Zion either. Comrades in the order fell away—among them Lilienblum and Pines, the latter a director of the work in Palestine—and declared bitter war against us, and particularly against our leader.

Pines was a scholar of note, and an excellent Hebrew stylist, though somewhat in the older, artificial manner. He never forgave Achad Ha-Am for having exalted the national factor in Jewry above all others, not excluding religion, as the principal driving force in our history. Achad Ha-Am, being an evolutionist and strongly under the influence of Herbert Spencer, could not regard religion as the *first cause* in the development of the Jewish spirit, for he saw how the Jewish religion had undergone a long process of evolution from the lower to the higher. He did regard religion as the highest form of national self-expression, the supreme utterance, but not as the original impulse. This purely historic interpretation of Judaism stands in irreconcilable contradiction to the purely traditional outlook, which accepted Jewish religion as a single and complete revelation from Sinai, working in an inexplicable fashion

through all the generations. For Pines the views of Achad Ha-Am meant the destruction of the foundations. Lilienblum went even further than Achad Ha-Am in his religious views, and his hostility to the latter was merely a question of political tactics or method. He could not bear the frankness with which Achad Ha-Am spoke of the shortcomings of the new settlements in Palestine, nor his merciless criticism of the leadership of the Chibath Zion. He was convinced that Achad Ha-Am and the order Bnai Moshe were doing untold harm to the movement.

Yet the order played the most important rôle in creative Jewry, and won over to its side almost all the intellectual forces of the movement. In the cultural field its influence was simply revolutionary. The publishing house of Achiasaf and, in part, the publishing house of Toshiah were founded through the efforts of the Bnai Moshe. They were responsible, too, for the first modern Hebrew schools, which contributed greatly to the Hebrew renaissance. Through the efforts of the Bnai Moshe was founded the first *self-supporting* Jewish colony, Rechoboth, today one of the finest and most extensive in Palestine. The chief founders were Elijah Zev Lewin-Epstein and Wolf Gluskin. The Bnai Moshe were among the first to protest against the system of Baron Rothschild, a system which delegated one man's authority to representatives who were the virtual rulers of the colonists. In unmeasured terms Achad Ha-Am denounced a régime which destroyed the initiative and energy of the colonist and turned him into a lackey licking the boots of the administrator. The reader should remember that in those days Baron Rothschild was the only supporter of the new settlement in Palestine, and like every baronial power he had his own dreams and plans and would not brook interference. Achad Ha-Am ignored the sensitiveness of the great man, attacked him along the whole line, and did not even bother to sugar the bitter pills. He declared that the system of Baron Rothschild *might* build up the country, but it

would *surely* destroy the Jews. And curiously enough, the Baron did not fly into a rage, as he was expected to do: he listened instead, and step by step followed Ha-Am's advice and tried to liberate the colonists from slavery to the administration.

But the greatest achievement of the order was in the higher field of ideas. It purified the national ideal both from the new disease of chauvinism and from the ancient disease of blind adoration of tradition. Thanks to the work of the order the renaissance itself went through a rebirth, and emerged with a clearer scientific understanding of its own nature, and a higher ethical appreciation of its own significance.

For me the order was a sort of Temple, served by an incomparable High Priest. Time did not weaken this feeling; the more intimately I came to know Achad Ha-Am, the more I admired his clear insight, his simple, healthy logic, and his sharp power of analysis. But most of all I was drawn to him by the purity of his mind and of his intentions.

It was many years later, long after the Chibath Zion had yielded the stage to the present Zionist organization, that the order Bnai Moshe disappeared silently—like the leader of olden times whose name it bore. No man knoweth the place of his burial. Political Zionism, tumultuous, vigorous, held the attention of Jewry. The founders of the Zionist Organization denied that Zionism was simply a development of the Chibath Zion idea. They always asserted that Zionism was a brand-new movement, beginning with its own Book I, Genesis. I have passed through both movements, almost since the moment of the birth of the first, and I must confess that to this day I cannot distinguish the principle that divides the two. The dream of a Jewish state is characteristic of both of them. In the Chibath Zion the cultural element played a larger rôle than it did in the Zionist movement: that is all. The explanation is simple. The Chibath Zion was dominated by the Jews of eastern Europe, who were

the strongest of Jewries in the cultural sense. In the sense of leadership, it was the western Jews who dominated the Zionist movement. The idea of a Jewish state simply became more clear: but the result was a certain degree of compromise in the cultural field.

Not all the members of the Bnai Moshe accepted the new features of the national movement. Achad Ha-Am himself was less satisfied than any one; and his apostle and adjutant, Joshua Eisenstadt, remained unsatisfied too. Twenty years after he had inducted me into the order, I visited Eisenstadt in Jerusalem, where he lived in a modest little room on an obscure side-street. He had withdrawn from public and political life. The apostle was silent. He spoke no more of the far-off future. Instead, he reverted with longing to the days that were gone. He told me that he had sworn me into the order on his own responsibility, and that the directors of the order had looked askance upon my membership, on account of my youth. But he had believed in the strength which I would yet develop. I gave him my thanks—belated almost by a generation.

CHAPTER FOUR: WARSAW FORTY YEARS AGO

IN THOSE days Warsaw was considered the greatest Jewish centre in the world. Numbering two hundred thousand souls, the Jews of the ancient capital of Poland constituted two-fifths of its population, and had laid upon it their peculiar stamp. There were other towns in Europe—like Berlin and Vienna—in which a powerful Jewish life pulsed, concentrated, long after the physical walls of the ghettos had been levelled, in a voluntary ghetto of its own making. But in these towns the Jewish population, though nearly comparable in size with that of Warsaw, was a much smaller proportion of the general population. Secondly, it was not sundered so sharply from the general life of these cities.

I remember that in Berlin I had to look fairly closely if I wanted to pick out a Jew from among the streaming masses of the city. In Warsaw I could do it without an effort, and I seldom made a mistake. But it was also in comparison with towns like St. Petersburg, Moscow, and even Odessa, that Warsaw was the most Jewish of cities.

In the Russian Jewish cities, like those last mentioned, a constant process of adaptation was at work, visible in the Jewish quarters no matter what their size. In the middle and upper classes, and to some extent among the youth of the masses, this process was expressed as a voluntary self-Russification in speech, dress, and manners. The picture in Warsaw was vastly different. Here reigned an autonomous Jewish life. With the exception of the upper ten, the Jews

of Warsaw had no alien example before their eyes. They envied no one and imitated no one. They went their own way, lived their own lives, as naturally as if they had been in these surroundings since the first week of the creation.

I am quite sure that the Warsaw Jew believed that Adam used to walk around in the Garden of Eden in a long capote, the end of his trousers thrust into boots, his head covered by a silken skull-cap. We may say what we like of the Polish Jew. We may dislike the manner of his life, we may condemn his inertia and remoteness from modernity; one thing we must grant him: within, he was freer, more independent, than his emancipated brothers in western Europe. He clung longer than his Russian brothers, too, to the traditions that had been sanctified by the generations.

It is a common mistake to hold up the Polish Jew as the classic type of *mah yofis* Jew, the servile toadying child of exile, doubling himself before the gentile. It is true, or rather was true, of him at certain moments in his history; but even then the bowing and scraping and prostration was external only. Under the pressure of historic circumstance, the Polish Jew had developed a sharp dualism, and lived in two parallel worlds: "their" world and "our" world. The more he had to chant the praises of "their" world, the world of the mighty, his masters, the more obstinately he clung to his own world. To the outer world he was compelled to resort to earn the daily bread of his wife and children: what other way was there for him? But it was only this bread of affliction, nothing more, that he sought there. Its secrets did not attract him. His spirit was not tempted. That world was like a stormy and treacherous sea, and the frail bark of his physical existence danced precariously on its waves. Does the fisherman think of the secrets on the ocean floor? His one longing is to return safely to the shore, and to fill the mouths that wait for him. And returned home, the Polish Jew also returned to himself, to his own world, where there was no need to play the sycophant. Here he was lord, and

his aim was to raise another generation after him, to follow in his footsteps. He sought neither change nor newness. He was content with his God, who helped him in time of storm. He was content with the spiritual inheritance he had taken over from his father, and which he would hand over to his son—so on, world without end.

Until the eighties the Jewish community of Warsaw was a homogeneous structure, with no divisions in its inner life. But after the first pogroms, there began the westward stream of Jewry within the Russian borders. The refugees made for Poland, and chiefly for Warsaw. There were economic reasons, too. The location of Poland, close to the heart of Europe, and the existence of coal-mines, made possible the growth of industrial centres in certain districts, and round these larger enterprises smaller home-industries might be developed. In the beginning of the nineties, after the celebrated expulsion from Moscow, the stream directed toward Warsaw became heavier. Tens of thousands of Jews, driven from the old Russian capital and from remoter districts in the interior, settled in Warsaw, and brought with them their business, commerce, and industry. They made use of their old Russian connections in the commercial world of the interior, and in this wise helped to transform Warsaw into an industrial depot and a distributing centre of Russian goods. The Russian business world was not always pleased with the inhuman decrees of the government against the Jews. On occasions it even intervened—for purely economic reasons—on behalf of *its* Jews. But this time it had reason to be pleased, for new branches of Russian houses were now opened in Warsaw, and new channels of distribution were created.

This activity was developed by those Jews who had been only half- or three-quarters ruined. The others, the totally ruined, continued with the current to America. And the outcome of the whole situation illustrates once more how difficult it is to make a right decision in life. Forty years

ago the wholly ruined Jews naturally envied their less unfortunate brothers, who had enough to resettle in Warsaw, and did not have to cross the seas to begin life wholly anew. And today how many of the children of the half-ruined envy the children of the totally ruined! If, forty years ago, their fathers had been lucky enough to be totally ruined, they, the children, would today be living in New York or Chicago, helping their poor relatives in Poland. But the rôles are reversed, and thousands of them wait for an American visa, meanwhile casting envious glances across the sea.

When I came to settle in Warsaw the Jewish community was no longer a homogeneous body. It was not a circle with one centre, but an ellipse with two centres. The "Russian" group already occupied a prominent position in public life. The relations between the old group, rooted for generations in Warsaw, and the new group, the arrivals of yesterday, were not very friendly. The Polish Jews looked on the Russian Jews in the light of dangerous competitors, and it never occurred to the new-comers that they were making things a bit close for the older residents. Indeed, they looked upon themselves as creators and civilizers, who would open new horizons for the Jews of Poland and develop new economic possibilities.

But apart from these more elementary considerations, there were deeper, psychological ones, springing from the first mass contact that had ever occurred between these groups. They were strange to each other partly in speech, more so in ways of life. The Litvak (Lithuanian Jew—most of the refugees were of Lithuanian origin) did not understand the Polish Jew, the Polish Jew did not understand the Litvak. They both spoke Yiddish, but with such differing pronunciation that a real linguistic gulf existed between them. Still greater was the cultural difference between them. The Russian Jew, particularly if he belonged to the middle or upper merchant class, had gone a long way toward Europeanization in appearance and bearing. The

background, it is true, had been Russian, not German, but his mentality, by frequent contact with western Europe, had taken on a strong tinge of the western European. To this part of the world he looked as to a model of civilized life. But the Polish Jew lived two hundred years behind these modern times, and frequently enough his concepts were purely mediaeval. The clerical character of Polish life was reflected in Jewish life, too. It was the "spiritual leader" who gave tone to the life of the community, in the case of the Poles, the priest, in that of the Jews, the Rabbi, who, in this respect, could not be compared with the other type of Rabbi, the Rav of the Misnagdim. The Rav is a scholar, who teaches and interprets the Law. The Rabbi is the intermediary between God and man, the representative of the former on earth—a concept really alien to the Jewish spirit, explicable only by the powerful influences of the surrounding life. For this is an instance of the ineluctable power of environment. No man can insulate himself: the pervasive power of environment is superior to all devices; it seeps in through the most obstinately guarded defences. There could not be a more perfect human system of insulation than that which was devised by the Polish Jews, yet it was not proof against the Polish Catholic view on man and God.

On the streets, in the tumult of the day's business, the two groups met and mingled. The outsider gained the impression of a single, homogeneous Jewish life. But in their inner life the Jews remained two separate groups, with few points of contact. In their social and family life they lived each in his own world, and between these worlds there was a gulf perhaps as great as that which today divides the German Jewish from the east-European Jewish groups in the land with the largest Jewish population—America. It is a pity that Jewish sociologists have hitherto made little research into the inner divisions and frictions which, in our very exile, have exiled Jews from Jews. In its persistent recurrence it is something unique to Jewish life. Statistics

would show, I believe, that marriages between Polish Jews and Russian Jews in Warsaw were at that time as rare as marriages between German Jews and east-European Jews in America today.

But the real masters of Warsaw, too, were of two kinds. There were the old, rooted Polish aristocrats, who felt themselves entitled to the leadership of the people and fought for it tooth and nail: and there was the imposed Russian administration. The leaders of Polish Warsaw exerted themselves to the utmost to the end that Warsaw might retain its Polish national character. They might be compared with the Jewish zealots in the time of the Roman rule of the second Jewish state. The Russian administration, powerful in numbers and in the backing of a strong army, worked in the opposite direction. *Their* aim was the wearing down of the Polish character by attrition, and the transformation of the former capital of a Polish kingdom into the capital of a Russian province. The Polish leaders had developed a certain "tolerance" toward their own Jews; but they were outspoken in their enmity to the Russian Jewish new-comers. The whole incident of the expulsion was an insult to them. Russia had driven out the Jews—and had never asked them, the *de jure* masters of Poland, whether they wanted to receive the refugees. Poland was being treated contemptuously as a no man's land.

The Russian administration, per contra, exploited the new-comers as *voluntary* co-operators in the Russification of Poland, and looked askance at the native-born Jews. The administration believed that the primary duty of the Jews was to help accelerate the process of Russification. They could quite understand the obstinacy of the Pole, but the Jew was not entitled to views that differed from those of the conqueror. And the Russian was the conqueror and ruler. The refusal of the original Polish Jew to adopt the Russian language as his own was regarded as a sort of state offence.

As the reader can now perceive, it was an extraordinarily

complicated situation. The conqueror and oppressor fought with the conquered and oppressed, the former backed by might, the latter by a proper sense of justice. The latter had to fight on two fronts—of which the second was exposed to the new immigrants. Among the Jews themselves there was no harmony. Jewish life was a seething cauldron of aims and tendencies. And it was desperately difficult for the Russian Jew to determine on a course of action.

To the honour of the latter, it should be remarked that he did understand at once on whose side justice lay, and he refused to be a willing tool in the hands of the Russian master. But the transition from one language to another is not at all easy for adults. In addition to economic possibilities and mental capacity, there must also be the psychological moral compulsion to learn. This last factor was understood by the Russian Jew of Warsaw. He struggled with himself, and did his best to master the language. His children learned the language from their earliest years, and therefore more easily. Thus, indirectly the Russian Jew asserted his belief in the moral rights of the Polish people, and despite the rule of the Russians, paid the tribute of the immigrant to the former. But all this took time, and the period of transition was a profoundly unhappy one. In the street, and in the business world, the Russian Jew was compelled to speak Russian, to the resentment of the Poles. But he could not help himself. He was in the position of the eternal wanderer who is often compelled to serve causes that he finds hateful.

When I settled in Poland, all my sympathies turned to the Polish people. A nationalist in principle, I dreamed of Poland's liberation from the Russian yoke. I did not even pause to think of what might be the consequences to the Jews. My feeling of justice took the right of way. But I only wanted the same standard of justice applied to my own people.

I was received, in the circle of the Chibath Zion, and more so in the closed group of the Bnai Moshe, with open arms. My activities in student days in the Jewish nationalist society in Berlin were remembered to my credit, and I was at once given official recognition. I became recording secretary in the Warsaw "office" of the order. As a matter of fact the official position meant very little, the relations between the members being thoroughly informal and intimate. The tasks assumed by any member did not tend in the slightest toward the creation of a hierarchy. There was a special chapter in the rules of the order which condemned in the strongest language the seeking of honours—the original and perpetual blight which lies on all political organizations. I can honestly say that in the order Bnai Moshe this evil had been reduced to the human minimum. I explain this not only through the quality of the membership, but also through the secret character of the order. It is easier to conquer the hunger for honours in a small, closed circle than on the stage of public life. It is the masses, the gallery, that are the undoing of a man.

The Chibath Zion, like the small Bnai Moshe, consisted chiefly of the new Russian element. Polish Jewry stood off at a distance, and regarded the movement as a Russian Jewish affair. In this respect Warsaw was no better than Berlin: it was the "aliens," the new-comers, who made the stir. The "natives" ignored or derided the movement. Sometimes, when the nationalists became too aggressive, they disturbed the complacency of the assimilationists. Then the latter, in Warsaw as in Berlin, would be provoked into bitter counterattack.

The arguments, on both sides, were the same in Warsaw as in Berlin. They were theoretical but real. First was the general argument that nationalism was a backward step in human progress, delaying the wished-for consummation of the all-human brotherhood. Second was the argument that Jewish nationalism prevented the Jews from becoming part

of the nation in the midst of which they lived. Actually the arguments might be summed up as follows: "As regards the Jews, I am a cosmopolitan. As regards the Poles (or Germans) I am a nationalist." This was the view of the Polish Jewish intelligentsia, which had imported its philosophy from Germany. The Jewish masses took no part in the struggle. They remained alien to the movement and the movement to them. This was the impression I obtained. There were of course exceptions. There were a few "native" Jews in the order, and some were scattered throughout the branches of the Chibath Zion. But the spiritual and factual leaders of the movement, those who initiated its activities and stamped it with their character, were the Russian Jews.

At that time no other movement than ours existed in the Jewish world. There were individual young Jews who joined the ranks of the Russian and Polish movements and disappeared in them. There was a curious and instructive difference between these two divisions of the Socialist movement. In Russia nationalism was ignored tacitly—as reactionary. The ostensible ideal was the pouring of all the human races into the one universal mould. In practice it meant, of course, the natural, unforced progress of Russian nationalism, swallowing up all nationalisms within the Russian border. But the Poles were conscious nationalists. They had to be in order to have some hold on the masses. They were compelled to fight on the nationalist as well as on the Socialist front. It might therefore have been expected that the young Jews who joined the Polish Socialist movement (the P.P.S., as it was called) would be influenced to take a more generous attitude toward nationalism in general, and their own nationalism in particular. After all, if nationalism is once acknowledged, it would seem easier to revert from a borrowed nationalism (Polish in this case) to one's own nationalism (Jewish) than to do so from the theoretical cosmopolitanism preached among Russian Socialists to one's abandoned nationalism. And yet, how amaz-

ingly otherwise it worked out. They conceded the nationalism of the Polish people, and condemned without reservation the nationalism of their own. And the crowning irony of the situation was that they used their Polish nationalism in order to combat Jewish nationalism in the name of cosmopolitanism.

That negative, almost unnatural, phenomenon in Jewish life, the constant urge to abandon one's own identity in favour of some one else's, may be generally explained by the false type of education practised on the Jewish youth. Nationalist self-consciousness is a question of heritage—and also a question of education. The history of the people, and its language, are the strongest conscious factors. But if a young generation is brought up in another language, another literature, there evolves an inner conflict between the inescapable heritage and the cultural-spiritual self. Such a conflict was evident, in sharpest form, among a young generation which sought out every point of contact with the outside world. Its approach to the world could of course only take place through specific intimacies with *national* cultures, like the German, the Russian, and the Polish.

The natural healthy way, among peoples leading a natural healthy life, is to open the eyes of the youth to the culture which belongs to its people and its environment: the culture of the world then breaks into the consciousness of the young through the prisms of its own authentically developed mentality. This possibility was not open to the Jews. They were completely without modern schools, modern literature, and modern school-books. Jewish education was therefore shot through with the spirit of antiquity and of the Middle Ages. Both the content of the education and its mental colouring came from vanished ages, and were alien to the life for which they were destined as preparation. The Jew who wanted to keep pace with the progress of the times, to live in and be part of the present, was compelled to turn to alien sources. He drank from the wells of others, and was

grateful when they were not closed to him. It is true that among the young who wandered farther and farther from their people in their perpetual search for the waters that could slake their thirst, there were some who had received a thorough and profound Jewish education. But they, who might have slaked their thirst at home, were pulled along in the general centrifugal rush; they were unable to withstand its force.

But not these difficulties alone drove the young Jew from the language of his people and the culture of his people. However skilfully he overcame these, he was not yet quit of those deliberate, repressive measures which doubled his problem. The decrees of the government that limited educational possibilities were directed chiefly against the Jewish youth. And their fiendish purpose was to stifle the spirit of the Jews, so that, losing hope, initiative, and endurance, they might go under and let themselves be ground beneath the wheels of the machine. Nor was the obstacle the government alone. The attitude of the Polish people was far from encouraging. The Jew was constantly reminded that he was an alien, that at best he was tolerated—but no one could tell for how long. When the glances that were thrown his way were not hot with enmity, they were cold with deliberate remoteness, sometimes more offensive than enmity. After all his bitter efforts to imitate, to resemble, in speech, language, study, gesture, loyalties, hopes, the master people, the Jew encountered only the studied coolness of contempt. It was hard to bear: better a little frank hostility, a sign of recognition.

This was the spiritual condition of the Jewish youth in those days. It sought a way into the open, where it would not asphyxiate, and this way it thought it had found via the Polish Socialist movement. It believed (as indeed it longed to believe) that in this temple reigned the spirit of equality; that the priesthood serving at the altar of humankind had left behind it the base quarrels of the national

groups. Here, then, was rest for the tormented soul of the Jew. For fear of a reversion to those quarrels and enmities, he locked out of his mind all thought of the struggles and special needs of his own group, and became a confirmed enemy of the Jewish national movement. But before long he learned that in this sanctified place too there were the old divisions, and, in order to remain true to his great ideal, he had to build himself a little separate chapel within the temple, where he worshipped and served after his own fashion. He began to understand that differences of character and of life-ways that had accumulated through countless generations, were not to be wiped out with a gesture; and he began to understand, too, that equality does not lie in the denial of the self, but in the free unpersecuted assertion of the self in the company of equals.

During the first period of my stay in Warsaw I was greatly occupied with propaganda. I spoke at many meetings. These were as a rule held in private homes, under the disguise of a family reunion or festival. We varied the disguise. Sometimes it was a Bar Mitzvah, sometimes a betrothal, sometimes a silver or a golden wedding. It depended on the available material—the ages of the people who were willing to play the rôles of an engaged couple, or of the parents of a Bar Mitzvah boy, or of a Jewish Darby and Joan, in case the police should suddenly burst in and discover the assembly. The table was always handsomely set, with decanters, whisky glasses, cakes, glasses of tea. As soon as the police was signalled (we appointed sentinels, of course) the glasses were lifted, a loud *lechayim* resounded through the room—and we drank. We never committed the blunder of putting tinctured water or tea in the decanters: the Russian police were first-class whisky-tasters. But of course we only drank one glass, for the special benefit of the police. It would not have done to go on drinking—meetings would have become too expensive. Besides, the Jewish youth had no taste at all for alcohol. So the bottles circulated

from meeting to meeting, and the same whisky served a dozen celebrations or more. But if they did not drink, they certainly smoked. Even the speaker would not remove the cigarette from his lips, and the room was always filled with a heavy cloud. But then—did not the first great Jewish leader also speak through a cloud?

Frequently enough I was the lecturer of the evening; but what I liked most, and where I expanded most, was in debates with our opponents. In debate I knew neither hesitation nor mercy. If an argument was absurd, I pounced upon it like a tiger, worried it to death, and clawed the carcase of it into shreds. Even my comrades did not consider me what might be called a tolerant debater. There were some who reproached me with turning potential converts into eternal enemies. I must confess, however, that though more than once I promised myself to exercise self-control, to be gentler and more patient, the resolution did not carry me through more than the first few minutes. Then the self-imposed discipline slipped from me and I sailed in with bare knuckles. My impatience made me suffer more than my own comrades. I always regretted, too late, the sharpness and bitterness of my tongue, and envied those who could conduct themselves with the cool tolerance of parliamentarians.

I took quarters among my more intimate friends, on a side-street off the Nalewskis, the main artery of the tumultuous Jewish life of Warsaw. Here life raged not less thunderously than on the Friedrichstrasse of Berlin, but reminded one less of Western commerce than of an Oriental bazaar. The Jewish merchant had not the habit of sitting patiently in his store, waiting for the purchaser. He had a hatred of loneliness. And the interior of the store was lonely. He was drawn to the noise, the rush, the chaos, of the street outside. He wanted the mass, the crowds, where he was not condemned to remain silent between one cus-

tomer and the next, and where he could talk himself out uninterruptedly. It may be that this was a genuine reversion to the Orient, where, for climatic reasons, business is carried on wholly in the open. In part it might be the result of the long life of the ghetto, where the Jew always lived in close contacts, and where the feeling of security was associated with the multitude. When the need was gone, the association clung to the Jew. He feels somehow more comfortable where there is less elbow-room. If God blesses him with a large house, he puts aside the biggest room for receptions seldom held; his living-and-dining-room is usually small, and the smaller it is the more *he* expands.

With the help of some friends, Helena and I were soon settled in a roomy apartment, large enough, in fact, for small meetings—an important matter in view of the severe attitude of the police toward meetings of all kinds. Every householder, without exception, was watched by the police. The houses in Poland are built round a courtyard. To enter the house, it is always necessary to pass the porter's lodge at the main gate on the street. Now this porter, or *strusz*, as he is called in Polish, was in nearly every case instructed by the police to keep a sharp eye on the tenants: to mark the number of guests and their character, to learn something concerning the occupations and associations of the tenants; wherever he could, it was his proper business to overhear conversations, and "get a line" on the ideas of the people living round him. And if he found the slightest ground for suspicion, he was to report to the police at once. But this porter was in reality a low-class servant put where he was by the landlord to be at the service of the tenants. And in fact he was treated as a low-class servant. What he became was a sneak and stool-pigeon for the police. In the hierarchy of the Russian espionage system he was the lowest among the low. And yet he was the foundation of the whole structure, for he stood in constant and so

to say intimate contact with the actual life of the population, and he was a man not easily avoided.

It goes without saying that the majority of these porters were gross and ignorant creatures to whom a political conversation was simply jabber. But the grosser and more ignorant they were, the more dangerous also were they to the population which factually lived under their supervision. A word torn out of its context, a careless phrase misunderstood by an illiterate, might be carried to the police and result in much discomfort. It was therefore the first law of life in Warsaw that relations with the porter must be friendly, and the friendliness must, if necessary, be purchased.

The monetary cost was fairly trifling; but the feeling of humiliation was harder to bear. We were at the mercy of a pitiful slave; and the most intolerable element in all this was the fact that the slave understood and enjoyed the situation. In his glances we could read his cunning pleasure; he accepted our kopecks not as a tip, but as the bribe paid out to the powerful.

In later years I became acquainted with the type of porter in St. Petersburg and in Moscow. They were something of an improvement on their colleagues of Warsaw. The Warsaw porter was in the employ of an alien government, toward which he felt no goodwill. It was need that drove him to accept the job. He was torn between two impulses. He would have liked to distinguish himself in the service of his master and prove his worth as a watch-dog for the Russian ruler. Also he would not have minded at all if some catastrophe had overtaken his employers—the oppressive government of the foreign conquerors. The Petersburg or Moscow porter served cheerfully and with a clean conscience; he was an important cog in the vast machine of his own government. He was a political factor, a permanent link in the social chain. How permanent, he did not quite realize, for the Czar and his court and their police are gone, but the porter has transferred his services, in exactly the same capacity, to

the Tcheka, the secret police of the Bolshevist government. At the time of his new appointment he was exalted by the wits to the noble rank of "Court Minister."

My friends advised me to start out by making friends with the porter. They also instructed me how to go about it. It was a mistake to give him too large a tip, and to seem too anxious for his goodwill, for then he could become an insufferable pest. He was to be treated with a diplomatic mixture of superiority and consideration: as though no one suspected him of being anything but a servant, but as a servant of somewhat higher quality. In brief, he was to be made a friend, but not a too friendly one.

After the years I had passed in Germany, all this was fantastic and barbarous. In that country the liberals were perpetually complaining about the nosiness of the police; but as I looked westward again from Russia, Germany appealed to me as the land of freedom incarnate. I doubt whether a citizen of a free country can quite understand what it meant (and means) to be a Russian subject. It is a mistake to assume that it was the Czar who ruled. It was not he, but the Czarist régime, which became, as an abstract idea, a sort of deity in itself. Man existed for the sake of the régime, in order that the régime might take mortal substance. This was an ideal which penetrated all society, from the apex to the foundations of the pyramid. The people existed in order that the Czar might rule; the young existed that the police might have some one to watch, the business man that the government might have an income—and so on. And it came down to the ordinary subject, who existed in order that the official might have some one to slap. The character of a people does not change with a change in régime. A new régime comes in—but the relation of the people to it remains what it was before. In Russia, after a furious upheaval and profound change, the attitude of the people to the new régime is what it was to the old one. The individual, no longer merely a subject, but a full-fledged

citizen, lives in order that the régime may take effect. The régime is still the supreme deity that it was of old. Hence the number of victims in Russia; for every idol demands sacrifices—especially at its ascension.

My house, tastefully furnished by Helena, became at once a gathering-place not only for the Bnai Moshe, but also for my friends among the Hebrew writers; there were Shafir, Friedberg (the one-time "censor" of my Hebrew songs), Ben Avigdor, Frischman, and others. Helena was the soul of hospitality. She liked company, and she was a skilful and friendly hostess. Indeed, she overplayed her rôle at first, and treated my more intimate friends as though they too were guests. It was my desire to keep the kind of house my father had kept. I wanted no ceremony at all; my friends were to come and go freely, without the feeling that they were guests, or visitors making a call. They were to be so much at home that they were never to attract more attention than if they lived with us. It was difficult to make Helena fall in line, for she liked doing things for people. In time it was my friends who saved the situation, for they perceived that Helena's friendliness was not artificial, but a natural, overflowing good-nature; they got used to the idea of being treated every time with the care and thoughtfulness that is bestowed on a new guest.

But this related only to the outer side of our social life. Inwardly Helena was unable to find, among those who frequented our house, the satisfaction to which, as a young and intelligent woman, she was justly entitled. She was the daughter of an orthodox Jewish house, but like the majority of her friends and contemporaries of a similar situation, she had grown up to another world. She had been educated in a Russian high school for girls. She had been nourished on the rich literature of modern Russia, followed the streams of thought of the better type of Russian society, and dreamed of a small circle of comrades devoted to the Russian movement of liberation. Her relationship to the Jew-

ish people and its destiny depended insecurely on her relationship to her father's house and his Jewish friends. Jewish knowledge, the language, history, and literature of the Jews, remained alien to her, and it was only because of her earlier contact with some friends who had belonged to the Jewish national movement, and because of her relationship to me, that her attitude toward this movement was not without sympathy. One felt in that attitude the effects of her powerful instinct for justice—I had always tried hard to prove to her that our national demands were the expression of a longing for pure justice—but I was convinced that if she was to live a full spiritual life, it was not in the Jewish world, to which I belonged, but in the Socialist world generally. And yet, it is probable that in a purely Socialist world she would have suffered from the absence of Jewish interests—for by inheritance she was a faithful daughter of her people. But her participation in such a world would have been more intensive, if only for technical reasons. She spoke and wrote an excellent Russian, she knew Russian literature thoroughly, and she had a profound and earnest relationship to the Russian movement of liberation.

The great majority of my friends and acquaintances were even farther removed than I from the Russian reality and all its problems. I at least read the current Russian publications, particularly the bulky periodicals, which as regards both literature and politics stood on a very high level; from these the reader was able to form an accurate picture of the main tendencies in Russian life. The majority of my Warsaw friends followed the Polish literature, and it was difficult for Helena to find points of contact with them. At the meetings that were held in our home the chief topics of discussion were Jewish problems, Hebrew literature, the new life in Palestine and the forms it was taking in its embryonic stages—topics connected with a remote country, a distant language and literature—and I could mark how Helena exerted herself to create an inner relation between herself

and these. But I also saw that it meant a sacrifice to her. It seemed to me at times that, in the midst of all the excited talk, she was dreaming of her girlhood years, when, among companions who shared her education and her views, she had not only listened but had also shared freely in the debates. The expression of distress which sometimes passed over her face spoke to me of imprisonment: the unhappiness of a person condemned only to listen, never to speak—and even to listen with great effort.

When two young people enter into a pact to accompany each other down the longest road we know—for there is nothing longer for us than the short span of our life—simple intelligence should compel them first to find out whether they can fulfil the conditions of such a companionship. Helena and I should have understood the full responsibility of that enterprise. We had undertaken to make the march side by side, in step: at all moments a complete pair, complementary, sharing equally the problems and joys of each moment. But life is not so simple as we imagine it at first: we follow, each one of us, not only physiological but also psychic laws. And it is not easy to say in which of these fields the element of harmony plays the greater rôle. Yet it seems to me that nowhere do human beings act as irresponsibly as in this matter of choosing a mate. In all languages there is that proverb: "Love is blind." The blindness of love is its impressionism: it pauses and concentrates on certain factors, and thrusts others into the background. Sometimes it is the physiological factors and sometimes—more rarely—the psychic factors that attract a disproportionate degree of attention. But in either case blind love is also lame love. It cannot keep pace with a life that is always in motion. It is thus that most people go down the road of life on crutches, and consider themselves lucky if they can manage with a single crutch.

Helena was good to me. She was by nature independent, yet she admitted tacitly that the foremost place in the house

was to be given to *my* world. This is the greatest concession that any woman can make. When alone, she and I spoke Russian, yet the atmosphere of the house was nationalistically Hebrew. The content did not agree with the form: both of us lived in perpetual translation. For me the translation consisted in the language, for Helena in the content.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDING MYSELF

THE old saying, "We do not see the wood for the trees," is just as good when it is turned round, and perhaps better. We do not see the trees distinctly for the wood. The vast mingled power of the forest overcomes us, and we forget that the hugest forest in the world consists only of single trees rooted side by side. We also forget, then, that it is not the forest which nourishes the trees, but the trees that sustain and make up the forest. Every individual tree must worry about its own sap, thrust its own roots searchingly into the soil, and strain itself to suck sustenance from it. The parent tree from which it came has worries of its own; and the trees to which it has given birth, the saplings, have an impudent habit of competing for space in the forest with their progenitor.

And surely if the individual trees had voices, they would protest mightily against the aesthete who stands before the forest, lost in the glory of that tumultuous mass, and would assert, each one for itself, its essential contribution. Each one would proclaim the supreme wonder of its own labour: the rearing of the trunk, the spreading of the branches and perhaps most marvellous of all, the restless search in the world of darkness, the unceasing weaving and transforming of inert earth into living tissue, the food factory working three shifts a day without change of labourers. For the tree the individual is the supreme wonder and creator and the forest is only a mirage.

We do not see men for crowds. Because of humanity as

a whole, we fail to see the individual nation; because of the nation we fail to see the individual classes; and because of the classes we fail to see the person. We set out from the individual, and we reach the group. But in the group we forget the point from which we set out. The individual disappears from sight. A time will come when we shall learn to see more wholesomely. The process will then be the reverse. We shall set out from the mass, and learn to see in the individual the totality in miniature. We shall see the whole forest in a single tree, all humanity in a single nation, and in the person we shall see the epitome and expression of his people.

In Warsaw I came up, for the first time, against the hardness and brutality of life. Till then I had lived in the forest and had had little to do with the trees. I lived in a movement, and had eyes only for that. I saw the army of those who made up the movement, and it was a single being, drawing breath, growing, struggling, as a single being. It did not occur to me that these little units, these marching figures which kept step rhythmically, were in a sense detached, that each one had a path of its own to follow, an individual struggle to face. I never descended to the man. Even with my most intimate friends I never discussed the question of my personal future. I did not think about their private lives, their means, their plans. Who asks the soldier, while he serves, what his private plans and needs are? Behind the army stands the people—and that is enough. I was criminally care-free in this respect, pathologically optimistic. The idea of "settling down," the question of "feathering a nest"—the primordial occupation of the modern world—did not exist for me. I was the typical Talmud student, repeating: "Do not make of the Torah a spade wherewith to dig." The Tree of Knowledge bore fruit, but not fruit to be eaten. All learning was its own reward.

The application of a little common sense would have shown me that I had no right to found a "house in Israel." I was

not equipped with means or a profession. The extraordinary thing was that neither my own parents and relatives nor those of Helena ever asked me what I intended to do about it. Helena's brother, the "American," probably did not even entertain the question. If I was founding a house I was presumably entitled to do so. My parents, Russian Jews, looked at it otherwise; a Jew *must* found a house in Israel—God will help him afterwards.

I had some means at first—and used them till the shoe began to pinch. And for the first time in my life I actually began to worry about making a living. For the first time I began to examine my friends as individuals, and I observed, somewhat to my astonishment, that every one had a regular profession or occupation which gave him bread and butter. This profession or occupation gave him a certain amount of freedom, which he was able to devote without afterthought to the public good—in this case the national movement. My Warsaw friends, all of them industrious, practical people, were also the first to discuss with me this question of "the future." They may have thought me better off than I really was, but they argued earnestly with me to make me find a source of income. But this, I need hardly say, is more easily said than done when there is no regular profession to do it with.

Under ordinary circumstances a person like myself would apply for and probably obtain a government job. In the big machinery of a state there is room for a man of good education and mind and industrious habits. Such doors were of course closed to the Jews. On top of this, I was extremely fastidious. I would under no circumstances accept work, however dignified in itself, which would not be connected, however indirectly, with the ideas that made up my complete intellectual and emotional life. Business? I could have chosen such a career years before, without having spent so much of my life in study abroad. Warsaw and Lodz, in those days rapidly expanding centres of commerce and industry, ab-

sorbed masses of our young people of academic training, and turned them into efficient business men. But from this path I turned resolutely. I could not tolerate the idea that after all these years I would have to prove my father in the right. But this consideration was not decisive, in itself. There was that in my nature which drove me always to look for new paths. Those that led to familiar places had no charm for me; and the trifle that was new attracted me more than the great achievement which was only repetition.

So I hit at last upon something that seemed to me to contain the element of originality. I was going to open a *cheder* of the modern type, and become a *melamed*—a simple *melamed* and comrade to little children. When I proposed the idea to my friends they stared at me open-mouthed. At first they took it for a jest. Finally I convinced them that I was in earnest, and I asked them to help me realize my plan.

The idea satisfied me in all respects. As a faithful pupil of Achad Ha-Am I shared his idea on the "preparation of the generation." With him I believed that before we built Palestine, or at least parallel with the building of it, we had to build the people. A generation was to be brought up which did not strain toward Palestine simply because of physical persecution, or even because of civic extrusion, but because of a desire to loose the soul of the Jew from the chains that held it down, not less in the lands of so-called emancipation than elsewhere. Among the most masterly passages in Achad Ha-Am are those which deal with the anguish of the Jewish soul in the slavery of an outer freedom. To teach a generation to despise this sort of slavery more profoundly than simple persecution, was a task not unworthy, I thought, of a follower of the master. Nor was there a better point to begin at than with the very young, the clean and still uncorrupted.

The idea as such was not the new thing, for the modern *cheder* was already an institution. The newness lay in the

fact that a man of Western education like myself was willing to take upon himself the name of *melamed*. Etymologically the word means simply "teacher," but by association it had become a ridiculous and almost an odious title. It had become a term of abuse. If a debater had nothing else to say of his opponent, he would call him, contemptuously, "*Melamed!*"—a man who did not know what he was talking about. It was the synonym for the loon, the half-wit, and the failure. The decline of the *cheder* was now symbolized in the word *melamed*. The man himself had become the scapegoat for the decay of an institution that should have been the pride of the Jews.

When the new Jewish intelligentsia arose, and it became clear that it was absurd to speak of a national renaissance unless the reformation began with the elementary schools, two obstacles were encountered. The *cheder*, a decayed force which spread decay, a broken thing that still broke the lives of the young, had become a sanctity in the eyes of the masses. A bad sign, for when an institution has become sacred, the sanctity is part of the ruin, and not of the remaining strength. The readier it is to collapse, the stronger is the sentiment which rises in favour of its retention, and fanatics multiply to defend it. They are equally opposed to restoration, for they are afraid that the restoration will go so far that before long they will be faced by a new building.

It is perhaps needless to say that the masses, in their obstinate struggle against the new, improved *cheder*, were supported by the ultra-orthodox Jews, and by the old type of *melamed*, who saw his end proclaimed by the standards now demanded of elementary teachers.

The second obstacle was the shortage of teachers. The Vilna Institute was the only teachers' seminary for a Jewish population of six million: and the very purpose of this institution ran counter to our needs. Here young Jews were prepared for the task of Russifying the Jewish child. Its graduates were set to work in the folk-schools which the

Russian government had set aside for the Jews, and at the expense of the Jews, in certain of the larger cities in the Pale of Settlement. For the overwhelming mass of the Jews, for those who wanted Jewish education, there was only the sacred ruin, the *cheder*.

Within the body of the Russian people the teacher in the folk-school was one of the main factors in the movement of liberation. Watched though he was by the police and the clergy, he managed to smuggle into his class some of the ideas of freedom that came in from the west. But in this respect the Russian folk-teacher ran true to the universal type: Among every oppressed people it is the folk-teacher who is the foundation of the movement for liberty. But among the Jews the type of indigenous folk-teacher was unknown. The *melamed* of centuries ago had been intended to fulfil that rôle; the *melamed* of our own time was not a teacher at all. As in war-time, then, we had to look for an *Ersatz*—a substitute. It was a fortunate thing for us that Yeshivoth still existed, institutions in which the older youth still followed the ancient literature of the people. They were immensely industrious. True, they were also unsystematic, but later on, when some of them added to their Jewish studies courses from Western universities, conducted with Western methods, a synthesis arose that enabled them to become excellent teachers. It is these Talmud students who must be thanked by the Jewish people if the old folk-school, the *cheder*, did not disappear wholly in a stench of decay.

But even these one-time Talmud students refused to accept the odious title of *melamed*. They got out of the difficulty by using another word, happily provided by the Hebrew language, *moreh*—and the children, instead of addressing the teacher by his old and traditional name of Rabbi, now called him *Adoni Hamoreh*.

The newness in my approach to this question was that I wanted genuine renewal from within. I insisted on the old names and titles, the old forms, which it was my intention

to fill with new content. The word *moreh* was too dry for me. *Melamed* had become taboo among the moderns—and I wanted to restore to the word its pristine glory. Later in my life I waged other battles for the restitution of their original power and meaning to words that had become banal or base. The love that I have always had for words is based on my feeling for their strength when they represent a reality.

My friends, as I have said, were far from overjoyed by my decision. They were all practical people, and did not believe that I could find an assured livelihood in the *melamed's* profession: unless, that is, I was prepared to reduce my economy to the minimum, which they expected neither from me nor from my young wife. Also they foretold much distress and disappointment for me, and obstacles created by the parents and by the government—particularly the latter. The government was opposed on principle to raising the standard of the Jewish *cheder*. It tolerated it as a primitive religious school; it was firmly opposed to an institution which might impart even the rudiments of a decent education to Jewish children.

In Russia proper the *cheder* was forbidden to teach Russian and arithmetic, much less history and geography. This was not because the government was afraid that the *melamed* would fail to do justice to the Russian language, or would not understand the multiplication tables, but because it was averse to the whole business of Jewish education. For education might lead to modern ideas; and from simple calculations in arithmetic the Jew might graduate to higher calculations in justice. How gladly the government would have wiped out of existence such dangerous things as language and arithmetic—had it only been able to! What a beautiful country it would have been if the Russian people were unable to speak, and did all its arithmetic with its fingers!

Unable to fulfil this lovely dream, unable even to forbid the teaching of language and arithmetic to the Russian

people, the government did the next best thing—forbade them to aliens. For aliens there was a special expression: the "otherwise born" as distinguished from the "Russian-born." Tens of millions of human beings, among whom there were six million Jews, peoples and races which had been rooted in this country for countless generations, carrying all the taxes and burdens of the Russian people, were distinguished by this strange word *inorodtzi*—itself the summary of a thousand discriminatory laws and decrees. In the ordinary folk or public schools, which were insufficient for more than a small percentage of the population, the Jewish child was rarely admitted. And the *cheder*, which the Jews supported out of their own pockets, was hampered by brutal restrictions. The Russian language was not admitted to the precincts. The government maintained a double watch: it kept the Jew away from the Russian language in the folk-schools, and the Russian language away from the Jew in the *cheder*. I doubt whether in modern annals another instance will be found of a government's blocking the expansion of the national language. An absurdity like this savours of the genius of perversity.

The province of Poland had other laws. Here the teaching of Russian in the *cheder* was obligatory. Every *melamed* had to pass an elementary examination in the language before he was allowed to teach at all. The paradox is quite simple: denying the Jew his rights in Russia proper, the Russian government was anxious to make him an odious instrument of forcible Russification in Poland. But the law —like all vicious laws that ignore the deeper laws of life— did not work. The Jewish *melamed* in Poland did not become the agent of the Russian government.

In spite of this wretched situation, and in spite of the discouragement of my friends, I stood by my resolution. The more they argued, the more obstinate I became. The *cheder* became an *idée fixe* with me. I was convinced that this was my life's career. Later on, when my desire to be a teacher

was realized, it became clear to me that a healthy instinct had driven me toward the profession of the *melamed.* I had a genuine affection and gift for this work—probably one of the powerful but forgotten desires of my childhood, the result of my intense admiration for my teacher, Judah Artzer. It may also have been gratitude, and a desire to repay through other children the immense and eternal debt which I owed him.

My education entitled me to teach children of the upper classes. But for the purposes of the *cheder* this privilege was quite useless. With the help of my friends I found a decent room in one of the most thickly settled Jewish sections of the city, furnished it with the necessary benches and desks, and then approached the task of finding pupils. This was not an easy task. I had to canvass the parents of my prospective pupils individually, and explain to them the significance and value of the new type of *cheder.* My friend Zev Gluskin, a member of the Bnai Moshe, was my guide. It was he who introduced me to the prospects and gave me a good character, assuring the parents that I had no ulterior motives or sinister designs, and that I really wanted to teach their children, but by modern methods. My friend advised me strongly to wear a silk hat when calling on prospects, as there was nothing more impressive—not even my Doctorate of Philosophy from a German university. He further advised me to speak to the parents in pure or "Christian" German, so that they should not understand me wholly. Plain, straightforward talk might not be as convincing. The best thing would be to bewilder them slightly—and for this purpose a silk hat and high German were excellent adjuncts. My friend was very serious in all this, but I felt that quite involuntarily he was mocking me. He saw the absurdity of my project—but did not care to speak about it. If now, instead, I had tried to get the directorship of a high school, that would have been intelligible. But that a man like me should want to teach Jewish children, that was incredible;

and I would certainly be suspected of devious motives. This illustrates, as well as anything I can think of, the contempt with which the question of elementary Jewish education was treated.

As it happens, my plans came to nothing, but the deciding factor appeared unexpectedly from another quarter. My father came on a visit to us. We tried very hard to persuade him to live with us during the time of his stay, but he remained true to his old maxim: "Don't stay even with your own children. Take your meals there, if you like, but nothing more." Our apartment was on the fifth floor, and it was while I was accompanying him upstairs that I observed for the first time that my father was growing old. For he found the steps difficult, and had to pause for breath at every floor. Naturally I said nothing, and even tried to cover up the sad pauses by accelerated conversation. But my eyes must have given me away, for in them there was that question to which there is no answer. On the top floor my father paused and said, curtly: "We don't stay young."

It may be that in my terror there was that inevitable touch of self from which there seems to be no escape. Till now I had been utterly dependent on my parents, and I saw the prop beginning to yield. It was a revelation of responsibility—a lightning-flash. The time had come for me to think seriously of the future, in a purely material sense.

My father stayed in Warsaw several weeks, and most of the afternoons he spent with us. He asked me a great many questions about my plans and hopes. When I said I was going to become a *melamed*, he smiled, as one smiles at the foolishness of a child. It was a gentle, affectionate smile. He began to explain that it was time for me to start looking at life seriously, like an adult. He was not going to compel me to anything; he would continue to help me, as until that time, but I was not taking life seriously, and what with my years, and my wife to look after, I would have to change. There was something very fine about the idea of working

for the benefit of one's people, but no man could serve his people unless he looked after himself first. He begged me, then, to drop this idea of a *cheder*, and to look around for a serious occupation.

For the first time that I can remember I yielded at once to my father, and unconditionally. At no time had I felt his worldly superiority as I felt it then. Various emotions were at work in me. I could not help feeling the genuine and loving concern in his voice. And the short scene on the steps, the betrayal of the years, was strong in me. My father was no longer the young all-powerful figure of my boyhood. He was a man who had to catch his breath on every floor. He was bowed under a burden of years and responsibilities, and among the latter were many of my creation. And because my father was bending with the years, I bent before his will. And my father told me, too, that both he and my mother were feeling the years, and that the coming summer, God willing, they were both going to take a rest abroad, at some cure.

I felt, when he expressed himself thus, as though some one had thrust cold steel into me. It is a good thing if children can live in the vicinity of their parents. It is not only the love and the moral support which they bring into one's life that counts. There is something equally important. Living near their parents, children do not see them growing old. For the last few years I had been unable to be with my parents. And suddenly I perceived my father an old man. I had left him, as I had left my mother, a youthful, vigorous, and energetic person. I saw him on the stairs of my house a man on the downward path of life. And I trembled to see the change.

I made up my mind, then, to wait for something to turn up—something in line with my desires, that is, in connection with my national dreams. And thus it came about that I concentrated on an idea that had long floated about vaguely in my mind: to become a Rabbi in some important

congregation where I would have an opportunity to go on with my nationalist work. In the meantime I intensified my activities in the fields of propaganda and literature. I read a great deal. I became a member of that group of young writers which founded the modern publishing house Achiasaf. It was not a publishing house with the means to employ workers at a regular salary. The only one who got pay was "Ben Avigdor" Shalkowitz. All the others were honorary co-operators. As far as the writers themselves were concerned, the pay they received for such work as was ordered from them was meagre indeed. The work they did in the literary direction of the house—though it called for much time and effort—went unpaid.

Ben Avigdor was a full-time employé, and besides being a literary editor for the house, was also its bookkeeper. He was a man of tremendous energy and industry, and was for ever bubbling over with new plans. His will to produce books for the Jews was boundless. But he thought more of quantity than of quality. His idea was to flood the Jewish world with Hebrew books. First, he said, let there be the flood of books. Then in the midst of the flood there will form islands of taste. His view was at the other extreme from that of Achad Ha-Am, though he was, like myself, a pupil of the master. However, in the Achiasaf it was the spirit of the master which reigned, for it was Achad Ha-Am who was the real founder of the publishing house, or more exactly, under whose inspiration it had been founded. Ben Avigdor began to feel strongly the restraint that was put upon his undiscriminating energies. He complained to me. He had gigantic plans: literary work, belletristic, scientific —all of them were necessary. And he wanted to do everything with five kopecks. With a few roubles he would have undertaken to construct Pithom and Rameses. His ideas were thin, and stretched up a long way. If he had come to America in time, Ben Avigdor would have been the first builder of

sky-scrapers. But his buildings would have had no more than two or three windows on each floor.

Irked by restraint, Ben Avigdor began to evolve plans for a publishing house of his own, and he tried to draw me into his plans. Before long he did break away, and founded the publishing house Toshiah—an imposing enterprise from the outside. Within it was poorly built and badly furnished. He did more to increase than to enrich Hebrew literature.

David Frischman, too, was one of the workers in the Achiasaf. He was at that time busy with the translation of Lippert's *Cultural History*, a book that was already considered outmoded in Germany, but which for the Hebrew reader was a new well of information. It was, indeed, the first history of culture to appear in Hebrew, and in a masterly translation such as Frischman alone could produce. Frischman, whose star was then rising, was regarded as a remarkable stylist, *the* European among the Hebrew writers. Frischman and I became firm friends from the first day we met. I was in no wise to be compared with him. He already had his reputation, a first-class one, and a secure one. I was an almost unknown beginner. Yet we became friends of like standing.

I admired in Frischman a refined taste, a rare gift of sarcasm, and a sharp wit—but above all I admired his polished, I would almost say his light-footed, style. In his prose, not less than in his poetry, the influence of Heine could be clearly noted. But this was not conscious imitation. I looked upon Heine not only as one of the great geniuses of all time, but one whom God had privileged to bring to expression the national character of Jewish poetry. For me he was a reincarnation of Jehudah Halevy, or of Ibn Gabirol, though he had surely not read their works in the original. And if Heine could be a reincarnation of poets who had lived many centuries before him, and whom he had never read, why

should not Frischman be a reincarnation of a poet who had died not so long before Frischman was born?

The national poet is not he who always takes up national themes, legends, and history. Such a one can at best be called a patriotic poet. But the national poet is he who, whatever his theme, incorporates in his style of expression and of thought—for thought too has its style—the qualities of expression and thought of his people. There are many complaints today that the young Hebrew poets imitate Bialik. This too is incorrect. Bialik is a national poet. He has brought to its highest expression the style of the authentic Jewish thought, clad in the luminous Hebrew word. His followers do not imitate him. They only follow the path that he has trod. Nor was Frischman an imitator of Heine. If, in the turn of his words and ideas, we catch an echo of earlier singers, the effect is natural and, as it were, proper. It is a universal phenomenon in all literatures and in all ages.

CHAPTER SIX: I REWED THE MUSE

THE struggle between the old and the new, between the liberal and the conservative, took a different form in the East from that which it had taken in the West. In the West the struggle was between religious formulas, while the East remained as a mass profoundly indifferent to the suggestion of religious changes. It ignored them, or, one may say, passed over them. For a short time, in the sixties, a few modernized Hebrew writers in the East tried to make a to-do about the necessity for reforms in worship after the pattern of the Germans: they tried to prove that such changes in the ritual and arrangement would bring the Jews nearer to new ideas in a general sense too, and would therefore hasten a rapprochement between the Jewish and the Russian intelligentsia. But they roused no interest. A few "temples" appeared in Warsaw, Vilna, and Odessa, which attracted to them some of the more liberal elements, but the prayer-book was not touched. Not a single custom in the ritual was omitted and even the special prayer-book of the more important holidays—the *machzor*—remained as it was.

The so-called temple differed from the old type of Synagogue only in the fact that the services were conducted with more order and decorum. For the ordinary Jew the Synagogue had been not simply a place of prayer, but also a centre and a club, a social institution for the free discussion of all sorts of worldly questions. In the temple there was much outward decorum in the services, no talking between prayers. And this was the extent of the "reform." Other-

wise the temple was exactly the same as the old Synagogue or Beth Ha-Midrash. Eastern Jewry was saved the religious quarrel which divided western Jewry—and the Jewry of America as much as any other part—into two camps.

Superficially one would say, then, that eastern Jewry remained unaffected, in all its levels, by the tendency toward Reform Judaism. But no modern movement left eastern Jewry unchanged; it was sensitive in all fields, though in the field of social ideals it went farthest—a great deal farther, perhaps, then western Jewry. The struggle between mediaevalism and modernism took on a sharp form, and there was no compromise between the two sides. But the culture war did not come to the same sharp issue in the eastern world as in the western.

The truth is that when the culture war broke out, western Jewry had to a large extent already lost its folk character. Individual Jews of great gifts and profound character might again and again bring up, out of the wells of the unconscious, the type of Jewish thinking and feeling, in art and literature. But the group, the Jewish collectivity, had lost its particular character. It had set out, as a mass, on the road of imitation and adaptation. But the psychological impulse toward survival, stronger in many ways than even the biological impulse, compelled these masses of Jews to create a brake, to find one aspect of their life in which the Jewish spirit might still take refuge.

The most obvious division of life that could serve this purpose was the religious one. In this choice, too, they were helped by the forms of the religious life around them. For every one admitted the right to religious separatism. In no country was the Christian Church an absolute unity; and almost everywhere there were, beside the two outstanding extremes of Catholic and Protestant, shadings that led gradually from one extreme to the other. And all shades of religion were permitted: one could belong to any one of them without thereby impairing one's full participation in civic

affairs and rights. This, then, was the path of least resistance. The Jews too, then, could remain faithful to their religion without prejudicing their rights.

In his Synagogue, then, the Jew was able to give partial rein to the ego which he tried elsewhere to suppress. Extreme assimilationists naturally went further. They found the old Synagogue, with its ancient ritual and its touch of the Orient, too much for them. There were too many customs and laws that seemed to have sprung not from a religious need, but from a national impulse. And they therefore set about the reform of the Synagogue, the one place in which a remnant had remained of a destroyed folk-life. The Synagogue had to change until, step by step, it approached the ideal of a Church of the nation in the midst of which the Jews lived. On top of the new Synagogues, or temples, a Magen David (shield of David, six-pointed star) was planted in imitation of the cross that crowned a church. Such a decoration was seldom if ever seen on the old Synagogue. For the Magen David, though it is obscure in its origins, may be taken with more certainty as a national than as a religious symbol. Yes, the assimilationists were even willing to contradict themselves, as long as in their outer details they conformed: the Christians have a four-cornered symbol, we have a six-cornered one—it comes to the same thing.

The culture war had to be waged, in the West, in the field of synagogal religion simply because there was no other. Elsewhere the peculiarly Jewish had already disappeared. It is true that the Jews lived a social life of their own, since the society of the master nation was closed to them: but in that separation the Jews yearned after the form of the masters, and among themselves too they were unnatural, without the folk-character, a weak, imitative thing.

It was far different with the life of east-European Jewry. Religion played a prominent, but not the only, rôle in the

expression of the folk-character. The masses had their own language—for that matter, two of their own languages, one for everyday use, and one for the sanctity of the book. It is true that the younger generation had begun to break into Russian life, and among the upper classes the process was almost general. But the total effect of Jewish life was strongly national. For that reason, precisely, the assimilationists among the Russian Jews did not have to limit themselves to the religious aspect of the folk-life. They aimed at the transformation of Jewish life as a whole. They paid little attention to the question of synagogal reform: not because they feared particularly to lay hands on sacred traditions but because, on the contrary, they went in this respect much further than the same class in west-European Jewry. They passed over religion as a minor factor. In western Europe you might have found in attendance at the orthodox Synagogues of that stronghold of orthodoxy, Frankfort, persons of high academic training, among them men of international reputation, who remained true to the tradition in the minutest trifles.

In eastern Europe a Jew of such a type was utterly unknown. Only occasional individuals, not at all typical, were to be found; but even they had generally received their education abroad. The higher institutions, the universities and the technical schools, and to some extent the high schools, killed off in the Jew all religious interest. For it must not be forgotten that in Russia religion and government were both odious words. The priestly hierarchy was not less and not less openly at the service of the Czar than the police and the army. The priest occupied a place between the civil servant and the governmental spy. It was his business to watch closely whatever movements were taking place in the soul of the Russian people, and to shelter it from the chilly winds blowing from the west. The Russian intellectual would not bother to struggle with the instrument of the oppressor, the Church, because he was too busy with the oppressor him-

self. He went to the source of the trouble. The Church was beneath contempt, and beneath political notice. Even Tolstoi, a world-figure who had the moral passion and the material to become a great reformer, a Luther or at least a Huss, was content to criticize the Church in general terms, and never became the leader of the masses on an upward path of progress.

From the Russian intelligentsia the attitude of contempt was transferred to the Jewish. Later, when I shall deal with the shift in the Jewish centre of gravity from the Old to the New World, I shall pause at greater length on the character of the Jewish Reform movement, which till now has been seen too one-sidedly. Here I am concerned only to show the peculiar development of east-European Jewry, which enabled it to pass over this movement without being affected by it.

As a natural compensation, the culture war in eastern Europe was infinitely sharper and bitterer than anywhere else. It came to a head in the years 1894-1895, and I, being then in Grodno, was in the thick of it. I had a comrade with me then, Bezalel Jaffe, a fellow-member in the order. He used to come frequently to Warsaw to visit his fiancée, Anna Margolin. He and I became close friends, as did Helena and Anna. It was a remarkable circumstance in our life that Helena and I always used to choose our friends in pairs, she the woman, I the man. Some of these friendships lasted through life. I believe that both Helena and I felt the lack of family atmosphere, and unconsciously we tried to create it. We surrounded ourselves with couples who had "hit it off," and only with such couples. I do not think that we exercised a deliberate choice. We were simply attracted, by a necessity that we did not recognize, to young people who lived well with one another. My friendship with Bezalel Jaffe was of a rare kind. Our intimacy began from the moment of our acquaintanceship—we were old friends within an hour. It was as though somewhere, in a forgotten place,

I had passed the years of my childhood in play with him. Strangely, the same kind of affection blossomed at once between Helena and Anna. Helena and I spoke often of this double perfection of friendship. It seemed to us that in friendships, not less than in love, there can be elective affinities.

Four persons stood out as directors in the Achiasaf group, Boris Stavski, Wolf Gluskin, Mattathias Cohen, and Eliezer Kaplan. Not one of them was a writer. They were all, however, members of the order, and devoted servants of the renaissance. Stavski, a lawyer, was perhaps nearest in spirit to the master, Achad Ha-Am; in the direction of the work of the Achiasaf he was more insistent than any one else on the principle of quality, at the expense of quantity. He demanded that every book be subject to double scrutiny, and every word in a book be passed through seven sieves, before the work be issued as Hebrew literature. Kaplan, the factual business director of the Achiasaf, was not less an admirer of Achad Ha-Am. He was, in fact, a worshipper, who, if he had not been ashamed, would have gone down on his knees before the master. But in his blood there was the itch of the merchant—and he dreamed of a publishing house that would achieve a great financial success.

But, in this field not less than others, financial success does not go hand in hand with the severest ethical and intellectual principles. The artist—or even the scientist, I dare say—whose passions are mixed, who, in the midst of the vehement impulse to pure self-expression admits also a foretaste of the pleasures purchased by success, sins against art—or science. Even the microscope will not prevent a proved scientist from seeing, occasionally, what he needs to see in order to win recognition. It is not the intent to deceive (the scientist knows there are checks), but the marvellous human capacity for self-deception. There is an ethical principle in scientific work—the abstraction of the personal element. And if it is difficult to remain impersonal in

the pursuit of impersonal facts, what shall we say of the business world, in which, after all, it is the personal element which is the greatest driving force? Achad Ha-Am regarded the Achiasaf as an idealistic or even a scientific venture. But Kaplan was a business man, aware of competition, and he permitted himself methods—such as sensational advertising—that jarred on Achad Ha-Am. The other two members of the directorate were also business men, and they too "knew" that even a spiritual enterprise cannot be conducted in a spirit of pure ethics.

There was occasional friction between the directors of the Achiasaf and the spiritual leader; the former lived in Warsaw, the latter, living in Odessa, rarely came there. The Achiasaf was and remained the first of all Hebrew publishers in dignity and worth, exercising a profound influence on the standard of Hebrew books and on the standing of the Hebrew writer. But Achad Ha-Am was never wholly satisfied; nothing less than the rigid application of all his principles would do for him, and he bore the responsibility for the actuality with much reluctance.

The leading spirits in the Achiasaf were likewise the leading spirits in the order. I considered Stavski foremost among them. He was intellectual honesty itself; his addresses captured an audience by their apparent simplicity—but in this simplicity there was skill. He was always at pains to understand what was going on in the mind of his opponent, to understand his difficulties and to meet them from within. He was respected by both camps. He had that curious gift, the art of bribing the opposition by charm. Kaplan, the most active of the group, was a fighter—but not in the open. Sometimes he was actually Jesuitical. Had it not been for his respect for the master, bordering on actual fear, it would have been difficult to work with him.

Interesting scenes would take place at some of the closed sessions of the order or of the directorate of the Achiasaf. Kaplan would make certain concrete proposals, and in his

enthusiasm would overreach himself slightly. His plans sounded, at least on the surface, perfectly proper and dignified, but under the surface something lurked, something we could not catch and define, a something secretive and reprehensible. We squirmed in our places. We opposed, we debated—but to no purpose. We did not put our finger on the spot. Kaplan was too skilful for us. And then somebody would have an inspiration. He would ask: "How do you think the master would act under the circumstances?" The question was asked simply, honestly, with no intent to scare Kaplan. But it worked like magic. It was Kaplan's turn to squirm. He changed colour—and his colours. He suddenly reconsidered, and out of the armoury of his equivocal arguments, he would—in a spirit of discovery—bring forth the very objections we had sought in vain. As skilfully as he had supported his propositions, he now opposed them. We had a nickname for him in our little circle: Achitophel, the man of too much cleverness.

I have often met men who have set apart in their lives a single sanctuary. In all other matters they act with the faultiness that is comprehensibly human: in anything that touches the sanctuary they revert, or rise, to a more than human purity. Shalom Ash has immortalized the type in his play *God of Vengeance*, pointing the contrast by the two floors in the house of ill fame. On the floor below, cheap and vulgar dissoluteness; on the floor above, a Scroll of the Law that is being written for the daughter of the brothel-keeper. In actual life the contrast is not so sharp, yet we may say that many men have two floors in their being. Among stronger natures the upper floor is occupied by an idea, among the weaker by a person.

My observation of Kaplan, and of others whom I met later, gave me much insight, in their relation to Achad Ha-Am, into principles of life and of history. I saw clearly an instance of idea become flesh. I understood why Judaism could not spread through the world until the apostles had

clothed the idea in flesh of their flesh. I understood better, also, the significance of a purely Jewish movement of a much later epoch—Chassidism. For the mass, Heaven is too distant, the idea too remote. The Zaddik became an intermediary, the bridge of flesh and blood between man and God. I also understood better the Chassidism of the Orthodox Greek Church, with its new lore of poverty; in the beginning that lore kindled in Russia a great religious flame, the fire of which destroyed hatred and envy and passion, and the light of which illumined countless obscure lives; in the end it became the evil it had set out to destroy. That new Russian lore found its incarnation in Lenin, and created the Lenin-cult. The new lore, which boasted of its complete modernity, of its utter liberation from all traditions, returned to the symbolism of Egypt and of an epoch when such incarnations played their greatest rôle. In the Kremlin, the focus of the new Russia, lies the painted, decorated mummy of the great leader. It does not lie in the heart of a pyramid, hidden for ever from the light of day, but in the open, so that it may witness how the pure idea is being overwhelmed in the brutality of its realization.

How it came to pass, I do not know, but once in the Achiasaf group, I began to write poetry again, and some of the poems were printed in the *Year-Book*. I had prudently divorced the muse in early years; now I fulfilled the Jewish law which regards the remarriage of a divorced wife as a special piety. I took the muse to my bed again. I was perhaps jealous of Frischman, who was regarded as the foremost prose stylist, and who yet found time to write brilliant poetry. However, the attraction based on jealousy is not particularly strong. I gave most of my energies to publicistic articles, in the *Year-Book* of the Achiasaf and in the weekly paper *Hamelitz*. The other Hebrew paper, *Hazephira*, was regarded as oppositionist, and I found frequent occasion to attack it.

Many of my polemical articles were written in light satiri-

cal vein, and I was faced with a difficulty. I was afraid to put my name to them; it was too easy to acquire a reputation as an irresponsible humorist, and I wanted to have my work as publicist taken seriously. And yet I did want to make my mark, and a *nom de guerre* would leave me still unknown. It was quite a problem. I wanted people to know—and I did not want them to know too easily. I was in a dilemma that is common to many writers with two styles. I consulted Frischman. The article that brought me to him was an attack on the work of the Black Cabinet, which had just then let out a new flood of ugly pasquinades on the leaders of the Chibath Zion. Frischman read the article, and liked it, for he too was fond of a jest. But he understood my difficulty: this was not the kind of thing for a young man who was at the beginning of his literary career. He said: "If you want the public to know who the author is, choose a fantastic pseudonym vaguely related to your real name. Jews are fond of riddles; they won't rest till they've found you out. If you want to remain wholly hidden, choose a simple name that won't arouse suspicion."

He went on to tell me a story of a name. A young man brought a short story to the editor of a periodical. He waited many months for a reply, and finally got it—a rejection. The editor stated that he liked the story, but he refused to print something by a writer with the utterly absurd name of Kugelmacher. Not that he even objected to Jewish names at large, but why on earth Kugelmacher? The young man ran breathlessly to the editor, and implored mercy and advice; the latter gave it freely. Why not choose a somewhat more aesthetic name—at least for writing purposes? And the young man confessed: "My real name is, as a matter of fact, Tschalentopf, an awful name, I know. But I wanted something that wouldn't wholly hide me, so I chose Kugelmacher, and you don't know how long it took me to think it up!"

There is something in our nature that prevents us from

running away too far from ourselves. Even the criminal feels an impulse to remain somehow identified with his crimes, and his share of common egoism drives him to revisit the scene. For the crime was part of himself, not less his handiwork than the book is the author's. The comparison is not too far-fetched. No person revisits a book more frequently than its writer, and he alone can never quite get over his admiration for it. So the criminal wants to go, over and over again, through the details of his production. I have read somewhere—I no longer remember the book—of a great counterfeiter whose bank-notes were masterpieces of imitation; for a long time he passed them off successfully, and in the end the forgery was detected by a notable expert. Somewhere, in a tiny corner of text, a letter *i* had remained undotted. The counterfeiter was tracked down, and at the trial a difficult question was put to him: "How could you possibly make so gross a blunder in your production, after you've shown such amazing skill?" The counterfeiter, deeply wounded, revealed the artist. "I didn't have to make that blunder. I did it on purpose. If not for the undotted *i* even I could never have distinguished between the real notes and the counterfeits I had made."

I followed Frischman's advice and adopted the simple pseudonym of Joachim Hurwitz. Behind this name my identity was safe. But it was a wrench.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE YIDDISH REVOLUTION

No other people in the world has undergone in the last forty years such radical changes in its psychological, geographical, historic, and economic structure as has the Jewish people. The tempest which gathered over Jewish life in eastern Europe in the eighties of the last century finally broke, and uprooted millions. It lifted them in vast masses, transported them to another hemisphere, leaving in the trail of its path the fragments that had dropped by the way. Seen historically, the entire process unrolled with kaleidoscopic rapidity. The living historian, bewildered by the flux of things, could not gather his wits together before he was faced by an astounding and accomplished fact—the centre of gravity of a people had shifted across the world under his very eyes.

Only two generations have passed since then. The first of these was the participant in the event, the second was born immediately before or else immediately after in the new hemisphere, and scarcely retains any memory of the whirlwind flight. In either case, of course, the second generation has no personal recollection of what went before and how it came to be born in the new land. Something it has learned by hearsay; but Father and Mother were too shattered by the incident, too bowed by the labour of rebuilding their lives, to be able to tell much, after the manner of settled peoples nursing a tradition. And the little they could tell they had not the skill to clothe in attractive

form. And when the artists arose who wanted to rescue the still throbbing past of yesterday from eternal oblivion, they used the old language of Father and Mother, a language mostly strange to the children. The latter listen to the old tongue, or they strain to catch the original through translations, and all the stories are to them like echoes of an incredibly remote past. They cannot enter into these memories, cannot feel their urgent immediacy. The wide ocean separates two consecutive generations, and sets a blank between. There springs up, between parents and children, a relationship like that between an ancestry and its remote posterity. It cannot be that between Russian parents and American children there lie only forty years or so, and that a single generation divides Minsk and Capulie from New York and Brownsville. Here space helps out time, in a unity that is beyond Einstein. Father and Mother have become the grandfathers and grandmothers of their own children.

For the great-grandchildren of their own parents, I would like to tell, from time to time, and through the medium of the life of one person, what was the manner of life of those parents, so that the younger generation may have at least some notion of their own origins. It is well, too, that they should know this much: the world of their parents beyond the eastern shores of the ocean was a many-sided world, rich in content, rich in colours, with deep economic foundations and abundant streams of spiritual life. It is not good for a young generation to be too proud, and to think that the world begins with it.

From many points of view the entire phenomenon was remarkable, if not unique. For an entire period, the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, the stream of emigration flowed on, washing successive fragments away from Russian Jewry, and adding them to the new structure of Jewish life on American soil. And yet, as against this, there went on simultaneously, within the body of Russian Jewry, a process of consolidation, not only spir-

itually, but economically. In the twenty years preceding the World War Russian Jewry accumulated great wealth. A running duel went on between the government and the Jews, and the more the government tried to destroy the Jewish structure, the more the Jewish structure consolidated itself. Decree and ukase were used in vain. The Jew had won through to a position of high and strategic importance in what was, at that time, the largest and richest country in the world. Even in the railway industry the Jews were represented by the families Poliakov, Sachs, and Malchiel. In sugar, textiles, timber, grain, and to a great extent in bullion and finances, they played a leading rôle. Even the Moscow agrarian bank of the Russian aristocracy was under the control of a Jewish firm. Under the sting of government persecution, the Jews called out all their reserves of energy and initiative and industry, and fought back with telling effect.

Even in Moscow, the city which, under the Draconian laws of Grand Duke Sergei, was to remain for ever clean of Jews, and from which there were successive expulsions, a new Jewish community arose. It was not as great in its numbers as in its importance for Russian commerce. Compelled to reduce their numbers under pressure, they made up for quantity by quality. Nor did they lose their sense of humour in the process. They added to their other methods of retaliation a classic jest. An ordinary Jew, not a member of the commercial guild, was not permitted to show his face in Moscow—not even in transit. A member of the second-rank guild was permitted to pass twenty-four hours in the holy city, and the police kept strict watch against infringements. On one occasion the police laid hands on a second-guild merchant, on the suspicion that he had overstayed his twenty-four hours. The question was put to him curtly, so as to take him off his feet: "When did you get here?" The Jew answered, as curtly: "Tomorrow." The joke is a re-

flection on the imbecility of the system. It was impossible for a Jew to transact his business in a single day.

One of these Jewish heroes of Moscow—they really merited that name—was Kalonymous Zev Wisotzky, founder of the world-famous firm of tea-dealers, Wisotzky and Company. Half a *melamed*, and half a *maggid*, with a modernist Hebrew education, he came to Moscow from the little town of Sagar, close to Kovno. I got to know him personally through Achad Ha-Am, and I heard the story of his life from his own lips. It was a story out of the *Arabian Nights*. He told me how he began to peddle tea among friends and acquaintances, and how he came to the conviction that God had blessed him with a special gift of taste—which is very important for a tea-pedlar; how by the strength of this taste he passed through the successive stages of tea-pedlar, tea-shop owner, wholesale tea-dealer, and tea-importer; how in time he stood on the topmost rank and could begin to measure forces with the oldest and securest tea firm in Russia, the famous family of Popov and Son; how he entered upon a long and merciless struggle for the leadership. It was Esau, the first-born, against Jacob, the second-born, but this time Esau did not sell his birthright easily for a mess of pottage. It was not for nothing that Wisotzky was sprung from a people that had long ago learned the art of wandering. Space was without meaning to a Jew who could answer the policemen's query with: "I got here tomorrow." He bought plantations in China and Ceylon, and developed the tea trade to a degree unknown till then. Popov could not keep pace with him, and sank into the second rank. Not even the interference of the government could arrest his progress.

This same Wisotzky revolved great plans in his mind, not only with regard to tea, but also with regard to the future of the Jewish people. He remained faithful to the traditions that he had brought with him to the old Russian capital from his little home town in Lithuania. To his last

breath—he survived to a ripe old age—he remained one of the most devoted servants of the Chibath Zion. Long before the days of modern Zionism, he was already dreaming of a Hebrew university in Palestine, and he set aside a sum of money in the keeping of the Alliance Israélite for this purpose. In his latter days he was the patriarch of his widely ramified family, and he tried to bring up a younger generation to follow in his footsteps, and to inherit not only his money but also his abiding interest in the fate of Jewry. Only a small part of his desire was fulfilled. The grandfather had thought, all his life, only of the need of his people; the children remained respectably within the Jewish fold, and treated him, while he lived, with much deference, but they were pulled along in the stream of a life of luxury. The grandchildren, however, travelled by paths of their own. They became faithful servants of the Russian Revolution. The Gotzes, the Fundaminskys, the Gavronskis, the third generation of old Wisotzky, were all social revolutionaries. They served actively themselves, and with their means helped along the ill-supplied treasury of the organization. Some of them rotted for years in the political prisons of Russia, or suffered in the remote, harsh climate of Siberia. But they were not saved by the last revolution in Russia, for they, like all social revolutionaries, and indeed, like those of all shades of Socialism who do not confess the Communist creed, were looked upon as dangerous traitors and therefore subject to a repression severer than that meted out even to the bourgeoisie. This too is a common phenomenon: schismatics of one faith hate each other more cordially than they hate outsiders. Bolshevists hate Mensheviks more bitterly than they hate capitalists.

When Achad Ha-Am lost his fortune and his home in Odessa, he accepted a post as controller in the huge firm of Wisotzky and Company. Later he became manager of the London central office, where he remained until his settlement in Palestine. The relation between old Wisotzky and

Achad Ha-Am, and not less that between the younger generations and Achad Ha-Am, was a touching one. He was always treated with respect and affection. Even after the Bolshevist revolution, when the firm of Wisotzky was broken up, and its fortune of two hundred million roubles was destroyed, the young people still worried about the employé, and even under these circumstances saw to it that the old master and teacher should be able to pass his last years in comfort and ease.

At the time of which I write, the years 1894-1895, Achad Ha-Am was already associated with the firm. His main cultural preoccupation was the idea of a Hebrew encyclopaedia, which should deal completely with all Jewish life, history, and learning. Achad Ha-Am was fond of comparing our times with those of Maimonides. As in those days, he said, it was necessary for us to create a concentrated résumé of Jewish knowledge, for the use of a younger generation that might too easily slip away from us. In the history of a people there are times of intensive creation, and times of compilation, and both are necessary phenomena. Old Wisotzky was taken with the idea, and promised the means for its realization. But it was never realized, and the fault lay with Achad Ha-Am himself. I have already said that he was much too exacting. He wanted to create an encyclopaedia on a plane that no other people had yet reached. It was an impossible ideal. Beyond a few abortive efforts, he did nothing in the matter. Achad Ha-Am drew me into the work, and at his suggestion I began the compilation of an anthology of Hebrew poetry from the earliest days down to our own times. Part of this compilation was subsequently published by the Achiasaf, under the title *Songs of Israel.*

The sages of all countries have sung the praises of the man who settles down to one craft, and becomes a master in it. "He alone succeeds," says a Hebrew proverb, "who has *one* occupation." "Shoemaker, stick to your last," has come down to all peoples—a healthy piece of advice. If God

has given you one shred of talent, work it. Be happy, and do not look for successes elsewhere. For talent is a rare article. Few people have it, and fewer still more than a little in one direction. And that little wants jealous attention and constant training. Without these it might as well be absent altogether. I do not mean to say that everything else must be neglected in its favour. But overconcentration is probably better than scattering, the specialist superior to the dilettante. But the dilettante suffers from an overdeveloped appetite. A little success in one direction makes him eager to extend in all directions, and he cannot see others' gardens blossom but what he must have a hand in one too. Limitation is the characteristic of the master: he limits himself in expression, and also in the material of his expression. In his own field a man works with the natural force of inclination, in other fields under the unreliable impulse of jealousy.

This desire, then, to shine everywhere, to touch all things, to adorn all the arts, is a disease—and it is a characteristically Jewish disease. It is not inherent in us. On the contrary, a study of our classic period—the period of our freedom—shows that we know how to concentrate and limit ourselves. We gave ourselves then almost exclusively to the idea of world-reform, and the realization of social justice. The Jew, by sheer concentration, drew closer to himself, in vision, the end of all things, and prophesied the perfection of the "latter days."

In the expression of this ecstasy he developed the *art of the word* to a degree which, I think, has not been surpassed. Indeed, it appears that, in its classic epoch, the Jewish spirit overconcentrated on one field, and neglected others. In its conception of the deity, it reached absolute monotheism, in its conception of the world absolute monism. Nor could it be otherwise, for it saw God and the world under a single aspect. The Jewish spirit could never have coined the classic, dualistic phrase: "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and unto God that which is God's." *That* came not

as our classic expression, in freedom, but as an expression of despair under the iron hand of Rome.

It seems clear that the fragmentation of our talents nowadays, our eagerness to shine in every branch of commerce, or art, or science, is one of the results of our life of exile. A people with a profound tradition loses suddenly its worldly roots. It moves at the mercy of the wind. How can it retain its power of concentration? It is true that in every age there have been single geniuses who conquered circumstance, and developed a talent to its highest capacities. But I am speaking not of the genius, but of the ordinary man of talent; among the Jews he has a specific leaning toward becoming a Jack of all trades. He is a type of scatter-brain, who never wins through to a higher craftsmanship.

I too was such a scatter-brain, and I still mourn the fact. I was too weak to concentrate on one field and be content with my modest portion in life. I was driven by the exile restlessness to try everything at least once, and to neglect the one field where I could have developed to my maximum capacity. In Warsaw I began two pieces of literary work that should have absorbed all my energies and all my power of concentration. Had I followed them up in this spirit, I would have consolidated my talents in the literary field.

I still cannot forgive myself for my behaviour. I carried on both pieces of work till they were fairly well developed, and then I dropped them to follow other ambitions. Least of all can I forgive myself for having so foolishly deceived myself when I abandoned both works. I promised myself earnestly that I was not breaking away: I was only interrupting myself. Yet I knew all the time that this was not a separation, but a permanent divorce. My conscious plane soothed the unconscious with insincere promises. It was the promise of a gambler to himself—this is the very last time he will play.

The first work I have mentioned—the anthology of Hebrew song from earliest times to our own day. The second

work was a new Hebrew dictionary, complete in all branches, with all the old treasuries, and all the new creations. It was to cover the Talmud-Midrash-Targum dictionary of Levin, the *Arech Ha-Shalem* of Kohut, the *Otzar* of Samuel Joseph Finn, and the new Hebrew dictionary of Professor Dallmann. Achad Ha-Am worked out the programme. I was to prepare the material in concentrated form. The roots of the words would be given in Russian and German, and the words themselves would be explained in modern Hebrew.

I gave two years to this work, and prepared material as far as the seventh letter, *zain*—that is to say, I completed a full third of the enterprise. In the work I had the help of an industrious young scholar and writer, Joseph Klausner, then at the beginning of his reputation. I had so far perfected the production that Achad Ha-Am instructed the Achiasaf not to send him any more of the proofs for revision or correction: I could hand in the manuscript direct to the printer. Both works, I say, were abandoned in the middle. It is true that there were technical reasons. The finances of the Achiasaf were very shaky, and it could not continue with such considerable enterprises. Yet the fault is still mine. Had I not been pursued by the demon of dilettantism, had I had the power of concentration, I would have managed to overcome even the technical difficulties. I do not pretend that the completion of the works would have meant the intellectual salvation of the Jewish people. But I myself would have been whole. And I would not have been haunted for years by the sense of abandoned creations, which still implored me to complete them.

My preparations for a scholarly literary career were respectable. I had a good knowledge of modern and ancient literature, the latter of course through translations. I had mastered three languages, Russian, German, and Hebrew, though of course not in equal measure. The first two never became for me—not even after many years of study and exclusive use in daily life, as I lived in Germany and Russia

—what Hebrew was. Yet as far as speech was concerned, Russian and German were as native to me as Hebrew. This was natural, since Hebrew was not a language of daily use. I had the illusion that I also thought in all languages alike, but the test (when I sat down to write) contradicted the illusion. No sooner did I begin to muster my ideas for an article in either German or Russian, than the Hebrew language at once presented itself to me, unbidden, as if to say: "At most I will allow you to translate me."

Much self-observation has strengthened me in the belief that an *organic* relationship can exist between a person and only one language. This belief is common, too, among authorities on the subject. Languages may be acquired to perfection, but they are acquired on a foundation that cannot be shaken—one original language. In one language the man feels thoroughly at home; other languages are like inns, in which the host may suddenly appear to advise him sternly that he has unwittingly broken one or another of the regulations.

I have omitted Yiddish from the list not because I consider this language unimportant. On the contrary, it has played a rôle only second to Hebrew in the life of east-European Jewry, and is in every sense a full folk-language. But at that time I did not use Yiddish as a written medium of expression.

I considered myself well equipped not only in languages, but also in general education. There was in me a natural affection for the study and use of the *word*, spoken and written, as a medium of description. I had felt the love of uttered descriptions even as a child. My earliest tastes were such that the words of the Bible were steeped in a play of colour. I understood the Prophet, who saw his vision as a rainbow with its range of colours; and the colours of a picture spoke to me as with a sound of words.

I understood too the phrase which tells that the people, standing at the foot of Sinai, "saw the voices" that issued

from the smoke and flame. In childhood, writing was to me both music and painting, and while writing I understood also the ancient Hebrew description of the artist: "He is the partner of God in the process of creation."

Had there been one to guide me firmly, I would have gone the way of my natural inclination. Left to myself, I was pulled a thousand ways. "They made me a keeper of their vineyards; my own vineyard I neglected." As long as I worked in the Achiasaf, I was happy. I had found myself. It did not last long. I was driven out, or, more correctly, no one drove me out. We are too prone to blame circumstances. Oftenest man drives himself out of his own paradise.

It is important to remember that in the nineties, that is to say, thirty and some odd years ago, Yiddish literature played a very small rôle in Jewish life. It had not yet been admitted to the drawing-room, and was ignored in intellectual circles. At best, it was regarded as an unliterary phenomenon: a translation of what was good in Hebrew for the benefit of those who had not received an adequate Hebrew education. At first even the Yiddish writers assumed an apologetic tone, and explained frequently the causes which drove them to use this language. They seemed to plead that they would certainly have preferred to write in Hebrew, but what was to be done with these millions who could not be reached in that language?

There is an excuse for everything, but most excuses cover some fault or some transgression. The writers apologized for passing from Hebrew into Yiddish—and thereby they placed the stamp of illiteracy on the second language: not their own stamp, of course, but that of the masses. But reader and writer are organically connected, and there could not arise, from such an attitude, the same feeling of regard for the Yiddish writer as for the Hebrew writer.

In those days no one suspected that Yiddish was about to develop a genuine rivalry with Hebrew and make a bid

not for equality, but for priority—and even for monopoly. The best writers of Yiddish, the creators of a Yiddish style —Mendele Mocher Sephorim, Sholom Aleichem, Peretz, Ravnitzky, and in the field of poetry partly Frischman and Frug—were (with the exception of the last) masters of Hebrew, and nothing was farther from their minds than the raising up of a rival to their own first medium. They intended only to pay their tribute to the lingual dualism of the Jewish people, which represents the only instance of a people that has created two languages of its own.

Among these founders of a modern Yiddish Hebrew literature, the men who had no intention of creating a competitor with Hebrew, one figure must be noted especially, not simply because of his supreme talent, but because of the singular rôle that he played in the detailed development of the character of Yiddish literature. Sholom Aleichem was a master of Hebrew, and some of his stories, originally written in that language, can serve even today as models of a rich and charming style. He had a profound respect for the Hebrew language and literature. It had been the earliest source of strength for and development of his talents; it had nourished him in childhood, formed his tastes, and encouraged his growth. Yet among all these figures Sholom Aleichem was the first to transfer the centre of attention from Hebrew to Yiddish, not for a negative but for an affirmative reason. It is true that Mendele, too, had a genuine affection for the Yiddish tongue; but Sholom Aleichem's love was already bound up with jealousy. He wanted the first place for the object of his love, and his Yiddish Folk Library may be regarded as the first signal of the new age, the gauge of an impending battle.

But Sholom Aleichem was not, like Peretz for example, a natural fighter. In life, as in writing, he was not stormy; he loved the gentle, the charming, and the witty. Yet he must be regarded as the foremost fighter for the supremacy —as opposed to the simple justification—of Yiddish. His

jests, his playful descriptions of men and things, and his infinitely amusing juggling with Hebrew texts did more to raise the prestige of Yiddish than all the apologetics and arguments of his contemporaries. Nor must we forget, or underrate, the fact that Sholom Aleichem was the first to seek out as his collaborators the most gifted of the Hebrew writers, and to reward their work liberally. A literature that pays well soon becomes exalted to the rank of a mother who feeds her young well. True, the nourishment is of the body, but even this plays a rôle in the attitude of its followers. Frischman told me, for instance—and with half-concealed pride—that for his song "Ophir," contributed to the Yiddish Folk Library, he had received payment at the rate of only a little less than a rouble a line: an utterly undreamed-of remuneration in those days. And since the poem was quite a long one, the public counted the lines, envied the poet, and gaped at the publisher.

Sholom Aleichem was by nature a spendthrift. He hated niggardliness as much in money matters as in devotion to art. As long as he was well-to-do—there did happen to be such a period in his life, a very short period, naturally—he squandered all he had, right and left, on Yiddish literature. He loved a good jest—and it was a good jest to him to be able to say, in deeds if not in so many words: "The mother may be older and more snobbish, but the daughter is both younger and richer." The jest did not last long—in fact, not longer than his money. The prodigal supply of funds was at an end, but not the prodigal talent. The latter continued to do service.

In those days I used to meet Peretz frequently, in the Hebrew circle of writers. Some years before he had been a passionate supporter of the Chibath Zion, and one of its best propagandists. In my time he had withdrawn from active service, more because he could not agree with the leaders than because he had changed his views basically. It was easy to see that he was discontented—not with that

cheap, commonplace discontent which characterizes an easy pessimism, but with the deeper, nobler discontent of a man seeking new ways and new interests in life. He was looking for other ways by which to lead the Jews out of the slavish narrowness of their existence. He believed that these ways led through the uncovering of treasures and forces contained in Jewish life, but now sealed with ten seals. There were treasures enough locked away to nourish all the generations to come; but the narrow framework of old inhibitions and prohibitions had to be broken first, and then the treasures brought into the sunlight. The soul of the Jew, not less than the mind, had its two levels, a hidden level and an open level. Below, there were untold riches; above, in the open, fragments and remnants, commonplace and dreary. The lower levels, stratum below stratum of power and creation, tempted his imagination. Down there, he believed, naked and yet unformed, lay fabulous deposits of ideas and concepts. There was a time—in the Middle Ages and for some time after—when the Jews acknowledged two types of great spirits, the masters of the known lore and the masters of Kabalah or revelation. For the first, the fields of dry law and custom; for the second, the mystic streams of consciousness. We cannot, of course, use old words for new concepts, but even old concepts pass through transmigrations. The man who wrote *The Transmigration of a Melody* carried in him the transmigrated soul of a Kabalist.

Even as early as my Warsaw period, before Peretz had become the acknowledged leader of the new generation of writers, it was his wont to talk in mystic hints, in half-phrases, allusions, fragmentary quotations, almost like a real neo-Kabalist. There was in his eyes a bright, hard laughter, an intellectual joy, a radiant perception of something more than the physical. His presence was a mixture of the gracious and the masterly. Whether one agreed with him or not, one listened carefully.

We used to assemble, at that time, in the house of Nahum

Sokolow, in which, thanks to the gracious kindliness of the hostess, hospitality had been refined into a rare art. She herself, though not a writer, exercised a genuine influence on the character of Sokolow's newspaper, *Hazephira.* In that house we talked of everything: we began with Hebrew literature and ended up with world-politics. In the conversations the central figure was always Sokolow himself. Even in those days we used to say of him: "He has memorized all knowledge." His memory for men, events, and chronologies was astounding, nor was it less effective for languages and literatures. He was thoroughly grounded, even at that time, in ten languages, and the learning of languages is a hobby that he pursues down to this day. The most remarkable thing is that he never had to work to acquire one. It is no exaggeration to say that he was capable of learning any foreign language in three months. One day I found on his table an Arab grammar. I asked him whether he also understood Arabic. He answered: "I keep Arabic only for odd moments, when I've a little superfluous energy."

In the field of world-politics Sokolow was regarded as a foremost authority, and he loved this field perhaps above all others. Had Jews possessed a state of their own, Sokolow would have been its most distinguished diplomat. From his early manhood he displayed those gifts and talents which are commonly looked for in the higher international diplomacy. His bearing, his social approach, his manner of speaking of and around matters, his very dress, distinguished and festive, marked him as one born to shine in the "big world." Among all the Jews I have met, or whom I have had occasion to observe, there is not one who approaches Sokolow in his character of the synthesis of Europeanism—not even among the Jews of western Europe. They, at most, were polished Frenchmen, Englishmen, or Germans. Sokolow was Europe itself. In his writing, too, this identification holds. Bialik's style can be traced to Jehudah Halevy, Achad Ha-

Am's to Maimonides. Sokolow's style was synthetic, and took in all European and all Hebrew literature.

In one of those meetings in Sokolow's house there was much talk of a young poet who had just appeared above the Jewish horizon—Chaim Nachman Bialik, a one-time Yeshivah student. The poem which had attracted attention was called "To the Bird." When analyzed coldly, the song betrayed neither an extraordinary style nor an extraordinary richness of content. And yet its effect was electrical. To this day I have never been able to explain how this song touched us all, at once, with a premonition of a greatness that was about to be revealed in our midst. But it may have been the elemental integrity that breathed in it. That integrity, greater than wisdom or knowledge or technique, betrayed the presence of a master. Knowledge and technique can be acquired: supreme honesty is a gift. In it lies the power to move and to conquer men. The premonition was not falsified. Bialik has fulfilled all the hopes that were reposed in him, and has furnished Hebrew literature with one of its great and eternal figures.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE CURSE OF THE WANDERER

In modern social literature a good deal of space has been given to the type of the immigrant—to the individual who is torn out of the soil in which he has grown to maturity, and transplanted to the soil of another people. But it is in his social aspect alone that he has been treated: from without, as an element to be adjusted, not from within, as a soul to be understood. He was a factor to be reckoned with in the economic machinery of peoples; but the human tragedy that he represented has been mostly ignored and repressed. That tragedy is, simply, that here a grown individual must turn back to the processes of his own birth, and must be simultaneously new-born child and midwife. The adult begins all over again; and none but he can adjust him inwardly. For if he is not to remain a hermit in the midst of a new world, he must become another man: translate himself into the terminology of a world that he has not known, acquiring not less its ways of thinking and acting than its language.

It is not my business to describe here the processes of this transplantation; it is enough to say that he must uproot many things that have become a living part of himself. Every uprooting sends shudders of pain through him, nor does he ever succeed in being thorough. And at best the rebirth takes place through a series of substitutions. Piece after piece is replaced until the total is a new person.

Infinitely more complicated is the process when we pass

from the individual and the small group to the completed people, the highest group form. Between the small group and the completed people there is not simply a difference of numbers, not just a difference of quantity, but one of quality. A group detached from a people, and placed in a strange environment, does not carry within itself a sense of responsibility for the survival of that group soul, or group personality, which a completed people represents. When the latter is transplanted it is tormented by an awareness of its unique value, its non-recurrent personality. Whatever the home-sickness of a group detached from its source, the pain does not compare with the pain of an entire people facing extinction.

There are not many examples in history of a people as such going into exile. Most nations have emerged and have disappeared on their own historic soil. The great wandering of the peoples, at the beginning of European history, did not represent the self-exile, or the enforced exile, of peoples that had crystallized on a territory. They were peoples in flux seeking a place in which to take root. Once they found their place, they rooted themselves in, and grew to such strength as was inherent in them, surviving a longer or a shorter period in proportion to their original gift of vitality, and then dying a natural historic death. Perhaps the one complete exception in history is the Jewish people—even today considered the classic symbol of exile. Twice in its history this people has known what it is to be driven, as a unit, into exile. It is difficult to determine what degree of crystallized personality the people had attained at the time of the first Destruction; but it is certain, as a matter of history, that the second Destruction found a people fully developed in all its attributes, that is to say, it was a people that had worked out its own form and philosophy of life, reflected in manifold institutions and customs.

A generation does not suffice for the transplantation of the little group. There is no room in the body of a person

for two souls; and as long as fragments and memories of the first soul linger in its texture, the second soul expands in the midst of torment. Perhaps the second generation may witness the total obliteration of the past, but as a rule a series of generations is involved in the completion of the process. And then the alternative of a new nationalism is accepted in its fulness. Much more laborious, much more complicated, is the case of an entire people. It may sound a daring paradox, but it is my firm belief that no people that has once acquired a complete group personality can ever assimilate as a people. When the concept of assimilation is transferred from the individual to the people or nation, there is committed a natural but profound error. It is assumed that what holds for the individual also holds for the super-individuality of the group. The assumption is false. The individual surrenders, but I have not come across a single instance of a people that surrenders. The group personality persists, carries on an obstinate battle with circumstances, and until the last chance of physical survival is removed, forms a perpetual guard around its cultural and spiritual inheritance.

This perpetual warfare creates a dualism that is one of the most interesting of cultural historical phenomena. In the history of the Jews, this dualism runs like a thread across all the ages, from the Babylonian epoch down to our own. The expressions of this dualism are imbedded in law and in mores, in institutions and even in language.

Let us take a single, illuminating instance—the sacred festivals of the Jews. A festival is one of the luxuries of a people's life; it is always connected with additional expenses. Simple logic would therefore dictate that a people on its own soil would permit itself the maximum of such luxuries, but that when it goes into exile, it would cut down on its expenses. But what happened actually in the case of the Jews? As far back as the Babylonian exile we see a doubling of the three chief holidays, Passover, Shevuoth, and Suc-

coth, which received two days in the place of one. There is a formal explanation, namely, that the calendar was not fixed, and there was danger of an error in observing the Holy Days. The real explanation for this extraordinary and anomalous institution lies much deeper—in the psychology of exile life. It was the outward expression of the dualism that had split the inner life of the people. Life now consisted of two parts—memory, a thing distinct and not connected with the surrounding world, and the surrounding world of actuality—and each part created its own system. The first day of the holiday was a tribute to the organic past; the second day was a tribute to that present which had no connection with it. And indeed, that second day was known from ancient times as the Festival of the Exile. The explanation goes even deeper: there has come into play that elemental instinct of self-preservation which drives the poor man to have more children than the rich man. The rich man is not afraid—he can give his children such attention as will guard them from danger; the poor man has no such feeling of security—he must therefore take refuge in numbers.

As long as a people lives on its own soil, it creates its spiritual values in confidence and security. It does not tremble for the future. It transfers the subjective feeling of immortality to the things it has created; as the land is eternal, so is the people, and so are the laws, customs, and values that are born of both. Suddenly the people is torn out of its soil and must take up the staff of the wanderer. The unshakable foundation is no longer underfoot. The feeling of security is gone, and a profound anxiety concerning the future of its spiritual possessions awakens in the people. It begins to replace the foundation with buttresses—limitations, injunctions, prohibitions. In the case of these double holidays, the second day was but a buttress to make sure the survival of the first.

The same phenomenon appears in the realm of language.

Of the two languages, the second is the support in the exile. It was out of deep anxiety for the survival of Hebrew that the Jewish people provided it with the prop of Yiddish. The first language was locked away in the security of books; the second was used for daily needs. The second language was made Jewish, of the people, by the transference to it of all the thoughts that were contained in the first. The foremost living authority on the Hebrew language, Chaim Nachman Bialik, has said that in the preservation of Hebrew the Yiddish language played a rôle of the first importance.

The Holy Days split into two; even the language split. And a third institution also split—and to this I must devote the more attention because out of the resulting situation emerged one of the problems of my own life. I speak now of the Rabbinate.

It was Russian Jewry—with its extreme folk-consciousness and its concern for the preservation of national values—that created the second type of Rabbi. Or, rather, it created the foil to the authentic type of exile Rabbi: and in contradistinction to the former, it called the latter the *kazyonne* Rabbi—the State Rabbi. It was an ugly and humiliating name. It meant, the Rabbi who belongs to the government, the scapegoat Rabbi. The government had demanded that the Rabbis should satisfy it in regard to their general education, so that through them it might control the community. The Jewish people refused to accept the situation, and so, instead of combining in one man the requisite Jewish scholarship and the demanded general education, it bestowed them separately on two individuals. There was one Rabbi for the Jews, another—for the government. The distinction in the folk-mind was almost as sharp as between kosher and un-kosher meats. The State Rabbi became a ludicrous figure: a buffoon, almost, put up to distract the attention of the non-Jews.

I doubt whether the government got much use out of *its*

Rabbis—for their influence in the life of Jewry was insignificant. But the Jews too had much to lose, and little to gain, from this split. No one was strong enough to hold back the new forces that were at play in Jewish life. New problems were created by new situations, and the most difficult problem of all was the education of the young. Here questions arose that the old school of Rabbis was not able to answer, and the new school, obviously, even less. In the spiritual life of Jewry there was complete chaos: the *cheders* were decayed, the communal Hebrew elementary schools were in ruins. There were no trained leaders, and youth, without competent guidance, was forced to grope blindly for ways of its own.

I do not guarantee that the following anecdote is more than apocryphal, but it was popular enough to represent an attitude of mind. In a certain important Jewish community in Lithuania—so the story goes—the leaders got together one day and elected a stammerer to the post of Rabbi. Following the custom, they conducted him to the Governor of the province, in order to introduce him. The Governor—who happened to be neither a vulgarian nor an anti-Semite (there actually were governors, here and there, who were not anti-Semites!)—made a little speech to the newly elected Rabbi, and called upon him to become the real spiritual guide of Jewish youth, and to teach it its duties with eloquence and passion. The word, he said, is the greatest power in the keeping of a teacher.

The Rabbi turned pale and trembled; but there was no getting out of it—a reply had to be made. The going was, however, slow, his average speed being about three words a minute. The Governor at once understood the calibre of the eloquence that was to be expected from this State Rabbi, and he too turned pale—with resentment. He saw in this election an insult to the government, and he sternly asked the leaders of the community for an explanation. A

member of the deputation, more courageous than the rest, answered, simply:

"Excellency, the law forbids us to elect a mute to the office. We have done the next best thing, and chosen a chronic stammerer."

In the larger Jewish centres, and particularly in those communities which were situated in government towns, the Jews were compelled to elect a Rabbi for show purposes. It was demanded of the Rabbi that he be able to deliver the right kind of address on public occasions, and that he be able to formulate the requests of the community more or less intelligently. The candidates were the graduates of the old Russian Rabbinical seminaries. Often enough, there were candidates of German seminaries, too. But wherever they came from, they were looked upon as necessary evils—the Rabbis forced upon the people by the demands of the government.

In the south-Russian Jewish communities life was not yet so severely channelled as elsewhere; they were comparatively new, their history not going back further than the reign of Catherine the Second. And here a third type of Rabbi arose. This new type had, as a matter of fact, nothing at all to do with the original concept of Rabbinics. He was created simply as the director of the purely social, non-religious cultural and philanthropic activities of the community, and in that respect can be best compared with the social worker of the Old and the New Worlds. But police supervision compelled the community to exalt this function —which was not permitted under the law—by the titular rôle of Rabbi.

Now this new, third type of Rabbi was more likable than the State Rabbi in Lithuania. There was less of the disingenuous in him and he was less intended to fool any one. He did, as a matter of fact, fulfil a need in the community. The only dishonest thing about him was his title, but among the Jews, at least, every one was in the know. Of the State

Rabbi it was demanded that he possess some sort of higher Jewish learning, not indeed because it was needed, but rather because he was accepted by the police as the Jewish Rabbi, and it would not do to have a complete ignoramus at the post. In the third type of Rabbi Jewish knowledge was not looked for at all. It was as if, in this part of the country, the Jews had determined to reduce to absurdity the pretensions of a government that aspired to regulate their religious lives. It was the usual thing to discover, in southern Russia, "Rabbis" who knew not as much concerning Judaism as one might discover in a hedge-priest. They might be excellently educated otherwise—doctors, engineers, lawyers. Some of them were exceptionally able men, first-class directors of communal affairs, tolerant leaders of the youth beyond the demands of the community. Some of them even became famous in the Jewish national movement, and their names were known in every part of Russia. Yet, to the close observer, it seemed queer enough: a Rabbi who could not read two words of Hebrew! But the whole picture was queer —three types of Rabbis, the first authentic, the second imitated, and the third not even an imitation.

I have dwelt at some length on this phenomenon of the triple Rabbinate, because it is the key to the spiritual tragedy of Russian Jewry. Even in such internal matters the Jew could not keep to the straight and obvious path, without devious falsehoods and pretences. For the direct road was barred, and if he did not want to die on the spot, but carry on, he had to crawl round obstacles, resort to tedious and tormenting devices. External law penetrated—or sought to penetrate—into the innermost recesses of his personal spiritual life. But not this aspect of the tragedy alone has tempted me to dwell at such length on the Russian Jewish Rabbinate. There is another motive.

The Rabbinate was destined to play a considerable rôle in my life. It wrote into my history a chapter that I would

gladly wipe out of my memory if I could. That, however, is impossible; I can still feel in my mouth the aftertaste of that episode. Often enough I have occasion to hear remarks —as others in my case must—concerning the "sacrifices" that I have made for the sake of the national movement. Compliments like these have always grated on me, not because of my modesty, but because of the simple fact that I have never known what it is to make "sacrifices." It is—for me, at least—an obvious truth that no matter how great a man's "sacrifices" are, no matter how painful his efforts, on behalf of an idealistic movement, he cannot contribute to it more than a fraction of what he receives from it.

It is true that the only system of measurement which is recognized as valid has to do with physical and material things, and an idealist movement is weak in material rewards. But its rewards in other fields are such as the rich long for and cannot find. Nor am I speaking of abstract ethics, of other-wordly values. It is a value quite substantially of this world—the deep inner satisfaction and spiritual balance that spring from such work. I doubt whether such balance is ever achieved by men who are pursued by the fever of gain, or by such as, in the more obvious pursuit of self-satisfaction, have never achieved that forgetfulness of self which is the first prerequisite of satisfaction. And it is curious that to me the individuals who were always loudest in their assertion of the rights of the ego never seem to have found out how to assert its rights. They always seem determined to drive a hard bargain with life—and the gains that they have wrung from it have lost in authenticity, in warmth and joy, what they seem to have achieved in formulas.

The unhappy persons who, in the ultimate irony of life, praised me for having abandoned their "joys" for the sake of the ideal, have filled me with discomfort all the more profound because I did not know how to explain their error to them. Only one exception has existed in my life—and

this exception too was never understood. There was a time in my life, the time I spent in the Rabbinate, during which I felt not so much that I was sacrificing something, as that something was offering me up as a sacrifice.

My slavery was not the less real because the communities which I served, in Grodno and Ekaterinoslav, treated me with distinction and consideration. For them I have only gratitude. My slavery was inward. I had taken a false step and could not retrace it. I had to continue on the path I had chosen, because I lacked the courage to turn back.

There was, first of all, the title of Rabbiner, a parody, almost, on the fine old title of Rabbi. In taking it upon myself I seemed to acquiesce in the tragicomedy of the Jewish evasion. And there were certain duties bound up with this type of Rabbinate which could poison the life of any honourable man. Of these I shall speak later. From the first day of my appointment I carried on steadfast warfare against them, and in part with success. But I regretted that I had ever been brought in contact with them; for this not even my warfare against them could console me.

My first position in the Rabbinate was in Grodno. The initiative in that city came from my friend Bezalel Jaffe. The vacancy was created by a death, so that my appointment was at no one's expense. When my friends heard of Jaffe's first steps, they insisted unanimously that I submit my name. When it first became publicly known that the Grodno community was contemplating the replacement of its former Rabbi by a young man of modern education, there was a mild sensation. The whole question of the Rabbinate came up anew for discussion, and the Hebrew press approved the character of the appointment. The existing situation satisfied no one except the ultra-orthodox, who obstinately opposed every innovation. The loudest demands for a change came from the Zionists, and it is remarkable enough that practically all the young Rabbis who entered on their careers at about the same time as I were Zionists.

In fact, it was enormously difficult for a non-Zionist to get himself elected. Nor can I remember any case in which Zionism did not turn the scales in favour of a candidate. I say this was remarkable, because the explanation is by no means simple. Officially, the communities were anti-Zionist rather than Zionist. Certainly the leaders of the community—which meant after all, the rich—were usually hostile. The Zionist groups were small, and they were composed of young people who had no say in communal affairs. Yet almost everywhere the Zionists managed to elect their candidates. It was an illustration of the old truth that a minority knitted together and inspired by an idea counts for more than a majority. Nor does the intrinsic merit of the idea matter, for it is not by the convincing powers of the idea that the minority triumphs. Indeed, after all the Zionist victories, the communities remained practically as anti-Zionist as before. It is the devotion and self-sacrifice of the group that matters. If an example on a large scale of the power of a minority to seize and direct the power, in the teeth of a huge but undirected opposition, were wanting today, we need only point to Russia. The Communist Party is a negligible proportion of the population. A multitude of explanations have been suggested for this apparently anomalous situation, and the key to the question lies in the one concept of *devotion*—one of the most powerful forces in history. It is one thing to have an idea; it is another to serve it. The first is open to every one, the second to a few. It is quite true that only individuals are counted in the voting, but the road to the ballot-box is a long one, and it is on this road that the devoted minority group can inject the decisive forces.

The preparations for the election in Grodno lasted nearly a year. During that time I paid several visits to the town, in order to become acquainted with what might be my future community. I felt like the prospective bridegroom on a visit to the in-laws chosen for him through the marriage-broker. But a young Rabbi too can choose his community as a man

chooses a bride—impelled by affection or guided by prudence. I have tried both ways, and they are very different. The first way is charming and attractive, the second dark and repelling. Often I have wondered that life should always offer us these two ways, the way of love and the way of the marriage-broker. Can it be a deliberate check on our conceit, a frequently reiterated proof that we can make a good choice either way?

The Grodno community was not a love-match—that came to me years later, with the Vilna community. There, indeed, though I had not the old title, I felt myself to be a Rabbi, and I was therefore the happier.

Between the ideal suspended outside of time and space and the realization of the ideal, lies the long and dangerous process of adaptation. No contact with reality ever leaves an ideal the crystal-clear thing it was when it was first glimpsed. Even artistic inspiration, in its first authentic vision, loses the moment it touches the instrument of its self-expression, in word or colour or form. Hence the labour-pains of creation. The formulation of a thought is, for the artist, the realization of an ideal. He will agonize to obtain the maximum of realization in the maximum of expression, but the maximum is remote from the full. The pure inspiration, the first flash of understanding, is something beyond the helpless, inert material he must use. Not even the greatest artists of all time have put all their souls into the finished work.

In movements the gap between the ideal and the real is much wider. I have watched for many years two movements initiated by suffering humanity, in their gradual realization, the social movement and the national. Neither of these movements has gone more than a part of the way toward fulfilment; both of them have made infinitely more progress in the last century than in any period of the past. I have watched, too, the growing gulf between the ideals that

were set for these movements in theory, and the realities of their fulfilment.

In my Rabbinic career, too, I passed through these stages which bring an ideal nearer realization and remove it farther from its first intentions. The possibility that I would in the end enter the Rabbinate had occurred to me even before I went to Germany to study. It was this possibility which induced me to enter the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums, and to occupy myself with Rabbinic literature. I cannot pretend that this possibility represented to me the maximum ideal, but in itself it seemed to offer a many-sided, active, and creative life. I did not dwell on the negative aspects of such a position. I have mentioned that during the year of my candidacy I visited Grodno, and became acquainted with the leading worthies. During our first conversations I heard from them such opinions concerning the duties of a Rabbi and his rôle in the education of the youth —particularly through the communal Hebrew schools—that today I cannot understand why I did not abruptly withdraw my name. The pretty joke about the Rabbi who was a stammerer I heard for the first time from one of the richest and most prominent of the Jewish communal leaders of Grodno, to wit, the older of the brothers Frumkin. It was, I suppose, a hint, and not a very subtle one. If I had learned how to speak, it was my business now to learn how to be silent.

The duties that were expected of me in connection with the Hebrew schools were unfolded for me by another important notable, the owner of the largest cigarette factory in Lithuania. He told me, briefly, that the methods of the neo-Hebraists were no good at all. They were artificial, and they bordered on revolution. There was no sense in trying to educate a young generation without frequent application of the strap.

I saw before me a reincarnation of my first teacher, Mottye the bean, and I wondered how the soul of that miserable village teacher had come to occupy the body of a

wealthy manufacturer. I need hardly say that I failed to agree with the views of Frumkin senior on the duties of a Rabbi, and the views of the cigarette manufacturer on the education of the young. I made some mild objections, but for the most part remained reserved. This was my first lesson in remaining silent—and almost silent I was. My comrades in the movement insisted that this was my rôle—and from their point of view they were right. Arguments alone are not the method of conquest. Action brings victory, and in order to get into action, one must sometimes compromise or, more simply, play politics. But I was not cut out for politics, and I suffered.

I spoke with Helena of my impressions of Grodno, and we decided to visit my parents and get their advice. In Swislowitz I was received with the honours due a man who has achieved the greatest distinction possible to a mortal: so young, and already (or nearly already!) a Rabbi in a great city like Grodno! My father was frankly interested in the material side of things. What prospects did it offer? My mother was a little dazed; she did not know whether to rejoice or to mourn. I considered it my duty to make clear to her the difference between a real Rabbi and a Rabbiner. And she said: "My child, perhaps you had better wait, and you may have a chance to become a real Rabbi." She understood that the position of Rabbiner had little to do with the hopes of Paradise and the world to come, and that my position in Grodno would not be the fulfilment of her dreams for me when I was a *cheder* boy—a great Rabbi, a light in Israel, and a benediction to my people. My mother, too, agreed that I ought to accept the position, but she felt then like a housewife who has known better days, and who prepares for the Sabbath a piece of herring because she can no longer afford a great big pike. I was sorry for my mother; she too was learning now the difference between the ideal and its realization. Her leviathan had become a minnow. And in her mind there must have arisen the question: "How shall

we fare in the world to come, when God will portion out leviathan among the righteous?"

In the meantime Helena and I went through the most important experience that can fall to the lot of a young couple —the coming of our first child, a daughter. A deep and almost blind necessity is fulfilled with the bringing of children into the world. The institution of marriage—in one form or another it serves the world still, no substitute having been found—derives its force and sanctity neither from the word of the priest nor yet from the civic acknowledgment of society. It is made sacred by a partnership to meet a debt. Every person has drawn out of the ocean of human life one tiny drop. No great matter, it is true, but the ocean consists of drops, and every drop can boast: "Without me the sea would not be full." To give back at least that drop is an inner necessity, if the individual is not to be haunted for ever by an obligation he has refused to meet. The stern teacher Shammai made it incumbent on every Jewish couple —over others he had no say—to have two children, a life for a life. The milder Hillel asserted that a single child met the commandment.

Mathematically Shammai was correct—a debt is not paid till it is paid in full. Let husband and wife replace the lives they are using up, and be glad there is no interest on the debt. Even the timid Malthus agreed with Shammai, and allowed two children to the conscience of each couple. I am convinced that out of this iron biological law sprang the institution, and not solely from economic necessity, as others declare. In married life—I speak of the rule, not of the exception—when the man must constantly look to the woman, and the woman to the man, the days become, under the best circumstances, monotonous; and there is a longing on the side of either to bring into the relationship more change, more joy, and more life. And what is a child if not, literally, more life? That perhaps is the deeper meaning of the Bib-

lical phrase: "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children"—that is, to deceive sorrow shalt thou bring forth children.

I do not mean to say, of course, that the individual worries about the future of the race. It would be a foolish assertion. In this respect the most developed of the animals is no more conscious of motive than the lowest of the plants. Without will, and without thought, man and plant follow the iron law of the continuation of the species. The tree does not know that it *must* bear seeds, and man does not know that he *must* pay his debt to life.

On me the birth of my daughter made an impression not less shattering than if I had myself been born anew. Even today, when I attempt to run swiftly, breathlessly, along the course of my life, to catch the totality of it in one panorama, I cannot pass without stumbling this one point—the point where I heard the first cry of my first-born. For it was then as if the house were flooded with light and sound. The secret of life was uttered anew in the form of flesh and blood. A soul trembled on the threshold of life, imprisoned in a tiny human being, with perfect hands and feet, and a pair of eyes. In those eyes I distinguished the origin of the strange and beautiful fable: Within the mother's body, while the child still inhabits it, a candle burns, by whose light the unborn sees from end to end of the world, and from end to end of the generations. At the moment of birth the candle is extinguished; the angel playfully flicks its finger under the baby's chin—hence the dimple—and it forgets. But in its eyes the experience lingers.

Helena was not overstrong, and the birth of the child was bound up with unusual pains. Yet I cannot forget the soft and brilliant light that came over her face when the child was brought to her. Pain and bliss were both written on her face, and the bliss was made up of pride and hope. Helena and I were no longer a couple. We had been transformed into a family, father, mother, child. "Two are better than one, and a threefold cord is not easily broken."

I could hardly await the moment when the new-born child had been washed and was brought to me. Very carefully I kissed the hands and feet of my daughter—a strong child whose head was thickly covered with black hair, and from whose face two black eyes shone forth. My wife was a chataine, inclined to blonde, her eyes were blue; and I had wished that if our child was to be a daughter, it might take after the mother's side, and not after mine. But I must confess that when I saw the black hair and the black eyes of my daughter, a wave of happiness went through me—a satisfaction of my family pride. And I was still happier when, after the first few days, it became clear that my daughter would resemble my mother—the same good gentle eyes. I at once sat down and wrote a long letter to my mother, describing in every detail the appearance of her new grandchild and calling her, since we had not yet chosen a name, my little mother. I expressed the hope that I would love my daughter not less than I loved my mother, not pausing to think how different from the love of parents is the love of children.

Undoubtedly the clearest illustration of the helplessness and awkwardness of language, when it comes to expression of the infinite shades of emotion, is the curious word "love." There are countless words for colours, there are scales for music, but for all shades of love we have the one word. "I love nice clothes," says one. And another says, "I just love baked potatoes." We also love our friends, we love our parents, we love our children, and we love love itself. A very extraordinary word, surely. It is like the manna that the Jews ate in the desert, concerning which it is told that when a man took it into his mouth it straightway tasted like his favourite food. For that reason, too, these flakes were called in Hebrew *man*, which signifies "What is this?" But the same name, for the same reason, might have been given to love. So the greatest of the Hebrew poets sang: "They say there is love in the world: what is love?"

The love of parents for children, and of children for parents, differs like the relation of tree to branch and of branch to tree. In the latter case it is a love that takes, and does not give, a love without responsibility, which spends itself only in loving. So we find in the Ten Commandments one which bids the child honour the parents. It was not found necessary to bid the parents love their children. Nature has already seen to it.

We gave our daughter the name Esther. But she herself, when she began to speak, called herself Enya. Where she got this name I do not know, but she had her way, and is called by that name to this day. True, the choice that father and mother have made is in its way important, but the last choice of name surely belongs to the individual.

During the months that followed I remained in Warsaw. I could not think of leaving my daughter without her father. The little creature bound herself to me with ropes of iron. I took over her care in the nights, and my daughter rewarded me. On me she smiled as on no one else. To no one else, not even to her mother, did she go as gladly as to me. And when she cried no one could soothe her as well as I. She was a strong, healthy child, and cried rarely. In my arms she never cried.

I remained at home, without interruption, for five months. My daughter uttered her first word—"Papa." "Mamma" came afterwards. At the end of five months I went to Grodno, and was elected, almost unanimously. I ascended the Rabbinical chair; more accurately, I sat down on a very hard and uncomfortable stool, but this I perceived somewhat later. I found a home for my family, and engaged an office. All this took some three months. In this period I did not visit Warsaw, for to make the journey I would have had to go through the formality of obtaining a permit from the Governor. Besides, I could not easily ask for leave immediately after my election, and so I waited for my family in Grodno. I prepared a little surprise for Helena. Without advising

her, I did not wait for her in Grodno, but went out several stations to board the train. I went into the car and caught sight of my wife, and of the little one in the arms of the nurse, an elderly Polish woman who loved the child deeply. My daughter was barely eight months old, and it was three months since she had seen me. Something extraordinary happened: no sooner did she see me than she stretched out her arms with the cry, "Papa!" She had recognized me. We were dumb with astonishment. I had prepared a surprise for my wife—but my daughter had a greater surprise for both of us.

CHAPTER NINE: FALSE HOPES

ALEXANDER THE THIRD was a man of decent, honest character. He never masked his ideas and intentions, desired to deceive no one, and deceived no one. As the favourite pupil of the blackest figure of the time, Pobedonostzev, he gave himself whole-heartedly to the reactionary schemes of his master: from the moment of his ascension until the day when he breathed his last in Livadia, in the Crimea, he helped mightily to turn the wheel of history backward, and laid an iron hand on his people, repressing every free thought as soon as it emerged.

Not a soul in Russia but knew that as long as Alexander the Third sat on the throne, there was nothing to expect except new restrictions and new oppressions. And so people prepared for a long wait, until some natural end should close this dark epoch. But Alexander the Third was a typical Russian giant, and his very appearance spread terror. There were legends in the country concerning his physical strength. It was said of him that he could bend and twist silver coins like leather, and could splinter a horse shoe with his bare hands. It was known further that he lived sensibly, spent his time in prayer, and allowed no dissolute life at the court.

There was every reason to believe, then, that his reign would be a long one, that many years would pass before his heir would mount the throne. The revolutionaries cast about for plans to hasten the end. The liberals fortified themselves in their patience.

The end came sooner than any one expected. A couple

of years before the giant fell, there was much talk of his sickness—a serious disease of the kidneys. There was much talk, too, of the characteristic obstinacy of the imperial patient. Accustomed to commanding millions, and to being obeyed without a murmur, Alexander could not persuade himself to take the orders of his physicians. The instinct of the master asserted itself even on the sick-bed.

His residence was in the Anitchkin-Dvoretz, a palace in the middle of the town built on one of the Neva canals. The house was damp, and the doctors forbade him to stay there. But he obstinately refused to move. Further, the doctors forbade him to drink alcohol; in this too he refused to obey, and continued to drink after the old Russian fashion.

It was a contest between his obstinacy and the obstinacy of the disease. In the end, almost by force, they brought him out of this palace and transferred him to Livadia, in the Crimea, close to the famous health resort which, by its mild, genial climate, attracted the sick from every corner of Russia. It attracted, above all, consumptives. Yalta, a little town in the vicinity, was reckoned as falling within the Pale of Settlement, and had a fair-sized Jewish population.

Suddenly a ukase was launched against the Jews; the city was transferred without warning to the administrative area of the Don Cossacks, and the residential rights of the Jews were abrogated. A single stroke of the pen destroyed a Jewish community of several hundred families who had lived here for many years and had earned an honest livelihood. Within a short time the place was "Jew-pure." The residents—the young and the old—all were driven out. The warm rays of the sun, the last hope of the consumptives, were intercepted; a Russian Emperor was taking his cure at Livadia, near by, and the sun could not be permitted to shine on Jews if it shone on him as well.

These were the tricks and inventions of the Russian statesmen which intensified the secret, underground activities of

the intelligent Russians. There was no hope from the heavens above; it would have to come from the earth below. Yalta was a minor incident, a pin-prick in comparison with larger, more sweeping decrees. But it was characteristic and symbolic; it spoke the language of an ancient Oriental despotism.

On an autumn day in the year 1894 a train was travelling from Livadia to St. Petersburg; it was loaded with members of the widely ramified imperial family, and with the highest members of the government and the governmental service. The train was carrying the body of Alexander the Third to its burial-place. Behind this train travelled a second, carrying the last of the Jewish refugees driven out of Yalta. The Jews, too weak to take revenge otherwise, contented themselves often enough with a bitter jest, the one weapon that a man could carry around without a police permit. So the Jews of Yalta discharged their jest against the Emperor. Like many Jewish jokes, it is a pun, untranslatable. The Emperor had died, according to the physicians, from too much *Eiweiss* (albumen) in the body; according to the Jews, however, he had died from the *Oi-wehs* of the Jewish sick who had been hunted out of Yalta. God had forgiven the tyrant much, but the groaning and weeping of the Jewish sick had been too much for His patience.

But this attitude toward the untimely death of Alexander the Third was not confined to the Jews. It was reported that on the day of the funeral the whisky shops of Moscow and St. Petersburg did the greatest trade in their memory. Among those who drank there may have been a few who sought to drown their sorrow for the national calamity. The huge majority drank in celebration.

The severe police régime—which in those days reached its maximum of efficiency—weighed heavily on others besides the Socialists and the advanced liberals. There was deep discontent among merchants and officials—with the exception of the few at the top of both classes. There was a

deeper discontent among the peasants, who had been liberated from the magnate only to fall into the hands of the *chinovnik*, the official appointed over them. Often enough a peasant would be heard to say that he did not know when life had been easier for him, before the liberation or after. The only contented class was the high nobility, the feudal masters, who concentrated in their possession the greatest and richest Russian estates. All other classes lived in a state of slavery, some in a greater, some in a lesser degree, serving the one little group of nobles whose guardian angel had been Alexander the Third.

On the day when the autocrat was buried, the police drove the population of Russia into the churches, synagogues, and mosques. The population went: an invitation from the police is a little more than a command. It would not do to treat such an invitation discourteously. Besides, the population had feared the body of Alexander more than his soul, and it had no objection to praying for the eternal peace of the latter—in the next world. The police drove the people into the places of prayer; the people prayed; the bells tolled; the preachers extolled the dead man. Each one tried to fool the other, and all of them tried to fool the heavens. For in the heart of each one of them there was a feeling of satisfied revenge—a burst of that primal rage which men ordinarily hide from others and from themselves. There was satisfaction, too, in the contemplation of the simple fact that the almighty ruler and the tormented subject were equal in the eyes of nature. One there is, the Angel of Death, whom emperors cannot frighten. True, he is the bitterest tyrant of all, but his tyranny falls with an equal hand on all of us.

A sudden breath of freshness swept through all Russia. It seemed as though gates had been opened, and the winds were coming through. There was hope again—but no one could have justified that hope by argument. There was no sign of a change in the clouds that hung over the sky. The new young ruler of all the Russias gave no sign of intention

to make things lighter for his people. And yet hope could not be denied. A new age was about to begin. No one dared to say this openly, audibly. But in whispers men congratulated each other on the unexpected death of the monster, on the closing of that black chapter which was the reign of Alexander the Third.

There were all sorts of rumours concerning the new ruler. It was said that, in contrast to his father, he liked good living, and that he paid generous court to the prettier half of humanity. Every one knew the name of his last mistress, the Polish actress, Ksheshinska, and every one knew how much that palace of hers on the English Avenue in St. Petersburg had cost him. This was looked upon as a good sign. For the world is afraid of rulers who wrap themselves in the mantle of piety, and eschew all worldly joys. Out of their piety comes the illusion of a divine mission, and with that illusion comes the pose of the semi-divinity. Such rulers speak to their people out of clouds of incense. They are the severest, the hardest, of all rulers, strangers to gentleness and compromise.

It was sound instinct, perhaps, that awakened satisfaction in the people when they beheld the worldliness of the late Crown Prince. He was, in this respect, much like his grandfather. Perhaps he would resemble in other points, too, the Emperor who, in the first half of his rule, had shown himself one of the liberal spirits of the time, and one of the most generous masters of Russia. It was believed, further, that his marriage with a German princess would bring a good influence into his life. True, a German princess, not an English princess or a French lady—still, some one from the more civilized West. For the time being even German ideas of liberty would be a godsend to the Russian people. The public did not understand that in Germany's upper classes the Russian Emperor was envied as the type of ruler they adored. Russia was the paradise of reaction, hence the eagerness of all royal families to enter into marriage alliances with the

Emperor's family. The wives of Alexander the Third and Nicholas the Second—the first a Danish, the second a German, princess—gave their utmost support to the black forces in Russia. The German princess was a particular disappointment to the Russians, for she not only encouraged her husband in the spirit of reaction, but helped to develop in him an inclination to superstition that finally acquired the character of genuine perversity. But all this became apparent later. For the time being, there was hope.

It was hope that sprang not from calculation but from extreme despair, the hallucination of the drowning man. As the latter clutches at a straw, the people of Russia clutched at a Polish dancer and a German princess.

As Crown Prince, Nicholas had undertaken a journey around the world. Such at least was the expression; actually a journey around the world had been undertaken—for him. Ostensibly this was an educational journey, after the model of the other Crown Princes of Europe who, before their accession, thought it well to become acquainted with the peoples, manners, and governments of the most distant countries. These journeys, at best, resembled the tour of a great factory by the son of the owner and founder. He passes swiftly from department to department; the heads of the departments hastily produce charts, figures, and all sorts of informational tidbits. But in the case of Nicholas it was whispered that his stern father had made use of the journey as a safety-valve, for he was not at all content with his son's love-affairs. He hoped to distract him by a long journey around the world. But in the capital of Japan, it was told, Nicholas fell foul of a Japanese officer over a geisha, and came out of it badly. He received a heavy head-wound which affected his mind.

On this young Czar with the disturbed brain the hopes of the people were centred; better a ruler with a brain that did not function properly than one with a brain that functioned too perfectly only in one direction. A disturbed brain

might also be a scatter-brain, and a decent thought might occur to it by accident. But the subsequent behaviour of Nicholas the Second proved that the story was either an invention or an exaggeration. For his brain may have been very small, but it worked quite consistently. He knew what he wanted, and he worked hard to get it. He was not as open and as honest as his father, for he loved intrigue, and enjoyed the roundabout discomfiture of his political enemies. He was sly and cunning even in his treatment of his nearest. He did not trust any of his ministers; and swiftly there grew up around him an atmosphere of backstairs intrigue.

No man knew him better than Count Witte, and the latter's picture of him is that of one of the most unlikable rulers of Russia—a man of much small pride, false to every one around him, and without a genuine affection even for his Great Russia. This was the impression he made on me also when, years later, I had the opportunity of seeing and hearing him. The legend which was created later, that he was weak-willed, and was wholly under the influence of others, was without foundation. But the legend was of great service to him. It freed him to some extent from the responsibility for some of his decisions: as, for instance, in the case of the Russo-Japanese war, one of the stupidest and most scandalous of all wars. It was, indeed, this war which marked the beginning of the end for the Russian order as it then was. But in this, and in other instances, the blame has been wrongly imputed to every one except Nicholas. He was, in fact, the primary force in the ruination of Russia.

A shocking catastrophe occurred during the coronation of the new Czar. The governments of all the civilized peoples were represented at the gorgeous ceremonies, and even the everyday public of Moscow was not forgotten. Outside the city a great stadium had been built to hold thousands of men and women. Music was provided, and presents were distributed at the expense of the Emperor; they consisted of a bag of sweets and a beaker of whisky. The beaker was of

tin—purchasable for five kopecks. But the public made a dash for the beakers and the bags of sweetmeats. The vast platform on which all this was being enacted gave way and collapsed under the weight. Over three thousand people were killed on the spot. That night, immediately after the fearful catastrophe, the young Emperor and Empress gave a ball to their distinguished guests. Count Witte tells that the young Emperor was discreetly informed of the catastrophe, and it was generally believed that he would postpone the ball. Not an expression crossed the Emperor's face when the news was told him. He issued no countermanding orders; the magnificent reception was held as if nothing had happened. In the old story, Belshazzar is said to have been frightened when he saw the writing on the wall. The modern Belshazzar was quite unaffected. He did not understand that the pillars of his throne had trembled when those of the platform on the Chodinka field had given way.

Like the other inhabitants of Russia, the Jews too had hoped—and without reason—for better times, beginning with the accession of the new Emperor. There had been reports from Germany that the new Empress was not at all anti-Semitic. The proof was that she used to make many purchases from the Jewish merchants of Frankfort on the Main. Not much of a foundation for such hopes as Jews built on it, but they built them.

My Grodno period in the Rabbinate was one of the bitterest disappointments in my life. It is true that I entered on it without too much relish, and even with a certain distaste. Yet I had hoped that somehow, in the movement of things, I would find enough to absorb my energies. What I found was that my position was an actual barrier, almost designed to prevent me from doing any work. If I did manage to acquire some influence in a few corners of the community, that had nothing to do with my official position. Indeed, it became clear that if I had settled in Grodno pri-

vately, and set to work, I could have exerted much more influence than I did as a Rabbiner, and certainly much more among the youth.

The Rabbiner was not appointed or paid by the government; he only had to be ratified in his appointment. But even this was enough to stamp the Rabbiner, in the eyes of the public, with the character of an official. Nothing that the government ratified was likely to be received with anything but suspicion, and it was the Rabbiner's task to cleanse himself from this suspicion, and to create a decent relationship between himself and the plain public. He had to prove that he was fit for decent company: that he had no ulterior motives in his questions, that it was not his fault if the government had not refused him the post. During the first period of my stay in Grodno I felt that an invisible wall divided me from the public. I spoke to the public openly and freely, without afterthought. But the public heard me cautiously; it was feeling me out, testing me, not yet sure of the kind of man that faced it. It treated me with respectful suspicion, and it was hard to tell whether the respect outweighed the suspicion, or vice versa.

There were a few homes in Grodno where my history was known and where, still more, my wife's family—which came from the vicinity—was known. Here I was received warmly, accepted at face value. There was also Bezalel Jaffe, my comrade in the movement, who had initiated the idea of my coming to Grodno. His house too, like the houses of all his relatives, was open to me. And in addition there was an important group of the Chibath Zion.

But it is a mistake to imagine that our moods depend upon and are regulated by our relationship with the friends we have made. These do play a rôle, of course, but the stronger rôle by far is played by the stranger, the man on the street, anonymous society, people at meetings, and so on. There is a good parallel to this paradox in our personal structure. The greatest rôle in our actions and moods is

played not by the known, but by the unknown, elements of the mind: below the levels of the conscious, which seems to direct our purposes and intentions, the darker forces of the subconscious send out their decisive impulses, which spring from suppressed longings, "forgotten" memories and experiences, and which clothe themselves, as they emerge, in the semblance of independent ideas and motives. In the same way our moods are determined much more by the remote than by the immediate, by the stranger than by the friend. Friends, relatives, acquaintances—these are only the tiny fragment of society that breaks into the level of the conscious. But the subconscious is filled with the hordes of the unknown, the vast residue of society. Instinctively, then, we seek the friendly glance of the stranger. And this desire expresses itself in the hunger for popularity. We want to be attractive even to persons with whom we know we shall never come in intimate contact.

The quality of my acquaintances, and of my rather fewer friends, might have augured well for the new chapter which was opening in my life. But the attitude of the public, even though I knew that its suspicion and reserve were not directed at me but at my office, pained and angered me. I felt myself personally insulted. If I had not believed that I could be of service to the community, I would never have accepted a Rabbinic post. But it was up to me to prove in advance that my intentions were decent. I sought neither honours nor an income—though in respect to the latter I was not as free as in respect to the former. I did want, for the first time in my life, to earn what I needed. Yet I can say with a clear conscience that the question of a living did not influence my decision. But I soon learned that the question of a livelihood is no simple one. The fact is that in Grodno I got more in the way of honours than in that of a livelihood.

It never occurred to me, before accepting the position, to ask what it paid as a regular stipend, and what perqui-

sites were attached to it. I only knew that the latter existed in addition to the salary. It was part of a Rabbi's work to act as registrar of births, deaths, and marriages, and to these registrations a fee was attached. It was widely known that many Rabbis abused their office by overcharging. But even the ordinary fee was not something to my liking. However, it was inflicted on the Greek orthodox and Catholic priests as well as on the Jewish ecclesiastic.

I had installed my office, a room for myself, another for my secretary, and the first "customer" arrived. A Jew was happy to report that he had just increased his family by a son, and he had come to register the fact. My secretary brought me the necessary form—a permit to celebrate the day of circumcision. I filled it out and handed it to the secretary, who took it out to the father. But my client did not go. He wanted to see me first. I thought he might have something to tell me—who knows? But when he came in, he said not a word. Instead, he thrust into my hand a number of copper coins and disappeared. I stood there, dazed, looking at the coins. I had the impression that some one had given me a tip and I had accepted it. I could not quite make out, either, whether I would have felt differently if the father had politely handed me a bank-note instead of thrusting these gross coins into my hand. I asked my secretary: "Must he thrust the coins into my hand? Couldn't he have paid you just as well?" My secretary soothed me; he explained that these were simple people who wanted the honour of paying the Rabbi in person. Besides, they were not sure, if they paid the secretary, that the latter would not deduct something in transmitting the money. As for the copper coins, he advised me to get used to the idea; even doctors were so paid in Grodno. It was still the age of metal—a ten-piece (two and a half cents) was a considerable coin here.

My secretary's well-meant explanations did nothing to put me at my ease. These copper coins were the first and

last that were ever paid to me in person. I arranged that only the secretary should have anything to do with the fees. I did not want to come in business contact with the public. And this too did nothing to increase my popularity. I was looked upon as a snob. But this is characteristic of the public—if it gives a man anything, it wants him to know about it.

In any case, the public was quite clear in the view that, like every other Rabbi or Rabbiner, I lived off it. And as I lived decently, the public decided that my income was an extraordinary one. Even my new friends, when I told them how small my income was, looked astonished and puzzled. They were very polite about it, but they hardly believed me. The simple fact was that during the two years I passed in Grodno my total income did not amount to more than a third of my expenses. I repeat that I lived decently, but far from extravagantly. Neither I nor my wife indulged in luxuries. I was sorry for my father—and for myself too. My father still had to look after his grown-up son, the Rabbi of an important Jewish community.

There were three regular Rabbis in Grodno, Eliakum, Abraham, and Velvel. The last one was known affectionately as Velvele. He is still alive, and is the oldest of the orthodox Rabbis of New York. Their condition was worse even than mine. Their incomes were very small—and they had no fathers to help them along. They lived, therefore, in poverty, but the public looked upon them too as a species of parasites. The attitude taken to them was that of the boss to his employés. This meant not only that the Rabbi belonged to the congregation, but that every member of the congregation owned a piece of him. There is a story told that when Baron de Hirsch gave that extraordinary sum of six hundred million francs as a gift to the Jewish people, a clever Jew in a small town calculated how many needy Jews there were in the world, and how much was due to each one. He at once wrote to the Baron demanding his share.

I felt that every member of my community was preparing a letter specifying how much of me he laid claim to. There may have been something morbid and oversensitive in my emotions; perhaps I painted my moral situation too darkly —but I could see it no other way. I was not in my right place.

What contributed greatly to my unhappiness was the fact that all my dreams of bringing new views to the younger generation, of instituting a new system of education for it, vanished almost completely. The Talmud Torahs (communal schools) remained closed to me. My intimate friends even advised me not to try to break into these places, which were dominated by fanatics of the old school, who trembled at the thought of anything new. The two governmental folk-schools for Jews—one of them for the children of the employés in the huge cigarette factory of Shereshevski—were also closed to me. In these a severe discipline reigned, and the teachers were under the close watch of government inspectors. The private *cheders* stood on the lowest imaginable level, and neither the parents nor the teachers were ready for the slightest reforms. Thus my most important intentions came to nothing. I therefore had to look elsewhere for my contact with the youth. The younger brother of Bezalel Jaffe, a young Russian poet greatly influenced by Frug, was of much help to me in this respect. We tried to organize a study group among the pupils of the middle-grade government schools, but we met with little success. At the time of which I am writing the competition of the Socialists was much too strong. This was, in fact, the time of the double birth of the World Zionist Organization and of the General Jewish Workers' Bund (Brotherhood) of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia.

Addresses delivered at large on Jewish topics were not in favour in Grodno. The only place where a meeting could be held without a police permit was the Synagogue. And here the difficulty of language arose. To speak Russian in

a Synagogue would have seemed outrageous to the older generation, besides which, the police would have learned that the Synagogue was being used for other than religious purposes and the consequences might have been uncomfortable. To speak in Yiddish would give my address too much of the tone of a sermon, and I would fall between two stools: the older people, the Rabbis, and the preachers would object, and the younger people would stay away. There remained only one way—the way I had pursued in Warsaw: to address secret, illegal meetings in the homes of friends. What, then, I asked myself, was the use of my Rabbinic position? It was more an obstacle than a help. Without it I could take greater risks and do more. Also I could approach the youth much more easily, not to mention the general public. I could not answer my own question. But there was a second question even more difficult to answer: Of what earthly use was I to the Jewish community of Grodno? Why, indeed, had it not found a real stammerer with nothing more than a knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet?

The tale of woe is not yet finished. So far I have enumerated the circumstances which condemned me to a life of inactivity. I was in this respect a man with much capital that he could not put into circulation. There were, however, active discomforts in my position, too. It is hard to keep silent when one ought to talk; it is harder to talk when one ought to keep silent. On seven occasions in the year the Rabbi had to deliver an address in the Synagogue, on the birthdays and name-days of the Emperor, the Empress, and the Crown Prince, and on the anniversary of the coronation. I found, in Grodno, a special addition to the ceremonies; after the Rabbi had invoked the blessing and made a speech, the *chazan* and choir sang the national anthem, in which not alone the land is glorified, but also its Church. The singing of a song to the glory of the Orthodox Greek Church in a strictly Orthodox Jewish synagogue, and in the presence of its spiritual leader, was about the limit of self-abasement

that a community could reach. I once had occasion to mention this practice to my friend Jacob Mazeh, the Rabbi of Moscow. In this particular respect his position was even worse than mine. Placed as he was at the centre of Russian Czarism and of its Orthodoxy, he had to be more circumspect than if he ministered in a province. In addition to the seven days which he had to dedicate to the imperial family, he had two pairs of days set aside for the Governor General, whom he hated and despised. But neither of us could think of a way of getting out of the mean functions bound up with our Rabbinic positions.

Years later I found the way out: I made a daring decision and abandoned the Rabbinate completely—but just at the time when it was beginning to give me satisfaction in many respects. Only a few of my most intimate friends knew the real reason for my decision. Among others I told Prince Swiatopolk Mirsky, one of the noblest Russians I have ever known, whose name is for ever associated with the "Russian springtime" of liberty. I came to know him in Ekaterinoslav, and later on, when I lived in Vilna, we became even closer friends.

Taken all round, my Rabbinate in Grodno brought me nothing at all. In this respect, the community and I were quits. But there was a difference. The community would not, and I could not. The only bright spot on that page is my Zionist activity. This was the time of the transformation of Zionism from the Chibath Zion into the world-movement. A new star had appeared on the Jewish heavens—Theodore Herzl.

CHAPTER TEN: THE AVATAR

THE star of Herzl rose suddenly and unexpectedly, like a meteor. Out of the charming and vivacious city of Vienna, the Austrian capital on the blue Danube, there came a voice of thunder, calling the Jewish people to self-liberation. A man who was alien to his people—or rather, one who had become alienated from it, like most of the best intellectuals—turned suddenly back, and the first words he uttered were those of the destined leader. An electric shock ran through the Jewish people.

The founder of the World Zionist Organization, Theodore Herzl, came into the orbit of Jewish life not only with the unexpectedness but also with the mysteriousness of a comet. No one knew what path he had traversed till then, and no one could forecast his trajectory. He was a portent. One half of the Jewish world watched him with amazement and joy, the other half with dread and suspicion. In one more respect the emergence of Herzl suggests the comet rather than the fixed star. The comet is the legendary body of the heavens—and Herzl's appearance and life had the character of a legend.

I do not know what impression Herzl created in his immediate environment when he proclaimed himself. I could only reconstruct this from reports, and reports are seldom objective. To us, to Russian Jewry, only the fanlike rays of the comet were visible, and the great voice reached us from a distance. And yet there is not the slightest doubt that we were the ones who were most affected. I am not

speaking of the circles of the Chibath Zion, which, by reason of years of propaganda, were sensitive to such a call, and which were ready to receive the Western leader with enthusiasm. I am speaking, rather, of the Jewish masses, which do not analyze or calculate, and which, like all masses, think through their emotions, and react to all events instinctively and directly.

This huge mass, which until then had been a victim and not a director of history, accepted the leader who had appeared in Vienna, without hesitation, without reserve, and in a great upwelling of worship and admiration. Overnight the name Theodore Herzl became a household word. No one had seen the man, but stories were told about him which already bore the character of legends. Suddenly the Jewish world was aware that from the other side of the Sambattyon —out of the lands of utter assimilation—a wanderer had returned to the fold, a man of majestic appearance, resembling indeed one of the kings of the ancient East, a man with the eyes of a dreamer, which look across the mists of time into the hidden future and the unborn generations. Learned in all the ways and wisdom of the world, gifted with marvellous power over others, this man could arrest the attention of the rulers of the world, and compel them to listen. For what reasons he had turned back on the path that led him outward from his people, no one could tell; but he had signalized his return by lifting a banner that would be visible in the four corners of the earth. It was told, further, that before his return he had prepared himself for the rôle of liberator. He had retired from the tumultuous world, had locked himself in a room, and had written a book in which he declared his secret to the world. He had found the path that led to the Jewish state! While he had been writing the book, he had distinctly heard the flapping of the wings of an eagle, passing and repassing overhead. These were the stories which sprang up at once and circulated among the masses concerning the new leader.

But legends are not created in a day. They take long to incubate, and very rarely can we catch one just as it emerges from the shell, still fresh, trembling in the newness of its life. It remains within the shell until the event or the man calls it forth into the world. Unless it is called forth by something or some one to which it can attach itself, the legend will not reveal itself. We often make the mistake of assuming that it is the man who has created the legend. The truth is that no man, be he ever so great, can create a legend. He can only become the embodiment of a legend that only the folk is able to create. The greatest legendary figures in the world must attribute their fame and immortality to the greatness of the legend that was created in advance for them, and finally identified with them. But on the other hand, only authentic greatness can attract and hold a legend which the folk has created. It is no small thing to become the vessel which contains the distilled longings and passions of a people. This falls rarely to the lot of an individual, but when it does, that individual is lifted for ever into the history of humanity. Such a one was Theodore Herzl.

In the innermost recesses of the Jewish soul, a flame has always burned. This is the eternal light of a people that could not step off the stage of history—as many other peoples in its case have done—yet had always to maintain a ceaseless struggle for the minimum of human conditions in which to exist. Out of the life-and-death struggle was born the vision of a world to come. When a people can neither die nor attain to full life, it creates for itself a Messiah, the expression of its ideal of a life that is full and complete. Every oppressed people has its Messianic dream. But the Jewish people, oppressed longest, because surviving longest, had developed that dream to a supreme form. At no moment in its history did it relinquish the hope of liberation. In the double darkness of its inner being—for its outer life was dark, too—it wove the legend of its liberator, and from time to time in its history—at long intervals, it is true—

there were men who came forward to claim that legend as their own. They sought to prove, by their deeds, that the ages had waited for them.

To Herzl, the modern, the perfect European aesthete, we must apply the legend, in order that we may understand his power, and understand too how this man was privileged to attain to a position in the history of his time and people which, apparently, others might also have attained, contemporaries apparently not less gifted, more deeply steeped in Jewish life than he, and not less devoted to the ideal which he proclaimed. The truth was that Herzl said nothing new, and even reformulated nothing. His *Judenstaat* (*The Jewish State*) is only an echo of Moses Hess's *Rome and Jerusalem*, and Leo Pinsker's *Auto-Emancipation.* The articles that he wrote in answer to his opponents are by no means as brilliant as those which Achad Ha-Am wrote on the same themes. It is this which leaves us to wonder what magic power was his to draw to himself, at once, the thousands of the old Choveve Zion and the countless tens of thousands of the Jewish masses.

I take myself as an example, and my own relations to Herzl before I became acquainted with the man, and I am faced with a riddle: What was it that drew me and held me to him? Why was it that he became and has remained, in my eyes, the hero, while Achad Ha-Am is only the teacher? I was a contemporary of both men. I followed their work from the first day of their public appearance until the moment of their death. I knew Herzl only for a few years, and came in personal contact with him only at the Zionist Congresses. With Achad Ha-Am I was intimate for decades, and I looked upon him both as master and as friend. In the spiritual field Achad Ha-Am was for me the personification of all that is deepest and richest in the Jewish world. Herzl was . . . the personification of polished Europeanism. In a word, they were for me the East and the West. But I, by nature and inclination and training, am of the East

rather than of the West. I was deeply influenced by my master's belief and message, that the power of our national movement does not derive from the political attractions of a Jewish state, but from the will of an Eastern people to live its life out in spiritual independence; that the state is only a means, not an end, a frame, not the picture.

And having made all this clear to myself, I return to the singular fact that from the first moment of his appearance I regarded Herzl as a man set apart in greatness, beyond the reach of others. Achad Ha-Am was not a mystery to me. I saw him clearly, and thinking of him I would evoke other great figures of the historic past, chiefly Hillel, Saadya Gaon, and Maimonides. But if I looked for the row of niches in which I might place Herzl, I had to go back further, into the mists of half-history, into the period of the Judges. For I could place him neither among the thinkers of the Middle Ages, nor among the Tanaim, nor yet among the Prophets. I had to look for the liberators, for a Gideon and a Samson, first because of his way of frightening a whole host with empty coffers, and second because of the mysteriousness of his strength; and in addition—applicable to both of these heroes—because of his abrupt and mystic emergence.

Yet Herzl was not the first one to turn back from among strangers and take upon himself the most difficult task that any mortal can assume—the liberation of an exiled people through the use of its own energies. In this respect, Herzl finds himself in the greatest company. Moses, too, the first and greatest Jewish leader, was brought up in an alien world, among the priests and magicians of an Egyptian Pharaoh; he too was a man full-grown when he first learned of the sufferings of his people, and turned back to it. It is remarkable that the oldest Jewish commentators, those who expounded our history thousands of years ago, could not ignore this circumstance, but pondered over it and looked for explanations. Naturally, they thought in the terms of their time, formulating both question and answer in the

spirit of believers who see in every act the finger of God. With the naïveté—as it seems to us—of their time, they ask: "Why did God have to let Moses float in a basket on the Nile, be rescued by an Egyptian Princess and brought up in the house of a gentile? Would it not have been more fitting that the future saviour of his people, he who later was to speak with God face to face, should be brought up in a pious Jewish home?"

The formulation of the question is interesting enough, but more interesting is the answer they found for the acts of God, who never does anything without a profound reason. God foresaw, they explain, how difficult it would be to pull the Jews out of the morass of Egyptian slavery if there came to them as messenger one who had been brought up like all other Jews, saying: "The hour of your liberation has come." They would not believe him, and would answer: "The tradition speaks through you. These are the songs your mother sang to you in your cradle; these are the legends you heard from your grandmother. You speak what you were taught to speak." Therefore God sent to them a messenger out of a strange place, out of Pharaoh's palace with its priests and magicians. To such a messenger they could not say: "You heard all that in your childhood." In a word, they would believe the stranger—and belief is half the battle. Without it there is no movement, no liberation.

I knew that ancient riddle and answer about Moses before the coming of Herzl. When he came, and when I observed how deeply he touched the masses to belief, I remembered the legend again, and much was made clear to me. What is a Smolenskin, a Lilienblum, a Pinsker, an Achad Ha-Am? They are our own people, compelled to tread the common path of tradition. But here was one who came from afar, one who had never heard the Jewish legends, or dreamed the Jewish dreams. He too now added his voice to the cry for Jewish liberation. *This* meant something.

In those days the Rabbinate in the town of Bialystock

was represented by one of the pillars of the Chibath Zion, Rabbi Samuel Mohilever, a remarkable personality. He was one of the greatest Jewish scholars, but his learning embraced the field of general knowledge too. This man was convinced that the liberation of the Jewish people could not come through the action of any class in it, but would have to be accompanied by an awakening in all its ranks and classes. Mohilever was very friendly toward me, and, as Bialystock and Grodno are neighbouring towns, I often visited him. It was profoundly interesting to me to observe the impression that Herzl made on one who was at once a great scholar and a firm, orthodox believer, one for whom the world out of which Herzl emerged was the actual antithesis of Judaism. Mohilever had already attacked Pinsker in the past for his too secular approach to Jewish nationalism. I wondered whether he would take up the same attitude toward the new leader from Vienna, and I watched closely. On Mohilever Herzl produced the psychic effect of a miracle. He did not, indeed, decide at once whether he would follow the leader unconditionally, or whether he would hold out for terms. But it was clear that he saw in the stranger, because he was a stranger, the man to follow or with whom to deal. He too, the pietist and the scholar, saw in Herzl the sign of the times.

But it was the nationally minded Jewish youth who proclaimed Herzl with supremest joy; it perceived in him, at once, its special hero. After all, the Jewish national movement as it has last manifested itself is only a link in the long chain of Jewish historic hope. The youth, which is the last link, was unable to separate itself from the spirit of the time, and a section of it suffered. In Zionist circles the burden of traditional duties was still heavy. Among the youth, then, there was one part that was even more moved than the rest by the call of Herzl—that part which had itself turned back on the road to assimilation. These could never have accepted a leader like Achad Ha-Am, even if he had had

all the qualifications. The best he could have done would have been to call them into his *cheder* to learn something first; and this was not to their taste. It was a special source of joy to them that they had found a leader who had passed through their own experiences.

The world has always looked with more admiration on the man who has reformed than on him who seems never to have been tempted. For the latter it may have more respect; for the former it has more admiration. One went the normal way; the other did battle with the devil. The old Jewish sages had their saying: "The pious man is not to be compared with the penitent." The penitent comes first. It is his reward for the pain he has suffered, the inner torments and the victory over himself. Also, it is a premium offered to the still impenitent.

Herzl came to the Jews as a penitent. With his own hands he shattered the idols he had worshipped in youth and manhood, and returned to his people. The eagle wings which, he says, he heard flapping over him as he wrote the *Judenstaat* were really the wings of the guardian genius of his people. Something similar must be found in the experience of all those who have passed through the crisis of a break with the past. The greater the crisis, the greater the sense of guardianship from above. In the case of Herzl the conviction deepened almost into the hallucination of wings.

What was it that suddenly impelled Herzl to take a violent farewell of his past and to proclaim himself the liberator of his people? What persuaded or compelled him to change from the care-free life of the Viennese journalist to the dark and difficult career of the apostle? Had he perhaps been grossly insulted, as man or as artist, because he was a Jew by origin? Had he gone through a psychic crisis because of some reaction in the circle of his friends? It often happens that a personal incident touches a spring in a man, opens his eyes, and reveals to him that he has been living in a world

of unreality and falsehood. This has happened a great deal of late with Jewish writers, who have tried to swim against the stream, have struck a rock, and have been sobered into an understanding of the futility and meaninglessness of their efforts. Herzl experienced no such blow. He could not experience it because the world he moved in, his companions and colleagues in the press, consisted of assimilated and half-assimilated Jews like himself. Toward the end of the last century the liberal press of Germany and to a greater degree that of Austria were largely in Jewish hands. I doubt whether, in the *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna, in which Herzl occupied a leading position, a single non-Jew could have been found. Yet it cannot be denied that the preparation for the great change was made in the narrow circle of Herzl's collaborators, even though the decisive incident came from elsewhere.

In the printed statutes of the Western world the Jews were completely emancipated, and no laws existed to differentiate them from others. Actually the Jews were as rigorously excluded from government positions after their emancipation as before. The individual exception only continued to illustrate the rule. The Jewish intelligentsia was therefore compelled to concentrate on the liberal professions, and to occupy a disproportionate position in their ranks. It was particularly intelligible that the Jews should take to journalism.

Equally natural was the liberal tendency of all Jewish journalists. The Socialist movement was in those days in its infancy; the press was dominated by two tendencies, the conservative and the liberal. The political situation of the Jews—I speak of the actual and not the legal situation—concentrated them among the liberals. The triumph of liberalism would have meant for them the triumph of their rights. But in order to prove that they were liberals on pure principle, without afterthought for themselves even as a group, Jewish journalists had to affect an unnatural im-

partiality in those questions which touched them nearest. In order to disguise this motive—as though it were dishonourable—the liberal press would often pay less attention to the specific problem of the Jew than did the decent part of the conservative press. Even when a wave of pogroms broke upon Jewish life in eastern Europe, the liberal press of Germany and Austria was afraid to react to them in a normal, natural way. It did not want to have too much to do with the Jewish tragedy. It treated the question in a sickly sweet general way, without indignation, without passion. It would use the feeble, stereotyped phrases of the classic rebuke to a tyrant. Seldom did it utter one strong word of denunciation against the brutality of the government, or of comfort for its victims. As for the Jewish national movement, it was on the taboo list. It was not even mentioned in contempt.

In this atmosphere of dishonesty and suppression, where every man seemed to play a rôle, it was Herzl's lot to work during the best years of his early manhood. What was worse, he was condemned to remain in it even after the great break. The record of his spiritual anguish after the break came may be found in his diaries. Unfortunately he tells us nothing about the preceding period, during which the break was silently preparing within him. That it was prepared slowly, stage by stage, is obvious. When the final thrust came, it precipitated a crisis. The preparation took place in Vienna; the crisis occurred abroad—so Herzl himself tells us.

In Paris, the city of three revolutions, the mother of political liberty, there was enacted, at that time, one of the ugliest and most hateful of human dramas, the Dreyfus Affair. It had become quite clear to every honest man that what faced the public was not an ordinary case of betrayal, such as occurs frequently enough in the history of a people, but an abominable plot to cover the guilt of a vast group by finding a scapegoat—and that scapegoat a Jew. Dreyfus

the Captain played a rôle inferior to that of Dreyfus the Jew. The accusation was not directed against an individual, but against a people, and the prosecution sought to imply that France was threatened by a huge international conspiracy. Such a conspiracy could have but one source, the Jews; and it was a Jew who had to become the focus of the accusation. In brief, it was necessary to plunge all France into a state of terror, in order to fasten for ever upon it the rule of the chauvinistic clique; to that end the legend of the eternal Jew was again invoked.

But if France was badly shaken, the Jewish people was stunned. Dreyfus himself might have mattered little; through him, however, was clearly demonstrated the collective responsibility of the whole Jewish world for every individual Jew. Let an Englishman or a Frenchman come into conflict with the law, and it is one man's affair. Let a Jew come into conflict with the law, and it is every Jew's affair. Every Jew must bear the responsibility not only for his own misdeeds, but for those of every other Jew, not only in his own city and country, but in all the cities and countries of the world. But this is a responsibility beyond human endurance, and under its weight a Samson would have collapsed. In France every Jew was exposed to the insults of the enraged mob, which concentrated on an innocent victim all the suppressed longings for revenge for the war of 1870. But the curious thing was that in Germany, too, the country which had humiliated France, Dreyfus was not less exploited by the anti-Semites as an argument against all Jews. In certain places in Russia the affair created a public mood which nearly broke into pogroms, particularly during the second trial of Dreyfus. Things came to such a pass that in Berditchev the Jews, in terror of a pogrom, passed an official resolution condemning Dreyfus.

The ghastly drama became a tragicomedy.

On the assimilated Jews the Dreyfus Affair descended like a bolt from the blue. For all of them France had been

the classic country of the emancipation. Not for nothing had Heine stated that every man—in his subconsciousness he meant every Jew—had two fatherlands, his own and France. Paris was the holy city of every Jewish assimilationist, and as the pious Jew turns in his prayers toward Jerusalem, so the assimilated Jew turned in his hopes toward France. And, of a sudden, the holy city was bankrupt for its worshippers. The walls had fallen, the temple was in ruins. This was the third Jewish Destruction—but it fell on the assimilated Jews. And if any man with a sensitive ear reads the articles of the Jewish liberal press of those days, he can catch in their tone the minor melody of the traditional Lamentations of the Ninth Day of Ab.

But even for the earnest Jewish thinker who was not afraid to stare the truth in the face, the Dreyfus incident was of profound and decisive significance. To such a man the following picture became clear: More than a hundred years before the Dreyfus Affair a certain political struggle had taken place in France. On one side had stood an entire people—something like twenty-five million souls—that had just passed in triumph through the greatest modern revolution in the name of human liberty and equality. On the other side stood a tiny group of forty thousand Jews begging to be included in the ranks of the liberated, so that the word "human" might be deemed to apply to them too. After a bitter struggle the little group won through to liberty, and great was the rejoicing in its camp. There was joy in all the Jewish world, and the word flew from country to country: "The Jew has been recognized as human!" For a hundred years and more they danced to that tune, a dance of self-forgetfulness and self-repudiation. At the end of that time the French people had increased from twenty-five to thirty-five million, and the Jewish people in France from forty thousand to exactly fifty thousand—about the same proportion as a hundred years ago. But not the comparative numbers alone remain the same: the same relation-

ship remains. The tiny Jewish group must still defend its human status. It must prove by all sorts of signs that it has really become assimilated, while the other group insists as ever that it is a foreign body within the body of the French people. Nor do the Jews understand the tragedy of their protestations, for the louder they protest that they are assimilated, the more clearly others understand that they are not. Has any one ever heard a corpse protest that it is dead?

Little wonder, then, that one of the results of the Dreyfus Affair was the return of many Jews who had abandoned their people. And if the old saying that there is no evil without compensating good has any truth in it, then even the Dreyfus Affair was not without its benefits. For it brought back Herzl to the Jewish people. The pity of it is that history must use such heroic remedies to straighten out its account with the Jews.

Herzl himself tells us that it was Dreyfus who converted him to Zionism. But that is only a manner of speaking; we are too prone to think only of the last of a sequence of causes. Dreyfus was the last thrust. It should be observed that Herzl came naturally and independently by his views on the Jewish question. It was only after he had written his *Judenstaat* that he learned of the existence of those two books, Hess's *Rome and Jerusalem*, and Pinsker's *Auto-Emancipation*. More than once he expressed satisfaction with the fact that no Jewish thinkers had influenced him in the conclusions he reached. His whole nature was such that he could not take upon himself the continuation of a work that others had begun. He could not play the rôle of follower; he had to create for himself. He had to be the beginning of a movement, not its continuation. But since all movements, religious or social, are continuous phenomena, every founder who claims to bring something new must find himself to that extent in conflict with the predecessors who made the very movement possible. For they threaten his posi-

tion in history. By their insistence on the prior rôle they played, they minimize his contribution. And the founder, on the other hand, does his best to minimize the significance of the predecessors. We see this conflict of jealousy in the New Testament, in which the compliments paid to the old dispensation are seen, on close examination, to be forced and reluctant admissions. We see it too in the Koran, in Luther, and in Marx. And Herzl, as founder of a movement, could not act otherwise. It was only later that he acknowledged the identity of his own movement with the historic forces of the Jewish people, and made amends by openly acknowledging his debt to the past.

But Herzl did create a school consisting of men new to the movement. And as is frequent in such cases, the new followers are even more jealous for the master than he is for himself. The apostle runs before the founder; and this is natural too, for apostles preach the movement by exalting the master, and in this they tend to deprecate those who have preceded him.

The chief apostle of Herzl was Max Nordau.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: HERZL, NORDAU, ACHAD HA-AM

An older generation will remember the time when Max Nordau was a name to be conjured with. Years before the coming of Herzl he had achieved world-wide fame. He was known not less to the Jews than to the non-Jewish world. But the former were only less amazed by the sudden linking of his name with Herzl than by the coming of Herzl himself. There were two elements of astonishment. In the first place Nordau, who was widely known in Russia, was not known by the majority of people to be a Jew, and for the Jews the discovery was a pleasant one. It is a peculiarly Jewish joy, this of discovering that some great man is Jewish. In its nature it may be compared with the joy of the man who has lost something and found it, or from whom something has been stolen and is now restored to him. Other peoples never know this joy—for their great men are seldom misrepresented as belonging to some one else. And to this type of joy is added a peculiar feeling of satisfaction: the great man may have tried to hide from his poor relatives; now he is proclaimed theirs before the whole world.

No one suspected, of course, that Nordau had made deliberate attempts to conceal his Jewishness. This would have been in contradiction to the frank—sometimes too frank—character of the man as it was revealed in his writings. The joy was therefore, in his case, unmixed with malice. But the second great surprise was his association with Herzl. Was Saul, then, among the prophets too? Is not this Nor-

dau, the famous critic, iconoclast, nay-sayer? Is not this the man who had wielded his sacrilegious pen like an axe among the great men of his time and of all times? Had he not even laid the Prophets on the dissecting-table, to prove that their anatomy was like that of the plainest son of Adam? What, indeed, had he to do with a constructive plan into which entered sentiment and devotion and passion, and into which were woven a thousand threads out of the past? Had he too turned penitent, and if so, what thrust had turned him back? This was not like Nordau, the anatomist of mysticism, the surgeon of romanticism.

Yet it had happened. When Herzl finished his *Judenstaat*, he believed naïvely that nothing remained now but to discuss the matter with a few of the mighty among the Jews, and the thing was done. Was not the plan as simple as the alphabet and as plain as a pikestaff? No one was going to deny the widespread hatred of the Jew; it was a historic fact. And here are the men with the strength and the will to help their people. That was point number one. Point number two was that the enmity to the Jew was rooted in the rootlessness of the Jewish people. The world is instinctively prejudiced against a people without a land. "The land without a people for the people without a land." Point number two, then, was to free the world from the poison of anti-Semitism, which does no less harm to those who carry it in their blood than to those whom they vent it on. And if the problem was so simple, then it must be solved by a single great act, and not tiny step by tiny step, as the Chibath Zion was trying to do. A land must be found for the nine million Jews of the world. We may note, in passing, that Herzl based his calculations on nine million, when there were between twelve and fourteen million Jews in the world.

But at the very start Herzl met with an astounding disappointment. He found that the powerful Jews were divided concerning his plan: some were indifferent, and some were afraid. There was no third class. Even Baron de Hirsch,

who was planning mighty things for the rescue of east-European Jewry, did not grasp the seriousness of Herzl's idea. He too did not understand that in and for itself Herzl's plan was by no means fantastic, but that the chief difficulty lay only in the disorganized will of the Jewish people. In the narrow circle of his friends Herzl met with as hopeless a reception as among the big Jews of the time. The only one among the big Jews to understand him at once, to enlist under his banner and remain faithful to the idea until his last breath, was precisely the man from whom it was least to be expected—the agnostic and iconoclast, Nordau.

As types they had little in common, and many things in opposition. Herzl was an optimist to the point of naïveté; Nordau was a pessimist of the Koheleth type, with a life-philosophy expressed in the short phrase concerning the threefold vanity of all things. Herzl had absorbed the dominating German idea of his time, and for him the state was the highest expression of human progress. Nordau had not the slightest respect for the state-idea. He saw everywhere only decadence and degeneration. In his books he attacked all society, leaving not one stone upon another. Herzl was the aesthete and artist, who looked for harmony in all things, who saw even the state as a marvellous piece of architecture, the majestic expression of the people's will. Nordau was largely an anatomist. He was not interested in the artistic. Colour meant nothing to him. The skin, the bones, the nerves, were his field. When he saw a painting he examined first the canvas. I speak figuratively, of course, but there was in Nordau almost an Old Testament hostility to art in all its forms. Nordau was the one-sided servant of the ethical, without any interest in aesthetics.

When, after the first Congress, Achad Ha-Am declared that the liberation of the Jews would come not from diplomats but from prophets, he set down the difference between Herzl and Nordau. But his evaluation of Herzl was in this respect only partly just. It is impossible to regard Herzl

simply as the diplomat. He was much more. Nor can Nordau be likened to a Prophet. He was much less. The Prophet was distinguished not only by his rage against the worshippers of false gods, but also by his enthusiasm for his own god and for the new social order, which would come about "when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea." And for the Prophet the fulfilment of the dream of absolute justice was an aesthetic not less than an ethical problem. The pictures that the Prophets draw are powerful—and they are also extraordinarily beautiful. Nordau had inherited one side of the Prophet—his rage and his disappointment.

This was characteristic of many other great Jews who had dedicated all their creative forces to the world in which they believed they had sunk themselves completely. Two classic examples are Heine and Börne. To these may be added Nordau and Zangwill, for however differently we may evaluate each of these individuals, they are all alike in that they carried within themselves the conflict of a hopeless effort to harmonize themselves with their surroundings. That conflict came to starkest expression in Heine. He, after many years of search for a formula, came to the final conclusion that for every man there is a choice only of two possibilities, to be a Greek or to be a Jew. In other words, the world is divided after the manner of an inheritance which can never be reconstituted, by synthesis, into a unit. Two antagonistic world-philosophies dominate the world; one rose up from the Jordan, the other came down from Olympus. Heine himself names the two contemporary representatives of these world philosophies, for Olympus Goethe, for the Jordan Heine himself. The former was as calm as the mountain itself, the latter tumultuous like the waters of the river.

Zangwill too dreamed of a "melting-pot" of all the elements. Involuntarily secrets reveal their pains. The great Jew, seeking recognition, has a special source of pain: he seeks and cannot find acceptance as a natural and fully

privileged member of the world in which he moves. He cannot find it; not because the world is anti-Semitic, but because he himself expresses in all his works an alien element —the deep inheritance of the past—that does not harmonize with the world. It is taste and outlook, not malevolence, which condemn him to extrusion. If this complex could at least be resolved, if it were openly acknowledged that this difference exists, then the two elements—the one master of the world, the other its subject—would be freed of their mutual dislike and distrust.

In the matter of the unacknowledged inheritance, Nordau stood on a much higher plane than Herzl. Nordau's father was a Hebrew teacher of Budapest, Gabriel Südfeld by name. I do not know how many scholars forged the chain of Nordau's inheritance. Nordau had all the characteristics of the sharp-witted Jewish scholar—they were simply translated into classic German. He had the authentic subtlety of the Jewish scholar, and even in his appearance there was something of the traditional Jewish thinker, erudite and severe. He had more rage and bitterness in him than Herzl for the reason that in him the conflict was stronger than in Herzl. He had more to suppress and more to adapt to surrounding circumstances. Out of much suppression rage is born, directed, it is true, mostly against one's self, but expressed in anger against the world; and Nordau poured out the torrents of his rage on the immorality of society.

A follower of Lombroso—also a Jew—who believed that genius and lunacy are only the obverse and the reverse side of the same medal, that the genius and the lunatic are overdeveloped people, the former positively, the latter negatively, Nordau did not seek the genius in the lunatic, but the element of lunacy in every genius. Because of his deep rage, Nordau could never be a statesman. He lacked the coolness of the diplomat. He who was a master of language did not know the art of using language to conceal the emotions. He forced his pills down the throats of his friends

too, and did not hide their bitterness under a coating of sugar. Herzl understood Nordau well, and never entrusted to him any important diplomatic task. In the world of diplomacy there is a special language; its peculiarity is not philological, but psychological. In diplomacy nation speaks with nation, and a nation cannot express itself in the plain, ordinary speech of the individual. It must be more guarded. It must express itself on a level of dignity and even of pomp. Herzl understood this art by instinct, and his language was always lofty and noble. Not even with his intimates did he talk as it were in shirt-sleeves. The creator of political Zionism was therefore Herzl, and Herzl alone. Nordau does not enter into the account. Nordau was the devoted servant of Herzl—so devoted, in fact, that he frequently defended the views of his friend against his own convictions, as we shall see when we come to the Uganda incident.

Herzl believed that the centre of gravity of the Zionist problem lay in diplomacy, and such a belief was the natural issue of his talents and his development. There were two other approaches to Zionism: that of the Chibath Zion, which placed at the centre of the problem the gradual upbuilding of Jewish colonies in Palestine and the gradual transference of the Jews to that country; and that of Achad Ha-Am, which placed at the centre of the problem the cultural and spiritual renaissance of the Jewish people. To both these approaches Herzl remained alien. He thought the first spatially petty, and too slow in time. To the second he had no psychic relationship. Political independence he understood by instinct. Spiritual memories were to him—a phrase. Only later, when he realized that his Zionist army was recruited preponderantly from the ranks of the east-European Jews, and when a certain intimacy had been created between the general and the army, did he obtain a deeper insight into the Zionist idea as an expression of a will to a spiritual renaissance. But even then the diplomatic side of Zionism remained for him the chief thing.

Herzl therefore wanted to appear at the first Zionist Congress with a definite diplomatic triumph to the credit of the movement. There were two reasons—first, the actual value of such a triumph, as the forerunner of other triumphs; second, the demonstration that a single diplomatic success would thrust the movement further forward than many years of obstinate but petty colonization work. Through his representatives in Russia, who were preparing the first Congress —all of them were Russian Jewish students who had studied abroad—he knew that he would have to face conflict with both the practical and the cultural Zionists; and he wanted to face them with a triumph in hand.

For this reason he made his journey to Constantinople before the first Congress. He was, indeed, received by the Sultan, but in his capacity as an important contributor to a prominent European newspaper, and not as the prospective founder of the Zionist Organization. At that time the European press had launched a unanimous attack against Turkey because of the Armenian massacres. The Sultan was very friendly to Herzl. He was even ready to promise things. But he had a trifling request to make. He wanted Herzl to use his influence so that his particular paper, the *Neue Freie Presse*, should suspend its attacks. Herzl was in an uncomfortable position. Had he been able to meet the Sultan's request, he would have refused on principle. But he knew very well that if his own newspaper knew that it could harm Zionism by attacking the Sultan, it would redouble its attacks. Of course he could not reveal this, and so from his first encounter with the Sultan he was launched on that long blindfold egg-dance that is called a diplomatic mission.

In the Jewish world, however, Herzl's reception by the Sultan created a sensation. Herzl's representatives strengthened the popular impression by telling how the Sultan had been affected by Herzl's words. Emotions ran high. The

Sultan, the Sublime Porte, and the new Zionist leader—a fascinating combination.

Herzl's feelings drew him toward England. His first political address after his visit to the Sultan was delivered in London before the Maccabaean Club, where he was presented by Zangwill. But at that time Herzl still spoke of a Jewish state at large, whether in Palestine or elsewhere.

As a Jewish *Realpolitiker* Herzl was a pure Territorialist, without any use for historic sentiment. Political independence for the Jewish people was his one aim. In order to achieve political independence, the Jewish people would need a land of its own. But it was not at all necessary that this country be hallowed by historic associations. This was Herzl's view. We may see it expressed in the motto of *Die Welt*, the newspaper which he began to publish a few months before the first Congress: "To found a legally secured home for those Jews who cannot or will not assimilate in the lands where they live." As for those who can assimilate, and wish to do so, that is their affair.

This was obviously not a challenge to assimilation, nor an implied denunciation of those drifting elements which have lost their moorings. On the contrary, the formulation of his plan implied a genuine concession to the assimilationists, an indirect promise that Zionism did not intend to disturb them in the pursuit of their own aims. It is remarkable that the same promise is contained in the second half of the Balfour Declaration, issued by Great Britain exactly twenty years later. Both in the first and in the second case, care was taken not to antagonize the Jewish assimilationists, for they were the wealthiest and most influential of the Jews. Herzl took into account—as the British government did twenty years later—the resistance of the rich. We may be quite sure that if it had been the poor Jews who were assimilationists, neither Balfour nor Herzl would have made the concession.

In any case Herzl's manner of thinking was diametrically opposed to that of Achad Ha-Am. We may formulate the difference briefly. Herzl wanted to rebuild the Jewish people through the creation of a Jewish state. Achad Ha-Am was convinced that the creation of a Jewish state could come only through a Jewish people rebuilt. The first man sought the state, the second, the people. Years later a compromise was reached; Dr. Chaim Weizmann called it synthetic Zionism. This was the position he adopted first as the leader of the youth and later as the President of the World Zionist Organization.

Herzl's concessions to the assimilationists were futile. The public statement that Herzl was preparing to call a Congress was the signal for the release of an avalanche of protests on the part of Jews. First came the scholarly Rabbi of Vienna, Güdemann, who wrote a pamphlet in which he proved that the Jews were merely a religious sect and that therefore they did not need a state. Curiously enough, all the argumentation against a political interpretation of the Jewish problem smelt more of the politics of the Jewish community than of the religiosity of the Jews. However, the attack of the learned Rabbi did prevent Herzl from holding the first Congress in Vienna. He shifted his plans, therefore, to Munich. The Jews of Munich also raised their voice in protest. In the name of the foremost Jewish body in Germany, the Rabbinerverband, the principal Jewish communities of that country entered a solemn protest against the action of the Zionists. The Rabbis protested against it too, and so strongly worded was the protest, so lofty the repudiation of the attack on the mission and on the Messianic idea of the Jewish religion, that it read almost like an excommunication. But these protests too had more to do with the inner politics of the communities than with the genuine convictions of the Rabbis. Some of these Protest Rabbis (as they came to be called) I knew personally. In their private capacity they were by no means as shocked or terrified by

the Zionist programme as they pretended to be. But the modern Rabbis of the European Jewish communities have long since ceased to be spiritual leaders. However intellectually honest they may have been with themselves, in the open they defended the views of the boards of trustees.

Herzl was in difficulties. Originally he had believed that he needed but one country. He found now that he needed two—one for the Jewish people, and one for its representatives to hold a Congress in. The final and successful choice fell on Switzerland, and the city of Basle.

I took a very active part in the preparations for the first Congress, but I did not attend it in person. I was prevented by the government. I could have obtained my passport by saying that I was going abroad for a cure or a rest, but I could not bring myself to lie on this subject. Nor did I consider it wise from the practical point of view. I therefore told the Governor that in earlier years I had been a Zionist, and that I now wanted to attend the Congress as a delegate. Our Governor was a man named Batiushkov, an old conservative terrified by every new idea. He was a poor administrator, so poor that the common joke was that the central government was trying to discover whether Grodno could manage without a Governor. Nor was it a secret that the real governor of the district was the chief of the gendarmerie, whom Batiushkov consulted on every important matter. A situation like this was not peculiar to Grodno; it was repeated in every district and city where the representative of the government was a man of weak character—which he was frequently enough. In respect to the subservience of the local Governor to the local chief of police, things have not changed much in Russia even today. The Tcheka and the G.P.U. (Russian secret police) are the lineal descendants of the old Czarist gendarmerie.

Batiushkov told me that this was the first time he had heard of such a thing as Zionism. He therefore could not decide on the spot whether or not to give me permission. He

would have to think it over. And think it over he did—probably with the assistance of the chief of the gendarmerie. The result was that I got no permit.

The type of police then in use in Russia, and the closeness with which every minor incident was watched, will become clear from the following story, which relates to the time of my stay in Grodno: I have already alluded to the great cigarette factory that existed in the city. More than a thousand men and women were employed in it even in my day. Shereshevsky, the owner, was a pious old Jew who believed firmly that the law of the land and the law of Heaven were equally sacred. One day the firm issued a new cigarette with the name Ratzia—a Polish word which means, "This serves you right"—an expression common in Polish quarrels. Above the name was the trade-mark—the five fingers of a hand, wide open. There were also reproduced, on the box, the various medals which the cigarette had won at exhibitions. On some of these medals there appeared the likeness of the Emperor Alexander the Third. It so happened that the printer, quite unintentionally, had put the open hand, with its five fingers, just above the Emperor's face. And right above was the word Ratzia—"This serves you right." Well, the fat was in the fire. The trial of Shereshevsky lasted for two years. To be exact, it was not an open trial, but the pious old Jew, God-fearing and—even more—Czar-fearing, was in effect on trial, and for two years, until the matter was satisfactorily cleared up, he trembled for himself and his factory. On one occasion I took my courage in my hands, and began a conversation with Batiushkov regarding the whole fantastic business. Wasn't it clear, I asked, that a man of Shereshevsky's type was psychologically incapable of committing *lèse majesté?* Batiushkov answered that I was quite right. He would never have thought of prosecuting Shereshevsky, for clearly the whole thing was an accident. But it did not lie within his competency.

The man in charge of cases of *lèse majesté* was the chief of the gendarmerie.

Some time after this incident this chief of the gendarmerie was promoted from the rank of colonel to that of general. It was widely known that he had improved not only his rank but also his bank-account. The charge against Shereshevsky was buried—but the funeral had been fearfully expensive for the old man.

I am quite certain that it was on the advice of the chief of the gendarmerie that the Governor refused to issue me a permit. But I too am not without blame. I did not follow up my request vigorously enough. I have had some difficult tasks to perform, much more difficult than getting a permit out of a Russian official. I would have succeeded if I had been insistent enough, if I had wanted it more intensely. The fact was that only the conscious part of me wanted to go to the Congress. I was at that time completely under the influence of Achad Ha-Am. My attitude toward Herzl, however, was very different from that of my master. And thus, as has often happened in my life, I was suspended between two worlds, unable to make a decision. For it seemed to me then that a decision meant a final choice between Herzl and Achad Ha-Am, and I would not give up either of them. I compromised. For Herzl's sake I applied for a permit to go to the Congress. For Achad Ha-Am's sake, I did not make the request too insistent.

But even at that distance I felt—as so many others felt—that the first Zionist Congress had opened a new epoch in our movement. In the production of this effect, the actual achievements of the Congress played a minor rôle. The important thing was that for the first time in our history our *elected* representatives had assembled in order to discuss the Jewish problem. For the first time the delegates of east-European Jewry met with those of west-European Jewry as equals. A world-tribunal had been created from which the Jewish people could at last utter its views.

Two figures towered above the Congress—Nordau and Herzl. Achad Ha-Am was present only as a spectator, and he wrote, concerning himself, that he felt "like a mourner at a wedding." But Nordau's address did make a deep impression on him. In Russia that address was learned by heart among the Jews. Herzl became great overnight in the rôle of statesman, Nordau in the rôle of national tribune. Even the oppositionist press was compelled to admit that this was the first time that any Jew had spoken fearlessly to the world concerning the condition of his people.

Among the delegates from Grodno was one by the name of Michel Urison, a modern Hebraist and something of a scholar. He was, in addition, a stammerer. The other two, if I remember rightly, were Bezalel and Leib Jaffe. Bezalel Jaffe was not by nature a public speaker, and Leib Jaffe was still too young to speak in public. It was therefore left to the stammerer to make the report, in Grodno, of the proceedings of the Congress. I had already noticed that public speaking is a special weakness among stammerers. The meeting for the rendering of the report was held in my home, and there were present several scores of persons, Zionist workers and prominent Jews of the community. In my house there was comparative safety from interruption by the police. The elder Jaffe gave us a report of the proceedings and the resolutions. The speeches of Herzl and Nordau were reproduced by Urison. Under ordinary circumstances he was entitled to a high rank among stammerers. When he became enthusiastic he entered into a class by himself. Reproducing Herzl's speech he was tolerable, but when he came to Nordau the recollection of his emotions overcame him, and he grew incoherent. We listened and suffered. Urison was, after all, a serious man. Besides, without sacrifices, what hope for Zionism? The fortunate thing was that we could measure the power of Nordau's tongue by its effect on Urison's. When he was quite through, Urison, apparently aware of a deficiency, said: "That was only a part of his speech. If

you want the effect of the whole, I shall have to give it to you verbatim." From every part of the room solicitous voices begged him to spare himself—the strain was too great. They would be able to read the full text in the press. And with difficulty Urison was persuaded to conquer his passions.

CHAPTER TWELVE: THE SOCIAL MÊLÉE

ALMOST at the moment when Herzl had perfected his plans for the creation of an organization of world Jewry, for the purpose of constructing a national Jewish home, there was held in Vilna the first constituent meeting of the General Jewish Workers' Bund (Brotherhood) of Lithuania, Poland and Russia, which has become known in Jewish history simply as the Bund. These two great organizations were born twins; and though, among other peoples, the respective tendencies which they represent have harmonized, they followed in the Jewish people the general rule of twins and quarrelled from the first day of their birth. The pity of it was that in these futile quarrels much positive energy, which could have served either movement well, was lost for ever. It is not my purpose to distribute the blame; the loss came largely through mutual misunderstanding and obstinacy rather than through a genuine clash of ideals.

Superficially seen, and from the technical point of view, the two foundation meetings in Basle and Vilna were the diametrical opposites of each other. The Basle gathering was called in the city Casino, which was decorated for the purpose; its object was to attract the maximum of attention. The delegates numbered several hundred, and they came from every corner of the world. A host of newspaper correspondents, from every European country, followed the proceedings and telegraphed them home. The Bund gathering was held in a cellar, in an obscure street, and the "delegates" made certain that not a word would leak out. They

were few in number, since few were to be trusted. Every man was a tried servant, known for his devotion—and for his skill in dealing with the agents of the government. For these men were engaged in the formation of a general secret organization.

A superficial glance at their ideals also revealed a contrast between the two meetings. The Congress at Basle declared to the world that the Jewish problem was national in character, and could therefore be solved only through the application of a national remedy—a country for the people. The Bund, representing the principles of social democracy as then understood, simply ignored the nationalist factor as an element in the development of history. And if it did recognize the nationalist principle as a phenomenon, it denied its applicability to the Jews. Of course the first logical question to be put to this attitude was: "Why then are you forming a *separate* Jewish Socialist organization?" The only answer the Bund could find at first was: "For convenience of language—Yiddish." Only later did the Bund add the more cogent reason—the particularity of the Jewish social structure, and the peculiar problem of the Jewish worker. And from that it was a step to an admission (fully made in the course of time) that the nationalist principle applied to the Jewish worker too.

This evolution of the Bund teaches us that it is dangerous to rely on the interpretation of events as made by those who participate in them. An author is often the last man to understand the significance of his own work, and men engaged in political enterprises are the last judges of the historical meaning of their activity. It is true that a powerful personality may leave its stamp upon a movement, but the true forces of history work through those who make up the movement. And if the leader obstinately refuses to understand what these forces are, he invariably breaks his neck. It is shallow to consider the programme of the organizers the index of a movement. Not what *they* intended, but what the

mass did, is the criterion. But it happens that the organizers of a movement are also, as a rule, its historians; and the first histories of a movement almost invariably overstress the intentions of the founders and underestimate the element of the masses. We see this in the case of Herzl. Herzl was a powerful personality and a great leader. His intention was to found a purely political movement, without any cultural problems. He failed. With every passing Congress the founder of political Zionism had to make concessions.

The same emergence of the latent will of the masses, triumphing over the rigid programme of the founders, was to be observed, as a parallel process, in the Bund. In spite of appearances, the Bund was something more than an organization for the improvement of the conditions of the Jewish working-classes. It was impelled by a desire to raise the status of the Jewish population as a whole, both in the matter of civic rights and in the matter of cultural interests, to whatever extent the latter go hand in hand with Socialist interests. It took seven or eight years before these facts were understood, and added to the platform of the Bund, but though they were acknowledged late, they had existed from the beginning.

The question of the Yiddish language cannot explain the tremendous risk and labour that were bound up with the creation of a separate and additional secret Socialist organization, with an autonomous constitution. And even if we were to accept the protestations of the founders, it would be shallow to consider language a mere technicality. The leaders of the Bund were as a matter of fact at home in the Russian language, but the Jewish masses they led resisted the intrusion of Russian. They did this not because Yiddish was more comfortable for them, but because they felt that their identity was bound up with their language. Resistance of this kind is national in character. And in the case of the Bund the founders were compelled, year by year, to yield to the insistent will of the mass, and to accept the trans-

formation of their organization into a national instrument. There was, of course, a desperate struggle, but the theoreticians had to give way before living forces.

It should be noted that the Bund was founded before the social democratic movement in Russia had crystallized into a firm organization, but friction arose between the Russian social democrats and the Bund. Lenin and Plekhanov were both opposed to the Bund. They declared at once that it was a Jewish national creation, with which true social democrats could not sympathize. Plekhanov expressed his views in a jest: he said that Bundists were Zionists who were afraid of a sea-journey. It was a poor joke, for lack of courage was not among the failings of the Jewish Socialists of Russia. They paid the largest toll of sacrifice to the Russian government, which disliked Bundists even more than ordinary non-Jewish Socialists, and in its sentences against such as were caught expressed its hatred both of Socialism and of the Jewish people. The government did not take the pogroms into its account, and it was indifferent to the Bundist attitude toward Jewish nationalism. Its motto was "Once a Jew, always a Jew." But men like Lenin and Plekhanov also held that view, and were therefore suspicious of a separate Jewish organization. They asserted that within the Socialist movement there was no such thing as nationalism. Ostensibly they defended an internationalist point of view. Actually they preached cosmopolitanism, a principle which, within a few years, was seen to be inapplicable to Socialism. The Bund was not the only body to evolve into conscious nationalism. In the world Socialist movement every territorial organization developed, under the pressure of events, along the same line. Everywhere life was stronger than the theorists.

The necessity of defending itself externally against the charge of nationalism set in motion a compensating mechanism within the Bund. It expressed its irritation by its attacks on Zionism. Indeed, the bitterest enemies of Zion-

ism, Jews or non-Jews, were the Jewish Bundists. In this Jewish civil war the attack came from the side of the Bund. It was a war that lasted until the outbreak of the World War, one consequence of which was the break-up of the original Bund of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia. Only in the new and independent Poland a fragment of the Bund survives, and there is still heard on the Jewish street the echoes of that ancient enmity.

I myself suffered greatly watching this struggle, for I never was able to see any contradiction between the nationalist principles of Zionism—which for me emerged from the nationalist principle in history—and the Socialist principles in the programme of the Bund. These were two movements which were different in character, and lay on different planes. In theory they could not clash. I understood perfectly well the attitude of the Polish Socialist Party, in which Socialism and nationalism ran as parallel forces. This was my view before the theoretical foundations of the concordat between Socialism and nationalism were laid by the Austrian thinker Springer-Renner, and before there was created a Socialist wing of the Zionist movement. I deplored deeply the unnecessary split in Russian Jewry; and long before the subject had been clarified for me by events that followed the World War, I already felt that the development of social forms within a people is also determined by a national character developed on a national soil.

Grodno is a few hours by train from Vilna, and Vilna was the centre of the Bund. Yet I had no means of knowing whether there was a branch of the Bund in Grodno. The Bundists were master conspirators. Deadly necessity taught them the art of concealing their organization not only from the government, but from elements of the population with which they came in daily contact. They led the lives of political Maranos. They worshipped almost literally in catacombs—their substitute being the cellar. But I knew many of the Bundists as individuals, and I cannot remember that

I felt bitterness or even antagonism against any one of them. I did detest the assimilationist, independently of his political views, whether he was a temple-goer or a Socialist. My only bitterness was against those who laid the dead weight of their inertia in the scale of Jewish decline.

Life in Grodno was sickeningly monotonous. The peculiar petty worries of the congregation did not interest me. When I was invited out of politeness to the meetings, I felt myself among strangers. However, I was quite sure that there were smaller, more intimate congregation meetings from which I was excluded. The feeling of indifference was apparently mutual. The city notables and I spoke a different language. The "better" classes used to spend their evenings playing cards. The professional classes, too, participated in the card games, to whatever extent their time allowed. I had given up cards since that famous incident in Minsk. The card-playing intelligentsia wrote this down among my shortcomings. A modern Rabbi was in fact expected to be able to take a hand when called upon. There only remained for me the circle of the Zionists, and this was not enough. I looked for a neutral circle too, and I found it in the house of a woman who, though an anti-Zionist, was a genuine cultural figure, of the kind that can be found frequently in the large Jewish cities.

The chief cultural personality of Grodno was Tatiana Ilinishna Greenberg. Her education had been rather ordinary, her looks were rather below the ordinary. But she occupied perhaps the first place in Grodno society, and not among the Jews alone. She had achieved her social position through her extraordinary gift for being friendly with every one and her readiness to help without asking questions. She excelled at listening to the woes of others, and at working out plans to help them, if help was at all possible. She was busy all day long, either in her home, or in her store, or in the town. The Greenbergs had a large dry-goods business. They had lost their only child, and they lived like people

who now found more in common in their business than in their family life. Tatiana Ilinishna once told me how an unhappy Jewish woman had gone to Governor Batiushkov for help. He told her that he himself could not help her, but that there was a woman, an angel, who helped everybody, and he sent the woman, with his card, to Tatiana Ilinishna. The poor woman thought she was going to see, almost literally, an angel. The Governor General himself had said it. When she saw the "angel," a rather plain-looking and unpretentious creature, she was so disappointed that, involuntarily, she spat and exclaimed: "What, is this Tatiana Ilinishna?" She disappeared without telling her story.

Tatiana Ilinishna conducted a salon. In one room sat her husband and his friends, playing cards. In another were assembled the intellectual spirits of Grodno. I was part of this second group, and more than once delivered lectures before it. I learned there, once again, how remote the Jewish intelligentsia was from our classic sources, how little it was to blame if it drifted daily farther and farther from them. It was there, too, that I became acquainted with the first individual Bundists, among them a remarkable girl by the name of Fisher. It was from her arguments with me that I learned of her affiliation with the Bund, and I envied a movement which could attract such a person. She was a woman of unusual intelligence and still more unusual intellectual honesty, one who would serve a movement with the limit of devotion, beyond all reach of fear. Tatiana Ilinishna mothered all of us. If the argument went too strongly one way, she intervened; she would have no victors and vanquished in her house. She loved ideas as such, and her greatest happiness was to be among people who were attached to ideas. What the ideas were did not matter.

Grodno was one of the oldest and therefore one of the proudest Jewish communities in Lithuania. It had already played a rôle in those far-off days when a large Jewish meas-

ure of autonomy had been recognized under the Vaad Arba Arazoth, the famous Council of the Four Countries. This Council had had a theocratic touch, first because it resembled the Slavic countries of that time in its stress on religion, second because, more particularly, it was a reflection of the Jewish religion, in which the distinction between the secular and the religious is less easily established than elsewhere. Yet it would be wrong to look back upon this Council as a regulator only of the religious life of the Jews. Its constitution did not prevent it from playing a large rôle, in which even the economic life of the Jews was included. When we study the scope of the Council, we are amazed by the *decline* of Jewish rights, even in the countries of the emancipation. The civic rights of the individual have swallowed up the political rights of the community.

The Jewish historian, Simon Dubnow, observes with justice that when Springer-Renner submitted before the Socialist Congress of 1899 his famous plan for the satisfying of the national rights of the minorities without a specific territory in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, he enunciated nothing new. He merely put into modern terminology the conceptions embodied in that ancient Jewish institution, the Council of the Four Countries. It is an interesting commentary on modern European history that the repression of national minorities has gone so far as practically to wipe out the memory of institutions which existed for their protection centuries ago.

After the fall of Jewish communal autonomy, the Jewish plutocracy rose to power. The rule passed out of the hands of the spiritual leaders into the hands of the rich. It is quite clear, of course, that the transference of the rule from spirit to capital did not take place without a struggle. For a long time the conflict between tradition and wealth, between reputation and gold, filled all Jewish life. In the end the new power triumphed. The fight was not, of course, characteristically Jewish. It occurred in the life of all peoples, in

some on a larger scale, and everywhere in a different form. It is the struggle between the baron and the merchant, between the feudal lord and the capitalist. I was a contemporary of the last stages of the struggle in the general life of Russia and, in a special sense, in the life of the Jews.

An excellent illustration is afforded by the matches that were arranged among Jewish families, by the rôle which family pride played on the one hand, and gold—as its equivalent—on the other, and the ultimate disappearance of the marketable value of pride of genealogy. It is a great pity that the movies came just a little too late. As a boy I was in the thick of the atmosphere of calculated match-making, and if there had been preserved an authentic picture of the scenes and persons, it would have given the world an excellent résumé, under a specific form, of the struggle between the hereditary nobility and the emergent rich. There was, with the passing of the years, a regular and almost systematic regression of the value of family pride. At first a long family pedigree of scholars easily held its own in the scales against a heavy bag of gold. Later on, the gold could be replaced by silver. Still later a handful of copper coins was considered the equivalent of a long and honourable descent. Finally the worth of aristocracy sank to nothing, and the article disappeared from the market.

In Grodno I witnessed the last agonies of the struggle. Today, after years of observation of life in the New World, I begin to understand the deeper significance of the struggle. Retrospectively I see that it was a struggle between Europeanism and Americanism. But it is a mistake to think that Americanism was born in America, that the displacement of the hereditary nobility by the self-made man—considering them as two types of rulers—is a specific American product. America, itself the product of a powerful protest against the petrified worship of the hereditary principle, was naturally the aptest soil for the development of the new outlook, for in America the activities of the individual found

no barrier in ancient form, and almost no limit to their scope. It was a whole continent that was offered to them. But it was not necessary to export the type to Europe. There, too, it arose independently. It could not develop with the momentum which it acquired in America, but it was distinct and undeniable. I first got to know the new type in Grodno. Later I met it, in a more developed form, in southern Russia, in Ekaterinoslav, where a genuine Americanism —in the sense used above—developed on a rich, virgin soil.

Three families set the tone in Jewish Grodno. No communal plan stood the slightest chance without their advance consent. Every family had its host of supporters, and every group was headed by one of the three important Rabbis of the city. The community was a triangle, with a Rabbi in each corner. The business of the Rabbi was to give religious authority to the views of his group. The three families were the Bregmans, the Frumkins, and the Shereshevskys. The two brothers Frumkin, Joseph and Abba, were the representatives of the aristocracy. They belonged to a widely ramified family, whose branches were to be found in Kovno, Vilna, Grodno, and Warsaw. And in each one of these cities there was a representative of the main family—in all, four sons of the senior Frumkin, Jacob, a prominent figure. The Frumkins considered themselves, therefore, something more than important individuals; they were a significant dynasty and a power in the land.

Shereshevsky, the cigarette magnate, had a partner by the name of Rusotta, but of the latter no one ever heard. Only Shereshevsky was spoken of; and as the factory, which employed first hundreds and then thousands of workmen, was in those days in the ascendant, the reputation of its chief owner grew from day to day. As regards aristocratic prestige, the Shereshevskys stood far below the Frumkins. Per contra, however, the former provided work for a good slice of the community, while the latter merely lived in good

style on their inherited money, and went in very little for business.

The richest among them was Eliezer Bregman, but aristocracy he had none at all. He came from a simple, small-town family which had lived near Grodno. He was by far the mightiest man in the community, and was in all respects the self-made man. His character was generous. Like old Frumkin, Bregman was a government contractor, but on a larger scale. He was a man of iron will and large ambitions. He had sense enough to know that in social standing he could not measure up to the Frumkins, nor, like Shereshevsky, could he provide a living for thousands. He therefore competed for power by means of his donations, and thus acquired the first place in the community.

Yet it must be admitted that of the three Bregman was the most progressive. He still observed all the old Jewish forms, but there was already something in him that we now call "American." The new did not terrify him. He was in the swim, and knew which way the currents of the time were moving. The two others were extremely conservative, and looked with envy on the parvenu whose generosities put them in the shade. Frumkin in particular was anxious to keep Bregman in his right place; newly acquired money was not going to be allowed, if he could help it, the dignity of inherited money.

It was Bregman who had insisted on bringing me to Grodno. He really had intended to introduce, through me, something new into the life of the community. If nothing came of his intentions, he was not to blame. He remained my champion until his death, which occurred a few months before I left Grodno. I myself did not show the necessary resolution to break through the walls of prejudice in Grodno, the less so as I realized that this was not the town for me.

During the first period they used to call me Bregman's Rabbi—a title not much to my liking. I was not permitted

to work for the community as a whole; the idea of working for a clique in the community was repugnant to me. I therefore adopted an attitude of equal friendliness to all three groups. The Frumkins readily admitted me to their circle, partly because of friendship for my wife's family in Königsberg. Shereshevsky was friendly for a reason of his own. The influence of the Bund was beginning to be felt among his workers, and the first attempts at a union were being made. There were frequent conflicts between the employer and his men. Shereshevsky therefore thought it wise to have some sort of connection with the intelligentsia—it might be useful some day. Without wanting to boast about it, I think I may safely say that my sympathies were continuously and consistently on the side of the workers in their efforts to better their position. I may say further that I lay no claim to particular virtue in this matter: a profound respect for the meaning of work and particularly of the worker had been inculcated in me in my early childhood by my pious and old-fashioned father. Indeed, to this day the touchstone of genuine Jewish piety is for me the attitude toward the worker. I am speaking now of the authentic spirit of Judaism, cleansed of all the foreign elements which it has acquired in its wanderings among the nations. For in the original spirit of Judaism piety could not go hand in hand with indifference to the principles of justice. It is very significant that the nearest Jewish or rather Hebrew equivalent which there is for the saint, is *tzaddik*—the just man.

In Grodno I made my first acquaintance with the Jewish factory worker, a type distinct from the Jewish independent artisan. The latter, as I had long known him, had also been a machine, but a self-contained and complete machine. The factory worker is only a part of a machine. The psychological difference expresses itself in the loss of individuality on the part of the factory worker. When I used to see the half-grown girls who poured out evenings from the factory of Shereshevsky, their lungs filled with tobacco dust, I could

hardly regard them as so many individuals. I saw only the mass, the machine. I learned a great deal about life in the factory from a young doctor, and from my friend Miss Fisher. It was a life of continuous and elemental struggle. And yet there were countless candidates for the jobs in the factory. Even in those days the servant problem was beginning to be felt in Grodno, and girls had to be imported from the surrounding townlets. Economically the servant-girl was on a much surer footing than the factory worker. Yet every girl in Grodno who had to work for her living preferred the factory. The social stigma of the servant was beginning to be felt more and more strongly.

My most intimate friends were the Jaffes. Their family was not among the richest in Grodno, but it was certainly among the most distinguished. Ber Jaffe, the head of the household, was the son of the famous Rabbi Mordecai Gimpel Jaffe, who had passed the last years of his life in Palestine, and had played an important rôle in the old pre-colonization community. Ber Jaffe himself represented the finest type of aristocratic Jewish family. But the moving spirit in the house was his wife, Chaya Leah. For years she was an invalid from rheumatism, and kept her bed. But even from her bed she directed the household and the family business—a distillery for Passover whisky. When I made the acquaintance of the family she was already a confirmed invalid, and I used to spend hours by her bedside in the company of her children. She had a tongue that an orator might have envied, and as she was unable to make the rounds of Grodno in person, she used to do it verbally—and by the time she had completed a "tour" there was very little left to the town. She did not simply talk about people, she used to give almost a theatrical performance—thus Frumkin spoke, and thus Bregman, and thus Shereshevsky. She was more than a mere imitator. She was a wit. She could catch the manner of thought no less than the manner of speech. Her husband, to make up the balance, was almost wordless.

Whether he was so by nature, or whether he donated his part of the conversation to his wife, I do not know.

My friendship with the Jaffes was one of the features of my life in Grodno that helped to make it tolerable. The affection which existed between Bezalel Jaffe and his wife Anna on the one side, and myself and Helena on the other, has remained in my memory as a singularly beautiful experience. Beginning as a two-sided relationship with four participants, it blossomed before long into a curiously—almost symbolically—complete group relationship. Bezalel and I loved each other greatly; with Anna and Helena it was the same. And before long a little daughter was added to their family, and a deep friendship sprang up between the new creature and our daughter, Enya.

Perhaps the loveliest of human capacities is that for friendship, and it is perhaps at its loveliest in children. I derived from the spectacle of that unfolding affection almost as much joy as from our mature relationship with the Jaffes. Our daughter Enya was already a year old when the little girl was born whom she straightway adopted as a sister. At first the love was necessarily one-sided, but within six months it was clearly reciprocated. At the end of that time Mirele stretched out her arms with more joy to Enya than to any one else. The psychology of friendship in children has received very little attention, and little is understood of what is—in spite of our feeling to the contrary—an extraordinarily rich psychic phenomenon. But the thought-processes of children are little understood as a whole, and we are inclined to dismiss as non-existent or worthless that which does not appeal to us in our grown-up mental idiom. I remember being struck by the amazing wealth of inner experience of which young children are capable as I observed the friendship of Enya and Mirele. Sometimes I sat in my study and overheard their chatter in the next room. It went on hour after hour, unflagging, apparently uninteresting (to the grown-up), but always full of an unfaltering joy.

And at the end of hours, during which they had exchanged nothings, they protested at being parted because they hadn't "finished telling each other"! It was quite sincerely meant, nor was it at all meaningless. Behind those empty surface words flowed a deep stream of communication unperceived by grown-ups and not to be revealed by the children.

Mirele was a charming and clever baby. At the age of nine months she began to acquire a vocabulary. At the age of a year and a half she was already imitating her grandmother and unconsciously picking up her saltiest phrases, to the huge satisfaction of the old lady. It was charming and incongruous to hear, on the lips of the little babbler, the sarcastic words that had been born in the brain of a satirical observer of the world. The grandmother crowed that she already had a living monument in her grandchild.

Two more persons—and only two—I can add to the roster of worth-while persons whom I met in Grodno: the two teachers Halperin and Ostrogorsky. Halperin was director of the government Jewish elementary school for boys, and Ostrogorsky had a private school for girls. Halperin had been a student in the Jewish Teacher's Institute of Vilna, where the government tried to produce a generation of teachers who would help in the forcible Russification of Jewish children, but by Russification should be understood here not the spirit of the Russian civilization, but the spirit of the Russian autocracy. The government achieved the same degree of success with this Teacher's Institute as it did with its purely Russian schools. The best students invariably joined either the Socialist or the Zionist movement. As for the rest, I doubt whether a single one of them emerged from the school a patriot, or rather, a faithful servant of the government. But as teachers they were compelled to be doubly vigilant, for they stood under the close surveillance which the government exercised over all intellectuals, by way of the police, and under the additional surveillance of the school inspectors, who were less interested in the educational cur-

riculum than in the spirit of loyalty to Czar and Church inculcated by the teachers.

Halperin inclined strongly toward Zionism, but he was afraid to associate himself openly with the movement. The government, it is true, had not forbidden Zionism, but it showed a marked preference for teachers who were not Zionists. The attitude of Ostrogorsky toward Judaism may best be described as belonging to the Jewish liberal school of the seventies, and it was in this spirit that he educated his own children. He gave them an excellent training—but he encouraged in them a negative attitude toward Judaism. His oldest son became a member of the Russian Duma at the same time as myself. He was a student of political affairs, had written a book on American democracy, and was well thought of among scholars. The second son was the editor of *Education*, a pedagogical periodical that was considered the best in its field. This son pursued the theory of assimilation to its last logical conclusion: he was baptized. He lived in St. Petersburg, and he often visited his parents in Grodno. I was struck by the tolerant attitude of Grodno Jewry toward the apostate and toward the father of the apostate. As far as I remember young Ostrogorsky was the only Grodno Jew to have been baptized. It was only when I settled in Ekaterinoslav that I came across an entire group of baptized intellectuals who were trying to play a rôle in Jewish life—it was an extremely interesting phenomenon, to which I shall return later.

During my first year in Grodno I did a good deal of literary work, chiefly on the Hebrew dictionary. My assistant, young Joseph Klausner, also lived in Grodno. But he left before long, to pursue his studies in Heidelberg, where he obtained his doctor's degree. He showed early the promise, later fulfilled, that he would become a scholar of note. In his youth he received no systematic education; but for all that he mastered several languages, together with their literatures, and leaping over the elementary stages of educa-

tion, he plunged at once into higher studies and felt himself completely at home there. Two faculties saved him: a remarkable memory, and an equally remarkable industriousness. I have the impression that as a young man Klausner never permitted himself a single hour for amusement or relaxation. He was obsessed by his ambition to become a scholar. The scholarly attitude did not desert him either at Zionist meetings or in the company of girls. His primary interest was the revival of Hebrew as a living tongue; he wanted to bring it out of books into daily circulation. He modelled himself, in this respect, on the famous Eliezer ben Jehudah, and it must be admitted that his contribution to the cause was considerable.

And yet I cannot help saying that there was something slightly unpleasant about these young apostles of the Hebraic revival. Often enough they used to speak as if they were rather the creators than the revivers of the language. I remember once reading a feuilleton in the *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna concerning the art of breakfasting. The feuilletonist grew rhapsodical over an acquaintance of his who had become a great master in this recondite art. He lived in one of the most distinguished hotels in Vienna, and breakfast was usually taken in the Palm Gardens. The atmosphere was one of charm, grace, and comfort. The faces of guests and visitors alike shone with the freshness of morning. The rolls had just arrived from the baker; they too radiated warmth and light and newness. The steaming coffee sent forth an odour suggestive of the most delicious spices. The breakfast artist sits at his table, and on his face are written contentment and joy. He strokes the rolls gently—not like a housewife investigating their quality, but like an artist feeling their texture. He breathes in the scent of the coffee, like a worshipper who sniffs at the fumes of the swinging censer carried by the acolyte. The waiter brings him two eggs. He does not eat them. He looks at them, curiously, smiling; he turns them over in his hands; he admires their

shape, their whiteness, their lustre. He is proud of them—as if he himself had laid them. He is so far carried away by his artistic spirit that he forgets who produced them—he leaves the hen out of the picture. . . . I remember how, at a public meeting, a Jew once spoke of the "discoverers" of the Hebrew language, ben Jehudah, Klausner, and others. Like the breakfast artist, the speaker had forgotten the hen.

It ought however to be recorded that the element of the artist was conspicuously absent in both the young Klausner and the old ben Jehudah. The latter was little interested in Hebrew as an instrument of artistic expression. He was, as a matter of fact, a bricklayer, and it is really amazing that this physically insignificant man should have laid brick on brick until he had reared such an imposing structure. It would have been a creditable achievement for an army of bricklayers. But Klausner wanted to be something more than a bricklayer; he had ambitions in the direction of the architecture of Hebrew literature. Like many others in the literary field, he went along the line of least resistance—he chose criticism. The trouble is, of course, that the true critic must himself be an artist, that is, unless the critic is to remain a bricklayer too. The most gifted and persistent of bricklayers cannot, however, become an artist—mere will-power will not suffice for the transformation. In the field of science, too, there are two types—the artist and the bricklayer. The artist discovers the new principles, the bricklayer builds the visible structure on them, for all men to see. The first creates, the second works. Very likely each type is equally necessary for the conduct of the world. The artists are certainly rarer, but it would be unfair to underestimate the rôle of the others.

From one circumstance I suffered particularly in Grodno: I did not get the opportunity to develop my gifts as a speaker. The little Zionist meetings we held were secret, and therefore only Zionists could attend. As a result, I felt my-

self inhibited. There was lacking the goad of the opponent. During all this time I delivered only two addresses that satisfied me, and these were delivered not in Grodno, but in Vilna and in Bialystock, whither I was invited by the Zionists to lecture to the public.

At that time there existed in Vilna a very strong Zionist group headed by three members of the order Bnai Moshe, Isaac Goldberg, Naishul, and Shukian. The most forthright of them was Goldberg. The other two were devoted followers of Achad Ha-Am, and had adopted their teacher's attitude toward the new leader in Vienna. To some extent, however, they were compelled to keep step with Goldberg, and to co-operate with the new organization. Goldberg exerted a remarkable influence over his Zionist comrades. He was no speaker. When he tried to take the platform, the words issued from his mouth in fragments, and sometimes like a sort of verbal dust. Words would be missing in his sentences, and syllables in his words. But as compensation, he would repeat the short words several times over—words like "yes," or "no," or "but." . . . He did this to intercept questions and objections. In spite of this handicap, he imposed himself on his comrades by his singular and sustained devotion to the movement and to Palestine. He was one of the few who understood in those early days that the first necessity for the individual Zionist was to make a personal connection with Palestine, and gradually, through this connection, to transfer the centre of gravity of his own life to the coming Jewish homeland. This was the formula which he adopted from the outset, and which he followed faithfully for forty years. He interested himself in every new enterprise which had to do with the development of Palestine. For the last ten years he has been living in Palestine, still at work along the same lines, as young and as energetic as he was when I knew him first, more than a generation ago, in Vilna.

It was this Goldberg who came to Grodno one day, to

invite me to lecture in Vilna. The subject I chose was not Zionism, but nationalism as the universal regulator in history. The meeting was held during the festival of Chanukah —the Maccabee festival—and a proper police-permit had been obtained. The change from Grodno, for that one day, had a remarkable effect on me; it was as though I had come out of darkness into the fresh morning air. I really fell in love with Vilna and with its people. There was something especially noble about the city, and something especially attractive about its people. From that time on I dreamed of Vilna, and my dreams were ultimately to come true. It has always seemed to me that nothing can be attained that has not been dreamed about first—as though our dreams are the feelers of our waking life. In this particular instance it was six years before my fate was bound up with Vilna. But the beginning was already there with my first lecture. The attraction seems to have been mutual, and by a coincidence of mood, the people found me, apparently, as nice as I found them.

The meeting in Bialystock was held in secret. Several hundred people came to hear me in a hall usually devoted to weddings. Just when my discourse had worked itself into a fine heat, I observed a restlessness in my audience. The restlessness exploded into a minor panic. The message came through from the watchers outside that the police were approaching. My friends were more terrified for me than for themselves—a State Rabbi in a secret meeting. I was spirited away to a side-room, and told to jump out of a window. The window was fairly high, and if I came out of the adventure without broken bones, it was thanks to my gymnastic training in the army. I immediately left the place, and made my way to the house of Dr. Chasanowitch.

This man deserves more than passing mention. He was one of the most astonishing personalities I have ever come across, and I have always regretted that no one has been found to write his life as it deserved to be written. As a

lover of mankind, he was in the first rank of the saintly. As a Jew, he had forgotten self-interest in the pursuit of the welfare of his people to a degree that few others have achieved. He was the initiator and founder of the Jewish National Library of Jerusalem, which today measures up to the finest in the world. He launched the idea on his own responsibility, and devoted to it his own energies. Whatever he earned—and he was one of the foremost physicians in the city—he spent on old volumes. He maintained numerous contacts with antiquarians all over the world, interested strangers as well as friends, added book to book, keeping them all in excellent order, catalogued them as best he could, packed them in crates, and sent them off to Jerusalem. And he did this all with a quietness and modesty which reminded one of a sacred service. No one ever heard him boast about his work. At the Zionist Congresses he would be found withdrawn into a corner. He gladly relinquished leadership to others, and his attitude toward Herzl was one of almost wordless reverence. One thing he did permit himself: he once asked Herzl to try and see to it that there should be less speaking. In his eyes the speaking interfered with the doing. And he himself was a living example of what the individual can do who devotes himself in silence to a course of action, and concentrates himself exclusively upon that. Such people are frequently included in the class of "maniacs." But their mania ultimately resolves itself into a finer lucidity than the superior powers of perception in men who see too much and try to do too much.

I visited Chasanowitch several times, and had the opportunity of looking over his collections. As the external symbol of his eternal connection with Palestine, he used to wear, when at home, a fez. And when he put it on, he looked rather exotic, and even a little Turkish. But no one wondered at the things Chasanowitch did. One day I met him in the house of Rabbi Samuel Mohilever, and he invited me to lunch—but explained that he never ate before two o'clock, as he

seldom got through with his patients before that hour. Mohilever took me aside and advised me quietly to have a bite before I went to have lunch with Chasanowitch. I ignored the advice, and regretted it, for Mohilever knew his man. I got nothing to eat until three o'clock. And when the meal did come it consisted of two rolls and a glass of milk for each of us.

"You see," explained Chasanowitch, "I eat simply. I'm a vegetarian. I find it healthier for myself—and healthier for my library."

He was a lean man, and when he wore his fez he looked even leaner than he was. The glasses in which the milk was served were also long and slim. So were the rolls. Everything in that room looked as if it had been reflected in a cylindrical mirror set up on end. But it was impossible to be even annoyed with this extraordinary man.

It was told of him that once while examining a patient he paused and became abstracted, then sighed and said: "Too bad, too bad!" It was not intended to frighten his patient. On the contrary, he believed greatly in the curative powers of optimism. The patient, as well as the others who were in the room, was badly frightened. Chasanowitch explained himself. The patient was all right—only a slight cold. But it had just occurred to him that without Palestine the Jews would come to nothing.

Two of the best years of my life were spent in Grodno, years of desire to work, years of creative impulse—and nothing came of them. Materially I had not advanced at all; I was still dependent on help from my father on the one side, and on my brother-in-law Hermann Conheim on the other. My parents were perhaps overgenerous, for they never uttered a single complaint, and seemed to accept the situation as something obvious. But Hermann Conheim had been brought up in an American atmosphere, and the thing was by no means obvious to him. He could not understand, to

begin with, how a man could venture into marriage without being assured of a livelihood; and secondly the whole situation seemed fantastic to him—to be the State Rabbi in a community of twenty-five thousand souls, and not to derive a modest living from it! Such things were unknown in western Europe and in America. If anything was needed to convince him finally that Russia was a wild country, and its inhabitants half-crazy, it was this circumstance. But Hermann was a gentleman. Whenever we met and he touched on this question, he did it gently and tactfully. He did not offer any protests; he only seemed bewildered; he was looking for the explanation. He was prepared to suffer with me—but he wanted to know why.

But I felt that my financial situation was creating a gulf between my brother-in-law and myself, and preventing the development of a natural intimacy. I felt this even more strongly, some time later, in my relations with Hermann's wife, Martha Morton. The latter came from a distinguished Anglo-Jewish family, and she was at that time at the height of her literary and dramatic career. She was a woman of high intelligence, with much of the artist about her. But she had not the slightest conception of the manner of Jewish life. She knew neither Judaism, nor Jewry. The only Jew she ever spoke about was Israel Zangwill, but of him she did speak with affection and admiration. She was captivated by his talents and his style. But she considered it a fault in him that he concentrated almost exclusively on pictures of Jewish life. She regarded herself as one who had been liberated from the narrow confines of what was called the Jewish world and had become part of the world at large; and she did not understand that it would be precisely her artistic inclinations that would ultimately drive her back to share in the hopes and problems of the Jewish people. But that change did take place, many years later, and I was able to observe it as a complete process—namely, in America. It was only after this revolution had taken place in her that

a real intimacy sprang up between myself and the Conheims.

My financial helplessness had a very depressing effect on me. I felt this all the more because I derived no satisfaction from my work. Even in spiritual matters I seemed not to be earning my living, but to be dependent on reserves of my own. And I was too young to be doing that. There was a feeling in me that I was eating myself up, destroying myself. Often I longed to get a refusal from my parents, or from Hermann, and to be compelled brutally to shift for myself. Once again I placed the responsibility on the shoulders of others; I blamed not myself, but my good parents. It was I who should have made the break, and mine should have been the refusal. I was like the Jewish woman in the story who, on the Day of Atonement, prayed to God in these words: "O Lord, provide me this coming year with a decent living; and if you do not, I may as well tell you now that I shall go and live with my rich sister." I doubt whether the prayer was found acceptable. The rich sister spoiled it in advance. These cushions on which one can fall back are bad things for a prayer; they take away its urgency.

I came to the conclusion—too late, unfortunately—that with their great kindness my parents had done me little good. To this day I mention their name with the same gratitude as in those times when they were my sole help. But however it sounds, I must say that even now I regret greatly that they worried so much about me. And I am sorry that I inherited this faculty from them and continued it in my relation to my own children. I do not know to what extent my parents were aware of that inner struggle between the heart and the head. I know that I am very sharply aware of it. Since my early manhood I have been able to observe the relationship between parents and children in Germany and in America, and I have found it healthier and more normal there—better for both. My mind tells me that it is wrong for parents to be too soft with their children, if they

want to be something more than parents, namely, teachers and educators, bringing up their children in such fashion as will prepare them for the struggle of life. And when I read of parents who compel their children to become independent of them—and this needs not only firmness, but an occasional touch of hardness too—I envy them. But all this belongs to the brain. The heart will not follow. Between the two there is a perpetual tug of war.

I would not have paused on this question if it were not that I regard my own case as being typical of a large section of Jewry, particularly in eastern Europe, where special circumstances have created such a relationship. I do not suppose that the Jew is naturally softer-hearted than any one else. But I do believe that the life which Jews have led has made them more sensitive to events within their own circle. When a people as a whole feels a certain mass security, on its own soil, when its material and its spiritual existence have about them a certain tacit assurance, then the emotions of the individual, particularly his feelings of kindliness, take a larger swing. But when a group is insecure, when it is surrounded by potential enmity, the emotions concentrate within a narrow circle, and the result is an exaggerated tenderness. Because the surrounding world is hard, compensation is sought within the closed circle. In Jewish parents there is always this tendency to worry more about their children than do parents among other peoples, and to sacrifice themselves more. They have, in fact, a sort of genius for assuming more than the strictly necessary share of responsibility. With long practice has come affection for these very worries, and the saying is not uncommon among Jewish parents: "Thank God I've got some one to worry about." As to my own mother, I need hardly say that she accepted worries not merely with gratitude, but with positive joy.

During my two years in Grodno I did not visit my parents once. The reason lay in my dependence on them. I looked

for all sorts of excuses to make the journey impossible, and when obstacles were lacking invented them myself. I was ashamed to go home—and I surely had little enough to boast about. However, Helena and my baby did go to Swislowitz, and my mother at once fell in love with my daughter. Toward Helena she was extremely friendly, but—so Helena told me—there was after all between them the gulf which divided two worlds. Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law could not bridge it.

At the end of the second year, my mother came to visit me in Grodno. She spoke very little—but she took in everything, and understood without asking questions. Saturday we went to the Synagogue, and she was given the seat of honour there. But I could feel that the distinction did not give her any satisfaction. My mother was no seeker after honours. What she had dreamed about was something else—the place in which her son ministered should indeed be a centre of godliness. What she expected exactly I do not know. Perhaps a sudden lifting up of the heart, the thrill of some sublime service. . . . And everything here was so dry. Her looks were overcast. It was not of this that she had dreamed in my childhood. Before she left Grodno, she asked me to come to her room; she wanted to talk with me. But when I came there she had not a word to say. She only sat for a long time with downcast eyes. Yet she spoke to me in the silence. I too said not a word. Did she not understand everything already?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: MENACHEM MENDEL USSISHKIN

My liberation came sooner than I expected. One friend, Bezalel Jaffe, had brought me to Grodno; another, Menachem Mendel Ussishkin, liberated me. Ussishkin and I were friends though I had met him only once, and that ten years before, in Minsk; our common Zionist activity had held us drawn together.

In these ten years—the period during which the old Chibath Zion was swallowed up in the new World Zionist Organization—Ussishkin had grown into one of the most important figures in the movement. His influence was felt everywhere, and at the Zionist Congresses his opinions carried weight. Among the closer friends of Herzl he was regarded as an opponent of the latter, because he symbolized the old days when Zionism was centred more on Palestine than on the political setting, the days when—so it was said—a goat in Palestine counted for more than the promise of a chancellery. But Vienna—the centre of the new movement—was compelled to treat the representative of the old movement with respect, and to meet him, occasionally, halfway. For behind Ussishkin there stood, with few exceptions, all the ranks of the Russian Zionists.

And Ussishkin was an authentic leader by nature; he was a gifted organizer, and he understood the art of commanding men. This is something more than a technique; it is a gift that it is difficult to define. Often enough we meet men who seem to have all the elements that go into the making

of a leader, and who yet remain within the ranks. And almost as often we meet men who are not more gifted than those whom they lead, but who do possess that indefinable something which turns them into leaders. The effect of this something expresses itself in the art of commanding men. But the nature of this something no one has yet analyzed. Sometimes it has been called moral power, yet it is not very clearly related to that which we call the moral element in life. Indeed, the leader is often enough perceived evading or even denying a moral principle in the course of his leadership; and the army that follows him is ready to forgive, even when it perceives, the evasion or denial. Not openly, but tacitly, another measure is used for the acts of the leader.

Ussishkin was famous for his obstinacy. It is a curious circumstance that his house was at the corner of two streets, one called Iron Street, the other Obstinate Street. The house belonged to Ussishkin's father-in-law, an engineer, a man who was very gifted, very clever and very lean. I believe that when Ussishkin married, the symbolic properties of this house were included in the marriage portion. But Ussishkin was always lucky—certainly so both in his marriage and his house. His wife worshipped him, and his house became his symbol. "I am not to be bargained with: I am iron on one side, and obstinacy on the other."

Ussishkin's obstinacy went so far that he refused to yield even to the laws of grammar. Having passed through a Russian secondary school and a higher technical institute, he spoke with a perfect Russian accent, and was well acquainted with Russian literature. But he never submitted to the dictates of Russian grammar. At first it was thought that his disregard of Russian grammar was the result of his foreignness. But later, when he turned to Hebrew, he treated Hebrew grammar with the same ruthlessness. He was forgiven these little sins for the sake of his genuine oratorical gifts. Yet Ussishkin cannot be properly called an orator.

We can only say of him that his speeches are frequently more effective than those of the most gifted orators. He speaks with an elemental power, with a strength that overturns and convinces; when he speaks, one hears the voice of the leader.

Ussishkin's great rival was Dr. Yechiel Tschlenow, a co-founder of the society, the Sons of Zion, of Moscow. Tschlenow was a complete contrast to Ussishkin. First as to appearance: he was slight of build, the typical "fine young man" as Jews thought of him, with mild eyes, and gentle facial lines. His appearance was of a piece with his bearing. Ussishkin commanded, threatened, issued ukases after the style of a Russian tyrant. Tschlenow explained gently. He did not command, but requested, even implored, like a doctor who begs a recalcitrant patient to be reasonable and take his medicine. Yet Tschlenow was not less effective than Ussishkin in his own circle. Both of them were respected and loved. The truth was that behind Ussishkin's hardness was felt the soul that suffered, and behind Tschlenow's gentleness the firm will of the natural warrior. In Herzl's immediate circle Tschlenow was far more welcome than Ussishkin. It is quite true that Tschlenow also clung to the principles of the old practical Zionism, but his harmonious nature impelled him to seek a synthesis between "practical" and "political" Zionism, and wherever a compromise was possible, Tschlenow found it. At the Congresses, as well as in Russia, both men were regarded as equal leaders. When it came to specific problems, the Russians, however, leaned more to Ussishkin and the western Zionists more to Tschlenow.

It was a curious division. The centre of the movement was in Vienna, but the masses of the movement were in Russia. Russia was divided into districts, and at the head of each district was a sort of parallel to the Governor. There was thus created a special Zionist Russian geography, and when one Zionist asked another under whom he served, the allusion

was not to the Russian Governor, but to the Zionist head. However, it was not the Zionists alone who had created a new geography. In Poland, Volhynia, and Podolia there was also the Chassidic geography, and in this system the Governor was replaced by the Chassidic saint or wonder-working Rabbi. Under Tschlenow's "régime" were to be found those sections of Russia in which Jews had no right of residence. His "territory" therefore stretched from Moscow to Vladivostok in the Far East. When Russia swallowed up Manchuria, Dr. Tschlenow at once informed his new "subjects" that thanks to the success of the Russian arms, Manchuria had also been brought under Zionist rule.

Vilna was "governed" by the calm and moderate Isaac Goldberg. Elizabethgrad belonged to Vladimir Tiomkin, and the whole of Bessarabia was assigned to Dr. Jacob Cohen-Berstein, a revolutionary who had turned Zionist. One of his brothers too was at one time amongst the most active of the social revolutionaries; he had been sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour and together with his fellow-prisoners in far-off Irkutsk rose in a rebellion that shook the whole of Russia. He met death heroically on the scaffold, together with his comrades. Dr. Cohen-Bernstein never talked about his brother, but his fate had instilled into him the steadfast rage of a revolutionary. In addition to the administration of his district, he had also charged himself with the dangerous task of directing the so-called Post-Bureau. This was the centre from which there went out regularly the theoretical letters to all the districts. In these were treated the purely ideological aspects of Zionism. The author of these letters was Dr. Cohen-Bernstein himself, and through them he acquired a great influence over the younger generation.

Ussishkin was the head of the Ekaterinoslav district, and of all districts this was the best organized. He had introduced an almost military discipline among the Zionists, and he was less the leader than the imperator.

At one of the secret meetings of the all-Russian Zionist Organization Ussishkin proposed to me that I submit my name for the post of Rabbi in his city, Ekaterinoslav. I told him how dissatisfied I was with the type of work, but he assured me that there was no comparison between the Rabbinate in southern Russia and in Lithuania. In the former, the Rabbinate could be made the instrument for a widespread nationalist activity, and the spoken word could be made the medium of a powerful influence over the masses and the youth. Ekaterinoslav, however, would not accept a Rabbi blindfold fashion, as Grodno had done. I would have to come down and sit for my examination—that is, deliver several addresses. Ussishkin promised to undertake all the preliminary work, and there was plenty of it. For the post was not vacant, as had been the case in Grodno. The old Rabbi was still there, and he had supporters as well as opponents.

Ussishkin's proposal to me was made not out of friendship, but in connection with the movement. As a Zionist he suffered from the influence of the old Rabbi and his clique. Other comrades of the district, equally resentful of the Rabbi's effect on the public, also urged me to fall in with Ussishkin's proposal.

This was the period when Herzl had proclaimed the new slogan—the Zionist conquest of the communities. It was, in fact, Herzl's first concession, though in disguised form, to Achad-Ha-Amism. Herzl had, at the beginning, the vaguest notions about Jewish life, and he really believed that no preparation of the masses was necessary in order to carry through the Zionist idea. He was of course prepared for opposition from the assimilated western Jews, but he believed that he only had to approach the masses of the east-European Jews in order to be accepted. He was badly informed concerning the movements and tendencies within eastern Jewry. When he came down to realities, and made a serious study of the situation, he realized his error, and

proclaimed the principles of the conquest of the communities as a step in the forward march toward the final goal. This was the first break in the pure political front of his original form of Zionism, and through this break there began to enter the application of the principle of "present work." For these were the two opposing principles: "Present work" among the masses of the Jews—*Gegenwartsarbeit*—and pure political action with one single end in view, the acquisition of Palestine. In the call to the "conquest of the communities" I recognized an echo of Achad Ha-Am's principle of the preparation of the generation. It was the beginning of a new epoch in Zionism, an epoch in which there would not be the same sharp division between the general Jewish needs of the present and the continuous Zionist programme.

In accepting Ussishkin's proposal, I felt myself also drawn under his influence. I changed in my outlook. I acquired something of his own commanding spirit, and prepared to make a conquest of Ekaterinoslav. I felt a sudden awakening of energies. I was excited by the prospect of overcoming, side by side with Ussishkin, the whole array of reactionary forces which stood in the path of Zionism in that district.

To this day, I am grateful to my friend Ussishkin. I shall have occasion, further on, to tell that I had my difficulties and unhappy moments in Ekaterinoslav too. But here I had the possibility to grow mentally and spiritually, in my struggles with Jewish and also with non-Jewish society. With the latter I made here my first actual contacts; until my Ekaterinoslav period I had been acquainted with Russian society only through books and through periodicals. I met for the first time the Russian intelligentsia, a great world, fascinating and provoking. In Lithuania the Jews really lived in a sort of ghetto. The reason for this was that the "upper classes" among the non-Jews were mostly Polish. The Polish intelligentsia was absorbed in its own problems, and was concentrating its energies on the task of removing

the Russian yoke. There was hardly any common ground on which it could meet the Jewish intelligentsia. The Russian upper stratum consisted almost exclusively of officials, who treated the whole of Lithuania like conquered territory, in which their first duty was the policy of ruthless Russification. They felt that it was part of their programme to keep themselves distant both from Poles and from Jews. Ekaterinoslav was the first genuine Russian city to have an intelligentsia of its own, and to the latter I had easy access, in part because of my official position and in part because of the additional tasks which I assumed. Ekaterinoslav therefore begins a definite period for me. I began to understand the realities of Russian life; I came in contact with the covert forces of the Russian people, forces which were at that time beginning to break into new, tumultuous expression.

Along the lower half of the River Dnieper, grandfather of Russian waters, there are countless little scenic paradises, and in one of them there had sprung up, as under a magician's wand, the marvellous city Ekaterinoslav. It is a city as broad, as open, as kingly, as the Dnieper itself; a city that takes its character from the mighty river and from the broad, powerful earth of the Ukraine.

The Empress Catherine the Second, the founder of this city, and the most important ruler of the country after Peter the Great, was a woman of bottomless appetites. She looked for love both in her entourage and at a distance. At a distance she coquetted with all the great of the earth, kings, artists, and scholars. In her entourage she had a harem of favourites, whom she changed as lightly and as frequently as a lady changes her gloves. She broke down the barrier of distance and dignity which separates monarch from subject, and picked out those she desired from all classes, the lowest as well as the highest. She was like the sun, which shines equally on all. For a long time a favourite of hers was one Potiemkin, a man of mean extraction and

of talents to suit. In the sunlight of her favour he rose to high power, put on strength, and even developed an imagination. He dreamed of a new fairyland in southern Russia. History has written this man down as the type of the braggart and the exaggerator, and the Russian folk-phrase for a castle that never was built, a pretence, a bluff, is still "Potiemkin's villages." Yet the truth must be acknowledged that with all his lies and braggadocio, this same Potiemkin played an important rôle in the development of the southern province, which in turn had a profound effect on the entire development of Russia. The city of Ekaterinoslav still bears witness to the fact that the contemptuous phrase "Potiemkin's villages" was itself an exaggeration, for many of this man's dreams came true.

I have made this short digression on the city of Ekaterinoslav because I want to convey something of the effect that it produced on me when I visited it for the first time. I had by then seen many great cities, but Ekaterinoslav took my fancy by storm, with its youth, its freshness, and its gaiety. The buildings, the trees, the people, all seemed radiant. I had been accustomed for a long time to Lithuania, an ancient land, with ancient cities and villages; the dust of generations lay upon it, and the worry of old age was like a visible shadow—it was a land that looked backward. Even my little Swislowitz made the impression, by contrast with the south, of an ancient, undersized gaffer, bowed under a burden of countless generations. Who could remember the birth of Swislowitz, or the name of the man that laid its corner-stone? That northern country was one in which beginnings were no longer made; men could only continue what the anonymous and forgotten past had begun. In every respect this rich young southern country was the antithesis of the northern country of my birth. My first glimpse of this almost virgin city of Ekaterinoslav seemed to open new horizons to me, and I felt renewed in its newness. Here, where the generations had not pre-empted everything, a

man could still write his name into something. Many years later I experienced the same thrill of renewal, but more intensely, when I came in contact not with a new city, but with a new world—America.

Curiously enough, as soon as I had settled in Ekaterinoslav, my enthusiasm died down. The new failed to hold my fancy, and I longed for the mournful traditions of my old, poverty-stricken Lithuania. The same happened with me in America too. After the first ecstasy of the new, came the home-sickness for the old. I do not know whether this is due to a restlessness in me, a perpetual swinging from extreme to extreme. It may be common to all men—for all men are the product of a historic past, and are compounded in equal measure of love for the past and a desire for the newness of the future. For all men the present may be like the pointer of a balance, swinging alternately from the outlived to the not yet lived and back again. They cannot find peace at either end of the scale, and achieve it only in the fleeting moments when the centre is touched. At one end there is apathy and petrification; at the other end nervousness, unslakable thirst, and uncontrolled chase of phantoms.

Because of my childhood years, and because of my later education too, I was too completely steeped in the past—that of my own people and that of humanity at large. I was drawn too strongly toward the heritage of the generations, toward ancient things. Even the upbuilding of my own people I regarded only as a restoration of the past. I used as my plans for the future the architecture of the past. The city of Ekaterinoslav was the first experience of a great newness in my life, and helped to restore the balance of my soul. Real newness became a more immediate experience, the past became less real, and I myself felt a release of energies. In a word, Ekaterinoslav was my first America, a discovery, a beginning.

Everything was new in Ekaterinoslav, even my own experiences. When the worthies of Grodno invited me to their

city, they advised me that silence was the first requisite of a good Rabbi. In Ekaterinoslav they told me to speak, and to speak much. This was all the encouragement I needed. I was at once in my element. Ussishkin had me come to Ekaterinoslav a few weeks before the elections. The city was in a turmoil, and Jewry was divided into two hostile camps. I doubt whether one man remained neutral. In its own little way, this city surpassed, for the occasion, the excitement of America on the eve of a presidential election. But not the Jews alone were interested; the Russians too caught the infection. There were at that time two big dailies in Ekaterinoslav. One of them, the more conservative, was for the old Rabbi; the other, more liberal, was for me. But the latter did find one reproach against me—I was known as an outspoken Zionist. The liberal press of Russia was either neutral toward Zionism—which meant that it ignored the movement completely—or else it was hostile. But the liberal paper of Ekaterinoslav felt itself compelled to support me in spite of my Zionism, probably, in the first place, because the other paper had chosen to support the old Rabbi. I was astonished when I read for the first time, in Russian newspapers, long editorials on the duties and functions of a Jewish minister, and on the standards which ought to be set by the Jewish community. But it occurred to me that we ought to have had the same right to say something about the choice of Christian priests.

The old Rabbi, Schochor by name, a graduate of the Vilna Rabbinical Institute, had many friends and supporters. He was a decent and kindly soul. However, like many of his colleagues of the Vilna seminary, he was deficient in one trifling matter: he had absolutely no inner relationship to his calling, or to the problems of the Jewish people. With his gentle nature, he only wanted things to go on drifting. At the mention of movements, whether Jewish or general, he became panicky. He considered movements as such superfluities in life; human beings could do

very well without them. The Jewish notables and the Russian administration regarded him as an ideal type of Rabbi. Socially he was extremely popular, and was considered one of the most gifted card-players in town—his specialty being the game of Préférence.

In addition to these two elements, a third was strongly on his side: the baptized Jews. Ekaterinoslav was a city of Jewish apostates, and the majority of them were to be found in the upper classes. At that time, as I remember, there were a round dozen baptized Jewish lawyers. In a certain sense these men could be called Maranos, or secret Jews; not that, like the Maranos of old, they were the bearers of a genuine tragedy, conforming outwardly to Christianity, and longing inwardly for their old Jewish life. All that they had done was to change their passport indication. Their lives remained the same after as before; they were neither worse Jews nor better Christians. They had only succeeded in evading all the obstacles that the Russian law placed in the path of the intellectual Jew. It is not easy to say whom their sudden change insulted more, the Jews or the Christians. However, there was one obstacle that their change could not overcome—the social one. Russian society remained cold to them, even after their baptism. Perhaps this is easily explained. The genuine anti-Semite is surely not prepared to change his attitude when the Jew adopts the simple device of calling himself a Christian. On the contrary, it must look to him like the shabbiest sort of trick, the most obvious evasion. And later I became acquainted with Russian intellectuals quite free from anti-Semitism, who regarded these baptized Jews with profound contempt as weaklings and renegades.

These baptized Jews of Ekaterinoslav provided me with an excellent study of certain aspects of Jewish assimilation. Here I need only note that, being excluded from higher Russian society, they were compelled willy-nilly to turn to the Jews, and willy-nilly they had to take an interest in Jewish affairs. The entire group of baptized lawyers stood

staunchly with the old Rabbi. The reason was obvious. As long as Judaism was interpreted only in the religious sense, was regarded as a matter of dogma and ritual, they could make peace with their consciences. These dogmas had meant nothing to them even when they had been Jews technically. In passing themselves off as Christians, they had actually repudiated nothing. True, there was a slight inaccuracy in their new nomenclature, but that was for the Christians to worry about—it surely had nothing to do with the Jews. The situation became quite different as soon as Judaism was interpreted as a national reality. Then the question bit deeper, and the man's very identity was in play. It might have been put thus: "You did not share the faith of your people—and therefore you repudiated it. Did you also manage to repudiate your people, cut yourself away clean?" Put thus, the question worries even men of less tender conscience.

There was one man in Vilna who put this question sharply and, having given the right answer, demanded loudly and openly that the renegades be completely excluded from contact with Jewish affairs. This man was Menachem Mendel Ussishkin. He argued: "We have no defence against their treachery, but by admitting them into our affairs after they have repudiated us, we are simply condoning their act." It was not an easy battle to wage, for it affected adversely some of the most distinguished Jewish families in the city. But I have indicated that Ussishkin was not a man of compromises. Where the honour of his people is at stake he is a bitter fighter—and he is not oversqueamish about his weapons. With Ussishkin as my champion in Ekaterinoslav, and myself a fighter in the movement which he symbolized, it is easy to understand that the opposition was desperate.

I delivered, on the average, something like one address a day, making the rounds of the Synagogues of Ekaterinoslav. I was in fact more interested in making these addresses, in living myself out at last, than in the result of

the elections. Had there been the slightest possibility that the old Rabbi would remain at his post, while I came in as preacher and lecturer, I would gladly have embraced it. Unfortunately there was no such division of functions. It was only many years later that my dream of such a division was realized.

The elections were democratic, though not direct. There were six hundred electors, and I was elected by a large majority. It was not my victory, but that of Ussishkin, and not so much his own as that of the movement.

But the democratic election was not enough; there was still needed the ratification of the government, and the government had been openly on the side of my opponent. I do not know whether my election would ever have been ratified if it had not been for an accident. Immediately after the elections I left Ekaterinoslav and returned to Grodno. Months passed, and the ratification did not come. It began to look as though my labours and those of Ussishkin had been wasted. It was always easy for the government to find a flaw in the elections. New elections could be ordered, and years could pass in this way.

Here again I learned what an important rôle the unforeseen and unforeseeable plays in our lives. Years before, in my student days of Berlin, when I was active in the Jewish Scientific Society, I had a friend by the name of Boris Brandt. He came to Berlin a graduate of a Russian law school, with a two-year scholarship to study international financial law. For a young Jewish scholar this was an exceptional honour, and for its attainment was needed a mixture of high ability, political pull, and pure luck. Brandt had come to the favourable attention of no less a personage than the Minister of Finance himself, Count Witte. Witte was clever enough to gather round himself a few gifted young Jews who were to provide the literary-theoretic foundations for his financial policy, and among them was my friend Brandt. In physical build Brandt was deformed; he

was a little man with a double hump, before and behind. He was not a public speaker, but he was greatly respected for his scholarship, and more so for his industry. Because of his small size, he could not sit at table; he therefore used to carry on his studies on his feet. It was really pitiful to see this frail body supporting these two humps. Yet Brandt studied in this way inexhaustibly. He was always to be found either in the Imperial Library or at a lecture. He came to Berlin a full-fledged Zionist, not passionate in his advocacy of Zionism, but firm and objective in his views. When he had completed his studies in Berlin, he was given a post in the Ministry of Finance, and when I came to Ekaterinoslav he already occupied a high position. He was engaged at that time in the compilation of a great work on the influence of foreign capital in the industrial development of Russia, and as Ekaterinoslav was a centre of new industries, he had come to study his material on the spot. This was the first half of the accident. Now comes the second. The Governor of Ekaterinoslav was at that time Prince Swiatopolk Mirsky, whom I have already mentioned as one of the noblest and most distinguished personages I have ever met. Ussishkin, who was friendly with Brandt because of their common Zionist interests, persuaded the latter to speak on my behalf with the Prince, and a short time after the interview my appointment was ratified.

The two years I had passed in Grodno were entered upon the calendar, but they passed over my life without leaving a trace. I did not know, when they were ended, why they should be included in the toll of my years. They were shorn away from me with as little effect as the hair of one's head is shorn. They had, however, one virtue. They made my parting from Grodno an easy one.

I made a farewell round of my friends and acquaintances. The worthies of Grodno said they were sorry to part with me. They said also that they could not blame me. A poor town like Grodno could never give me what rich Ekateri-

noslav could afford. Their gentleness did not please me at all. I told one of them that I had suffered less from the fact that Grodno could give me so little than from the fact that its Jewish leaders had not permitted me to give them anything at all.

Wife and child remained for a time in Grodno, and I transferred myself, full of hope and courage, to my new place. My friends, and particularly the family of Bezalel Jaffe, were genuinely happy for me. On the way to Ekaterinoslav I visited my parents. They too were happy, first because of the honour shown me, second because they believed that Ekaterinoslav would do better by me than Grodno had done. My father, as timber-merchant, had business relations with Ekaterinoslav, and he had been told that the Rabbinate in that city was exceptionally well paid, and such was to be expected of a Jewish community of sixty thousand souls in the centre of a fast-developing region. However, both my parents and I were to be disappointed in this respect.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN: RUSSIANS AND JEWS IN EKATERINOSLAV

If any one had asked me, before my Ekaterinoslav days, what were the relations between myself and Russian society, I could hardly have found an answer. Social relationships imply a common point of contact. In Grodno, as in other towns, such a point did not exist for the Russians and the Jews. If we except occasional card parties, and occasional contacts in the city clubs—confined on the Jewish side to a few privileged individuals of the professional and the rich merchant classes—there was no social relationship. My official position in Grodno enabled me to develop a stiff and formal acquaintanceship with a few Russians, mostly among the higher official class, and that was all. Not one instance could I observe, among my Russian acquaintances, of a human interest or a desire for friendlier intimacy. Per contra, I was frequently enough able to observe a consciousness of condescension. The natural result was, of course, that I remained equally reserved. I would not have it appear that I was anxious for favours of any kind, and repaid coldness with coldness. Moreover, I found nothing to interest me in these official circles. I did want very much to become more closely acquainted with Russian social life, and with the Russian as such. But it was quite clear to me that I could not satisfy my desire in these circles.

What sharpened my desire to learn to know the Russian was the periodical literature of that time, which stood on the very highest level. It was rich, distinguished, and many-

sided; in it participated the foremost intellectuals of the country. Through it I caught glimpses of the mysterious Russian soul, half-wild, half-mystical, always baffling. On the one side there were men like Leo Tolstoi and Vladimir Soloviov—types that stand, ethically and intellectually, for the highest there is in man, types with more than a touch of divinity. On the other side there were the Suvorins the Mescherskis and their venomous clique, cruel, inhuman in their hatreds. There are contrasts in every people, but they have never achieved elsewhere the starkness that is to be found in Russia. One had the feeling that Russia had not yet crystallized out; the two primal forces, the divine and the diabolic, still fought for the mastery of the emergent people. One felt that there were still two Russias, two churches, two faiths—the priesthood was still at war with the spirit; the church bells of Moscow tried to drown out the human call of the new apostles, and the voices of the latter rang ever louder and louder.

It was a great epoch in Russian history—perhaps the greatest. The professional historians of the new Russian régime have done their best to belittle its significance, hoping thereby to lift the new rulers to the height of gods who created a world out of nothing. They are eager to oust from the picture all but the little group that has today—almost in a literal sense—ascended the Russian throne. But they cannot succeed; the past cannot be violated in this fashion. The time will come when the objective historian will give us the true picture of pre-war Russia, make clear the greatness of that epoch, and delineate the creative forces that were already at work in that world.

I had a Jewish, as well as a purely human, interest in seeking the acquaintance of the Russian. Russia at that time contained about seven million Jews. It was clear to the Zionists that the fate of these seven millions would for many generations be bound up with that of the country. No one, not even among the Zionists, believed that within a short

time—even if that phrase is taken in its historical sense—these millions could be lifted out and transformed somewhere into an independent national entity. It is true that we saw in Zionism the *only* possible solution to the Jewish question, but the effects of Zionism were to be qualitative rather than quantitative. We saw the Jewish problem not only under the civic and economic aspects, but also under the political and psychological aspects. What we attacked was the *homelessness* of the Jewish people, wherein we saw the chief cause of the disastrous Jewish situation throughout the world. The creation of a Jewish homeland, even if only for a fragment of the Jewish people, would remove that reproach, with its psychological consequences. The individual Jew, living outside the Jewish homeland, would then feel like any other member of a people who finds it necessary to leave his homeland. It might be that even under these circumstances there would continue a certain hostility toward the Jews, the result of a profound difference in life-outlook that has expressed itself in differences of religion, customs, and manners. But it was the attitude of contempt toward the people that was the greatest evil.

Furthermore, it was quite clear to me, as well as to all in my circle, that the condition of the Jew could change for the better only with a change in the régime. But we did not think of that change of régime in the form of a social revolution. We thought it sufficient if we could achieve a constitution like that, for instance, of England or France. And I must confess—though the confession can do us no good—that we might even have been content at first with conditions such as they were in Germany. For all these reasons I was anxious to make contacts with the circles of the Russian constitutionalists. From contemporaneous periodical literature I had got the impression that something earnest was afoot, not only among the subterranean revolutionaries, but in the open intellectual world. The literature alone was not enough for me. I wanted to meet face to

face the men who wrote and read it. These were the men who were preparing a brighter future for the seven million Jews of Russia.

During my Grodno period I hardly had the feeling that I was living in Russia. Russian books can be read abroad, too. The Russians I met were not, for me, representative of the Russian mind that was disclosed in Russian literature. They were policemen, of higher or lower rank, with the typical manner and bearing of the policeman—dry, stiff, and at the same time naïvely cunning. It was in Ekaterinoslav that I formed my first living concept of Russian society. Curiously enough, I was helped to this concept by the very highest Russian official of the locality, the Governor General Prince Swiatopolk Mirsky. It was he who opened the doors wide for me, and assured me of a welcome. At my very first visit, when, according to the custom, I came to present myself, he was exceedingly friendly to me in the presence of a considerable number of the highest officials. I imagine that Boris Brandt had gone to great lengths in the description of my virtues, for I was received more like an old acquaintance than like a new official. The man I had come to meet had an open, intellectual face, on which were clearly written the qualities of gentleness and honesty. At first blush I could hardly believe that such a man could be a Russian Governor. He wore, at that interview, the uniform of a lieutenant-general and aide-de-camp to the Czar. His breast was covered with the insignia of academic titles and military orders. Neither the uniform nor the decorations accorded with that tired, spiritualized face, which seemed constantly to be saying: "Do not look either on my uniform or on my decorations. I have had to put these on, or rather, I have submitted to having them put upon me. I had much rather wear the plain clothes of the ordinary citizen."

His warm reception of me, which was at once interpreted as a demonstration of friendliness toward the Jewish community through the person of its representative, made a

deep impression in political circles. As is usual under such circumstances, nothing more was needed than a sign from above. I observed that the officials actually took pains to be friendly toward me. But while the friendliness of Swiatopolk Mirsky was natural, theirs was forced.

I soon became acquainted with the Russian religious hierarchy, including the Archbishop and the upper clergy, with the judges of the Ukrainian Supreme Court, with the representatives of the nobility and of the Zemstvos or local councils, and also with the leading educators. In brief, I got to know personally all the circles that made up the government of Ekaterinoslav; and they could serve as a model for those that constituted the larger and more complicated machinery of the central government. I was interested in the mechanics of their organization, and in the motions of the component parts. It needed no special insight to perceive that the nobility played the leading rôle, that round it moved the rest. The nobility set the standard, and whatever failed to agree with it was removed. The two principal parts of the machine were the priesthood and the army. The same material was used to cast the church bells and the heavy artillery; what the former failed to achieve by persuasion, the latter achieved by force. The schools, more particularly the public schools, were placed somewhere between the two; on the one side the priest, on the other the soldier. The directors and inspectors of the schools, whom I soon got to know, were the darkest of all the forces, in some respects worse than the gendarmerie. They were men, I soon realized, who had not the slightest interest in education and pedagogics as such. They had one object in view: to make more difficult the already difficult task of the teacher, to keep him constantly aware of the fact that he was watched, that every word of his was weighed.

I remember, in this connection, an interesting episode. Among my Christian friends in Ekaterinoslav there was one by the name of Stefanova, a woman of fine mind and educa-

tion, and strongly liberal in her views. She liked to mix with Jews, and she was always talking of the necessity of a closer contact of the Russian and Jewish peoples. Like many simple Russians who came from a district where Jews were unknown, she was under the impression that the obstacle was created by the Jews. As a demonstration of the sincerity of her desire to see both peoples drawn closer together, she opened a mixed kindergarten—the first of its kind in Ekaterinoslav, I think—for Jewish and Christian children. The young generation was to serve as a symbol. There was much talk in the city about this strange venture. But the inspector of schools did not wait long to show that something about this enterprise was not to his liking; it was not the kind of thing the government was anxious to develop. He therefore visited the kindergarten, and saw that the children were being instructed *in a room.* "This is an outrage," he declared. "You call this a kindergarten and I don't see a sign of a garden, not a single tree. This will have to stop." And stop it did.

The Zemstvos had been founded in the early years of the reign of Alexander the Second, the great reformer. They had been intended to develop an instrument of self-administration for all the classes of the population, including the peasants, as a counterweight to the landed nobility. In my time, however, the institution had already degenerated almost into a government department. In any case it was closely watched and narrowly controlled. Still, all the liberal elements in Russia rallied round the Zemstvos as the last strongholds of the old reforms, and in them could still be found, here and there, an official who had been driven out of the direct government service for excessive liberalism. In the Zemstvo of Ekaterinoslav, too, there were to be found genuine liberal spirits. Some belonged to the old, disappearing generation, and some to the new, who looked upon those early days as on a lost paradise.

The government pursued a cunning and ruthless policy

toward the Zemstvos, removing privilege after privilege, weakening the structure, waiting for the day when the denuded fortress could be completely demolished. But even the government could not take the fortress by storm. The grandfather, Alexander the Second, had evoked the genie; neither son nor grandson could wholly banish it. It was for the time being driven into a corner, and held at bay. The time was close at hand when the government, in its insolence and ineptness, would give it its chance—and the throne of the Czar would tremble with a forewarning of approaching doom. The occasion was the insane and criminal war with Japan. Then the Zemstvos suddenly started into new life, like giants refreshed, and the voice of the Russian people was suddenly heard claiming its human heritage.

My reception among the Jews of Ekaterinoslav was an uneven one. The minority defeated in the elections maintained an unfriendly attitude. It was impossible for them to ignore me, for in the cities of southern Russia the Rabbi was the genuine representative of the community, and was, *ex officio*, the most important member of every communal committee. But they could and did make themselves obnoxious. Their dislike of me was, for the most part, not personal. They were simply smarting under the defeat. But there were some among them who understood in advance the programme I had set myself, and who were determined to keep up the fight against me. Perhaps I myself would not have noticed the opposition particularly if my friends had not frequently and insistently told me about it. Every day these "friends" came to me with detailed reports as to what this one had said, what the other one thought, and what the general attitude was toward me in the opposing camp. The point of these reports was, I suppose, to make me understand that though there might be some danger, I had men and women I could count on. There were times when I suffered more from this type of friendship than from

my opponents. Silent friendship is one of the most beautiful of human gifts; a boastful friendship is—I speak from much personal experience—one of the heaviest loads a man can carry. Silent friendship only asks for friendship in return, but boastful friendship asks for—or rather demands—gratitude. What is particularly unfortunate is that each one of these vociferous friends asks for the largest slice of gratitude. There is continuous competition among these friends. And if God punishes a man with too many friends of this type, he goes bankrupt in the end. There just isn't enough gratitude in him to go all round, and though he has signed no notes that can go to protest, the unwritten obligation is regarded as particularly sacred, and the friends clamour to collect.

In brief, I suffered much from my friends. I was not looking for defenders, having little fear of my opponents. Perhaps I overestimated my own powers, but I believed them sufficient to cope with the men I did not know. As to those among them who opposed me on principle, it goes without saying that I was anxious enough to come to direct grips with them. They, in fact, were the people for whose sake I had come to Ekaterinoslav.

But there was a small handful of people who did give me the kind of reception I wanted, and who gave me genuine moral support in my work. Some of them remained my friends long after I left Ekaterinoslav, five years later. Without talk, without bluster, there grew up between us a secret bond. Before I entered on my principal task, which had to do with the reform of the Hebrew schools of all grades, and the education of the Jewish youth in general, I held long and serious council with them. It was their share of the task to prepare the ground in the community, and make my assault easier. Ready though I was for battle, I was glad to have these serious spirits on my side.

I cannot apply the simple word friendship to my relations with Menachem Ussishkin. It was something more. It

was a relationship of absolute trust and confidence, built up on an unshakable foundation of understanding. I saw in Ussishkin a reincarnation of those old Jewish heroes who had concentrated in themselves the will of an entire people. I was not blind to his faults and weaknesses, and they occasioned me much suffering. But they never disturbed our relationship. My complete faith in him often passed over into respect, and respect passed into admiration. I admired his consistency and oneness; and I admired the simplicity of his private life. Ussishkin was an only son, and came of a well-to-do family; his wife's family was even wealthy. Ekaterinoslav was a turbulent, parvenu city, with boundless possibilities. Every one speculated heavily on its future. There were men who amassed fortunes dealing in grain, iron, and coal, the virgin and almost untapped forms of wealth of the district.

Ussishkin moved in a circle that was for ever tempting him to throw himself into the wild struggle for wealth. He withstood the temptation; in the midst of this sea of gold-hunters he created a quiet island, the refuge of the Zionist ideal to which he devoted the strongest years of his youth and manhood. He was accused of parsimony, for he was perhaps overfrugal in his way of living, in his very clothes. But the accusation was unjust. Ussishkin wanted to keep himself free, and he did keep himself free, from anything that might interfere with service of Zionism. He paid for this devotion; many worldly opportunities came his way and he neglected them. He could have become a rich man; he refused to be tempted. In the world from which he came, such resolution needed unusual strength of character. I believe, moreover, that Ussishkin wanted very badly to be rich. But this has only heightened my admiration for his self-control. He fought an inner as well as an outer battle, and came through the victor.

Ussishkin lived in a little apartment next door to his father-in-law's house. His work-room looked like a second-

class cabin on an old-fashioned steamer. Year after year I saw him tied to his tiny desk, issuing his instructions by word of mouth to the dozens of Zionists who visited him, sending out letters to every corner of the province. His apartment, which was open at all hours, made more the impression of a public institution than that of a private residence. Particularly was this the case during the marvellous southern summer evenings, when crowds of Zionists—many more than could get into the apartment—would be walking around in the courtyard, to discuss the questions of the day. Ussishkin was very happy in his relations with his wife, Esfir Sergeievna (it was characteristic of Ekaterinoslav that so many Jews carried Russified names, even in Zionist circles). She worshipped her husband, and his word was law to her. Her education had been purely Russian, and she had had no contact whatsoever with Zionism. But she understood that her husband was in the service of a great idea—and she was in the service of her husband.

In telling of my Warsaw and Grodno days, I have already remarked how it was my wife's fortune and mine to meet our friends in perfect pairs. In Ekaterinoslav Helena and Esfir Sergeievna took naturally to each other: perhaps because their fates had been somewhat similar. Both were lovers of Russian culture, and both of them had to live in an atmosphere of intense Jewishness, and move in a world composed exclusively of Jewish interests. They were in a sense comrades in devotion and unspoken suffering. Ussishkin's only daughter, Rachel, quite naturally became the most intimate friend of my little girl Enya.

Another reason compels me to take Ussishkin out of the general ranks of my friends. As Zionist head of the province of Ekaterinoslav he was in a sense my superior. He was accustomed to asserting his authority with a strong hand. More than once I had occasion to feel his severity, but I have always admired and submitted to discipline.

The immediate circle of my friends was a small one, but

it consisted of authentic, strong individualities. For some of them I must make room in this narrative. The oldest and the youngest in the circle was Michael Maidansky, well known throughout Russia as one of the cleverest and most active figures in Jewish public life. He was nearly eighty years of age, a man with a snow-white head and a broad snow-white beard. His eyes, which would have suited a young, temperamental hero, shone out of their setting like unnatural suns. It was hard to tell whether the eyes were fooling the snow-white hair, or the reverse. Maidansky was vigorous, lively, and active. Intellectually he concentrated in himself the best that there was in the old type of neo-Hebraist; he was crammed with knowledge of our old and our modern literature. He had a remarkable memory for his own experiences, too, and after many years in public service, he seldom faced a situation for which there was not already an illuminating and helpful parallel in his past. He was a wit of the first order; and where opposition could not be broken by assault, he melted it. He was loved and respected by Christians and Jews alike. No important function that had to do with Jewish life was complete without him. Even the government often found it necessary to consult him.

Strangely enough, this man had been in his youth a fanatical Chassid. He had even been the "repeater" of a famous Chassidic Rabbi. As "repeater" it had been his function to repeat the sayings of the Rabbi to larger audiences, sometimes in popularized form. Incidentally, he also acted as the publicity agent of the Rabbi. What incident, or series of incidents, was it that caused him to change from the mystic ecstatic world of Chassidism to the sensible and modern world of public service? This was his secret, and he never revealed it. He had no enmity for the world that he had left; indeed, he had no enmities at all. There was no room for them in his joyous, optimistic nature.

During my five-year stay in Ekaterinoslav I met this

happy old man nearly every day, since he belonged to the directorate of the main Synagogue in the city. There were three in this body: the president, the scholar, and the treasurer. The Rabbi belonged *ex officio*. According to Russian law the Rabbi was at the head; as a rule he was content to be admitted at the bottom of the list, a long way behind the others. Michael Maidansky was the "scholar" of the directorate. He played a considerable rôle in the Chibath Zion movement, and later when Herzl transformed the movement into its political form, the old man kept pace with the younger generation. Our acquaintanceship early passed into intimate friendship. He called me by the familiar "thou" and wanted me to address him in the same way. I could not bring myself to it. I always spoke to him in the third person: "What does Grandfather say?"

One day my eighty-year-old friend turned up at my house at seven in the morning. He knew that I was an early riser. Seeing me startled, he reassured me with: "Don't be afraid. It's an important matter, but nothing tragic. There's a Jewish girl in town whom the Christians have persuaded to accept baptism. For the time being she's in a convent." The old man had been to see the Archbishop, with whom he was quite intimate, and to ask him to have the girl, who was little more than a child, released and returned to her parents. He had been successful in his mission. Why had he come to me then, at this early hour? There was a second question, now that the first one was settled.

"You see," explained the grandfather, "I don't need your help now. But I had an intimate discussion with the Archbishop regarding the relative merits of Judaism and Christianity, and while I was talking I remembered an anecdote in that very connection. It was a beautiful anecdote. It tickled me all over, but I didn't dare to tell it. But I had to tell it some one. You know, I am an elderly man, and my memory isn't what it used to be. I was afraid I would forget

it altogether, and then it might get lost. I feel sure that in your hands the anecdote will be perfectly safe."

I need hardly say that the anecdote was salty—much too salty for an Archbishop, too salty, in fact, for a plain, ordinary bishop. If I hadn't been ashamed, I would have kissed my eighty-year-old friend. Sometimes one reads of such high spirits in an old man; to meet an instance is an unforgettable experience.

Old Michael loved little children. He could play with them by the hour, and hold them hypnotized with his stories. And the children responded by idolizing him. At the meeting of the two extremes of life, there was created a marvellous harmony. For my little Enya he had a special love, and once when she was ill he made it his business to visit her every day. On one occasion he brought with him a canary in a cage, and, sitting down by her bed, began to spin stories about birds.

The most important and most influential Jew in town was Moisse Judovitch Karpas. He resembled, in many respects, Lazar Bregman of Grodno. As a type he was American, full of energy and initiative, always ready to take a chance with something new. It is a common characteristic of the man who has no long family tradition of business or public affairs behind him, the man who has carved out his own career, and has no one to thank for his position, that he develops an extreme degree of self-confidence. Frequently enough this self-confidence becomes megalomania; such men become gods in their own eyes. Socially they are of course intolerable. If they take an interest in public affairs, they imagine that their wealth entitles them to have the first and the last say. It sometimes happens that the gold they give cannot undo the harm of the advice which they impose. Even such men cannot dispense with expert advice, but they always choose the kind of expert who can read their intentions first, and anticipate their half-baked plans. Such men,

seldom educated, are naturally possessed of much native intelligence; but rarely have they enough of it to understand decent and modest behaviour. They are too well acquainted with their own worth, and they believe that success in business entitles them to the rôle of spiritual leaders.

During the many years of my public and national activity, I have had occasion to meet many rich Jews, some of them wonderfully good and gentle persons, always ready to help their people in a big way. Their good intentions never came to anything, for God, who blessed them on the one hand with the means, punished them on the other with the ambition to possess a philosophy all their own. And their lean philosophy used to eat up their fat donations, as the lean cows in Pharaoh's dream ate up the fat cows, and of the latter we are told "it was as if they had not been."

Moisse Judovitch Karpas was the actual head of the Jewish community, and it lay in his power to make my work in the city very pleasant or very much the reverse. But he was an exception among self-made men. From small beginnings he had risen to the position of one of the leaders in the newly developed metal industry. He was vigorous, creative, and far-seeing in his social activities, but he was not drunk with success. He knew his own abilities, but he measured them soberly. His ambition was to see Ekaterinoslav become a model Jewish community. To this end he used the large fund of technical information which he had gathered during his many journeys through Russia, and his close observation of communal institutions. He never came back from one of his journeys without new ideas and new suggestions. And these he was prepared to back with money. But he never failed to consult his co-workers, or to obtain the most expert assistance. When it came to questions of education, he always kept modestly in the background. He had next to no education, but he made up for this by his natural intelligence, his instinctive logic, and his mental honesty.

A very different type was the father-in-law of Ussishkin, Sergei Pavlovitch Palei. Sergei had originally been Shmarya, and Pavlovitch Feitel; and Feitel Palei came from one of the old-fashioned Chassidic families. Shmarya himself had received a purely Jewish education, and it was only after his marriage, when he was already the father of two children, that he suddenly abandoned the world to which he had been born and turned to the books of the moderns. He recast his whole education—went through a high-school course first, and then passed successfully through the aristocratic Institute for Transport Engineers in St. Petersburg, of course under his new Russian name. With that name, Sergei Pavlovitch, he returned from St. Petersburg. He educated his children solely in the Russian culture. Not a word of Yiddish or a sign of Hebrew. The grandfather understood his grandchildren with difficulty, the grandchildren the grandfather not at all. I mention this as an instance of the kaleidoscopic changes of the Jewish generations in Russia during my own time. The gap between grandfather and grandchildren was much wider than two generations. Every generation began a new cultural epoch. But when such epochs are too short the cultural structure is weak in the foundations.

Sergei Pavlovitch was the manager of his father's business. The old man owned a large steam-mill for grain, and a large saw-mill equipped with the latest machinery. As Sergei Pavlovitch was an only son, the public already regarded him as the head of the rich firm. In the business world he was known as a man of absolute integrity, but very hard. He was by nature sceptical and pessimistic—not the kind of stuff out of which public-spirited men are made. But under the imperious influence of Ussishkin Sergei Pavlovitch did throw himself into Jewish public affairs and even, to some extent, into Zionist affairs. He lacked both the magnanimity of Karpas and the optimism of Maidansky. But his brilliant mind was of great use to us, particularly

as a controlling element. He was the necessary brake on our occasionally immoderate enthusiasms. Not a grateful task under any circumstances, for though this kind of man is extremely useful, he is always regarded as a destroyer rather than a builder.

Within the same circle moved a number of rising young men. The most interesting amongst them was Moisse Bruk, the second son-in-law of Sergei Pavlovitch, a young engineer with a natural flair for social work. He too was a full-blooded Zionist, but unlike his brother-in-law Ussishkin he did not confine himself to Zionism. He was active in all communal affairs. In particular he was interested in the employés of the smaller artisan class; he organized them, founded co-operatives among them, and tried to instil into them both a Jewish and a general education. He was a member of every important committee—mostly as secretary, for he loved this work and undertook it eagerly.

The Jewish community of Ekaterinoslav was much more democratically organized than that of Grodno, where only a couple of rich men directed communal affairs, without any representation of the masses. The result was that here the public at large took a much greater interest in its own affairs. There was such a thing as a genuine public opinion. In part this was due to the Russian newspapers, which devoted considerable space to Jewish communal affairs. To this they were really compelled by the preponderance of Jewish readers; the Jewish population was only a third of the total, but it read far more than did the Russian. Among the Russians there was a large class of workers, chiefly in the iron works and the railroad shops of the well-developed Ekaterinoslav lines. There was also a large element of the lower middle class. Neither the workers nor the middle class had reached the cultural stage where a newspaper is a daily necessity. The Jewish masses stood on a higher cultural level and, like the Jewish masses everywhere, they were distinguished by their passion for the latest printed thing.

The people of the Book quite naturally became the people of newspapers. Of old they had been wont to turn every day the pages of the Talmud, to find out what the sages had to say. Now they turned to the editorial page.

In Ekaterinoslav I was for the first time in my life drawn into ordinary charitable work. The community had assumed the responsibility for the poor, and begging from door to door was forbidden. It was not an easy responsibility. On the one hand there was much opposition on the part of important Jews, who rather liked handing out their gifts to the poor in person. On the other hand there was much opposition from the poor themselves. It was no use explaining to them that the new system was better, more decent, more reliable, that some one would take an intelligent interest in their troubles, and they would get assistance regularly. They did not want these impersonal donations. They would rather depend on the moods God inspired in the hearts of the donors. To go from door to door was for them a symbol of faith in God. But the reform was instituted, and house-to-house begging disappeared. I took part in the reorganization of the charities. The new system involved much research into the individual cases, and with my colleagues I paid frequent visits to the poorest Jewish quarters. I did not meet in Ekaterinoslav such poverty as I had been able to observe in Lithuania. Indeed, there were many receivers of our help whose position might have been envied by some of the smaller householders of Grodno. They did not eat the heavy black bread of the Lithuanian poor, but tasty white bread; instead of eternal herring and onion you could smell in their houses beet soup and meat. The houses were roomier, the clothes more decent. I did not meet those pale despairing faces to which I had become accustomed in the north, the expressions of hunger and want endured since earliest childhood. I learned by this contrast the meaning of Schleiermacher's famous phrase: "Man is what he eats."

The fact that Jews usually have a larger number of

philanthropic institutions than others has been accepted as evidence of a superior kindliness among them. The true explanation is rather more one-sided. It lies less in the character of the Jew than in the historical development of the people. The Jews have seldom or never been the recipients of whatever degree of care governments bestowed on the poor. They therefore learned early to exercise voluntarily those social functions which elsewhere were taken over by the government; and it is a curious fact that if we examine Jewish philanthropic institutions we shall see that nine-tenths of them are devoted to pathological cases, and the remainder to constructive biological work. Hospitals, orphan asylums, homes for the aged, old-clothes societies, and the like are repeated over and over again. Only of late has Jewish philanthropy turned to the care and education of the young, but the disproportion is still striking. Whatever the explanation may be, this is certainly a sign of weakness, and even of sickness, in the people.

My work in the charity committees took much of my time, and I got little satisfaction in return. I had no flair for that kind of activity. I had read enough about the difficulty of curing deep-seated social diseases with charity, and I had no faith in the palliatives applied by the philanthropists. I soon determined to break with the local tradition which demanded that the Rabbi be a leading spirit in the charity work. I was attracted to other fields.

During the first year my position and work were both insecure. I had, it is true, won a following through my numerous addresses, but the general public remained either cold or reserved. I knew the unpleasant feeling; I had already experienced it in Grodno. But I felt confident that in time I would break through. It was more difficult here. In Grodno I had been a stranger personally, but as type I was flesh of their flesh, blood of their blood—an authentic Litvak. The reverse was true in Ekaterinoslav; the silent hostility was directed against the type, the Litvak, and not

against the man. Between the Litvak, or Lithuanian of the North, and the warmer Jew of the south, there was traditional enmity dating back to the religious break of the eighteenth century. The generous and emotional Chassidic sect had been born in the south and had taken root there, and its opponents consisted of the cool, dry intellectual types of my homeland, Lithuania. That revolution had expressed the rebellion of the simple, ignorant masses against the trained scholars—not a new phenomenon in Jewish history. Lithuania was considered the nest of the sceptical, over-intellectualized scholars; the south was the home of the ecstatic religionists. The division thus created extended through all Jewry, and it took several generations before the mutual hostility of the groups relaxed. The migrations of the Lithuanian Jews toward the south produced a mixed population in the larger centres. There was another mitigating circumstance, the common wave of Russification which passed over all Jews, Chassidim and Misnagdim alike. But historic wounds are not cured so easily. Even in my time the scar was still open. The original cause of the quarrel had in reality disappeared, but as is usual in historical development, the phrases and emotions outlived the reality. In brief, I felt that it was as a Litvak that I was being rebuffed, and as such I would have to conquer this place. The opposition only strengthened my determination.

In my public addresses I always avoided the question of Jewish divisions. I treated Jewry always as a whole, and my motif was always the liberation of the national entity. It was the creative entirety of the Jews, made manifest in their achievements of the past, which was the earnest of their happier future. Inner frictions, quarrels, divisions—these were isolated and historically meaningless episodes. I spoke little of nationalism and Zionism in direct terms. The name did not matter as long as the substance was there. I have met too many Zionists who have been eager to argue about the name without understanding anything about the sub-

stance of nationalist theory; and I have never derived any pleasure from the spectacle of a Zionist organization that spread out widely on the surface while the roots went no deeper. For such a movement every minor mischance becomes a catastrophe, and I knew that the Zionist movement was advancing toward troubled times. It was necessary that its roots be deep and its hold on the people firm. In all this I was guided by the principles which had been laid down by my master, Achad Ha-Am. I used, as my material, the accumulated treasuries of Jewish history, and in particular the Midrashic literature, with its simple stories, profoundly conceived and skilfully pointed. I aimed at the creation of spiritual values, and often the public read more into these stories than I myself had put into them.

I managed at last to break the ice. A friendlier atmosphere surrounded me. I did not take the public by storm. It was a hard struggle, and every step was marked by great labour.

But if I found pleasure in my public speaking, I found even more in my work as a teacher. My dream of Warsaw achieved realization in Ekaterinoslav. To my functions as Rabbi was added that of teacher in one of the higher government schools for girls. It was not, God forbid, a regular government job with pay—to this privilege no Jew in Russia could aspire. It was the unpaid position of religious instructor. Even this was regarded as a great concession. The local government actually permitted me to teach Jewish girls the Jewish religion! In such cases it was usual for the community to pay the teacher, but I refused to receive any pay. This particular high school had been founded by the Russian aristocracy of Ekaterinoslav, and was governed in what was, for that time and place, an unusually liberal spirit. The person who was chiefly responsible for this was the director, Alexandra Akimovna Rindovskaia, an elderly woman of great intelligence, who had been brought up in the spirit

of the sixties and seventies. When we became better acquainted, she told me much of those happy years of the reign of Alexander the Second, of his personal life and his great plans, and of the hopes which stirred during that epoch in the mind of the Russian intelligentsia. Now—at the turn of the century—that dream was dead as if for ever. Russia was a prison, and a careless word in favour of freedom was too dangerous to be risked. It was hard for me to believe that the woman who spoke thus was the director of a higher government institution. But this was a woman whom it was impossible to doubt in her sincerity.

The school had eight classes, and I taught the upper four, in which the ages of the girls ranged from fifteen to twenty, that is, from late childhood to early womanhood. As regards their knowledge of Jewish things, however, they were all of the same age. They had not the remotest idea that there were such things as a Jewish history and a Jewish literature. Very few of them knew the Hebrew alphabet. These, it must be remembered, were children that came from the richer homes—their ignorance could not be written down to economic oppression. It was the result of a criminal attitude on the part of their parents toward the Jewish education of their daughters. The Jewish girl, the future Jewish mother, grew up like an exotic plant in her parents' house, and often enough her entire Jewishness consisted of a fear of pogroms. It was only with the growth of the national movement that some attention began to be paid to the Jewish girl. But one generation could not catch up the lapses of many. I had occasion to discuss this melancholy situation with the director of the school, as well as with some teachers who became my friends. If the Jews had only known what contempt was aroused in Russian intellectuals by *their* contempt for Jewish culture, they might have changed their attitude. How was it possible, the liberal Russians asked, to bring up children in decent homes without the slightest knowledge of their own people and its past?

I already had some inkling from my school years in Minsk of how Jewish children regarded their "religious instructor." I decided at the outset to leave the beaten path, to ignore the dry catechism, dates, rules, and so on, and to concentrate on the cultural history of the Jewish people. I refused to take any pay because I was going to make what was then a daring experiment, and I did not know whether I was going to be successful. I was almost certain that the government would soon discover that my "religious" instruction was an excuse for a course in the history of literature. If my experiment succeeded, and if I remained an instructor in the high school until I left Ekaterinoslav of my own free will, it was chiefly thanks to that wonderful woman Alexandra Akimovna, who stood as a sort of guard between me and the higher educational authorities.

I introduced a new system. As text-books I chose the histories of Simon Dubnow, but in my lectures I expanded the material considerably. I did not ask my pupils to learn anything by heart. I only wanted them not to cut classes, so that the continuity of the story should not be broken for them. I seldom examined them to test how much they remembered of what I told them. I knew that with severity I would get nowhere. The course would have to be intrinsically attractive and interesting. It was hard work, especially in the beginning, when I had no experience to guide me. I believe I spent between three and four hours of preparation on every hour I actually lectured. I worked out a four-year course that covered the field from earliest times down to our own day. Parallel with the history of the people ran the narrative of its literature and of the spiritual tendencies which it reflected. My work was made all the harder by the fact that my pupils did not understand a word of Hebrew, and I had to prepare all my quotations in Russian translation. There was not even one good Russian translation of the Bible.

It was a happy period of my life. Preparing all this material for my pupils, I myself made deeper contacts with the subject. The outlines of the vast drama became clearer to me, and formed into a unity. My own understanding became more systematic and more disciplined, and this was true not only in relation to the subject-matter, but in relation to my general thinking.

The attitude of my pupils toward me was one of gratitude. Poor Jewish girls! They became aware of the strange fact that they belonged to a people who had a fascinating history and a great literature. There were some among my pupils who even came to my house to express their thanks. Many of the parents became supporters of mine. I was immensely proud of my success. There were many interesting episodes in that five-year period. Some of the older girls began to look upon me as their spiritual father, and came to me in secret, seeking advice on their personal problems; and I remember that in such cases I felt embarrassed and helpless, and could only stammer the commonplaces of fatherly advice. One fact will illustrate the relationship that existed between my pupils and myself. My lessons were not an obligatory part of the school course, yet during the five years not one girl absented herself from class without a very good reason.

My success aroused the envy of my Russian "colleagues," the two priests who gave religious instruction to the Christian girls. One of them was a man with an academic training, and with him I got along well; we often had long discussions on theological philosophical subjects. The other had only been to a seminary, and he had a weakness for drink. I ought to observe that it was by no means a rare thing for a teacher to turn up in class somewhat the merrier for a couple of drinks. This second priest had no luck with his pupils. As often as they could, they cut his classes, and frequently he addressed almost empty benches. He took an aversion to me from the beginning, and made no bones

about it. One day, during a session of the staff, when some forty teachers were present, and when the subject of the theological courses was being discussed, he made a provocative remark: "I would like to know, Shmarya Chaimovitch, what kind of magic you've invented to hold your pupils as you do." The tone in which he said this made his meaning clear: he was an old man, I was young. And that explained the difference in the attitudes of our respective classes. I answered him first with the biblical phrase: "There is no magic in Israel." Then I went on to explain that *his* courses were obligatory, that is, he had the help of the police. Mine were not obligatory. I had no police to help me, so I had to rely on myself. I added—in order to put an extra sting into my remarks—that the great characteristic of Judaism was its freedom from compulsion. My answer was too sharp—that is to say, it was sharp enough to be dangerous to myself. But Alexandra Akimovna was delighted with my reply, and showed it openly. The incident passed off without consequences, and the priest swallowed my retort in silence.

The teachers in the upper classes were all men. But in every class-room an older woman sat through the entire lecture hour. Alexandra Akimovna was one of the "chaperons" for my classes. She went through my entire course, changing from class to class. She was perhaps my best pupil. By means of her influence I obtained the concession that when I reached the subject of the rise of Christianity the chaperon should be withdrawn, in order that I might not feel myself embarrassed by the presence of a Christian. I was, I think, the only teacher who was ever permitted to instruct a girls' class for quite a long time without the presence of a chaperon.

In my last class I found two Christian pupils. They had obtained—again through the good offices of Alexandra Akimovna—a special permit to attend one of my courses in Jewish history and literature. It was the custom for the

Archbishop to be present during the examination of the two higher classes, and I had the singular satisfaction of watching him examine among others two Christian girls who had derived from me a thorough knowledge of Bible history.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: LAST DAYS IN EKATERINOSLAV

In telling of the first plans of Theodore Herzl, I have already mentioned how the creator of political Zionism pinned his greatest hopes on England. It is true that he neglected no opportunity to lay the claims of his people before all rulers, but England was in his eyes the future bulwark of the movement. In this particular Herzl showed the mixture of artist and *Realpolitiker*. England was the leading world-power, but England was also the country which had known how to reproduce with strange fidelity the spirit of the Old Testament. In no European language are the influences of the Bible and of biblical phraseology as pronounced and as organic as in English; no other literature had produced a book like *Daniel Deronda*. Herzl understood that the element of the marvellous, almost of the fabulous, in the dream of a Zion rebuilt would find its strongest echo among these northerners. The English interpretation of Zion rebuilt might be different from Herzl's. His was Jewish, England's was mystical Protestant. But both looked in the same direction. It was not a mere accident that among Herzl's first great helps was the pious Englishman, the Rev. Mr. Hechler, the one-time tutor of the liberal Kaiser Frederick. This man, who looked like a biblical patriarch, saw in the Zionists the saviours of mankind. He was for ever praying that to his England might belong the merit of bringing on the consummation. At Zionist Congresses, and at all important Zionist gatherings, Hechler was to be seen,

with his snow-white hair and long white beard, with his huge cape, the wings of which spread out like the wings of the cherubim—a symbol of the fact that Zionism was something more than a merely Jewish affair.

All the financial instruments of the Zionist movement were created under English law and had their headquarters in London. Had it not been for the technical difficulties of language and distance, most of the Congresses would have been held in England too. In fact, in spite of these difficulties one of the Congresses, the fourth, was actually held in the British capital.

This was the first Congress that I attended. I failed to appear at the first Congress partly, and at the second and third wholly, through my own fault. My bitter disappointment with Grodno had taken the initiative out of me. I had not the heart to appear at a Zionist Congress. It was a piece of false pride on my part. The fact was that I had always remained active in the movement, and had never turned down an opportunity of service.

From Ekaterinoslav I went openly to the Congress. I would not ask for a vacation in general, and use that for the purpose of attending the Congress. I told Prince Swiatopolk Mirsky that I wanted to go to London as a Zionist delegate. My relations with him were more than usually friendly. He would frequently invite me to dine with him, and we passed hour after hour in conversation. He was eager to learn something about Jewish conditions. I too learned something, namely, that this Governor of a great Jewish province had no idea of the disabilities under which the Jews suffered. He did not know that there were so many special laws designed to make Jewish life intolerable. At every new revelation he would open his eyes as if to say: "Is that really so?" He asked me to speak with the utmost freedom—it would help him, he said, to speak freely with me. On one occasion he exclaimed impetuously: "If it were in my power I would abolish these laws with one stroke of the pen!" I

felt that this was no idle boast. When our conversation turned to more general political questions he would do most of the talking, and then I would have occasion to admire both his frankness and his genuine love of humanity. He was that something very rare in Russia, a nobleman who wanted a modern constitution in his country. But he wanted the new era to be brought in by a compromise from above and not through pressure from below. I could not understand how this man could serve the existing régime. But there were quite a few lost souls among the higher officials who really believed that freedom could come from above. It goes almost without saying that Swiatopolk Mirsky was sympathetic in his attitude toward Zionism, and in granting me the permit to go to London, he wished us all success.

The fourth Zionist Congress, held in London, was a thing of marvellous contrasts. A nation that was politically the weakest in the world, which was geographically scattered over five continents, was coming to the capital of the greatest empire known to history. Hundreds of Jews from remote townlets and villages in forlorn provinces were coming to London to stage their embryonic parliament in the city of the Mother of Parliaments. And finally, persons who during three Congresses had gone through considerable torture to adapt themselves to the official language—German—now found themselves in a milieu in which their broken German was useless to them.

It would be difficult to describe the sufferings of the delegates in the matter of lodgment. Had the headquarters been located in a Jewish district like Whitechapel, there would have been other difficulties. It would have been impossible, in those days, to find in the Jewish quarter decent rooms decently furnished. But at least we would not have been condemned to wander around the streets of London like deaf-mutes, inventing for the occasion a new sign-language which the English, alas, found as incomprehensible as we found their speech. But it was Herzl's intention to impress the

English world; also he hoped that a dignified and imposing Congress would break the stiff-necked opposition of the rich Jews of London. The Congress was therefore held in one of the finest sections of the city, namely, Regent Street. The headquarters were in the famous Queen's Hall. All of us wanted to be lodged close to the Congress. It was task enough for us to find a land for the Jewish people; we did not want to be looking every day for the Congress hall in this gigantic labyrinth of streets. We were afraid to try the big hotels; they were said to be prohibitively expensive. So we went looking for furnished rooms as near as might be to Queen's Hall, and at last we were duly quartered. A few of the delegates had been clever enough to make a preliminary study of the English language before they came to London. But it did them little good, for their pronunciation hid the words from everybody but themselves. My wife came with me to this Congress, and was quite certain that in a day or two she would be quite at home. She had studied English in the high school of Königsberg, and could quote the whole of the soliloquy from *Hamlet:* "To be or not to be." But after we had wandered round for a whole day, and, together with Anna and Bezalel Jaffe were faced with the final decision, to be or not to be lodged for that night, my wife found Shakespeare quite useless for our purpose, and we had to return to our new sign-language.

But for all that, the Congress must surely have made a profound impression on any observer. He would have been compelled to admire, first of all, the extraordinary talents of the leader. To bring together in the capital of England the representatives of a scattered people, and to impose upon them a parliamentary discipline which would have done credit to the most experienced people—this was indeed an achievement. It called for great skill in organization, and a very high degree of moral force. With the very creation of the Congress Herzl dealt a death-blow to the famous legend—current more among Jews than even among others

—of the undisciplinable character of the east-European Jew. It was remarkable to see with what rapidity the east-European Jew adapted himself to all the rules and regulations and wrinkles of parliamentary procedure, and even became an expert in their manipulation.

The impression that the Congress made on me was ineffaceable. The praesidium on the tribune, with the majestic figure of Herzl at its head, called up in my mind the descriptions of the ancient Sanhedrin. I forgot for the moment our position among the peoples, helpless and unprotected. I only saw before me the representatives of an ancient cultural people, and I believed that they could, with the power of the people behind them, move mountains and build up worlds. It seemed to me that the meeting was being held not in London, but in some forlorn and desolate space; outside the building waited the millions of our people; within the hall the resolutions would be adopted, the word would be passed to those who were waiting, and in an instant millions of hands would be transforming the desolation into one of the world's centres.

I cannot forget, either, the occasion when Nordau delivered his address on the subject of the Jews of Rumania and the new persecutions instituted by the Rumanian government. Queen's Hall was packed. Below in the parquet, sat the delegates to the Congress, above in the galleries, the thousands of guests and visitors. Nordau did not deliver an address; it was rather a moral ultimatum, the protest of generations. It was not the voice of a man, but of thousands of the dead, who uttered through him, once more, the cry that had been stifled on their lips. Nordau spoke in German. I do not believe that the majority of the guests were able to follow him completely. But it hardly seemed necessary. The words cut through the air, and through the barrier of imperfect understanding. The anger of the prophet sounded in Nordau's voice. He pictured the situation of the Jews of Rumania, but what the audience heard was the story of

the fate of a people. On the tribune, not far from Herzl, sat a living illustration of the truth of Nordau's words—Dr. Moses Gaster, Chief Rabbi of the Spanish-Portuguese community. As scholar and philologist he had added more than any other Rumanian of the past or the present to the language of the country. As a mark of her gratitude the Rumanian government had exiled him. True, later she recalled him. But it was too late.

The second great occasion was the mass meeting in the Whitechapel district. The dignity and beauty of Queen's Hall and Regent Street had not served any purpose. The Jews for whom Herzl had intended them remained at a distance. The so-called Jewish aristocracy was unmoved. Indeed, some of its members even found it necessary to make unprovoked public declarations of their disagreement with the entire movement. The one exception was Sir Francis Montefiore, the nephew of the great Sir Moses Montefiore, that legendary figure among the Jews of eastern Europe. Sir Francis was good decoration; apart from his name, he represented no element in British Jewry. The other nephew of Sir Moses, Claude Montefiore, a rising scholar, would have been something more than a decoration, but he elected to remain among our opponents. Zionism had little luck among the rich and satisfied Jews—satisfied, that is, not only in material things, but also in their situation. They were quite alien to the meaning of the words "the national hunger."

The picture underwent a radical change when the Congress turned round and faced the Jewish masses. Among the rich Jews we had to exert ourselves in order to instil Zionism into them. Among the poor, we had to exert ourselves in order to instil into them something more than an instinctive feeling for Zionism. For instinctively the Jewish mass is Zionistic. We proved it with our meeting in the London ghetto. The entire leadership turned up at the meeting. Herzl himself, Nordau, Zangwill, Dr. Gaster, Profes-

sor Mandelstamm of Kiev, Ussishkin, Dr. Tschlenow, Dr. Cohen-Bernstein, Vladimir Tiomkin—all of them imposing figures. At first there were short addresses in English or German, but the audience caught fire only when it was addressed in its own language. With the first phrase of the speaker—"Greetings to you from your brothers on the other side of the water"—a thrill went through the hall. And when the speaker went on, "We have become weary of being a people of wanderers," the audience was in the hollow of his hand. They were simple words, simply uttered, simply meant. They created at once an atmosphere of sincerity and brotherhood. When the meeting was over, the members of the audience would not go home. Groups of them accompanied the delegates to their lodgings through the dark midnight streets.

The debates at the fourth Congress were vehement in tone. There were already strong oppositionist groups within the movement. On the one hand were a number of Rabbis, who wanted to place a religious stamp upon it. On the other hand were the representatives of a radical-democratic youth. They demanded that within the Zionist programme be included a wide range of social and cultural activities for the Jewish masses. The leaders of the young democrats were two of my friends, Leo Motzkin and Chaim Weizmann. The latter was younger than I by several years, but he belonged wholly within our group. He had already made a name for himself as one of the deadliest debaters, even against such men as Lenin and Plekhanov, whom he had fought in Switzerland. It was apparent to all that in this young man there was latent a leader of unusual power. But it occurred to no one that he was destined, in later years, to take the place of Herzl.

I shall say little about the impression that Herzl produced upon me. I was not astonished by the strength of it, for I came prejudiced in his favour. And yet it was stronger than even I had anticipated. And this was true despite the

fact that my first glimpse of him was nothing more than a glimpse. I was present at a session of the standing committee—the chief committee of the Congress—and was deeply absorbed in a debate which was then in progress. Suddenly the door opened, and a tall slender figure stood there. I heard the announcement that as the Congress would open in the afternoon instead of in the evening, the delegates would have to come in morning clothes instead of in evening dress. This was the rule in England. The figure then disappeared. Every one had risen to his feet—with the exception of myself. Motzkin, who sat by me, nudged me and said: "That was Herzl." I felt a sudden wave of emotion pass through me. I sprang to my feet, but it was too late. I caught only a glimpse of the man whom I had wanted to observe closely.

The Congress closed with a banquet in the main hall, a formal, frosty affair, after the English fashion. At the table on the dais sat a number of ladies in extreme décolleté; among the guests moved waiters with the traditional English side-whiskers. The atmosphere was icy. One of the strong champions of the orthodox wing in the Congress, Akiba Rabinowitch, a Rabbi of Pultowa, was outraged by the ladies in décolleté, and left the hall in protest. We did not believe either in the sincerity of his words or in the genuineness of his protest. A little later we discovered him in one of the loges upstairs, staring at the ladies in décolleté through his balled hands. I went over to him and said: "Rabbi, don't strain your eyesight. You can come closer." He afterwards developed into one of the ugliest opponents of Zionism.

At last the Congress closed. The hours of exaltation were over; it was time to return home. Not all of the delegates had their fare. No one will ever know with what difficulties a great many of them had scraped together their expense money.

A few days before the opening of the Congress, there was

also opened in London the new tube, the deeper of the two underground systems. Shortly after, when the Congress was in session, one of the tube trains got stuck in a tunnel, and stayed there for several hours. The company, anxious to avoid difficulties, and perhaps to anticipate actions for lost time, handed a gold sovereign to every passenger as he emerged from the train. This at least was the story that reached the Congress delegates. But among the Congress delegates alone something else was told—namely, that several delegates took to riding diligently in the tube in the hope that the accident would be repeated. The old saying that from the sublime to the ridiculous is only one step is not quite accurate. The two of them always run parallel.

During the last years of the nineteenth and the first of the twentieth century there suddenly sprang up in Russia and particularly among the Russian Jews of Goshen (the Pale of Settlement) a host of commercial schools. The government had till that time paid little attention to the question of commercial education. And suddenly the country literally sprouted these schools. Astonishingly enough, they were given new buildings, first-class equipment, and, so it was said, a higher teachers' budget than any other schools of that grade. What was the reason for this sudden transformation? Had the government realized as it were overnight that it was impossible to continue without a commercially trained younger generation? And where had the government found the means? In the matter of education it had always been frugal to the point of miserliness; in the general budget of the country education had occupied a place analogous to that of the appendix in the human body—a little organ in a dark corner, the uses of which no one quite understood. The Ministry of Education behaved like a badly oiled charity organization. It needed untold effort to get the money for a new school, and work enough to get even ordinary expenses for the existing schools.

But now came a second question, even more baffling than the first. In these new commercial schools Jewish children were received apparently without limit; in some places they constituted sixty and seventy per cent. of the total enrolment. Yet these were government schools in every respect—just like those others to which Jewish children were never admitted to more than ten per cent. of the enrolment, even when the school stood in the midst of a large Jewish population. Had the government then experienced *two* changes of heart, one in regard to education, the other in regard to the Jews?

There is a Russian proverb which says: "The box always opens at a touch"—if you know where to make it. The secret was easily explained. The Russian government had changed in nothing. Point number one was that all these new commercial schools were directed not from the Ministry of Education, but from the Ministry of Finance. Point number two was that for all of these commercial schools the Russian government used scarcely a kopeck of its own money. They had been founded at the expense of the business class, that is, largely at the expense of the Jews, who in the Pale of Settlement represented in many districts ninety-five per cent. of the business world. There were two explanations for this situation. First, the Jews, excluded from so many professions, were compelled to concentrate on commerce. Second, the government always saw to it that the Jewish merchant received a higher rating for tax purposes than did the Russian merchant. The number of Jewish merchants in the highest guild was therefore artificially increased. Until the introduction of a progressively graded income-tax, these mercantile taxes were the chief source of income of the commercial department of the government. For the Cherta, or Pale of Settlement, the Jews contributed ninety per cent. of the total realized. There were thousands of Russian merchants who did a large enough volume of business to be included in the first guild for tax purposes,

but who escaped into the third class or guild, and paid the minimum for their licences. There was one reason that made Jews anxious to be included in the higher guilds even when the volume of business did not justify it—the disabilities attached to Jews in the upper guilds were fewer than those for the Jews of the lower guilds. They had the right to send their representatives for brief stays into otherwise forbidden areas, like the great commercial centres: St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Nijni-Novgorod, etc. I was personally acquainted with some Jewish merchants who paid for the highest licence when their business warranted only the lowest. But they did business with the licence itself. They sold their rights to others, in fragments. They sent representatives outside the Pale for merchants who could not afford the higher licence. The government knew of this device, but said nothing. The more the higher licences, the greater the government income.

Count Witte, the ablest Minister of Finance that Russia has ever possessed, occupied a place of his own among Russian statesmen. Opinions may differ as to the sincerity of his liberalism, concerning which he did much boasting. But his bitterest enemies were forced to admit that he was a man of character, of independent views, and of large ideas. Nicholas the Second inherited him from his father, and held on to him more out of fear than out of inclination. For the man himself, the Emperor had a genuine hatred. But he feared him because of his great influence outside of Russia. He also feared him because of his obvious abilities, and Witte had refined into an art the management of his master, whom he understood thoroughly as the opposite of his honest and narrow-brained father. Witte considered the Emperor irresponsible and false. He had no faith in his friendship, and relied rather for his position on the fear that he knew how to inspire. In his attitude toward the Jews Witte did not go one-tenth as far as a man like Swiatopolk Mirsky, yet, in spite of the fact that he was not averse to making

use of anti-Semitic tendencies when a pet plan of his own was at stake, he cannot be designated as a genuine anti-Semite. As a matter of principle, he stood for the gradual emancipation of the Jews of Russia. It may be that in this respect he was influenced by his wife, née Nurock, a daughter of a well-known Jewish family.

It was this Witte who announced a great plan for the founding of a system of secondary schools, which were to prepare young people for higher technical and political-economic institutions. Both the secondary and the higher institutions were to remain under his direct control. He, more than any other statesman, knew how backward Russia was among the other European nations in the matter of commerce and industry. He also knew that to turn over his plan to the Ministry of Education would be to kill it. In order to create the means to remain independent of the Ministry of Education, he counted on the exploitation of the disabilities of the Jews, and he counted well. The Jews jumped at the opportunity, expensive though it was, to provide their children with secondary-school education, especially when it was bound up with certain rights. The government sold, and the Jews bought, certain human privileges for their children. Incidentally the government uncovered its hypocrisy. When instituting the limitations against the number of Jewish children in its schools, its argument had been that it had to protect the Russian population from the evil influences of the Jews. By the concessions which it now made in the new commercial schools, it showed itself ready to "sell" the Russian people for gold. Few incidents in Russian Jewish history illustrate more clearly the motives and excuses of the Russian government in its attitude toward the Jewish people.

The chief founders of the commercial schools in Ekaterinoslav were my two best friends, Moisse Karpas and Michael Maidansky. Through their efforts the necessary means were raised, and Ekaterinoslav was provided with a new school

built after the latest models and excellently equipped. The school programme included religious instruction, and the Jewish religious teacher was to be paid at the same rate per hour as every other teacher. The position was offered me, and I accepted it, simply because I wanted the income. The Rabbinate did not give me enough to live on. The stipend was a very small one, and I wanted to be rid of the expenses which were connected with the position. Also, I hated the official functions that were bound up with the Rabbinate. I wanted therefore to obtain a sufficient number of side-jobs to enable me to attend to nothing but my addresses and my educational work.

The four lowest classes were opened first, and my pupils ranged from the ages of nine to fourteen years. I soon found out that the work was much more difficult than I had anticipated. My experience with the pupils of the girls' high school had misled me. I had thought I would be able to use the same methods here: simple, interesting narrative, without too close a control, and without technical methods. I was wrong. With such youngsters one needed not only knowledge of the subject, one needed also experience and pedagogical training. I had neither of these, and book learning was not a substitute. In the youngest classes I simply failed to maintain discipline. Children of that age are like untamed horses. They feel at once whether the rider is sure of his seat or not. I was very unsure of mine—and they made me still unsurer. I sought the advice of my colleagues, and particularly of the director, Siniavsky. The latter was all for modern methods. He believed that gentleness went much further than severity. He advised me to behave toward my pupils like an older brother. I liked the idea—but the pupils had other views. They wanted me to behave like a younger brother. With the older pupils I had less difficulty, but the youngsters took a great deal out of me.

Director Siniavsky liked to play the rôle of liberal, even tinging himself a faint—very faint—red. But he awoke no

confidence in us. His friendliness was overdone, and it did not stand even a little strain. This I discovered in connection with what should have been a trifling incident, but apparently became something more for him. At the time of which I am writing, there was opened in Ekaterinoslav an engineering academy in connection with the new coal-mines that were being developed in the region. The director of the academy thought it would be a good thing if his students could be persuaded to take an interest in something more than merely technical matters. A debating society was founded, and I was invited to deliver a lecture on Vladimir Soloviov. In the audience was Siniavsky, and he took part in the discussion which followed the lecture. In answering, I treated him not like my director, but like any other member of the audience. He cooled off toward me, and remained cool for a long time.

My teaching in the commercial school absorbed a great deal of my time at first, but with practice I learned to do just as good work in fewer hours. Most of my time I gave to literary work. I wrote at first for *Der Jud*, a good literary weekly edited by my friend Joseph Luria. To this was soon added *Der Freind*, a daily founded in St. Petersburg by my friend Saul Ginsberg, whom I had known years before in Minsk. With *Der Freind* I had a regular position, having to supply eight articles a month, four of them publicistic and four of them feuilletons. Both of the papers mentioned above were in Yiddish. I also wrote, in Hebrew for *Hazman*, edited by Ben Zion Katz, in St. Petersburg, and for Achad Ha-Am's monthly, *Hashiloach*. The latter was the most distinguished Hebrew periodical of the time. As editor Achad Ha-Am was as exacting as in everything else. Not a phrase was admitted into the periodical unless it was in perfect Hebrew. He read every manuscript closely, and frequently altered phrases. But he confined himself to matters of style only; the content was left untouched, even when the writer was attacking the views of the editor. I was commissioned

by Achad Ha-Am to write for the *Hashiloach* a review of the month, including everything that had taken place in the Jewish world, whether of a political or of a literary character, whether in Russia or abroad. On this article, as I remember, I used to spend more time than on all the others put together, and I was immensely proud of the fact that the exacting master very seldom found a word to alter in my Hebrew. Years after, when both of us had settled in Palestine, and we would spend hours together daily, he would speak of his *Hashiloach*, and of the men who had worked with him on it. He had always considered me, he said, among the best of his collaborators.

It was a busy time in my life. Once more I worked as I had used to work in my childhood. Once more I sat at my desk late into the night, and sometimes until the early dawn —this though I frequently had to turn up at the school at eight o'clock in the morning. But I got along with little sleep. During my two years in Grodno I had laid in a heavy stock.

I undertook many tasks and found time for all of them. I was very sensitive in the matter of punctuality. Neither the Yiddish nor the Hebrew papers ever had to remind me of my obligations. The articles always arrived on time, and I achieved a reputation for something like pedantry. It was rumoured among my friends that whenever I had to catch a train, I always caught the one before.

Every Friday evening an assembly would be held in my house, of my Jewish and Russian friends, the latter mostly from among the teachers. These evenings were supposed to be devoted to purely social ends, and it was always agreed in advance that political discussion was barred. But the agreement always collapsed. For a while we would sit in front of glasses of tea, talking innocuously of art and literature and drama and what not. But the itch would be felt in the air. A chance remark would sound, to somebody, like a provocation to a duel. A retort was made. The riposte came

back. Before we knew it we were in the midst of a passionate discussion of the old, wearisome subject, the sufferings of Russia. The debates lasted late into the night, and it was difficult to bring them to an end. The debaters dragged the discussion into the vestibule, they rolled it downstairs, and it died only when they emerged into the street. The street had a sudden sobering effect on every one. Mouths were shut tight—not against the cold, but against the police.

Outside of Russia much fun has been poked at the eternal talkativeness of the Russian, his perpetual readiness to debate. It has been represented as a specifically Russian characteristic, particularly in the case of the Jew. But I am quite convinced that the most taciturn Englishman, if forced to sit, as the Russians sat, on the mouth of a volcano, would begin to talk, loudly and volubly. The repressed emotions are not to be denied. When men's hands are tied they wag their tongues with threefold energy.

The most difficult of all human tasks is to pass the time pleasantly. He who passes it pleasantly in work is among the rare favourites of chance. I was among these favourites during my stay in Ekaterinoslav. I worked long and hard, and in most of my work found complete inner satisfaction.

A couple of years passed thus, smoothly, without surprises of any kind. I became used to my congregation, and my congregation to me. It even learned to forgive me for the accident of my birth among the Litvaks. With the growth of a new intimacy and mutual respect, my social work too became easier. Until then I had taken part in communal affairs as an official, a rôle which I disliked so cordially that I made it as unimportant as possible. When I was finally accepted for my own sake, I found these affairs less intolerable, and I finished up by developing a liking for them.

Thus I took an active interest in the Jewish employés of the big Jewish firms. These men, I discovered, worked seven days in the week all the year round. The situation had

arisen in the following manner. Sunday was the official day of rest, when all businesses had to be closed. The Jews would have liked to keep closed on the Sabbath and open on Sunday, but on Saturday the non-Jewish houses were open, and it would have been difficult to keep closed, and on Sunday the law compelled them to keep closed. But for the Jew who had desecrated the Sabbath, it seemed intolerable that, in addition, he should have to sanctify Sunday. So that the employés were kept at work—only the business of selling was suspended, in accordance with the law. The employer worked together with his employés behind closed doors. The police knew of this practice, but connived at it—it probably made more by keeping its eyes shut than the employer did by keeping his business open. I am convinced that the Jews worked on Sunday not for economic reasons. It was the psychological factor that counted most. "You make me desecrate my Sabbath: I in turn will desecrate yours."

On the surface, it looked like a shabby practice; as though the Jews were making special profits on the desecration of their own Sabbath. It was not, however, the question of the desecrated Sabbath that drew me into the fight. As far as that point was concerned, there were orthodox Rabbis enough to protest. I was an official, and I was very careful not to intrude into fields which others considered their own. Nor did I want to be taken for a spiritual father, for I liked that rôle even less than the rôle of the official. I was not concerned with the formal side of Judaism. Moreover, I knew that the orthodox Rabbis had protested often enough, and loudly enough, and without effect.

I approached the problem from another side. I took up the cudgels not on behalf of the desecrated Sabbath, but on behalf of the desecrated human beings. For three months I conducted a personal campaign. I went from Synagogue to Synagogue and preached against the practice. I explained to the Jews of Ekaterinoslav that elementary considerations of humanity cried out against the seven-day week. I spoke

of the basic concept of sanctity in Jewish thought. The Sabbath was not made holy by a decree in its own right; its sanctity accumulated during the six days of work. For it is written: "Six days shalt thou labour and the seventh dedicate to thy creator." The two parts of the command are equally valid; if there is any emphasis, in fact, it is on the first part. The sanctity lay in the labour, and what I protested against was the desecration of the man who laboured.

My arguments sounded strange. I seemed to be defending the workingman against desecration of Sunday just as much as against desecration of the Sabbath. But the Jews of Ekaterinoslav understood me, and something like a miracle happened. A large delegation of the Jewish business men of Ekaterinoslav waited on me, and assured me that from that day on they would keep their businesses closed on the Sabbath. The public was amazed by my success, and my stock stood high. It stayed high for a month. During four Saturdays Ekaterinoslav looked like a Jewish city. On the fifth Saturday the employers came as usual to Synagogue, listened with much spiritual joy to the sermons of the Rabbis, participated unctuously in the prayers, and kept their employés busily at work, buying and selling as heretofore. Again the same delegation came to me. With tears in their eyes they explained that it was impossible to continue the practice any longer. As far as Sunday was concerned, they would see to it that their employés should have as little work as possible. But to keep closed on the Sabbath, when the non-Jewish firms were open, meant ruin. They knew very well that it was the Sabbath I really cared about. But what was to be done? "The Jewish people is in exile." I did not say a single word to them. I saw before me the spiritual tragedy of the Jewish people.

This was not the only attempt I made to swim against the current, but always I discovered that it was impossible to organize Jewish life on Jewish foundations when the sur-

rounding world exerted such continuous and relentless pressure. This is true not only in lands of oppression, but in lands of civic equality. I realized more and more clearly that the radical solution lay in the one formula: A Jewish life must have a Jewish land.

As far as the government was concerned, I had little to complain of personally. I had reason to know that I was closely watched. All my activities were known—down to my attendance at illegal meetings. At most of these I came in contact only with the Jewish youth of Ekaterinoslav, which at that time had not crystallized into groups, but was a mixture of Socialists and nationalists. I had made up my mind to go my own way. If the government objected, I would resign my position. I said this openly to Prince Swiatopolk Mirsky, and as long as he was Governor all went well. But suddenly there came a change in the administration. Swiatopolk Mirsky was called to the position of Under-Secretary of State for Home Affairs, and his place in Ekaterinoslav was taken by Count Keller. Jews and Russians alike regretted the departure of Swiatopolk Mirsky. His farewell to me was that of a friend. I told him that I doubted whether, under the new régime, I would be able to carry on my work as freely as I had done till then. He tried to reassure me. He told me that he had already spoken about me to the new Governor. Count Keller was, of course, another type of man, a conservative, and a German militarist of the Baltic school. But he could also be a gentleman. The Prince's words did not reassure me. I waited for the new-comer with mixed feelings.

In his first reception of me Count Keller was very friendly. He spoke much of Swiatopolk Mirsky, and praised him to the skies. But I noted that he did this more for my sake than for the sake of his predecessor. I was suspicious of the man, and I did not relax as I had done when Swiatopolk Mirsky first received me. I did not trust Keller. He wore, at

this first meeting, the uniform that Swiatopolk Mirsky had worn, that of a general and aide-de-camp to the Czar. But whereas on Swiatopolk Mirsky the uniform had seemed, somehow, misplaced, it sat on Count Keller like something he had been born in. I saw before me a soldier, a man who wore epaulets even when he was naked. I was not at all surprised that the government should have appointed a military man to the civil governorship of such a large province as Ekaterinoslav. It had appointed an even more militaristic type, General Vanovsky, to the Ministry of Education, and had seen no contradiction in the appointment. The government had, in fact, adopted the plan of appointing military men to as many civilian posts as possible. It trusted soldiers more than civilians.

From the outside, the government made an impression of strength. Within, the system was already rotten. This last plan showed how weak it was, and also helped to make it even weaker. I will give one instance that will show the helplessness and bewilderment of the government. It had made compulsory military service a *punishment* for revolutionary activity. Seldom has any government behaved so idiotically. On the one hand it asserted that the army was its securest and most faithful support; on the other hand it degraded it to the level of a prison. On the one hand it surrounded the army with a thousand safe-guards, lest it catch cold from revolutionary winds. On the other hand it threw open the doors and admitted the germ-carriers *en masse*. Within the army of the Czar formed a small army of the revolutionary youth. Such imbecilities were possible, I believe, only in the Russia of that time. They indicated that the government had lost its head completely, and that its actions were dictated by panic. It was in that spirit that Count Keller was appointed to the governorship of Ekaterinoslav. He was to rule with an iron hand.

I must, however, confess at the outset that toward me Keller behaved like a gentleman. He used to invite me to

him even oftener than his predecessor. Later on it became something like a law that I had to be at his house on Sundays for dinner. There I would meet with the members of his staff. The Count was no enemy of the bottle, and his example fortified the natural inclinations of his staff. Myself, as Rabbi, he exempted from the duty of keeping pace with him. The meals, too, were prepared specially for me. Countess Keller, née Princess Shachavskaia, used to supervise the preparation of my meals, and guarantee that they were kosher. At one meal, in a fit of abstraction, I helped myself to potatoes from another dish. The Countess was greatly upset, and at once drew my attention to my error. In front of me stood my own dish, which contained kosher potatoes, not fried in lard. After dinner the company would stroll in the fine gardens which surrounded the house, and amuse itself with rifle practice. On the first occasion I remembered my army days, and astonished the company by demonstrating that I could handle a rifle respectably. Whether the bullets which the Countess handed me were also kosher I cannot say, but it would not have surprised me, for when a countess takes to *kashruth* she can outdo the most orthodox Rabbi.

In one of the houses opposite the Governor's house lived one of my friends, a remarkable person by the name of Simon Stanislavsky. The Stanislavskys were among the first families of Ekaterinoslav. They were among the earliest Jews to settle in the district, and their attitude was much like that of Americans descended from the *Mayflower*. Simon Stanislavsky was a bachelor of fifty, a good Hebrew scholar and a specialist in Russian Jewish history. He frequently published monographs in the Russian Jewish press. He belonged to the small circle of intellectuals, and was greatly under the influence of Ussishkin, not because he was a Zionist but because he was a great coward. He regarded Ussishkin as a sort of Samson, and hung on to him in an effort to conceal his timidity. He was among the most frequent

visitors in my house, and I doubt if he missed a single address of mine. Whenever I met him, on a Sunday, on my way to the Governor's, he would ask me, with an ironic smile: "Are you going to eat kosher potatoes and shoot with real bullets?"

According to the Russian law every governor in the Pale could have between one and three Jewish officials, who carried the title of "learned Jews," as specialists in Jewish affairs. Their salary was nine hundred roubles a year; they received this not from the regular treasury, but from the special fund created by the tax on kosher meat. This fund occasionally grew to a respectable number of millions of roubles, and the government was not ashamed to take an occasional slice of it for non-Jewish purposes. It was widely known, for example, that during the Russo-Japanese war the government lifted ten million roubles out of the kosher meat tax for general war purposes. Count Keller was interested in the Jewish question, and would often consult me at length on Jewish matters both in Russia and abroad. To show his faith in me, he appointed me one of the "learned Jews" and occasionally delegated me to prepare documents for him on specific Jewish questions. These he incorporated in his reports to headquarters.

The most important piece of work he gave me was to supervise the Jewish colonies in the Ekaterinoslav district. These colonies had been founded, together with German colonies, in the forties of the last century, and their purpose had been the development of a waste region. At the time of my appointment there were in these colonies some eight thousand Jews. I travelled through the district for some six weeks, and found occasion to visit the German colonies too. The contrast was striking. The German colonies made a remarkable impression, with their rich fields, their gardens, their houses, and their systematic development. The Jewish colonies were, by comparison, pitiful. The Jews told me that there were two reasons for this difference. The best

land had gone to the Germans, and also the latter had received their land outright, whereas the Jews were tenants. There was a third, obvious reason—the Germans were farmers and the children of farmers, the Jews were children of the ghetto. They had much, much to learn, and in this particular respect learning does not mean simply the acquisition of technical information, but the slow adaptation of the person to a new world. And this is no light task.

I prepared a report in which I also touched on the general question of permitting the Jew to settle increasingly on the soil. What use Keller made of my report I do not know. But on one occasion, in the midst of a conversation on this very question, he suddenly and quite irrelevantly exclaimed: "If you only knew how difficult it is to work under a minister like Von Plehve!" Later, Keller showed that he meant this seriously. When the Russo-Japanese war broke out, Keller, against the wishes of the central government, gave up his administrative job and went off to the war. I think there has never been a war in which the life of the higher officers was as dissolute as in the Russo-Japanese. But Count Keller was an exception. He sought out and was given the most dangerous positions, and before long he was killed.

It is curious that few people regard themselves as tyrants. Yet in one respect every human being exercises in an important province—that of his own life—a tyrannical and irresponsible rule. And the characteristics that men develop in the possession of absolute power over others, all of us develop in the possession of absolute power over ourselves. We are seldom called upon to render account for the repressions and cruelties we have practised on ourselves, but they are numerous and abominable.

In my own case, repression took the form of a deliberate ignoring of certain necessary aspects of my own life, a refusal to live myself out completely. Ekaterinoslav was the

time of my growth. My energies developed rapidly, I felt a great hunger toward life, and I satisfied this hunger through my addresses, my writings, and my communal activities. I was contented—sometimes even happy. And yet there were moments when it seemed to me that all this work was being done by some one else *through* me, and the essential I of me was being thrust aside. Something was lacking to make my life my own, but what that something was I could not discover. More accurately, I did not try to discover. A search was going on, but it was not I who was conducting it.

Once there came to us, as visitor, an old friend of my far-off student days. She stayed a couple of weeks. She was married, and the mother of several children. Probably she too was seeking something. She observed me closely during all the visit, and when she was about to leave she said she had been disappointed. She had come to see her old friend Shmarya Levin; all she had found was a Rabbi, a writer, a lecturer, a social worker, and several other functionaries rolled into one. But where was her old friend, the man Levin? I remembered then the story of a housewife who suddenly discovered that three pounds of butter were missing. She asked the cook what had become of them and the latter said: "The cat ate up all the butter." Whereupon the housewife grabbed the cat and placed her on the scales. The cat weighed three pounds. "The butter is here," said the mistress drily. "But where is the cat?" The cook could not answer her mistress, and I could not answer my friend. I did not even understand, at that moment, how searching was the question that my friend had put to me. But she had asked a woman's question, an elemental one.

I saw my parents very little during the latter years of their life. The journey from Ekaterinoslav used to last, in those days, nearly forty-eight hours. For me it was difficult to spare the time, for my parents it was difficult to stand the physical strain. I felt that we were drifting apart,

and I suffered. But a new factor had entered into our relationship. I was no longer dependent on my parents, as in the days before Ekaterinoslav. True, things had not turned out as I had expected, but with my many activities I did manage to make a living. Yet I was ashamed to admit to myself that my material independence had anything to do with the increasing alienation between myself and my parents. I thought it was merely the years, which wear down all things, including love. But whatever the cause, it was clear to me that my parents no longer occupied that place in my thoughts which had once been theirs. They still occupied, formally, the place of honour, but somehow the place of honour was not so impressive as it once had been.

For some years before his death my father suffered greatly from a disease which affected his feet and made it almost impossible for him to get about. He was taken to various places abroad, but to no effect. Many of the doctors even asserted that his malady was functional and not organic. Such explanations, though they often serve to reassure the friends of the patient, have the opposite effect on the patient himself. For the patient wants to be taken very seriously, and when the doctor as much as says that the patient is suffering from nothing more than a form of hypochondria, the latter is offended. The doctor apparently refuses to believe him, in revenge he makes up his mind not to believe the doctor. Moreover, he is provoked into trying to prove that the doctor is quite wrong. His sickness is real, and independent of his own will. However this be, I found my father, when I visited him, suffering pain and raging against the doctors. But besides his physical anguish, my father also suffered mentally in his last years. Of this latter side of his distress my brothers and myself suspected nothing. We only knew that something was on the mind of our pious father. His closest confidant was my brother-in-law, Asher Shafrai, the great scholar and still greater *schlimihl*. Suddenly my father began to spend many hours together with him, in

intimate talk—something that he had not done before. But none of us asked Asher what the subject of these secret conversations was. None of us had the courage to look behind the curtain. My brother-in-law only used to say that we had never understood what a saint our father was, and to what extent he remembered every act of his life and weighed it in the balance of his conscience.

My mother bore all this in silence and humility. She too was ill, with diabetes, but she forgot her own illness in her worry for my father, and if she had only been able to she would have added his pains to her own. But she was helpless, and she had to sit by and watch the life slowly ebbing from her Samuel Chaim. She resorted to her favourite remedies of secret fasts and prayers. During all the years of his illness my father had a special servant assigned to him, but my mother did not relax her own attentions for a moment. She would even miss Synagogue services for his sake, and that was the greatest of her sacrifices. In the hall of our house there used to hang a large hand-drawn portrait of my father. A couple of times I saw my mother standing before that picture and praying, not out of the prayer-book or audibly, but silently, as Hannah, the mother of Samuel, prayed in the tabernacle. It was strange to me, a pious, God-fearing Jewess standing in prayer before a picture—even though it was not to the picture, but for the man portrayed there, that she prayed.

She had made her peace with God, but she prayed for one favour—that her husband might live another two years and reach the seventy years laid down by the psalmist. She did not want her husband to be cut off before he had lived out his life. It was not out of love of life that she prayed, for their sufferings were too heavy, but out of piety. Her prayer was not accepted. My father died between his sixty-eighth and sixty-ninth year. There was no consolation in this world for my mother. Her life had been bound to my father's since she had been a child of fourteen. She survived

my father only fourteen days. A little while before her death she was taken to Minsk, in the hope that her life might be prolonged a little, and there she died. Among Jews it is not the custom to transport the dead. "Where the tree fell, there let it lie." My mother lies buried in the cemetery of Minsk.

We were assembled in Swislowitz, four sons and one daughter, and nearly a score of grandchildren. In the old house of my father, and in the village of my birth, lying peacefully between its two rivers and among its fields and forests, nothing had changed. We felt like the branches of a tree when the trunk has fallen. In that moment we felt closer to one another, tried to be gentler and more thoughtful than was our wont. But it was just this added touch of gentleness that made us feel that we had lost the strongest thing in our life. That power which had sustained us all these years, the power of Father and Mother, was suddenly gone, and for ever.

The "baby" of our family had always been my younger brother Eliezer, concerning whom I have already written. Had he been a stranger, I would have written much more. In the latter years of my father's life it was Eliezer who conducted the business, which was no longer as big as it had been. My older brother Meyer, who had a large family, had had to shift for himself. A younger brother, Joshua, a dentist, was going his own way. It was the youngest son who inherited the business and the traditions of my father's house, that is to say, he saw to it that none of the employés should be dismissed, and that the families that had made their living by the business—and particularly the family of my sister—should continue to make their living as heretofore. And when we sat together after my father's death, our eyes turned to the youngest among us, to him on whom the burden of responsibility had fallen heaviest. We trusted him to continue decently the tradition that my father had built up, together with his house, in so many years of labour.

This was my last visit to Swislowitz. I never saw the village of my birth again. I said farewell to the people, to the rivers and fields and forests, and in my heart thanked them for the marvellous memories of childhood with which they had filled all my life.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN: GATHERING STORMS

THIS is the way of history: When it has accepted a plan, and defined a goal for itself, it does not set out in a hurry. Slowly it gathers the necessary forces, and gives or rather hints a warning of its purpose. Its purpose is not its own; it is bound by laws which it must fulfil. But it is not wholly ruthless, for the wise may take the warning, and prepare themselves. Later, when the forces are all gathered, and the process of fulfilment is at hand, it grows stronger and more insistent. And finally the day of reckoning comes, when those who would not read the signs, and have refused to prepare themselves, are broken and cast aside.

The time that I am now about to describe embraces only a few years. But they were the years of crisis and of judgment, and in them are gathered the processes of ages. It was the beginning of the end of a long, long epoch of slavery, and the approach of a period of freedom which had already given first signs in the seventies of the last century. How much time must yet pass before that freedom is realized no one can tell. But when I concentrate on the few most critical years there rises before me a remarkable picture. As a rule, if we turn to look at the past, we see the steady stream of the years, smooth or stormy. But these four years from 1903 to 1906 are a double picture of two streams—for the Russian people the tempestuous waters flowed upward, and for the Russian government they flowed downward.

As always, seen from the outside, the government pre-

sented itself as a powerful and impregnable fortress. But this was the façade. Within the building were chaos and decay and despair. In the blindness of despair, the government hastened its own doom, and did more damage from within than did the waiting masses from the outside. In their panic, the rulers of Russia lost every vestige of decency and shame. More like a gang of desperate adventurers than a class responsible for the welfare of a country, they embarked on mad enterprises in which disaster could be the only reward.

The final collapse of the Russian government began with the pogrom of Kishineff. The reader will suspect in this statement either the one-sidedness or the chauvinism of a Jew who wishes to see history under a Jewish aspect. Yet I feel myself quite free from this tendency. I do not exaggerate at all the rôle which the Jews played in Russian life—and no one accuses them of having played a small one. But I regard the pogrom of Kishineff as the beginning of the collapse because it revealed with breath-taking suddenness the ghastly rottenness which had eaten into the system of government. It is quite true that even in previous pogroms the government had had a share: but the pogrom of Kishineff was all its own. It was born in the black brain of Von Plehve. Every detail of it was worked out in the dark rooms of his ministry. Even the instructors were sent down from St. Petersburg. The hooligans were a home product, and as good a crop could be found in Bessarabia as in any part of Russia. There is an ancient Jewish legend which tells that Pharaoh the persecutor became a leper, and his advisers told him to bathe daily in the blood of Jewish children. For the leprosy of the Russian government Von Plehve prescribed and arranged a blood bath of Jews of all ages. But perhaps the reader will ask: "How was it possible for a government to exist at all if at the head of it stood men with the education of corporals and the psychology of lynchers?" That very question, in those very words, was asked in the first Russian Duma by Prince Urusoff. I do not know the answer,

but the Kishineff pogrom may well stand as a warning to sundry governments today.

The civilized world, accustomed as it was to pogroms against the Jews, was horrified by the pogrom of Kishineff, which went beyond all others in its bestiality. The cry of protest went up from the whole world; and loudest among the voices were those of non-Jews, who demanded the intervention of their respective governments. The governments could not intervene. The slaughter of Jews, Armenians, and others is "an internal affair," and according to the international etiquette-book it is not proper for an alien government to step in. Within Russia itself the protests were few, but among those few was the voice of the man who had been excommunicated by the Russian Church, Leo Tolstoi. I do not know what effect that had on the Russian masses; the Jews did find a little comfort in it.

The Jewish world, and particularly that part of it which lived beyond the seas, was shaken convulsively to its foundations. In addition to the immediate thrill of brotherly sympathy, there was that subtle reflection: "If not for an accident, it might have been ourselves. They might have fled from Russia, we might have remained there to meet their fate." The helplessness of the Jewish people was once more uncovered in all its revolting nakedness. In a poem of rage and misery which the Kishineff pogrom inspired, Bialik poured forth the anger of the Jewish people against the pogrom hooligans, against itself, and against its own God. It is one of the most remarkable utterances in all literature. For, with the impartiality of utter despair, it spares neither the Jews nor their God; for the former it has the name of beggars, and for the latter the name of bankrupt. Like a flash that poem travelled from end to end of Jewish Russia, and everywhere the Jews learned it by heart.

The Kishineff pogrom preceded very closely the sixth Zionist Congress, the one in which the Uganda question almost shattered the movement, not only from the organiza-

tion, but also from the ideological, point of view. The leader himself, Herzl, had been badly shaken by the pogrom. He who had kept his eyes fixed only on the big future, who for the sake of it had rejected the small colonization schemes, and had made himself a host of opponents, suddenly realized that the claims of the present cannot be ignored. He began to look therefore for a side-path, an indirect approach to his problem. He was ready to compromise. He would accept, as a halfway station, the territory of Uganda. He declared, indeed, that it *was* nothing but a halfway station. But this was the first time that he had ever spoken in half-terms. In a critical moment he lost his balance. So I see the connection between Kishineff and the Uganda proposal; so I saw it then when I was in the midst of the conflict. Kishineff led to Uganda, and Uganda broke the Zionist leader.

Shortly before the Uganda Congress Herzl undertook a journey through Russia and had a long interview with the minister Von Plehve. If Herzl, who was a stranger to Russian affairs, had taken good advice, he would never have made this journey. This is not because of the storm of protest which Herzl's visit to Von Plehve roused among Jewish radicals, who regarded Von Plehve as a man not fit to be dealt with. Herzl was, after all, acting in the capacity of foreign minister of the Jews, and it happens often enough that in such a capacity a man of the finest character must often treat with a man of the meanest. The journey was inadvisable simply because the most solemn promise of Von Plehve was utterly without value. Among his virtues, not the least was that of cynical lying.

On his return journey Herzl stopped off in Vilna. The Jewish community gave him a royal reception, the same kind that it had given many years before to Sir Moses Montefiore, when the latter visited St. Petersburg in order to discuss the Jewish situation with the government. Just as in the first instance, the Jewish community came to meet the guest with a Scroll of the Law—the greatest honour that

can be bestowed upon a visitor. It was in Vilna that Herzl came, for the first time in his life, in contact with the simple Jewish masses. He was deeply impressed by them. Indeed, the visit to Vilna was the one positive gain of his journey in Russia.

Once again the Zionist delegates came together in the beautiful and hospitable city of Basle. Once more the wandering parliament of the wandering people held its sessions in the Casino. It was an impatient horde of delegates, conscious of the fearful emergency, that waited for the Congress to be opened. But something more than impatience was written on their faces: worry, uncertainty, and the sadness of hope deferred.

Six years had now passed since the leader had called them to the first Congress, and had startled and inspired them by his first appearance and his first speeches. Six whole years—and of all the hopes that he had then inspired in them not one seemed a jot nearer fulfilment. The Jewish magnates were still deaf and dumb; of the El Arish offer of the British government nothing had come. And meanwhile? Meanwhile there was Kishineff.

It was widely known that the leader had something of great moment to reveal to the Congress, but the nature of that something was closely guarded in the inner circle. It was the offer of the British Colonial Minister Chamberlain of a charter for a certain section of the territory of Uganda in British East Africa. Herzl wanted it to be understood—and he repeated this over and over again—that Uganda was but a stepping-stone. It was not Palestine. But for the sake of their present sufferings the Jews ought with gratitude to accept this generous offer on the part of the British government. I was sitting, when Herzl revealed the whole matter to the delegates, on the platform of the Congress, being one of its secretaries, and I was therefore able to watch closely the effect that the announcement produced on the faces of the listeners. They listened with almost agonized attention. On

their faces was written astonishment, admiration—but not a sign of protest. I do not believe that any of the delegates realized at the first moment the significance of what had happened. The magnanimity of the British offer sufficed, during the first instants, to obscure all other considerations. And yet the astonishment and admiration were not such as might have been expected. It was only when the general session broke up, and the various country groups assembled, that it was realized that a crisis had suddenly appeared in the Zionist movement.

The Russian delegation was the largest in the Congress. Its leader was Yechiel Tschlenow, for Ussishkin was not present at the Uganda Congress—he happened to be, at that time, on a visit to Palestine. Tschlenow, as I have indicated, was not a man to look for battle. Also he was a passionate admirer of Herzl. He was the first to open the deliberations of the Russian delegation. He did not venture an opinion. All he did was to analyze the significance of the offer of Uganda. After him spoke Weizmann, who even then exerted considerable influence over the younger and more radical elements of the Congress. He was known for the swiftness of his ideas, and for the devastating wit with which he could defend them. But he too, on this occasion, did not find himself so easily. Even in him the delegates noticed uncertainty.

I was the third to speak. It would be untrue and ungenerous to insinuate that either Tschlenow or Weizmann lacked the Zionist courage to give the decision for which the delegates were waiting, and that they had therefore left it to me. It happened to be my good fortune that I spoke third, when all of us had had a little time to gather our thoughts. I, among others, had already sobered up from my first bewildering impressions. The general mood, clarifying the situation as it did, helped me to become clear too. I caught and, out of conviction, reflected the mood. After me others spoke, like myself in a spirit of the strongest opposition to

the Uganda offer. But there were others who were just as strongly for it. The session became tense. Interruptions like "Suicide!" "Criminal!" "Treachery!" began to fly from all sides. Without being formally chosen, I became the leader of the opposition to Uganda.

In the general sessions of the Congress we passed through hours of storm. Max Nordau, in principle opposed to Uganda—though we learned this only later—submerged his own views in his loyalty to Herzl, and defended Uganda in a speech that was more remarkable for its wit than for its power of conviction. One of the staunch defenders of Uganda was Leopold Greenberg, for several decades the editor of the *Jewish Chronicle* of London; he had been the man to bring Herzl into close contact with the British government. European Jewry was divided into two almost clean-cut parts: western Jewry was for the project, eastern Jewry was against it. Of course there were exceptions, for we must bear in mind that the division into east-European and west-European was psychological as well as geographic. It is a remarkable fact that the majority of the orthodox Rabbis were in favour of the project. There was even one delegate who made a bet in advance that this would be the case, and won his bet. For the orthodox Rabbis Uganda was a real find. The building of Palestine by profane means had contained an element of competition with their favourite concept of the Messiah, but Uganda could be built without interference in Messianic affairs.

The vote was taken by roll-call, and every delegate had to answer either Yes or No. The No-sayers shouted more loudly, but the number of the Yes-sayers was greater. Out of some five hundred delegates, only one hundred and eighty-five voted No. It was therefore decided that an expedition be sent to the territory of Uganda, in order that detailed information might be obtained as to its possibilities. Without any further announcement the minority rose as one man, and left the Congress. On the faces of many of them there

were tears. They felt they had lived through a third Destruction.

On several occasions, during the Congress, Herzl invited me with the other leaders of the opposition to meet with him in the council room. He tried to soothe me. I observed his face, and I did not envy him his victory. He understood well enough: one more victory of that kind and the Zionist Organization would be done for. But those who stood near to him did not understand the matter thus. They did not understand that they were undermining the sources of the Zionist impulse. They were playing politics not for but with Zionism. They had weakened the moral power of that immemorial Jewish demand upon which Zionism was based.

When, in the Congress hall, the map of Palestine was covered by a map of Uganda, the delegates felt as though they were watching a total eclipse of the sun. The map of Uganda had been hastily prepared by David Trietsch, one of the most curious figures of the Zionist Congresses—and one of the most skilful men in the rapid preparation of plans for the swift realization of Zionist ideals. Trietsch, who was the father of the Cyprus plan, as well as of many other plans connected with countries near Palestine, greatly loved Palestine. He had passed some years in the country under the reign of Abdul Hamid. And when he covered the map of Palestine with one of Uganda, he really did not mean to offend the symbol of Palestine. But such was the effect of his hasty act.

The last night of the Congress was a wakeful night for all of us. In particular, the oppositionists held an all-night session. Late in the night the leader appeared in our midst, and asked to be heard. A resolution had to be passed before he was permitted to address us. While the resolution was being passed, Herzl waited in the corridor. The proud leader humbled himself before his followers. We resolved to hear him. Once again he assured us that Uganda was not a substitute for Palestine, but only a halfway station. He pro-

duced no effect. There was no applause. We had faith in Herzl—but we had no faith in Uganda.

After a sleepless night, the oppositionists went out for a rest into the garden of the Casino, there to wait for the opening of the last session of the Congress. Among us walked the leader of the orthodox group, the famous Rabbi Isaac Jacob Raines, one of the finest types of orthodox Rabbi, a great Jewish scholar with a thorough training in general philosophy. Half-thoughtlessly, and only to provoke him, I asked: "Rabbi, apart from everything else, aren't you afraid of the equator? You know that Uganda lies almost on the equator." He answered: "That's nothing. We Jews have passed through greater troubles than a mere equator."

Herzl delivered the closing address of the Congress. His last words were those of our forefathers when they swore eternal faith to Jerusalem by the waters of Babylon. He uttered the words as if they were written for him, at this moment. That speech of his was his swan-song. The oppositionists organized themselves under the leadership of Menachem Mendel Ussishkin, and the war against Herzl was conducted with too much bitterness. It was not necessary to be so bitter. With a little softness we could have achieved exactly the same results.

Herzl's heart began to beat weaker from day to day. In the midst of its growth, the loftiest Jewish tree of many centuries toppled and fell. I was present at Herzl's funeral in Vienna—the greatest procession I have yet seen. In my imagination, I saw the unresting chain of events that had led to this moment: Von Plehve-Kishineff, Kishineff-Uganda, Uganda-Herzl. It seems as if when Herzl went to see Von Plehve, he went to face his doom. He rose into the Jewish heavens like a comet, and he disappeared from them like a comet.

A short while before the Kishineff pogrom, Achad Ha-Am suddenly left *Hashiloach*, the monthly organ that he had

founded and had raised to the highest position of intellectual and spiritual influence. He did not leave it because he had grown tired of the work, still less because he had nothing more to say to the Jewish people. He was at that time at the peak of his creativity. He left it—let this be well noted—simply because of material reasons. This man, who could have sustained more than one such journal, could not derive his sustenance from it. Even his closest friends did not know that there were times when Achad Ha-Am was living in the most stifling poverty. When he could stand the pressure no longer, he left *Hashiloach*, and accepted the offer of a position with the tea firm of Wisotzky and Company, becoming their representative first in Russia and then in London. I do not believe that in our times the Jewish people would permit such an act of vandalism: it would not permit the clearest Jewish thinker of his time to take a job with a commercial house. The firm of Wisotzky was in its day one of the greatest in the world, yet I do not believe that all its wealth, at the time of its greatest expansion, could cover the loss—if it can at all be estimated in money—which the Jewish people sustained when Achad Ha-Am accepted this job. It is true that he was never a very productive writer. But every word he wrote was weighed and polished like a jewel, and our loss was therefore the greater. In those days Hebrew literature happened to be expanding a great deal—in the matter of quantity. But it derived its greatest value from those who wrote least, but that little of supreme quality.

The editorship of *Hashiloach* was entrusted to the young writer Joseph Klausner, whom I have mentioned in connection with my Grodno period. Since those days Klausner had completed his studies in Heidelberg, taken his doctor's degree, and thrown himself with unparalleled industry into Hebrew literature. The most remarkable thing about him was his productivity. He wrote a great deal, and he wrote about everything. He was like a man who had taken all knowledge for his province. He was, in fact, the very op-

posite of Achad Ha-Am. The latter was an aristocrat in form and content; the former was very much the democrat. Achad Ha-Am had brought sanctity into Hebrew writing, and Klausner made it almost workaday.

My first monthly review to appear after the Kishineff pogrom was to be sent to the new editor of *Hashiloach*. I received from him a warm, friendly letter asking me to continue my collaboration. I sat down to my task, but both my thoughts and my pen refused to budge. The great obstacle probably lay in the character of the chief incident under review—Kishineff. But another force was at work. I was no longer under the wings of Achad Ha-Am. I felt such reverence for my master that it almost seemed like an act of faithlessness to pass at once under the editorial guidance of another, the more so since I felt Klausner still to be a literary fledgling. Whatever the obstacle was, from that time on I stopped writing for *Hashiloach*. I am sorry for it to this day. I am a person who, in order to be kept at work, must be placed under the pressure of a moral obligation. Once I feel that pressure, I can be industriousness itself. When it is removed, I am at a loss.

My relationship with *Der Freind* also suffered an eclipse. After the Uganda Congress I sent this paper a series of articles in which I poured out all my scorn on the supporters of Uganda. But it appears that the editor had taken another view. He was tolerant enough to print seven of these articles, taking up one month's time. With the eighth he stopped, and I suspended my contributions for a year.

These looked like trifling matters. I had tasks enough to take up my time without these articles. But it soon appeared that the suspension of so much of my literary activity had an evil effect on my mood. I felt suddenly emptied, longed for something, and did not know what. For five years I had kept at work in Ekaterinoslav, such hard work that I had become a stranger to myself. And now a change came. The hours set apart for literary work could not be filled. I there-

fore had time to think more, and I thought about myself, and my own life. I looked back along the years, and remembered the time when I had made the great compromise with myself, and had decided to become a Rabbi. I remembered too what I had promised myself: that I would be a new type of Rabbi, who would concern himself only with the intellectual needs of his community, ignoring all those official duties which have no relation to spiritual and intellectual matters.

During my first period in Ekaterinoslav I had often talked this over with a young man who used to regard himself as my pupil, but whom I regarded as my friend. His name was Ber Boruchov. He came to the city about the same time as myself, having just completed a course in the gymnasium of Pultova. But he was educated far beyond his years. He had an excellent grounding in general philosophy, had advanced far in the higher mathematics, and had studied with good results Marxian economics. He was, in addition, a man —or perhaps I should say boy—of unusual intellectual honesty. He carried on vigorous Zionist activity among the youth, under the direction of Ussishkin. But his Marxism gave him no rest. As one of the founders, later on, of the Poale Zion (the Socialist wing of the Zionist movement) he proved himself an advanced and able theoretician, the foremost in his party. It was my belief that in the Diaspora the best thing for the Jewish Socialists would be to work along with the general Zionists, and bring into the movement at large a wider understanding of their principles. Even today I am not certain which method would have brought the better results. Boruchov became my most intimate friend among the youth. All of us feel, as we grow older, the need of maintaining a contact with the youth—the bridge over our own lost years. With Boruchov I talked more earnestly than with any one else, and him I told that at the first sign of a conflict I was prepared to leave the Rabbinate.

Now, after five years in Ekaterinoslav, a circumstance

arose that almost compelled a decision. In the Jewish community of Odessa elections were pending for a new Rabbi, and I was invited to submit my name. I did so—and set the condition that if elected I was to be freed entirely from the official functions connected with the post, and left to concentrate exclusively on the cultural, educational, and intellectual work in the community. The condition was accepted. My candidature was supported in Odessa by one of the finest spirits of Russian Jewry, the famous lawyer Menasseh Margulis. For a time he had been one of the pillars of the Chibath Zion, and had written some witty articles in its defence. When I got to know him he had changed camps, and now wrote against Zionism. For all that, he supported me strongly; he disagreed with my Zionism, but agreed with my views on the proper functions of a Rabbi. My rival for the position was Vladimir Tiomkin, who was Rabbi in Elizabethgrad.

Tiomkin was a fine type of man, an excellent organizer and public worker, but altogether a stranger to Jewish knowledge. He was, however, the "Governor General" of the Zionist district of Elizabethgrad, and very popular among Zionists. Most of the Odessa Zionists supported him. Ussishkin too regarded the matter from its purely Zionist aspect and supported Tiomkin at a distance. Nor was it possible for me to stand openly against Tiomkin, for personally we were the best of friends, and close comrades in the Zionist movement. Tiomkin was elected. But the outcome was a curious one. The government refused to ratify Tiomkin's election, and in his place advanced to the post of Rabbi in the greatest Russian Jewish community that queer person —to put it mildly—Moses Kreps, the same Kreps who had played such a buffoon's rôle in the Jewish society of Berlin in my student days. The appointment of this fantastic ignoramus was a cynical insult to the whole of Russian Jewry.

Odessa Jewry seethed with rage. And one morning, shortly

after this outrage on Jewry and on the Rabbinate, I made up my mind and resigned my position. I was free once again. My decision took the community and my friends by surprise. The step was neither expected nor understood. The community sent one deputation after another to dissuade me, but I stood firm. What I found hardest was to stand out against the pleading of old Michael Maidansky, but even he pleaded in vain.

When it became clear that I was not to be dissuaded there began the awful series of farewell banquets in my honour. Only two of them really touched me, one arranged by Alexandra Akimovna Rindovskaia in the girls' high school, and the other arranged by the community itself. The first was a purely Russian affair, attended by the teaching staff and special guests. There was much talk about the unifying effects of cultural work, how it brought together groups, and peoples, and nations. The finest, wittiest speech was made by the gracious old Alexandra Akimovna herself. She spoke of a brotherhood of men in which each man should be permitted to develop his own way of life.

The Jewish girls in the upper classes arranged a picnic for me on the Dnieper. They gave me, too, a group picture of themselves, and their earnest promise to remain faithful to the lore that I had taught them. The banquet of the community took on the character of a mass demonstration. Thousands came to the affair, and I was presented with an illuminated address on which appeared thousands of signatures. The address had been composed by one of the oldest lawyers, Vitale Osipowitch Levanda, the brother of the famous Russian Jewish writer Leo Osipowitch Levanda. Vitale was widely known in the Jewish world for his work on Russian laws against the Jews during the last two centuries. The author of the address himself read it. Were it not for my dark skin, I would have turned every shade of red listening to the downpour of praise and thanks. But behind the

exaggeration there was a genuine note of gratitude. This was not merely a formal occasion.

The one person who least understood my motive was my wife. In five years, she had managed to settle comfortably into the life of Ekaterinoslav, and it was hard for her to break up house again. She was afraid for the future, knowing that I had no plans at all. I, on the contrary, was curiously calm on this point. Instinct told me that I would land on my feet. One rich inheritance I had from my parents: faith.

And my faith did not deceive me. I soon received the offer of a position in Vilna. Vilna, a centre of Jewish scholarship for the last four hundred years, was a continuation of the tradition of Nahardea and Pumbedhita, the great centres of Jewish learning in ancient Babylonia. Vilna was first a Talmudic centre, and afterwards a centre of the Hebrew renaissance in the nineteenth century. The curious thing about this city was the fact that the transition from Talmudic study to modern thought was made quietly, without a struggle. Men like Mordecai Aaron Ginsberg, Abraham Ber Lebenson, Kalman Shulman, Samuel Joseph Finn, and many others were links in an unbroken chain. Quite naturally that chain led from the old to the new. I believe that for this happy development much credit must be given to the giant figure, the Gaon of Vilna, Elijah, the spiritual leader of the community in the eighteenth century, whose spirit still broods over the city. This extraordinary man had, without any influence from the outside, and aided solely by his incomparable knowledge of Jewish lore, prepared the way for the enlightenment. It was he who broke through the hard walls of that purely formalistic Talmudic scholarship which stifled Jewish thought at that time, and opened new horizons to the Jewish spirit. It was he too who had the courage to declare that without a thorough knowledge of Hebrew, and of Hebrew grammar—the latter a thing taboo to his contemporaries—it was impossible to attain to a true knowl-

edge of Judaism. Still more daringly, he declared that those who wished to understand Judaism needed also to study worldly things like geography, mathematics, astronomy, and even medicine. He went further. He demanded that a decent measure of education should be provided for the Jewish girl, not less than for the Jewish boy. The neo-Hebraists who came after Elijah Vilna found their task made easier by his authority. They did not suffer from that bitterness of repression which finally expresses itself in revolution. They did not have to uproot in order to plant. Vilna passed quietly and fruitfully through a natural process of evolution.

Some decades before there had been founded in Vilna a choir Synagogue. The founders were a group of Jewish scholars, among them the Hebrew poet of the renaissance, Abraham Ber Lebenson, and the great reformer of Yiddish literature, Isaac Meir Dik. The new choir Synagogue introduced no changes in ritual, yet it was regarded by the public at large as a reform temple. Indeed, it was said that at the close of the services on the Day of Atonement Isaac Meir Dik had mounted the rostrum and declared loudly: "The congregation is hereby notified that next year the services will open promptly at six o'clock." It would appear that the worshippers of the Taharat Kodesh (this was the name of the congregation) did not assemble more than once a year. But then the joke was launched, I believe, by Dik himself.

For a long time the Taharat Kodesh met in a small rented hall. Only at the beginning of the twentieth century did it acquire a handsome building of its own. This was the time when the self-conscious intelligentsia of Vilna had taken up energetically the task of educating the Jewish youth. The directors of the Taharat Kodesh decided to institute regular courses in Jewish history and literature for the young people of the city, and as director of the courses it appointed the famous historian Simon Dubnow, who had settled in Vilna about that time. He was then occupied with the Russian Polish section of the great history which he had planned.

He could, indeed, have obtained the necessary documents in Odessa, where he had lived till then, but he felt that documents alone do not make history. Dubnow wanted to breathe in the atmosphere of Russian Polish Jewry, and he could not have found a better place for this purpose than Vilna. But for the particular task that he had assumed, Dubnow had one shortcoming. He was too much of the scientific specialist. He was too deeply absorbed in his own work, and his lectures were therefore fitter for those who wanted to pursue a higher course of study than for young people who still had to be attracted to the subject. The new enterprise of the Taharat Kodesh therefore did not meet with success.

The invitation that was issued to me to take over this work came through my friend Isaac Leib Goldberg. My official title was to be Preacher to the Taharat Kodesh, but my chief work was to lie in my lectures to the young people. There was not to be found anywhere in Russia a Preacher who was not at the same time the Rabbi. Only Warsaw and Lodz had Preachers, but even they were in a certain sense connected with the Rabbinate, and their appointment had to be ratified by the government. I accepted the offer from Vilna readily and gratefully. There, in the Jerusalem of Lithuania, a new way was being prepared. Chance would have it that, at about the same time, Prince Swiatopolk Mirsky should resign his position in the government, and be appointed Governor of Vilna. This circumstance made the offer from Vilna even more tempting.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: JERUSALEM OF LITHUANIA

In my personal life too these were remarkable years. If I were to give these two short years as much place in this narrative as they occupy proportionately in my memory, I should have to dedicate at least a volume to them. And if I were to reproduce the tone of my memories, I should have to leave the prose form. In the life of most people there are, besides the regular festivals which all observe, private festivals and High Holy Days. Occasionally they are long, most often they are short and scarce. Seldom do they last two years. The great Pentecost of my life was Vilna.

Something else. Before I came to Vilna I had had frequent occasion to change my place of residence. With every change there had been bound up a time of adaptation—lost time, lost energies. They were lost because they went only into preparation. My two years in Vilna began, as it were, on the day of my arrival. I cannot think of one lost hour. It is perhaps because of this fact that the Vilna period of my life seems so long and so full. Yet it was no longer than the time of my stay in Warsaw or Grodno, and less than half as long as my stay in Ekaterinoslav.

Vilna fitted me like a glove. I loved the landscapes around the city, reminiscent, as many have remarked, of Switzerland. I loved the castles of the old city, which breathed the spirit of a proud past. I even loved the little alleys, with their grey, huddled buildings, which brought with them the memories of the Middle Ages. Most of all I loved the Syna-

gogue Yard of Vilna, surrounded and dotted with tiny study-rooms—the memorials of the great spirits who have given Vilna her name. They still lingered above the vast tomes that lined the shelves, above the benches and lecterns, built massively as if for eternity, above the brass candlesticks and seven-branched candelabra, and above the mighty stoves, in which, it almost seemed, the divinity itself had lingered on long winter nights, to hear the voices of Jews in study. I could wander for hours in that ancient courtyard, pausing at the doors of the House of Study, and listening to the ancient traditional chant of the Talmud student, itself the carrier of a host of stories out of the past. The same feeling, I suppose, comes over the sensitive Englishman when he wanders among the colleges and cloisters of Oxford. The Vilna Synagogue Yard was the Oxford of a people in exile, and its study-rooms were its colleges.

I was happy, too, in the small circle of friends which formed around me to help me in my work. The first place among them was taken by Isaac Leib Goldberg. He belonged in reality to the business world, and was much occupied by his affairs. Yet he had made himself a home which conformed to the instruction of the Fathers: it was a meeting-place for the sages—that is, for the intellectuals of the city. His wife, Rachel Michaelovna, was the director of the organization Yehudiah, which had founded a number of modern Hebrew schools for girls. Goldberg's house stood open to every man. And whoever came always found enough to eat and to drink, and guests enough to make good conversation. Goldberg himself possessed the useful knack of being able to put every one of his odd moments to practical use. Moreover, he could so divide his time and occupations as to do five days' work in one. He was active in all communal affairs, and present at every important meeting. But his fullest efforts were given, of course, to Zionism. On top of all this, he found the time to read all the latest books and periodicals. He remained modest, quiet, and retired. A younger brother

of his, Boris, a chemist, showed the same aptitude for work, and Isaac Leib exploited it to the full. The third of my main helpers was Arkadi Naishul. This man too belonged to the business world. It was a generation of business men which has now died out in the Jewish world—individuals who regarded their business only as a means that would enable them to serve the community Naishul, a one-time member of the secret order Bnai Moshe, remained true to his master's principles long after the order had disappeared. There were, indeed, several former members in this circle. All of them were drawn into our councils, but the three men I have mentioned above were the pillars of my practical work.

In our intellectual world, which was not Zionist throughout, the first place was taken by Simon Dubnow. He believed that it was necessary to create in Palestine a cultural centre to serve as a beacon to the whole Jewish world. But he also believed this to be only one of the tasks of the Jewish people. For him the centre of gravity of the Jewish problem lay in Jewish autonomous rights in the Diaspora. This view he defended with the double equipment of a historian and a publicist. He believed in the possibility of independent Jewish cultural evolution in the Diaspora, and he carried the principle of Jewish minority rights to its logical extreme.

Simon Dubnow lived the classic life of a scholar. In his house there was peace. It was like a temple dedicated to research and meditation. The priestess of that temple was his wife Ida Efimovna, a modest, gentle soul, devoted to her husband's work. With Dubnow I became friends as soon as I arrived in Vilna, and the two families became closely united.

Among the many rich types who formed part of the intellectual circle, and who were frequent visitors in my house, I have space here for but three, Joshua Steinberg, Dr. Judah Leib Cantor, and Feivel Getz. Joshua Steinberg was the last of the Mohicans—the representative of the vanished generation of the Enlightenment period in Vilna. He was a man of more than seventy years, but as straight and stiff as the

Hebrew roots which were his lifelong occupation. He had been for no one knew how many decades a teacher in the old Rabbinical school, and inspector of the Jewish teachers' institute. His reputation was founded on his Hebrew dictionaries. As type, he was a born official, and having all his life studied only grammatical forms, he became in the end as dry and as formal as the subject-matter of his studies. He considered life something to be parsed and conjugated neatly. But hardly something to be declined—for when he was over seventy he married for the third or fourth time, and took to wife a young woman of twenty-odd years. The incident did not create much of a sensation, for in the Jewish world marriages like these were not unknown. Often this old scholar was to be seen strolling through the streets with his young wife, and leading by the hand a charming little daughter of his.

Dr. Judah Leib Cantor was chosen in my time as the Rabbi of Vilna, and it was there that I first met him personally. He made a tragic impression. He had been noted as a scholar even in his youth, and was a stylist in three languages, Hebrew, Yiddish, and Russian. His education was European in character. He had written much for periodicals, and was considered a first-class publicist. Then, in his latter years, he looked around and discovered that he had frittered his life away in many trifling achievements. This had happened because he had observed many movements with light interest, and had been passionately interested in none. The same was true of his friend, the poet Frischman. But Frischman had never desired anything more than to be an artist, and to influence the world through his art. Cantor had wanted to win recognition in the field of public activity, and a publicist without a passion cannot make a place for himself. The public regarded him only as a sort of cultural ornament in the community. His style and scholarship were praised, and his opinions on the problems of the day were ignored. Cantor was one of the aesthetic sceptics who did not believe

that anything serious would ever come of the Jewish national movement. In Vilna he discovered his mistake, but then it was too late.

The third man, Feivel Getz, would have been accepted in Frankfort as a type, but in Vilna he was something unique. I at least have not met his like in Russian Jewry. He was conservative both in his Judaism and in his political views, and at the mention of radical opinions he trembled from head to foot. He was profoundly convinced that if only the Jews had skilful silver-tongued advocates enough to convince the world of the beauty of Jewish ethics, then all Jewish troubles would come to an end. He considered himself one of these advocates, of whom there were, alas, too few. He polemized with Leo Tolstoi on the views which the latter had expressed concerning Judaism and Christianity. He carried on a long and voluminous correspondence with the great philo-Semite and philosopher Vladimir Soloviov on the subject of the Jewish problem. He published large numbers of Jewish apologetics with laudatory introductions by Tchitcherin and Korolenko and others, and believed with all his heart that in this way he was improving the condition of the Jews. The Bundists and other Jewish Socialists terrified him almost out of his wits, and even the mild demands of the League for Jewish Civic Equality seemed to him excessive. He had a job in the Ministry of Education as "learned Jew" and he lived in perpetual fear of losing it. And as the times were stormy and the Jewish world was full of movements, this man trembled day and night and was pitiful to behold. He was a frequent visitor at Dubnow's and in my home. He was for ever trying to influence the Jews to be more modest in their demands. Ridiculous figure though he was, it must be said for him that he genuinely believed what he preached.

Of the Socialists, a few used to visit the houses of members of our circle, but only for social reasons. There was no such thing as an official contact between their organization and ours. It was only a little later, when the political storm

broke out in full fury, that the Jewish organizations drew somewhat closer together.

My lectures in the Taharat Kodesh drew from the beginning a large audience. They were formulated especially for the youth, but the older people came in even larger numbers than the young. The Synagogue could seat no more than fifteen hundred in both sections—that of the men and that of the women. But on many occasions two thousand people squeezed themselves into the building. The place became a death-trap in case of fire, and the police had to be called in to control the crowds. My work in Ekaterinoslav now helped me much. I had a skeleton ready for all my lectures, and plenty of time in which to prepare the material. It moved me deeply to note how closely the audience followed my lectures, word for word. If the audience was grateful to me, I had occasion to be even more grateful to it. This was my own audience, which lay open to me, and which understood every hint of mine.

I gave little place to formal Jewish history in my lectures. Most of my time I gave to the history of the development of Jewish culture. I dedicated six full lectures to the Jewish laws concerning the slave, and showed the evolution of Jewish thought on this subject from the oldest times to those of Maimonides, as compared with the attitude of the Greeks and Romans. I did the same with the subject of charity, the agrarian laws, and even the regulations for the conduct of war. I worked hard to bring the Jewish youth of Vilna into the spirit of the Jewish outlook in the various epochs of our history. I did not omit, of course, the Messianic thought in Jewish history. In addition to my regular lectures, which were delivered on Saturday nights, I occasionally had to preach. But my "sermons" were in reality additional lectures. The congregation of the Taharat Kodesh did not need sermons. I had to be much more careful in the preparation of my material than I used to be in Ekaterinoslav. There were too many scholars in my Vilna audience. Among the listeners

were men like Dubnow, Steinberg, and Cantor. One of them would have been enough to inspire respect in a speaker. I always liked to have in my audiences men who had to be treated with special intellectual respect.

From various sides propaganda was conducted against attendance at my lectures. I was accused of being chauvinistic. I believe that the accusation was unfounded. In any case, it did my accusers no good, for the Synagogue continued to be packed. Apart from this propaganda, I had not a single complaint to make of my career in Vilna. And even in this respect my complaints were purely ideological, for my opponents were men of intellectual standing; the stamp of the city was upon them.

Meanwhile, with dizzying speed, the Russian rulers rushed toward their doom. After the Kishineff pogrom came the war with Japan. Seen from the outside, these two incidents are remotely related, both in size and in significance. Actually they were two manifestations, almost equally important, of one destructive motif. Kishineff was the beginning of a systematic series of pogroms, the purpose of which was to act as a safety-valve for the revolutionary restlessness of the Russian people. But it became apparent that with the terrific inner pressure that had accumulated the Jews would be insufficient for the purpose. A second, more powerful outlet was needed; and God was good to the Russian rulers and sent them a war. And the Russian rulers rejoiced. Here was something to rouse the patriotism of the people, to light a flame in which the revolutionaries would be consumed. What Jewish blood could not wash out, the fire of war would cleanse away. It was understood, of course, that this war would have to end with a Russian victory; to Nicholas the Second the thought of a defeat was inadmissible.

This was the time when the Russian Emperor had ceased to consider even the views of his own ministers. He kept them only as a façade toward the outer world. He had sur-

rounded himself with a secret cabinet of his own, in which the leading spirits were the gang of swindlers and intrigants Bezobrazov and Company, and it was they who rushed the country into the mad war with Japan. The private life of the Czar had sunk into a mixture of disgusting superstition and mysticism; here he was under the influence of his sick and perverse wife. The Czarina was weary of bearing one daughter after another, and she wanted to compel the heavens to send her a son and heir. There appeared upon the scene a French charlatan, a certain Philippe, a quack who had been expelled from his own country by the government. He was taken up by the Russian court, given the title of doctor and the rank of general, and became the principal magician to the royal pair, the forerunner of the more famous Rasputin. The advice of Philippe was that the Czar should create a new saint. At the command of the Czar the bones of a former churchman who had left behind him a reputation for holiness were exhumed from the Sarov Church, and by command of the Czar the dead man was declared a saint. But this was more than even Pobedonostzev could stand, and he implored the Czar not to make sanctity so cheap. There were countless graves of this kind all over Russia, and if all the men in them were to be declared saints, Russia would be flooded. The bones had not rested long in the grave. Pobedonostzev's plea was ignored. The power of the Czar extended over the dead, and them too he could exalt according to his will. The Czarina went to bathe in the well of the church, while the Czar prayed on his knees all night long.

And the miracle came to pass. The Czarina gave birth to a son, to inherit the throne of Nicholas. There was a great to-do about this last addition to the ranks of the saints. From such an incident the reader may gather something of the atmosphere which reigned in the Russian court. It is a historical fact that the war with Japan was declared against the united opposition of Count Witte, the head of the Cabinet, Lamsdorff, the Foreign Minister, and even Kuropatkin,

the War Minister. The advice of Von Plehve outweighed that of Witte, and when the latter reproached his colleague, Von Plehve answered cynically: "You don't know conditions in Russia. We must have a successful little war in order to stave off revolution."

The Czar himself, in all his glory, visited the centres of mobilization in Russia, and wherever he went there followed trainloads of sacred pictures, the foremost place being occupied by the last and greatest of the saints, Serafim. And the Russian soldiers went off to war better provided with holy pictures than with equipment and ammunition. One of the most popular of the old commanders, General Dragomirov, pictured the situation in the following words: "It will be a curious war. We will bombard the Japanese with the pictures of our saints, and they will answer with bombs and grenades."

Few armies have ever made such a contemptible showing as the Russian army in the war against Japan. Defeat followed defeat in crescendo. The fleet made itself even more ridiculous. It made a hasty journey round half the world and found its grave in the Pacific Ocean. Few wars have exposed the bankruptcy of a government with more ghastly clarity. Lavyan, Port Arthur, Tzusima, and Mukden became the passwords at meetings, in cafés, and in street conversations. The Russian public began to see clearly—the idol had feet of clay. And the public suddenly picked up courage. What had been whispered in cellars was now shouted openly on the streets. The silent subject suddenly became a vocal citizen.

No one knows how long the revolutionary movement in Russia would have been stifled if it had not been for the smashing defeat which Russia suffered in this war. The revolutionary leaders cannot come into the open until they feel that the mood of the masses is with them. That mood was created, for the benefit of the Russian revolutionaries, by the outcome of the war.

Von Plehve did not live to see the organic outcome of his

policy. The bomb of a terrorist reached him first. The terrified government leapt from one extreme to the other. After Von Plehve, Prince Swiatopolk Mirsky. From one end of Russia to the other the cry was heard: "The spring is here! The spring is here!" Higher than anywhere else ran the mood in Vilna, the city from which Swiatopolk Mirsky was called to take the place of the assassinated Von Plehve. Deputation after deputation came to see him off. He assured them all that he would, in all his acts, consult the opinion of the Russian people, and seek its confidence.

I had come in frequent contact with Swiatopolk Mirsky in Vilna too. As Governor of the most important Jewish district he had had three "learned Jews" as advisers, Steinberg, Wolper, and Kliatschko. He had appointed me as fourth. Our relations remained the same friendly ones that they had been in Ekaterinoslav. He consulted me frequently on Jewish affairs. He was still the same open, kindly soul that he had been in the past. I was part of the Jewish deputation which came to say farewell to him in Vilna. On that occasion too he spoke like a gentleman. He used no banal phrases, made no vain promises. He only said that he regarded the Jewish situation as the most anomalous thing in the whole of Russia, and it would have to undergo a radical change. He too dreamed of the Russian spring, but before long it became clear that he had been called to St. Petersburg only to be made use of for the moment. He was needed in the game of chess that the rulers of Russia were playing against the masses. When I visited him in St. Petersburg he told me that he felt like a prisoner. He had not even the power to change his officials, and there was not a man he could trust to carry through the most trivial reform.

Swiatopolk Mirsky made several attempts to speak the naked truth to the Czar, with the result that he earned the hatred of his master—and particularly of his mistress. Nicholas only waited for a decent opportunity to rid himself of this unwelcome messenger of the Russian spring. The op-

portunity came soon, and Nicholas the Second proved himself to be an authentic reincarnation of Ivan the Terrible. He himself issued the order to his own palace guards to fire upon the peaceful thousands of Russians who came, with crosses in their hands and respect in their hearts, to implore their Emperor for mercy on his people. The procession was led by the priest who later achieved a unique infamy, Father Gapon. If there were still in Russia naïve persons who believed that by nature the Czar was inclined to lend an ear to the cry of justice, but that he was perpetually misled by his ministers, that ninth of January, in the year 1905, finally opened their eyes. The government kept pouring oil on the flames, and the mood of revolution rose higher and higher.

The pogroms against the Jews did not cease. A new type of pogrom-maker appeared on the scene—the mobilized soldier. Whatever heroism the Russian soldiers had, they spent it in the massacre of the defenceless; they had nothing left for the field of battle. This was the only justification I can think of for the popular phrase that made the rounds of Russia in those days, to the effect that the Jews were helping the Japanese. But the Jewish self-defence, in which both the Jewish Socialists and the middle-class elements participated, was now well organized in all the towns and villages. For all that, the number of Jewish victims who fell in the pogroms of those years mounted to several thousand. In the winter of 1905-1906 I participated in the Jewish self-defence. It was a wretched feeling, to go marching armed through the frosty night. In my heart there was an inherited hatred of shedding blood, in my hand was the revolver which I might have to use at any moment. Vilna was spared an organized pogrom because of the mixed population—Jews, Poles, and Lithuanians. The Russians proper were in a small minority.

I wish to introduce, at this point, an incident in the political struggle of the Jews of Russia that ought to be explained. As long as the Jewish Bund was the predecessor

of the Russian social democratic movement, and played to some extent the rôle of pioneer, the Jewish middle-class democratic movement lagged behind the Russian. It only began to organize in 1905, after the mood of revolution had seized all the classes of the Russian people. This curious fact—that in one field the Jews led, while in another they followed—cannot be explained solely on the ground of the passivity of the Jewish middle class. The explanation lies in the fact that the Zionist movement had withdrawn a large number of middle-class Jews from the internal political struggle in Russia. The Zionist programme had been laid down largely by west-European Jews, for whom the separate struggles of the various groups of Jews for civic rights in their own countries lay outside the Zionist field. This point was strongly disputed at the Congresses. Part of the "present work," which so many of the east-European Jews demanded to have included in the Zionist programme, was the struggle for Jewish local emancipation, as well as the intensification of cultural work. The Zionists of Russia broke through the programme before it was changed by the general Zionist Congress.

With this general awakening to political life, there also came the question of the creation of a Russian national Jewish organization for the defence of Jewish rights. There already existed scattered parties, and what was really needed was a leader. There was not yet a body that could claim to speak for Russian Jewry as such.

For the first time in the history of the Jewish emancipation a Jewish group emerged openly as a *national* entity. The name of the organization was The Society for the Full Rights of the Jewish People in Russia. The demand was for civic, political, and national rights. By "national rights" was meant autonomy in regard to speech, educational system, and communal affairs. The phrase "equal rights," which was usual in such cases, was replaced by the phrase "full rights." The first phrase implies two classes of citizens: those

who get their rights first, and those who get rights equal to those; those who have "rights" and those who have "equal rights." The natural effect is to leave a perpetual after-taste of inequality. In this connection the reader must recall what I have already said about Russia: it was a huge state composed of a large number of nationalities, and the concepts of State and Nationality were not, as elsewhere, synonymous. The Society for Full Rights—sarcastically called by its opponents The Society of Fullers—was founded in Vilna in March, 1905. The initiative came from St. Petersburg, and the leaders were Maxim Vinaver, Genrich Sliozberg, and Leonte Bramson. The first place belongs to Vinaver. He was already widely known in Russia as a scholarly lawyer of big calibre. He had also played a leading rôle in the general Russian democratic movement as it expressed itself in the party of the Constitutional Democrats, generally called the Cadets. Genrich Sliozberg was known as the great specialist in Jewish disabilities, which, as a practical lawyer, he had fought all his life in individual cases. Politically he was the most conservative of the group. Leonte Bramson—also a lawyer by training—had long been active in the cultural and economic field of Russian Jewish life, and had written a great deal in connection with his work. In politics he was a radical, and worked with the Russian intelligentsia, which had not yet gone over to the Socialist camp. The St. Petersburg group represented the non-Zionists—actually the anti-Zionists—in the society. Opposed to them—within the society, of course—were the Zionist leaders, who laid sharper emphasis on the national demands. Both elements were necessary to the foundation of the society. Simon Dubnow was the liaison between the two elements, for both of them gave him their full confidence. Three Jews of Vilna—Dubnow, Goldberg, and myself—were elected to the central committee of the society. Maxim Vinaver, whom even his opponents recognized as the ablest statesman produced by the Jews of Russia, was elected chairman.

It was at this time that our second child was born—a son. We named him Samuel Baruch, the first name for my father, the second for Helena's. Both of us were happy in the event, I probably because of an old, Oriental instinct—I had wanted a son, and now I had one—Helena because every woman renews her motherhood with each child. In the midst of all that turmoil the leaders of the Vilna community, and many guests from St. Petersburg, came to the celebration. We were congratulated on the event and told that the boy had been born under happy auspices—namely, together with the rights of the Jews of Russia. That, indeed, was the feeling which dominated the whole of Russian Jewry at that time. No one could escape the optimism which was in the air. Even those who took no interest at all in political affairs were pulled along in the stream. In our house the mood was reflected at its brightest. It was a happy time for all of us. Helena too enjoyed those years greatly. She was in close contact once more with her old friends of Grodno, Anna and Bezalel Jaffe, and she was nearer in general to the city of her birth.

We kept open house. Guests came and went at all hours, bringing with them the general excitement and joy that filled the streets. The late hours of the night and the very early hours of the morning I devoted to literary work. I had resumed my relations with *Der Freind*, and I also wrote for the Hebrew periodical *Hatzofeh*, of Warsaw. The days were taken up by committee meetings and open meetings. There was no time to be bored in.

The seventh Zionist Congress, the first after Herzl's death, was to make the final decision on the Uganda question. Actually the decision had been dictated by the members of the expedition that had been despatched by order of the sixth Congress. The report was negative; the offered territory was declared to be unfit for purposes of colonization. But out of Uganda had come an independent question—Ugandism. The

finding of another territory than Palestine, to serve as an immediate source of relief, had become a question of principle. The fight against Ugandism was now taken up by Menachem Mendel Ussishkin, and in this battle he showed himself, as always, hard, almost ruthless. Close by Basle, in the little German town of Freiburg, Ussishkin called a conference of the faithful, who gave themselves the rather clumsy name of Zio-Zionists, a sort of higher degree of Zionism. Here he organized the group with iron discipline. At the Congress proper, in Basle, speeches were now superfluous. The delegates spoke with their hands—that is, just voted. Almost unanimously, the Congress voted, together with its refusal of the offer, an expression of profound gratitude to the British government, and expressed the hope that when occasion should arise it would still support the Zionist demand as formulated in the Basle programme, that is, for a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

A group, consisting of the English and a few Russian delegates, under the leadership of Israel Zangwill, broke away at once from the Congress and the movement. Zangwill defended Territorialism as a matter of principle. He believed that the Jewish people had a right to a territory. Palestine was not excluded from the range of possibilities, but it was not the only one. But after he had founded the Territorialist organization Zangwill even became an opponent of Palestine, and spent more energy in combating Palestine than in finding a territory.

It is a common enough phenomenon in party life: it is the men with the most similar ideas who fight each other most bitterly. A bitter war was conducted for many years between Zionists and Territorialists. Zangwill never lost an opportunity to attack the Zionists and Zionism. I took part in this battle, and I had only one prayer on my lips: "O God, punish Zangwill and send him a territory!" For then he would be busy with his territory, and have less time to attack us. Also he would learn that there is no such thing

as a territory without difficulties. Only a theoretical territory could be an earthly paradise. There rain always falls at the right time, there are neither earthquakes nor diseases nor blights, there are no conflicts with the inhabitants, the administration is faultless, life runs as smoothly as a dream of love. Of course, for such a paradise only those people are fit who are as innocent as children, and who therefore still run about like Adam and Eve before the Fall. And so I prayed that Zangwill, who was not exactly an innocent child, might be driven out of his theoretical paradise into an earthly territory, and come to grips with Mother Earth. To my regret my prayer was never answered, and the Territorialist dreams continued to float about like soap-bubbles until the winds dispersed them. The only service that the Territorialist movement did for the Jews was, I believe, that several leaders became good geographers.

The death of Herzl left the Zionist movement orphaned. There was not one man to take his place. The only individual who had gripped the imagination of the Zionists by his many-sided knowledge and the fire of his speeches was Max Nordau. But he lacked the qualities of a leader. None knew this better than himself, and he refused categorically to take up the leadership. The Zionist movement was in a difficult situation. Its centre of gravity lay in eastern Europe, principally Russia. For political reasons the centre of gravity of the leadership had to be in western Europe. The Congress finally chose a person who in some measure represented both East and West, David Wolfsohn.

This man, who had been born in a little town near Kovno, in Russia, had been taken as a child to Germany, where he had grown up, living at first in the border town of Memel and later in Cologne, where he had founded a large business house. Wolfsohn was a typical self-made man. Everything that he had achieved in life—wealth, social position, and a decent education—he had none to thank for but himself. He had enrolled himself under Herzl's banner at the first

call, and had become his intimate friend. Herzl immortalized him in his *Altneuland* as the man of natural intelligence and practical insight, David Litwack.

And as a man of practical insight Wolfsohn realized that the Zionist Organization, as it then was, could never carry out the historical task which it had assumed. He therefore attempted to draw into the practical work for Palestine such other Jewish world organizations as the Alliance Israélite, the Bnai Brith, the German Hilfsverein for Russian Jews, and the Jewish Colonization Association of Baron de Hirsch. In this he anticipated by twenty years the action that was ultimately taken by the Zionist Congress. To achieve his purpose Wolfsohn called a conference in Brussels, and there the question of a union of Jewish forces for the work in Palestine was discussed. But the time was not yet ripe for this union. The other organizations still looked upon Zionism as a movement of east-European Jews, that is, they patronized it. Besides, all Jewry was in a nervous mood because of the developments in Russia.

It was quite clear to every one that Russian Jewry, once emancipated, would take over the leadership of world Jewry. There were many who believed that the events in Russia belonged to the last act of the drama. Soon the curtain would be rung down on the old régime, and a new order would appear, bringing Russia into the family of the civilized nations. It was therefore believed that for the moment the best policy for outsiders to follow was one of watchful waiting. I was present at the conference, and delivered an address on the subject of the various party groups in Russian Jewry, and their respective attitudes on the question of the emancipation. After the lecture there came up to me the director of the German Hilfsverein, Dr. Paul Nathan, and introduced himself. Once again I made contact with my own future. When, somewhat later, I settled in Berlin, my acquaintanceship with Paul Nathan played a great rôle in my life.

And now there came the most fearful year in the modern history of Russian Jewry, the year preceding the opening of the first Duma. There had been organized in Russia the dregs of the population, the so-called Black Hundreds. True, they were directed against the movement for freedom as a whole, but nine-tenths of their fury they expended on the Jewish people. Heroes often seek the most difficult path, hooligans always choose the easiest. The Black Hundreds felt secure. Neither the police nor the soldiery would interfere with them in their work. It was an open secret that these supporters of the throne were in turn supported by the throne, and that the Czar himself was in personal contact with the leader of the Black Hundreds and gave him large sums of money out of his own treasury. In Russia the division between the Czar's funds and the state funds was a very vague one. It could, under all circumstances, be easily bridged by a word from the Emperor. The fact that they stood under the imperial patronage placed the Black Hundreds beyond the reach of the law. There was no official who dared to take steps against them.

In this frenzied policy of lawless repression, the Czar was supported by the secret cabinet of charlatans which he had gathered around him. The official central government, conservative and revengeful though it was, realized that some sort of compromise had to be offered the Russian people, and it literally compelled the Czar to issue his manifestoes. After every defeat on the field of battle, there came a new manifesto. First came the promise of Buligin's Duma, really an advisory council, to which no Jew would be admitted. Then came the second manifesto regarding this same Duma—the Jews were to be included. And finally, when work in Russia had been practically suspended and everything was at a standstill, when the trains were no longer going, when the factories were shut down, the lighting systems shut off—right in the midst of the general strike which extended almost throughout the whole of Russia and made itself felt most

strongly in St. Petersburg and Moscow—the Czar issued the third manifesto, that of the seventeenth of October.

I will not make it my business to describe the effect which this manifesto produced. We sometimes read of blind men who suddenly regain their sight. Something of what such a man feels when the light first bursts in upon his brain was felt in Russia when the manifesto of October 17 was published. Strangers embraced each other on the streets of the cities of Russia. Men went around pinching themselves, to make sure they were not dreaming. The Bastille had fallen! Slavery was dead! Russia was to have a parliament, a real parliament, a legislative body with full powers. Tyranny had abdicated the throne!

Thus the third manifesto was interpreted by some. The Jews were not mentioned in the document. But it was quite clear that from this moment on discriminatory laws against the Jews were dead. Thus the manifesto was interpreted by the Jews. And if there were some who pointed to certain dark and dubious phrases in the manifesto, they were shouted down. The public wanted to be happy.

Its happiness did not last long. There was apparently a third way of interpreting the manifesto—that adopted by the Black Hundreds. The week following the publication of the manifesto more than fifty pogroms took place throughout Russia, and in every one of them many lives were lost. Once more Vilna escaped the wave of butchery; the Black Hundreds had no privileges in regard to Poles and Lithuanians. But if it escaped the pogroms, Vilna paid in another way. A day before the issuance of the third manifesto the soldiers shot into a mass of demonstrating citizens, killing five and wounding thirty. Among the five killed four were Jews. On the day of the publication of the manifesto a cortège of fifty thousand men and women accompanied the five victims to the burial-place.

The winter that followed the manifesto was even worse than the summer which preceded it. There was a sort of

lunacy in the air, a chaos in which men could not gather their wits together. Neither side, the rulers nor the ruled, knew what it was about. There is an old legend which tells that before the Creation light and darkness reigned together. It is difficult to form a picture of such a condition, but it was through such a period that Russia passed before the opening of the first Duma. On the one side the manifesto, which promised freedom, on the other side the Black Hundreds and the pogroms of the soldiers. On the one side preparations were being made for the election of a legislative parliament, on the other side the workers and peasants were in revolt—and as an answer to these, a declaration of a state of siege, the sending of punitive expeditions which terrorized a peaceful population. And to make confusion worse confounded, on the one side the Bolsheviks, calling to an *active* boycott of the elections, and on the other side the Mensheviks, proclaiming a boycott against the Duma, but supporting the elections as an opportunity for propaganda. It was in the midst of this bedlam that the elections took place.

At the conference of the Society for Full Rights for the Jewish People in Russia, held in St. Petersburg after the publication of the third manifesto, there were also heard voices in favour of a boycott of the elections. But the great majority of the members of the society—if not the society itself as such—were actively interested in general Russian affairs, and belonged for the most part to the League of Freedom, that is, the Cadet party. And the society itself proceeded at once to the organization of the elections throughout Russia. Only a couple of months before the elections were the names of the candidates announced. Mine was submitted for the city of Vilna.

As part of the election campaign a number of my friends founded a daily Russian paper with the name of *Novaia Zarya*. The already existing Russian daily of Vilna also belonged to Jews. But it was opposed to the policy of the Society for Full Rights. The Jewish Socialist group of

Vilna accepted the resolution of the Bolsheviks to conduct an *active* boycott of the elections—that is to say, they tried to prevent the holding of the elections as such. I clashed with them at many of the open meetings. Again I must repeat that I have nothing to complain of in regard to these clashes. Each side was permitted to present its side of the case peacefully. One fact is worth remembering. During the winter before the elections, the Socialists of Vilna "took possession" of the Synagogues. They made use of them for propaganda purposes. But regular lectures in the Taharat Kodesh continued without interruption.

The elections, and my candidature in particular, received support from an unexpected source. The well-known Socialist, German Lopatin, had been released from prison after the publication of the third manifesto. This man had been in solitary confinement in the Schlisselburg fortress for twenty-five years. Why he chose to come to Vilna after his release I do not know. Perhaps it was the government which chose this city for his residence. He was already an old man, with a snow-white patriarchal beard. There was no sign of suffering on his face—or if there were such signs, they were hidden in the deep wrinkles which ran across his lofty forehead. He called on me several times, and also accompanied me to my meetings. He spoke very little. Twenty-five years of solitary confinement teach a man the art of silence. I looked with awe at this strange, noble Russian, in whose pure, almost childlike eyes there shone neither pride nor the light of revenge. He saw in the Duma the forerunner of the Messiah.

Among those who supported my candidature actively there were two who are worthy of note. They were opposite types. Shmarya Gorelick was a close friend of mine, and an intimate in my house. He was one of the chief workers on the *Novaia Zarya*. I have seldom met a man who served the literary ideal in general, and Russian literature in particular, with such knightly purity. For him literature was not

the reflection of life, but its substance. He belonged to no political party. As a follower of Tolstoi he abhorred the use of force, or even the suggestion of force. He lived a lonely, sundered life, like a modern Essene.

The other, the opposite of Shmarya Gorelick, was still very young, but he came to Vilna with a complete reputation as a fighter, an able journalist, and a brilliant speaker. I had seen him for the first time at the Uganda Congress, the sixth. There he had delivered an address in Russian—he did not yet know German—against the Uganda proposal. In the course of his speech he introduced many new words, like *equilibristika, journalistika, publicistika,* and so on. The witty critic Eliashov—better known as Baal Machshavoth—dubbed him "the *stika* delegate." Dr. Eliashov did not suspect that the *stika* delegate would become in time one of the stormiest figures in Jewish political life. He came from Odessa, where, as a seventeen-year-old boy he had already achieved fame by his stinging feuilletons in one of the leading dailies.

This man was Vladimir Jabotinsky. Arrived in Vilna, he flung himself at once into the seething cauldron of politics and became the idol of the very youngest generation. He was admired for his wit, his energy, and above all for his extraordinary mastery of the Russian language, which he used as a virtuoso uses his instrument: the ready phrases flowed from his tongue so smoothly, so painlessly, so effortlessly. We received him as one of our own, and he became the pride of the Jewish community. It was my privilege to become his first teacher in Hebrew. I was amazed by his talent. After the first eight lessons he was able, with an almost insignificant vocabulary, to perform the most extraordinary tricks, something like a gifted actor who is suddenly called upon to deliver an impassioned monologue in a language which he does not know. More than anything else he loved politics. His favourite slogan was: "Make the bear come out and

fight"—that is, under all circumstances, whether necessary or not, provoke the enemy to battle.

When election day came round the Poles refused to participate. The Lithuanians united with the Jews in my support, and I was elected almost unanimously as the representative of Vilna to the first Russian Duma.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: THE GREAT SWINDLER

THERE were twelve of us in all, the representatives of between six and seven million Jews, and I wonder whether any twelve men have ever carried upon their shoulders the responsibility of so many hopes and longings. Russia was—so it seemed—about to rise out of the abyss of oppression; the Jewish people was about to rise out of an abyss below the abyss. And these twelve men were to haul it out. To make their task the harder, these men had to bear in mind that they had been elected by non-Jewish as well as by Jewish voters, and frequently there was no correspondence between the work they had to do for their own people and the party needs dictated by their other constituencies. Even if there was no actual contradiction of interests, tactics might sometimes bring interests into a seeming conflict; when a thousand things had to be attended to by this first parliament, and every group was clamouring for first attention, the very order of affairs became an important matter.

The Society for Full Rights assembled in St. Petersburg after the Duma was opened. The Zionists, who formed half the Jewish group in the Duma, proposed that the entire group organize into a parliamentary faction, with the obligation to vote as a unit. The other six members demurred. They argued, with some show of reason, that to be consistent the Jews would have to step out of the various parties. A compromise was struck. It was decided that on all Jewish questions, the Jewish members should come together and

try to act as a unit, though without party discipline. As a matter of fact, as will be seen, the discussion was almost purely theoretical.

Three groups were to be found in the Duma. First came the Constitutional Democrats, or Cadets. In this party were to be found the most advanced elements of the old Zemstvo, and the finest forces of the non-Socialist Russian intelligentsia. The theoretician of the party was Peter Struve, a former Marxist. Until the opening of the Duma he edited, from abroad, the party paper *Osvobojdenie—Liberation.* In the meetings of his faction he showed clearly that he was more and more inclined to shift toward the right. The chief leaders of the party were the historian Paul Miliukoff and Maxim Vinaver. The Constitutional Democrats have been compared to the democratic parties of the Western countries, generally regarded as the representatives of the lower and upper middle classes. The parallel is inaccurate. Any one who is well acquainted with the Russia that was will know that no party could arise to defend the rights of the middle classes without automatically defending those of the peasants and workers. Indeed, on agrarian questions the left members of the Constitutional Democrats took an extreme view which approximated to that of the Social Revolutionaries, the most extreme party in the Duma. The leader of the last-mentioned section of the Cadets was Solomon Gerzenstein, a former Jew, professor of political economy in the agricultural institute of Moscow. He was a recognized authority on economics and finance. Him the government feared and hated as much as it did any man, for he was more adept than any one else in exposing the indecent conduct of its finances during the war. Soon after the dissolution of the Duma the government squared its accounts with him. Gerzenstein was assassinated by the Black Hundreds.

To the right of the Cadets stood the Union of October Seventeenth, which had been organized after the issuance of the manifesto; it included the mildly liberal elements and

the less conservative representatives of the large landlords. I doubt whether these men were genuine constitutionalists. They were only cleverer than the other big landowners and made a virtue of necessity. During the reign of Stolypin this Union of October Seventeenth became a direct instrument of the government, a few degrees above the standards of the Black Hundreds. The leaders of the group in the first Duma were Count Geyden and Prince Volkonski—typical Russian landed aristocrats.

The third group, under the name of the Trudoviki, consisted of the radical elements, Socialists and half-Socialists, who had been elected in spite of the official ban of the party on the elections. This group had no party programme, and the only point on which they were united was the question of agrarian reform. They were extremists on this point. The leader of the group was Deputy Aladin, not a remarkable man in any way, but a good speaker and an authority on parliamentary tactics. He had lived a long time in England, and had watched the proceedings of the English Parliament. Of the twelve Jewish deputies, eight joined the Cadets, and three the Trudoviki. One remained without any attachments: or, as we said, he ran wild.

Among the Jewish deputies I occupied, in a certain sense, a special position, not for my virtues or abilities, but because of one of those fantastic anomalies which were so frequent in Russian Jewish life. I was the only one among them who had no right to stay in St. Petersburg. The others belonged, one way or another, to the class of the "privileged" Jews, either by academic association, or through their standing in the business guilds. But my degree had been taken at a foreign university, and I was no business man. I was therefore one of the six million who could not leave the Pale. And so I walked around in St. Petersburg as the living symbol of the absurd system, as if to say: "I have no right to be living in St. Petersburg at all, and I am only here for the purpose of helping to make the country's laws." I did not

neglect to point this out in my addresses, both in the Duma and at a meeting in Moscow.

However, there were absurdities enough in connection with that first Duma. One little circumstance, which had to do only with the Jewish delegation, I remember with amusement. Every delegate to the Duma had to register his name, together with his religion and his nationality. We were twelve Jews in the Duma; it was therefore expected that the twelve names would be repeated under the list of the religions, and under that of the nationalities. But among us there was the well-known journalist and economist Gregory Yollos, for many years the Berlin correspondent and then the editor of the foremost Russian daily, the *Russka Viedomosti* of Moscow. Yollos insisted on enrolling himself as a Jew by religion and a Russian by nationality. But it appeared that the ancient dispensation could not tolerate the disappearance of one of the tribes, so there appeared on the scene the friend of Yollos, the former Jew Gerzenstein. *He* registered as Russian Orthodox by religion, and Jew by nationality. So the accounts were squared, though, as often happens in accounts, by means of a little cooking. There were twelve Jewish deputies, twelve on the list of the religions, and twelve on the list of the nationalities. Yollos too, it may be noted, was one of the members of the Duma to be assassinated by the Black Hundreds. These two men lived only as half-Jews, one with his nationality, the other with his religion. They died as full Jews.

The first official reception to the Jewish delegates was arranged by the Jewish community of St. Petersburg, under the leadership of the man who had, for many, many years, been the chief *shtadtlan* of Russian Jewry—Baron Garazi Ginzburg. He received us in his palatial home, and spent a couple of hours with us. More active in the reception was his son David Ginzburg, a famous Orientalist, and the possessor of one of the finest collections of Hebrew books and manuscripts in the world. The Ginzburg family easily occu-

pied the first place in Russian Jewry. In the days when *shtadtlanuth* was still the only means by which anything could be done for the Jews, the Ginzburgs set the example —not too often followed—of quiet, modest, and selfless service to their people. The old man invited us to his house as a sign of respect for the *elected* representatives of the Jewish people. But in this house the ancient system of *shtadtlanuth* had for many years found its headquarters, and our appearance there was symbolic of the revolution that had taken place in Jewish not less than in Russian life. Baron Ginzburg accepted us, too, in a spirit of symbolism. He accepted the new order.

Quite different in character was the reception given to the entire body of the Duma in the imperial palace, where the ruler by the grace of God was to come face to face with the men who would, from now on, make the laws for his empire. In one of his moments of weakness, when he felt the sword suspended above him trembling in the wind, the Czar issued his own invitation to the deputies. But it needed much persuasion, almost compulsion, before he was convinced of this necessity. He regretted the step as soon as he had taken it. But it was too late. The comedy had to be played until the moment when the supporters of the throne had gathered enough strength to ring down the curtain, and proclaim it at an end. And then another play would begin, the play of revenge against those who had forced this humiliation upon the elect of God.

The day of reckoning was, in fact, close at hand. The ranks of the faithful were being increased and closed. In the interim the farce continued. Some six hundred of us, therefore, assembled in the palace and there, *standing*, we listened to him. Some two hundred of the country representatives came in their peasant clothes, and brought with them, into the perfumed air of the palace, the strong smell of the Russian earth, or, less figuratively, the still stronger smell of newly polished leather. Officials and lackeys of every rank

crowded into the doors and corners of the hall. The Imperial Guard was drawn up before us in two ranks. The Court Marshal entered, and struck three blows with his baton, to say: "The Czar is coming!" And there he comes, an unimposing little figure, accompanied by a great suite. They advance in measured step, and the Czar ascends the throne. Some of the lackeys try to raise a cheer. It dies in the hall without an echo. And standing by his throne Nicholas reads forth his speech. He speaks of mutual trust and confidence between Emperor and people. He mentions the Duma and expresses the hope that the great heritage which he has received from his fathers he will be able to transmit in its entirety to his young heir. Once again the Marshal taps three times with his baton. The Czar marches out. Once more a weak cheer. The ceremony is over.

I watched the man closely, and listened to his words with the utmost intentness. There was no twitching of his face, no tremor in his voice. He had learned his rôle well, and he played it well. On me he certainly did not make the impression of a weak nature, such as has often been ascribed to him. On the contrary, I felt that before me stood a good actor, who could control his face and expression excellently. He wore a mask. Years later, when I read the memoirs of Witte, I came to the conclusion that I had understood Nicholas. The blank face covered a studied desire for revenge. Witte, who knew him better than any other man, says of him that he was the most bitterly revengeful of all the Romanoffs.

In the speech from the throne, as in the October manifesto, the Jews were not mentioned once. The government believed in adding contemptuous insult to injury—Jews could not be mentioned in important documents like these. The answer to the speech from the throne was composed largely by Maxim Vinaver, and in it appears the categorical statement that there can be no talk of a regular constitution for the country without civic equality for all its inhabitants.

Once more, in its reply, the government ignored the point. And Vinaver, in the Duma, made perhaps the strongest speech of his career, declaring openly: "Let the government know, once for all, without civic equality there can be no tranquillity in this country."

The Cadets and the Trudoviki were united on this point. The point on which some of them were divided was the order of procedure. Was the question of civic equality—which meant, of course, the Jews—to take precedence over the agrarian question, which was the burning question of the day for all Russia? From this question had proceeded most of the unrest of the time. The Russian muzhik—more than three-quarters of the population—was crying out for land. The division of land had created injustices which it was difficult to look upon without feelings of revolt and disgust. While gigantic estates had accumulated in the hands of the aristocracy, the peasants were compelled to work tiny plots of earth, which could not provide the barest necessities for themselves and their families. Not only the Trudoviki, but many of the left Cadets, were inclined to place the agrarian question first. But all of the Jewish deputies, and most of the Cadets, were afraid of the attitude of the muzhik delegates in the matter of equality of rights. In their opinion, it was the wiser course to take up the latter question first. I took part in the debate in the sessions of the Cadet caucus. Instead of using arguments, I asked the permission of the assembly to tell a Jewish story and, weary with the dry, monotonous debates, the delegates signified their consent.

It was a rather difficult story to tell, for I had first to explain certain Jewish laws and customs. One of these laws is that on the Sabbath the Jew may not kindle a light, even through the agency of a non-Jew. Having explained this, I went on to describe the dreariness of the long Friday nights in the winter. At five o'clock on Friday afternoon the prayers are over, and the Sabbath has begun. At six o'clock the family meal is over, and then follows sleep. At twelve they

are through with sleeping—and there remain seven or eight hours of darkness. The poor cannot afford to leave a light burning through the night. This is the privilege of the "rich." One such "wealthy" Jew rose one Friday at midnight and saw to his horror that the light had gone out. He had a gentile servant in the house, but it is forbidden to direct the servant to light the lamp. The Jew casts about in his mind and suddenly calls loudly to the servant. "Ivan, how would you like a drink of whisky?" Ivan did not mind being roused out of the deepest slumber for the sake of a drop. "Thank you," says Ivan. "I'd love it." "But it's dark," his master answers. "I can't find a thing." "That's perfectly all right," answers Ivan. "I'll make a light." The Jew is delighted. He had not told Ivan to kindle the lamp. The lamp is lit, the drink is poured out. Ivan swallows the drink gratefully, hands back the glass—and extinguishes the light. "Be careful with Ivan," I warned the Cadets. "He may get what he wants and then put out the light again." I was told that my story had its effect. The problem was taken up more seriously.

In court circles Count Witte was regarded as the chief criminal in exploiting the defeat of the Russian armies for the purpose of wringing concessions from the Czar—in particular the manifesto of October 17. Shortly after the calling of the first Duma, Witte was deposed as Prime Minister, and his place was taken by Goremikin, a black reactionary of the old school. This incident alone makes clear what was in Nicholas's mind even when he issued the manifesto. One look at Goremikin was enough. His eyes were cold and glassy, he wore the old, ultra-orthodox side-whiskers of the typical Russian beaureaucrat. In all, he was the personified antithesis of a constitutional government. Goremikin was not the only sign of the real intention of the Czar, but he was the most revealing.

And still the Duma believed that Nicholas meant well—or, at least, that with the manifesto he had gone so far that

retreat was now impossible. And who knows? If the democratic forces of Russia had been united at that moment, they might have emerged victorious from the struggle. But there was no such union. The interparty struggle, a bitter and obstinate struggle, was not suspended even for a moment, and the energies of the delegates were exhausted before they approached the question as a whole. The leaders of the fight against the government were the Cadets, and they were the most optimistic party. I was at that time a contributor to the *Retsch*, the party newspaper edited by Paul Miliukoff and Joseph Geseen. The first of these was the leader of the party, the second, a one-time Jew, was one of the foremost intellectual and political powers in the party. I became well acquainted with the entire group that was in the van of the movement: Miliukoff himself, Fiodor Roditchev, the Lassalle of the party, the brothers Ivan and Ilya Petrunkevitch, old fighters in the Zemstvo, Vladimir Nabokov, son of the former Minister of Justice, a cool, logical and convincing speaker, and the lovable and pure personality of Fiodor Kokoshkin. The last two mentioned were also assassinated, Kokoshkin by the Bolsheviks, and Nabokov, after the World War, by a former member of the Black Hundreds, who shot him in Berlin. I became acquainted, too, with the Polish professor, Leo Petrazhitsky, a man who was heard in the party with special attention. In all the upper circle of the party—composed of the higher intelligentsia, men of the world, and skilled politicians—there was the same feeling of optimism. There were times when they spoke seriously of a Cabinet of the Cadet party.

In the Jewish group Maxim Vinaver was the best informed on Russian political questions. He was a man of the Disraeli type, both in his brilliant intelligence and in his inexhaustible industriousness. He had not the opportunities of a Disraeli: but even a Trotzky could not have organized an army under the Czarist régime. We followed Vinaver, some of us because we recognized his great-

ness, some of us because we had no alternative. I was among the former. Among the Zionists, and in particular those of St. Petersburg, I was blamed for my attitude. There were at that time three Jewish publications in the capital, two Russian monthlies with weekly supplements and one Yiddish daily. They were, respectively, the *Voschod*, the *Yevreskaia Zhizn*, and *Der Freind*. The first was the paper of Vinaver. Around it were grouped men of all shades of opinion, Zionists, non-Zionists, anti-Zionists, and nationalists of the type of Simon Dubnow. There were even a few half-disguised assimilationists. The *Yevreskaia Zhizn* was the organ of the Zionists. *Der Freind* stood halfway between the two extremes. The central figure among the Zionists was Abraham Idelson, the editor first of the *Yevreskaia Zhizn* and later of the *Rasviet*. Idelson was a man of immense knowledge, Jewish and general. He was a strong Marxist, and yet he remained within the Zionist party at large, and was even the leader of the Russian cultural Zionist group of the youth. He brought into the Russian literature on Zionism the wit of the Talmudist, and had worked out for himself a remarkable Russian style, a model in its own way.

The Zionists had their own salon in St. Petersburg, just as in Vilna. In the latter city it was conducted by Isaac Goldberg, in the former by Israel Rosov. But while in Goldberg's house the atmosphere was Hebrew, in Rosov's it was Yiddish-Russian. In this circle the driving force of Zionism was not the power of the ancient Jewish culture and the impulse to a renaissance, but quite simply the intolerable conditions of Jewish life and the bankruptcy of the assimilationist ideal.

Idelson's salon was a happy, tumultuous place. Every evening the Zionist youth assembled there, and ferocious debates lasted into the early morning hours. I was in frequent attendance that winter. Those were, in fact, the "white nights," when there is so much light in the sky that sleep is difficult.

The Duma set to work in dead earnest. Commissions were appointed for the drawing up of laws, and in the full sessions the questions of the day were debated in general terms. The Speaker or President of the house was Sergei Muromtzev, a skilful chairman. As President he was compelled to be non-partisan, and he therefore resigned from the Cadets to accept this post. At that time he became, for the deputies and the country alike, the symbol of the new Russia. His presidential throne was, in the eyes of the people, higher by several steps than the throne of the Czar.

The catastrophe came closer, and once more it sent its shadow in advance in the form of a pogrom. The question of the Jewish pogroms had been brought sharply into the open in the sessions of the Duma, by interpellation of the government. The interpellation was formulated to indicate clearly that the government was held to be the party directly guilty. The Minister for Home Affairs, Stolypin, a graceful speaker with elegant manners, promised to give an answer within a month. But the pogrom-leaders were impatient, and provided their own answer before the month was over—a pogrom in Bialystock. This was an orgy of beastliness after the fashion of Kishineff: bellies ripped open, heads with nails driven into them, children with their brains dashed out, and the rest. Eighty Jews were killed, and hundreds wounded. A tremor went through the Duma. It was not only the pogrom as such, but the hint that it contained. This, then, was the reply of the government to the interpellation. The Duma resolved at once to send a commission of investigation to the actual scene. One of the members of the commission was the Jewish deputy Benjamin Jacubson, who belonged to the party of the Trudoviki.

I had occasion to speak in the Duma on the subject of the pogroms, but I can no longer remember whether it was on the general question, or in connection with the pogrom of Bialystock. I said at that time, addressing myself to the Russian people: "It is well for you to know that we Jews

are bound up with you, the Russians, like Siamese twins." I meant to say that the destruction of the Jewish people could be accomplished only at the price of the destruction of Russia. I was attacked from two sides. The *Novoye Vremya* accused me of having offered mortal insult to Russia. The Zionists attacked me for having insulted the Jewish people. Neither side understood my simile. I do not know whether it was particularly skilful or not, but in the sense in which I used it I hold it true even today. There has been no case in history where a government has done violence to Jews without doing equal violence to itself.

Between the Bialystock pogrom and the dissolution of the Duma I had occasion to visit the most Russian of the cities, Moscow. I had received an invitation from the general Cadet party to deliver an address on the Jewish question. The Bialystock pogrom had acted like a cold shower on Jews and liberal Russians alike, and many had begun to feel that the Duma would not live much longer. Among the Jews the depression was of course at its worst. In Moscow I had the first occasion to declare the tragedy of the Jewish situation to a huge pure-Russian audience in the very heart of traditional Russia. My two friends, Yechiel Tschlenow, who was very popular among the Moscow Cadets, and Isaac Naiditsch, a rising public figure in the Jewish community of the city, participated in the meeting. I cannot forget the extraordinary reception that was given me, a Jewish deputy who had no right to be in Moscow at all. The real celebration took place after the meeting, when the leading spirits assembled once more in the Slavianska Bazaar, a famous restaurant, and occupied the place until four in the morning.

On the second day of my stay I addressed a purely Zionist meeting. I took as my theme the question of what would happen after the Jews had obtained their "full rights." My text was the life of Herzl, and I indicated how the impulse toward the building of a Jewish homeland had

come not only from Jews who lived in lands of oppression, but from those who had achieved civic equality. That impulse was not born of oppression, and did not die with liberation.

My first reception was as a deputy of the Duma, my second as a Zionist. The third, which was held in the house of Jacob Mazeh, the Rabbi of Moscow, was given to me in my capacity of Hebrew writer.

The commission returned from Bialystock. Fiery speeches were delivered in the Duma by Vinaver, Jacubson, and Roditschev. By an overwhelming majority the Duma accepted a resolution calling upon the Czar to dismiss his Cabinet, in order that the rulers of the country might disassociate themselves from the disgrace of the pogrom. The atmosphere, during the debate, was heavily charged. The deputies knew that they now stood at the parting of the ways. Two days later, when they turned up at the chamber, they found the doors locked and guarded. Outside was posted up the manifesto of the Czar dissolving the Duma.

I went with a group of deputies to the Nevski Prospekt, the main artery of St. Petersburg. We wanted to see for ourselves the effect which this action produced on the general public. There was nothing to be observed. There was not a sign of excitement. The crowded street looked as it had always looked—countless people hurrying around, intent on their own business. If two persons stopped to hold conversation, a third was sure to stroll by as if by accident, sidle up absent-mindedly, and overhear what was being said. There were agents enough in the capital to provide a third for every two that stopped to talk. Life was "normal" once more. The citizen had reverted to the subject.

We were called together in the club of the Cadet party. The deputies wandered around like lost souls. It was known that somewhere, in some secret place, the leaders were in conference, and there was nothing to do but wait. The hours passed slowly. The mood in the club was like that in a house

of mourning before the corpse has been removed. The dead man can never be disturbed again, yet every visitor walks on tiptoe, as if afraid of waking him. It was toward evening that some of the leaders finally appeared. It had been decided that the whole party should transfer itself to Viborg, the nearest town across the Finnish border.

The Trudoviki had taken the same resolve. There, in Viborg, the two parties assembled, separately, and hour by hour there came relays of messengers from St. Petersburg, the emissaries of the revolutionary organizations. Stories were circulated of the excitement that reigned in the ranks of the workers of St. Petersburg. Others added that the unrest had spread to the barracks. And we ourselves could not quite make up our minds. Was *this* then the signal for the liberation? Was the dissolution of the Duma the necessary interlude before the curtain was raised on the last act?

The hall in which we assemble is small and overheated. The faces of the deputies are drawn and haggard, the voices weak. There are still some who preach moderation. This is not the moment for a revolution—peaceful victory is in sight. But the moderates are a small minority. The majority wants action, something to restore the dignity of the outraged Duma. The best speakers of the party follow one another, and the deputies listen intently, nervously. Vinaver takes the floor. The time has come, he declares, to ignore party programmes. The government has practised a deliberate swindle on the first representative assembly of the Russian people. The reply of the Duma will have to be fearless and dignified.

It is after midnight when the meeting is called to order. Sergei Muromtzev enters the hall. Every one rises. All eyes are fixed on the man who, as the first President of the Duma, has become the symbol of Russian freedom. We stand as if at prayer. The Viborg manifesto of the dissolved Duma is read out. The Russian people is called upon to boycott the Russian government with all the means at its command, to

arrest the entire machinery of administration, and to continue to a successful issue the struggle for freedom. Muromtzev is the first to append his signature. After him come the leaders and the other deputies.

The next morning we returned to St. Petersburg. On the train we received the "confidential and reliable" message that round the station in St. Petersburg hundreds of thousands of workers had assembled to greet us, and that there the first open conflict with the government would take place.

And sure enough at the station there waited for us a guard of honour—two rows of gendarmes between which we walked as down an alley. No one else to greet us. When the droshky driver asked us, with the famous St. Petersburg courtesy: "Excellency, what address?" we did not know what to answer.

Swindled again. It was the old game once more. It has been described once for all in the book of books. Nine times Pharaoh swindled Moses. He was waiting for the tenth plague. And even after the tenth plague he changed his mind and pursued the liberated people. At the Red Sea he got his final answer.

Many, many ages must pass before history changes into legend. But after a long time—I do not know how long a time—the legend will arise of the great swindler who was the last to sit on the throne of Russia. He swindled, and swindled again, and kept on swindling until the Red Sea swallowed him up.