Parallel Quest

A Search of a Person and a People

By Irma L. Lindheim



THOMAS YOSELOFF

New York • London • Toronto

Digitized by Touro College Libraries
For Project Zikaron
www.zikaron.tourolib.org
2022

© 1962 by A. S. Barnes and Company, Inc.
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 62–17023

Thomas Yoseloff, *Publisher*
11 East 36 Street
New York 16, New York

Thomas Yoseloff, Ltd.
123 New Bond Street
London W.1, England

9807
Printed in the United States of America

Parallel Quest

To my family, in explanation
To my comrades, the pioneers of Israel
In dedication

Illustrations

The following illustrations appear as a group after page 108

Irma L. Lindheim (1916)
Norvin R. Lindheim (1906)
First Zionist center in the United States
Officers of the Motor Corps of America
Mishmar Ha'emek in its early years
*Degania display at all-*kibbutz *exhibit*
Digging furrows for tree-seedlings
The same spot today, enjoyed by picnickers
In kibbutz *fields, sugar beets are being raised*
Men and machines reap grain harvest
First dining barracks, kitchen, and meeting hall
Entrance to cultural center and outdoor theater today
Three generations dance the hora at harvest festival
Re-enactment of biblical Passover festival
Dwellings with pink tile roofs have replaced original huts
Monument to the founders of Mishmar Ha'emek

Acknowledgments

To my people: whose courage and determination made possible the re-creation of the Jewish homeland; whose vision led me to participate in their immortal adventure, the struggle for their continuance; whose renascent spirit touched my life with its glory

To my family: whose patience must have been sorely tried, and whose cooperation has been unfailing

To my comrades of the *kibbutz* Mishmar Ha'Emek: by making my work assignment its writing, they made this book possible

To my friends: who helped to bridge the gap between the *kibbutznik*'s austerity of funds, and the material costs of preparing a manuscript for publication

To Grace O'Connell: for her enthusiasm and encouragement during her arduous task of deciphering illegible handwriting and typing many stages of rewriting

To Janet Mabie: whose understanding editing untangled the strands of varied experience in a long and eventful life, reweaving them to make clear the design of a pattern of great purpose

To all of these I offer my appreciation

IRMA L. LINDHEIM

New York City
May, 1961

Foreword

From my vantage ground in the kibbutz *I watch an outworn world disappearing, and a new world taking form in its place.*

The beauty of a rising structure often causes its foundations to go unnoticed. At times the foundation stones of the State of Israel are overlooked, and on occasion are even casually dismissed.

For this reason my account will lay greater emphasis on foundations than on achievements, since it was foundations that enabled a people to win the right to a free and independent existence in a homeland of its own.

Close to three decades have passed since the night in 1933 when I kept anxious vigil, hoping to receive word that, by vote of its sicha, *or town meeting, the* kibbutz *Mishmar Ha'emek had accepted me as a member.*

"You're the first one to be accepted unanimously!" I was informed in the morning by a messenger, who paid me the compliment of adding, "But then, your acceptance could

have been taken for granted." To my mind that was overly optimistic.

How could I have taken the outcome for granted? This was a movement in which youth *led* youth, *and I was more than ten years older than even the oldest founding member in the settlement. My background and former way of life were very much different from the circumstances of my* haverim, *who, in making up their minds whether to accept me as a member, had to determine to what extent my lack of training for manual labor would interfere with my fitting in, in a life where such work was of the essence.*

Precedent alone could have made my forty-seven years sufficient reason to reject me. If I were admitted, I could see myself only as a very insignificant part of a community where the accent was on youth, and where the responsibility for hewing out a destiny was firmly in the hands of youth.

Conspicuously lacking any practical training for day-to day activity in a rigorous youth movement and unused to extremely primitive conditions, I had to be able to bridge the gap between my own previous experience and a Spartan system dedicated to transforming tens of thousands of boys and girls into men and women who could create a new kind of society and live in it: a society pledged to maximum individual effort to achieve purposes from which returns would be, at least in a material sense, negligible at best.

For these and many other reasons, I could not have taken acceptance for granted.

In the years since 1933, mankind has experienced sweeping changes; during this period, the Jews have summoned the faith, endurance, and fortitude to come to grips with the problems and dilemmas that confront them: with the threat of extinction, and the martyrdom of millions, the will, and the need, to create a new homeland to gather in the exiled and homeless became an inexorable imperative.

By the time Palestine became the State of Israel, I—in a

sense a stranger, come from afar—had some time since cast my lot with the lot of my people, making their home my home.

In Palestine I have witnessed a youth, fired by purpose, build a homeland on foundations of peace and goodwill. When this phenomenon first burst on me, it was a wonder; I turned aside from my accustomed path, to see, to learn, eventually to become a part of it. When I trace back the experience, it brings to mind the image of Moses on the way to Mount Horeb with Jethro's flock; when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in the flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, and the bush burned with the fire yet was not consumed, Moses said, "I will turn aside now, and see this great wonder. . . ."

Happily, from the beginning of my experience as a Zionist, I have been closely associated with the two elements most responsible for laying the foundations of the Jewish homeland and future State: the Jewish National Fund and the kibbutz *movement, which the National Fund made possible. At the first Zionist Congress, in 1897, through the vision of the leaders of the Zionist movement, the fund was set up to purchase land. Poor and rich alike were invited to contribute to it. The wasteland purchased became from then on the inalienable possession of the people. Thus anyone with the will to work the land but with no means to pay for it, could receive on a lifetime lease the number of acres needed to sustain him. Payment was deferred until the earth bore fruit, which did away with the likelihood that a people would need to be driven to take possession of land by force.*

The land of the Jewish National Fund was leased not to individuals but to groups. Exactly fifty years ago the first halutzim, *the pioneer youth, gave the spirit of the Fund its initial embodiment and expression. A group ventured into the malaria-ridden, bandit-plagued region of the Jordan*

Valley to found Degania, the first collective farm. From Degania spread the whole kibbutz *movement, which became not only a way of life desirable to those settling Israel, but which serves today as a pattern for other underdeveloped lands and underprivileged peoples in Asia and Africa.*

I was to be an eyewitness to the changes brought about by the combination of these two cornerstones of Palestine's rebuilding. Disregarding even elementary health precautions, accepting all manner of hardship, those who worked the soil snatched from devastation great reaches of swampland and rocky wilderness, and in their place erected farm homes. Today the desert—half of the State of Israel—is being made to bloom, fulfilling the ancient prophecy, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

Yet greater still has been the transformation of the image of the Jew in world consciousness. In our time it has been shown that the Jew is neither the subhuman that Hitler made him out to be nor a mere moneylender, middleman, or parasite, as others project his image.

On the contrary, the Jew has clearly accepted the tremendous opportunity confronting him, and, instead of living life in the ways of old, has struck out along new paths as farmer, as worker in basic industries, and as creative pioneer in a society of his own making.

Because I have seen each change in the kibbutz *met with the desire and resiliency to accommodate the real to the ideal without sacrifice of principle, I have faith that the pioneer impulse will endure, even with the encroachment of more "civilization." I also believe it will live to serve—like the prophets of old—as a conscience, to remind the people of Israel that the home being built must house the dwelling place for the grandeur of Israel's spirit as well as its body.*

There is an expression, common to the Jew of Israel, and by which he lives: In Hebrew it is "lamrot hakol," *in spite of*

everything. It synthesizes the spirit of everything I have observed in Palestine, and of everything in which I have been privileged to participate.

This spirit has inspired both the quest of the people for fulfillment, and the parallel quest of an individual, through identification with her people, to fulfill herself.

IRMA L. LINDHEIM

Parallel Quest

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.
—Robert Frost

Prologue

Time: The Present

IT IS STILL NIGHT, THE LUMINOUS NIGHT OF Palestine's darkness before dawn. As always before sitting down to write, I go onto the terrace outside my room, high on a slope of the Manassah foothills. By the simple act of breathing in the heady predawn air, by gazing off over the still beauty of the world spread out before me, each day I relate a little more to all that this world signifies, and to myself; my world now; the land of my people; my home.

The hush is immense. Not far off, cypresses form a rampart. Above their silhouetted spires a shining crescent of young moon cleaves the dark blue of the heavens, cradling the blue brilliance of the planet Venus between its cusps.

How did I find my way here, I ask myself once more in the clear darkness. How? What impelled me to this frontier, to take its life as my ultimate chosen way?

I take deep draughts of crystal air, watching night withdraw, the first of dawn advance, a faint flush of rose and violet and gold steal along the horizon.

It is the silent signal. A slight, gathering stir all around me tells of a world beginning to awaken. The light lifts. A montage of sight and sound unrolls. This world permits itself no luxury of waking gently.

Tramping heavily from door to door the heavy-booted night watchman arouses men and women assigned to early duties. Simultaneously there is a staccato blossoming of lights, in dwellings and farm buildings. Far below me a glow of illumination bursts up around kitchen quarters, heralding food for workers of the first shift.

Sounds from the room next to mine tell that my good friend Reuben the bus driver will appear shortly, obediently following on the raucous ring of his alarm clock, groans of wrenching himself from clinging sleep, the rustle of dressing, a small clink *as he snatches up the satchel containing his supply of change and bus tickets. He appears then—not omitting as he dashes by to call out* farewell and l'hitraot!— *sprinting off down the rough path. Only for a moment will he pause for a bite of breakfast, before leaping aboard his bus exactly on schedule.*

Shalom *cries a last-minute passenger for the Tel Aviv express bus. I recognize the educational director of the kibbutz. His head is hunched turtlewise into his coat collar, his shoulders stiffen against the glassy-cold air. Clutching his jacket tight to his chest with one hand, with the other he grips the briefcase full to bursting with papers and books. All week he will be traveling over the region, I know; visiting schools, consulting with families of students among the seventy-four border colonies of his kibbutz movement; conferring with faculties, lecturing, teaching in training schools where the teachers are being prepared to impart to wave after wave of youngsters something of the European culture of their elders, at the same time fitting them to carry their individual share in the cooperative life of their particular farm group.*

As with all whose work week is of necessity spent away

from home, the director will work without regard for the clock. When he has time to give it a thought, he will rejoice in anticipation of his Shabbat weekend at home. A minimum of time will be spent in sleep; as much of the day and night as humanly possible will be devoted to discussion, of farm affairs, of cultural activities of the group; and to that cherished Saturday afternoon hour or two when he can sit at leisure over coffee or tea and cookies in his room; he will not ask or want to be left alone with his wife and children, for friends and passersby are all family too. Weekend activities must be telescoped, but inevitably are for the sharing and use of all.

A clatter of new footsteps under the terrace, another member of the kibbutz rushes by. This time a girl, in cap and crisp white apron, on the way to her work in the baby house. She is in a hurry, but not too much of a hurry to greet me. No matter how many times in a day kibbutzniks *may meet, the niceties are never overlooked.*

Pearly dawn is gone now; the red-gold sun floats up in grandeur above the horizon, not yet distributing enough warmth however to temper the crackling coldness. Racing to outrun the chill, the girl hugs her chest tightly, as best she can harboring remnants of the warmth of bed and blanket from which she has torn herself. In the baby house she will be welcomed not only by adequate warmth, but the atonal music of the new generation, chorusing lustily for breakfast and loving care.

From my terrace, in these ways I see the day begin. The farm is awakening. Crowing of cocks . . . lowing of cattle . . . shrill, scolding screeches of the children's peacocks . . . distant honking of horns summoning tardy bus passengers . . . sputter of cold tractor engines . . . backfires, exploding against the timeless hills. . . .

I must not linger any longer, even to view the waking of a world I have become part of and so love. It is a world of

workers and I, who am part of it, have work to do like everyone else. Once I worked in the tree nursery, the vineyards, orchards, vegetable gardens, kitchens, in a strip of field building a stone fence to balk rabbits. Now my assignment is changed. Here one task never passes from a pair of hands without there being another to pick it up. I am no longer needed to weed young carrots and prune vines in the arbors, but there is another task I can perform.

In the many years of following little-traveled trails to this destination, of living in this young, formative society, I have amassed a treasure. In an age of little faith, I received a faith to live by, have been shown a way of life in which all—men, women and children—can give themselves freely to the common aspiration of living in peace and simple brotherhood with each other, with all men. And so my assignment has been made one of sharing this, my faith, with others.

Full day is here now. The sun's red gold is changed to molten gold, steady, beneficent. I must go indoors and to work. Each morning I ask myself again, so that one day I may understand completely. What caused me to give up one kind of life for this so-different life? By what stages was I led here? For what actual purpose? *If I am to succeed in passing on to others even some part of the treasure I have received, I must understand the experience in all its many and interrelated facets.*

Shalom, *cries another kibbutz voice, hurrying past as I step back into my room. It is the blessing for all on the work of the day.*

1

November 2, 1917.

Throughout the morning it was like any cold gray autumn day in New York. Only more cold to the human spirit, more gray, because of the war.

But then afternoon brought a historic change; an event to electrify the imagination and warm the heart.

Arthur, Lord Balfour, Great Britain's Foreign Minister, had announced officially that His Majesty's Government pledged support to the Zionist hope for a Jewish national home in Palestine, with the proviso that rights of non-Jewish communities in Palestine be respected.

The news did not come into our home by radio; radio was still several years away. To our home the news came with a ringing of the doorbell all but tearing it out by its roots. It came in the exultant announcement by a friend, my fellow Zionist Boris Katzman. It had reached his ears in the streets of New York by tidal wave, from country to country, government to government, people to people; by cable, telegraph, telephone, and word of mouth.

"You should see it!" cried Boris, bursting into the parlor." They are singing and dancing in the streets; embracing friend and stranger alike; weeping for the joy of it—laughing—shouting—praying! You can feel hope come to life—You can reach out and touch it!"

In all the suddenness and trembling excitement, we asked ourselves: Could we, dare we, believe it? Longingly, cautiously, we let the news lave over us, like healing waters; it was like a blessed warmth, turning away the gray cold.

Few Jews in all the world slept that night. The great thing that had transpired must be talked about. Prayers of thanksgiving must be said, tears of glad pride shed, ancient faith renewed and spoken. The old, who had not given up hope, must explain to the young that even mountains are moved when faith and trust hold fast. The young must ask questions, and they must receive answers.

With morning, mass celebration commenced. It took form spontaneously, and chain reaction catapulted the Jewish East Side population into the streets to a man. These Jews, many of whom had themselves known terror and pogroms, who feared terror and pogroms still to come to relatives and friends yet living in the ghettos of Europe—even these could not contain their joy. They must raise their voices in prayers of thanks; for Lord Balfour, and for President Wilson who had openly concurred in the Balfour Declaration. They must weep with the joy of it, and march with song.

The people, pouring forth from the slum dwellings of their voluntary ghettos, were people pouring from darkness into light, spiritually even more than literally. Young, middle-aged, old; Talmud scholar, peddler, sweatshop pants cutter, walking delegate, midwife, seamstress, cleaning woman; the lame, the halt, and the blind; with tears and joyous cries all joined, raggedly forming groups; rank on rank, in a parade getting its start far on the Lower East Side, they surged up Second Avenue, then westward, to mark

this greatest of events after the seemingly endless years of painful waiting. If few marchers could seem to keep in step, if all was bedlam, it was of no consequence. *Oneness* was here, pressed down and overflowing, making up for unimportant trifles of order.

We were one; We were Jews! We were promised our homeland!

At every intersection new marchers rushed to join in. No resplendent parade uniforms here, no music of brass bands, no martial order here. Only unimaginable joy and unity. And as the parade gathered numbers and progressed, a chant arose. Taken up by the marchers, row by row, it became like a drumbeat, a pounding of a collective pulse, stronger and stronger: "*Am Yisroel Chai, Am Yisroel Chai!*" —The People of Israel Live! The People of Israel Live!"

I marched shyly at first, self-conscious in the conspicuousness of parading as a Jew. Instead of looking at the fringes of the curious, lining the sidewalks, I looked straight ahead. My body trembled, occasionally I stumbled. My thoughts had turned back to the experience of a day almost six months earlier, when I had come to the realization that, whereas I had long thought it enough to be an American, it was not enough, because, besides being an American, I was also a Jew. The Jews were a people and I was one of them. For the very reason that I was an American, with an American's ingrained love and respect for freedom, my place as a Jew was with the people from whom I and my children stemmed. My responsibilities as an American and a Jew were identical, interchangeable. The privileges of the one carried with them the obligations of the other.

As I marched my thoughts were lost in these truths.

By the time our parade turned westward toward Fifth Avenue the last traces of embarrassment or strangeness had fallen from my feelings. I felt reminded that, indeed ". . . our inheritance is held in store for us by time. . . . There is a

sea of Time to rise one day, before which all who wrong or oppress us will be swept away like leaves. . . ." I began "to see it, in the flow. . . ."

My quest for a faith to live by—at times such a lonely thing—a niche in life where I belonged, began taking on a new and clearer light. My people's quest and mine were joined. In the same way that this tremendous turn of events proclaimed that a people was no longer to be alone in its great dream, my individual quest for roots could never be lonely again.

"We are truly heirs of all the ages," John Tyndall said. "It behooves us to learn the extent of our inheritance."

In my individual quest for identity, for a true home in the scheme of things, I had everything to learn; not least, to survive the process of learning.

If, just here, I go back somewhat, it will afford a frame of reference.

Unconsciously my quest began long before I knew it as such.

I was born into an unexceptional family, began my life in a period in which only change was exceptional, and grew in an unexceptional environment.

Ours was a middle-class existence, well to do, well behaved, complacent. When I was born, in the last month of 1886, our house was brownstone, with a high stoop, on Ninety-fourth Street near Lexington Avenue in New York City. It was a great pleasure to me as a child to watch, from our front windows, a family of goats and their kids frisking over a patch of rocks the size of a square city block.

Twice a year my sisters and I were taken by horsecar for shopping expeditions in the big stores on Thirty-fourth Street, or farther south on Fourteenth Street. After a spree of buying we ate our lunch in a public restaurant, an adventure so unimaginably satisfying that we felt no need to

envy Marco Polo or even Hannibal with all his elephants.

My father, Robert Levy, born in Hesse-Cassel, Germany, of German-Jewish parents who died in their own country without my ever knowing them, was an importer of nettings and veilings, who climbed slowly but steadily to affluence in this country.

To his family he was first and foremost a businessman, virtually a slave to his success in pursuit of security for his family. In the rare instances when he tore himself away from success, to relax and be friendly with his wife and children, he showed himself invariably to be a man of superb charm. But there was little time, really, for learning to know his children, or we him.

His America was an America of expansion, a solid, planned, conservative world, demanding the closest attention, where opportunity was unlimited for those who had energy and the industriousness to grasp it. The only kind of man considered worthwhile carefully conserved what he acquired, and built on it what he wanted for the future. Cash in the bank, or invested in the business, was the acid test of a man's value. Our father had the prejudice of many men of German-Jewish origin against Jews born "east of Berlin." I can only speculate on his feelings, had he lived to see—when German-Jews sought refuge in Palestine—that it was the Russian and the Polish Jews who were first to welcome them with open hearts and hospitality, doing everything humanly possible to ease their difficult adjustment to a new home. I can imagine only too well how he would have felt when, in time, I was to choose as my dearest friends and closest associates, people who stemmed from the very background he abhorred.

It was his fixed and unalterable belief that neither politics nor religion were fit subjects for family conversation. Even so important a topic as the Dreyfus case was proscribed,

as a dinner table incident showed. It took place the evening of his arrival from a business trip in Europe.

With rage and indignation he described rioting he had seen in Paris, and how he had barely been rescued from the hands of a mob yelling "Down with Dreyfus! Down with the Jews!" While an attack on my father was too unbelievable to be real, what I could not comprehend at all was that, suddenly in the middle of a sentence, he put his finger to his lips with the sharp exclamation, "Hush!" when the Irish maids came in to change the plates.

Was the word "Jew" something not to be mentioned in front of servants? I did not understand. All I knew was the distressing shame and embarrassment I felt for something incomprehensible in my father who, I always told myself, could do no wrong.

The only other time I remember seeing him give vent to fury in connection with politics was at the time William Jennings Bryan delivered his startling "Cross of Gold" speech, at the Democratic National Convention in 1896. When the full force of Mr. Bryan's ideas struck him, my father shouted, "Why, that shameful demagogue!"

My feelings about my father were ambivalent. I dearly loved him, and he was not really the tyrant he appeared at times to be. With me he was downright indulgent—my middle sister said overindulgent—perhaps because his "baby" was the only one in the family with no fear of him. And yet often his authority and domination affected me in ways exactly opposite to his wishes or expectations. In time I came to see, for all I loved him, that I learned from him more of what I wanted *not* to be and do, than *to* be and do.

My mother had no interest whatever outside her husband, her children, and her home, and was completely content for it to be so. Not all women, eternally doing for their loved ones, are able at the same time, to create an atmos-

phere of tranquillity. Giving herself up solely and completely to the needs and wants of her family, she crowned it all with unity and peace.

Her parents had emigrated to Pittsburgh from Nuremburg, Germany. Our maternal grandparents Morganstern prospered until their sons, educated beyond such mundane practicality, took over the family's thriving shoe business and ran it quickly into the ground. The disaster had one happy effect at least; it brought our mother's parents to New York to live with us.

Of the experiences of my childhood only one influence was to have a clear effect on the course of my future; even so, it long lay dormant.

In a line of direct descent from my maternal grandmother and through my mother to me had come a passionate Jewish consciousness. With one exception, my grandmother's sister, we were the only ones to possess it. So intrinsic in nature was it, so indivisible, that, in spite of being negated and suppressed in me, taking many, many years to rediscover, it remained alive.

My grandmother's Jewishness was more active than my mother's; it was my mother's quiet way to live her convictions without, however, obtruding them on those around her.

I used to sit every day on a footstool at my grandmother's feet, listening in rapt attention to stories she told me from the Bible. She sat very tall and straight in a high-backed Victorian chair but in some wonderful way her hazel eyes, with bronze specks in them, brought her down close to me. Mine, and my mother's, eyes were like hers, only hers had more crinkles around them because she was old.

She would rest her hand tenderly on my head as she told the stories. I loved everything about her; the soft, billowy folds of her black silk dress, the way her white lace cap with the black ribbon bows set on her wavy brown-gray

hair, her face shining with love for me as she stroked my hair.

More than anything I remember the day—though I was only five when she died—when, taking my face in her hands, and looking deep, deep into my eyes, she said, "Never, never, my darling, forget you are a Jew."

Always, after they were gone, my grandmother and my mother were identified in my mind as one.

My confirmation was the tremendous event of my youth. For a while I felt an acute regret that I was not a man, and therefore could not become a rabbi. I felt almost suffocated with wonder and joy at the moment when, before the open ark, my rabbi placed his hands on my head and blessed me. To myself I vowed that my life would forever be dedicated to my people.

What happened between that moment of exaltation, set to the deep, majestic tones of Handel's "Largo," and the time, only a few short years later, when there seemed nothing left of the burning faith that had been mine but the ashes that appeared to be without ember or spark?

Somehow the longing questions of a seriously inquiring child had been answered without affirmations she could accept. Could I, I wondered persistently to myself, be a Jew merely because of having been born a Jew?

Before doubts and questions assailed me, I loved going to temple with my mother on Saturdays, the only one of the children who really wanted to go. My father attended service only on the high holidays, and then merely to please my mother. He could make me laugh with funny things he would say, but I did not really like his saying them because everything in temple was to me too solemn and beautiful. When the organ poured forth its wonderful sound, and the choir sang, I felt myself lifted right up to heaven.

Because she was so devoted to us, Mother was a worrier. It made for almost too cushioned a kind of life for us,

overprotected. No matter how many servants there were—in time nurses, governesses, cooks, waitresses, chambermaids, finally a lady's maid, our darling, fat, French Marie—all picking up after us and tending to our slightest needs—our mother was always ready at any time to hurry to the kitchen and cook our favorite dishes as she knew that *we* knew only she could cook them; to sew for us, to knit beautiful stockings and sweaters for us, as later she would do for our children; to help us with our homework; from morning to night to add in whatever way she could to our happiness and wellbeing.

She taught us varied skills; though I could never seem to do very well at the drudgery of household cleaning jobs which in her wisdom she believed that we should master, in later years I could never be grateful enough that she had insisted that we learn them. Only long after she was gone, when I had allowed myself to grow rusty at such tasks, did I feel fortunate that I was able to call back some of the things she had taught me; however, I never learned the art of scrubbing a floor, and it took many grueling tries and much kindly direction before I could clean the floor of my tiny one-room shack in the kibbutz and know that there was not more mud on it after I had worked than there had been before I started.

In view of our well-tended household life, it may seem paradoxical to say that before my sisters and I were grown there was never any extravagance in our home. Certain standards and amenities obtained, but they were based on fitness, not show. My mother knew instinctively how to husband material resources, utilizing them for necessary purposes; she was thoroughly in sympathy with my father's passion for saving to provide for our future, in healthy fear of a family being left unprotected, to face want.

This passion for saving to protect the future was altogether characteristic of German Jews of that period; indeed

to this day it is considered something of a crime to spend more than one receives as interest on money. Capital is to be used only for investing.

The business was the big thing in life; the more money ploughed into it, the more profit would be stored up to take out later.

But when it came to our education, nothing was saved.

Contrary to everything which seemed so conducive to happiness and security, I was a lonely little girl, for a reason as painful and baffling to me as it was to my parents and the doctors.

I had been blessed in being born with the gift of a happy nature. My mother said I awakened to each new day with a smile. Regularly I was told that I was pretty. It was mentioned also that I was lucky, because of being "born in the caul," which I was happy to believe must be something exceptional. People said this brought luck to even those around me, and my father made me feel proud and important by telling me that it was when I was born that his real success in business began.

Yet I lacked the one thing I wanted most. I could not talk like other people. I stuttered.

Unable to share the discoveries and thoughts that effervesced inside me, I took refuge in silence. I told myself, despairingly, Better be lonely than laughed at or pitied.

A strange duel began in me. Hurt, puzzled, feeling imperfect, I was happiest when left alone, at the same time longing to be with people and to communicate with them.

Outwardly I gave an appearance of conforming to the world around me—except for such things as not learning poems—which I loved above everything—for fear of being called on to recite them at school, thereby having to watch my schoolmates try to hide their giggles at my contortions to get out each word.

Once my exasperated German teacher exclaimed tact-

lessly before the whole class that the way I talked reminded her of a dog, snapping for its food. Though I was excused from attending her class and retaliated by hating the German language and Germans from that time on, the hurt and shame did not soften, nor the scar heal.

My world of silence was safe. Alone in it, I could live and talk perfectly, like anyone else. My books and the heroes in them were my everyday companions. Wherever I went, they went with me. I could do everything they did, and never be made to feel ashamed or embarrassed. I went every inch of the way with the pioneers in their covered wagons, rumbling westward; sharing their hardships, their campfires, their dangers and adventures, their brave dreams.

I fought at the side of the fighters for American freedom and independence. It was perfectly possible for me to accompany King Arthur and his knights on their quest for the Holy Grail; to travel at the side of Wallace and Bruce, fighting for Scotland's freedom. Nor could my family stop me, who never cried, from weeping inconsolably when Uncle Tom, whom I dearly loved, was flogged to death by Simon Legree.

In my world I was untrammeled by time, or space, or impediment of speech. I was lonely and cut off, but it was not a really unhappy loneliness for I was alone with those I admired and loved, before whom I had no defect and no need to feel ashamed.

From early childhood my mother went with me from doctor to doctor, from reputed cure to reputed cure. Refusing to accept defeat, she took me to another doctor, and another, and another, finally walking with me before school each day across Central Park to the office of a man who insisted that, by teaching me the right way to breathe, he could teach me how to talk naturally.

At the start I was permitted only to sound the vowels in words and sentences. Gradually, as I was trained to relax

my lips and breathe correctly, I was allowed to include the consonants.

Working regularly with me with infinite patience throughout one school year, the doctor brought me to the point of being able to read without hesitation, even the broken rhythms of Shakespeare. It appeared that at last I was cured. But I was not. Still I could not recite in school without battling for words; and I spoke before people only with dread and fear.

And then, in my early teens, a miracle set me free. It was not a mystical manifestation to which healings usually are ascribed. It was the miracle of first love.

At fifteen, in Europe, I fell romantically in love, with a French poet, much older than I. Like a brook, released in spring after being frozen and immobile the winter long, I broke the afflicting bonds. I was in love both with a man, and with love itself, and speech flowed from me like a freshet. I was released, free!

The love was, of course, transient. Yet it left me doubly blessed.

Even so, had anyone, foretelling my future, said that in years to come I would speak before audiences of thousands, not only over the length and breadth of my own beloved country but in lands scattered over the face of the earth as well, I would have dismissed the very thought as absurd.

In time there appeared to me a deep symbolism in the source of my freedom, namely Love. Was it, however, so strange? Has not love ever been part of freedom?

2

WHEN I HAD MY FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO travel outside my own country, I was so entranced by the prospect of a European trip that, somewhat forgetting the sting of my German teacher's ridicule, and my dislike also of certain German habits in my father, at first I overlooked the irony of our main destination—Germany. Understandably enough, my father wanted his family to see his birthplace.

The clothes my sister and I wore customarily were in the simple fashion considered suitable for well-dressed girls of our age in the United States. For the street I had a simple woolen dress, a tailormade raglan coat, a felt hat trimmed jauntily with a bright-colored pheasant feather.

The first morning I went walking in Hesse-Cassel the local children ran after me, shouting, "Look at the girl in boy's clothes!" Others took up the cry, calling out at me," "Ja!, a girl who is dressing as a boy. *Ist verrückt!*" They held their sides, laughing boisterously.

I didn't know which way to turn. I couldn't have imag-

ined such impoliteness, such cruel inhospitality accorded a stranger at home. When my father advised me to ignore this boorishness, and took us to see the house he was born in, I did the best I could, but everything I saw became an uninteresting blur, and I could scarcely wait for the day when we resumed our trip.

A year or two later we went abroad again. In Berlin my sisters and I looked forward eagerly to joining the promenade in the Kurfurstendamm at the fashionable hour. We were not prepared, though, for the persistent flirtatiousness of the swarms of fledgling army officers who ogled and jostled us arrogantly, forcing themselves crudely on our notice. It revived my antipathy to Germans with a rush. One day, when our father came to join us, he was just in time to observe the incivilities; he protested indignantly and, for his pains, was very nearly flung in jail for *Majestäts Beleidigung.*

Even lumping together everything I detested in the German makeup and behavior—the arrogance, the incessant florid heel-clicking, the vulgar manners and gourmandizing in public restaurants—admitting in all fairness that these were hardly correct reasons for abhorring a whole people, again I could hardly wait for our stay in Germany to be over.

The fact was, this bitterness was a symbol. Living so long, alone, in the world of my own imaginative creation, in its treasure house were stored many precious things but also seeds of rebellion. Driven in on myself, forced by my handicap to think instead of talk, the character of my reading shifted from romance to meanings and philosophies of human experience; more and more I rejected the limited concepts and conventions hemming in the lives of those around me, telling myself that it was not necessary to, nor should one, let one's life pattern itself as it would; one should determine what one wanted to find, and be, and make

it so. I sensed oncoming change in the world, and in the deceptively peaceful shallows of the life dictated by custom and our family environment, prepared in my untutored way to meet it, not involuntarily but as an individual, with something to contribute as well as to receive.

With the classic headlong thinking of the very young and, I suppose, as a facet of my inner seething—stemming from anger over my stuttering, instinctive resistance to many of my father's autocratic attitudes, a deep need to be important as an individual—I set about framing a decalogue of things I would, and would not, do with *my* children, when I had them.

First and foremost, I would never, never permit exposure of my children to the idea that mere accumulation of money was a proper aim in itself. Such a standard had too many undesirable side effects: for example, artificial social discriminations, early encountered in certain schools. A school such as I attended, riddled as it was with the vain snobberies of wealth, would never be for my children! Dr. Sachs' Collegiate Institute for Girls was unequaled for scholastic excellence; our teachers not only were truly of college caliber, they were genuinely gifted communicators of knowledge. Yet these advantages were specifically reserved to children from wealthy homes. To my mind the pervading aura of exclusiveness gave a bad and contradictory grounding in false values.

If a bit precocious, the attitudes I planned to govern the upbringing of *my* children (as contrasted with those of my parents in bringing up their children), reflected that hard, confident idealism which is the peculiar treasure of the young and untried.

My children never would be condemned to learn about sex from their contemporaries at school. They would learn about it from me, in their own home, where imparting of such knowledge belonged. The constant cloak of prudery

in our household had prevented this in my own case, and resulted in my picking up at school what pitiably little I knew, all made somehow to seem dirty and evil. *My* children would have no need to satisfy the natural curiosities of the healthily inquiring mind with surreptitiously collected, fantastic odds and ends of misinformation. I would have prepared *my* knowledge for *my* children to furnish them, simply and scientifically, with those facts of life which it was their plain right to know and, without ugliness, that they might feel the wonder and beauty of the natural order of things.

I would never be too preoccupied or weary at the end of the day, as my father usually was, to give *my* children the best of myself, in affection and stimulating companionship. Whoever my husband turned out to be, he and our children must always have first call on my best; never would I make the mistake of saving up my best "for company."

The autocracy of my father extended even through the long periods when he was absent from home. He had to travel at least twice or three times a year to France, where he maintained a branch of his business, and while he was away we were, in effect, cut off socially, for the reason that his business interests dictated our social circle; in his absences, therefore, there was no one but family to be invited to visit.

Denied a circle of friends and acquaintances amongst whose children we would more naturally have found a selection of our own friends, I acquired a feeling of rootlessness in the community where we lived. It developed an even stronger craving to be part of a group, to which I could feel I really belonged. At school, without a "set" because of my speech defect, at home without a social circle larger and more interesting than our father's constricting business interests would allow, inevitably trying in some desperation to

free myself I made occasional rebellious choices which were bound to arouse parental antagonism. For instance, I made friends with one girl; I liked her very much, but her name was Lenski. "Not for you to associate with," my father said flatly, looking cold; "not with a name ending in "ski." That can only mean that she is a Polack." To his mind that ended the matter.

That his prejudice was deep and final I could have no doubt, however instinctively it repelled me. Nor could I forget overhearing an interview in the same vein between him and another wealthy importer, who came to our house one evening to beg him abjectly to act as his sponsor for membership in a certain rather formidably restricted club. My father refused. The man left our house in tears. I asked myself, How is it possible that one Jew can harbor such hatred of another Jew?

In consequence of this and other haunting incidents, my ties to my people were subtly fragmentized. I tugged away at what I magnified as my "bondage," meanwhile presenting a facade of reasonable conformity against the all-important day when I could free myself to live a life of my own.

One bond I intended should early be loosed was the—to me archaic and absurd—tradition that it was a father's "right" to arrange his daughters' marriages. I was hemmed in on all sides by the tradition in actual practice. For example, it was common talk in the family that—in one branch where there were eight daughters—the long-standing arragement was that, at marriage to a suitor selected, or at least approved, by the head of the house, each girl received a dowry of fifty thousand dollars plus an aesthetic touch in the form of an oil painting of value, thrown in for cultural good measure.

Closer to home I had seen enough of what being married off for money meant, my beloved sister Amy being expected

to go along with this without protest on her part, no matter how she might disagree about the successful businessman selected by my father.

It is difficult for me today to project myself backward into a period when there was no recourse from such sweeping parental domination, when a father's commands were under no circumstances to be questioned or even discussed. To girls such as myself, with the wine of new freedom beginning to seep through our veins, this whole idea gradually appeared to me simply antediluvian, and not to be tolerated. Young ladies approaching womanhood, I told myself firmly, were not to be bargained for, bought and sold, like cattle; it was their right as human beings to marry according to their own, not a father's, choice.

With these bold convictions began a new consciousness within me of rights of others as well as my own. For me it had no emancipation label—the woman-suffrage movement had not as yet made any ideological impression on me—but I felt a first stirring of social impulse, to open ways to freedoms for others such as I wanted for myself.

It seems odd to be able to pinpoint such a thing, but on my fourteenth birthday there was an abrupt change in my personality and behavior. It puzzled and rather embarrassed the family. Suddenly a hitherto compliant youngster simply ceased to fetch and carry at every behest of her sisters, declining to do, unquestioningly, exactly as she was bidden.

There was no way for them to know—unless I explained, which I had no thought of doing—that on that day I gave myself a birthday present; a personal Declaration of Independence, secretly composed, and to be unequivocally kept.

It was not lengthy. Henceforth I was going to be, and grow as, *me*.

Inwardly laying my own lines, I kept my ideas and plans to myself through the next four years.

The only warrant for including the private episode which follows is that it had a decisive effect on all that has followed in my life.

On a Sunday afternoon in the spring of 1905 two young men came to our house to pay duty calls on my sister Edna for a recent party. For one of them it was a formal obligation to be discharged; he had not attended the party and he must make amends.

At first I was little interested, for I too was entertaining that afternoon, the first time I had been permitted formally to receive a boy.

But then into the back parlor where we sat decorously came my sister and her two young men. One of them I had never seen before. In the instant when I glanced at him I knew, in that inexpressible way, that here was the shining knight of my dreams. It needed no explaining; it simply *was*.

"Come along, Norvin," exclaimed his companion, "you must meet the star of the family—you excepted, of course, Edna! Anyhow, Norvin, this one's the youngest. Youngster, my friend here is named Mr. Lindheim, but you can call him Norvin. Flirt with him pretty, now!"

He certainly wasn't tall like the knights in story books—only a little taller than my five feet six inches; besides, he was a bit on the heavy side for his height; being active in sports, I noticed such things.

In place of chain mail and a polished steel breastplate, he wore the conventional attire of any young man of social position when out paying Sunday calls; a morning coat and striped trousers; instead of a plumed helmet, he laid aside a silk hat and his ivory-topped walking stick. However, these were unimportant trifles about my dream knight.

His voice was deep and had timbre. He carried his head with the air of a man of strong beliefs who would, if necessary, do battle for them with valor and courage. Over his

gray eyes, the brows were heavy; his facial planes were classic, and there was a ghost of a humorous quirk at the corners of the mouth—instantly I felt in tune with him. My own visitor seeming by now absurdly callow to me, I began conversing with this newcomer as though we had known each other for years. My sister stared, scarcely believing her ears; she admitted later that this young man's intellect and wit had often overawed her—who was not easily overawed.

Considering this dazzling first impression, it was overwhelmingly exciting that he should say, directly to me, "Did you know your family and mine will be summering at the same resort?" He added, laughing, "And do you know something else? I think I can safely promise that you won't any longer stay to the rear of your sister on your daily horseback rides!" I marveled. How on earth could he possibly know that Edna rather relished keeping her "baby sister" in a baby's place, although sometimes explaining offhand that it was merely a simple precaution, in case my horse should try to bolt—a contingency with which, as she well knew, I was fully capable of dealing. I stole a glance at her now. She was looking a bit petulant. But also noting Norvin Lindheim's sureness I thought that very probably I would not be riding behind, this summer.

Though the impression he made on me, and my response to it, were practically instantaneous, there were certain facts to be recognized, in the interval between our first meeting and the second, in the summer when I saw him for the first time in his own family setting.

No one, it seemed, stood in the least in awe of his father, a gentle, cultured man. On the other hand everybody, it seemed, stood in awe of his mother, who had an established reputation as a martinet.

My first encounter with this lady was, for a special feminine reason, nerve-wracking enough, without being complicated by any inkling on her part that her only son Norvin

and I were, or ever might be seriously attracted to each other. As he was naturally the very apple of her shrewd and determined eye, any chit of a girl must be regarded as a threat to her potential plans. Until later that summer, however, she knew of me as little more than just one of many girls with whom her son was acquainted.

Mrs. Lindheim and I first encountered each other in a place not calculated to lend the meeting ease or grace. By some dreadful coincidence it happened that I sat opposite her on the all-too-long train trip from Far Rockaway into New York. Dreadful because it was hard to recall a day when I was worse dressed. Being an alert, observant woman, her cold, appraising eyes took me in from top to toe.

It is never a nice thing for the morale to be caught on such an occasion looking every inch the frump. What miserable chance had caused me that morning to put on a dress of gray poplin, with a guimpe of white all-over embroidery, when it only made me look the more dowdy and juvenile? Up to then I had been rather proud of the dress—it was the first I had made for myself, that being one way to make sure of having more clothes. In that period there was a clearly marked line of precedence as to clothes for the girls in a family. My sister Amy was now married and thus, so to speak, out of the way. But I still had to wait my turn for becoming and expensive dressmaker clothes; my sister Edna's rights came ahead of mine. Until she was married, or at least had firm "prospects" she had first call. I came last.

And so, on this fateful day, opposite me in my homemade dress on the Far Rockaway train sat a picture straight out of a fashion periodical; a *grande dame,* the very model of what a matron of her position and age should wear.

In her summer gown of frothy lavender, she seemed fairly to draw away from the dust and grime of the train. A violet toque perched exquisitely on a carefully waved, snowy white pompadour. Her feet were shod in slippers of pale

gray kidskin; her hands were beautifully gloved and she carried a furled gray parasol.

Not until this embarassing trip had I been acutely disturbed by a lack of attractive dresses. Norvin was impressed with my proficiency at sports, knowing little or nothing of what was going on in my head. The clothes I needed for riding, tennis, golf, and swimming were abundant, fashionable, and the best money could buy. Besides, there was hope. In the fall I was to make my formal debut; when I was officially presented (in the marriage mart) my parents would automatically and gladly spend the money for appropriate "plumage" for me.

That day, however, there was little I could do but make the best of a bad situation, and pray that the time would come when Mrs. Lindheim would see me not only better dressed, but possessed of qualities more important than chic clothes.

The lively activities of the summer resort were a convenient cover for the progress of Norvin's interest in me, and mine in him. There was a great deal of gaiety, but a good deal of anxiety between us too. He was far from being established yet in his profession, and we both knew that there would be violent disapproval from my father over my being seriously interested in any but a man well on his way up in the business community. As to what reaction there would be from Mrs. Lindheim, I hardly dared imagine.

But, since we knew also that we would never be dissuaded, we laid plans as best we could. Of course my father represented the great initial obstacle.

And so a climax was reached in our affairs. I decided that, even if it must be done by letter, I must openly take a stand as to my future; there must no longer be any beating about the bush. There was to be no "arranged" marriage for me. Certainly choosing a husband for myself was an is-

sue not calculated to make the contest an easy one. But what was the use of my Declaration of Independence—even though it were known only to me—unless I stood by it?

Therefore, I sent a brief letter to my father, in Europe, saying, "I have fallen in love with a young man, Norvin Lindheim, and he with me. You don't know him, but you will, as we plan to be married."

On the fastest ship carrying mails the answer came, to my mother, not to me. "You will," my father wrote, "put a stop at once to any further contact between your daughter [why is it that, in a crisis, a child is always credited to one parent or the other, never to both?] and that fellow Lindheim. When I return, I will dispose of the matter."

He returned from his extended trip on my nineteenth birthday. Thus the lines were drawn, the issue joined. In all logic I could not be surprised. It would have been utterly out of character for him to have accepted my stand, even with token objection. Nor was there anything surprising in his show of parental authority. In any well-to-do Jewish family, especially of German background, it was simply part of the natural course. To my father and his kind and class, the suitability of the candidate for a daughter's hand in marriage must be decided solely and beyond all question by her father. Naturally the young man would be a successful businessman on his way to more and more success; his credit rating would already be noticed favorably by Dun & Bradstreet. He should, indeed must, be possessed of a substantial reserve of capital, he must be known for recognizing and adhering strictly to the principle of the sanctity of savings; it followed naturally that he would shun like the plague the mortal sin of spending a penny of accumulated capital.

Socially the standing of the man I intended to marry was impeccable; in fact his family was known as "society" whereas ours was not. For those qualifications deemed prime in

the eyes of my father, he was, however, woefully lacking. He was not even in "business." And in the law he was no more than a fledgling attorney, with his success still to be made.

Immediately on my father's return, before he could try to drive home the traditional ruling, I announced that it was time he and I had a serious talk. Even if he could not understand, and certainly not approve, he recognized a change in his hitherto compliant youngest. He granted me a hearing, much to his own astonishment, I gathered.

"I agreed to give up seeing Norvin until you came home, but only for mother's sake," I began. "If I had not, you would have been very angry with her, and that wouldn't have been fair. I realize this seems to you all very reckless and sudden, and I am therefore willing to be reasonable with you, and try to meet your wishes halfway.

"But our minds are made up, Norvin's and mine. We know what we want, and we won't change or be talked out of it," I rushed on, not letting myself be affected by the fierce expression on his face, a mixture of outraged disbelief and stupefaction; that he could be hearing such talk from a daughter of his!

"If you feel that you have to limit our meetings somewhat, to give yourself time to know and like Norvin—for you surely will like him when you do know him—I'll accept that and do as you wish. But if you forbid us altogether to go on meeting, then we'll simply refuse to obey you, and meet when and where we think best. We are not children, you know."

Thus did I open my assault on the barricades. My sisters, ears glued to the furnace outlet in a bedroom overhead, could scarcely believe it. It was a foregone conclusion that he would bellow and rage, and he did.

I listened politely, but it could change nothing, and did not.

I did not delude myself into thinking, however, that I had won him over. But, though he limited our meetings, he did stop this side of forbidding them altogether.

Very possibly, mixed up somewhere in the armed truce which ensued, was a grudging respect for a worthy foe.

3

AS OFTEN HAPPENS WHEN ROMANCES INCUR opposition, all factions told themselves they were winning. My parents read wishful meanings into mere trifles. For instance, when Norvin and I seemingly saw less of each other, they assumed that soon we would be "over it." Mrs. Lindheim, accustomed to getting her way in any and all situations, took the complacent view that naturally nothing would come of this.

What none of them thought possible, therefore did not sense, was that Norvin and I were making decisions strictly between ourselves. We had long, long talks about the chances for our future together, and weighed them with great seriousness. Interested above all in assuring the outcome, in the course of a long, very late walk along the deserted beach, we agreed privately that—however disconsolate it would make us—for the present we would perhaps be wise not to allow the "understanding" we had reached to be binding on either of us.

We arrived at this conclusion for different reasons. To Norvin, his profession was at once a calling and a cause. On the threshold of his career, would it be fair to bind me to waiting?

For my part, however, I rebelled against his mother's taking it for granted that the Levy girl was too young, unsophisticated, and socially unimportant to be a suitable match for a brilliant son on the way up to an eminent career. I did feel a need, though, to become more at home in the world of the intellect, to encounter new ideas and people, and generally broaden my outlook and experience. Not really yet having had a taste of life, how else could I hope to help, not hinder, what in my heart had become my cause as well as his? I could not conceal from myself, however, that it was very difficult indeed to be objective and wise, at a time when everything within me argued instinctively against caution.

As committed to each other romantically as we were, we had many sobering and apprehensive moments. Across a private world of moonlight and roses slanted brooding shadows of practicality and common sense. For example, Norvin argued anxiously that a law clerk's beginning salary, twenty-five dollars a week, would certainly not support me on the scale to which my parents had accustomed me. On the contrary, I argued, the only thing I wanted was to begin at the bottom with my husband; as a partner, to help him climb the heights. And so it went, around and around.

What we could, and did, agree on after long and racking talk was that, at this point, he ought not to be under the distracting responsibility of supporting a family. Conceivably too, it might be as well for me to take the opportunity to free my mind, to meet more people, and to add to my horizons in ways that would tend to narrow the gap between his more mature associations, tastes, and training and my own.

We told ourselves that we were being strikingly sensible,

and that any seeming separation would be purely temporary. Nevertheless, it was a woebegone pair of lovers who parted that night. We agreed that he would leave me at my door; we couldn't face the prospect of family chitchat.

The instant I entered the house I was overcome by a terrible realization. In my absorption with my own problems, it had completely gone out of my mind that my parents were celebrating their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary.

Naturally no daughter of theirs had been expected to be so disrespectful, lacking in affectionate sentiment, and utterly thoughtless as to vanish at such a time—and to who knew where! I could read something more in their faces, the root of their fear. Several times I had threatened under provocation to elope. With my prolonged absence tonight, they had become panic-stricken—and at a time when they had a reception on their hands!

The immense relief over my being home safe and sound instantly assumed the mask of exaggerated icy dismissal.

Temporarily my mother was greatly relieved, when she noted that Norvin and I saw each other less. Nothwithstanding my spurts of nonconformity, she was so used to regarding me as the most permissive of her children, the one with the disposition moreover to return love in greater measure even than it was given, that she felt me as yet totally unequipped to cope with the necessary adjustments of marriage; then too she seriously doubted that I could ever contend successfully against the dominations of a personality such as she understood Mrs. Lindheim to be.

Mrs. Lindheim's background environment was Lynchburg, Virginia, with all its Brahmin social implications. The fact that she came of Jewish stock was all but undiscernible in her way of life. At most, her Jewishness was limited to reading from the Jewish prayer book in the privacy of her own room, mainly on sad occasions, when she groped in

need of a support outside her own spiritual resources. If there were other Jews in Lynchburg she remained impervious to them. If somewhat less regal in their attitudes, her relatives were much the same. Their friends too were F. F. V.'s; as for Mrs. Lindheim, she never doubted herself as a First among the Firsts.

Her parents were distant cousins, who had met while her father was on a visit to his family back in Germany. The couple's first encounter coincided with her mother's graduation from high school. He found the loveliness of her delicately molded face irresistible, the heavily-lashed brown eyes, the chestnut hair, crowned for the graduation exercises with a wreath of moss roses and forget-me-nots.

Their marriage followed shortly and they left for America and the affluent life he was able to afford her. She bore him five children, two sons and three daughters. She and her husband lived through the horrors and hardships of the Civil War, in which both her husband Nathaniel Guggenheimer and his brother Max served with distinction.

They turned their large red brick house into a hospital for the duration. While she nursed the sick and wounded, her oldest daughter, aged five, handed out sandwiches and coffee to gray-coated soldiers passing through on their way to the lines. In later years Mrs. Lindheim liked to recall how she, a natural-born spitfire, would turn on the soldiers who delighted in teasing her, and call them, "Yankees!" It tempted them to goad her into flurries of temper which, in her, they found "so cute."

After the war, her mother mastered the necessary art of living frugally, when little remained to them but the worthless paper of a discredited Confederacy currency, for which they exchanged practically all they possessed, with the major exception of a solid silver service, buried in the back garden against some day of complete destitution, However, "genteel poverty" was a badge of distinction in their South.

Although Nathaniel Guggenheimer's wife was still young, her death followed soon after his. The five children were left under the guardianship of their uncle Max, of whom it was widely said that, had he not been a Jew, he would have become Governor of Virginia.

A more arduous task than even a governorship had fallen to him, it seemed, when his niece Hortense became his ward. Her temper matched his own, and to control her tantrums and whims was no mean undertaking. She was neither beautiful nor brilliant, but imperiousness and a curious paradoxical charm were her weaponry.

She tyrannized unblushingly over the lives of her brothers and sisters. It was a natural progression then, to total domination of her husband, Reuben Lindheim. He loved his wife with a quiet extravagance and always deferred to her, perhaps fearing a little her driving, tempestuous nature, so unlike his own. Very likely there were times when he jeopardized his relationship with their only son, by siding against him in any differences, even when justice might be on the son's side.

When Reuben Lindheim died instantaneously of a seizure, Hortense Lindheim was distraught with grief. By this time Norvin and I had negotiated the narrow, perilous gorges of parental opposition, and were married. With nothing to indicate that it was his last night of life, responding to an impulse which, to us at least, was completely out of character, Reuben Lindheim had suddenly remarked to me that, if he should be the one to die first, no matter how sympathetically or sentimentally obligated we might feel, we must never, never invite my mother-in-law to come to live with us.

Considerably before this eventuality, however, realistically facing the evidence that no opposition or scheme of hers to prevent our marriage was going to avail, she veered around and adopted a new tack. If she could not keep me

out of the family, she could see to it that I was properly admitted and indoctrinated.

My main interest was to make myself a good wife to her son. If her methods often demanded the very last ounce of patient endurance, nevertheless I became grateful to her. Perhaps it was because she came to mean a challenge to me —a difficult one—that had to be met day after day after day. It was easier to win the approval of those outside your home, but of what use was it if, inside, you failed in human relations? I found the touchstone which opened the way to a lifetime of good relations and mutual respect—even love —between us; to yield on all that was not essential, and to hold firm to that which was—for example, the children's upbringing. On this neither interference nor compromise could be tolerated. But this was to take years of hard experience to achieve.

The first move after I came under her "management," so to speak, was to take me as her future daughter-in-law on a visit to Lynchburg, to introduce me to the family, and give me a general orientation.

We were accompanied on the trip by her husband, Reuben Lindheim. In my frame of mind, feeling very much like a butterfly impaled on a pin and being scrutinized, this was very reassuring to me; from the time Mr. Lindheim and I first met, he was my friend, even my ally, though a silent one.

Now I also had the security of the right clothes to wear; it almost made up to me for the misery of that awful day on the Far Rockaway train. Along with my trousseau, I had prewedding clothes of extravagant elegance, and so I could have some sense of equanimity when I heard Mrs. Lindheim calmly presenting me with possessive pride as "my new daughter."

Years earlier the Guggenheimers, being the only Jewish family of means in Lynchburg, had been smoothly assimi-

lated into the Christian community. In their way of life was no discernible sign or substance of Jewishness. I inferred that the practice of prayers during the High Holy Days in the privacy of their own homes had evolved mostly after Charles and Max Guggenheimer married the Rosenbaum girls, Bertha and Minnie, from Richmond.

Coming out of the restrictive bonds of my own family's life, my first visit to Lynchburg under the Lindheim cachet was like a storybook romance. To make it all the more enlightening and enthralling, it was the Christmas season.

Though my maternal grandmother had read me Bible stories—even respectfully including the Bethlehem story—our family had never dreamed of having a Christmas tree. As children we had been allowed to hang up stockings the night before Christmas, and in the morning we found them stuffed with gifts, with more scattered about on the floor; for me there was usaully a pile of books, but that was the extent of it.

But now, at the Charles Guggenheimers' in Lynchburg, everything was very different. To them, Christmas was not an obliquely borrowed occasion; it was their holiday too, a day to be celebrated as one with their Christian friends. In fact, "open house" on Christmas at the Charles Guggenheimers' was a recognized Lynchburg social tradition.

The preparations were as new and entrancing to me as the party itself. Eggnog was, it seemed, the substance of a kind of rite; huge freezers of it had to be prepared, and the climactic step was the blending of brandy and eggs in such a way that, when the cream was added, there would be no curdling. Charles' wife, Minnie, presided as high priestess; in perfect harmony with her environment, she appeared to me as the very model of hostess, wife, and mother.

Supplementing the festive eggnog, from the farms of miles around were collected the chickens to be fried, the ducks and geese to be roasted, the suckling pig for the *pièce*

de résistance, to be roasted to a turn and brought ceremonially to the table with a bright red apple in its mouth.

All in all, in the presence of this gracious and unprejudiced South, with its romance and allure, how could I have but begun to see the North as rather drab, without imagination or color? Here there was no nervous strain, but rather a maximum of hospitable grace.

A woman of warm beauty and nature, with large dark eyes and erect bearing, when I saw Minnie Guggenheimer, surrounded by her five children, all of whom fell so naturally into the pattern of her graciousness, I resolved at once that I, too, would have five children; whereas she had three boys and two girls, I decided I would have four boys and one girl.

More than this was decided, however, on that Christmas visit.

When the drawing-room doors were thrown open on Christmas Eve, there stood an enormous Christmas tree, glowing in splendor. At once I decided, when *I* was married and had children, *we* would celebrate Christmas in exactly this way.

More and more I was impressed by the signs that this was *everybody's* holiday. A day of feasting, to be sure (*and* drinking, to a degree I had never before seen, and this in the "dry" state of Virginia!), but a day also which, instead of separating and pigeonholing people by race and creed, brought them together as one. Why, when *we* had children, I asked myself, should they not be part of the harmony and joy of this day, and experience the beauty and delight of the Christmas tree, even though it had been unknown in my family?

Looking forward from this new experience to the time when I would have a family of my own, I prepared to bear in mind always that the things which brought people together were good, whereas things which separated them

could be bad. How I wanted my home to reflect the spirit here, where artificial distractions and differences were erased.

On New Year's Day, it was the custom to go to the Lewis' open house. "Miss Lizzie," as everyone called her, had from childhood been a close friend of Mrs. Lindheim, a part of her tradition, and yet, I was to find, a sensational exception to it!

Miss Lizzie was aunt to the five beautiful Langhorne sisters, those legendary Southern beauties, one of whom became Nancy, Viscountess Astor, and the first woman member of the British Parliament, and another of whom became the wife of Charles Dana Gibson, the famous artist who immortalized her in his "Gibson Girl" drawings.

To me Miss Lizzie was a new and exciting experience. Any and everything new or modern was halted summarily at the door of her home. Electricity and telephone were not allowed, being held discordant with candle and lamplight and the glow of old mahogany. Wonderful examples of the craftsmanship of Chippendale, Sheraton, Adam, and Hepplewhite had come with Miss Lizzie's forebears to Virginia, when they emigrated from England to the Colonies. And yet, paradoxically, Miss Lizzie was the acknowledged leader of the woman suffrage movement of the South. In this, her friend Hortense Lindheim flatly refused to join her; yet, however tenaciously she clung to the conventions of her own tradition, she remained Miss Lizzie's close friend, simply ignoring the vast difference of opinion.

Until I met Miss Lizzie, suffrage for women had had no meaning to me. It was as distant from my family thinking as it was seeemingly extraneous to hers. Yet it was not the only "cause" to which my eyes and mind were opened on that otherwise social visit to Lynchburg; nor were the social contacts and festivities the only impression made upon me.

Everyone knew Max Guggenheimer's wife as "Aunt Bert."

Much later she and I were to be drawn together in a close common interest of poignant significance to us. The fact that her husband was uncle and erstwhile guardian to Hortense Lindheim (though who, observing the adult and redoubtable Hortense, could ever envision her as under a guardianship!) made an extra bond with Aunt Bert for me.

She was different from any other member of the family, and at first impressed me as cold and distant. (In fact, I learned later that, at the time of my visit, she was frozen by grief over the recent death of her only child, a young married daughter, a renowned southern beauty and belle, and incidentally the ideal of her young cousin, Norvin Lindheim.)

I admired Aunt Bert greatly when I discovered that she was deliberately submerging her grief by working to remedy, or at least reduce, some of the human evils prevalent in the cotton mills.

One day she took me with her to the mills. Completely insulated as my life had been against even the existence of substandard conditions anywhere, the complacency of my social outlook was forever shattered when, with my own eyes, I saw the pasty, yellowed skins, the dull, lifeless eyes of itinerant cotton-mill workers, and the pitiable surroundings in which they clung to mere existence.

I shall never forget the seamed, putty-colored face of one young girl we stopped to speak to. I say she was young, yet somehow she looked to me a thousand years old. She struck me as a warning symbol, awakening in me what was to become the social conscience of my whole future life.

Though her eyes showed signs of life, they were more those of a rapacious animal than of a human being. Aunt Bert reminded her gravely of the shame and pity of bearing a child each year by a different father, but the girl was not listening; rather, eyes riveted on Aunt Bert's handsome

beadwork bag, you could see her mind boring into it, trying to guess what riches it might contain.

Impressed as I was with Aunt Bert's character and intentions, I could not suppress the thought that it was comparatively easy to reprove and counsel when one lived in a mansion surrounded by a wooded park and carfeully tended gardens. Somehow, even in the face of the nearby grave of a beloved daughter, the knowledge that treatment in the finest sanitariums in Switzerland had been obtainable when tuberculosis struck put tremendous distance between Aunt Bert as a human being and this other human being, a wretched mill girl. The stamp of disease was already on her face and body; as it deepened she would find no sanitarium bed in Switzerland, no gentle love and treatment.

I was struck, not as consciously as later, to be sure, by the bitter paradoxes that such wealth should stem at least in part from the labors of mill people such as this neglected girl, and that while everything humanly possible might be done for another girl, for her there lurked only poverty with its terrible alternative, prostitution.

Throughout the newness and grace of the Lynchburg visit, I deeply felt the romance of the South. But I was able to see the inconsistencies too. For instance, in this "dry" state, liquor flowed like water. The people to whom I was introduced had their own private stills as a form of insurance policy; One showed me a telegram he had just received. It read: "The cow has just died, but the calf will soon be giving milk." With great hilarity he decoded for me. It seemed that the still had been raided by revenuers, but the new still would soon be producing.

Thus was I indoctrinated in these and other values and influences of my future husband's upbringing and experience. It was Mrs. Lindheim's very indomitableness which enabled her to make so thorough, and on the whole success-

ful, a job of my indoctrination. All through my subsequent life with my husband, though she and I were often in disagreement, I was to be aware that whatever Mrs. Lindheim undertook to do, she did thoroughly, carrying it off not only with assurance and style, but with the drive of a bulldozer as well.

I did not invariably like her—what daughter-in-law always likes her mother-in-law, and vice versa?—but invariably I respected her.

Though my mother always feared that I would never be able to have a life of my own with my husband in the towering shadow of his mother's strength, that first Lynchburg episode was a help to me, and its effects were felt for a long time. If it was Mrs. Lindheim's *dea ex machina* purpose to scrutinize me under exacting conditions, I looked closely at her too. I did not look so much for chinks in armor as for clues to honorable strategy. A hundred little incidents suggested that, like most intrinsically strong people, she could admire and deal fairly with strength in others. In the end this was confirmed, when her personality and dictatorial temperament forebore to intervene, when I became intent on achieving a deep purpose of my own, even though she remained irreconcilably opposed to its purpose, which seemed to her foreign and objectionable.

We did not get to know each other at once, or all of a sudden. At first, in that romantic Lynchburg environment, my mind was rather like a photographic plate exposed in light which is too strong; it recorded images too sharply, without composition, perspective, or contrast of lights and shades. Instinctively she superimposed the positives of her background on the positives in mine, with the inevitable result that some things had to be undone later, some values sorted out and disentangled, placed in their true relation one to another.

And after all, why not? In the essence of a good fellow-

ship I had never sampled before encountering it in Lynchburg, there were beckoning horizons, and much wisdom and beauty. In a marvelously effortless intermingling of character and human personality, of Christian and Jew, I saw a true reconciliation, in contrast to the segregation implicit in the life of New York as I experienced it. How different the whole Lynchburg atmosphere was from the insularity surrounding and permeating the circle in which I had grown up. I had yet to discover that Jews, when few, found acceptance in the Christian community. Only much later, from Herzl's testimony before the Royal Commission on Immigration, was I to learn for the first time, as an axiom, that "the Jew carries anti-Semitism with him in his suitcase."

I felt at the time a nerve-stretching sense of excitement, of standing on the threshold of a wholly new discovery in human values and experience. I had arrived in Lynchburg as a person of certain proportions, as well as a set of romantic notions of the South it would take years of experienced living to shed. I went home having glimpsed wholly new and, I believed attainable, vistas.

4

MARRIAGE TOOK ME INTO A WAY OF LIFE PROphetically different from any I had known or even imagined. In a climate of flexible thinking there was every incentive to stretch the mind, seek new impressions, sight new vistas. On the surface, it may have appeared that Norvin and I were curiously unlike, that our attraction for each other was a contrast of opposites. To Norvin it was an asset that I was instinctively at home out of doors, actively pursuing and excelling at a number of sports. His attraction for me was his ease and assurance in the world of the mind, with its varied intellectual associations. Each of us represented for the other, therefore, elements of welcome balance as well as common likes and interests.

Our first son was born a year later. A daughter and another son came along to gladden my father's eventually wholly reconciled heart before he died, in 1914, as the thunderheads of war were gathering in Europe.

The fact that he left me independently wealthy was only

incidentally important. In the seven years since our marriage, my husband had advanced rapidly in his profession and, with my dowry, we already had the freedom of circumstances and mind to concentrate on things which interested us a good deal more than mere money.

Without our being aware of it at the time, a long shadow was cast when my husband made his first trip to Europe, two years after the birth of our first child. Now a member of the new, young firm of Hays, Kaufmann and Lindheim, it was his assignment to establish contacts in England and Germany. Ironically they were to become at once a mark of his brilliant success in the law, and a factor in the personal disaster which ultimately destroyed his life, in its prime.

His letters from Europe opened new vistas to me. He had a certain affinity with England, and was filled with apprehension because she seemed unaware of the significance of the dynamic upswing in Germany. He fretted over how the English were complacently clinging to their little social niceties at a time when Germany unquestioningly was putting everything aside for disciplined austerity; the time-honored teatime work stoppage of the English, the cherished long weekend; more realistically, Germany was humming with first-things-first and the energy to cope with onrushing change. Old methods were being discarded resolutely for new, industry was booming and expanding, world markets were being assiduously uncovered and acquired.

For his own part, he was pursuing new clients intensively, and with exciting success. Sometimes his reactions to them were ambivalent. A natural part of establishing the professional relationship with them was becoming involved in their social life, which, in Germany, often was distinguished by a public display and fantastic luxury which struck him as bordering dangerously on a hedonism of damning vulgarity. Whereas there was an irresistible professional satisfaction in the outcome of negotiations with such clients as,

for example, the rolling-stock giants, Arthur Keppel Company, the Allgemeine Electricitäts, and I. G. Farben, the associations revealed to him as well the decadent side of Germany, which climaxed in fancy-dress balls with unspeakable costumes and behavior, and the pleasure dens where Berlin high life could plumb the animal depths of the soul.

In almost laughable contrast to his grave letters, in my answers I supplemented reports on the baby's progress with an account of a book I had read, which gave me an idea which well might alter the manner of our living. The author of this book was a new writer named Gene Stratton Porter. Everyone was reading her. The thing I liked about her was her portrayal of what seemed to me the ideal life—a home in the midst of the forest, which we could build for ourselves, where we could do everything necessary with our own hands. Our children would be able to do what they could never do living among city streets; they could put down deep roots in the good soil. Nature would be their familiar universe, strife would never come near them, they would breathe the air of peace and harmony. Actually this was a somewhat idealized projection of a dream with which we had started our marriage, as a pair of "pioneering" suburbanites in New Rochelle. We had relinquished it when my father-in-law died, little more than two years after our marriage. Well-armed with "logical" excuses for going against his solemn warning never to do so, we had insisted on my mother-in-law's coming to live with us, in the house in the city into which—because of her—we moved from our suburban Elysium.

With Norvin's return from Europe, side-effects of the diverse contacts he had made there began to expand our social life.

For the oddest of reasons Franz von Papen, who, amongst others of the leading Germans in the United States, had become an intimate in our home, had accepted a post at the

German Embassy. Such was his impression of the capital city that he came in anticipation of enjoying the big-game hunting around Washington. For this happy prospect he had brought along a supply of guns suitable for killing elephants.

Von Bernstorff, the German Ambassador to the United States, confined his hunting impulses to conciliating American feelings through diplomatic circles, the while assiduously warning his government that provocative displays of submarine strength would surely bring on war.

By degrees our home became a gathering place for a mixture of important people from the worlds of business, diplomacy, finance, and the arts. While I reveled in signs of my husband's advancing success in his profession, evidenced in his varied associations, I could not always ignore an uneasy feeling about many of the individuals who came to us as guests. In many of them I sensed a hard core of ruthless, brutal expediency under a veneer of extreme politeness. Later, when Dr. Heinrich Albert, the Commercial Attaché of the German Embassy—whom, ironically, I had liked rather the best of all—was to make headlines when by mistake he left a dispatch case on the seat in a car on the Elevated in New York—a case found to be stuffed with sensationally damning secret documents—I had the chilly if tardy satisfaction, at least, of not really being surprised.

Gradually I was being initiated through my husband and his friends in a world of carefully cultivated reason wherein, to be accepted, ideas must be examined objectively, dissected, then fitted together again according to the pattern of rational thinking.

In ways that remind me of my discoveries during my Lynchburg visits, the road to assimilation was opening ever more widely to me. Among philosophical questions which challenged my thought processes was the old *how* and *why* of being a Jew. In the years following the passionate experi-

ence of confirmation, I had drifted far from meek acceptance of the idea that being born a Jew was sufficient ground for remaining a Jew. More and more I demanded reasons.

My husband reacted differently. In his class at Johns Hopkins University, the presidency of his class had escaped him when it was remembered belatedly that he was a Jew. His way of coming to terms with the disappointment was to accept it with an attitude of *noblesse oblige,* for he was of a temperament to save the stronger emotions for matters which were—to him, if not to me—of greater importance.

"The Jews are a religion," my rabbi urged me to believe. A leader of the Reform Movement in Judaism, he had been my teacher. "As Protestants and Catholics are members of their churches, so Jews are members of their group by virtue of their faith."

"But," I objected, "Protestants enter their faiths by baptism, not by birth." What then, I wanted to know, was to be said of the many, like my father for example, who professed no religious faith? Were they to be held Jews, nevertheless? Or what of those whose physical traits make them distinguishable as Jews?

My questions were myriad, the answers too negative either to satisfy or inform. The rabbi's total acceptance of the "mission" of the Jews was not understandable enough to me to evoke response in action. If it came to that, what action was possible? To live righteously, to do justice, to walk humbly before the Lord—were not these universal beliefs, common to all faiths? Why, instead of being one with the universal, insist on being particular and separate, only to emphasize concepts which were, in any case, matters of ethics, not creeds, and which, from my observation, were moreover likely to be cursorily preached rather than sincerely practiced?

In the midst of accumulating new ideas and experiences, I grew more and more separated from the Jewishness of my

birth. I had no way of telling that, even so, there were roots which, though inactive, were alive.

My husband and children afforded me a life I wanted. There were many attendant responsibilities which, being an outgrowth of the socially rebellious times, were especially creative for a mother. A pattern of easy spending and aimlessly luxurious living was forming in the United States. Although it would not be recognized for what it was until the early Twenties, it was the beginning of a moral, social, and economic revolution. A great restlessness was increasingly in the air. Money rolled in, seemingly bringing with it a security which made spiritual faith expendable. "Easy come, easy go," was no mere quip.

Norvin was caught up in ceaseless and ever more complicated legal work. His time and thought were monopolized by clients day and night, the more so after the outbreak of war in Europe. He became especially involved with our Government in an important aspect of the law, wherein the validity of freedom of the seas would ultimately be put to the test by the sending of foodstuffs to German noncombatant populations. President Wilson had demanded that strictest neutrality be observed, that the United States remain absolutely nonpartisan in all its relations with the combatant powers.

My husband's clients were necessarily often entertained in our home. Though it was somewhat beside the point, I found myself liking the English among them rather more than the others.

I had learned a great deal in a relatively short time about running a household by the constant entertaining that had to be done. Even so, there were occasional embarrassing occurrences. For example, one evening Adolph Tuck, of greeting-card fame—later to be Sir Adolph Tuck—was our dinner guest, with his attorney, Herbert Bentwich.

In routine concern that everything go well, my husband

asked what we were having for dinner." "Don't worry, my dear," I said; "rest assured it'll be good."

Instead of being satisfied, he countered with what amounted to a bombshell. "Of course you wouldn't know that our guests tonight must be served kosher food," he said ruefully, neither of us being informed as to the Jewish dietary laws.

Though it was to be some time yet before I understood more than vaguely the meaning of the term, I realized with horror that my menu might not meet the requirements at all—the main items being oysters, smelts stuffed with lobster, and chicken.

"The oysters will have to go," my husband said flatly. Having other things to do, he left me to solve the problem. The oysters were easily replaced by grapefruit, thank heaven! And when our guests enthusiastically requested second helpings of the fish course, Adolph Tuck, beaming, exclaimed: "This is the most extraordinarily delicious fish I ever tasted!"

I knew, then, that my worries were over, for assuredly the chicken would be satisfactory. But it was only years later when I discovered how guilty I had been in serving lobster, and it was a little tardy then to regret having been raised in ignorance of what, as a Jew, I should have known. At least the sin was entirely mine.

Immediately on the declaration of war, my husband had volunteered his services to the Judge Advocate General, and they had been rejected. In the end this was to have more than one significance. To understand what it meant, it would be necessary to understand something of the character and convictions of a man such as Norvin Lindheim. He was, above all, a patriot—not the extravert hurrah, Stars and Stripes Forever, Fourth of July type, but one who from early youth had aimed his studies and thinking to the single-

minded purpose of serving the primary interests of his country.

At Johns Hopkins, and later at Columbia University where he was graduated from law school with honors, political science was his special field, and he prepared himself sternly to guard those rights basic to the American concept of freedom, national and international. His concentration on international law stemmed in large part from his passionate belief in freedom of the seas.

That President Wilson's announced neutrality of the United States proved visionary was an ougtrowth of numerous factors, not the least among them Germany's own actions. Legally, however, until the United States was actually at war with Germany, American citizens had the legitimate right to follow a pro-English, or pro-German, course, as they saw fit.

On the question of which side we were on, in our own family there was no difference of opinion. From the very outbreak of the war I was even less thoughtfully, and more rabidly, anti-German than I had been in my adolescent and teenage years. With the sinking of the "Lusitania" my husband began severing all professional relations with Germans. He had not believed at first that German tactlessness and lack of understanding of the psychology of other people and nations—about which he had repeatedly warned them—could possibly carry them to such folly. He and I even engaged in a hypothetical argument about the sinking of the "Lusitania" during a short touring holiday through the Berkshires. As an argument it was laughably onesided however, since neither of us could imagine such a miscalculation. The small bet we made, therefore, was, to our minds, an example of unsporting betting on a certainty.

We reached the Red Lion Inn at Stockbridge—beloved place to us since the time we spent our honeymoon there—only to hear that a German submarine had sunk the "Lusi-

tania" off the coast of Ireland! More than a thousand lives lost, over a hundred Americans among them.

Overnight a war psychology began building up in the United States. It was fanned vigorously by the combatant nations, for lines were being desperately drawn to get the United States on their side.

The word "propaganda" came into daily use, with its sinister connotation of meanings of words and ideas sufficiently sugar-coated so that the unwary could be relied on to swallow them whole.

The road from innocent acceptance to mature cognizance is seldom an easy one to travel for one who, as I, was prone to think the best of people, and to accept idealistic purpose without too much analytical thought. But out of the correction of this human failing—if failing it could be held—was to develop the maturity to face and survive the shock of the attack on a man's integrity; the questioning of his loyalty without even a semblance of supporting evidence that was to shake to the roots my belief in the infallibility of justice. Above all, it was to enable me to evaluate the character of my husband—as a man—who, without illusions, withstood the storm and kept his beliefs intact.

For a while yet, however, we were mercifully unaware of what was coming, on the dark wings of war and its destructive cruelties.

When the United States went to war with Germany, the general eddying restlessness exploded in a determination by many women to prove in public ways that they too were as patriotic as the men. One immediate concrete expression of this attitude was an organization which, though not a part of the Army, worked in an auxiliary capacity with the Army. The Motor Corps was a force of women volunteers who drove cars and ambulances, did odd jobs for the military, and in general was on call in emergencies. Uniforms were

adapted from British Army style, complete to that smart accessory originally designed for an officer's field belt by a British Army officer, General Sir Samuel James Browne, and in recognition called the Sam Browne belt.

My fourth child was five weeks old when I enlisted for active service in the Motor Corps. I drove a low-slung Cadillac touring car given me by my husband as a gift for our third son. My first assignment was as "flag car" in a parade on Fifth Avenue. The date was April 18; with a bow in the direction of Paul Revere's ride in 1775 this was called the "Paulina" Revere parade.

The atmosphere of the Motor Corps out-armied the Army, its commanding officer out-brassed the Army brass. But also she was a woman possessed of a sense of mission, a stern disciplinarian, but with the capacity to elicit obedience from a heterogeneous collection of individualistic women, most of whom were rich and spoiled.

As there was a psychological as well as practical job to do, we were drilled relentlessly to high exhibition standards. A corporal found that she had a lot to go through before she was capable of barking commands in exactly the right manner! What went into the carrying out of orders for which there had been not even rudimentary training was hardly to be imagined. Our commanding officer was, first of all, zealous. Thin, wiry, excruciatingly efficient, her skin tightly drawn over high cheekbones lent some credibility to a claim of being the daughter of a father of the English nobility, and a mother who was a South American Indian princess. She had had some medical training, and managed to convince the Surgeon General of the Army that her women could serve many of his Corps' needs, thereby releasing men for other jobs. At the outset, few of the women had been able to say, without fear of successful contradiction, that they knew one end of a clinical thermometer from the other; but when their short period of intensive training was

done, they knew at least that and somewhat, if not much, more.

Even so, equipped with a superficial First Aid course and, at best, odds and ends about bandaging and how to find a vein and (in a tailor's dummy) to administer a hypodermic, we went to our assigned jobs with high morale. Day or night we would speed to remote sections—on the Bowery, in Brooklyn or on Long Island—to find out, for example, whether a soldier was goldbricking or really in need of medical attention; if the latter, families confidently expected the Motor Corps women to give it at once. Or we were detailed to ride inside an ambulance with a delirious pneumonia case from Fort Hamilton many miles to the City and a hospital. I must say I did this over serious protest. Paralyzed with fear and helpless when the patient grew violent, even more panicky when he lay inert, the only way to be sure he was still alive was—praying frantically—to pinch him.

The marvel of it all was the way in which such an unlikely group of women submitted to tough, ruthless discipline, working round the clock with a spirit worthy of the West Point ideal of "The Corps!" until, welded into a well-functioning paramilitary whole, serving to its absolute limit of capacity, it became recognized for indispensable service.

It seemed incongruous that, whereas I had sought unsuccessfully for such a niche in peacetime, in wartime I had found my place in a group with a purpose, serving *as* a group in a common cause. Whatever the job, however inconsistent with any previous experience, it was all one and the same to me. The satisfaction I had longed for but never before found—of belonging to a group, and working, moreover, in service necessary to my country—was very great. It seems quite possible that it was precisely the inoculation I needed to prepare me for a decisive experience which, unknown to me then, was just around the corner.

For the mood of the moment was indeed one of high idealism. Young and old alike had a desire to serve, and a willingness to sacrifice. Were we not fighting along with the men to make the world safe for democracy? Were not oppressed nations to be freed, a new world order established under a League of Nations? Was not the greatest thing of all, that this was the war to end all wars, the last war to be experienced by mankind?

Without the wholehearted encouragement and backing of my husband I could not have done as I did. Nor would it have been possible, without freedom from financial problems, to employ the help necessary to maintain the mechanics of household life. As it was, I was fortunate to encounter all manner of new people and experiences and, through sharing them, introduce the children to vicarious participation in the war effort.

Of course there were moments of misgiving. One day I was detailed to drive a boxing champion, "Kid" McCoy—somewhat confusingly explained to me as a welterweight who outgrew his class—to Wall Street. I parked in front of the Treasury Building, and he made a rousing recruitment speech from the back of my car. I could only hope that, at the moment the boxer roared "Give your name to the corporal here!"—the opening and closing cry of his speech, learned letter perfect—my husband wouldn't chance to emerge from the building where he had his offices, only to discover that "the corporal" was, in private life, his wife!

Actually my husband was considerate to a fault about this venture of mine; however, I had no desire, at this early stage of working with the Motor Corps, to put his generosity to too severe a test. Nor did I deem it wise later to make any point of the fact that, in the line of duty, it had been necessary to lunch at Coney Island with not only Kid McCoy, but an assortment of fistic cronies including the heavyweight—

and I was told, first Marquis of Queensberry champion—the Kid's contemporary, Jim Corbett.

I was one of the few Jewish women then in the Motor Corps, the only one later to become one of its high officers. I felt it a debt of honor to balance time, given away from home and family to Motor Corps service, with creative attention to my children. I was appalled at the way some women used war work as a welcome relief from family responsibilities; it gave me the consciousness that, whatever I could contribute of time and work to the war effort, I must make doubly sure not to neglect the rights and needs of my family.

Our eldest son had begun lessons at home when he was six, to learn something of his people's history. My husband and I had agreed that he was not to be a spiritual parvenu. Therefore he received instruction in the history, the legends, and the customs of the Jews from a well-qualified teacher, able to impart knowledge according to the boy's capacity, not his age. A child should at the very least become acquainted with the line of his inheritance, historical and individual. Well remembering that questions of my childhood and teen years had received answers which did not satisfy me at all, unlike my parents with their children, I decided that I too must study, to fit myself to answer questions as they would inevitably arise.

Available at the time was a course of lectures by a leader of the Ethical Culture Movement. The subject was "The Bible as Literature," the group composed mostly of Jewish women.

Discussing the Book of Job, the lecturer said one day, "The Book of Job is to be ranked with the world's greatest literature, including the writings of Shakespeare and Goethe." He startled us then by changing abruptly from the coolly intellectual to intellectual indignation, throwing out a question shocking in its pertinence.

"Should I, a non-Jew, have to reveal to you, who are Jews, the greatness of your own literature?"

No whipped dog could have felt worse as, humiliated and inwardly disgraced, I left the lecture hall. I thought I had been studying conscientiously for some years: philosophy, history, sociology, politics. But now I realized how I had neglected—perhaps subconsciously avoided—subjects which were intrinsically Jewish. I had read the Upanishads—yet not the Bible! Early marriage having cut short formal education, and feeling the urgency of catching up with a brilliant, highly educated husband and fitting myself to raise our children, for me Jewish history might as well have stopped at the fall of the Second Temple. Even though I could recall having won a medal at Sunday School graduation for knowing all the "answers" at the back of the lesson book, a non-Jew had—very properly—made me feel the disgrace of my basic ignorance as a Jew.

I then knew that I must do something positive to close the gaps in my knowledge and understanding. But what? How?

A short time after that shattering episode in the lecture course, I was given a weekend leave from my Motor Corps duties and went to Baltimore to pay a brief visit to my husband's cousin, my friend Hortense Guggenheimer Moses.

A Jewish life had developed in Baltimore which had in it nothing of the negative, formless, creedal limitations which had impelled me to look for new, positive answers to life. Hortense was a leader among the younger women of the Jewish community; of exceptional intelligence, she was active too, in the life of the city. To her it was incomprehensible that I was not a Zionist. In the few days of my visit, conversation revolved frequently around that subject. To me it was equally incomprehensible that she was a Zionist,

no doubt mainly because of my antagonism to it, for I knew little if anything about the movement.

The final evening of my visit started out, as I thought, uneventfully. I took merely polite interest in my hostess' decision to expose me to strong Zionist influence, by means of our going to call at the home of Dr. Harry Friedenwald, an eminent Baltimore physician, and an ardent and prominent Zionist.

Another guest was Dr. Ben-Zion Mossensohn.

Introduced to me as the principal of the *Gymnasium* in Tel Aviv, first institution of its kind in Palestine, he was the first Palestinian I had ever actually met.

I was jolted out of my passive frame of mind by the first impression made upon me by this thoroughly exotic-looking man. One felt astonished by a man who seemingly might have stepped forth from the pages of a tale from *The Thousand and One Nights.* The combination of his appearance—luxuriant, meticulously square-cut, black beard; glistening black-brown, magnetic—almost mesmeric—eyes; expressive long-fingered hands; a body suggesting boundless vitality—and the manner of his talk—a remarkable vocabulary, conveyed in a soft voice of great resonance—was saved from melodramatics only by a tremendous sincerity and conviction. All this was bound to be fascinating to any woman, a fact pointedly noted sometime later by my mother-in-law, who seemed well informed as to his romantic reputation and feared its effect on a daughter-in-law whom she considered woefully impressionable.

Oddly enough, his conversation that evening with Dr. Friedenwald about Zionism—to which it was intended I should listen and learn from—was boring to me at first, and I heard it with only surface attention.

However, I could certainly not deny to myself that I felt emotionally stirred by this apparition among men. Subtly, however, it became as though my mind were being exposed

to a slowly unrolling scroll, silken, marvelously illuminated. I was presented with a series of images, the best of Zionist literature and thought, taken like rubbings of ancient tablets. With consummate skill Dr. Mossensohn gave to forces and events the status of oracle. The combined impact of personality, intellect, and dedication was enormous. Perhaps the effect on me was secondarily intellectual, due to some unreckoned vulnerability within me.

As I knew myself, one side of my nature was wonderfully and completely satisfied in my marriage. Another side, engrossed in a drive for self-fulfillment, was acutely receptive to external impression, like copper plate under the engraver's burin. My thinking still leaned to the abstract and the philosophical. Though little recognized as such by myself, deep within my being ran a revivalist's rushing fervor. Restrained, kept within bounds by the calm rationalistic atmosphere of our home, and a strong streak of inherent common sense, I was protected against the dangers of ever going off at "religious" tangents.

Later, looking back with objectivity on that evening at Dr. Friedenwald's home, it was possible to realize that my host as well as Dr. Mossensohn had deliberately plowed up a spirit and mind they divined to be ready to be sown with the right seed; they divined also, in a person showing few outward points of contact with the Jewish heritage, that some spark lay deep, still, which in time might be fanned into flame.

I left for New York the following morning. Boarding the train I can recall my state of mind as only one of *waiting.* I had a misty sense of something coming toward me, but no premonition as to what it might be.

I opened a book, let my eyes follow lines of print, looked out the window, absently took my tickets from my purse. The train rushed along; it passed a red barn, a white wooden

church, a shallow pond, cattle standing placidly in lush meadowland.

A Morse Code of facts, ideas, questions, answers, arguments, hummed along my mind. *National being of a people, captive for centuries. . . . Isn't it enough to be an American? Untrue that Jews are not a people, only a religion. . . . Jews are victims of their homelessness. . . . If I am an American, am I at the same time a Jew? Where does my allegiance, my responsibility lie?*

Without being able to identify what was happening to me, I had the feeling of growing bigger than I knew how to be——

Must not I, so wanting to be free and to find fulfillment, be part of the drive of a people to be free, to reassert their creativity in a homeland of their own? *I am an American. . . . I am a Jew. . . . Instead of an enigma to myself, am I not thereby doubly blessed, doubly responsible? What better fulfillment than to take my place with those who have suffered for centuries for their beliefs? To share in rebuilding a national life in the land where our forefathers held that very concept of freedom, equality, brotherhood on which the greatness of America—my America?—is built?*

So went the stream of my consciousness as I looked out at the countryside and saw it only vaguely, looked at lines of print in a book without taking in their meaning. Looked—and waited——

If, as the Zionists such as Dr. Friedenwald and this Dr. Mossensohn held, Jews retained the courage, the vision, and energy to rebuild a home in the land of their beginnings, how could I look for greater fulfillment than to be part of the great adventure?

Bits and pieces of old prejudices and antagonisms swam past the lens of my mind like motes in a shaft of sunlight—and passed into a sudden nothingness. *Zionism is not an*

abstract term, framed in space, I thought. *Zionism is a saving way of life to a people, Zionism is alive——*

To what moment can one point, saying, *There in that moment my life was mystically changed?* That then one experienced the awakening, as from the unconsciousness of long sleep, to the spiritual revelation of a purpose which could become a lodestar for the rest of one's life? How express the experience in terms of a chemical composition of emotional and intellectual parts?

What had been coming toward me happened, while the train rushed onward. Zionism reached out to me and took my hand. A new way opened in front of me and there was no fear. Mystically, yet it seemed tangibly as sunlight, a great purpose and its glory touched me.

Reason murmured in my mind, *There will be conditions.* Of course. Great purpose is never without conditions.

For example, how convey to my husband, at the end of this train ride within an hour or so, even a fraction of the vision I had caught, with its accompanying marvelous evaporation of inhibitions, doubts? How make real to those I loved, and who loved me, what was now so real to me? I so wanted my family to travel with me, side by side. How present this way to them, so that of their own accord they would want to travel it with me?

Unbidden, my mind moved back to my confirmation. How I had been exalted by it! And how far I had strayed from the font of my exaltation!

Now I was returning home. This was my conversion.

As love released me years earlier from the confines of my stammering, now the signs and symptoms of love were again all around me. I had a matchless feeling of weightlessness, of freshness of spirit, an essence of spring. Life was falling into a mosaic. There were depth, breadth, harmony, beauty in prismatic color. Puissance flowed through me.

The train crossed the Jersey marshes. My husband would

be at the station to meet me. I could face him in the security of discovery that my life had reached a threshold of true purpose. No atheist ever had farther to come, or arrived with greater certitude.

When I told my husband that I had experienced a conversion and become a Zionist, would he understand?

5

A MORE PHLEGMATIC—OR LESS UPLIFTED—person doubtless would have waited to get home, or at least into the privacy of the family automobile, before conveying to a quite unprepared husband so vital a piece of news; besides its inherent importance as deep human experience, it inevitably must affect the life of our family.

As it was, stepping from the train, I said, "Darling, I'm a Zionist."

His answer was equally direct. "You mean you want to live in a ghetto?" A few short days earlier, if he had been the one to make an announcement like mine, my reaction would probably have been no different than was his.

I was not disturbed. In our ten years of marriage I had learned to rely on osmosis as a method to overcome certain essential differences between us in approaches to things. In his question I had caught an edge of irony. But it would take more than irony to swerve me from the course on which—so inexplicably—I had been set. I was convinced that he

could and would be won over. In terms of his own personality, the way his mind worked, it would not come about in a hurry. Time, reason, circumstances, and great caring must be given opportunity to work changes.

Though our mental processes and methods of learning and expression were quite dissimilar, my inquiring mind and intellectual capacity had earned his respect. He watched with approval how I chose my courses for study although, since his own way was that of reason and evidence, the instinctive way I reached conclusions was outside his experience and correspondingly difficult for him to understand. When it came to public speaking, which in time I was pressed to do, the success this met seemed the more extraordinary to him because I was completely untrained and extemporaneous, whereas he was an accomplished speaker, but he had been highly trained in that skill.

Unlike as our processes often were, his mind was the whetstone on which I ground my mind to a fine edge of mental discipline; it set a standard for me and, whether from a Henrietta Szold or a later association with the highly trained mentalities in the *Hashomer Hatzair* youth movement—the most intellectually self-disciplined group I have ever met—was of significance because invariably I sought out such a standard, and made it a fixed star by which to be guided.

I now began meeting a circle of new people—dedicated people—and reading books that not only were alive and interesting, but inspired. Magically, walls which had enclosed my outlook within bounds limited to our environment seemed to dissolve, allowing a new world with its people and problems to come close to my own life. For example, I grew able to see India's struggle for freedom, and the rebellion of Ireland against British domination, as akin to the Jewish struggle for nationhood and a home of its own.

The self-determination of peoples was no longer just one among President Wilson's Fourteen Points; it shone as a principle and concrete purpose for which it was essential to work, if necessary to fight. Bringing it close to home, such issues were in line with my husband's passionate championing of freedom of the seas and of the right of free speech.

I became acquainted with the writings of Gandhi and of Nehru; George Russell's *National Being* presented Irish problems to my mind which in some ways were analogous to Jewish Palestine's struggle for rebirth. Such books occupied my mind alongside Moses Hess' *Rome and Jerusalem,* Herzl's *Jewish State,* and Pinsker's *Auto-Emancipation.*

As illuminating to me as these books were the people who guided me to them. Wisely they tended to lead me away from too mystical an interpretation of my restoration to Jewish identity. They gave me the beginnings of an understanding of the realities of Jewish life, and the complex political factors of building a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

At the outset of what might be called my period of orientation, it was not so much the leaders of the Zionist Movement I met who influenced me most as it was those who were parts of its active nucleus. Boris Katzman and Charles Cowan were two among many.

Head of the Society of Engineers for Palestine, Boris Katzman—tall, lean, with a countenance as classic in its beauty as that of a legendary Greek god—was a man noble in his single-minded purpose, as self-effacing as he was exemplary in his dedication.

A scientist of first rank in his field, he had been engaged in research for a major food concern in the United States. His position and future were secure. All of this he gave up voluntarily to pursue his dream, working out in minutest detail with his fellow engineers a scheme for settling in Palestine a carefully-selected, self-contained nucleus of

100,000 Jews. Every skill and profession to support its needs —"the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker"—was to be represented. When the plan was ready to be put into execution he himself would immigrate. Until it was complete he would not go, for he felt that heterogeneous and random immigration could only result in futility.

Not knowing the meaning of compromise, he failed to grasp that the disciplined men and women on whom the success of his plan depended were not to be found in sufficient numbers amongst the Jews of this period, a period in which those turning toward Palestine in thought and action were rather the atypical and exceptional men and women, different from their families and friends, and tending to group together when their common objectives of settling and building in Palestine could be removed from the realm of theory and be made fact.

Boris Katzman was of Russian origin, a son of a wealthy family living outside the Pale, and therefore able to attend the universities of the country. While still quite a young boy he was turned away from the assimilationist trend of his background through reading Grace Aguilar's *Vale of Cedars.* This book, he told me, changed his life. Reading of the Inquisition and the fate of Jews in Spain sensitized him to what was going on around him amongst the Jews in Russia also, and to the gravity of the Jewish dilemma in general.

At once he had begun planning his own education along lines which would fit him to participate in the rescue of his people. Temperamentally he was unreservedly willing to make any sacrifice, however personal—even family ties—to achieve his purpose. It was easy for some to mark him as a fanatic. Certainly he was of the stuff of which great religions and causes—and sometimes martyrs as well—are made.

For the first time, then, I was confronted with a contradiction—single-minded dedication to a cause that could

only result in action which would be right, necessary, and even noble to some, and to others represent only flagrant disloyalty and betrayal in desertion.

The facts of Boris Katzman's service in the cause posed a question of serious importance. In his case a premarital arrangement had been agreed upon which provided that he was to remain free of any personal bonds which would limit or hamper his work for Palestine. Complications arose when he had to choose between putting the cause first, and thus leave lucrative work, to develop his unit plan for Palestine. In this his wife would not follow him. A dentist by profession, she had now to become the mainstay of the support of her two children. Without his driving purpose, she saw him not as saint but as sinner.

I asked myself whether such conflicts must necessarily rise to plague dedication to a cause? In my own case, what of possible conflict between my primary and chosen obligation to my family and my ever deepening dedication to Zionism? Could I serve both with full justice to each?

Emotionally and intellectually stirred, I had plunged into deep, unknown waters, and now needed the support of the greater knowledge, experience, and strong convictions of these new friends, until I could develop power of my own to swim strongly in the many currents. In a sense, forces of the times, and events, placed me in an advantageous position to "go somewhere." By means of the Motor Corps service and other liberating influences I had begun tasting the first fruits of the growing emancipation of women; through Hortense Moses, Ben-Zion Mossensohn, and others I had glimpsed the seriousness of the chasm between the lives of families in our social and economic status, and the lives of the great Jewish masses whose depressed existence was still carried on in the shadow of persecution and collective homelessness. I had begun to be aware of the psychic distance between New York and Palestine, and to feel that it presented

me at once with opportunity and obligation. I had a gathering sense of reaching what I had longed for all my life, *of belonging,* of being a part of a great movement and, receiving of the strength of the group, becoming capable gradually of accomplishing things which, as an individual, I would not previously have thought myself capable.

Late in the year I was drafted to talk, before a group of women, on the meaning of Zionism. Since I was scarcely six months old in the movement, it may appear to have been rushing things, but in a sense the majority was learning how to walk in knowledge and understanding, and so those who were thought to have gifts of speech, to be able to move the convictions and action of others, were useful even when lacking experience.

I felt genuinely fearful. I, so recently a stutterer, how could I stand before people and speak acceptably? Yet, inspired by an opportunity to serve which transcended any mere self, I put fear behind me, and purpose before me—and simply spoke.

Never will I forget that moment! It was as though my tongue were touched at last with the coal of fire I had dreamed of and prayed for during that mystic period of my confirmation, so clouded by my miserable stuttering. Like Isaiah, I had been unshackled then by what seemed to me a miracle. Now, by a new miracle, I found myself released from fear—except for that edge of healthy fear which is its own kind of insurance against failure—and able to convey to an audience the precious insight I had received. And yet then, as always thereafter, it seemed as though someone outside myself and not I were speaking—someone to whom I found myself listening, knowing they would not fail me.

My inner transformation quickly produced outward effects, naturally first and most particularly in the life of the

family. Besides those of my husband and the children, I could not but be sharply aware of the reaction of my mother-in-law, for my action struck against deep-lying and ineradicable attitudes of hers. Our hard-won compatibility was, at times, sorely tried. The gap between her lifelong world and my newly discovered world of Palestine and the Zionist movement was far too great to expect her to be able easily to bridge it. Virginia-born and bred, in spirit she was far from all things Jewish. She had never met and did not now care to meet Jews, especially such as those who now were acquainting me with this new world with which I had chosen to ally myself. For example, it was as inconceivable to her as any aberration that, influenced by Ben-Zion Mossensohn, I had read Moses Hess' *Rome and Jerusalem* over and over until it became my second Bible. Nor could she comprehend my excited interest at gleaning from Charles Cowan, a Jew, an awareness of the awakening nationalisms in the world. How could such extraneous matters possibly concern me? How could I look for guidance to one who had no business or profession and was without visible means of support? Unaware of the traditionally high status of the perennial scholar in Jewish life, she had nothing but contempt for one who fitted into no recognizable category.

For his part, Charles Cowan had no difficulties about divided responsibilities. At the time a bachelor, he was kept to a lecturer's schedule only in the evenings. If he chose, he could read all night—which he did—and sleep all day. In consequence he made himself into a walking encyclopedia, with a catholicity of taste as wide as mankind. From him I gained a perspective of the renascence of the Jewish people and the building of their homeland in Palestine—not as an isolated incident but as in the stream of world movement, one of the tremendous historical affirmations of our time.

For reasons of background and training my husband could not agree of a sudden with all I had espoused. On

the other hand, if he could prevent it no one was to be allowed to interfere with the translation of my convictions into action. He, like Voltaire, might disapprove of what I said, but would defend to the death my right to say it.

Knowing him as I did, a man dedicated to the steady extension of freedom, I had no anxiety about his eventually recognizing the true nature of the Jews' struggle to wrest freedom from a world so long opposed to granting it. The pioneer spirit of Palestine would come to appeal to him for its analogy to the early struggles of his own country. Once the various elements were related in his mind, we would be able to travel the way together as allies.

Meanwhile I understood thoroughly that my individual struggle was only beginning. More thought, dedication, and effort than I had ever before expended would be needed, to cultivate and maintain my Jewishness now that I had glimpsed it, and to convey it—I hoped for their emulation—to my loved ones.

My husband did not wait to be completely convinced before putting his faith in my judgment into practice. Immediately after the parade celebrating the Balfour Declaration, it was decided to give a mammoth concert at the Metropolitan Opera House—in two days' time! Very few people refrained from saying bluntly that it couldn't be done. Seemingly, however, along with my faith I had discovered that there is no such thing as "impossible." At least two of us believed it could be done—Abraham Baron, music critic of one of the Yiddish daily papers, and myself—with my husband to take our word for it.

There was only one mishap in our otherwise sensationally successful victory celebration, and that only momentary. Someone, unnerved by the numbers and volatile spirit of the crowds converging on the Opera House, put in a riot call, with the result that no one—myself included—could enter the building. But, in his inimitable, authoritative

way, my husband carried conviction with the police officer in charge, who quickly ordered his men to clear the way and allow the wildly enthusiastic, happy, but orderly audience to enter and give rapt attention to an epochal concert.

I could not conceal from myself that there were very great odds against successfully infusing into our family life any such unfamiliar way of life as now occupied my every waking thought. We spent our first summer in our newly acquired estate in Glen Cove. I must admit that the atmosphere could hardly have been less conducive to making real to my family the ideal of Spartan sacrifice to a purpose which had taken possession of me. How could the luxurious life, the peace and security of a well-staffed country home possibly be related to horrors daily being faced by a homeless people? How could we, who had nothing but freedom in our daily lives, relate ourselves to people forced to flee from cellar to cellar, city to city, country to country, endlessly seeking even momentary refuge for themselves and their rootless children?

Here at Glen Cove the air was alive with the laughter of confident children at play amid the joyous barking of their dogs; here, guarded by the sheltering beauty and protection of sentinel trees, they could romp freely; scarcely a world in which to make even imaginable, however, a world where children, ill-fed and ill-housed, could know neither safety nor freedom; where "play" was a word without meaning. It was a grave matter, indeed, to find the right method to counteract the softening effects on the children of a daily existence which took for granted servants to supply their every need, making any effort on their part superfluous.

As yet I had only the broad idea of what must come about; no more than my husband had I discovered the method. It was more apparent to me, though, than it was to him that it would take time, combined with slowly maturing per-

spective, wisdom, and judgment, to see in just what practical ways a cushioned and protected life such as obtained in our home could be, in fact, a mixed blessing. It was too comforting and comfortable a life, and it limited the children's outlook, giving them no hint that a world outside was filled with dissonances which they would encounter sooner or later and would need to comprehend.

I became increasingly aware, therefore, that it would be very wrong for our children to be kept sheltered from any other way of life than one in which they received everything without knowing the need to work for any of it. As it was, they were without any need of the sharp cutting edge which a competitive world would ultimately require of them, in the form of initiative, selective judgment, independent skills. A day would come when mere physical and material comfort must be laid aside in order to venture forth in a real world, to find for themselves the boon and responsibilities of independent creative living. No longer could there be any question that the old order was passing; the world they would have to meet when grown would be altogether different from the one into which they had been born. How were they to be readied to meet it when the time came? In the face of so easy and ordered a life, how instill in them a living sense of the pioneering spirit which though it must seem to them largely as something from a storybook had formed the country of their birth and was the same spirit of pioneering which now was stirring in the land of their ancestors? How were they to develop the stamina which, closer to home, had enabled their grandfathers to come to America as friendless, penniless boys of seventeen, and find the initiative and courage to achieve their ambition to succeed in the competitive society they had had to face?

It was inevitable that there would be false starts, in finding—or inventing—the first creatively useful activities for the children. For instance—though both artificially and

unnecessarily—the children and I decided that we would bake our own bread at home, instead of buying it from the baker. We proceeded under the cold, disdainful eyes of the cook and kitchen maid. The children were interested in taking turns at kneading the dough, but were really only playing along with their mother at the new game; indulgently, my husband waited for me to see for myself that it was nonsensical, to say nothing of the fact that bought bread tasted better, and was cheaper too.

In time, by trial and error, the "individual responsibilities" narrowed down to the irreducible minimum for each child, that of making his or her own bed when old enough, and keeping the room in order. My mother-in-law regally if pointedy ridiculed the whole device, assuring the boys that they were allowing themselve to be changed into sissies; she exchanged meaningful glances with my husband who, as long as he lived in his boyhood home, had never been required to so much as pick up after himself or close a bureau drawer.

An exception to my necessarily losing battle against the realities of our environment came with the family camping trips. Even on these, my husband considered an army of guides indispensable; yet the children found life in the woods giving them all kinds of opportunties to be on their own and use their initiative, happily doing the thousand and one manual jobs needed around the camp. In the out of doors they had their father setting an example—it was a point of honor with him to carry as heavy loads over the portages as the guides themselves carried. Here was what I had sought for—their father leading the family in our home.

Into this complicated and rather hit-or-miss effort to weave some serious unfrivolous elements into our existence, entered my new outlook on life. Without that I would have been beaten before I started. Even so, it could not have

played the decisive role it did, had not my Zionism been based on more than pity for cruelty which long had been, and continued to be, visited on the Jews. Race hatred, discrimination—these by themselves were too far removed from my own and my family's daily experience to provide any of us with a durable urge to identify ourselves, as Jews, with the fate of the Jewish people.

However, what pity could not motivate, the pioneering spirit of Palestine could and did. And the first to become converted to my "conversion" was our eldest son, then approaching the age of ten.

Sometimes important stages of growth show themselves in apparently irrelevant ways.

Undoubtedly influenced by my entrancing experiences in Lynchburg, we had followed the custom of observing Christmas in our home as Americans, in the American way, with a tree. It was one of the things about which Ben-Zion Mossensohn challenged me. He demanded that I explain how —believing as I now did—I could conceive of this kind of celebration of Christmas in our home? How could I explain it, justify it before the children? Was I sincere after all, about giving them back their Jewish heritage? If so, how could I, on the one hand, raise them as Jews, at the same time holding out to them on the other the utter inconsistency of Christmas as *their* holiday?

It was of little avail to explain to a man of such intensity that Christmas was really nonsectarian, that it was far bigger than just a Christian holiday, as I soon found out when I applied myself to meet the challenge of his objections. True, it had become so commercialized that sometimes it seemed difficult even to get through to its deeper significance. I had to admit, of course, that any Christian would rightly find such a rationalization devious; and, to tell the truth, I myself was no longer able unreservedly to accept the shallow "American holiday" explanation of a day

when I well knew its significance to be deeply holy for so many.

Yet when it came to the established custom of our own home, could I now just suddenly take away from the children something delightful and warm which had been built gradually for them? Since my first visit to Lynchburg, no fir tree had ever been too tall and handsome, no trimmings too gay and ornamental, no gifts too entrancing to mark Christmas for them. To my daughter and the younger boys —still only five, three, and not quite a year old, respectively—it would not mean so much if the tree were omitted. But to Norvin, Jr., it would mean a sharp, bewildering change and privation—or so I thought.

Therefore, that year of 1917 I compromised. Let the permanent solution wait on a little more wisdom. Meantime I would not take away the familiar celebration of Christmas time before I was prepared to replace it with another which was more fitting.

Indeed I needed time myself; I must discover and study the real meaning of Hanukkah, not let it be merely what it had been to me when I was young—a matter of a "gift" handed out to us at Sunday School, in the form of a half-pound box of candy. I was absolutely unwilling to work the change in a way which would place a vacuum where previously there had been so much sheer joy. I deeply wanted my children to come to love—not hate—being Jews.

Like many another parent, I found I had underestimated the sensitivity of her child. In front of the biggest, brightest tree the Lindheims had ever had, Norvin, Jr., turned suddenly to me and said, "Mother, I want us to never have another Christmas tree, Never. Today it has made me feel ashamed." In that moment I knew that already something of the ideal and idea which had become so real to me had begun to take hold in him. My mind went back to the time when, on the train from Baltimore, I had

asked myself how I could communicate to those I loved, and who loved me, this great thing that had laid hold on my life. I could not yet know precisely how it had been transmitted to him and begun to work its effect. I could only tell from our son's unexpected and impassioned announcement that, somehow, it had.

In 1918 we celebrated Hanukkah for the first time in our home. I had pored over Charles' two-volume edition of the Books of the Maccabees, and marked the salient and dramatic passages which I knew the children would love. Then I had gone over them with Norvin, Jr., so that he could read them understandingly to the children—others beside our own, for we had invited some non-Jewish as well as Jewish children to our first family Hanukkah celebration.

What story lends itself more dramatically, more inspiringly, to a child's imagination than the story of the Maccabees? The struggle of a small, inconsequential people, planted on a strategic highway between powerful forces fighting each other for supremacy in the region, daring to rise and take up arms against one of these, not for conquest or territorial gain, but for the right to live according to their own beliefs and in the manner that their fathers and forefathers had taught them was good?

They were farmers and shepherds, these people of Judea, who wanted nothing more than to till their lands and tend their flocks in peace. But when the forces of the Hellenistic Empire, under Antiochus Epiphanes' leadership, demanded not only oppressive tribute from them, but that they live and dress and worship contrary to their own laws and customs; that, against every tenet of their religion, they sacrifice swine, to them the filthiest of all animals, on altars dedicated to their God, they rebelled. When Matthathias, venerable father of five sons, killed the officer who tried to force the sacrifice of a pig on the altar of his village, Modin,

then his sons rose and, with the men of Judea following them, went into the hills, formed guerrilla bands and harassed the enemy from mountain passes and ambush. After many years of hard living and heavy sacrifices of life and fortune, this tiny people had triumphed, under Judas Maccabeus' leadership, over the hosts of a colossal enemy.

No broad outline of a story is enough to fire the imagination and enthusiasm of a child. I therefore translated and adapted a number of passages from the story into dramatic action. Looking back into my own childhood, I recalled that the most exciting things were the mysterious bumps in my Christmas stocking, and I took over this idea. When the Maccabees and their guerrillas fled into the hills, assuredly they would have had to take a few things with them, probably in sacks slung over their backs. So I translated the "Christmas stocking" delight into the pack the Maccabees carried on their backs into the hills. One obvious advantage of the sack over the mere stocking was size—how much more the sack could hold, gifts and good things to eat!

The "cast of characters" assembled in our room upstairs, in costume, their sacks on their back. Each with a tall, lighted candle held in the free hand, they descended the staircase in single file, singing "Rock of Ages." The library was banked with greens, in the center a Hanukkah eight-branched menorah, next to which stood a tall seven-branched candlestick into which the children, still singing were helped to place their lighted candles. Then, with the children sitting around him on the floor, Norvin, Jr., read the story of the Maccabees from the original.

Next came the lighting of the first candle by the youngest child, the blessing of the lights by the oldest, another song, then presents for all. What seemed to the children the most miraculous of anything was that, according with the number

of lights, there were gifts for eight nights, instead of just a single night of Christmas gifts.

In subsequent years, when we lived at Glen Cove the year round and our children went to the Quaker School in Locust Valley, the non-Jewish children invited to share our Hanukkah celebration were not a little envious of the Jewish children whose "Christmas" lasted eight days instead of one! And Mr. and Mrs. Blackburn, headmaster and headmistress of the school, liked to come to our various Jewish celebrations, particularly on Friday nights when we lighted the Sabbath candles at the dinner table.

All of these ceremonies were completely unorthodox and not in accordance with tradition, of course, for I had no tradition to take up, never having even seen the lighting of the Sabbath candles at home, or celebrated Hanukkah. The important thing was that I had become consciously and joyously a Jew and wanted my children, as well, to take delight in giving expression to their heritage.

My persistent need was to harness my aspirations. It is all well and good to think correctly, but useless until something is done which translates thinking into action. Therefore I was looking for service. This led me after months of study to visit the offices of the Zionist organization where, for the first time, I met Henrietta Szold.

At the head of the Zionist movement then stood Louis Dembitz Brandeis, one of the great Americans of his or any other time. As it turned out, I was later to be brought into close and infinitely inspiring contact with him in matters concerning Zionism.

In the newly re-organized movement, Henrietta Szold was head of its cultural division. It would be fair to say that not only was she part of the human bridge between American Jewry and the settlers of Palestine but was, in effect, one of the pioneer builders of this bridge.

Born in Baltimore, after graduating from high school she organized the first "Americanization" classes for immigrants who came to live in her city. Not only did she teach these newcomers English, but she conveyed to them an understanding of the greatness of the country with which they were casting their lot. For reasons of humanity, temperament, and patriotic devotion, no one could better instill the values of the country she so passionately loved. Similarly no one, I was to find, could better pass along these values to the great dream of building a Jewish homeland.

She had visited Palestine first in 1909. One of the things which struck her forcibly was the inadequacy of medical service in the country, and she resolved to give her life to bringing this need to the attention of American Jewish women so as to bring healing to their people.

The first time I saw her she was sitting at her office desk in New York. The office was modest in size and simply furnished, and she was as modest and unassuming as her surroundings.

It was good, she said to me contemplatively, that I had found my way to Zionism. Increasing numbers of young American Jews were needed to support those of European background and experience in America who had made a sacred trust and personal responsibility of rebuilding Palestine into a Jewish homeland.

As Henrietta Szold and I talked, and I poured out to her the glory and purpose that had come into my life with my awakening to my Jewish heritage and the opportunity for its expression through Zionism, I no longer saw before me an overworked, graying woman; I saw a great force in human guise. Her searching eyes were young and full of fire, her manner dynamic, her words a ringing call to action.

"We must find the right place for you, my dear," she said to me, simply.

It made no difference that the first task she set me was seemingly a trifling incidental one; very likely she selected it as a test to clarify my understanding of the issues involved.

It seemed that a leading Jewish woman in the San Francisco community had resigned with asperity from the Women's Zionist Organization of America, Hadassah. She gave as her reason the fact that there had recently been printed on the back of its membership cards the aims of Zionism as defined and adopted at the Basel Congress: "To have a publicly assured, legally secured Jewish homeland in Palestine."

This, it seemed to her, had too political a connotation to be an aim for a welfare organization such as Hadassah. Therefore she resigned her membership.

As I worked away at the answer Miss Szold directed me to frame to this letter, I learned what an instinctive pedagogue she was. Vague thoughts must be made clear, objectives defined, ideas made graphic. It occurred to me to compare the present status of the Jewish people, in relation to their deep need for a homeland, to many small deposits of coal scattered here, there, and everywhere around the world, their dispersed energies therefore dormant and wasted. Gather the deposits together within the space where their energy was needed and, like coal ignited in a well-built furnace, they would produce their propulsive power.

Whereas Miss Szold went immediately to work on this means of making use of me, I had the feeling, however, of not being taken very seriously by others in the executive positions of the movement. They were, perhaps understandably, wary of a very young woman who just might be taking up a passing fad, indulging a transient enthusiasm; perhaps a problem was posed too, when a young woman was not too plain looking, and rather unusually well dressed.

Louis Lipsky, Jacob de Haas, and others were polite,

bidding me welcome. But what to do with me as a worker in the movement? Though they surely did not voice it, they probably thought briefly that possibly the best use for me in the future would be as window dressing.

I was anxious not to spoil my aspirations and hopes by impulsiveness, and I carefully bided my time. I kept up my service in the Motor Corps, taking care to keep the pockets in my car well stocked with literature concerning Palestine and the movement, and reading diligently when I must wait for passengers or orders.

My dream and my resolve were gradually stabilizing and strengthening. Zionists put me in touch with other Zionists. I knew I was often as much of a phenomenon in their lives as they were in mine. I was young—only thirty, by now. The cause needed young spirit, young minds and hearts, young energies. But those who were not quite clear as to why a wealthy and assimilated young person would be concerning herself with unsung service for this particular movement, nevertheless suffered me gladly, finding me worth bothering about, if only for my potential value.

6

AT THE TIME THE UNITED STATES ENTERED the war against Germany all German-owned property had to be declared to the Alien Property Custodian.

Like jackstraws in a game, myriads of seemingly unconnected or inconsequential elements imperceptibly began drawing toward each other. One element was a newspaper. Peculiar circumstances were to give it a terrible relevance to our family.

The *Evening Mail* was founded while the United States was still neutral. A man named Herman Sielkin—an American citizen but resident in Germany, and widely referred to as "The Coffee King"—invested one hundred thousand dollars to get the paper started.

There were those—among them at the time Theodore Roosevelt, S. S. McClure and some others—who were disturbed by the fact that only the British and the French sides of the war were being presented in the press, and that seemingly the German position was being slighted. Among

other things, this was regarded as a serious disservice to the spirit of neutrality.

Through one of the partners, Walter Kaufman, who had been retained to represent Mr. Sielkin's interests, my husband's law firm, Hays, Kaufman and Lindheim, became involved in the events which followed.

My husband was the firm's expert in such matters and so, late one afternoon, Mr. Kaufman came with Mr. Rumely to have the declaration for the Alien Property Custodian approved. The secretaries had all gone because of the lateness of the hour. Without the slightest sense of any risk, and primarily because of Mr. Kaufman's blindness—which, gallantly, he never permitted to interfere with his career as a lawyer—my husband inserted in the declaration in his own handwriting certain relevant amplifications bearing on Mr. Sielkin's investment.

It was ironic that the war had been over for several years before this simple clerical act produced a conspiracy charge against Walter Kaufman, Edward Rumely, and—making up the trio because technically a charge of conspiracy had to show "involvement of three or more persons,"—Norvin Lindheim. The precise conspiracy, it was set forth in the charge, was "to defraud the Government of the United States."

Several years of investigation had gone into building the charge. It did not take account of the fact that the Alien Property Custodian could at any time simply have taken possession of the money under the provisions of the Trading with the Enemy Act. The only purpose served by including my husband in the action was numerical since, in the interest of strict accuracy, he had only inserted a few clarifying words as to Mr. Sielken's investment in the *Evening Mail,* the one overt act which connected him with the case.

Instead of taking possession of the money, it was chosen

instead to charge conspiracy, on the ground that a felony had been committed when the fact was concealed that the one hundred thousand dollars was not Mr. Sielkin's personal money, but belonged, rather, to the German Government. For this no motive was ever charged or found.

The case of the *United States* vs. *Rumely* was brought to trial in October, 1920. The Federal Court Building, cold, gray, murky, seemed strangely suited to the cold, gray, murky purposes of the proceedings.

Incredibly, without presentation of the slightest claim or evidence that the defendant attorneys knew of any connection between accounts of the Central German Purchasing Agency, the German Embassy, and the money invested in the newspaper by Mr. Sielkin, they stood charged with having "willfully" made a false report to the Alien Property Custodian as to the source of the money.

Conveying no embodiment of the majesty of the law and its equity, the Federal Building loomed rather as a symbol of the crushing weight of its power, immune to review, appeal, or redress. At times the trial seemed to take on the theatrical character of a morality play produced by a Granville-Barker or a Moscow Art Theatre, in which—day after day after day for seven interminable weeks—bank messengers filed in and out of the courtroom carrying extended in their arms before them, huge bank ledgers.

There are times in life of such hurt that one can only think primitively of gathering loved ones close, crawling into a shell, and holding them together to shield them from further attack. This was such a time. It would not bear reference here, however, except for its effect on later events connected with my Zionist activities, and my absorption into life in Palestine. It had taken a personal experiencing of a crushing injustice for me to identify completely and unalterably with those seeking justice.

Aside from intimate family feelings, since my husband was on trial in a Federal Court I had to ask myself in all honesty whether my activity in Zionism, and consequent gradual advancement toward a certain status of leadership, might possibly affect the cause detrimentally.

When I posed the question to those at high levels in the movement, I was told categorically that I must continue doing as I had been doing. At no point was there any question of my husband's integrity or innocence of wrongdoing. For the time being it was inevitable that he would feel compelled to curtail some of his own activities. Was that not perhaps all the more reason for me to maintain my own service?

From the family point of view the decision to continue my work was a salutary one. Nothing could so menace our future as permitting the tone of our home life to sink into a morass of gloom. I had once observed the destructive effects of such submission. The family of a bank president charged with embezzlement continued living in their rather expensive home; the cross-currents of the case, and the fact that it was the exclusive topic of family conversation, so inundated the children that, long ahead of any court verdict, they were swallowed up in a sense of guilt.

Such a thing was not to be permitted in our family. Our eldest son was now of an age to be able to take in what was happening. Though a point was made of open and frank facing of the trouble, no weeping and wailing about bitter injustice was indulged in or allowed to poison our daily life. Hard as it all was for my husband's mother, she too had to summon the gallant strength and courage to join in our attitude.

This was 1920. Agonizing years were to pass between the handing down of the verdict—"Guilty" (ironically a few days before Christmas)—and sentencing. Meanwhile we must push it to the back of our minds as best we could, concerning ourselves instead with activities of constructive

purpose; and, above all, seeing to it that it was made to serve as an experience—bitter as it was—on which our children could grow and not be destroyed.

Our fourth son was nearly a year and a half old when the trial ended. Not only was he a delightful addition in himself to the family, but he was conclusive proof that I had lived up to the promise extravagantly made to myself, on the occasion of my first visit to the Charles Guggenheimers' home in Lynchburg during that Christmastime of my engagement days, when I vowed that I too would have what seemed to me the ideal family of five children.

For some time past my husband had been actively interested in Zionism with me, coming toward it as I had felt he would, as he learned to know it through some of the great minds guiding its steps; in turn they drew his excellent mind into their councils.

Besides Stephen Wise, who had become a close and valued friend, another who was near and dear to us, standing out as the very personification of integrity and warm human sympathies, was Julian W. Mack. He was another of the more recent converts to Zionism, having joined the movement around 1914, only three years before me. A western Jew of assimilated background, a Justice of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Second District, he had become interested through Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the great Russian-Jewish professor of chemistry at Manchester University.

During the war, Dr. Weizmann was a director of the British Admiralty laboratories. He became famous when he developed a synthetic acetone to be used in manufacture of the explosives then desperately needed for Britain's conduct of the war.

The British Government felt deeply indebted to him. It has been said that, when he was bidden to claim some reward commensurate with his service, he requested only that

Palestine be recognized as the Jewish Homeland. Certainly his influence was a major factor in the procuring of the Balfour Declaration and the sustained interest of some of England's greatest leaders. From his youth, Chaim Weizmann had been active in Zionism. He visited Palestine first in 1907; in 1920 he was the acknowledged leader of the World Zionist movement.

He had won Judge Mack over with a blend of irresistible logic and personal charm, not only to becoming an advocate of the movement, but also a leader, at a stage where it was beginning, in the United States, to lose the homogeneity of its perdominantly foreign-born supporters, and had begun to attract those, like himself, who had been drawn back to their Jewishness by the courage and imaginative daring of the Zionist concept.

For the delicate and complicated process of grafting the new element on the older, European stock—whose roots were deep not only in the historical and traditional ties with Palestine, but in the traditions they themselves had established since the beginning of the Zionist Organization of the World—no one could have been more ideally suited than Julian Mack. He had the gift of patience. He was by nature an arbitrator. He leaned over backward in being fair. In the best of the liberal spirit he wanted, and always was ready, to hear and consider both sides of a question.

Inevitably there were differences about the form and interpretation of Zionism between the American-born Mack and the Russian-born Weizmann. Yet they were not too evident then. This was the honeymoon stage of the movement in the United States, when new forces were being joined to the old, the fusion holding great promise of achievement, politically and organizationally.

Notwithstanding the unavoidable intricacies of pressures and politics which were part of the evolutionary process of Zionism, Julian Mack was able to make and render objec-

tive judgments, and to keep harmony within the ranks. He had a talent for inspiring deep loyalty and warm friendship. No doubt it was beside the point, but the fact that he was a superb judge of fine wine and food added a human facet to his image.

A cadre of young lawyers gravitated around him, some drawn not so much, perhaps, by the Jewishness of the case, as by the sense of being near, in his company, to international problems which would have a part in determining history. There was work for them to do; people had to be seen, research material prepared, briefs written—all the many phases of political lobbying; all in all there were many opportunities for eager, able, bright, legally trained minds.

Many people, of course, remained tepid; some were antagonistic—even violently so—to the philosophy and purpose of rebuilding Palestine. Exceptions were such men as Samuel J. Rosensohn and Abraham Tulin, who were to become our lifelong friends.

Sam Rosensohn was a human being gifted by nature with the enthusiasm and capacity for throwing himself unreservedly behind things in which he believed. In wartime government service at Washington, he still made time for advancing the cause of Zionism in every way possible.

Sometimes after a heavy day's professional work, Rosensohn and Norvin Lindheim—each possessed of a taste and a gift for forensics—found refreshment in sessions of Socratic dialogue concerning Zionism and its varied appeals. The appeal of these pyrotechnics lay in the extent to which two men, deeply committed on the same side, could marshal brilliant arguments, and support them with all the flair and bulldog tenacity they would instinctively bring to total differences between them.

Abraham Tulin often was a participant. I remember one

evening especially, when the two men stayed on in our home far into the night.

Whereas Sam Rosensohn had a sense of the dramatic, Abe Tulin's approach was more cerebral; shorter on warmth and passion, longer on history and pure legality.

In a sense all this worked to my personal advantage. Because I was still young in my grasp on historical facts in the Bible, Abe captured my interest at once by drawing a parallel between Moses' leading of his people for forty years in the desert—to transform them into a homogeneous nation—and the present time, when a conglomerate mass of Jews was gathering from here, there, and everywhere and —regardless of background and other superficially divisive elements—joining efforts in a movement toward reconstitution of the Jews as a people, no longer homeless and depressed, but secure in the dignity of a homeland. It was to be a nation as other nations, where the ethos of the Jews could find its own and true expression, spiritually, socially, economically, and culturally.

Differences in points of view were anvils, on which conclusions were hammered out. Examples: the distinction between nationality and citizenship; the relation between citizenship and membership in an historical grouping, such as the Jewish people; was this grouping racial, or was it religious? Were members tied together by blood or by ethnic background? Was there a valid conflict of loyalties between being an American and a Zionist? I could not believe so—to me, the two had become identical.

Towering above all personalities within the movement, speaking often on the issues from his position on the heights of that American Sinai, the United States Supreme Court, was Mr. Justice Louis D. Brandeis. Only after 1914 had he come to speak out, both as one of the great of our country

(though never, in all humility, did he so regard himself) and as a Jew.

His speaking was prompted by his deep conviction that, not only was it permissible for an American Jew to be a Zionist, but that as an American it was required that he should be. Of his own position he wrote, "Slowly, slowly I began to realize, that in order to become better Americans we must be better Jews; we must be Zionists."

For me the time following the birth of our fifth child and fourth son, Stephen, was a time of many "firsts." Life became for me a series of revelations and discoveries, each seemingly more exciting than those that had gone before. A summons to meet Mr. Justice Brandeis was like nothing else; to me it was like being invited to meet a Moses, a Jefferson, a Lincoln.

The meeting place was Chicago, the occasion the first convention I attended as an accredited delegate of the Zionist Organization of America.

When I entered the room it struck me that this man —in physique tall, gangling, perhaps a little less ruggedly graven and more beautiful of feature but with somewhat the same austere, brooding contemplation and, in his occasional smile, great human warmth—bore a strong suggestion of the Lincolnesque.

The moment exacted of me the self-possession which only whole-hearted yielding to a great faith can produce because Mr. Brandeis made no small talk or other move to open the conversation casually; instead, he waited in silence to hear what I had to say.

Risky though it was, my opening gambit seemed to catch his imagination. Instead of being platitudinously pacific, it offered criticism, constructive I hoped and believed, but criticism nonetheless. "Mr. Justice, I know you are most anxious for new forces to join the movement and give their services. But if they are to feel encouraged to do so, a remedy

must be found for what I myself have encountered. I want to serve—but find I must struggle to be permitted to do so."

"Struggle?" he asked quietly. "Why?" His deep-set eyes seemed to bore into my inmost mind.

"I am an unused volunteer. There seems to be no place to utilize the full-time service I want, and am prepared, to give." I have believed ever since that it was in that instant that Louis Brandeis and I became not only allies in a cause, but friends.

A sluiceway of ideas and plans was opened immediately. It was blocked once—happily only briefly—when someone whom I saw only as a red-headed young man interrupted and sought, rather precociously I thought, to stem the free flow of ideas. He proved to be a Harvard Law School professor, eventually to be an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court. His name was Felix Frankfurter.

The convention was excellent training in speeding up my reaction time. It was such a study in contrasts that one could find oneself left far behind in short order unless one could adjust rapidly. For example, even the language was different: Yiddish, or what was designated as "Congress Deutsch," was favored by the majority of delegates. Wild applause was given to those speaking their beloved *mammaloschen* (Yiddish), but merely polite attention to those speaking English. Only the fact that I had known German as a child rescued me from floundering completely when Yiddish was being spoken; however, my German could not save me from missing the point of priceless witticisms which lost all flavor in translation; nor could my German convey to me the essence of the folklore which studded the speeches of those who had been able to live the life of a people, notwithstanding—or perhaps because of—the separation which discrimination forced upon them.

Not only was the language different, but so were the

speeches. Even the most eloquent speech somehow sounded clipped and colorless in English, compared to the rhythm and flow of ideas delivered by Yiddish orators, for example, such as Abela Goldberg, Smiliansky, Barondess. Without being able to understand much more than a fraction of what they said, so consummately evocative was their skill that their appeal was translated into the response of their hearers. You exulted in concert with their exultation; you laughed with them at the valiance of a people who could see humor through the veil of their tears; you wept with them at the pathos of it all. I found myself envying those who had experienced the colorful, bitter-sweet life of the ghetto.

Yet not all the people encountered were the great leaders and eminent speakers. Like myself, some were newcomers in the movement, searching for their own way to serve.

There was, for example, Mary Fels. New to the movement, she had come into it after long, active work with her husband, Joseph Fels, in England and this country in behalf of Henry George's land-rental principles, widely called "the single tax" though that was and is a misnomer. It appeared likely that the vast resources of the Fels-Naphtha soap fortune might be generously diverted to this purpose. After her husband's death, Mary Fels had interested herself in the cause of building a Jewish homeland, and the prospect that, from the first, its economy could flourish as a working example of the land-rental system.

At the convention it was interesting to observe this tiny slip of a woman, dressed invariably in severely simple black, being protectively piloted through the crowds on the arm of the very tall Stephen Wise; or talking earnestly up into the aloof countenance of towering Louis Brandeis.

With me at the convention was my close friend, Bertha Guggenheimer. During the last illness of her husband and after his death, a deep friendship had grown between us. She seemed to live a vicarious youth through me as her

interests became centered more and more in the work for Palestine; she made large contributions and was eventually to leave one hundred thousand dollars to get the playground movement started in Palestine.

After the convention was over, it was Mary Fels who was at least partially instrumental in influencing me to undertake my first substantial task within the movement. She and three others influential in the Seventh Zionist District, comprising the so-called "Silk Stocking District" of New York City, from Fifty-ninth to One Hundred and Tenth Street on the West Side, proposed that I become district chairman.

Inconceivable, I said. I was too young in relation to the movement, too inexperienced, knowing nothing about large-scale organizational methods. It would be wholly premature to give me such responsibility.

It was a puzzling fact that, although the wealth in this particular district was impressive, from the standpoint of support for Palestine it had made the poorest showing in the country. If these men and women who were "old hands" at the problem had failed to correct this, how could it possibly be expected that I would succeed? And if it could not be anticipated confidently that I would succeed, why make me chairman?

The members insisted that at least I take time to think about it. I could agree to that, although there was little or no possibility that I would come around to their view—or so I thought.

I had reckoned, it seemed, without the intuitional force that had taken possession of me, without the rise of sap from roots of whose vigor, still dormant, I was not aware.

The morning following the meeting with the District leaders, an idea shook me awake before daylight. What the District needed at this juncture was a home where the Zionist could be host, where Jews and non-Jews could be invited to learn of developments in Palestine amid surround-

ings which would reflect the culture, the varied beauty, the spirit of a renasence of the Jewish people.

The logic of the idea so gripped me that, if the District committee would sanction my planning and set in motion such a center, I would accept their proposal.

At first my husband was a bit leary of still another idea that seemingly had sprung fullblown so soon after I had promised only to "think about the proposal." But when I described to him the kind of meeting place I envisioned, he could tell that I had reached the point where I was going to have to see the effort through, if for no other reason than for the good of my soul.

The real estate agent first looked blank, then long-suffering—and yet the very first place he showed me was precisely right for our purpose. Racing off to confer with the four committee members, I persuaded each to give one thousand dollars to cover two years' rent and running expenses. I raced back and signed the lease.

The space was the basement and storeroom of an apartment building on Seventy-second Street, between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues. It was piled with trunks, dust-covered valises, and the accumulated lares and penates of the apartment house tenants; but—to the eye of one who had, not long before, taken an enormous, neglected, barn-like brownstone on 74th Street and made it over into a beautiful dwelling—it had two outstanding features and presented exciting possibilities. The two features were indirect lighting, installed there for some unimaginable reason, and a short flight of stairs making an intriguing entrance into the main room.

My mother gave me *carte blanche* for the furnishings, and I recruited some of my friends, who were artists, to help make it appealing to the eye as well as practical for the purpose. After cleaning and painting, Lester Boronda, an artist of Spanish descent, did the ceiling and walls, rubbing blues

and greens together and then spraying them with brick dust, a clever device which people who had been there exclaimed at on sight as creating the very atmosphere of Palestine.

This was not to be just an organization office and workroom, but a home of the Zionist movement as well, where guests could come to meet those of like interests, and gain insight and understanding of the needs and aspirations of Palestine and the Jewish people, their past, present, and future.

There was resistance to be met, of course, and refusal of the "Old Guard" to believe in the center as a bona-fide undertaking. All in all, though we had considerable upstream swimming to do, the success was immediate and this first Zionist center, aesthetically inviting as it was, became a beehive of activity, and a rallying point for the youth as well as the adult community.

In the course of events, I found out that what I was doing was in reality running counter to the prevailing current of the leadership of American Zionism.

One of the basic differences between the European way of thinking, and that in America, had to do with the question of doing *Gegenwarts Arbeit*—educational and cultural work —in the diaspora, that is to say, among the Jews living in dispersion outside Palestine, in "exile." Here I was doing just that—deliberately building up a Zionist center for this purpose, to be a focus of educational and cultural work and also to raise necessary funds. The center, having its pivot in Palestine, would be a means of bringing knowledge of the real meaning of the rebuilding to all, young and old, living within radius of the center's influence.

Louis Brandeis honored our gala opening by attending. Standing at the head of the stairs, in his quiet, moving way, he spoke a few words of approval and encouragement. (Years later, at our last meeting before he died, he was to reveal

that he had been well aware of the difficulties, if not at the time the possibilities, confronting that first center. He remarked, "Had we followed your lead through, and established other district centers such as yours over the country, Zionism would have had a different and heathier growth in this country.")

At our housewarming Simon Flexner—who ordinarily concerned himself only with developing the economic aspects of Palestine's rebuilding—referred to me as "the Zionist rabbi." (Whereas in the United States the term "rabbi" connotes the Jewish minister, in eastern Europe it is as well the term for scholar or teacher.)

One day a year or so later a young man sat across the desk from me, a member of the Intercollegiate Zionist Organization, one of many youth groups functioning at our center, the first real home the Zionist youth had found.

"What do you expect to get out of all this?" the young man said while he glanced around at all the evidences of organizational hard labor. The young man was Louis Fischer, on his way to becoming a noted writer and political commentator; to becoming too, first a lover and then an implacable hater of Communism.

What was *I* expecting to get out of it all? I did not feel complimented by the question; such cynicism was disturbing, coming from one with intellectual capacity such as his. Yet the very fact that the question was put made me realize that I must be doubly sure in my own mind of the answer.

Those in search of gold and treasure know that there is a passion of exploration which does not count the cost. This human fact is generally recognized with understanding, respect, and sympathy. Why, then, should it be hard to understand the passion of exploring the roots of oneself and one's heritage?

For example, the *Midrashim,* those legends and stories scattered throughout the Talmud, being unkown to most of

us of American birth, were, to me, matters of exploration and discovery. It was shocking to have to admit to myself that—although I had been an avid collector of stories of all peoples in order to pass them on to my children—I knew literally almost nothing of the Jewish folklore and fairy tales that were a rightful part of their inheritance.

Professor Mordecai Kaplan, of the Conservative Jewish group, and a daring thinker and great teacher, was my advisor and guide. He arranged that one of his students from the Jewish Theological Seminary should come to the center Saturday mornings to tell those stories from the treasure house of the Jewish past to the neighborhood little ones, tots of four, five, and six years of age. They came in droves, those of non-Jewish as well as Jewish parentage.

For the older ones a Sunday morning group was led by Dora Askowith, an able teacher of History at Hunter College. So avid was the interest that the youngsters tormented their parents into digging out on a day when there was a blizzard, to drive them to the center.

Recalling my own Sunday School experiences, I felt an experiment was indicated, wherein history would be conveyed *as* history, and Palestine could be made more real than it had been made to me, as some vague segment of geography, suspended figuratively from the sky on four blue ribbons.

Certainly the activities of the center were by no means limited to children. But in orienting myself to a rediscovered faith, part of the problem I encountered stemmed from the fact that the origin and ways of that faith had been allowed to become, for me, so obscured and overgrown while I was growing up. Therefore I dreamed now of a world, for my children and the children of others, in which such mistakes would be corrected. Yet before this could be brought about, knowledge and understanding must replace ignorance and misconception.

The unorthodox organizational methods I used, as offering the shortest distance between two points of ignorance and comprehension, began bearing fruit. Committeewomen acted as hostesses to their friends and their friends' friends, and the circle of supporters enlarged. At our Sunday forums capacity audiences welcomed the most gifted speakers, from all over the country. Mordecai Kaplan and those of his followers who, like himself, were seeking new forms of expression for their Judaism held weekly meetings at our little Zionist home, and from their deliberations grew the first of the Jewish centers of America.

The simple beauty of the place itself, and the significant fact that in it Zionists possessed in microcosm a home in which to be hosts, drew the fangs of much of the opposition leveled against the movement itself by its antagonists. As a dynamic step I invited opposition leaders, one by one, so that we might discuss differences—true or false—over a cup of tea. Non-Jew as well as Jew came to visit and to gain new insight into what was happening in the "Holy Land."

For the first time in the history of the Seventh District money was forthcoming in substantial amounts for the Palestine Restoration Fund, as it was then called.

It seemed to me very often that the imperative and exacting work of the center was the means of keeping me on an even keel through the disillusioning period between the returning of the "Guilty" verdict in my husband's case, and his ultimate serving of the sentence. That the sentence was mitigated in the end, reduced from a year and a day, to be served at the Federal Penitentiary in Atlanta, to a month, at the White Plains institution—modern and humane, but still prison—was only one facet of the strange reasoning which entered into the case from beginning to end. In that portion of his diary written in prison my husband

raised the penetrating question, with respect to reduction of the sentence from a year and a day to a month:

Why one month? If guilty, one year would not be sufficient punishment. Innocent as we are, one hour's imprisonment would still be atrocious. . . . I am told that one of the newspapermen stated that President Coolidge felt that *we might have believed the facts were as we reported them, and so the violation was only a technical one.* We were convicted of willfully agreeing to make an untrue report. If we *believed the facts as we reported them,* then we were wholly innocent. What I am chiefly concerned with now is: Will there be *opportunity* for vindication? That is one thing we must fight for, and fight, and fight, and fight!

In the years of fighting for vindication, the factor which bulked largest in saving the family from succumbing to tragic injustice was the outside and living interest brought into our home by the people and plans concentrated on the building of the Jewish homeland. This interest was the bulwark of our *home,* to my husband, to me and, indirectly, through us to our children.

It was not until 1928, though, that the New York State Court of Appeals handed down the decision which cleared the defendants of all guilt, and paved the way for reinstatement at the bar of Walter Kaufman and Norvin Lindheim.

The tragic aspect of this was that my husband's reinstatement came—posthumously. In February of 1928 he had died; suddenly, it is not too much to believe of a broken heart.

But prior to that desolating fact, both he and I were experiencing the rich rewards of deepening absorption in aspects of Jewish learning, and in specific phases of Zionism with reference to Palestine.

At this time, too, storm clouds had broken over the movement. Between the European and the American leader-

ships, serious differences had manifested themselves. Not only did they involve the leadership—Mr. Brandeis and Dr. Weizmann—but they penetrated deeply into the rank and file.

Having rejoiced in learning to know and love the Jewish people as an entity, it appalled my husband and me to hear —like the tocsin of discord—the cry, *Die sind nicht unsere leute!* ("They are not our people!") leveled at us, the assimilated German Jews who were giving ourselves wholeheartedly to the upbuilding of Palestine. We recognized the ugly symptoms of a kind of actual class struggle, a deep emotional attack of "East" against "West," which crystallized in Dr. Weizmann's categorical exclamation, "There can be no bridge between Pinsk and Washington!" The struggle raged at all levels. No matter how devoutly we desired to remain outside it in the interest of remaining constructive instead of engaging in destructive or otherwise futile action, the malignancy was in the very air.

Judge Brandeis had been to Palestine and, there, had been struck by the terrible health conditions which, after World War I, had left large segments of the population weak and debilitated by the malaria which swept the country. He saw the amelioration of the land and the drying up of the swamps as a first and major task. He felt also that, with the promulgation of the Balfour Declaration and its inclusion into the law of nations by the "San Remo" decision of 1920—whereby Great Britain was granted by the League of Nations the mandate over Palestine—the objectives of Zionism had been achieved, and that it was now time to lay the stress on building a sound economic foundation for the development of the country. He believed the time for propaganda had passed.

Another purpose of Mr. Brandeis in going to Europe was to acquaint himself with the leadership of the movement there, in order to decide whether the position of world

leadership, being urged on him by Dr. Weizmann, should be accepted; it would necessitate his resignation as an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

He wrote in his diaries subsequently that this step seemed impossible to take because of what he envisaged as the unbridgeable gap between his concept of ways and means, and those of the European leadership. His vision was perhaps prophetic; the gap widened into an irremediable split between himself and Dr. Weizmann at the London Conference in 1920; the episode was particularly painful because this was a crucial conference, in that it was the first held since the war and the Balfour Declaration, and Zionists of all countries were once again able to attend.

For the movement, it was a tragedy, casting a long shadow over its further development in the United States. Had there been deeper historical understanding on the one side and a greater forbearance on the other, an all-important unity might have been preserved. There were bound to be many versions of what actually transpired but Mr. Brandeis felt—as I heard directly from him—that bad faith had roiled the waters; that, whereas he had first been hailed as a deliverer by Dr. Weizmann when he told him of having gained the consent of the three leading Jews of England to accept responsibility for Palestine's economic development, his promise of assistance, necessary to winning the conference over to the plan, was then withheld. Mr. Brandeis was a man of uncompromising integrity and veracity, and would brook no shade or nuance less than this in those he worked with. Whatever the origin, the split between these two great leaders was irretrievable and the effect all but catastrophic to the movement in the United States.

At the time Mr. Brandeis felt strongly that British Jews had the double duty of taking responsibility for Palestine's future, inasmuch as it was to be administered by their government under the mandate given them by the League of

Nations. It would be unfair, though, not to give recognition to the fact that, from its beginning, the Zionist movement was a movement of the masses which functioned always from a strong, democratic base. The plan to have an aristocratic group of knighted men exert a determining power over the economic development of Palestine could conceivably have been impossible for even Dr. Weizmann to put over at the conference. Herzl, similarly, had suffered defeat at the hands of those who revered him when he went counter to the wishes of the masses.

Like colonies of germs on a slide under a microscope, difficulties swam into the field of vision. One on which opinion was sharply divided concerned the plan to pool gift and investment funds, giving administration of the whole to the *Keren Hayesod,* or Foundation Fund. Again Mr. Brandeis found himself at odds with the majority opinion. Not for nothing had he written a book titled *Other People's Money.* Exactitude in handling money was a responsibility he could not and would not allow others to escape.

As far as I personally was concerned, it was extremely puzzling and profoundly disturbing. On the one hand, I felt much more in tune with the European Zionists. On the other hand, if the economic foundation were not soundly laid, I could see how all could end in disaster. Yet even then I sensed the imponderable of faith, which had often succeeded in making something out of nothing, able to bring reality to the dream of a Jewish return to its ancient homeland. Thus, regardless of my husband's advocacy, I was faced with a long, hard inner struggle before I could bring myself to take sides; not without serious reservations, I lined up eventually with the Brandeis group.

No one who did not experience it personally could know the heartbreak that went into the internal struggle, which culminated later, at the Cleveland Convention of 1921, in the resignation en masse of the top American leaders.

It all afforded a liberal education in the political realities of democratic action. In simple fairness to Dr. Weizmann one had to take into account that he never wanted things to happen as they did. His sin was one of omission rather than commission, in that he vacillated.

On the one hand he was torn by realization of what it would mean if men such as Louis Brandeis, Julian Mack, Stephen Wise, and others, though retaining membership in the movement, should withdraw their leadership. On the other hand he was unavoidably driven by the violent passions aroused in his followers—the great traditional leaders of the movement such as Menachem Ussishkin, Shmariyahu Levin, and others who were in the United States at this time and taking part in the struggle.

Amongst the other casualties was the little Zionist center of the Seventh District. With others of the Brandeis group I felt it inconsistent to retain its chairmanship under the incoming administration. Offers to continue the work, if not the leadership, were rejected. The logic of this may have been impeccable, but the center died. For this I do not hold myself guiltless.

The miracle was that, though seriously crippled by events, the movement in the United States survived. For this, credit must be given to Louis Lipsky, whose loyalty to Dr. Weizmann never wavered.

Seen in perspective, there is no doubt that Dr. Weizmann not only had the vast majority of the Jewish masses behind him, but that it was he who most truly represented their conscious and subconscious aims and aspirations. It was "their" movement, "their" bitter need and longing for a land of their own which had crystallized the longing for Zion into a twentieth-century political movement. Strangely enough it had been brought to concrete expression by another assimilated Jew. Theodor Herzl, as correspondent of the Vienna newspaper *Neue Freie Presse,* had reported the

Dreyfus trial. He had become so imbued with the need of the Jew once and for all to be rid of the anomaly of being a people without a land, that, in a surge of prophetic inspiration, he wrote his book *The Jewish State.*

Around him and his idea of starting immediate political action with the heads of governments to achieve recognition of Palestine as the Jewish homeland and the right of the Jews to return to it as such, gathered those who had already joined forces toward this end, some even having gone so far as to send out groups to colonize, when it still was under Turkish rule. These groups were the *Chovevei Zion*—the lovers of Zion—and the *"Bilu,"* the first to pioneer the idea of the Jews redeeming the land through their own physical labor.

No people ever has had dropped on them, seemingly from the sky, a more magnetic personality, a more handsomely dramatic ambassador than Theodor Herzl. His background of Viennese culture, his beautiful writing, together with the passion of his new-found gospel, gained him entrée everywhere among the royal courts of Europe, and those in power in Britain received him as the accredited representative of his people.

His testimony as a witness before the Royal Commission on Immigration brought forth a thought-provoking assertion which also drove home a telling point.

Speaking of the fact that Jews "carried anti-Semitism with them in their suitcases" he pointed out the curious circumstance that all remained well when Jews were few, but wherever there were Jewish masses, trouble was sure to mount. This, he felt, was important affirmative evidence in behalf of a Jewish State where the Jew, knowing he could dwell by right, would not fall prey to the tensions caused by bare toleration of his presence.

I might interject that one of the first things I did in the Zionist movement was to have Herzl's testimony before the

British Royal Commission reprinted and distributed, for it was known to only a few in the United States.

In order better to comprehend the divisiveness of the 1921 events it helps to recall certain of Herzl's difficulties. Even the greatest hero often suffers grave blows of fortune when, in a democratic movement, he feels he must go counter to the will of those under his leadership.

The first Zionist Congress, organized under Herzl's leadership in 1897 in Basel, had been handled as a true parliament. He even went to the length of insisting that delegates attend in full dress, on the ground that anything less formal would not befit the occasion.

Yet as soon thereafter as 1903, again at Basel, the beloved Herzl was outvoted when he proposed that Britain's offer to cede Uganda to the Jews as a national home instead of Palestine be accepted.

His point was that, even though Uganda was plainly second best, pogroms were making some decisive settlement of the fact of Jewish homelessness imperative, and hence he urged the Congress to accept the Uganda proposal.

Dr. Weizmann led the mass sentiment vigorously against any such diversion from the true objective, Palestine. Protesting delegates left the hall, and Herzl went down to defeat. He died shortly afterward. He could not stand it if it were thought that he raised any ideological impediment to the return to Palestine. Only in the land of Israel were the roots; only there could the life and spirit of the Jewish people fully find continuance. But pogroms were desperate realities—was no measure to be taken which would put an end to them? The answer given by those suffering the pogroms was, "NO! There is to be no substitute for the land of Israel."

Now, again, in 1921, a like dissension became a stern reality. This time it was not a question of the diversion of objectives, from Palestine to another land; instead, the fear

of a diversion of power, the risk of its falling into the hands of those who felt neither the basic need of a home other than the one in which they lived nor the urge to pull up roots there and put them down in the land of their forefathers.

Puzzled, torn by the conflict raging roundabout, I turned to the Bible to find historical parallels and relate them to present circumstances.

Moses, a prince of the reigning house of Egypt, had also been an assimilated Jew. He too had been attacked, when he intervened in a quarrel between two Jews. They said, "Who are you—an Egyptian—to judge between us?" Nevertheless, he ranged himself unreservedly on the side of his enslaved people. When the call finally came, together with his people he exiled himself from his land of Egypt, himself leading them into the desert, to prepare them for entering the promised land.

There come times when the vision needs to be enlarged, the judgment impersonalized, the will strengthened. My experience has been that, at such times, if given a chance, nature may take a hand.

In the summer my husband, our twelve-year-old son, and I decided on breaking away temporarily from rising tensions; we sought the change through two months on pack trails in the Rocky Mountains.

One day, descending from a rim of the Great Divide along a glacial ridge, we came into a forest of majestic pines. Their roots were not covered over by underbrush. Instead, clumps of white columbine ringed the base of the trees, their slender flower limbs seeming to engage in a dance, as of nymphs, poised to take flight. Suddenly a single beam of morning sunlight reached through the immense forest dimness, clothing the fluttering white blossoms with shimmering light. Nature seemed to transform her forest into a cathedral, lighting the candles for a service of adoration.

Israel seemed to call to me. "Your roots are here," it was as though I heard her say; "come and be joined with your roots."

In childhood the American pioneer tradition had appealed strongly to my imagination. I used to dream about how, if only I could get away from the city, from all built-up places, I, too, could be a pioneer!

As a Jew it was not too late in Palestine to live the life of the pioneer. Pioneering was needed there; there it was possible to build without tearing down, to create a society with regard for human relations and moral aspirations. In that pine forest, for the first time Palestine as a home for me became real in my mind as a goal to aim at.

Clearly, more than a program of economic soundness was needed for building the foundations of a new Jewish homeland. Investment, industry, the ramifications of sound business principles were vital requirements. Repeatedly Theodor Herzl had said, "Only if you will it, will it be." Without an upsurging of the will to build the homeland, and human beings willing to sacrifice ease and comfort to do the building, would the dream be realized. Where were the Jews who were ready to pull up roots in other lands, and put them down in Palestine? Where were the Jews content to become farmers or factory hands in a desert land? Deliberately to make themselves the building blocks on which the economy of the Jewish homeland would be constructed, from the ground up, on Jewish labor? Who would drain swamps, eliminate the anopheles mosquito, and otherwise rid the land of destructive evils? Who would summon the resolution and courage to settle on dangerous frontiers, to labor to make productive the rocky and sandy wastes? How tap, and harness, dispersed energy needed for rebuilding an inhospitable, neglected wilderness into a homelike habitation?

Would the promise of an independent, self-sufficient secure economic future prove enough to start the flow of a people's dormant creative energy as Brandeis' supporters thought? At this time no natural resources of significance were known to exist in Palestine. None, that is, but one—manpower; the idealistic, self-sacrificing, pioneering manpower represented in the *halutz* movement. But for these young men and women, impelled by the purpose, moral passion, and instinctive fervor to give themselves to the monumental task of rebuilding the land without thought of personal gain or profit, there could be no economic development of a nation. Only tangible contact with their roots, and profound faith in their people's present and future could release and channel the necessary pioneering spirit and human resources. It was faith in the Jewish people's readiness to pay the bill when it came due—not money already in the bank—that had allowed for the acquisition of the Valley of Jezreel and provided the site for the first mass agricultural settlement. Faith was the investment capital of Europe's Zionists; they banked on it and stood firm when, in the controversy of 1921, this faith had been discounted as too intangible to be built upon.

I knew this faith was real. Had it not reached out and gripped me, endowing me with a new kind of strength, the vision and the will, if need be, to see my easy environment well lost?

As yet, it seemed to me, I had with few exceptions seen little around me of this kind of faith in action—a faith strong enough to rise above differences in background. Conflicting standards of attitude and conduct were inevitable in a movement drawing to itself people from widely diverse economic, social, and cultural strata. Above all, there were few ready to identify themselves so completely with the movement as to want to live in Palestine.

Also I had come to realize that, as yet, I myself had no

real contact with the source of the historical strength of my people, no intimate knowledge of roots sufficient to fortify me against the kind of disillusionment and discouragement that assailed me when the philosophical and factional fires burned hot.

As we rode out of the pine forest, I asked myself whether, in all seriousness and truth, there was a "Jewish" ideal. My questioning was an acknowledgment of ignorance rather than scepticism.

Whence, I needed to know, exactly and incontrovertibly, came the Jew's lodestar, and his strength for sheer survival?

The very opposite of Julian Mack in temperament and character was his close friend and comrade-at-arms, Stephen Wise.

A knight, ever arrayed in the shining armor of his convictions and seasoned by many crusades, always he stood ready to enter the lists, especially against any and all who challenged his right, as a rabbi, to fight the cause of the weak and oppressed. When few of Reform Judaism had yet enlisted in the cause of the rebuilding of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, he set aside self-interest and jeopardized the career that his unique personality and great gift of oratory entitled him to, by becoming a fighter in the cause of Zionism, speaking out uncompromisingly for the right, and indeed obligation, of his people, to establish a home in the land of their forefathers.

Compromise was abhorrent to his nature. When offered the pulpit prized above all others, he declined it. No board of directors could be allowed to limit his freedom to speak as his conscience dictated. Organizing what he called the Free Synagogue, he set precedent by causing pews to remain unassigned; regardless of wealth or social position, congregants were seated in the Free Synagogue in the order in which they arrived for worship.

The worker exploited on his job, the Negro discriminated against for his color could count on the advocacy of Stephen Wise, even if the boss or bigot involved happened to be an influential member of his congregation. Injustice of any kind sent him forth to fight to remedy its evils, and it was not an unfamiliar sight to see him walking picket lines, or marching in such demonstrations as the parade celebrating the Balfour Declaration.

He had the respect of heads of government. President Wilson invited his counsel in the affairs of Palestine, as when he associated himself with the drafting and adoption of the Balfour Declaration. Thomas Garrigue Masaryk and Eduard Benes regarded Stephen Wise as a co-author of their new state of Czechoslovakia; their sponsor and friend when they were in exile in the United States, he worked with them closely to advance its coming into being.

In politics he was partisan, a Democrat, lining up with a young nonconformist such as Fiorello La Guardia, helping to put him in office and keep him there.

Any and all seeking freedom could find their way to him. When people addressed mail to "The Great Rabbi" or "The Chief Rabbi of America" the Post Office lost no time in forwarding it to him.

Tall, rugged of frame and facial features, he was tempestuous, impetuous, at times thoroughly inconsistent—and a man entirely human in make-up; a noble figure and towering character of a man, in some ways cut from much the same pattern as his friend Franklin D. Roosevelt. A fighting liberal, he was ready and eager to do battle to the finish for matters in which he believed, and to raise that inimitable, organ-toned voice of his wherever it could rally his fellow countrymen to the cause of freedom and justice.

The Jewish Institute of Religion was the crowning effort of his life, his legacy to a new generation of rabbis and young students, from his capital of valiance and the spirit of free-

dom. Working closely with him, Julian Mack brought to its planning the balance and stability of judicial discernment, and experience as an overseer of Harvard University.

At home once more, learning that the plans for the Institute had moved ahead steadily, at a chance meeting in Judge Mack's chambers I asked Stephen Wise—half facetiously and half in earnest—whether he would accept me as a "special" student.

"Wonderful!" boomed out the great voice without hesitation, adding only a practical "Why?"

Entirely serious now as the idea, once voiced, became of the greatest importance to me, I replied, "I have to get my bearings—I have to triangulate my course."

Always alive to the dramatic in any given situation, he accepted the idea fully. It was certainly dramatic enough to suit even him, for any woman to be accepted for rabbinical training.

And so began a period of creative pause in my specific Zionist life; it was to spell—not its end—but rather its real beginning.

Like any serious explorer, setting forth on a long voyage of discovery, I set my house in order. Maintaining only a small *pied à terre* for the family's convenience in the city—a small studio apartment, a block from where I was to study, and a refuge after my husband's long professional day, where, doing the cooking myself, I could give undivided attention to him in the evenings—we moved our year-round home out to Glen Cove. My second son, not having recovered well from a mastoid operation, needed the reinforcement which living in the country could give him. He was only eight yet already had a passion for the soil, and talked confidently of becoming a second Luther Burbank. Making due allowance for the right of children to change their choice of calling many times over, I tucked away in a corner of my mind this enthusiasm of his. Was it perhaps a

sign that the great hope, so real to me, would eventually become as real to those I loved, might be realized in the course of their own lives?

So, in 1922, began my three-and-a-half-year period of intensive study; I gave ten full hours a day to it, carrying twenty-two credit points, with vast corollary reading. For admission to a course given by Professor John Dewey at Columbia University I faced a kind of scholastic Everest. The course I had chosen was a very special one, open only to graduate students with honor grades. Applicants were interviewed by a Professor Jones of Columbia. "What qualifications do you present for this course?" he asked, looking me over quizzically from head to toe.

"None," I replied, with more honesty than diplomacy.

"Have you a bachelor's degree?"

"No. But I have five children."

He leaned back in his chair, roaring with laughter. "Well," he said, "you won't last more than one lecture of course, but anyone giving that answer goes in." He was in error as to my not lasting more than one lecture. I lasted three and a half years.

Wherever research led me, everything I touched seemed to turn to intellectual gold. Aside from the learning acquired there the Institute was in itself an experience. The student body was made up of college graduates, many of them members of Phi Beta Kappa, their purposes and backgrounds varied. Some were graduates in engineering or the law. Perhaps elsewhere the satisfactions of learning had eluded them, and they hoped they would find them here. Others, groping for meaning to life, thought it might be revealed through Institute study. Then too there were those who, without struggle or doubt, seemed ideally fitted for the modern pulpit, where religion, philosophy, psychology, and community human relations were the function of the "cloth." Still others, having "graduated" from orthodoxy,

were preparing for serving the seemingly more socially desirable Reform congregation.

My own purpose in entering the Institute was simply to learn. I wanted to learn first of all whether there was a Jewish ideal in more than the philosophic sense and, if there was, of what did it consist. Also I wanted to explore the wellspring of Jewish survival. What was it that had allowed the Jews to live and retain their entity, the one people to survive antiquity? Hope and disillusion both made it imperative for me to find answers.

The faculty brought together a group of professors of differing backgrounds but profound and thorough training in their special fields. Those who came from Germany had a very modern, scientific approach to Jewish learning. Of these Dr. Felix Perles of Koenigsberg, and Dr. Ellbogen were experts in their fields. Dr. Julian Oberman was of a newer and more modern school of thought. Young and vigorous, he was also an enthusiasitc mountain climber, and would delight the children with his yodeling on our many long hikes together. Of the more traditional school there was the great Talmudist, Dr. Tchernowitz, "*Rav Tsair*" (the "young rabbi," he had been called in Russia), a man rich and warm in personality, a treasure house of learning and folklore. David Yellin of Jerusalem was, in addition to his great scholarship, one of those helping to bring about the rebirth of the Hebrew language, giving its usage modern terminology and moving beauty.

From England came Dr. Israel Abrahams, an eminent Bible interpreter. One day he called me on the telephone and announced with mock indignation that I had forced him to do something absolutely against his principles.

And what was that?

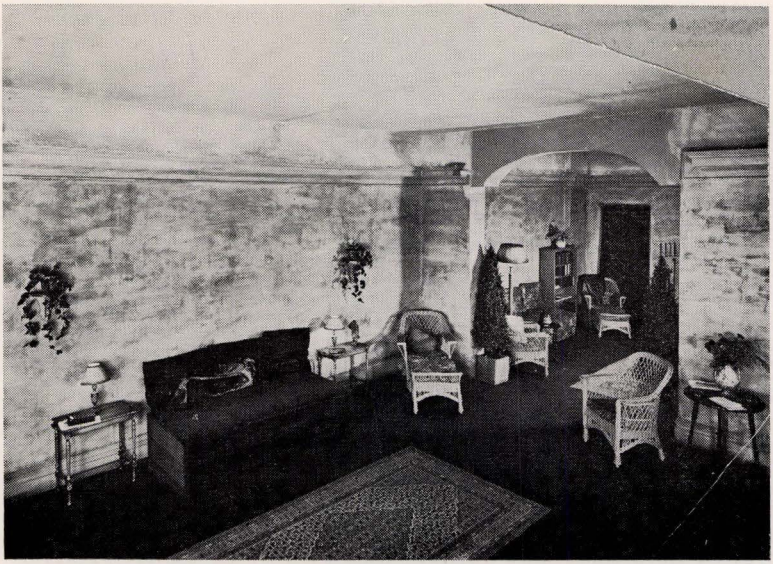
"I have had to mark you 100 per cent on your paper on the Book of Job!" he exclaimed. We both laughed, he a bit ruefully.



Irma L. Lindheim (1916).



Norvin R. Lindheim (1906).



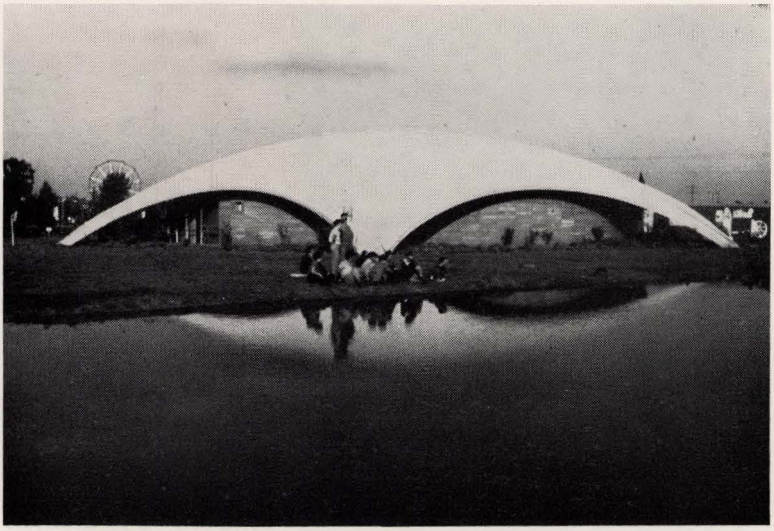
First Zionist center in the United States (1919).



Officers of the Motor Corps of America: Lt. Lindheim is second from left; Capt. Bastedo, ranking officer, third from left. (Campbell Studios)



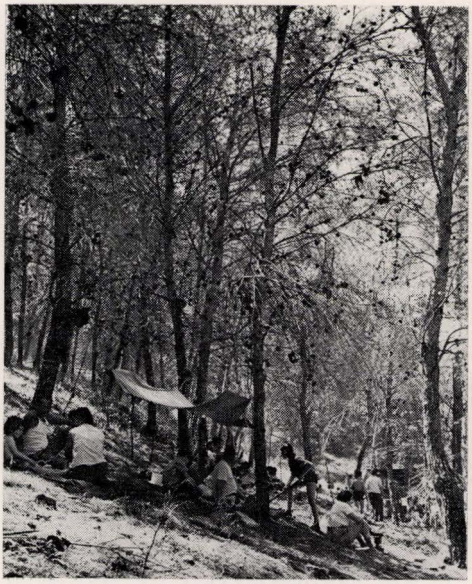
Mishmar Ha'emek. In the beginning, shacks and stony hills.
(Y. Lothan)



*Display building of fifty-year-old Degania (first collective group-farm of Israel) as all-*kibbutz *exhibit in Tel-Aviv.*
(George Wheelwright)



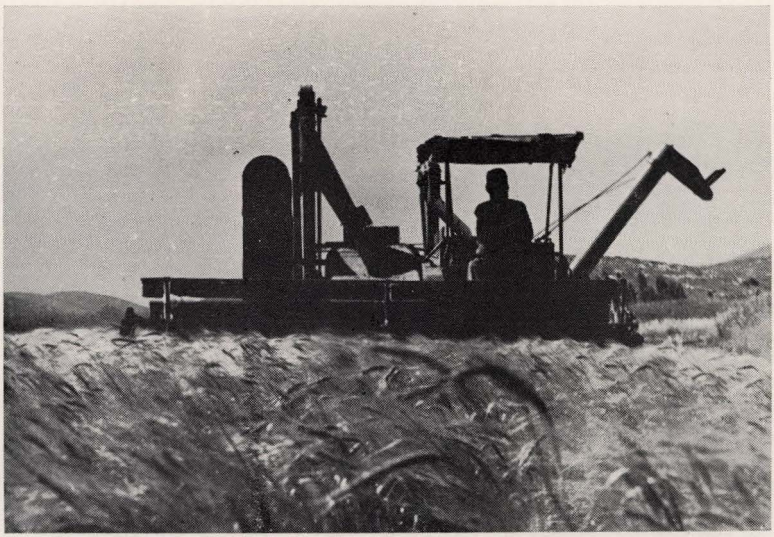
In 1928, first furrows were dug for a future forest. Close to half a million trees were planted from seedlings nurtured in a tree nursery. (Y. Lothan)



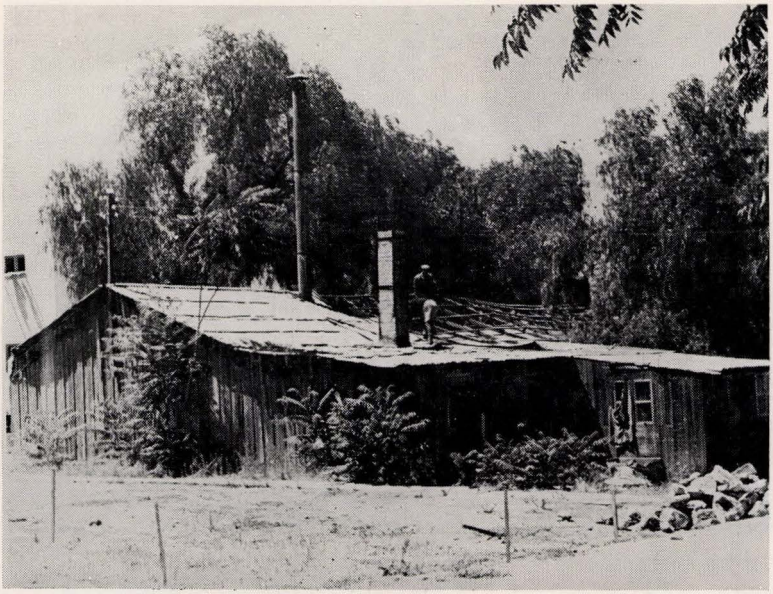
The same spot today, enjoyed by picnickers. (Y. Shragai)



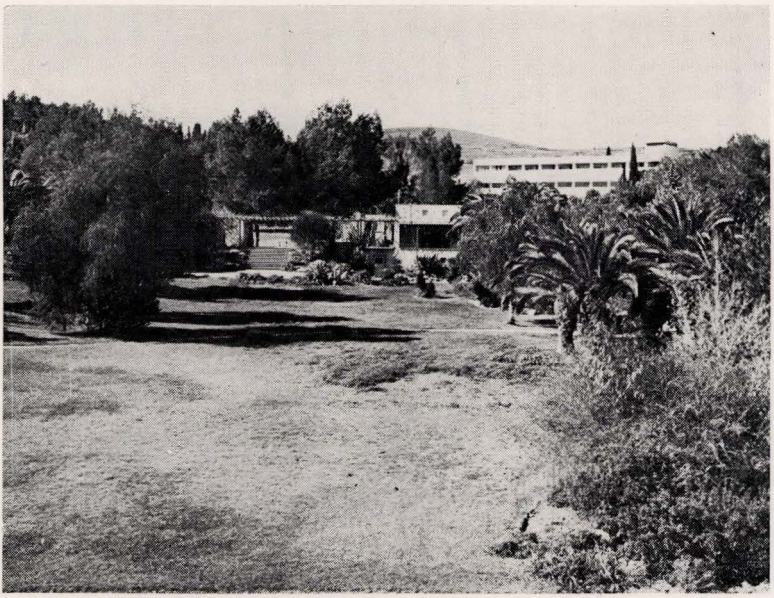
In kibbutz *fields, sugar beets are being raised. (State of Israel Bonds)*



In the fields of Mishmar Ha'emek today, men and machines reap seas of golden grain. (Zwi Meyer)



First dining barracks, kitchen, and meeting hall. (Eddie Tsur)



Today, broad lawns and lush verdure surround the entrance to the cultural center and outdoor theater. New high school library is in the background to the right. (Eddie Tsur)



At the harvest festival, the third generation joins with the second and first to dance the hora. (Y. Shragai)



In this re-enactment of the biblical Passover festival, first sheaves are cut and bound in ceremonial dance in the fields. (George Wheelwright)



As seen from vineyard on hillside, dwellings of concrete with pink tile roofs have replaced original huts.



In a nook in the garden at Mishmar Ha'emek rises a monument to remind future generations of the sacrifices made by the founders.

Among rabbis who lectured on homiletics—the art of preaching—was one who finished himself with most of us by thundering, "Truth should not be spoken! Truth should be *sung!*" He suited the thought to the action, requiring us to write sermons in the melodic language of his own style; and, furthermore, to adorn our papers figuratively with angels!

For me the time was hard in work and rich in experience. I studied Talmud, though not in Hebrew, for I knew no Hebrew yet. Dear, kind, shy old Mr. Marcus would translate diffidently from the *Katuvot*—marriage contract—dealing with sex and marriage, reassuring himself apologetically as he discussed it with me that, since I was married, it was not wholly unfitting.

What I found in this rich repository of a people's attitudes on sex was absorbingly engaging to one of my generation. To a person raised in the school of moral thought which held that a Lucrece raped was a Lucrece obligated to redeem her honor through suicide, the down-to-earth, common-sense discussions by the rabbis on the subject came like a parting of dark curtains and an entrance into the light.

For example, there was a fascinating discussion between the schools of Shammai and Hillel on the question of *jus primae noctis*—the practice of the ruler of Babylon's taking the bride on the first night of marriage. Was it legitimate to falsify the date of the marriage in order to avoid this barbaric custom? The sages answered affirmatively. And what if the newlyweds were not successful in circumventing the ruler—was the deflowered bride obligated to kill herself? Not at all, answered the sages; the bride was not responsible for the law of the land, and therefore her intended husband must marry her, unless he was a Levite and, as such, could only marry a virgin.

I questioned Professor Dewey on my reactions to what I

was discovering in the Talmud. Was I exaggerating the importance of these? His answer was unequivocal. It was, he said, the only continuous record extant of three hundred years of civilization. "And what a civilization!" he added.

I asked whether he meant his praise to be as superlative as it sounded.

"More so," he replied. "I know of nothing of greater importance to the study of sociology than an organized study of the Talmud, this detailed record of three hundred years of a people's life, laws, education, and belief."

What was perhaps my most important discovery was the continuity of reason, of human understanding, and stress on human relations, running all through the history of Jewish life and law. Even the concept of God was subject to interpretation and changes: the shepherd-God; then the God of vengeance and armed hosts, yielding to the God of the Prophets, who demanded that righteousness flow as a mighty stream, and justice be meted out alike to all men, of all lands, for all men are equal, and brothers in the eyes of their God.

Unchanging except in expression stood the belief of the Jew throughout the ages that, at some time in some way, there would be established *on earth* a Kingdom of God, a world where all men would be free. Variously interpreted, this was the center of faith by which the Jew lived. No matter the persecution, the pogrom; no matter whether oppression were dealt out by a Torquemada, a Crusader, a Czar; a day would surely come when social justice and law would reign over all the earth, and between men there would be peace and brotherhood.

This I discovered was the Jew's perpetual faith, the dynamic of his survival. Whether expressed by ghetto Jew or a Spinoza, whether voiced in prayer or in philosophy this faith continued undimmed and undiminished, creating the will to rise above all obstacles—persecution, discrimination,

repeated uprootings from lands where he thought to settle unmolested, endurance in the face of extermination.

Where this Kingdom of God was to be was, in the Jews' reasoning and faith, beyond question. Exiled for a time from the land of Israel, only Israel could be the port of return. In prayer, in plans, in dreams throughout the centuries, to the Jew the living reality was his return to the land of his forefathers. When? How? To the religious Jew the answer did not rest with him. At the appointed time the Messiah would come and lead the way. To the young, secularly minded Jew of the twentieth century, the appointed time was his to help bring about. His faith in the possibility of its accomplishment still remained an affirmation—if a rational one—of the reality to him of the Messianic belief.

In the literature, the liturgy, and the life of the Jew of all times, this Messianic concept could be traced continuously. This, in a very real sense, was the Jew's lifeline, ever saving him from sinking into despair, a lifeline relinquished at the end of his own life to his children, and to his children's children, through a system of learning made mandatory by Jewish law, an obligation of every father. It established the basis of a way of life, expressed in regulating the most minute details of the life of the individual as well as the functioning of the group, all in preparation for the days to come. This gave meaning to the routine of daily study through which the wisdom and ways of the past became the means to survive the present and become fit for the glory of the future: the Age of the Coming of the Messiah; the age of the return to the land of Israel; the return home.

I decided I wanted to change my status. Having been voted best in scholarship in the Institute for two years, both by the faculty and the student body, I decided I had earned acceptance as a regular student, instead of remaining labeled

"special." This stirred up a hornet's nest. No woman ever had been permitted to become a candidate for the rabbinate, much less to become a rabbi! Henrietta Szold, studying for years at the Jewish Theological Seminary, had attained a measure of learning I hardly dared hope to equal. Other women had studied at various institutions of Jewish learning—but even to consider graduating a woman as a rabbi?! Even for a Stephen Wise that was to be confronted with a monumental issue. A true feminist at heart, who had battled valiantly to help women achieve the vote, he was—though in practice a Reform Jew—a traditionalist at heart. To take such a step as I proposed was to fly in the face of all precedent.

However, after a campaign waged with seriousness—and satire—I was received by the faculty as a regular student, the faculty including the men most steeped in tradition, "*Rav Tsair,*" and David Yellin.

It was not that I had any plan to function as a rabbi. I simply believed, in a time of women's gradual emergence as individuals in their own right, that if I prepared myself in accordance with the requirements of being a rabbi, the door would be opened for other women, should they wish and have the gift to minister to congregations. There was no intrinsic reason why they would not do well—perhaps in some cases better even than men.

However, my chief aim at the Institute was to find out what Jews had believed in through the ages, giving them the power to survive where other peoples of antiquity had perished. I discovered that the ferment embodied in modern Zionism had its roots in, and derived its strength from, twenty centuries of the Jews' indomitable faith in a future.

In 1924 the shadow we all had so resolutely done our best to rise above could no longer be ignored. In March—four long years after the court trial, and a sufficient length of

time to allow perspective and common sense to have judged the situation dispassionately for the caricature of justice and dreadful mistake it had been—the defendants in the case of the *United States* vs. *Rumely* were summoned to serve their prison terms.

Though seemingly a trifle compared with a year and a day, a month in prison is also a kind of death.

One or two of the children would go with me on Saturdays to visit their father; our eldest son would come down from his college classes at New Haven when he could.

We made use of oncoming spring, the image of our hopes. We took a hamper and picnicked under the trees and the limitless sky to which no court could set boundaries. In the children's eyes no disgrace whatever accompanied their father's punishment. With that divine, assured insight of children they saw him as he was, a good and brave man, overtaken by injustice and cruelty yet setting before all the world an example of nobility and gallant courage. In one way the month passed on leaden feet, in another it was soon over. I had gained more than mere knowledge from my studies. I discovered that faith in a future was the dynamic that could lead to the survival of an individual as well as of a people. It was the sum and substance of my years of learning, the faith which enabled me to survive the storms of the past and present, and those which would lie ahead: "A tree of life to those who take hold of it."

No matter how unanimously in the eyes of his colleagues and friends a man is held innocent not only of the fact but the capacity for wrongdoing, it is a question as to how far the essential manhood which has been attacked and mortally injured can be restored. Can what is beneath the outer semblance of a proud, confident, positive personality survive direct assault on the integrity? I was gripped by the premonition that the blow my husband had received was a mortal one, and that his days were numbered.

In the deep ways, the man who returned at forty-four to his family was a shell of his former self. The place he had made for himself as counsel to the fur industry was secure, as were his place and service in the Zionist movement. Of as brilliant intellect as ever, ready and anxious to put behind him with dignity what could not be expunged, he bravely and proudly determined to carry on. Only those closest to him could see that the core of strength had been lethally damaged, the great heart broken.

Four years before it was demanded that the sentence be served, a distinguished member of the New York Bar had written, "It is the duty of the profession, in my opinion, to secure for these men the only redress that can atone—though that only in part!—for a great wrong, unmerited suffering, and a cruel miscarriage of justice."

Though time has a way of modifying causes, there were those who did not forget or neglect this admonition. At the trial, Harlan Fiske Stone had testified for the two defendants as a character witness; now he was Attorney General of the United States, in the cabinet of Calvin Coolidge. Mr. Stone was one of those who neither forgot nor neglected. As soon as he assumed office he saw to it that President Coolidge signed pardons for the two men. The way for their reinstatement at the bar was now open.

After the terrible experience had been behind us for almost a year, it was characteristic of the person Norvin Lindheim was and would never cease to be, that putting aside all thoughts of himself including a greater need of me than ever, he would be the first to observe the involuntary sagging of my shoulders, and to decide that a complete respite must be found for me from the accumulation of burdens I had had to carry. When our physician said, "She's got to have a protracted rest and change," my husband decided a trip to Palestine was what I most needed—and

wanted. Swiftly inviting Bertha Guggenheimer—"Aunt Bert"—to leave Lynchburg for a while and become my traveling companion, he booked passage for us on the S.S. "Olympic."

Could he even have imagined, how many new windows he was opening for me on life? Although he was fearful of the consequences, and although it was against his own interests, he arranged for the trip which was to result in my discovery of a new world—a world I was to desire to make my own. This voyage of discovery marked the end of the first phase of my quest for living Jewish values, and the beginning of the second stage, which was to lead me ever further afield.

7

NO MOMENT COULD HAVE BEEN MORE PROPITIOUS for my entering Palestine. Jews from all over the globe were converging on Jerusalem, where ceremonies opening the Hebrew University were being held, April 1, 1925. Men, women, and even children were gathering to hail the beginnings of a Hebrew University in Palestine and to greet not only Dr. Weizmann, but Lord Balfour as well. It was a measure of both the humanness and the courage of this man to whom the Jews were so greatly indebted for the Declaration, giving them their own homeland for the first time in two thousand years, that he had braved seasickness, of which he had a terrible dread, and the threat of Arab reprisal for the part he played, as British Foreign Minister, in granting the Jews the "right" to settle here. Of the two—the threat to his life, and the misery of the crossing from Naples to Alexandria—for him the latter had been the most unnerving. Though Dr. Weizmann had assured him confidently of sunny blue Mediterranean waters, they had

turned out to be gray and tempestuous; the equinoctial storms of spring whipped the sea to tumbling waves, and Lord Balfour was by no means the only one to remain prostrate in misery throughout the voyage. I know because I was there.

On the overnight train from Cairo I awakened at sunrise to look eagerly from the window. Those first unforgettable impressions, as the train wound its way ever higher into the Judean hills!

I felt a sharp stab of dismay. Was this the Promised Land of milk and honey, this dead sea of rock and waste? Where was soil in which any growing thing could fasten roots? What could grow out of such grudging land?

Once or twice my eye caught a flash of color—purple cyclamen, growing unconcernedly between rocks in a crevice. It affected me like a voice, whispering in my ear, "Oh ye of little faith! If flowers grow from rock, why not other things as well?"

This was springtime, the season of hope. The sun was dazzling in a sky of unimaginable blue. Beside the tracks, people stood in open stretches, watching the train as it passed. Their faces were strong, confident, full of life, of courage. If the countryside was hard, the will to stay and conquer it must be even harder. In its way was the cyclamen a symbol? If its delicate beauty could live as long as there was just a scrap of soil to receive its roots, would not a people manage at least as well?

Thousands gathered on Mount Scopus for the dedication of the University. Lord Balfour—tall, spare, in velvet-faced silk academic robe with its scarlet-lined hood, and the distinctive black velvet tam-o'-shanter crowning his silver hair—looked at the age of seventy-three every inch the wise thinker and eminent statesman.

Almost instantly I felt at home in Palestine. Why, I

asked myself? I was a third-generation American, without the background of racial or religious traditions.

Question on question crowded through my mind.

I stood on top of Mount Scopus alone at sunset, facing toward the Dead Sea. Gleaming liquid sapphire, it stretched farther than the eye could follow. I studied the reaches of land, between the spot where I stood and the mountains of Moab; barren, empty, they seemed to be just waiting. Waiting to be touched to life?

It occurred to me that my reactions to this place were very different than to, say, the glories of our American West—the Rocky Mountains, the Grand Canyon. Why, I wondered?

I decided that one could respond to the Rockies and to the Grand Canyon as to a finished marvel, a creation complete in itself. This place, on the contrary, evoked dreams of action, calling man to a role of creation. Here there was the provocation to build; to build this stony expanse into a homeland, this waste place into a garden.

There was all the more incentive to create, to build, for here there was nothing ready made to work with. Nature herself even seemed to have joined the resistance. The land, long insulted with neglect, had finally withdrawn its fertility. Trees had been felled with heedless extravagance or, helpless to subsist in perishing earth, had torn themselves up by their own roots. The eroded soil permitted the torrential winter rains to turn valleys into vast primeval wastebaskets, filled to overflowing with boulders and silt.

Toward this unprepossessing and unprepared land a wave of immigration was flowing even now. A wave of men and women, with little or nothing in common but the fact of being Jews, yearning for a homeland of their own, whether out of spiritual privation, human desolation, or the weary conviction that only by consolidation into a nation and a building of lives and culture as a people in a land of their own could Jews be liberated from the effects of centuries of

disenfranchised wandering, with all its threats to social, cultural, economic, and sheer physical survival.

The wave of immigration was also flowing toward great new problems. Facing the newcomers with no welcome was an indigenous population (in 1922) of 83,000 Jews and 590,000 Arabs* whose leaders viewed the oncoming thousands, with their modern outlook on life and progressive approach to pioneering work, with antagonism and suspicion if, indeed, not open hatred.

Here, too, was a government committed to keeping Arabs and Jews continuously apart, on the arbitrary premise that not only was no peace between them possible, but that keeping them apart was indispensable to Britain's considered divide-and-rule policy.

It came to me within a very short time that I would gain no real insight into the meanings—much less possible solutions—of these profound problems, if I depended on the bits and pieces gathered at government receptions, and the pleasant but merely formal tea parties and dinners in Jerusalem to which we were invited. I knew I must get away from conventional courtesies and beaten tourist paths, and out along the highways and byways, where I could observe, reflect, and learn for myself. Once again I asked myself, was it not because Moses turned aside, to contemplate for himself the wonder of the burning bush which fire did not consume, that he received the charge which was to determine his future course in life?

Official consternation and friendly concern were both freely expressed when I requested an arrangement for me to make a horseback trip through Palestine. "The times are not conducive to so unprecedented a venture," both British and Jewish officials informed me, frowning disapprovingly.

* The Government Census of 1922 gives the following figures: Moslems, 505,203; Jews, 83,794; Christians (including Christian Arabs), 73,014.

"There is much unrest in the land, due to Balfour's presence. We cannot accept responsibility for your safety."

I was quite willing to assume responsibility for myself. For my part, I was concerned only about the anxiety which might be felt by my traveling companion, Aunt Bert. She couldn't possibly have felt less anxious. She welcomed the opportunity to pause for a while and sort out the impressions which had made so overwhelming an impact on her. No place better than from the top of Mount Carmel, where the meeting of sky and sea gave a sense of illimitable space, could she, as the prophets before her, gain something of their vision of one world and one mankind.

As a first step I met the woman who would plan my trip.

Manya Shohat came to look me over. She was curious as to an American young woman who insisted on traveling through the country on horseback—for it was the way she herself had chosen, seventeen years earlier.

Our first meeting was short. She looked me up and down, over and around, with critical thoroughness. "I see you as a *halutza,*" she said briefly. "Things will be arranged." I sensed that to be called a *halutza* by her constituted a kind of accolade. I felt honored, and somehow I couldn't help remembering an incident, back in the States on a pack-train trip through the Rockies, when our number 1 guide had made quite a point of changing my designation from "tenderfoot" to "roughneck," upon the occasion of my successfully forcing a balky horse through a stretch of quicksand while fording a river that had a particularly dangerous current.

Halutza, "pioneer," had taken on new significance as related to the young women who came to Palestine from Russia after the Revolution of 1905. Manya Shohat was a prototype of this group. To her, and to the thousands of *halutzim* who were to come later, it meant giving

oneself unreservedly, regardless of personal sacrifices, or deprivation, hunger, imprisonment, even death, to the building of the Jewish homeland. It meant pioneering on the frontiers of this old-new land; in the case of Manya and her comrades of the "second *aliyah*" it meant creating the beginnings of an entirely new way of life.

It will help to better understand later episodes if I digress briefly to acquaint the reader with Manya, for she was unique.

In physique she was unattractive, of medium height and indeterminate age, with a face which was lined by the rigors of her life and nearly wizened, and eyes which peered, myopically yet piercingly, through strong-lensed glasses. She wore her grayish hair bobbed haphazardly. Her attire—like a uniform, really—was self-designed and homemade, of navy cotton, with the slight concession of a white guimpe, and with many pockets. Manya was not one to be bothered with luggage, and the multiplicity of pockets was for the carrying of scanty necessities.

What was her background? How had she come here?

In Czarist Russia she had been a full-fledged and thoroughgoing revolutionary; a Russian working single-mindedly for Russian liberation. In no way had Zionism fitted into her scheme of life. After the Kishinev pogroms in 1905, she was shaken, and she sought to rouse and equip the Jews to defend themselves against attack.

By 1908 she had become perilously involved with a turbulent group, one member of which proved to be an informer for the Czarist police. Manya's life was threatened, by both the secret police and the revolutionary forces, which —unjustly—suspected her of complicity with the informer.

She came to Palestine only by a ruse, worked by her brother.

Made aware of her peril, he cabled her that he was desperately ill and needed her to care for him. On her

arrival she discovered that he had deceived her. Though understanding his purpose, she planned to return to Russia by the next available ship. However, ships to Europe were at that time few and far between. She decided, therefore, to take advantage of her opportunity while waiting, and see something of the country. She and her brother, searching for raw materials suitable for industry, then made a trip—on horseback. She fell in love with the land, and remained.

Manya's surroundings had changed, but her revolutionary idealism had not. She now became intent on working to bring about better relations between Arab and Jew. In taking over the arrangements for my trip she also took the responsibility of educating me in this problem, which she regarded as among the most crucial of all those bearing on the future development of Palestine, and so on our trip I was to visit Arabs as well as Jews and experience the life in Arab villages and homes.

By personal observation and experience, I was to find out by degrees how Manya functioned; how she lived and worked with the Arabs, learning their language and in other ways paving the way to a workable basis between settled groups and new Jewish settlers. At any and all times she held herself ready to go into spots of sharp danger and unrest, if necessary to carry arms—camouflaged in one ingenious way or another—under the very noses of British police. Stubbornly, with great human insight, she was setting a pattern. It was unfortunate that the way was barred to its becoming official.

Meeting Manya was, to me, meeting someone entirely new under the sun. So tremendous was the purposeful energy concentrated in her person that everyone who met her felt a contagious dynamic strength and moral power. At once you believed in her, and in the fabulous stories of her beginnings. An active revolutionary in her youth—even a terrorist, it was rumored—despite a wealthy family she

had been a worker in a Russian *artel,* a group hiring themselves out and working together as day laborers. It was the *artel,* she told me one day, that eventually suggested to her the method for organizing her comrades and herself into the first group of Jewish workers to farm the dangerous outlying sections of the Palestine frontier and which, in turn, was eventually to form the basis of the *kvutza*: the collective farm, of which she became one of the founders and guiding spirits.

To make my trip of discovery possible, she selected a young comrade of hers to be my guide and companion.

Yigael was another new phenomenon to me. Improbably he was a Jew, Arab, and cowboy, all in one.

He also had to pass on my suitability.

Born in Palestine, his motivating desire was never to leave it. Still in his thirties, already he was becoming a kind of living legend. The Arabs took him for an Arab and indeed he could have passed for one. As did many of the Jews in Palestine, he affected the small moustache and the same dress as young Arab blades, many of whom were his close friends. Swarthy of complexion, with a swashbuckling manner, it was commonly held that he bore a charmed life; nothing and no one could destroy him. Caught in murderous ambushes and blood feuds, he never seemed to come even close to not living to tell the tale—and fine tall tales they were!

Yigael was a master horseman, and a member of the *hashomer,* or watchman, group.

The *hashomer* had taken on the task of guarding the older colonies. This had been a new role for Jews and the earlier settlers contested it. A Jew, they would say, should work with his head, not hands. But, taking the slogan *kibush avodah*—"the conquest of labor"—the *Hashomer* won their point, and not only became the watchmen of the

older colonies, but the settlers of new ones, in the wildest, most inaccessible, and dangerous borderlands, where no one else would try to settle.

Between attacks and raids friendships were struck up between themselves and Bedouins and Arabs of the region. Yet the first consideration, for the *Hashomer,* remained the building of the homeland, and the opening of new frontiers for Jewish settlers. Many of the *Hashomer* had been long on the land, all had taken Hebrew as their language.

These, then, were the trail blazers of a way which the *halutzim* of Palestine were to follow. If not the teachers they were the leaders, and set the pattern for the generation of *halutzim* to come.

At the time I knew only a few ill-assorted words of Hebrew. Yet, without my having a command of the language, Yigael and I were able to reach an understanding. We were to meet in Kfar Giladi, *kvutza* of both Manya and himself, near the Palestine northwest boundary in upper Galilee; from there we would start out on our trip.

Before that, however, Aunt Bert and I were to go by car into Lebanon and Syria, taking the mountain road skirting Mount Hermon, for a week's visit to Beirut, Baalbek, and Damascus.

Yigael instructed me to equip myself in Damascus for the trip. He cautioned me that only the best should be good enough. I was to find an *abbaya,* that cloaklike Bedouin garment, made of the softest, finest camel's hair, supple enough to pass through the circle of joined thumb and forefinger. There was to be a *kaffiya,* the Bedouin handkerchief, of heaviest white silk with a border of spun-gold thread, and kept in place on the head with an *aghal,* or double rope of wool held together by gold metal thread. The Bedouin dress, *Yigael* assured me, was the ideal garb for riding, at once giving maximum protection from the

sun, with the *abbaya* serving both as cloak and blanket against the cold. Breeches and riding boots I had brought from home. Yigael would obtain saddlebags.

Aunt Bert and I drove north from Jerusalem through country which captivated us. Its bare, rounded hills, the valleys dotted with villages—older ones colorful with pink-roofed houses, newer settlements bare of trees and charm but somehow inspiring. At the moment the latter interested us particularly. They reminded us of shanty towns in the States—except that these evidenced not the weakness of an old social system but marked the vitality of a new one. Here mere comfort and appearance were being sacrificed gladly to the determination of the occupants to drain the surrounding swamps to make the land habitable and productive where, as yet, it was dotted only with the gravestones of others who had come before them hoping to settle there.

Impressed and excited by everything, we observed the lately arrived youngsters, fresh from comfortable homes in Europe. In the blazing sun they were breaking stones to build new roads, wading hip-deep in the quagmires to be cleared; for this backbreaking work they earned a pittance to buy meager rations, at times only a few pieces of bread a day. But they sang as they worked—sang as I had never heard youngsters sing, sang out of pure happiness.

I pondered the thought that the landscape—seemingly not one to arouse any enthusiasm whatever—nevertheless held an imponderable something, gripping and impelling. You felt it as you wound through mountain passes and valleys, as you climbed more hills with further vistas of more mountain passes and more valleys, all the while impatiently waiting for what lay ahead.

For a tiny country, the variety and contrasts encountered within just a few hours were prodigious. Not mere miles,

but ages were traversed—ancient, medieval, modern. On hillsides Arab villages appeared to sprout out of the ground. From a distance their effect was of great beauty; angular, flat-topped roofs, rising tier on tier up hillsides, presented architectural groupings, which were abstract, stylized, modern, and elegant in effect yet somehow completley integral to the contours of the land. Driving through the villages presented an effect which was somewhat more down to earth. The impact of smells, filth, flies, goats, dirty children and barking dogs overwhelmed ears, eyes, and noses.

Men, I noticed, wore the petticoats, women the pants. The women did all the work and dressed the part. Still they were not without feminine wiles and their own ways of declaring independence. Over their baggy pantaloons—seemingly at random but evidencing an instinctive taste—they draped bright bits of rags, all colors and shades, achieving at one and the same time a sly femininity and a certain exotic charm. They covered their heads with prosaic turbans or veils.

The men's garments were straight-cut, like a woman's ankle-length nightgown, held in tightly around their almost girlishly slender waists with gay-colored sashes. On their heads they wore the flowing *kaffiya* or sometimes the red fez, though in the villages the latter was not common.

The incesssant routine of the men seemed to be sitting in front of the cafes, gossiping, sipping coffee, smoking—the narghile, or else cigarettes—playing backgammon, or absently twiddling a string of amber prayer beads.

Their women, meanwhile, toiled up the hill from the wells below, balancing on their heads lovely amphoras of hand-thrown clay, or more mundane five-gallon gasoline tins. They bore their burden with inimitably exquisite grace. Again, the women could be seen baking their bread in outdoor clay ovens, or in the fields binding grain into

sheaves. It was obvious that the work in this man's world was left to the women.

I sensed that, if I fixed in my mind what would amount to a living cyclorama, I would better understand scenes and experiences coming later. Bit by bit, piece by piece, I built up a pattern of impressions and images.

Biblical times came to life for me in camel caravans, plodding along rhythmically and slowly. Always there was the touching accompaniment of a tiny donkey whose task was to lead the proud but stupid and indifferent camels. In turn, as their patient and indeed indispensable helper, they were prodded ruthlessly along by a ragged urchin, flailing at them with a pointed stick while berating them with curses.

Here too the men rode, the women trudging along behind in the clouds of dust. It was the placid custom of the country, and I gathered that if I were to raise a deprecating eyebrow, I would be pitied and ignored rather than respected.

Contrast succeeded contrast. We wound 2,500 feet downward from the heights of Jerusalem, through ancient, neglected mountain terraces, glowing in the early morning light as though, under the ashy gray of their stony surfaces, there lay some mysterious carpet of burning embers. We progressed 600 feet below sea level to the Jordan Valley, finding the lake of Kinneret a glimmering, sparkling, jewel-like blue from which rose steeply the bare, eroded mountains of Transjordan. With sunset they took on fantastic lights and shades, mauves and cobalt blues, overlaid with fiery rose.

We made as few stops as possible along the way; we would cover the ground again later, and pressed on now to reach our objective, Kfar Giladi, before nightfall. To do so we must traverse the most desolate, dangerous section of Palestine—the valley of the Huleh—and, beyond, the northern reaches of the upper Galilee.

Climbing up from the black basalt houses of the town of Tiberias, we passed above sea level again onto the slopes embroidered with an endless needlepoint of wild flowers: cyclamen, anemones, poppies, wild tulips, orchids, narcissus, and many species I had never before seen.

Passing Rosh Pina, one of the oldest colonies, settled some fifty years earlier, and the post of the British Frontier Guards, we approached the valley of the Huleh.

Spread out before us was a vast stretch of swampland, desolate, uninhabited but for scattered Bedouin tribes whose black, batlike tents brooded over the entrance to the valley. Clamoring pie-dogs and screeching children—with their malaria-yellowed, parchmentlike skins and horrifyingly distended bellies—impeded our passage until called off by a voice of final authority from deep inside a tent.

Mountains flanked the margins of the swamps. Stagnant pools and the Lake of Merom, reflecting rays of the setting sun, menacingly warned wayfarers and inhabitants alike of the approach of perilous night. Night's most ferocious marauder was the deadly anopheles mosquito; since time immemorial, with the dark's coming the insect had made a mammoth necropolis of the valley of the Huleh. Only Bedouins had dared brave the fevers that attacked here. But at all costs their herds and flocks had to be saved from drought and famine, so they brought them here to feed, where the swampland grasses grew ironically plentiful and lush.

The Bedouins had remained the Huleh's only inhabitants until, following footsteps of the founders of the old colony of Metulla on the Lebanese border, the Palestine pioneers established the two settlements, Tel Hai and Kfar Giladi.

We sped on our way, past expanses of tall papyrus . . . herds of djamuss—water buffalo, those milk suppliers and work beasts of the Bedouin . . . past walled tents of papyrus

rush mats. . . . As we passed, we observed families sitting in colorful groups on mats made of the same papyrus rush, eating food prepared by the women on outdoor stoves.

Suddenly a single, seemingly infinitesimal thing reached out like a reassuring hand, lessening the weariness and the strangeness a little, making the intimidating wilderness somehow a little less menacing. I caught the strong, pungent headiness of sagebrush and breathed it in, clinging to it gratefully. This was something within my experience, some part of my personal and familiar past! It was a living link with home and family and camping out in the Rockies. Always I had had a sense of deep kinship with pioneers in the country of my birth. They too had trekked through threatening wilderness, they had breathed in the perfume of sagebrush as they too pushed on to open new frontiers.

Now, through a chance whiff of sagebrush, instead of feeling lost in space, I rode along with a gathering sense of coming to one of those junctures in experience where life opens wide and reveals a new road to travel.

The sun had set. The first stars of evening shone in the arc of a luminous sky. Aunt Bert and I entered the *kvutza* of Kfar Giladi and were made welcome by its founders. It was Sabbath eve.

It seemed like the first step into a millennium.

Only lightly buried under a crude, even ugly, surface, I could sense a wealth of eternal values and meanings.

Formerly a fanatic, swift executioner where so much as one fly was concerned, now swarms of flies—buzzing in my hair, ears, eyes, and mouth—hardly mattered at all. Standing on the threshold of a whole new world, of what account were incidental nuisances?

Gauged by all my previous preconceived requirements for routine daily living, I would have found the initial external evidences of life in the colony too grimly harsh to

cope with. Instead, a kind of tranquilizer seemed to course through me, taking gentle but firm hold. It was to stand me in good stead, closing off the uncomfortable, the unbeautiful. In its way quite possibly this undefined fortification was a permonition that one day I would choose this pioneering way of life for my own.

Except for the magnificent mountain scenery cradling it, outwardly the settlement was undeniably ugly. The few buildings of black basalt, constructed to house cattle below and human beings above, were without pretense of design or grace. This was equally true of the communal dining room, where we had our evening meal. We were crowded together on wooden benches pulled up to plain scrubbed wood tables; it was important to the work of the colony that the many jamming into the room should have their turn as soon as possible for the evening meal: bread and more bread, goat cheese, and, a cherished luxury—sugar—for sweetened tea.

What made this Sabbath eve meal seem more savory to me than any banquet? It may have been a reminder, "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." It may have realized a preconceived ideal. Or was I simply in the grip of a profound wonder at the realities of the life which I was witnessing for the first time?

Was there not coming to life, here before me, John Dewey's description of the "realizable" ideal: "The beginnings of a society where an organized social intelligence, directed by the processes of social change, created a rational form of living, wherein individualism was not perverted to conform to the practices of a pecuniary culture, but was creating a new and authentic form of individualism, in a society of democratic collectivism."

Money, as such, did not exist in the *kvutzah*. The produce

of *kvutza* labor was shared equally by those who labored to produce it. No matter what the task, from the most menial to the most "important," all shared alike. The reward of the individual's labor was returned to the individual in terms of housing, food, clothing, and in the care of his and his children's needs of health and education. These returns depended in quantity and quality on the earnings of the group as a whole. In a border colony such as Kfar Giladi aggregate earnings were of necessity low, as markets were at a distance and transportation costs high.

The basis of this society was cooperation. The planning was done by the members of the group, meeting in assemblies not unlike the New England town meeting in the early days. Decisions on policies, and the detailed functioning of the *kvutza's* daily life were made by the democratic procedure of discussion and the vote. The *sicha* (literally, "discussion") as these assemblies were named, was the supreme authority, for the reason that its decisions reflected the common will and therefore were binding, regulating action of both group and individuals. Everything, from care and education of the children to the assignment and division of labor was determined by the discussions and considered judgments reached at these evening meetings—which at times had a way of going on well toward morning, especially when political issues were at stake.

In the early days, results of these general discussions had a tendency to emphasize principle at the expense of efficiency. There was to be equality and a rotation of work at all costs, especially in the jobs that nobody wanted, such as cooking and kitchen work. It made no difference that the ulcer incidence was high, and colitis and dysentery endemic; no one was to be subjected too long to the drudgery of working constantly at a task he hated, nor be exposed to the atrophy of repetitive work. A disgruntled cook one month had the prospect of being a thoroughly satisfied field worker

the next. There were to be no privileged classes here. No one was to be exploited for the gain of another; if pioneer stomachs suffered incidentally, it was too bad but something which couldn't be helped.

This, then, was a trial-and-error period. If at times the cost to the individual was uncomfortably high, who was to complain as long as all were united in readiness to pay the price? And, notwithstanding errors of judgment and mistakes, and sometimes profligate expenditures of health, energy, and stamina, there were great accomplishments to the credit of all. Already the seemingly unattainable had been attained—a society in which individualistic individuals lived together and not only endured but liked it. Here in Kfar Giladi a form of group living had been created where a spirit of brotherhood genuinely prevailed, where personal likes and dislikes were rendered secondary to achievement of a common purpose.

My attention was riveted by these people's eyes. Never had I beheld such eyes! They shone with a light which was from within; their luminosity came from more than mere "happiness." It seemed to me they shone with a luster like that of the stars shining over the land of Israel. Clear, unobscured by mundane mists, they illumined everything on which their light focused.

It did not matter that I sat crowded in with working men and women who ate without any of the fastidiousness to which I was accustomed, or that they brought to the table the characteristic odors of their labors—the sweat and smells of the cow barn, the sheepfold and the manure pile—which no evening scrub-up could disperse. No privilege ever had been extended to me which was as great as to be accepted into this fellowship.

Manya Shohat and I talked all through the night of my arrival. In particular I asked and learned much about the children's house and the care of children of the *kvutza.* It

was wonderful preparation for what I observed for myself the following day.

On our first full day in a *kvutza* Aunt Bert and I began by visiting the children's house. Manya's daughter Anna was our guide. In that chemically providential sense, I found favor in her eyes; she sealed our rapport by bestowing my Hebrew name upon me, "Rama." To her Hebrew-conditioned ears Irma, in the German pronunciation—at the time our only common language—sounded to her like Rama; so my name became Rama forever after.

In the children's house we saw the realization of what long had been a cherished dream of mine for my own and others' children. Here the children were receiving care—and more—such as I had tried to give my children.

While their mothers were absent, doing their share of the work of the *kvutza,* their children were in the care—not of strangers, hired nurses, and governesses—but of the mothers' own comrades in the *kvutza;* those chosen for the work because of their desire and specific ability to care for the children.

In 1925 this method of handling the child care had not yet been developed as scientifically as now, when girls—and at times men, as well—are given years of training for their work. Even so, the system was working then, to the extent that the mothers could go about their designated work with free minds, knowing that their children were surrounded in their absence with love and intelligent care.

Under this system, each day had its happy climax in that hour when, their labors over for the day, parents returned to children who rushed to greet them and, uninterrupted and relaxed, share the experiences of the day until the children's bedtime. Not the least startling aspect of this new way of organizing the lives of parents and children in relation to each other was that, not only was the children's daytime care separate, they also slept away from their

parents at night. Thus, children and parents got a maximum of relaxation and rest.

As with much of this new society, I observed, its forms were taking shape not so much from theoretical plans, but were being molded by necessity. In many details necessity here happened also to coincide with theory.

When this particular group of pioneers first settled on the fringes of the Huleh swamps, like the Bedouin they had lived in rush tents made of the papyrus reeds. Before long the dread malaria struck men, women, and children alike, ravaging their numbers. Most of the adults recovered. But of the children, *all the firstborn died!*

The immediate questions were: Should they therefore leave this murderously pestilential valley and give up the dream of settling its borders?

This they could not and would not do. Only if the Jews settled here would northern Galilee be included in the Jewish homeland, when the boundaries of Palestine, now Israel, were finally determined. It was not enough that there remained the old, broken-down colony of Metulla on the northern border. The region would have to be settled by the new, young, vigorous pioneers. It was decided that this pioneer group would stay, against all odds.

But never again would they allow their children to be sacrificed to the malaria. And so, by the time the next children were born, a house had been built of concrete, to serve as both their home and fortress. So it was that the first of the "children's houses" originated which, since, have become a distinguishing—and at times controversial—feature of the new way of life of the Jewish pioneers of Palestine, now Israel.

There was an unexpectedly dramatic personal moment in my first visit to the children's house. Some years earlier, a bazaar had been held, at Madison Square Garden in New York, to raise money for supplying Jewish workers in

Palestine with tools. My young daughter had insisted on donating her doll's house to be raffled off. It had been especially designed for her when she was little, and it was very beautiful—a white, Colonial house, with green shutters. It was furnished with early American furniture matching our own, and equipped with electric lights, bathroom, and everything else to delight the heart and homemaking instinct of a child.

When I entered the children's sunshine-flooded playroom I saw it—this self-same doll's house, come from Glen Cove on Long Island, to gladden the hearts of children in their house at Kfar Giladi! The winner of the raffle had sent it to Palestine, and here it was —perhaps a bit the worse for wear, with part of its roof burned off, but a doll's house still, and the kvutza children's joy and delight. I could not but feel overwhelmed with amazement and wonder. Here, in tangible form, was one tiny part of my concern that the lives of my children should come to natural links with a Jewish homeland and its life. Here, for a beginning, was a part of our family's life, in the northernmost outpost of northern Galilee!

Spontaneously we expressed our pleasure and gratitude—as much mine as that of the children—when the children, encircling me and with their hands on each other's shoulders, danced the dance of the pioneers, the hora. They drew me into their circle. In ever faster, more abandoned rhythms, we danced until my breath gave out, and I could dance no longer. But long before that, the children and I were friends.

8

AGAIN THAT NIGHT THERE WAS LITTLE SLEEP for me; there was too much to learn, there were too many questions to ask. My whole being seemed to stretch, like a thirsty person toward spring water.

As she sat on the side of my narrow iron cot, Manya Shohat conveyed to me some of the beginnings of this new way of life. When she talked she struck me as an embodiment of majestic beauty; faith, selflessness, courage, shining spirit, purpose were her endowments.

She told me how the first *kvutza,* Degania, had been settled, six hundred feet below sea level in the Jordan Valley. Located at the lower end of Lake Kinneret, built on wasteland, it was part desert, part swamp. Nearby flowed the Jordan. Raiding Bedouins and malaria attacked relentlessly. Amid harrowing difficulties of adjusting to a tropical climate, there was a complicating lack of foods and funds. Perhaps climate was the biggest hazard, for all the settlers were Russian-born, and had lived their childhood and youth in Russia's cold, invigorating atmosphere.

They had survived everything because they were permanently drunk with the exaltation of their purpose, and the conscious role they were playing by helping to fulfill the destiny of their people. To these pioneers nothing was sacrifice. Their hardships were their joys. Everything was subordinated to the opening up of Palestine and too much could not be asked of them; nothing mattered but the achievement of their goal.

When these first settlers of Degania had planted their roots securely in the desert soil of the Jordan Valley, some among them felt they must push back the horizon, and strike out to settle new territory. With others of her comrades, Manya had been among those who made the trek to northern Galilee. Old difficulties and new ones confronted them. Here no Jewish-owned land had yet been made available to them. Jewish and British officials were unanimously opposed; they were not to be permitted to settle. Armed then only by their dreams and determination, the settlers went ahead with what seemed to any practical observer a foolhardy and uselessly hazardous venture.

First there were the swamps. Nowhere but in the wildest jungles was malaria as virulent to be found. Controlling the disease could not reasonably be expected in the foreseeable future. Other than that the waters were miasmal with contagious fevers, that the very air was pest-ridden, little could be said of the Huleh Valley.

As if this were not enough, a political war was being waged in the region, a struggle between Britain and France for a supremacy which would have as a by-product the placing of these new Jewish settlers in the path of the two contending forces.

Claims were conflicting. The French were in Syria by agreement with Britain. The British were in Palestine by virtue of the victory won over the Turks in World War I and the subsequent carving up of the Ottoman Empire.

The French were out to add northern Galilee to their Syrian gains. Each of the contesting empires was bent now on presenting a *fait accompli* to the Peace Conference at Versailles. Each claimed the greatest possible area, to be gained by fair means or foul, without regard or respect for rights of the indigenous population. New settlers would only complicate an already complex situation, and neither side wanted that. Thus both drafted the Arabs, subject now to their rule, to do their fighting for them and render Jewish settlement in the region impossible. Thus the bizarre spectacle of forces of the Syrian Druses and Palestinian Arabs, directed by both Britain and France against the new Jewish colonizers. Thus were seeds of future unrest and war callously sown. Because of it, in 1922 the newly founded settlement Tel Hai suffered attack and harassment from both Syrian and Palestinian Arabs.

The British and French misunderstood their Jewish prey. Despite the obstacles put in their way, and when land was leased to them by PICA (the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association founded by Baron Edmond de Rothschild) these pioneers of the northlands simply built themselves a two-story house to serve as home, watchtower, and fortress. Digging themselves in behind high barricades not unlike those of the pioneer times of early New England, they went out each day, rifles in hand, to cut their fields into furrows, and plant crops for their subsistence.

Attacked from all sides, their barricades pierced, their barracks invaded, eight of their small number were killed, more were wounded, yet nothing stopped them. Decimated but not overwhelmed, they refused demands of both Jewish and British administrations to vacate the territory. They would remain, they said, and they did. Adjacent to the invincible Tel Hai they built a new colony and base, Kfar Giladi.

I went out and stood at the gravesides of those fearless

defenders of an ideal and an outpost, killed only four short years before my visit.

It seemed to me that through their eyes I saw their vision of the future of the valley, lying so magnificently—if treacherously—stretched out before us. Facing me across the cemetery in which these eight valiant men and women lay buried, reaching into the clouds, Mount Hermon seemed no more deeply and unshakably rooted than the determination of those dead and the others yet living to remain and make possible the peopling of the valley.

It must be understood, no sacrifice was too great to accomplish this. Josef Trumpeldor's words before he succumbed to fatal wounds dealt him at Tel Hai were serving to turn the searchlight of history on the motive force behind this willing gift of life and limb, comfort, spiritual and intellectual resources. With his waning breath he left a tribute to those who lay dead, a memorandum to those who remained living: "It is good to die for your country," he testified, and this was the essence of the centuries-old longing of the Jew for a land of his own, whatever the cost. It was good to have a land of your own. Even if it had to be remade inch by inch, it was good to have it to live for. If defended to the death, it was good to have it to die for. The will to live, to pioneer, to build were all-important. In life Josef Trumpeldor was the symbol and embodiment of this motive force. So he was to remain in death.

I wanted to be better acquainted with the memory of this man.

Josef Trumpeldor had been an officer in the armies of Russia, and had lost an arm in the war against Japan in 1905. Subsequently, he had been in the bloody fighting at Gallipoli.

Disillusioned as a Russian when he found, regardless of his wholehearted patriotism and service to his country, that he remained to his Russian compatriots always "the Jew,"

he migrated as a Jew to Palestine, joined forces there with the pioneers, and became one of the founders and leaders of the *halutz* movement.

To the young people he led, he was an ideal and a hero. Few Jews had also been officers in the armies of Russia. Besides, Trumpeldor was tall, strong, and handsome.

The task he and his comrades undertook had never been done before. The young Jew was to make himself over—but in a pattern of his own choosing. He was to train himself to be a farmer and manual worker in the Land of Israel, to prepare himself and be ready to build and defend a homeland which would be *his*. The movement was called *He-halutz;* the individual, a *halutz*. The powerful psychological significance of identity was involved. For so long had the Jew asked himself desolately, "Who am I? Where do I belong?" Now there was the first measure of a clear, proud answer: "I am a Jew. I belong in the land of Israel, and the land of Israel belongs to me."

It was much more a spiritual than a material gain. To become a *halutz* presupposed readiness, if necessary, to leave home, family, mere personal ambitions behind; if necessary, to change even the most basic daily habits—sleeping, eating, living, even thinking.

A *halutz* could be sure he would rarely have enough money to eat well, or even time enough for a full night's sleep; there were too many and more important uses for money than to be spent for food; too few hours for time to be merely swept away. In effect, the *Halutzim* became an army of workers with a self-discipline far harsher than military discipline. Yet it was a triumph too, in that it functioned without force or pressure other than the intrinsic thrust of being part of a group aiming to achieve a great and essential goal.

Trumpeldor had not invented this movement of youth. At this moment there was an extraordinary conjoining,

in history, of many oppressed peoples including the Jews, all feeling the ferment of self-determination, resolutely turning their backs on past disappointment, fixing their eyes afresh on freedom, and beginning to organize the steps of their liberation.

It happened that, because of the continuous stress the Jews laid on education, there were those among them who, as individuals, were sensitized to this process of history ahead of their time; these rose, ready and able to serve as front runners for the young host ready and eager to follow the trail they blazed. Among these were Trumpeldor and the pioneer band, already settled in Palestine, and there creating a new way of life. Who was to know that, among them and prophetic in their foresight, were future prime ministers, cabinet and Knesset (Parliament) members, even a president of the State of Israel which they would be instrumental in founding?

At the inception of the *halutz* movement, pogroms in Russia and Poland, along with postwar disillusionment, quickened the young people to align themselves with this great new turn in the life of the Jews.

Essentially those who joined the ranks of the movement were the young men and women of deep social conviction who had become possessed by the resolve to end, now and forever, the terrible rootlessness and homelessness of the Jew. They had grown up under its crushing spiritual weight and could bear it no more. To them, therefore, and to all bent on the final liberation of the Jewish people, Trumpeldor was the personification of the hope. He held up to them a mirror showing a new image of themselves. In them was the Jew renascent, master of his own fate, walking through life no longer bowed and homeless, but erect and with dignity.

My mind flashed back to the period of my self-imposed postulancy at home, with its regimen of intensive study.

Now, gazing out over the vast reaches of this new Jew's uninhabited, unhealthful but beautiful and reclaimable valley of the Huleh, standing beside the graves of Trumpeldor and his comrades, their vision for a land and a people took deep hold in my consciousness, and I knew that my period of preparation was drawing to an end, and that I must undertake my share of responsibility to make this valley come to life.

Suddenly I felt both rebuked and put on notice that, here in Kfar Giladi, even young children felt the obligation instinctively. Manya Shohat told me of a vivid recurrent dream experienced by her daughter, Anna, when she was eight years old. Each night she would dream of visiting the cemetery. There, standing by their open graves, would be the fallen heroes of Tel Hai.

"Why," Anna would ask them, "why don't you rest quietly in peace in your graves?"

Their answer, she told her mother, was always the same. "We cannot rest in peace, dear child, until the valley is filled with many people, many settlements. Our work goes on. Each night we must rise to remind you, and through you the others, of the work that lies ahead. Never forget that this is your task and your responsibility."

By osmosis even the littlest children took into their subconscious the determination which, at the time of Tel Hai, had caused their parents' refusal to evacuate the northern borders. Much later, during World War II when the British government was to demand the evacuation of all women and children, the children had answered as had their parents before them: "You can take us out by force, but of our own free will we will never leave."

The children as well as their parents made it clear to me that Kfar Giladi would become the mother colony of the many settlements which followed to people the valley.

After a weekend of profound absorption and manifold impressions, we left this new world, with its revelations of pioneering service and social enlightenment, to turn towards an ancient and very different world. Aunt Bert in her own way had proved herself a heroine, taking in stride primitive conditions and crude hardships she could never even have conceived of, back in her cushioned Lynchburg life. It was significant that her spontaneous reaction was not to the blunt impact of physical discomfort and inconvenience but, with sensitive appreciation, to the rampant idealism visible at every turn. For us both, everything else receded into insignificance beside the complete dedication of this solidarity of men and women, of whose very existence we had been unaware up to less than ninety-six hours earlier.

Now we resumed our program. We would continue together to Beirut, Baalbek, and Damascus. Then we would separate on returning to Kfar Giladi—she to go and stay at a hotel on Mount Carmel in Haifa, I to set forth on my trip through Palestine by horseback.

Setting out from Palestine we wended our way through stupendous and perilous mountain passes to Beirut.

We perceived almost at once that our precipitation into this Arab world had been too abrupt, without transitional stages to acclimatize us.

Coming from rarefied heights of human personality and endeavor, having made the descent through scenic beauty of supreme grandeur, Beirut presented itself to us as grey and decadent, even evil. In contrast to the proud world of advanced social ideas and moral uprightness from which we had come, here we were confronted on all sides with feudal rot and tawdry immorality. Homosexuality was everywhere casually evident. We were puzzled at first, seeing young men walking on the streets hand in hand, one of them hold-

ing a rose between his lips, "the sign," we were told. It was further explained to us, cynically, that it was expensive in the Arab world to acquire a wife, and sexual perversion was the alternative. We did not imagine, though, that later, in Damascus, we would be invited to see a house of prostitution (male). A young man, mascaraed and rouged, assured us condescendingly that it was one of the things to be "done," and that it would be foolish to miss it.

Contrasting with such licensed sophistication was the fact that this was a world of static tradition. The same religion which captured our eyes and imagination with the exquisite stone lacework of its mosques and minarets, which arrested our hearing with the ancient minor-key chant of the muezzin's call to prayer—this same faith held in complete subjugation the lives of its women followers, withholding from them any hope of equality, education, or progress as human beings. Such "gentlewomen" as we saw walking about the streets were symbolically imprisoned, shrouded in long garments of black; only their eyes showing through slits in the black veils covering the heads and countenances. The working women did not count at all, it was obvious; these were merely the beasts of burden, the slaves of their masters, the men.

Nor did religion or state seem to take any thought for the health and well-being of the children. It was appalling to see everywhere the raggedly clothed skinny little bodies, the sore and suppurating eyes, fly-covered. "*Baksheesh! Baksheesh!*" cried the young and the old alike, stretching out clawlike hands, crying monotonously for alms. Such children as were not begging in the streets were working in the factories; by the time they were five years old they were deemed employable; only an employer of exceptional humanity would wait until the children were ten before he employed them. Five or ten, it made little difference in

the earnings of the children, who were paid a mere pittance in any case.

In a revolting kind of way it was interesting to be driven into the hills to see the gloriously located summer homes of the Beirut rich. Overlooking the Mediterranean, their beauty was a mockery by contrast with the hovels permitted the poor in the city.

Damascus was little different. From far off it looked like a great pearl set in the dusty gold of the desert which enfringed the very edges of the city.

Coming down out of the mountains, our ears caught the purling music of running water. On every side were gardens with cunningly placed little artificial brooks and lush growths of marvelous flowers, rioting over the walls enclosing the homes of privileged owners. From this sort of thing must have grown the romantic myth of the East, that image of exotic mystery and charm which made Damascus seem a veritable Garden of Eden to anyone coming upon it from the parched desert wastes, extending from its borders like a limitless sea.

From nearer by, for good and ill alike Damascus was always and unmistakably of the East, a frankly Oriental composite of beauty, mystery, dirt, smells, and disease; uniquely, if not always desirably, its own self.

It took us three days to seize our opportunity and learn something of the city, but the only purchases I was really interested in making were those having to do with my forthcoming adventure, on which I was impatient to start. Impatient or not, I had to learn that it was impossible to bypass the ritual of bargaining. When my supplies of clothing for the trip were finally assembled I had paid in the self-control necessary to drink innumerable thimble-sized cups of coffee with merchants who seasoned our transactions with virtuouso protests, compliments, shrieks of pain, claims of robbery, and curses—the while eyeing us with the sly

implication, speaking more loudly than words, that we were a disgrace to the honorable art of bargaining, yielding as we did too easily and too soon.

Equipped with an outfit worthy of the most aristocratic sheikh—or a Rudolph Valentino—we turned again toward Palestine where in Kfar Giladi I was to be joined by Yigael.

In the early morning the curious assembled in the courtyard, old and young alike, hoping for whatever excitement might ensue during the tryout of horses brought for my selection.

Yigael's entrance was worthy of the showiest stage extravaganza. Dressed in flowing cloak, with a purple *kaffiya,* held tightly in place on his head with a rose-colored *aghal,* he galloped in at full speed, pulling his horse to a melodramatic stop which sent it rearing on its hind legs, pawing the air and rolling its eyes spectacularly. I took it that Yigael was indulging in some window dressing for he cut a far different figure than when I had met him in the city, attired in a simple dark suit, his white shirt casually open at the top. Now, his *kaffiya* draped with studied effect, half-covering his face ostensiby to shield it from sun and dust, he looked every inch the Bedouin chief who had lately received some wardrobe tips from Hollywood.

I must admit I felt as though I too were somewhat playing a part in a play when, in my own Bedouin outfit, I mounted a horse caparisoned with multicolored carpet saddlebags and betasseled woolen reins.

At a signal from Yigael I waved goodbye and galloped off full speed toward the mountains of Naphtali, cloak and headkerchief billowing out behind me in the wind.

We were to climb the mountain range which rose steeply from behind Kfar Giladi, entering Lebanon from the opposite side of the valley from Mount Hermon and Syria. Arrangements had been made to spend the first night at the

home of a rich Lebanese Sheikh—a tested friend of the settlers of Tel Hai and Kfar Giladi—who lived high on the mountains and across the border.

Riding along, it was a strange feeling, this cutting of all ties with the known, and traveling into the completely unknown with a total stranger—moreover one with whom I had not even a common language. I summoned previous experiences of travel on remote trails. In tight, either-or situations—for example, in the Rockies—I had found exaltation an unfailing substitute for fear. Given the most perilously narrow trails or precipices to hover over, I found myself equipped with wings—when, with a cowboy yell, I allowed myself, instead of submitting to fear, to be carried on the wings of bravado and adventure. It had worked before; the question was, would it work now? This was all so different.

What gave me a sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach was the appalling oddity of everything, and my ignorance of Arab ways. As Arabs chanced to pass us on mountain trails—where at best human beings were few and far between—I found myself falling back impulsively on romantic notions and stereotyped prejudices. Were these passersby bandits, possibly murderers, or what? If by some miracle I could manage to keep it anywhere near the forefront of my consciousness, there was a wry kind of comicality to my coming out here deliberately, when I had nothing but ignorance with which to cope with whatever might happen.

It was a perhaps providential distraction that, on the very first night outward bound I was presented with a much-needed lesson in the relativity of standards, by which different peoples measure the rights and wrongs of morality and conduct.

After nine hours in the saddle, we reached the imposing home of Mohammed Bey, the Lebanese Sheikh who had befriended the Jews at the time of the attack on Tel Hai.

The sheikh would be distressed when he learned that he had not been there to receive us, but he and his son would soon arrive from the hunt. It was beyond belief that we had managed to travel so great a distance over the mountains in so short a space of time. We were thus made welcome by an aged household retainer, who said we were to regard the house and everything in it as ours. And so on and so forth. Yigael and this beautiful white-robed old man tossed back and forth the flowery compliments and flowing Arabic greetings suitable for such occasions. Meanwhile we were served a refreshingly cool drink flavored with crushed rose petals, followed by tiny cups of darkest amber-colored coffee, seasoned with an intriguingly elusive flavor of some desert herb.

I expressed my keen desire to visit the harem and meet the ladies of the household. With the composure of his kind the old man clapped his hands, fetching a young lad who was instructed to accompany me.

From the threshold of their quarters I beheld six or seven women, reclining on floor cushions, gossiping with each other and eating sweetmeats. One of them, happening to glance up, uttered a shrill scream. In a pandemonium all the others shrieked, jumped up and, clutching their clothing tightly about them, dashed from the room, leaving an echo of slamming doors and bolts being shot home.

At this moment the sheikh, coming to welcome me, arrived. He asked, in puzzlement and concern, "What is wrong?" The fact that I was dissolved in laughter seemed to puzzle him even more.

To tell the truth it had taken me seconds to think what possibly could have brought on such a scene. Had I broken out with some unfelt but visible disease? Was I in some way fearful to behold?

Then it dawned on me. Dressed as I was in breeches,

boots, Bedouin cloak and headdress, the women had fled, taking me for a man, forcing his way into the harem!

The sheikh, relieved and justly proud of the seemly modesty of his wives, joined me in hearty laughter. A bit unusual, it was nevertheless a happy introduction, and effectively broke down any strangeness and formality between us.

During an elaborate and excitingly exotic dinner, the thought struck me that I had come far indeed to meet an example of deferential good manners such as I would not be apt to encounter in my own country. Since it was against custom both for him to sit down for a meal with a woman and to allow an honored guest to be served by the hands of a servant, he served me himself.

We talked late into the night, and I paid his intelligence and taste the compliment of asking some frank questions.

"How is it possible," I asked, "when you have been educated in Europe and are obviously a man of the world, to keep the ladies of your household virtually locked up, completely isolated and with no other aim or occupation in life but to please you?"

For a few moments, twirling his rather dashing mustachios, his flashing eyes peered cogitatively into mine. Finally he said affably, "You have a husband, Madame?" I had only time to nod before he added, "And he permits you to leave him and travel about—" he paused almost imperceptibly—"alone like this, with another man?"

My husband would have remarked, "A leading question." A leading question indeed—and the answer much too difficult to even attempt to make credible to any man of such a different world.

There flashed before me the social, cultural, and moral gulf between us. Was it possible at all to bridge the vast separations of West and East? Even if not yet, was it con-

ceivable that any comprehension ever could develop between them?

Yigael and I crisscrossed the valley. Many days and nights we were guests in Arab villages and Bedouin tents.

Perhaps it was Mother Nature, obliquely taking pity on me for the formidable task I had laid out for myself. At any rate, when we reached the southern end of the valley I fell seriously sick. Strange foods—strenuous days—hard riding—nights made sleepless by onslaughts from every species and variety of insect—combined, they abruptly made me an initiate of this land. I had my first attack of fever.

How ironic! That very morning I had bought an offering of the very finest olive oil to present reverently to the Arab-venerated saint, Hosea, the Prophet. In Palestine Hosea was the saint of Jew, Arab, and Christian alike, each maintaining their particular grave for him as a shrine. However, in my case, the beneficence of Hosea must have been called for elsewhere; for, when the fever soared I too received an offering of oil—castor oil, a huge dose of it.

As it will in Palestine, the fever came on suddenly. Innocently I had enjoyed a blessed swim in the cold Merom waters—the lake of the Huleh. Brushing accidentally against my arm, Yigael discovered I was burning with fever. Providentially a circuit doctor of the Hadassah Medical Organization, covering the outlying colonies of upper Galilee on horseback, was expected at Yesod Hamaale within hours. All propitiation to the Prophet aside, the doctor gave me no choice: first the castor oil, second not a drop of anything cold to drink to calm my burning thirst. Miserably I recalled having tried to assuage my thirst before my swim, drinking greedily from the well around which gathered a noisy conglomeration of shepherds, Arab women drawing jars of water, sheep, goats, donkeys, and camels.

Yigael watched over me as though I were a baby. My host, El Hardef, son of a founder of the colony, had generously opened his home to me, doing everything possible for my comfort. All too well he knew the toll that fever in this area could take, particularly with those who were unacclimated. His own family, along with most settlers' families, had been weakened by disease and its aftereffects to the extent that many relatives were barely able to survive. There had been decimation by death as well, El Hardef's family having lost three out of five children. Although Baron de Rothschild's generous grants had made the family landrich, so many of its members were lacking in strength and stamina as a result of being ravaged by fever that the property exceeded their capacity to exploit it.

The evening before the fever overtook me an incident had occurred which was not without humor. Making what for the time being was to be the last of the series of overnight visits to the Arab villages, quite suddenly I decided that I had had enough of being a feast for the assorted household vermin, and that therefore I would not spend the night indoors. By this time all fear of, and strangeness with, the Arabs and their world having left me, I rolled up in my cloak out in a field and prepared to sleep with only a roof of sky and stars. Yigael saw to declining courteously the invitation of the sheikh that we take our rest as guests in his own house. Perhaps the sheikh assumed that all women are impulsive, and this one in particular perhaps a bit crazy, and that, given time and my way, I would reconsider. He went off to perform his evening devotions and, on his way back, was very surprised to find us settled in one of his fields for the night.

What with his expressions of great concern, and the accompanying solemn pledge of his immortal soul as guarantee that no flea, louse, bedbug, or other pest would molest me

that night, I could hardly in decent courtesy refuse to be escorted to somewhat less primitive accommodations.

That was how it came about that, surrounded by villagers who came to see this strange apparition of a woman, I spent the night wrapped in my cloak under an arch of the exquisite colonnade in a holy place of the Arabs, the tomb of the Prophet Hosea, son of Beeri. The tomb is on a hillside, its great white dome set off by the surrounding colonnade. Thither our considerate host led us, giving us a resting place for the night. I drifted off to sleep on the appeal of a harmonius thought. In Palestine every saint has at least three tombs. To the Arabs there was no cause for bitterness that Jews hold another place sacred as the tomb, and Christians yet another. This was the tomb of their saint. It held the remains of the prophet of blessed memory, and was thus holy.

During the enforced rest necessitated by the fever attack there was the time and soothing inertia in which to sort out the kaleidoscopic impressions which had piled, one on top of another, since our arrival in Palestine. The doctor was adamant as to my resting where I was, at least until the fever gave way. Against his judgment I prevailed on Yigael to requisition a car to get me out of the smothering hotness of Yesod Hamaale, and up into the invigorating atmosphere of the exquisitely lovely mountaintop city, Safed. I defended my decision by saying that my recovery might be speeded up by the staff of the Hadassah Hospital there. In the more honest recesses of my mind I knew that what was urging me on was a craving for something cold to drink; at the moment my loftiest ambition was for ice-cold mineral water.

Safed's renown is that it is the place in which much of the mystic literature of the Jews has been written. Certainly it was distinguished more for its traditions of learning than

for progress and modern development. Paradoxically there was a highly trained physician, and excellent facilities for the thorough kind of bacteriological tests needed to establish what was really wrong with me.

In Safed the Hotel Herzlia was simple, clean, and well-run by a pioneering hotelkeeper, Kaethe Dan. Lodged there quietly and under good care, I had the peace of mind to reexamine first impressions. In the heat of initial enthusiasms they had been rather fluid. They began taking on stability of form and meaning, now, as I could drop them under the microscope of retrospect; people, places, and happenings could be viewed, by themselves, and in relation to each other.

I found Jerusalem standing out in high relief. The exciting emotional and aesthetic character of its singular beauty; the atmospheric influence of the crystalline light which seemed to open its special way for things of the spirit—these made credible the historical verity that Jerusalem had cradled two great religions, gave substance to a third, and that an imponderable something in the place itself had invested them with power to plumb new depths in man's consciousness, arousing their followers to strive for new heights of human thought, conduct, and understanding. In my mind's eye I pictured again the castellated walls surrounding the Old City; the buildings brooding timelessly over the city's proud elevation. At sunrise and sunset even the narrow, sordid, often filthy streets were embellished lustrously by the light. And when the sun flung an aureole of fiery rose around the domelike tops of the distant mountains of Moab, it seemed to recreate as a daily miracle the wonder of the fiery bush which, burning, yet was not consumed.

As Jerusalem had, to a large part of the world, become a spiritual fountainhead, so too had it become a maelstrom.

Polyglot hordes, many-colored of costume and of every known pigmentation, thronged the streets. The single common denominator was passion of temperament. Each individual had his beliefs and his own God. To Jew, Arab, and Christian alike, there was but one God—his. In this single-minded way convictions and loyalties admitted no ground for debate, and too often turned the city—where brotherly love was so eloquently preached—into a battleground of bigotry.

I pondered again, as I had so many times previously, what else besides passionately timeless love, could have constrained a people—for centuries shut outside of Jerusalem—to maintain their ancient claim to a home there as the central reality of their lives. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick," the easy proverb has it. Hope deferred seemed to have worked here, on the contrary, in quite a different way. Sick though the heart might be, it could keep alive the resolve not to rest before passing on the fadeless grandeur of Jewish faith to the generation which now was showing itself worthy of the teachings of its fathers, and its fathers' fathers, taking them seriously enough, putting aside all selfish interests, to help to support the claim in rebuilding the homeland of their forefathers.

What drives them to do this, said a watching world.

Some said fanaticism. Others, with more wisdom and perception, knew it was the working of devotion to an ideal which can only grow out of a definable faith.

The thought took shape in my mind, that here was a people literally unable—and glad of it—to disown the responsibility of fulfilling their own destiny. Here was a people gripped by history. Education, tradition, and the persecution accepted as the price of remaining unique and distinct had provided for them the continuity to follow a foreordained course. The rebuilding of Jerusalem and the land were the terms of their eternal destiny.

For an illustration, how else explain the "opening" of the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus—when all there was of it, at the moment, were a couple of laboratories in which research was being carried on as to causes and the cure of malaria? In reality the chief impressiveness of the "opening" was symbolical. It testified to the living terms of fidelity to a dream. When thousands of Jews had streamed to Jerusalem from all quarters of the earth and there seen with their own eyes the tangible stirrings of the dream for a new center of learning in Jerusalem, could they do other than join hands, knowing that the dream was beginning to be reality?

I began seeing in new light people I had met in Jerusalem. In his or her own way, each was giving body to the "Great Dream" by giving body to dreams of their own.

At the time of our first meeting, Itzhak and Rahel Ben-Zvi—as this is written President and First Lady of the State of Israel—were living in a tar-paper shack in the midst of a cluster of huts looking for all the world like a field of impressionist mushrooms crowned with corrugated-tin hoods, amongst the trim, pink-roofed houses newly built in Rehaviah, a fast-growing section of an expanding Jerusalem.

When Allenby's army completed its military work and turned the city over to the British civil administrators the huts had been left behind. The "battalion of labor"—the *gdud avodah*—created by Jewish Palestine's labor movement to serve in war and peace—had taken the huts over for the newcomers to the land who were to be trained now in work more necessary to their new lives and to the country than occupations they had followed in their countries of origin. Instead of working as storekeepers, middlemen in commercial enterprises or white-collar workers, they were now learning stonecutting, masonry, building construction, and other trades hitherto left to skilled Arab labor. Wives

were contributing to family support by becoming wage earners, and many men who had been devoting their energies to study were now receiving training in manual work. Precedent, if any were sought, was found in the Talmud, which says, "He who does not teach his son a manual trade is like one who teaches his son robbery."

Yitzhak and Rahel Ben-Zvi were at the center of it all in Jerusalem: Rahel was teaching, and Yitzhak was head of the *Histadrut Haovdim,* the Federation of Jewish Labor in Palestine. Foresightedly, Rahel had educated herself in France and Holland as an agronomist and in forestry. She planned her education to fit her purpose of becoming a worker on the soil of Palestine. Now she was giving of her experience and both lightening and giving variety to the burdensome household drudgery of these future farmers' wives by teaching them the health-giving work of planting trees, kitchen gardens, and flowers, and raising poultry. Not only was this a means for the women to augment the family income, but it also admitted them to the satisfactions of doing creative work.

There was a pleasurable excitement in approaching the Ben-Zvis' tar-paper shack through a garden planted with a profusion of beautiful flowers and shrubs, of species and varieties almost unknown to the dry, stony soil of Jerusalem except briefly in springtime when—as though the land had grown young again and been changed into a charmingly self-centered child, clamoring precociously for attention—every open field and hillside flung out a carpet of brilliant wild flowers. It was equally exciting, on entering the shack, to find its walls paneled from floor to ceiling with books.

Against this background I became acquainted with the Ben-Zvis. I had not fully appreciated them until I also met and learned to know the founders of the Kfar Giladi. All were of the same caliber, all shared the same ideals and practical dreams. From Yitzhak I learned the nature and

function of the *Histadrut* and, especially, the labor unions among its components.

For good reason the ramifications of the *Histadrut* reached into every section of the life of Palestine. Unlike trade unions in the United States at that time, the agricultural as well as the city worker in industry, transportation, and other fields were all organized under the aegis of the *Histadrut,* of which labor unions were an essential part.

The educational system developed in the pioneer settlements had spread throughout the country, and there was a widespread system of education for the adult city workers as well as for their children.

Besides this, the Histadrut already had gone into industry. Through the *Solel Boneh* it was doing the larger part of the building in the country, and its cooperatives handled most of the transportation.

The *Bank Hapaolim*—the Workers Bank—had by that time also come into existence. Thus, in manifold ways, the Histadrut made itself felt throughout Palestine, setting a new standard and way of life not only for Jews but also for the Arabs, though this latter was mostly by indirection. In any case, the Federation of Jewish Workers was laying the foundations of a cooperative commonwealth; it was like a tree with roots driving deep in the ground, and branches giving shelter to those seeking its protection.

Never were a couple more dissimilar. Where Yitzhak was grave, slow, and deliberate of speech, Rahel was a living fountain of irrepressible ideas and enthusiasms. Where her husband was tall, angular, aquiline of nose and serious of expression behind the austerity of spectacles, Rahel was stocky, strong, and sturdy of body, with glowing if weather-beaten skin. White teeth flashed when she smiled and her eyes, like deep, sparkling pools of a mountain brook, seemed to give off sparks as they reflected the sunshine of her ever-optimistic plans and dreams. In her own right she was a

leader in the labor movement, active also in the self-defense force which it had been necessary to organize. She had been a member of Hashomer from its earliest days, and had played a heroic part in helping to save the Yishuv during World War I when Yitzhak and other leaders had been imprisoned or in exile. Withal, Rahel was all woman, giving a rich treasure of love and tenderness, as wife, mother, and friend.

"He inspires you with a feeling of calmness and confidence, and conveys the impression of wisdom and judgment."* This was my early impression of Ben-Zvi. From him I gleaned many of the difficulties of building "a state within a state," as the British called the *Histadrut,* and of establishing viable relations between Jew and Arab under an administration which, ostensibly, was there to hold the balance between the two peoples but which, in reality tipped the scales against such understanding, by governing the country on the fallacious premise that peace between Arab and Jew was impossible.

Rahel wanted me to see and understand everything at once. She was in charge of the Jerusalem Self-defense Force, and showed me through the network of trenches and the tactical guard posts that had been set up. This gave me an insight into the position of women in the new labor-created world in Palestine.

Also I must see the girls' training farms, being organized by the working women of the *Histadrut;* she herself was directing one of them. I must stop over at the Agricultural Training School for Girls in Nahalal. I must see these things—not just for my own enlightenment—but because, when I returned to the States, she was charging me to see to it that a host of young Americans learned about what was going on here in the land of Israel. Once they understood,

* Irma L. Lindheim, *The Immortal Adventure* (New York: The Macaulay Co., 1928).

then they must be motivated to link their individual future with that of the *halutzim.*

Thus for the first time did I come face to face personally, through the Ben-Zvis, with the dynamic force which was causing the past of Palestine to press on, in its present, to the building of its future.

Ben-Zvi did not deal in abstractions. An archaeologist by training, he described to me a group of Jews in western Galilee, whose forebears lived for centuries in the small village of Peki'in. There were only eighty of the group left, and now for the first time in centuries they were faced with dispossession, dispersal, and very possibly extinction. These were professed Jews, who lived, dressed, and spoke like Arabs, being distinguishable from the Arabs, amongst whom they lived amicably, only by the religious forms they observed. Their claim was that they descended from ancestors who never had been exiled, and whose residence in this land had been continuous since before the first and second exiles of the Jews from Palestine.

In his investigation of these claims, Ben-Zvi had been able to trace their domicile in the village for four or five hundred years. Fascinatingly enough, he had ascertained this much by finding, embedded in the walls of the old synagogue, a very beautiful seven-branched candlestick dating at least as far back as that. Displayed proudly in the Ben-Zvi home was a plaster cast of this ancient brass menorah.

For the first time, now, these human relics of antiquity—the Jews of Peki'in—were to be forced to leave the land and homes they and their families had occupied for so long. Owning no land in their own right, the land they had been working belonged to the Arabs. Now the Arabs had need of this land for their own use; in addition to losing their homes, the Jews were about to lose even their source of sustenance.

Was it not a grave injustice that—whereas newcomers to the country would be provided with land on which to settle —the land should be taken away from those who had traditionally worked it, these remnants of the past?

The village of Peki'in was to be reached only by horseback over difficult mountain trails. It was ironic that, having for so long been largely overlooked, it should now suddenly receive such unsympathetic attention!

I promised Ben-Zvi that I would fit Peki'in into the rest of my itinerary. This promise had a curious later outcome.

After I returned home, I made vigorous efforts to see that something humane and sensible was done about the plight of the Peki'in Jews. But by the time sufficient funds could be raised and sent to the National Fund which attended to all land buying, rumors had become so exaggerated as to the amount of money available that the price of land began to spiral, with the result that it was twenty-five years before the land actually could be purchased, and a new village of Peki'in founded adjacent to the old. In the years intervening between plan and its execution, Ben-Zvi remained always the friend and protector of the Jews of Peki'in, and saw to it that they regularly received the interest on the money held in escrow.

It seemed paradoxical that the means to relieve the situation of these impoverished relics of antiquity derived from a diamond bracelet. Raffled once, and then a second time, when the winner returned it to fill the coffers further, it had yielded the tidy sum of ten thousand dollars—to replant the roots of the Jews of Peki'in in soil of their own.

Throughout that first visit I made to Palestine, wherever we turned the hunger of the Jews for land was to be felt, almost like something tangible in the air. In the eastern European countries, laws deprived the Jews of rights to own land; humanly enough, now they brought with them to the

land of Israel the urgent sense of need to possess land, and it became a passion with them. Chaim Nachman Bialik, poet laureate of the Jews, who knew so well how to voice the longings, sorrows, aspirations, sufferings, and joys of his people, knew also this hunger for land and understood it. "Each people," he wrote, "has as much heaven over its head as it has soil under its feet." Yet in the Palestine of 1925 the fact remained that, though the need to acquire land was an all-around imperative—human, social, political—only 5 per cent of the land was in Jewish hands.

Means for alleviating this land hunger had unexpectedly been dramatized for us in Kfar Giladi.

As the time came for our departure, we insisted on the privilege of in some way compensating the settlement for the great hospitality extended to us. Certainly there was a way, we were told tranquilly. There was "the blue box." Vaguely I was aware of blue boxes. Back in the States the small blue boxes, bearing a map of Palestine in white outline, were distributed by the Jewish National Fund to collect donations to buy land for the nation aspiring to rebuild itself. Heretofore I had rather disliked the idea of the blue boxes; to me they smacked too much of charity in proximity to so great an aim. Nor did I think they helped the prestige of the Jewish National Fund.

Now in Kfar Giladi I felt altogether different about them. From what was said I understood that here no fund or institution was of greater importance to the development of the Jewish homeland than the Jewish National Fund, known in Hebrew as the *Keren Kayemet l'Israel.* So we accepted gladly the device of placing in the blue box the sum which would go to the purchase of land. If its purpose were understood, nothing could diminish the loftiness of its aim. The blue boxes symbolized a true people's fund, democratic in form as in purpose, a means enabling the poor to give his mite as well as the rich of his substance. There was no distinction

between givers. The smallest contributor could hope and dream, exactly as the largest, of the time—if and when—he or his children would "ascend" to the land, there to be provided with ground on which to live and work. The word "ascend" (in Hebrew, *aliyah*) in English also meaning to "immigrate," is the same word used when the pilgrims to Jerusalem "ascended" to the temple to make their sacrifices.

Since 1898 and the Second World Zionist Congress, the Jewish National Fund had been the official instrument of the Congress for land purchase. Before the October Revolution in Russia, large sums had flowed into its coffers, with still larger sums held in reserve against the time when it might become possible to acquire more land. After the Revolution, Zionism was outlawed, Zionists were imprisoned as counterrevolutionaries, and the reserve funds confiscated.

The unique aspect of the Jewish National Fund was that land once purchased by it never again could be sold, but became the inalienable possession of the Jewish people, their one and only material asset. Those who settled on the land did not become its owners. Title was held by the Fund and the land could not be mortgaged. Land was not apportioned to individuals but to groups found responsible, able, and willing to work the soil by their own labor. The leasehold was for a period of forty-nine years; it was renewable and inheritable. Only those were allotted land who would agree to work it with the labor of their own, not hired, hands. This stipulation was written into the Charter as an Eleventh Commandment: "Thou shalt not exploit another for thine own gain." All improvements on the land—buildings, equipment—and earnings from the produce raised, belonged to those who worked the land. Thus was the pioneer enabled to work for all, himself equally with others.

The Fund served too as a bulwark against rising specu-

lation, which would threaten plans for the colonization and development of the country.

Little enough land was available for purchase; most of it the Arab landlords, largely absentee, had found uneconomical to work. Yet even swamp and desert tracts, segments of stony hill country, sand dunes, and other waterless wastes did not escape the greedy eyes of private speculators who, in 1925, began to arrive in large numbers on the incoming wave of the fourth *aliyah*. The glittering Florida bubble had not yet burst, and Palestine, to some, seemed to hold out the same prospect of easy profits. But there were enough people possessed by a sense of cause and effect, who were able, after a difficult period, to stem the tide and to implant public respect for the view that the incoming settler, with the will to occupy and work the land, needed just such opportunity as the National Fund afforded to acquire land on terms which permitted those with the will, if not the means, to develop it. The larger part of the *yishuv*—the Jewish community in Palestine—recognized that it was a moral crime to bid against or impede in any other way, the acquisition of land by the Fund.

Among the impressions I sorted out while waiting to recover sufficiently to resume my journey of discovery was one involving Menachem Ussishkin, a key figure in the vital role of the Jewish National Fund in the rebuilding of Palestine.

I had met him first in 1921 in the States. It was in the difficult period of great controversy, though the actual split between the American and European Zionists had not yet become final.

Apparently I invited him to have dinner with us at our home. Before that date arrived, however, an event changed things.

A giant Zionist rally at Madison Square Garden had been organized to greet Dr. Weizmann and other visiting

leaders of the European movement. It had been decided officially by both factions that none of the speakers would touch on controversial subjects. It was to be an occasion for celebrating the strengths, not the weaknesses, of the movement.

In some way Ussishkin had not known of and become a party to the agreement. No sooner had he risen to his feet and begun to speak than he flung wide the door to controversy. The American leaders rose in a body and left the hall.

In retrospect the incident was illustrative of the man. Ussishkin, a man of his word, would not have consented to keep silent, and then have spoken out. That he was by temperament unyielding when he considered a principle was involved, was admitted even by himself. He could be counted on at all times not to dissemble, and would never speak anything but what he believed to be the truth. He was not, however, always pacific, nor was he known for his tact. For example, when he headed the First Zionist Commission in Palestine, he stoutly refused to speak in any language but Hebrew to the British administrators of this newly conquered territory, notwithstanding the Commission was the first to be recognized by Britain to deal with them officially, as representing the community of Jews within Palestine, as well as those scattered throughout the world, under the yet undefined terms of the Balfour Declaration.

It appears that, after the Madison Square Garden incident, I "dis-invited" Ussishkin to dinner with us.

However, I had come to Palestine now, and Aunt Bert and I had been invited to take our Seder meal with him on the first night of Passover. "I am heaping coals of fire on your head," he twitted me cheerfully. "I can now take my revenge for the invitation you withdrew!"

That Passover night he had gathered around him in his home Jewish leaders from many lands, with others in high places in the field of culture.

Now World President of the National Fund and the dynamic force back of its expansion, he stood out as the dominant figure of that evening. A short, stocky, thickset man, Ussishkin conveyed an impression of immense strength and vitality. His square, short-clipped, iron-gray beard seemed only to emphasize a bulldog set of jaw. The expression of the clear gray eyes ranged between the twinkle of humor to the steely set of formidable will and the occasional flash of righteous anger. His whole stance, manner of speech, and bull-like, head-on approach to ideas and principles expressed a man who stood as squarely on his convictions as on his feet. Right or wrong, in agreement with others or not, he made known exactly where he stood; once his stand was taken, there was no reason for anyone to hope he would change.

Nothing could have pointed up for me more graphically the need of a common language in which Jews could communicate with each other, than the fact that at Ussishkin's Seder table that evening seven languages were spoken.

It obliged me to hasten to dust off my German, which I had not really spoken since childood. In miniature this gave me special respect for all who had exercised the iron discipline required to change over from a familiar, native tongue to one which, long having been unknown or alien to them, had for all practical purposes to be learned as they went along. If only I could slip easily into the use of Yiddish, if not Hebrew. Not having done so, how many nuances I —and others as well—missed that evening.

Late that Passover night, looking down over Jerusalem's moon-silvered panorama from the ramparts enclosing the Old City, I grasped the logic of making Hebrew the language of the Jewish revival. First I went over in my mind the relation of the language to the life of the people.

Hebrew was the language of the prophets who had walked these very streets of Jerusalem. Hebrew was the language

in which a way of life, a rich literature, a distinctive culture, and a code of morality had been developed. Essentially Hebrew carried the seeds of the survival of the Jewish spirit, the language of conversation and daily use, for which the zealots of its revival were roundly censured and sometimes even attacked.

One such victim was the son of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, whose obduracy far exceeded his sense of self-preservation. Having settled with his young wife in Jerusalem, he allowed no word but Hebrew to be spoken in their home. The children born to them lived isolated from all others in order to ensure the future of the language. One day, escaping with his little dog from their garden's confining walls, his oldest son, Ben Avi, raced happily through the streets until, calling his pet to heel in the holy tongue, both boy and dog were stoned, by those who saw in this a desecration and an abomination. The boy escaped with his life, but the little dog was killed—a martyr to the Hebrew language.

A fortunate thing indeed for Israel today, that the iron resolve of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda and others like him gave a common language to the polyglot assemblage of those who migrated from all the nations of the world. He left as a legacy a Hebrew dictionary in fourteen volumes. Hebrew is today the language of the courts, the home, the schools, and an ever-increasing number of the newcomers to the land. It has allowed a new culture to develop with a language of its own, its roots planted deep in the best tradition of the old.

In the strict meaning of the term Hebrew never became an entirely "dead" language. Rather it was in prolonged suspension, coinciding with the limitations set on its use by two thousand years of exile from Palestine. Yet when they were torn from their native soil, it was a ghetto language which helped to keep the people alive by perpetuating the group life of the Jews and giving them a means of commu-

nication. A language evolved—Yiddish—which became the language in everyday use while Hebrew was reserved for ritual and study.

Yiddish started developing when the Golden Age of Jewish culture in Spain and Portugal came to an end with the expulsion of the Jews from these countries. Many fled to Germany, and there the language of the Jews took on a new form—German, with Hebrew words interspersed, becoming the basis of the language used there. In Turkey and the East it took another direction, with Spanish for its basis, but Hebrew words and idioms becoming a part of what was called "Spanioli," spoken by the *Sephardi,* or Spanish Jew, as distinguished from the *Ashkenazi,* as the Jews who settled in Germany, and later in Poland and Russia, were called.

As the *Ashkenazim* adopted words from the language of the peoples amongst whom they lived, the language evolved which is Yiddish. Thus, along with Hebrew, Yiddish has played a distinct role in the epic survival of the Jew through the centuries of his exile, becoming an integral and essential part of his continuity. Hebrew, rooted in the land of Israel, provides history and prophetic ideals; Yiddish, rooted in the Diaspora, is the folk language of a people in exile.*

What could be more logical, then, than that along with the teachings of those Hebrews who exemplified and heralded the ideas of peace, freedom, and universal brotherhood—implicit in the Seder celebration of the Jews' freedom from the bondage of Egypt, and of their return to the land of their people's birth—the Hebrew language should henceforth be recognized as the true language of the national rebirth? Becoming once more a living tongue, was not Hebrew an affirmation of continuity with the greatest manifestations of the creative spirit of the Jewish past? Was not the Hebrew language one of the gardening tools in effect, helping to replant much-transplanted roots which had

* Israel, by David Catarvis. Trans. by F. Carter. Viking Press, 1959.

stubbornly refused to be destroyed? The roots from which spring the faith, the strength, the will of the Jew to live on as a people? If only I had learned Hebrew when I was young! Above all else I was learning the truth and wisdom of the Jewish sages, who said over and over, and over again, "You cannot be a Jew without study!" But to try to learn so much in so short a time—it was a dizzying experience!

Standing there in the silver wash of the moon, I was reminded of an assertion of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In relation to Hebrew as the recognized language of Jewish revival was it not—though uttered in 1762—given the stamp of prophecy? "The Jews have no possibility, in the Diaspora, of proclaiming their own truth to mankind. But I believe that when they shall again have a free Republic, with its own schools and universities where they can express themselves in safety, we shall at last learn what the Jewish people has still to tell us. . . . "

Was it not exciting to speculate about how soon people gathered from many places and backgrounds around the Seder table on another such night as this in Jerusalem, would converse, not in seven languages, but in one; and that one Hebrew, common-language-to-be of a people, come home after long journeying in far places.

9

AN ILL WIND, PARADOXICALLY, HAD BLOWN ME good. Ministrations of a Hadassah staff doctor and laboratory technicians afforded me first-hand insight into health services through which, under the planning and leadership of Henrietta Szold, the women of Hadassah were making available the best of American medical standards and practice to a country still largely in its primitive stage of development.

The organizing genius of Henrietta Szold as expressed through the Hadassah Medical Organization in Palestine had, for its starting point, the deceptively simple premise that good health, for her family and her community, is every woman's job. As she saw it, high standards of health, and the future of Palestine, were indivisible.

It was no accident that, sitting once for a portrait (doubtless against her will, for she was innately a self-effacing person), she was overheard to murmur to herself, "Make my eyes look toward the future." Everything on which she

lavished her spirit and creative action looked, in passing to the present, but mainly to the future.

The Hadassah Medical Organization in Palestine had its essential beginnings in 1912 when, accompanied by her mother, Miss Szold visited Palestine for the first time. She was then fifty-three years of age. Horrified by the dreadful health conditions she observed among the poverty-stricken Jews of Jerusalem—a high incidence of trachoma and its corollary blindness; the ravages caused by dirt, disease, and ignorance of hygiene; lepers, sitting in the streets, ringing their bells to announce at once their "uncleanness" and need of alms—Mrs. Szold touched a match to the twig of kindling she saw in her daughter's eyes, saying, "You have a study group in New York; shouldn't you women stop talking and *do* something about all this misery here?"

Out of her gifted understanding of human nature, Henrietta Szold well knew that women will best respond to the need for action when the cause touches their own personal experience. As Hadassah women cared for the health and well-being of their own families, so could they not be welded into a force to care for the health and well-being of the larger family, their people?

Up to that time her interests had been largely educational and literary, though from the early years of the Zionist movement she had concentrated on its advancement. Her father, Rabbi Szold, had seen to it that from her earliest youth she had been a student of Jewish learning; by this time she had behind her years of study at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

When she diversified her interests to take in the fields of social service and medicine—though it was characteristic of her that, raising her hands to cup her eyes, she would say, with quiet humor, "I have put blinders on, and in the future will look not to right or left, but only at the task

ahead—she proceeded then to maintain a range of vision which was of extraordinary depth and breadth.

Through asking questions to learn about some of the early steps, I was able to piece together how, here in Safed, I had been able to receive badly needed treatment.

Aided by the great-hearted philanthropy of Nathan Straus and his wife Lina, the Hadassah women were able to take the first concrete steps toward the new mission glimpsed by Henrietta Szold. First, two district visiting nurses were sent to Jerusalem; the service they gave to the community was both prophetically memorable and heroic. Then, toward the end of the First World War, a medical unit was sent to Palestine. It was like the proverbial throwing of the pebble into a pool; from that time forward an ever-increasing number of American Jewish women, accepting the responsibility for promoting the health services, raised money to expand those services and, by educational means, fostered understanding of creating better health standards and conditions as part and parcel of building the Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Thus by realistic means, Miss Szold found the touchstone for achieving idealistic ends, activating American women by the thousands to serve a cause geographically far away but spiritually much closer, through the professional service they furnished on a voluntary basis.

In the mirror of my mind I could see the foreboding mosaic of Jerusalem's Old City with its dreadful slums, wryly interspersed with blue-painted doorways, narrow, smelly—yet exquisitely arched—streets, where camels and donkeys contended peevishly with humans for legroom; where meat carcasses, caked with swarms of voracious flies, hung over open butcher-shop counters, dripping blood; where half-naked children, bony bodies barely covered by their rags, chased each other through the crowds in the random games which preserve the sanity of children in

such an environment; where the sellers of coffee, lemonade, and anise-flavored water poured their wares from hand-hammered, beautifully shaped brass flagons; where honey-soaked cakes were sold from open trays to those impervious to the first sweetness being stolen by feasting flies. . . .

To this backward Oriental world with its medieval customs and total ignorance of health laws, came by slow steps the oases which were Hadassah's maternity care and child clinics. They represented a new world, cool and quiet in its well-ordered cleanness; even their utilitarian simplicity being dramatic by contrast with the world just beyond their doorsteps.

Gradually there converged on the clinics mothers from Yemen, Kurdistan, Bokhara, Persia, as well as from the Arab and Jewish, worlds of Palestine. Here, clad in the colorful costumes of their countries of origin, they listened wide-eyed, while a trained nurse, kindly, and clad in the crisp blue-and-white uniform of the Hadassah Nurses Corps, demonstrated with a life-sized doll how to bathe, dress, feed, and properly care for a baby. As most of the women could neither read nor write, the instruction was given in a simple, warmly human way, with as many visual aids as possible.

The organizing of the Nurses' Training School of Hadassah had been no small task. The families of girl students had first to be convinced by Miss Szold personally that the profession of nursing was not "beneath them." When that hurdle had been accomplished, then training proceeded, and enlightened medical care could move into the home and schoolroom as well as the hospitals and clinics. Laboriously, textbooks must be translated from English into Hebrew, with many new words etymologized to render scientific terminology understandable; it was hard to be certain which faced the biggest problem of adjustment—the fledgling nurses, themselves just barely free from the

protective cocoon of their old-fashioned homes, or the mothers, still living in the sixteenth century, who must be taught to catch up with the ways of the twentieth.

The cycle set in motion by Henrietta Szold's faith in the capacity of women to meet a need when their interest became sufficiently involved was demonstrated by the degree to which the realism of its methods, affirming its idealistic aims, in turn assured the effectiveness of those methods. In thus uncovering the touchstone of motivation which was to result in epochal achievements, she had exercised nothing short of genius; as an organizer and director of human energies she may have had peers, but she had no superiors.

Inevitably there had been, and would continue to be, many collisions between people, and between the old and the new. The spanning of the centuries was there for any who cared to see, in the hospital treatment given, in the whole emerging pattern of medical and preventive health work. For example, headway was being made in control and eradication of malaria, and undulant and other fevers through the research and heroic zeal of men like Drs. Kleigler and Adler and their associates, working under the cooperative aegis of the Hebrew University and Hadassah. The hospital buildings were inadequate and not up to date, but the care given in the buildings, by dedicated doctors and nurses, was of the highest standard.

At times a note of absurdity was precipitated, as, for example, when a Bedouin patient, fleeing from the hospital rather than submit to a bath, had to be recaptured; or when an old Jew, cowering within the black satin caftan of his erstwhile Polish ghetto, his wide-brimmed, fur-trimmed hat pressed so low over his head as nearly to hide his carefully curled earlocks, was led, trembling with paroxysms of fear, to be examined under the X-ray machine which he could not but anxiously believe would burn him to death.

There had come a point when Miss Szold felt that by

transferring her activities back to the States, and thus leaving her post in Palestine, she could advance the pace of the work. She asked a Hadassah coworker to sound out Justice Brandeis as to the wisdom of this change. His reaction was immediate: "Never can I sanction that. The thing Palestine needs is character. Miss Szold has that to give. I care not in what capacity she serves in Palestine, her influence is felt. The great contribution Miss Szold has given to us; the ideal, the ennoblement, the enrichment, the heights to which she has taken us in the movement is character. . . ."

The first time I saw Henrietta Szold in Palestine she impressed me, not formidably as one of the "great" of the earth, but rather as one of its rare and choice personalities. She received me in a small, modestly furnished hotel room in Jerusalem, surrounded by a wealth of growing plants and flowers which, as a botanist, she knew well, and loved and tended as though they were children whose lives were to be made secure, beautiful, and inspiring.

As did those of the *halutzim* of Kfar Giladi, her eyes mirrored the special spirit within her. Her eyes reminded me of the eyes of my mother: hazel eyes, flecked with brown, glowing with deeps of love and understanding. Miss Szold's eyes could shine with excitement, sparkle with joy, shoot arrows of moral indignation, become benign with warm human sympathy, all depending on the subjects or thought receiving her attention. Within her small, compact, middle-aged body it seemed to me there was contained the sublime faith of a Joan of Arc, the compassionate love of Mother Earth, and the reasoning power of the born creator of order. All these she asked only to lay on the altar of her people's service, wanting nothing for herself but to serve their needs. She permitted herself two tiny indulgences; homesickness for her sisters back in the States, and the longing to experience the change of seasons there, especially in

autumn, when leaves turned to red-bronze and gold, and woods were ablaze with color.

By an adroit combination of protesting that I felt much more restored than I did, and accepting a steady diet of *leben,* I managed to resume seeing things I still wanted to see and learn before returning to Haifa to rejoin Aunt Bert. The doctor had recommended that, three or four times a day, I drink the *leben,* a fermented milk product like yogurt. Yigael was even more in favor of it, pronouncing it extravagantly an "antiseptic, and cure for everything." It tasted to me like ordinary sour milk, but was delicious when mixed with cucumbers or rice; however, I confined myself at the moment to drinking it plain.

Though I paid for it with a relapse, and being again confined to bed, I did manage to have the illuminating experience of visiting the chief of the Bedouin sheikhs of the Huleh. He was a great friend of Yigael's and announced on our arrival that we were to stay not less than two weeks. He found it hard to believe when I said we could only stay the afternoon. The Bedouin, I was told, rarely had more than two wives. I was presented to the Sheikh's chief wife, a renowned beauty for whom he had paid the unprecedented sum of five thousand pounds. I thought she was extraordinarily lovely though her body was ravaged now by malaria, and I understood it had destroyed her once ravishing beauty and left the sheikh with the bad end of a bargain. The Bedouin wives went unveiled; their faces were tattooed around the cheeks and chin and they wore beautiful ornaments of silver and gold, according to the wealth of their husband; I gathered that they were markedly freer than women in the harems, and they impressed me as being considerably more intelligent.

Yigael and I had arrived at an interesting moment. A delegation of sheikhs from Transjordan was being received

and it presented a fine opportunity to learn something about their living conditions. They were suffering terribly because of drought, which killed the grass on which they fed their cattle, and from the ensuing famine. They came asking to be allowed to pasture their flocks in the Huleh lands; they could not endure to see their camels, sheep, and goats starve before their eyes; to give them away would be easier than that.

On the way back from a visit to Yesod Hamaale we went to Mishmar Hayarden, a dilapidated-looking old colony, given new life when it was taken over by a new group which was running it on a cooperative basis. We then went to a *kvutza* which was about four years old, Ayelet Hashachar. There were striking differences between the two, and I wanted to know what the differences were, and why.

One of the first things I observed in the *kvutza* was that, now, all the people working in the fields were Jews, while in the old colonies all the people working in the fields were Arabs. For example, the laborers at Rosh Pina were chiefly Arab women, paid, I was told, 5 piastres (25 cents) a day. This fact was crucial: it explained the reason a new group was running the old Mishmar Hayarden on a revised, cooperative basis. When the Jewish farmer did not work the ground himself, but merely superintended his Arab labor, it was a clear sign that he had not attached himself and his family to the soil. Those interested in the future of Palestine felt gravely concerned by the movement away from the soil of the children of the old colonists; the new, cooperative colonization was having a revivifying effect, stemming the tide and turning it back in the desired direction.

Much was to be said from the purely economic point of view for employing Arab labor in the fields. Jewish labor was expensive because of the higher standard of living. The old colonists had experienced difficult times before and during the war, and only the large-scale beneficence of

Baron Edmond de Rothschild had tided them over the years of depression. Manifestly, therefore, it was asking much of them to employ more costly Jewish labor. Nevertheless, a great principle was involved. It was not a question of race discrimination. The problem resembled that involved in union labor versus the open shop. The one would ensure a decent wage for all labor; the other would depress the standard of living. And how was mass immigration to come if Jewish jobs were to be preempted?

Certainly the Jew must not accept the fellahin's standard of living; but no more must he endorse and encourage the wage scale whereby Arab landlords reduced peasant populations to a state of slavery. To employ an Arab at five piastres a day was to make it impossible to fulfill the ideals of a Jewish commonwealth because it accepted the wage scale of slavery and thereby withheld from Jewish labor the right to work. The Jewish commonwealth could be truly built only when Jews were employed in the building—not only of their houses and orchards, but the structure of a social system wherein every man, be he Jew or Arab, gained through his own toil, and not at the price of another man's freedom.

How was this situation to be met? How was the farmer to cover his expenses if he were compelled to pay wages which made legitimate profits impossible? To the workingman of Palestine the answer was cooperation; elimination of the middleman; buying and selling in groups; owning cattle and machinery in common; employing labor only as partners in business and sharers in profits. In other words, working and living together, instead of competing and making profits separately.

As individuals, the old colonists had traditionally a great and beautiful idealism. But now it was taking the *halutzim* —younger, full of fresher strength and farther vision—to adapt the idealism into a system with which to lay founda-

tions of a new commonwealth, on principles of justice, freedom, and brotherhood.

After seeing Mishmar Hayarden we went to Ayelet Hashachar. A fine almond orchard had been planted, and all kinds of vegetables were growing for marketing. Clearly the proudest achievement was the dairy. It had the most modern equipment and was kept immaculately. All the milk and cheese products were sold in Safed. A happy point was made, too, of introducing me to "Vashti," a beautiful mule who had earned her name by showing the good sense to be born on Purim.

As I thought over the many things I had observed, it seemed to me that the same fineness of the colonizers of forty or fifty years earlier was the fineness of those who now were settling Palestine. Their courage was of the same degree, their dreams of the same weave. In the days when the earlier group came, there was no such thing as a Hadassah Medical Organization to care for them when malaria struck; it took men and women of heroic determination to move themselves and their families to a land inhabited by unfriendly people, and to live under a Turkish government entirely hostile to their interests, unwilling to give any pledges whatever to safeguard their rights in the community.

They came nevertheless, and they had stuck it out in spite of all the hazards. Of the two groups, the earlier and the present, the earlier had by far had the harder task. That their methods were not of as great social import as those of the present was the fault more of the period in which they colonized, and certainly not of any lack of idealism. At least they made a beginning.

Ben-Zvi made a point of wanting me to see as much of the Negev as possible. In these ten thousand square miles of waterless land lay locked a settlement future for thou-

sands of people. There were already some plus factors. There was no settled population which would be disturbed by newcomers; no malarial swamps waited to sicken them here. Only water was needed.

As we sat eating breakfast on the floor of the tent of our host, the Bedouin chief who had extended us his hospitality for the night, we discussed the steps needed for locating water sources. I was reminded once more that in Palestine talk for mere talk's sake seemed at a notable minimum and that, realistically, the purpose of discussion was action.

I have remembered that particular episode for one other, rather unusual, reason. During the conversation I had felt vaguely aware of some kind of presence behind me. At last, uncomfortably, I turned around to see what it was, and found myself looking up—and up—and up—until my eyes met the bold stare of—an ostrich. The creature was of appalling size and assurance; from my position on the floor I felt at a considerable disadvantage.

My host, realizing belatedly that ostriches would not be part of most households, explained that this was a pet, very well behaved, and a gift from the Emir Abdullah of Transjordan. I tried to make doubly certain of his reassurances by offering the pet a lion's share of my Huntley and Palmer biscuits.

I look back on this day as the point at which the nature and true significance of the Negev was disclosed to me through Yitzhak and Rahel Ben-Zvi. Leaving our horses, Yigael and I traveled with them by car.

Anxious for me to receive a thorough impression, Yitzhak headed us south from the tents of our Bedouin host. We got only as far as Asluj before being stopped by British tanks. Ibn Saud's Wahabi warriors were on the rampage, and the tanks were a road block to keep them from penetrating into Palestine.

Ibn Saud was the implacable sworn enemy of the family of Emir Hussein, Sherif of Mecca and guardian of the Holy Places in the Arabian Peninsula, whose two sons (by the grace of Great Britain and Lawrence of Arabia) had, after World War I, been named rulers over Syria, Iraq, and the mandated territory of Transjordan which, until 1923, was included in the boundaries of mandated Palestine. Now Ibn Saud was out to capture Mecca from the rule of Emir Hussein, with as much additional territory as possible.

Forced by the British command to leave off exploring further south, we turned north again. During the rest of our survey together, with all the eloquence which knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm gave her, Rahel impressed on me the possibilities of transforming the Negev into a great fruit and grain producing area.

Back in Jerusalem, Menachem Ussishkin held several talks with me for the purpose of urging me, when I returned shortly to the United States, to campaign for much increased support of the National Fund. "You will have a free hand," he said. "Translate what you have seen into practical terms. You will have the backing of the Fund's head office in Jerusalem, and of myself personally."

With more impulsiveness than seasoned judgment, I pled with him to lose no time in purchasing Negev lands. He looked at me patiently. "First we must think of land to the north," he explained; "desert land can be bought at any time—no one else wants it. As for the north, forces are at work and if we waste time, that land might be rendered politically as well as economically beyond our reach."

Stopping off on our way back to the States, we met Stephen Wise in Geneva. He began at once to persuade me that letters I had written from Palestine to my family should be published. How were people to understand how and why they should support what was going on in Palestine

unless it was made real to them in ways which would appeal eloquently to heart, spirit, and imagination? For a moment I was amazed that he should know of my letters—until I recalled that some of us in the Zionist movement had established among ourselves an informal custom of sending round copies of any communications received which would be of constructive interest; Stephen Wise, Louis Brandeis, Julian Mack, and a few others had received copies of my letters. I promised him that I would think about it, but would only agree to publish if I found that my letters contained material which had not been written about before. I was more interested in doing something immediate about the needs of Palestine, not merely in writing of them.

10

RETURNING HOME, ON SHIPBOARD I FOUND reason to reflect that sometimes hidden thoughts and ideas come alive in us which, if we are receptive, contribute to our vision and growth.

A belief of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes suddenly took on meaning: "A man must take part in the actions and passions of his times, lest he be judged not to have lived." Could anything remind me more, in relation to all I had seen and felt in Palestine, that I must now see how I could translate it usefully into action?

Life in my own home, once more, showed me that it was no uncomplicated matter. Just how, in the luxury-assured atmosphere at Glen Cove, where there were always servants to do every task, and any attempt to train the children to values of "self-labor" must inevitably seem contrived and doctrinaire, were the pioneer values I had seen lived in Palestine to be practiced as well as preached? In this framework of luxurious living, must it not appear rather as an

empty gesture? Where rocks for the rock garden had cost five to ten dollars each, how explain a land where a sea of rocks and stones merely chokes the soil; where it becomes a life-and-death matter of clearing the rocks or having people go hungry? Wryly I thought, what a pity that no rock-garden market existed for Palestinian rocks, at five to ten dollars apiece!

How was it possible, I asked myself further, to make plausible to my children, a pioneering way of life which involved struggling with problems of desert aridity and soil erosion because of lack of trees, when they awoke each morning to life in grounds where, almost overnight and for the mere sum of ten thousand dollars, a meadow had recently been transposed from pasture to a forest of full-grown transplanted trees, where winding woodland trails and a lively waterfall made the newly built tennis court seem an intruder upon nature?

Continuously I faced the problem that must be faced when a single member of a family experiences the kind of personal reconstruction that had transformed my whole thinking; how to convey its workings to the others, who had experienced no such upheaval? On what ground could one combat the enviroment which—new vision now made it seem possible—could threaten the very continuity in development of the fine potential of an eldest son? Such an incidental factor, for example, as a monthly allowance making it possible for him to occupy a beautifully furnished suite in the dormitory provided by his college for sons of the well-to-do—how to make logical a rejection of such a life of privilege without dislocating an established relationship of mutual respect, confidence, and love? Or, I wondered, might taking a stand on principle work the other way around, because of the innate quality of the person, bringing out all the more the elements in our relationship?

We celebrated my homecoming by going off for six weeks of family camping in the Canadian north woods. Both in Glen Cove and in the woods I had periods of the oddest sensation. There were moments of asking myself whether I was dreaming. What I was doing here? Gradually such moments became fewer; gradually this seemed to dissolve into a secondary world, spiritually; more and more it seemed to me that the place where I could and must belong was Palestine.

Once more we had the sheer joy of being together, sharing the experiences of the exciting and illuminating trip which only the family's generous consent had made possible for me.

Although I had not yet been able to decide what form my obligation would take, to translate into action things I had seen and learned, I had told Stephen Wise that I could not indulge myself by continuing my studies at the Jewish Institute of Religion. What I had gained thus far by studying had been of tremendous help to me, making it possible to understand, on even a first visit, the deeper implications and historical significance of what I had seen of the revival of a Jewish Palestine. But now I had to put the life of a student aside and assume my share of the responsibility.

He was disappointed that I would not complete my final year and receive my degree from the Institute; but out of his own passionate devotion to everything connected with the emerging Palestine, he agreed that it was much more important for me to put emphasis on working actively for Palestine than to receive the title, however august, of rabbi.

Each day at camp I saw that the family and our guides were provided with the kind of food that would stick to their ribs and wished them fisherman's luck when they left. Then, while reviewing my letters as I had promised Stephen Wise, with an eye to their value if published, I gave myself over to more sorting out of things I had seen and experienced in the weeks and months since Aunt Bert

and I had crossed the Atlantic on our way to visit Palestine.

No spot in the world more than the north woods could have offered a more perfect setting for contemplation. Indeed, was there not a profound similarity between the tall forest trees which, accepting the role assigned to them by nature, pushed up from secure roots to the utmost possible height to receive the sun's life-giving rays, and the determined purpose of the Jew to grow beyond confining ghettos to attain freedom in his rightful homeland?

The pioneer stock in reviving Palestine had not come from shallow, weak roots. The young Jews I had seen, hacking out clearings in which to transplant themselves and their people descended directly from forebears conditioned to face worse even, if need be, than the hard stony earth and swamps of Palestine's wastelands. These forebears had known, and passed on through their blood, the secret of survival: to cling to their roots; to have faith in their destiny; to aspire, as men spiritually free, to heights of human thought and endeavor; above all, to work as a community together, never striving alone, never as individuals each only for himself. Hillel the sage had bequeathed a large legacy in the form of a brief adage: "If I am not for myself, who am I; and if I am only for myself, what am I?" The pioneers of Palestine were making this a living reality, even transposing the words into song, and dancing round and round to them until the early hours of the morning in the circle of a *hora.*

Day by day, when the others were off on their own pursuits, I rethought experiences in Palestine, examining them for indications which would further my quest for a course of positive personal action. I cannot say what the recollection connected with, but I remembered an incident in Banias, across the border in Syria. Our host, sheikh of the village in the Mount Hermon foothills, must have had some reservations as he received us so courteously, wonder-

ing as to the kind of woman who would be riding around the countryside with face unveiled, clad in male attire, and in the company of one man, a man unrelated to her.

In some manner I must have resolved his doubts for, as we neared the end of our stay he paid me what Yigael later assured me was the maximum compliment for a man such as he. "Your name should be *Honor,*" he said, touching his heart, lips, and forehead, and inviting me into his harem, where he introduced me to his chief wife—a Jewish woman from Istanbul!

He had watched with unconcealed pleasure as one of his little daughters and I seemed to fall into a common language. Suddenly she ran from the room, returning with a tightly clutched handkerchief. Laboriously untying a knot in one corner she spilled the treasure it contained into my hand; a few copper coins, carefully saved and greatly cherished. Smiling with astonished pleasure the sheikh observed proudly, "The first time, I am sure, an Arab has ever been known to give *baksheesh* (alms) to a Jew!"

When one really came down to it where, I asked myself at the time, was all this atavistically ineradicable hatred of Arab for Jew and Jew for Arab that was always being talked about?

It had been a very small incident, and yet it was a discovery which was to me important because it had to do with fundamentals. It might well be true that values, traditions, mores differed considerably between Arab and Jew. Yet think how much the universal language of the hand outstretched in friendship between equals, the smile, the expression in the eyes, the gesture in place of words, could narrow the gap! What tradition of enmity could hold out, for example, against such an incident as this? We sat down to a meal and were served with rice flavored with orange blossoms, the special dish marking the end of the fasting of Ramadan, and the onset of the Moslem spring festival co-

inciding with the Jewish Passover and the Christian Easter.

By gestures I conveyed that the two great dishes placed before me—delicious in aroma and taste as they were—were simply too much for me to eat. But the sheikh and his wife—extremely pretty of countenance and lusciously fat of body—pantomimed gaily that I must think, rather, of becoming "beautiful and *fat*"! They drew pictures in the air with their hands, and I took the two words to be interchangeable terms. As gaily, I countered, pantomiming that in America—a word they knew immediately—to be beautiful a woman must be *thin*. When my hands made an image of two vertical, closely parallel lines, there was a burst of amused laughter, and that amicable shrugging of shoulders which said, if not in words, each to his own taste. Many similar incidents caused me to wonder: under what possible circumstances could such people and I possibly be enemies?

More and more, by the evidence of my own eyes, I saw that bonds between Arab and Jew were not fictitious but real. The customs of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were customs of the present-day Bedouin. When Abraham sat before his tent after the heat of the day, as we read in the thirteenth chapter of Genesis, and, lifting his eyes, saw three strangers approaching, he did no differently than a Bedouin sheikh we encountered, resting before his tent in the Plains of the Huleh. Rising, bowing low before me, he bade us welcome. Holding my horse's head he invited me to dismount and enter his tent. He pulled off my boots himself, and laved my feet with cool water. As Abraham had done with the three strangers, this man offered us water and bread until the midday repast could be prepared. As did Abraham, the sheikh bade that a young lamb be quickly fetched, to be slaughtered in our honor and, when roasted, set before us, together with great bowls of rice. *Pitah,* the Arab bread, was kneaded and baked on the open hearth, even as Sarah

and her handmaidens had done in ancient times. Also, then as now, conversation was postponed until the repast was over. Only when coffee was served—that fabulous, clear, slightly bitter, amber-colored coffee of the Bedouin—was conversation to be picked up where it had left off, with the amenities of meeting and being made welcome. In this way was I presented with a new code of etiquette. I learned thereby that it was bad manners to talk during the meal, for it would delay others in reaching their turn at the food. It was bad manners also to clean bones too thoroughly of meat—there must be some meat left on them, in order that the women and household servants might have some pleasure in eating, when it came their turn.

I made a mental note that, at our next Passover celebration at home, as the Haggadah bids Jews to do, our children would recline at their Seder feast. As did their ancestors, they too would wear the robes of the desert Bedouin, and would eat their meal in a tent—even if the tent had to be pitched in our dining room instead of in desert or swampland!—to commemorate not only the flight of their forebears from slavery to freedom, but also bonds with the Arab people who lived now exactly as their forefathers lived then. This small incident had showed me a way to make our Passover celebration as meaningful and exciting as the way of celebrating Hanukkah.

Evenings around the north woods campfire were a good opportunity for me to describe—in the relaxed way that only a campfire allows—to the children and my husband some effects of the cycle set in motion by Henrietta Szold, and shown in the evolution of work by Hadassah women. Realism of methods had raised the sights of idealism, which in turn strengthened the effectiveness of the methods.

I described Americans I had encountered, who had elected to live and work in Palestine, who were rendering a personal

kind of pioneer service. For example, Judah Magnes stood out in bold relief against the background of the Hebrew University, then being built on Mount Scopus. Like Miss Szold he synthesized his American, and his Jewish, passion for justice and morality in the fervor which he poured into his work. Yet he differed interestingly from her in the manner and method of his contribution to the building of Palestine.

In rather the same vein that Miss Szold had led Hadassah to extend its health services to the Arabs, Dr. Magnes utilized his University leadership to make the opportunity for higher education available to Arabs as well as Jews. The difference was that, whereas instinctively Miss Szold used realistic means to reach idealistic purposes and gain support for them, sometimes Dr. Magnes' individual idealism missed those realistic methods which would have transmuted lofty ideal into practical action. Yet there was no question that the spirit in both was the same.

These two very exceptional human beings differed distinctly from each other in personality as well as in methods. Where Miss Szold saw herself first, last, and always as a servant of her people, Dr. Magnes' image of his role seemed more the prophet. His voice, admonishing the Jews of Palestine from the heights of Mount Scopus in tones of ringing eloquence, to persevere in creating tangible conditions of peace between Arab and Jew, bore this out in its truly prophetic effect.

To a degree, Dr. Magnes was perhaps caught between two worlds. He had been raised in American freedom and was a rabbi, of the liberal-minded Reform movement. To his congregation he spoke customarily in terms of highest idealism, not necessarily connecting up however that, *ipso facto,* principles must forthwith be put into practice. The audiences he addressed in the States were generally wealthy, and often hard realities of past and present Jewish struggle must

seem to his hearers remote and unreal. Speaking outside rather than within the Zionist movement, representing as it did the masses of those looking towards Palestine for liberation from their persecution and homelessness, inevitably at times diminished Dr. Magnes' effectiveness. One result was that—noble as was his voice—it tended to become a "voice, crying in the wilderness," for the reason that, on the whole at this time, his aims were supported only by a select few Jews and Arabs, versed more in the theory than in the practicalities of conditions of life in Palestine.

It often seemed to me that telling the family about people I had encountered under a variety of circumstances in Palestine was, in its way, like showing them illustrations in a historical narrative. Through people—hundreds of them, really—a great hour in history was brought to life in my mind and theirs. Inevitably a certain proportion of history slips into the abstract. But people never are, or can be, abstract.

Two who had turned their backs on more comfortable life in the United States to come and make Palestine their home, qualified as pioneers in the individual, personal sense. Both were frail of body; both were mighty of spirit, yet one would have said that, seemingly, they were hardly fitted for the rigors of this old-new country in its remaking process.

Jessie Sampter expressed in inspired poetry her passionately mystic faith in the Jewish renascence.

Nellie Mochinson, cyanotic from a heart ailment, nevertheless compelled a tremendous will power and sense of purpose to serve her dream of leaving her mark, as she passed by, on the social services of the country. While they lived they put all medical prognostications to naught, and performed with serenity beyond what anyone would have estimated to be their strength. In going, they left behind a

legacy of shining faith forever as new as today, as fresh as tomorrow.

Another woman, of unusual character and sense of mission, was Deborah Kallen. Unlike Jessie Sampter and Nellie Mochinson, she was strong of body; but, like them, she was of indomitable will and purpose.

Boston had been her home, and her family was a learned one—she herself had been a teacher of teachers, at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. There she had conducted classes for children drawn from the various ethnic groups represented in the public schools, and had received recognition for new and excellent methods she developed to give children facility in expressing themselves through painting and design. With great feeling and insight, she helped them to draw on their own cultural inheritances for inspiration: for example, she made Irish-Catholic children acquainted with early primitives in the religious art of the Renaissance; she showed Jewish children that the Hebrew alphabet was a source of innumerable patterns and designs. She used art as an instrument to convey to the children pride of ancestry; teaching them respect for traditions and customs of their parents, she guided them to ways of putting back into the soil from which they had sprung taproots of their own.

All this Deborah put aside, setting sail for Palestine, on a badly frayed financial shoestring with no visible means of future support. It meant declining important inducements offered her by the museum, and disregarding the wishes of her family. Thoroughly committed to her concepts of teaching, she dedicated her capacities and whole self to serving the teachers and children of Palestine, asking only the privilege of pointing them along a path where they might find their own ways of building their fulfillment.

It was clear from the moment of her arrival that her

course would not be easy. For one thing, others besides herself had methods, and equal faith in them. Unfortunately what she possessed in talent and dedication, Deborah Kallen lacked in sense of humor. At times she seemed the prototype of the Puritan woman of her own New England, doggedly pursuing her way in stiff-necked determination. Short, thick-set, with gray, level, unflinching eyes which looked at life and people straight on, she stood by her chosen course to the end of her brave, gifted, highly individualistic life.

When I met her one evening, in the *kvutza* of Merhaviah where she was watching over her little charges in the shadows of the dimly lit children's house, there was nothing to show that Golda Myerson would one day become Minister of Labor, and then Foreign Minister of a State of Israel. I had simply been told that she was an American woman become *halutza* whom I would enjoy meeting.

Her first words sent a little ripple of excitement through me for in her speech was a twang of the Middle West, a true grass-roots sound. It was moving to me to see another woman from my own part of the world, who had chosen to cast her lot as a pioneer, electing to pursue this hardest of all ways and, with the other pioneers, endure the hardships, the strenuous physical labor, the dangers of malaria and the other endemic diseases, at times even hunger, in order to build a homeland and, in the building, create the kind of life, for children and their children and children's children, which they could root in Palestine.

As I saw her that first time, Golda Myerson was a young woman and vigorous, not beautiful but handsome. Her body and the features of her face had the strength of sculpture; you could tell that she was made of strong material. Nothing about her was indeterminate. Her dark,

expressive eyes, her quick, assured manner of speech, indeed her entire presence radiated moral certainty, courage, and human strength.

She told me that her own two children—proudly she showed them to me, as they lay sleeping in their own among the many cribs in the room—were not to be allowed to grow to maturity under a conflict of loyalties and interests. They were Jews, born and being raised in the land of their forefathers; for them there was to be no such thing as a "Jewish problem."

From girlhood Golda Myerson had recognized only one solution for the problem of Jews living outside Palestine. In accordance with her understanding, her personal approach was direct and uncompromising: Jews must migrate to Palestine, and there do their part to build the kind of life which would open the largest possible program of immigration and permanent settlement on the land.

Her choice, in joining the labor force, was instinctive; in the labor force resided the concrete purpose and strength of group action to implement such a program. We talked late into the night. Though the picture did not seem to me as black and white as it was to her, I was moved to profound admiration for one who uncompromisingly lived in fact what she believed in principle.

"I ask myself," I said to the family gathered in the flickering light of the dwindling campfire, "if I am of the character to do the same." But I was saying it to myself too, and not for the first time.

That visit to Merhaviah had been my first to the *Emek*—valley—which sloped from the hills of Ephraim to the west, and to the Jordan valley to the east, and six hundred feet below sea level.

It was from Megiddo on the west wall of the *Emek* that

the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse would, according to prophecy, ride over the valley—then called Esdraelon—to announce the advent of the Day of Judgment.

My first sight of the *Emek,* from the hills of Nazareth, was certainly without presage of doom. A checkerboard of cultivated fields, green and gold . . . pink-roofed farm buildings in scattered groups . . . blocks of land still submerged by swampy waters—but already an army of young workers, fresh from war-ravaged European countries, were out in full force to attack and conquer the dangers and the waste. Armed with shovels, wearing hip boots, they were digging drainage canals to channel the waters and divest them of pestilential breeding places for disease.

Often these young workers fell prey to malaria, of the most virulent varieties known; paradoxically, even constantly recurring attacks seemed only to wed them more indivisibly to the land. Theirs was a passion for building; that it might cost them suffering was incidental and expected rather than feared. There were instances when their doctors, coming round to visit them, did not find them in their beds. Following sounds of singing, their patients would be traced to the dining tent where, draped in their bedsheets, they would be dancing out their exultation at being builders of Palestine—the while their bodies protested with alternate fever and chills which set their teeth a-chatter.

These were the youngsters who had come with the third *aliyah*—wave of immigration—immediately following World War I. They were carrying forward the very best in the pioneer tradition of those who had come before them, in the first and second waves. That the risks they took stemmed from exultation notwithstanding, by all the rules of medicine and health, they should not have lived—yet they did. One must ask oneself, How far can dedication and purpose become an antibody to social as well as physical ills?

There was a point at which I must stop, as it were, telling the beads of my experiences in Palestine and decide on action. For one thing Ussishkin expected an answer to his invitation, and he must have it.

Everything in me urged me to undertake the task. Everything I had seen and heard and felt during my journeying in Palestine had made the National Fund the embodiment to me of the spirit of the Jewish Renaissance. As the National Fund had fashioned a unique method to place ownership of the land in the hands of the people, so the pioneers, working the land, were writing a fresh chapter into the record of the struggle to better human relations.

I had always found the woods a source of strength, and this time was no exception. By the time our camping trip was over, I knew what my answer would be. It was indeed true; as a woman I too must take part in the actions and passions of my times, lest I be judged not to have lived.

Palestine and the National Fund had need of people who could serve. I left the north woods knowing that I could serve, and would.

11

A BY-PRODUCT OF WARTIME EVENTS WAS THAT late 1925 was seeing more and more women undertake activities outside the home. Reasons were many and varied: the lure of "self-expression"; attachment to some great cause which needed a continuity of service; urge to try the wings of emancipation; economic need. In my case, I was drawn irresistibly into the broad current of a world liberation movement, through one of its tributaries, Zionism. I was no conscientious objector to women's classic role as single-minded guardians of husbands, children, homes; to me the important and creative objective was to harmonize the ancient role with an extension of it which would apply knowledge and experience for the good of one's own family as well as the larger family of man. Of course there was a price to pay. One must be prepared to rationalize and organize the priority of the family and home, so that, conscientiously there would be the time and the freedom of mind to pursue outside activities without surrendering to others

the all-important tasks and relationships within the home.

Accepting Ussishkin's urging, that I must translate into practical terms what I had seen in Palestine, preferably by campaigning for increased support of the National Fund, I grasped at once, not only that I would now be facing clear-cut competition with men in a field over which they had held a monopoly, but that I would be entering a world new to me in other ways.

I did not even speak the language in which those conducting the Fund activities in New York conversed and carried on their work—Yiddish. Yiddish was as foreign to me as my background, lack of Jewish tradition, and personality were to them. It did not take any great sensitivity to recognize that, to them, I was more like a *goya*—gentile—than a Jew; in which case, what was I doing in territory which was, for all intents and purposes, theirs?

Having seen in Palestine with my own eyes what the blue boxes meant to a people's fund and land bought with it for the people's use, it seemed to me that, in the United States, one of the first things that cried out for change was the way the blue boxes were being used. Somehow they seemed to have slipped into debasement, becoming more an instrument of "*shnorring*"—begging—than of education and building.

A change was called for in the method of placing and gathering contributions from the boxes, including the conventional system of remunerating the collector for his work out of the receipts from the boxes. The method struck a woman as archaic, ineffective and, worst of all, uneconomic; it commanded indifferent support and no respect at all.

However, a change meant treading on toes of people with a vested interest in letting things stay as they were. I could almost hear the old-timers already: "That's always the trouble; people with no traditions always want to change things," and that would probably be the politest thing they

would say. They could accept us, if reluctantly, as window dressing. But heaven forbid that we see ourselves as new brooms and begin sweeping clean!

I appealed to the head office in Jerusalem to advise me how to proceed. Ussishkin, as I knew he would be, was as good as his word, assuring me of his backing and that of the directors. It was their decision that I should begin at once as I had suggested—organize the women in the United States, put the blue boxes in new perspective, and integrate various elements in a whole new course for the National Fund. Toward this end they were prepared to send two women of outstanding ability and experience to help me: Sari Berger and Nadia Stein. Aside from being beneficial to the Fund, the development was a personal turning point, enabling me to take a giant step forward in my own quest for a way of belonging, and service.

The versatility which quickly marked the blue boxes was an inspiring thing to watch. We made them our main instrument. These were our visiting cards, gaining us entrée to homes and the offices of important people and organizations. Quickly they were being recognized by individuals who received them as keys to a new world of personal adventure, one of identification with a life of pioneering.

As welcome as the boxes themselves were the volunteers whom we trained for the work of distributing and collecting them. Before a volunteer went out on calls she was prepared, by lantern slides, discussion periods, and up-to-date information, to convey, graphically and accurately, exactly what was happening to the bare Palestine hillsides in the way of reforestation, how swamplands were being turned gradually into fertile fields and farm sites, how desert sand was giving way to garden spots, above all, how returning Jews were being able to feel more Heaven over their heads as there was more purchased land under their feet.

From a rather listless start, the crusade grew rapidly. For the first time an attempt was being made to attract the young American college-trained woman to our work and make her a part of Palestine's rebuilding. Adding this force to that of older women energized by a new insight into the purposes at stake, a momentum built up in New York which overflowed through the country. In a satisfying brief time, the Women's Jewish National Fund Council was off to a good start.

Burgeoning success brought complications. Among them, the leadership of Hadassah approached us, objecting that we were competing with them. Whereas in some situations competition is healthy, in others it may be divisive. Therefore my answer to Hadassah was "If you will assimilate the National Fund Council with Hadassah, our whole group will go with it." And it was so agreed and done.

Within the framework of Hadassah the work of the Fund surged ahead. Time and again we were put to it to find halls large enough to accommodate the crowds who came to hear what the Fund was accomplishing in Palestine, what was being planned as support increased.

I went to Boston to speak before the Hadassah chapter and felt at once gladdened and distressed at the number of people unable to get into the meeting place.

When the leaders of the Boston chapter accompanied me to my train back to New York, I took it for a simple gesture of courtesy—until they informed me that the New England regional Hadassah convention was preparing to nominate me for the office of National President. In the few moments before the train pulled out, I could only tell them, flattering though their decision was, that I could not consider it. True, Henrietta Szold was determined to relinquish the presidency, but there were others available, far better fitted than I, who did not feel at all equipped, and had no desire, moreover, to occupy so august a position. Mainly, however,

I was fully committed now to the forwarding of the work of National Fund, and wanted nothing so much as to continue the work which so challenged my imagination and energies. Too, there were important considerations of family. Together with a husband about whose health I felt increasingly alarmed, and five children with whom a close relationship must be maintained, I would simply not be free to give the time such an office demanded. "Besides," I said with mock severity worthy of Henrietta Szold, "you are forgetting that it is entirely opposed to the tradition of Hadassah for a regional group to decide on action of such import without the sanction of the National Board, and it was completely unlikely that this would be forthcoming."

There was a curious similarity between this train trip back to New York, and the one back from Baltimore in 1917. Each in its way was crucial. This time it was not a "conversion" which shook me, but rather a feeling that unwittingly I had been launched on a current and was being borne along rapidly by forces I could not halt. I felt that somehow I must prevent the "inevitable" from taking place. From the train I rushed to the offices of Hadassah.

In a letter from Jerusalem, Henrietta Szold had left no choice but that her resignation be accepted. Now the executive board was in session at the offices. At my insistent knocking on the door, Zip Szold came out. I explained the intention of the New England Regional Conference, and my conviction that it must not be permitted to go ahead. In the very moment that I protested that the proposal of the Boston chapter must in no circumstances be entertained, with dismay I read in her eyes the thoughts of Zip Szold, a vice-president, "Why shouldn't it? Wouldn't this be a real solution to the problem?"

Would no one take my apprehension seriously?

Things happened fast—too fast. The Sunday following my Boston visit the New England Regional Conference had

indeed entered my nomination; on Thursday evening the National Board decided I must not refuse the nomination. And I had not even had time to appeal to Henrietta Szold by letter to throw her influence on the side of my conviction that this was not for me. I wrote her nevertheless.

I have never been more deeply moved than by their decision, and I have accepted, but I wish—oh! how I wish—I could know if you are willing to trust your life's work in my hands. I feel so utterly small and incapable next to you. . . . You will receive this letter, I hope, before the Convention. . . . There will still be time to change the tide. I beg you to cable me honestly if you feel that someone else can better carry on the traditions Hadassah has so firmly established.

There are so many problems. . . . I am harassed by serious worries about my husband's health, though the doctors' diagnoses have not uncovered anything specific. . . . In reply to this letter I beg you to be absolutely, brutally, and specifically frank. If, at the Convention, the decision of the National Board is confirmed, I shall feel that I have been ordained, more truly so, even, than had I been confirmed as a rabbi. I can then only hope and pray, that some of the light of your wisdom will fall on me and give me strength. . . .

Her reply was immediate but the comfort it gave me was mixed.

I am fully and completely satisfied with the solution of the presidential problem accepted by the National Board. It is so acceptable a solution that I don't understand why it didn't occur to us these two or three years since I have been urging the Board of Hadassah to release me. . . . Your preparation, personality, and convictions the women of Hadassah need at this time . . . Hadassah is to be congratulated. . . .

With reference to my anxiety on account of Mr. Lindheim's health she said, hoping that cause for an easier mind would show itself, "I know what it means to be torn between public commitment and private duty." Noting a reference

to my regret at not being able to fit in further studies at the Institute, she said, "As president of Hadassah you can serve greatly by doing the writing and the educational work you long for. Let that be the form your propaganda will take."

She emphasized that my deep preoccupation with the acquisition of land for more settlers was at the moment a larger and more serious point. "This is the most fascinating, as it is the most fundamental of Zionist problems. It lies as the cornerstone of the Zionist movement, and Zionist success." For this she saw Hadassah as an instrument, "a sharp knife set in a finely turned handle. For the new president, it is to think deeply and wisely, how its blade was sharpened, how its handle turned to fit the cunning hand, and then beware of rejecting impulsively the means that made it a tempered instrument."

She wrote of activation to be given other than the "inert mass" which "only recently had been stimulated and had caused Hadassah to turn attention to a fundamental undertaking other than its own: The Jewish National Fund." She pointed out that "yet other inert masses" could be stirred to enthusiasm for still other needs, for instance, for the university. After recommending that the new president consider well the phenomenon of Hadassah, throughout its history continuing to capture the attention of inert masses and, once arousing them, never losing them, she indulged in a note of legitimate pride: "Has any other group succeeded in doing this?" In closing her letter she said, "But I don't want to preach, for I am persuaded and convinced that you will guide Hadassah aright."

And so, in the summer of 1926, I was voted in by acclamation and became the second National President of Hadassah. When I faced the delegates representing nearly thirty thousand women, I took strength and confidence from Henrietta Szold's letter. If she had declined to join my private conspiracy to escape the situation, she certainly did

not leave me comfortless. As Elisha had prayed that a double portion of the spirit of Elijah might fall upon him, so I prayed that the spirit of Henrietta Szold would fall upon me, to the end that I might serve Hadassah as it went on, growing steadily more effective and beautiful.

When Miss Szold cabled the convention that in her opinion "the task has fallen on shoulders that can bear it with dignity, and into hands trained to execute it deftly and nobly" I knew one thing.

This I had yet to prove.

It had been, and was still a cause for worry to think of the possible effect on my husband of this heavy additional responsibility I had undertaken, even though in the end, it had been at his insistence that I had finally consented to stand for election. Only slightly less was I fearful of the effects on the children's lives, particularly on the close relationship between my eldest son and myself. I had some time since detected subtle signs that he was jealous of my outside activities.

But it was my husband's state of health that worried me most. I asked myself why he should have been so insistent about my accepting.

A surface reason was that, by this time, he himself had become deeply involved in Zionist work. For example, he was giving invaluable service in helping straighten out complexities in the organization's finances. To a degree our ways no longer diverged, but followed parallel lines. Yet in itself this did not seem sufficient reason for him to have encouraged me insistently to a decision so against his own interests, contrary to his anxious wish to have me with him constantly. True, he was falling in with a trend of the times, that of the American husband clearing obstacles from the path of a wife's chosen work. But I could not help feeling there must be something else, a deeper motivation.

Since before my enlistment in the Motor Corps he had encouraged whatever I chose to undertake as an outside activity. With my deep involvement in the Zionist movement—in which he himself became directly interested only after two years—he put nothing in the way of my giving freest expression to ideas not only different, but at the time foreign, to his own.

I now wondered whether he favored my accepting the Hadassah task as his way of compensating for the shadow which the dreadful experience of the case against him had cast over our lives. For himself he would have wanted to lay the world at my feet. When this high honor offered, was this his way of doing so?

It was to hurt to think that this may have been so. I neither wanted nor deserved any such self-immolation. Although it was contrary to his nature, I wanted him to think of himself as I did—coming first. For the brave way in which he was facing life in which he was being denied the right to follow practice of the law—which to him was more a vocation than a profession—he deserved that and more.

Denied his law practice, he had joined the fur concern of Eitingon Schild, who previously had been his clients. Labor conditions were in a period of disturbance, and serious strikes were threatening. Through his gift for mediation he succeeded in bringing about better understanding between employers and employees; working conditions were improved because both sides gave him their trust and confidence. In negotiations between factions which were bitterly antagonistic it was recognized by all that he would be consistently and absolutely fair, even when ideas were diametrically opposed to his own. His judgment was sought out of recognition that, with him, justice was the cause to be served.

Of the children, the effects of my becoming president of Hadassah must be expected, at that juncture, to fall most

heavily on the relationship between my eldest son and myself. At a time when postwar disillusionment tended to vitiate all values, when the attitude towards authority—especially parental authority—was under particularly critical scrutiny by young people, the affirmative direction my life had taken had—though he still had not ceased fighting its implications—had won young Norvin's respect. Unselfishly, the fact that I had found a faith, a purpose tangible enough to result in social action of a nature he could approve, indeed one that had come to serve him as a kind of mooring, meant that, as thoughtful and fair as he was, he could not oppose my course of action. For, in a world of uncertainties, my affirmations had given him a gauge by which he could appraise what was going on around him, and set new sights for himself.

To him and his coterie of young collegians, gathering at our home on weekends, my beliefs were as a bone to a puppy, something to worry agreeably, good exercise for the teeth. Today that group would see itself as existentialist. In effect, our home became a place where two world outlooks could meet; the negative versus the positive. It seemed to me most important that this atmosphere be sustained.

I stood alone in most of the arguments, my son remaining on the sidelines, watching to see how I would make out under the cannonading of his contemporaries. Yet there was an important personal factor too, a stake we shared equally. It was his rejection or acceptance of becoming himself part of the great pioneer adventure of the Jewish youth of his generation. Obviously the decision must come out of his own convictions, not mine. As this was still very much in the balance, I was all the more concerned, lest my assuming the Hadassah presidency be the one thing more which might sway his growing interest away from this new direction.

It was a battle against forces of environment as well as

ideas. There was no question that the odds were against me. A life of pioneering was far outside the everyday experience of young people of well-to-do families. Moreover this life of pioneering was located in—to them—outlandish Palestine which, so far as they knew—which really was nothing—had for its chief characteristic the unwelcome stigma of religious connotation.

These being sons of Jews, but without Jewish background or education, to speak of "Jewish" values to them was to set them off on a tangent. There were no such things as absolute values, they argued; much less would they think of arrogating to themselves the values of a "religious" group. The concept of the Jews as a people or nation was, to them, absurd; they were cosmopolitan, unchauvinistic, and international in outlook. They saw boundaries as outdated, and any form of nationalism was to be rejected, as containing the seeds of war.

One single phase of Palestine's rebuilding did have interest for them, namely the pattern of life emerging in the communal farms of Palestine—and yet this was primarily because of its cultural aspects. The dancing, music, and drama stemming from the group life attracted them, but as for curiosity as to the reasons for a flowering of culture in so short a renascent time, they had none.

For me the small, hopeful sign was that, though not in the least agreement with me, the subject aroused them to argumentative interest; though pretty much of the "might-as-well-talk-about-it" kind, it did keep them coming back for more.

For want of guidance—which they were at a stage to fend off—and purpose, it was a sign of the times for these and other of their contemporaries to find an escape line into the arts. Their only faith was in beauty and its many icons. They thought of becoming writers, publishers, stage directors, museum curators; of finding their way to Rome, Paris,

or Hollywood—anything but mixing in politics or other affairs of the world. Their elders had made a sufficient mess of things, why should they compound the crime?

There were aspirations to foster, many prejudices to modify without antagonizing, many experiences to be offset. For example, young Norvin, with several Yale companions, spent a summer interval working as day laborers at the Chrysler factory in Detroit on a project organized by the Y.M.C.A. But, to their disgust, often they stood out as anomalies, made different from other workers by home environments not of their choosing but much to their liking. It was a salutary experience.

All this made clear to me that the part of me given to the service of Hadassah must be balanced by paying equally great attention to the cultivation of a continuity in the life of our home, upholding standards and values which might influence my children in the direction of affirmative faith. I failed to find these in the life of contemporary America, but the pioneering life of Palestine gave me the one outstanding example of what, in an earlier period, had been a distinctively American way of life. Especially was this important to the youth, because in relation to things Jewish they had been left in woeful ignorance. The degree to which I could succeed in carrying on the old, as well as the new, tasks, would tell the tale. It was a formidable undertaking.

I felt hopeful that, even in a home essentially non-Jewish in character, an atmosphere could be established wherein, for example, celebration of Jewish holidays would seem gradually to be natural. I based the hope considerably on our Hanukkah celebrations, which had been made as joyous as the Christmas celebrations we had held formerly.

We had now had our first home Seder feast. Without the

long search I had made in the course of my studies, to find the meanings of the Jewish holidays and their applicability to our lives, and without my tuition in Palestine it would not have been possible.

To the children, to ourselves, and to our many guests, the Seder had been at once an unforgettable experience in itself and, in its way, a family landmark. At times, as I anticipated the planning, it seemed the wildest kind of wish projection that I would be able to translate an inspiration which had come to me in the tent of a Bedouin sheikh in the valley of the Huleh in Palestine to visible terms in the dining room of our home on Long Island. The thought that stayed with me was that I could at least try.

The tent of rugs was built at one end of the room. When the time came our children and their young guests, dressed in Bedouin robes such as their ancestors might have worn, reclined on cushions inside the tent and ate their Passover meal. They understood the meaning of their Bedouin dress, and the appropriate songs, having been coached in the latter by our friend, their teacher of Jewish history, Louis Lober. As the Bedouin of today, they understood that their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had been shepherds and desert dwellers; that, though their people long since had put aside the ways and dress, this remainder of their beginnings touched to life a feeling of kinship with the Arabs, still dwelling in tent or city. Completing the picture, our two oldest sons, naturally dark and handsome, could have passed anywhere that Seder night for Arabs.

Our guests for the festive occasion were many and distinguished.

With us was Sir Wyndham Deeds, First Secretary of the Mandatory Government of Palestine. Out of his profound knowledge of the Bible and a deep sense of history-in-the-making, he heartily approved the continuity implicit in the

tie-up of Jew and Arab through our dramatization of the Passover story. Sir Wyndham had been one of the few who took implementation of the Balfour Declaration as an obligation upon himself; scrupulously avoiding any discrimination against the interests of the Arabs, within the framework of his important position he assisted the creation of the Jewish Homeland in every way he possibly could.

Stephen Wise and his wife Louise were there to help us celebrate. In the reading of the Haggadah, though all, including the children, participated, his beautiful great voice boomed out. Our Stephen—Stephen Wise's namesake—asked the traditional four questions in Hebrew, thus becoming intimately introduced to the fact that all Jewish holidays, including the Seder, make the child the central part of the observance.

With us were others, including Sam and Etta Rosensohn: Sam, who had been our friend from the earliest days of our sharing in the movement; Etta, his wife, not yet, but on her way to being a Zionist, and with exceptional talents and training to contribute.

As young Norvin stood, tall and darkly handsome in his Bedouin robes, reading the story of the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt, to those celebrating with us this was an evening of commemoration dedicated to the first mass struggle in history of slaves, resolutely casting off the chains of their bondage, and I thought how clearly he was a symbol of what a life lived in freedom could hold for the young Jew. Gone from him, it seemed to me, were the facile negations of his times. That evening he was the Jew, proudly relating the story of his people's struggle against enslavement, of their triumphant fight for total freedom.

As I watched him, listened to him not as one merely telling a story of the past, but as integral in the contemporary struggle to free the Jew from remaining thralldom, I won-

dered if this evening were not seeing the beginning of a resolution of anxieties concerning our family life. Through a uniquely Jewish celebration had we not all been drawn a little more closely together by a common assertion of the Jewishness which, for a time, had set me a little apart?

12

WOMEN AS WELL AS MEN WERE ENTITLED TO vote in the councils and conventions of the Zionist organization. It was decided now, that in its role as the Women's Division of the organization, Hadassah must begin to make its franchise felt; otherwise it would lay itself open to blame for allowing matters of policy to go by default to the male vote.

An interval of a few weeks following the convention had allowed me to accompany my husband on a much-needed holiday in Europe. I too returned refreshed and ready to take up the complex responsibilities of office. Simultaneously Henrietta Szold returned from Palestine for a visit. It afforded a providential opportunity to tap her wisdom and experience.

With her usual far vision she had, it seemed, perceived that Hadassah no longer could overlook or shirk political responsibilities. To assume them effectively, she felt, new leadership was required. Her insistence on resigning the

presidency, therefore, had not been because of age or other limitation on functioning as before, but rather because she felt less than equipped to lead the specific political action which, she felt, it was essential for Hadassah to take. Taking full responsibility for her share in the decision itself, she needed freedom to carry on with the expansion of the medical and welfare work in Palestine.

The anatomy of politics was familiar to me; it had long been an essential current in the atmosphere of our home. Because it was a gathering place for both men who agreed, and disagreed, with my husband's convictions, I had been afforded exceptional opportunities to gain experience in the give-and-take of discussion and debate. This was of special worth after I became intimately conscious of Palestine, and of my own need to learn how to marshal and present facts if I were to make convincing to the nonbeliever, in my home as elsewhere, knowledge and ideas which now formed the sum and substance of my life. There was no place for abstractions, loose thinking, or sentimentality. I underwent continuous hard training and stern discipline, especially at the hands of my husband, but, having learned to do battle to hold ground, and to take the attack, I felt equal to accepting the tasks facing me.

It had been accepted practice that the president of Hadassah was also vice president of the Zionist Organization, and sat on its Executive and Administrative Committees. Since Miss Szold was no longer head of Hadassah, some changes in procedure were indicated. Whereas the greatest respect had always been paid her extraordinary qualifications, and her voice always taken note of, especially when it was raised against abuses of power, in a sense it sometimes was a voice of conscience which alas was not always heeded, especially when her long absences from the United States made it comparatively easy to disregard it.

The objective now was to make Hadassah's voice a collec-

tive and continuous force, commensurate with the size of the membership and the amount of dues deriving from it. There was to be no more taxation without representation; Hadassah's participation was to be a token one no longer.

Though the men of the Zionist Organization would have put it differently, what happened at first was like attempting to drive a horse in tandem with one of the team only accustomed and willing to travel alone. From the point of view of the men, most impertinently the tail was trying to wag the dog. A clash of personalities and methods developed which was costly in time, energy, and effectiveness, a result not unique at the time, when any organization of women sought to enter territory hitherto controlled by the men. Both the movement and Palestine were made to suffer.

The basic cause was that the values and ways of women in organizations are different—and sometimes, so it was believed, better—than those of men. Some reasons were organic, others functional, made chronic by too long a period of unquestioned control. Women, on the contrary, had not been long enough in public causes to have set ways, hardening the arteries of organizational life; they had not yet learned to "play politics," building bureaucratic machines to hold themselves in power, thereby ensuring continuity of control even though at times it might be at the cost of principle.

Against such evils in the Zionist Organization Hadassah now arrayed itself, using as its criterion the standard of excellence it had itself achieved. In its thirteen years of functioning, Hadassah had created an exemplary model of handling funds. Money collected for its work in Palestine reached its destination without deductions for administrative expenses, which were separately covered out of membership dues. This was known as the "100 per cent clause," and was guarded by the membership with an almost religious fervor.

There was no parallel in the men's organization and, though some of the men thought it worthy of the highest commendation, to others in positions of power Hadassah's very virtues acted as a subtle reproach and irritant.

In all fairness it would have to be recognized, that, being the breadwinners, men did not on the average have the time to spare for that volunteer service which allowed Hadassah to hold its paid staff to a minimum, thereby keeping administrative costs low. This was generally appreciated. What was not accepted, and had therefore of necessity to be made a point for revision, was that volunteer work as such was generally discouraged by the men's organization as a species of competition, a hazard to a staff of professional workers jealous of their power in controlling the organization.

Prospects for a change were promising. Men of valuable talent were ready and eager to join as volunteers, to give their services to Palestine; they were unready to cope, however, with the political maneuvering and sniping which working under the existing circumstances would invite. Yet there were others, like my husband, who contributed of their time and energies in spite of sporadic difficulties. These stood with Hadassah in its determination to set a "Good Government" movement in control which, while it was hoped to retain the valuable services of those who ran the machine, would prevent continuance of a self-perpetuating dictatorial group.

Even with a not inconsiderable number of wise and able men as allies throughout the country, we faced a formidable task. But the Zionist movement in the United States must at all costs be made into one in which our husbands and sons would find it both possible and desirable to work.

In many ways the picture was symptomatic of its period. Many more than organizational issues were involved in the struggle; partly it was a repetition of that which had caused the tragic split in the American movement back in 1921,

and which had alienated great men such as Louis Brandeis, Julian Mack and Rabbi Wise from serving as active leaders. As at that time, a prime issue was the method for the handling of funds, and financing practices which allowed for incurring and underwriting loans without specification of sources out of which they were to be repaid. There was criticism too of using more than a limited amount of money collected for Palestine for administrative purposes, and the general lack of curbs and democratic control of administrative and organizational processes. These were all basic issues, yet in the hands of those interested in political maneuvering, they were made into an attack on personalities and a battle of the sexes, a struggle between women and men for domination.

The women were not always skilled or even clever. Relatively new to public and organizational life they tended to approach causes with the zeal of neophytes. Sometimes the ardor and selflessness of their service was taken for self-righteousness and arrogance. Eager to make their organization the very model of democracy, though inexperienced in political parryings and finding it difficult to approach differences through compromise, at times positions were taken which were too inflexible and their lack of political sophistication was turned against them as a weapon for their defeat. There was much destructive talk about "Diaper Zionism," used sometimes as a smoke screen to obscure principles. When it came to women wanting to be heard on the convention floor there were, from time to time, some very odd interpretations of *Robert's Rules of Order* in order to silence their voices.

As matters stood when my administration began, Hadassah constituted a mote in the eye of the Zionist Organization. Unless the question of control could be constructively settled, Hadassah's unique potential of effectiveness could

hardly be realized. Fortunately this disturbing situation was only one side of the coin.

The other and reassuring side was that an organization having the capacity to multiply its already great contributions to the building of the Jewish homeland, was ripe for expansion.

For myself this called for a change of emphasis but no change of aims. Where my personal approach led me to stress land and the pioneering activity in Palestine, Hadassah's emphasis had been on establishing and improving health conditions of its population. Now the objectives were joined to make a common goal. Even if, as I had come to believe in as a practicality, there would have to be less of an accent on the political factor of Arab-Jewish relations, Hadassah had already established its position for making the benefits of its services available to Arabs and Jews alike.

So went the reasoning which led to my pouring into a new mold the deep convictions which gave my personal Zionism its dynamic. A new blend of ideals and objectives would give all fresh incentive and direction. From sources hitherto untapped, new members would come into the organization. For the first time the more social-minded younger American woman, without roots in Jewish life, would join in the work which she had regarded previously, if mistakenly, as being old-fashioned, colorless, and of a purely philanthropic nature.

If the universally admired Henrietta Szold had not already set a precedent, with her broad social-mindedness and vision, for a more inclusive approach by the Hadassah constituency, we might have been more fearful at the lifting of Old Guard eyebrows. Instead, we paraphrased subconsciously, "If Henrietta Szold is for us, who can be against us?"

In her personal emphasis on health work, she did not at all minimize the importance and place of the new pioneer-

ing type of Jew, coming forth from roots deep in the soil of Palestine. Again and again she recommended the example of those who were putting their individual interests into the larger interest of building a people's homeland, and would speak in deep appreciation of "the enthusiasm the youth have always had, their intrepidity, vision of mind and sacrificial devotion." Many of her convictions stemmed directly from deeply religious beliefs. Ideals and ideas were to express moral principles, not to be repudiated even when carrying political labels, and using methods at times difficult to accept. She called herself a pacifist and a socialist, but her socialism was of a private variety.

As I traveled about to speak for Hadassah's new goals, I did not have to compromise my personal convictions, tear heartstrings, or stress the worth of charity. Where were American audiences so dead that they could not respond to the prospect of becoming a personal part of a pioneer effort? I had only to stretch the canvas on a wider frame, projecting an image of the Jew as a true pioneer rather than the needy suppliant, however worthy, for the sympathy and dole of others. As was hoped and expected, it raised large, needed funds: for lying-in facilities, maternity services, receiving blankets, diapers, and all manner of supplies, as well as for salaries for six hundred doctors, nurses, technicians, and other helpers of Hadassah in Palestine.

On Jewish women, seeing themselves now as belonging to a band of pioneers venturing forth on new frontiers, the effect was positive and creative. Pride and confidence grew in those who joined spirit and hands with Jews incapable of remaining down-and-out from body blows, possessed once again with the will and the courage to pick themselves up and make a fresh start.

Hadassah was fortified with an inherent stability, deriving in no small measure from the continuity given the organiza-

tion by a National Board whose members consisted mostly of its founders and other women of like background and character.

There was an interesting opportunity now to make new places, both locally and nationally, for entering elements. Organizational forms had to become elastic enough to meet the needs of an American-born and oriented constituency yet without disrupting or alienating the activities of an older generation of Hadassah adherents, most of them with roots planted deep in Jewish tradition. Where a clash of age groups arose, the younger element, developing a dynamism of its own, influenced a change, from chapter to chapter, to form separate groups functioning together in federated form, each with the autonomy to hold meetings and conduct projects to meet their quotas separately.

A healthy growth ensued. Regional regroupings gave a broader base and more direct representation to far-flung segments; regional presidents, elected at district conventions, sat as members of the National Board which hitherto had consisted only of members living in or around New York City.

An interesting choice of activity appeared. Whereas long-standing members of Hadassah stood by the institution of the sewing circles which were part of the organization's beginnings, the younger group demanded more in the way of educational activities. These new members, most of them young mothers, had in common a very special problem. New to things Jewish, they did not know how to go about handling situations confronting their children—as Jews. Themselves lacking the specific experience, they felt inadequate to help their children in meeting needs rising out of a non-Jewish environment. Problems of racial hostility and discrimination nonplused them. The prevailing widespread celebration of Christmas as a nondenominational, "national," predominantly nonreligious holiday left them os-

tensibly compliant yet, in many cases, with a feeling of guilt which, in turn, tended to put them on the defensive. These young women wanted the kind of education that would help them learn what they should do—for example, when a child came home from school weeping with anxiety because a playmate, turning on him suddenly, had called him a *name*—"Jew!" What to say to a child who says, with puzzled eyes, "Mother, what is a Jew?"

Coming, myself, from an environment completely assimilated, and having, through acquaintance with both Zionism and Palestine, found my path to a positive Jewishness, I rejoiced at the opportunity to put my gropings and discoveries at the service of others. Certainly none of us could hope for any short cuts; there were no easy ways. What our Jewish sages had said long ago was still true, and would always be; it is not possible without study to be a Jew, any more than it is possible without study to be a thorough parent. If anything positive was to be given to children there must, above all, be a contact of parents with the new Palestine. To those who would lay hold of it, this would be a lifeline, once they recognized that their need of Palestine was as great as Palestine's need of them.

The nature of one plan, designed for mothers seeking for enlightenment to pass on to their children, may be set down here; though short-lived—for lack of any one person dedicated to its success (I, myself, being too engaged in the tasks of the presidency)—in essence and potential application it is as good as ever for short-circuiting the chain reaction of ignorance compounding ignorance.

I had been a director for many years of the Child Study Association. It was now proposed, within its framework, to make possible the study of problems confronting parents and children of one or other minority groups in the United States; in this case specifically for Jewish parents, who could

thus learn to meet the special problems arising in the lives of their children as Jews.

With the idea of enabling parents and children alike to make fuller contribution to the life of their country as well as enriching their own lives through study of their own unique culture, the project was to be composed of men and women who were learned and wise in the ways of their own people. Feelings of inferiority and lack of self-respect were to be canceled out by a positive evaluation of their past as a people. The reason for joint implementation of the plan by Hadassah with the Child Study Association was that it was desirable to treat the problems of the child as a whole rather than separating his life into compartments, as it were, treating his Jewish side as a thing separate and distinct from his everyday normal existence.

The means for the activity were made available by a personal friend; both the Association and Hadassah having accepted the validity of the project, all elements for its success seemed to be in sight. However, internal differences as to the implementation of ideas, theories, and practice arose, and the plan was canceled. Its value is still great enough, I believe, to be recorded here.

As I began traveling the country over on Hadassah work, frequently I had the company of my aunt and good friend, Bertha Guggenheimer. "Aunt Bert" was, in a way, a new manifestation in Zionism. Living her whole life in Lynchburg completely separate from the concerns of the Jewish people, she had now come to consider them as her own. In her there was "new blood" and, besides the regularity and substance of her material contributions, her presence at meetings was a source of interest and encouragement to many who were unaccustomed to associating her like with the movement. Unusual for her times, she was a college graduate. Some thought her cold and "too intellectual," but

when they learned of the ties she had established with Palestine, they knew they had been mistaken.

The idea of the "Guggenheimer playgrounds of Palestine" had its genesis while we were traveling through Palestine, but I can remember the place and occasion of its actual birth. We were on a train high in the Swiss Alps. The sheer, moonlit beauty of snow-clad peaks was electrifying, a symbol of man's rightful inheritance of freedom, joy, and peace. "I am going to make it possible to begin establishing playgrounds in the Old City where Arab and Jewish children can learn to play together," said Aunt Bert. "If they can begin early to get along together, they can go on that way when they are older." Soon after this first playground was arranged for, she ensured another with a gift of twenty-five thousand dollars. Later a codicil would be added to her will, raising the sum dedicated to the children of Palestine to one hundred thousand dollars.

She died in the course of a trip devoted to our common interest. We had separated for a single day; when I was speeding on a train from Duluth to rejoin her, to continue our trip west to Seattle, death overtook her. She had not been as well as usual, and I thought perhaps she should not make the trip. But she was the kind who felt strongly that her life would be over when she began allowing herself to be "shelved." And she would have asked nothing better than the state of interest and activity in which the end overtook her.

It was in St. Paul, where she died, that I learned how a common cause can bind people with ties as close as those of family. In my absence everything possible had been done for her; and now everything possible was also done for me. Instinctively I longed for the presence of my family. At the moment my husband was on his first visit to Palestine; he had been invited, as one of a commission of three, to accompany Henrietta Szold and Rose Jacobs, then national chair-

man of Hadassah's medical work, to resolve the particularly knotty problem of the possible withdrawal of Hadassah's Medical Director, Dr. Bluestone.

Thanks to an eight-hour time difference, I received a sustaining cable in an incredibly short time; also I had my husband's letters from Palestine to read and reread; letters filled with enthusiasm and interest in the country; letters in which he said he understood now, more even than before, my intense love of the country; and, further, volunteering that he too would like to make a home there for us.

I settled into a steady existence of eighteen-hour work days and long absences from home and family. I begrudged nothing—not the time; not the incessant boarding and leaving trains, being required to speak early and often before a membership growing fast both in numbers and the desire to learn how to be useful. I zigzagged over the country, and what I was able to impart to audiences was no more valuable than what, collectively and individually, audiences were able to make known to me, in the way of the human resources by which the future of Palestine might be bulwarked and advanced.

I met a tremendous range of Jews, and it was at once my duty and privilege to make sure that the meetings were of more substantial worth than the mere signal of approval shown. Sometimes I misunderstood reactions, sometimes I was misunderstood. For example, a small tempest boiled up over a point I made at an elaborate private dinner party given in my honor. Perhaps the reason I was invited was to meet a group to which, in general, life had been too good; they had no wish to contemplate any kind of change or intrusion. In the same way that they would not have been moved to join the American westward trek, they now had no real interest in becoming supporters—or even admiring onlookers—of the pioneering movement in Palestine.

It was against my wishes therefore that I was forced into the position of discussing the life on the communal farms. My host, thinking to take advantage of my intimate knowledge of *kibbutz* life, had asked me at dinner—in lowered, confidential tones—to tell him "the inside story of the love life" in these settlements. Seated on the other side of me was the editor of a scandal sheet who, overhearing the question, drew the conversation out into the open, and the fat was in the fire. From then on, all anyone wanted to hear was about those "love nests."

Here were people who could accept without protest the shocking rise of divorce and crime in their own communities and yet dare to give a lascivious interpretation to the high morality of young people who refused to build their lives on hypocritical sexual standards and were consciously evolving a new morality, which has stood the test of time. It was the first and last time I allowed myself to be baited into discussing a subject with an audience unequipped by experience to understand what I was talking about.

The incident was to have an amusing repercussion. On my return to New York one of the national board members remarked to me icily: "If you do believe in free love, might it not be better not to discuss your views in public?"

That misadventure was an exception. In Chicago and elsewhere I met Jews of outstanding quality and character. Conservative, and many of the Reform, rabbis extended to me the hospitality of their pulpits. For example, Rabbi Joshua Liebman showed courage and conviction by inviting me to speak to his congregation though it had long been nurtured on the bitter anti-Zionism of his predecessor, Rabbi Hirsch.

There were, too, Dr. Alexander Dushkin and his wife Julia, whose home was among the first I had been in where a synthesis of American and living Jewish values had been established, and where their two beautiful young daughters,

Kinnereth and Aviva, conversed fluently with each other and their parents in Hebrew.

It was the Dushkins who made it possible for me to have dinner and an evening's talk with Julius Rosenwald, whose stature as an American and a Jew singled him out from those who feared the revival of the Jews as a nation might put their status as Americans in jeopardy. In spite of his negative position on Zionism, and unlike the fearful ones, Julius Rosenwald had a feeling of solidarity with his people, and a corresponding sense of responsibility toward their welfare.

His was a point of view to be recognized and respected, even if opposed. He believed that Jews must be helped to strike their roots ever more deeply in countries where they resided. When, after the Revolution in Russia, the Joint Distribution Organization together with the government of the Soviet Union planned for the settlement of Jews on the farmlands of the Crimea, he was the first to give a million dollars for this purpose, notwithstanding a total lack of sympathy for the system of government under which they were to live. But it was in Germany, and the Jewish future there, that he placed his greatest faith and gave great sums to assist philanthropic and cultural undertakings there. What Julius Rosenwald would have felt, had he lived to witness the tearing up of the centuries-old roots of the Jews in Germany, and the murder of six million Jews in the fiery furnace of Nazi Jew-hatred, can only be imagined. But in that evening we spent together, with its interchange of deep thought, the impression he made was of a man moved by strong emotional attachment and profound spiritual conviction. He felt not only for his own people; in the same way as he gave to the Jew, he gave also to the cause of the Negro in his own country, to better whose conditions he gave millions. Indeed he aided all peoples who suffered from race hatred and discrimination. That evening each of us felt the

pity of each other's mistaken views. But the impression left with me was that here was one of the great and good men of his time.

Of interest in a different way were groups of wealthy assimilated young Jews, highly intelligent and consciously facing the problem to be, or not to be, Jews, because of the effect it would have on their children's future. Of all amongst whom my responsibilities took me, these seemed closest to me and my own background. Our language was mutually familiar. And yet, aside from the natural interest which a fresh personal contact would have for them, it struck me as doubtful that anything short of a major cataclysm would cause these Jews of the West to identify themselves closely with those of Eastern origin. I reflected that probably it was largely my German-Jewish parentage which admitted me as one of them.

Gradually realizing that there were as many differing kinds of Jews as there were people and problems, I felt I had to understand my own personal "difference." Must I not reexamine my objectives, take periodic bearings on my course? Although compelled, as president of Hadassah, to be less articulate about it at present, was there a danger that I might lose a sense of that pull which the pioneering way of life in Palestine had so powerfully exerted on me?

On a train, descending from the heights of the Sierras into lush California valleys, I glimpsed the beginnings of some answers. I had come into the presidency of Hadassah under emergency conditions. Now that time and planning had improved directions, I could step out; there were others for the task, others more fit than I. When I could rightly do so, I wanted to resume my quest. For what? For strengths not to be found in any organization, no matter how great it be? For strengths in a way of life which might better be defined as civilizational than organizational?

At the next annual convention I asked to be retired from

office. To my surprise even my husband threw his influence on the side of my remaining. Also Miss Szold, loath though she was, habitually, to enter into the decisions of others, added her voice—reluctantly, with misgivings, yet firmly—to those who wanted my leadership to continue. It was put to me now as, more than ever, involving the very life of Hadassah, and its continuance at a very critical stage, as an effective independent instrument for the good and welfare of Palestine. Increasingly the organization was under sharp attack from the leadership of the Zionist Organization of America which, by this time, had made unmistakably evident that it would be satisfied with nothing short of absorption of Hadassah and its full cessation as an autonomous body. Therefore it was felt necessary that I continue to guide the struggle.

In the summer of 1927, in Atlantic City, I was reelected national president of Hadassah. In my acceptance speech I passed on this thought of Walt Whitman: "It is provided in the essence of things, that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary. . . ."

13

"NOW FAITH IS THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"—never was it more necessary to bear this in mind, now when the Haddassah convention was past, and the convention of the Zionist Organization coming on. The problem of a basic difference of concept was to emerge, full blown; much would turn on it, of future good or ill for both groups.

In short the two opposing concepts were these. The Zionist Organization of America, as the parent body, conceived as irrefutable its complete and unobstructed control of a constituent part such as Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization, thereby, for all practical purposes, relegating Hadassah to the position of compliant appendage.

Hadassah's image of itself, on the other hand, was service on two planes: to support the Zionist Organization of America by joining with it to strengthen its effectiveness throughout the United States and to continue the autonomy under which it had pioneered and successfully developed its spe-

cific services to the population of Palestine in preventive health and in medical and nursing work. For the conduct of these services in Palestine, the women of Hadassah accepted full responsibility and themselves raised, and administered, the funds for their maintenance.

Its survival as an effective organization threatened, and the serious need to meet the increase in sickness resulting from the hunger and unemployment existing at the time in Palestine, Hadassah was forced to retain the autonomy which had resulted in its efficient implementation of its specific project and at the same time fulfil its obligations as a constituent part of the Zionist Organization by exerting the suffrage—long overdue—to which its large membership in good standing entitled it. Unaccustomed to take part in the rough and tumble of political struggle—now necessary if Hadassah was to survive as an organization and continue its essential work—it was soon clear that women had much to learn from men, including the tactics and tricks of political strategy and showmanship.

The stakes were high. On the one hand there was the struggle to gain control over this large and effectively organized body of women, diverting them for general rather than for their special purposes of fund raising. On the other hand there was the struggle by Hadassah to retain that liberty of action legally authorized by the World Zionist Organization, guaranteeing it the right and duty of raising and administering funds to cover its health work in Palestine as an integral part of the general fund-raising effort of the *Keren Hayesod.* As a part of this foundation fund (known in the United States as the Palestine Appeal), and due to the specific nature of its appeal to women, and the excellence of its methods of organizing, Hadassah had risen to an enviable state of proficiency and effectiveness. If shortsighted it was perhaps very human that, in order to seize control of this valuable group—whether for lack of aware-

ness of consequences, or simply blind desire for absolute authority—the Zionist Organization seemingly stood ready for action which, all too certainly, would have the effect of killing the goose that laid the golden egg.

In view of the situation any self-satisfaction over the past year's successes was readily expendable. There was every indication that we were at the bitter beginning of what, at the best, was bound to be a turbulent year. My personal administration and prestige were at stake, though only in the secondary sense. What constituted the real challenge was to steer a way through the storm so that the fundamental dream for the good of Palestine could move forward, growing in strength.

Hadassah did not stand isolated or alone in the controversy. Throughout the country, in spontaneous rebellion against "machine control" within the Zionist Organization, there were men in outspoken sympathy with Hadassah's determination, both to avoid being swallowed up, and to advance its well-rooted creation of a "good-government" movement, to supersede the inequities of the power and patronage system of a group concerned only with self-perpetuation. In good conscience it must be said that this group consisted of men of sincere purpose and great ability according to their lights; nevertheless, they were intent on limiting active work in the movement to those willing to bow to their control.

There were many exceptional "pockets" which complicated the over-all situation. For example, the Brandeis-Mack group was among the dissidents. Some of them, however, were again functioning to some degree within the Zionist Organization. Unfortunately they had neglected to agree either on a clear-cut program for remedying evils or on a representative active leadership. The result was that, though actually wishing to support Hadassah, their lack of definition and leadership seemingly put Hadassah in little

more than the position of spearhead for a reopening of issues which were dead, and a rekindling, in "cold" form, of a war that had been lost in 1921 when it was "hot."

Events of the Zionist Organization convention would have been *opéra bouffe*—if they had not been so freighted with consequences for the future. Hadassah's elected delegates found themselves, by pseudo-parliamentarian sleight-of-hand, unable to present their views. Important decisions, relating to the good of both organizations, had been taken at the Hadassah convention. But, though a vice-president of the Zionist Organization as well as national president of Hadassah, I did not receive the courtesy of the floor to speak on the decisions, though they represented the large majority of the Hadassah convention.

In the end our constituent efforts were made to appear ridiculous, as not being directed at solving issues of grave importance but rather at the launching of an attack—by implication feline—against one individual, a veteran orator of the Zionist movement, one adept at using the humor and pathos—not to say bathos—of a Charlie Chaplin in his oratorical appeal.

The device by which we were held up to ridicule was, in its cunning and cleverness, worthy of the elaborate exaggerations of a dramatized ancient Jewish folk tale. Rising to a point of personal privilege at the opening of the deliberations on the crucial question of autonomy, in defense of his status and with a voice choking with emotion, he said in a hoarse whisper, clutching his throat, "I gave my voice in the service of Palestine!" Pausing, he gestured that he was unable to go on. The storm of applause and acclamation indicated that there was no need.

Now more than ever needing a brief holiday to recuperate after the strenuous demands of the past year and the unnerving events of the two conventions, I could not refuse

the urging of Henrietta Szold who, crushed by the malice of the attacks on Hadassah and the false position in which self-seekers had placed it, had asked that I waive my vacation in the interest of keeping me in touch with everything. I set therefore about planning the second year of my administration.

In August I boarded the S.S. "Berengaria," en route to the World Zionist Congress in Basel, my first as a delegate.

It is pleasant to imagine that the gods took pity on my difficulties with plaguing problems of interorganizational political strife, for a fellow passenger was one wise in the ways of organization even though young in years: this was Leo Wollman.

For his brilliant record at Columbia University, he had been picked by Sidney Hillman, the dynamic founder and head of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, to be head of the union's research department. Widely recognized as one of the most successful unions in the nation, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers was unique in the relationship it had reached, between employers and employees, under the slogan "What is good for the worker is good for the industry," and vice versa. It was because of Leo Wollman's achievements in the labor field that he had been chosen to go to Palestine now, as a member of the nonpartisan commission which was to look into causes and the possible cure for unemployment and the depression holding that country in such a grip.

There were sense and sanity besides a leaven of humor in his approach to the processes of democracy whereby widely differing opinions could be welded into workable form, through hammering out differences to the point where a majority could grasp and accept a program of common action. To one who had gone through the wringer of this process and was still feeling badly battered, it was good to share experiences with one to whom such happenings were

neither unusual nor fatal. Though he reminded me of what I already knew—namely that women had much to learn temperamentally in dealing with the give-and-take of negotiation and in having the flexibility to compromise at times—admittedly he had no Solomon's store of wisdom to impart for psychological use when and as the women were the stronger and demonstrably more efficient than the men. On this point, he recognized sagely, one must always face the possibility that—as in marriage—situations well might lead to divorce before they had time to lead to harmony!

In a short stopover in Paris I indulged in a king-sized version of the hoary cliché that a woman can always come alive, in moments of insupportable strain or depression, by buying a new hat. I flew from couturier to couturier, trying on and ordering all manner of dresses, coats, and other regalia, to be fitted and finished, and picked up on my way home.

The Congress opened up for me many new and varied facets of insight and experience. It seemed to me there were several analogies between its proceedings and those in the current struggle in the States between the Zionist Organization and Hadassah on the question of autonomy.

One felt in Congress deliberations the atmosphere of proceedings of a true government, although it was in reality a body forced to function in an illusory realm of hope and dreams rather than of established fact. Differences between Congress groups seemed to assume several patterns. Some seemed confined in nature to the ideological while others seemed to be more contests of class interest than of "machine" fighting for the sake of gathering power and concentrating control for the future.

I sensed that the Congress was functioning primarily as a training ground for administrators-to-be of a country-to-be. And yet, since the autonomous power to tax and to enforce decisions was missing, every action and decision

taken was delimited, hedged around, subject to dependence on the "grace and favor" of another country—Great Britain—for permission to possess and develop Palestine as its own. All this seemed to produce the indecisive, frustrating atmosphere of people not permitted due share in the management of countries in which they lived, which could find release only through an abridged political expression such as they could enunciate as constituents of a nonexistent government of a nonexistent country—a country which was nevertheless, by all moral right, felt to be theirs.

It did occur to me, however, that my impressions might be only reflections of the psychic distance and differences that separated those born into the ghetto experiences of eastern Europe, and those born into the freedom of the West. Indeed Dr. Weizmann himself had alluded to such a type of cleavage, during the 1921 crisis which produced a split between Mr. Brandeis and himself; paraphrasing Mr. Kipling's "East is east, and West is west," he had stated emphatically, "There can be no bridge between Pinsk and Washington." It had not been that Mr. Brandeis undervalued the need and importance of political action. In no small measure he himself had influenced Woodrow Wilson's vigorous support of the Balfour Declaration and, indeed, had had a hand in the shaping of its final wording. However, this political step taken, in his strong belief that now the emphasis must be on the practical task of building a Palestine economy, he then dissociated himself from the "game" of politics and any prolongation of the "propaganda" period.

The Congress shed new light for me on the interplay of opposing forces, of differing background and motivations.

In the Jew of eastern Europe there was an instinctive faith in Jewish destiny which, by the very fact of belief in its reality, had the effect of making the unreal real. In much the same sense that the Hebrew University had been

"opened" when—for all its actual substance—it was still only a dream and a hope, the government of a future state was being made to function before in actuality, it had come into being. The *Emek*—the Valley of Jezreel—offered a case in point. In point of fact it had been "purchased" without money in the bank to pay for it. Incomprehensible to a Jew of German origin—certainly to one with the towering concept of financial integrity innate in a Brandeis—he had simply been incapable of that mystical superfaith in the Jewish people which enabled Weizmann, Ussishkin, and others of the European leadership to know, simply, that when the payments came due, they would be met. With them, this faith was more than cash in the bank. Under no circumstances could it fail.

As to the man who was the hope of the Zionist movement, in the opinion of the large majority of the Congress delegates the one who could best change the essence of the idea and dream of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine into a reality, there could be no doubt that it was Chaim Weizmann. There could be, were, and doubtless would continue to be differences of opinion as to ways and means of achieving the ideals and dream, but it was he who exemplified the qualities which could unify hopes and longing aspirations, and politically give them a concrete form.

This was the first opportunity I had to see Dr. Weizmann in his natural setting, one largely of his own creation. Previously the magnitude of his personality had been obscured behind the shadows of controversy; now it emerged as he addressed the Congress in low, almost velvety tones, speaking to the hearts as much as to the minds of the men and women seated spellbound before him. As one man, the delegates seemed to respond to his every thought and emphasis. Even his opponents among them yielded at times—if only for the moment—to the magnetism in his voice for, beneath

the logic of his words, sounded constantly the throb of his love for his people, his oneness with their destiny.

From the shadows of past controversies, too, emerged the unique personality of Shmariyahu Levin. In himself he embodied the folklore of the ghetto, and in a way he was more truly than Dr. Weizmann one of his people. Inevitably, as a statesman, a great scientist in the field of chemistry, Dr. Weizmann was removed from intimate contact with them, more remote.

Shmariyahu Levin was adored by those who, psychologically, were his brother Jews, to whose life he gave significance when he wrote and spoke. In speeches he would use the homely, recognizable similes of their daily lives, handed down through the centuries of learning. By anecdotes and witticisms reflecting their own experiences he drove home his message with powerful effect. It left one like myself, who had not shared the rich folkways of her people, and who knew their language only enough to catch bare meanings without being able to enter into the laughter and fun, envious of the ghetto background which so appreciably enriched the personalities and lives of those who had lived it.

In looks Dr. Weizmann and Shmariyahu Levin were much the same type. These were giants among men, unique personalities to fill with pride and confidence those who chose them as their leaders, to whom they gave in return their great gifts and very lives with singleness of purpose.

There were many others, of great and unusual stature: for example, Nahum Sokoloff, the seasoned plenipotentiary, sage, of deep judgment; and Dr. Max Nordau who, describing the deteriorating situation of the Jews in Poland, with the threatened danger to their status in other countries of residence, imparted to the Congress proceedings, albeit with deliberative mien and measured tones, a sense of urgency—of an imminent day of doom.

I felt on less unfamiliar ground after a reunion with Menachem Ussishkin for I had come to rely on his insight as the head of the Jewish National Fund. He was the embodied symbol of the pressing need to place ground under the feet of the returning Jew. He served as a bridge between me and the "foreign" European personalities whom I was meeting for the first time. Though welcomed, as a new figure attending the Congress I was received as one to some extent "exotic." I had the handicap too of my "Western" origin.

Speaking in an idiom completely familiar to me was Dr. Arthur Ruppin. Born in Germany, he had given up a successful career as lawyer and business man and, since 1917, had served on the Zionist Executive Board in Palestine, for many years as its head. His task was not to talk on Zionism or the problems it was to solve, but to translate its theories into practice, in the land where fulfillment of itself was Zionism's reason for being.

In a bold, challenging presentation of facts, he laid bare basic issues facing the Congress in this period of crisis, warning of the conceivable destruction of those values which were the most constructive yet created in the renascent Jewish life of Palestine. He took issue with the attack by the Zionist "middle-class" element on the *halutzim* who, besides being the actual builders of the land, were now bearing the brunt of the depression, the one group to stand firm and undaunted amid the tormenting hardships it had created. Sternly he put the conflict as one of "*baalebatiut* against *halutziut*." In both Hebrew and Yiddish the word *baal-ha-bayit* means master of the house. But it also carries a connotation of a well-to-do, smug, and self-satisfied class, sometimes known as "stuffed shirts." Back in the States I had heard an amusing play on words, deriving from Sinclair Lewis' prototype, Babbitt, and the term baal-ha-bait.

A Jewish wit had characterized a certain type of Jew resembling those satirized by Lewis as "baal-'a-Babbitts."

Dr. Ruppin's point was that the issue presented a new variation of capital versus labor. There was in Palestine an alignment of a unique kind of middle class—largely without capital—pitted against a unique kind of worker—at this time largely without class consciousness. He called the attention of the Congress to the dangers of allowing such an attitude to harden, of allowing a doctrine, an "ism" (*baalebatiut,* or middle-classism) which arrayed the Zionists living outside Palestine against the pioneers living and working inside Palestine. It should be said here that at no time did Dr. Weizmann associate himself with any such class distinction as *baalebatiut,* invariably giving his support to the pioneering element which he looked upon as "the greatest natural resource Palestine possesses!"

It was perhaps not to be wondered at that, with the "crash" in Palestine, the pioneer forces were made the whipping boys. Their "mistakes," it was said, had been the seeds of destruction. This explanation glossed over the fact of evils deriving from the "boom" of 1925, when the runaway greed and optimism of those who saw in Palestine just another land of overnight opportunity and easy money set *baalebatiut* investors off on a wave of speculation, making wholesale commitments which later they could not meet. Dr. Ruppin had sounded a warning at the time. Now, perceiving a new undercurrent, he spelled out the danger of trying to impose the forms of highly industrialized societies on a young new one which, as yet, had no foundation of industries or markets or, for that matter, any form whatever other than that of a raw country trying to chop a pioneer way through the wilderness of its undeveloped being.

Arraigning the attitude of those intent on fixing the blame for "mistakes" on the pioneering element and its supporters, he answered with facts and figures. He reminded them

that, of necessity, experimental methods had to be used to meet conditions which were completely new and unprecedented. He likened the situation to that of the chemist, working in his laboratory who finds, through the trial-and-error tests of experimentation the "directives by which he arrives finally at positive results." By such trial-and-error tests had the directive been found whereby, in six short years, the Valley of Jezreel had been changed from a region "in which the very roads were unsafe for a Jew, and where malaria laid a heavy toll, into one of the safest and healthiest areas in Palestine." Only a pioneering youth, a youth "which refused to be turned back by danger to health and life itself," had made possible this achievement which had won admiration and support from those outside as well as within the ranks of Zionism—of Christian and Jew alike. In no uncertain terms he warned against discouraging or disparaging the enthusiasm which had given rise to this indomitable pioneering spirit, "for it was only through this enthusiasm, this search for new technical and social forms, that we could have reached a period of normal work, with its sober calculations and business management."

Again he gave the development of the Valley of Jezreel as a case in point. Threatened with failure, due to a 40 per cent reduction in the already minimal budget promised by the last Zionist Congress for this, the first large-scale project in land amelioration and colonization to be undertaken by the Zionist movement, on the promise made by Dr. Weizmann himself that the budget would be met, he, Dr. Ruppin, had assumed its direction. When the promised money had not arrived and he was faced not only with a deficit but the serious political implications and collapse of Zionist hopes of absorbing any large numbers of immigrants on these hopefully acquired stretches of land, it was only because the pioneering element refused to allow the undertaking to fail that the Emek could now be pointed to with

pride as the greatest of all Zionist accomplishments to date; a place where, incidentally, middle-class development—co-operative as well as communal—settlements were beginning to thrive.

The point was driven home that *only after* a preliminary period of pioneering could settlement of any kind get underway. Without the *kvutza*—the communal colony—there would have been no centers for training newly arrived settlers who never before had done agricultural work or, for that matter, any manual labor at all. In all Palestine there was only one school—Mikveh Israel—which gave agricultural training, and for a very limited number of students. Without these group farms, it would have been impossible to settle the isolated and dangerous frontier tracts, these serving not only as training centers for the re-education of young, idealistic, pioneering Jews, and as frontier posts, but also in feeding the stream of the reviving Hebrew language; most important of all, serving as mainstays for the young new citizens who already were raising another generation of children.

Continually Dr. Ruppin made the point that Palestine could only be rebuilt through applications of "business" methods. The communal farms were not only productive farms, supporting settlers, but laboratories as well, testing and proving economic and business techniques.

Here, I felt with a surge of reassurance, were words of a man of tried practical experience, of one charged with the heavy responsibility of carrying forward actual work. Here, too, was affirmation of all I had come to believe in. Palestine was not to become merely a physical refuge for the homeless and persecuted; it was to be the dwelling place of a new kind of Jew, unafraid of life, courageous in the face of its problems, imaginatively creative in exploring ways to solutions for obstacles along the way. A modern manifestation of an ancient moral fiber, the *halutz,* retracing the ways of

his prophetic ancestors, was translating their essence into a developing way of life.

My main function as a delegate to the Congress was to find a synthesis of the ideal and the real, in particular a way to draw on the substantial budget of Hadassah to turn aside a threat of bankruptcy hovering over the other medical service of Palestine, *Kupat Holim,* the Workers' Sick Benefit Fund. Especially at a time of hunger and unemployment in Palestine, with all their related ills, it was unthinkable that the doors of *Kupat Holim* could close for lack of funds, even if for various reasons, real or artificial, its administrators had been uncooperative toward Hadassah, and on occasion had even strewn nagging difficulties in the path of its new, brilliantly gifted young American director, Dr. E. Michael Bluestone.

As it happened, my husband had served on the commission sent by Hadassah to smooth out troubles of the Director, calm his feelings, and prevail on him to remain at his post. Miss Szold herself had participated in the persuasion, remarking ruefully that "at the cost of selling my Zionist soul," as a minority of one, she had yielded in the interest of harmonious action to the majority opinion which resulted in endowing the Director with extraordinary powers, and removed the Hadassah budget from more than the token approval of the Congress.

In view of the emergency facing *Kupat Holim* I suggested that Hadassah should cede ten thousand pounds sterling (fifty thousand dollars) of its budget to rescue *Kupat Holim* from its difficulties, well knowing that my proposal would face opposition both from the Hadassah National Board in the States, and from Dr. Bluestone in Palestine. However, I had the moral and practical support of Henrietta Szold. Because she believed the idea was just and had merit in itself, she volunteered to countersign with me a cable to the

National Board—on condition that, after completing the work of the Health Commission of the Congress, of which I had been made chairman, I would leave immediately for Palestine, to see that everything was carried out properly. Otherwise, she felt, the work of the Hadassah Commission in Palestine would have been to no end, and undoubtedly Dr. Bluestone would leave, feeling—not without some justification—that agreements made with him had not been honored.

In the way that one situation will sometimes affect another, the Health Commission—which it had been predicted would be the eye of the Congress hurricane—became a pleasant and peaceful center of good will.

A more difficult task lay ahead.

14

I LEFT FOR PALESTINE.

Even in memory, the flight over the desert from Cairo to Gaza brings back a sensation of joy, a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

To think of traversing in two hours and forty minutes the desert it took Moses forty years to cover! To look down on these sandy wastes and see a phantasm of a people in endless numbers, moving along, loaded down with a remembered slavery yet carrying within the better burden of a destiny to which an inspired leader ever rallied them. . . . To look up at the sky, seeing white shapes of enormous clouds such as must have appeared, to the eyes of those others, as fleets of ships sailing before free winds. . . . To feel this ship of the air make contact with ships of the atmosphere, sail with them briefly and then part, to sight on a different course brilliant reaches of empty blue sky and, underneath, an azure Mediterranean. . . . I felt intoxicated with wonder and excitement.

Newsmen, clamoring to ask questions at the foot of the deplaning ladder, told me that I was the first woman to enter Palestine by airplane. In its way such an arrival was perhaps a good omen. Dr. Bluestone was there to meet me. If there were seeds of antagonism they blew away in the dust eddies of the dramatic landing; his exhilaration seemed scarcely less than my own.

The moon was up for the drive from Gaza to Jerusalem. Happily for the outcome of my errand I was not to know until a very long time afterward the depth of the bitterness with which he had received news of our action at the Congress. Circumstances do not always arrange themselves so gently in delicate situations; on the drive to Jerusalem an opening was established for a friendship that would remain unbrokenly deep and warm. This proves many things about the quality of the man, for we became friends in his full knowledge that I had been personally responsible for the ceding of Hadassah funds, to which he was sharply opposed.

Many warring factors came together in his situation. Trained under the exacting tutelage of a great medical director in New York, at Mount Sinai Hospital, he was unprepared both by nature and experience when he was forced to face unusual conditions in Palestine, including being invested with what he assumed were practically dictatorial powers.

He had a fine Jewish background, he was at home in the Hebrew language; yet these were not enough to prepare him against the climate created, even before his arrival, for example by fast-spreading word that the salary he would receive was unprecedently large even though, according to standards in the United States for such a responsible position, the salary was looked on as no more than adequate. Nor was he prepared for finding, on his arrival, that X-ray technicians in the hospital he had come to direct were out on strike, and he could therefore not make a beginning

even on an examination promised a fellow ship's passenger who had been taken seriously ill on the crossing.

Oddly enough with a man seemingly fated to be a storm center, Michael Bluestone was endowed with an unusually keen sense of humor—the trouble was he did not possess an equal knack for expressing it in the situation surrounding him. Consequently his dealings as Director—whether with his highly individualistic staff doctors, or with *Kupat Holim* —were markedly devoid of that flexibility or relieving diplomatic finesse which might have worked to allay the suspicions of those who took for granted that he was a rival and conspirator, or to smooth out the blizzard of antagonisms. Unbending in the face of attack, he grew embittered, which, in turn, affected the whole situation.

He and I set off on a ten-day tour of Hadassah institutions and the country. In no time I learned to regret that the side of himself shown to me was shown to the country hardly at all. There were small, lightning glimpses of what he and those around him were missing by this. For example, in Safed the hospital staff gave a reception for me. Impulsively, I think, the Director asked one of the nurses to dance with him. The effect on everyone was almost pathetic to watch. Here, suddenly, was—not the stiff, forbidding Director they looked on with fear and trembling, but—a human being, like themselves capable of gaiety and joy. Later he and I walked together through the narrow, moon-drenched streets of this beautiful hill town of Safed where the Cabbala was written, during the Middle Ages, when despair led its authors into the paths of mysticism. Here rabbis pored over the Mishna and the Talmud.

Here, suddenly, the Director began singing snatches of Jewish songs, in a beautiful tenor voice. As I studied him in the shimmering moonlight I thought that here is no man for people to fear, but rather a man dedicated to great things, who only seems forbidding because dedication fills his

being. It was Palestine's loss that he was not able to give it the great gifts he possessed.

This ten-day trip gave me my first broad-gauge view of Hadassah's work: its hospitals and clinics; its preventive and medical educational work; above all, its system of child care, from the prenatal stage through the school years; then, as the cycle started again, as young mothers-to-be, going on to postnatal care for themselves and their babies. I came close, too, to the devoted staff of physicians, nurses, and practical aides. It was a source of deep satisfaction too that they seemed to sense in me a person who belonged spiritually in Palestine.

I viewed everything not only for purposes of immediate findings pertaining to the problem at hand, but for the sake of what it would give me to take back to the States, to those wanting to hear and to understand. Two Hadassah contributions were outstanding from several points of view. One —to me it seemed the most important—was the scientific feeding and care of infants and children which had been introduced into the country. The second encompassed the first, and consisted of the setting of standards of health work. In effect it made the Hadassah Medical Organization a pilot project for conveying and applying the most modern scientific methods used in the States to an underdeveloped country, growing under conditions of a heterogeneous indigenous and immigrant population. I was filled with admiration of the organized force of women in the States for the share they were assuming, in raising a generation of children in Palestine who—born into a subtropical, in some places even a tropical, climate, such as the Jordan Valley—were, in defiance of all statistical precedents, growing into vigor as a generation which would become defenders of their country and creators of a state.

It was not that Hadassah went into every nursery or home in the *kvutza* to train individually those whose task it was to

care for the children. The scientific methods of child care had become a blessed contagion, spreading from the center of the work, in Jerusalem, through the length and breadth of the land. So completely had the contagion got into the bloodstream of the people that a chance question by a tourist, as to the incidence of death amongst the babies in such a colony as Degania, more than 600 feet below sea level, could bring the immediate indignant response, "Our babies don't die!"

The more I observed, the more convinced I became that it was not only unrealistic but destructive to regard the work of Hadassah and of the *Kupat Holim* as mutually incompatible. For Hadassah supplemented, but did not compete with the health service which *Kupat Holim* had established as one phase of the *Histadrut,* and which was of such incalculable value to the working population of Palestine. Hadassah merely was in position to bring into the country standards to be used as a pattern, otherwise out of reach of a community poor in money, materials, and experts. It brought to an underdeveloped civilization the benefits of the scientific methods of an advanced civilization. Alas, what it could not bring—because there was as yet no discovery of scientific method—was the pattern by which men could establish good human relations with one another, and live together in peace. That task was still ahead, personified in the problem of the two medical systems, *Kupat Holim* and Hadassah, to find a viable way of living and functioning together without friction.

The pioneers in Palestine were pointing the way. In the communal settlements this dream was being realized. Even in the hunger and intense deprivation which I found in 1927, human beings were showing that they could live together in a spirit of brotherhood. It is supremely reckless to prophecy failure for a pioneering element in which, on a budget of five cents a day for example—all that could be

afforded in this period of deep economic depression—boys and girls, young men and young women, doing intensely hard physical work, simply made up the deficiency and sustained themselves when they were hungry—by singing and dancing. Their faith was a compound of many elements, certainly not the least among them the knowledge that, indeed, man does not live by bread alone.

Necessarily during that ten days there were many serious consultations. In retrospect it is never possible to say quite when and how the mooring lines of hostility and contention began to slacken, when perspective changed, when insoluble problems seemed to grow less so and the prospect that Dr. Bluestone would give up his post disappeared.

In those ten days of my second visit to Palestine, my own faith increased manyfold.

I was to need it.

15

IN THE PATTERN OF OUR FAMILY LIFE, OUR weekends brought the world to the children. Guests, dropping in from all parts of the globe, would share experiences for which they were happy to have so eager and receptive an audience. From Friday night until Monday morning the whole family joined to revel in our home and renew ourselves. From Monday morning to Friday night I attended to my work, and my husband to his. We insured ourselves to a common-sense degree against the disruptions that can arise out of two executive lives by keeping a small second home on Washington Square South in the city. There was a perfect understanding that any detouring of my life from its essential attachment to the everyday details of home and family, through my incessantly exacting work, was justified only to the extent that I was serving the purpose of usefulness to the wider family of our people.

By designing our family life along these lines we had the concrete opportunity to test the psychological theory that it

is not necessarily a service to children to dog their every footstep, hovering over them with incessant guidance, and thereby depriving them of inestimable advantages in developing themselves, through making their own mistakes as well as hewing out their own achievements. However, never for an instant did any of us lose sight of the fact that we had, in Granny, a veritable host. Growing older, she had lost none of her generalship. She kept things going at Glen Cove when I, of necessity, was forced to be absent. Measles, mumps, the skein of imponderables in the lives of growing children, held not the slightest terrors for her. There was a streak of showmanship in her, which at times tempted her to act overanxiously, at crisis pitch, but she knew and we all knew that—even before the chips were down—she was equal to anything and everything that could happen; above all the children's interests and welfare were her paramount concern.

In pursuit of my work for Hadassah I became acquainted with the rising phenomenon, nowadays labeled V.I.P., then called "distinguished visitor." It fell into a pattern. Arriving at my destination where I was scheduled to speak, the fortifying first cup of coffee was often absorbed in the grayness of the railroad-station restaurant, while representatives of the host organization ran through the schedule. The main event usually consisted of a speech and a reception. Then there were the "extras." So-and-so, a *very* big man in the business community, had been recalcitrant up to now about contributing to Palestine. But if I would consent to call on him I would undoubtedly "get" him and, so doing, also "get" his rich following. Would I be willing to try? Being personally a large giver I had no reluctance whatever to ask others to give. Besides, my trips were for general fund-raising purposes as well as for Hadassah.

Removed from the railroad station to the hotel, my day would commence, customarily with a "quiet little intimate

breakfast" with the Hadassah "inner" committee, affording them the chance to meet me personally and enlist my aid with especially difficult chapter problems. As to the nature of the problems, the majority of communities visited presented common features: sharp differences and prejudices existing between Reform and Conservative congregations toward Zionism (the Conservatives being the backbone of Zionism in the United States, and following a more progressive form of orthodox traditionalism); the recalcitrance of the orthodox group; the anti-Zionism among some "die-hard" Reform rabbis; and—most perplexing of all because it was not amenable to reason—the imaginary but bristling line drawn by the Jews of German origin against Jews from the eastern European countries.

After breakfast the press interview, en masse, and individually. Was it true that I had ridden throughout Palestine on horseback? Was it true that I had been entertained by Arab sheikhs? Would I give them the "low-down"? What were sheikhs *really* like? Was it true that I had made a gift of all my jewelry to Hadassah? Would I describe the pieces, name their worth?

I have read somewhere that only about 10 per cent of the time do performers with the circus know what city they're in. I can well believe it. After a while one falls into a groove —at least I did—accepting an itinerary, doing what one is told to do at the time it is to be done.

After a generous twenty minutes of late-morning time allotted to a hot bath and change of clothes, came the lunch meeting, to which had been bidden the male "big givers" to the Palestine Appeal. The size of the meetings was limited, to give those present the opportunity to ask questions. "What were the prospects of Palestine's development and future under a not-too-friendly mandate government, and considering the hard fact of a country without known

natural resources?" "What of the 'depression' now plaguing the country—could Palestine pull out of it? If so, how?"

It gave me a feeling of deep exultation to be able to report, as the close of 1927 was drawing on, the beginning of an upswing from the "depression" and to cite the new and promising factor of the development of the orange crop. Above all to sketch in illustrations of the courage, determination, and living faith of Palestine's greatest natural resource, as Dr. Weizmann called it, Palestine's pioneering manpower.

Then there were the Rotary Club lunches, with their valuable opportunity to reach audiences of non-Jews as well as non-Jewish Jews. And 1927 was the year in which the Council of Jewish Women, whose membership was predominantly non-Zionist and Reform, invited me for a luncheon, tea, or reception—take my pick. For this overture—call it an olive branch—I was indebted to a misadventure some time earlier.

When I had assumed the presidency of Hadassah I had requested a place on the program of the Council's Triennial Convention—at a time when as yet the Council had no tie of work with Palestine—to offer a short summary of Hadassah's work.

The request was refused. I was invited, however, to be among those presidents of national organizations who would bring greetings. Four minutes was the time allotted. Four minutes! What could I pack into four minutes to make them truly count?

When the evening's program opened I was assigned to speak first, before the Council's president. In three minutes I sketched the Council's fine and necessary work in which Council women awaited arriving immigrants at American shores, with welcome and offers of care and hospitable help.

In the last minute of my four I made a plea to the women of the Council to extend the horizons of their own

thinking and service, and include in their embrace the homeless on the other side of the world, joining with Hadassah, standing on the shore to welcome those seeking a home in Palestine, thereby extending the same healing and humanitarian understanding the Council of Jewish Women was giving to newcomers in the United States.

Never again was I to receive a rebuff from the Council; instead there were invitations for the President of Hadassah to speak to Council chapters throughout the country.

My time was never too filled to make room for meeting with local youth groups. I had visited the *kibbutzim* and must tell exactly what they were like! I must do the same in pulpit talks in synagogues and churches; I must talk to the children in their Sabbath Schools. And to their elders in the Sabbath *Oneg Shabbat,* or cultural gathering. I had not learned to say "no."

It always ended on the same note. The local committeewomen would accompany me to the station. "It is not humanly possible for you to go on at this pace!" they would cry; "you must learn to spare yourself!"

At the next day's stop the only new thing would be the faces; the greetings, the schedule, the breakfast, lunch, and dinner menus and audiences would be the same; also the warm, wonderful solicitude for my mission and strength to carry it forward.

There was a fire at which I could always warm and rest my body and replenish my nervous energy. The fire was the matchless chronicle of a people's and a country's rebirth. I could pass on its glow to those who knew nothing of the story or, having heard it, wanted to hear it again.

For every occasion on which I encountered hard resistance to my mission, I encountered more than one instance where —even though not in full accord with me—people were willing to give me a fair hearing. I came to understand that resistance could have more than one cause. For example,

there was real pioneering communications work to be done in San Francisco so far as help for Palestine was concerned, and for good reason. Proportionately there were few Jews in San Francisco; mainly they were families whose forebears had been there from the early days of the city's development, in which they had had a part. To these families, therefore, Palestine seemed very remote, "foreign" to the degree that they found it difficult to make any real contact. In a somewhat connected way they tended to remain apart from the more recently arrived Jews in the community who were interesting themselves actively in Palestine and its future. With the latter, wealthy, old-type settlers, my own German-Jewish and assimilated background were a sort of bridge; it helped that I was a third-generation American, and also that I had studied at the Jewish Institute of Religion, and "almost" a rabbi.

Something of such nuances lay back of the fact that—a case of the impossible being made possible—I was invited to speak at the Saturday morning service from the pulpit of Temple Emanuel. From the pulpit in this stronghold of the very rich, very cultured and assimilated, very anti-Zionist fifth-generation Jews of San Francisco, I was to have the opportunity to present the case for Palestine to those who, under any other circumstances, would not have come to listen.

For this unique chance I had Rabbi Louis I. Neuman to thank. Nothwithstanding his known personal Zionism this colleague and disciple of Stephen Wise had been invited to lead this congregation. He did not force his opinions on his congregation; he simply waited, hoping for the best. While waiting, he saw no good reason not to allow possible solvents to do a little work.

The Temple itself, being extremely beautiful, seemed to exert a conducive effect. Only recently completed, in the California mission style with a patio blazing with flowers,

the interior had the feeling of a church, very solemn and quiet, deriving a sense also of the cathedral, from its height. It seemed to me that the combination of visual details—the speaker wearing a long black robe, the walk in procession to the altar—caused the occasion to have more of the atmosphere of a church service than a ceremonial in a synagogue—or "temple," as the Reform Jews called their houses of worship. It was all impressive and most beautiful, especially Cantor Robert Rinder's sensitively chosen musical program which, it seemed to me, helped to release the associations of thought and emotion necessary to reach a congregation inclined to be separated from tradition.

If San Francisco made a special niche for itself in my mind, Los Angeles did so for reasons which were quite different. Here there was a large and prosperous Jewish community needing no prodding to take an active interest in Palestine affairs to which munificent support was already being given. But, as in most places, there were those who hung back, indifferent to the meanings and needs of Palestine. When Rabbi Edgar Magnin—laughingly dubbing himself "an Irma Lindheim Zionist!"—invited me to speak to his congregation of Reform Jews, it was a gain for the cause.

When I had time to sort out the currents and crosscurrents of response in California to my mission, I sensed that, if for some reason the people of California were to be driven into exile from their state, the Californians, as the Jews had done during the centuries of their exile, would keep alive in their children and their children's children the determination to effect a "return from exile," no matter how long it might take.

Experience was to teach me that, with successes, a certain proportion of setbacks tends to help one to preserve balance.

In Denver a transient episode threw discomfiting light on the lengths to which blind prejudice can go when it be-

comes impossible to admire in the present what was worshiped in the past.

A warm welcome awaited me, in which even Reform Temple members joined. Not so their rabbi. A die-hard anti-Zionist, he had bluntly refused the request of the president of his congregation and its board of directors to invite me to occupy the pulpit on the Friday night of my stay. The surprising upshot was that the congregation, to a man, deserted its regular service, coming instead to the Conservative synagogue where I spoke. It was deeply embarrassing, yet enlightening, and a constructive lesson could be learned from it.

In the last of such trips I was to undertake for Hadassah I was to cover twenty-five cities, with four or five major talks in each and the usual galaxy of "extras." My last engagement was in Nashville. Then home!

Called from a lunch at which, for the first time, an audience of rich, assimilated Jews was to listen to a Zionist speaker, I learned on the long-distance telephone from Norvin, Jr., that my husband was dead. Our son had come down from college for the pleasure of spending an evening with his father. But I? I was two days and two nights away!

In helpless pity I had seen him reel under injustice, seen him rally and transcend his own concerns through service to others, seen him pick up a life's pieces and put them together so that sometimes it was hard to tell exactly where the pattern had been smashed. But all the while the great heart was breaking. And now he was dead of it.

Two days after his forty-seventh birthday, deep tributes were paid to a man as gallant in adversity as he had been generous in putting his life and great gifts at the service of all that promised for the good of men.

To the large auditorium of the Stephen Wise Synagogue house came men and women in hundreds to pay tribute to

him. And at the last, at the cemetery, when his firstborn recited in Hebrew the *Kaddish* he was voicing not only the Jewish prayer for the dead, those traditional words of the Jewish faith ". . . strong in the face of death . . .," but our pride and faith in a father and husband.

Before me, like a message ticking along in electric lights, passed events of the terrible ordeal to which Norvin Lindheim had been subjected. The charge brought against him . . . the trial . . . the verdict, so disorienting to his life, yet so gallantly transcended. . . .

Though needing no vindication, in his human way he longed for the image of vindication.

It came, ironically a few weeks after his death. In the opinion, written by Benjamin Cardozo, then Chief Justice of the New York State Court of Appeals, there were stinging words having to do with justice.

"The honor of the profession does not demand the sacrifice of the innocent. . . . The looms of the law have in this case woven a fabric of injustice. . . . "

The words led the Appellate Division to grant the reinstatement of Norvin Lindheim at the bar. It came too late to undo the injustice. For the first time, my strength failed me.

16

I WAS NOT THE FIRST WOMAN AND WOULD not be the last to be left with family decisions which must now be faced alone, complicated moreover by large outside responsibilities which, having been undertaken, could not, even in pressing personal circumstances, be shifted easily to other shoulders, or simply dropped.

Certainly now the children's interests and care must have preference. Attacks on Hadassah were sharp and recurrent, growing out of feeling in some quarters that there was too much of a lack of submissiveness to the ways of the Zionist Organization. In my efforts to establish a proper counterpoint between my private and public responsibilities, I ran afoul of doctors' advice, though I was able to stave it off for a while.

A convention of the Zionist Organization was drawing on, and it was well known that many issues which had become bitterly controversial would be brought to a head. The advice of the doctors became what was in reality an ultimatum.

Only by putting distance between myself and the convention which I would not be fit physically to attend anyway, and thus putting myself beyond the reach of the inevitable appeals, might I save my health, if indeed not my very life. I was given no choice. I must go abroad at once.

"Run away at the height of battle?" I asked wearily; "How can you expect such a thing?" The doctors did not have to answer; prostration answered for them.

Norvin, Jr., just having been graduated from Yale, took over, booking passage for us to Europe. On the ship I drafted what would undoubtedly be my last message to Hadassah as president.

Hadassah, not so ready to accept, sent two letters to the pier for me to sign before sailing. One stated that circumstances made it impossible for me to serve another term. The other stated that I would agree to stand for reelection if no other way could be found. It was understood that this particular letter was only to be used as a last resort.

I signed both—and found myself suddenly tearing the loophole letter in bits. It left my decision not to serve again final and unalterable.

For underlying reasons as well as the immediate one of having five children and a mother-in-law dependent on me, I knew the decision to be a right one. I had a sense that—however my work had tied me to Palestine and its future—I was being freed by circumstances for larger and closer ties with Palestine, even though at present they could only be vaguely sensed.

"The best laid plans. . . ." Notwithstanding my decision, which I had thought ineradicable, I learned by cable, two days after the Hadassah convention, that I had been elected again by acclamation to the presidency. At once moved by evidence of such confidence on the part of the members, and puzzled and deeply concerned at the assumption that somehow I would be equal to what was involved, I cabled,

"Deeply touched. Will do everything possible to make future service possible."

The only thing left to do at the moment was to apply myself to getting well.

It was salutary to feel all responsibilities slip away. Here, tucked away in a valley of the Bavarian Alps, was Schloss Elman, a haven of spiritual as well as physical refreshment, designed by its moving spirit, the philosopher, lecturer, and writer, Dr. Johannes Muller. My professor and friend, Dr. Julian Obermann, had arranged for us to be received. Everything here ran according to plan, with schedules supervised by a kind of schoolmarm, ramrod of back, impervious to frivolity.

The framework of the way of life Dr. Muller had to offer was a subtle fusion of the monastic, the democratic, and the elegant. Meals were in a dining room where Carthusians would not have been uncomfortable; one's own rooms were Biedermeier.

Out of the fact that no guest of Schloss Elman might use a title or honorary prefix before a name—a major adjustment in a Germany where every woman pretentiously tacked even a husband's professional designation before her own name, insisting on being addressed as "*Frau Doktor*" or "*Frau Justitz Minister*"—emerged a community spirit, a democratic interchange within which cliques and snobbery never were able to gain a hold. Even "*Excellenz*" Harnak, a close friend of the former Kaiser, and one who stood as an acknowledged leader of German culture, was addressed as plain "*Herr.*"

There were public lectures, and private consultations for those desiring them; and a harkening back to the folkways and cult of the body evocative of the spirit of an early Germanic culture. Gnomelike, physically almost a dwarf, Dr. Muller was able in school-vacation periods to draw

daughters of the first families of Germany, all too happy to work without pay as maids for the privilege of basking in his spiritual aura; in the evenings, they, dressed in flowery dirndls, he and the guests in *lederhosen* and the gaily embroidered shirts and suspenders of Bavaria, would dance German folk dances.

One can look back and say that, beyond doubt, the long shadow of Nazism was subtly being cast at Schloss Elman. Certainly in the form and spirit of the cult evidencing itself there, there was a harkening back to legendary days of Germanic culture and might and, perhaps, even to its gods.

For me it was sufficient at the moment that brooks flowed through flower-filled meadows, that one could sit by them and, listening to their purling music, feel cleansed of all disharmony.

Yet other music was part of life at Schloss Elman, for the greatest musicians of Europe were drawn here. In return for holidays given them free, they gave marvelous concerts of a lofty beauty comparable to the very Alpine heights surrounding us.

My physicians insisted that I plan to remain abroad for a year. But I had become conditioned to work; even with the responsibility of being both mother and father to my children, and my mother-in-law's one remaining child, how could I live without work, and without purpose?

Into my uncertainty came Professor Hegar. "You should study the cello," he said meditatively. I could hardly grasp a suggestion so seemingly fantastic and wonderful.

There had been an evening of Beethoven sonatas. Afterward we had gone down to the *weinstubl* to discuss the performance given by the Professor—one of the very great cellists of Europe—and his quartet.

His suggestion was fantastic to me, perhaps, because I had never put into words a secret longing to be able to play

the cello. "I seldom feel envy for anyone or anything," I said, "but I truly envy your gift for the cello."

"Then why not study it?" he said placidly. He dismissed the womanish excuse of age, saying "Let me see your hands." Twiddling and flexing my fingers for some minutes he remarked, "If you mean what you say—that the cello really interests you—then I shall test you tomorrow morning. I will test you two times more, then I will say whether it would be worth your while. If so, and if you were to be in Munich, I could guide your studies. I can say this—you have exceptional hands for the cello."

Looking back on it, the way things arranged themselves seems laughably simple. With the first test, Professor Hegar said it was perfectly possible that, if I would give the time, discipline, and application, I would be able to find great satisfaction, and to join in trios and quartets. As soon as my son and I had arranged for a Munich apartment, in the wooded, parklike surroundings of the Isar River, we hurried back to the States, to dispose of the Glen Cove home and its furnishings, and outfit and pack up the four younger children and Granny for a year's stay in Europe.

There were hard moments when it was important to live only on the surface. There was a choice, between selling the house, with all its complex memories, and being buried by it. It represented a huge expense, even if it were to stand unoccupied. It seemed better to give it away than risk being dragged under by it. Later on my bankers were to impute to me some prescience, prompting me to get rid of it in advance of the crash when such property became a drug on the market, and owners floundered under unpaid taxes and upkeep for estates they could not unload.

The day the house was turned over to the auctioneer for the sale of all it contained, I packed the whole family off in my beloved Cadillac—ten years old and like a dear relative to us—and took them out of sight and sound of the house

for a day's outing. There were moments when we looked away from each other and knew we were doing so; but we knew too that when a radical operation is indicated, it must be performed.

All that behind us, a few last-minute things were before us. Before sailing, my children would enjoy a last fling amongst city pleasures, they who were so thoroughly conditioned to country life. As for myself, words—chameleon-like sometimes—had raised an unforeseen and unimagined misunderstanding between Hadassah and me. If possible, I told myself, this must be settled before I went away. This was right in any case; but I have thought many times that it had also to do with the circumstance that—whatever specific course it took, in whatever terms it was expressed—my future was certain to be joined with that of Palestine. Hence what could be more important that no past discords or misunderstandings be left unresolved along the way, to arise some day as a dissonance.

The difficulty posed by a choice of words was this. My cable on being notified that I was reelected—"Will do everything to make future service possible"—had been interpreted as acceptance. In reality the meaning in my own mind had been simply that "I would try to get well enough to be able to serve again." At that point there was simply no telling whether it would be possible. Notwithstanding, I was now in the position of turning my back on a responsibility which I had seemingly accepted.

It was an unhappy episode, never really resolved in the minds of many, I think. But it was a lesson to me that organizational affairs sometimes lack those qualities of human understanding and tolerance we would wish for, the right responsiveness to human needs and responsibilities.

Henrietta Szold had a letter awaiting me in Europe. With her unfailing understanding she wrote, "The fact that you

felt forced to do as you did made it right in my eyes." Only this letter relieved me of the guilt I felt over Hadassah.

The family debarked at Cherbourg. In no time at all there was a question as to whether the children any longer needed a shock absorber. In the car we had brought with us, we meandered through France from Cherbourg to Arles, going on then to Switzerland where Don and Dick had been entered in a progressive school, as perhaps providing an atmosphere better for them just then than Germany. The school was near enough to Munich for them to spend many weekends and all holidays with us, yet supplied them with the recreational values also of winter sports and skiing.

One way and another the trip conditioned each of us, in a pleasant, relaxed way, for taking our separate ways to the next step. For the younger children the combination of fresh experiences and having their mother as traveling companion and live Baedeker helped to break the tensions of the last months; too, it stored exciting impressions for them, and gave them a sense of orientation to new surroundings and circumstances which otherwise might have remained strange and possibly uncomfortable to them for some time. Secret panels and *oubliettes* in great turreted mansions in the chateau country brought alive for them the Age of Chivalry whose romance and hair-raising ways had heretofore been known to them only through their books. And they began to look with a cool eye on food habits back in the States, compared with the wonders which could be chosen from the fabulously long menus to be found in even the simplest French villages.

No city could have offered more peaceful beauty and asylum than Munich. Inconceivable that, from here, any madness could ever emerge. A few scattered signs were there for the perceptive to see and feel—but few I met were con-

cerned about the ominous future that could be discerned—least of all the Jews. People were gay and good humored day and night; singing endlessly, singly or in tandem as they pedaled their bicycles along the tree-shaded *allees,* on their way to work, or to the *ausfluge*—those cherished outings to the beloved mountains surrounding their city. Impossible to see this idyllic city as presenting any aspect, really, other than culture of an extraordinary level, with rollicking folkways and the best music in the world.

Scattered signs? There was a jolt, somehow, when General Ludendorff appeared every Sunday, marching with his war veterans, the *Stahlhelm,* to a frightening theme, "The Day of Revenge." And was it mere coincidence, or accidental, that, for example *Die Dreigroschenoper,* so brilliantly produced, seemed to reveal a demonism at work?

Soon we were settled and I could commence to explore the healing power of studying the cello. Professor Hegar, gratified to observe the creative effort, became a welcome guest and friend of the family. This divinely gifted man had not been immune from tragedy. His peace of mind had been wrecked, his honorable professional record and brilliant career touched by scandal when his wife, leaving their two sons, had gone off with a young music student and—as though that were not enough—an envious colleague at the conservatory where Professor Hegar taught had brought false charges against him which, though never proved, had led to court action. So his brilliant musicianship struggled to maintain itself against hostile circumstances.

Professor Hegar, interested more in good food and wine than in keeping the trim figure expected of a great artist and star performer, was what the Germans called a *feinschmecker,* a gourmet, and it was a treat in the literal sense to be invited as a guest to his home. But the treat extended beyond food. Always the moment came when he would sit

down to play for his guests; giving himself over to his cello, his bow could draw from its strings shadings of melody and depths of meaning which made the mind soar and the spirit take wings.

Introduced into Munich's world of music, I made new acquaintances and many friends, among whom was one who had the effect of bringing my life, which may have appeared to stray somewhat away from the path of Zionism and concern with the advancement of Palestine, very much back to them.

This was Baron von Schwerin. Avid in his desire to be brought up to date on happenings in Palestine, he could not hear enough from me. Contact with Palestine was a tradition in his family. His grandfather had headed the Society of Templars, an organization interested in restoration of the Holy Land, which, in his time, the Kaiser had been interested in taking under Germany's protection! Even though, on a visit, the Kaiser arrogantly had the walls of Jerusalem breached in order that—on horseback, and impressively arrayed—he could enter, like a knight of old, into the Old City, one must still be grateful for the trees which the Society of Templars planted on what had been the bare slopes of Mount Carmel.

In turn, I learned much from the Baron of what was going on in Germany. He was a man not only of large estates and wealth, but of real intelligence, deeply concerned with trends manifesting themselves in his country, especially a deepening anti-Semitism which he felt was being stimulated in an organized way. That his interest was sincere was proved by the fact that he arranged subsequently for three public meetings intended to bring about better relations between Christian and Jew. He also arranged with the Grand Duke of Bavaria to give me an audience, so that he too might learn of the rebuilding going forward in Palestine. Yet the most interesting and important of the meetings

which the Baron arranged for me was the one with his wife.

He had told me that she lived almost the life of a hermit and, in relation to the society in which he moved, it was true, for she never entered it with him. However, she had asked particularly to meet me. Why? I could not imagine.

"I had to meet you," she said at once, "because, more than any other, I envy you." She was slim, of medium height, and very beautiful, with white hair, a face contradictorily young and cameolike, and with dark, tragically sad eyes.

"But why, Baroness?"

Her answer was to tell me her story. Born of the family of Moses Mendelssohn, she was of the fourth generation of Jews baptized into the Christian faith.

She was sick with longing now for contact with the roots from which she had been separated. Wealth, position, family—everything material was hers. But she felt detached from life—lost. She envied me because she had heard that, though long separated from similar roots, I had now identified my life with the life of my people, and was sharing in their rebirth, whereas she was merely wandering, without hope of finding the haven for which she longed.

How little could her ancestor, Moses Mendelssohn, have imagined that, through his breadth of vision and boldness of action, a great-great-granddaughter would find herself in such a plight. When he breached the walls of the ghetto to allow the light and learning of a modern world to penetrate, it had been with no thought of escaping his Jewishness; when he advocated extending Jewish studies to admit the learning and language of the outside world, he had thought only to enrich his people's lives and free them from the restrictions imposed on them by the ghetto.

Learned among Jews, Mendelssohn was called by some the third Moses, in line with the first and greatest, and the second, Moses Maimonides.

Moses Mendelssohn was one of the prophets of the *haskalah,* or movement of enlightenment, beginning to sweep away the rigid mental and physical confinement of Europe's ghetto life and psychology. Little could he have imagined that by translating the Five Books of Moses into German, and counseling the Jews of Germany to "render unto Caesar that which was Caesar's" by becoming true citizens of the land in which they were domiciled, by knowing its culture and learning to speak its language, that thereby he would be opening the way for them to discard the heritage of their own culture, and to discover the lures of assimilation and apostasy.

To the truly great among Germans, as for example Lessing (who used Mendelssohn as the prototype of Nathan, in his play *Nathan the Wise*) Mendelssohn was the very symbol of the enlightened and learned Jew, contributing not only to Jewish but to German culture.

Nevertheless, to many among the following generations, unwittingly his legacy cut them off from their roots. Notwithstanding disciples who became the vanguard in the new field of biblical criticism and a scientific approach to the study of Jewish history, many felt they saw in the direction Mendelssohn took—not a call to the continuity of all that had gone before, but a sanction to divest themselves of their beginnings. Mendelssohn's desire to replace Yiddish with the study of Hebrew was to put Jews again in direct contact with their Bible and their prophetic heritage, as opposed to continued concentration on only the lore and literature which had been developed in the years of their dispersion. But to some this departure from the tradition meant only being excused from the daily routine of their Talmudic studies; as time went on it meant to others a full and complete stop of all Jewishness.

This, then, was the core of the Baroness' great sorrow. The Jew without knowledge and contact with one's own

people and their past had become vulnerable to destruction. Left without sustenance, her roots had withered away.

All I could offer the Baroness of comfort and hope was the experience thus far in finding my own way back. All I could wish for her was that she too might encounter a similar awakening.

It seemed as though I was meant to have this meeting at just that moment.

Spring was coming to Munich. The change of scene, the fresh contacts, the tranquillizing effect of music study, a sense of returning health and well-being combined to turn my mind and heart once more toward Palestine. Munich had done all it could for me. Now it was time for me to feel the earth of Palestine again under my feet, to reestablish contact with my source of strength.

17

PALESTINE WAS REJOICING IN HER SPRINGTIME. And I rejoiced for the third time in the sense of homecoming.

The green fields were gemmed with flowers; scarlet poppies, the burnished gold of wild mustard, anemones, rising tall and straight in stained-glass colors among the grasses; purples, pink-splashed whites and white-pointed pinks; violets, reds, yellows. The air shimmered, the sky was bluer even than I remembered it. A buoyancy in the atmosphere dispelled any remnants of darkness within me; I felt welcomed, warm again with a joy of living. As the snow-white almond blossoms burst out of drab brown budcasings, I felt myself escape the sadness which had encased me. My spirits rose to life's eternal promise of re-creation, in unison with the spring symphony all about me. I felt reborn.

Eagerly I felt pulled in two directions, to be brought up to date on new developments. To Manya Shohat, who was both my link with the progress of the realities of the pioneer-

ing movement, and a one-woman intelligence service concerning political currents; to friends previously made in official circles, who would interpret political changes. Everywhere I saw evidences that great progress had been made since my last visit; everywhere I felt optimism in the air. Yet one could not dismiss from the mind the inflammatory incident of the previous September; one could only be thankful that things had quieted down but remember also the eternal vigilance which is the price of freedom. The facts were known to me. . . .

On the holiest of holy days in the Jewish year—Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement—a day of penitence, fasting, and prayer, when the pious Jews of Jerusalem gathered before the Wailing Wall, that massive remnant of their lost glory, the Temple destroyed in A.D. 70, a temporary screen which, according to established precedent, had been permitted on this day to partition men and women at their devotions, had arbitrarily and with violence been removed by British police during the hours of prayer. It was an act which only an untimely combination of unfortunate elements and personalities could have made conceivable.

At the moment no High Commissioner was on the spot to exercise authority. Sir John Chancellor, who succeeded Lord Plumer, was on holiday. The First Secretary, Harry Luke, was Acting High Commissioner.

At the time the Governor of Jerusalem, having the direct responsibility for keeping order in the city, was Keith Roach. On the ground that the screen was "in contravention of regulations," he had ordered the screen removed; one could only believe on demand of the Arabs.

During Lord Plumer's administration no such thing could have happened. A general of the army, he was accustomed to give orders, not take them; nor was he one to yield to intimidation. In numerous instances he had established his position as nonpartisan and fair; during his administration

he had effected a stabilization and period of quiet in the country which had helped materially in weathering the trying period of financial slump plus large-scale immigration without serious incident.

The incident of the Wailing Wall screen had not in itself been a major one, but unquestionably it had been handled by all concerned with a maximum of tactlessness, stupidity, and viciousness of impulse. Whatever the intentions, they had served to exaggerate a minor incident, weighting it with lingering portents.

Manya Shohat had written me at length concerning this while I was still in Munich. Now, sitting on the seaside terrace of Kaethe Dan's small pension, our backs to the mushrooming city of Tel Aviv, our faces to the limitless, sparkling blue stretches of the Mediterranean, she sketched in details, gained through tireless search and her close contacts with Arab friends in the villages and cities.

That Keith Roach had been given the post of Governor of Jerusalem and thereby the power to make decisions affecting gravely sensitive areas was a straw in the wind, lending credence to a slogan which was widespread among the Arabs: "The government is with us."

He was not a reassuring figure in the circumstances. Big, brawny, red-faced, he ruled with a heavy, discriminatory hand, instinctively arrogating to himself personally all the glory and greatness he deemed as the due of the Empire he served. He was a shocking antithesis to men such as Sir Wyndham Deeds for instance, a man of high ideals and scrupulous conduct, a rare personality incapable of gross methods.

Keith Roach, on the contrary, could find no common meeting ground whatever with Jews. He hated them for their refusal to accept the role of "natives"; hated them for the feeling of inferiority which their intellectual superiority gave him.

He could love the Arabs, on the contrary, for the "honor" they cleverly paid him of making him feel the great, protecting Pasha.

Whatever instinctive aversion one might feel for such a man, surely it was the part of both reason and forethought to learn to know him. It was perhaps not the most diplomatic opening to an acquaintance that, at a tea at his house to which I was invited, one of his associates shouted across the room at him, on the strength of a remark I had made, "I say, Keith, Mrs. Lindheim actually likes Palestine! She even wants to live here!"

To British officials, inured to looking on assignment to Palestine as a dreadful chore—a "bloody disagreeable one at that!"—such an attitude could only be taken cynically as proof that all the criticisms of the Jews were well founded. The criticisms, many and varied as they were, all too often came rolled up neatly in the small package, "But Jews have such bad manners!" True, Arabs often displayed better ones. True also that the ghetto bore little resemblance to Eton and Harrow as a training school in manners. In some ways it was fair to say that the Zionist Organization had been remiss, and exposed Jews to bad relations with the British by failing to educate them to meet conditions they would be forced to face on arriving in the country. It was hard enough, arriving in the grip of a consciousness that one was participating in the fulfillment of Messianic prophecy, to find others in actual possession of "their" land. Adding to this the experience of eastern Europe, which had divested them of any liking or respect for government and government officials, there seemed reason enough to them to take no pains to hide their feeling that it was actually they, the Jews, who were the rightful lords of the land, and hence owed subservience to none.

The Arabs, on the contrary, better understood how to propitiate those in power. Quickly, cleverly appreciating

that a Keith Roach was one to dote on flattery, with diplomatic alacrity they gave it to him, wining and dining him to his gratification, and made him feel the "Great Pasha."

Summing up the chief obstacles in the way of achieving good relations between Jews and Arabs, Manya Shohat singled out the policies of government as being an even greater deterrent than the almost medieval power held by the effendi-landlord class, which had reduced a large majority of the Arabs of Palestine to a state of semiserfdom, leaving them too impoverished to permit energy for rebellion. Had the attitude of the British government towards implementation of the mandate entrusted to it by the League of Nations been clear and determined, no force would have been strong enough to deter it. Fifty-two nations of the League had endorsed the interpretation of the Balfour Declaration which granted a homeland to the Jews in Palestine "without prejudice to the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities." What had transpired instead was that, under the new concept of a mandated territory, Britain applied the policies of colonial rule, administering the country to serve British self-interest and pursuing the classic tactic of Empire, "divide and rule." This was all that was needed to encourage Arab leadership to exert its bargaining power to whittle away at the mandate and its purpose, the Jewish homeland.

Acting on the presumption that no ground for cooperation between the two peoples was possible—a presumption reiterated in speeches and official documents on all possible occasions—official action inevitably drove a wedge between Jew and Arab. For example, if Arabs and Jews *together* appealed for help to a District Commissioner—their harvest alike being threatened by a plague of mice—the Arabs were told pointedly that they would gain more by coming alone. It did not take long for any form of cooperation to seem futile.

Like action was demonstrated in 1927 when the *Histadrut* founded the *Brith Poalei Eretz Israel*—the Palestine Labor League—having as its statutory aim "to unite all workers of Palestine regardless of religion, nationality, or race, in one league, for the improvement of their economic, social, and cultural conditions; to conduct educational and social activities among the members of the league; to publish books, pamphlets, and newspapers; to conduct any other activities that may improve the economic condition of the members of the league in city and country."

This program constituted the beginning of a united front between Arab and Jewish workers. The government was opposed. When representatives of the league appeared before government officials, they were refused recognition, and Arab employers were encouraged to do likewise.

Thus was the purpose of the mandate ground away on the whetstone of British colonial interests. Arab leadership, taking courage from their enhanced bargaining power, made use of blackmail among other weapons.

Relentlessly the concept of a Jewish National Home was diminished to an insubstantial spiritual center within an Arab land. A representative Legislative Council was proposed which would have frozen the existing Jewish community of Palestine in a permanent minority status. Much to the relief of the Jews the Arab rejected this, on the somewhat ironic ground that it was "too pro-Zionist."

It all had one constructive effect. Manifestly, the work at hand was to seek out and support such forces of progress as Britain sought to discourage.

As for myself, I was to see more clearly than ever that the pioneering element of Palestine was leading in this direction, and to feel my own motivations drawing steadily closer to theirs.

Overwhelmed by the stupendous multiple problems of simultaneously building a nation and a country with chron-

ically inadequate resources, the Zionist leadership was still failing to find the time—or the will—to grapple with the knotty dilemma of Arab-Jewish relations. At the time of the Versailles Peace Conference Dr. Weizmann had attempted to do so and achieved a certain initial success when, in a letter to Professor Felix Frankfurter, the newly crowned King Faisal of Syria gave recognition of a common way for Arab and Jew to travel together. Negotiations had been opened but, following Faisal's death and the complete change of circumstances that came with the practical application of the mandate, there seemed no one in authority to talk to. The result was a setback in which the Zionist development of the country was shunted by the mandatory government onto a side track bearing little relation to the population which gave it form.

The new "capitalist" wave of immigration that had come in 1925 from Poland—the fifth *aliyah*—proved to be completely removed from the main problem; it simply did not exist for them except to the minimal degree that at times they joined forces with the supernationalist antilabor, anti-Arab new grouping of Revisionists which, small but articulate, stood as the only grouping in Palestine which was unquestionably antagonistic to the Arabs. These could be counted on for nothing, however, but to make trouble. Nor was the Communist Party—negligible in the country—any help in effecting good relations between the two peoples. By some quirk of dialectic reasoning they justified a self-appointed task of giving aid and comfort to the antiprogressive, anti-Zionist policies of the Mufti, proof that politics does, indeed, make strange bedfellows!

Such, then, was the picture Manya Shohat gave me of some of the forces now at work. It left me—healthily—without illusions, and an equally healthy sense of urgent need to join with those who were actively seeking solutions.

The *Histadrut,* leading in this direction, had initiated a

program aimed at building the country without the evil of dominating or the fear of being dominated. The Arab peasantry and workers had nothing to lose and everything to gain by joining with those possessed of the will to better not only their own conditions, but the conditions of others as well. Their own leadership showed no interest in their health or welfare, their need for education, or their social or economic advancement; as these were not included in the program of nationalist "liberation," numbers of Arabs were beginning to believe that cooperation between Arabs and Jews had something promising to offer.

Having the will, the Jewish Labor Federation had the power to alleviate many handicaps under which the Arab people were suffering. Within the ranks of this strongest, most cohesive force in the country, unique of its kind, was concentrated the pioneer element working in the collectives, in cooperative groups on the farms, and in the industries in the cities. Its cooperative marketing organization—*Tnuva*—and its consumer cooperative—*Hamashbir*—sold the produce of the farms which, by self-labor, raised the crops, and provided the farm machinery and staples needed by their members. It had a Central Workers' Bank, a cooperative bus service providing transportation throughout the country, a large-scale cooperative building operation; it had organized the widespread insurance system which, through its sick benefit fund—the *Kupat Holim*—assured its members complete physical care, including also members of the Arab Palestine Labor League. It included, also, labor unions, functioning as unions elsewhere, fighting for the best possible conditions of work and wages without, however, prejudicing development of the Jewish homeland.

Indeed the ramifications of the Jewish Labor Federation honeycombed every phase of the country's life, and included a comprehensive school system, and one for adult education and trade schools. Even the safety of the Jewish population

was protected by the *Histadrut's* secret self-defense force, the *Haganah.* But perhaps its most unusual of all features, as a labor organization was the *Histadrut's* constant clamor for more, not less, immigration.

All these facts convinced me that a new society in Palestine was being hewn out, on foundations of equality and justice. I felt more than ever that I wanted to be of service in relation to its potential.

I came to an important decision. Before returning with them to the United States, I would bring the children to Palestine. It was time now that they learned something of the country which, indirectly through their mother and through the convictions reached by their father before his death, had become an influence on their lives.

To bring them here would, in a way, be a further interruption of their conventional schooling. But, whereas the sad family events had unsettled all of us, only good could come of another year in which to learn from life as well as from books. It would be an experiment, but I was prepared to initiate it. Perhaps—who could tell?—of their own volition they might decide they wanted to remain and make Palestine their home. The experiment would at least give them more evidence than just the words of their mother, on which to base a choice.

Suddenly my days were divided between arranging for a place for us all to live when I fetched the family back to Palestine, and seeing many old friends in strategic places and, through them, making new ones who would expand my horizon and increase my knowledge and understanding.

It was good to be in touch once again with the magnificent work of Hadassah. Dr. Chaim Yassky had succeeded Dr. Bluestone as director of the Hadassah Medical Organization and, fruitful in ideas and exceptionally fitted for the task, was proving an able administrator. He exercised a kind of quiet diplomacy which curbed controversy and effected

good relations for Hadassah with the often contending political and social groupings in the community.

It was as though, with each contact made, I became charged with returning energy and purpose. Though I had loved my work in the States, and though raising the wherewithal to enable others to build was certainly necessary, living in Palestine offered opportunities which were different from working from afar. Here, concentrated energy seemed to compound itself. Was there something inherent in Palestine which, having made it the birthplace of two great religions, now enabled its new settlers to perform prodigious tasks? In probably no other place in the world were there just now so many who individually and consciously carried not only the normal burdens of daily existence, but charged themselves also with a personal share in building the new homeland, according to a pattern which their consciences dictated and approved. For example, those of the Hebrew University, now growing to size, who organized the *Brit Shalom*—Peace Alliance—with the specific—one might say sacred—purpose of bringing about conditions which would make Palestine "neither a Jewish nor an Arab State, but a bi-national state in which Jews and Arabs should enjoy equal civil, political and social rights, without distinction between majority and minority; the two peoples should each be free in their administration of their respective domestic affairs, yet united in their common interests."

Following the moral imperatives traditional to their people, Judah Magnes, Hugo Bergman, and others were first to evolve a definitive program of this kind for Arab-Jewish relations. It failed for two basic reasons to win support: no Arab leadership was yet ready to consider a relationship of parity between an Arab majority and a Jewish minority; nor were there world powers to support a program which offered no opportunity for gain for themselves, for example through winning the Arabs and access to their oil.

The second and essential reason for failure of the *Brit Shalom* program was the "neutral" stand taken by its leadership on pressing needs and demands of the Jewish masses. It was a negation of the aims on which Zionism was posited, namely liberation of the Jews from the clutches of forces of oppression and persecution, and eradication of an anomalous homelessness, through making possible a territorial concentration in a land of their own. By supporting the government's severe limitation of immigration, and its proposed Legislative Council—which would have kept the Jewish community permanently under Arab domination—the *Brit Shalom* leadership not only cut itself off from any possibility of mass support, but even that consideration of its program which might conceivably have led to its being molded into more acceptable form. In other words, its aims were sacrificed to the theoretical "liberalism" of its leaders as the moral "ideal" was allowed to outstrip the real.

Notwithstanding all the disturbing crosscurrents and incidental difficulties, there was manifest in Palestine such an atmosphere of purposeful living that I wanted my children to be exposed to it. The perils of possible exploding hostilities seemed of less consequence to me, on the whole, than the likely gains to them of experience. They had become fairly steeped in their inheritances from the past—but can the past ever be sufficient, if there is nothing in the present to match its greatness? If there had been a measure of success in my contest against the children's luxurious environment, it had stemmed from the pattern of Palestine's pioneer living which had come into my own life in time to reroute the trend of their education. But had not the time come when they themselves must witness this pioneer living, in order to know their own people as the true pioneers they were? So, at least, did I reasure myself as I weighed the dangers of a possible Arab uprising against the benefits to my children of a year of life and experience in Palestine.

To wait for a more peaceful period—who could guarantee when that would come? What others faced, could not we also face? As Americans, was not ours a double obligation?

I found an apartment for us, in the new section of Talbieh, and gave specifications for its preparation. It would serve a purpose I had long dreamed of: a home in Palestine where, on *Shabbat*—the Sabbath—we could keep open house for Arabs, Jews, and British alike. I had received much hospitality from all, and it was high time I returned it.

I entered my children in Deborah Kallen's fine progressive school—all, that is, excepting my daughter who was nearing seventeen and therefore ready for college. When I left for Munich to collect the family, Rahel Ben-Zvi had gaily volunteered to take over transformation of the penthouse apartment's terrace into a rooftop garden. It signified the fact that, in Palestine, no matter how busy a person was, somehow there always seemed time to squeeze in something more. Not only was Rahel extraordinarily busy with her training courses for girls and future farm wives, but she had become head of the *Haganah*. This was a secret job, not to be spoken of. The Ben-Zvis, sharing Manya Shohat's analysis of undercurrents, understood the vital need of preparing for the worst, in the midst of hoping for the best.

I arrived back in Munich in time for our Passover Seder, falling in that year of 1929 on April 24. My plans and I were received with acclaim by the children. Granny, having no affinity for Palestine or things Jewish, announced without displeasure that she would be more comfortable living in a hotel in New York and would wait for us to join her there. Norvin would spend his summer holiday with us in the Bavarian Alps lake region and escort his grandmother

back to the States when we left for Palestine, with plans for exciting stops along the way.

Before we could complete our complex preparations and be off for Jerusalem there were other than family concerns requiring our attention.

The day after being with us at our happy Seder, Professor Hegar had died suddenly. He had become a precious friend. Were it not that he had opened his vast treasure of music to me, encouraging me to study the cello, I would not be looking forward to the lessons I would take up when we were settled in Jerusalem, with Tamar Yellin, a disciple and accomplished pupil of Pablo Casals.

In Professor Hegar's name we gave a scholarship to enable his most promising pupil to study at the Berlin Conservatory; it was a way of giving continuity to the glorious music of his cello which had inspired many people in many ways.

Unexpectedly, in the midst of planning for the summer and coming year, I received urgent demands to attend an important congress of Jewish Women at Hamburg and deliver an address on the newly organized Jewish Agency; for the first time non-Zionists were joining with the Zionist leadership to forward the affairs of Palestine.

Supposedly the subject was noncontroversial. Through the assumption of responsibility by such Jewish leaders as Felix Warburg and Louis Marshal, the building of a Jewish homeland had reached the status of a nonpartisan task. The Jewish Agency was recognized by the League of Nations as the official body to deal with all questions of the mandate. This combination of factors would have seemed to make the approaching speaking engagement uncontroversial. But I was to learn otherwise.

On my arrival in Hamburg it was made contradictorily clear to me that any discussion of Palestine at the proceedings would be disturbing and must therefore be avoided.

Welcomed cordially by the president of the Congress, I was urged to speak frankly on any subject I chose—that is, except Palestine. Yes, it had been understood I would speak on Palestine, but couldn't I *please* change to a different subject.

No, I admitted, I could not. I was perfectly prepared to take myself off their hands and not speak at all; but if I did speak, it would have to be as planned.

Accepting the axiom that what cannot be cured must be endured, the president took the only way left which would be more or less within the bounds of courtesy and at the same time reduce the hazard of repercussions—the speaking time was cut to ten minutes.

The outcome was not premeditated. Unwisely, as it turned out, I was scheduled as the last speaker on the program. Obviously one could not speak adequately of the Jewish Agency in ten minutes. Sensing that my good English was not being adequately understood, I launched out, in my poor but fluent German, to impress upon my hearers a portrait of the new Jew, emerging in the Land of Israel, one who walked erect, head high, with eyes facing the future fearlessly, and with confidence. As the sowing of the dragon's teeth of legend had caused a race of warriors to spring up, now from Palestine soil a new Jew was springing, of heroic courage and faith in himself and his future.

I may well have wanted tact, but had I any choice? From the reaction of the younger element in the audience, and of the press, I was glad that I had none. For this was already the year of 1929, and the wheels of the Germanic gods were grinding inexorably on.

This was to be no ordinary journey; it was to be an adventure, indeed an expedition. By some financial gymnastics not unmixed with rationalization, I had figured that traveling the overland route by car, through Italy, Greece,

Turkey, Asia Minor, and Syria would be as cheap, if not cheaper, than the usual route, by boat to Egypt and train to Palestine. Besides, what better way for the children to learn not only geography, but peoples and their cultures? Therefore I acquired a Mercedes-Benz, and a German chauffeur; for in Palestine we would need a car, and it would be less expensive to drive it, conveying the family, than to ship it—and them—by boat.

Not since our camping trips in the wilds of the United States and Canada had we known such excitement as when our equipment began to accumulate—canvas water bags for desert stretches; raw-silk zippered sleeping bags, guaranteed impervious to invasion by bedbugs and other crawlers; a picnic basket with every conceivable gadget; cook stove, pots and pans, mosquito nets—everything for every conceivable eventuality.

The many needed visas were difficult, at times complicated, to arrange. Traveling by car through some of these countries was not "done" in the eyes of some officials, but with some diplomatic help and the guarantee of the Deutsche Bank we managed. Even the Turkish government waived its lordly demand of a deposit in cash of half the value of the car—to be returned "sometime after our departure from the country," seemingly the closest they could come to specifying the time.

Buying some necessary additional furniture to that ordered in Palestine for the new home brought on a little unexpected complication in the form of an advisory visit from Menachem Ussishkin, "strong man" of Jerusalem and Palestine, and my old friend and president of the Jewish National Fund.

"You will keep a kosher kitchen, of course?" I was startled by the inconsistency of the question, posed while eating at our table in Munich. As my eyebrows flew up in-

voluntarily he added, "Would you want only the British and Arabs to be able to eat in your home? Besides, I want to be able to come myself to your house for meals."

If he could dine with us in Munich, why would there be any difficulty in coming to us in Jerusalem? My puzzlement must have showed in my face.

"In Jerusalem," he explained, "things are different than in Munich. In Jerusalem tradition must be observed if all are to particpate in your hospitality."

I therefore bought three complete sets of dishes, cutlery, and pots and pans: one for milk dishes, one for meat, and one set for the week of Passover, shipping them with the new furniture by van to Palestine. I also engaged the services of a housekeeper versed in the laws of *kashrut*. Due to my upbringing, I was ignorant of these laws; I was, however, ready to learn.

August came, and the time for our departure. We bought a bottle of special champagne which Norvin broke over the hood of the Mercedes, christening it "the Camel." He and Granny were poised to leave for the States and I for Palestine when the news came that Palestine was up in arms. Again the cry of the Arabs had gone up—"The government is with us!" Unprecedented killings and rioting were taking place. The very foundations of the Jewish homeland were rocking under the impact.

Fortified by what I had observed on the recent visit as to measures for meeting such not unexpected crises, I felt shaken but neither overwhelmed nor deterred. Norvin was impressed by my failure to be stampeded. He had feared that I had built on illusions. He now learned otherwise.

In all common sense we must recognize the immediate problem: what to do about our trip. Obviously we could not now travel through Asia Minor and Syria as we had planned. We could, however, start out through Italy. Tak-

ing one step at a time would allow for further developments which, in turn, would help to guide us to a final decision.

Norvin and Granny left for the States. The four children and I turned, hopefully, toward Palestine.

18

WHAT MIGHT BE CALLED OUR "PROGRESS" through Italy would accomplish two purposes. It would give me time to think about my course in relation to new unrest in Palestine. And should it turn out that the time was not right to take the children there, their horizons would still have been broadened by the trip; the experience it gave them could not be taken away from them. The boys would be seeing Italy for the first time, my daughter Babs for the second; in 1926 she, her father, and I had motored over this same route and been captivated by the hill towns —the rugged mountains whose heights and steep slopes were still dotted with romantic castles of the *condottieri,* those professional captains who, from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, raised troops and sold their "protection" to princes or states—our eyes could feast on lush green valleys, and the numberless corridors of Lombardy poplars and Aleppo pines, fixed and immortalized as the background of paintings of the Renaissance; all were as fascinating to me as they were to the children.

I was anxious that their introduction to the glories of Italian art be judicious and reasonable; better that they should see too little, this time, than too much. All too well I remembered experiences of my own first visit to Europe. It was my mother's first, also, and in her enthusiasm to miss nothing, gradually I had grown stupefied trudging through miles of galleries, paintings, and statuary. On this trip of ours toward Palestine, therefore, there were to be no such wholesale poulticings with art and history—and positively no guide books; the children's minds were not to be stretched to their limits, like rubber bands; what they absorbed must be taken in pleasantly. Like any undergraduate cramming for an examination, I marshaled knowledge each night, which could be conveyed in story form the next day.

Florence . . . San Gimagnino . . . Siena, where we watched the city celebrate the feast day of its Saint, the simple young peasant Catherine . . . Perugia . . . Assisi, with all its reminders of St. Francis, immortalized for his simplicity and the strength of his faith in the good and the beautiful. . . .

When we reached Rome, I let the children decide whether to go on with me to Palestine or, because of the seriousness of the happenings there, to return to America. I explained my own feeling and why, even during a time of crisis, I believed it important for me to go to Palestine. But first, if they wanted it that way, I was prepared to see them safely back to the United States, placed in school there and left, temporarily, in the care of their brother and Granny.

There come moments in the life of a parent when all that is dreamed of and hoped for in the raising of children is realized—and now came one of those moments. The boys, moved emotionally as well as excited by prospects of adventure, said instantly that they were going on with me. At first my daughter, by nature the least fearful of my children, reacted otherwise, briefly; she had little

interest in Palestine and, like her grandmother, none at all in things Jewish; moreover, she had fallen in love with Germany. I offered to return with her there and, wherever she wished, settle her in school near friends. But then, of her own volition, she decided to go on with the rest of us.

Pausing only long enough for an exciting visit to Pompeii, we sailed from Naples, en route for Egypt and Palestine; my careful arithmetic as to the economy of buying the Mercedes, and traveling the land route having gone awry, the "Camel" and our chauffeur went along with us—by boat!

I had many private second thoughts. Introduced to Palestine at a moment of turmoil and bloodshed, how could I expect the children to feel anything for the Arabs but hatred? I decided on something which might dispel the danger. We would go out into the desert from Cairo on a week's camping trip—each with his own camel to ride. Thus there would be first-hand contact with the Arabs—dragomen, helpers, cooks, camel boys—and the atmosphere of the caravan would be Arab, even to the interiors of the tents, made beautiful by elaborate decoration with quotations from the Koran appliquéd in bright colors to the walls.

One evening when we were camped, we were visited by a little band of learned men who had heard the strange rumor of an American woman who professed to be interested in the Koran. Discussion through an interpreter was illuminating. The wise men were surprised to discover, over coffee and sweetmeats, that the Abraham and Sarah his wife who were of such sainted memory to them, were revered ancestors not only of the Arabs, but of the Jews as well.

On another night in the desert there was an experience of a somewhat different nature, when we visited the stronghold of a fanatic sect of dervishes. It seemed wise to watch

from the distance atop the backs of our camels and, gradually, as the whirling of the dervishes progressed to more and more frenzied ecstasy the children grasped that what they were observing was not entertainment but mystical practices which were part of a belief that they—and I—found difficult to understand.

The week fulfilled its purpose; everyone in the caravan had become a friend, and it would have been quite impossible to convince the children that anyone, from dragoman to the least helper, could under any circumstances whatever become someone of whom one must be wary or afraid.

In Palestine much must now be done; our home must be made ready to receive us, and the children settled in their schools—not an easy task when shooting could catch up with you at any street corner. For myself I wanted to pick up loose ends, and reestablish contact with those who were guiding Jewish Palestine. It was essential to find out at first hand what, if anything, was being done to make a recurrence of such events impossible. My first meeting was with David Ben-Gurion, now leader of the labor forces of Palestine. In what was becoming more or less the regular pattern for such briefings, Manya Shohat took me to his home for one of those long, undisturbed conversations from which one can learn so much because there are no interruptions, and time seems to stand still willingly.

Instantly one saw here a dynamic personality, a man of decision, of utter faith in his own vision and the rightness of the direction in which it counseled him to lead. His home was simple, in perfect accord with the modest standards set for its leadership by the *Histadrut.* In the study where we talked thousands of books on a great many subjects, but especially history and philosophy, occupied shelves covering the walls from floor to ceiling, with the over-

flow in casual piles on the floor, ready to hand. Against this, his favorite background, Ben-Gurion was not only the embodiment of the Jewish liberation movement, but also of a scholar, a dedicated student of world history and thought. His way of speaking was always energetic; his stubby body, joined by a short, thick neck to the large head made to appear larger by the shock of wild hair, seemed to sway and weave in rhythm with the sing-song voice, high-pitched and emphatic. He did not invite argument with his views and was difficult in meeting criticism of them. A man who had no time to lose on the all-important question of Arab-Jewish relations, in the early evening he seemed satisfied as to its place in the specifications for building of the country; yet as the evening wore on gusts of impatience seemed to blow over him and as he felt the criticism implied in my questions he would say, and say again, "Give me a hundred thousand more *halutzim* and there will be no Arab problem!" Clearly, tomorrow would not be too soon to give them to him.

It was not that Ben-Gurion did not grasp what was at issue. He was encouraging three oustanding young men of his following to specialize in the field of Arab-Jewish relations: Moshe Sharett, in Palestine since early childhood, and fluent in Arabic, and Dov Hos, Russian by birth, were graduates of Cambridge University; the third, and perhaps the most promising of all, Chaim Arlosoroff, born and educated in Germany, was an economist and brilliant political thinker. All knew the history, culture, and political aspirations of the Arab people, and were dedicated to bringing about good relations between them and the Jews.

Perhaps because of Ben-Gurion's background of persecution and pogroms in Russia, he was driven by the pressure and urgency of the need of his people to sidetrack the very program and plans he had himself conceived and advocated for others seemingly of more immediate need. Be

that as it may, regretfully I came away from that meeting with the feeling that the leadership so pressingly needed at the moment in this field would not come from him.

It had become clear that no partnership with England could any longer be depended upon; the Jews themselves must find a solution. Manya Shohat was part of a group determined to act to ameliorate, if not cure, the now-critical situation.

Among members of the group Josef Nachmani stood out. He had practical, successful experience in negotiating directly with the Arabs. He and others of the group had drawn up a plan for serious consideration.

As head of the land-purchasing department of the PICA —Baron de Rothschild's organization for the development and assistance of the older colonies and colonists of Palestine—Nachmani was responsible for breaking the long-standing deadlock, in which land owned in Transjordan by PICA was to be exchanged for land within the boundaries of Palestine. In brief, the solution returned to the Arabs, free of any charge, fifteen per cent of the land purchased when it had been cleared of swamps and stones and was ready for plowing and intensive cultivation. Interestingly enough the plows were those of biblical days; a bough of wood, bent by nature to the size and shape with which man or beast could furrow.

The memorandum drawn up by Nachmani and the group for the present situation was more comprehensive and practical than any that had preceded it. When I was told its contents, I urged that it be put in final form, so it could be presented to those interested, financed, and set in motion; indeed, it was something to which I wanted to give all possible service.

The premise was that, without the incentive of Zionism, there was no possibility of Palestine being developed. But also, as long as the Arab remained in his primitive culture,

the Jews could not "beat their swords into plowshares" and build the land in peace.

It helps to comprehend the wisdom and potentiality of Nachmani's proposed solution, to summarize the liabilities of the situation.

Due to large areas of swampland and primitive agricultural methods, much land was going to waste. After the capture of Palestine from the Turks, the British made short-term loans to the *fellah* (Arab peasant) to purchase cattle and reestablish himself. No supervision was given and most of the money was spent to purchase wives. When the British government demanded at least partial repayment of the loan in 1928–29 the *fellahin* had no other choice than to sell their draught animals, naturally at a disadvantage; for example, animals worth twenty pounds sterling went for ten pounds. Later the *effendi* (landlords) had to be approached for loans to buy new animals, and interest rates ran to 30 and 40 per cent and more.

In 1928 there was a crop failure, due to lack of rain and seed. The government gave seed on loans, but did not reduce the *osher*—tax on agricultural products—so once again the *fellah* was caught between two millstones, the usurer and the *effendi*. The year 1929 was good, but prices fell, due to the import of flour, and the government demand that the tax be based on prices of the previous years although the *fellah* had sold at half-price. Various interrelated tax evils complicated the situation. The question of labor was difficult; public works and industry had drawn seasonal workers away from the land. Whereas the profit of the *fellah* in a good year was eighteen to twenty pounds (then $5.00 to the pound), and in a bad year he was left with only a burden of debt, the industrial worker could expect a return of fifty to sixty pounds a year.

Conditions were such that the *fellah* despaired of ever being able to repay his loans. Too, there were Bedouin

raids to contend with, and the blood feud (the *de Gom*) making it the elementary duty of every member of a tribe to take revenge for the killing of a member. The Bedouins were inured to hardship. They trained themselves and their children to endure hunger and thirst while journeying far and wide attacking the fellahin, looting his property, and fleeing.

Seemingly interlocking factors were numberless. The *effendis* exploited the despair of the *fellahin* to combat the Jews; the evils they themselves visited upon the *fellahin* they attributed to the Jews. Embittered, it was no wonder that the *fellahin* fell prey to agitation, the more so as there was no one to explain the truth; by nature the *fellahin* had no interest in politics, it making no difference to them who —Christian, Moslem, or Jew—collected the taxes.

For the aristocratic families of Palestine—Christian and Moslem—there was more at stake. Their power, hitherto only traditional, could now become legalized by some kind of parliamentary set-up, in which they would speak in the name of the people whom they need not, however, give representation. The results of such a system were already to be seen in the "elected" municipal councils of cities without Jewish population. In these, the governing body was made up entirely from a reactionary aristocracy which, once the new election laws had been passed, some three years earlier, oppressed the people more every day.

These and many more factors, then, had been taken into account in the program suggested by Nachmani and his associates. It was designed to counteract the evils, without bribery, and was based on self-interest for the Arab as well as the Jewish people. In practice it was to be many-sided. Among its provisions were the following:

1. Jews and Arabs were to join together, forming agricultural groups, making a joint effort to effect agrarian reforms, and

remove the obstacles interfering with agricultural development.

2. Assistance was to be given those who wanted to develop an opposition Arab party against the reactionary forces, and for the creation of a democratic party, based on real service to the Arab population, economic and social. This party would be made up of those who, though non-Zionist, were convinced that Palestine was destined to be the homeland of two peoples, and that without Jewish participation the country would not be developed. Here again, there was to be aid, but no bribery.

Various measures were provided for implementation of the plan. The measures included a loan bank, branches of Hadassah through which the social services, clinics, infant-welfare stations, and so on would be enlarged and extended to all; a newspaper to be published in Arabic, which would not dabble in politics, but rather analyze the wretched economic conditions of the Arab people, to formulate their needs, and to give concrete advice for betterment of their conditions. There would be control over the Supreme Moslem Council which regulated the economic interests of the Moslem population yet was functioning without supervision. The Moslem population was bound to the religious courts whose employees, though appointed by the Council, were paid by the government. In every district the Mufti of Jerusalem ruled supreme; in every village, fortresses to arouse and concentrate hatred of the Jewish population were organized; these were ruled over by the *imam*—priests—who so dominated the cities and villages that all opposition was silenced by fear of retribution.

A storm was raging over Palestine while this plan was being drawn up. It was designed as all-inclusive, to be put into effect throughout the country; already parts of it had been put into practice locally. The great need now was to marshal men, money, and those individuals with the will to carry the plan through; perhaps of necessity these would

come from outside the Zionist ranks. But in the leadership of the Jewish Agency such men as Felix Warburg and Lee K. Frankel, vice-president of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, were open to considering plans for what they considered the all-important question, the creation of good relations between Arab and Jew.

As my quest for ways to understand must, in its very nature, be long and at times painfully slow, so could the *modus operandi* for answers to this formidable problem only be slow and difficult; only harm could come from precipitate thinking and action. I was certain of only one thing, a desire to devote myself to this great purpose. It would depend on greater understanding and patience on the part of both peoples. Sights that we saw in pursuit of understanding were not for the faint of heart.

A cousin's husband, the Chief of Police of the Gaza area, took me to visit the scene of the mass killings in Hebron. In the college of jewish studies, the *yeshiva,* teachers and students to a man had been slaughtered, quietly accepting their fate, dying with the words of the *Sh'ma* on their lips: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One!" The Jewish volunteer defense force, the *Haganah,* had wanted to send a detachment to guard the Jews of Hebron from the threat of attack, but the offer was refused with indignation. The leadership protested that they and their fathers had lived here amongst the Arabs for centuries, and would have none of it. And so we saw the results, in the house of the rabbi, where sixty had taken refuge. It would have been excessively morbid were it not for the fact that the scene of the ruthless murder of sixty innocent people was being kept intact for the purpose of being allowed to speak for itself to the Shaw Commission of Inquiry, appointed by the British Parliament to "investigate" the happenings in Palestine and to fix the blame.

We waded through layers—a foot deep in places—of

feathers and shards and splinters of glass, daubed here and there with the red-brown of dried blood. Mattresses, feather-beds, and pillows had been slit open in search of hidden money; I had a passing sense that mirrors had been smashed to smithereens in order that the attackers might not glimpse themselves at their devilish work.

We went to see what was left of the Hadassah clinic, serving the predominantly Arab community. I must have been in a sort of daze because of what I had seen because, on the way, I crashed head-on into one of the exquisite old stone arches which span streets in ancient Hebron. In an ironic way the injury to my head pointed up the wanton damage done to the Hadassah Welfare Station; no one could receive even first aid there now, for everything to work with was destroyed; not a package of surgical gauze, not a bottle of antiseptic or medication, not even walls or ceiling had been left intact. The lust to smash and destroy had taken over; an institution set up to serve the welfare of mothers and babies, of sick and ailing in the community, lay wrecked in a hopeless shambles.

It flashed through my mind that here was not hate of a people, here was hate of progress, hate of science, and of very humanity itself.

Was this not all the more proof that we *had* to find another way?

There is an expression in Hebrew which sums up the completely stubborn philosophy of those who had pledged themselves to building the country: *l'amrot hakol—in spite of everything.* In spite of everything a way had to be found which no atavistic lust for destroying and killing could circumvent. Even though the impulse was found in the Arabs' actions among themselves, the search must go on for the way which would restrain it, moderate it, and at last end it. It seemed to me there was a glimmer of hope in the fact that what had happened here had not burst out spon-

taneously, but had been ordered from higher up—not against the new Zionist forces, but rather against the old and long-settled communities of Jews such as those in Hebron and Safed. Wherever the *Haganah* was present—though the job was supposed to be done by the British police—no such murderous outbreaks had ensued, as witness only one case, of a large force of incited Arabs driving on Jerusalem, which had been turned back after one killing and the wounding of but a few. The task was made that much harder and slower, however, by intermittent barbarism and the fact that the government of Palestine systematically impeded any and all attempts to bring Jews and Arabs together, no matter in what constructive circumstance.

As for ourselves, we did not allow the "troubles" to confine us to Jerusalem, and it was perhaps providential for our cumulative understanding that we made a visit just when we did to the agricultural school, Mikveh Israel, where my son Donald hoped to study, to realize his dream of following in the footsteps of Luther Burbank.

The head of the school, Dr. Krause, a man of vision, indomitable will, and courage, was worried over the effect the uprisings might have on me and my plans to be of help to Palestine. Therefore he gave me more than advice as to Donald's aspirations; he gave me a key which was to keep open for me the door of hope through succeeding periods of trouble marking the building of the Jewish homeland. The key was simply this: whenever the situation reached a new low point, it then rose to a new height. As though his words and the experience of fifty years in the country were not enough to convince me, he showed me a graph demonstrating his thesis, complete with dates and places of each setback.

Dr. Krause was one among the many who took their stand on the "in spite of all" side. I remember also the valiant

Yehudah Kapelowitz, one of the pioneers who had come with the second *aliyah*.

He had just come back from a research trip to Persia when we went out to see what remained after the destruction of his colony, Ramat Rahel. He participated in the final clash, but it was too late. Standing by the charred remains of his tent, gazing at the ashes of all the notes he had made in digging deep into the life and history of Persia's Jewish population, he remarked, simply, "We will start over again." Erect, gallant, his long black hair blowing in the breeze, his dark-skinned weatherbeaten face aglow with determination, the sight of the wreckage drew from him no word of lament for having made the experiment of building a *kvutza* close to a city, in this case Jerusalem. He and his comrades had believed beyond all question that they could succeed at combining day labor with raising vegetables and developing poultry, eggs, and dairy products for sale in the city. Obviously there was a tremendous risk in locating a *kvutza* in so exposed a spot, one which was demonstrated by the destruction of the *kvutza* not once but many times. Yet the reaction of the colony was the same each time: "We will start again."

Word came suddenly that Granny was gravely ill in New York. If we hoped to see her alive we must return at once. There was no question of our not going, even though our new home was practically ready for occupancy, the children settled happily in their new environment, and the vans, still en route from Germany with the balance of our household goods and personal possessions expected any day.

As I was to find once more, a turn of private affairs often presented me simultaneously with some unexpected opportunity to further the sense of belonging I had long been in search of, through service to the paramount cause which seemed to be leading me ever nearer to its discovery. Among

other things this trip would make it possible to carry word in person of the plan developed by Josef Nachmani and his group to Felix Warburg who, besides being a philanthropist and important banker with all the associations such a position implied, was a man of exceptional vision.

Soon after arriving I saw Mr. Warburg and, at his suggestion, Lee K. Frankel. Both signified their readiness to lend themselves to the Nachmani plan upon the proviso that Dr. Magnes, then en route to the United States, would give it his approval. Mr. Frankel went so far as to say flatly that it was the first plan he had seen to which he felt he could give himself enthusiastically and for the rest of his life. As it turned out, it was rather too long before the hatching to count the chickens. . . .

To the astonishment of all, on his arrival Dr. Magnes turned thumbs down, although in Palestine, he had given the impression the plan had his endorsement. Now, inexplicably, he said, "Only in the way of the spirit can good relations between Jew and Arab be established!" The word I questioned, in deep anxiety, was "only."

Not until very much later was I to find the clue to the position he took. I found it in the files of an interchange of correspondence between Henrietta Szold and Dr. Magnes on the subject of the memorandum, to which she gave her support.

"I can accept the plan only if it meets with the consent of the Arabs," Dr. Magnes wrote her.

"I take it you mean *the assent* of the Arabs," she replied.

It was much more than a matter of semantics. Dr. Magnes and his followers had little, if any, contact with the Arab people; the few Arabs they dealt with were leaders—wealthy *effendi,* intelligentsia, and the like, who themselves had no interest in tillers of soil and drawers of water but were motivated to strong opposition to the Grand Mufti,

Haj Amin El Husseini, and by the desire to replace him in power by members of their own family—the Nashishibi.

However, Dr. Magnes' opposition held. Because of it the leading non-Zionists decided to have none of the plan and any support for it in the States that was aroused crumbled away. Even Stephen Wise, great liberal that he was, chided me for advocating it. I was driven to reflect that forces of the spirit can be covered over—or beclouded—by too near-sighted a viewing of a distant objective.

Our arrival in the States was to disclose to us a new and very disturbed kind of country. Effects of the September "crash" were widening with alarming rapidity. It struck me that not only Jewish Palestine faced stormy weather ahead, with the danger of its partnership with Britain seriously undermined and the economic partnership with the United States seriously threatened by the "depression"; more startling was the collapse of morale which seemed totally unbelievable in relation to this country. But about this we had everything yet to learn.

19

IT GAVE ME A FEELING OF BEING ALMOST A deserter to leave Palestine at a time when it was enveloped in deep depression. It was December, Jerusalem was being drenched by the cold, torrential rains of winter, and it was hard to maintain a "*lamrot hakol*" optimism when sun and blue skies were continually hidden behind gray and forbidding clouds.

There was abundant reason for the wave of pessimism. It was clear that the findings of the Shaw Commission of Inquiry, sent from England to investigate the disturbances, would lean more to the political considerations of the Colonial Office Middle East policy than to the obligations Great Britain had undertaken to facilitate establishment of a Jewish homeland.

On our arrival in New York we found that pessimism was not confined to Palestine. If it had seemed from a distance that the stock-market crash and its effects were something taking place in a world of fantasy, that impression was dis-

pelled at once by the expression on young Norvin's face when he greeted us at the dock. "No, Granny's all right," he assured us quickly. She had been making a dramatic recovery from the instant she learned that we were on our way. She made her decision to live final by summarily halting the distribution of treasured personal belongings to family and friends, as mementos to remember her by. She came to this decision when she knew she had caused us to return.

Why, then, did Norvin look so troubled? He did not try to break it gently; his own inheritance had been swept away in the crash, and there was a very great question as to how much of the family income could be salvaged.

It had appeared that while I was still in Germany I had become fortified against just such a blow—if blow it was. From the news reports we had heard, it seemed as if America had gone mad. It was impossible to conceive that the wild binge of speculation that had swept everyone into a state of dementia and had made everybody, even the charwoman, the elevator operator, and the office boy, put their last penny on "tips," could last. The wild gyrations of stock values, the piling of paper profit on paper profit—it was bound to topple! Convinced of this in August of 1929 I cabled my brokers from Munich: "Sell everything of mine unless you think I'm completely crazy." They did—and sold nothing. I was therefore not completely unprepared for the news that met us on our arrival. Life in Palestine had conditioned me to react differently to it than I was supposed to. What persisted was the question of how a man was to benefit from a life of luxury when in exchange he was continually exposed to the precarious ups and downs of satiety and hunger, plenty and poverty?

Unknown to me yet, though, was the stern way my financial education was to proceed. Even this, when it came, did not disturb me too much. All that I had experienced and

was experiencing as part of my quest had carried me so far from the norms of my former life that what seemed to most —even to Henrietta Szold—as presenting a stiff upper lip in the face of disaster was, in reality, a triumphant assertion that I had found something more enriching than money to live by. Subsequently, when I was to encounter personally the harsh effects that the financial debacle was having on the lives of people throughout the country I learned many paradoxical answers to the question of satiety and hunger, plenty and poverty, existing at one and the same time in the richest country in the world.

For a while my advisors showed me conclusively that there was still more than enough substance to live on—providing they be allowed to continue managing our affairs as usual. Gradually, though, I began hearing a word new to me, "margin." Its definition sounded simple, safe. I felt a little smug over my stubborn investment of a rather substantial sum in the Worker's Bank in Palestine—especially since it had been against the horrified consensus of my advisors who chorused, pointedly, that only a "dreamer" and "idealist" could conceivably be so misguided as to suppose that money invested in Palestine would be safer than money invested in the United States. It would be shown that I had played it safe when this money in Palestine was all that remained of a fortune.

I have sometimes speculated as to what the outcome might have been, had I not gone to Toronto to deliver an address on conditions in Palestine, and had not stayed as a guest at the home of friends.

The word "margin" was very much in the forefront of my consciousness, for I was hearing it daily from those trying to keep my holdings in "stable" condition. But only in Toronto did I learn the real meaning of the word—how, if money were not found to cover the difference between the

marginal deposit paid on the stock and the devaluated collateral held by the broker, a fortune would be wiped out.

My Toronto friends were wealthy, with a thriving manufacturing business. But now it had become too late to conceal even from a house guest that call after call throughout the evening from New York was for any purpose other than to serve notice that if stocks were going to be held even through the next day, tens of thousands of dollars must come to cover margins. Helplessly I watched a healthy, vigorous man shrink into abject fear and grow old before my eyes, consenting within the space of a few telephone calls to rush a quarter of a million dollars, on the remote chance that the dike could be made to hold.

On the train taking me back to New York I too made the acquaintance of crushing fear. Up to now it had been possible to meet margin requirements. But what if the requirements should increase? Without credit, or a business to fall back on, what would I do? With only myself to depend on, to whom could my five children and mother-in-law turn for help?

From the train I went directly to Wall Street. This time there was to be no airy conversation about my being possessed of second sight, no equivocation.

"Sell!" I said firmly. "Now, this minute. Sell everything you hold of mine."

It was lunch time of a clear, crisp December day when I left Wall Street; but I was happy, and free of the fear and terror of debt. Only a few thousand dollars remained, but it was in cash. With careful husbanding we could live for a while. Norvin could finish his training in architecture at Columbia, Donald his agricultural study at Cornell.

We sat down as a family and drew up a budget. We settled down to a new game, the game of getting maximum possible fun out of a minimum of money. Only later when, to cut the pattern according to the cloth, we moved to

Connecticut from New York did we discover the limitless resources of the Sears Roebuck catalogue, and that fish is good—and cheap, when bought straight from the fisherman! But the move accomplished something else. It established in the children's minds memories of the happiest —if simplest—way of life they had yet experienced.

On the point of leaving to enter William and Mary College my daughter had decided on her own, not to go to college and raced through enough secretarial training to get herself an interesting job with ASCAP.

If my children could become employed, so, I decided, could I. Preparing myself by study at New York University, complete with classes in salesmanship techniques and enactment of visits to the offices of prospects, encouraged by our dear friend, Judge Julian Mack, to believe it was out-of-date to look on selling insurance as a transparent means of exploiting the favors of one's friends, I became an agent of the New York Life Insurance Company. I hated the very thought of the work, but did well at it. Many doors were open to me—I had entered them so often in the interests of Zionism and the future of Palestine. I had the idea of making a specialty of persuading people to take policies in which they would name Palestine as beneficiary. Soon I detected—or thought I did—a certain difference in the reception accorded me, and asked myself if I had really expected that those who received me so warmly when I came solely in the interest of Palestine, would receive me as hospitably now that I was working in my own self-interest.

Actually my career as an insurance agent was ended by my son Norvin. "You've preached one thing, Mother, but you're practicing another," he said severely.

"How so?"

"You brought us up to give ourselves to jobs we could be eager about, and stay away from things that brought no satisfaction. Here you are, fooling yourself over a job you

have to drag yourself out of bed in the morning to do." It was a perfect description, and I stopped, not without protest from my superior, who came to see if it meant nothing to me that I had climbed to the top of the list in sales. Wasn't it true that I badly needed money, he asked bluntly. What better way to earn it, then, than by developing what he assured me was a potential of becoming a million-dollar-a-year agent? I think he got a very odd impression when I explained that my family had been the ones who decided I should give it up, but went away, shaking his head in bewilderment that I could see nothing to do but concur.

In times when few people could find many occasions for laughter, mercifully many of our forced retrenchments revealed a funny side.

I became involved in the arrangements of a mammoth benefit at Carnegie Hall for the future Philharmonic Orchestra of Palestine. Our family at the time was still occupying a city studio apartment, and we pulled our budget out of all recognizable shape in order to give a party after the concert for the artist of the evening, Ossip Gabrilowitch.

As we knew him to be an artist who had not the slightest objection to being asked to play informally—in fact rather enjoyed it—obviously it would be unthinkable not to have a piano. It never entered our heads to rent an instrument for the evening; when we bought the Steinway baby grand it made us feel outlandish enough to buy it on the installment plan.

The party, as well as the concert, was a glorious success. It seemed to me that Gabrilowitch played even with more than his usual brilliance and beauty in the informal atmosphere of our studio. For weeks we basked in the unforgettable evening, with its crowning touch due to our making sure to have a piano.

We were all the more startled one day, therefore, when —close on the heels of sharp notice that I had not paid the

last installments—four burly individuals arrived and, like undertakers, carried out our beautiful baby grand.

It remained to my youngest son Stephen to supply the comic touch. I took it as evidence that my children were growing in healthy resilience to circumstances and a sense of proportion toward material possessions when—watching the unceremonious removal of the instrument on which he had been taking lessons—he remarked, "Mother, from now on I'm going to take up only some little, portable instrument—like a clarinet or trumpet."

20

TO CHANGE WORLDS AT ANY TIME AND IN ANY circumstances is a difficult and complicated process at the very least. There was in my mind now the certainty that my future—and I deeply hoped the future of my children—would be aligned positively with the pioneer forces in Palestine. What still could not be clearly discerned was when and in what exact terms. Nevertheless, during the time now that it would be necessary for us to remain in the States, I must find the best ways I could for keeping pace with the movement.

If becoming a member of the *Poalei Zion* (workers of Zion), if crossing over into its world while still in America was in a sense like being temporarily on an island distant from the mainland, at least it was a real move. I must have faith that, in the larger view, it would be a right move.

The *Poalei Zion* was the recognized spokesman in the United States both for the *Histadrut* and Mapai, the Socialist-Zionist labor party. It soon appeared that this was

an oversimplification, and conflicts showed themselves, some pertaining too to Hadassah.

When it appeared that I would be remaining on this side of the Atlantic for a time, I was pressed to resume the presidency of Hadassah. I declined, in the interests of Hadassah as much as of myself. I felt sure now that my future service would lie within Palestine itself. In the interim, before I changed worlds, I wanted to prepare myself to fit into the new life I would enter there as a worker in a worker's society. I therefore felt I ought to align myself with the forces of labor in the Zionist movement in America. I assumed I would retain my relationship as a member of the Hadassah National Board, however. That assumption became a point of difference. By now Hadassah, having separated from the American Zionist Organization, had affiliated, as an autonomous group, with the World Zionist Organization.

The new president of Hadassah, Mrs. Rose Jacobs, believed that my being a member of the *Poalei Zion* and remaining simultaneously on the National Board would be incompatible.

I offered my resignation, urging, however, that it not be accepted, for a reason I believed to be fundamental, and shared with Henrietta Szold; namely that Hadassah, while as yet having no political orientation of its own, was broad enough in its scope to embrace all women of whatever political persuasion and affiliation.

Nevertheless, my resignation was accepted. While retaining my membership, interest, and devoted admiration for the organization, I was therefore no longer a participant in its councils; thus the changeover from my organizational world was almost complete. Were my husband with me, I knew he would have considered my step unwise. From the beginning of my Zionist life he had sensed where my essential interest lay, but had consistently counseled that for

me to ally myself directly with the labor forces might tend to limit my usefulness in the movement. While encouraging me wholeheartedly to contribute funds as largely as I wished, he urged me to keep within the general Zionist framework which, at that time under Dr. Weizmann's leadership, was sypathetically inclined to the pioneering effort.

Now, in this interim period back in the United States, I knew that I had no choice but to affiliate positively with those representatives here of the forces in Palestine who had helped so to crystallize my convictions and great faith in the future there. It was my way of standing up to be counted with those giving themselves unreservedly to building a new kind of world. Not only did I find in Palestine a socialism with which my own was compatible; with my own eyes I had seen there, from beginnings made, that—at least in Palestine—a new kind of world was being built without the waste and tearing down of an old one and without the sacrifice of humanism and kindness.

The *Poalei Zion* organization was small in numbers but strong in influence. Dedicated from its beginnings in eastern Europe, and subsequently in Palestine, to a strict course of action which enjoined on its membership translation of its socialist-Zionist beliefs into a way of life, its functioning in the States was somewhat more relaxed; it was even possible to find in its ranks some employers of workers, as well as workers.

The members of the *Poalei Zion* had known me and I them for many years. Yet now, when we met on a common platform, we seemed strange to each other. Though we met as *haverim*—comrades—we differed even in language; where Yiddish was their common tongue, my English seemed to me by contrast stark and naked, and the thought occurred to me that it was a difference of more than just speech. Perhaps I did not understand as I should have, but it seemed an altogether different idiom than the one used by

the emissaries coming to them from their affiliated groups in Palestine, even though these emissaries were at home in Yiddish, which I was not. It was as though the segment of *Poalei Zion* here was in reality a piece of the "old country," of the eastern European ghettos, picked up bodily and transplanted in this country, yet remaining subtly separate and apart from its new surroundings, with little discernible change from its form in Europe.

Notwithstanding what seemed to me at the time a duality of objectives as well as language, its support given the pioneering life of its affiliates in Palestine was single-minded and purposeful. It was this dedication which enabled me to make the necessary adjustments. I started by traveling about to speak in the interests of the *Histadrut,* helping to raise funds for its extensive institutions in Palestine. Simultaneously I was particularly concerned with the youth activities of the organization. It seemed a tragedy to me that the Zionist movement had neglected to attract the interest and support of the youth. With the exception of Hadassah, which still benefited from a strong organization of its Juniors, no youth group had been attracted in sufficient numbers or purpose to safeguard the continuity of the Zionist movement in this country, or to reinforce the ranks of pioneers in Palestine. It seemed important to find out whether the *Poalei Zion* had succeeded where the rest of the Zionist movement had failed. Surely in an organization tied so closely as *Poalei Zion* to the dynamics of Palestine's present and future life, both answer and solution would be found.

The question, as to why no real movement of youth had developed in this country, was nothing new to me. It had puzzled me from the beginnings in 1917 of my Zionist life. It struck me as strange that a purpose which had come so completely to fill my own life should have failed to attract other young Americans in great numbers. Was it be-

cause they happened not to feel any psychic kinship with the spirit of pioneering in their own country, and hence felt no pull to a comparable spirit in the new life of Palestine? Or was it because, having no real knowledge of the background from which they stemmed—however many generations back—they had not a sense of identification with their people's destiny, nor sufficient curiosity about themselves as Jews strong enough to arouse their consciousness, and direct it to a purpose? Was it perhaps even simpler than any of these? Had the image of the Zionist movement, as they had come to it through a mother's Hadassah activities or a father's lip service, left them unable to summon interest in affairs which appeared at times to deprive them of their parents without in return giving meaning for their own lives and thinking?

It seemed to me that, in and to the whole world today, no task was at once more vital, more of an opportunity in itself, than to instill in the lives of young people a purpose real and challenging enough to be a goal, meaningful enough to arouse in them the will and enthusiasm to give it the best and the most of which they are capable.

Searching for clues to an idea which could magnetize young people to become committed participants with the pioneers of Palestine, delving into available reading material in the forlorn offices in which the youth department of the *Poalei Zion* functioned, what I found first was that if any results of consequence were to be achieved, a fresh start would have to be made. Involuntarily I contrasted the surroundings, physically drab and uninspiring, from which *Poalei Zion* was attempting to make its influence felt, inviting positive creative action, with the little center we had prepared years earlier in the Seventh District, on Seventy-second Street between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues. First we had made the quarters, modest as they were, as appealing to the eye as they were practical for the purpose.

We had not stopped at fashioning just an organization office and workroom, but had made a home, where Zionism could be host, for the purposes of Palestine. The youth needed a home of their own as well, a place where they could develop their own action within the movement. I was discouraged because I was back where I had started.

As I pored over dull brochures it struck me that what was needed in the way of a fresh start for *Poalei Zion* was, first of all, a new attitude, not mere prosaic brochures serving up paragraphs cataloguing the variations of capitalism, socialism, and communism, with no attempt to relate dry, academic materials to practical and pressing issues affecting, or hoping to affect, the lives of the youth. What little attempt there was at making contact was through whipped-up hero worship of the great personalities of the second *aliyah,* the men and women who had created the *halutz.* But nothing was available pertaining to the historical processes motivating these pioneers, from which they drew the strength to do what they had done; no effort was therefore being made to have these historical processes serve the younger generation as they had the older. With only secondary contact with the sources from which the heroes being presented to them as models had derived their strength, from whence were these young Americans to draw strength and inspiration to meet the present and what was to come? How was it to be expected that ties could be set up which would be strong enough to engender individual identification?

Out of my search came the idea of a "Camp Kvutza." By joining the summer camp familiar to young Americans with the nature of the *kvutza* in Palestine, and actual experiencing of the meanings of self-labor, study and discussion, potential young leadership might receive basic training which they could carry over to a higher level of activity.

The plan received support from two important quarters; the youth themselves gave it especially enthusiastic support;

and the two Palestinian emissaries from Palestine, then in this country, heartily favored it; these were Golda Myerson (later Golda Meir, Foreign Minister of Israel) and Zalman Rubashov (later Zalman Shazar, Minister of Education of Israel).

Wherever I spoke in the interests of the *Histadrut* campaign, the idea was received with spirit. Contributions were forthcoming, earmarked for fellowships to Camp Kvutza, so that selection of the young people for training could be on the basis of merit and specific potential, not on ability to pay. I was anxious to prepare myself with some practical aptitude, so that I could share in the actual working of the plan. Therefore, from our home, then in Connecticut, I traveled twice weekly to Pratt Institute in Brooklyn to learn large-scale cafeteria cooking, so that I could assume responsibility for the commissary as well as for the camp, when our family would spend our summer there.

If ever a break in the lines of communication was encountered, it was encountered just here. Manya Shohat, then visiting America, and always the catalyst in my life, had arranged a meeting for me with a member of the youth movement, *Hashomer Hatzair.* In the course of our lunch at a small cafeteria on Seventh Avenue I discovered to my utter astonishment and delight, that the plan I had worked out in theory and which was now ready to put into practice had long since been put into effect! That boys and girls, having no means of their own, were earning the money to pay for centers for their activities, for summer camps, and for their training and departure for Palestine when they had prepared themselves for their *aliyah,* their immigration!

That a youth movement was already doing exactly what we had been planning—I could hardly believe it! It seemed too good to be true. What difference did it make, who brought such things about, so long as they were getting

done? I rushed to the *haverim* of the *Poalei Zion*—my comrades—with the good tidings.

My question was one of jubilation more than exasperation: "But why, when these young people already are training themselves for the pioneer life in Palestine, did I hear nothing about them?" I felt a curtain of antagonism coldly lowered between us. It took a while to learn the reason.

It chanced that I had been instrumental in the *Hashomer Hatzair* receiving a rather substantial contribution toward its work. It happened without premeditation. By coincidence I was visiting a wealthy friend at the moment when she received a check for five thousand dollars from an insurance company as settlement for jewelry lost or stolen. We had been talking about a need to purchase some cows for the training farm on which some of the youngsters were preparing themselves for their life in Palestine; expected funds to cover the cost of the cows had not materialized and there was a chance that the training program would have to be canceled, or at least postponed.

My friend was responsive to the situation and, saying that payment of the insurance claim warranted her going outside her budget, gave me a thousand dollars for the purchase of the cows. It was interesting to me for another reason than the immediate one. I had noticed that the very rich among the Jews could always be counted on to react favorably when fellow Jews took to farming.

This, then, was the reason for the coldness shown me by my *Poalei Zion haverim.* To understand it fully, one had to understand that the groups differed in political coloration. While in this instance both were members of the *Histadrut,* and were socialist-Zionists, they were of slightly different hue, the *Hashomer Hatzair* being, not "red," but a somewhat deeper "pink." I had not had the experience which would have warned me that this difference could lead to some hard stepping on toes. If the sum I had been able

to turn over to the *Hashomer Hatzair* had been smaller, the incident might have passed without effect; but, being a member of *Poalei Zion,* to have diverted a thousand dollars away from it to another youth group—one outside their jurisdiction—was regarded as an indiscretion bordering on disloyalty. Had it not been for a valued friend I had made in this new world of mine, Chaim Greenberg, I would have come under party discipline. This was avoided when he reminded them that all of the *halutz* movements were, alike, under the aegis of the *Histadrut,* and that at times the *Poalei Zion* itself had contributed to the upkeep of the *Hashomer Hatzair.*

Chaim Greenberg, writer, lecturer, profound thinker, was a leader outstanding among the *Poalei Zion* membership, a man as high in moral character as he was keen of intellect and wit. Yet not even he could lessen the outcome of the incident.

I returned from a speaking trip for the *Histadrut* campaign to find myself relegated to a committee of six charged merely with finding a camp site. I sensed from this that I was no longer wanted in the administration of the Camp Kvutza which I had hopefully proposed. Were these antagonisms and suspicions inevitable between groups working for similar objectives?

My affiliation with the organization continued, as did my interest in and contact with the *Hashomer Hatzair;* the latter grew closer as I had the opportunity to observe its members in action and learn to know them individually. I found in Chaim Greenberg a friend, adviser, and confidant who could and wanted to help me meet constructively the incidental conflicts. He could understand the heartbreak of seeing good plans go awry for no better reason—or so it seemed to me—than vague political differences; he helped me not to let it interfere with my work for the *Histadrut.* Equally important, he led me to a deeper, more sympa-

thetic understanding of people with whom, after all, I had of my own accord chosen to work. In Russia he had been a member of the *Zeire Zion* organization—the "Youth of Zion" which amalgamated with the *Poalei Zion* in Palestine, together becoming the *Mapai,* the labor party of Israel, which held the controlling voice also in the *Histadrut.* The *Zeire Zion* differed from the *Poalei Zion* in its greater emphasis on the cultural and spritual than the political values of Zionism, and its members—like Chaim Greenberg—had given great impetus to the rebirth of the Hebrew language by making it a daily medium of expression in their writings and speech. A distinguished writer and speaker of Yiddish too, in whatever language he used—even English, which he mastered in a few short years—his addresses were more than oratory. He was truly a teacher. By the beauty of his diction and delivery, and the keenness of his logic, the depth of his emotional content, he shared effectively the wealth of accumulated knowledge and wisdom he had drawn from man's—and his people's—historical experiences.

I had met no one like him except in the pages of Russian literature. He had left Russia only when he came to believe, in deep disillusionment, that the "Revolution" was betraying its own principles. He was the very prototype of the Russian intelligentsia—and as full of contradictions. He was the Alyosha of Dostoevski's *Brothers Karamazov,* like Alyosha torn by inner doubts and conflicts; his deep religiosity running counter to the rationalism of his socialist belief and his clear perception of the right and wrong of a course of action; an intellectual, his agony of doubt was more apt to come after, not before, the making of a decision. In Chaim Greenberg's case this was profitable to the Western Union, whose boys were kept on the jump to deliver telegrams conveying "regrets" for not keeping engagements he had made in good faith, only to face doubts about later.

The mixture of inherent great qualities, contradictions, and conflicts had carved deep lines in his still young, lean, dark-skinned, sensitively beautiful face, framed in a mop of unruly black hair. It was his eyes, however, which best revealed the spiritual depths which, often in torment, could take calm courage from the underlying certainties and faith at the core of his being. Those who cared for him wished him to have lived in a world less filled with the complexities which bound him, and kept him from soaring, unconstrained, to the heights of which he was capable. Not so to him, who put above all else the good and welfare of the Jewish people, to whose liberation from their state of homelessness he gave unreservedly of the great gifts of his all-too-short life.

I felt myself completely and absolutely at home when I attended my first meeting of the youth of the *Hashomer Hatzair*. From a seething slum street in Brownsville, Brooklyn, I entered a new world in which every corner of the basement clubroom was occupied by young people busy with craft work, reading, or serious discussion. This was the *ken*—or nest—of the Brownsville segment of the youth movement; two rooms, one large, one small, obviously poor and rundown yet rescued from stark ugliness by being a humming center of creative activities; they had paused long enough to transform the drabness by hanging pictures and examples of handcraft, by knocking bookshelves together and stocking them with useful books and, above all, by the dynamic spirit permeating the rooms. This was a world made and managed by youth, into which adults came only when invited.

It was happily unbelievable to one who had endured scores of endlessly flowery introductions to simply be presented to a semicircle of young people and sit on the floor with them to talk as a fellow worker and friend. I told of

my horseback trip through Palestine, of my visits up and down the land to Arabs as well as Jews, of my discovery of the pioneer world and way of life of our *halutzim.* This was a language they understood, it was theirs. Each of them expected, when their preparation was completed, to make the way of life I described his own; even though some might fall by the wayside—for the training was long and rigorous, the self-discipline of learning hard and demanding—out of this group, listening that evening in rapt attention, would eventually come the first *kibbutz** in Palestine of American *halutzim.* In time it would be called Ein Hashofet—well of the judge—in honor of Louis D. Brandeis, who became their friend and sponsor.

Unlike Europe, where the membership numbered tens of thousands, the movement had had difficulty in taking root in American soil. Here there was no precedent of youth movements, and it was necessary to draw its numbers largely from the Hebrew schools, and those children of foreign-born, new citizens whose ties with their past history and the future hopes of their people were still strong enough to cause them to want their children to learn the language in which these had been, and were being, expressed.

For the light it shed on the quality of these young people who were being drawn into the movement, I would like to describe an incident which occurred during a speaking trip I made to Detroit. Not only was the city deep in the depression, but evils attendant on Prohibition were at a frightening height.

As always when on a speaking tour, I made time to meet

* Hereafter, in place of *kvutza* the word "kibbutz" will be used to indicate the communal farms. At first *kibbutz* was associated with the *kibbutzim* (plural of *kibbutz*) of *Hashomer Hatzair,* but has come to be used as the generic term, distinguishing a single farm group from one belonging to a federated group of farms.

with some of the young people of the community; this particular night had been promised to a group of the *Hashomer Hatzair.* Besides the younger ones, there were many older members whose training had been completed and who were ready to leave on their *aliyah,* and wanted to talk over prospects of their future with one who had been there.

I was struck by the extraordinary level of their intellect, culture, and purposefulness and felt a sense of regret at the interruption of our talk when I was pressed to attend an engagement party for two ardent supporters of the *Histadrut;* the young woman was a gifted folk singer. I consented to go on condition that my young friends to whom the evening really belonged were also invited.

What happened at the party seemed to be one of those miraculous experiences which one senses later could so easily have been missed. Here were young people, virile, modern, spirited, utterly immune to the allure of lawbreaking which seemed in the very air of the times, adhering with utter naturalness to abstinence from liquor, and even from smoking, which was also against their code. This did not make them dull and prosaic. In fact, without any of the conventional stimuli to merriment, they promoted a gaiety which was thoroughly contagious, making the gathering joyous for all.

It was after this visit, and similar experiences in Boston, Montreal, and elsewhere, that I took occasion to visit Mr. Brandeis in Washington. I wanted to discuss with him my discovery of this group of young people who were fitting themselves for lives according to principles which were his own.

Ever a man who admired people who lived by their beliefs, he listened closely, a brooding yet gratified expression in his eyes, to what I had to tell him of the youth movement. He put searching questions. I recounted what young

men and women had revealed to me of their feelings when they came to the great decision—whether or not to live their lives in Palestine. Or, in the cases where the decision was not to go to Palestine, how they met the heartbreaking step of leaving the movement, with the necessity often of breaking ties and associations they had maintained from childhood. I had been impressed with the realization of all with whom I talked, that there was no middle way. Above all, here were young people who adhered willingly to a code of their own making, under no pressure other than self-discipline.

Judge Brandeis asked if I thought it would be possible for him to meet some of the young people themselves, to hear from their own lips of their dreams, hopes, plans. It struck me that he was reaching out to live vicariously what might, had the opportunity come earlier in his life, have become a fulfillment he could have wished for himself.

With clear impressions in my mind of these many months of close contact with the people and the principles of the movement, I listened to the sharp criticism and limited praise given by Zalman Rubishov, just returned from an extended trip over the country. At the time of my withdrawal from work with the youth of the *Poalei Zion* he had been absent from the city, as had Golda Myerson, but they had both been deeply distressed when my plan for the Camp Kvutza had not been carried through as had been planned.

Their chief concern now, however, was directed at the support I was giving to the *Hashomer Hatzair*. Rubishov remarked on his high respect for their educational methods, saying, "They were the only ones who knew how to educate youth, and I for one would be ready to see all youth under their tutelage." He paused an instant and added sharply, "But the fact is, in Palestine, they are leading their youth to communism."

It was an ominous statement, but the charge was not new to me. Even before my first meeting with the group I had been warned that it was Zionist-communist. Of course such an assertion was so irreconcilably contradictory that it was not to be taken seriously by intelligent people. If corroboration of this was necessary, at this time Russia's opposition to Zionism was continuing, on the ground that it was a counterrevolutionary movement; Zionists were being persecuted and in some cases imprisoned for their beliefs. In the United States too, if only with vitriolic words, the Communists were fighting any and all manifestations of Zionism, especially in the labor groups whose socialistic values should logically have drawn them into closer sympathy. And in Palestine, where their numbers fortunately were few, the antagonism of the Communists—most of whom were Jews—had gone so far that, for example in the grave uprisings of 1929, they had aligned themselves with the forces of that archreactionary the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, and openly incited the Arabs against the Jews.

One could only wonder how it had been possible, then, to accept without conclusive investigation the charge now being made against the movement. From the beginning I personally had found the movement to be Jewish and Zionist to its core, notwithstanding its admittedly socialist-revolutionary philosophy which was shared, incidentally, by the *Poalei Zion.*

Making clear to Rubishov that I respected his right to his own view, I personally had acquired such respect and admiration for the *Hashomer Hatzair* that it would be utterly impossible for me to repudiate what seemed to me the finest manifestation I had found in the whole Zionist movement without first-hand evidence to substantiate the charges. It would take more than hearsay evidence to convince me that it was not the true aim of the organization to educate its youth to assume personal responsibility for the

fulfillment of the objectives of Zionism, and to so identify themselves with its aims that nothing less than giving themselves intact to the liberation of the Jewish people and their concentration in Palestine was enough for them to contribute.

However, I was deeply enough disturbed at the potential of damage from irresponsible charges that I was ready to make a special trip to Palestine to confirm the truth.

Two days later I was on a ship, traveling eastward.

21

IN ITS WAY THE SPECTACULARLY ROUGH CROSSing was symbolic of the turbulent currents, seemingly conspiring together from many directions to keep men from finding the way to living together in peace; many of the currents involved the two problems which prompted making this trip on such short notice: how to effect stable good relations between Arabs and Jews; and whether or not *Hashomer Hatzair* was, as charged, leading its youth to communism.

As though the efforts underway in Palestine to build the Jewish homeland were not difficult enough to accomplish, to one degree or another, the situation was subject to many external forces. If matters in Palestine were to be understood, it would depend on understanding, also, impacts from the outside. By trying to appraise some of them as they related to the whole, for the most part I could endure the disagreeable crossing.

How many guises did "solutions" assume, in the muddle of the times since the end of World War II

At Versailles humane men, heads of state, had placed themselves on the side of a committed "permanent peace," until the "Old Tiger," Clemenceau, reminded them to make very certain that they meant what they said once they understood the costs of peace. "Among those costs, gentlemen," insisted the Tiger, peering hard at his hearers from under the thick, disheveled white eyebrows, "is the giving up of empires." Were they interested enough in permanent peace to pay for the privilege? The British, for example, by coming out of India? The French out of North Africa? Belgium out of the Congo? The Americans out of the Philippines and Puerto Rico, agreeing also to leave Cuba and Mexico alone? "Peace is very expensive," sighed the formidable old man. " We must therefore be very sure we are prepared to pay what it will cost to have no more war."

In Petrograd, Lincoln Steffens pondered another kind of "solution" for the ills of the world. Lenin, a "quiet figure in old clothes," explained to him that Soviet Russia now was "a revolutionary government with an evolutionary plan; it is serving a purpose that has to be served."

Steffens, as a liberal, had to work hard "to grasp the idea of an evolutionary society which was beginning as a dictatorship to establish a new order, force the people to form new ideas and habits, defend this growing thing from conspiracies and corruption inside, and from wars outside, till its various industries could evolve into one united productive whole, a self-governed, highly disciplined business organization. It took time to put ideas like that through one's head." But by the time he got back to Paris from Petrograd the ideas had had sufficient time to show him that there was, in Russia, "a new culture; an economic, scientific, *not a moral,* culture."*

In Italy a "man of destiny" planned to change the map of

* Lincoln Steffens, *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company).

Africa, and make the Mediterranean an Italian lake over which, as in the days of the Roman Empire, an Italian Emperor would rule, although now under a Duce's dictation. In Germany another "man of destiny" used his hatred of Communism as a red herring, fed his paranoid hatred of the Jew, and yammered the empty boast that he could establish peace by ridding the world of both.

Elsewhere "solution" became synonymous with "appeasement" and vice versa. Fascism, socialism, and many derivative "isms" came to the fore. To the right, the tides of fascism pulled distraught masses into their current. To the left, increasing numbers of the disillusioned and dispossessed fell in behind the communist revolution.

In the United States a case before the U. S. Supreme Court, whereby the State of Oklahoma defended its right to hold the manufacture of ice a public utility, would have been absurd had it not been connected with both the fact of economic depression and the principle of free enterprise. "With deep emotion, his black-robed arms moving in expressive gestures," Mr. Justice Brandeis dissented from the ruling that the depression did not justify the State of Oklahoma in tampering with free enterprise. Mr. Brandeis rejected the assumption that the intent of the Fourteenth Amendment was to leave the people helpless in the face of economic dislocation. In such times could the Court assume the responsibility of staying the course of social experiment? There must be power in the states, as in the nation, to remold economic practices and institutions, through experimentation, to meet changing social and economic needs. Denial of the right to experiment well might be fraught with serious consequences to the people. "If we would be guided by the light of reason," ran the dissenting opinion, "we must let our minds be bold."*

* Arthur W. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Crisis of the Old Order* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1957).

These were among the thoughts passing through my mind as the ship plowed along in the rough seas. Intermittent squalls, violent storms, and mountainous seas, in which seemingly any ship would be able to maintain her headway—it was as though the elements were holding up to man the mirror of the maelstrom he had created in his own society.

As I reviewed my own thinking, reading, and experience of these past years, preparatory to searching out answers I was traveling to find, I saw how the remark of Lincoln Steffens—that the culture of Soviet Russia was not a moral culture—exactly expressed my own criterion for rejecting any likenesses between the new societies in Russia and Palestine. Open as I was to radical change if necessary, instinctively I was too influenced by the moral-ethical Jewish culture, too deeply inoculated with bourgeois ideals—as those of the Left scornfully characterized them—to deliver up my thought and actions to those evolving their own expedient code of conduct, in which, if not truth, then terror was accepted as valid. In all honesty I must admit to myself that at times it had been a temptation to join forces with those who professed to have found so many definite "solutions" to the problems of the times. But in the last analysis I could not compromise with amoral means to achieve desirable ends, however scientifically and economically advanced and desirable they might be.

In the *Hashomer Hatzair*—an organization as revolutionary in its approach to the causes and cures of a sick society as was the approach of the Soviet Union—I found a strikingly wide scope of responsibility; its world outlook not only envisioned the building of a new and better society in general, and in Palestine specifically, but it was dedicated to liberation, in body and spirit, of the Jews as a people. It seemed to me that, at the start of my inquiry, I found a telling refutation of the charges, inasmuch as, in

its otherwise advanced program, the U. S. S. R. had conspicuously overlooked releasing, in body and spirit—as it had that of the many other and varied ethnic groups within its orbit—the national expression of the Jews within its borders.

In the *Hashomer Hatzair* I had met for the first time a group to whom, as to me, Zionism signified a complete and total revolution, personal as well as political.

These were not the first individuals I had met who had this outlook; the aspect which differentiated them was that, within their movement, they had developed an educational method to give continuity to their beliefs and to ensure its expansion as a way to build towards the future by educating a new generation of youth in its meanings and methods.

It would therefore take a good deal of irrefutable proof to convince me that those who had completed their training and gone to Palestine to realize the aims which had molded and guided their every action throughout the period of their adolescence, had now effected a complete reversal of objectives and were being led away from Zionism to communism.

My acquaintance with the organization was based on more than my intimate contact with the young people themselves, enlightening though that was. Mordechai and Zipporah Bentov, the two emissaries sent out from Palestine to educate and counsel the youth of the movement in the United States, had become my close friends. They deepened my insight into the thinking, methods, and objectives of education which had successfully achieved what so many had failed in—namely to implant in the experience of young people a purpose so clear-cut that it then became the major motivation of their lives.

Mordechai and Zipporah were equipped to lead because they themselves had come along the same path. Both were veterans of the movement in their native Poland, and

Bentov had been one of its founders; as soon as was possible after World War I they had emigrated, in the vanguard of the third *aliyah.*

They were of different backgrounds and temperament. Mordechai came of a well-to-do family. His father was a successful head of a publishing house which, when he died, his mother, a beautiful and gifted woman, took over and administered. In American terms the boy grew up to be an assimilated Jew. He had all the benefits of superior education, studied music, had a deep appreciation of art, knew several languages—not including Yiddish, which he learned to speak only much later, in New York. With little or no contact with the problems of the Jewish masses of Poland, he had neither a common language with them nor possessed their religious traditions or national consciousness. His mother country was Poland, his mother tongue was Polish, he had participated actively in Poland's movement to free herself from Russia.

Tall, wiry, slim, his body as disciplined as his mind, he was in fact the very personification of the movement. His classic features were disturbed only by the thick-lensed glasses he was obliged to wear; yet a curious relation was suggested between the bending of light by the ground lenses, allowing his myopic eyes to focus and see clearly, and the working of his mind, bringing assorted, seemingly irreconcilable, elements in the world's political picture into clear and distinct focus, presenting in a single image an interrelated whole.

Thus, while the October Revolution of 1917 in Russia was a pivotal point in his thinking, in no way did it bury the call to concentrate on the liberation of his people, and the urgency of achieving their rightful place in Palestine. He grew adept in looking accurately in many directions at once. By looking beyond the immediate, often repugnant, policies and tactics of Soviet Russia and keeping in view the

economic and social bases on which they were building toward a new world of socialism, he could maintain in his socialist-Zionist sights those bases as essential also to the Jews if, in the new life they were to build in Palestine, they were to lay sound social and economic foundations, and produce a worker and tiller of the soil, a new Jew.

For Bentov's was no easy acceptance of limited objectives as to his fellow members of the movement. To him it was not enough for the Jew to travel from one country to another to achieve his goal, even if that country were his land of hope and promise, Palestine. To him it was necessary, for the Jew's true liberation, to do away once and forever with the occupational bonds which so long had held him captive and insecure and, free of them, to create an economy in which he, the Jew, was an essential and productive part. No longer could the Jew agree submissively to some arbitrary position in the economic pattern. As worker and farmer, he must become an integrated part of its broad base; else, as in Poland and other countries where Bentov had seen it happen, the Jew would remain teetering and insecure on an inverted economic pyramid, exposed to the winds of war or economic depression or both, and therefore among the first to be toppled.

Among the main reasons for Mordechai and Zipporah being in the educational youth movement which was *Hashomer Hatzair* was their total acceptance of the principle that there can be no preaching of a creed which you do not yourself practice. When I met them again, after my arrival in Palestine, they had resumed their lives in Mishmar Ha'emek; Bentov was again driving his beloved tractor in *kibbutz* in the *Emek,* situated with its west wall on the slopes of the Menashe hills. They had had the common experience of having drained swamps, broken stones to build roads, built habitations, sickened with fever, been hungry, dancing and singing away weariness and discourage-

ment; they had settled in the *kibbutz* Mishmar Ha'emek as two of its founders, later leaving it only temporarily because their experience was needed to instruct the first group of young Americans who would go to Palestine to found a *kibbutz* of their own.

Zipporah—in backround, personality, attitudes—was, in everything but the sharing of a common ideal, Mordechai's opposite. In contrast to his reserve and controlled manner of expression, she bubbled with an expansive, contagious, outgoing enthusiasm. She had a talent for bestowing and expressing love, and the warmth and understanding that emanated from her made the place she was a better and happier place to be. I have known only two other women who possessed her understanding in like degree: my mother and Henrietta Szold. All could attain remarkable self-effacement in the feelings and problems of others.

It was not by accident that Zipporah expressed her faith in joyous ways. She was a direct descendant of the Ba'al Shem Tov (Master of the Good Name) who, in an earlier day, had led his followers in breaking through the hard shell of a rigid orthodoxy, enabling them to express their sublime faith through joy. On my first visit to Palestine in 1925 I had been struck by the parallel of hassidism, the mystic religion of the Ba'al Shem Tov, and *halutziut,* or pioneering. Issac Ba'al Shem, who had inspired hassidism, making joy the expression of his religion, was a *halutz* of his day, breaking away from the fetters of limiting traditions, and bidding his followers to reverence God with joy.

Zipporah was completely and enticingly feminine, from the crown of her wavy drift of red-gold hair which held its burnished luster nothwithstanding endless washings in strong soap and cold water (hot water being an almost nonexistent luxury) to the full length of the softly curved figure. All the more surprising, then, that when she and Bentov arrived in New York to help train new young people

of the *Hashomer Hatzair* for the *kibbutz* way of life, I learned that she would have preferred to have been a boy; she was happiest when work assigned to her was the hard kind usually given to men, and undertook always to prove that she could do it even better than could men.

As the ship plunged ahead through the troubled seas, I took courage for what was ahead from thinking about Mordechai and Zipporah, contrasting as they did with the decay and hopelessness of an old world order, and representing the ascendant hopes of a new one. They spoke for that current of rejuvenation in the air, calling to the young and the courageous to make contact with it, and translate it into action.

It was like an omen that on the last day or two out the winds moderated, the sea turned—if not peaceful—at least less warlike.

When I arrived in Palestine, it could not have been by accident that there was, running through my mind, the saying, "*lamrot hakol,*" in spite of everything.

"*Lamrot hakol*"—all rumors and irresponsible charges to the contrary, I approached the task of the next few weeks with complete faith in the integrity and purpose of *Hashomer Hatzair,* and the incorruptible dedication to its course.

22

FROM THE SHIP, ANCHORED IN THE OUTER harbor of the port of Jaffa, we were rowed to shore in a small skiff manned by shouting, gesticulating Arabs. Unless one knew that this was their ordinary habit of communication, it would have been frightening; actually it had no significance. I made use of the time spent in bouncing across the harbor waters to make a mental note or two. I must not listen merely for what I wanted to hear, looking only for the evidence I hoped to find, with respect to the Arab policy of Mapai, and whether or not *Hashomer Hatzair* was veering to communism. I must listen objectively, look in the directions which would yield evidence affording a real basis for dependable findings.

One thing which struck me immeditaely was the contrast between the way things appeared from outside, and inside, Palestine. In the States, for example, the whole emphasis seemed to focus on the present, and the outrage of British actions. Inside, these seemed scarcely to be noticed;

the future was what counted. Regardless of the surrounding political turmoil, the day-by-day building of the homeland was going forward steadily. Unrest and uncertainty in everything were simply taken for granted, so accepted a fact of life that they could not interfere with the work at hand. The prevailing attitude was that, contrary to the assumptions—or wishes?—of outsiders, the future of the homeland was in the hands of its builders; their hands would be the ones to do the work and determine the shape it was to take.

This, my fourth visit to Palestine, was my first as a member of the labor group. From the moment of stepping ashore I felt spritually and physically caught up in the current of dynamism; it was in the people, it was in the very air.

In the labor movement, one of the first of its leaders I met was Berl Katznelson, spiritual leader and policy guide of the socialist-Zionist party, Mapai. This was a man of great and intense purpose, and with a quality of thinking which explained readily why he was regarded as one of the giants of the pioneering generation of the second *aliyah.*

Night after night we sat on the seaside terrace of the then modest Kaethe Dan Hotel overlooking the Mediterranean, discussing the broad problems of Palestine's building, including those specific points with which my trip was connected.

I came to admire Berl Katznelson without succeeding completely in being able to follow his reasoning. In his keen analyses and insight into events, there seemed to me a continual blind spot in all that pertained to *Hashomer Hatzair.* We concluded on what might be judged a draw, in prize-fighting parlance. We parted on the note of my telling him amicably that he reminded me of a wise, gifted father who lavished on a son the benefits of his accumulated knowledge and experience and then disowned him when

the son struck out on a path of his own, acknowledging the boy no longer as son and heir to his spirit.

From these conversations I went to a *kibbutz* in the Jordan Valley which Berl arranged for me to visit. If the heart was to faint at sights that suggested the dream was moving slowly, this was one of the places for it to do so. Located on the isolated frontier of Zemach, on the border of Transjordan, barbed wire surrounded the colony, with guard houses at tactical points. Over everything lay a hard grayness which reminded me of nothing so much as a drab Pennsylvania coal-mining town.

But a faint heart would revive immediately at the sight of the young men and women, carrying on their lives in this terrifyingly stark and desolate spot in the desert at the lower end of Lake Kinneret, not far from the *kvutza* of Degania. In this uninviting and unattractive place they had been able to make no more than a start toward their dream of conquering the wilderness, changing it into a lush oasis, a verdant Garden of Eden, as the settlers of Degania had done. But the start had been made. It had been made within the youth movement of *Hashomer Hatzair* and, though this settlement had broken away in 1929, when *Hashomer Hatzair* created a federation of its own *kibbutzim*—the *Kibbutz Artzi*—it struck me as maintaining the original approach and educational method for the development of the individual in the group.

I turned next to explore Chaim Greenberg's question: What was the nature and strength of the will behind the stated Arab policy of *Mapai?*

I talked with Abu Hushi, leader of Haifa's powerful labor forces and in charge of the Histadrut's policy of unionizing the Arab workers. Abu Hushi, too, had been raised in *Hashomer Hatzair,* and there the will to effect good Arab-Jewish relations had been deeply implanted in him. When he left the movement to find a career outside of the

kibbutz he retained the strength of his earlier education, remaining staunch in his faith in building a way to live together in harmony with the Arabs, among whom were many friends sufficiently close to keep him in hiding at times when the British sought to apprehend and imprison him. One had only to listen to him to be impressed by the passionate sincerity of his will to build good relations with the Arabs. With tremendous enthusiasm he related practical things which were being done. For example, to make it possible for an Arab worker to acquire a wife without mortgaging his soul, a loan fund had been created. In the Arab world marriage was an expensive proposition, but because marriage tied in closely, for good or ill, with so many aspects of everyday life, it was realistic to set up a respectable, dignified, safe way of arranging for it.

Abu Hushi described to me the only union in which Arabs and Jews were organized together; this was a strong union of the railroad workers and had been operating peacefully for many years.

He told me of many other enlightened projects; notwithstanding all this, the note on which our talk ended was somewhat pessimistic. Whereas funds seemed to be available for all kinds of undertakings, of greater or lesser timeliness and relevance, it remained difficult to find money for building strong underpinnings for measures important equally to the lives of the Jews and the Arabs. He brightened, however, saying that obstacles were only to be overcome, and he told me of how the Arab quarry workers at the Nesher Cement Works near Haifa had gone on strike when—a last straw—the contractor who ran the company store refused them (of all things!) their weekly ration of camel meat to celebrate their Friday Sabbath meal. It had required only a small additional sum to bring the strike to a successful conclusion. "But this sum," Abu Hushi said bitterly, "was not forthcoming." And thus another oppor-

tunity was lost, he said, to cement closer relations between Arab and Jewish workers. He reminded me, however, that even small gains outweighed the setbacks, and the important thing was that the will to make the gains steadily larger always exist.

Dov Hos, whom I had met first in 1929, was of the same mind as Abu Hushi, namely, that the *Mapai* party was unequivocally and permanently committed to strengthening good Arab-Jew relations, although it was a fact that the party was at times hard put to find both time and money to make its announced policy—the policy also of the *Histadrut*—real in fact as well as theory.

Dov Hos was one of the most promising of the younger leadership of the labor forces. At Cambridge University and the London School of Economics he had received the training which equipped him unusually well for his present tasks. He was possessed of a generally objective point of view, and an unusual understanding of factors outside the confines of Jewish life. It was easy to see how keen he was on the whole question of developing good relations between Arab and Jew. When I put Chaim Greenberg's question to him—as to the amount of will behind the party's policy—he gave an illuminating answer. "Amongst my many tasks," Dov Hos pointed out, "I am head of the *Histadrut* and *Mapai* Arab departments. To this I am allowed to devote one-twenty-second part of my time!" That was all he needed to say to answer Chaim Greenberg's query. There may have been no lack of desire to create the solution for this problem so bound up with Palestine's future. But there appeared to be a flagging of the will to overcome the handicaps due to lack of time and money; all the many other formidable problems which had stood in the way of the development of Jewish Palestine had been met "in spite of everything." "Why?" I kept asking myself, "why not this?"

With the views of key figures with whom I had talked for

guidance, I was free now to visit the *kibbutz* Mishmar Ha'emek to round out my inquiry into the policies and current directions of the *Hashomer Hatzair.* Later I was to look back and see how little I realized the fatefulness to my life of that visit.

As I passed along the aisle of palm trees I sensed something indefinably different from anything encountered in any other *kvutza* or *kibbutz* I had visited. Kfar Giladi, which had been my point of reference in the world of pioneering, had been in existence for many years, yet externally it remained crude and ugly, a raw outpost in which even simple beautification had been postponed to some far-off future, if indeed it was ever to be thought of.

Here, though there were many obvious signs of newness, in a settlement still only four years old, thing were quite different. Though not out of the stage of tar-paper shacks, tents, and quonsetlike huts, nevertheless there were evidences of better things to come. My first view of the whole was from the roof of the children's house—here, as in most colonies, a two-story concrete structure. Here the planning for the future was described for me. A high school, just there, on that hill . . . a permanent building for the library and music room, now housed in wooden huts . . . flower plantings here . . . more housing units there. . . .

Mishmar Ha'emek (the "Guardian of the *Emek*") rested on the slopes of Mount Ephraim, where Mount Carmel ends and the hills of Ephraim begin. As the colony guarded the *Emek,* so hills guarded the colony. Leading up to what was to become a fine forest—the *Hashomer Hatzair* Forest —was an alley of cypresses, the planting paid for with money given the Jewish National Fund by the youth of the movement all over the world. It was still half-grown woodland but it was a beginning, both aesthetically and in the economic sense. The money donated for the planting had furnished the first sparse income for the living needs of

members of the community, income which had enabled them to go on and plant fields and hillsides; the fields stretching toward the mountains of Nazareth were green already with the promise of a good harvest of wheat and barley, corn and alfalfa; fruit tree saplings were in blossom on the hillsides, and the vineyards along the slopes were tidy with tier on tier of rustic frames supporting the meticulously trained grapevines.

Like Kfar Giladi, Mishmar Ha'emek, being a frontier colony, was exposed on all sides to attack. To the southeast lay the strong Arab towns of Jenin and Nablus; on the heights of the surrounding hills were Arab villages with considerable armed strength; and while the Arab village of Abu Shusha, situated on a hill directly above the colony, was friendly, it needed to be borne in mind that, if anything should occur to curdle the friendly feeling, one well-placed machine gun obviously could rain down havoc on the wide open and unprotected farm community lying below. The British did permit a few rifles to be kept under official lock and key, to be used for self-defense and in extreme emergency; against any concerted attack, however, at this time the only actual defense was an absolute determination not to evacuate this spot, plus a few small weapons of which the British were kept unaware.

There was another, and subtle, difference between Kfar Giladi and Mishmar Ha'emek; it was a difference I had sensed too in the youth center in Brownsville, Brooklyn. Mishmar Ha'emek was more than an outpost; it contained the essences of a home. I came to realize this increasingly as a characteristic of *Hashomer Hatzair* as I learned to know its planners and builders.

There was much of policies and politics to be crowded into so short a visit, only overnight. From the States, Bentov had informed the movement of my deep interest, and its leaders here had responded by inviting some of the

best brains of the movement to meet with me for discussion. Three were particularly enlightening: Boria Linkowsky (later Linn), Eliezer Hacohen, and Yakov Hazan, one of the top leaders of the *Hashomer Hatzair.* Boria's quality of objective, well-balanced reasoning lent weight to any discussion. Eliezer's forte was a brilliant dialectic skill in driving home points with hammering effect. And Hazan? Hazan was different from the others; whatever he said, whatever position he took was tinctured with the power of kindliness and human understanding; whatever he said, even when he spoke controversially, derived power—not from resentment or hate, but from a consuming love of mankind.

I had received word that a crowded schedule of speaking and organizing awaited my return to the States, and I listened to these men, and exchanged thoughts with them, with a sense of great responsibility, for I would be the channel through which their point of view would communicate itself to those at home who could, if they understood the great purposes at stake, have a share in effecting them.

Our discussion centered around an open letter which had appeared in the labor daily paper, *Davar.* I had seen the letter; in fact, questions I had come such a long way to have answered were based on it.

The point of the letter was that *Hashomer Hatzair* had called on their fellow workers in Palestine to stand up and be counted as friends of their fellow socialists in the Soviet Union, instead of allowing themselves to be numbered, by default, among the enemies who now encircled them.

Was it the policy of the *Hashomer Hatzair,* I wanted to ascertain, at all costs to be guided by the socialist convictions of the Soviet Union, or only if and to such an extent that these convictions ran parallel to their Zionist aims? If parallel, I felt one could go along with them. However, in view of the insecurity of the Jews, the uncertainty as yet

of their future, and the fact that Palestine still was not in any sense ours, I could not see how Jewish interests would be served if socialist aims were allowed to outstrip or replace Zionist ones.

The discussion lasted deep into the night; presentation of the case was basic in principle, profound in thought, and convincing. We were in agreement that in no circumstances could the aims of Zionism come second. At the same time it was only realistic to recognize that its aims could not be truly achieved without application of the basic principles of socialism; that without social and economic justice assured the workers, and freedom secured *to Arab as well as to Jew,* neither peaceful development of the land nor the evolution into a national home for the Jew, in spirit as well as body, could ever be brought about. As in the States, I found the movement held the interests of the Jewish National Fund paramount.

From time to time through the discussion, references had been made to my leaning toward Palestine as my home. At breakfast before leaving, I saw Hazan once again. "Have you decided yet?" he asked me eagerly; it was rather like saying that I had had the whole night to think about it and surely that was long enough!

"I am shortly coming to Palestine to settle," I replied, full knowing I had had no plans for saying so this morning, yet not feeling unwilling to do so. "We shall have to see then, whether I can pass the ultimate tests which the movement gives to all its members; whether I am material which the *kibbutz* needs and will receive. Meanwhile, I am returning as a friend and supporter."

I felt the findings I had to take back with me confirmed Chaim Greenberg's belief that *if* the will to give Mapai's Arab policy full implementation existed, the will was still too weak to be effective. Too few people had too little time

and financial support to be delegated to concentrate on the complicated task.

As for any substantial evidence that *Hashomer Hatzair* was slipping into communism, I did not find it. All the movements had lost members to communism in the disillusionment of 1929 and following years, but *Hashomer Hatzair* no more than any other.

Just before leaving home a rather important incident in the life of our family had occurred. It had been much with me all during the weeks of my stay in Palestine; now, just before leaving for home, I received a cable which settled the matter in a way which could not have been happier.

If Chaim Greenberg had armed me with two questions, charging me to obtain answers, my son Norvin had armed me with one which, though rather more private in nature, was connected directly nevertheless with the others.

About to graduate from the Columbia School of Architecture, he had asked, "Is there a future for me in Palestine?" He wanted to get married, but he had no prospect of earning a living because of the Depression. Therefore, he could still decide where he would try to build a career. He implied now that my answer to his question would tip the balance either way.

But man proposes, and love disposes.

The sweet and beautiful girl he married knew nothing of things Jewish until she met us, indeed only half believing that she *was* a Jew. A typical product of the postwar period, perhaps subconsciously in order not to get hurt, she had encased a sensitive, artistic spirit in a hard shell of chain-smoking, drinking, and unconcealed cynicism; her instinct was to shield her inner self from a world that had lost its faith.

Then, exposed unexpectedly and for the first time to a faith in the future exemplified in the belief in renascent

Palestine, she opened like a flower long denied the sun needed for its maturing. About the story of the building of a resurrected nation by the faith and work of its youth, she could not hear enough. She reacted by letting down the guard behind which she had hidden her real self. It seems a small thing, yet her throwing off of the attitudes and behavior that had expressed her constraints and repressions was to be seen in how she changed the way she did her hair. Formerly she had worn its gold-burnished length drawn back severely and coiled in a hard knot at the back. Suddenly she had it cut to shoulder length and allowed it to flow free as she walked, which she did with new grace when she also discarded aggressive-sounding high heels for sandals.

They were married before I returned from my mission of inquiry, with Norvin's question answered affirmatively. The cable I had received as I was preparing to leave for the States said that Norvin and Helen had decided, without waiting for my return with the answer to the question, to make Palestine their home. We would pass each other on the way. They would settle in Jerusalem where Chaikin, a British Jew, was head of a successful architectural firm which designed most of the Government buildings; Norvin would work in Chaikin's office, where he had been offered a promising future.

Meantime my second son, Donald, had made up his mind to leave his studies at Cornell and live in Palestine the life he longed for, one of work on the soil. Since childhood such work had been his passion. At Glen Cove, when his playmates were busy with baseball, sailing, and such activities, it had always been possible to find him planting and weeding in the garden, or at work with his friend, Jack Levison, a brilliantly gifted landscape designer-forester who could transform bare fields into sylvan glades as though by magic, transplanting ferns and other plants, and creating glens to give the effect of stretches never reached by the hand of

man. Jack had offered to train Donald as his successor in the lucrative profession he had developed. But Donald had said repeatedly, "Why should I spend my life merely beautifying rich men's estates?" Palestine, he felt more and more, had more to offer than this; among other things it offered him the opportunity to contribute to needs other than his own. Whereas Norvin's calling almost demanded settling in a city, Donald's eye was on working in a *kibbutz;* here he would be welcome, where his living would be paid for with his labor. "Find me the *kibbutz* that can use me, Mother," he had said.

Oddly enough it was the drab, desolate spot in the desert at the lower end of the Sea of Galilee which struck me almost instantaneously as the *kibbutz* where Donald would find the work and challenges he hoped for. I couldn't quite account to myself for the choice of this singularly uninviting place. Was I, subconsciously, the Spartan mother reincarnated, believing that the harder, more relentless the test, the greater the achievement and satisfaction of surmounting the difficulties? At any rate, here people were compensating for the ugliness of their environment. The fact of their being there, of trying valiantly to fashion something out of nothing, personified a pioneering spirit; it seemed to me that Donald would respond to starting out with a group which was, itself, just beginning. Too, from the standpoint of his major vocational interest, there was a fine agricultural experimental station nearby; already it had succeeded in bringing olive trees to fruition in seven, instead of the usual twelve or fourteen, years. It is easy, of course, to be wise after the fact. Many times I was to ask myself whether his life might not have taken a different course had he entered a kibbutz such as Mishmar Ha'emek, where regard for the individual was given so high an evaluation? Might my tendency, to lean over backwards to en-

courage my children not to follow too closely in my lead, but rather to go freely in the direction of their own choice, have been a factor in failing to prevent what was to follow when he subsequently left the *kibbutz* and became known as "The Gardener of Jerusalem."

All in all, the contents of Norvin's cable seemed like another of the wonderful events of my life; that, on a trip which, even a week before leaving, I had not known I would make, a dream I had nurtured for fifteen years—ever since that other miracle, my conversion to Zionism—was now coming true, in the independent decisions of two of my children to cast their lives and future with the life and future of Palestine.

I turned homeward with a heart full of thankfulness, a faith stronger than ever—and a sense that to the end of my life I would never have known an idle or wasted day.

On shipboard I reviewed all I had heard and seen, wanting to arrange it in my mind in the kind of order and simple clarity which would reassure those who had grown doubtful, or suspicious, or both, as to the strength in Palestine to keep the course; and, if it were anywhere needed, renew the strength of purpose in those who had been training with the *Poalei Zion* and *Hashomer Hatzair* against the day of their own *aliyah.*

One must not grow impatient that, to the disinterested, or the "objective" observer at a distance, the future of Jewish Palestine looked to be of little promise. One must persuade them to think, rather, of a Palestine as I had found it on my recent arrival, seething with life, and determination to continue, full speed ahead, on its course to nationhood, *lamrot hakol,* "in spite of everything."

One could not, of course, brush aside the fact that the period between 1929 and this year of 1932, had been ill-

starred with disillusionment, frustration, and at times black despair. Every day it seemed to me clearer that, in all history, there had been no time when faith seemed more essential to survival; to be the only protection; the one assurance that the Zionist dream could or would be realized.

The tangle of political factors might well overwhelm those without faith. "Solutions of the Jewish problem" too were just as plentiful, as conflicting as they were numerous. From one direction, for example, could come suddenly an extremist element, rallying to the leadership of a brilliant Russian Jew, Vladimir Jabotinsky; an element, leaning to the right, patterning itself on the Mussolini *fascisti*—with the trifling amendment of wearing shirts of Nazi brown instead of shirts of Fascist black. Again, but leaning to the left, there would emerge—if only very few—those, hopeless of Palestine's future under Great Britain's mandate, who would turn for their answers towards the communism of Russia. Though these were scattered about equally among the several labor groups, I had been satisfied that the charge that the youth of *Hashomer Hatzair* was being led as a group to communism was false and misleading.

There had been, and would continue to be, hopeful signs. Great men—Lloyd George, Ramsay Macdonald, and others—voiced anger and shame at the betrayal of Britain's honor in the flouting of mandate responsibilities, and spoke out for a return to integrity.

Of the White Paper, regulating immigration and land purchase, Lloyd George thundered:

> The White Paper is hostile to the spirit of the Mandate. It breathes distrust. . . . If it had been written by an anti-Semitic official, I could understand. . . . The White Paper is almost universally regarded as a revocation of that Mandate, a practical revocation. . . . Not merely the Jews, but the Arabs take this view. The Jews regret, the Arabs rejoice. . . . The White Paper

was issued without anyone being consulted, not the League of Nations, not the Mandatory Commission of the League of Nations. . . . It is a one-sided document. It is biased. . . . In Roman days Palestine had a population estimated variously at between 3,000,000 and 5,000,000. . . . The Mandatory Commission contemplate the possibility of 3,000,000 at any rate ultimately occupying that land. Since we took it over the Jews have increased by 100,000 and so have the Arabs. . . . So far, taking the last twenty-five centuries, the Jews are the only people who have made a success of this rather stony land. The Jewish contribution to the improvement of Palestine is incalculable. . . . They are bringing a spirit of intelligence and brains into the regeneration of Palestine. . . .

In his quieter way, hoping to restore some balance and justice to the troubled situation, Ramsay Macdonald rose in the House of Commons and said,

I happened to be in Palestine a few years ago, and when I went up and down the country, I saw how impossible it was for anyone, seeing what I saw, to be too extravagant in tribute to the Jewish colonizers in Palestine. I saw what was a bog being turned into cultivable land. I saw the historical, barren sides of the mountain of Jerboa being planted with olive trees. . . . I was with a friend, a very well-known dentist, who had gone out to join this labor colony because his heart was in Palestine, and in this life there was for him no consideration superior to the consideration that he would like to be one of those who restored the land of Zion. I was shown into a little place, a sort of dilapidated cabin. There he busily conducted his professional work in a case demanding emergency treatment. Having performed his act of mercy, he took off his white overall, and took me with him to a place where the agricultural gang was digging holes for the planting of olive trees. That is what is going on in Palestine. It is not only labor, but spirit and generosity. It is work which every Government in this country must encourage for as long as we hold the Mandate. . . .

Such were among the utterances, the signs I thought of, on my way back to the United States to report what I had seen and heard, as a result of raising Chaim Greenberg's questions, Rubishov's charges, and my son's desire to know whether "my Palestine" held a future for him and his young wife.

23

BACK IN THE UNITED STATES I SENSED THAT one thing was missing—a positive remedy for depression and despair, such as I had observed at work in Palestine—faith in the future.

True, once again Messianism was in the air in Palestine. Always present in Jewish history, whenever life had grown unbearable and despair set in, visions of a Messiah in one form or another have come over the horizon. The form it was taking in this, the second quarter of the twentieth century, was that of a "New Day"—a day in which anti-Semitism and pogroms would be no more; a day when all men on the face of the earth would work to effect economic and social conditions that would ensure their freedom—and permit them to live in peace together as equals.

Some called Zionism a form of Messianism, with its pledge of liberating the Jew from the yoke of his persecution and homelessness.

As such, Messianism was not a part of the American

tradition. But self-reliance and optimism were, and what was depressing was that they seemed to have gone into eclipse. In this third year of the economic slump there did not appear to be either the energy or the faith to furnish the motive power for climbing out.

Was it that the Jew had had longer training in adversity, and therefore had developed muscles and reflexes better conditioned to the rebound? Was it that the years of recent plenty in the United States had softened the American to the point of losing his image of himself as the free self-made man, making him easy prey to despondency when failed by his easy riches and gadgets?

Whereas in Palestine depression seemed only to toughen faith in living, the American tradition of faith and direct action seemed to falter. There was a feeling of undefined guilt in the air, people expressed their resentment in bitter jokes. Mr. Hoover was mentioned as the world's greatest engineer "who, in little more than two years has drained, ditched and dam(n)ed the country." I felt a flash of pride bordering on chauvinism that, whereas in this country clusters of huts fashioned of nailed-together flattened tin cans were labeled scornfully "Hoovervilles," the name given to often similarly unlovely clusters of huts in Palestine was *kibbutz,* having in its brisk sound the ring of action. Not for nothing is the *kibbutz* often referred to as "the most inspiring economic expression of the spiritual ideals animating a vital segment of Palestine's Jewish community."

But, now that I was back in the States, all the philosophical thinking, appraisal, and effort to understand the nature and impact of what had happened was not really to the point. Now the question was: what was to be done, and more particularly, where lay my most useful way to help?

As I resumed traveling about the country to present the picture of pioneering Palestine, it seemed to me that poor

little beleaguered Palestine had something of value to give to depression-ridden America, as well as to receive. In the *kibbutzim* I had witnessed a dynamic at work, expressing not merely the will to live, but to start life over and to build a structure better and sounder than what had existed before. When the economy of the United States had gone into reverse, it had done more than take away wherewithal; it had stripped away the faith of people in themselves and their future, taking from them some of their characteristic American sense of direction and purpose. This was in itself an anachronism because it was part of the American tradition when knocked down not to stay down, but to get up and fight back.

The Jews had set an example. It was not merely fighting back that had kept them alive as a people. Rather it was their faith in a better life ahead. This had always been the secret of their survival as a people.

Could not this dynamic of Jewish survival be put to work in America as well as in Palestine?

I no longer thought of telling the story of pioneering Palestine just to those connected to it through Zionism and *Histadrut*. Others were desperately looking for hope and a return of faith to live by. Did not the whole concept of pioneering Palestine have something to communicate to others as troubled as she, if in different forms?

This idea of something of value to give as well as to receive sparked a revision of plan for the *Histadrut* campaign which was to take me on a speaking trip across the country. It is perhaps oversimplification to say that, substantially, the plan was "few speeches, but many, many talks." Speeches at large meetings seldom permitted people to ask their own particular questions; talks, wherever people would gather informally in centers, private homes, wherever there was an atmosphere conducive to free inquiry and communication, could, I thought, give people a sense of receiving something

of value to themselves. Naturally it was my hope and belief that, even though for a majority of people money was scarce, in proportion as they received—not only information and facts, but reinforced faith answering a deep psychological individual need—they would give, thus establishing a tangible link with a source of new strength for themselves; in return they would be giving financial support to settle more and more newcomers on the land.

Los Angeles provided an ideal opportunity to put to the test the idea that whereas people might shy away from meetings if they knew the prime objective would be to ask them for money, if they felt assured of hearing in detail from an eyewitness the various phases of Palestine's building, could not the practical purpose be expected to result in due course?

I was anxious to avoid pitfalls. Many felt that Zionism had degenerated in the United States from a dynamic movement into predominantly a money-raising mechanism, feeding the public only such facts as aroused pity and thus produce contributions motivated more by feelings of charity than sincere sympathy with fundamental objectives. Besides the necessary "appeal" *Histadrut* needed friends; I felt that our meetings could make such friends.

From previous visits to Los Angeles in my capacity as president of Hadassah, I was known, but I was new to the committee of the *Poalei Zion* which met me at the station. I was there to be of use to the organization but they were a bit puzzled as to just how to make use of me. There was no experienced director to run the campaign, but when I explained my idea as best I could—though they were obviously in doubt as to how it could be executed, they gave me a free hand. There were obvious dangers in speaking again and again for two crowded weeks when at the end of that time the *Histadrut* was to hold its first money-raising banquet at a large hotel, but the risk had to be taken. Out of

those who followed from meeting to meeting, eager to hear in more and more detail the expansions of pioneering Palestine, the nucleus of a new grouping began to emerge. Necessary as it was to put first things first, concentrating on the campaign itself, I saw the chance in this for a reinforcement of the essential purpose.

At the time Professor Albert Einstein was living in Pasadena. While his mere presence no longer created a sensation, it was a cause for rejoicing that he came frequently to Zionist gatherings, and he was always hailed with delight. Through an unanticipated bit of nonsensical byplay I learned that his genius for the great abstruse theories of physics could give way to little side excursions into humor.

We chanced to be placed next to each other at a speakers' table, and I could not resist twitting him on the contrast between his lofty position as a scientist, and his appearance, especially his wide, luminous, childlike eyes. "You know, of course," I twitted him, "that your eyes are much too beautiful for a man!"

"Frau Lindheim," he replied in German, wagging a playful finger at me, "you make of a man a poodle."

"But don't you know you look rather like a poodle?" I retorted outrageously, passing a hand swiftly through his aureole of wild white hair. The audience laughed delightedly, hearing his burst of laughter. He was a man who had mastered, along with his learning, the deep truth that it is necessary from time to time to laugh, or else one would die of the things done to men. One saw that part of the unique greatness of Einstein too was that, while all the world was awed by his genius, he was able to remain childlike in simplicity; not knowing the meaning of formality and egotism, his approach to life could be uninhibited and intellectually uncluttered.

Something more than a momentary bit of nonsense was to come out of our meeting. I challenged him to express

publicly opinions he had repeatedly expressed to me privately, as to his admiration and support for the labor movement in Palestine, and the need to continue steps to effect good relations between Arabs and Jews. I asked him to attend the fund-raising dinner being given in the interests of the *Histadrut,* and also to write a letter which expressed his attitudes and approval, and which could be photostated and distributed along with the invitations to the banquet.*

The night of the dinner came. It coincided with the epidemic of "bank holidays" which were spreading over the country and had already affected the banks in Los Angeles. What could we expect, I asked myself in fear and trembling? Why should people who had heard me over and again attend a banquet where they knew they would be asked for money? Never had the *Histadrut* campaign received any significantly large amounts. In the face of the immediate circumstances, would all amounts be even less now, or would there be none at all and the banquet hall be left empty of people?

I felt like a reprieved prisoner when I arrived to find that reservations filled all available space, and it had been necessary to turn away two hundred persons. In a period of slightly less than three weeks, there had been a clear response to our purpose. Much of that from people who, until recently, had little grasp of the things we were concerned with, and certainly little or no active interest in the *Histadrut* and labor Palestine. But now a cause had given them new hope, and a faith to go with it.

A question remained, nevertheless. Now that these people had made the effort to attend, would they give? As a final test, I decided at the very last minute on something I had consistently refused to do: I asked to be allowed to make the actual "appeal." At the end of my address I therefore paused

* A photostat of the letter appears in this volume by permission of the Estate of Albert Einstein.

Athenaeum
551 South Hill Avenue
Pasadena, California

2. II. 33.

Sehr geehrte Frau Lindheim!

Selbstverständlich nehme ich Ihre Einladung gerne an. Die Bildung von Ligen für die Arbeiterschaft in Palästina halte ich für sehr nötig. Denn diese Arbeiterschaft ist nicht nur die eigentliche Seele des Aufbau-Werkes, sondern sie bildet die einzige wirklich wirksame Verbindung mit dem arabischen Volke. Eine Stärkung der Arbeiterschaft bedeutet daher Gesundung und Festigung der politischen Position des jüdischen Volkes in Palästina.

Freundlich grüsst Sie

Ihr A. Einstein.

and asked a question: "If this cause has brought a sense of new spiritual richness into your own lives, given you a new strength with which to pick up the struggle and face the difficulties ahead, do you feel in turn like giving to Palestine, in the measure to which you have received?"

That was all. The money poured in. Interestingly enough, there were no large contributions, or even noticeably substantial sums; yet an amount far in excess of any given previously to *Histadrut* was donated that night by other than its usual following, which had not only been small in means but relatively small in numbers.

If I needed any restorative for a case of nerves it came from Albert Einstein, who, looking at me with his luminous eyes said, with a gentle smile, "Frau Lindheim, this is the first time I have seen money raised with dignity." What was of the greatest importance, however, was the welding into a group of some thinking and committed people, eager to learn more, and insisting on a program for sympathizers with *Histadrut* in this country, so as to translate principles into action.

An immediate result was the setting up in Los Angeles of The League for Labor Palestine. It became a stronghold in the United States for the *Histadrut* and, besides, a training school for future leaders of the community. It was still a question whether this method of giving in order to get would set a precedent. Only time would tell.

Although without the decisions of Norvin and Helen, and Donald, I would soon have made the final decision to leave with the rest of my family to settle in Palestine, the fact that they had made the move before me undoubtedly determined the time of departure for me.

The most formidable part of the situation was to gain the consent of Granny, now seventy-nine years old, to move—not only to another continent, but to a place as irrelevant

to her own life as Palestine. In her redoubtable way she had made a complete recovery from the illness which had called us back to the States. She was back, so to speak, at her fighting weight. She had come long since to tolerate what she looked on firmly as my queer choice as to a way of life. She knew without the slightest doubt that we would never neglect her or her interests.

In the end, when the time came to answer the question I could hardly put without some involuntary trepidation—namely, whether she would go with us and make her home in Palestine—she said simply, indeed almost offhandedly, "Yes." She added, after an instant, "That is, on one condition." I hardly dared ask what it was.

"When I die, give me your promise that you will bring me back here to be laid to rest beside my husband Reuben."

I promised. Her companion told me later, confidentially, that one of Granny's friends asked her whether she was careful about reminding me of my promise. Granny had replied icily, "When my daughter makes a promise she keeps it!"

The thorniest of our problems solved, we now were faced with making our move during the week of the bank holidays.

There was, of course, the usual mountainous job of packing up to move on. But how could we dispose of the many things we wanted to rid ourselves of, when dealers in antiques, paintings, silverware, and the like had neither the cash nor the desire to buy? And possessions were not so easily weeded out. There were the ghosts of the past, and the sentimental attachments of the children—a portrait, done of me by Stephen Wise's wife Louise, while I was studying at the Institute; the odds and ends of treasures and souvenirs of seven lifetimes, demanding in many voices to be kept in defiance of sure and certain knowldege that they could not be transported and, if they could, that there

would be neither room nor justification for them in Palestine.

The question of what my daughter Babs would do about joining us in our big new venture was not simple. She was very like her grandmother, in that things Jewish were utterly distant from her interests, and I could therefore see no reason for her going with us to Palestine. She loved Germany, and her friends were there. If that was where she wanted to be, she had my consent.

If the idea of her not being with us was a subtle hurt, it was at least in part compensated by the fact that her ideas were strong and her own; for all that we might have points of difference, she had the conviction to stand by them.

But then the remote hand of Adolf Hitler intervened. It became manifest that it was not the time for her to return to Germany; in effect she was left stranded, and therefore she gratefully accepted the proposal that she travel with us to Palestine—with the assurance I offered her of a return-trip ticket in her pocket.

We sailed on a March day in 1933, bag and baggage, to take up residence in our new world. The dream of my Zionist lifetime was coming true and my inner joy was great. Three of my children would greet us in Palestine; the other two would be going with me; Dick would live in the home of his South Norwalk high school principal until he finished his school year and would join us in the summer for a year before returning to go to college.

Was it a symbolical reminder when the S.S. "Vulcania" docked in Naples and the first of the refugees in flight from Nazi Germany boarded the ship? They crowded every remaining inch of deck space, these doctors, scientists, artists, teachers, musicians, and writers. Hitler's "Brown Shirts" had started perversely at the top, setting the cream of the Jewish intelligentsia of Germany to cleaning streets and latrines on hands and knees, scrubbing contemptuous politi-

cal posters from billboards and putting others, even more contemptuous, in their place. Now, knowing the meaning of Zionism, these would find refuge in Palestine.

Was there not symbolism in the fact too, that the *Seder* was to be celebrated immediately after our arrival in Palestine, and that on that first night of the Passover, each of us could feel ourselves in some degree to be truly reliving the flight of the Jews from Egypt.

"*Lamrot hakol*"—in spite of everything—it was to be *this* year, not next, in Jerusalem.

24

WE MOVED INTO OUR NEW HOME IN TEL AVIV. If it seemed treachery to Jerusalem, my work lay in Tel Aviv, so here it had to be. Second to Jerusalem in choice of cities would have been Haifa, now beginning to be built up the slopes of beautiful Mount Carmel, a promontory rising directly from the sea. But, whether Tel Aviv was or was not the best-loved city, it was the hub of the new Palestine, the heart of its driving life; sooner or later everyone and everything was drawn to Tel Aviv, whether for business or pleasure, for organizational or cultural purposes. The important factor in choosing it as our home now was that it was the focal point of the federated activities of the *Histadrut,* and the center of gravity of the surging new wave of immigration.

The best awaited me. Here no speeches were demanded of me, no people had to be convinced to give of their time and means, no barriers had to be crossed before Jews, recognizing their Jewishness, became active participants in

the building of Palestine. Here was a country in the early stages of its building, and consequently with a need to face day-by-day actual facts of life; to welcome responsibility for a specific, if relatively minute, part of its developing life and to derive individual satisfaction in being a functioning part of a sweeping whole; all without any of the glamor or glory that was a part of organizational life and work in the United States. Here each and every inhabitant was doing a job, often beyond his capacity, yet done without hope of reward other than that which comes through striving in common with others toward the purpose of making Palestine a home for those who needed it and wanted it—themselves included.

I now found my place and work as part of the labor group. On the ship, under the impact of my first face-to-face meeting with "refugees," a specific need had suggested itself, and an idea had begun to take shape.

The expression "the refugee problem" had become part of the world language. But here refugees were not "problems," they were people, whom violence had catapulted from their homes and countries. From the instant of their uprooting they ceased to be the people they had been. From being independent individuals with free will, they became dependent on the will and bounty of others. Torn from the known and the familiar, they had the unknown and the strange thrust upon them. Because their confidence in themselves was shaken, everything was shaken. The world tumbled about them; even so small a detail as having to sleep crowded together on a ship's deck without a room or so much as a bed of their own took from them the sense of any vestige of essential personality, flinging them as merely one more anonymous part of a conglomerate mass.

Was it not of first importance that these people be helped to find their way back to themselves? Must it not be done individually and personally, so that each would come to be-

lieve again in himself and his importance as an individual, in the building of the new nation in which he now found refuge? In its very origin and nature, theirs could be no orderly transition. Was it not all the more essential, therefore, that extraordinary attention be exercised, in order that the taproots be not injured in the transplanting, and rather that the roots be set quickly and deeply enough in new soil to gain the healing sustenance they so sorely needed?

These were no born pioneers to whom hardship and obstacles were the breath of life. Nor was it appropriate to offer refugees from Hitler's Germany, for example, identical treatment with those coming from Poland. By long exposure to a virulent form of anti-Semitism, the latter had developed at least a partial immunity to hate, fortifying themselves with self-respect and self-knowledge as Jews, and achieving their own emancipation through identifying themselves as Jews with the liberation movement of the Jews as a people.

The German Jews were different and more vulnerable. For centuries they had lived in Germany as Germans, feeling themselves natives of the country in which they had gained from and contributed to its life and culture. To most, their Jewishness had become an incidental, even extraneous part of their lives. The anti-Semitism of Germany was deep-rooted; nevertheless it was different from that of Poland. Depending upon the sensitivity of the object of its hate, it could be accepted or rejected at will. German anti-Semitism was not of the pervasiveness which brutally manifested itself in Poland. While it took the form of impeding professional and economic advancement it did not, in this country of "high" civilization, express itself so much in physical attack or even in that social discrimination which shut Jews arbitrarily out of universities, hotels, and clubs.

The Jews of Germany employed various ways to evade the anti-Semitism aimed at them. Some found protective seclusion in living exclusively as and with Jews in communities of their own religious and social groupings. Others, without taking explicit measures to negate their status as Jews, sought by assimilation in political and cultural groups to erase differences that would tend to cause division and hurt between themselves and their fellow Germans. But there were those too—and in sufficient numbers to be lampooned frequently and publicly—who took the road of apostasy and conversion to gain desired positions and titles. The frequency of this phenomenon called forth from the pen of the brilliantly satirical poet of Germany, Morgenstern, a barbed poem about an adult convert who, when ready for baptism, sought his sponsor's advice as to the clothes customarily worn at the baptismal font. The sponsor's answer was brief—"Diapers!"

These first refugees who had come aboard the S.S. "Vulcania" at Naples, fleeing Germany's newer form of anti-Semitism, belonged to none of these categories. Most were Zionists. In one form or another, and in varying degrees of intensity, they had accepted the fact that the Jews were a people with a common destiny, a destiny taking a new turn now in their regrouping in Palestine as a nation.

Of these, the younger people presented no question. Those who had been members of youth groups in Germany were smoothly absorbed into the cooperative and collective settlements of the movements with which they were already identified. Others, for example, members of the *Blauweiss,* the university Zionist youth movement, though without a distinctive political orientation of their own, had been given the essentials of preparation for resettling; these too quickly fitted themselves into the life of Palestine, whether in city or country. The Zionist Organization of Germany had more on which to congratulate itself than its opposite

number in the States, for the *Blauweiss* had been organized under its auspices.

With the adults it was different. Most had none of the necessary preparation; notwithstanding their avowed Zionism, few had hoped to be able to migrate to Palestine, and they were unequipped either psychologically or vocationally to fit themselves smoothly into the life of a formative young country. In number and kind it was impossible for so tiny a country to absorb so many professionals. This meant that there would have to be much vocational training, with an attendant period of painful reeducation before the adjustment to new conditions could be hoped for. Besides the doctors, lawyers, and film directors, and men and women of the world of music, art, and education, converging on little Palestine were also the leaders of the Zionist elements in Europe, coming to take up residence in a country where there was no Zionist Organization for them to lead.

Who better equipped, then, to give counsel so urgently wanting than the leadership which had made of the *Histadrut* the most successful instrument for absorbing the new immigrant into *Eretz Israel*—the land of Israel?

Yet the *Histadrut* simply did not have the capacity to meet the demands of all those clamoring for entry, each one feeling it due him that he receive the personal attention of those at the top. If, on the one hand, the wheels of the *Histadrut's* multifarious activities were not to be hopelessly clogged, and if, on the other hand, the shock to newcomers at finding doors closed to them, even of necessity, was to be lessened, clearly an intermediary was needed. Untold harm could result if those seeking guidance at a critical moment could not receive it; aside from the practicalities, the inference might be drawn that, for whatever reason, the *Histadrut*—like Britain—had a "closed door" policy. It was self-evident that, even as the British Empire was being compelled at that moment to yield somewhat to the surge of

human beings beating at the doors of its mandated territory, so would the *Histadrut* have to meet the pressures of the need, even though the demands on its leaders strained resources to the limit.

Having come to Palestine now as a committed part of the labor group, my thinking had caused me to come with a plan. I had presented it to the Executive Committee of the *Histadrut,* which had accepted it with enthusiasm. It called for a kind of clearing house, where the individual needs and demands of the newcomers could be channeled and dealt with in a reasonable way; it called also for a center where newcomers could be given, first, a warm welcome, and then an understanding preliminary hearing. The clearing house would furnish surroundings in which a feeling of solidarity could be established between newcomers and those settled longer; in turn, this would help to revive the strength and hopes of those who had had the very underpinnings of their lives torn away.

Aharonowitz, head of the Worker's Bank, gave the idea its first grounding in reality. He offered it a home. A man of calm judgment and not easily swayed by emotion, he saw in this plan something he could endorse wholeheartedly. The bank had outgrown its quarters, and was going to erect a new building adequate to the volume of its activity, which had become an important factor in the economic growth of the country. He now offered one floor to house the proposed center and provide necessary space for its educational and social functions.

Until the Bank's building was ready, I made our home available as an interim educational center and meeting place. Two evenings a week were set aside for talks and seminars with leaders of the *Histadrut,* who would give information and guide discussion. Creative people, representing the arts, would meet with those unfamiliar with Palestine's cultural life. And, because it was unfortunately pos-

sible to live in Tel Aviv and yet have no comprehension that the world surrounding it was an Arab and not a Jewish world, trips would be organized, to learn to know and love the country, and begin to gain an understanding of its inhabitants.

American residents in Tel Aviv too were to share in the advantages of the center, an evening a week being devoted to them. Though their numbers did not as yet warrant this, perhaps, not only were their problems close to me but I was looking ahead; it was important to Palestine's future to have settlers from the States who came of free will and conscious of the realities, and who had some of America's greatness and skills to share. One could only hope that as time went on the numbers of those who wanted to come would increase. Up to that time Zionism in the States had concentrated more on cultivating givers than builders; the satisfaction, for the givers, lay more in helping others than in themselves becoming settlers in a new and difficult land.

Of the full implications of this tendency of American Zionists to build a world within a world, I learned only after meeting them. For instance, there was a young Junior Hadassah member—a former president of the Detroit chapter—who came to our home beseeching me to explain the reason for her inability to adjust to the country.

She was disappointed, disillusioned, unhappy. In Detroit her life had been filled with creative activity and satisfactions. She had found personal fulfillment there as a leader.

But, believing sincerely that the Zionist aim could only be truly realized through coming to Palestine and living there, she had left her work, her family, and home, and come to "settle."

"Why do I feel so lost?" she said with distress? "I feel as though I were in an unknown land. I don't see how this is possible, when I am steeped in the Zionist dream and ideal. It is the way I feel, however, and I must learn why."

It might be because she had come unprepared for the realities in this world she had chosen to come and live in. Was it not hard for her to cross the gap between the ideal she was prepared for, and the initial reality awaiting her? Alone, without the support of the organization from which she had drawn strength and stimulus, without familiar surroundings and the group with which she had been accustomed to work, was she not unhappy with the homesickness of a child for its mother, a longing for the security of familiar things?

It occurred to me that, as time went on, inevitably many must feel as she did, and would continue to feel that way until a way of working and a way of living furnished a conviction deep and informed enough, and a need urgent and pressing enough, to enable the individual to bridge the gap between an old way of living and a new. I felt very grateful to my friend from Junior Hadassah for helping me to see ever more clearly the difference between an "organizational" and a "civilizational" Zionism: the one working to meet the needs of the "other fellow," the other to meet needs of one's own.

Tel Aviv was in no sense a city built according to plan. It had begun as a suburb of Arab Jaffa in 1908, when a group of sixty families appealed to the Jewish National Fund for help in acquiring land. It increased in size with each wave of immigration, at such a rate that if its permanent mayor—who also was one of its founders—was asked for the population figures he would plead ignorance for the reason that he had not yet seen the reports for the last few hours.

The rivalry between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem was much like that between Los Angeles and San Francisco; people either loved Tel Aviv extravagantly, or disliked it as extravagantly. Whatever the attitude toward it, the city seemed to grow before your very eyes. It was like watching

a weird form of legerdemain to see sand dunes gobbled up one after another by bulldozers and their sudden replacement by paved streets, with just enough sand left between the built-up sections to serve as a reminder of the city's origin while filling both resident and visitor with wonder that, in so short a time, so much of a city could rise on so sandy a foundation. Nor was it in the least unusual still to see camel caravans, plodding along the main thoroughfares laden with *zif-zif* (small stones) bound from nearby beaches to building sites where concrete mixers waited with wide-open maws to grind the stones for the mix for structures rising at the rate of two hundred a day. Nothing could have been more of an anachronism, or more comical than the struggles between these tawny desert beasts, leftovers from a prehistoric past, and tooting taxis made in Detroit; either could be halted peremptorily by the upraised white-gloved hand of the moustachioed British traffic cop, but it is doubtful if the camels would have deigned to respect his authority had it not been for the prodding of their flanks with sharp-pronged sticks, and the curses shouted at them by the Arab camel drivers.

Now, in 1933, Tel Aviv had a population of approximately seventy thousand, 99 per cent of whom were Jewish. One could live in Tel Aviv and believe that Palestine was an "all-Jewish" country, as many did think. Yet there were Arabs to be seen; the "big city" held an irresistible attraction for them. The young Jaffa Arab would promenade on the boardwalk on *Shabbat* with the throng; unobtrusive, in European dress—usually smarter in style than that worn by Tel Avivians—the resemblance between them striking, Arab and Jew barely distinguishable from each other.

With the Arab women it was a different matter. Though there had been in effect since 1929 a boycott against "buying Jewish," they felt conspicuous in the enveloping black veils covering all but their eyes; though it was dangerous

for them to visit the shops, the materials in the Tel Aviv shops were tempting enough to warrant braving the reprisals of the boycott committee.

Arab street vendors reasoned differently. To buy from a Jew might be a crime, but to sell to a Jew was a virtue. From morning till night Arab women, faces unveiled—only expensive-to-purchase women were protected from public gaze by their owners—peddled chickens, eggs, and vegetables from the curbstones. Rarely did the Jewish housewife's allowance suffice to cover her family's needs, and it was too great a temptation to resist buying at the low Arab prices. Though it was important for the country's economy to buy from the Jewish grower, to many a Jewish homemaker it was a shade more important that, by buying from the Arabs, she could, within her very limited budget, get more with which to feed her family.

It was not possible for the Jewish farmer to compete with Arab prices for produce. The Arab *fellah* was conditioned to living at a bare subsistence level; he worked his land with a minimum of equipment and care for preserving the fertility of the soil. There was no payroll to meet; the family worked intact; the farmer and older children grew the produce, the wife and younger children sold it. Food presented no problem, and education, clothing, health came somehow—or they did not. No one preached about evils of child labor and undernourishment; if more children died than need be, it was the will of Allah.

Even in a city like Tel Aviv, in which material conveniences were relatively abundant, refugees were not alone in having to make adjustments. Housekeeping and marketing were not easy tasks; there were daily necessary adventures in the unknown and unexpected, and ingenuity, improvisation, and above all patience were needed if one was not to be put to flight by discouragement. Nothing was easy to come by, and the difficulties of keeping a household in running

order were many. There were no gas stoves yet, and electric stoves were still imperfect, unpredictable, and expensive to operate. One must choose between the good old reliable "Perfection" oil stove, or the "Primus," a terrifying kerosene utility with a tendency to explode.

Yet there was fun in it too. One learned to be very cunning about estimating the probable moment at which the milkman, ice vendor, or kerosene man would present himself. The slogan of any one of them might be "I shall pass this way but once," and to miss them was to have to scout who-knew-how-far to replenish supplies. These were the days when the small retail stores of *Tnuva,* the marketing cooperative of the *Histadrut,* were just beginning to open. Here, it would be possible to buy milk, cheese, and butter with assurance that they were produced and packed under sanitary conditions. Before these small, blue-portaled shops came into existence, milk was peddled from door to door, measured from a large can into a tin pitcher. Even when the housewife received milk from the large can into her own receptacle, there was nothing to guarantee that hairs of the milkman's donkey or dog would not come along with it. One had to learn not to dwell on having come a very long way indeed from a land where milk was pasteurized and delivered in sealed bottles, and where neither stray hairs nor escorts of flies were tolerated.

I was reminded of American children, flocking to the bells of the Good Humor man, when I heard the cry "*neft! neft!*" ring through the street and rushed out to have the kerosene man fill my tin with his black gold. And as ice often could at times become a household life-and-death problem—especially on the long weekends, when nothing could be bought or sold—many times I had occasion to be thankful for camping experience in the Rockies and Canada, where I learned the knack of refrigeration by evaporation when ice was not available.

As a holder of a union card and a member in good standing of the *Histadrut,* I was entitled to household help permitted anyone engaged in *Histadrut* responsibilities, whether at home or outside. I accepted no remuneration for my work but, while I was subject to rules and regulations, I was eligible also for benefits. Household help had begun to be recognized as a division of labor, and it was regulated by union rules of an eight-hour day. For houseworkers, therefore exploitation was becoming a thing of the past. The mechanics of running a household thus became part of the moral code, with incidental phases of daily life governed by principle. Thus to be able, every day of the week, to *live* principles in which one believed, thereby feeling oneself at one with tens of thousands doing likewise, gave a satisfaction transcending mere convenience.

The first few months after I changed worlds were, to me, like a honeymoon. When I walked to the sea each day for an early morning dip, I walked on air. To have found my niche; to have been entrusted with responsible work; to have my family with me—my cup seemed full to overflowing.

As Tel Aviv was the hub of the country's cultural life, the powerhouse of its business and organizational activities, so also was it the axis of the political expression of the various parties. Out of the storm center one of the most gifted and brilliant of Palestine's young political leaders was to be sucked into death by assassination. Such an episode was the murder of Chaim Arlosoroff, on a Sabbath eve in June. Though it marked neither intimate tragedy nor any actual turning point in the life of our family, it was a tragedy of major importance nevertheless and, combined with some preceding events, set wheels of doubt and decision in motion.

Like my young friend of Junior Hadassah, in some ways

I too found myself unprepared for the change in worlds. Tel Aviv, unique, amorphous, at once intriguing and repellent, proved, as weeks passed into months, to be a home of the body but not of the spirit, at least not of mine. For the first time in eight months of sojourn, I discerned that Palestine was taking power from me, instead of feeding me its power. An apartment on Rothschild Boulevard in Tel Aviv was not necessarily a home in Palestine for the spirit and its work.

There had been lags in developing the purposes and activities of the educational and reception center. Leadership had found difficulty in sparing time and cooperative service to seminars and planned discussions. The essence of the idea seemingly was being allowed to evaporate.

Much must be reevaluated: the validity to Granny and the children of this particular living arrangement; its effectiveness in showing the deeper meanings of Palestine's life to my older boys, who were looking to me to point the way, by living in no less than strict conformity to the ideals which I had, for so long, professed. For the sake of us all I needed to stand off from the turmoil and confusion; by looking at the good and the bad of these past months from outside rather than close at hand, to get a new perspective.

25

THAT EVENING CHAIM ARLOSOROFF, ECONOmist, political thinker, young statesman, and leader, left the hotel where he and his wife Sima had celebrated their reunion on his return from a tour of perilous duty in Nazi Germany. Happily they went for a stroll along the beach at Tel Aviv.

Any student of politics would have had to agree that assassination was in the air. If it was not spoken in so many words it was primarily because many things were taking place which were so foreign and abhorrent to Jewish life that it was unbearable to call the evil by its true name, thereby as it were making it real.

Arlosoroff became entangled in the technique of the "big lie," employed, indeed introduced into Palestine, by the right-wing party of extremism, sounding a tocsin which Jews had come rightly to dread. Here were not the mere differences of political opinions or ideologies, nor were they rifts caused by the class struggle between capital and labor.

Here were techniques identifiable from their use in Italy and Germany, weapons being used in those places to destroy the forces and gains of progress—to destroy Jews! Even under the guise of patriotic nationalism, the form was the form of fascism. This was national socialism, an up-dated name for the age-old struggle of evil against good, of destruction against creation; a contest waged since man started his climb out of the primordial ooze.

The basis of the "charge" against Arlosoroff was that he had placed himself in league with the devil, signing pacts with Jewish blood, trading Jewish lives for goods. An archfiend, smeared with the blood of his own people! A betrayer! Hitler's collaborator and assistant in rooting out and destroying Jewish men, women, and children! This was what certain newspapers carried as banner headlines!

All this and more besides, at a time when Arlosoroff was concluding an agreement allowing the Jews fleeing Germany to salvage something from the wreckage of their lives. It was forbidden for Jews to take money out of Germany, but he arranged successfully that goods could be taken out, to the degree that it became possible for those with goods equivalent to five thousand pounds cash to obtain the prized visa to Palestine for themselves and their families. This equivalent put them in the capitalist category for which the government of Palestine lifted quota limitations on visas. Thus, so far from betraying his people, Arlosoroff not only saved the lives of many but also, by enabling large imports of machines and materials, helped to lay foundations for Palestine's industrial development which followed in the wake of the immigration from Germany.

For this "crime," Arlosoroff was marked for destruction and, in due course, murdered.

The ensuing consequences were strange and baffling.

One which touched my personal interests most closely was the signing of an affidavit by leaders of the *Histadrut,*

immediately after the murder, stating that the murder had not been committed by any Jew or Jews. This was of dreadful importance for two reasons: the signers of the affidavit knew the truth to be otherwise; and it had the effect of causing Jew to shield Jew, thereby retarding justice. This, in turn rendered measures to stop the spread of the essential poison hesitant, futile, and behindhand.

On the day following the murder ten thousand men and women converged from field, from farm, and from factory to accompany Arlosoroff to his grave. There was an exaltation of spirit in the air, attesting a solidarity and strength on the position that the dedicated work which the martyred Arlosoroff had started would be continued by these thousands of his comrades, and the tens of thousands of the others whom they represented throughout the land.

But after the exaltation had passed, the reaction set in. Could an act such as this have been perpetrated by Jews in the Jewish homeland?

One crucial question was clear. If a Jew had done it, was he to be shielded, because he was a Jew, from punishment for the crime? The question seemed to me fundamental to the whole concept and practice of justice in relation to the future of the Jewish homeland.

In disillusioned despair, I sought the wisdom of Henrietta Szold.

She answered my question by relating an episode in which her father, the good and wise Rabbi Szold, had been involved.

During the Civil War a deserter from the Union Army, a Jew, had sought refuge with him, expecting to be shielded because of his religion. Rabbi Szold was compelled to deny him refuge, explaining that a Jew was not permitted to escape the consequences of an act. *Because* he was a Jew, he had the obligation to give himself up to the authorities. Therefore, either he must live up to his obligation, or the

rabbi, living up to his own obligation, would have to surrender him.

It came to me, through all this, that, whereas a heated political atmosphere arose in the United States every four years, with the phenomenon of the presidential elections, here such an atmosphere was the daily fare. Here every Jew seemed to charge himself personally with the obligation of imposing his beliefs as the only way to bring about salvation; that, whether they would or not, his ideas must be impressed on all as representing the shape the future should take. Political assassination was too new to Jewish life, however, for anyone to be able to grasp or accept it as a reality. Certainly I, who had led so completely protected and sheltered a life, had more to learn in this direction than most.

In the atmosphere of such desperate surroundings the Eighteenth Zionist Congress was convened in Prague, in that summer of 1933. The shadow of the murder brooded over all of its deliberations. In Palestine two Revisionists newly arrived from Poland had been arrested by the government of Palestine, and were being held for trial. The leaders of Mapai—the Labor Party—and the *Histadrut* had changed their stand. No longer protecting those they believed guilty of the crime, they charged the Revisionists with being accessories to the murder. Yet their every move was haunted by the previous testimony they had given. Street fights and violence had become common occurrences in Tel Aviv and inevitably the tension carried over to the Prague Congress.

In a way the metamorphosis of Vladimir Jabotinsky indicated what could happen with a man under the impact of evil events.

That the mantle of "The Leader" should have rested on the shoulders of one who, since his youth, had been respected and admired for his brilliant intellect, his learning, his oratorical gifts, and his passionate espousal of Zionism

only made the situation all the more confusing and complex. Because it was inconceivable and incomprehensible that such actions as took place could have any basis in fact under the leadership of Jabotinsky, issues became befogged and people utterly bewildered. Impossible that one who had helped to form and lead the Jewish Legion as a fighting unit of the British Army in World War I; who had, in a period of many parties, organized a legitimate party of revision to protest against what he and many others felt were Dr. Weizmann's too moderate policies *vis à vis* the British government—that such a man could be guilty of or even contemplate acts as reprehensible as those charged. To Jabotinsky's admirers he was good; *ipso facto,* the party he led could not be evil. The equation seemed as simple as this to those in Palestine's new "capitalist" class, who saw in the shape Revisionism was now taking a necessary and growing force to curb the ambitious domination of organized labor. What they missed, or were unwilling to recognize, was that this was in the pattern too of fascism; even in the face of irrefutable proof, such as that Revisionist youth were indoctrinated to believe that strike-breaking and "scabbing" were legitimate and even desirable.

Some time before 1933 I had sat over lunch in New York with Jabotinsky and listened to his ideas on the future of Palestine to which he was then eager to convert me. My impression of him was a kind of little Napoleon. He laid claim then to being a "Jeffersonian Democrat." However, I might have been more convinced by his brilliant exposition had he not, at the very end of our conversation, paraded what came first rather than last, in his mind. His idea was a standing army which would accomplish two purposes: it would make the Jewish homeland safe for Jews; and make doubly sure that Arabs in Palestine would find homes elsewhere. In other words, he would make an armed ghetto of

Palestine. At this point, of course, our roads became irreconcilable and separate.

As yet there had been no more than this to suggest the course his career was to take. As yet there was no Benito Mussolini for him to visit publicly, to come to admire, and from whom he would learn to take his first steps towards fascism and dictatorship.

For a while he attracted to himself some men of brilliant intellect. But as conditions worsened, and more Jews were reduced to that state of hopelessness which could only find release in hate and revenge, his party drew to itself increasing numbers from the "lunatic fringe" attracted to fascism elsewhere. When these took a hand in shaping policy, whether he or the more responsible of his followers would or no, Jabotinsky was forced to accept responsibility for acts of which his party was guilty. Failing to repudiate these, he made himself an accessory.

Delegates to the Congress from other countries than Palestine—and especially from America—dreading that the facts were a sort of Pandora's box to be kept tightly shut at all costs, turned their agitated attention to smoothing over what they hoped against hope might be disposed of as a mere ruffling of feathers. They sought to make peace—where there was no peace.

Jabotinsky, however, declined to let matters rest. Assuming the role of the aggrieved party, he indulged in histrionics more appropriate to the stage, films, or Hitler Germany than to a serious-minded Zionist Congress.

Making a dramatic entrance, surrounded by a bodyguard uniformed alike in Brown Shirts, he strode down the aisle of the hall and demanded termination of the agreements made by Arlosoroff with Germany. Each time in another of the many languages in which he was fluent—Russian, German, Yiddish, Hebrew, English, French, and so on—each time

with more melodramatic emphasis than before, he declaimed the resolution over and over again.

Denied the floor to do more than present the resolution, he flung his arms wide, leaned over the front of the speaker's rostrum, obviously expecting the delegates to arise and follow him! He seemed to believe this would actually happen. He was as a man possessed. Was this staged for some real or fancied effect? Was he suffering from delusions of grandeur, a man drunk with power which he had arrogated to himself?

There was no time for speculation. Pandemonium broke loose. To a man those sitting in the Revisionist benches rose and, pointing at the solid mass of Labor sitting on the opposite side of the aisle, shouted in cadence that most insulting of all defamations—"Informer! Informer! Informer!"

At a signal from the rostrum, the Labor delegates rose and filed in disciplined ranks from the hall. If they had not, bloodshed would surely have followed.

Puzzled and disturbed, delegates from the Western countries sat stunned into silence. All this went deeper than they were prepared to follow. They had been reluctant even to listen to those of their compatriots who had lived through events of the preceding months and were prepared to lay the facts objectively before them. Nor, though advised to do so, had they sent a committee of inquiry, in order that they might come to the Congress prepared with facts furnished by those who could not have been accused of partisanship. Even a man so completely just as Stephen Wise took the position, "A plague on both your houses!" By apportioning blame equally between two factions, he diluted the importance of issues. Made anxious by the stand he took, I was to go later on a special fact-finding trip to Poland; on the basis of evidence brought back to him, he, with char-

acteristic fair-mindedness, admitted he had been mistaken, and voiced a retraction from his pulpit in Carnegie Hall.

It was not to be wondered at that I left the Congress in a state of mind even more confused and disturbed than when I had arrived. Nor was my work taking a direction which furnished any compensating comfort. The times were too hectic, the tasks of the *Histadrut* leadership too diverse, for leaders to take their hoped-for part in the educational-reception center program as planned. In the meantime the plan itself had been radically altered. A club—not for all newcomers, but for Americans—was to be organized; I was invited to become its director.

In its way this development served as a warning. In all honesty I could not deny that there was, in me, the zeal of the missionary. Having myself discovered a great treasure, I could not hoard it, but must share it with others; otherwise it would inevitably diminish. If this were not to happen, the time had come to replenish it.

The present sense of disillusionment, disappointment, indeed deep personal loss was not merely concerned with a geographical entity called Palestine; nor was it even a cause which was to ameliorate the life of the Jews. What filled me with the faith and strength to overcome the blows fate had dealt me was the truth that, out of their joining together, a people and a land had generated a spirit, something new and of transcendent worth; a way of life which was transmuting the prophetic promise of old into living forms of a new way based on man's faith in man. In such a life there was no place for a gospel of hate.

This was a way of life which, to be known and to proclaim its substance, had to be lived.

There was no longer any question in my mind that the service I could best render would be through not organiza-

tional forms, but civilizational; in other words, the *kibbutz* way of life.

Now, nearly eight months after our arrival, for the first time I renewed contact with my friends of the *Hashomer Hatzair*. I had not done so before, wanting to give my usefulness to the *Histadrut* a fair time to prove itself, to the organization as well as to myself.

Mordechai and Zipporah Bentov were just home after concluding their term of service with the movement in the United States. I telephoned asking to be allowed to spend a week with them at Mishmar Ha'emek. It was to be a week of seeking and finding answers, of inquiry and decision.

One cannot simply move into a *kibbutz* as though it were any housing development and take up life there. The *kibbutz* must accept you. To guests, though, it had a policy of wide-open and warm hospitality, and my status for a week's stay was that of a guest. But, even as a visitor, it was not a place to feel happy in without doing some share of the work and, on arrival, I asked for and was immediately assigned a half-day of work. I was set to building a small barrier wall of rocks against the incursion of rabbits in the vineyard—a wall, which, I thought, any rabbit of spirit should have been smart enough to be able to hurdle.

The task of piling rock on rock gave release to my thoughts and again, as in those other moments of my life when, seemingly without volition, I had been led to a complete reversal of what had come before, I was gripped by a train of thought in which the accumulation of years of thinking and experiencing crystallized suddenly and took shape in conclusions too incontrovertible to be argued with and too decisive to leave room for doubt. Such a moment was this as, building that small wall of rocks high up on the hillside of Mishmar Ha'emek, I saw stretch out before me, not only the glorious, multishaded green and gold checker-

board of the farmlands newly redeemed from the swamps of the *Emek,* but also my road to the future. I would ask permission to extend my stay and remain for the six-month trial period which preceded any application for membership in the *kibbutz* and await any further decision until I—and the *kibbutz*—could determine how I met the test.

From that moment of decision onward I had to concentrate on the adjustment forced on my family by my ceasing to live with them in Tel Aviv and my return to *kibbutz* after we, as a family, had decided on the reorganization of our lives. It seemed to me I was doubly blessed in that I was at home in Palestine, with my children near me, and could count on their understanding approval of my course of action.

For Granny, contentment was as much as could be aimed at. From the first the only reason for our settling in a city was to give her the environment which was familiar to her, where she could be comfortable—if not happy. Considering the degree to which she looked on our chosen course as outlandish, she had adjusted rather surprisingly. At times, though, this attitude of hers showed itself in somewhat unexpected ways. One afternoon, stepping out of the room to get something from the kitchen for tea, I overheard her regaling the head of British Intelligence who had come to pay us a social call about certain failings of the Jews and certain virtues of the English, with whom she seemed with great pride to have aligned herself! For this, a home in Tel Aviv was hardly necessary!

Contentment for her took the form, therefore, of being established in a luxurious room in the home of a private family in Haifa; here she had a companion-lady's maid to jump at her least wish, and here she could hold court as befitted the grand lady from Lynchburg, Virginia.

At so many times in the life of our family had Granny made it possible for me to do my chosen work; certainly

such arrangements as would please her at eighty years of age were little enough for us to do in return, even if they left our treasury depleted.

The children, except for Stephen who was as yet only fourteen, presented no great problem. The older ones had already set their own independent sights. I had hoped all along to have Stephen with me in the *kibbutz,* but it proved impractical. He was older than the oldest children at Mishmar Ha'emek, and the high school building was not yet completed. The best plan seemed, therefore, that Stephen would board with a family in Haifa, go to school there, and spend his weekends with me at the *kibbutz,* which was reasonably close. It wasn't ideal in all respects, but what is? At a younger, or an older, age, his adjustment would have been simpler. He loved Palestine out of feelings which were his own; yet, like many young Americans coming to Palestine with their parents, it was hard for him to find a group of contemporaries into which he could fit. At an age when a major need of the young is their own gang, with common interests, he had difficulties to work out in being thrown in with boys of his age with whom he had little similarity in background. Too, there were unhealed scars from the sad circumstances of the breaking up of our home when he was only eight, causing so much uprooting, so much change of environment and schooling. In this sense his ties to Palestine were to be affected, to some extent adversely. On the other hand, and perhaps more important, the experience of Palestine gave him gradually a fine set of values, good technical training, and the deep urge to make his life count.

In relation to the life I was going to take up, I could think of the older children without uncertainty. They had been equipped to face life at an earlier age than most. From early youth I had aimed to fit them for independent living. As I built up the wall to discourage the rabbits I could hear

the echo of my reasoning when, convinced that my children were facing a drastically changing world, I took the offensive against the fortuitous luxury of their environment: "I did not bring five children into the world to have them sit passively, like cabbages in the sun, waiting to be eaten."

Donald's plans were made. Dick, the son between Stephen and Donald, showed the typical sibling rivalry, the middle-child's need to prove himself in terms of individual capacities. Having completed high school successfully in the States, at sixteen he had traveled alone to Palestine for a year of "experiencing" here before going back to enter college. He settled himself happily in a *kibbutz* in Haifa Bay, where he found friends and felt himself at home. To this year of *kibbutz* living he attributes the awakening of his social consciousness.

Babs had early established herself in Haifa, with an apartment and life of her own. She had become secretary to the head of British Imperial Chemicals in Palestine, finding her companions among girls in like jobs, and men in the British forces. Gauged by Palestine's standards, her salary was high, and she was able to live comfortably and well. This was not important in itself; its significance was that she belonged to a new group in Palestine—those who, without attachment by reason of sentiment, race, or religion, found Palestine an attractive and good place to live.

Norvin too had been tempted by the *kibbutz* way of life. After giving up his position in Jerusalem, he had spent some months in Kfar Giladi; a deep friendship had sprung up there between Manya Shohat and himself; she approved and wondered at his capacity to take in stride the hardships, inconveniences, bad food, flies, and the required hard manual work.

He found satisfactions in the *kibbutz* which he had long sought elsewhere—and not found. There was an earthiness to *kibbutz* life, combined with a life of the intellect. Singly

neither was particularly rare, but it was rare to find them combined. He was tired of the rather pretentious intellectualism of his times, and the attendant leaning to mere discussion rather than action. A profound need in him was met by a life grounded in the earth, and finding a place among people who daily put their convictions to the test of action.

Nevertheless the life of the *kibbutz* was not, as a permanent thing, for him. He was married, and in her personality and drives Helen had dimensions which were separately and distinctively her own. Her response to Palestine, which she loved with her whole being, expressed itself in the dance, and her forte, in certain ways, called for a larger canvas than the confined life of the *kibbutz* permitted.

These and other factors helped to point up for Norvin the fact that his architectural training was both a gift and potential for service, and that it would therefore be wrong for him to waste it. His decision therefore was to turn away —if with regret—from the appeals of *kibbutz* life, and to contribute, in terms of his training, to the resources and beauty of Palestine.

Thus was I enabled to view new directions for my future years, secure in knowing that, while life in itself is fluid from beginning to end—sometimes, as later experiences were to teach me, fluid to an extraordinary degree—the several lives in my family had reached the stage of good planning, in accord with individual aspirations and need for satisfying purpose.

There must be positive reason to ally oneself with *kibbutz* life. One must be powerfully drawn to its unique nature and purposes.

Historical variations of the essential community idea had long been of interest to me. Shakers, Rappites, Amana villages, "Perfectionists," Robert Owen's center were among

the many. How did they resemble the *kibbutzim* in Palestine? How did they differ?

Many of the "idealistic" settlements centered around particularized religious faiths: for example, John Noyes's "Bible communists," first engaging at Putney, Vermont, in religious and social experiments on communal living, then driven over into New York State, with a later branch in Connecticut.

The seven little Amana villages in east-central Iowa began to be settled in 1855; an offshoot of the Pietists, they proclaimed themselves as the Community of the True Inspiration, and only in 1932 did they form a cooperative corporation, with separate religious and economic administrations.

In 1907, while on our wedding trip, we had visited a colony of the Shakers, at Mount Lebanon in New York State. They were gentle, quaint folk, shadowy, and seemingly hardly of the world in which they lived. The women were shy, retiring, submissive, the men stern and ascetic. They lived enclosed in a climate of the rigid ideas brought from England and, somewhat paradoxically, surrounded by household goods of beauty and material worth—lovely copper lusterware, blue and white Staffordshire china. Was it possible that their willingness, indeed seeming eagerness, to sell their treasures was a subconscious need for final separation from all symbols of earthly ease and vanity?

We were struck by the absence of young people. The group was now small in number, clearly dying out. Missionary efforts seemed to attract few converts or none at all, and the rule of celibacy cut them off inexorably from all prospect of natural reinforcements. The collectivist life of the community held on, but there was a foreboding in the air that the chosen form had become frail and would hardly survive much longer.

George Rapp and his followers moved on to Pennsylvania

when Robert Owen came from England, bought the buildings at New Harmony, Indiana, and set about establishing the cultural and scientific center which was to give this communal colony its distinguishing character, and produce many advances. Here religion was not the caulking which held the members together; rather it was the personality and learning of Owen and the gifted men drawn to him.

Regardless of their motivations, in the United States such colonies were never more than isolated islands in an individualistic sea, having little appreciable influence on the economic and social structure of the growing country. From pioneer days, characteristically the settler in the New World was highly individualistic in his ways, determined to carve out the greatest possible wealth for himself and his family from the sources of riches around him. Without need or disposition to fit himself into the pattern of a group—except in the earliest days, when a common defense was necessary against the danger of Indian attack—instinctively the American colonizer went his individualistic way, little by little building up an image of ruggedly self-made, self-reliant man, making his way by his own initiative and alone; each man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost.

It had seemed to me that there were certain interesting parallels as well as the important differences between the Mormons' form of collective settlements and those of Palestine. To be sure the difficulties faced by the Mormons in settling the forbidding salt flats of Utah in the middle of the nineteenth century were of a somewhat more transient nature than those facing the colonizers of Palestine.

My impression was received during a short visit with some of the Mormon leaders, in Salt Lake City in 1927. Similarly, both Mormons and pioneer Jewish colonizers had deep spiritual motivations; those of the Mormons stemmed from religious beliefs, those of the Jewish pioneers from social convictions and national need. Both were victims of

persecution, both sought a home in which to live a life of their own patterning, free of the domination of others. Alike they were forced to battle against hostile nature and unfriendly man. Fresh water was as scarce in the salted reaches of Utah as in the desert wastes of Palestine. Alike, there was a need of common defense against enemy forces.

In neither place could any individual farmer, no matter how willing or fortified with means and equipment, have battled by himself against the inhospitable lands on which Mormons, and Jews, were driven to settle. With both, collective initiative and effort grew out of the essential needs confronting them. Without the unshakable faith and group solidarity which provided them with the inner power to meet and overcome stupendous obstacles in their way, they could not have succeeded. Though the collective character of the original Mormon settlements was to alter as conditions changed and became more favorable, there was to remain throughout the State of Utah a strong cooperative movement, keeping the Mormons a tightly knit cooperative community.

With these few examples, for me any analogy between the historical collective colonies in the United States and those of Palestine finished. The abundant conditions of land and life in America differed as fundamentally from the sparse resources and fierce realities of Palestine as did the characteristics of those seeking refuge on their respective lands. Without money or experience in agriculture, faced by a need to settle wastelands and frontiers lacking in natural defense barriers, the collective form taken by the Palestine colonization grew out of the urgent necessities of national need which, linked with profound social convictions, made the organization of its collective farms not incidental experiments of isolated individual living, but a *national form,* organic to the development of Palestine as the Jewish homeland.

Now in 1933, when I entered Mishmar Ha'emek, there were already eighty *kibbutzim,* group collective farms, in three large federations, with some ten thousand members.

The first of these group farms, Degania, nearing its quarter-century mark, had been founded in 1909. At best, Palestine held out no promise of an easy living for those settling on the land. In this connection, the former Assistant Chief of the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, Walter Clay Lowdermilk, was to say of the "genius" which brought into being the collective settlements,

> Only a people with a true love of the land, and a goal toward the achievement of which it concentrates all its efforts, can bring a country, poor in natural resources, to a maximum state of development. [Dr. Lowdermilk compared conditions he found in Palestine with the genius of the Dutch people who, when more land was needed for their growing population,] increased the absorptive capacity of their country by dyking off sections of the North Sea, draining them, leaching off the salt, and preparing the soil for crops, thus changing sections of the ocean floor into an agricultural paradise yielding bountiful crops and making a homeland for about eight million people.
>
> The genius of the Jewish settlers in Palestine [he went on] has similarly transformed "badlands." They have fled from the unspeakable persecutions of anti-Semitic regimes in Europe. They have a goal to which all of them are consecrated, and they are undaunted by hardship, disease, crop failures, or terrorist attacks. By training thousands of young men and women in technical and practical tasks, and organizing them into working groups which can wrest their food, clothing, and shelter from the soil, and can find satisfaction in so doing, the Jewish pioneers in Palestine have developed something new under the sun. A foundation has been laid, and a method evolved for successfully adapting a people to its land resources.*

* Walter Clay Lowdermilk, *Palestine, Land of Promise* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944.

"Something new under the sun"—that was how I saw the *kibbutzim,* and in relation to my own particular future, Mishmar Ha'emek.

The 1,250 acres of Mishmar Ha'emek varied between hillside and valley fields. The colony lies at the point where Mount Carmel ends its 17-mile stretch inland, and the hills of Ephraim begin. Above it could be seen the spot where Elijah proved himself a true prophet when he predicted that a cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, would grow large and become filled with rain to relieve the drought plaguing the country. Here the priests of Ba'al were slain as false prophets; here, Elijah, arousing the nation to declare itself against a foreign god, reminded the people that Jehovah would not hold them as His own unless given an undivided allegiance. Such was Elijah's message from the Lord to the nation, before, as legend had it, he was caught up to heaven in the fiery chariot, only to return as the herald of the Messiah.

To the southeast of the colony, nearby stood Megiddo, the ancient fortress guarding the western entrance to the Valley of Esdraelon.

Directly opposite to Mishmar Ha'emek lay the hills of Nazareth, and Mount Tabor; and to the right of the valley, toward the Jordan, lay Mount Gilboa, where Saul and Jonathan fell in battle. Cradled in history, Mishmar Ha'emek was to leave a mark of its own on the future. The surrounding hills were dominated by Arab villages, looking down on just another settlement of pioneer Jews, ready to face any circumstance for the right to reclaim lands lying unused and wasted by centuries of neglect.

In the first few years after being granted the land by the Jewish National Fund, from 1926 to 1930, only a small group—fifteen men, and one girl to cook and take care of the household needs—came to take possession, and do the preparatory work before the land became habitable and

ready for cultivation. By the time I went to live in Mishmar Ha'emek, a full complement of members had been settled there for only three years. In the summer up to thirty worked in the colony, the remainder of the group of eighty or so members remaining in their temporary work camp of Afula where, the drainage of the surrounding area completed, they hired themselves out as day laborers, construction workers, masons, plasterers, and carpenters in what was hoped by real estate investors would be the big city of the future, to serve the needs of the *Emek* farm population.

By the time all the members of the *kibbutz* could move in, there were families including young babies to be considered. Also security measures must be taken; it was no simple matter to take possession of land lying in a completely Arab section of the country. To accomplish it peacefully innumerable cups of coffee must be drunk with Arab neighbors, many conversations held attesting the peaceful intentions of the newcomers, at the same time making unmistakably clear the unshakable determination to settle on this land, and to remain.

For the delicate task of establishing good relations with Arab neighbors Arieh was ideally suited. From the beginning he was the settlement's *mukhtar*—headman—the spokesman for the *kibbutz* and go-between to Arabs and British, both of whose languages he knew well. He had the bearing helpful to his position; tall, slim, rather romantic in appearance, his lean features, aquiline nose, and military bearing lent him an air of assurance and distinction. Also he was a magnificent horseman, which always impresses the Arab. Always wearing riding breeches and highly polished boots, he rode a fine Arab horse. It was part of his status that he was the one member of the *kibbutz* who was allowed the luxury of good clothes—and a leather jacket.

During the period of preparation an assortment of fruit trees was planted on the hillsides. It was an experiment

which flew in the face of all previous experience and all the advice of the experts, who were convinced that only citrus fruits could survive the onslaughts of the dreaded Mediterranean fly. Also dooming the experiment to failure, in their eyes, was the folly of planting fruit on hills with no water for irrigation, and no moisture beyond the fickle winter rains and the heavy night dews.

But people so ready to experiment on themselves were not to be easily discouraged. With an alleyway of cypresses as a fitting approach to the forest of the future, the beginnings of what would prove to be prize fruit orchards and vineyards were planted, and the first ten thousand saplings for the forest rooted in the soil of the higher slopes. In the fields below the first potatoes to be grown in the *Emek* were given their start; also a vegetable garden, poultry run, and tree nursery were started.

At the beginning there had been no roads, and in winter, when the rains churned a thick mucilaginous mush called in Hebrew *botz,* communication with the outside world was cut off, for it was hard for even a mule or horse to move through the *botz.*

Notwithstanding these conditions, in 1929 the *kibbutz* was settled permanently. It was a few years, though, before a road was laid to Haifa, providing a lifeline for trucks to travel at all seasons, in all weather. There was a funny side to the building of the road with such celerity which appealed strongly to the *kibbutz* sense of humor.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., was to visit the Holy Land. His interest in archeological finds was known. It was therefore in the hope of receiving a grant from his overflowing coffers that the Government of Palestine made haste to lay a road from Haifa to Megiddo where, it was assumed, he would visit.

Mr. Rockefeller did not make that visit, but there is no great loss without some gain; Mishmar Ha'emek, lying

on the way to Megiddo, got its road, and the name "Rockefeller" became known even to babies in the colony; indeed, I duly noted the name at the first fancy-dress Purim ball I was to go to after coming to the *kibbutz.*

Prior to all this, and when there was still only a handful of members at Mishmar Ha'emek, there had come the uprisings of 1929, when the whole of Jewish Palestine was faced with imminent disaster, and the gains made in preparing the colony for settlement in danger of being wiped out. Though promising it protection, the government demanded that the place be evacuated. The idea of evacuating was rejected, but a compromise was reached; the group would work at the colony during the day, but return to the others at Afula at night.

The arrangement lasted only one night. The Arabs had eaten every last chicken, had uprooted, burned, or broken half the planted trees. Arieh, the *mukhtar,* strode into the police station, demanding removal of the police, and the Arab officer in charge; the *kibbutz* would defend itself. Which it did; with pitifully few arms and people, they routed the three hundred or so Arabs, though being shot at from all sides.

It was now decided that, regardless of conditions—or because of them—the *kibbutz* should join its forces and settle the land without further delay. The trees that had been destroyed were replaced, and 130,000 more planted.

Thus Mishmar Ha'emek had its actual beginnings late in 1929, little more than three years before I sought permission to join.

In my eyes it was a place desirable above all others. Physically it was certainly not much to look at, though I would not have so agreed. The litter of tar-papered wooden huts . . . some pyramid-shaped army tents . . . a low, barrackslike building for a combined dining room and meeting hall . . . an attached kitchen . . . barns, a silo, sheds to house live-

stock and poultry . . . a water tower, situated high above the scattered buildings, and next to the water tower the children's house . . . On the hill above was a symbol for the future, the beginnings of the first high school of the *Hashomer Hatzair* movement. The first story was finished, the second begun.

Though the Arab village of Abu Shusha peered down on the kibbutz the members of the colony, being naturally optimistic—an attitude naturally part of the philosophy of *l'amrot hakol*—were ready to let bygones be bygones. The policy of the movement was to live in friendship with the Arabs; children of the two villages mingled freely, playing together; from their earliest childhood our children were taught that—when the Arabs burned trees and otherwise destroyed what we had built—they, because of the character of their leadership, were more sinned against than sinning.

As yet the colony had no electricity; water was scarce, and drawn from standpipes placed at several points near the dwellings. Plumbing there was none, not even in the central toilet house at the outer edge of the settlement. I fell victim soon to the "gippy tummy" ("gippy" for Egyptian) of the subtropics; but even having to walk a quarter of a kilometer four or more times in a night, and in winter in pouring rain and *botz,* did not impair my enthusiasm for *kibbutz* life. Discomfort had no reality; I was insulated against bother. Visitors who had known me at Glen Cove or elsewhere, marveled that I could live in such "appallingly primitive" conditions; one went so far as to exclaim, "Why, even the dog houses at Glen Cove were better than this shack of yours!" I could understand that there were those who possessed nothing within themselves to shed light on the meaning of what they saw at Mishmar Ha'emek or the many settlements like it throughout Palestine, but they were like people speeding along roads in cars having no

headlights to pick out the red warning signs along the way.

Certainly there were inconveniences, but many of them afforded fun—if you could see it. I remember a day when I soaped up, preparatory to taking my shower, only to discover there was no water to rinse it off. A shout for help to the girls working in the laundry adjoining brought a bucket brigade to the rescue; though the laundry was primitive, at least great iron vats of water were kept boiling over charcoal or wood fires, and there was a reserve of cold water.

The shower room was of corrugated tin; a space between roof and sidewalls admitted the cold, wet winds and rain of winter as well as the cool, welcome breezes of summer; after a day of relentless broiling sun the temperature in the hut was that of a furnace.

In the *kibbutz* the daily shower was both a favorite sport and an institution; by common consent only one a day was allowed because of the scarcity of water and continual threat of drought. The hair, though, got its daily shampoo if only in cold water, work clothes were laid aside, the girls put on fresh blouses and skirts, the men clean shirts and trousers over freshly laundered underwear, leaving the showerhouse spic and span. Probably nowhere in the world was there so beshowered a farm population as in the *kibbutz,* or one which goes daily through such refurbishment, and always to the accompaniment of the gayest, most uninhibited singing. There are supper and the socializing of the evenings to look forward to, and an atmosphere of joyous anticipation, what Walt Whitman describes as "the institution of the love of comrades."

In itself, the food was sketchy. At this time the daily food budget was three and a half piastres per person, about fifteen cents at the current rate of exchange. There was always enough, though, to fill up on, even if it did not stick

to the ribs for long. Bread was the staple, with dried beans following it as a close second. For those suffering from effects of the long deprivations of the training period and bad and insufficient food, and had developed ulcers and other stomach ailments, a special menu was prepared, called *dieta.* By reason of my digestive reactions to the new conditions of my life, I fitted this category from the outset, a class shared by a considerable segment of *kibbutz* members.

Breakfast was both hearty and good. To the horror of most Americans it started with a salad, a prevalent custom in Palestine. When fresh vegetables were in season, cucumbers, tomatoes, radishes, and onions were placed on the table in bowls. According to individual taste and digestive vigor, these were cut up and mixed with *leben,* the national soured-milk product borrowed from the Arabs. Mixed with lean white cheese and sliced, garlic-cured olives, it made a tasty mixture to eat with bread and, when available, a hard-boiled egg. Always there was hot cereal and a bit of smoked or salted fish or anchovy paste to start the day on, washed down with unlimited amounts of highly sweetened tea which could, however, as a special concession, be had without sweetening; I became a minor curiosity for drinking tea without sugar. For those eating *dieta,* white cheese and *leben* were daily fare. Bread was home-baked—good, dark, crusty whole wheat for the majority, white bread baked to rusk for those on diet. On Friday nights there was white bread for all; then the tables would be covered with white cloths, and the dining room made to look festive. On Sabbath eve there would be eggs or fish, possibly on rare occasions even chicken or meat, served in thimble-sized portions which in the United States would be scorned even as appetizers. Soups were always plentiful, good, nourishing, and filling, with noodles or other starchy foods to be eaten without limit. In the beginning potatoes, being scarce, were

regarded as luxuries. Food, though, as such, was not a matter of interest or discussion, and there were no complaints. The long years of pioneer living had educated out of the *haverim* any emphasis placed on food by their mothers while they were still at home. Food was a necessity, eating was to satisfy hunger, not finicky taste. What counted was quantity, not quality; stress on food was just another habit of "bourgeois" childhood, to be discarded, along with other such habits not in keeping with exacting conditions imposed by a chosen way of life. It was of greater moment to stretch lean financial resources for things of greater importance. The children and their education had a high priority; but everything to do with making the *meshek*—farm—self-sufficient and productive came first. For this, personal need or comfort was gladly sacrificed. *Kibbutzim* were building towards a future; the future required production; production required tools and machines, so that workers could become the masters, not the slaves, of their work. This every one understood and accepted.

The highest authority in the *kibbutz* was the *sicha,* or town meeting. Its voice was the voice of the membership, its decisions final.

It was my first experience of total democracy at work in daily living.

Here each constituent member of the community was kept informed on everything in his or her immediate world, and in the larger world outside, national and international, each having an equal share in decisions as to what to do about everything that concerned them. Decisions were carried out through the organizing committees, elected once a year by the assembly. The committees were responsible for their own assigned departments of work, rendering reports to the *sicha* periodically, or at such times as new policy decisions were to be taken.

For example, a crisis arose in the kitchen; lack of proper cooking arrangements, drafts, and ventilation wore workers out, making kitchen assignments very unpopular. The pressing need to enlarge the kitchen and improve its facilities was brought to the *sicha.* The whole membership discussed the matter; the decision was taken to break down walls and extend the kitchen area, in order to improve equipment and working conditions.

When I began my trial period in the *kibbutz* the enlargement of the kitchen was underway. Though there was semichaos, the situation was of special interest to me, for I had asked to work in the kitchen, receiving enthusiastic permission from the Work Assignment Committee since few worked in the kitchen from choice.

In all frankness I should say that my status in the *kibbutz* was special. I was at this time forty-seven years of age —older by a quarter of a century than the average age of its members—and no one expected or wanted me to assume the full obligations of a member. Instead of the full nine hours at manual work, I put in a half day, spending the other half day in writing, studying Hebrew, and knitting for the children. I was pleased that my comrades loved to say I had "hands of gold," and praised me as a good worker, but I knew that I merited the great compliment less than all the others.

I accepted the disciplines of the daily life in full, and would not have allowed it otherwise, even though it still left me as a privileged person, one of experience in the Zionist world so different from the average that the *kibbutz* would gladly have relieved me of any obligations of work whatever, out of their deep appreciation that I had chosen their way of life as my own.

I asked for kitchen work for two reasons. I like to cook.

I also did it as a matter of protest. I thought it wrong and harmful that cooking and kitchen work should be regarded as relatively "unproductive" compared with the "productive" work of the fields, barns and children's house. There was a tendency among girls who had chosen the pioneer way of life to feel that the revolution effected in their own lives should emancipate them from the household drudgery that had "enslaved" their mothers and their mothers' mothers before them. To them, working in the fields not only was more productive, it was liberation.

All of which lofty protest and theory did not much help me in facing my first and chosen assignment with anything like equanimity. At best, I knew myself to be not much of a baker, and I was horrified and frightened at the thought of not making good on my very first job given me. Most of my cooking had been done outdoors, on camping trips. My first assignment was to bake a cake. Moreover it involved bringing me face to face with a device I had never even heard of, namely a *wundertopf,* a pot supposed to bake a cake on the top of an oil stove instead of inside a proper oven.

Well, nothing ventured, nothing gained; armed with a recipe out of an American cookbook, requiring many but happily inexpensive ingredients, I was directed to a temporary storeroom to which all staples had been removed for the duration of the repair work. This was a no-man's land of boxes piled on barrels, sacks piled on boxes, five-gallon gasoline cans balancing on top of sacks. Hidden away in a biscuit tin at the top of the comestible Mount Everest I found the last item needed, raisins! The cake turned out well, *wundertopf* notwithstanding, and my acceptability in the kitchen was assured. The incident had one unexpected aftereffect. Thereafter the cake was much in demand—not for the whole *kibbutz,* which would have made it an ex-

travagance since cake properly was only for Sabbath eve and the holidays—but for those eating *dieta.* Hitherto I had been one to whom making the two sleeves of a baby dress precisely alike was a chore; now the baking of a cake, over and over again and always the same, became an unexpected discipline. I had to learn also that my kind of intuitive cooking was not what was needed or wanted here. Radical in thinking, but ultraconservative in food habits, the *haverim* did not wholeheartedly welcome the unaccustomed in food. I learned too to expect to eat more or less the same thing each day, and like it; in the *kibbutz,* food was not an adventure, and only served a necessary purpose; there was no call for trimmings; that the food met the needs of a more or less balanced diet was the one thing to be thankful for.

When, therefore, in spring I was assigned to work in the vegetable garden, I was not sorry. I missed the friendly talk and companionship of the kitchen and my job of peeling millions of potatoes and scraping millions of carrots, which left the mind free to roam while the hands were busy. But in spring in Palestine one should be out of doors, and I was happy to put my hand to this new kind of work, about which I had known nothing.

Working in a collective group has great advantages; a beginner can learn to do one specific task well without the tension of having to carry responsibility for the whole. It is not too difficult, learning to peg in a cord at both ends and planting garlic buds at intervals of fifteen centimeters along the line. Or at least so I thought, as I planted one garlic bud after another under Yonah's supervision. At the time she was in charge of the vegetable garden, and my guide and instructor. It was only as she was leaving me on my own that she threw out the suggestion which was my undoing. "Be sure to plant the small side downwards; otherwise the garlic cannot root." For many nights, in my dreams, I saw my

garlic growing upside down, roots waving mockingly in the air. Anyway, how did one distinguish one end of a garlic bud from the other? Both looked alike to me. Yet what if my *haverim* should be deprived of their garlic for the year? Afraid to confess, afraid not to, finally I told Yonah my nightmares—and learned that nature has a way of correcting the stupidities of humans. Happily, if the buds had been planted upside down—which it turned out they had not—nature had its own way of correcting the work of a novice, and the roots could find their own way downward.

When the garlic was harvested, it was said that the *kibbutz* had never had a better crop; and, I must say, never had I felt more of a sense of accomplishment.

Yonah was more than my instructor in garden work. She instructed me too in the knacks of scrubbing a wooden floor so that it came out clean instead of pock-marked with mud puddles.

A beautiful brunette, young, tall, willowy, of a type and personality to match the best in Hollywood, with a bandana tied around her dark, curly hair, and in work pants and shirt, she needed no make-up to point up her beauty—a good thing, since make-up was frowned on and never used in the *kibbutz* except at the fancy-dress balls at Purim. In the *kibbutz* no one flies in the face of public opinion, which is even more decisive in setting the pattern of behavior than the supreme authority of the *sicha.*

Fortunately for me, Yonah spoke a charming, school-learned English; her very white teeth sparkled when she laughed at herself, her mouth dimpled as she carefully framed her words. She was a graduate of the *Gymnasium* in Tel Aviv and had lived in the city from childhood, when her parents migrated from Russia. Notwithstanding her city upbringing, she chose to live in a *kibbutz* and was a fine worker and comrade, the highest praise a *kibbutznik* can receive.

On top of her own hard work she took me on as a protegeé, and counseled me on the care of my room which, at the moment, presented a problem. A shack was my temporary dwelling place; my own brand-new one was being built.

This shack had been used to shelter transient guests. It was built of wood which was old to start with, encouraging others besides humans to find shelter there. The question was how long it would be before the bedbugs would manage to make off with it entirely. Yonah and I met them on the field of battle. We carried the bed outside, and I learned to be very dexterous at applying the blowtorch. We scrubbed the walls from floor to ceiling with the strongest disinfectants, but what turned the trick in the end was that old American standby Flit. Finally it did for the interlopers, and I could sleep at night.

Other than the mechanics of *kibbutz* living, very much else had to be learned.

There was the major question: was it possible for the uniqueness of the individual to find expression in the life of the collective? Could personality develop, and individual gifts find satisfying outlets? Could the creative potential of the individual be brought to realization in a life where the interests of the community took precedence over those of the individual? Could any society be a "great" society which did not afford innate individual qualities the avenue for separate expression and development? All in all, could the collective survive as a way of life, in terms of human impulses?

In Mishmar Ha'emek it was a good sign, to my mind, that every individual member or couple had a separate room. There was a respect for privacy here which I had not seen before in the collective settlements.

I was to find that the more I learned of this complex, and

to me new, society, the less I seemed to know. I started with a worrisome handicap; I had no language! I now could only communicate in halting words with the people with whom I lived. My teacher in Tel Aviv, Bourla, had warned me when I told him I was going to enter the *kibbutz.* "You will never learn the language," he said sadly. When I protested that people went to the *kibbutz* primarily to learn, and among other things Hebrew, since it was the only language spoken there, he answered, discouragingly, "Others, yes; but not you. They will want to discuss things with you other than the prosaic topics of daily living and work. With a young woman, entering the *kibbutz,* they would speak no other language than Hebrew. But with you they will not have the patience to listen to big thoughts expressed in the small words of your limited vocabulary."

All too true! Nearly every language but Hebrew was spoken to me. My German improved by daily use, many learned through me to speak English. Yet it seemed that no sooner would someone volunteer to work with me on my Hebrew than they would be drafted for other work. I made myself study hard, yet I felt illiterate, full of frustration and shame. At times it was so acute that it seemed very much like the days of my childhood, when I stuttered so badly and, being unable to talk gracefully, felt driven to live within myself.

Nevertheless, I was from the outset very happy in this new life; in time the language drawback was to be corrected.

I found not only comrades, but close friends and even a family. Mordechai and Zipporah Bentov embraced me as their own, making their home mine after work hours. Too, there were the inspiring mornings when I carried my chair up to the young forest and, among aromatic-smelling pines under a blue, blue sky, could set my thoughts free for writing.

It was very good indeed, to be surrounded by the love of comrades, and to live in a world founded on the faith that there can and must be comradeship between all men and nations.

26

NOT MANY FRIENDS, PARTICULARLY IN THE States, thought I should, could, or would settle down permanently in the *kibbutz,* where my little wooden shack in the farm settlement Mishmar Ha'emek measured 7 x 9 feet and cost $27 to construct.

Part of my taking this step had, it seemed to me, been intuitive, a response to some deep subconscious drive. Although still interested in understanding fully the conscious *why,* my most important question now was whether I could make good in the life, and how. A sense of humility made me feel it an honor to be accepted as an equal in a world so different from any I had known, by those who were molding their lives on a pattern in which their service was bound up without thought of self-aggrandizement or economic gain. These were people who placed values ahead of all else, who rated success or failure in life by the degree to which they matched their daily practices to principles; their objective was to advance the welfare of their people,

their country, and their group, and all action must be molded by this objective.

Elsewhere in Palestinian collective farm settlements I had met many individuals of like ideals and purpose, great personalities; but it seemed to me at Mishmar Ha'emek that never before had I observed a group which functioned so unanimously. It reminded me of a perfectly trained orchestra, in which each player, recognizing a need to carry his individual part with maximum spirit and technical capacity, was alive also to his responsibility to the excellence of performance of the whole.

I was reminded of having sat on the floor in discussion with the youth of the *Hashomer Hatzair* in such places as Brooklyn, The Bronx, Boston, Detroit, Montreal, and Toronto, when we talked with American young newcomers on the floor of a tent in Mishmar Ha'emek, and I had an opportunity to learn the transitional experiences of these young people from the Western world. They had now been here about a year. Young city dwellers had been changed by the training they had received into pioneer workers on the land; I recognized the transformation worked in their lives by the clear-cut purpose which they had made their own.

No longer pale city dwellers, their bronzed young faces glowed in the light of the single oil lamp hanging from the tent pole; their eyes shone with the inner light seemingly characteristic of all the *halutzim* of Palestine. They had fully accepted the rigorous discipline and training needed to reach their chosen goal, and were as intent on meeting the tests as any young Americans trying out for college baseball teams or Olympic trials. These had been selected by their fellow members in the States to come on ahead and prepare themselves as a nucleus which the members who followed would join on their arrival in the country to form a *kibbutz* of their own. This was no isolated instance of a method planned especially for this, the first group from

America, and new to the experience of the world movement; it had been worked out through several stages of trial and error and found effective in establishing a chain of border colonies throughout Palestine. Under this system the older, more experienced settlements became the training ground for nucleus groups of the movement's younger members who, when sufficiently conditioned to farming, management, and group living, would go out on their own and establish new settlements. In this way, to date seventy-four farms of this *kibbutz* movement had been established throughout Palestine, each a stronghold of economical, social, spiritual, cultural, and physical strength.

As the first to arrive from the United States and Canada, this group was of special moment to the life of Palestine. They were designated to become founders of the first American *kibbutz,* Ein Hashofet, meaning "The Well of the Judge," in honor of Justice Louis D. Brandeis who became their sponsor and friend.

Before this greatest of all days, when these young settlers would be granted land of their own by the Jewish National Fund on which to establish the settlement, they must go through a period of further preparation. Joined by the remainder of the group, still in training in the States, on arriving in Palestine they would be settled, as an intermediate step, in the village of Hadera, where they would work as day laborers in the individually owned orange groves of the settlers who had been among the first to come from Russia, some fifty years earlier.

On the first visit I paid to their work camp at Hadera, I remember it was the girls who made the deepest impression. For example, there was Shifra; musically gifted, as an extracurricular interest she took on the responsbility of organizing and leading a choral group. She was one of those I had met in Brownsville, back in Brooklyn. She came of a musical family and wished to contribute her share of musi-

cal talent to the cultural life of her *kibbutz*. A warm, generous personality, lovely to look at, with large gray eyes and curly dark-brown hair, she applied her finely equipped mind and hand wherever she was assigned and later made an important contribution to the care of children who, for one cause or another, had become disturbed.

Bella came from Boston. She was to bring into the world a brood of towheads like herself, adding to the considerable number of blonde youngsters in Palestine. Such children were even born to dark-haired parents, and puzzled visitors by their "un-Jewish" hair and coloring.

And there was Penina, as quick of tongue as a whippet is of leg. It was not easy for her to fit her quicksilver personality into the pattern of the group, but she worked hard at it and achieved an outstanding place as a teacher, leader, and organizer of dramatic and festival celebrations.

Sara used to say she had been born a Zionist, which to her meant that it was only logical that she would prepare herself to make Palestine her home. Born in Brooklyn of parents who emigrated from Russia, she was raised in modest circumstances, but made the most of them, gaining to the full the advantages which America had to give those without great means. Joining the first group of *Hashomer Hatzair* organized in the States, she prepared herself to become a teacher. Simultaneously she studied at Columbia and at the Jewish Theological Seminary, where she learned Hebrew which she was always to speak with an incorrigibly New York accent. She never allowed her strenuous academic program to interfere with her youth-movement activities; as one of the older girls in the movement—at this time perhaps all of seventeen or eighteen—in the evenings and on weekends, she helped train groups of youngsters. Nor, when she arrived in Palestine, did her intellectual talents deter her from learning a new and unfamiliar craft. I can still call back my first glimpse of her, at Hadera,

hammering away at a cobbler's bench on a pair of shoes she was making. It seemed to me she was prouder of her handwork than any of her many other capacities.

When she escorted me around on that first visit to the "camp" I was struck by the homelike atmosphere created on what had recently been only a bare patch of sandy land. It had no feeling of temporary shelter or way station. The shelves of the kitchen barracks were bright with gay-colored oilcloth brought from the States, along with numerous gadgets to speed work; flowers grew in profusion, roosters crowed in the courtyard, hens cackled and laid eggs; everything combined to give the camp a feeling of being a settled and permanent home.

Sara and many of the other girls like her were born pioneers. Had they lived in the days when America was pushing westward, they would have gone with the covered wagons, battling their way through weather, drought, and unknown dangers. Had there been then the kind of training and education as here in Palestine now, a more lasting pattern of pioneering values might have been formed.

It was striking to find in Palestine girls from the States who had consciously put aside beauty care for its own sake, to apply their every thought and act to the rejuvenation of their people and their ancient homeland. In the dedication of these young men and women, I was reminded of the youth in Hawthorne's story who, searching long to find one who, in life, resembled the Great Stone Face, came at length himself to bear the stamp of its nobility. These young people were becoming stamped with the noble likeness of the way of life they were helping to create, and from which they derived the satisfaction and fulfillment which engraved on their character, personality, and countenance a beauty of its own special kind.

The training, begun when they were novices in the youth movement in the States, progressing through a year of

preparation on a training farm for their *aliyah,* had continued from their arrival in Palestine. Nothing was haphazard and they learned in the work camp in Hadera to live and function together for the first time as a group earning its own way, in which each contributed according to his abilities, each receiving in return according to his needs. If there were members with the responsibility of continuing to support their parents in the States, this was included in the budget as a group responsibility, the money was earned and sent. In this way of life all money was pooled and expended by common consent, subject to a meticulously worked-out budget. If by chance a budget for a period could not be made to balance, then they learned to take the "easy" way of avoiding deficits by trimming their appetites to suit the amount of cash available. Regardless of any tax their stomachs might have to pay, the budget balanced, even if the diet did not.

In Hadera, the members of the group would have their first experience as wage-earners, and thus feel themselves truly a part of the labor forces of Palestine. As members of a trade-union movement, they would learn to protect themselves and their fellow workers from exploitation insofar as this was possible. As members of the *Histadrut* they learned to participate in party activities, and to begin to play a role as *haverim* of their own *kibbutz* federation, *Kibbutz Artzi,* which, in the intensive political life of the country, furthered policies and a program distinctive to itself. Here too they were fitted to become an effective unit of the self-defense forces, the *Haganah,* mounting guard each night to protect their community and camp.

It could be likened in a way to U.S. Army training—except that it was often more arduous, and without the compensation of eating their fill of appetizing food, and drinking the quarts of milk they were used to and craved, but did not get. In Palestine at this time milk was still

limited both in quality and quantity, and available only to the very young and very old.

With only self-discipline, and a belief in their goals which made up for any deprivations, these fledgling *kibbutzniks* submitted themselves to the toughest kind of conditioning. Not all survived; some returned to the States; but those who remained were of the stuff to join others who, before them, had pioneered the frontiers of Palestine and become the founders of successive *kibbutzim,* new links in the chain of group farms brought into being by the same kind of determination and disciplined training.

Sitting together with these young people, whose bodies and spirit were fairly bursting with the power and energy of their chosen way, many questions demanded answers. Exactly what had shown them their way to a faith and purpose leading them away from the disillusionments and destructive tendencies of their times, and instead imbuing them with strength to find their salvation and self-realization in a society which they themselves were helping to pioneer and build? How had an ideal which history had made seem essentially American—pioneering—come to them, as to me, by way of Palestine and Europe? Why had these youngsters been impelled to leave their country and help build another on the other side of the globe, instead of staying to apply the codes and high standards of conduct of their youth movement to adult objectives in the United States? Was it that America did not need or call for this dedicated type of service except in wartime? And, if not, why not?

The same, and similar, questions were constantly asked by visitors to Mishmar Ha'emek. What was the source of initiative in a society which relieves the individual of urgent need to earn a living or go hungry? What was the incentive of work when there were no personal pecuniary gains? What were the compensations and satisfactions when all work is rewarded alike, where there is no "mine" and "thine," only

"ours," and no one tries to accumulate possessions to secure his future?

Perhaps David, the shepherd of Mishmar Ha'emek could furnish a clue to the answer? For a long, lonely nine-hour day he tramps the hills with only the companionship of his sheep, his goats, and his dog. With none of the genius of David, his shepherd ancestor, who composed ageless verses while tending his flocks, and with no star of destiny to guide him to a kingship, our David obviously had found his own satisfactions.

On the rough shelves of his shack could be found all the latest available information on scientific breeding of sheep. Of necessity the herd had been started from the remnants of Arab flocks; David had no outlet through poetry, but he had made himself well-versed in genetics and the skills of animal husbandry, and by degrees was adding new, improved strains to the herd. He was finding his satisfaction, in seeing each generation of baby lambs grow a finer, thicker quality of wool; furnish for market tastier meat because of improved bone structure, and a greater quantitative as well as qualitative yield of milk for the cheese made in his *kibbutz* for the markets of *Tnuva* in Jerusalem, Haifa, and Tel Aviv. What the two Davids had in common, and what gave our David his satisfactions and incentives, was the urge to share in building his people into a nation. From the uplands our shepherd covers with his flocks he need only look over the valley stretching below and beyond, for incentive to further effort and initiative. Surveying the *Emek* he does not feel himself an isolated speck in a universe of competition, but rather a meaningful part of a great united effort of like-minded people, working to bring order out of chaos and establish a viable and productive economy in his people's homeland.

Closer to home, immediately around him, our David may take his satisfaction in the hillside, rising from his beloved

kibbutz. No longer is it littered with gray stones and thistles, as are the further slopes. The hillside is covered with the thick dark green of young growth, the beginning of a great forest; already orchards and vineyards are promising fine harvests. The erosion of centuries is being systematically checked, and soon the torrential winter rains will no longer rob the slopes of precious topsoil, and sweep rich red earth away to the sea.

Below the vineyard the young shepherd's eyes must surely linger on the clustered shacks and tents that spell home; he can dream safely of the day when these ugly huts will give way to well-built houses of which now the white water tower, the children's home, and the high school under construction give promise. But first things first; the farm economy must be soundly established before the indulgence of better housing can be thought of. All depends on the yield of crops growing now on the long, narrow strips of field stretching to the gentle, low hills of Nazareth. This year the rains are tardy; gladly would the shepherd be drenched if the clouds would only gather, and pour the much-needed rain upon him.

Many and many another revealed to me the meanings of *kibbutz* life for its members. I went one day into the fields with Shlomi, the *kibbutz* expert in field crops. His life had not begun on a farm nor had he planned to be a farmer. Now his passion and ambition was to be the best farmer possible. To further his ambition his *kibbutz* had given him the time and opportunity to study, to increase his knowledge, to become expert and a specialist in his work. With all the care and pride of a parent exhibiting a firstborn, Shlomi fingered the earth, uncovering a tiny seedling cradled deep in the rich, moist soil. Tenderly, with infinite care, he lifted out a single grain of wheat; placing it in the palm of his hand, he pointed out the strength of the roots; the moisture it retained was a result of his first experimenta-

tion in dry farming. Could a swelling bank account give him greater delight, or the prodding of selfish ambition stir him to any greater initiative or satisfaction than that he showed in displaying his seedling? His vision was opening a new future for arid, neglected lands; his was the satisfaction of taking a step forward in the search for methods to supply more bread for the hungry living on arid soil. More than that he seemed not to want.

I was impressed by how the Jew in Palestine stood in position to help his Arab neighbors. I walked along a well-beaten footpath; on one side were our fields, on the other side the fields of our Arab neighbors. The Arab fields were marred with clods of dry, caked, stony earth; ours had the rich color of fertilized and well-worked soil. The Arab fields had been surface-plowed, ours cleared of noxious weeds and plowed deep. Our wheat stood straight and tall, rippling in the wind; tares interspersed the Arabs' gold-laden stalks, which grew shorter, and were less heavy with grain. Help and "know-how" were being extended by the *kibbutz* to the extent the Arab leaders allowed.

Neighboring Arab *fellahin* wanted very much to learn our ways. Despite interruptions by political agitators, forbidding them all neighborly exchange with us, even to the extent of prohibiting the bringing of their sick to our clinic to be treated for their many ailments (a prohibition which somehow the mothers of sick babies showed great ingenuity at circumventing), they were beginning to learn; it would take time, for there was much to learn and to unlearn, and there were many hazards. However, the quality of neighborliness can be as stubborn and sturdy as the cyclamen of Palestine that seemingly was able to grow in stone.

Perhaps it was the tractor drivers who gained the maximum amount of satisfaction from their work. They seemed a class unto themselves. Lucky the child whose father was a tractor driver, for all children worshipped him. I overheard

two children, resting cozily by a wheel of a farm wagon. One had a newborn brother, and they were discussing his future. One said he should be a second *Moshe Rabenu,* our great ancestor Moses.

"No, not *Moshe Rabenu,*" said the other positively. "He will wear goggles and a helmet, and be a tractor driver for sure!"

Quite a while later, when Mordechai Bentov had become Minister of Labor and Minister of Development in the government of the State of Israel, I was to wonder if, for him, his position matched the distinction and satisfaction of being a tractor driver, which he was when I first came to the *kibbutz.* If I were looking for a sign, I would say it was in the fact that he has never removed from his library the extensive literature on tractors that he had had sent from America.

I had seen Mordechai—in the *kibbutz* called Mietek—in the role of educator, counselor, and friend of the youth of the movement in the United States; here, besides his regular tasks, he was the one always chosen to greet distinguished visitors from the English-speaking world, and showing even now the promise of the able diplomat he was to become.

For example, when His Excellency the High Commissioner, Sir Arthur Wauchope, came to visit the *kibbutz,* it was Bentov, with a committee, who received him. Sir Arthur was unique amongst Britain's High Commissioners of Palestine in that he liked the Jews, and was an enthusiastic admirer of the *kibbutz,* and specifically of Mishmar Ha'emek. He saw a great potential in their group form of farming, even recommending it as a method which might prove useful in England. Out of his private funds he had given the money for a machine to drill for water, the need for which was becoming more critically urgent with continually rainless days. Thanks to him the machine was set

up, and its bore drove daily deeper and deeper into the earth. By now the flowers in the gardens were drooping on their stems, and water was heavily rationed. The children were heartbroken that their gardens must go unwatered, and there was a feeling of mounting tension throughout the *kibbutz,* as the bore drove deeper, and the *haver* in charge loudly announced the depth reached in meters.

"80 meters!" "84! 90! 94! meters!" Soon the depth limit of the drill would be reached! "Just half a meter more for good measure," it was announced.

Then, suddenly, there was a great gushing sound, and water leaped into the air in a geyser. "*Mayim! Mayim!*" the cry rose—"Water! Water!" Men, women, and children came running, shouting, some almost crying for joy. Instinctively hands joined, a great circle formed around the foot of the rigging. The geyser showered down its riches and everyone danced and sang, drenched to the skin, laughing, shouting, swelling the chorus, "Water! Water!"

In a grand climax, as someone beat joyfully on the great iron hoop outside the dining barracks, the heavens opened, and torrents of rain poured forth, a kind of cosmic affirmation that the Lord helps those who help themselves!

27

NEW PEOPLE, NEW NAMES, NEW LIVING CONDITIONS and values—yet instead of being a stranger, I felt at home. To live permanently in the *kibbutz* there certainly would be many adjustments to make as time went on. Oddly enough one very real test of inner equilibrium, which came quite early, could hardly have been anticipated and involved a seeming incidental of human existence. It came with the end of the drought, and the onset of the rains.

In Palestine there is no place to hide from the downpours. Clouds open, and torrents of water tumble down. In seconds the body is waterlogged; ground which a minute ago was a solid, hard-packed surface, turns in an instant into a thick, gelatinous mire; merely to put one foot after the other becomes a feat of dogged muscular ingenuity.

I should have been too old in years and experience to look on it as an adventurous lark with nature, but it seems I wasn't. Which accounts for my remaining happy and undisturbed despite the weather and the *botz,* which were

enough to try men's souls! How know that this state of mind would not be temporary? These were no nice, polite rains, to make an occasional day spent indoors a tempting delight. Here were no open fireplaces to give one comfort. Yet it must be borne in mind that nothing less than cloudbursts was likely to pulverize earth baked stone-hard under eight months of merciless sunshine.

I looked about me to see how those with extensive *kibbutz* experience took it. Did tempers tend to grow short, depression set in, energy and activity taper off? Not at all. If anything, the *kibbutzniks* seemed to enjoy themselves most when hardships were greatest. In a steaming atmosphere of wet clothing and soggy bodies, the wilder the behavior of the clouds, the heartier became the gales of laughter and joking. Which was more important, to be dry and comfortable, or to receive heaven's gift to the grain and vegetables, the harvests spelling life to the *kibbutz?* Obviously the rains should be thought of with the deepest respect for their service to the parched earth. Other than that, the *kibbutzniks* treated them rather as raffish guerilla bands on marauding excursions, well armed but never really quite clever enough to rout their human opponents. Not that the guerillas didn't try, sometimes with devilish cunning. For instance, there was the matter of rainbows.

There are few spots on earth where a rainbow is not a sign that the rain is over. At Mishmar Ha'emek, however, when we saw the rainbow, arched in prismatic splendor over the mountains of Gilboa, Tabor, and Nazareth, we knew it marked the arrival, and not the departure, of another downpour. Briefly it would cast its beautiful reflection on rain-soaked, emerald fields; suddenly, then, it would fade first into the palest wash colors, and then dissolve in the folds of pitch-black cloud banks—and in noisy triumph the rains would be upon us again.

Sometimes I felt a bit ashamed of the clothing I had

brought to withstand the weather. Left over from past camping trips in the Rockies, I had the water-repellent hunting jacket, warm breeches, high boots, leather coat. I never found envy in the *kibbutz;* if I excused my good fortune, my explanation met with protest—"You aren't accustomed yet to such conditions."

If the skies had their Jupiter, the *kibbutz* had its Dollek, the meteorologist. Each morning he appeared before a lively audience to make his announcement of the night's rainfall. Who cared about ankle-deep mud and dripping clothes—so long as Dollek's tally inched toward the 800 millimeters of rain needed for the season?

The rains, and dressing for them—dressing *against* them, would be more accurate—were a means of acquainting me with the *communa,* a kind of country store, where—with the one essential difference that cash never was used as a medium of exchange—all the material necessities were supplied.

In its earlier stage the *communa* at Mishmar Ha'emek (at other collective farms, it goes by other names) made no effort to suit individual tastes or sizes, and so startling effects resulted at times. For example, on a day in early winter, when Mount Hermon dramatically pushed aside its stage curtain of cloud and stood forth under a cold sapphire sky wrapped in a cloak of ermine snow, the *haverim* too burst forth, clad without reference to size, fit, or style in surplus U.S. Army jackets, coats, pants, and the like. They laughed uproariously at their "fashion show" and were anything but cast down over little things like weather or chic. They appeared in coats too big or too small—sleeves too long or too short—pants better suited to a 200-pounder than a slim 125—though the group looked like nothing so much as the rag, tag, and bobtail remnant of "extras" assembled for an impromptu staging of *The Beggars' Opera,* no one thought of criticizing the *communa* for purchasing such a

collection of misfits. What if jackets didn't fit; they were warm and of good material, and in time would be altered or exchanged with those more the right size. If the general effect was funny—well, what of that? The standards and foibles of their bourgeois past were behind them; it better became the proletariat if clothes fitted budget rather than body.

In the *communa,* all stocks of clothing, bedding, furniture, beds, chairs, cupboards, toilet articles, and other necessaries were purchased out of the money earned and pooled by members of the settlement. When the *kibbutz* was hardly more than a dream to be realized in the future, the *communa* was the first of the practical aspects of collective living. While the young settlers of the movement were still working in small separate groups, cleaning out swampland and breaking stones to build roads, they called themselves a *havoura*—fellowship—reserving the term "*kibbutz*" for the time when they felt the name was deserved by having been earned.

At first, "*kibbutz*" was a more general term, used to describe the group farms of the *Hashomer Hatzair* as differentiated from other collective settlements, though it was in fact descriptive of all the collective farms which were joined in the tightly knit federations such as the *Kibbutz Meuchad* and *Kibbutz Artzi.* A group farm such as Degania and Geva, more loosely organized in the *Chever Hakvutzot,* was called a *Kvutza* (plural *Kvutzot*). Pooling all earnings and appointing a treasurer to handle all funds and make necessary purchases, the *communa* became the center around which, later, the *kibbutz* took its organized form. Collective ownership had not originated with the young newcomers of the *Hashomer Hatzair;* by the time they arrived in the country it was already a well-established system, having grown out of the ideals and necessities of the pioneers of the second

aliyah, who accepted common ownership as the basis of the new society they would build.

As with all things involving freedom and democracy, each generation must learn meanings for itself. Thus, when the third *aliyah* swept over Palestine at the end of World War I, the pioneers rediscovered the idea of collective ownership, making it the basis of their way of life.

It was to be a decade before clothing, for instance, belonged to anyone in particular. Gradually it was found psychologically undesirable and economically unsound when no one felt personally responsible for the clothing he wore and its care, for this led to waste and speedy deterioration. When the hefty and well-padded tried to squeeze into shirts and pants meant for slight figures, seams strained to bursting, hardly making for long wear. A new system was adopted; clothes were tagged *aleph, bet,* and *gimel* to distinguish small, medium, and large sizes. Suits and dresses were "assigned" by the *communa,* at first to be worn for short periods, gradually for longer. One month's apportionment of clothing stretched out to six; finally the time came when the *haverim* became actual possessors, and clothing belonged to them; girls' dresses began to be made to measure, according to individual taste and style. From *Shabbat* or best clothing, dresses became second best, and so on, with replenishment distributed over a period of years, as the state of the treasury and decisions of the *sicha* allowed. It was an interesting fact that for a long time work clothes were distinguished only by size and remained common property. All in all, it was a trial-and-error method designed by people determined to establish a state of absolute equality for all.

Inevitably there were faults. For example, how to handle in an equalitarian way the assortment of boots and shoes left standing outside the dining barracks on days when it poured and mud ran in all directions? All footwear was removed

before entering on such days for meals; at best the interior of the dining room was primitive and unlovely, but that was no reason to track mud in and make more arduous the task of maintaining even a semblance of cleanliness and order.

In the conglomeration left outside there were boots of rubber, even of good leather, jammed together helter-skelter with down-at-the-heel workshoes which must afford scarcely any protection against mud and wet. Naturally one had questions. Who decided what was distributed to whom? What modified the rule of strict equality? What kept people united and functioning together harmoniously as a group, in the face of such occasional inequalities?

Questions like these deserved answers, since I was no longer the traveler, the visitor passing through, pausing only to observe with wonder the amazingly numerous and varied forms of social living concentrated within the small area of Jewish Palestine. Yet it was perhaps best that I not demand or discover all the answers at once; to do so might lead to misinterpretations of my motives. Here it was best to learn by experience, and that took time.

Although from the beginning the *kibbutz* way of life had seemed to me the best, I had sought to learn something also of the *moshav,* the smallholder's settlement which, though observing the moral principle of not exploiting another's labor for your own gain, nevertheless left some latitude of choice to live a more individualized life.

It was interesting to find that the people of the *moshav* paid a somewhat higher price than did the *kibbutzniks* for observing this moral tenet as a basic aspect of their lives. By a systematic division of labor, the *kibbutz* was able to organize its work—except at harvest time—on a nine-hour work day. In the *moshav,* men and women both worked around the clock. Not allowing themselves hired help, the women tended their households, their kitchen gardens, and

poultry and, outside of school hours, cared day and night for their children too. The men, working their fields, caring for their livestock, and doing the thousand and one chores all farmers everywhere have to do, differed from the individual farmer elsewhere by cooperatively buying and selling their produce, and making cooperative use of their farm machinery. The schooling of their children and their social life were also carried on cooperatively, all assisting each other mutually in time of need. But I noticed that, like all other overworked farm women, the *moshav* women tended to grow old before their time. Though in nobility of character and moral stature they certainly equaled those of the *kibbutz,* their life appeared—even if they seemed unaware of it—an endless round of drudgery, less fulfilling than it well might have been had they continued, as they had begun, in the *kibbutz* movement which they had helped to found.

On the whole, my questions tended to be confined, however, to the *kibbutz* way of life and, at the moment, to Mishmar Ha'emek, where it had been planned that I would stay six months, before spending equal time in settlements of the two other federations of collective settlements, the *Kibbutz Meuchad,* and the *Hever Hakvutzot,* before deciding where to apply to live permanently.

Something else which favored my happiness was that it never occurred to me to be driven away by the difficulties of learning to speak the language. True, for uncounted nights I was rather reminded of abacus counters, as my dreams clacked with the sounds of names such as Mulek, Gulek, Yulek, Henyek, Genyek, Dollek—most of my Mishmar Ha'emek *haverim* were of Polish origin. In themselves Biblical names were less of a problem—at least until one remembered to attach *aleph, bet,* or *grimel* (the first three letters of the Hebrew alphabet) as suffixes to Sara, Rivka, Yaacov, and so on, when there were several people

with the same name. However, I told myself, I had not come this far to be overthrown by language.

When I knew that the natural culmination of my long quest for a total identity with a way of life and a purpose would come in the *kibbutz,* I asked myself how it was that I had chosen Mishmar Ha'emek as the one for my first period of orientation. I was least acquainted at Mishmar Ha'emek. I knew almost no one there, with the exception of Mordechai and Zipporah. It would have been more likely for me to return to Kfar Giladi, where I had first discovered *kibbutz* life.

Pioneer living was much the same in all the settlements; it was the unique educational approach here which drew me and made me want to stay. The young people here, having been driven to emigrate by more than the violent anti-Semitism of eastern Europe, had been impelled to leave their homes and families and come thousands of miles to live, collectively, the hard, exacting pioneer life in Palestine. While the system of education did allow each one to develop as an individual, it was the manner and degree of their working and living together which testified to the success of the system. Though it was sometimes said that this group seemed at first of lesser caliber and personality than the pioneers of the second *aliyah,* it was remarkable to observe the stature attained by each as a part of the group, dedicated to a purpose great enough in their estimation for them to desire to make themselves over to its measure.

To me, especially, it seemed nothing short of a miracle to find, in these young Americans of the training group, young people who had discovered where they wanted to go in life, and were preparing themselves by the sternest kind of training to get there. Here, too, I would have the opportunity to meet some among the founders of the youth movement which, though it had originated in Europe, had suc-

ceeded where other movements failed to lead young Americans out of the cynicism and confusions of their times, and give them a faith to live by. I had observed this unique system of education in action back in the States; here I could see at first hand its results in adult practice.

I felt it necessary to warn myself that I would not learn, to the extent I wanted to, if I accepted everything I saw at face value. More and more I inquired, therefore, about inequalities I observed; not only in boots and shoes, but in food and in housing. In a community where equality was a major conviction, there must be some sound explanation for these inequalities. Little by little pieces of the puzzle fell into place; the pattern which emerged identified a life as inherently different in form as it was in principle to any I had ever before seen.

Here *need was the key;* not the hours of work done, or the quality or substance of talent, but the exact need of each individual. If this seems a contradiction of group living, let me offer an example which illustrates the actual working of factors.

A *haver,* beloved by all, had made the decision to leave the *kibbutz.* This was an unusual thing in itself, in a group raised together from early youth. A deep depression spread over the *kibbutz;* it was almost worse, it seemed, than if the man had died. Every kind of persuasion was exerted to get him to change his mind, but he would not; he left, taking a reluctant wife and child with him, to work as a skilled, highly paid worker in the city.

Not more than a month later Zipporah Bentov, then in charge of the Committee on Health in the *kibbutz,* ran across the man, in the clinic of *Kupat Holim.* To her horror she learned that one of his arms had become paralyzed; he was at present totally unable to work.

What was to be done? In a different society the question

would not even have been raised; plainly a case of "He made his bed, let him lie in it."

Zipporah rushed back to Mishmar Ha'emek and called for a *sicha* to be held that very night. It is part of the *kibbutz* organic structure that any member has the privilege of calling for a general meeting if he or she believes the occasion warrants.

Zipporah laid before the *sicha* the gravity of the situation. It was decided to offer him three choices: (1) Invite him to return with his family, and forget that he had ever left the *kibbutz;* (2) In case this might force him to decide not from conviction but from need, he was to be invited to return until such time as he recovered his health; (3) Should this embarrass him, his expenses in the city would be paid for the duration of his illness and incapacity.

The significance of this handling of the problem was that, however he had come to his incapacity, his welfare was to be assured by the members, and his care was made a charge on the group. No expense was too great for the need of a fellow member, for he was, by common consent, reestablished as such. That such human kindness was taken for granted here, and in no way considered exceptional or meriting praise, in a group where all members led a Spartan existence, seemed proof positive of a society where a man indeed was his brother's keeper.

If this might seem an inequality in itself, the answer would be that the vicissitudes of pioneering had left not a few incapable of any longer doing a full day's work. No more was expected of them, therefore, than what they themselves judged they were capable of doing. In the *kibbutz,* shirking was unknown; members suffering from effects of disabling disease felt far more mental anguish at not being able to do their full share of the work than they felt from their particular ills.

I had been puzzled at the table, one day, when I noticed a

haver contentedly eating a stack of white beans and bread, while immediately next to him another ate from a plate heaped high with all sorts of good things, even meat or chicken. I did not understand the reason for this, then, but later Sarah described her feelings to me, when she found she was pregnant, and a third piece of bread was pressed on her, at a time when the food ration of others was only two slices of bread per day.

"I almost choked," she said. "When I tried to swallow the third slice, it just wouldn't go down!" Her moral impulse to accept no extras had to be curbed because of her greater need. She gave birth to a fine boy, the first boy born to the group.

It was to those whose needs were considered greatest, therefore, that the better food and housing were given; expectant and nursing mothers received top food priority. A *haver* related an incident in his group—one of the first to come to Palestine after the war—about one of the girls soon to become a mother. "It was decided," he explained, "that we could not allow her to continue to receive only our daily food ration. Therefore I was delegated to walk to Haifa, forty kilometers distant, to try to raise a loan from the *Solel Boheh*—the building cooperative of the *Histadrut*—to buy the chicken we felt her condition required." A smile spread over his countenance. "My mission was successful; I felt good as I walked home the forty kilometers with the loan in my pocket."

It is natural to ask whether too many cases of special need tend to throw the *kibbutz* budget out of kilter? In truth, yes, but the remedy was, in its way, quite simple. Everybody shared in covering deficits by eating less.

As time went on, it became more and more clear to me that the *sicha* was the very foundation of *kibbutz* strength and vitality. Under a system wherein each one at the *sicha* received the opportunity to have his full say, naturally it

took time and patience to reach decisions. But, when they were arrived at, it was not merely by majority vote, but by a method giving a new interpretation to the democratic process. With no coercion, bureaucratic control or pressure of leadership, unanimity was aimed at and achieved. It did not always come easily or quickly, but it came. To know with what mental and emotional effort at times, it would be of benefit to overhear the extended discussions, in the shower rooms, and at mealtimes, over unlimited cups of tea in the evenings. All views were submitted to examination, reexamination, and the most intensive analysis. Partisans of one point of view or another lobbied freely. And finally, if expediency and not principle were seen to have been involved, compromise became possible; a member of the opposition could join with the majority, thereby making it possible that the kibbutz speak with a single voice. If, however, after many discussions a member found he could not, in good conscience, vote with the majority, he had two choices: one, to leave the kibbutz—and instances of this were extremely rare—or to disagree, but not engage in further active opposition to the majority decision.

Thus was molded and maintained a collective ideology, by an informed and deliberate electorate, a method possible only when a group, functioning homogeneously over a period of time, held the opinions of all members in high respect. The system was possible only in a group not too large to have the effect of discouraging less able and articulate members from voicing opinions, yet not so small that the interplay of ideas was limited to too familiar and intimate a group. This consideration caused the *Kibbutz Artzi* federation to limit the membership of its groups to something between the very large membership in the groups of the *Kibbutz Meuchad* and the small memberships in the group farms of the *Hever Hakvutzot*. Later larger memberships in these were found to be an economic necessity.

Before passing along to another system among the collective farm settlements, I wanted to learn from individual founders of the movement some of their reasons for having been drawn to it as boys and girls, and remaining to be the veterans of a particular *kibbutz* now going on forty years old, and literally "oldsters" of a youth movement they had initiated some decades ago. How, above all, had the homogeneity of the group and its purposes been effected?

28

"TAKHI" WAS DIFFERENT FROM ANY OF THE others. Called Takhi for short, his name, from the German, Gluckman, took on this surprisingly Japanese sound, Takhimoni.

A small, almost gnomelike man, one felt that, at birth, he might have looked as old, if not older, than he did now. Throughout his life he had been plagued by nearly every illness known or imagined by man. He made up in posture what he lacked in size. His brows characteristically knitted in furrows of thoughtfulness, he strode among his comrades with a kind of Napoleonic air which stamped him as a personality. Though invalided for long periods at a time, the fact that he was unequal to a full day's work like the rest in no way prevented his being a favorite in the *kibbutz.* He did his share. A historian and writer of topical skits and plays, he was a facet of the cultural life of the settlement. No Purim celebration was complete without his reading his own specially written version of the *megil-*

lah, spiced with sharp wit, humor, and irony, especially pithy when he drew parallels between British actions in Palestine and the infamous Haman of Jewish-Persian history. If Takhi sometimes became oracular it was excused in him because of his skill as a cartoonist in words. His profound knowledge of what made the wheels of the *kibbutz* go round had earned him whatever pose he chose to assume. As we sat and talked I saw, in the very exaggerations of his personality, the fulfillments he had found, in a measure which no other life could have given him.

This life was not what had been planned for him. "My father had intended that I would become a rabbi," he explained. "Our family had a tradition of following a life of Jewish learning; from the age of three I was thus set to the task of earning status in this world for my family and myself, and our salvation in the world hereafter. More the horror and disgrace when, at the age of fifteen, I ran away, leaving home and *heder* behind me." One could almost see him, huddling, shivering, on a bench in the heatless, cheerless classroom of the *heder,* clothed in a patched-up copy of his father's caftan, with sagging pants, wrinkled black stockings, and earlocks like those of his father. Easier to picture him this way than in the boy-scout garb which became his symbol of emancipation from the interminable sessions of rote learning, the sing-song recitation of passages from Talmudic literature and the Bible, every word and intonation to be rendered in the traditional manner, without mistake, aided if necessary by applications of the switch.

As Takhi's memories awakened, he chattered and sputtered with excitement. I got the impression that he and his young comrades had been driven instinctively like bees toward new sources of nectar. No longer content to remain identified with the habitual ways and beliefs of their parental environment, spiritually pulling themselves up by

the roots, they had become for a time homeless. If they could not find a habitat reflecting their aspirations and as yet dim dreams, they must create one. Here were individualistic young characters, in avid search of a collective identity.

There was a process of history at work. War and revolutionary upheaval had torn at the roots of the life of the Jewish community of eastern Europe. What distinguished these young Jews, adrift on raging currents, was that instead of merely being unsettled, they set about finding positive ways to counteract the insecurity and confusions of life around them. Student youth, of varied backgrounds and parentage, they investigated any and every field holding out the promise of instilling meaning and purpose for their lives. Accepting this, rejecting that, they roamed far afield from solely Jewish sources. In selecting values by which they wanted to live, nothing was accepted without being put first to the test of reason, but once they committed themselves to a value, there was no turning aside.

In a group of atypical teenagers, Takhi had perhaps been the least typical. His coming from a background of extreme orthodoxy only served to emphasize the strength of an amalgam which could bind together so heterogeneous a collection of individuals. At the opposite extreme from him were young people whose parents, grandparents, and even great-grandparents had been caught in the wave of the *haskala*—enlightenment—which, as early as the seventeenth century came sweeping down over the walls of the ghetto, penetrating the intellectual isolation behind which the Jews had immured themselves. Those caught in its current had broken with the traditional ways and reached out to fields of secular learning. Now these, their descendants—more often knowing neither Yiddish nor even the rudiments of Hebrew, and instead speaking only the language of the countries in which they happened to live—found themselves joining others as foreign to them as they were to one

such as Takhi. The amalgam distilled by their common quest was strong enough to hold them together.

"What, exactly, was this amalgam?" I asked Takhi. "What catalyst made you into the homogeneous group whose life continues here in Mishmar Ha'emek?"

He seemed to vanish deep within himself in search of the answer. When he spoke he deliberated over each word, like a lapidary for whom only one stone—perfect, without equal—will do.

"The amalgam, as you describe it, was the *'romantica,'* " he said precisely. "This caught and held us, different as our backgrounds were. It gave the movement its character."

"The *'romantica'*?" It was difficult to grasp *romance* as the motivation of a group I saw as basing its life and actions on rational thought and conscious planning. I risked breaking a mood which gave promise of leading to important answers. "What, exactly, was this *'romantica'*?" I asked. "What form did it take, how was it expressed?"

"From the beginning we had a framework within which we could express our strivings, yet which allowed, too, leeway for change and experimentation as our ideas developed and took shape. Though we adhered strictly to the rules of the world scout movement as to truth, service, and integrity, since we were not directly affiliated, we could adapt the scout code of conduct to our group needs. We wrote a revised decalogue by which to regulate our lives. Among the demands laid upon ourselves were strict adherence to principles, among them the adoption—at first in theory, later in practice—of Palestine as the homeland to which we pledged our loyalty, and intensive study and use of Hebrew as our first language. Adopting the scout symbols, ceremonies, and pageantry as well as its codes, we wore its uniform proudly, as clothing us with new self-respect and dignity. For we were a body of young Jews who knew ourselves as such. When we marched together in disciplined

ranks, backs ramrod-straight and heads high, we were no longer 'just Jews' but young knights, *sans peur, sans rapproche,* moving with confidence in ourselves in search of an ideal which we were prepared to pursue at whatever cost to ourselves, or obstacles in our way. And when, on the parade grounds, we formed ranks into a letter 'H,' and the drums rolled, the bugles sounded, and we snapped to attention at the smartly given commands of our troop leaders, standing at salute as the guard presented the colors and our flags flew free in the wind, we were as one man: a group proud and confident in itself and its objectives, eager and ready to march united into the future, and to rebuild it to a pattern of our own shaping."

This, then, was what Takhi named the *"romantica"* of the movement. Having stood the test of four decades in time, and the assaults of changing circumstances, it was not to be readily discounted.

However, a thought occurred to me. What of those other "youth movements," before and since the genesis of this one? Youth movements which, also making use of a *"romantica,"* released—not constructive, creative forces to build a country—but instead powered a monster, directed at devastating and destroying a world? As if on a screen there flashed before my eyes marching phalanxes of Nazi youth. Greater in numbers, more imposingly uniformed and beflagged than this Jewish youth group of Warsaw and Vienna, they had been rallied to unbreachable solidarity by a *"romantica,"* one of several paranoiac grievances sublimated into a cause. Where lay the difference? What led one group to aim to build, the other to aim to destroy? By what driving force was one group raised to high collective endeavor, the other impelled below bestial level?

One explanation must be that the pioneering pattern of the *halutz* movement for Palestine presented youth with a clear-cut program of action through which the individual

could become essential and instrumental in the collective endeavor to free his people, and in so doing find himself, in a harmonious unity with nature, his fellow man, and himself. To the Nazi youth, the uniform became a symbol of their superiority, which all others must acknowledge or else be liquidated.

While the pioneer pattern was not the creation of the youth movement of the *Hashomer Hatzair,* it was this movement which first evolved a system, unique in educational method, allowing this pattern of living to be carried over in its essential form, and continued by succeeding generations. This distinguishing characteristic, which I observed among the first young Americans trained in the system, was what impelled me originally to explore the *kibbutz* way as my personal way of life.

Yet I still sought from Takhi a definition of the precise key. What made this movement succeed and grow, where others had lesser success or failed? Surely it had not been merely the *"romantica"* of uniform and pageantry, even though his group had been the first in Jewish life to adopt it.

Could the exact explanation lie in the fact that, from its inception, it was *a movement of youth, led by youth alone?* These were young people with the confidence in themselves and in their spirit and power to affirm their right to strike out and discover their own way, to learn from their own mistakes, not permitting adults, individually or collectively, to impose a pattern upon them. Was it this unique aspect which had caused even those whose antagonism was aroused by the movement's insistence on the right to go its independent way, to acknowledge the merit of the educational method established, and its effect in successfully mobilizing and training the membership to play so distinctive a role in the economic, cultural, and social development of the country, and its defense?

Feeling I was making headway toward discovering answers, I turned next to Poli. Poli, now a veteran leader of the movement's educational system, was one of the initiators of the high school at Mishmar Ha'emek (first of the twenty-four high schools now serving the children of the seventy-four settlements of the *Hashomer Hatzair,* as well as city children, and newcomers from outside the country).

A leading member of the high school faculty, Poli still looked the personification of the European youth-movement leader. Even with a somewhat thickening waistline, and a slightly balding head of ash-blond hair sprinkled lightly with white, he could pass as one of the Teutonic founders of Germany's *Wandervogel,* the first of all youth movements. Blue eyes, sunburned fair skin, tall and "Nordic" in looks, at the time when "Youth" became a newly defined group, if not indeed almost a race, set apart and distinct from adult humans, he must have been, when young, the type of youth incarnate. He was Takhi's "*romantica*" in the flesh. A Roumanian by birth and inclination, the complacency of his attachment to everything Roumanian was shaken at his first sight of young Jews, marching in Scout uniforms through the streets of his town *as* Jews, unashamed and unafraid.

"That first time I saw them marching in their proudly disciplined ranks," Poli told me, "a spark was touched off inside me, and I caught fire. I wanted only to join them, to march in step with them. For the first time in my existence I knew what it was to feel proud as a Jew—and this in a country which despised its Jews, treating them with hatred and contempt!

"But the privilege of becoming a member of the group, of being allowed to wear its uniform, was not given easily. It had to be earned. There were tests: qualifications of character, proficiency in studies. Only when standards were met could one be considered as a candidate for member-

ship. This was an elite group of young, serious-minded intelligentsia, in whom a conscious awareness of what they were undertaking was a prime requisite. They might have been taken for prigs by some, had it not been for their exuberant joy in life and the electric enthusiasm with which they pursued their purpose.

"There was nothing easygoing about the studies we set ourselves in the movement. Educating ourselves was our hobby as well as our occupation. Nothing was outside the scope of our learning. From the Bible, to the Hebrew language, everything was included: the history of the Jews, the geography of Palestine, the natural sciences, the great dramas—*Hamlet, Othello,* Ibsen's plays. Never was it study merely for study's sake. Everything learned we made material for the achievement of our ideal—the perfect *Hashomer,* 'the young guard' of our dreams. We even discussed how we were going to educate our children in the future."

Educator that he was, Poli analyzed the method by which this was done. "We cut our teeth on the core of the meanings we extracted from our studies, through individual and group discussions. For every ten or a dozen of us of the same age group, there was a group leader, never more than a few years older than us, who was our teacher, father confessor, guide, and friend." Poli paused and then added, thoughtfully, "To this method of intimate guidance I attribute the success of our movement. There was nothing we would not or could not confide in our group leader, whether the problem was one of clashing personalities, or the deep, inner conflicts and contradictory urges that warred inside all those of our age. Night and day, our group leader was always there, ready and eager to listen, and help us to discover the answer to our problems. And what, after all, could be of greater importance to a youngster, passing through the radical chemical and spiritual changes and con-

flicts of sensitive years, than to have one who, though older and more experienced, was nevertheless of his own generation, ready to lend a willing and understanding ear to thoughts and feelings it was sometimes hard to dare confess even to oneself?"

Still not quite able to rid myself entirely of the contrasting picture of the Hitler youth, mesmerized into a destructive unity by acting, feeling, looking like an indivisible nationalistic unit, I asked a question bordering, perhaps, on the disputatious: "Are you sure which—the potentials of the educational method, or the surface trappings emblematic of a national solidarity and the security of a group chauvinism—was the deciding factor in drawing you to the movement?"

He smiled slightly, replying, "Nationalistic feeling was foreign to us. From the beginning, Palestine was—though vague and distant—an ideal. At that time there was no thought of *aliyah* to Palestine. Nor was there anything ideological—socialist, political—in our outlook. From the outset we were antimilitaristic, and by conviction pacifist. Our uniforms and scout rituals were simply symbols of the new identity we were in process of building for ourselves. They gave a stamp to the movement, surrounding it with a romantic appeal we found lacking in Jewish life. The uniform gave us self-respect and assurance with which, together, we could face a community hostile to us as a people. As a group of young Jews, this touched a deep chord within us. When we marched, banners flying, Hebrew songs rising joyously from our throats, we saw too that this assertion of our solidarity gave to the Jewish community an upsurge of faith and hope; in turn this enlarged our own faith and hope. No, there was nothing of chauvinism in the uniform and scout ceremonials; rather, so fused were they with our ideal, that they were our tangible reminder to make ourselves worthy of the future for that ideal."

With this enlightening analysis by Poli, I paired a description of the spiritual beginnings and objectives of the Warsaw group of the *Hashomer Hatzair,* transmitted at a much later date in a letter to a member of the Government of India by my friend Mordechai Bentov, a founder of Mishmar Ha'emek.

We started from the grass roots of human society, (the letter said) the education of the human being; his self-expression through shaping his own life and the life of his immediate environment, his effort to practice his ideals. This is how the *kibbutzim* came into being. We felt that even the best social system is bound to fail if it cannot depend on suitable material. Therefore we gave priority to the task of preparing the man for the system, rather than preparing the system for the man.

Poli spoke of the search for values made by the movement, on which lives of its members could be creatively based. "It was natural that we would study the first of all youth movements, the *'Wandervogel,'* to gain from its experience. We adopted many of its free, even unconventional ways: the habits of wandering, and living close to nature; the dress. Deeper in influence than these superficial manifestations of freedom was the *'Wandervogel's'* revolt against home and parents. At the beginning this had kindled the movement, given it its most profound motivation. It was not, in essence, either wayward or childishly willful. Nothing could have been more stultifying than the classic tyrannical domination of the German father over his family. Our need, too, was to free ourselves of hidebound conventions, outworn traditions, and the circumscribed fields of learning permitted us. Our revolt was made more difficult than that of the Germany youth, by reason of the deep, affectional ties between our parents and ourselves; nevertheless—if not without certain pangs of conscience and a

wrench of the emotions—we held to our need, and went our separate ways."

To make clear to me how deep was the cleavage between parents and children, Poli cited an example illustrating the difference in the attitude toward work between the older and younger generation.

"As our objectives became clear, and Palestine became an attainable reality instead of a dream, manual work—the true connotation of building—became an integral part of our creed; one expression of our principles and beliefs.

"We trained ourselves by hiring out as day laborers to the peasants, working on their farms; this provided us incidentally with money needed for our upkeep, and for our studies. Our parents were horrified. We, their beloved children, for whom they had planned and dreamed and sacrificed to provide a life of learning or, at the least, a professional career—we, to become common day laborers, working as peasants? It was a denial of everything our parents believed in and hoped for.

"To us, on the contrary, work came to mean the very essence of life. In time it even took precedence over study, became the foundation on which to build our lives. No longer would we be parasites, living by the work of others. Sadly we grasped that this was something we could not expect our parents would ever understand."

Zipporah Bentov told me of the feeling of her father when, at the age of seventeen, she was already in Palestine and assigned to breaking stones for the roads. A pleading letter came from her father: "Please, if this is work which must be done; if you feel it to be of such importance, let me send you a '*goy*' from our brickyard here, a first-class day laborer, to work in your place. And please, we beg of you, come home to us and continue your studies."

Gradually, Jewish influences, events, and personalities exerted greater and greater impact on the movement. But be-

fore they could give definite form to its ideas and objectives, yet another German influence was to place a deep and lasting imprint on it.

Through the writings and lectures of a Dr. Wyneken the movement came in touch with a new and progressive trend in education which placed emphasis on releasing the creative energy of youth for the specific purpose of its own self-expression.

Stressing the importance of youth itself being made conscious of its own potential, Dr. Gustav Wyneken was the protagonist of a culture of youth (a '*jugendkultur*'), a society of youth separate and apart from the entrenched society of adults. By becoming aware of his capacities, youth could find the courage to act independently and be released to express unique powers.

Though rejecting a separate youth society as undesirable, the movement did accept Dr. Wyneken's concept of a culture of youth which would prepare itself to take its place and function within an adult society; one heading, as far as was possible, in the direction it wished to go; a direction which would lead them in time to become an integral part of the *halutz* and labor movements in Palestine and, with these, enable them to share in building the foundations of a future State of Israel.

To me it was striking that the youngsters of this particular movement—without a Moses to point out a path for them to follow, without a pillar of flame to light their way —nevertheless deliberately and of their own choice set about the construction of a society with the moral and cultural pattern of the ideal *kibbutz* society, living its principles as scrupulously as the most orthodox of their parents observed their traditional tenets.

In search of more insight, I went to Mielek, for many years director of education for the *Kibbutz Haartzi* federa-

tion, and one of the institutors of its first high school at Mishmar Ha'emek. Though not a founder of the movement, he had worked for its development from its early beginnings. He was emphatically the intellectual, but of a much more sophisticated type than usually found in the movement.

"I came to the movement," Mielek explained, "not primarily out of conviction, assuredly not drawn by the glamor of uniforms, marching, and so on. Close friends of mine were members, and this aroused sufficient curiosity in me to find out what it was all about. Seemingly many, if indeed not most, of our opinions were shared, so it was all the more reason to find out why they had joined a uniformed youth movement which, while not demonstratively Jewish, nevertheless had an unmistakable Jewish character.

"Well, I went with objective curiosity to investigate, and remained to be subjectively absorbed by the movement. I came too to wear the uniform; if, at times with tongue in cheek, yet always with the persuasion that it met a special psychological need in the lives of Jewish youth. This has stood the tests of time, and has demonstrated permanent value."

Mielek passed to a unique aspect of the organization of the first of the high schools as a self-contained, self-governing, autonomous children's community. "This is an outgrowth of Dr. Wyneken's ideas. We had conceived our schools as organic units, separated from *kibbutz* by a considerable geographic distance. But when reality took over from theory, it was decided by our theoreticians-turned-parents to shrink the distance between high school and *kibbutz* to a matter of minutes instead of miles. Retaining Wyneken's idea of *lebensraum*—living space—for youth, free of parental domination, and true to the concept of an autonomous youth community, we built the high school close enough to home to allow for easy intercommunication (ex-

cept where the children of two or more *kibbutzim* attend the same high school, as has become the custom); when visits between parents and children are prompted by the children's desire and choice, without the pressure of too close proximity. This helps the children to accomplish their transition from the state of dependent childhood to the state of independent adult action and responsibility."

I sought Mielek's views on the matter of sex education, as given at the movement's beginning and which, in its later development, was known to have affected the behavior of its youth in a quite extraordinary way. To give focus to my questions—on a subject of inevitably absorbing interest to anyone come lately from a country as sex-obsessed as the United States—I had in mind an incident involving a refusal by some Hollanders to support a movement which, it was alleged, countenanced "the outrageous custom of boys and girls sleeping at night in the same room without adult supervision."

From time to time, in one circumstance or another, the matter of sex conditions arose to plague *kibbutz* leadership. One such episode came when a group of Youth Aliyah had been in Mishmar Ha'emek long enough to have lost the fear-haunted, love-starved look of children driven by inhuman terror to leave father, mother, home, and country behind, and seek refuge in Palestine. Youth Aliyah was a movement of rescue, unprecedented in history. Under its protection tens of thousands of boys and girls, ranging in age from fifteen to seventeen, were transferred from Nazi Germany into the care of Henrietta Szold. One of the world's great women, she was already well up in years when she first undertook the tremendous task of large-scale foster-motherhood. The children were placed in the *kibbutzim, moshavim,* and specially organized institutions for the rerooting, rehabilitation, and retraining which would turn them back into healthy and happy human beings.

Mishmar Ha'emek was limited enough in size, and the framework and pattern of its life was discernible enough so that, by the time the question of sex education had to be dealt with, the children had begun to regain a sense of security, and have a measure of stability. The love encompassing them gave them a feeling—if not altogether of family—of close comradeship and home.

Into this state of comparative Eden came a serpent, in the form of a letter to Miss Szold. It contained charges implying scandal.

There were several ways in which Miss Szold might have dealt with the problem. Among others, she could have summoned those in charge of the children to a meeting in her office in Jerusalem; or have threatened sanctions if certain methods and practices—for example, the free intermingling of boys and girls, including occupancy of the same room at night—were not stopped, thereby avoiding even the appearance of evil.

Not Miss Szold. Without prejudice or prejudgment, she went personally to Mishmar Ha'emek, prepared to withhold criticism and decision until, at the scene she learned the reasoning of those whose educational methods she had come to respect and admire. With the children's young male teacher-guides, Mielek as educational director of the movement, and the children's housemother, in an all-day discussion she examined with them the theory, practice, and results of the methods which had provoked criticism.

Her decision was that she could not and would not call for a change in methods which, to her mind were achieving a unique and salutary success. "Never once," she said to me later, "has there been a pregnancy to deal with, or any other unfortunate effect arising out of this free association of boys and girls." She added that it had been her experience, when she placed her children with the *Hashomer*

Hatzair, that there was no need to stand over them and watch out for their interests. They received more extensive education, wise guidance, and appropriate oversight than even we demand. Though she could not, as an observing Jew, approve the attitude of the *Hashomer Hatzair* towards religion, she had come to believe, she had said, that "they held the moral and ethical future of the Jews in their hands."

With illumination of this kind, I now asked Mielek about the beginnings of the method of sex education which was effectively orienting even the boy-and-girl relationship of children, coming from different countries and moral climates, who had only recently encountered the movement's ideas and educational attitudes. Though the youth of the movement had no actual contact, perhaps even no knowledge of "good" girls who carried contraceptives in their handbags when they went to dances, or of young intellectuals who, on one hand scorned virginity in girls, and on the other abhorred the idea of prostitutes and rejected the use of them, they had nevertheless felt the need to break with hypocritically conventional moral codes of the past and present. But their protest took a positive form. Repudiating the cynicism of merely holding all values to be relative, they saw logic and reason in applying to morality the test of whether or not it furthered their objective. Therefore each generation of youth decided to abstain from liquor, smoking, and, during the period of training, when they were preparing themselves for their life in Palestine, sexual intercourse. Setting themselves a code and adhering to it, they created an environment and moral climate uniquely their own.

I talked also with Sara, a *kibbutznik* who had become my close friend. In her this period, with its mixture of re-

bellion, single-minded dedication to purpose, mood of high exaltation and ecstasy, came alive. Sara told me how the movement had effected a complete transformation of her life.

"It started," she said, "when the family fled from Russian-occupied Poland and settled in Vienna. Here new horizons were opened to us who had lived circumscribed lives within the narrow confines of our small towns and villages. Jewish influences, and others of new and varied kinds, introduced us to a world we had never dreamed of. In our contact with the *'Zeire Zion'*—the youth of Zion—for the first time we heard Hebrew spoken as a modern language, and Jewish history presented as history. We met young people passionately engaged in the revival of a Jewish culture. These were young university students, a kind of elite, an intelligentsia without political coloring; Zionists, but with no serious intentions at this time of settling in Palestine."

She told of the influence of Professor Martin Buber, Jewish philosopher and historian from Germany, who became to this new generation the interpreter of Hassidism as a movement which freed its disciples from the shackles of orthodoxy, and led them to worship and express their religion in song, and dance, and joyous spirit.

She told also of Siegfried Bernfeld, psychologist, pschoanalyst, pedagogue, and Zionist, who had taken into his particular charge children orphaned in the pogroms in the Ukraine, and who was retraining and reeducating them for life in Palestine. As political events of the period crowded in on these and other children from all sides, they were "shaped and molded as dough is kneaded and patted before it is placed in the pan for baking." The upheaval of war and displacement; the overthrow of the Czar in Russia and the upsurge of hope for emancipation which the Revolution promised—these were the stuff out of which the dreams

of this youth were woven, making them ready and eager to take the building of a new world into their own hands. Especially had the *halutz* movement left its imprint on them. "It was all these influences coming together which caused the revolutionary ferment within us to break out against the conventions of our lives. I, who had been the pride and joy of my father's life, came to be disavowed and disowned by him; even struck by him, until my face was swollen and distorted. He said he did it so I would mend my ways, and follow the path he wished for me.

"When the problem at home became acute, I remember I brought it to the attention of our executive committee, for I needed advice. Against my father's prohibitions I had continued my studies at the university. At night I studied from books I hid under the blankets. I hid them under my skirts when I went out in the morning, and hoped against hope that when I returned from school he would not discover them. It was after he did so, precipitating a violent scene, that I appealed to our higher committee. Was it permissible, I asked them, to live a lie as I had been doing? Our code was strict, allowing only for truth. But, after long discussions, it was decided that under the circumstances I could only continue as I was doing. I was already in my seventh year at the gymnasium, was earning money by teaching Hebrew and Jewish history to children, and by sewing buttons on uniforms.

"Finally, though, there came the day when my father, flying into a rage, threatened to kill me. He had followed me that evening to a meeting I had with the head of the movement, and accused me of having immoral relations with boys. At two in the morning my mother sent me to an aunt's home to spend the rest of the night; shortly afterward, I left home for good."

There followed a life typical of many of the young pi-

oneers who had the courage and determination to leave the comfort and security of parental homes rather than give up the principles and objectives which had come to mean life itself to them. Sara was chosen as one of the seven to form the first *halutz* group of the movement, composed of three girls and four boys. She went out as a reaper in the fields of a peasant, doing a man's work to earn her passage money to Palestine, and training herself in agricultural work.

She recounted to me how, one day after the decision had been taken that these first seven were to leave for Palestine, they had gone out to the grave of Herzl (the assimilated, very gifted, young journalist of Vienna who, while reporting the Dreyfus case in France, became consciously a Jew and a prophet to his people). There, by the grave of Herzl, the young people entered into a covenant, with each other, with their movement, with their people. "We stood at the graveside," Sara told me, "in a silence unbroken by words. Instinctively each one of us leaned down and picked a single flower from Herzl's grave, exchanging them one with the other. It was as though an electric current was set off and flowed through us, tying us indissolubly to each other, to our cause and to our people." As she told of this moment of dedication, I felt as I had when, on my earlier visit to Mishmar Ha'emek, she had taken me up to show me the young forest on the hill. At the time she was in charge of the tree nursery; each seedling had been planted and nurtured under her care and supervision. It was a late afternoon. A wind was blowing in from the sea. I remember that she stopped suddenly; raising her hand, bending her head back in an attitude of listening, she said in a hushed voice, "Listen! Do you hear it?" I felt awed by the light of exalted beauty shining in her eyes. "Do you hear it?" she repeated. "It is the first time—the very first—that I have seen the trees tall enough to catch the soughing of the wind."

From Russian-occupied Poland to a young forest on an upland in Palestine—of such experience was the ecstasy of life made, for one of so many of these young pioneers, possessed of the will and the courage to follow their dreams.

29

NO LONGER WAS THERE ANY DOUBT IN MY mind that the *kibbutz* would be my home.

I had come a long way. This was a different world from the one I had lived in as a child with no sense of belonging. This world was unlike the world of my husband and children in which I had so willingly been absorbed. The world in which I found myself now was a world of people whose every concern differed from mine—save one. I was bound to them by a purpose: not only the building of Palestine as a Jewish homeland, but by their aim to build, in their section of the world, a place where man's responsibility to man was put to daily test and practice, where all felt themselves to be their brother's keeper. This made me part of a world where, regardless of differences, all worked in one direction, towards fulfillment of one aim.

It had taken time and hard experience for me to learn that there could be as many different roads to travel to reach what at first seemed an indivisible goal as there were differ-

ences of social, political, religious, and national outlook amongst those traveling them. My personal road zig-zagged markedly therefore, until I perceived that, whereas a renascent Palestine was envisioned by most with whom I had previously worked as holding the answer to their people's deep-rooted need, it had to a much lesser degree to do with the needs of their own. To those who were to become my comrades of the *kibbutz,* their Zionism was envisioned within the widest possible framework, answering profound personal needs and social aspirations, as well as the economic, cultural, spiritual, and national needs of their people. At the same time, they sought to live at peace with each other and all peoples, of whatever race, creed, or color —more especially with their neighbors the Arabs. To this kind of Zionism I was drawn as by a magnet; constantly in quest until attracted into its orbit.

My road had taken me through complex organizational responsibilities, intraorganizational controversy, conflicts of personal interests, but at the same time affording me the satisfactions which come from working for a cause deeply believed in. At times it had been necessary to forbear from action and do the intensive study which would bring into the perspective of history the meaning of being a Jew, the causes of past Jewish survival and their applications to the present and future, and to explore how—if at all—I related to this perspective. The further I went, the more clearly I realized that I had everything yet to learn.

Committed now to the *kibbutz* way of life, the only question remaining for me was which *kibbutz* to live in. It was time to make the decision. Beguiling as might be continued study of the nature, likenesses, and variations of the collective farm settlements, if all my study to date had impressed one thing upon me it was that, in Palestine, study and education must lead to creative action.

I felt strangely reluctant to be elsewhere than at Mishmar

Ha'emek, notwithstanding my first experience of collective living having been Kfar Giladi. In a very considerable sense Manya Shohat had become to me the embodiment and interpreter of the *kibbutz* way of life, and it was she who first set my feet on the way I now wanted to make mine. She too had transformed my first trip to Palestine from one of adventure to one of deep spiritual discovery by sensing the deeper reasons for wanting to travel through the country on horseback and then undertaking the arrangements to make it possible. My education too, she had taken in hand and, by giving encouragement to my desire to visit Arabs as well as Jews, had given direction to my Zionism. Having turned me also to a preoccupation with the *Hashomer Hatzair* she was now giving me encouragement—in spite of being a member of Kfar Giladi—to remain in Mishmar Ha'emek and make it my home. Knowing me well she felt it the place best fitted to my needs and, collective being that she was, Manya remained always deeply sensitive to individual human needs.

It was specifically this problem of the survival of the individual in collective life which was exerting a great influence on the choice I was about to make. The question of whether it does away with personal development and identity—as was commonly believed—had remained foremost in my mind. For the answer to this, I believed would make the difference between *kibbutz* as a transitory, or permanent, form of the society in the future. In their attitude to this I had observed wide differences in the various *kibbutz* systems. For example, a founder-leader of Ein Harod, of the *Kibbutz Meuchad,* explained their approach to me in this way: "In ours, the large, 'wide-open' *kibbutz,* we believe people must, themselves, find their niche in the community, here there is a process of self-selection at work; through it the stronger find themselves and survive with individuality intact."

I felt a stinging dismay. "But what of the weaker?" I exclaimed. Was this then, I asked myself, simply the old survival of the fittest in contemporary form? Surely the weaker too possessed individual potential. But the only answer I received was an easy-going shrug of the shoulders.

I contrasted this with what I saw in Mishmar Ha'emek. It was illustrated in the case of a newcomer. For a time she moved from task to task, seeming noticeably not to find her place, so as either to be useful to the settlement or fulfilling for herself. That is, until the day the electric laundry was installed.

For some reason this called up in her both aptitudes and enthusiasm. Where before she had been unsatisfied and restless, rather a floater on the *kibbutz* current, suddenly she had found a niche where she was needed and productive as an individual.

Not by chance had this come about, but rather under the watchful if unobtrusive eye of the committee of the *kibbutz* created for the very purpose of helping those who needed help to find their way to an occupation not only needed, but giving individual satisfaction.

In the *kibbutz* the worth of the individual does not necessarily have to show itself in one-of-a-kind jobs. For example, in all *kibbutzim,* each member does his or her share of the "dirty work" as a matter of course, taking the more distasteful jobs by rotation, such as sanitation work, cleaning outhouses, cesspools, and the like. Yet it is an interesting sidelight that the necessary good of all often was served through voluntary choice. Apparently, in the same way that progressive education sometimes calls forth in a child the impulse and willingness to shoulder tasks seemingly neither convenient, nor easy, nor agreeable yet which must intangibly present some liberating challenge, *kibbutz* life produces frequent examples of above average individuals voluntarily putting self aside to serve the common

good in the most lowly ways, and finding satisfaction in the process. As for instance, I had observed one day how Hazan, one of the outstanding leaders of the *Hashomer Hatzair,* had turned ditchdigger, working with pick and shovel to install pipes.

Extending my profound interest in the *kibbutz* movement, *Histadrut* and its connecting bodies, it was the emphasis on education to be found in *kibbutz* living which made the most powerful appeal to me. This, I found, in the most outstanding degree in the settlements of the *Hashomer Hatzair.* Theirs was an approach to adult living—as well as to youth—I had found only amongst the most advanced progressive educators.

Manya, who heartily agreed with my findings, defined the problem of Kfar Giladi as one of catching up with the *Hashomer Hatzair's* unique concept of education for young people. "When we started," she explained, "we were not as they, an integrated group with years of training in an educational youth movement behind us. We were individualistic people—frontiersmen, not educators—who became welded together as a group when we had the experience of carving out for ourselves the kind of collective life we wanted—and needed—to live, if we were to be successful in pioneering new and peril-fraught border lands. Only when we had children did we learn the all-important lesson: if the children of Kfar Giladi are to want to continue its life into the future, their education must be developed to prepare them for it. But we started too late and seem not to have found the right way."

Careful inquiry and study have convinced me that there are two main elements in the *kibbutz* which have precedents in the past: it has revived the role played by the group in Jewish survival; and as the Jews linked religion and morality for the first time in history, the *kibbutz* for the first time linked morality and socialism. Its dynamic is expressed not

only in economic terms but in a life regulated by a consciously accepted code affecting human relations and behavior. Thus the group again becomes a conduit for the faith, spirit, and energizing power of the Jew as these are conducted into a way of daily life. This is a new interpretation of the age-old concept of the Jew—not as a chosen people—but a people who choose the way they want, and feel destined, to go. The role played by education for living gives further example of the influence of the past on the present, as expressed in the *kibbutz.*

During the time the Jews were homeless, in exile and dispersed, they had "put a wall around the Torah." Their sacred literature became their substitute for sovereign geographical boundaries. The five books of Moses, the Talmud, the Mishnah, the commentaries of the Jewish sages, the declarations of their prophets, constituted a stronghold within which they could sustain their life as a people, and thus cling to their entity as a national group.

Education—the study of the history of the Jews, their laws and learning—was so held to be the lifeblood of their continuity that it was made a first charge on every male of the Jewish community, to the extent that those who failed to ensure the education of their sons were excommunicated. In this society the highest status belonged unequivocally to those who devoted themselves entirely to study.

Thus was the example set. Education, though taking a different form in the *kibbutz,* again has become the transmission line effecting the continuity of the faith and energy contained in the group, passing on from generation to generation the power to generate renewal. How else, but through this continuous education, account for the survival of the Jews through centuries of the race hatred and discrimination which forced them into the narrow life of the ghetto? How else explain the speed of the liquidation of the Jews of Germany except by the loss of any organic contact

between the individualistic Jew there and the spirit and body of his people? How else today account for the phenomenal feat of the young pioneer Jew who, with empty stomach and fever-wracked body, lived on to build anew the youth of his people, his society, and his country? In effect, is it too much to believe that the *halutz* pattern of *kibbutz* society has extended, in new organic form, an expression of Judaism beyond a way of belief into a total way of living?

Night after night as I saw the work-wearied men and women of the *kibbutz* revivified as they danced to the ever-wilder rhythms of their beloved folk dance, the *hora,* it came to exemplify, in symbolic form, the strength inherent in the collective ideal of the group. By the close contact of linked arms, in effect, the circle of the dance seemed to set up a closed circuit through which energy was conducted from one to the other, generating in the weaker as well as the stronger the will and power to dance through the night and start out afresh at daybreak to yet another day of work. In this way the *hora* reflected the force generated in the group life of the *kibbutz* by men and women, linked to each other by common experience and purpose, who have established a circuit of human beings. Through this means, the lesser, as well as the more gifted, have become endowed with power to create a society in which, through will, education, and self-discipline they together have found a way to live together in peace and to build towards a world rooted in collective well-being, creative individual expression, and a widening brotherhood of men and nations.

It was a time of perfection for decision. Spring had burst joyously on Mishmar Ha'emek. Flowers were everywhere, as far as the eye could see; no color or shade was missing from the tapestry reaching into the Nazareth hills.

That morning I was at work in the vegetable garden, given a breather from the close confinement of the kitchen. Squatting on a low wooden stool I thinned out vegetable shoots and transplanted young carrots. Rejoicing in the life-giving sun and air, I felt permeated with a sense of belonging. In the way of young, growing things, I was at one with my surroundings. I had found an ultimate purpose and meaning in life, a means of fulfillment which could transform the most lowly and prosaic work into the creative.

From childhood until, in Zionism, I had found myself as a Jew, I had been a wanderer, anxiously pursuing a need to identify, to belong. Here in Mishmar Ha'emek I had found identity. Its form was a potential individual sense of usefulness to common aims—to the people, to the place, to the country, and, it seemed to me, to the world. On a tide flowing to a future where each could express a sense of personal responsibility to all, there was room for me. Here the way was positive, having nothing to do with chauvinistic nationalism, to adventurism, or methods left to chance. Here, through education, a movement was generating and harnessing its dynamic to produce—not only things—but a civilization based on people who had learned Plato's meaning of love—that which removes the obstacles which stand in the way of human happiness. In an orderly pattern of purpose it had found the method to develop its youth to establish and assure its continuity.

From over the world Jews were finding their way home to Palestine. What they found here must be a way of life better than there was today or had been yesterday. The new thing, the great and inspiring thing, to me, was the creation of a leadership of and by youth. If the vision of the older generation throughout the world had dimmed, if faith and purpose, losing the thread of tradition and without the strength and courage needed to face change, had become weary and faltering, let them observe a generation of youth striding

into position—one capable of becoming the builders of a state. No easy life was in prospect for them, nor was it asked or wanted. Enough that the goal ahead be clear and desirable to them, that their ideal be a real one, achievable through faith, courage, and education. The way of life called for was new, hard, venturesome, exhilarating. It was the way I had sought for my children—for other people's children—and now at long last had found in the *halutz* way, with the *kibbutz* as its framework.

In Mishmar Ha'emek I had found the blueprint of the future. Its building was going forward. I could ask nothing more, after a long search, than to be allowed to fall into step beside those pressing forward.

And so the decision was made. Not surprisingly, it marked —not an end—but a new beginning.