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CANADIAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

FOUNDED BY SAUL HAYES, O.C., Q.C., LL.D., F.R.S.A.
FIRST EDITOR LOUIS ROSENBERG, F.R. Econ.S., F.S.S.

Nous nous souvenons

NEW SERIES 46

Forgetfulness leads to Holocaust;
Remembering is the root of redemption.
(Baal Shem Tov)

THE HEROES OF MONTREAL JEWISH EDUCATION

Compiled by
DAVID ROME

NATIONAL ARCHIVES
CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS

MONTREAL, CANADA

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YEHUDAH EVEN SHMUEL

In the mid 1920's a group of young men of considerable ability assumed the direction of the two modern schools set up by the Labour Zionist movement to revolutionize Jewish education. Each devoted half a century to this mission, and between them created a distinctive Jewish culture in Canada which gave this community primacy in schooling, in literature and in civic ethics in world Jewry: Jacob Isaac Zipper, a nom de guerre, (1900-83) and Shloimeh Wiseman (1899-1985).

As both of them - and the third patriarch of advanced Jewish education in Montreal, Yehudah Kaufman, who came to Montreal at the same time as Wiseman - tell it, they all owe their creative success to their fathers.

The three giants of Canadian Jewish culture, in their biographies and their philosophy, influenced and led the schooling and the community, directly and indirectly during their long, busy lives from the first ferment in Montreal Jewish education to their passing, three score and ten years later.

A young student at McGill University, Yehudah Even Shmuel Kaufman (or Kaufmann), found in the Montreal community an environment that permitted flowering. He became the devoted aide to Reuben Brainin and an indefatigable executive in the vast projects which the older man inspired and led.

His own personality, his Hebraic scholarship, his stylistic verve, his Chassidic enthusiasm, human wisdom and the depth of his religious traditions all served to establish him as the precious figure which later years in Israel only enriched with more facets and dimensions.

Even finer and more subtle than Brainin, Kaufman offered entry into a special world which altered the initiates. Nor did his departure from Canada, in his case also, as in the case of Brainin, totally sever his relations with the Montreal community; his person continued to affect the standards of the community and its schools. It was not only by his visits that his influence persisted. Canadians privileged to visit the shrine of his den in Jerusalem or to receive his correspondence appreciate the extended power that was imbedded in his sublime personality.

The spiritual nature of Yehudah Kaufman (1889-1976) grew out of his ancestral home where his father, a Lithuanian Lubavitch Chassid, nurtured his son in a remarkable blend of musicality, learning, mysticism and modern learning. The son treasured the father's tradition. He changed his own name to Even Shmuel with its medieval familial and scholarly connotations.

Before the war of 1914 the family left the Ukraine for Western Europe, where the son studied in London and later in the Sorbonne. In 1913 they left for Montreal where a brother-in-law had already settled. Here young Kaufman continued his studies in Judaism at McGill University.

He entered McGill as a graduate student in 1913, during the early Brainin days and, within three brilliant if stormy years, he became the intellectual leader of the Canadian immigrant society - in education through young Shloimeh Wiseman, and politically and culturally through Brainin and the Poale Zion. For the succeeding half century, when Kaufman resided in the United States, in Palestine, and Israel,

he inspired and led the grateful Wiseman month by month in developing the Jewish People's School and its teachers.

His official academic record describes his "Third year: Hebrew texts, history of the creation of the Mishnah, Arabic, Aramaic, Phoenician, Social institutions. Fourth year: Hebrew texts, history of Greek and Roman periods, Social institutions. 'Very high marks, took first class honours in Semitics.'

"October 13, 1915: application as graduate student proceeding to degree of Master of Arts. Had done graduate work at Paris, 1907-09 in philosophy, Hebrew history and literature, under Lalande, Picavet, Durkheim, Levy-Bruhl, Slouschz, Levy and others. B.A., McGill, 1915."

During his McGill days he was recognized as a brilliant and effective organizer of major community projects which were based on his philosophy of modern Judaism, including the organization of the Jewish Public Library, the Jewish People's School, the National Jewish People's Alliance - and then the Canadian Jewish Congress.

He had already developed a magic personality which was expressed not least in Chasidic and Jewish folk music. While in Montreal he laid the foundations of his studies in the development of Halachah and Jewish philosophy.

He composed profound lectures on various aspects of contemporary Judaism which he delivered across Canada and the United States and which he published serially in the Adler and in the American Hebrew periodical press.

His studies in education were applied in Montreal in the development of the Jewish People's School and in the Hebrew Teachers Seminary in New York which he later directed.

Shloimeh Wiseman, the most qualified among his disciples to benefit directly from Kaufman's inspiration, testified that "during the four years in Canada, he accomplished much towards the formation of a new Jewish cultural life and a new Jewish communal life in our city and in our country."

A perceptive witness of the Montreal process, he testified, "Kaufman radiated light about him, most unforgettably in his circle of family and friends in their modest St. Urbain Street home. His wife Frumeh, raised in an environment similar to her husband's, was also a fine scholar. She received a wide variety of guests who included self-taught scholars, union leaders and foreign celebrities such as Zrubavel, Alexander Chashin, Solomon Kaplansky and Isaac Ben Zvi. Kaufman found time for all, for studying deep into the night, for Poale Zion meetings, committee sessions, etc.

"During his Montreal days he became radically free in his views; observant of only some customs such as lighting of the Sabbath candles, for aesthetic and national reasons. Even as he extended his studies in the profane he remained a Matmid scholar, continuing to pore over his lecture notes all night, even as he had studied the Talmud without counting hours or days.

"In Montreal, Kaufman found Brainin and accepted him as his Rebbe."

Kaufman later testified that "whoever did not see Brainin during his Montreal period has never seen militant Brainin. I am happy that it has been my fortune to stand at his side and to witness the hard battle which the man of spirit fought

for principles, for his faith, his aspirations and the dream of his spirit. It was the battle of a man who dreamed a wonderful vision, a dream, a new and blossoming Jewish community aspiring to spiritual riches, endowed with creative power, a model for all the Jewry of America. . .

"I saw the warrior Brainin in Canada. I heard his perpetual demands and claims. I saw the people's response. Who knows but Brainin might have realized his dream of the new community, were it not for the mean foxen who destroy the vineyards. Only those of us who were witness to the great efforts which he made there can appreciate the seeds which he planted in this virgin soil. With the coming of many years the seeds will sprout and historians will appreciate the great dreamer and the battler who had lived among them." (Nahum Slouschz, ed. Souvenir Scroll on Sixtieth Birthday of Reuben Brainin. N.Y., Hatoren, 1923. Pp.59-61)

Kaufman's repute in the immigrant society was spreading and the Poale Zion delegated a group to interview him. Their report was enthusiastic. The party was rather eclectic in composition and in character, seeking to combine various, even conflicting, loyalties, particularly when candidates were of proven dedication to broad Jewish values. They welcomed atheists and Jews who appreciated religious and historic values. Many of the members were Yiddishists, but the official program recognized a Hebrew Israel and a bilingual diaspora. It was an unstable arrangement, particularly in their educational activities.

In spite of their difficulties they pioneered with their Peretz and People's Schools with historic success. Kaufman was an ideal leader; indeed, as its founder and spokesman in its early days, before the arrival of Shloimeh Wiseman, the Jewish People's School was his philosophical voice in American immigrant Jewry.

Shloimeh Wiseman noted Kaufman's part in the formation of the Jewish People's School when a group of founders of the Peretz School separated on ideological grounds, mainly to assert the Hebraistic theme the more strongly. Kaufman - newly arrived in Canada, young, scholarly and highly respected in national-socialist circles - was head of the group which included Zelig Wolofsky, Moishe Dickstein, D.H. Lazarus, L. Meltzer and A. Parnas.

One of Canada's foremost Hebrew journalists, Moses Z.R. Frank, editor of Toronto's Daily Hebrew Journal, wrote in Hadoar in 1962,

"The founding of these schools was epic. Many of the teachers were volunteers; many were totally unprepared; the essential qualification was an inspiration for the broadest causes of Judaism. Some, on the staff of the Talmud Torah, volunteered their services to the agnostic Yiddish school; some of these were strictly observant, but taught in the People's Schools with bare heads.

"Much is to be said for the particular Canadian conditions and atmosphere. After all, such schools were also founded in New York, Philadelphia and other American cities. But only in Montreal are they firmly established.

"Only those who lived in Montreal during the First World War can appreciate the accomplishments of Yehudah Kaufman as the father of the Jewish People's School, as the founder of the Jewish Public Library, unique in its type in the western hemisphere, as organizer of the Jewish Congress; and above all, as colleague of Reuben Brainin.

"Without Kaufman, Brainin could not have created the Congress movement. He brought about the rapprochement between Brainin and the Poale Zion which led the Poale Zion to support Brainin as head of the People's Alliance and encouraged Brainin to accept its leadership.

"Surviving published and other documentations attest that the present Jewish Public Library has developed out of the Poale Zion library and was in fact founded by them. At the formation of the group in May 1905 they began to assemble pamphlets and books in Yiddish, Hebrew and Russian. For a time, from 1909 to 1912, the collection was housed in the Baron de Hirsch Institute; in 1912 Brainin appeared at a concert program for the library in Coronation Hall and urged the readers of the Adler to support it. At the urging of Yehudah Kaufman, Brainin agreed to lead the library and the Jewish People's University as a distinct community institution. He convened a conference on February 1914, where the institution was set on its historic way. It was Kaufman who had Brainin crowned at the Jewish Public Library. Kaufman might have created the library even without Brainin, even as he created the Jewish People's School without Brainin.

"The true founder of the Jewish Public Library and Jewish People's University, its living spirit, was Kaufman who had Brainin named as its president. He introduced Brainin into its activities and its atmosphere which, in reality, were alien to Brainin.

"Kaufman was a people's man in all its senses. Indeed his opponents from the left, within his Poale Zion group and outside it, suspected his Hebraism, but he loved his mother language deeply as his very being. He taught Yiddish folk songs and Chassidic songs even in Jerusalem where most of his conversation and his affairs were in Hebrew and about Hebrew. He loved Yiddish in all its manifestations and revelations.

"Brainin was different. His years in Vienna and in Berlin had ruined and Germanized his Yiddish speech. His service as editor of a Yiddish newspaper introduced him into the maze of petty matters such as Kashruth and city elections where all was confusion for him but which he could not avoid, seeking as he was to elevate public affairs to greater heights.

"During Brainin's first months in Montreal the public elevated him to spokesman on grave matters. He was the Berliner for the ignorant who came to touch the fringes of his garments as he appeared at important public demonstrations. Kaufman saw the light in the Brainin humanity, the practical community worker. In the library he bridged the abyss between refined Brainin and the men of the people, hungry for creative enlightenment, many of them close to the Poale Zion. Brainin attended meetings of the library, busied himself with elections and campaigns and committees and teaching the people.

"It is doubtful whether anyone but Kaufman could have convinced him to join the men of the landsmanshaften and the Labour Zionists.

"The school which Shloimeh Wiseman came to lead after Kaufman left Canada is not only representative but is the best of them. Kaufman shone over it, gave it direction and standards, influenced its atmosphere and inspired its activities through all their difficulties."

Kaufman was living in New York during Wiseman's early principalship, heading the progressive Jewish Teachers' Seminary, but he was the active spiritual leader of the Canadian school, imbuing it with advanced ideas in education.

The archive of his correspondence with Wiseman over the many years, when Kaufman became an intellectual beacon of all Israel, is a monument for the cultural life of early Montreal Judaism.

Kaufman's letters to Wiseman are a monument of sheer beauty, Hebrew literary style and modern Zionist elevation. The dignity of these communications did not fail to reach down to the elementary class pupils. Every public statement by Wiseman during those decades was deliberately modelled on Kaufman's oral style, and his classroom explanations sounded like musical symphonies shaped on Kaufman's "small talk."

Kaufman's influence established a Montreal tradition of inspiration in education dating back to Harkavi with such names as Reuben Brainin, Isaiah Rabinovitch, Abraham Golomb, M. Menachowsky, J.I. Segal, Jacob Zipper, Samson Dunsky and Mordecai Husid. They constitute a constellation which it is difficult simply to call a school system. When we add to this professional cadre the names of such school activists as M. Dickstein, L. Zuker, Louis Rosenberg, B.G. Sack, Melech Ravitch, H.M. Caiserman, B. Sheps, etc. we see that there are many dimensions to this Canadian Jewish phenomenon not paralleled on the continent.

KAUFMAN - TEACHER

Late in 1913 Yehudah Kaufman began contributing articles on religion and society to Brainin's Adler. An early article, "The Victims of Moloch" was an attack on capital punishment,

"The air smells of blood; mankind again seeks a sacrifice. Primitive thirst for blood has reawakened. Tomorrow the rope will be tightened again about the neck of another person - in the name of justice, of society's loving conscience, in the name of the god of love, grace and mercy.

"Justice, what great atrocities, evils beyond description, what ingenuity have been performed in its name! Capital punishment, the most horrible heritage from the original primitive man, is founded on strict justice.

"Man spangled with blood should be expelled from society and must spend his punishment-life in lonesome repentance.

"Tomorrow the executioner will kill a nigger. The man who will kill him is our spokesman before God.

"As wealth is accumulated in a few hands and isolation and need spread among the billions, unnatural sin spreads among them, and the abnormality and impudence of crime grows. There ought to be a universal public accounting of conscience every time a new type of crime is invented. Instead, we add new blood to old blood. We block our ears with music as we bring our children to the altar of Moloch with loud dance music. With every head that falls at the chopping block a scream of woe is torn from the soul of every man whose soul still bears a spark of God's light.

"Jews have not failed to fight the Moloch cult for two thousand years. They had not invoked capital punishment since Talmud days. In our tradition the crime of the sinner has been attached to the high priest who by his negligence has failed to teach the people; in a word, the bad organization of society and its courts. The one court in two millenia which handed down a death sentence has been labelled the cannibal court.

"We call upon the men of law, the prosecutors, the judges, the legislators, upon all society and upon organized labour to end the pouring out of blood, to abolish capital punishment."

The Chassidic tradition of the saintly Rebbeim was discussed by Kaufman in his exposition on "The Tzadikim of the Generation" on December 4, 1913,

"The Chassidic movement has been increasingly advanced in our literature, the passionate longing for the sacred in the life-manner of the first Chassidim. In this regard, again, literature is a reflection of the processes in the people's soul.

"The people may not appreciate its own yearning for those beautiful realms. They may deny the existence of such feelings. But it is in the nature of literature to reveal all secrets, predictions and prophecies as X-rays penetrate the external elements that conceal the essence of the human soul like a fog.

"The more life is vulgar, base and profane and the more it is surrounded by moral degradation, the more intensely man yearns for rebirth, for flight into higher universes, for a pure, sacred and gentle life, for a deep faith, for childish wonder and angels' enthusiasms. All this was in Chassidism.

"But its central motif was the faith in man, in the Tzadik, the Chassidic superman who influenced all universes, who annulled the decrees of the Almighty. He conducted the life of all men of his generation, giving his entire life to them. His very existence in the world elevated man's value; man must indeed be great if he can rise to such heights that God consults him.

"This faith in the potentiality of man is the finest pearl that has been lost with the decline of Chassidism and which is most longed for ever since.

"Who was the Tzadik? Between the spiritual aristocracy of the Rebbe of Mezrich who asserted that only 'an angel of the Lord of Hosts' can be a Tzadik, and the populist perception of Reb Boruchel that 'when ten Jews declare a simple Jew to be 'a good Jew,' a Tzadik, he becomes one - between these conceptions lies the truth.

"All great personalities require this sanction, the consent of the people. Only after the people begin to love them and believe in them does their true greatness appear. Every member of the people brings him as a gift a mite of his courage and of his good will, as all the streams pour into the rivers and thence into the oceans. Thus a viable mammoth heart is created.

"Each of us has lived the first years of the Herzl experience. A great man came to us and we have made him noble by our love and faith.

"Naturally even an entire nation cannot be a creator ex nihilo. The object of a people's love and a people's faith must be a luminous personality.

"But the faith in human worth assures us that there is no generation without its thirty-six hidden Tzadikim. Here and there proud men without profound insight appear; mild souls with dove eyes and wings of eagles, generous hearts seething with stormy oceans of energy, the assembled minds that dream the light of humanity. Yet they pass over the generation of the profane, petty concerns like a flower fading in a shadow, and fail to give the world what they long for and could give: their rich soul.

"It is not the Tzadikim that have failed us, but the faith in the Tzadikim, the faith in men, faith in ourselves, in man's possibility to rise and to become a colourful panorama which illuminates from on high the dark tents of fellow-men who might peer at him from below and admire him from afar.

"The high hope is that the people shall realize the nature of their yearning and shall steep in it. It is the dream of the mission that a nation shall awaken from frightening low sleep atmosphere to higher forms of life. The heroes await for this bright moment, so that they might kindle the courage of the people. The hidden sacred forces await their revelation; they miss the complement of the people's will. Where is the poet who shall sing to my people?

"Awaken, awaken
For your light has come,
Arise, my light."

ANTI-EDUCATION

In his pedagogic discussions, Kaufman describes the Jewish people, "a nation of stars and sand, extremist and contradictory, which can elevate ideas and then tread them underfoot; we have Faust's wonderment and Mephistophelean contempt. A people of clowns who do not live their own lives but play many other people's lives. Most remarkably, we move from idealistic living to vulgarization; a people who promised to do and then to hear and soon after worshipped the golden calf. This rapid chameleon alternation of colours leaves a regret in our hearts.

"Many of those who permit their children to grow into Jewish ignoramuses had themselves enjoyed their studies in Cheder and in study chapels. Have they forgotten the sacrifices their own parents had made to keep them in their schools? Have they forgotten the shame that had marked those few who had not been able to benefit from secular schooling?

"Admittedly, there had been a measure of impracticality in the system which had kept us isolated from life to the age of eighteen; as they sought to turn every youth into a scholar, even a rabbi. This accusation resounded far when our entire generation put the old Torah aside and went to public school; and all had, at least, to complete high school.

"But was it necessary that this practicality be accompanied by the rejection of the Burden of the Torah, by the repulsive ignorance which is carefully cultivated among our young, a cheap generation without a gentle desire, without a sacred spark, a higher ambition? Our young are prematurely and cruelly thrown upon the market place equipped with reading, writing and arithmetic. Not for them did the poets sing and the men of fantasy weave dreams; not for them did human culture develop for a thousand generations. What society created is alien to them; even more alien is the yearning for the better and the finer, the glory of God's universe, man's investigation of these universes, art with all its secret pleasures.

"Suddenly our young have become Robinson Crusoes, the first Adams for whom nothing had yet happened, for whom everything has to begin to happen.

"This is probably the first ignorant generation which stands shorn before all its predecessors with whom it has no spiritual relations, whom it does not understand and whom it knows not how to respect, a leaf torn from a broadly grown tree in a hot desert, with no past.

Did we tear this leaf? Can we claim that it has been done to us?

"Can we blame hard times? Our history knows of generations of great poverty. But was the voice of the Torah then silenced? Indeed, the cannons of those times were responded with the lightning of thought.

"Poets and geniuses helped to weave our golden dream. Why did we deprive our children of the light in the Torah, the divine light that illuminates man's road which caresses and consoles us?"

Kaufman represented a remarkable young figure in the nationalist, largely secular immigrant society, an intensely religious man in a Jewish world where religious values were largely faded. His vocabulary illustrates the weakness of the efforts of the observant to retain their own children in the faith. (Adler, Nov. 25, 1913)

"The secularism of the age crept into Jewish society, first among the intellectuals and then, with electric speed, among the masses.

"There is a beginning of a return to religion among Jews. The intellectuals yearn and dream, and the people seek compromise and create caricatures, especially when parents blindly experiment with their children to combine old traditions with the new life. So parents force the child to prayer as long as he is in their hands, even though the parents do not pray. These parents do not understand why the children abhor praying. They sense that they are being forced or bribed with pennies.

"The father doesn't ask why he himself does not pray. He could spare the few moments. He lacks only the inner need to thank God or to beg God, or to pour out his heart to Him; this even though he might have been brought up in a world of piety.

"But even the observant father cannot influence his progeny, for the child's universe is not created only in the home. The street, the school, and the synagogue count for much, and these exert no influence in favour of faith.

"Even the synagogue chapels exert no religious influence. The structure is void with two or three minyanim, older people with no semblance of the enthusiasm we had seen in our childhood. The child senses a clumsy yawn more visible to the child than to the father. There is no harmony between the parents' religious demands from the child and their own life and conduct.

"It is not that the child has no religious need for prayer; indeed he is aware that the ambient Christian society has the experience of prayer, of motions and gestures associated with ecstasy. But they do not feel them in their Jewish life. Their parents and elder brothers work on the Sabbath, yet the younger children act as Sabbath-Goyim: turn on the electricity, carry away the candles, cannot play ball or tear paper.

"The street demonstrates to the child that he is being deceived. People smoke on Sabbath, travel and work. The adults forget the first rule, 'Let your child never catch you in an untruth, for you will never again rise in his eyes.' He soon finds that he is surrounded by falsehood. He becomes suspicious by the age of eight. The lies we tell him for his own benefit turn him into a spy and do more harm than good.

"As long as the people mimic piety and alter their compromises each day, the religious education we give our children will serve to demoralize them. They will see the teachers as hypocrites and will despise their instruction.

"Children wish to grow out of their cradles. Our recent piety would leave them in their infantile condition."

In his "Paedagogic Considerations" Kaufman noted a weakness in the Jewish nationalist movement. ("Shamed Judaism")

"While we hear the voices of national renaissance, when the nationalist idea is propagated from all arenas with firm conviction the deep awareness in the masses of the people, it is appropriate to glance at the community, its synagogues, Chadorim and Talmud Torahs, to see how little truth is in these banal statements. In fact, the instinctive national feeling resides only at extraordinary revolutionary

moments. In the course of daily living it sleeps in lethargy, leaving little impress upon the hearers.

"Pessimistic as this may sound we must admit this as we glance at our educational life. What do we transmit to our child, to aid him in self-identification? What cultural arms do we provide him to conduct his specific Jewish battles courageously and proudly? Have Jewish parents in the past ever let their children go forth on the difficult roads of life so poorly prepared?

"These are the plagues that torment all humanity - the diaspora of mankind that has taken the form of sharp class differentiation, cannons of warfare, prostitution, the slavery of alcoholism, the shattering of mankind's nerves. In addition to the universal condition, there has come the tenfold intensification of the Jews' exile, hopeless migration, boycotts, the Beilis case, conversion, suicide, neurotic anti-Semitism. We struggle against these attacks with psychopathic feebleness.

"Those of us who have been raised on the ideals of the prophets can somehow withstand the demoralization, being enriched by the traditions of the Chosen People, being nourished by our mothers' milk with faith and hope.

"But what is the elixir of life for our children? Where are their prophetic ideals? Thousands and scores of our children enter the market of life without even the names of Micah, and Isaiah in their Cheder heritage, not to speak of the Aggadah, Hillel, Rabbi Akivah or Rabbi Johanan; not to speak of the later morality literature. One in a city and two in a family go a line beyond the Pentateuch, some children's tales given them by their English teachers as prelude to the New Testament.

"The heritage of our national heroes is weakened, and profaned. Their ideals are shaped on the street where public opinion is the only governor, the concentration of filth whence everyone flees to his isolated corner; the movies which might have become one of the blessings of young humanity, but instead have become the revelation of the darkest facets of human life, which deafen and intoxicate our children; the public schools where Santa Claus has replaced the prophet Elijah, Christmas has replaced Simchat Torah, and fairy tales have replaced the 36 Secret Saints. The home has become alien as did the parents, the children and the rabbi.

"If, by happy chance, the older child comes to feel how alien all this is to him and if he has the courage to reject it, he finds himself naked, deprived, without a trace of cheer."

PARENTS

Kaufman pointed out that "among normal peoples the sense of group consciousness and of normal self-respect develop early in childhood and grow when children learn their national hymns. Jewish children in their play crossed their heart and attested 'As I am a Jew.' At seven we heard from teachers, and then from mothers, of the destruction of the temples. Durkheim counts the social sense as the most significant experience in the child's development.

"Today we rob our children of this sense. It will require generations of acceptable Canadian living to develop true Canadian patriotism.

"In the meantime Jewish parents lightly let their children loose from loyalties to the Jewish nation, and the ranks of the battlers for the Jewish cause are thinning. We do not give our children concrete values of our traditions, of our language, of our land.

"Our people have discovered the ancient potent weapon for our survival, the Hebrew language, vigorous in its renaissance, in its links to our hopes, to our past.

"The sounds of our young children attach them to our ancient language; 'from the mouths of suckling babes you have created Force,' our past will come alive in our future.

"Is this our last hope? If so, why are we so indifferent to it? We rob our children of the tremendous heritage which is theirs, the key to the riches of Hebrew whereby 'the sons can return to their boundaries,' as Nordau has been appealing to us."

Kaufman dealt with economics, or "The Yoke of Earning a Living" in his pedagogic discussions.

"The struggle for bread has given humanity much. Technical development and much of scientific progress and advances in societal life have come about from the search for economic progression. But this same intent has also led to the corruption of the human soul, the loss of much talent and precious thought. It may be that, if we could weigh the uses and the harm which this search for bread has caused to humanity - if it were in our hands - we might choose to reject both. But history does not pause for a moment, nor does the pursuit of bread.

"The Jew is not the least in this pursuit, and he pays richly for his life in exile. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries he paid with his honour, permitting the squire to tread on him while he sang Kol Nidrei and Mah Yafis for his entertainment. Later he paid with segments of his Judaism, with Sabbaths and festivals and customs and language.

"Until then he did not pay for it with the education of his children. But now economics has become cruel, and seekers of livelihood are facing the Moloch demanding their children. Some ninety percent of Jewish parents sweat bitterly at their work far from their home table which is far from the father's world. Whether employee or craftsman at home or storekeeper or peddler, he sings with Morris Rosenfeld, 'Work drives me early from home and relieves me late at night. I am an alien to my own flesh, a stranger to my child's glance.'

"This alienation goes deeper in the spiritual distancing as they develop into contradictions of their universes which will probably never meet.

"Even the mother is often caught up in the complexities of economics, even when she is not forced into outside labour. The children become superfluous. The tired father and the working sons will soon appear, tired, rushing, demanding within a few moments the fruit of the hours of labour preparation; the children run out to school, to play in the street where, in truth, they educate themselves.

"At fourteen the perspectives for the morrow begin; the child begins to earn, to bring his mite into the family, calls for respect; he cannot be antagonized; his caprices must be met so that he might develop filial love for his parents who will soon depend on him. To whom does he listen and for whom does he 'care' as he readies for the streets of the adults which call brazenly with their blinding colours?

"As Jews race all over the planet to wherever the livelihood is easier - if it were possible to halt them and to present a portrait of the alienation of children in the lands of their destination, would they halt in their flight? Who knows but that in our difficult times the integrity of the family might also shatter. There are signs of this already here and there, of the storms in all the skies over our heads.

"Superhuman power will be needed to combat these conditions. We are confident of victory, but our struggle must begin soon. We have sources and resources. When parents will understand what is facing them, their instinct will teach them the art of conflict."

THE LOST TRIBES

"The Jewish Arcady" was the theme of Kaufman's essay of December 29 and 30, 1913 on the theme of the Ten Lost Tribes.

"The human mind is rapid in its associations of minor news items. So the news of the death of King Menelick connected his name with Abyssinia, the land of the Falashee, a part of the Ten Tribes beyond the Sambatyon River, the red little Jews, the sons of Moses.

"A sea of legends flow in waves of yearning. Yearning for what? For the naive, colourful, hearty, melodious tales of the blossoming times when we first heard them from mother's tearful eyes, and believed them deeply, religiously? Or for the fantastic world which the people's imagination wove so artistically, when the exterior life was petty, ugly, without content and therefore senseless and unjustified?

"All legends that awaken a longing in us are created by the deepest imagination of the nations; an entire people of millions spread to all the corners of the world sit in a mystical sunset and all eyes are searching for something long lost, and all are awaiting the miracles of resurrection. The miracle occurs, and with it the rebirth of something lamented and now active, for the people had inserted its best vitality into it. It is as active as the work of art is potent over the artist, as it inspires him; as man with his virtuous acts inserts a force into God and his Divine Upper Family.

"In the dark middle ages, when Jewish suffering passed far beyond the more terrible martyrdom, when life was more horrible than death, and death was more impossible than life - at this time the mind affirmed the concept that those who did not live to experience such events must have been great saints.

"That was one of the saddest forms of the Jewish perceptions of Exile. It was based on the assumption that no creature can persist. Instead of the tribe of Judah and Benjamin and the tribe of Levi, the founders of the primitive legend held that the sons of Ephraim are worthier than us; that they are the perfect saints, while we suffer in this world.

"The people's fantasy explored the corners of the world in search of the hidden saints who had been driven out as we had been, but are not suffering the yoke of exile as we do.

"The simplest explanation, which satisfied the modern scientists, both Jewish and Christian, has it that the ten tribes dissolved among Jews and among adjacent and distant peoples. But this said nothing to the Jewish people which never, in the most fearful times, accepted the notion of dissolution. When they first heard of it, it seemed as a pagan melody such as had plagued Amnon and Moab and from which the Romans and Greeks suffered. But how think of the Jews in this context - the people whose entire life is one protest against the very concept?

"No! The sons of Ephraim live, and how well they live! Not in the world to come; that universe was accepted by Jews for the individual person. The nation lives in this world, and this is its greatest reward; the ten tribes live in our world as a true nation of saints ought to live, distant from the evil and from the filth of our lonely world, nearer to God and His spirit, nearer to the prophetic spirit,

animated by the finest ambitions of mankind, effective with sacred healing upon nature both organic and inorganic.

"Fantasy found its adepts and warm minds emerged to search their fortunate brothers. They set out on foot to all the corners. Some may have perished in forests and deserts, in rivers and oceans. Some of the few who returned, without having lost their senses - such as Petachiah of Regensburg and Benjamin of Tudela - told of their suffering but faithful and happier brethren.

"The fantasy remained for generations with the people and the legend grew of the Red Jews or the Little Sons of Moses in a blessed land, a Jewish Arcadia, enriched and enriching, more colourful and in more tonal dimensions. What the prophets and Aggadists foretold has already been realized 'there,' even the dreams of poems for the improvement of mankind. Fourier's version of the Future City and Bellamy's portrait of the Coming City and Herzl's Alt-Neuland have no magic that is not found in the Beyond Sambatyon that has crystallized in the Jewish people's imagination during the centuries, a reality already existent just behind our shoulders.

"What is most significant in this legend of the profundity of the Jewish populist conception of the world is that our fortunate brothers live their own life tragedy; happy as they are where they reside, they nevertheless long for that other land, the land of their past and of their future. They are cut off from that land by the Sambatyon River. Only God may one day pity them and bring them there.

"Even our simple national philosophy at the popular level recognizes that tragedy is imminent as an organic element in living, but it finds consolation in tragedy as enrichment, as a preventative against satiety, as stimulant of ambition, revolution and movement. In this sense the Jewish Arcadia is more beautiful, more sacred and profound than other Arcadias.

"This people's genius flowers in our endless and unconditional love of the land of Israel. From the vantage point of total achievement, of the prophets of 'what the human eye has never seen,' of beyond the richest fantasy of all humanity - outside Israel there is no good fortune.

The people long not only in their plight and need, in their isolation, but also in their greatest freedom, glory and power; their hearts and eyes still turn there. What is the good of an Arcady which diverts us from our history? This is the basic tone of our legend, its proud refrain which we need hear only once to recognize the prophetic truth that 'the eternity of Israel shall never prove false.'

"This legend belongs to our lachrymose contemporary literature. Yaacov Cohen began by initiating a cycle 'Beyond the Sambatyon.' He has found 'fearful beauties' in the river, a harmony between the spheres of Force and Glory as they surrender to Sanctity as it rests on the Sabbath.

'The air is still, the sky shines,
The leaves and branches rest,
Even the Shechinah rests.
In honour of the
Noble Sabbath Queen'

"We bear the legend into the treasury of human culture which needs our shining jewel, its memory of our creative exiles, of the courage of our freedom visions."

CHANUKAH

Like Schneour, Kaufman claimed Chanukah as the property of the new Jews, the revolutionaries of the age of exile. "We have discovered it. Instinctively we have to come to feel it one of the great experiences of world history, the emergence of the democratic spirit, the rebirth of our people, a foundation for our movements, a stream of vital serum in our veins - ready for the call of the revived Judah the Maccabee.

"Chanukah is a date in universal human history when two immense human cultures met, the Jewish and the Hellenic. The encounter could have become the infinite blessing for all humanity had not the infamous Power of Profanity intervened in the man-animal form of Antiochus.

"It is false and foolish to believe that the Greek and Jewish cultures were conflicting and could not live together in one nation or in one man. On the contrary, neither is complete without the other. The flaw in humanity cannot be healed without their union in harmony. Did not the Greeks convert the ideal of beauty into low, ugly pornography? The aesthetic soul of the ancient Greeks created so many art worlds. His body profaned these worlds. The Greek man inspired silent nature into living and articulate speech and blew his spirit into stone. But no spirit remained in his own body. Man did not grow through his creative force and activity, but became enslaved.

"And did not the Jews deny by their quest for the abstract absolute One, the colourful and many-sided world of forms? Did they not devote too much space to man and too little to nature? Their tendencies to sanctity tore man from life, distrusting the force of life. Was the fear justified? Did not our prophets teach us to bring sanctity into life? The Jewish man was indeed elevated, but the Divine injunction 'You shall be holy' nearly became 'You shall be Nazarite' - which is what happened to the Essenes, thence Christianity.

"It seemed as if, now that Judea has met Ellas, mankind will bond an eternal compact with nature which will never be torn; man's eyes will never cease viewing the world, to which, however, he will never be enslaved or subjected; the melody of the 'Bless my soul' prayer will extend to all the corners of the universe, and all humanity will realize the poetic unity of the ideal beauty of Japhet in the tents of Shem. The aesthetic creations of Greece will be transplanted into the quiet restfulness of the tents of Jacob and will find their perfection there.

"But to mankind's misfortune, it was not magnetic attraction that brought these two cultures together but external pressures, inhuman and wild violence. The Seleucids began to spread their culture with a gross iron hand. Conflict and clash brought the Jewish aristocrats, the priesthood and the masses into war as the two cultures clashed when they met. What was at issue was not the unification of the universe but the suppression of the vestige of political freedom which remained to the Jews, the enslavement of the Jewish spirit under the small group of priests and the uprooting of all the national and popular remnants of Judaism.

"A bitter struggle began not against external foe, but against the domestic, led by truly heroic sons of the people, sons tilling the soil, soaked in its culture, fanatics of the democratic spirit, lovers of the people beyond power or glory, an old priestly family who had long cherished God's Torah, but had not traded in it as had the treacherous high priests of the time.

"Only such heroes could stand at the head of the revolution of the time in their quest for freedom as they fought to preserve the Jewish national purities against the profaned beauty of the time, not by steel and fire but by the love and sacred effort which will prevail when cultures meet and embrace." ("The Maccabean Revolution," in Adler, Dec. 21, 1913)

ART

Kaufman could live fully in the universe of art, as when he reacted to the restoration of La Gioconda to its place in the Louvre. (Dec. 18, 1913),

"Life is too hard, too bitter, too vulgar for us to appreciate the true joy of mankind at the finding of the Mona Lisa.

"You may find the rare chosen few, isolated, scattered over the corners of the universe, whose joy is the deeper for being solitary and misunderstood. There must be something grandiose in their rejoicing on behalf of all humanity. Just as grandiose was the mourning of these Sons of Elevation over the disappearance of the da Vinci spiritual child; as beings whose temple has been demolished, whose star in the heavens has been extinguished, who met only superficial sympathy as they wept over their desolate isolation. So now their profound consolation; they can hope that a time may come when mankind will appreciate that there had been cause for mourning, and now there is cause for rejoicing.

"I cannot imagine the Louvre without La Gioconda, the natural bridge between the first daring artistic art strivings of mankind, today's mighty eagle sweeps with the endless space of the myriad hidden beauties.

"The face of the East Wall of Honour whence the painting suddenly cast its spell upon you and, alone drew you, only to her, as if to reveal only to you all the infinite secrets of space that no son of man had ever heard.

"People stood before her for hours, in search of her charm and magic, never expecting to wonder at her in privacy, always certain of a Minyan in her circle. Yet there were never enough for public service in her temple. In her presence each discarded the yoke of the daily mass man and remained alone with himself, his distinctive soul.

"So each experienced his own revelation; each discovered a new secret; each soul sought out its spring; remarkably that face had impressed so many so differently

"In their lectures professors loved to speak of the wisdom shining out of her eyes as characteristic of the renaissance when art and science became unified almost organically.

"We sometimes hear young people speak of the conviction and determination in her closed lips, in some lines of her cheekbones and in the rays from her eyes.

"A young girl commented about her happy smile - 'da Vinci painted her only with love.' Another of my friends proved to me that she consoles all sufferers, stills the stormy heart with her serenity and heals the sick with her mildness.

"As a veteran of the chapel study I first marvelled at her modesty who renders all forgetful of Venus and Aphrodite and leaves the Jewish youth ideal of a daughter of Israel. On another meeting one is surprised by her pride and courage. If she were but a little more oriental you could find in her Deborah, the wife of Lapidoth. as she sings with proud awareness, 'Until I arose, Deborah, - I arose, a mother in Israel.'

"She certainly is more the people's heroine than Jeanne d'Arc as the French paint her.

"All these elements and others da Vinci painted in this art-blessed figure in his inspiration and wonder - without deification; therefore so near to us; not a god among men but a divine soul among those who visit our world from time to time to ennoble and to sweeten our life.

"As we regard her, it appears that man has not fallen so deep; he has so much to hope for, if he is able to bring down such a one from the treasury of souls.

"Even if La Gioconda is but a dream, a romantic yearning, a wonderful harmony of emotion and realism, it is nevertheless an assurance of a radiant nearby horizon to be soon fulfilled."

ROOTS

The first of Kaufman's "Paedagogic Discussions" (Nov. 21, 1913) recalled the roots of education in the root of the Hebrew term "Chinuch" as in Chanukah, with the meaning of Renewal, in the belief that "the deeds of the fathers will be inherited by the sons," but that the power of the son is finer than the power of the father. Education is directed not only at the conservation of the old, but at creating new worlds and leading mankind to happier times.

"The Jewish ancestors knew of these ideals: piety, Jewishness and Torah.

"A natural religious sense lived in the heart of our forefathers as the heritage of prophecy, not out of fear of God's greatness or of love of his goodness but because, until recently, religion was a power sensed deep in the heart of every Jew without which no life was possible. A mystical union with God bound every Jew with Him, 'I envisage you before me, God, every instant.' It encompassed every person, regulated every motion in his life. The intention of every Jew was that his children should examine each of their acts the more intimately in accord with all the refinements of each nuance of His Law. An accounting of every deed, and even thought, is due in accordance with the presence of the Father who is in heaven.

"Organically bound with this piety was the bond with Judaism. The soul of every Jew bore the agony of the diaspora, the exiling of the Shechinah, his identification with his people. He knew that the entire people suffers with him. He took pride in his suffering in the people's chosenness. There was joy in the ghetto folk song,

"Whatever we are - we are
But we are Jews!
Whatever we suffer - we suffer deeply
But we remain Jews."

"The sweet hope of the Land of Israel and his thinking of Messiah lightened all suffering, lit a sacred light in extinguished eyes and brought comfort.

"As hostile nations mobilized force against Jewry, Jews nourished their children with education. Before a child had developed his sense of individuality he already was conscious of being nationally a Jew - aided by his mother's Yiddish version of the Pentateuch, his grandmother's tales, his father's sigh at the table, the atmosphere in the synagogue - even more national than religious.

"The child instinctively defended the joys of his childhood. He found strength in Cheder and in synagogue where the past of his nation and the large panorama of the future which the Jewish fantasy had created pervaded.

"The educational ideal which his parents had created - to live as a Jew, to feel and think as a Jew, to suffer as a Jew, to fight as a Jew, and finally to die as a Jew - succeeded in absolute perfection. Generation after generation the national sense became more intense and fertile.

"The ultimate element in this process was the study of the Torah for the sake of study; there was no life without study of the Torah. Universal, free education was born early in the Jewish people. The child learned all his concepts of life and of

the world in his first Cheder and in Jewish books. Study was life's ideal, the Book which was the Holy of Holies. Mother cradled him:

'My little Jew will study Torah,
Torah will he study,
Books he will compose.'

"Parents sacrificed all for tuition costs on the level of buying bread and water. The ultimately fortunate Jew was he who could maintain his son in study to the age of sixteen. He had then attained the ultimate in this world and in the next."

Kaufman recalled the traditional problems and responsibilities of Jewish parenthood formulated in the phrase, "the agony of bringing up children," particularly in the Canadian Jewish context.

"Parents have always known from the day they were blessed with a child that they no longer live for themselves alone; that they have begun to live for the following generation. When they ever mentioned the agony it was always to speak of their troubles in joy, and they raised their children 'for Torah, for the canopy, and deeds of virtue,' each according to his talents; one to become the Apter Rebbe, another to become the Apter drayman. The parents perspired for both of them, each father according to his understanding, each child refined to be fit for God and man according to the ideals of each time.

"In our present world the agony of children has remained, but not in the interests of bringing them up. There may be more parents' agony, but not for raising them. The reward of this purpose has disappeared from the parents. The soul of the child is far distant, leaving a Gehenna in the heart of every Jewish parent.

"Jewish parents no longer bring up their children. This is the tragedy and the problem of our life. They have let the children out of their hands and cannot restore the earlier, normal state. They are being educated by whoever will and however he will: the street and the moving pictures, the funny papers and the candy stores, the cheap songs, the stronger children and the alien school teachers from the alien worlds, the strange language and the other Torah, the criminality of contemporary society, the shameless conversation of adults and the dollar idealism, the sports type - all except the parents shape the children.

"Ask a Jewish mother about this and she will sigh, 'Today's children!' or 'American children!' You will hear all the powerlessness and you will sense the national tragedy, the destruction of the last foundation under our feet, the opening of the final abyss, the degeneration of a people, the dissolution and agony.

"There is bound to be salvation, for it has been promised: the eternity of Israel shall not prove a falsehood.

"This salvation must come through the parents themselves, aided by teachers, writers, speakers, community workers. The plague must be healed on the spot. The parents are the healers."

THE PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE

Hebraic scholars as they were, and informed of the Book of Tears in the corpus of lamentation literature, Brainin and Kaufman were not content to record the latest chapter of inhuman horrors imposed upon the Jewish people

As historians and as Zionists, they viewed the events of 1914 in the perspective of the past and of the future. They foresaw Jewish fate in Europe beyond the conclusion of the first of the world wars. They felt that a resolution of this chain of holocaust lay in the immediate realization of the Zionist plan to end exile.

In February and March, 1915 the group about the Brainin-Kaufman-Poale Zion organized the People's Alliance (Folks Farband), to raise funds for overseas needs in the spirit of those leaders, to mobilize Canadian Jewry in democracy and in unity, to prepare for the anticipated crisis and for the opportunity of the war and of the peace conference that must follow, to rebuild the post-war Jewish society, to establish a Canadian Jewish Congress through which the community could act for these purposes and to achieve its fulfilment. They cited the prophets, "For help has been slow in coming, and the days of evil are endless. Press Edom into the shadow of darkness and raise for us the seven shepherds." (Micah 5:4)

In his own rhetoric Kaufman drove away the ironic memories of the Armenians, who had caused the Jews to flee from them, as he and the entire world heard of that race of oppressors become oppressed by those more powerful than them. (Oct. 21 and Nov. 29, 1915) "We now have before us the image of a people fleeing. It is becoming clearer each instant: this horror image of gehenna of entire peoples in flight. I am faced with the earnestness of the prophet's words, 'Therefore shall my heart groan for Moab like a flute, and my heart shall weep bitterly for it.'

"Sadness like a hand seizes my heart and holds it fluttering and beating like a bird in a cage. I feel guilty for my people. I can see the Armenians fleeing; I see those who are less supple fall on the hot sandy roads leading to Persia; I see the last ray of pride extinguishing from the eyes of their young.

"But at the moment I do not see my brothers running during an entire year on all the highways of Russia; that flight is hidden as by a mist. I spend long dark nights at my windows praying for them, but for the sight of but a second of my people in flight. I turn to my old God, the God of my grandfathers to whom I dare not show my face, to whom I have not spoken for so long, with a shamed but glowing plea, to the God of illumination.

"Shed, for but a second, light upon my people's gehenna. May its infernal fire scar my eyes, and may the heat and insanity of its demonic dance rot my brain. But we shall survive the vision of that moment. Cancel that concealment of your face which I suffer so grievously for the first time. . .

"The worst of the Biblical curse has not yet been uttered. To become insane from seeing may be bliss compared to the condition of a human soul which longs to see that from which one becomes insane. . ." (Der Veg, Oct. 21, 1915)

To fulfil the objectives of the Brainin-Kaufman group the Jewish National Workers Alliance, a broad mass affiliate of the Poale Zion Party, took the initiative in

convening a number of Montreal immigrant social institutions to set up a body to defend the political, economic and other interests common to all Canadian Jews.

The invitation to the conference of February 21, 1915 read,

"As you doubtless know, we were absolutely ignored in the distribution of the assistance fund to which each of us has contributed his share. Thus the voice of those who are suffering was mercilessly suppressed. But the situation is too terrible for us to cease our efforts, as have our up-town benefactors. Something must be done. It is our obligation to ensure that the cry of the hungry and of the suffering shall not be a voice calling in the desert. Send your delegates so that together we may develop plans to help those who seek help."

L. Zuker presided over the gathering of thirteen organizations which was convened, as he formulated it in his opening remarks, "to secure aid for our suffering brethren immediately, to unite all Jewish organizations into a single alliance which would make it possible to send delegates to the Jewish Congress, so that no individual will claim to represent the Jewish masses, and to take a position in regard to immigration problems."

It was proposed that a tax be imposed on all organizations in aid of the suffering, that a one-cent stamp be printed for the same purpose, and that women in particular be organized for collection of relief funds.

M. Dickstein emphasized the importance of political activity. Yehudah Kaufman proposed that the gathering, acting as a pre-conference, should issue an appeal to all the organizations in the community. The Canadian Jewish Alliance (Folks Farband fun Canader Yidn) was the title accepted by the conference.

In connection with a conference of March 7, the Provisory Committee of the Preparatory Conference issued a lengthy "Call to All Jewish Organizations."

"A grave period in the history of the Jewish people has come, serious and difficult.

"The largest and most important section of our people has been seized by the great fire of war.

"Over a million of our young best are in the fighting armies.

"Some three or four million Jews are scattered and spread over all the warring camps, on the battle lines of Austria, Russia and Germany. The destruction is aggravating every day and is assuming the most horrible forms that humanity had ever heard of. Hundreds of Jewish communities are being wiped out. Hundreds of settlements have been scattered and exiled.

"Tens of thousands of young lives have been despoiled. Tens of thousands of new orphans are crying out to their helpless, young, newly-widowed mothers. The survivors fall from hunger.

"There is no protection for the living; hatred is constantly being preached against Jewish lives. The newly dead who had given their lives for their motherlands cannot rest for the horrors that have befallen their people, perhaps the most violent of all the major catastrophes that have befallen our people in our long history.

"Only the young, 3,000,000-strong Jewish settlement in America has remained free of the Great Destruction, and a weighty triple obligation has fallen upon its shoulders.

"We must be ready to speak in the name of the entire Jewish people. We must announce to the entire world that the time has come for our voice to be heard. We must ensure that, at the Peace Conference to be convoked after the hostilities are ended, the entire Jewish people will be represented as one.

"We must mobilize fully so that this conclave will hear the true Jewish protest against the crime that all mankind has committed against us. We must demand assurances of civil, political and national rights for the Jews in the warring countries, especially in Eastern Europe and in Palestine.

"Now that the culture of our European centres has ceased to nurture us, and when the reconstructed communities there will have to depend so heavily upon us, we will of necessity need to make ourselves culturally strong by organizing our communities into firm institutions and building our national and social life here on healthier foundations.

"These are great tasks before us: economic, political, cultural.

"What have we done to realize these objectives thus far? Nothing." (Canadian Jewish Archives, new series, no. 1)

Brainin was elected chairman despite his desire to remain neutral in the current labour conflict with Wolofsky in the Adler. L. Zucker was named vice-chairman, Kaufman secretary. Efforts were made to have Lyon Cohen, establishment leader, join in the initial steps, but with no success.

There is significance in this effort to involve Cohen and his sympathisers in the establishment into this all-Canadian undertaking. A letter from Cohen to Sir Herbert Samuel in London on the eve of Rosh Hashanah 1915 echoes some of the tones in the Kaufman-Brainin proclamations.

"As a coreligionist, I was pleased to learn the deep interest you showed in the various Jewish communities among the line of your travels. The time is not far distant, we trust, when we may be again able to welcome you to our shores.

"Jewish conditions in Eastern Europe, particularly in Poland, where military necessity compelled the removal of thousands of our people, forms pitiful reading. Every Jew in America is horror-struck at what has happened. A campaign for funds for the relief of the destitute has been organized here, but the task is so great as to be almost discouraging.

"German Jews in the States are making the most of present conditions in Poland and Russia, and have worked up a strong feeling against the Russian authorities for what they call this newest and greatest outrage on our people. It is hoped that when the treaty of peace comes to be signed, Jewish rights will not be disregarded, and that some good may be the outcome of the war, if Jews are given equal rights like those of other human beings, rights denied them for over two thousand years."

ON FRENCH CANADA

One of Kaufman's last works before leaving Quebec was published in Der Veg under the editorship of his colleague Reuben Brainin, on February 18, 1916. In it he urged the systematic exploration of French-Jewish relations, some quarter of a century before his advice was taken seriously by sensitive Jewish and Catholic thinkers and activists in Canada.

"I touch a question," he wrote, "which is different from the many current issues of the day because of the taboo surrounding it. There seems to be a conspiracy forbidding the very mention of the problem. No one speaks of it. Is this hush-hush policy wise? Maybe it has developed out of slavish fear.

"Would it not be wiser to put it on our agenda clearly and openly? This course seems advisable to me; indeed it is the only road open to us. We need to keep our eyes open and to seek solutions to the problem, to move appropriately in matters shaping French Canadian attitudes towards the Jew in the province.

"When Jewish and French electors meet in political campaigns, the Jewish candidates are taunted for being Jewish, while French voters threaten Jews in terms I prefer not to quote.

"The Quebec blood libel case was not an extraordinary event. It was bound to happen with all the anti-Semitic poison being spread in this province.

"The third, direct reason is the Catholic church whose teachings are based upon a condemnation of the Jews. Catholic reality seems to be entrenched on Jewish blood. Catholic education does not tolerate progressive developments among the French masses and will not tolerate their children growing up without hate of the Jews who, they teach them, have sold their God, desecrate their Host, use children's blood for Matzot, disregard the teachings of the Jesuits and reject the salvation offered them in this life. They oppose the unions.

"Of the three causes this last is the worst because this hatred is being sown against us every day. As this continues unabated, new generations of anti-Semites arise every day.

"We must not let this happen. We must find means, both peaceful and active, to improve our relations with the French. We live with them side by side in one nationality, in one land. We must learn to know one another, to understand each other, to create together." (Translation by Louis Chait)

It was not until September 30, 1983 that an eminent Jewish legislator and authentic spokesman for the Quebec Jewish community, Herbert Marx, M.N.A., was able to declare, at the formal proclamation of the amended and enriched Quebec Charter of Human Rights,

"It is often said that Quebec is not a province like the others, and this time in regard to personal rights; I would like to refer to two senses in which it is not a province like the others. In the first place, by virtue of legislation we have adopted here and which has been adopted in other provinces.

"Secondly, since its adoption in 1975, our Quebec charter has been the most progressive of all provincial legislation of Canada. For instance in our charter it

is forbidden to discriminate against or towards anyone because of his social condition. This is a provision not found anywhere else in Canada. . ." (Canadian Jewish Archives, no. 34, Pp. 60-63)

René Levesque who was present on the occasion testified to the legitimacy of this approach.

"In closing I state simply: rarely have I heard anyone evoke so well, from so important and delicate an approach, the difference that is Quebec, and show us how rich it is and also how promising." (Ibid, P. 64)

KAUFMAN AFTER MONTREAL

At about the time of Brainin's sudden departure from Canada, Kaufman completed his course of studies at McGill in Judaica and proposed to his academic mentors a further investigation into the development of Halachah. But the young rabbi of the Reform temple who was lecturing on Hebrew at McGill found his proposal insufficient. The formal academic record at McGill states: "Report on thesis application on The Fundamental Strata of the Mishnah: not acceptable. Major in Semitic studies, minor in English and Education."

Kaufman left Montreal to continue his doctoral studies at Dropsie College in Philadelphia.

He ended his Canadian phase, but only in residential sense. He continued his interest in Canada to his last days in 1976. For decades, during his years in America, he visited Montreal frequently, even as he lectured across the country on education and on the dream of Zion. His inspiration impelled his disciples in the Adler to continue to act in a communal sense within the spirit of his teachings, most clearly in the Yiddish schools - the People's and the Peretz Schools - in the Jewish Library and on behalf of the Canadian Jewish Congress. Such leaders as Wiseman, Caiserman, Zuker, Garber and the Myerson brothers were stamped by his mark, a mark that came to identify scores of others also by the melodies which he perpetuated and his didactic tales.

After he concluded his academic studies he directed the Yiddish-Hebrew Teachers' Seminary in New York. There he initiated a series of great works, while exile Judaism girded for the titanic effort of declaring statehood in Israel after centuries of international exile.

Representative of his profound concern with Jewish philosophy is his Midrashim of Redemption, Chapters in Jewish Apocalypse, from the Canonization of the Babylonian Talmud to the Beginning of the Sixth Millenium, Compiled from Published and Manuscript Midrashim, with an Introduction, Comments and Notes, Variant Readings and Bibliography. During these decades he began his edition of Maimonides' Guide to the Perplexed, his collaboration in the Hebrew-English dictionary and other such works. His last work was his edition of another Yehudah: Halevy, the Kozari.

His continuous progress to Palestine transformed the Son of Samuel (his nom de plume) into Ish Yerushalaim. There he was a legend for many years, the source of high ideals most often extended to pupils who, in turn, revealed and expanded his thinking to the teachers in Israel.

The address of his apartment in the Holy City was symbolic and helpful: Rosh Rehaviah, the head and the opening to the prime residential district of Rehaviah, around the corner from King George V Street Hechal Shlomoh, the official museum and temple of orthodoxy. A fence was opened at its rear so that Kaufman, always slightly lame, could walk easily from his spacious apartment directly into the passage of the Hechal.

He was quite agile in his home, climbing ladders to upper bookshelves, courtly as he handed liqueur to the lady among the visitors from Montreal. But the launching of his Kozari in the presidential palace would have been too much. So

His Excellency brought the party to Kaufman's apartment, at the Head of Rehaviah.

There Kaufman, proudly, showed a vast additional manuscript on the Kozari that did not enter into the very thick newly published volume: discoveries and ideas on the Kozari created since the manuscript went to the press.

The conjuncture of middle aged Brainin and the profoundly gifted 23-year-old Kaufman who seems to have adopted the elder thinker and leader, is remarkable Canadian history. For their several Montreal years, he skilfully guided Brainin and balanced the weaknesses of the older man with rare wisdom, tact and uncalculating love, to ease his way and to enrich the community greatly.

In retrospect we see Canadian Jewry indebted to both of them for founding basic institutions and for a heritage of elegance, profundity, and scholarship.

The brief fertile Canadian ages of each of them tragically ended suddenly and simultaneously, for different causes; but in both cases because of the sad judgment of men in positions to make wise decisions and to guard precious persons.

The two were probably the only Jews ever to live in Canada whose quality extended beyond Canada.

Brainin had brought his world significance with him. Kaufman flowered in Canada and carried his repute with him, like A.A. Roback from McGill to the entire continent and to all Israel.

JACOB ZIPPER

Jacob Isaac Zipper (related to his wife's family name) (1900-1983), Montreal communal leader and pedagogue of the I.L. Peretz Schools for some fifty years, learned much from his father, scholar Abraham Shtern, a man very learned in Hebrew law, Chassidism and folklore.

The biography of Zipper was not personal; it was the national life of Polish Jews and of Jews who became Canadian, even as he did; of typical anonymous migrants, some of whom entered the annals of Canada and of its Yiddish literature, of others who made their mark elsewhere in the history of the Canadian nation.

The young Zipper of this profound orthodox background reached a culminating point in his life when he left the paternal home in wartime 1919 and joined the largely secular Labour Zionist movement in Poland as a revolutionary, taught in villages in the Wohlin area and led the Zionist Hechalutz movement. Soon the police were on his trail. At one point he was captured by Poles and sentenced to death. He was saved by a miracle. It is from this period that his noms de guerre Sternberg and Zipper date.

Cameron Smith's Unfinished Journey is the parallel epic of Maishe Losz, Bundist militant of the Svisloch village of 1920, guerrilla, idealist, victim of civil war and revolution who also fled the firing squad bringing his family with him. In Montreal, as Maishe Lewis, he was among the few Bundists in the Workmen's Circle and in the labour movement. He brought with him his son who continued the socialist tradition of the C.C.F. and N.D.P., now bearing the name of David Lewis.

Zipper's literary creativity began in Poland, characteristically in Hebrew and in Yiddish, in Brisk and in Warsaw in 1923, and in Chelm in 1925, with a Tishwitz legend, with war scenes, wandering, at the tomb of I.L. Peretz - and with a reprint of even earlier tales. Such was the miniature Zipper corpus before he set foot in Canada.

In the complex Hebrew-Yiddish conflict of ideas in Canada Zipper is often cited as the militant for Yiddish. Those who oversimplified the arrangement of debaters often overlooked that Zipper added Hebrew versions of most of his works to the slim Canadian bookshelf at the side of Wiseman's translation of American short stories, Msaprim Americanim (Tel Aviv, 1956) and of classic philosophers, and of Isaiah Rabinovitch of Toronto. Hasifruth B'Mishbar Ha'dor (Jerusalem, 1951) and Ner Dolek (Tel Aviv, 1954)

Zipper's contribution to Canadian literature in Yiddish and Hebrew since his migration to this country includes valuable work on Polish Jewry (Zwischen Teichen un Wassern (Between Lakes and Rivers), 1961; also in Hebrew, Tel Aviv, Hamenorah 1967); semi-autobiographical works set in Poland between the wars (Oif Yener Zeit Bug (Beyond the Bug River), 1946; also in Hebrew Me'ever Linhar Bug, 1957); a poem Chbin in mein Chorever Heim Gekumen (I Returned to my Ruined Home), 1965; a collection of stories Fun Nechten un Heint, (From Yesterday and Today) 1978. The Far Side of the River, Selected Short Stories, translated by Mervin Butovsky and Ode Garfinkle, presents his work for anglophone readers (Oakville, Mosaic Press, 1985). Zipper has also edited the community history, Pinkas, of the Polish town of Tishwitz, 1970, and the festschrift in memory of Lazer Zuker, as well as the very informative jubilee books of the Winnipeg and

Montreal I.L. Peretz Schools, 1934, 1938. Zipper co-edited, with Chaim Spilberg, The Canadian Jewish Anthology, 1983.

Perhaps the key to the Jacob Zipper biography lies in the first of his profound contributions to Canadian literature in Yiddish and Hebrew, his personal version of the life of the Baal Shem Tov (Geven is a Mentch, "Once there was a Man," Montreal, 1940; Hebrew version, Ish Hayah Baaretz, 1955). Parts of the Yiddish version appeared in the Yiddish press as early as 1931. It had appeared serially in the World Zionist Organization Hebrew Haolam in 1937-38.

The book was a summation of a mass of his shorter Chassidic writings published during nearly a quarter of a century over continents, and never reassembled to this day to complete the essential corpus of Zipper's writings.

Zipper's restoration of the early appearance of the Baal Shem breathes reality to the Ben Zion Dinur's classic study of the sociology of the origins of Chasidism and its social and Messianic foundations. He cites the tale which Zipper also tells affirming the "organic link between Chasidism and the social opposition, whether we look at the ways in which they influenced existing institutions in the Jewish community, or at their assumption of roles that in fact ought to have been filled by the community and its institutions but that had been neglected or abandoned. The earliest recorded public activity of the Besht consisted in his joining a local prayer quorum in the countryside composed of village Jews who 'decided not to go to (use the synagogue in) town, since the Kahal there used the villages to obtain revenue;' the villagers felt themselves 'exploited by the Kehilla.'" (Gershon David Hundert, ed. Essential Papers on Hasidism, Origins to Present. New York: New York University Press, 1991. Pp. 138, 198)

In his work on Israel Baal Shem Tov Zipper tells of the scattered villagers who would come to the town for the High Holy Days. The saint would stand unnoticed inside the door of the synagogue; his wife at the door of the women's gallery, together with wandering strangers and the very ignorant persons who had no assigned place and whom no one inside the hall of worship regarded.

Sometimes the Shamos might pass one of them and glance at the open prayer book to see whether it was open at the right page. The embarrassed stranger would cringe with embarrassment, would cover his face with his prayer shawl if anyone sought to look inside his prayer book. Israel would stand all day without a prayer book, his eyes shut, murmuring, bending backward and forward. Mischievous boys surrounded him, giggling, waiting to call him strange names. But when he opened his eyes they felt a light from another world, and left him alone.

Israel had begun his prayers in the midst of the craftsmen, but he left them to stand at the door. When his Esther asked him why, he explained that "the eyes of the Parnas were piercing us. The wealthy ones were proud of their learning, but the eyes of the workers are warm with hospitality. Even when they hold the prayer books upside down they pray more warmly."

As the numbers of the scattered villagers grew larger, they decided to set up their own minyan at home. They were very joyful. They would not need to leave their possessions in the hands of aliens, and would not be shamed by the contemptuous glances of the townsmen, nor their smiling looks at the strangers, struggling with the citified cutlery as they ate. What is more important, as they would need to observe an anniversary of a death in the family by being called to the reading of

the Torah scroll among strangers; and certainly there need be no fear of embarrassment at an error in the reading.

There was indeed a problem: would we have at least one participant whom we would call by his title 'Our Teacher?' they were not called to the Torah in the town because none were of the category of 'Our Teacher,' as they witnessed the parade of the teachers being called to the Torah, each with the stiff embroideries on their prayer shawls on the earnest Days of Awe, standing around the reading desk. "Where will we find Our Teacher?"

But they quietly agreed among themselves: "since Israel can sing and can pray from the Reader's stand, let him be Our Teacher."

So they did, and had cheerful Holy Days. Israel prayed with sweetness and with a taste which melted in every limb. Everyone was called to the Torah, with no fear of alien eyes seeking errors; each scrambled through the benedictions.

It was a festival with no sense of fearful awe, for the weather was fine; the late summer toyed with a thousand red and yellow colours; the fields after the harvest looked like a thousand shaven Christian chins stretching white like spider webs shining against the sunlike silk, a sign of cold wind coming soon. In the meantime the fields are cheerful. Potatoes are dug up. Cabbage is carried in. There is the odour of hard labour and assured satiety. The Jewish settlers sensed it, and sensed the prayers with their noses like tasty food that eats itself. They raised their voices and chopped the difficult Hebrew words like the sharp knife chops the straw in the barn.

The peasants paused before the inn and were pleased. "The Jews are praying. It is easier to know that, as you work, someone else is praying to his God." Those who felt more at home cried into the inn, "Pray, neighbours. Pray to yours for a good winter, please pray."

The Jewish neighbours responded with a louder declamation of the Hebrew words, and Israel drew out a longer melody after the set musical pattern. It was the first time the country settlers heard such prayers.

But things turned out badly. When the community in the town learned that the country people had, for the first time, convened a minyan, the Parnas ordered them to come immediately into town and explain their act without prior approbation. The Succot festival was spoiled for them; on the eve of that week they were forced to come, in stockinged feet to apologize to the Parnas and to canon law judges.

Zipper's father, Rabbi Abraham ben Isachar Shtern, continues the tale. In his Chutim Hamshuloshim he recorded how the Baal Shem Tov came to be recognized as the great personality in Israel.

"The authorities in the large city objected to the independent act of the Yishuvniks as it represented loss of income to them. They, therefore, summoned Reb Israel and the villagers to court as violator of custom. They tested his knowledge of the prayer texts. When he passed it they challenged him to recite the Eighteen Benedictions. At this point he challenged the judges, 'Whoever is aware that he has not corrected the sins of his youthful years should leave the rabbinical room.' The audience scoffed. But when he uttered the first words of the prayer to the

melody of the Days of Awe, the majority in the room - but not the villagers - fainted away, until medical men were called.

"In the meantime the townsmen stood about the windows of the synagogue and jeered at the darkened faces of the country people who chattered nervously as they sought to explain what they had done. The experience weighed heavily upon them. Most of them bowed before fate and law; others were ready with their fists. Israel barely restrained them, as he explained to the judges, 'There is more light in our synagogue.'

"Unheard of impertinence,' the Parnas was boiling

"You see, judges. There is a great world full of wonders, but small hands block the light.' Israel said.

"The Parnas was furious and threatened whipping. Some however softened as they heard something more in his voice than his words. They sought excuses and as punishment they called only for wood for the synagogue.

"The case was taken to Rabbi Jacob Yehoshua, the author of Pnai Yehoshua. The great scholar was immersed in his studies, wrapped in his prayer shawl, wearing Rabbenu Tam phylacteries. As he raised his eyes and saw the face of the teacher he signalled the dismissal of the case. 'Let them leave in peace, to institute High Holy Day services in the village.'

"After that day the country people added a title to his name. They called him Reb Israel the Innkeeper."

H.M. Caiserman welcomed Zipper's work on the Baal Shem Tov in 1940 in the framework of important current Canadian Jewish literary works such as Israel Rabinovitch Music Among Jews, J.I. Segal's eighth collection, Die Hoiz fun die Poshete "The Home of the Modest" and A.M. Klein's poems.

Zipper's work was innovative as literature. Among the first to appreciate it was Joel Entin who sensed Zipper's absorption with nature as a constantly altering force, a formative persona, active, shaping, creative as in the work as the Baal Shem Tov. Yiddish literature was slow to relate Zipper to this revolutionary phase of Chassidism which he had inherited from his father, the Jewish continuing phase of romanticism.

Later in his life Zipper went back to everybody's Ur-beginnings, to our Patriarch Abraham, to renew with a similar outlook the shaper of our Jewish entity, and of the vast white portion of humanity in his work on Abraham, In die Getzelt fun Avrohom (In the Tents of Abraham), 1973; Hebrew version B'Ohalay Avraham, 1974)

Yehudah Elberg refers Zipper's literary work, and possibly his life, to the Talmudist legend about King David's lyre which hung over his bed so delicately strung that the winds vibrated it and sang out a melody of love of the Creator, of His people, of the human race, of the soul's yearning for its roots. "A generation-old, authentic soul walked among us in human shape who read out the David melody in the lines of his written books, planted it in the souls of his pupils and into his society."

Another admiring critic of J. Zipper, Chaim Spilberg was born in 1913 in the Lutzk region in Poland and from his youth became active in the Revisionist Zionist movement. When the war broke out he fled, through Lithuania to India where he survived the years of conflict. He came to Montreal in 1948 and became active in its cultural and literary spheres, particularly in the Jewish Public Library. Among his published works is an essay in Hebrew, Issodoteha Haruchaniyim shel Hodoo, (The Spiritual Foundations of India on the Religion and Philosophy of Hinduism).

In his study of Zipper, Spilberg notes that the Montreal pedagogue "has passed through these curtains into the fog of Jewish fate, to sense the distinctiveness of its tragedy since Genesis days to his own time. These were the beginnings of his young stormy generation, of high appeals and dreams, when dreams and slogans met in the lanes of apocalyptic Polish villages and forests. Zipper brought forth this treasure of spirit, seemingly contradictory but twinning profound learning, tradition and secularity."

In the literature of the Besht, the Montreal volume may be unique in focusing on the developing families of Chassidism in earliest childhood, or within a small family, in an intense atmosphere close to nature and to several silent persons of integrity. This directness and truth marked the young Israel Baal Shem Tov, selected the human beings with whom he communicated and formulated his words to them, his message to fellow human beings. It also determined Zipper's ethos from childhood in Poland and stamped his subsequent career in Canada.

It explained his dialogue with his father-mentor and with the Yiddish community in Montreal.

Zipper's atlas of a microcosm of a tiny sector of Polish Jewry (Zwischen Teichen un Wassern (Between Lakes and Rivers, 1961; also in Hebrew, 1967) remains one of the most profound, sensitive, many-sided examinations of European Jewry before the extermination. Selections had appeared in the Adler thirty years before book publication. Y. Elberg notes that its central hero remains the Shtetl. (Viewpoints, vol. 3, no. 1, 1968)

Here in a realistic directory of house by house and chamber by chamber and person by person and hour by hour he charted a water between lakes and rivers where, on a hill, on a water bar between tides and recessions, between slippery sidewalks and sinking homes of damp bedrooms and hospitable kitchens, synagogues and chapels and saints' abodes and fantasy childhoods and devoted mothers and craftsmen fathers and penniless traders and personal genealogies, were crowded hundreds and thousands years of old tradition-laden descendants of Abraham and grandmothers of future New World Zionists and bourgeois and Holy Land Chalutzim and ministers of state and Argentinian millionaires, communicating in a rich idiom which requires a dictionary of their own Yiddish language roots and morphology and semantics - an essential vademecum for any explorer of Canadian ethnicity or of the outline of modern European history.

Torontonian Isaiah Rabinovitch wrote of Zipper's Between Lakes and Rivers, "The bridges have a life of their own which are not satisfied with external events but draw themselves into their own secret places. The bridges hang over the village like seven mysterious curtains. We need to raise them to reveal the psychic depths which never cease from hiding the Jewish man on Polish earth."

Zipper had examined a drop of the waters from between his as yet unwritten Lakes and Rivers to record the initial 1914-20 holocaust experience of a man who epitomized on many levels the large Jewish mass destruction with its unlimited suffering; death in countless thousands, each death a bearer to the grave of an essential personal cultural tradition, at the hands of governments and churches and social authorities; destruction of Jewish societies and communities; the severing of limbs from the body of world Jewry rooted in the Great Russian heartland; the desperate survivors, as in Poland, the Slavic mentor of the civilized German Nazidom and of a score of nations on three continents; threatened yet determined on the long range to build a European and world Jewry, largely inspired by modern Zionist nationalism, in the midst of reaction, fascism and racism; too busied to count its war losses when a greater world war broke out in 1939 with a renewal of holocaust that made the first phase pale in comparison in the eyes of the veterans of the 1914-20 war.

Canadian Yiddish literature records, in Lithuanian N.J. Gotlib's reminiscent verse autobiography Montreal, the years between the wars which in his native provinces were called revolution, civil war, pogroms. On this "sixth fraction of the globe - whites, blacks, greens, in Denikin, Machno, Petlura and Wrangel, guerrilla pogromist armies alternated cellars each hour; fleeing between basements and attics, naked, barefoot, hungry, fearing shells and bullets, sword and rape, finding refuge in the typhus hostel." (P.34)

Zipper's semi-autobiographical works set in Poland between the wars (Oif Yener Zeit Bug, Beyond the Bug River, 1946; also in Hebrew Me'ever Linhar Bug, 1957) narrates the adventures of the youth of Poland in the early years of Poland's independence. The horrors and the despair of the time marked Zipper deeply to the end of his life.

Zipper's Oif Yener Zeit Bug is concrete, yet even in this Poland realism, no less than in his profound Teichen un Wassern, there is the equally real romanticism, dream and inner melody founded upon the particular temper of folkloric fantasy, S. Dunsky wrote.

Reuben Brainin, editor of the Adler, in Montreal, was the Canadian who understood in 1914 what Zipper experienced during the first Jewish world war. Zipper came to Canada and remained to record the war saga, to count its losses on all levels, to understand its Tikun (to use the artistic term of Jan Menses), its subsequent complementation in the State of Israel, and its educational role in the meaningful life of Canadian Jews as a creature and creator of culture.

Already Zipper the philosopher, the stylist, idealist, man of integrity, and of universal learning was fully shaped by the time he reached Montreal. He was already the leading patriot of the Polish Jews of the Shtetl, of their history and folklore, but also the passionate lover of Poland and of almost all its people, of its instant-by-instant Polish Jew day and night, of its nature and ways, its moods and speech, and the integral manner in which all these elements conjoined - until violence and wars destroyed Poland's independence and all its Jews.

Zipper survived the First World War, the Communist revolution, the guerilla wars from which a Poland sought to emerge in the midst of the early holocaust experience when he arrived in Canada in 1925, a guest of his uncle.

When he reached Canada all his memory, his inherited and developed learning grew fixed in his mind, much of it protocolized in memento words written

purposefully by his father to help the sons convey the reality of crashing worlds to fellow citizens and to coming generations in faithful Izkor remembering to that end. During the succeeding half century, Zipper was able to fix it on paper in classical Hebrew and again in faithful Yiddish.

A poem Chbin in mein Chorever Heim Gekumen (I Returned to my Ruined Home, 1965) represents the quarter century of maturation of the consideration of the Polish holocaust by one so deeply rooted in so many levels of Polish Judaism.

CANADIANS AND THE POLISH SHTETL

These Zipper writings are among the classics in the great Yiddish literature on multifaceted Polish Judaism. His colleague in Polish Jewish Canadiana was one of the greatest of Jewish writers, Melech Ravitch. In his last Montreal work Dos Maasse Buch fun mein Lebn, vol. 3 (The Story Book of my Life, Years in Warsaw, 1921-34 - Warsaw, I.L. Peretz Publishing House, 1975) Ravitch recorded his love of Poland.

His enthusiasm grew when he saw a large map of Poland with its Shtetlach clearly marked in a bookstore window. He bought it and took it home, had it mounted and underlined the scores and hundreds of the Shtetlach where he had lectured.

Ravitch wrote of "the Polish Shtetl, what is it? Neither town nor village. There were several thousand such in Poland, and in each several thousand inhabitants; among them always a substantial number of Jews. A Jewish majority was not rare. Not only was the Jewish settlement a kingdom within the state, but in every Shtetl there was a Jewish Shtetl within the Shtetl.

"These kingdoms and little states had no written constitutions, only a tradition of peaceful coexistence of peoples on one piece of God's earth, as His text put it 'And the earth He gave to the sons of Adam.' No one knew when these Polish-Jewish and Jewish-Polish Shtetlach began. Some historians say it was a thousand years ago; others speak of five centuries.

"It matters not, as long as they are here. The Jews had their mission in the economic structure of the Polish people and of the Jewish peoples which populated the fields and the forests about the great Vistula or Weisssel River, and they carried it out in the best and most honest manner.

"In the course of comings and goings of the centuries, suffering mingled with joy. They created their own civilization of the Shtetl; without constitutions but with the human warmth of peoples living together. With substantial differences in faith, in dress, in poverty at meals, as in vernacular; Slavic tongues on one side and Yiddish for the other. It was not rare for a Shtetl Jew to have no sentences of Polish or Russian or Ukrainian, but at need they communicated.

"The coexistence was not always ideal or idyllic. There were pogroms incited by bandits or by educated nationalists. But among the simple people, the Itche-Mayers and the Yones, there was life together. They needed each other and they were poor; and nothing binds man and man like poverty - black earth and the black bread of the poor.

"Why deny it? I love Poland above all the roofs of politics, above all the streams of hatreds, and I love the Polish language - my mother tongue until I became a Yiddish writer.

"There is an author and journalist in Poland named Antony Slonimsky, a grandson of the Hebraist of the Enlightenment, mathematician and journalist, Chaim Zelig Slonimsky. Antony was born when his father had already converted. We can apply to him the lines in Goethe's Faust, 'Two souls live, woe is to me, in my breast.' The twenty-four lines of his 'Elegy of Jewish Shtetlach' can boldly be called a Kaddish for the Shtetlach of Poland, the abysmally profound mourning for the demise of the Shtetl civilization.

'The Yiddish Shtetlach are no more in Poland.
Search in vain for the candles in the windows
The blood has been covered with sand, the traces erased.
No longer Shtetlach where the shoemaker was poet,
The watchmaker a philosopher, the barber a troubadour.
The moons, the winds, rivers and stars
Have written the tragic story of the two saddest people
On God's earth, with the blood of centuries.'

"I have lived forty years in Poland, a third of them in Warsaw, and I love its tongue more dearly than all the languages of the globe, except Yiddish. I have sown all my dreams there; I planted my convictions and field of thorns there," Ravitch wrote.

Canadian Jews, long from Eastern Europe, keenly aware of the decades of pre-holocaust horror there, find it difficult to accept the love of their native lands which Jewish immigrants bear in their hearts; probably we are unaware that the new arrivals had spent the unforgettable years of their childhood there. The vivid and precious happiness of nature and of childhood has remained ineradicable from their memory.

Zipper has also edited the formal community history, the Pinkas, of the Polish town of Tishwitz, 1970, as well as the very informative jubilee books of the Winnipeg (1934) and of the Montreal I.L. Peretz School (1938) which animates particularly the 1910-1915 period in this schooling saga.

CANADIAN PAGES

Zipper's writings centre, of course, only on the old world. Yet it is surprising that his sixty years in Canada are so little reflected in them considering that he devoted the energies of these decades to the building of Jewish communal life and culture here.

Another important work he edited was the Leiser Zuker Book which he inspired to perpetuate the unusual moral figure in the gallery of communal leaders of Canadian Jewry.

In 1982 he edited, jointly with Chaim Spilberg, the trilingual Canadian Jewish Anthology, (Montreal, Canadian Jewish Congress, 672 p.)

A year after his passing, on August 23, 1984, a Montreal committee announced the publication of his seventh volume, under the title of Glimpses into Yiddish Literary Creativity and in Memory of Colleagues and Activists, recording in 33 chapters his essays on Montreal's J.I. Segal, Rachel Korn, B.G. Sack, Yehudah Elberg and Sarah Caiserman, as well as a number of world figures in Jewish life.

Zipper has left us his written record of his own first minutes of sleep on Canadian soil, "On the New Shore," and of his later hours of illness; lasting mirrors of reflections of classes and of generations meeting at his bedside, in clarity and in subtlety, in his Fun Nechten un Heint, "From Yesterday and Today." (Montreal, 1978)

At his typical, Zipper recorded Sternberg's, Zipper's nom de plume, (another layer of the identities of Jacob the son of Abraham Shtern) moments in Canada of sleep broken by snatches from his past, his instants on Canadian earth which he had not yet trod. The train was bearing him from steamer to his Montreal destination where he would - the uniformed guards permitting - actually set foot on Quebec.

"The sudden flame of dawn and the blinding whiteness in the windows of the train car tore Sternberg from the tired dozing into which he had sunk as soon as they were all packed into the darkened train. He opened his eyes and would have risen but he sank again into a dream, half awake. In his confusing memory there stood out the unclear phrase that had been thrown out last night as they were being crammed into the waggon; it had slipped over the back of his neck, before his eyes, over his chest and finally remained in his mind, disturbing like a dull thorn.

"'They waited that long for us,' he thought he had heard the phrase half mockingly, cast out to us. He was so taken by it that it persisted throughout his dozing. He did not know who 'they' were and what it meant. He would reach to the bottom of it, as if at the end of it lay the key to the entire long voyage over the storms of the seas which had just ended.

"As soon as they had thrust them all into the cars, the train began to move, at first forward then a little in reverse and with a trembling noise it began to breathe hard smoke, and with thick steam winding itself over the network of bushes and pine trees shivering in the first snow which had come early in the morning with a storm at the height of the Indian summer.

"Some meeting us,' the heavy half sleep was teasing him, a complaint bound up with the question which had lulled him to sleep, constantly repeating and drawing out in twisting mockery, yet in stiffened seriousness.

"The entire process of docking after the long voyage had appeared ghostly. The ship had remained motionless all the last night in thick fog, constantly whistling. Then the slow crawl down the slippery gangplank with no possibility of even glimpsing about him lest he fall into the darkness of dank corridors in a daze. It seemed as if something did happen to him, a repetition of an earlier experience; he had passed something he recalled as a disinterested witness who knows how it had happened and how it will happen again, yet still amazed at what he sees, 'Why do they need to examine the same papers again and again? They had just controlled every document before we left the ship.'

"The dark gray passages through which they had led all immigrants were populated by the shadows which had shadowed the other side, whence they had just come. It seems he had pushed the vessel away with his fist from the shore. Yet everything here seems like there. The same persons, the same freezing faces of those who command to remove your outer garments for the 'cleanliness inspection.' Here again the delousing. He was curious: how many years of training in this specialty, how many examinations before they were put here so earnestly to seek in all the folds of strangers, dazed and helpless.

"Are we still not there?' The shadows on the walls tease with mysterious grimaces.

"And now that we are here, so what?' The line moves forward on its own. Why the darkness? Why none of the joy which he had expected throughout the long voyage?

"He is tempted to tear himself from the line, fall against a wall, touch something hard, but the shadows move grotesquely, leap overhead and over limbs, eerily silent as if a fate had determined it all, beyond questioning, without any sound; they pace tensely, holding their breath, to the stone platform in a more darkened fog outside.

"Here everything is familiar, as if after long voyages we return to the same spot. He would swear that it is exactly as it was there; a high wire fence on the side separating the arrivals from a group pressed on the other. All heads with the same faces. You see them all, and you see no one.

"The cries are meaningless, addressed to no one. 'Mummy, daddy, look. Can't you see? He is there. It is him.' The cries come from there, aimed from the side, but you cannot tear yourself from the mass of shadows about you.

"The shipping line people stand at the approach to the platform, silently hurrying the line forward in deaf and dumb language, mainly with their arms and elbows, into the open railway cars which await with open curiosity.

"Someone behind whispers to us in a friendly tone. 'Some meeting us!' He pushes him to a vacant space on a bench which welcomes him with a groan and a tired sigh.

"It was only with the coming into the train that faces separate out and the comments in different languages. Suddenly a thin, supple young man appeared near Sternberg, loaded with endless packages under his arms, on his shoulders and

even hanging on each of his fingers constantly in motion. 'I see you are Jewish. Take it, it is Kosher; it is a present from the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society. It's a long way to Montreal. They will await you there. You won't be lost among Jews, blessed be His Name. When you get there ask for. . .' He did not catch the name.

"The mobile parcels are next to another Jew, being unloaded in homishness. 'A happy hour, Mr. Jew,' he was prattling deep in the waggon, 'There is no being lost among Jews, as you see. The others, with all their lands; no one has come to receive them. If you wish, you may share with them.'

"Move over, Mr. Relative, so there will be room for another Jew.' It was the voice of an angry Jew who had found no room. 'Jews are only good to eat porridge with.'

"On this long trip the gentiles are jealous of us. Not one of their people showed up to care for them.

"When they will be wandering all over the world as long as we have been doing they will become human too.' . . ."

FALIK ZOLF

The very days that Zipper crossed the ocean to land in Quebec City, another Jew shared his experience, Falik Zolf, also the devoted son of a Hebrew teacher, was on the way to Winnipeg, with the intention of becoming a farmer in Manitoba, fated however to become an important pedagogue for many years in the I.L. Peretz School of Winnipeg.

In the meantime he was a desperate immigrant aboard ship with Polish peasants from the Pinsk marshes, fearfully anticipating the decision of unhurried omnipotent immigration officer - together with lonely women from the villages, uprooted families, youths with frightening wartime sagas - seeking stability and their new fate, smalltowners assembled by chance en route, with their bundles.

As he emerged from the consul's desk, with the approbation, that miracle of the great judgment day, he trembled with relief and joy, he cried out with ecstasy, 'I have the Canadian visa.'

Like Zipper, Zolf looked ahead to Canada, but nevertheless looked back from the deck of the Polonia upon the receding coast of his native Poland, "I had never had much joy from the land of my birth, but felt a powerful yearning, with tears that did not explain themselves.

"Late Friday afternoon the Jewish women, although suffering from sea-sickness, gathered in the dining room, with candles, pleading with the puzzled French and Polish seamen until an officer understood their needs and ordered a large tin plate lightly covered with ashes in which to light their candles. Their illness, their prayers, their anxiety for their kin and for the graves they had left behind, for their children and for their unplaced future drew their tears and weeping and the prayers as they kindled the Sabbath light; the Friday night ceremony was akin to the Yom Kippur.

"It is forbidden to weep on the Sabbath,' an old lady dressed in silk commanded in a soft, motherly voice. The ship rocked in the storm, and the women stood over the candles, protectively, together, mumbling a quiet Yiddish prayer of welcome to the Sabbath Queen; 'May the humble candles they had lit at sea find grace in Her eyes, as did the great Sabbath Candelabra and the old familial candlesticks which had illuminated their home back on land. May She remember them and float over them and spread Her grace and goodness over all the disseminated children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob floating between the depths and the heights.'

"But from another corner sounded out the masculine musical manifesto, 'Come. Let us Sing,' as a group of men who forgot where they were called out for the Sabbath evening prayer and for the immediate recall and restructuring of the Friday night synagogue hall, 'Arise, arise, for your light has come.'

"In the morning, a Polish Jew with a short beard and a long frock coat, knocked at cabin doors to announce, 'This is the Sabbath of the New Moon.' Fatigued sleepless Jews sick of the sea gathered slowly while the rain drizzled on deck as the cantor for the small congregation raised his voice, in a prayer beyond the demands of the ritual, as a personal expression of his own plight.

"The wind outside the ship stormed beyond what the captain had anticipated. For hours the seamen climbed the masts and arranged the decks and locks and doors and ropes and cables and benches, driving the odd passengers below deck, as lightning confirmed that the vessel was not stable before the tempest tossing it. Broken picture frames, cutlery, glassware, pieces of furniture, irons, lumber, rags, pots and papers fell and flew through space, striking passengers; the crew were helpless and had disappeared; several were injured, noses bleeding; the cabins were no refuge; those who needed aid had no recourse.

"The officers were concerned not with us but with the ship which was buffeted more than it moved.

"The passengers soon were cringing in terror, as was the ship before its fate, except that, being human, they could react to fate, cry, succumb to pray, 'Is this the end?' 'Misfortune.' 'Will we not come to Israeli burial?' 'Let us confess.' 'My beloved Jesus, save me.' 'Shma Israel,' 'Sacred Mary protect me.' 'My God, do not punish me for my sins.' Christians crossed themselves. Jews beat their breasts, 'For the sins which we have committed.'

"In the midst of the praying a Pole crawled to an old Jew sitting on a lower bunk, took his hands in his own and began to confess, weeping and beating his head with both their hands. 'Have mercy on me, and forgive me. I, too, have beaten Jews and robbed them. All of us were killing them. All took; so I, the cursed one, also took. Forgive me, my beloved Jew.' and the ocean tossed and stormed." (F. Zolf, Oif Fremder Erd. Winnipeg, Dos Yiddish Vort, 1945. Pp. 451-61)

MONTREALER

In "His First Morning in Montreal," smiling Uncle Chaim proudly took away the passport which Sternberg was about to put in his pocket, as he had always been accustomed to before leaving home.

"You don't have to have it with you. No one will ask you for it and no one cares who you are or where you are going. You only need to know your address, to find your way home. Hide it among your papers with your landing card. You will need it only when you become a citizen. Until then, if you have friends you are at home, and no one can stop to ask you who you are. This is the kind of country this is if you do not bother anyone; it is no one's business who you are."

Almost ceremonially he put his hand out to me and led me out of the home. "In an auspicious hour, begin your walk with your right foot. I cannot come with you this fine, sunny day, a gift of a day. We will soon have wild snow and won't be able to leave the house. But I have to be off to the store. It is hard to lose your way here."

They were warm words, but the emptiness accompanied them. When he stopped at a store window and even a door, no one asked if he wished to be served; at the sight of a policeman he was about to feel in his pocket, and a helpless fear at the emptiness there, until the stately, clean-shaven man passed by toying with his truncheon, amid the warm security around the alien street noises. He was near tears when he turned the corner and saw the policeman surrounded by a few prattling children. He put one on his shoulder, took another under his arm, pressed a third to his heart and took them across the street. The children moved tightly to him. The scene penetrated all his own horror experiences of childhood and of later life with the gendarmerie across the seas. He kept repeating the children's "Thank you, Tom."

As Uncle Chaim had said, "This is the kind of a land this is," he began to feel concretely with every step on the asphalt. "It is good; it is pleasant in this land."

The streets were not all that alien, the solid long brick walls divided by steps were reminiscent, with their courtyards full of metal and lumber, where fur-clad men with lined faces calling across to each other in a strange language; the mixture of gargled tongues possibly unrefined Yiddish, drowning out Ukrainian in words half swallowed, unintelligible, which he had heard on board ship, familiar odours. He seemed to have heard these sounds somewhere in the past, but could not locate them.

Sudden anger from a higher window distracts him. "Mr. Bad Luck. What will I do with it? Where will you keep it? What for? He is always collecting garbage from I know not where."

A lined face wrapped in a thin red shawl as in a frame, in a bedraggled jacket with a rope for a belt, cries up to her. He is rolling a wooden barrel and a tire into the courtyard, bumping into each step. He is breathing hard, bent in three. "Stop yelling. It is worth a whole dollar."

This elderly woman, hidden in a black fur shawl over her head; Zipper seems to have seen her with a worn basket with vegetables and several long loaves of bread and other sorts of food, the basket becoming ever emptier, in her careful walk in

the street of the poor. If she will turn to a door he would recognize the people living there, who are waiting for her. This being Thursday, she is bringing in the beginning of the Sabbath.

The biographical parallels the impressionistic. Another Montreal teacher remembers her own mother's Thursdays,

"What would she do today, in this age of institutionalized case work, with her Thursday afternoons? In her time these were her hours with her steadies; hours spent listening to woes, sharing sympathy, dispensing philosophy and a cup of tea, a cookie, a bite, a few cents; sending a little compote for the children, with a fare-thee-well and 'have a good Sabbath' - an assurance that there are friends in the world; the mother who gave away her daughter's pay envelope - 'You'll get along' - and the trousers to the suit her husband had bought for Rosh Hashonah go to a Gentile beggar who had come to the door on a cold day wearing tattered trousers." (Esther Kershman Muhlstock)

When Zipper came to Montreal he had some difficulty becoming established as a teacher.

In an essay in his last major publication, which he wrote with Chaim Spilberg, Zipper recalled his 1925 visit to the St. Lawrence Blvd. offices of the Canader Adler, in fact his first experience with a daily Jewish newspaper.

"I stood in some wonderment at the display windows with the impressive wording, 'Editorial Offices of the Canader Adler, publisher of the Babylonian Talmud.' On either side of the door were large size newsprint posters with the news headlines and a listing of several articles in the day's paper. Several Jewish men on the sidewalk argued loudly about the scribal lettering. Are they printed or prepared by a scribe? 'No honest scribe would do this.'

"Everything is done in America! You must admit, it is clearly inscribed' Some passersby glanced at the wording and went on, with a mocking smile. One challenged, 'If you are interested, why do you not go in and ask? Could they have a machine for such big lettering?' The argumentation was continuing even when I left the building some time later.

"With some call upon my courage I had entered the long office where a man stood behind a long counter over a calculating machine. At the other end of the inky counter stood Leon Cheifetz, a fresh veteran of the Jewish Legion in Palestine, writing out the news. I had already met him at a Poale Zionist meeting.

"In his own shy manner he immediately introduced me to the publisher, H. Wolofsky, who was passing by with a handful of papers. He passed me quickly, sizing me up as he smiled, greeted me with hands waving, on his way down the curving wooden stairs to the presses. In the air there remained the Polish intonation of his words,

"You are the greenhorn, teacher and writer? Polish, eh? We need good teachers. You write Chassidic stories? We could use two a week. Six dollars, not to be sneezed at. Talk to our editor, Israel Rabinovitch. Leon, please introduce him.' He disappeared in the lower floor before I could open my mouth.

"Now that you know our head, let me present myself.' He was tall and slim, in late middle age with a warm friendly voice. 'I am Nechemiah Segal, brother of poet Esther Shkolnikov and of J.I. Segal. 'I also write poems, but I am not J.I. Segal.'

"The poet siblings were two of ten children to their parents. The father, the saintly scribe-cantor, had died six months after Jacob Isaac was born; Esther was nine then. Three children died earlier. In a poverty-ridden universe, the widow and children had the worst of it; whatever assistance family offered, it was most humiliating.

"The eldest son had to leave his wife and children to flee overseas from the Czarist conscription. When he reached Montreal he inscribed young Esther as his child. She worked in his cellar pants factory. It was to this free land that Nechemiah and Esther brought Jacob Isaac, age 16, with his culture, learning and more than a seed of poetry.

"Nechemiah told Zipper, 'I also write poems, but I am not recognized.' It was hard to tell whether it was pride or bitter humour. 'It won't be easy sledding'. He took me by the hand into another room. 'I prepare the news bulletin on the long sheets.'

"You do them by hand?"

"A heritage from father, of blessed memory, the scribe from Koretz,' a breeze of pride in family. He seemed to become taller.

"Cheifetz was somewhat humourous when he complimented him, 'I sometimes think your lines on your bulletins are like lines of poetry.'

"Jewish letters always sing to me. But who is listening?' he sighed." (J. Zipper. "B.G. Sack," in Canadian Jewish Anthology, Montreal, Canadian Jewish Congress, 1982. p. 490-96.

In their translation of Zipper's journal, 1925-26, Ode Garfinkle and Mervin Butovsky note that Zipper gravitated into "the closely woven network of social, political, educational and welfare agencies to care for the community's needs. Aside from their specific function, the combined presence of these bodies was to provide a collective coherence to the recent immigrants as they struggled to achieve some balance between the traditional world they had left behind and the often confusing world which surrounded them.

"Since their common language was Yiddish, it predominated in the home as in the marketplace, in the school, playground, political meetings and workshop, offering, to the first generation at least, an effective buffer against the inroads of foreign tongues and alien cultures. In these circumstances Yiddish served not only as the neighbourhood's vernacular but as political statement as well. Those who were committed to preserve the traditional culture against the inevitable erosions relied on the language as their chief means for defence. These included many individuals and organizations comprising the teachers of the elementary schools, members of the various political and Zionist parties, journalists and writers, trade-unionists and (the Yiddish phrase is untranslatable) 'culture-workers' in general. It was to this society that the young Zipper gravitated in his first year."...

But Montreal was not Poland. "I go out into the street and Yiddish is being spoken. But what a mess they make of our Yiddish. Here they say: we're busy! meaning they're occupied. Business and business. Will I be able to adjust? . . .

"In the Peretz School a cultural world seems to exist. The school is the centre for the radical nationalistic intelligentsia. So it looks as if I may find kindred spirits here after all.

"I was at the Folks Bibliotek yesterday. Quite impressive. I immersed myself in a Yiddish world. Several young men were sitting around studying. So there seems to be a life here. There's also a Folks University. Things seem to be moving. Came across a literary periodical called Canada issued in Montreal. It is rather skimpy but my joy is great. So there is a life here! There are people who want something. There is a place to accomplish things. No need to worry, brother. .

"The hall is crowded. The audience attentive. The library is downstairs. It contains books to which past generations have devoted energy, mind, and soul. The atmosphere is earnest. So my sense of responsibility grows along with my seriousness. Down below, the library is a Beis Medresh. How does one endure till the new study houses are as hallowed as the old ones?

"In any case I'm a bit of a 'Cohen,' therefore I must perform earnestly the ritual of sacrifice. Somewhat flowery perhaps, but how else can it be expressed. I gave my lecture on 'Characters in Yiddish Literature'. The audience is enthralled, as if caught up by the experience. Their eyes glisten. So I become enthusiastic. This mutual rapport is a delight to me.

"After the lecture and the serious discussion that follows, I feel that a great deal can be accomplished here. You just have to approach them with a new warm word. It is so cold here. And they fail to understand that only warmth, deep belief and commitment can raise them up. There is important work to be done here. . .

"So far I work three hours a day and earn six dollars a week. And the four dollars from the newspaper brings us up to ten dollars. One of these day I'll know if I have a job at the Peretz Shule, that will total \$17.00 a week. In addition, my earnings for the summer will exceed \$20.00 -- so we'll manage quite well. . .

"A few days ago, as I was sitting in the house, a man walks in and implores, 'Come to the synagogue today, young man, I have a Yarzeit. I would like to say Kaddish. . .' What could I do? A man, unshaven, rushing about on a rainy night looking for a few Jews with whom he could say Kaddish. I went to the Shul. Cold, neglected, long benches and tables, lights burning. One at a time, men dragged themselves in, some hurrying from their work, others passing by. Having gathered them together, the mourner stood at the pulpit and recited Ma'ariv. Strangers to one another, unacquainted, probably seeing each other this time alone, and never again. . . saying Kaddish for a stranger had brought us together. We stood about till the end of prayer, listening to a stranger's Kaddish for the unknown dead. That dead man is not even recalled, not for a moment is the man who lived and died considered, and his son in a distant foreign city dashes about searching out strangers in order to recite the Kaddish on this memorial day.

"An orphaned and friendless Kaddish for a stranger, amongst strangers in a distant foreign city. And I felt so cold. Why have I recalled this? I'm not sure myself.

"Today I went to the Folks Shule. Fifteen teachers sit around disputing and contending with each other about pedagogical and education issues. There's much vitality here. Their eyes glisten. All in all, it seems to me that this school is warmer and more congenial. Not as dry as in the Peretz Shule. Wiseman says to me: 'I thought there would be work for you here with us -- but as you are already working there. . . .' I told him that a teacher could work in two schools as long as they weren't opposed fundamentally. . .

"This morning I had a dream. My home, my old beloved home appeared. I'm talking to my father.

"He: 'What do you want of me? Why are you making my life unbearable?'

"I: 'It is no better for us.'

"He: 'All is forsaken in my life. for so many years I placed my hopes in my children.'

"I: 'Why can't you try to understand us? Our souls are expiring in these distant, frigid lands.'

"He: 'Who asked you to go? Here things are comfortable and pleasant. Let us sit and study.'

"I: 'I can't. Try to understand and sympathize, father.'

"He: 'I won't comply with good will. Your path is a twisted one. . .you are guilty. You were the first who drew the others away.'

"I: 'Only feel for us. Let us be closer, we are all lonely. . . He starts to speak but is overcome with sobbing. I would like to whisper something but begin to cry through clenched teeth. I woke with a scowling face and a bitter taste in my mouth. . .'" ("The Journal of Yaacov Zipper, 1925-26," in Ira Robinson, Pierre Anctil and Mervin Butovsky, eds. An Everyday Miracle, Yiddish Culture in Montreal. Montreal, Véhicule Press, 1990. Pp. 53-68)

THE SHTERN MIGRATION

In the universal Jewish immigrant tradition since 1880 and before, each immigrant spontaneously dedicated himself, without reservation, to bringing to the new land of his residence his entire family from Europe. This was an intense world folk wisdom which not only foresaw the cataclysm about to sweep Europe, and particularly its threatened minorities, but was able to specify the reactionary agents of this horror by name and address. Few families in the migration of the millions were more tightly bound by links of tradition and love than the Shterns of Tishwitz.

Jacob Zipper, the eldest son of Rabbi Abraham Shtern, was one of the great figures of Canadian Yiddish culture.

Within the decade Jacob Zipper arranged for the entire family to settle in Montreal where father and sons and even grandchildren and in-laws added much to the culture and communal politics of Quebec.

So Zipper arranged to bring his wife Sarah in 1926 and his younger brother Yoseph Sholem (born in 1906) in 1927 to Montreal where, in spite of years spent in sanatoria, he recovered to teach in the Yiddish radical school and came to occupy a place in Yiddish literary historiography and criticism and in the realm of Yiddish verse. This poetry is familiar to anglophone and francophone readers in translation.

The arrival of Sholem Shtern, the poet, on the immigration sponsorship of his brother Jacob Zipper recalls a chapter in the biographies of other Canadian literati, such as that of poet Chavah Rosenfarb who came to Montreal after the Second World War, sponsored by H. Hershman of whom she had not heard before, and that of Nathan J. Gotlib. The latter, like Zipper, also a mystic and Chassid, descended from the head of a Lithuanian Yeshivah, the Sandzer Rebbe, wrote in his memoirs,

"The New York 1929 crash resounded even in Lithuania: put out all lights and hope; bitter, hard days drag along, waver in despair. Suddenly a letter comes from a cold distant land: If I, Gotlib, consent, the unknown stranger stands prepared to send me papers to come to Canada, at once. Fortunes may not be awaiting in Montreal, but I will not lack bread in this hopeful land, young and bubbling, great and rich.

"Who is this man, good enough to stretch to me a helping hand? His name is Shtern, Sholem, a songster, youthful, blossoming, who now has read my name and my song, and wants to warm by my side. In response, I said, 'I will fly,' and I begin my farewell to grieving parents and pious family, to hovels and to Baltic villages, to Tavruck, Yourbourg, Eiragole, Wilkowisk and Butremantz, Simne, Meritz and Kaidan.

"Like each young immigrant from Halifax the rushing train imprints the film of thick forests crowned with granite, between shining rivers and sun-illuminated valleys, to looming Montreal, chimneys soaring, churches tolling, edifices tall and broad. Good early morning, summery Montreal," Gotlib wrote.

As Zipper, several years earlier, had dazedly watched the countryside between Quebec City and Mount Royal, the pines swinging, dancing a quadrille, in dozing

from the night train, his colleague from provincial journalism - in his case it was Grodno - Noah Jacob Gotlib also went through the same experience.

Indeed, Zipper and his brother Sholem Shtern awaited Gotlib at the Montreal station in 1930, only a few years after the Shtern brothers had themselves come to Canada, as Gotlib recalls in the first verse of his autobiographical poem, Montreal (1968). They took him by taxi that first morning to the mountain crowned with a cross, with the city unwinding block by block to the Shtern home on Clark Street; mild enough for a blue heaven, children at play, stores filled with cake and bananas, sardines, oranges, breads white and brown, sausages - city of plenty and freedom, first day friends at first step. The first evening at Fletcher's Field with green trees, sky full of golden bright stars, conversation homey, sated with bread and wine and meat.

A wealthier man, Joseph Shaffran, opened his Davaar Street home to Gotlib for a year, while he wrote constantly for the Adler and other publications, bound up with authors B.G. Sack, Israel Rabinovitch, Israel Medres, in love with every park and square and lane, especially the mountain top, above the city's thick walls; the city a giant, restless, breathing heavily, wheels banging, smoking chimneys, ringing church bells, climbing high by steel rigging - metal strong.

In the Laurentians an old French Canadian was living alone in a hut. Georges was the cook in the sanatorium for the city's Jewish tailors become tuberculous.

In the city Gotlib spent days pacing the miles of the narrow dusty poverty streets of the east end with J.I. Segal, houses under winding staircases, aged children's heads at the windows, faded young women in unmade beds, plates and dishes full of tears. An old Jew with horse and waggon called to the houses: "Rags, furniture." De Bullion, Roy, Colonial, City Hall streets washed in sorrow tears of each tonality of sound.

To this accompaniment Segal related his father's sacred scribhood in the Koretz of the ancient world, every chapel full of libraries, of Seforim, women's Yiddish prayer books; noble generations, long forgotten, and a melody and a tale of Reb Nahman of Braslav.

Itsche Goldberg, editor of Yiddishe Kultur, notes that "Sholem Shtern came to love Canada before others of his generation.

"Wherever I am, I miss my home, Montreal."

"He remained a native of Tishwitz all his life. But for that Polish reality Montreal would not have become what it was, a rare synthesis of both.

"Sholem became so rapidly Canadian because he felt intuitively that to become Canadian he must preserve the Tishwitz that was within him, not discard it, to ingest it forever. Montreal plus Tishwitz make for wholeness.

"His Canadianization was a radiation of his creative perceptions and purposes. a conquest of his new homeland and then surrender to it in full love," Goldberg noted as he quoted Shtern.

"The Yiddish authors who immigrated after the Second World War experienced infinite pain here before these homes became our new patria, as we set up new tents, for the beauty and idea purity of the homelands blossomed here in labour

and folk life. It was a difficult strife. We were poor, struggled for bread. It was a noble generation loaded with idealism and ideas.

"All is not perfect but the Canadian landscape with its tendency for home style helped to create a lifestyle which sketches the reality of the Jew here." ("Sholem Shtern" in Yiddishe Kultur vol. 53, no. 4, July 1991. Pp. 45-50)

In 1933 Zipper brought to Montreal his 24-year-old sister Shifrah Mira who married Sholem Joseph Krishtalko who, in the family tradition, became a poet and a teacher. In turn her son Aaron, an academic, born in 1940, in due course published his collection of Yiddish verse Good Morning, World on his Bar Mitzvah. He was the first Canadian-born Yiddish poet to publish a volume of his verse.

In 1935 he brought his poetess sister Henyeh Dvoireh to Montreal and in 1936 Zipper arranged for his brother Yechiel, then age 33, to come to Canada where he compiled his classic study of early Jewish schooling and child life, in 1946.

He was followed in 1937 by his youngest brother Israel Hersh Shtern, born in 1913. Dr. Israel Shtern became widely known by his nom de plume Ish Yair. He is the most widely ranging of the family, as mathematician and modernist poet and essayist in English and in Yiddish.

He was trained in literature and in industrial vocations in Poland and in Vilno and had been active in Zionism and labour before joining the family in Montreal where he obtained his doctorate in science and where he joined university society even as he continued to teach in Yiddish schools and to write in many Yiddish and Hebrew periodicals.

His investigations in contemporary literary vocabulary led him to compose verse in English as well as in modern and in antiquarian Yiddish; in the latter his own poetry was innovative in his wording and in philosophic content as much as in his lines and in his imagery. His pseudonym became well known in avant garde writing all over the world. He edited the Yiddish poetry issue of international Poetry journal printed in India.

His most recent collection, Vayhi Beyime. . . ("and it was in the times of. . .") (Montreal, 1975. 176 p.) echoes the sounds of the Yiddish classic Cheder Rebbe translation of the last generation of prewar migration.

Just before the outbreak of the Second World War, in 1938, the Shtern family arranged for the coming of the aged father, Rabbi Abraham Shtern from their native Tishwitz in Poland, to an unusual measure the fountain of inspiration and learning for the entire family.

In Montreal Rabbi Shtern conveyed his learning within the family; all the sons, regardless of their later ideological and political development, studied their father's teachings to the best of their ability. There was no leaving the tradition whatever their theology, and whatever their language of communication with the rest of society.

THE FATHER

Zipper's father Rabbi Abraham Shtern, was a deeply religious Talmudic scholar intensely learned in the particular mode of traditional Chassidic folklore.

To understand the role of Rabbi Abraham Shtern (1878-1955), a descendant of Reb Mordecai of Czernobyl, a kinsman of the Rizhiner Rebbe and a devotee of the Husiatiner rebbe in his particular orthodox tradition we need to be aware of the structure of Hebraic religious teaching and transmission. There being no central authority for the Jewish religion, learning was intensely personal and transmission was through distinct schools deriving from individual teachers, with no universal standard church or academy to render relative judgment.

This was particularly true when the mystical element became prominent in Eastern Europe, through the Chassidic movement. Here every rebbe and every prominent disciple of a rebbe founded his school which continued for many decades with infinite subtle riches, nearly always transmitted orally by teachers in infinite faithfulness personally, to dedicated pupils.

Rabbi Shtern was in his person the bearer of encyclopedias of this Talmudic and mystical lore. As was common in this tradition, such teachers bestowed much of their learning primarily upon their own children, which in part explains the frequency in Chassidism of the inheritance of the Tzadik's seat within the family.

Rabbi Shtern issued three volumes in Hebrew and in Yiddish in Montreal: Sefer Eidoth b'Israel, Kvutzat Kitvei Aggadah, and Chutim Hamshuloshim. They record the hagiographies of the teachers in his Chassidic tradition and, additionally, contain much elaboration upon Talmudic law.

Upon his arrival in Montreal he entered into the world of the small Congregation Tzeirei Dass v'Daass (Faith and Knowledge), at one time on St. Viateur, east of Park Avenue above a cobbler's shop, since removed to Van Horne, east of Victoria, and of the Yavneh Congregation.

He immortalized the Tzeirei Dass v'Daass Congregation by incorporating some numerological or other explanations he delivered there in his Kvutzat Kitvei Aggadah. a distinction rare in the annals of Canadian houses of worship.

On one of the most dramatic title pages in the literature of Judaism, the founder of the Canadian Shtern-Zipper tribe tells the story of their coming to Canada.

On his monumental Shaar-Gate title page to Kvutzat Kitvei Aggadah, a Collection of Aggadah Writings, Rabbi and Shochet Abraham Shtern, the son of Issachar and Sarah Shtern, with his last breath narrates his life story, essentially an autobiography articulating in miniature the lives of the millions of Europe's doomed Jews, some of whom were saved in the New World or in the Holy Land, the rest immolated by their German and Slavic neighbours.

He had breathed the Polish air of many generations of the scholars who had created the Ashkenaz thousand years of Jewish history, and was oscillating between remaining in the Treblinka-Lublin world, settling on a Holy Land farm, or joining his sons in Canada. Now the dying Rabbi Shtern described himself, in the classic Hebrew tongue of his orthodox milieu, as "Shochet and Teacher of Justice in Poland, in the Lublin province, Tomashev County, in the city of Tishwitz, and was

now in Montreal, Canada, Teacher to interested young friends in the Tzeirei Dass v'Daass Congregation, the searchers for the Faith and for Knowledge in the Yavneh and the Chevrah Shass Talmud Study Classes in this city. Montreal, Northern Printing Co., 1947."

In his introduction he "thanks the Almighty for the privilege of publishing his Eidoth b'Israel, Testimonies in Israel," He narrates the family circumstances:

"In the 1920's, because of the Russo-Polish War, my beloved sons began their exiles from my table, one by one. My young son, Isachar Aryeh had died at the age of nineteen in 1915 in the war. The eldest of them left for Montreal in 1926 and so he brought each of them here, and I remained with my wife Gittel, sad and solitary in Poland. Evil decrees were issued hampering Kosher Shechitah, and my subsistence was affected. Then the nationalistic and religious hatred intensified so that our lives were in grave danger and we were forced to migrate here in 1938.

"I had laboured with my sons, long may they live, and educated them in the Torah and in divine service. We literally spent entire nights and exchanged many letters. All our Sabbaths we discussed our nation's morality to bring enlightenment within the darkness and murkiness of the exile of spirit and of body. We spoke together of the Aggadah which draws on the heart, with my constant prayer that the Almighty may tie them with pleasant bonds of His beneficent love to His Words, to His Service, to awe of Him and to serve Him with love. According to His will I succeeded in revealing some of the mysteries concealed in the Aggadoth in my letters to them, in the tradition of books and of scribes rooted in the sacred seed of our sages, the firmly faithful of Israel.

"When I arrived here I found much of my teachings in my letters to them hidden in their cherished collections. I collected them as my treasures, and assembled them, together with my lectures to audiences who cherish the Lord and His Words, and they became a volume, a message of great peace for the lovers of Torah.

"I hoped to benefit our public, myself among them, that God may be among us as He has been with our ancestors who repose in the Garden, for such is the tradition of the great elders in our ancestry. For the Torah returns to Her Great Hostel. May it be the will of our Father in heaven and on earth that the words of final prophet may be realized in our time."

The volume in 606 pages was issued with the assistance of the Montreal orthodox community. The participants, listed on the last three pages, are headed by Chief Rabbi H. Cohen, and Rabbis M. Wachtfogel, J. Hirshorn, and P. Hirschsprung, Dr. S. Petrushka, J. Colton, Shochet J. Aspler, the Jewish Community Council, the Association of Shochtim of Poultry, the Tolner Rebbe J. Twersky, Rabbi Flamm, the Ozherow Congregation, the Ukrainian Congregation, the Roumanian Congregation, the Machzikei Hadass Congregation, the Bnai Jacob, the Beth Israel and Samuel Congregation of Uptown, the Beth Matitياهو Congregation, the Beth Itzhak Congregation, the Beth Shlomoh Congregation, the Chevrah Shass Congregation, the Chevrah Thilim Congregation, the Yavneh Congregation, the Kerem Israel Congregation, the Nusach Hoari Congregation, the Stepiner Congregation, the Pinsker Kinyan Torah Congregation, the Tzeirei Dass V'Daass Congregation, the Shomrim Laboker Congregation and the Tifereth Israel Congregation.

The hundred and fifty religious and folkloric, mystical letters in the heartland tradition he had written largely from Tishwitz - but some from Montreal after

1938 to his sons Jacob Zipper, to Yichiel Menachem Shtern, to Israel Zvi Shtern, to Yoseph Sholem Shtern, to his daughter Shifrah and to his son-in-law Sholem Joseph Krishtalko, to his daughter Henyeh Dvoireh - are a cultural monument not only to their author, their father, but even more to his sons and their sons, to future New World generations, for he was aware that his beloved erudite recipients included political Poale Zionists, mathematicians, physicians, modernistic poets in English, revolutionaries, Yiddish novelists, organizers and founders in the secular society of Canada.

He was thus addressing his last message to Jewish time to come, for by the time his book and the title page were set in type, the two memory letters "Z'L," May his Memory be a Blessing, had been added to his name.

The universe which Zipper, the twentieth century son of his father Shtern, inherited and inserted into Canadian Hebrew-Yiddish literature - as does his Montreal colleague Yehudah Elberg - was nourished upon the Baal Shem Tov and upon the saints of that world of waggons and horses, of roads which were lakes of mud precariously uniting towns with fairs, night time asylums which were taverns with angry squire landlords, Chassidic courts, bandit gangs, and Jews thrown into pits. A world that is now destroyed, no more physically; nor are those who peopled it. But there had been powers in those worlds, born out of the observance of divine commandments, that had been lived there, elevated and concretized into realities from a prayer, from a hint, from a subtle gesture, from a personal logic, from a festivity, from elemental simple faith, from the Torah that stood the test unto martyrdom. Their world is destroyed, but the forces are continuing to bring into the reality of exile a God of love and pardon and mercy - a bridge between a present of poverty to a future of richness.

The present was poor; the message of wealth was concrete and the links and the bridge were real from within, from the life of snowy roads and of cloudy skies. (Isaac Meir, editor. Y. Elberg. T'V Kochot, (Fifteen Forces). Jerusalem, World Zionist Organization, 1989)

The last section of the book is entirely in Yiddish, although this vernacular is not totally absent from the first sections. These pages are more replete with Chassidic folklore, but are equally rich with commentary on Jewish tradition and law.

In some cases Zipper had shared with Rabbi Shtern his own philosophical thoughts which his father elaborated further. "You are right, but the matter is more devoted than appears in your words."

His father assisted Zipper with rare books from Europe in the preparation of his works such as those on the Baal Shem Tov.

Zipper had written his father from Montreal in 1938 about a scholarly discussion he had had with Rabbi J.L. Zlotnick, formerly of Montreal but then residing in Vancouver, about the origin and the legitimacy of the common expression: A prophet is not recognized in his own city. Rabbi Shtern elaborated on this theme at great length. (Pp. 170-2)

This posthumous work recalled that Zipper had inquired about the name of the Messiah, and Yichiel and Zipper had opened the question of the messenger of the Almighty (Pp. 25-27), about the composition of the Passover Haggadah and about the condition of the Caballah revelation at the time of the Sacred Ari. The father

recorded an earlier explanation he had given to his son Israel in regard to the period of the deluge.

Zipper had written Rabbi Shtern that the Haggadah is chanted with a solemn and fearful melody because the Lord is not satisfied with the destruction of the evil Egyptians. But his father was not content with this explanation. He saw the condition differently; that the Lord is certainly happy with joy in Israel, and when Israel was established on their own soil and were strong, they read the Haggadah joyfully, as was their duty, for Passover was their first national festival, and the other festivals were dependent on it, as is mentioned in their ritual. But now, that the crown had fallen from us, we observe the Passover in bitter exile; the command to repeat the story of the exodus from Egypt as ordained in the Torah is the affirmation of the wisdom of the Lord and of His own eternity. For the time awakens such reading as the Song of the Red Sea. This is an instance of the reading coinciding with the season; on other occasions, the reading recalls the times of the event. But these are moments when the ordained reading reconstitutes the historic event, and both become inseparable and identical.

The recitation of the Exodus chronicle during the Passover event, at its season and in its order, certainly awakens the powers of redemption and profoundly confirms the faith in the coming of salvation as an immutable pillar, as the Jew recalls the cherished ones who have fallen at the hands of the evil ones in the dark ages when the Jew was forced to shut doors and windows - contrary to the command to open the doors of his home broadly and to invite, both by his lips and his heart, "Let all who desire enter and eat," he explained to his children.

"The melody is not awful, in my judgment, but teaches us the heritage of the Weeping for Generations, an outpouring of the soul which is opened by tears of happiness out of the joy of the commandments, the elevation of Jerusalem at the head of festivities.

"When the Rizhiner Rebbe was asked about this, he had said, 'When a Cossack is in a black mood he sings a very gay tribal chant, to restrain his feelings. The Wallachian who is exuberant sings a 'moral' melody to ensure that his soul shall not explode from joy. May the good Lord concretize, in our own time, the elevation of sorrow and sadness, that we may attain joy and happiness.'"

Shortly before the Second World War Zipper and his father communicated about the anticipated looming atrocities coming from all corners, overwhelming their horror and oppressing expression.

"The limitation of wisdom is silence, as the Pirkei Avot put it. The Rebbe of Husiatin said: 'What is wisdom then? That nothing shall matter to you, for we believe that we are protected by Providence, and that by His design all will settle for the best.' As his father, the Rizhiner Rebbe in the past had taught: 'If all is not as we wish, we should wish it to be as it is.' Among listed Hebraic conditions for silence there is one who could reply and who has arguments in reply, but he is commanded to be silent; another acts as if he were deaf and as if he does not understand, he is not expected to respond; another acts as if he were inanimate and has no feelings, and therefore cannot protest," the father wrote.

From depression-ridden Montreal radical poet and Winchevsky School teacher, son Sholem Shtern wrote with bitterness about the poverty he had witnessed in the Quebec ghetto and, no less, among French Canadian farmers. Sholem Asch read Shtern's poem, "The Father" which had expressed his faith in the salvation of the

workers. "Your own tendency in your God-blessed writings is socially Jewish," he wrote to the poet. Asch's words dripped light and joy into Shtern's soul.

But the father in Tishwitz, thousands of miles away, read his son's words differently. "For me it suffices that you can maintain yourself, even if you are not yet wealthy. Here in Poland every moderately rich Jew prays to be in your condition. Not to speak of the poor who go among the peasants, who are bereft of wives and children all week, in danger of their lives in their constant isolation among Christians, all in the hope of earning a thin slice of bread with a drink of water.

"Myself, as I travel to my work in the slaughterhouses, through Christian suburbs, I am pelted with rocks. Recently we were shot at as we drove our wagon. As I understand the Talmud in Ta'anit, 'As you have wept in vain, I shall set for you a weeping of generations.'

"If only you had been weeping on behalf of the entire community of Israel, who had been sentenced to wandering since the destruction of the Temple, devoid of a durable foundation underfoot, you would be on a higher category, and could claim to hope for the promise of the sages, 'Whoever is in sorrow for the woes of the community shall witness the consolation of the community. But even in such cases, when the sorrow comes spontaneously, for one such mourner was stopped because the servant is not greater than his master, since the Lord Himself suffers from the destruction of the Temple and the exile of Israel.'"

Rabbi Abraham Shtern was embarrassed to receive a request from his daughter Shifrah, a student at the Jewish teachers seminary in Vilno, for highlights on Caballah: the Talmud rules that whoever teaches an unworthy or dishonest student is worshipping false gods and the teaching becomes a prison for the student. For her studying in a secular institution itself, the students and teachers are not believers in the faith, men who draw from evil waters, casts suspicion on her.

Nevertheless he was prepared to go beyond the fence and respond to her, even as he prays for forgiveness. He proceeds for ten printed pages. He also addressed similar letters to her husband Sholem Joseph Krishtalko.

His other daughter Henyeh had written him in criticism of Canadian Passover "Kneidlach Sedorim," distant from Polish Passover customs. Her father responded in the Chassidic Love of Israel tradition by referring to the many normal household activities relating to the Seder preparations which have themselves become sacred.

He then wrote the story of Levy Isaac of Berdichev who was constrained from the proper Passover services by a vision from on high. He proceeded to watch a Jewish drayman who had been working long hours before the festival, had been given too much to drink by his customers and had fallen into a stupor just before the Seder. His wife attempted to awaken him. He was too tired to proceed with the Haggadah but he summarized the festive occasion, "You know how many gypsies are of immoral and of lowly manners. It was among them that we were exiled in Egypt. The Almighty had mercy on us and freed us from them by miracles. He split the Red Sea for us, fed us with manna at the well of Miriam, brought us to Mount Sinai and into the Holy Land. Now it is up to us to praise him for those miracles and to plead that He redeem us from the present heavy exile. Now, wife dear, serve the Kneidlach."

The Berdichever rabbi went to his home and conducted the Seder with joy and enthusiasm, as he explained that the drayman's words at the Seder had rejoiced all the heavens and had stilled the celestial prosecutors. Rabbi Shtern added, "This is the power of a Kneidlach Seder."

Unique or rare among Hebrew-Yiddish rabbinic expositions, Schochet Abraham Shtern has seen the Yiddish tales of his third volume "pirated" in Jerusalem by an anonymous publisher, without permission. When the enterprising printer heard that the Montreal family was inquiring about him he suddenly disappeared, and his Jerusalem distributors agreed to establish a wall of silence about him. (Pinkas Tishwitz).

EDUCATION

By 1928 Zipper was named principal of the I.L. Peretz School, the successor to the Jewish National Radical School.

He served as secretary of the Montreal Separate Jewish School Committee which was headed by H.M. Caiserman, in April 1929.

"The decision of the Privy Council allows Jews to have separate schools, as Catholics and Protestants may have theirs.

"Jews have always fought for equal rights, and particularly for the right to educate their own children. Without separate schools, we do not enjoy equal rights with other groups in our population.

"Only those who are blinded by assimilation do not understand this and are prepared to sacrifice our rights and permit our children to remain in schools under the control of Protestant ministers.

"True Montreal Jews must put these men in their place and must demand their rights proudly and courageously," he wrote. (April 14, 1929)

It was a long career in the secular immigrant community where the schools, the Zionists, the Jewish library, the unions, even the orthodox Community Council (founded on the same initiative, in part to support the schools and the library), constituted a virile Yiddish cultural structure nearly unique on the continent. Zipper, with his colleague Wiseman of the People's School, led its cultural life, press and literature; scarcely a week without a major cultural event to penetrate public, personal and family life, with the personnel of the school families, and with visiting literary, historic and political figures.

In the twenties, Montreal Jewry was shaken by the school question, a conflict involving Jews, the Protestant School Board and, ultimately, the Catholic church. But the immigrant community was largely on the sidelines; at issue was the matter of prominent Jews being permitted to sit on the Protestant board. But no immigrant shared this ambition with the Westmounters.

Soon after coming to Montreal, Zipper and Zuker had reported on the school question, at the height of the controversy, to the Poale Zion party. Even as they were mustering the score of radical groups, they saw no wisdom in cooperating with Uptown in the rich men's search for a position on the Protestant School Board.

Zipper and Wiseman played an imaginative and historic role in the eventual resolution of the governmental and judicial drama on the stage of the legislature and of the Imperial Privy Council. (Canadian Jewish Archives, new series, no. 2, 1975. P.69)

But he remained at this post only briefly, and in 1930 he removed to Winnipeg where he assumed the direction of the I.L. Peretz School there.

Zipper's years in Winnipeg had brought him in contact with the Western Canadian pioneers in Yiddish education, notably in the Edmonton and Calgary schools where Moses Mordecai Bloshtein wrote his In Farteidigung fun Kind ("In Defence of the

Child," Winnipeg, 1934, 427 p.) and Oif di Vegn fun Kind's Neshomeh ("On the Roads to the Soul of the Child," Edmonton, 1937, 232 p.)

His four years there proved happier. He made many friends there, contributed at length to the local Yiddish newspaper, Dos Yiddishe Vort, and issued the school's Jubilee Book. His Montreal career in association with Leiser Zuker, president of the school for many years, until his retirement in 1971, is Yiddish educational history.

The end of the decade-long public school conflict of the 1920's having brought no resolution and the Wiseman-Zipper-Rabbi Hirsch Cohen plan for independent Jewish schools was instituted. Zipper was chosen secretary of the Separate School Committee which was proposing a much more fundamental program.

The bold proposal for separate Jewish public schools in equality and legal status, tax-supported as other schools were, did not have universal support at first, even in the Jewish immigrant community. But it had legitimacy from the House of Lords' Privy Council and was finally adopted by the legislature of Quebec.

CHAYELE GROBER

The European quake of war - which shook the world with revolution, pogroms, dispersal of Jewry and holocaust, which brought the Shtetns and other creative immigrants to Canada - also bore here on its waves a lonely girl who was to alter the community, not through the classroom as in Zipper's case, but from the stage, a small stage. Chayeleh Grober altered and enriched the artistic life of the Yiddish universe from her new home in Montreal.

Among the children of the migrants uprooted during the first months of the World War of 1914 was Chayeleh Grober, cast into the flood - together with her fellow townsman Nahum Tzemach who dreamed the Zionist vision of a national Hebrew theatre, together with the Russian drama genius Yevgeny Vachtangov. The three devoted the dramatic decade of the Russian Revolution to help found the Habimah National Theatre, now in Israel.

The remarkable saga of the Habimah was conceived in the Shtetl and born in the midst of Ukrainian pogroms and of Lenin's progressive anti-Semitism, of supreme modern Jewish ideology and of the ideological analyses of the bloody and hungry arena of revolutionary war-torn Moscow. High Slavic and libertarian causes and thinkers were entrapped in the hemisphere of the Czar, of Kerensky, of Brest Litovsk, of Petlura, of Trotsky and of Lenin. Chayeleh was among them, seeking her own interpretation of the highest and purest, but most personal, application of the stage in the Judaism of the young twentieth century.

Her role in the Dybbuk has become a durable legend in world theatre and contributed to the enthusiastic adoption of An-sky's play into the centre of the universal artistic repertoire of music, cinema, opera and folklore, no less than of theatre. With it the recognition of the modern Jewish spiritual activity - of Chagall, Chassidism, Freud, Sholom Aleichem, Wiesel - at the forefront of the century.

Here she developed her personal dramatic genre, the Solo Theatre for Yiddish Song - a realization which bears the title of her Yiddish autobiography Mein Veg Alein, "My Way Alone" (Tel Aviv, Peretz Ferlag, 1968. 244 p.)

The solo theatre was the stage on which the artist presented an intensification of a truth, one moment from life or letters rather than a conflict of persons or of numbers or of ideas that is a theatrical drama. Instead of the audience participating in the battle of humanity, those attending the solo theatre are sharing the poet's entry into his examination of the poem.

Here the Canadian life of Chayeleh and of Grosbard is a chapter in the biographies of hundreds of Jews reading Leivick, Halpern, Zeitlin, An-sky and a dozen anonymous contemporary Yiddish creators.

"Solo theatre calls for particular concentration and absolute control of the artist, a relationship with and even a mutual friendship of each member of the audience, of preparation and of balance, of drama and of humour," she wrote.

This Yiddish national theatre had its gestation in New York on the model of English Ruth Draper, the French Yvette Guilbert, the Argentinian Bertha Singerman and of Poland's Hertz Grosbard with whom Chayeleh Grober came to share Canadian citizenship.

She referred to him as "the greatest in the genre because he retained his unique personal form; with his powerful voice, his temperament, with his remarkable diction and the atmosphere he created with his simple bulb lamp which lit only his spare face. He was the only artist who could hold his Yiddish audience an hour and a half as he sat motionless at his little table on the stage."

In New York the habitués of the literary Café Royal learned of Chayeleh Grober's daring plan to appear in the theatrical desert of Montreal, when someone, smilingly, told her, "Don't worry. There is the wonderful H.M. Caiserman there. He will meet you, and you can be confident; you will know him from your first moment there."

"Our train arrived in the Windsor Station in Montreal two and a half hours late because of a December snow storm, and I was sick with some stomach infection. I threw myself into bed in a hotel full of American merrymakers, come to soaking Montreal from prohibition-dry United States, to scream and sing their drunkenness.

"But the telephone soon rang and a Roumanian voice with its rolling R's greeted me, 'Good morning, Chayeleh. It is time to rise. It is half past nine, and I can wait no longer. You will have lunch with us at 12:30. I was going to call you last night for supper, but your friends would not let me. This is Hananiah ben Meir Caiserman.'

"Shining Sarah Caiserman opened her St. Viateur St. door to me. As a welcoming Caiserman picked me up at the door and raised me to the ceiling, introducing me, 'This is Chayeleh Grober.' Their little daughters Nina and Ghitta, with their cherry eyes, completed the festival of a Jewish cultural ménage-salon.

"Three concerns dominated Caiserman's life: Zionism, the Congress and art in all its forms - painting, poetry, theatre, music. He was Poale Zionism, but also the support of artists, the enthusiast, the indefatigable spirit, sharing with his endless world of friends the best in life, receiving all in his office, examining with them his precious documents, old papers, anti-Semitic scribbling, clippings.

"His pride as a Jew came to a peak as he furthered the work of his beloved Montreal poet, Jacob Isaac Segal; tears literally flowed from his eyes as he read or talked about the work of his friend.

"His Congress was a one-man institution where an endless line of Jews in trouble came to complain, to seek advice and help. Caiserman had heart and patience and ingenuity for each of them - until the heart collapsed in 1950.

"Until that day the door to the Caiserman's harmonious home was always open, the table always set, even though each of them was laden with responsibility - he in Zionism, she in large-scale business, in the world of women and in the home.

"Their salon was in the warm basement: books to the ceiling, a piano and rows of chairs. I have since appeared at the Salle Nova in Paris, at the London Palladium and in conservatoria and theatres all over the world, but my farewell concert from the Caiserman home is etched in my memory. Hananiah's enthusiasm and Sarah's smile have followed me all my years, together with Nina's restless creative perspicacity and search for what is beyond her eyes or the mind."

Within the decade Chayeleh, now with her husband Vladimir Grossman, enthusiastic farmer and famed international journalist, made their permanent home and base

of her worldwide concert career, even as he began publication of the three volumes of his Canadian Jewish Year Book.

During the years of the Second World War Chayeleh Grober established the Yiddish Theatre Studio (YTEG), first in the basement level of the Jewish Public Library at 4099 Esplanade Avenue and later in the Baron de Hirsch Institute at 2040 Bleury, near Ontario.

A major power in the YTEG was Mrs. Masha (Leib) Roskies, mother of McGill academic Ruth Wisse and of D.G. Roskies, a descendant of the Mann printing family of Vilno, devoted worker for Yiddish in Canada, "Her energies poured out in our squalid basement which virtually became her home. Her temperament and sensitivity to the refinements of Yiddish, and of our better art qualified her for a place in the world of our art. She did not realize how profoundly she inspired our activities for the YTEG.

"The most notable of these efforts was the presentation, at Victoria Hall, of J.I. Segal's Di Getliche Getto (The Divine Ghetto, reproduced in Grober, Mein Veg Alein, Pp. 185-211), décor and costumes by Aleksander Berkovitch.

"It is from there that I walked out 'Into the Great World,' into the title of my first volume which appeared in Buenos Aires in 1952," Chayeleh wrote.

WISEMAN - THE YOUNG TEACHER

Born in Russia in 1899, a year before Zipper, Shloimeh Wiseman was also brought up in a pedagogical atmosphere. His father was an enlightened Hebraic nationalist in the Haskalah and a teacher who counted among his pupils such world famed scholars as Ezekiel Kaufman and Zvi Sharfstein. He was in the modern Hebraistic tradition, emphasizing the study of grammar, of the current scientific editions of the Bible, and the newest literary trends.

The father's pupils were taught intensely in the presence of the son, but he was not permitted to intervene in the class discussions; that was for late evening hours - when father was not busied with Zionist activities and with local arbitration cases. All his life Shloimeh Wiseman kept hearing the screams of the claimants of his childhood days.

Every Saturday morning the father reviewed with his son the reading of the week's scroll as illuminated by the medieval scholar Ibn Ezra before proceeding to the synagogue.

The child was assigned a weekly task of translating a 64-page Yiddish book secured from an itinerant Mocher Seforim into Hebrew. His Russian assignment was to review the works of one classic author during the year and the same treatment for one great Hebrew author.

The family arrived in Montreal in 1913; when he was fourteen years old he began to teach Hebrew privately. That year he complained in the Adler that the parents of one of his pupils expected him to teach their son the traditional Ivry reading of Hebrew as an element of the curriculum.

It is necessary to place young Wiseman, as he entered Jewish education, in the particular Canadian society in which he was to play such a leading and creative role for so many years and which was to react on him so powerfully, even as he was observing it so acutely and so objectively.

The newly immigrated Montreal society of some 15,000 Jews was atomized, indigent and economically ill equipped beyond words, scarcely one with more than barest pocket money; none with any class connection or influence. They strained each moment to survive, to find work, to pass the hours of the day, to establish a family, to sustain it minimally, to retain paternal relationship, to create social relationship with kin, with other minimally congenial linguistically, socially, culturally, emotionally, economically, religiously, ideologically and for purposes of mutual aid. There was no church or overriding social welfare institution for the immigrant watching over him or to which he could turn, and he had no leisure, energy or time to consider or solve his personal or group problems.

There is no contemporary or subsequent record of the day by day or night by night biography of these thousands. And all settled in a residential belt in the city, near work, in togetherness, between the English and the French quarters. All, brought together by the magic magnetism of common Jewish fate; scarcely one was lost, assimilated into the New World melting pot

But the first Jewish immigrant saved his first half dollar to buy a ticket for a sister and a brother to Canada. Each immigrant rented a couch in the apartment

of another immigrant. Several immigrants met in friendship and in commonality and organized in mutual aid in event of illness, or in prayer, or in cards.

In the social chemistry, some soda water stands became hangouts for the rare leisure. The unusual genius of talented H. Hershman introduced New York Jewish papers and pamphlets in his store and opened his upstairs living room for customers to read them. He brought some books there as a "public" library in 1903. In 1907, as the other genius, H. Wolofsky created his Canader Adler which discovered among this human assemblage, hundreds of readers with personal traditions and literacy and, greater miracle, dozens of men of the pen.

As this diverse Jewish humanity discovered itself, it divided itself by their biographies, habits, traditions, creeds, tastes, perceptions; each division held together by a common idea, bound in friendship by the advancement of a common cause; but each participant with his own biography, psychology, social class, language and manners, in great diversity internally.

In the dozen ideological divisions in the community one that is historically very significant was the Poale Zion into which young Wiseman fell; as internally diverse, colourful as any union, synagogue, landsmanschaft, mutual aid society - the arena of human interplay, of leadership, of talent and ambition.

From the beginning in Montreal he was associated with Brainin and Kaufman and contributed to their Der Veg; his "Blinking Candle-Light" in the issue of January 20, 1916, reflections on his mother's Sabbath candles, is one of his most imaginative literary efforts.

His essay, "Our Struggle" in Der Veg of November 30, 1915, was in the anti-assimilationist tradition of S. Schneour, an attack upon the shallow bourgeois who centred on their sense of the Jewish mission of internationalism - which current events were already proving meaningless.

In 1916, when Brainin and Kaufman left Canada, Wiseman entered the McGill program, an indication of the major direction of his interests, distinctly a discovery for the immigrant society and distant from the folksy world of Noveck and Bercovitch. Wiseman long continued his university studies. These interests were reflected in his Hebrew translation of American short stories, his Hebrew renderings of Epictetus and of Marcus Aurelius, his studies in American history and in the pluralism of Louis Adamic and of John Dewey, and his intensive theoretical lecture before the Montreal Committee for Intercultural Education.

His academic concerns were lifelong, in part a reflection of his elitism and of his proud distancing from those not fortunate enough to have the keys to the temples. It became a remarkably continuous element of the Jewish radical immigrant society, even when he began in 1916 to teach in the new Jewish People's School where A.S. Sacher - a graduate of the Grodno Teachers Seminary sponsored by the Jewish Colonization Association in Russia - was head teacher. Sacher had also taught in the Milton Street Talmud Torah headed by M.M. Rosovitch, as well as in the Papineau Talmud Torah for a short time.

Abraham Samuel Sacher (1880-1970) wrote, on Hebrew teaching methods in Brainin's Der Veg (1915). In 1933 he collaborated with Samson Dunsky in Jewish History in Questions and Answers (115 p.). An English translation by Rabbi H.G. Perelmutter appeared in 1938 (138 p.). At the same time Sacher published several

brief pedagogical essays for the educational committee of the renewed Canadian Jewish Congress.

By 1920 the founders of the People's School, Yehudah Kaufman, Moishe Dickstein and Leon Meltzer, were able to engage Wiseman's full time services and he was named principal.

The colourful Moishe (he would tolerate no anglicized first name even when he became a major figure in Canadian insurance) Dickstein (1890-1955) reached Canada in 1913 at the same time as Kaufman, but with a totally different career behind him: in his own proud words, as a Warsaw street arab, yet journalist, junior Bundist, chum of great rabbis (one of them Rabbi M. Price [b. 1897] later dean of Toronto orthodoxy, editor of the Sefer Chassidim). In Montreal Dickstein early came to lead the Poale Zion, the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Jewish People's Schools. In the course of time Dickstein played a major role in winning Samuel Bronfman for the leadership of the Congress in 1938 and thus altering the course of the Canadian community. Soon after the Jewish State came into being Dickstein toured the Holy Land. His reflections on the pages of the Adler were translated into English by A.M. Klein in 1951. (From Palestine to Israel)

These early years of the school, under the administration of founders, A. Parnas and D.H. Lazarus (father of film maker Felix and of journalist Charles Lazarus and grandfather of David Lazarus, also journalist) were difficult, when the pipes burst in the cold days and when the landlord ejected the school. But they were the period when Wiseman introduced his own teaching methods and his intense system of teacher training which, in time, made Wiseman famous throughout the world.

The inspiration was confirmed by the philosophy of another Montrealer, the honorary principal of the school, only several years older, who had come to Canada at the same time as Wiseman: Yehudah Kaufman, also the scion of a notable father. Kaufman gave instruction to Wiseman in advanced Hebrew studies while heading the Jewish Teachers Seminary in New York.

J. Kage notes that as early as 1912 Wiseman introduced his first historic expansion into the People's School: he added, to the elementary school program, intermediary classes on the high school level.

Characteristic of his outreach program, Wiseman appeared at the Jewish Inter-club consisting of the Dufferin Graduates Society, the Y.M.H.A, the Y.W.H.A and the Chevrah Kadisha Young People's League, on January 4, 1925 with "An Introductory Appreciation of Jewish Folklore." His lecture was illustrated by the Jewish Peretz School sextette and the choir of the Bialik Hebrew School.

By 1927 the school had a kindergarten with a class of 9 children. By 1930 there were 15 students in the two classes; by 1931, 31 in the three classes. In 1944 of the 310 students in all classes, half were boys.

In the course of the years the afternoon school progressed, welcoming children into its elementary grades; in 1924 they extended their program to welcome young people into its middle school for children attending public high schools, of course presenting Jewish culture on a more mature and extensive basis - the predecessor of the future Herzeliyah and Bialik schools several decades later.

Certainly the example of these Yiddish schools led the traditional Talmud Torah to adopt many, or nearly all, of the innovations thus introduced into Jewish education by the radicals whom they had but recently denounced.

In the 1920's the school, led by M.H. Myerson and J. Torchin, began expanding the circle of its active friends outside its ideological sphere, a program which it pursued throughout its history, with Dunsky as pedagogue since 1924, and as vice-principal since 1927.

Zipper recalls first meeting Dunsky on Mount Royal when his pupils in the I.L. Peretz School Dineson Club were singing the same song as those of the People's School's Sholom Aleichem Club. A sudden rainstorm forced the teachers and pupils of the clubs to flee to the armoury on nearby Esplanade Avenue.

"I do not recall what we discussed in the shelter, but I still taste that conversation to this day, the comfort I have felt since of being at home in Montreal." (Areinblikn in Yiddishn Literarishen Shafen, 1983, Pp. 49-50)

The core of the team: Dickstein, an invaluable leader, a man of vision and scope, head of the school for many years; Abe Parnas, loyalist, secular ideologist, anti-clerical yet intimate of rabbis; Mrs. Anne Wiseman, specialist in the training of young children, was hostess to innumerable gatherings, including ten years of regular Friday evening gatherings of graduates.

Wiseman long remembered the comradeship of his pupils - including Isaac Fogel, Joseph Silverman, Pinchas Nachles, Moses Taub and Solomon Rubenstein - who would return after school and after supper and on Friday nights and again on Sunday afternoons to their teacher's home for further long discussions with other graduates and friends on Judaism, on literature and philosophy. There they edited the series Bliende Zwigelach (Blossoming Twigs). In the same tradition were the group visits to concerts and to the Yiddish and English theatre. "These gatherings enabled me to introduce historical, essential Judaism, ancient and modern Palestine and the essential positions of Hebrew and European literature into Jewish education."

Wiseman began Jewish Education Week in English for the Young Judaea organization, then led by Dov Joseph, by his brother Philip Joseph and by Samuel Chait. He was encouraged in this direction by Rabbi Harry J. Stern in whose Temple Emanuel he lectured for several years, as he did at Sir George Williams College, predecessor of Concordia University.

Many of these changes were forced upon the Hebrew-Yiddish schools by the evolution of the parents and of the pupils. Increasingly, these pupils were of Canadian background, each year further from their grandparents' roots in Eastern Europe. Ever more did the pupils demand from anyone calling himself their teacher certain standards of instruction, certain means of communication which the public school system had taught them to expect. The parentteacher-pupil relationship of the Shtetl (even of the modernized Shtetl) simply was not applicable in the new conditions.

Wiseman noted as early as 1940 that "fifteen years ago Jewish rootedness on the American continent was becoming greater and immigrant influence less, Canadian acclimatization more real; the challenge of maximal Jewish education, as proposed by his school, was becoming impossible. The readiness for Torah study in the new generation was weaker. Neither the parents nor the children were prepared for

commitment to long range, profound Jewish education. 'We must admit it is difficult in our time to be a good Jew.' It was clear that if we proposed to continue with the two-school systems: separate English and Jewish schools, the objective possibilities of great pedagogical achievements will become remote. The atmosphere in which the Jewish child lives is becoming less conducive to the achievements of our desires. We require greater and better natural conditions for modern Jewish education.

"It is with these perspectives that the teachers and activists of the People's Schools had approached the day schools program." (Yiddishe Derziung, vol. 4, no. 7, May 1940. Pp. 7-12)

THE DAY SCHOOL

At the end of the 1920's Jewish education entered a totally new phase when some sectors of the Jewish community developed a desire to participate in the administration of the public Protestant school systems where their children were receiving their general education.

The secular Jewish schools, such as the People's School and the Peretz School, proposed another solution of the problems thus raised: the establishment of a separate network of Jewish public schools, parallel to the Catholic and Protestant panels. (Canadian Jewish Archives, new series nos. 2-3)

Wiseman's Jewish People's School in 1927 embarked on a unique independent experiment: with no funds or the other necessary resources at their disposal they established in 1929 their own day schools where, within normal hours, they taught their own children the full public school curricula as well as their own intense passionate programs of Jewish education, in Hebrew and Yiddish, with the ideology of their Labour Zionist movement, of radicalism, Zionism, Jewish literature and history, the backgrounds of religious culture and a voluminous etc.

Eventually the separate school effort succeeded brilliantly all over America, and nowhere more so than in Quebec. But for the immediate chronology, the efforts of the Jewish community, led by the governing sector of Montreal Jewry to secure a place on the Protestant Board of School Commissioners, failed. Basically the Jewish position in education remained frozen until the Quiet Revolution in 1967.

In an atmosphere of frustration Wiseman and Zipper picked up the pieces and indefatigably, with no resources or external support, decided to establish their own Jewish separate school late in the twenties, "with a sense of great privilege and responsibility 'to anticipate and hurry the final end' - a revolutionary effort: for these tiny Jewish schools to assume the functions of the Board of School Commissioners of Greater Montreal!

It was an old deeply-rooted Canadian Jewish program, possibly with European origins, for far back there thinkers were exploring the social and legal foundations for minority and majority convivance, some of which, by 1919, were entrenched at Versailles. That year Simon Belkin had introduced such ideas at the first session of the Canadian Jewish Congress. Before that Leon Chazanovitch and Schneour had written of Quebec and Canadian possibilities in this vein; later B.G. Sack, L. Fitch and Israel Rabinovitch developed the concepts.

The Herculean task of the small school in the proletarian ghetto, limited in its contacts even within the community, fell upon the shoulders of the proud Wiseman whose systematic record constitutes a rare document of pedagogic dedication.

The modern Montreal Jewish school introduced meticulous record keeping as a revolutionary innovation against the old Cheder, as was evidenced by Orthodox pioneer M.E. Levin. For indefatigable Wiseman, his 11-page printed report for the first half of 1937 in an American journal was a religious act. It detailed an analysis of registration: classes and teachers in the two schools, in the day schools and afternoon schools. The day school had grown to 100 pupils in five classes, with increased class hours; school bus problems, conditions of classrooms; parents' mornings in the kindergarten; the principal's contacts with public schools, observing classes in operation, sharing materials, visits with other principals. (The day school

has no formal status in the school system, and one Protestant board officer - where graduates of the Jewish day school would soon be seeking to apply - clearly was not friendly to private schools and has already hinted as much to the Jewish People's School); extra class reading of children's Yiddish magazines; class libraries; singing and choir; advanced classes for graduates; preparing children for teacher training; text books, recommended readings and students' reading circles; world affairs; teachers' literature; student clubs; the school newspaper; Chanukah festivities; pupil correspondence with Vilno and Deganiah schools, and finances. (Yiddishe Derziung, vol. 2, no. 5, June 1938. Pp. 23-33)

Significantly, after each teacher's pedagogical training meeting with Wiseman the Board of Directors of the school received a detailed report of the proceedings.

Wiseman bore in mind the pedagogical value of the intellectuals of the community within the classroom, and retained philosopher-scholar Samson Dunsky and poet-littérateur Mordecai Husid on the upper levels of his staff for many years, together with journalist-poet Jacob Isaac Segal,

Bessarabian-born, Vienna-educated Husid had been teaching in Finland and in Sweden when the Second World War broke out. His collection of stories Formen in Bren (Forms in Flame) was issued in Vilno two years before the conflict. In Scandinavia he played an important role in the dignified cultural life of the community, especially when Jewish refugees from the war zones, including poetess Rachel Korn, arrived in the area. Upon his coming to the New World, he was befriended by the Jewish People's School and soon joined its teaching staff. In Montreal he published two volumes of poetry Doires Schrayen Mir Ariben (Generations Scream over Me), 1959 and A Shotn Trogt Mein Kroin (My Crown wears a Shadow), 1975.

Another experience that encouraged Wiseman, H.M. Caiserman, Zipper and Rabbi Cohen was the Catholic parish school system in the United States. In that country, the classic holy land of the religiously neutral public school, the church had been forced for decades to establish and to finance its own parochial schools. The very term, of American usage, became the Canadian name for the Jewish experience.

The beginning was with a preparatory kindergarten class which became the grade one class of the day school. Two years later another class was added. In 1940 the People's School graduated its first day school class. By 1944 there were 1,000 pupils in the Jewish day schools of Montreal.

"It seemed as if our familiar, homey modest school sought to climb into the alien world and to lose its original character and taste. It took a long time before our day school came to be seen as the cornerstone of education. Even the teachers were slow to recognize the importance of the project which called for much sacrifice in energy and time, to recognize that these efforts raised their pedagogical significance," Wiseman wrote.

The two Montreal Jewish schools executed this ambitious public school program even as they continued the afternoon school activity which had been their mission in the community for nearly twenty years.

THE CATAclySM

Followed the cataclysmic tragedies that befell Jewry in the 1930's when the Germans and their numerous European allies declared a war of extermination upon the Jews of the continent, which happened to be the heart of Yiddishland, as of all Judaism.

The early part of this tragedy of tragedies is the slow recognition of its development; by all humanity, not excluding the scattered Jewries.

Not surprisingly, the educators were among the first to sound the alarm. During the first year of the reorganized Canadian Jewish Congress - a body studiously ignored by most of the community - Wiseman and M.H. Myerson, jointly with H.M. Caiserman and S. Belkin, appealed to Montreal Jewry on March 30, 1934,

"At this trying hour in the history of our people, the Jewish education of our youth is our surest weapon in our struggle for survival, liberation and renaissance.

"We, therefore, respectfully beg to draw your attention to the fact that the Passover week has for ages been the traditional season for enrolling children in Jewish schools.

"In every part of the city there are Jewish educational institutions that answer the particular educational requirements of all Jewish parents. All these schools are now preparing to receive new pupils for the spring and summer seasons.

"We confidently hope that you will do your duty to our people by enrolling your children in one of the Jewish educational institutions of our city."

In mid-war Wiseman addressed the plenary session of the Canadian Jewish Congress,

"I appreciate the great privilege of addressing you tonight at this assembling of the messengers of our young and responsible Jewish community in Canada, met to consult on what we can do for our gravely stricken people and for our own selves.

"I am also overwhelmed by the magnitude of the responsibility which is ours. We are all aware that before we turn to our earnest agenda we must express, however inadequately, the raging storm which is within each of our hearts.

"More than ever before we feel bound with a thousand threads to each shattered, tortured brother in all the corners of the world. We cannot but cry out at this momentous moment our own pain and agony.

"At this moment of deep suffering which dispels all logic we want to confess our guilt towards each of our sisters and brothers who is confined in Hitler's ghettos; who dare not on pain of death emerge a moment into even fractional freedom. We long to sit with him and to empty the glass of bitterness with him. We long to don the yellow badge with him; to sense the abyss of countries, times and generations, to meet him somewhere in the ghetto of Frankfurt, of Mainz or of Rome in the thirteenth century. We simply must clench our fist together with him in spite of all mortal fears, to seek consolation with him and regain human dignity

on Balfour Day, in a Yiddish theatre, before a page of the Talmud, at a reading of Bialik or Sholem Ash.

"The Russians have promised mankind that they are opening ledgers of account to record all the inhumanities which the Nazis are perpetrating against them.

"Who is keeping our accounts? Who among us feels this need, and who does not?

"The recently deceased Dr. Simon Bernfeld attempted to record in The Book of Tears for generations to come the horrors of the Crusaders. He was blinded counting our prayer, 'May you preserve our tears in your chalice that they may be forever.'

"Reb Nathan Hanover attempted to fix in a small volume, Yeven Metzulah some of the inhumanities of the persecutions of the seventeenth century. These few pages resound with Weeping unto Generations.

"Beilinson followed in the same tradition during the heroic days of Palestine in 1936, and the effort shortened his days.

"But why examples? Every Adam in Israel is our registrar of inhumanity towards us; our souls are scarred from testimony of accumulated suffering and sympathy, as the rings of trees tell of their deep age.

"A frightful impatience drowns us: When will we share our bread with our tortured kin, our last warm garment? Even as the worm of doubt and restlessness gnaws at us, are we mature and worthy of this height of humanity and brotherliness?

"Even as our souls are overwhelmed by the mortal fears and grave agonies of our brothers in pain, we are also strengthened by what we learn of their spiritual and physical heroism beyond human power. We wish that from this tribune there come forth, from our hearts, the word of fraternal identification with these our kin; and as well our inestimable pride in the elevation of their souls as they reaffirm their Jewish and their human worth, even as they undergo suffering in the Nazi inferno; above all with the salvation-heroism of our brothers and sisters in Eretz Israel. In our very pains we are strengthened by each report of the exulted military initiative which our Chalutzim demonstrate in the battlefields of Libya and elsewhere even when the Palestine government does not consider it possible to describe them as other than Palestinian; by each report of economic or spiritual positions maintained in Eretz Israel city or village, in Kvutzah or Moshav, each report of new construction or of reconstruction in the remotest north or south.

"In this most earnest moment in the annals of our community we send our prayer that 'the hands of all our brethren who construct the sands of our land may be strengthened - wherever they may be.'

"At the same moment our healthy vital instinct prompts us to believe that we cannot afford the luxury of ersatz-experiences of too readily attained quiet. We must mature by the instrumentality of our will into worthiness and responsibility. We must sense our accountability for the place which we, Canadian Jewry, occupy in our world. What powers do we have to meet the demands which will fall soon upon our shoulders, all too young and weak as we may be?

"This is the sense of our so solemn a gathering. This is the weighty role in which we must see ourselves. Never could any assembly of Jews, wherever it has met, conceive of itself as a limb torn or separated from the trunk of our people. Jews have always seen the interrelations and the links between all the parts of our national body. All Israel is responsible for each other - that is the highest commandment of our life, as individuals and as national communities. Today this interresponsibility is greatly multiplied. Each of us is the spokesman for a great community, a great people in intense straits.

"We are at one with the Jews in America because we have instinctively and consciously felt what Roosevelt and Churchill proclaimed to the entire world - the unity of the English-speaking peoples and their responsibility for the entire world. We have come to feel during the past decades that the Jews of these countries carry a historic responsibility for the entire Jewish people.

"We are conscious of the pride and dignity of being a part of the British Empire, as we appreciate our closeness to the greatest and most important Jewish community in the world - American Jewry.

"We are aware that destiny has decreed that upon the ruins of the deeply rooted and the deeply founded Jewish settlement shall arise the Jewish communities of the American continent; that it is our most sacred duty to become an independent Jewry which will be able to assume the functions of the Jewish nation of the entire world, functions which have fallen from weakened hands. It is thus that we must become the hostel of the Torah, the arsenal of Judaism, the treasury of Jewish ideals and values, the model of organized Jewish group life which is basically rooted in our country and simultaneously enriches its culture as a distinct element.

"We have come to feel that it is our most sublime duty to set down a healthy social economic basis for the life of our group in our countries, as much as possible on the model of the cooperative forms of living which we have established in Eretz Israel and which have brought us fame all over the world. We have come to feel the responsibility as the principal pillar upon which rests our reality of the present and the vision of the future of our work in the land of Israel.

"The providence of the Jewish people has awaited for scores of generations for the day when it handed to us, the Jews of the Americas, the mission of being the Last Generation of Enslavement and the First Generation of Salvation. We should and can be the effective factors in rebuilding a Jewish centre in Eretz Israel and in establishing in our own Tents of Jacob healthy exile peripheries for that centre.

"We are convinced that another vast and grand function awaits us. There is no doubt in our minds, with our inborn Jewish sense of faith, that the present titanic conflict between the forces of darkness and of violence against light and of justice will conclude with victory for our empire and for its allies the Americans and the Russians and for other lands and peoples partially or totally enslaved.

"We are thus deeply convinced because, without this faith not only does this conflict and our very life lose all sense; this conviction entails the assurance that after this victory a just political social and economic order must be set up which will make impossible the recurrence of our present nightmares. We must ready ourselves for that day.

"These are onerous and powerful objectives. We need not fear them. We did not pass, humanly worthy and proudly, through all the Seven Spheres of the historic hell, all the tortures of a cruel world, to lose our courage now in the decisive hour of the Agonies of the Messiah and the Advent of the Messiah.

"At this time, as we witness the Churchills and the Roosevelts, the British Tommy in Libya and Malaya, the civilian Englishman in London and in Manchester, all inspired by the Jewish concept of martyrdom and of confidence; each can be steeled to lead the battle into the minute of triumph.

"We cannot and shall not stop midway. The longer and more difficult the road, the more we evoke from the depths of the Jewish heart the reserves of stubborn faith which has been willed us by Abraham from the furnace, by Daniel from the den, by the Hasmoneans who liberated land, people and the people's soul, by the martyrs of the medieval ages, by the generations of revolutionaries who awakened their lands to liberty and by the Chalutzim who have illuminated the greatest wonder of our history, to revive our land, our nation and our persons.

"It is with this firmness we ready ourselves; with this determination we shall stand until we see victory." (1942)

REALISM

Wiseman was the major proponent of the separate Jewish school movement. He always acknowledged Montreal's debt to Winnipeg's earlier experiment in day schooling which the Quebec metropolis followed with some confidence.

He had been the youngest delegate to the first Canadian Jewish Congress and to the new Jewish Community Council (Vaad Ha'ir). "I put into these campaigns my glowing faith in the role of education in national salvation of our people. It was a painful and a rough struggle, and I was even accused of hoping to benefit from my efforts, possibly 'fat jobs.' Ideologically the decision to enter the program was intense as we fought for a philosophy of a united Jewish people armed with a total and distinct educational program for our children. It presupposed the pedagogic separation of our children. The strongest opposition came from the religious community.

"The day school project had a number of built-in positive features for children and parents: the pupils are not required to attend a second school, with all its demands, after a long fatiguing day in the public school; the Jewish studies programs are integrated into the general curriculum and therefore do not present an additional burden for the children; the Jewish achievements are naturally greater; the total program is carried out in a progressive, national, Jewish atmosphere; in a new revolutionary educational environment, pedagogical innovations are readily introduced to the satisfaction of the pupils," Wiseman wrote.

Neither government nor the Protestant boards were pressing money into Jewish schools, not even into the less wealthy Peretz and People's schools, and Jewish community leaders, rather lukewarm to education even in their own families, were not pressing for public support, as they had been for seats on the Protestant School Commission.

In retrospect Wiseman recorded, "If we achieved a measure of success, appreciation is due primarily to the intelligence and to the profound national awareness of many of the parents and, in addition, to the sensitivity of our activists and teachers in their constant care of the English curriculum presented by the educational authorities. They ensured that our pupils were at least on a par with the parallel classes of the public schools. We always had to please the boards, for at all times some of our pupils transferred to the public schools.

"Several times we sought to determine our status but we received only mild responses. Here and there, some psychological barriers were raised by some principals who were not quite sympathetic."

The Jewish day schools formally petitioned the Protestant Board that the reports and diplomas which they issued, should be accepted. It was a difficult and sensitive process, but essential.

The first contact between Wiseman and the director of the Protestant Board, on the telephone, was discouraging; he could not see the desirability of our plan, which was "contrary to Canadianism; immigrant groups should discard their characteristics; a Sunday school suffices for religious needs. The school board will make its definitive decision in due time. In the meantime, if the parents choose to take their chances. . ."

Wiseman, together with Dickstein, decided to keep this development confidential between the two of them. In fact, the school was not able to open their first class; but the next year the Jewish People's Day School opened, and recognition came. One of the most daring ventures in Canadian Jewish annals was risked and won.

The greater plan was successful from the day they first presented their graduates for admission, without special examination, into high school. Indeed this acceptance came earlier, in some cases, as pupils from these schools had, for some reason, because of geographic removal, been freely admitted into Protestant schools. In the spring of 1940 formal recognition of the Jewish schools' diplomas was accorded.

Wiseman was most gratified to receive Douglas Pope, leader in the Protestant system, and Miss Britain, principal of the prestigious High School of Montreal, to the Jewish school. They expressed their wonderment that Wiseman's school had been able, under such difficulties, in the crowded, reconverted residence, to undertake such an ambitious educational project and such progressive extra-curricular activities.

The Jews of Montreal won their ultimate objective in the spring of 1940. They had created schools of their own, without recourse to public schools or public funds.

Poet J.I. Segal saw its graduates as "heirs of a culture that needs you as urgently as you need it, the realization of a dream which still has the warmth of a dream. During these fate-laden days of 1947, we have all become closer relatives and yearn nationally more for each other than ever. The sufferings of our people have bound us more tightly, by common responsibility, by consoling each other and helping each other to rise above destruction, to build the Land of Israel, the People of Israel. As I sense the beating of your hearts, I feel we have become one large heart." (Jubilee Book, 25th Anniversary, Graduates Society, Jewish People's School, 1922-47, P. 42)

As a profound and articulate philosopher of education Wiseman deepened the intentions of the day school system beyond the convenience of pupils in giving them their full education in one school and within the time frame of normal schooling. Exposing the pupils to a single integrated systematic educational program and objective were clearly healthier and conducive to personal development and to the formation of perception and loyalty which would benefit the future citizen and the Jew of the future.

These were issues beyond the convenience of children and of parents, and called for pioneering pedagogical planning, and Wiseman sought to mobilize the structure of the school and of the teaching personnel to these ends. Indeed, his lectures to the annual teachers' conferences and his writings directed wider professional attention to his broader perspectives and objectives. In the process the community, including board members, parents, graduates and the readers of the serious press, witnessed a creative Jewish thinker at work. The society of Jewish education still remembers his golden years at work in Montreal.

Wiseman recognized the limitations of his day school as long as it was confined to the elementary school system, for one does not educate a citizen in seven grades. For his objective was the emergence of generations of Jewish cultured citizens, of scholars and of creators. Towards the end of his career he saw with

youthful excitement the fulfilment of projects for Jewish day schools on high school level as a step towards the high level creativity in Canada.

Wiseman was the leader, ideologist, pedagogue, executive officer, as well as the academic documentalist and cool observer of the tiny sector of his society. His school maintained complex statistics and, in his reports and essays, he included sharp comments on various radical changes in the immigrant society during his revolutionary 1915-1970. He was interested in the influence upon the children of their immigrant heritage, their altering attitude to Yiddish, the altering social status of the homes and their political orientation.

From the beginning more time was accorded to Hebrew than to Yiddish in the interests of equal status for the two languages. Methodologically, Hebrew was always taught directly from Hebrew, and not in translation from Yiddish or from English. As early as 1927 consideration was given to adopting the "Sephardi" pronunciation of Hebrew in accordance with Holy Land usage. This was actually adopted in 1948, after the establishment of the State of Israel. It is interesting to observe that opposition even then was based on a reluctance to sever the connotation of the language, when taught in the Sephardi mode, from the association with the language in the European synagogue and in Talmudic studies.

As early as 1937 he recognized the looming linguistic assimilation and loss of Jewish life style and alienation from the traditional national and social ideals of our people to which the school was committed.

As Yiddish came to be less often the language of the homes of the pupils and English became the language spoken among the children, the school became concerned for the survival of the language even in the Yiddish schools. As early as 1924 the pedagogical council considered the problem of English being used by the pupils among themselves. "Speak Yiddish" leaflets were circulated. Wiseman long paced the corridors pleading with the children to speak Yiddish.

The People's School was born in change, as a counter-revolution to the I.L. Peretz School (a change of name from the Jewish National Radical School) which had been the totally new school established by the socialist Poale Zion as a secular Yiddish school at its 1910 convention. In 1914 the Hebraist school, more tolerant of Zionism and of tradition, broke away under Yehudah Kaufman to set up the new school, but it continued to change for the succeeding seventy-five years.

"My own position toward religion within education was very positive; more so than that of many of my colleagues in the campaign. I found it difficult to share the stand of my radical socialist friends who were marked by anti-clericalism; their shallow agnosticisms were repugnant to me. Yet I often had to compromise with them in order to advance the separate school program."

Wiseman recorded that "the Jewish People's School was among the first educational institutions in the labour radical society to call for a respectful and tolerant attitude for ancient Jewish social values in spheres where a cheap cynicism was the common attitude to religion and to the traditional life style. This effort was made even as the Yiddish schools sought to legitimize the secular creativity in the nationalist movement, and as our children were taught the current value of modern human development.

"The institution considers the Jewish religion a cultural-historical, moral, national and poetical element of our people," as the platform of the school declared. But

there were differences among its board members. Yet the stand became ever more positive, as the Passover Haggadah entered and expanded in the curriculum.

Wiseman brought his pupils to the synagogue across the street for the reading of the Esther Scroll, just as he taught the text of the Selichot prayers on the eve of Rosh Hashonah.

The prayer book entered the curriculum in the 1930's after a lengthy discussion under the title of "The Geography of the Siddur" and the teachers explained the ideas of the prayers at the levels of the pupils' appreciation.

Later, in the '50s the pedagogic council recommended that the school meet the parents' request for Bar Mitzvah training for their children. Pragmatically this was essential, for otherwise the children would be withdrawn from the school at age eleven for such preparation elsewhere. The program lasted only a few years.

Bible texts were studied, at first from abbreviated texts and later from a more complete program developed by S. Dunsky. At first the teachers taught the Bible classes with their heads not covered, but later the traditional head coverings were introduced.

Public affairs was on the curriculum and extended to reacting materially to social and communal realism by the children collecting moneys for philanthropic and labour causes.

New time intruded upon what had been new ideas, (old time never intrudes upon anything), to the pain even of progressive idealists. So Wiseman more than other observers was hurt when his teachers, whom he considered as colleagues in the monasticism of selfless martyrs for the cause of education, unionized to fight the school for better working conditions.

Even more shocking was the great communist rebellion in 1933 by advanced students and graduates who labelled his school as reactionary, retrograde, anti-labour, etc. (Memoirs of My Life as a Jewish Educator, 52 p. ms)

The realistic achievement of the day schools was not long lost on the rest of the community. The United Talmud Torahs and several congregations established their own religious day schools.

Indeed the program was expanded in the course of the years by the establishment of high schools for the graduates of these Jewish day schools, both by the original secular pioneer schools and by the religious Talmud Torahs.

By 1933 the United Talmud Torahs copied the parochial system and within four years were teaching pupils both Hebrew and English in their exemplary kindergarten and in the extended hours of parochial instruction in modern well-lit classrooms staffed by experienced teachers. (1937 leaflet)

They were followed in 1941 by the Peretz School. (J. Kage)

By November 1946, sociologist Louis Rosenberg listed for Father Stéphane Valiquette the registration of Greater Montreal Jewish Day Schools.

<u>School</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Kinder Garten</u>	<u>Elemen- tary</u>	<u>Junior High School</u>
United Talmud Torahs	480	83	329	68
Jewish Folk Schools	382	51	329	0
Peretz Schools	150	45	105	0
Tomche Tmimim School	148	14	112	22
Mercaz Hatorah School	9	0	0	9
Adath Israel Cong.School	<u>245</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>175</u>	<u>0</u>
Total, Greater Montreal	1414	263	1052	99

Summary

Ultra-orthodox schools	157	14	112	31
Orthodox schools	725	153	404	68
Yiddish schools	<u>532</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>436</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	1414	263	952	99

In the history of Canada, which knows of large sectors of the founding peoples of society developing their own cultural security through the instrumentality of educational institutions, this record of a tiny deprived fraction of an immigrant group dealing successfully with complex educational programs without any resources at its disposal is a secret saga.

For an incredible forty years the Jewish day schools, including the pioneering Yiddish day schools, remained the responsibility and the charge of the Jewish educational institutions which, in fact, made a gift to government and to the Protestant School Boards of the cost of educating these pupils who, otherwise, would have been attending their classes as of right; for the original two schools, probably with greater difficulty.

Rosenberg wrote, "The state-sided school system in the Province of Quebec makes provision for Catholic and Protestant schools only, and all school taxes collected from Jewish taxpayers are turned over to the Neutral Panel and are in turn paid to the Protestant schools, which are attended by the Jewish children.

"The Jewish parochial or day schools, which are maintained by fees paid by parents and voluntary contributions by members of the Montreal Jewish community, give instruction in Jewish religion, Biblical and post-Biblical Jewish history and literature, and the Hebrew and Yiddish languages; and in addition all the secular school subjects included in the Protestant school curriculum are taught by trained certificated teachers.

"In other words, Jewish parents and Jewish supporters of Jewish parochial schools, while paying their school taxes through the Neutral Panel to the Protestant schools, make additional voluntary payment of school fees and donations to maintain Jewish parochial schools."

As late as June 9, 1954 Louis Rosenberg reported to Saul Hayes that "basically the maintenance and growth of Jewish Day Schools must continue to depend in the future, as in the past, upon the willingness of Jewish parents and the Jewish community as a whole, to make the necessary sacrifices to maintain them, rather than upon any assistance which may be forthcoming from municipal or provincial grants.

"It is estimated in the United States that approximately one-third of all Catholic children attend Catholic parochial schools which receive no financial assistance from taxes or state or municipal governments. In the present state of legislation in the United States and in eight of the provinces of Canada, there is little or no possibility that Jewish Day Schools or parochial schools of any kind will ever receive any tax monies or grants-in-aid from municipal or provincial funds.

"To assume that such parochial or day schools can continue to be maintained only if financial assistance is forthcoming from provincial or municipal taxes, would mean that the day schools, whether Catholic or Jewish, which exist in the United States and in the other provinces of Canada outside Quebec, will eventually have to be closed for lack of such assistance."

Even the American church eventually had to reduce their vast parochial school system.

In Quebec eventually rescue came from another source: the Quiet Revolution and the even more spectacular revolution in thinking and acting on education in the province. The ban on Jews in Protestant boards was disregarded and S. Godinsky was among the first allowed to sit in on the Montreal board.

The government, by a variety of steps, arranged for Jewish schools to receive some money. Eventually, in a unique and generous scheme recognized the Jewish schools as private schools of value to the state and worthy of state support.

The development of Jewish education in Canada, from the struggling migration with the ambitious, high-minded idealism of Rabbi Hirsch Cohen, of Noveck, Chaitman, Schneour, Kaufman and Wiseman to Lesage and Gerin-Lajoie, was a difficult, global scale success story half a century long, in a time frame of heroic social and cultural conflict, each classroom and each school structure a Jewish Arc de Triomphe.

For its exhausted militants, most of them nameless veterans, it is the success story of their lives; instead of medals they cherish the cultural visage of their children and pupils at home and the total face of the new community - by and large bearers of the eternal tradition of Judaism which the immigrants had brought with them to an unexpecting New World.

Wiseman was probably the Jewish educator who was the most understanding of the triumphalist pedagogic revolution, of the progression from the homeless classes of the first Jewish Nationalist Radical School to the comparative palaces, to the officially recognized and subsidized modern Talmud Torah and People's and Peretz Schools. As one of the generals of this triumphant army of veterans, he often noted with stoicism that, like all soldiers, these "old timers" recalled with the pain of nostalgia, the hardship and comradeship shared, and of the New Times and newtimers who "altered and betrayed" the ancient commonalty and traditions. But such is the passage of time; he would shrug them off in all loyalty, proud of the better new world.

EDUCATION IN CONTINENTAL AMERICA

In the years of World War II Wiseman formulated his philosophy on "Continental America in our Jewish Education, on an Integrated Jewish Education" which surprised many of his close colleagues,

"Education must bear in mind the complete young person, to prepare him for living in a given society and to elevate it to a higher level. The basis of this objective is the development of habits, relationships, attitudes and aims as the fundamental shaping of his personality.

"Our objective is the education of a Jew as a man whom we define carefully, a Zionist and progressive Jew, a man residing in a given environment, under given cultural, social and political conditions; the person in mutual effectual relations with the environing conditions which also shape his personality.

"The concept of the American Jew is relatively new, unprecedented and as yet undefined, in a new society.

"The Jew in America should be at home with his own perceptions of the continent, in his Jewish community, with the Jewish people of the world and in Eretz Israel, interested in his country's welfare; he is a son of his Jewish community and recognizes his obligations to it; he is prepared to participate fully in the fulfilment of its cultural concerns. Bound as this community is to other communities, the Jew shares the pride and the sorrows of world Jewry, particularly their common ideal of the affirmation of the Jewish homeland in Israel, the spiritual home and the concern therefore, also, of American Jewry.

"Clearly the Jewish educator has a complicated and difficult task before him. It can be resolved only when it is perceived in its entirety.

"The old established community adopted a minimal and diminishing program in order to avoid complexities. Other sectors, such as the extreme orthodox and the radical progressive, proved unwilling or incapable of dealing with the problem of American Jewish education. These elements are relatively new on the continent. They were repelled by the bourgeois melting pot image presented by the assimilationist society. They relied upon the public education system to Americanize Jewish children. Jewish education concentrated on developing Jewish loyalty and disseminating Jewish information. There was no cooperation between the systems or any attempt to integrate them.

"The dominant culture pervaded. The young generation grew into the superficial civilization. Its Jewish loyalties are scarcely visible. Jewish education did stamp its mark upon a certain minority which is closely linked with our Jewish life, but a certain negative element appears there: it considers itself emotionally alien to the land and torn from the mainstream in the deepest sense of the word, uprooted in a sense from life here, both Jewish and American - a guest for the night.

"There also appears a measure of isolationism of their own intensely Jewish sector from all other Jewish communal elements. It was a protest against the bourgeois shallowness, the absence of any culture there.

"But the world is seeking a linkage with universal Judaism and with Jewish achievements in Palestine. They still fear full-blooded Jewish nationalism, the strong air of total redemption which is Zionism. Yet in the process what is relevant is what remains inside the person experiencing educational influence related

to his environment. We must state freely that colourful Jewish life is possible in exile as well as in Israel, even if it is secondary in fullness, nurtured from Eretz Israel.

"Walt Whitman has spoken of America as 'a teeming nation of nations,' and important creative men of culture have been pleading for cultural pluralism.

"Of course, fullest integration is possible only in Jewish day schools where the dualism of general and Jewish education has been abolished and a synthesis of Hebrew and continental culture in education has been created. The day school is an American Jewish school where a child is rooted in Jewish and in American culture. Its Americanism is deep and healthy, the fruit of one philosophy, one pedagogy, one approach to life and to learning." (Gedank un Lebn, vol. 1, no. 2, Dec. 1943. Pp. 129-148)

For decades Wiseman called for a realistic community attitude towards education. He complained before the Canadian Jewish Congress in 1962:

"We hear a great deal of talk about Jewish education being a communal responsibility. It is a generally accepted phrase, nay even a truism, but as yet not a reality. We must insist that this should become a reality for the entire Jewish educational field, including the day school. I single out the day school because even those who favour a Jewish day school education at times state that the Jewish day school is the business of those who want it for their children and who can afford to pay for it, but it is not a communal responsibility.

"I must say that this is wrong reasoning. There is an irrefutable cogency in the following syllogism: the community is interested in Jewish cultural development; the latter possibility is predicated on intensive Jewish education of the Jewish children and adolescents, which seems to be possible of realization mainly in the Jewish day school - which therefore must be considered as a communal responsibility.

"We have heard much talk about the advisability of asking for, or accepting, outside support for the Jewish day school. This is admittedly a controversial subject.

"My friends, as a citizen, as a democrat, I know exactly how I feel about our right to get back some of our school taxes for the maintenance of our Jewish day schools. But I need not take a stand at this point on this question.

"One thing though is clear: that it is misleading to state, as we have heard repeatedly - even today - that the Jewish day schools can stand on their own feet. I tell you, they stand on tottering feet.

"Moreover, I feel that many Jewish day schools cannot exist any longer on the present conditions. I feel, therefore, that we cannot be overly principled and consistent in our objection to getting support from outside sources, unless we are sure where we can get adequate support for the maintenance and development of these day schools." (Presentation at session A Community Shapes its Future through Education, 13th Plenary Session, Canadian Jewish Congress, Toronto, June 21, 1962, P.20)

EDUCATION IN THE NEW SOCIETY

The end of Canada's Second World War suddenly revealed a new Jewish community, a sudden new Jewish demography of Canadian-born, speaking English having forgotten Yiddish, a new urbanism distant from the old waterfronts, new religions in synagogues, new economics, new Jewish-Christian relations, new definitions of Judaisms, changed links with Canadian communities, the United States, Palestine and Europe, new Jewish institutions and new leaders. In a new citizenry every ten-year-old child, woman or man entered a new world of biography. In the post war, post holocaust era he was incapable of fighting for the continuity of the discredited past against the sweep of the new, won in bloody battles.

In Canada, as throughout the post-Victorian world, a remarkable unanimous reaction among the newly-born Jews: everywhere the young spontaneously decided, as an act built of triumph and discretion, to settle together, in new Jewish areas, expressing a significant subtle ideological commonalty, an urbanistic mid-twentieth century paralleling the European eighteenth century which became the home of the advanced twentieth century American suburb. It adopted profound and serious Jewish education, including unwittingly the risky Wiseman day school whose name they knew not, married to the new congregations with such schools attached, suburban branches of the now burgeoning United Talmud Torahs and more independent Hebrew schools allowing for their own form of individualist groups, even the neo-Chassidic chapels they did not understand.

This education in the new Jewish urbanism was a profound phenomenon, because it was not unrelated to the distinctiveness with the Yiddish heritage which had been discarded almost at the moment of the birth of the Canadian-born infant, who was now statistically registered and fatefully weighted Canadian-born as the majority in the nation's Jewry. The parents now removed to new city areas when new construction caught up, the cultural portrait radically altered. First of all, residentially, as the contractors put up suburbs, and then, educationally, as the parents oriented their preferences in regard to their infants' daily timetable, careers and newer Judaism.

Hence new Jewish schools for the Jewish society no longer proletarian, syndical or traditional in ritual, new principles and new principals, in a total Canadian society newly conscious of the need of more intensive, scientific education.

OBSERVING OUR NEIGHBOURS

In the middle 1960's Wiseman was deeply impressed by the great changes that occurred among his Quebec neighbours in the realms of education, within the revolutionary context of the Quiet Revolution.

These changes which deliberately altered Quebec thought and conduct, almost always for the much greater good, led the government to establish, for the first time in many decades, a Ministry of Education, and provided a planning instrument which would establish a frank, well-thought-out, detailed, carefully considered reorganization of schooling in the province.

From its initiation Wiseman was inspired, as he followed the proceedings of the Parent Commission with admiration because of its touching sense of rediscovery, of its modern approach and sound pedagogic psychology, scientific foundation, humanism and concern with the ultimate welfare of pupils. As he told the Canadian Jewish Congress Teachers' Conference in February, 1966, long before the Parent Report was published, with a feeling of jealousy,

"This report and its underlying motivation is obviously an essential part of the ambitious, earnest plans that Quebecers have for a New Era for Quebec. We Jews should be most appreciative of this tendency. We, as a people, have in a short 50 years effected changes in various spheres of our cultural and national life that are really astounding. To cite but two striking examples: the development of modern Hebrew and Yiddish literature and the building of Eretz Israel. Quebec Nationalists keep citing the last instance as a very encouraging example for them to follow. . .

"There is a touching sense of urgency in the Report dealing with the question of teacher training and qualifications. It is not merely pious wishful thinking. The Parent report is in dead earnest about establishing, in the nearest future, much higher standards than have been in practice heretofore. The report is no less insistent on giving fullest scope for the development of the teacher's potential and for the diversification of his interests and abilities than it is with regard to these aspects as they affect the pupils. It is out to give the most scope for teachers' initiative and responsibility. . .

"What is the new projected image for the educational system in Quebec? What psychological impact is this image likely to have on the population in general and on Jewish parents in particular? We should be able to try to conjecture the possible implications of these changes on Jewish education. I feel reasonably certain that the general public will gradually and consistently develop a sense of confidence in the Quebec education system to an unprecedented degree. The public will get the feeling of a very vital, ambitious and far-reaching educational reform taking shape. The educational possibilities will indeed gradually but surely be enhanced considerably. Our Jewish parents, with their classical positive attitude and zeal for education, will be greatly impressed with the changes for the better in the existing school system. More and greater demands will be made on the time of the pupils and on their interests."

Wiseman felt, even before the full report had appeared, that "the document and the official policy that will flow from it will alter the province and its schooling system for the good; that a new society of pupils will soon emerge from all the schools of the province; that the public will gain a new perception and a new

expectation from all schools - Jewish no less than Protestant and Catholic; and that the Quebec solitudes of the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish children and their school universes will be shattered.

"Jewish schools will have to meet higher, and more expensive standards at every pedagogic, technical and administrative level, and their existence will be more necessary than ever to maintain Jewish awareness and cultural awareness.

"In a Quebec society that is advancing and mounting, the Jewish presence will be more precious and richer. This Jewish society will also need to accord to its education and culture a higher priority and a more intense seriousness, as does its ambient environment." (S. Wiseman. The Proposed Changes in the Quebec Educational System and some of the Implications for Jewish Education. Montreal, Feb. 15, 1966; S. Wiseman. "The Changing Educational Scene in Quebec," in View, vol. 20, no. 5, June, 1966, Pp. 2-7)

FAITH IN THE NEWER WORLD

By war's end Wiseman noted that "both in secular Palestine and in atheistic America a strong traditionalist movement has arisen. Militant and consistent atheism has been fading as their leaders search the Bible and the ancient sources of Jewish culture for the roots of a profounder folk culture and a place for Bar Mitzvah and for Sabbath observance. Leaders of radical institutions are attending synagogue," he wrote in his "Our Generation in Search for God" in Gedank in Lebn, "Thought and Life," vol. 3, no. 2, July 1945. Pp. 63-87)

"This is doubtless related to the horrifying events of the decade, an attempt to find refuge from terror in the folds of the popular spirit which always found expression in religion; or is it an instinctive clinging to comrades and to kin in the common historical faith in the God of our ancestors?

"To a certain extent this return to religion is our form of condemnation and contempt of non-Jewish society which has been so evil to us, and this evil is an organic element in the Great Evil from which so many in the non-Jewish world still suffer. These non-Jews include those who were silent in the face of the Great Evil at its most active years, who succumbed to the psychic pathology of the evil deeds of a minority. Yet our Talmud justifies acquitting whoever is dominated by his sorrow. . .

"Some of us seek to control ourselves because we feel that our development as a national and cultural society is organically bound with humanity; outcry and isolation are not an option for us. Even before the shattering of its walls, the ghetto was never hermetically sealed. We must assist humanity to awake from the reactionary nightmare which we share with it.

"As a group which has not yet lost the last trace of self-respect, our condemnation is a natural and healthy reaction.

"In the course of recent years experience with the further development of our current Yiddish culture has both gratified and disappointed us. During the past twenty years it has produced mature good fruits, but it has not been what we had expected. We no longer experience the old religious joy of the harvest. We are no longer assured that the secular phenomena of merely speaking either Yiddish or Hebrew can feed the Jewish spirit emotionally, as did the ancient religious values and forms of living. Except for Zionism, we seem to remain without a foothold in our personal and in our communal life, and we are afraid for our ability to remain faithful to Jewish life. We therefore search again for what we have nearly lost.

"Such signs of national health show in our efforts for Zionism, our cultural activism, in our heightened national awareness. The return to our faith is natural.

"One aspect of the search for God is a reaction to nationalism and to materialism and the faith in the omnipotence of reason. This appears in the arts and in philosophy, in the return to myth and to primitive instinct.

"In truth, we had never burned our bridges; a comfortable road is open to the gates of repentance, to the royal road to the historical folk life of our people. We inevitably fought the hegemony of dogmatic religion in the name of modern secular nationalism. Jewish life of the past decades - Zionism, our social

movements, our construction of Palestine, modern Jewish culture, even the renaissance of the Jewish faith, even the revival of Chassidism as a vital positive force in our contemporary society, not to speak of our position as a nation among nations - could have taken place without our secularist campaign against the old religion and against clericalism. This conflict has inscribed a colourful page in our rich history.

"But that war is over. It is no longer necessary, unless we are blinded by hatred of the vanquished enemy who has in fact disappeared. We can look about us without hatred, at a universe without victors or vanquished, and ask: did the enemy possess something positive or useful for us?"

"The current manifestations towards religion favour the deepest foundations of religion: belief in the human spirit, his search for sanctity, for the elevation of human life, his utmost refinement and spiritualisation of the universe, that it may be filled with the knowledge of God as the sea is full of water.

"As we sought to liberate ourselves from orthodoxy we considered ourselves inspired by our vision faithful to our people, free to breathe the air of a true religion, an elevation of the soul, a poetic-philosophical conception of divinity which can achieve the pure national historical form of Judaism. We defended the irreplaceable sanctity of the Holy Land. Our nationalism is permeated with eternal longings, Messianic redemption. Our Chalutz movement is the purest revelation of Jewish religious renaissance.

"Ours is not a faithless generation. We believe in the eternity of our people and its ultimate place in the family of free nations as the bearer of world culture."

THE BOTTOM LINE

The greater "the acceptance" of Jewish education by the community, the more critical Wiseman became of what was so widely accepted. For him to be silent or to flow with the stream was to deny his true person.

Wiseman was bold, even to the point of discourtesy, in facing the conventional discourse on education. With reluctance he addressed the Canadian Jewish Congress in 1962.

"I am becoming increasingly mistrustful and impatient when I hear public talk on Jewish education - even when I myself do the talking. You are probably aware of the oft-quoted saying of George Bernard Shaw that when he hears talk about patriotism he puts his hands in his pockets. To paraphrase: I get rather restless and sad when I hear talk on Jewish education.

"I actually sense a certain degree of danger in this kind of talk. I feel that there is in it a degree of self-hypnosis, that it is a sort of ersatz action. There come to my mind the well known phrases of the prayer book beginning with 'May it be Thy Will as if. . .'; 'May we pay with words instead of sacrifice.'

"This feeling is due to the ever-present tragic urgency in the present state of Jewish day schooling. It is because of this urgency that I forcibly overcame my reluctance.

"The dire fact is, that, as yet, we educate by far the larger part of the rising Jewish generation to near-illiteracy. How then, can we square this with our heavily-laden fateful words such as Jewish cultural continuity and the trans-mission of the Jewish heritage?

"I am scared by this generally pervading near-illiteracy, because in such a cultural atmosphere there can be very little scope for cultural creativity, even on the part of the tragically small minority which does get at present a maximal Jewish education. The Jewish Am-Haaretz (ignoramus) of my home town in the Ukraine was in a sense more cultured than a good number of our present Jewishly-educated people, because my home town Am-Haaretz imbibed Jewish culture, Jewish folklore, and Jewish values from the generally pervading high Jewishly-cultured atmosphere of Jewish living and Jewish learning.

"My friends, the time has come to apply to ourselves a strong shock treatment, to face the facts of Jewish education and to honestly and realistically evaluate our achievements.

"While in a city like Montreal, some twenty years ago, 90% of all Jewish children attending an afternoon school were found in 5-day elementary Jewish schools, at present a 5-day Jewish school is a very rare phenomenon indeed! Why, it is almost an extinct species!

"The preponderant majority by far of those attending the elementary afternoon school attend only 3 days a week, and at that, only 3 school years. I ask myself, what is the equivalent of that education? By equivalent I mean the amount of actual learning in terms of hours, material covered, etc. and, by implication, what is even more important, what is its value in terms of its possible influence on adult Jewish cultural predisposition? What will the 3 years of Jewish education mean

to the present pupils in their adulthood in terms of Jewish cultural identity, for the purpose of enabling him to be a 'Yiddisher mentch'?

"I must, in all honesty say, that its value is not more than one year of regular schooling in a regular school. Imagine a situation in the Western hemisphere which would bring up its young on one year of public schooling! So much for the afternoon school.

"What about our day school - the much-vaunted day school, which I honestly believe to be the apple of our eye? Even here 7 years of day school is at best equivalent to 4 years of elementary public school and no more. I ask you my friends, under such conditions how dare we talk in terms of Jewish cultural continuity and Jewish creativity? Since when have we Jews been deluding ourselves so much? To delude ourselves so tragically in this most vital element of our existence!

"We must set up the best public relations machine ever devised to convince Jewish parents that evening school must mean at least seven years, with a larger number of hours than prevails now in our evening schools. We must create an atmosphere of public opinion wherein a measly minimum of Jewish education should be unthinkable. We must gear the desirable minimum to an acceptable standard for Bar Mitzvah and Bath Mitzvah.

"Is it really unthinkable that we can create an atmosphere where Jewish men and women in Jewish communal life would be uncomfortable unless they give their own children a socially accepted minimal standard of Jewish education?

"I maintain that this would be possible - but not until that 'hefkayress' - the immoral anarchy now prevailing in afternoon Jewish education - is done away with. Otherwise, the People of the Book will become the cultural gypsies of the world.

"If we realize this, there is a hope for the afternoon school. For this hope to become a reality there will have to be a communal responsibility for the curricular standards of the afternoon school. This is a prerequisite for doing away with mock graduations, where the richness of the ceremonial and the high tone of celebration is in an inverse proportion to the amount of learning these graduates have enjoyed during their stay in the elementary school.

"The cataclysms, of course, together with their equally vast antithesis, the establishment of the State of Israel, altered every phase of Jewish life, not least education and the shaping of the successive generations of the new Jewish populace. During the same decade the Jewry of Canada also freely altered from a Yiddish-born society to the anglophone nature. The biography of every Jew turned sharp corners; not least Jews rooted in Europe, concerned with rooting in the New World, and those who helped the Jewish nation and their modern children root again into the social sod of Israel." (Presentation at Jewish Education session of 13th Plenary Session, Canadian Jewish Congress, Toronto, June 21-24, 1962, Pp. 14-21)

Within a decade of Wiseman's address before the Congress 1962 Plenary Session his vision of the new Quebec, as presaged by the current thinking on education, began to take shape. The new province acted not only on the pedagogic arena but no less wherever the Jewish society was touched. The function of the citizen altered as the future Quebec was being planned and structured and its progressive

state was given shape by a generation of dreamers and planners who devoted themselves to the welfare of the young generation and their progeny.

In the new more democratic time, the role of the wealthy was reduced, and social services were taken over by the state. Health care was taken over by government. Hospitals and the care of the indigent was placed in the hands of social practitioners; the denominational structure lapsed. The cross disappeared from the institutions of health care. The fear that the religious and national culture of the province would be destroyed was unjustified. The Quiet Revolution proved to be progressive and fair. The Jewish Hospital remained Jewish, the CLSC structure respected the urban quarters inhabited by Jews and often staffed them with ethnic nurses; the Jewish nature of the Baron de Hirsch services remained and the sensitivities of clients and trained workers as deeply respected as ever.

The professional attainment of such experts as Allied Jewish Community Services' Manny Batshaw and of Maimonides' Louis Novack and medical stars as Dr. Phil Gold and Harold Segall continued to shine in the Quebec firmament.

Most spectacularly, in the sensitive realm of education, within this assumption of social responsibility for the life of the citizenry by the state, the government's ministry of education accepted responsibility for better schooling, with newer structures, clearer curricula and for wider cultural strata, including Jewish.

Jewish parents and pupils who preferred to continue in Protestant schools - now with Jewish instructors at will - were encouraged, with no church complaints that Jews were robbing the religious institutions. But for parents who preferred it, the growing number of Jewish day schools were encouraged. These schools were recognized as agencies of public service and, their instruction in the three "Rs" was subsidized.

These formal changes in the vital constitutional status of the community were openly negotiated by government with Jewish institutions and agencies such as the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Allied Jewish Community Services, the Jewish schools and social work agencies. Jewish specialists, including newly-arrived francophones, were put on this civil service in many cases.

In the area of education, the leaders were the Talmud Torah president Ben Beutel and Canadian Jewish Congress director Saul Hayes in the new political and cultural climate.

The community sensed the injustice it was suffering in being forced to subsidize the Protestant Board by educating in its day schools, at its own expense, many hundreds of Jewish pupils who otherwise would be attending the Protestant schools as of right. In retrospect it is clear that organized Jewish desires in the case was important. This had not been there for the forty years that the impoverished Jewish day schools had been bearing the burden.

What mattered was the Quebec post-Parent political climate and social conscience. Quebec became the unique jurisdiction to recognize the status of Jewish schools.

The history of Jewish education - indeed of all phases of Canadian Jewry - is marked by double crises when, in the inevitable course of time, the community no longer consisted only of the European-born bearers of the wealth of the Zipper-Wiseman tradition but now also of the children, and soon of the adults,

who had been born in Canada, educated here, secularly and Jewishly, and experienced Canadian life.

This great cultural revolution coincided in time with the destruction of European Jewry, with the infinity of its consequences, to this day not fully understood outside of Israel. Those who had been born in Europe, who of all the survivors felt the impact of the catastrophe most deeply, may be said to have been struck into a silence by its ineffability of the catastrophe, not least the artists and poets dedicated to expressing it.

Zipper identified with Dr. Ignace Zigelbaum, the leader of Polish Jewry who committed suicide in the free world where he had come during the war, futilely, to plead for the world's understanding of the tragedy. This frustrated silence and helplessness marks Canadian Jewish social and cultural history on this level, not least the educational and linguistic development since 1940, with the demise of undefended Yiddish culture in particular.

At a moment not without its embarrassment in 1976, five years after his retirement, Zipper addressed a festive dinner in the impressive Shaar Hashomayim Congregation in his honour and in honour of Shloimeh Wiseman. He recalled "the beginnings of secular schooling in 1913, with a score of children whom we had found in the first narrow room loaned by the pressers and bakers unions in the Prince Arthur Hall. It is difficult to remember the double parlours where the school came to be located, with insufficient coal for the Quebec heaters.

"In the cold, the teachers would strike a melody and all would stamp their feet, and begin to dance to warm up, and tell a folk tale in its fullest dimensions.

"The vision and the dream of scope were great. The difficulties and the isolation were not less than our desires, but we succeeded in creating a warm environment, and we often found colleagues who encouraged us."

Noting, on this festive occasion, the clear failure of the original dream in the light of the present social success of Canadian Jewry, he shook "in guilty betrayal of having survived the deceased idealists on both sides of the ocean and now in obedience to the canon of the succeeding generation, not even uttering the ancient hymns and oaths of earlier ages, of the fidelities of Bialik, Leivick, Lamdan consenting in essential silence to the new architecture of satiety. He dared utter, 'We tremble for the new, happier age, adapted to present conditions. We fear that our quest for contemporaneity and novelty may lead us to lose the foundations of the soul of earlier time. I tremble because the greatness, wealth and power of the centuries of Jewish custom had been in each epoch the outgrowth of earlier, eternal time, as distinguished from evanescent, from the limited time of a recent life span. In our materialistic universe we forget these distinctions, and we measure all values by their immediate utility on the short scale.

"Each of us is only a messenger performing his function in time. Our attitude to our cultural development and treasury depends on this understanding of the persons who work with us. For what we create in our time is vivified by the eternal impulse, in its own period, and woven into the eternal web."

AS CANADIAN TIME PASSES

Time has been very eventful for Jewish education in Canada in several directions. For one, children have been born all along as ancestors pass on.

Fifteen years after Zipper's coming, by 1941, the younger half of the community, the pupils in Jewish schools and many of their parents, were Canadian-born, and their home environment was no longer immigrant Yiddish. The Zipper world was changing rapidly and permanently.

Another great event: by 1948 a vast migration flooded Canada, including many Yiddish enthusiasts, builders, creators who seemed to be able to reconstitute the demographic Yiddish loss. They joined the Zipper, Wiseman, Dickstein, Zuker forces with their literary spirits - the Rachel Korn, the Melech Ravitch, the Mordecai Husids, the Hertz Grosbards, the Yehudah Elbergs, the Chaim Spilbergs - in the schools and in the Library, in publishing Yiddish books, in the lecture programs, in the Yiddish press.

It was a new Yiddish age in Canada. It enabled the immigrant society to build an architectural monument for the Jewish Public Library, the cherished home of A.M. Klein and Dr. S. Petrushka, designed by Harry Mayerovitch, artist-architect. Jean Bruchesi, personal representative of Premier Duplessis, opened the impressive building at the corner of Mount Royal and Esplanade with its sign in four languages: French, English, Hebrew and Yiddish, the first such in the Jewish community, in October, 1953. The spokesman for the Library responded in French.

The Jewish People's School moved to a large building at Waverley and then to Snowdon, at Westbury; the Peretz School moved to Cote St. Luc from 120 Duluth St.

The Quebec Minister for Cultural Affairs formally entertained poet Melech Ravitch at a dinner at the provincial pavilion at Expo '67.

Yiddish books by Canadian authors flowed from the Montreal presses and won international literary prize after prize. The Library conducted its People's University with its courses by Irving Layton and by great scholars from three continents. Literary evenings were convened several times a week. It instituted a children's theatre under Dora Wasserman who also directed the drama group of the Jewish People's School - before she assumed leadership of the Yiddish Theatre at the Saidye Bronfman Centre. It was the golden age of Yiddish culture in Canada.

But history avenged itself with the weapon of demography. The children and grandchildren of the first immigrants now were anglophone at birth. This was also the experience of the survivors of the Holocaust who immigrated after the war, and of their children born in Canada. The immigrants and the artists among them passed away, and the Yiddish afterglow faded all too rapidly, leaving a precious bibliography as a heritage.

Wiseman and Zipper lived not only the success and growth of their educational program but, spectacularly, to see multicultural Canadian and Quebec philosophy adopted by the total society. In its own inventive manner the liberal governments that followed the Great Darkness of the Groulx-Duplessis period, introduced Jewish schooling, in its revolutionary program, largely in the scheme of private schooling,

and proved willing to include Jewish day schools in the network of institutions that serve the interests of society.

In his maturity Wiseman formulated, with his consistent analysis, the major lines of educational life within the community. "How to educate a generation oriented on the vision of the Return of Zion, simultaneously integrated into Canadian and American Jewish life and into Canadian and American culture? It is essential that, in the midst of daily classroom work, we do not cease to deal with the questions that stand at the supremacies of the universities. I do not compromise in my Zionist orientation based on Israel and in my open positive stand on migration to Israel. I strain no less on educating children for living in Canadian exile as intensively and as creatively Jewish as is possible.

"I am not less aware of the need to create a Jewish generation who will live in the larger Canadian non-Jewish universe. Herein is the key to the success or failure of our educational effort. I demand, with no compromise, maximum Jewish education, maximum Jewish loyalty and maximum Zionism. It is a heavy-laden, dangerously packed education, but there can be no less." (Shloimeh Wiseman Buch. Montreal, Jewish People's School, 1961; Antologie Canadish, ed. by Samuel Rojansky. Buenos Aires, YIVO, 1974. Pp. 366-85)

The time came for Wiseman and Zipper to retire, honourably, in good health, together with Samson Dunsky, world authority on the Midrash, and with poet Mordecai Husid.

A sad but honourable phenomenon came at this time. For the half century of their careers the two schools had remained distinct, though nearly identical, in their work. Questions did arise, in some circles: why two schools? The illogical but sufficient answer: it was an ancient Montreal tradition, and it served to perpetuate two distinct Hebraist-Yiddish cultural personality traditions. When the two pedagogic giants retired from their veritable thrones, their two schools merged.

Inevitably - or fortunately - the years followed. Wiseman was widowed, left alone, the children far away. His mind remained alert. In the '70's he brushed up on his classics and translated Marcus Aurelius from the Latin and Epictetus from the Greek into Hebrew, as he had, years earlier, published American short stories for the benefit of Hebrew readers.

EDUCATION - PROTESTANT SCHOOL 1960's

A gift to the National Archives of the Canadian Jewish Congress by a prominent lawyer who played a leading part in the negotiations has clarified the circumstances which a quarter of a century ago ended over sixty years of fundamental discrimination in education against Montreal Jews.

The story of how an injustice to Jewish school children, their parents and even to the Protestant School Board, which itself had initiated the discrimination against Montreal Jews ninety year ago, is documented in the personal file which retired advocate Samuel Godinsky, a leading figure in the historic rectification of 1965, has now placed in the Congress Archives for the benefit of researchers.

In 1903 arrangements were completed for the admission of Jewish children into the schools of the Board of Protestant School Commissioners - the children, but not their parents. Their fathers and mothers were stubbornly refused membership on the Protestant Board or any say in the education of their children there.

Initially Jewish immigrant children were a financial burden upon the Protestant Board, but this was soon enough corrected as more and more Jewish parents became substantial property owners and taxpayers, and as corporation and neutral tax funds were drawn upon to balance these accounts. In time the presence of the Jewish pupils became a major reason for the increasing revenues of the Protestant Board, to the detriment of the Catholic commission.

In the meantime, for 35 years the Jewish day schools received no public or tax support as they educated hundreds of Jewish pupils who otherwise would have attended Protestant schools as of right.

In 1947 the Outremont Board of School Trustees decided arbitrarily to close its doors to the 1565 Jewish pupils out of its 2300 school population. The claims of the Jewish community to participate in the administration of their children's schools were contemptuously ignored.

The condition remained with no symptom of redress until 1964, when the Catholics claimed for their own schools a portion of the neutral tax revenues, "the handsome profit" which the Protestant Board was making by drawing upon the neutral school tax revenues as compensation for educating the Jewish children. The Protestant authorities felt that now the Jewish parents -and the Canadian Jewish Congress - might be a potential ally, in the new ecumenical age!

Paul Guérin Lajoie, minister of education, told the Private Bills Committee as it dealt with Bill 190 that the government gave the Parent Commission on Education specific instructions to find a new formula to ensure the greatest possible liberty for parents in choosing schools for their children, in conformity with their religious convictions as well as their maternal language.

"It is another illustration of how Quebec and its population, largely Catholic and of the French language, chooses to treat its minorities, as it takes measures to ensure schools where they can educate their children and participate in their administration".

Saul Hayes, the national executive of the Jewish Congress, called upon advocate Samuel Godinsky on October 27, 1964 to act as liaison between the Congress

committee and the Protestant Board spokesman T. P. Howard. Within weeks the Board recognized the Jewish claim; "the principle of equality is the first and greatest principle of justice," as it submitted to the historic Parent Commission on Education, even as they agreed to petition that the legislature add the names of five Montreal Jewish representatives on the Protestant board. (Feb. 15, 1965)

The Congress as early as this time felt it necessary to explain to the Private Bills Committee of the Legislative Assembly in French the long background of the very irregular educational condition of our children.

"The historic ties link the Jewish immigrants since 1880 to Montreal and led them to settle in this city, largely Anglophone and a centre of commerce and industry, and in other urban areas in Quebec in the light of their history in the eastern and central European countries of their origin, where by medieval legislation they were forbidden to own land.

"This explains why the Jewish immigrants confided the education of their children to Protestant schools, particularly as the educational program of the accessible public schools of the majority seemed 'excessively Christian' for pupils of the Jewish faith.

"Historical pressures and the nature of the schools at this time led the Jewish community of the time to align themselves culturally and linguistically with the Anglo-Saxon community of Montreal. It was in fact a reversal of the normal condition, for it is well known that in the 19th and 20th centuries, the great majority of emigrants adhered to the majority culture of the lands which welcomed them.

"So accidents of history - French colonial policy, the demographic structure of the Jewish community and the types of educational systems available in the major public schools of Quebec - forced the Jews to place their children almost completely in the sphere of the Protestant Anglo-Saxon minority.

"When the Fathers of Confederation edited article 93 of the BNA Act, they could not take into consideration the tiny Jewish community of Montreal and Quebec of the time within its historical limitations.

"It should be clearly understood that the historical pressures to which we have had to submit in education with the Anglo-Saxon Protestant community were not created by the Jewish community.

"We submit: the Jewish community cannot remain deprived of its rights in the realm of education. If a very democratic attitude cannot be adopted because of the BNA Act, at least, the risks deriving from its implementation must be limited to the strictest interpretation. Parliament several years ago added to the authority of the Protestant Commission powers of supervision in areas such as Côte St. Luc which were unknown in 1980 where 87% of the population is Jewish.

"The Jewish community has always entertained the hope that the confessional system will be replaced by public schools which will fulfil the needs of a truly bilingual community. It does not surrender the hope for the early establishment of an educational network based on linguistic and cultural norms and not on confessionalism. When that happens we shall no longer be engaged in debate we have to-day.

"We recognize that, as we appear before the committee on private bills on Laws 139 and 190, that the present system is transitory and that the changes and recommendations brought forward are only provisional. Whatever the difficulties, the constitutional impasses and the history of our school system, we find it inconceivable that in the third decade of the twentieth century an impressive group of loyal and patriotic citizens can be told that their educational rights are based on a narrow outdated public school system, as we note the gigantic evaluation in metropolitan Montreal. All who are endowed with good sense, who live by democratic principles, who demand justice and equity can find the maintenance of such a system only revolting.

"The position of the Jewish community should be clearly understood: it is based on three of its concerns: its dignity, its status and its prestige. Until the day of radical change in our present educational system the community will be part of the Protestant system and will participate in its administration. Under those circumstances we should need to involve ourselves equally in its financial problems and we demand that the necessary funds be provided so that the Protestant system can remain vigorous and progressive and able to dispense to the pupils in its institutions the teaching appropriate to the needs of new Quebec.

"We are not and do not pretend to be competent in this matter. Never having had a word to say in the administration of the schools where our children attend by tradition, we cannot be expected on the eleventh hour to know all the details, to have the experience of other groups, to be able to evaluate experience or to express pertinent opinions. The right of representation should have been accorded us since many years. In such a situation we would to-day be very useful in the discussion of finance.

"We reiterate: since in the light of history we have been integrated into the Protestant system, we expect the right of expression and are authorized to plead in general terms for the subventions required for the maintenance of the present Protestant system. We hope these arrangements will only be temporary, and that in the present conjuncture of the progressing revolution which Quebec is witnessing during this third of our century the citizens of our province will be given the possibility of becoming truly bilingual and bicultural. The Quebec heritage belongs to all. If these advantages do not benefit our children, let us hope that their children will benefit from them. In our view the only method of reaching this condition is by setting en route a schooling system founded on these linguistic and cultural objectives."

Early in June the Private Bills Committee settled on a bill to which provided for a sharing of the neutral panel of tax proceeds which favoured the Catholic Board. (Gazette, June 4, 1965)

On August 3, 1965 the Lieut-Governor approved the nomination of Joseph Caplan, Harvey Golden, Mr. Godinsky, Leon Kronitz and Harold Lande - nominees of the Canadian Jewish Congress - as the first Jewish members of the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal. In principle they were named for a five year term; initially each of these Jewish citizens would sit for a shorter term and would be replaced by a successor for the full term. Mr. Godinsky was named for a three year term.

Mr. Godinsky sat on the Protestant Board until January 1972. He resigned from the Board "in the interests of democracy", to make room on the Protestant Board for Mrs. S.L. Kaplan, the nominee of the Westmount school board. "Gallantry not Dead", the Westmount Examiner headlined on January 27, 1972.

A KOL NIDREI INTIMACY

Jacob Zipper was a great chronicler of Judaism, from Abraham, the Baal Shem Tov, classic Polish Jewry, holocaust, and migration from Yiddishland to Canada where he built Jewish schools in the west and in Quebec and added great volumes to Hebrew and Yiddish literature.

He tells of a Kol Nidrei experience in an informal chapel, a prayer room and study chapel, with a leader who only at times repeats an unpretentious word of Torah learning, with no sexton or cantor:

"Naturally Jews cling to each other during the days of Rosh Hashonah, the days of repentance and the Atonement Day. This year I came early before Kol Nidrei, to concentrate on the Purity prayer, before the services begin. Soon the room is crowded, pushing the walls apart. It is already very dark outside. No one in the restless crowd knows the circumstance of the delay.

"In the front the ordained leader of the service stood with two others with prayer shawls covering their backs. Then the three men open the Ark, remove the Scrolls and parade solemnly to the Reader's table, followed by a thin starved young man, his face barely visible under his mop of hair topped by a skullcap which all but covers his forehead; only his beard remains visible. His broad oversize prayer gown hangs purposelessly over his shoulders. He, too, is walking by measured steps to the reading table, but nevertheless he seemed to be hastening, as if fearing someone would stop him. He quickly throws his prayer shawl over his head. We can see a firm set of trembling shoulders as he hears our leader in prayers inside with a broken heart, but nevertheless with fiery celebration,

"By the authority of the Lord in His Place and by the authority of congregants here assembled, we permit prayers with sinners," our leader declared the proceedings under way.

"The strange person scarcely waited for the formal declaration, when he bowed down and let out a strange tone as from a deep well, a cry, a call and a weeping Kol Nidrei; their unclear sounds not of identifiable words. After the one reading, he repeated his sobbing, choked. His third repetition was less clear, as if it was his lonely isolation that was seeking a voice.

"The congregation shivered. They sought to assist him by humming the traditional melody, but he persisted in swallowing the words of his prayer three times. After concluding, he remained standing erect, his prayer shawl hiding his head, trembling as the Scrolls were replaced in the ark, and the leader of the services began looking about, in a voice not his own.

"It seems as if his features were also not his own; this astounded us no less than the remarkable Kol Nidrei. That man was still standing shaken in his place, pulling his prayer shawl tighter over his head as if he were hiding in it, as if seeking to disappear in it.

"Our leader was as much shaken as the man who had rendered the Kol Nidrei so unbefittingly. He called the mumbling assembly to order by slapping the reading stand before him, and began in a pleading voice.

"You probably wonder why I let our leader in prayer come before you. I must admit I have known all along that he had never led the prayers even on a week day. If you are angry at him and at me, I beg the pardon of each of you. During the days before this sublime evening I had been considering what I should do, and the test to which I am exposing you. But I felt that you are merciful men, the sons of merciful ancestors, when you will know what he had experienced, and his voice broke through his emotions, and he stuttered, 'you and the Creator will pardon us both for not hearing the sanctified tradition of Kol Nidrei but a rendering which has no equal, of which God alone knows the secret.

"I have known this man only several weeks, since he came from the other side. With great difficulty he has searched out a distant relative. He came to visit me, and at our first meeting he appealed to me, "Rabbi, I want to be Bar Mitzvah. You have to help me. I know I am not of that age, but I never became Bar Mitzvah. I was never called to the Torah. I never prayed before the Reading Stand."

"He saw my confusion; I was seeking an excuse to refuse him, but he would not let me say a word. "Hear me, rabbi, and you will see." I sat and I heard a tale which, the Lord may protect me, darkened the light of my eyes. I felt that I could not but promise him, to make him Bar Mitzvah in this extraordinary manner. I felt that it needed to be so, that we need to witness what we have just heard, a Jew weeping out his Maftir as he becomes Bar Mitzvah! May the Lord assist him to Torah to the Canopy and to Good Deeds.

"Our text says, "There are many openings for the Lord." but not all are open to us to know where they lead and what is hidden behind them. I know not the mystery of the Kol Nidrei-Maftir. All I know is that a fortnight before Reb Yoseph's Bar Mitzvah - this is the name of the leader of our service tonight - the great Deluge opened up. His parents and their household were among the murdered of his village.

"It is beyond my powers to convey what he experienced. It is to shame the species of mankind to speak of it. He lay amid the heap of corpses, fainted in the darkness, in a rainstorm, discovering a hand of his that moved, a foot. He crawled and eventually found partisans, some of whom acted humanly towards him, let himself be useful for them, and once even took him to one of their actions and praised him for his courage. But the others wanted to be rid of him and of the several other Jews in the group. What kept him alive was lying at night repeating the Bar Mitzvah benedictions and the Maftir melody which took him to another universe, with the faces of his home.

"Often his neighbour would poke him, "What are you muttering? Forget what was. Sleep."

"Whenever he could, he dug deeper in the forest and there sang out loud what had remained in his memory. When he noticed that he was forgetting words and melody, he vowed never to let a day pass without repeating the Maftir; he found it helpful to weep as he sang it to himself.

"All this he could do only deep in the forest, for the mean ones mocked him with ugly gestures as they tortured him in ways that are shameful to describe. When he would come to, his humiliated bones were trembling with shattered Bible passages.

"He quit the partisans and wandered wherever his feet took him, avoiding settlements and walking over obscure trails, repeating the benedictions in his memory; he still knows not how long.

"Crawling on all fours he was once discovered by a man with an angry crooked mouth speaking a language he barely understood. "Who sent you here to spy on us?" He could not answer, he only wept out the benedictions with their melody. The man suddenly softened and ordered food to be given to him.

"May all Israel be redeemed as compensation for his suffering, for even lying on the ground in his Siberian prison, the melody of the Haftorah did not forsake him. He believes it is by virtue of this remembering that he survived the tortures of those camps.

"But just as there is no limit to the evil in man so there is no limit to the unexpected miracles granted him through human agencies that enabled him to reach Vladivostok, then to steal across borders, to fall into Japanese hands who sent him to Harbin where he eventually found Jews who shipped him to Shanghai, where he felt the melody become clearer but confused with the Kol Nidrei. He then swore that, should he ever reach a Jewish settlement, he would perform the Bar Mitzvah. Now he is with us sobbing, "I have forgotten the Maftir but the melody gives me no rest."

"We cannot deny him. We have been granted the weeping of a broken heart that splits the heavens with its horror and claims, animated by the voice of the Torah trembling with vividness demanding the response from Him, "I shall forgive you, as it said," and by the virtues of this man, and with the power of his melody, we shall all seek to win the verdict of a good year. Let us all congratulate Reb Joseph. Mazel Tov!"

As the prayers resumed, I distinctly heard the Sinaitic sweetness of each word tangibly as out from a hidden world, the generations singing with us, with time in a dimension unlimited.

(Zipper tells this tale in his "From the Stones of Our Time" in his Fun Nechten un Haint, From Yesterday and Today. Montreal, 1978. The incident was also described by Dr. Isaac Fine in the 1976 New Year's issue of Der Yiddisher Kemfer.)

GLIMPSES INTO LITERATURE

In 1970 Zipper edited the Hebrew Yiddish Pinkas Tishwitz, a remarkable volume in the series of memorials to European Jewish community history and to its holocaust at the hands of the Germans and their allies at mid-century. (Tel Aviv, Association of Natives of Tishwitz in Israel. 324 p.)

Like many in these memorial volumes, the Zipper book is full of local data, often situated within European history and in social philosophy which had absorbed modern political Jewish purposefulness; the Shterns of Tishwitz, in their several contributions to the Pinkas, not the least by Israel Zvi Shtern, reflect this profoundly.

The book inevitably contains much material on the Shtern family, notably a memorial to "Gitl, the wife of the Schochet", a model of womanhood, motherhood and citizenship in orthodoxy, by M. Fisher.

Soon after receiving the Itzik Manger Prize for creative writing in Yiddish, in Israel, in 1982, in his last months in the spring of 1983, Zipper prepared one of his most ambitious compilations, Areinblikn in Yiddishn Literarishn Shafen (55 Collected Essays, Glimpses into Yiddish Literature, in Grateful Recollection of Friends and Community Workers). By the time his 332-page of glimpses into the shaping of Jewish literature on the continent (some of them reprinted from Yiddish journals) appeared in print, the title page claimed the copyright for his estate - a fate his posthumous book shared with his father's last volume.

Some dozen of the essays deal with prominent New World writers; an additional 40 are treatments of Canadian figures. Zipper reconstitutes a creative Canadian Jewish cultural society of great riches which - like great European centres and obscure villages - counts among its creative and memorable, religious figures such as Congress founder S. Belkin who first brought the aid of Canadian Jewry to Soviet Russia under the slogan "I Seek My Brother", B.G. Sack, Leib Zuker and Sarah Caiserman and some obscure personages of great value such as legionnaire Zvi Reisler, the library's W. Ostreger, Toronto teacher Menachovsky and Winnipeggers S.M. Selchen, Fanya and A.J. Cherniak and B. Sheps. For the Canadian reader the profound Zipper volume is a precious gallery of the broad range of his Jewish community.

In his perception the rank and file in his neighbourhood with whom he rubbed shoulders at synagogues, at library meetings, in Shule and at bookshelves, Zipper portrayed, typically, the full directory

In characteristic absence of order Zipper devoted three chapters to former Winnipegger Ezekiel A.M. Bronstein, the self-ordained Vagabond, (with and without quotation marks), the author of Vagabondance, the poet and the lover of Yiddish poetry and of the New World paysage.

Zipper paid tribute to C.L. Fox, the octogenarian Jewish immigrant who thanked our country by compiling 100 Years of Yiddish Hebrew Literature in Canada. 400 entries, 1980.

Zipper remembered the moment when Baruch Zukerman first proposed to a postwar plenary session of the Canadian Jewish Congress the establishment in Jerusalem of the Yad Vashem Museum as perpetual of Ashkenaz civilization and

its sudden destruction, "an entire nation making an accounting of a thousand years of history at the threshold of an era of renewal."

In his essay on Yehudah Elberg's holocaust classic Oifn Spitz fun a Mast, (At the Tip of a Mast), some of which is situated in the Polish countryside as distinct from the nervous and restless city, Zipper notes "the near-stability of the peaceful villages. The artist's eye does not fail to enter the most secret courses of nature, some of which are elevated to eternal symbols of creatures in the wilds." These last months in America are also the substance of the same national experience in Elberg's At the Tip of the Mast. The author absorbed the narrations of the Montreal survivors and incorporated them into his historic fantasy novel.

As in his own autobiographical novels, Zipper appears to read Elberg's intention to portray the haunted Jew catching his breath after the stormy strain of the apocalyptic agony of the ghetto which is the foundation of his work. Both the artist and the reader are permitted to retain their spiritual balance for a moment. You see, regardless of all that is happening in the valley of horror, that there is still something not far away that is not totally off the tracks. Only Elberg's storytelling artistry make the inconceivable unreality credible.

"It becomes constantly, bitterly, more clear that essentially the survival of a few individuals is a mysterious and abnormal incident in the totality of the diabolical play. . .

"In the classic approach to art, the reader must demand, above literary values, the idea values of a work; in the Elberg case, the complicated situations and the deeper sense of the superficial and senseless confusion portray human existence.

"But are not doubt and denial a token of faith, to quote a Chassidic survivor of the Exodus on his way to Israel to unite with a woman who had been forced by the Nazis into whoredom, in the final chapter of Elberg's classic?" (Pp. 143-51)

Zipper refreshed the memory of Sheindel Franzusky-Garfunkel, the novelist of the revolutionary family of southern Russia, who published two critical autobiographical novels, Rachel and October's End in the late 1930's, when the Soviet revolution was storming world Jewry.

But after the war, she met, in Israel, the survivors of the Holocaust, the post war flood of "illegal" refugees to Palestine and the new immigrants in the War of Independence. Herself suffering the final moments of her fatal illness, in 1957, she published in Israel the translation into Hebrew of her climactic Yiddish work The Adventures of Toba. in the original work, Gittel's Oisterlishe Se'ungen (Gittel's Extraordinary Visions) was a final accounting of her life and her revision of her home characters who appeared in her earlier works.

Her last volume is a monumental interpretation of the essential meaning of the Jewish Holocaust within the world literature of genocide, in the context of Jewish unique eternity promised to Abraham by God.

In this cosmic bloody parade marching through Egypt and Amalek and Babylon and Rome and Granada, past Chmelnitzky and the czarist Black Hundreds and the Lithuanian Dispersion and Poland's bloody national restoration and the Ukrainian Petlura, Hitler was no innovator, the Mufti teacher of Arafat and the planners of the Intifada no new enemy of Jewish survival. Each of these successive genocidal conspiracies intentionally uprooted an ancient Jewish civilization and left only

precious archaeological fragments, which served as the seeding from which grew succeeding Jewish civilizations. But of the preceding civilization, Oh! how little remained! What losses of earlier Jewish science and of earlier sciences were lost beyond resurrection in the recording and in the revising of history!

Sheindel Franzusky-Garfunkel is a legitimate continuation of Jeremiah in the literature of Jewish destruction.

In her novel the voice of eternal tragedy is a girl, Toba, one of the not yet mature Jewish children at whom Hitler aimed in particular, a survivor who had hid out in a deserted synagogue, collecting torn sheets of Scrolls which she would bring to the ghetto where they would become the secret spiritual weapons for the coming revolt of the ghetto.

She was a survivor who reached Israel after the horrors of the Jewish world war, there, like A.M. Klein of The Sacred Scroll, finding the ultimate meaning of the millennia of Jewish history in the setting of newborn Israel.

In her extended dream-fantasy and in the intimate testimony of the survivors and the social workers with the survivors, who had themselves reached Palestine as brands rescued from the fire, the Montreal novelist felt the overwhelming need to record the history of the century in a surrealist form.

A child who was being carried by a sailor to a Holy land beach asked whether it was really true that they were now on the dreamed-of soil where she would no longer need to seek refuge among wild animals from the savagery of human beings who were no longer human. In a trance the child dreamed of a partisan mission against the Nazis in the course of which she learned of the humanity of wild creatures who welcomed them, of her joy in flowers and weeds even as the soil, steeped in blood, sought fresh water, and the Angel of Death refused to identify with murderous men.

In her fantasy she meets the Hebrew teacher of her childhood, now a recluse praying in a synagogue, a living symbol of the eternal Jew. She recognized the Polish Chalutz whom she had despised, now the ideal Israeli farmer-citizen representing the living eternal Jew.

In the liberated Holy Land she could envision that the violated environment became sublime as it protested against whatever human beings had soaked and choked the earth with the flood of Jewish blood.

The hares, lions, birds and the imagined animals from the Synagogue Ark curtains emerged to rescue the legendary heroic partisans in the swamps and brush, seeking to rescue whom they could and to preserve the symbols of the eternal nation.

The novelist's great revision had not been only of persons but was the incorporation of the legend of world Jewry, as, after the Holocaust - on a call from the tattered remains of the Bible people for the survival of four continents' Jewry - suddenly all came to realize what the months of the Holocaust had meant to each of them and to their assembled communities.

Zipper fixed the literary career of the three great Yiddish poets of Canada - J.I. Segal, Melech Ravitch and Rachel Korn.

In his essays on J.I. Segal's progression, Zipper traced his poetry from the Yiddish literary schools of 1934 and their abstraction towards the poet's concretization of his truthful poetic world which became solid in Sefer Yiddish; but the process was becoming evident in Segal's maturing 1940 Di Hoiz fun de Poshete.

World literature does not have many lives of poets so greatly chronicled as that of Rachel Korn, the native of Galician soil, who recorded her youth in language so poetic, profound and anticipatory before the Holocaust, before the Russian exile and her wandering through Soviet horrors and through Finland before finding refuge with her daughter in Montreal - to renew her literary career as the imperial princess of Yiddish letters. In a dozen prose and poetic volumes, issued in Montreal, and later in Israel, in the course of nearly half a Canadian century, she has recorded the sensitive Jewish poet's experience of recollection, Holocaust survival, bereavement, loneliness, woman's life, family, Israel, the fate of Yiddish, literary collegiality and history, Canadian society and ill health - the whole told by a sensitive poet with her Yiddish language at the command of subtlety and of infinitely refined meaning. Towards the end of her time she found expression for the ultimate summations of life, questions and suggestions of answers which she resolved to give to posterity, also in the Jewish timeless language, in Hebrew, in a paysage of Holy Land and Holy Book symbolism.

In Melech Ravitch's stormy and contradictory prose and poetry, Zipper noted that in his stoic autobiographical three-volume Maasse Buch fun Mein Leben (The Storybook of my Life), placed as it is in a stormy landscape, all clear and masterly, a quiet flowing, crystal clear current graced with mild forgiveness and silken humour.

A PAGE FROM HIS DIARY

Zipper remained happily and warmly surrounded by his close family. He drew inspiration from the Hebrew State of Israel, to whose reconstruction he had contributed as Poale Zionist and as pedagogue-mobilizer.

But ill health plagued him. The pages of his vivid diary which he managed to publish, Fun Nechten un Haint (From Yesterday and Today) are as sophisticated, subtle, meaningful and as youthful as any of his writings of half a century earlier.

An entry during a convalescence: his afternoon drowsiness at sunset is shattered by the familiar voice of a younger friend.

In the course of the years Zipper had accumulated a number of friends who have been showing their warmth by remembering that he is tied to the house, with little outside company. They come from time to time. But he was pleasantly surprised to have an unexpected visit on this stifling evening, as they happened to drive by his home. "Let's see how he is there. Maybe he will come for a ride with us. Let us look at him, see how he is. He has been so long, choking alone in his room. It is hard on him. Let him know that he is not forgotten."

"Why in the dark? After a day like this it is good to go for a drive out of the city, to catch your breath. All sorts of thoughts creep into your mind for lack of air."

There was cause for their self-satisfaction; they had worked their way up socially and move in other circles now. But they are faithful to friends of old who have remained behind, and do not even have cars of their own, who are always complaining about the world and are looking for answers to questions that cannot be answered.

Zipper thanks them warmly but avoids the car rides from incidental friends who are not touched by the doubts and fears that are in his mind. They listen to him out of courtesy, and may even laugh at him behind his back. He forgives them for remembering him out of pity. If he ever consents to go downtown with them, he can hardly wait to be back in his room and put out of his mind the several dull hours he has wasted with them.

But, to his own surprise, he was glad to have this visit. He jumped out of his bed as if he was emerging from the dusk shadows. "Very kind of you to have me in your mind on a day like this."

He sought to liberate himself from the earlier trembling cold. "Must not surrender," the visitor muttered.

He did not understand. "Surrender to what?"

"To the greed and horrors that are being foretold."

"It won't hurt anyone to go to the country for a while."

The Diary: "We cross the city, westside, and pass the old-fashioned one-storey homes with pointed turrets. Were they used in defence against hostile Indians?"

The square apartment buildings open to all the winds of the world and are yet closed unto themselves, as if seeking a place to hide.

"In a strange neglected space a single building with a sign offering Good and Cold, for a dry mouth, a strange and alien place, yet familiar to my driver. Inside it is full of people and pipes and tobacco and cigars and spicy food heaped on plates and in bowls at the side, like an altar in a sanctuary of old. In the centre, a two-faced idol, one face serious, the second with provoked nostrils and an open running mouth. A centre for gourmands.

"At the door to a main dining room a waiter is smiling a welcome, mockingly. Even the napkin on his sleeve is winking sarcastically. As we near him we see name cards on both sides of his formal suit. "For Guests Only."

"I suddenly feel naked among people all dressed, regretting being here, among people who know each other, all wearing the badges, all chatting familiarly on first names. I had met many of them at Jewish meetings, at gatherings marking the jubilee once upon a long time ago. They dare not lift their eyes, our people from our homes, we know them by their first names, but from our distant memory. They sit at the edges of their seats lest someone glue them to where they had left long ago.

"Sometimes one of them warms up suddenly with praise for 'those who still have the courage to resist alien minds and are carrying out the great mission.' Eyes grow damp. We appreciate them. It is a rare spiritual pleasure. We hope for the times ahead. . .

"Then they disappear into their own streets and into their homes stuffed with heavy furniture and various works of art in gilded frames on the walls and on marble-topped tables in every corner. They know the names of the world's ends whence these antiques came, a mark of the broad world they come from. With their comrades of old only their addresses remain for the campaigners in periods of stress. Why did they meet now? It appears it is truly their party. Any others are aliens. Their name cards call out, 'Look how far we have reached.'

"They notice our group in shock as if they did not know us; our daily wear seems poorer than usual; their eyes race away as from a scarecrow. Our friends who brought us are now among them, with their names on the lapels, on the steps, waiting for the guest of honour to appear soon. Magicians turn lights upon the tables full of tasty morsels. On the stage, behind a transparent curtain, the musicians and the half-dressed dancers await.

"No one needs to tell him that the star of the event is David the Individualist, the fiery liberty warrior in his youth, the enemy of every form of state power, who denied all accepted forms and social measures, who tried his luck in the business world and blamed the jungle ways in the initiative and free enterprise.

"I cannot participate. I see no hope for organizations who are distant from our central anarchist principle. . . ' His business contacts keep him bound to the accepted rules. He never accepted public honours. But now, forty years in affairs, this surprise party prepared in utter secrecy. Sh! He does not know about tonight."

He suddenly feels his superfluity here, as the startling reminder of all that everyone here wishes to erase from their memories. How to exit before he destroys the ornate classic comedy here?

The phantasmagoria resolves into a nightmarish search for a telephone for his friends, for a taxi, for a doctor, for waking images of the madmen in his native village, for the straight line of his life since. . . (Pp. 191-97)

Five years earlier, in 1973, Zipper had written about the ignored Louis Rosenberg himself about to fall into near oblivion at a Winnipeg spiritless program in his honour, "at the climax to a lifetime of service to the community, the audience rose to be photographed. I confess I felt sickened with heavy thoughts, 'Is that all?' I almost cried out as they handed him two plaques, one for his Congress office and the other for his home.

"I visualized his return to Montreal, putting his plaque in his pantry with his unpublished work on Canadian Jewish history waiting to be published. The sheets tumbled at the touch of the frames. 'Is it not yet our time?' The plaque reassured them, 'You should have heard the fine speakers.'"

Zipper recalls telephone conversations with the aging historian Louis Rosenberg "not really conversation but quickly monologue - and you want it none other - a broad Jewish panorama ranging from the narrow emigrant village to Leeds, to the frosty prairies in the distant western colonies all the way to Montreal, peopled with a host of familiar and unfamiliar faces, warmed by the breath of the narrator as he leads them from oblivion, as they struggled with loneliness and fate and achievement in the face of failures."

VINDICATION AND BIRTH

Time, and its historian children, may be justifying Wiseman's boldness and stubborn assurance after decades of being ignored; decades which proceeded in their own direction.

Suddenly, unexpectedly, English-speaking librarians, academics, theologians, historians with fresh perspectives, French Canadian anthropologists discovered "a truth that is different altogether," the uniqueness of Montreal the city, its Yiddish as a utopian venture.

To quote its own son, David G. Roskies, who noted while he was preparing for a colloquium in the Jewish Public Library that the culture which H. Wolofsky, Israel Rabinovitch, J.I. Segal, M. Ravitch, S. Dunsky and Wiseman actually created something that was like nothing that existed anywhere else on earth and therefore had to be invented from scratch. "It was neither a pragmatic compromise with the ethnic makeup of Quebec nor a freak occurrence. It was a cognitive and above all, ideological construct, the work of a tiny group of secular Zionist intellectuals. The break-up of the old order, the Hurban Beit Hamidrash, was a given to this group of recent immigrants. There was no going back. A New Jew was about to be born and the only question was: could this golem be turned into a redeemer?... The Montreal Yiddish intelligentsia fought for a restorative and integrative program that would create a sense of wholeness both within Jewish life and within the fragmented world at large. Through extraordinary self-sacrifice and in the face of bitter in-fighting, this cadre of young ideologues established a network of institutions to embody their bold utopian vision: a Yiddish press, a Jewish Public Library, a Vaad Ha'ir, afternoon and day schools, a teacher's seminary, amateur Yiddish theatre groups, summer camps and book stores.

"The group took upon itself the arduous task of guarding Jewish cultural boundaries. To be sure, the ideological foundations of cultural nationalism had been laid elsewhere: by Ahad Ha'am and Chaim Zhitlowsky. By the same token, the postwar treaties that guaranteed minority rights and cultural autonomy, not to speak of the Balfour Declaration, had everything to do with Jewish political aspirations in French Canada. But while the roots of the Yiddish cultural revolution in Montreal were decidedly east European, its particular flowering - and the fruits that it ultimately bore - were nowhere else to be found. . .

"If one had to define the one 'ism' that most animated that generation of Zionist pioneers in Montreal, it would be not folkism or even nationalism, but the internal Jewish bilingualism that had once characterized life in Ashkenaz. . .

"The tiny group of recent immigrants with no political clout and with no traditional sources of authority to fall back on, these lay Jewish revolutionaries took their case for a separate Jewish school panel all the way to the Privy Council of England; how, when their legislative efforts failed, they created the very first day schools in Montreal, which were also the first Yiddish day schools anywhere in North America, and while they were at it, organized the Vaad Ha'ir to oversee the sale of kosher meat for the sake of their Orthodox brethren. Indeed, it was in the Jewish School Question that raged in Montreal from 1923-31 that the Labour Zionists took their stand and became - despite their lack of Canadian Yikhes - a major integrative force in the community.

"In a remarkable series of analytic and programmatic essays written in the 1940s, Wiseman became the chief theoretician of the Yiddish secular schools in North America. . .

"Out of their unrequited longing, however, they would establish a new Jewish calendar, making the old festivals yield new meaning. In a cynical age of minimalism they would dedicate every ounce of their energy to creating a maximalist culture of Yiddishkayt.

"That invented Yiddishkayt, Wiseman went on to argue, however insufficient it might seem to themselves, would be real and existentially compelling to their students. The native-born generation would have no other measure of authenticity. Besides, it would be the task of Jewish educators to keep alive the longing for a more total and more beautiful Yiddishkayt. When the students grew up, they would then be motivated to work towards that restorative vision.

"Insofar as Yiddish was a key to Lebns-shteyger (way of life); insofar as Yiddish literature extolled the beauty of Jewish holidays; insofar as Yiddish was symbiotically tied to Loshn-koydesh; insofar as Yiddish was the living link to a living people, Yiddish would be the crucible of the past, present and future. Insofar as the new cultural institutions embodied this integrative vision, Yiddish would become the embodiment of Yiddishkayt.

"A new brand of Goles (diasporic) nationalism was thus created by Wiseman and his fellow Labour Zionists, designed to combat the fragmentation within and the seductions from without. Wiseman spelled out the nationalist agenda in no uncertain terms. Our purpose, he wrote at the beginning of the same essay, is to condition our students so that they could not live other than as Jews. To achieve this end one must create a total environment, both within the school and without - by teaching them to live in two Jewish languages; by celebrating all the Jewish holidays in a meaningful way; by instilling within them a sense of responsibility for Jewish history and Jewish destiny. What a sophisticated educational philosophy! What a utopian, and at the same time, pragmatic vision! . . .

"Ideologies came and went. What Wiseman and his cohort understood is that only institutions would insure the transmission of their integrationist values. Small wonder, then, that it was they and not the leaders of the Talmud Torah, who pioneered the Jewish day school in Montreal, in 1928. Only the day school, Wiseman argued in an essay devoted specifically to that topic, with its integrated curriculum, could counteract the dualism of Goles. Only the day school could make Yiddishkayt central to the students' experience, rather than an occasional late afternoon appendage. Only the day school could forge a Jewish elite that would someday assume leadership positions in the community.

"The actual, physical destruction of Jewish eastern Europe only intensified the longing for a more whole and beautiful Yiddishkayt that had long ago become part of the hidden curriculum. . ."

"Out of holocaust," Roskies wrote, "a new and viable culture can be reinvented. . ."

"The lay Jewish revolutionaries in Montreal were collectivists with a restorative, neoclassical bent who operated in the public domain. They organized, they fought, they lobbied, they built institutions from the bottom up, they went from house to house collecting the 50 cents a month tuition for the afternoon school. Their

ideology was predicated on peoplehood, not prophecy; on language, not liturgy; on getting their hands dirty in the nitty gritty of communal and, when need be, of national politics.

"Yiddish for them was never an end in itself; it was a means towards achieving cultural integration: of reuniting east and west, the folk and the intelligentsia, the Frume (religious) and the Fraye (secularist). Yiddish was to be the vehicle of national liberation. . .

"It has charged us with a maximalist vision of what is possible; it has allowed us to experience wholeness in a world devoid of wholeness; it has so conditioned us as Jews that being anything else is simply unthinkable." ("Yiddish in Montreal: the Utopian Experiment," in An Everyday Miracle, Yiddish Culture in Montreal, edited by I. Robinson, P. Anctil and M. Butovsky. Montreal, Véhicule Press, 1990)

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