

The **FEDERATION of SYNAGOGUES**

1912-1937

A Record of Twenty-Five Years

By
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PREFACE.

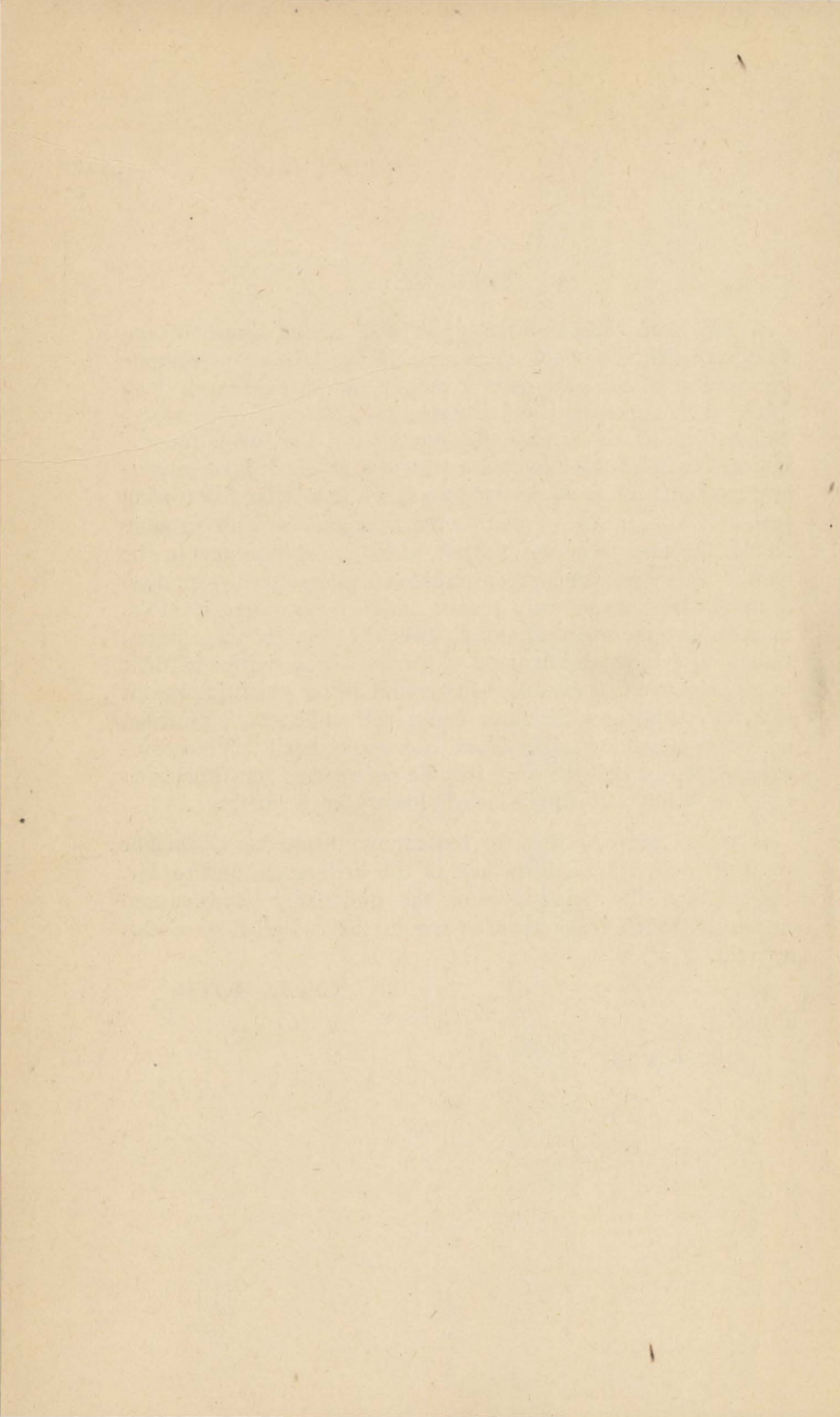
It was with pleasure that I acceded to the desire of the Honorary Officers of the Federation of Synagogues to compile this review of the past quarter century of its existence. Too often, as it appears to me, a synagogal history is of necessity written from a wholly parochial standpoint. But, while there is in the activity of the Federation a good deal which is of essentially local interest, it comprises also much that is far from being petty. It is at present probably among the greatest, and certainly among the most generous, Jewish religious organisations in the world. By its insistence upon traditional values, and by its deep sympathy with every truly Jewish cause, it has swung itself (as it were) into the main stream of Jewish history. In these pages, therefore, I have endeavoured to present its activities in their historical setting, against the background of that majestic pageant that has lasted now for three and a half millennia, eschewing, as far as possible, personalities and petty detail. Thus considered, I trust that the work may be regarded as constituting an integral chapter of Anglo-Jewish history as a whole.

It is my pleasant duty to record my thanks to Councillor M. H. Davis, L.C.C., President of the Federation, and to Mr. Julius Jung, the Secretary, for the unfailingly good-natured assistance which they accorded me in the compilation of this account.

CECIL ROTH.

LONDON.

December, 1937.



THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FEDERATION, 1887.

The Federation of Synagogues was formally constituted at a meeting held on Sunday, November 6, 1887, at the Spital Square Synagogue in the East End of London. Eighteen bodies were represented—all minor congregations, some too small to be taken into account when the United Synagogue had been constituted seventeen years before, others established since that date. Some of those in the former category were of really considerable antiquity, going well back into Hanoverian times. The Prescott Street Synagogue, for example (afterwards merged in the New Castle Street Synagogue) was established in Rosemary Lane, near the Tower of London, as long back as 1748; the Scarborough Street Synagogue (formerly in Gun Yard) went back to 1792. The majority, however, were new foundations, having been brought into being by the influx into England of terror-stricken refugees from the wave of pogroms which had begun in Russia in 1881.

In consequence of this the face of Anglo-Jewry, and in particular of London Jewry, had been completely changed. The Anglicised Jews of earlier immigration, worshipping for the most part in solidly constructed places of worship scattered throughout the Metropolis, were now equalled, or outnumbered, by the recent arrivals crowded together in the East End, fervently pious and banding themselves for prayer in rudimentary congregations which made use of extemporised, and often insanitary, places of worship.

THE FEDERATION IN 1912.

This was the state of affairs which had prompted the first Lord Swaythling (Mr. Samuel Montagu, M.P., as he then was) to take steps for the organisation of the Federation of Synagogues. For twenty-four years he remained its moving spirit, being constantly re-elected year after year to preside over its activities.

His long and useful career was not long ended when the organisation which he had created celebrated its semi-Jubilee in 1912. The progress made during the previous quarter of a century had been noteworthy. The first balance sheet had shown income and expenditure amounting to £119 ; in 1911 it was nearly ten times that amount (without counting a substantial legacy and the income of the Burial Society, which would have brought the total up to over £10,000). The number of synagogues represented had increased from sixteen (for two of those represented at the inaugural meeting had since dropped out) to fifty-one, including by now some in the north and west of the Metropolis, and several which were accommodated in properly constructed Synagogues. The total membership, originally not much more than 1,000, was upwards of 6,000.

THE GREAT WAR, 1914-1918.

The outbreak of war with Germany in August, 1914, proved to be a turning point in the history of the Federation. For the moment the voice of controversy was hushed. The national effort overshadowed all other considerations. For many months communal gatherings almost ceased. No meeting of the Board of the Federation was held for nearly a year, only the most urgent and indispensable business being transacted.

A very large number of the younger members of the Federation and their sons answered the call of their country and joined the armed forces of the Crown, to assist in combatting the German menace, which, after it failed to overthrow Great Britain, was to seek a weak defenceless scapegoat in their own coreligionists. Of the 50,000 British Jews who served in His Majesty's forces during the conflict, a larger number probably were affiliated to the Federation than to any other single organisation. It was a fitting gesture of appreciation when the Committee of the Burial Society unanimously passed a resolution to the effect that all members, notified by the secretaries of their respective Synagogues as having joined His Majesty's forces on active service, should be relieved from payment of their subscriptions to the Burial Society, and should remain exempt (though, of course, entitled to full benefits) until their safe return.

On the other hand, the organisation of the Federation, with numerous members of foreign birth who could be reached through no other channel, was found to be of the utmost utility at this juncture. In connection with the Metropolitan Committee for War Savings and Food Economy, the Federation assisted in organising propaganda among East End Jewry. Posters and leaflets in Yiddish were circulated and assistance given in organising meetings to be addressed by Yiddish speakers. Thus a Yiddish translation was made of the Royal Proclamation on economy in the consumption of grain and circulated among the Federated synagogues, which co-operated loyally in the campaign and encouraged their Rabbis to speak at public meetings in support of its objects. The importance of this collaboration was acknowledged in cordial terms by the National War Services Committee. Similarly, the Federation co-operated in the Coal Economy Campaign and in the Jewish War Services Committee ; and a day was appointed by the Ministers of the Federation for a special service and collection on behalf of the British Red Cross Society.

On the conclusion of peace the Federation was worthily represented in the establishment of the Jewish War Memorial (now the Jewish Memorial Council) which, though it has fallen far short of the magnificent objective originally designated, has without question done work of inestimable benefit in raising the level of Jewish education in this country. "It is hoped," the subsequent Biennial Report stated, in referring to the initiation of this endeavour, "that the Federated Synagogues will evince their interest in this great reconstructive movement, so that in the future it will stand not alone as a Jewish War Memorial, but also as a great Jewish Peace Memorial."

DEATH OF RABBI C. Z. MACCOBY.

During the war a familiar figure in East End Jewry passed away in the person of Chaim Zundel Maccoby, a famous Preacher who, even before his arrival in England, had become famous in Russia and Poland under the title *The Kamminitzer Maggid*. It had been in 1894, during the interregnum which succeeded the retirement of Dr. Lerner, that he had been elected Preacher to the Federation of Synagogues, and he served it

faithfully and unremittingly until his health broke down twenty-one years later. His eloquence renewed for the Eastern European immigrants in London something of the atmosphere of their youth. Synagogues were crowded to overflowing when it was known that he would deliver an address ; and when he was borne to the grave in April, 1916, the coffin was followed by one of the most remarkable funeral processions that the streets of London have ever witnessed.

Another notable character in East End Jewry had passed away not long before, in 1913, snapping yet another link with the heroic days of learned immigrants with their profound Jewish sympathies. This was Isaac Suwalsky, who for many years edited, with indomitable courage, that memorable Hebrew weekly, *Hayehudi*. Single-handed, he was the editor, printer, type-setter and publisher ; and he continued his work almost to his last day, when he was weighted down by an incurable illness. The place which this courageous pioneer occupies in the development of the Hebrew renaissance in this country is no contemptible one. There can be no doubt that he found a majority of his slender band of readers among the ranks of the Federation of Synagogues ; and it is fitting that just as the Board registered at the time its grief at his passing, so his name should be recorded here in a more permanent memorial.

CHANGING CONDITIONS IN THE EAST END.

On the cessation of hostilities, the Federation found itself in a new atmosphere. The war had made a great difference to the Jewish masses in the East End of London. Above all, the organisation was becoming increasingly Anglicised. The immigration from Eastern Europe to which it owed its origin ceased almost entirely, English Jewry being thus thrown back on its own resources. A younger generation was growing up and beginning to take its place in communal life and leadership. The years of warfare had been so many years of consolidation. From the East End reservoir, Jewish householders were establishing themselves in the remoter suburbs, above all, to the north and north-west. With them they brought their characteristic religious life and institutions, making necessary an extension of the activities of the Federation. It was clear that a new epoch

lay before this organisation, which could no longer continue to be governed on quite the old lines.

Unfortunately, those who stood at its head were unable to adjust themselves to the changed atmosphere and circumstances. The first Lord Swaythling had been an exceptional personality, who did not hesitate to carry his profound religious convictions into the Houses of Parliament, and even to His Majesty's Court. Autocratic and unyielding though he had been, the Federation was his own creation, on which he lavished his devotion as well as his wealth ; and much could be forgiven him on that account. The nominal Honorary President, Lord Rothschild, who might have exercised a very considerable moral influence, followed him to the grave in 1915. The second Lord Swaythling, who by special request of the Founder had been elected to succeed him, was possessed of a particularly strong sense of duty, but he lacked his father's generosity, his devotion and, above all, his deep feeling of interest and sympathy with the orthodox East End masses. He relied implicitly, moreover, on the Secretary of the organisation, Joseph Blank, who had served it from its very inception, but had now begun to treat it almost as his private preserve.

THE MANIFESTO AGAINST ZIONISM AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

The first signs of the forthcoming rift became apparent in 1917, at the period when the idea of Zionism was beginning to obtain increasing support in Governmental circles, and was about to culminate in the publication of the famous Balfour Declaration. Certain elements in the Jewish community were bitterly opposed to this, and in May, 1917, the Joint Chairman of the Conjoint Foreign Committee (a body including representatives of the Anglo-Jewish Association and of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, on which the Federation of Synagogues was officially represented) published in *The Times* a manifesto against Zionism, in which they attempted to dissociate the community as such from the movement. There was a storm of protest throughout Anglo-Jewry, headed by the Chief Rabbi and other universally respected figures. Lord Swaythling, on the other hand, publicly came out in support of the anti-Zionist manifesto. His action was bitterly

resented by East End Jewry—so bitterly, indeed, that in their anxiety they neglected the rules of procedure accepted in English public life, thus enabling their President to maintain his tactical position. He was, however, forced to declare that he had acted throughout in a private capacity, and to place his resignation in the hands of the Board of the Federation. At a subsequent meeting a vote of “No Confidence” in the President was moved. It was lost by 18 votes, 26 votes being cast for it and 44 against. The size of the minority was truly portentous.

Nevertheless, the portent was neglected. In 1919 the *Morning Post* published a series of articles on *The Causes of the World Unrest*, which almost reached Continental standards of anti-Sémitic extravagance. In April a prominent group of anti-Zionists seized the opportunity to address to that journal a letter, innocent perhaps in intention, but unfortunately timed and still more unfortunately phrased, in which they dissociated themselves from revolutionary sympathies in such a manner as to imply that the loyalty of their fellow Jews—particularly of that element which felt their Jewish loyalties most intensely—might perhaps leave something to be desired. Among the signatories was included Lord Swaythling, President of the Federation of Synagogues. Much resentment was aroused once more in the East End of London, and the more thoughtful began to realise that a public man, however, high-minded, who showed himself so completely out of sympathy with the rank and file of his co-religionists could not be allowed to remain indefinitely in his responsible position.

The meetings of the Board of the Federation in the period which followed were stormy. Often the rules of procedure were neglected; the assemblage sometimes broke up in confusion; the minutes record on one occasion at least a non-official continuation after the official adjournment. A good deal of attention, sometimes accompanied by ill-natured criticism, was occasioned by all this. But the critics failed to realise that they were dealing with a body of deeply religious men, passionately earnest, often unable to express themselves clearly in the vernacular, and, in many cases, completely unfamiliar with the canon of English public life. They were fighting desperately for a cause which they held very dear. If in the process their proceedings sometimes departed from the standards of a dispassionate committee of aristocratic Parliamentarians, it was a tribute to their earnestness rather than a disgrace.

THE TOLL OF DEATH.

The crisis was made more acute by the passing, within a very short period, of two stalwart workers for the Federation, who had collaborated with the first Lord Swaythling almost from the beginning, and who, by reason of their antecedents, general activities and interest, were peculiarly qualified to bridge over the gulf between the more and the less Anglicised elements in the community. Foremost was the Vice-President, Herman Landau, that dynamic personality, a magnificent worker in the cause of the foreign Jew in England, who died on August 25, 1921. Mark Moses, J.P., who, with the Hon. Gerald S. Montagu, had served for many years as Treasurer, preceded him to the grave on May 22, 1921. Herman Landau was succeeded as Vice-President by Alderman Harry Kosky, at the time Mayor of Stepney.

DEATH OF RABBI JUNG 571.

Above all, the Federation had to deplore the passing at this critical period of its Chief Minister, Dr. Maier Jung, who had received a call to fill that position on its foundation by the first Lord Swaythling in commemoration of his elevation to the peerage in 1907. It had taken almost exactly five years to find a candidate who possessed all the qualifications on which the pious founder had insisted. Dr. Jung, however, combined them all: deep orthodoxy, profound learning, a modern education and outlook, and great eloquence—of all of which he had given proof during his twenty years of Rabbinate at Ung. Brod in Moravia. He was a preacher of great distinction, was immersed both in Rabbinical knowledge and in modern philosophy, possessed a wide range of modern culture, yet was sufficiently meticulous in his religious outlook to satisfy even the most exacting of the old school. He had at once entered with heart and soul into the duties of his office, and, within a very short period of his arrival in this country, was already able to speak publicly in English. Even the synagogue of the ultra-orthodox element, the *Machzike Hadass* (Spitalfields Great Synagogue), had such confidence in his learning and principles that, on the death in 1912 of their own *Rav*, Rabbi Lerner, they applied for permission to submit their ritual difficulties to him for decision—a permission which was, of course, readily granted.

Within a short period of his arrival in London the new Rabbi initiated a number of movements which had as their object the stimulation of the religious influence among the working classes. Among the initiatives which he inspired is the Sinai Movement, with its ideal of reviving the tradition of Jewish study among the rising generation, which is still a great force in the East End.

Rabbi Jung was, however, destined to enjoy only a very brief period of tranquility in his new office. The outbreak of the war in 1914 was a particularly heavy blow to his peace-loving nature, hampered his work and sapped his vitality. He was still at the height of his powers when he died, on June 10, 1921, at the age of 61. But he had already the privilege of seeing the fulfilment of promise in his sons, particularly Dr. Leo Jung, now Rabbi of the Jewish Centre in New York, and Dr. Moses Jung, of the Department of Religion in the University of Iowa. The connection of the family with the Federation is still maintained moreover by his third son, Mr. Julius Jung, its Secretary (as will be seen later) since 1925.

Since Rabbi Jung's death the position of Chief Minister of the Federation has not been filled again. More than one attempt has been made to find a candidate suitable for it in every respect ; and in 1927 a special committee was appointed to go into the question. Thus far, however, it has not been possible to discover any person who combines the force of character, the deep learning and the unimpeachable orthodoxy requisite for so responsible a position.

On the other hand, the differences concerning the Chief Rabbinate, which were vocal at the time of the election of Dr. J. H. Hertz, the present incumbent of the office, just quarter of a century ago, have now greatly diminished. The new generation of the Federation is perhaps more closely attuned to that element in Anglo-Jewry which he represents, and do not therefore require (as their fathers did) their own spiritual head. Dr. Hertz, on the other hand, has shown himself to be possessed of wider sympathies, and is more warmly sympathetic to the East End and foreign elements, and to the feelings of the great Jewish masses, than was the case with his predecessor. The Federation has accordingly been able to work with him smoothly and in general agreement. If, for their part, they have seldom turned a deaf ear to his appeals, for his he has always shown himself willing and anxious when approached to assist the Federation by his ministrations.

DAYAN AVIGDOR CHAIKIN שלי.

The premature and universally regretted passing of Rabbi Dr. Jung has left the entire burden of the ministry of the Federation on the frail shoulders of Rabbi Moses Avigdor Chaikin. Born at Sklow, in the government of Mohilev, in 1852, he had been taken at an early age to St. Petersburg (as Leningrad was then called), when his father became Chief Shochet in that city. He was educated for the Rabbinate and obtained his diplomas from several authorities of the highest repute, among them being the famous Rabbi Spektor of Kovno. After the pogroms of 1881-2 he emigrated (like so many others) to Paris, where he served as Rabbi of the Polish community from 1883 to 1887. In that year he felt it his duty to return to Russia, where he was appointed Rabbi at Rostov-on-the-Don. Before long, however, he was expelled from the country and emigrated this time to England. From 1892 onwards he acted as Rabbi in Sheffield, where he earned golden opinions through his profound learning and, above all, by his sweetness of character. He has shown, moreover, the broadness of his sympathies in his *Apology for the Jews*, published in French in 1887, and his biographical sketches, *Celebrities of the Jews*, which had appeared at Sheffield in 1889.

This was the man who was brought to London in 1901 to act as Minister of the Federation in succession to Dr. M. Lerner, who had left to take up an appointment in Germany. For over a quarter of a century he continued to serve the Federation with loyalty and devotion, acting, in addition, from 1911 onwards as a member of the Beth-Din, fulfilling the functions, and receiving the title, of Dayan. Few persons in the East End of London were so universally beloved. He was accorded a memorable farewell when, in 1926, at the age of 74, he laid down the cares of office and went to end his days in Palestine. Shortly after, however, in June, 1928, news arrived of his death.

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS.

A most important change took place in 1920-1921, which vitally affected the position of the Federation. Hitherto, the relations between the organisation and its Burial Society had been to some extent nominal. It was now agreed that from

subscriptions to the latter body one penny weekly should go to the Federation of Synagogues. In the first year this levy brought in no less than £1,646. The results were far-reaching. The organisation was henceforth self-supporting. As a natural corollary this self-sufficiency threatened to undermine the autocratic rule of those who had the power, if not always the desire, to foot the bill. There were ugly rumours, however, that the Federation did not receive the full benefits of its enhanced prosperity, a good part of which were diverted to private channels.

Meanwhile the Secretary, oblivious of the changed atmosphere, continued to rule the Federation with an iron hand. Meetings were rarely called, and, when called, were brief. Discussion was stifled. The recommendations of the Honorary Officers, generally prompted by the Secretary, were endorsed with so little change that the agenda paper could be (and very often was) embodied almost unaltered in the minutes. There were suspicions of serious defalcations. Certainly, the annual grants to, the paid officers, and their unofficial perquisites, were very high. The President, however, considered any criticism of the system and officers in the light of a personal attack.

RESIGNATION OF LORD SWAYTHLING.

The discontent came to a head in May, 1925, when the desire for a change of administration became so insistent that a meeting of the Board was called to consider the question. A slender majority of those present expressed its desire that Lord Swaythling's presidency should continue. In the following November, moreover, when the normal elections for office took place, he was re-elected, though he had at first refused to have his name put forward. This, it was clear, was essentially a tribute of recognition and gratitude to the family which had done so much for the Federation throughout its existence and showed that the Founder's name still carried weight. On the other hand, complaints against the Secretary's administrations were by now so rife that, at the May meeting, his tenure of office was summarily terminated. After a short interval Mr. Julius Jung, son of the late Chief Minister, was elected to succeed Mr. Blank as Secretary—a post

which he has continued to occupy since with conspicuous efficiency and dignity.

Friction, however, did not by any means abate. The President and Vice-President insisted on the payment of a substantial pension to the former Secretary. The majority of the Board, on the other hand, considered that the circumstances in which his engagement had terminated rendered this absolutely impossible ; and Councillor M. H. Davis, newly-elected Treasurer of the Burial Society, positively refused to sign the requisite cheques. Once more Lord Swaythling and Councillor Kosky declared that their position had become untenable and tendered their resignations. On this occasion their decision proved to be final and irrevocable. For some months Mr. J. Libgott, Senior Treasurer, served as Acting President. Meanwhile, an attempt was made to fill the vacant office, according to precedent, by some individual of high repute in the general community who stood outside the organisation and its internal politics. The search was unsuccessful, and, at the elections held on March 20, 1928, Councillor Davis was elected President of the Federation.

COUNCILLOR M. H. DAVIS AS PRESIDENT.

The new administration made a clean break in many respects with the precedent followed (especially during the past few years) by its precursor. It was more closely attuned to the feelings of the Jewish man-in-the-street, more sensitive to the desires of its ordinary members, and, above all, better acquainted and in closer sympathy with the aspirations and ideals of Traditional Judaism. This change of outlook manifested itself in many directions.

Above all, since the internal revolution, the Federation has developed on more democratic lines. The General Council is punctually informed (as was not the case under the old administration) of everything that is being done, and has, in fact, as well as in name, the power to veto any expenditure with which it does not agree or any grant which it feels to be unwarrantable or undesirable. The chronicler becomes aware of the difference by a mere perusal of the records. Meetings are more frequent and apparently more spirited, and, above all, the minutes taken

are properly adequate, instead of registering in stereotyped formula the bare resolutions passed, which under the old regime seldom varied in any detail from the announcements circulated in the agenda.

THE REVISED RULES OF 1934.

In 1934 revised rules for the Organisation were taken into consideration. While a good many of the changes proposed from the original constitution were purely technical and administrative, the new outlook was reflected in the objects of the Federation as now restated. The original somewhat parochial standpoint was discarded. Among the ideals of the organisation, as now specified, are the following :

- “ To assist in the maintenance of orthodox religious instruction in Talmud Torahs and Yeshivoth.
- “ To obtain and maintain Kashruth by direct representation at the Board of Shecheta or by such other means as the Board may from time to time decide.
- “ To support by grants and/or by representation on other councils other worthy Jewish and non-Jewish charities here and abroad.
- “ To promote by other means the interests of Synagogues affiliated to the Federation.
- “ To use influence and exertion, whenever intervention may seem desirable, in favour of Jewish Communities throughout the world.
- “ To further the upbuilding of Eretz Yisroel and thereby create a haven of rest there for our brethren who are persecuted because of their race and religion in many countries.”

ABOLITION OF INTEREST ON ADVANCES.

The new spirit was manifested in one development of great significance which had taken place during the period of interregnum. From the very beginning it had been the practice of the General Board to charge a modest interest on the sums advanced to constituent synagogues for building and similar purposes—sums varying from less than one hundred to some thousands of pounds. This was, of course, the natural procedure.

No loans are made in the modern world free of interest, and the Federation had to forego a certain amount of profit on every sum which it withdrew from its reserves. Yet the idea of charging interest on a loan—and especially on a loan for a sacred object—is abhorrent to Jews and to Judaism. It is true that in the Middle Ages Jews had been excluded by Christian intolerance from every honourable walk of life and had been driven into money-lending, which, henceforth, became associated in the popular mind with the Jews as a characteristic Jewish occupation. The mediaeval communities had struggled manfully against this, and had submitted to the pressure of circumstances only with the utmost unwillingness. When the weight of intolerance was relieved a more natural economic distribution followed—a process which has made phenomenal progress already, though the results of many generations of oppression are not to be shaken off in a few years.

It was, hence, not unnatural for this feeling of abhorrence to find its expression even with regard to the loans made by the Federation to its constituent bodies. The Mosaic Code declared plainly against the lending of money at interest. True, it was clear that this was not intended to apply to cases where an institution, not a needy individual, was in question, and when the lender lost an appreciable amount as a result of the transaction. There was a moral value in the gesture which outweighed these considerations. At a meeting on February 28, 1927, Mr. B. Simons moved the following resolution :

“ That this Board of the Federation resolves, in accordance with the laws of our Bible, to charge no more interest on the loans advanced to Federated Synagogues, and that in future the policy of the Board be to grant loans to its Federated Synagogues free of interest.”

The motion was carried, after a debate of unusual distinction, by a large majority. Those voting fully realised that its operation would involve their organisation in a large monetary loss, but, as was finely remarked during the course of the debate, what they lost in money would be amply made up in Jewishness.

THE BOARD OF SHECHETA.

Another point which caused much pre-occupation at this period was the question of the representation of the Federation

on the Board of Shecheta (founded in 1805), which supervises the kosher meat supply of the Metropolis. Though the membership of the Federation amounted in 1928 to some 16,000 Jewish families—mainly of the traditional type, to which the question of kosher meat was of vital importance—its representation on the Board of Shecheta was only equal to that of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation (the membership of which was very much smaller) and only half that of the United Synagogue. Moreover, no representative of the Federation figured on the Executive. In 1928 the Federation took this matter into serious consideration, and it was even suggested that its own separate Board for the organisation of kosher meat supply should be established. Negotiations followed, and, as a consequence, the representation of the Federation on the Board of Shecheta was doubled. Thus, one unfortunate point of difference with the representative bodies of metropolitan Jewry was overcome. Particular thanks are due to the honorary officers of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue for their good offices during the progress of these negotiations.

GRANTS MADE BY THE FEDERATION.

The increasing financial prosperity of the Federation, due to wise and careful administration, was not regarded (as is the case with some similar organisations) in a narrow or selfish spirit. These resources came in the last resort from the Jewish public, and those who administered them have decided that the surplus should be returned to Jewish public purposes. Accordingly, during the past few years a number of grants have been made, some of impressionable dimensions, to various Jewish charitable, social and educational organisations in this country, as well as to some of the major appeals which have been issued on behalf of great Jewish causes abroad. It is no exaggeration to say that, in consequence of this profound feeling of sympathy with every Jewish effort, the minutes of the Federation of Synagogues, during the past decade, constitute a synopsis of world Jewish history during those eventful years.

The first of these great donations gave tangible expression to the importance of learning and scholarship in the traditional Jewish scheme of life. Under the Presidency of Lord Swaythling it had been customary for the Board of the Federation to vote a slender contribution of £50 to £100 to the Talmud Torah Trust

(founded under the auspices of the Federation in 1905), which is responsible for the Hebrew education of thousands of children in the East End of London and elsewhere. In 1926 the President was persuaded to consent to an increase of this grant to £500. In the following year it was raised to £1,000, and, since then, the contribution has never fallen below that figure.

THE FEDERATION AND PALESTINE.

In one direction, above all, the Federation has exercised its generosity in a manner which indicates its profound sensitiveness to traditional Jewish values. Part of the charitable organisation of the historic Jewish community of the past was bound up with the lot of their co-religionists in Palestine. In many congregations Wardens of the Holy Land were appointed, year by year, to collect funds for this purpose ; in many ancient synagogues it is still possible to see the alms-chest which was designated to receive contributions with the same object ; and visiting scholars from the four " Holy Cities," soliciting contributions from their fellow-students at home, could always count upon welcome, hospitality and, above all, generous support.

It had therefore been a symptom of his insensibility to the traditional scheme when the second Lord Swaythling, in 1917, had endeavoured to rule Zionism out of order at the meetings of the Board on the pretext that it was a " political " matter. It was only after his association with the Federation had ceased that this policy was officially reversed. In 1296 the Board granted the small sum of £25 to the Keren Hayesod and the same amount to the Jewish National Fund " to redeem the land of Eretz Israel." From that date grants for this purpose increased, the amounts rising to £5,000 in 1936. In addition to all this, in July 1933, a loan of no less than £10,000 was made to the Jewish National Fund to assist in its work of redemption in Palestine—work which, in the light of Jewish tradition, has every right to be described as " Holy." In addition the Federation has given considerable sums to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (towards the Institute of Agricultural and Applied Chemistry, and for other purposes) and towards the Balfour Forest, which is restoring to part of the hills of Galilee that exuberant fertility for which it was famous before its Jewish children were driven forth.

When in the summer of 1929 news reached London of the shocking outbreak of riot and massacre in Palestine, the conscience of East End Jewry was profoundly stirred. The entire staff of the Federation was immediately placed at the disposal of the Zionist Organisation, with which it co-operated whole-heartedly in arranging the great Albert Hall meeting of protest. To the Emergency Fund Appeal the Federation and the Burial Society contributed £250 each, while individual synagogues made considerable collections. At the meeting of the Board, held on Thursday, September 12, the following resolution was unanimously passed :

“ That this Board of the Federation of Synagogues, with a membership of 60,000 Jewish souls, expresses their deep sympathy with the victims of the barbarous attacks in Palestine and their bereaved relatives.

“ That this Board was shocked beyond words to find that the local Palestine administration had not heeded the many warnings they had received of impending trouble, and had therefore been quite unprepared for this wanton and cruel outrage on our people, when harmless men, women and children were murdered in cold blood. This Board has noted the statement issued by the High Commissioner of Palestine on his return to that country and hopes that His Majesty's Government will take all necessary steps to restore peace and order for that country and prevent once and for all those ghastly crimes which, in the words of the High Commissioner, have brought ‘ upon their authors the execration of all civilised peoples throughout the world.’

“ This Board welcomes the timely statement issued by the Colonial Office that the recent events in Palestine will in no way affect the declared policy of His Majesty's Government as laid down in the Balfour Declaration of 1917, and embodied in the Mandate, of establishing in Palestine a National Home for the Jewish people.

“ That in order to prevent the recurrence of the deplorable events in Palestine, this Board instructs its honorary officers to urge His Majesty's Government

(a) To punish all people guilty of any actions of violence and to render full co-operation to all who have suffered in the recent deplorable riots.

- (b) To settle, once and for all, the question of the Wailing Wall by ensuring the right of Jewish worship there without any interference in future, a worship hallowed and sanctified by time itself.
- (c) Lastly, to remove from office any officials, either in Palestine or in the Colonial Office in London, who by their action or inaction have been wholly or partly responsible for the deplorable events in Palestine.

“ A copy of these resolutions to be sent to the Prime Minister and the Secretary for the Colonies.”

With this comprehensive resolution is linked up a whole series protesting against the desecration under the British Mandate of those slender Jewish rights at the Western Wall of the ancient Temple site which even the Romans had respected (1929); deploring the setting up in Palestine of a Legislative Council, which would relegate the Jews to the condition of a permanent minority (1936); and so on.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS.

In addition to its support for institutions at home and in Palestine, the Federation has not forgotten Eastern Europe, from which the vast majority of its members originated more or less immediately. Thus, for example, it is assisting materially in the support of some eighteen Yeshivoth in Poland, thus helping to preserve these famous seats of Talmudic learning and doing something to relieve the dire economic distress facing both pupils and instructors at these institutions. This is apart from the grant of £10,000 made in 1936 to the British Fund for Polish Jewry, comprising no less than 20 per cent. of the total amount collected.

Some minor contributions indicated the breadth of the Federation's interests and the wide scope of its work. In 1930 £100 was voted to inscribe the name of Lord Balfour in the Golden Book of the Jewish National Fund, and £50 as half of the salary of an interpreter at the Whitechapel County Court—an office formerly filled, with outstanding success and great utility both to the Court and to East End Jewry, by that lovable character, S. Rehfish. A little later £100 was granted to the Jews' Temporary

Shelter. In 1931 grants included £80 to the Jewish Lads' Brigade for acquiring a marquee, £25 in support of lectures on the Talmud at the School of Oriental Studies at the University of London (since made an annual grant) and £75 in response to the appeal by the President, in his capacity as Mayor of Stepney, to fight tuberculosis in the Borough. In 1934 there was a grant of 100 guineas to the Lord Mayor's appeal for the Miners' Fund in connection with the disaster at Gresford Colliery, and in the same year a Ward was consecrated at the Home for Aged Jews. In 1926 a sum of £1,000 was voted to endow a bed at the London Jewish Hospital in the name of its President, Councillor M. H. Davis.

THE PERSECUTIONS IN GERMANY, 1933.

One of the grants—among the largest of all, indeed—has an interest which borders on the romantic. At the very inception of the Federation, as far back as 1890, the news of this fresh endeavour in Anglo-Jewish religious life reached the ears of Dr. Israel Hildesheimer, the scholarly leader of German orthodoxy, whose interest in the lot of poor Jews in all countries led to his being given the nickname, the *welt-schnorrer*. Nothing Jewish was alien to his warm heart, and he deemed it a privilege to make a collection among the Berlin community to assist this struggling new organisation in London. It amounted to £39 1s. od.

Nearly half a century later the cup of sorrow passed to German Jewry, formerly so proud, so confident and so self-sufficient. Shortly after the beginning of the persecution, on May 22, 1933, at a meeting of the Board of the Federation, the President moved the following resolution :

“ That this meeting of the Board of the Federation of Synagogues, representing 72 synagogues, with a membership of approximately 60,000 Jewish souls, expresses its horror at the persecution and discrimination under which the Jews in Germany are suffering, and appeals to His Majesty's Government to use their powerful influence with the German Government that will cause this persecution and discrimination to cease.

“ It urges His Majesty’s Government, as the Mandatory Power for Palestine, to facilitate the admission of German Jews into Palestine and to give asylum in England to those persons seeking admission here, who are victims of German terror.”

This resolution, carried unanimously after a moving debate, was communicated to the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, the German Ambassador and the League of Nations.

In addition to the successive appeals issued by the Central British Fund for German Jewry between 1933 and 1935, the Board of Federation contributed a total of no less than £17,000, in addition to some £1,500 subscribed by the individual synagogues as a result of the public appeals. The bread which the charitable Jews of Berlin had cast upon the water in 1890 returned to them nearly a thousandfold after many years.

In the subsequent period the Board of the Federation took a prominent part in the movement for the boycott of German goods and services, of which the President was one of the leading spirits. The movement may not have lived up to the expectations which were at one time expressed, that it would serve as an instrument for forcing the modern arch-persecutors of the Jews to reconsider their fanatic policy. Yet there could be no doubt, and there can be none, that every farthing sent to Germany in the course of commercial operations strengthens the hold of the Nazi regime in that country, and is thus in every sense of the term a notable disservice to the Jewish people—a disservice which is not confined to that country, but has its repercussions throughout the world, in every place to which Nazi influence and Nazi propaganda reaches. There must be, moreover, a strange want of imagination in a Jew who does not hesitate to make his purchases from, transmit his money to, and increase the well-being of a body of persons whose domestic policy is based on a fanatical hatred, brutally expressed, of Jews and Judaism.

Above all, at the Board of Deputies of British Jews the representatives of the Federation pressed for a more vigorous policy in view of the threatening situation, and especially for an official endorsement of the anti-German boycott. In view of the limited success of this endeavour, the Federation took the lead in the establishment of the Jewish Representative Council for the Boycott of German Goods and Services, which was set up in 1933, and subsequently—through its President—in the World Jewish Congress.

DETAILS OF GRANTS.

The following table indicates the most important of the grants made by the Federation during the past decade :

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
EDUCATION IN ENGLAND—						
Talmud Torah Trust	8,251	13	8			
Talmud Torahs	971	3	0			
Yeshivah Etz Chaim	2,133	0	0			
Central Committee for Jewish Education..	2,229	2	0			
School of Oriental Studies	50	0	0			
Lectures at the University	50	0	0			
Council for Jewish Adult Education ..	31	0	0			
Tarbut	200	0	0			
Bayswater Jewish School	1,000	0	0			
Training Centre for Chalcutzim	100	0	0			
				15,015	18	8
EDUCATION ABROAD—						
Polish Yeshivoh	1,836	5	0			
Beth Jacob (for Girls' Education in Eastern Europe)	200	0	0			
Portuguese Marranos Committee	200	0	0			
Daniel Sieff Research Institute, Rehovoth, Palestine	800	0	0			
				3,036	5	0
SOCIAL GRANTS—						
Brady St. Associated Club	200	0	0			
Home for Aged Jews	1,118	15	0			
Hospitals	3,304	5	0			
Stepney Tuberculosis Appeal	150	0	0			
Appeal for Miners	105	0	0			
Deputies Relief Fund	250	0	0			
Jewish Students' Common Room	90	0	0			
Social—General	307	5	0			
				5,525	5	0
PALESTINE						
King George V Jubilee Forest	10,615	15	0			
	1,155	0	0			
				11,770	15	0
DANZIG JEWRY				200	0	0
JEWISH WORLD CONGRESS				300	0	0
CALENDAR REFORM COMMITTEE (for Defence of Sabbath)				100	0	0
CONTRIBUTIONS TO SYNAGOGUES (in addition to advancing £38,000 free of interest) ..				362	17	0
GERMAN JEWRY				17,000	0	0
POLISH JEWRY				10,089	5	9
				£63,400	6	5

These grants are apart from the annual grants to the Board of Guardians, the Visitation Committee, the Welfare Committee (the last two representing the London Jewish Community), the salary of the Superintendent for the Mikva'oth in London (who is paid exclusively by the Federation of Synagogues) and the loan of £10,000 to the Jewish National Fund.

VISITS FROM JEWISH LEADERS.

In consequence of this liberality, it became the practice of Anglo-Jewish communal leaders to come down to the East End to address the Board of the Federation for special purposes. Thus, in September, 1929, Mr. Simon Marks, President of the Keren Hayesod, spoke in connection with the Palestine Emergency Appeal Fund, to which reference is made elsewhere ; in April, 1931, Mr. Robert Solomon, M.C., enlisted the interest of members, and through them of their synagogues, in the Kfar David, which it was proposed to establish in Palestine to celebrate the outstanding work of David Lloyd George for the Jewish people and its rebirth in its ancient home ; in April, 1932, the Chief Rabbi, Dr. J. H. Hertz, spoke on behalf of the Bayswater Jewish schools. (This resulted in a grant by the Board of the sum of £1,000, in consequence of which the main hall of the new school building was given the name of the President of the Federation.) In August of the same year there was an address by Menahem Ussischkin, one of the most venerated figures in the new *Yishuv* in Palestine and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Jewish National Fund, resulting in a grant of £500 for the erection of a watch-tower in the Balfour Forest.

Nineteen thirty-four witnessed an impassioned appeal on the part of the venerable Haham Moses Gaster on behalf of the Beth Jacob Schools, which are doing so much to advance the education and training of Jewish girls in Eastern Europe. Early in the following year Lord Melchett and Captain Robert Solomon spoke to the General Council on the situation of German Jewry in connection with the new appeal ; Mr. Anthony de Rothschild and Viscountess Erleigh (now Marchioness of Reading) addressing it with the same object a little later.

In 1934 Dr. Nahum Goldman gave a review of World Jewish conditions, and, two years later, Dr. Chaim Weitzman, the great Zionist leader, delivered an address prior to his departure for Palestine to give evidence before the Royal Commission. Another honoured guest was Sir S. G. Joseph (Sheriff of the City of London), who attended the meeting of the General Council held on October 3, 1934, and expressed the thanks of the Lord Mayor for the gift of the Federation to the Miners' Fund.

By 1932 the new administration had given ample proof of its efficiency. Method had been re-introduced into the affairs of the Federation ; its finances were in order and showed an increasing

surplus ; its external activities had increased enormously ; and it had begun to play the part in communal affairs generally to which its membership and importance entitled it. In recognition of his work in bringing this about, which over a long period had frequently occupied the whole of his time, the General Council in August, 1934, voted the President a gift of £1,000—an unusual tribute, but one which was amply deserved. The amount was subsequently distributed by the recipient among various charitable causes.

TALMUD TORAH TRUST.

In certain instances the Federation's munificence has proved a useful example to other institutions. A case in point is that of the sum received each year from the Board of Shecheta. From the annual surplus of this body £1,000 is donated to the United Synagogue, as the most important of the parent institutions. Of the remainder, two-thirds is given to the same body, and the remaining third divided evenly between the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation and the Federation. For many years it has been the practice of the Federation to devote the amount thus received to the Talmud Torahs—generally through the Talmud Torah Trust, as an additional grant. Thanks to the efforts of the President, the other parent bodies have, since 1933, followed this example. Thus, the orthodox public receives again, for educational purposes, money which in the first instance came from its own pocket.

The work of the Talmud Torah Trust, though so lavishly supported, left something to be desired. It has developed into little more than an agency for the distribution of the moneys which it received, of which a very large proportion derived from the Federation. The individual Talmud Torahs received little supervision, and even less guidance and advice than might have been desired. Moreover, though only Federation members were eligible for inclusion on its governing body, under the original Trust set up by the first Lord Swaythling in 1905, this provision was utterly neglected. In consequence, in the autumn of 1928, it was decided by the Board of the Federation to set up an Education Committee "for the purpose of maintaining the teaching of Judaism in accordance with the orthodox traditions."

Towards the initial expenses of this body the Burial Society voted the sum of £550. The sentiment in favour of the Trust was, however, so strong that, rather than introduce a schism, negotiations were reopened. In consequence of this, the Talmud Torah Trust was reconstituted in 1930.

THE RABBIS' COUNCIL.

The educational activities of the organisation have, naturally, been carried out in conjunction with the Rabbis' Council of the Federation of Synagogues—a body of unique status, first set up in 1928. This Council meets regularly at the central office for the purpose of considering various religious questions brought to its notice, and advises, in addition, on matters submitted to it by the executive officers. It has performed, moreover, considerable services in organising various adjuncts of traditional Jewish observance, such as the Ritual Baths, which, thanks to its intervention, are now under proper supervision.

In some other respects the Federation has provided a salutary initiative for metropolitan Jewry as a whole. It set the example, for instance, in striking off its list of authorised monumental masons those firms which touted for custom at the moment when the burden of bereavement was at its most acute—an abuse, it may be added, which is by no means confined to the Jewish community. It was also the pioneer in making an increased charge for tombstone fees and devoting the proceeds to Jewish educational purposes, a procedure which has now been imitated almost universally in London.

CEMETERY OFFERINGS' FUND.

In addition to its many direct grants, London charities benefit to a considerable degree from a special fund set up by the Federation not long since. It is an ancient Jewish custom to visit the graves of parents and the illustrious dead in the month of Ellul, previous to the High Holydays. This pious practice, while to some extent disregarded in England, is generally observed among the members of the Federation. On Sundays, during the month of Ellul, the number of visitors in the "House

of Life" is likely to number from six to ten thousand. In accordance with ancient practice, the visitors usually desire to make an offering to charity in memory of the departed. Under the old administration these amounts were mostly used for the general purposes of the Federation, particularly the augmentation of salaries of the senior officials; though it is doubtful whether more than half of the amounts were actually received at the central offices. The new administration had made a drastic alteration in this. The visitors to the cemetery are informed that all services rendered by ministers and attendants are completely free of charge, but that any donations will be gratefully accepted on behalf of the Federation's Cemetery Offerings Fund. All amounts received are turned over to this special account, without any deduction, even for the not inconsiderable clerical expenditure. Since the inception of this scheme the income has never fallen below £200 annually, and in 1928 rose as high as £368. Out of the fund grants are now made annually to Talmud Torahs and other worthy institutions, including all the metropolitan hospitals. Thus, the London Hospital (which has been supported by Jews ever since its inception nearly 200 years ago) now receives some thirty guineas annually from this fund. In return the hospitals provide the Federation with in- and out-patient letters, which are distributed to members who are in need of them.

THE BURIAL SOCIETY OF THE FEDERATION.

With regard to the affairs of the Burial Society (from which the Federation derives much of its financial strength) considerable light is thrown by the actuarial reports which have regularly been prepared from time to time and which provide a good deal of information as regards the demographic situation of East End Jewry generally. Thus, for example, in the 1920 report, by Mr. Eric Nathan, F.I.A., particular attention was drawn to the heavy mortality of members of the Society between the ages of 45 and 65. "Persisting, as it does, for six years," Mr. Nathan stated, "it cannot be due to an accident. The deaths are higher in number than would have been expected from a standard table of mortality, and show that the mortality between these ages is in excess of the normal. If this assumption is correct, it increases the Society's liability under its contract with the members."

In accordance with the recommendations made in these reports, the weekly contribution from members has been increased from time to time. At the outset it was fixed at 1½d. weekly. The amount being subsequently found inadequate to cover expenses, this was increased later on to 2d. In 1921, on the actuary's advice, in view of the general rise in prices and in expenditure, it was raised to 3d. (in addition to 1d. weekly payable henceforth to the Federation), at which figure it now stands. (It must be kept in mind, in this connection, that the contributions covers all the unmarried members of the contributors' immediate families, with the exception of sons above the age of 21.)

The increase would necessarily have been greater still were it not for the exercise of the utmost care and economy in organisation. "Since Mr. Jung has become Secretary," to quote the actuary's report of 1927, "the cost of funerals shows considerable reductions. . . . The ordinary cost of funerals, less the profit made on paid funerals, has fallen from £7 19s. 11d. in 1923-4 to £5 5s. 0d. per funeral in 1926-7." When it is borne in mind what a drain funeral benefit societies notoriously are on the poor working classes in the metropolis (a social peril to which economists and sociologists are now devoting increased attention) it will be realised all the more impressively the importance of the work done by the Federation in this respect. To quote the report drawn up in 1920 by a non-Jewish actuary, Mr. Owen Kentish, F.I.A. : "Finally, I may be allowed to congratulate the Committee upon the immeasurable benefits which for so many years they have conferred, at the time of their greatest need, upon the members of the Jewish communion, and upon the marked ability with which the Society has been conducted on its business side. The record is one of which any body of men might be justly proud." Since the date when this tribute was made, the Institution has added nearly twenty more years to its unostentatiously useful career.

As long back as 1920 it was pointed out that, with the increase in the number of the members of the Federation, the question of the space available in the burial ground would become acute. It had been in 1889, when the Federation was in its infancy, that Samuel Montagu had acquired two acres of land at Edmonton from the Western Synagogue for the purposes of a "House of Life." Subsequently, this area was increased by a gift of a further three acres of ground from the same munificent donor, and by the acquisition by purchase in 1908 of the adjoining

cemetery of the Maiden Lane congregation, established in 1810 and amalgamated with the Western Synagogue in 1907. With the membership as it was then this would have sufficed for all needs for a number of years, but the considerable recent expansion made it necessary to expedite new arrangements. Accordingly, in 1936, a tract of land extending to 106 acres was acquired at Rainham, in Essex. Only 56 acres of the 106 are at present to be used for a cemetery, the remainder being sub-let to farmers. The new Rainham *Beth Haim* (planned by the Federation's architects, Lewis Solomon & Son) is said to be the best laid-out cemetery, Jewish or non-Jewish, in this country. It was consecrated on Sunday, February 20, 1938, by Dayan Dr. A. Feldman, Rabbi Dr. E. W. Kirzner and Rabbi A. Singer.

EXPANSION OF THE FEDERATION.

The Federation is now no longer a predominantly East End organisation, as was the case at its inception and for many years after. Its constituent bodies have spread to every part of the metropolis. In the North of London is the Stamford Hill Beth Hamedrash, a very large congregation conducted in accordance with the finest tradition of the Jewish past under the scholarly guidance of Rabbi Dr. Kirzner. Here, classes and study-circles are regularly held, for adults as well as for the young, and the traditional Ritual Bath is attached to the Synagogue. Further out, in Tottenham, is a large Synagogue, originally established in 1904 in order to forward the policy of decentralising metropolitan Jewry by creating new centres outside the traditional area in the East End. It has since flourished exceedingly, now comprising over 400 members. The beautiful Synagogue in Lea Bridge Road, Clapton, was established only a few years ago, but its membership has increased so rapidly that it shows signs that it soon may be the largest of all the Federated congregations. In the South-East there is a handsome Synagogue in Rouel Road, Bermondsey, while the Beth Hasepher Synagogue in Soho Square is a centre for cultural as well as spiritual life in the West Central area.

In the West of London there are the Shepherds Bush and Notting Hill Synagogues, the latter (established in 1900) being one of the older foundations. The new centre of Jewish popula-

tion in the North-West is provided for by the Synagogue at Gladstone Park, and, above all, by that at Willesden Green not far off. The new House of Worship for the last-named congregation, just completed, was designed by a gifted German Jewish architect, Fritz Landauer, now a refugee in this country. Its impressive exterior, coupled with the care which has been lavished on the interior decorations, have created a warmth of atmosphere and feeling of prayerfulness such as is to be found perhaps in no other London Synagogue, excepting the surviving eighteenth-century places of worship in the East End. Synagogues in the outlying districts extend from Ilford and Valentine's Park in the one direction to Woolwich on the other, and southward as far as Croydon.

RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED SYNAGOGUE.

A regrettable, but perhaps inevitable, result of this expansion was the development of a certain degree of friction with the United Synagogue. This body had found its adherents in the main among the more Anglicised elements in the community. Its activities in the East End, though considerable and eminently praiseworthy, were in the main of a philanthropic nature ; this fact, indeed, was primarily responsible for the organisation of the Federation as a separate body fifty years ago. It was not altogether unnatural that it regarded the new communities of young Jews established after the war in the outlying areas of London, where it had formerly enjoyed a monopoly, as falling within its scope. These communities, however, were composed in the main of men and women whose families originated not very long back in the East End of London and who had been brought up in Federation Synagogues, to which they themselves (or, at any rate, their parents) had previously belonged. For the Federation to consider these newly-established bodies as its natural constituents was therefore only logical and proper. There was, moreover, a more important question at issue, quite apart from that of mere prestige. If the younger elements abandoned the Federation it would be left with an increasing body of elderly members, from the actuarial point of view a liability rather than an asset ; and, in consequence, there was a probability that its charitable activities, of such importance to the community at large, would have to be curtailed.

This is not the place to go into the details of this unfortunate clash. It resulted, however, in the loss to the Federation of two associated Synagogues, serving the Ilford Valentine's Park and Gladstone Park Neasden districts respectively. In either case a large body of the members preferred their previous affiliation and founded a second community of their own, though they had to start again from the beginning, without any meeting place or ritual appurtenances. A consequence of this regrettable dispute was that in 1936 the Federation withdrew its collaboration on certain communal committees controlled by the United Synagogue, and discontinued the grants which had naturally followed. The breach between the two bodies is all the more deplorable in view of the fact that co-operation between them had increased rapidly during the past decade, to the great advantage of the community as a whole. It has, however, been stated formally by the honorary officers of the Federation that, as soon as the United Synagogue is prepared to give a formal undertaking that it will not canvass Federation synagogues directly or indirectly, or encourage them to secede, the Federation will resume its former cordial relations. In the meantime, to safeguard the educational and charitable institutions concerned against loss, those grants formerly made through the medium of the United Synagogue will in future be allotted directly from the Head Office.

APPROACH BY PROVINCIAL COMMUNITIES.

Notwithstanding the extension in the scope of its activities, the Federation has insisted in maintaining itself as an essentially religious body. As a matter of principle, it has declined to consider repeated requests from various friendly societies for affiliation, holding that, as a Federation of Synagogues, it cannot admit bodies not dependent for their existence on the religious bond and the maintenance of Divine Worship. On the other hand, the purview of the Federation is not necessarily confined to London. More than once, in the early days of its history, the Reading Hebrew Congregation approached the Head Office for affiliation ; and, as long back as 1902, a Conference of Representatives of the Jewish Congregations of Great Britain and Ireland, at which 93 provincial delegates attended, was held under the auspices of the Federation, with Sir Samuel Montagu (as he was then) in

the chair. More recently, an application for affiliation came from a provincial city 70 miles away. Though the disadvantages of such an extension are obvious, the advantages would be great, and it may be said that the question of principle is as yet undecided.

RELATIONS WITH CONSTITUENT BODIES.

Much has been done of recent years to strengthen the bonds between the Federation and its constituents, with the object of increasing the influence of the central authority and enabling it to exert its influence to the full in public affairs. At the outset the individual Synagogues had been left almost complete autonomy, provided only that nothing was done which transgressed fundamental Jewish principles. The disadvantages of this policy were sometimes very considerable. At the close of 1936, however, the General Council recommended the introduction of certain changes in the constitution, with the object of bringing about closer co-operation between the Head Office and the Synagogues. Henceforth, local constitutions might not be changed without the sanction of the General Council. Above all, it was determined that all land and buildings belonging to any congregation should be invested in trustees, one of whom should be appointed from time to time by the General Council. While the Synagogues at present in the Federation are only gradually putting these changes into effect, they are strictly applied to new congregations which seek membership. Thus, it is hoped, the cohesion of the Federation and its immense power for good will be considerably increased.

Simultaneously, with the process of expansion to which reference has been made, one of consolidation has been going on in the East End. The founders of these communities, with their deep and uncompromising piety, desired nothing more than a small room in which they could worship ; and this was the origin of the large number of tiny synagogal organisations which sprang up in every street in the Jewish area. The younger generation is more discriminating in its requirements. Owing to their insistence, and with strong encouragement from the Federation itself, there has been a growing movement from some of these smaller congregations to amalgamate with one another. In consequence, of recent years, quite a number of the East End

congregations established at the close of the last century have lost their independent existence. Thus, the Little Alie Street Synagogue has recently amalgamated with the Jubilee Street Congregation, that established at 1A, Christian Street with Fieldgate Street, 3A, Christian Street with Sidney Street, Whitechapel Road with Vine Court, the Glory of Israel Congregation with Mile End New Town, Fieldgate Street (Sphardish) with Settles Street, Plotzker with Great Alie Street, the Voice of Jacob with King Edward Street, and 2A, Christian Street with Lubiner. The extent of this change may be realised from the fact that no more than three of the congregations whose delegates attended the initial meeting on October 16, 1887, now figure under approximately the same name among the 69 affiliated Synagogues.

Congregations thus amalgamated have a more numerous membership, more inspiring attendances and greater resources than the tiny congregations which they superseded. In many cases they are able to improve their accommodation—a process greatly encouraged by the General Council of the Federation, through loans (free of interest, as we have seen) and advice—and sometimes even to acquire properly constructed houses of worship in place of the extemporised accommodation in converted dwellings which so often had to serve previously.

This improvement is being fostered also by another process. At the beginning the General Council was generally content to make inquiries merely into numerical strength when discussing the question of admission of new bodies into the organisation ; only in the most flagrant cases was an application refused on the grounds of inadequate or insanitary accommodation. In recent years, however, greater strictness has been exercised in this respect, and the new conditions laid down are enforced with the utmost rigour. Before admission to the Federation every applicant Synagogue must be inspected by the official architect. Unless the latter is satisfied that it attains the minimum standard insisted on by the General Council for the maintenance of the dignity and decencies of public worship, or that such structural alterations as are necessary for this purpose will be carried out, the application for affiliation is not entertained. It was long ago pointed out by Mr. Digby Solomon, who for many years placed his services at the disposal of the Federation in the capacity of honorary architect, that anxiety on the part of small congregations to join the Federation was a very powerful influence in bringing about an improvement in conditions in the extemporised places

of worship. That process has been operating during the past few years with increased celerity and effectiveness.

THE PROCESS OF ANGLICISATION.

As a result of this, a profound change is coming about in the religious life of the East End. The double process of encouraging the amalgamation of little Synagogues and of laying down a higher standard for new bodies which desire admission is having an effect which every year becomes more marked. It is probable that the tiny one-room Bethel behind some dark and insalubrious passage will before long be a memory of the past ; and the younger generation will be provided with attractive and healthy houses of worship, more in accordance with modern requirements and more likely to imbue the English-born Jew with what he considers to be the proper attitude of mind for public prayer.

It is interesting to notice, in this connection, that quite a number of the Synagogues affiliated to the Federation have their accommodation in what were originally designed as places of Christian worship, for congregations which have since decayed or found other homes. This is the case, for example, with the Commercial Road Great Synagogue, the Woolwich Synagogue, Rouel Road Synagogue, Bermondsey, Stepney Orthodox Synagogue, Cannon Street Road Synagogue, and even with the Philpot Street Great Synagogue (adapted for Jewish worship as far back as 1908), where many of the official services of the Federation have been held.

With the passing of the tiny synagogues the general atmosphere is changing. The old-type Jews of the former generation, driven to these shores by foreign persecution, who founded the little mushroom Chevras and tiny synagogues which were subsequently fathered by the Federation, are passing away. Passionately attached to Jewish traditions, deeply imbued in most cases with a devotion to the old-type Jewish studies, they needed little but a room in which to pray and to learn. Occasionally (for the benefit above all of the women folk and the unlearned) they arranged for the visit by an itinerant Maggid, who in the course of a two hour oration in melodramatic Yiddish on the Sabbath afternoon would stir his audience to an ecstasy of tears and repentance.

Their children, born in this country, have not the same passionate desire for learning, nor similarly keen religious emotions ; nor do they feel so profoundly the conviction that religion is synonymous and commensurate with life. Yet there must be no mistake. There is a drift from the Synagogue, just as there is a drift from the Churches. Yet that drift is, in the case of the Jew, very far indeed from being universal. There are very few, even among the younger generation, who positively repudiate their Jewish allegiance ; the vast majority desire to attend Synagogue services, occasionally at least, and the very fact of the growing membership of the Federation, a majority of whose younger and newer members are of necessity English-born, demonstrates a degree of religious loyalty which is certainly not below, and is probably well above, the standard which prevails in urban life as a whole in this country.

SYNAGOGUES AND MINISTERS.

The religious requirements of the younger generation, on the other hand, have undergone a certain modification. They do not desire only a service conducted on more ascetic standards and larger and more imposing synagogue buildings. They do not wish to have a Maggid to harangue them in the old style when they attend divine worship, and sermons in Yiddish are in many cases unintelligible to them. Thus, though many of the East End Synagogues still have Rabbis not long since arrived in this country, who address their congregants only in Yiddish, the number of congregations who have English-speaking Rabbis and Ministers is growing. It is to be observed, however, that a large number of them have had their training in the deeply traditional Yeshiva Etz-Haim in the East End, to the maintenance of which the Federation has made considerable grants. On the other hand, secular studies are not by any means overlooked. It is noteworthy that a number of the Federation Rabbis of the younger generation possess in addition an English doctorate, such as Rabbi Dr. J. Newman, of the Notting Hill congregation, and Rabbi Dr. E. W. Kirzner, of the Stamford Hill Beth Hamedrash.

The problem of how to equip the Federation Synagogues with Rabbis who have sufficiently deep knowledge to satisfy the older

members and, at the same time, possess that grounding of English culture to attract the younger generation, is receiving the serious and constant attention of the Federation. A scheme is under consideration to train the senior students of the Yeshivah by enabling them to deliver sermons in those Synagogues which as yet have no religious leader. Similarly, strong encouragement is given to the building of communal halls attached to the various Synagogues. In these the younger generation can meet for social religious and cultural purposes in a Jewish environment and under the ægis of the congregation. Thus it is hoped to resuscitate the ancient Jewish conception by which the Synagogue was not simply a church-like place of prayer, but in the very fullest sense of the term a *Beth Hakeneseth*—a House of Assembly.

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With this exemplification—by no means isolated—of the maintenance of Jewish tradition as a living force on the part of the Federation of Synagogues, it is necessary to take our leave of this survey of the second twenty-five years of its activity. Starting on a pathetically small scale, it has developed with much rapidity that it is now one of the most powerful agencies for good in Anglo-Jewish life. But its potentialities are by no means exhausted. Twenty-five or fifty years are an insignificant period in the grand sweep of Jewish history, or even in the more limited record of the history of the Jews in this country. It is to be hoped that, when the time comes for the chronicler to record the history of the first century of the activity of the Federation of Synagogues, he will look on the tale unfolded in these pages as nothing more than a small, if promising, beginning ; and, surveying the record, he may be able to repeat the Biblical blessing (Job viii, 7) :

וְהָיָה רֵאשִׁיתְךָ מְצֹעַר וְאַחֲרִיתְךָ יִשְׁגָּה מְאֹד.

“ Though thy beginning was small, thy latter end was very great.”

APPENDIX I.

HONORARY OFFICERS AND CONSTITUENT SYNAGOGUES, 1887.

President :

LORD ROTHSCHILD.

Vice-President :

SAMUEL MONTAGU, ESQ., M.P.

Treasurers :

HERMAN LANDAU.

I. WEBER.

CONSTITUENT SYNAGOGUES.

Spital Square. (Formerly the German Synagogue, New Broad
Street ; founded 1858)

Fashion Court. (Founded 1858)

“Konin,” Hanbury Street

Princes Street. (Founded 1870)

Scarborough Street. (Founded 1792)

Mansell Street

“Kalischer ”

“Bikur Cholim,” Fashion Street. (Founded 1858)

Prescot Street. (Founded 1748)

Old Castle Street

Carter Street. (Founded 1790)

Dunk Street

Windsor Street

Hope Street

Voice of Jacob

Sandys Row. (Founded 1851)

Income : £119

APPENDIX II.

HONORARY OFFICERS AND CONSTITUENT SYNAGOGUES, 1937.

President :

COUNCILLOR M. H. DAVIS, L.C.C.

Vice-President :

D. BARNETT.

Treasurers :

N. FISHER.

I. M. SHOCKETT.

B. SIMONS.

Secretary :

JULIUS JUNG.

CONSTITUENT SYNAGOGUES

Artillery Lane	Forest Gate
Austrian Dzikower	Fulham and Kensington
Bethnal Green Great	Gladstone Park and Neasden
Black Lion Yard	Great Alie Street
Bloomsbury	Great Garden Street
Buross Street	Greenfield Street
Cambridge Road	Grove Street Great
Canning Town	Ilford and Valentine's Park
Cannon Street Road	Jubilee Street Great
Chevrah Torah	King Edward Street
Christian Street 4A	Lambeth
Clapton	Leyton and Walthamstow New
Commercial Road Great	Federated
Congregation of Jacob	Leytonstone and Wanstead
Croydon Hebrew Congregation	Limehouse
Dunk Street Beth Hamedrash	Lodzer
Ezras Chaim	Lovers of Peace
Fenton Street	Lubiner
Fieldgate Street	Mile End and Bow Federated

Mile End New Town	Settles Street
Montague Road Beth Hamedrash	Shepherds Bush
Nelson Street Sphardish	Sidney Street
New Road	Soho Square Beth Hasepher
North-East London Beth Hamedrash	Sons of Britchan
Notting Hill	Spitalfields Great
Old Castle Street	Spital Square Poltava
Old Montague Street	Stamford Hill Beth Hamedrash
Philpot Street Great	Stepney Orthodox
Philpot Street Sphardish	Tottenham Hebrew Congregation
Princelet Street	Vine Court
Rosener	Warsaw Lodge
Rouel Road	Wellington Road
Roumanian	Wilkes Street
Sandringham Road	Willesden Green Federation
	Woolwich and Plumstead

Income : £33,721 2s. 5d.

APPENDIX III.

THE GROWTH OF THE FEDERATION.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Affiliated Synagogues</i>	<i>Approximate Total Membership (Families)</i>
1887	16	1,350*
1889	22	—
1895	25	1,580
1912	51	6,500
1937	68	13,000

* It will be noticed that of the 18 Synagogues represented at the Inaugural Meeting in November, 1887, only 16 formally appointed their delegates to the first meeting of the Board on December 4 of the same year. An allowance has been made for the two tiny congregations who have no membership return on this occasion.