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CANADIAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

NEW SERIES
NUMBER FOUR

CANADIAN JEWS — EARLY IN THIS CENTURY

by

B. G. SACK

with

BENJAMIN GUTL SACK

a Preface by

SAUL HAYES, O.C., O.C., LL.D.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS
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CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS

MONTREAL

BENJAMIN GUTL SACK

a Preface by

SAUL HAYES, O.C., Q.C., LL.D.

When B. G. Sack passed away in Montreal on May 2, 1967, he left his life work, his *History of the Jews in Canada*, unfinished.

The Canadian Jewish Congress had published the English version of the first volume, in the translation of Ralph Novek, in book form in 1945. It covered the period before 1900. A second edition of the *History* was issued in paper back by Harvest House in Montreal in 1965.

Parts of the history had first appeared in Yiddish in the *Jewish Daily Eagle* and in an English version in the *Canadian Jewish Chronicle* in 1925. The following year the Sack history occupied the first eighty pages of *The Jew in Canada* which Arthur Daniel Hart edited in Toronto.

The original Yiddish version appeared in book form in 1948.

Sack's work is scattered in the columns of the *Eagle*, where he had been one of the editors for many years, under his own name and under such noms de plume as Ben Zakay, Esterson, Ben Zikunim, B. Gurman and G. Lipes.

His writings also appear in the German-language *Encyclopaedia Judaica*; he was contributing editor of the *Universal Jewish Encyclopaedia*.

Sack edited the *Thirtieth Anniversary Souvenir Book of the Jewish Public Library, 1914-44* (in English and in Yiddish. 21,19 p.)

He had also contributed to the *YIVO Blaetter*, the *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, the *Mexico City Forois*, the *St. Petersburg Der Freind*, the *New York Varheit, Tageblatt, Tog, Tzunkunft* and *Yiddisher Kemfer*, the Russian *Razsviet*, the Hebrew *Dror* and *Hatzofeh*; to such Canadian publications as the *Winnipeg Canader Yid*, the *Folkszeitung*, edited in Montreal by Leon Chazanovitch, and the *Canadian Jewish Chronicle*.

In addition to his historical and journalistic publications, Sack also translated Hugo's poetry, work by De Amicis, De Vigny, and Alfred de Musset's *The Romance of a Teacher* and *Pierre et Camille* into Yiddish, for the *Eagle* and the *Yiddisher Kemfer*.

Sack was not only the outstanding historian of the Jewish community; for all intents and purposes he was the first.

When he began his work early in the century, he had very little prior writing to base his work on. Several items in the press, in books on Montreal, and in the pages of the *Jewish Encyclopaedia* by Clarence

de Sola, the *History of the Congregation of Spanish and Portuguese Jews Shearith Israel of Montreal*, 1918 (no authorship cited), several articles by Rabbi J. J. Price — and that was nearly all there was when Sack began his work.

Nor were the original sources voluminous or accessible. As early as 1911 he pointed out in a series on Canadian Jewish history in a Winnipeg newspaper that the materials essential for an understanding of the community were in at least four languages and scattered over several continents. That far back he called for "a home for our history, a centre for our collections, so that we may not need to huddle in alien corners."

"סענעטער אדלער"



צו פרוינט זאק'ס א יובילעוםער האב געשייטעט האט פ. ג. זאק קיין געווען. איר זיך געריכט צו שרייבען א סאלידען ארטיקל ארויסגעפירט אלע פאנען פון זיין שאפען. דאס וויסן זאק'ס אז איר באקום די ידיעה אז ווער קראנק — אז די צייט איז קורץ, צו שרייבען א לענגערע אפמאכונג — וועגן דעם קען שוין קיין קינד נישט ווילן. ס'א האטיר באטיט קאנען ווי קאנצענטרירען אויף א פאר פאקטען, מער פון א פערזענליכען באראקטער.

שוין אריבער 30 יארה ווי איר בין באקאנט מיט פ. ג. זאק, אז עס האט גענומען א שטיק צייט בין וואגען ביר האבען ווי דערקענט איינער דעם אנדערען. נאכער איז דאס געווען שוין נאכ' דעם ווי איר בין שוין מער ווי געווען קיין ת. א. א.

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The young pre-war immigrant to Canada had not been academically schooled in either history or literature, in the critical disciplines of research, the retrieval of information, the organization of materials.

To these difficulties we must add personal handicaps. At birth he was stricken with muscular dystrophy. "From childhood, I could move my body only with great difficulty," he once mentioned in a rare moment of personal reminiscence. His fine pride usually forbade reference to a condition which only added to a record of achievement rendered secretly heroic by these circumstances.

"His life is a gripping study in the potential force of the human will," wrote Joseph M. Diamondstone, pioneer Canadian Yiddish journalist, in the 1932 jubilee edition of the *Eagle*, (P. 66).

He belonged to that remarkable Jewish generation of European-born (in his case at Abeli in Lithuania on January 31, 1899) which was not exposed to formal training in the west European model.

His father was poor even by the low standards of that *shtetele*. At five he was sent to a *cheder*. "However, owing to my physical condition, I could not attend regularly, sometimes missing many weeks and months. I have never attended any secular school.

"I had a teacher for only five months, when I was fourteen. It so happened that a teacher came to my town who taught pupils privately. One day, at the home of a school friend of mine, he noticed my handwriting which he thought was very beautiful, and he inquired about me. Next day the teacher came to my home offering his services. My mother



His signature

engaged him to teach my sister for one hour; however, he offered to teach me without a fee, for my parents were very poor. My father was in Canada by then. I had these lessons for five months. When the winter was over my teacher left the town."

But for his generation the hunger for systematic learning and for the culture which the west had accumulated was a compelling force, an ideology which almost substituted for religion. Auto-didacticism was the core of living, so that even before he joined his father in Montreal in 1905 he had already learned German and Russian.

"I began to read any book I could lay my hands on, the classics of both languages and the critics of world literature such as Brandes. I began to learn mathematics and the French and English languages by myself. When I was fifteen I assisted the Civil Rabbi of the town in writing birth certificates and briefs for city hall and for the court."

The idealism of his generation was remarkable. As they reached this land of golden promise — promise the land and the people kept generously over the decades — thousands of these newcomers bore centrally in the conduct of their lives, in their private ethos and in their philosophy the responsibility for

the public weal, for the better direction of society and for the resolution of Jewry's problems. They were not drowned in the currents of problems of the new continent, of adjustment or in the dazzling opportunities for advancement and for riches. They found additional energies for community work, for ideology, for the creation of a unique society in which they lived here.

Characteristically: the economic depression of 1907 struck the Jewish needle trade workers in particular; soup kitchens in Montreal and Toronto staved off actual hunger. That year Sack wrote a play, *The Worker*, which was produced in aid of the unemployed.

Sack's environment in Canada was the folk of the *Eagle* constituency. His associates were a remarkable generation of creative literary and communal personages: H. Wolofsky, Israel Rabinovitch, Rabbi C. Kruger, J. I. Segal, A. M. Klein, S. Belkin, L. Zuker, H. M. Caiserman, N. J. Gotlib, M. Dickstein, Rabbi J. L. Zlotnick, S. Wiseman, J. Zipper, Rabbi S. Pietrushka, S. Dunsky, H. Novek, S. Shmuelson, H. Hirsch, A. A. Roback and many other unjustly forgotten.

Sack had a vivid and dynamic sense of this Canadian Jewish presence, as is evidenced in his voluminous comment published over scores of years of Yiddish journalism. He immersed himself in the day by day development of his community. There was nothing of the dry antiquarian in this researcher of the records.

Sack shared their extraordinary dedication to an interpretation of Judaism all their own, and he



adopted one mansion in this house as his own: the history of the new community.

To this cause he dedicated himself as priest and prophet are dedicated — single minded, driven to the perfect service of the Highest.

A disintegrating newspaper clipping of April 18, 1924 headed, "Our As Yet Unwritten Canadian Book" records his appreciation of history as an invaluable treasure of a people.

His investigation into the past of the community — born in distant homelands — had given him a fresh understanding of the Jewish contributions to the society in which he was living, of its uniqueness, of its development and of the link it was forming in the long chain of Judaism.



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GEO. CHARLAB
photo



Abeli — Sack's native village

Sack wrote that French Canada had responded to Durham's taunts as an incomplete nation without a history by producing the works of Michel Bibaud and of Garneau. Sack called upon the Jewish community to produce its own chronicles and self-studies.

In some way still not clear, the materials from far-flung archives, most reliable and most illuminating, surfaced and reached Sack. He interpreted them and used them to construct from them a framework of an informed history which has become an invaluable book in the history of Canada and in the annals of the Jewish people.

His editor, Israel Rabinovitch, recalled that the very first issue of the *Eagle* carried Sack's work. "Sack, the journalist, has every reason to thank the Almighty that the historian emerged unscathed from the newspaper career which pressed upon him with the great weight of hour-by-hour duties at the desk.

"For when does a newspaperman have the leisure to engage in basic writing? Certainly not in the normal working hours, for they belong to the paper. It is only in the very early hours of daylight, or late at night when the cock tries out crowing at the promise of a new day — only then can a journalist spare some energy for belles lettres, if such are his ambitions, or some searching for an historic work," he wrote out of his knowledge of the sounds of the minutes when the deepest night merges into dawn. (*Eagle*, May 9, 1939)

Unfortunately, the work only approaches the opening of the twentieth century. Yet in the seven

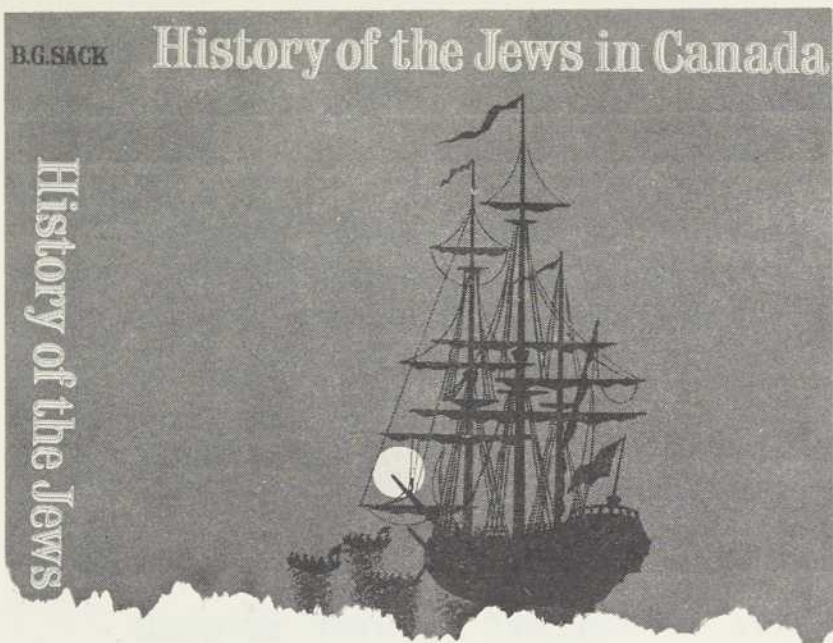
decades since then the community has multiplied. The epoch before 1900 is only prefatory. He had written the prelude to the years of substantive living of the community, to the significant, decisive, dramatic saga of a Canadian community.

His fine volume is an introduction to the record of these Canadian citizens, to the story of their migration, their integration, the formation of their community, their battle against prejudice, their contributions to the nation's war efforts and to its literature, to its constitution, economics and internal social conflicts, of their mite towards the restoration of Israel's sovereignty, to the rescue of their brothers who remained in Europe, to their religious experience and to their synagogal morphology. There are histories upon histories here to be written, somehow forming a unity and a new incorporation of the national form of Judaism.

This history has remained unwritten as yet. No new Sack has arisen to supersede him or even to supplement him.

After completing his first volume he continued his researches in order to reach an era closer to our own. But he was not fated to complete them.

On his passing, he left a brief draft in Yiddish dealing with the first years of the new century. But it was only a draft. Meticulous as he was in his writing and acutely sensitive to what was published over his name, we find it hard to tell whether he would have wished to have this incomplete draft appear.



But only the living can make decisions, and we are now placing before the reader the edited text of these posthumous chapters in the translation of Anne

Glass, the daughter of the long-time colleague at the *Eagle*, Israel Medres.

It is gratifying to note Sack's long association with the Canadian Jewish Congress in his capacity of objective and interested journalist. There is satisfaction, also, in remembering that Congress had occasion to be helpful in the publication of his books. Congress' recognition of his person was expressed in 1961 when he was honoured at the Plenary Session of Congress as dean of our history writers and journalists.

In dedicating this issue of *Canadian Jewish Archives* to his work, our intention goes beyond appreciation of his work and of his personality. We believe that these pages constitute an addition to the small shelf of Canadian Jewish histories, a supplement to Sack's volume which is the premier book of this Jewish Canadiana.

CONTENTS

- Chapter One: The new century.--The mass migration.--
The cemetery at Three Rivers. -- Goldwin Smith. --
In Victoria. -- Montreal Talmud Torah and Ottawa
synagogues. P. 1
- Chapter Two: The Baron de Hirsch building. -- The
Pinsler case. -- Rabbi Herman Abramovitz. --
Jules Heilbronner. P. 8
- Chapter Three: The Act of 1903. -- Kishinev. -- A.J.
Freiman. -- Reform. P. 15
- Chapter Four: Canada's open door. -- Destitute
immigrants in Winnipeg. -- The Russo-Japanese war. --
Lord Rothschild's plan for colonies in west. --
Growing responsibilities. -- Municipal office. --
In education and the arts. -- Israel Zangwill. --
Fear of a ghetto. -- Pogroms of 1905. -- Sir
Wilfrid Laurier. P. 22
- Chapter Five: The Poale Zion. -- A curious phenomenon. --
Sarah Bernhardt. -- The Lord's Day Alliance and
Sunday observance. -- Jewish delegation. -- Debate
in parliament. -- Laurier, imperialist, and Henri
Bourassa. P. 30
- Chapter Six: Reaction to the pogroms. -- McDonnell,
Maclean, Borden. -- Rabbi Jacob Gordon. --
Intellectual interests. -- Yiddish book. --
Leftist ideologies. -- Influential thinkers. --
Union movement. -- I.W.W. and Knights of Labor. --
Y.M.H.A. -- Maccabean students. P. 35
- Chapter Seven: Farm settlements, New communities. --
Justifying the pogroms. -- Response by Gerhard
Deutsch. -- Anglo-Jewish leaders on Canada. --
Territorialism. -- Interview with Laurier. --
Jewish Daily Eagle. -- Immigrant aid society. --
Persecutions in Rumania. P. 43
- Chapter Eight: Another Talmud Torah in Winnipeg. --
Rabbi I. Kahanovitch. -- Sherbrooke and Hamilton. --
Perplexities in Montreal. -- Economic hardships. --
Again the school question. -- Surprising arguments
of the Jewish Times. -- Justice Minister plants
trees in Palestine. -- Winnipeg. -- Depression
strikes. -- Free kitchen. -- Cultural activities. --
Increased antisemitism. -- Dispute within the
community. P. 49

Chapter Nine: Rabbinical feud. -- Eagle excommunicated. --
 Unemployment. -- Curtailment of immigration. --
 Poverty. -- Christians contribute to synagogue. --
 Zionist message from a gentile. -- Antisemitic
 violence. -- More Hebrew schools. -- New Testament
 in Toronto schools. -- L.M. Singer. -- A pessimistic
 view. -- A Jewish board of deputies. -- Philanthropist's
 negative view of immigrants. -- Englehart. -- the
 colonies in the west. P. 54

Chapter Ten: Missionary activities. -- Lachine. --
 Always the school question. -- The Finnie bill. --
 Antisemitic views of Dr. Barclay. -- S. W. Jacobs. --
 Bill rejected. -- Schools in Montreal and Winnipeg. --
 The Toronto News. -- Glace Bay and Sydney. -- Jewish
 National Workers Alliance. -- Canadianizing the
 immigrants. -- Bakers Union. P. 59

Chapter Eleven: Zionist convention. -- Bnai Brith. --
 First paper in Winnipeg. -- S. Hart Green elected. --
 Episode with Laurier. -- The clothing industry. --
 Again, Three Rivers cemetery. -- Plamondon attack. --
 Abbé Belanger. -- Antisemitism in Montreal and Quebec. --
 Ever the school question. -- New institutions. P. 65

Chapter Twelve: Cultural events. -- Poale Zion convention. --
 Mixed marriages. -- Census of 1911. -- Hunger strike
 in sanatorium. -- New Talmud Torah. -- Citizens'
 League. -- New synagogues. -- Winnipeg welfare
 federation. -- Dispensary in Montreal. -- Queen City
 Yacht Club. -- The missionaries and the rabbi. --
Catholic Herald and the Toronto World. -- Laurier
 in Montreal. -- Webwood. P. 70

Chapter Thirteen: Politics. -- Queen's University Bill. --
 Brainin, editor of Eagle. -- Jewish library. --
 Chazanowitch and the Folkszeitung. -- Zionism. --
 Worship and education in Winnipeg. -- Farmers in the
 west. -- Clothing industry strike. -- Unity in the
 community. -- Kashruth in Toronto. -- Hebrew Free
 Loan Society. -- The Hon. Sam Hughes. -- Children on
 strike. -- Sokolow in Canada. P. 76

Chapter Fourteen: Anxieties. -- Legal Committee of Baron
 de Hirsch Institute. -- Slaughtering trial at Halifax. --
 Sentence appealed. -- Shechitah declared humane. --
 Plamondon and Leduc before the courts. -- Slanders
 against Talmud. -- Revival of murder accusations. --
 Jacobs conducts prosecution. -- Court rejects Jews'
 pleas. -- Superior Court reverses judgment. -- Beilis. --
 Sir Herbert Samuel. P. 82

Chapter Fifteen: Blumenthal, Rubenstein and Bercovitch.--

Jewish People's School. -- Canadian Jewish Chronicle.--

Dr. A. Roback. -- Prof. Jacob Viner. -- Winnipeg seeks
immigration curbs. -- Alderman Scaliter. -- Passing

of Ansell and Lazarus Cohen. -- First World War. --

Proposal of Jewish regiment. -- Brainin's opposition.--

Echoes of the war. -- Relief for Jewish sufferers of
the war. -- Intensifying Jewish unity. -- Folks

Ferband of Canadian Jews. -- Mizrachi. -- Sholem

Aleichem and I.D. Bercovitch. -- A Yeshivah.--

Canadian Jewish Conference. -- Sir Arthur Meighen.

P. 89

CHAPTER ONE

World Jewry was unable to share in the universal hopes of the nineteenth century. The Jewish people, as a nation, was a long-awaited aspiration and fulfillment of the loftiest aspirations of the human race.

Confronted by the tragic realities of daily life in their environment, the beleaguered Jews of Europe could feel no illusion or promise in the oft-repeated words of renewed faith in human ideals. To them such assurances seemed hollow and meaningless, in no relation to their stark existence. Anti-Semitic reaction was unabated, striking terror into their lives - the terror of pogroms and ever increasing legal restrictions - and evoking among the age-long perplexities that now so urgently cried out for a solution.

To flee their hostile environment seemed to them the only way out of an unbearable situation, and to this end the Jews of Europe in their desperation used all their energies and resources. During the nineteenth century, a mass exodus from Jewish towns and villages in Europe, the migration, larger than ever before, was to flow in many directions, but the bulk of the wanderers headed for the New World. By the time of the First World War, more than one and a half million Jews had been transplanted from Europe to this side of the Atlantic.

In the first years of the century Canada, too, was beginning to attract its share of that migration. Arriving here in gradually increasing numbers, this new influx of Jewish settlers was to have a far-reaching impact on the young community which was already established in this country, imparting to it new vigour and contributing immeasurably to its future growth and development. As a direct result of the impetus provided by this dynamic stream of immigration, in those early years Jewish life across Canada became more clearly delineated, rapidly acquiring fresh interests, problems and needs.

The remarkable change in the composition and character of the community took place virtually overnight. Suddenly one was aware of the Jewish masses actually reshaping the Jewish environment.

Where did these Jewish masses come from? They were, of course, a part of that vast migration which overflowed into Canada as it gained momentum, originating from various lands in



CHAPTER ONE

World Jewry was unable to share in the universal hopefulness and optimism that hailed the Twentieth Century as the dawn of a new enlightenment in the history of mankind - the long-awaited culmination and fulfilment of the loftiest aspirations of the human race.

Confronted by the tragic realities of daily life in their environment, the bewildered Jews of Europe could feel no elation or promise in the oft-repeated avowals of renewed faith in human ideals. To them such utterances sounded hollow and meaningless, in no relation to their stark existence. Anti-Semitic reaction was unabated, striking terror into their lives - the terror of pogroms and ever increasing legal restrictions - and evoking anew the age-long perplexities that now so urgently cried out for a solution.

To flee their hostile native homelands seemed to them the only way out of an unbearable situation, and to this end the Jews of Europe in their desperation bent all their energies and resources. Spurred by economic hardship no less than by political and social repression, a massive exodus began from Jewish towns and villages in Europe. The emigration, larger than ever before, was to flow in many directions, but the bulk of the wanderers headed for the New World. By the time of the First World War, more than one and a half million Jews had been transplanted from Europe to this side of the Atlantic.

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Where did these Jewish masses come from? They were, of course, a part of that vast migration which overflowed into Canada as it gained momentum, originating from various lands in

Europe such as Russia, Austria, Germany, Poland, Rumania, Galicia, and so on. The mass nature of this human inflow is apparent: the number arriving during the first five years of the twentieth century (17,288) surpassed the total Jewish population in the country in 1900. (The census of 1901 records the number of Jews in Canada as 16,401.)

Regardless of their place of origin, and despite the initial hardships encountered in the adjustment to a new life, the newcomers were unanimous in their gratification at having found a haven of refuge in the new land. As they breathed freely in the young country that had received them, they strove in every way to express their loyalty and devotion.

Inevitably the absorption of such a large number of new arrivals within a few years should prove a strain on the limited resources of the small scattered Jewish communities throughout the country.

The problem was particularly acute in Saint John, N.B., where the newly-reorganized Jewish Immigrant Aid Society found itself unable to supply aid for all the newcomers, many of whom were without any means whatsoever. The Jews of Saint John nevertheless did everything possible, evoking praise from the Saint John Globe. This was in sharp contrast with the attitude of the anti-Semitic Weekly Sun of Toronto. Goldwin Smith's publication wrote of this immigration that "no invasion could be worse".

What seemed like an "invasion" to these opponents of the Jews, however, later proved to be of the greatest benefit to Canada. Jews adapted themselves far more rapidly to the democratic way of life than new arrivals of other ethnic groups. Like their predecessors of an earlier age and their successors in years to come, the Jewish immigrants of that period contributed a great deal to their new country, while at the same time enriching the life of the Jewish community.

The scope of Jewish life became broader and more diversified in the first years of the century as a result of their presence. The community acquired the specific features and characteristics that have persisted to the present day. In fact, it was during this period and under the impact of these new arrivals that the foundations were laid for development of the Canadian Jewish community as it was to evolve in the decades to follow.

If the history of Jews in Canada may be divided into three distinct periods, namely, the Sephardi, the Anglo-Germanic and the Eastern European immigrant, this division became most apparent during this period.

As it merged with the previously existing Jewish settlement, the new stream of humanity added vitality and dynamism to Jewish life. The typical immigrant of this era differed from those of former days. Primarily an integral part of the "masses", a "folks-mentsch", he was intensely devoted to everything Jewish, bringing with him new ideas and permeated by that healthy folk-initiative that eagerly sought an outlet. All that he built and created in the new land struck deep and lasting roots.

Some of the established Jewish leaders of the community at that time were not without certain misgivings, however. They were disconcerted by the appearance and habits of the immigrants which they regarded as too conspicuous and therefore incompatible with successful absorption as future Canadian citizens. They would have preferred to see a prompt and deliberate attempt on the part of the newcomers to eradicate all traces of their European-Jewish origin - discarding the old ways, the habits and even the language to which they were accustomed. The retention of their mother tongue, Yiddish, regarded by many as the Jewish "jargon", seemed a particular source of embarrassment to them, as is shown by the fact that its use at a public meeting in Montreal created a near scandal.

When speeches were delivered in Yiddish at a political gathering of Jewish citizens in that city, a storm of protest rose from the leaders of the Baron de Hirsch Institute. Letters poured into the non-Jewish press denouncing those guilty of this unseemly offence. Their indignation knew no bounds. Even the President of the Canadian Zionist Organization was among those who protested. One complainant went so far as to accuse the culprits of attempting to set up a Jewish ghetto in Montreal - indicative of the obsequious mentality that prevailed among some of the leaders of the community at that time.

This same attitude was discernible on various occasions and under different circumstances. A former president of the Baron de Hirsch Institute announced that it was virtually "a part of their religion" to "Canadianize" the newcomers. It was naturally assumed that what constitutes true "Canadianization" was to be determined by none other than these leaders. In their view it was essential for all Jews, particularly immigrants, to avoid any kind of behaviour that would cause them to be conspicuous. Whatever hostility existed towards the Jews, they believed, would vanish if only the latter were prepared to alter their ways - an opinion which found expression in the distinguished periodical, the Jewish Times.

As for its geographical distribution, we learn from the census of 1901 that Jews were living in 149 cities and towns in Canada, in almost every well populated centre. While Montréal,

Toronto, Winnipeg, Hamilton and Ottawa contained the largest number, Jews were also to be found in rural areas. Jews were recorded to be living even in Dawson City in the Yukon.

Though the records of 1901 provide no information regarding economic distribution, it is safe to assume that the majority of Jews were engaged in various branches of the needle trades as well as in peddling and in retail merchandising. The Jewish members of the industry in Montreal were already organized in a union which was regarded as the strongest union in that city.

According to the same census of 1901, there were twenty-two synagogues in Canada at that time - four in Montreal, seven in Quebec, seven in Ontario and the remainder in various other centres. While the combined membership of all the synagogues was 2,380, there were 5,875 places available for worshippers. Furthermore, ten Jewish Sunday schools were in existence, with a total enrollment of 580 children.

While there was a tendency among some Jews to surround themselves with an aura of complacency in the belief that all was well, subsequent events were to show that this belief was based on illusion.

This complacency was soon shattered by an incident that had painful implications. For it involved the Jewish historical background in this country and the commemoration of the first Jewish pioneer settlers, a commemoration now in danger of being shamefully violated.

About mid-July of 1901 there appeared in a newspaper in Three Rivers an official notice to the effect that the city had applied to the Superior Court for a permit to expropriate the old Jewish cemetery belonging to the local Hart family, for "sanitary reasons". Accordingly it had become necessary to remove all the graves located in that ground. To this end notice was given that in the absence of any objections from interested persons within the next fifteen days, the petition would be granted. Upon receipt of this news, Mr. Louis A. Hart of Montreal authorized Mr. S. W. Jacobs to act as his attorney in fighting the request.

Investigation revealed that the "sanitary reasons" were no more than a pretext. The cemetery, which had once served not only the Hart family but other Jewish residents of Quebec as well, had not been in use for over forty years. The land was now put on sale for the simple reason that its present owners were no longer interested in retaining it. Having become part of the Catholic population, these descendants of the early Harts

felt no attachment to the historical Jewish burial ground which they now sought to dispose of.

Moreover, it was too late to do anything. The plot was sold and the graves, together with their original tombstones, were removed to another Jewish cemetery in Three Rivers on a site once donated for that purpose by Ezekial Hart. To make matters worse, the disinterment was carried out without a rabbi to ensure adherence to Jewish ritual; only one solitary member of the Hart family, a non-Jew, was present.

This event naturally aroused profound indignation within the Montreal community. A meeting of the congregations was convened by leaders of the Spanish-Portuguese group to explore the possibilities of undertaking action. Resentment pervaded the assembly as delegates gave vent to their anger; they asked whether such an incident would ever be allowed to occur if a Christian cemetery had been involved.

Everyone was aware, however, that this flagrant deed was by now irreversible. Their real concern came from fear lest this desecration be repeated if and when the owners of the remaining burial ground in Three Rivers should one day decide to dispose of that cemetery as well. Such a situation did in fact arise several years later.

This time it was obvious that it would be futile to attempt to preserve the old cemetery. To prevent the further violation of the remains and of the memory of those early Canadian Jewish pioneers, the Spanish-Portuguese congregation had the bodies re-interred with their original gravestones in its own burial ground in Montreal.

Meanwhile, new problems diverted attention to other areas.

With the vast growth of immigration there was increasing antipathy to the large numbers of incoming Jews. This ill feeling found expression in the daily press, and not only in the papers under the influence of Goldwin Smith. Rabbi S. Jacobs of the Holy Blossom Congregation in Toronto drew attention to this in his sermons. He accused the Toronto newspapers of deliberately misrepresenting the Jews, to their detriment. He cited a news item where, in a report of thirty lines involving a Jew, the word Jew appeared no fewer than seven times.

In Montreal this phenomenon also involved a leading newspaper such as the Montreal Gazette, in which two articles appeared containing a thinly veiled protest against the recent admission into

Canada of Jews from Rumania. Far from evincing sympathy or admiration for the sufferings and endurance of the refugee newcomers, one of the articles even justified Rumania's persecutions.

On the other hand, the official attitude in the country towards the Jews gave not the slightest cause for complaint. The authorities in no way shared the anti-Semitic prejudice expressed in other quarters; on the contrary, they were sympathetic and laudatory towards the achievements and abilities of the Jewish settlers.

An incident illustrating this fact occurred during the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall (later King George V and Queen Mary) to Canada in 1901 - when a Jewish girl, Norma Hamburger, was chosen in Victoria, B.C. to make a presentation of flowers to the Duchess. Among the invited guests to the official reception in honour of the royal visitors held in the Provincial Parliament, there were many Jews, including S. Openheimer, F. Landsberg, Samuel (later Judge) Schultz and the Rev. Montague N. A. Cohen.

Isolated incidents of prejudice on the part of individuals connected in some way with government agencies might occur here and there, but these were too rare and too trivial to give any real cause for concern. Jews on the whole could feel confident that they had the full sympathy of the authorities, and it was this confidence and sense of security that enabled them to devote their energies to the work and interests that lay closest to their hearts and needs.

Zionism, Jewish education, relief for the needy, problems of religious Judaism - these were living issues never off the daily agenda. They were present wherever a Jewish community sprang up, in greater or lesser degree, depending on the size of the settlement. At the annual convention of the Zionist Federation in December 1901, President Clarence I. de Sola (1858-1920) reported that Zionist membership throughout the country had grown to over a thousand. It was at this meeting that we first encounter the name of A. J. Freiman (1830-1944) as a delegate from Ottawa.

We hear of many rallies in a number of cities with the aim of promoting national Jewish causes, and of new societies being formed. The Zionist movement grew by leaps and bounds as ever increasing numbers were drawn into its ranks. New associations were organized in Montreal and Ottawa, and in such widely separated points as Vancouver, Brandon, and Glace Bay in Nova Scotia. Jewish miners from Cape Breton, recent immigrants from Rumania, were among those participating in the initial meeting of the Glace Bay association.

The education of children and the shaping of a way of life in the new surroundings were matters of importance to each community. This was particularly true of Montreal, where the Jewish population began to grow at an unprecedented rate. Towards the end of the year 1901 Rabbi Hirsh Cohen (1862-1950) became the principal of the Talmud Torah, upon the departure of its founder, Rabbi A. M. Ashinsky (1866-1954). The latter had served for six years as rabbi of the Bnai Jacob Synagogue and as principal of the Talmud Torah. Located at 401 LaGauchetiere Street, its president was Mr. M. Denenberg, for many years among its most dedicated and tireless supporters.

The same year saw the founding of a Talmud Torah in Saint John, N.B., through the efforts of Rabbi H. Wolinsky, who had been called by the Ahavath Achim congregation in that city. Among the very first tasks he undertook, to which he attached the utmost importance, was to make available to the children the facilities for a Jewish education. Saint John at that time numbered 283 Jews - a community which, despite its small size, had made substantial contributions to the relief of needy immigrants arriving there.

A similar concern with Jewish education in Winnipeg led to the construction of the first Talmud Torah building there, the cornerstone for which was laid in 1901. Designed to accommodate 150 children, the school was build in conjunction with the Shaare Zedek synagogue in that city.

About this time the rebuilding of the old Bnai Jacob synagogue was undertaken on the same site as the original structure (the present day De Bullion Street), which by now was in a deteriorated condition. This was the building which until the year 1886 had housed the German-Polish congregation and whose walls had witnessed so much of the early history of the Montreal community. It was demolished and a new synagogue erected in its place. In may 1902 the cornerstone was laid in an impressive ceremony; the most ardent address on this occasion was delivered by the reform Rabbi Isaac Landman of Temple Emanuel.

In Ottawa the Agudath Achim Congregation was preparing to move into its own building on Rideau Street. Despite its small numbers, the Ottawa community was beginning to come into prominence, particularly since the election of Samuel Rosenthal as alderman in 1902.

CHAPTER TWO

An event of major importance for the Montreal community was the official opening on May 28, 1902 of the new edifice that was to serve as the home of the Baron de Hirsch Institute. The Governor-General of Canada, Lord Minto, dedicated the building. Expressing his profound pleasure at this honour - the more so because the Baron and Baroness de Hirsch were personal friends of his - the Governor-General paid tribute to the couple's noble philanthropic deeds.

Other distinguished guests at the ceremony were the prominent French-Canadian journalist Joseph I. Tarte; a representative of the Federal Cabinet; the Principal of McGill University; the Mayor of Montreal, the French Consul-General; and members of the Protestant School Commission. Mr. Tarte praised the work of the Institute and expressed admiration for the qualities displayed by the Jewish population. In his view the Jews were a minority similar to the French-Canadians, also having every right to hold their heads high and not to feel inferior to their English compatriots.

The new home of the Baron de Hirsch Institute on Bleury Street subsequently became an all-embracing community centre for Jews in Montreal. Not only did it serve as a meeting place for various clubs and organizations, which constituted the groundwork for many significant community projects, but it was also the headquarters of the Jewish Colonization Agency, which directed farm programs in various parts of Canada. It was also the centre of immigrant relief work, distributing aid to the needy. In addition, the Institute maintained a library, carried over from the old building on St. Elizabeth Street, the initial contribution for which had come from Lord Strathcona. There was also a day school for children, as well as evening classes for adults.

The scope of educational services provided by the Institute can be gleaned from the Directors' report for the year 1902. We learn, for example, that apart from adult evening classes that were crowded to capacity, the Baron de Hirsch school had an enrollment of 470 children, comprising 221 boys and 249 girls. In addition to the regular school curriculum, one hour a day was devoted to the study of Hebrew. The pupils for the most part were children of immigrant families, the majority from Rumania.

An even clearer picture emerges the following year: an increase in attendance to 583. The predominance of Rumanian immigrants is evident from the fact that of the 2,617 applicants for assistance from the Baron de Hirsch Institute in 1902, more than half, 1,365, had come from Rumania.

Not surprisingly, the influx of new settlers gave rise to unforeseen problems. This was true wherever the immigrants made their homes. The large number of motherless children in Montreal gave rise to a project for establishing a Jewish orphans' home. The plan was taken up by a philanthropic association, organized on the basis of a 20-cent monthly membership fee, which drew a large number of supporters. Funds were to be raised through dramatic presentations and other entertainments. But the plan proved to be beyond the resources of the association.

A far more serious problem soon loomed on the horizon. This was the old vexatious school question, which for so many years had been the centre of bitter controversy. The seeds of contention, embedded in a series of temporary agreements between the Jews and the Protestant school authorities, now ripened into a full-blown climax. This happened in the so-called Pinsler case which, as we shall see, served to clarify definitively the status of Jews in relation to the educational system of the Province of Quebec.

According to the statute of 1841 which set up two separate school systems in Quebec, namely, the Catholic and the Protestant, Jews possessed no specific rights with regard to the education of their children. They had been expected to negotiate with either one of the school boards, in accordance with official instructions. After the law had been in force for over thirty years, it was amended in 1870, this time granting Jews the right to pay their school taxes to the school system of their own choice. In the majority of cases they chose the Protestant, thus making their sons and daughters eligible as pupils of the Protestant schools.

The immediate cause of the crisis in 1901 was the noticeable reluctance on the part of the educational authorities to grant scholarships to Jewish pupils who qualified in all other respects for these awards. Matters came to a head when the Protestant School Board declared that only those Jewish children whose parents were school tax-payers, that is, property owners, were eligible to receive scholarships. A particular instance in point spearheaded a legal case that brought long-standing Jewish grievances to the fore.

This occurred in 1901 when Jacob Pinsler, a pupil of Dufferin School in Montreal since 1895, was awarded a scholarship entitling him to free high school tuition, having won top honours on graduation from the elementary course. When, however, at the beginning of the fall term he presented himself at the high school he was denied admission and his scholarship was rescinded because his father was a tenant and not a landlord.

On November 26th of that year the legal firm of S. W. Jacobs filed a petition in the Superior Court of Montreal in the name of Paul Pinsler, father of Jacob, asking that the ruling of the Protestant School Board "which excluded a certain class of persons of the Jewish faith from the privileges of a scholarship be declared null and void". The petitioner appealed to the Court to order the Protestant School Commission to admit his son into the high school on an equal footing with other scholarship winners.

Among the arguments presented by the Protestants to justify their action was the old one of insufficient revenue. The Board, they claimed, was forced to subsidize the education of Jewish children since the amount paid by Jewish school-tax-payers was inadequate to cover the cost of maintaining these children in the schools, and it was under no obligation to continue to shoulder this burden. The point was reached where open discrimination against Jewish pupils in the Protestant schools began to be practised.

Moral considerations, judgments of right or wrong, never entered into the picture. It was pointed out that the cost of keeping Jewish pupils in the Protestant schools amounted to \$24,000 a year, only a fraction of which came from Jewish tax-payers. Furthermore, the Protestant School Board was paying \$800 a year to maintain a teacher of Hebrew in the Baron de Hirsch school. The Board was therefore fully within its rights when it denied to some Jewish children a privilege enjoyed by their Christian schoolmates.

Nevertheless, there was reason to suspect that a deeper motive lay behind the actions of the Protestant authorities, as was pointed out by S. W. Jacobs. This could be traced to the fact that of forty scholarship winners in the Protestant schools that year, ten were Jews, a ratio far exceeding the overall proportion of Jewish to non-Jewish pupils.

Nevertheless, the claim of insufficient revenue became the basis of all the arguments presented by the Protestant side. They resorted to another method for furthering their aims. At the closing of the school term in 1902 not a single Jewish graduate qualified as a scholarship winner, even though there were among the Jewish pupils some who had attained the highest scholastic records throughout the year.

The community was outraged. That such unethical methods should be practised on innocent children seemed a violation of moral principles, the more so because they were perpetrated so demonstratively. That some local Jewish leaders sought to restrain their reaction to this event is implied in the fact that the case

was not even reported in the Jewish Times. Nevertheless, the same publication saw fit to reprint a communiqué of the Montreal correspondent to the Jewish Comment of Baltimore, denouncing this injustice against school children in language that does not permit repetition to-day.

The Pinsler case finally came before Judge Davidson of the Superior Court on October 6, 1902. The Jewish side was represented by such able lawyers as Maxwell Goldstein, Jacobs and William Patterson; while the counsel for the Protestants included the later renowned Justice Greenshields. In his statement the elder Pinsler declared he was a British subject, having lived in Montreal with his family for many years, all his children, including Jacob, having been born in Canada.

Counsel for the plaintiff went on to show that the revenue of the Protestant school board was derived from three sources: an annual levy of taxes on immovable property in Montreal; a yearly subsidy from the Provincial Government of Quebec; and lastly, from school fees paid by parents of pupils. In addition, the Board received, jointly with its Catholic counterpart, a share of the "neutral" school fund, which was made up of school taxes paid by corporations owning immovable property. From the foregoing it was clear that the defendants' claims of insufficient funds to maintain Jewish children were gross exaggerations.

Under these conditions, the lawyers for the petitioner argued, Jewish children ought to possess the same rights as those of the Protestant faith regardless of whether their parents were landlords or tenants. No distinction ought to be made between those whose fathers owned property and those who owned none, just as no distinction was made in the case of Protestant children. Hence the Court ought to disallow the controversial regulation.

The Protestant defendants approached the matter from an entirely different point of view. Apart from their insistence on the monetary insufficiency of Jewish school taxes, they interpreted the laws to prove that the Jews did not come within the provisions of the Quebec School Act, as no mention is made in that Act regarding specific rights for Jews. Even if the law of 1870 permitted Jewish property owners to pay school taxes to the board of their own choice, either Catholic or Protestant, this did not imply that children of Jewish tenants were entitled to the same rights as their Protestant counterparts.

Fraught with suspense for Jew and non-Jew alike, the hearing before the Superior Court adjourned after a few days. The eagerly awaited settlement of the thorny problem was handed down by Justice Davidson a few months later.

Meanwhile the incident brought into the open the lamentable state of education prevailing in the province of Quebec. Mr. D. A. Ansell, president of the Baron de Hirsch Institute, told the Daily Witness that thousands of children, both Catholics and Protestants, as well as a number of Jewish youngsters living in the poorer sections of Montreal, were receiving no schooling whatsoever and were spending their time idly in the streets, growing up without the least supervision or education. It was shocking that no one seemed to care about the welfare of these children. No one seemed concerned that many of them might end up in jails and reformatories.

The Jewish Times commented that the conditions described by Mr. Ansell were the result of the "medieval school system in the province of Quebec" and a "crying shame for the city of Montreal".

At the same time there were constant reminders of the unceasing flow of immigration. In a marked upsurge and diversification of Jewish activities and interests, new organizations sprang up devoted to a variety of programs. Old-new forms and ideas, which at first appeared strange and conspicuous, gradually took more distinct shape as they left their stamp more visibly on the Canadian scene.

Many problems arose as a direct consequence of the continuing immigration. For the new arrivals, not all of whom could settle in Montreal, there was the difficulty of finding employment. Many found themselves in need of assistance from the community. But everywhere the newcomers showed the remarkable quality for which they were admired by their Canadian neighbours; their ready adaptability to the new land and its conditions.

There were perceptible changes in the face of all communities, both large and small. This was true of Halifax and Saint John, of Montreal and Toronto, Ottawa and Hamilton, or Victoria and Vancouver. In the first years of the century we hear, for example, of an attempt to introduce Reform Judaism in Winnipeg by a group of recent arrivals from England and Germany. But nothing came of it.

In contrast, the traditional Jewishness of the Eastern European immigrant took root. Here we see the rise of synagogues and Talmud Torahs, congregations and private schools. Prayer houses were filled not only on the Sabbaths and on High Holidays, but were frequented also on week days as Jews came to pray or to sit evenings over a page of Gemarrah.

A pillar of strength was added to Jewish life in Montreal when the Shaar Hashomayim congregation engaged the young Rabbi Herman Abramowitz (1880-1947), who was to remain with the congregation for

nearly four and a half decades. Having arrived only twelve years earlier from Lithuania, where he was born and received his boyhood Jewish learning, Rabbi Abramowitz early exhibited an outstanding personality that was to bring honour not only to his own community but to Jewish life throughout the country.

The long-time breach between the Sephardi and the Russian-Polish Jews was healed when Rabbi Abramowitz was invited to deliver a sermon on a Sabbath from the pulpit of the Shearith Israel Synagogue. The rift had occurred long ago when the Sephardic Jews refused to participate in the dedication of the first synagogue building of the German-Polish Jews in Montreal.

Concurrently with the immigration of those years a new experiment in land settlement was launched by the Jewish Colonization Association. An attempt was made to attract large numbers, particularly among the recent newcomers from Rumania, to settle on land in Lipton, the colony founded in 1901 in the Yorkton-Melville District (formerly Qu'Appelle) in Saskatchewan. The experiment was a failure from the start, however, as the colonists encountered untold hardships and disappointments.

We learn from the JCA report of 1903, for example, that many settlers were leaving the colony, that in February of that year only 183 remained on the land of the 365 original settlers. First-hand investigation by a JCA representative sent to look into the situation revealed that "several mistakes" were committed in the founding of the colony, though the report does not state what these mistakes were. Steps were taken to alleviate the hardships of the settlers, with the result that a number returned to the colony. But by the fall of that year their number had again dwindled even lower than before, so that only 156 souls remained.

In Quebec, Jews were confronted by a blatant resurgence of anti-Semitism. The disseminators of hatred once again filled the air with the poison of anti-Jewish propaganda, finding a ready vehicle in the pages of the French language weekly Pionnier which carried the writings of a certain L. G. Robilliard, a devotee of Edouard Drumont. The editor of La Presse, Jules Heilbronner, himself a Jew from Alsace, brought suit against Robilliard, charging him in court with criminal libel.

This action, however, failed to silence the hate-monger. Though his pending trial did restrain him from mentioning individuals in his attacks, it did not deter him from continuing to slander the Jews as a people. A law student of McGill University, A. H. Vineberg, brought another court action against the culprit. Robilliard was arrested on the strength of information and documents, arraigned before Justice Choquette of the Court of King's Bench, and was released on bail.

Robilliard had been the president and manager of a "Union Franco-Canadien", on whose behalf he had engineered a life insurance scheme which proved to be a colossal swindle. Over a period of years Robilliard had literally robbed his victims, extorting money from them for a life insurance plan that never existed. He had swindled tens of thousands of French-Canadian families. Clients were easily solicited with the aid of the clergy whose services he secured by paying one dollar for each applicant recommended by a priest.

The exposure had barely come to light when Robilliard suddenly vanished, forfeiting his bail and taking with him a fortune made from defrauding innocent people. Only after his escape was a full-scale inquiry held into his affairs and the true extent of his extortions revealed.

Not all of French Canada shared his views. In fact, the French language daily La Patrie showed its disapproval of the provocative anti-Jewish attacks by publishing an article strongly sympathetic to Jews, in the form of a "Letter from Ottawa", presumably written by Joseph I. Tarte, Minister of Public Works in the Federal Cabinet. "In this country", it read, "we welcome with open arms all those who wish to become good citizens, all those who obey our laws and support our institutions. The Jewish colony is growing in scope and importance. It now numbers thousands of citizens such as any country would be proud to admit. Canada is a land of liberty, tolerance and equal rights for all."*

* La Patrie, Montreal, May 28, 1902

CHAPTER THREE

The long-awaited judgment in the Pinsler case finally came on February 14, 1903, bringing in its wake new and unexpected problems for the Montreal Jewish community.

Justice Davidson's ruling left both parties, Protestant and Jewish, extremely dissatisfied. The Jews were placed clearly in a predicament. According to the Court's interpretation of the Quebec School Act, Jews possessed no rights whatsoever as they were not legally incorporated into either the Protestant or the Catholic school system, and no legal provision had been made for their incorporation. Hence they could not claim any Jewish rights.

The Protestants, on the other hand, were displeased with the judgment on an entirely different ground. Certainly it was no cause for concern for them if the Jews were excluded from the Quebec school system, for this was exactly the argument they had advanced to begin with. Apprehension grew rather out of another phase of the Court's juridical conclusions. Even though the presiding judge concurred in the Protestant view of the absence of Jewish rights, he had pointed out in one clause of the ruling that it was within the power of the provincial legislature to grant Jews such rights. In the opinion of Justice Davidson, the problem had become of "pressing importance".

A possible appeal to a higher court was initially considered by counsel for the Jewish cause but was never pursued. Instead, a new series of negotiations began between both parties, this time with a different end in view, namely, to avert the implementation of Justice Davidson's advice. Neither party, it seems, wished to resort to the solution he advocated. The spokesmen for the Jewish cause, apparently lacking the foresight displayed by the presiding judge, were extremely reluctant to take advantage of the opportunity to found a separate school system of their own. Instead, they entered into a fresh compromise with the Protestant authorities, resulting in the School Act of 1903.

A newspaper report of March 3, 1903, dealing with negotiations between the two parties leading up to this Act, reads as follows:

"At a conference held yesterday, the Protestant school commissioners and a committee of Montreal Jews came to an understanding regarding the question of Jewish children in the Protestant schools. In brief, the agreement arrived at by them provides that the Jewish population be included in the Protestant school system of Montreal, that this system remain as up to now Protestant throughout and therefore Christian, and that

the regulations contain a 'conscience clause' to protect the religious sentiments of Jewish children. Under this agreement, if enacted by the Legislature, Jewish children will for school purposes be considered Protestants. The Jews will also pay their school taxes to the Protestant school fund, instead of exercising, as heretofore,, the alternative of contributing either to the Protestant or the Catholic school fund."

Two days later a delegation consisting of both Protestant and Jewish representatives appeared before the Legislature in Quebec. The Jewish spokesmen presented a memorandum urging the legislature to pass a bill implementing the agreement arrived at jointly by the Jews and the Protestants following the disclosures of the absence of Jewish rights contained in the Davidson report.

At the same time the Protestant delegates, while reiterating their complaints about a heavy financial burden, nevertheless declared themselves willing to accept Jewish children, failing an alternative resolution. A bill was accordingly introduced in the Legislature granting Jewish children equal rights in Protestant schools. It was passed without delay, and became part of the Statute of Quebec on April 25th.

Under the prevailing circumstances, the School Act of 1903 was unquestionably the most practical solution of the dilemma, even though the Jews had failed to take advantage of the opportunity of establishing their own separate school system.

The designation of Jewish children as "Protestants for school purposes" could have unfortunate ramifications, but this was not foreseen at the time. It therefore came as a surprise that the newly achieved amity proved to be short-lived, for before long the Protestant school commissioners again voiced the old grievances regarding their Jewish wards.

The Protestant School Board issued a pamphlet in which they claimed that the education of Jewish children constituted a strain on Protestant tax-payers which was increasing yearly. "Ten years ago", it stated, "there were only 314 Jewish pupils in the Protestant schools. This year there are 2,144. Each year there is an increase of 369 Jewish children over the previous year. This will not cease to burden the Protestant tax-payers."

The implications of this statement were all too clear. Appearing as it did just eight months after the signing of an agreement, it created misgivings which, unfortunately, proved to be well founded.

At this time a tragedy of major proportions was unfolding before the eyes of the world. As the horrifying reports of the Kishinev pogroms reached the New World they became the overwhelming concern of the Jewish communities of Canada. With the cries of anguish of the murdered Jews, the Czarist rulers sought to drown out the growing discontent of the suffering Russian masses.

The merciless crimes of the Czarist regime called forth a wave of protest that spread into Canada. Mass rallies to condemn the atrocities in Russia were held in Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg. Prominent non-Jewish citizens participated in these meetings.

The events in Kishinev - the "city of slaughter", as the great Hebrew poet H. N. Bialik has called it - precipitated a flood of emigration to America greater than any that had gone before.

Impelled by the most intense urgency, a human stream surged forward towards the shores of the American continent. In Canada alone, in the first five years after the Kishinev massacres, no fewer than 32,865 Jewish immigrants arrived. The new arrivals in that five-year period were double the entire Jewish population in Canada. The bulk of the new immigrants hailed from Russia.

Possessed with an abundance of energy, initiative, and a lively sense of Jewish values, these newcomers became pioneers and builders. With their enthusiasm and dedication to Jewish causes they inspired other sections of the community to new efforts and undertakings. Thus it was not long before in various parts of the country there were new budding institutions and associations that owed their beginnings to these recent arrivals. In fact, the immigrants of that period laid the foundations for much of the Canadian Jewish community as it evolved in later years.

These newcomers, however, did not always find favour in the eyes of the established members of the community. Many of the older settlers looked askance at the insistence of the immigrants to perpetuate orthodox customs of the Russian tradition in the new country.

An organized opposition to traditional Judaism soon grew, and even found its way into the Quebec Legislature. Mr. James Cochrane, a former mayor of Montreal who was also a member of the Quebec Legislature, in an address before the Austro-Hungarian Congregation at the opening of a new synagogue reported that during the legislative debate on the incorporation of the Montreal Talmud Torah, leading Jewish citizens took a strong stand against it, while there was no opposition to the bill from either Catholic or Protestant members. Not surprisingly, Lyon Cohen (1868-1937) pleaded the case of the Talmud Torah and the bill was adopted.

Meanwhile new interests and problems began to claim the attention of the rapidly growing community. Perhaps the most compelling of these interests was the rising Zionist movement, which was encouraged by prominent Christians.

In May 1904 Israel Cohen, a well known Zionist leader from England, visited Canada to make several public appearances. In Toronto, the Zionists called on Sir William Clark, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, to preside. To their happy surprise, Sir William that evening amazed his audience in the crowded St. George's Hall with his profound knowledge and understanding of the Zionist ideal. There was genuine warmth in his words as several times during the course of his speech he used the expression "your Palestine".

But in Montreal it was discovered that municipal employees engaged in the preparation of the voters' lists had in January 1904 deleted Jewish names from the lists. At first it was thought that some of these might have been struck off because their foreign spelling had given rise to doubt as to whether their owners were naturalized. Even if such were the case it would not detract from the flagrant injustice and arbitrariness of the action.

After closer inquiry, an even more startling disclosure was made. Not only were some Jewish names struck off, but all Jews were removed from the voters' lists, even those who had been naturalized many years earlier and those who had been born in Canada; among them were well known professional men, businessmen and property owners who had been taxpayers for years.

The truth eventually came to light. Since the municipal voters' lists were to be used also in the Federal elections, someone had attempted, by deleting all Jewish names, to eliminate the Jewish vote. Only a public outcry against such illegal and fraudulent measures finally impressed upon the city council the necessity of taking steps to rectify the situation. Alarmed at the prospects of a civil lawsuit, municipal authorities began an inquiry which ended in the exposure and dismissal of one of their employees. There the matter closed.

Hostility towards Jews was evinced also by a Capt. Chartrand in an article, surprisingly enough, in the Ottawa Free Press, a paper generally known for its liberal views. In a tone of fierce antagonism that shocked many Canadians, the captain's remarks were directed mainly against the Russian Jews, whom he accused of lack of patriotism and cowardice because they fled from Russia when they ought to have remained there to fight for their country against Japan.

His true motive became apparent when he wrote:

"What confidence can we place with men who abandon their country in time of war? Suppose England and Canada at war, would we be happy to see some of our countrymen deserting our flags and go away boasting of their doings? What would we think of other people opening their arms to such renegades?"

This anti-Semitic tirade from an officer on the staff of the Royal Military College at Kingston could not be passed over in silence. Young Archibald J. Freiman of Ottawa took it upon himself to answer the charges. In a reply prominently featured in the Free Press he wrote, "How can the Jewish sons of Kishineff fight for Russia, when the cries of their innocent brothers who were massacred last year are yet ringing in their ears; when their ruined sisters are yet beside them with hearts forlorn? How can the Jews fight for Russia when we know that the very ground we try to conquer, upon that very ground we will shed our blood? Shall we create more ground for persecuting our brethren, and perhaps far more massacres?"

This incident was not the only one of its kind. Even more alarming was a statement from a government official aimed specifically at Jewish immigrants.

In a press interview in Montreal Dr. Peter H. Bryce, Chief of the Dominion Medical Inspection of Immigrants in Ottawa, described Jewish newcomers as the least desirable elements, whose admission to the country should be drastically curtailed. He had actually issued instructions to immigration inspectors to bring this about wherever possible. In particular, he pointed to the extreme poverty of these recent arrivals, a poverty which in their new environment "produces degeneration, nervous diseases and even insanity". In his view the Polish peasant from Galicia, no matter how poor, was more desirable an immigrant than the Jew.

Under the impact of the adverse reaction to his words, Dr. Bryce later felt impelled to mitigate the effect of his remarks by declaring that he was misinterpreted in the newspaper reports. The Jewish Times in a lengthy editorial pointed to the hostility of the government official towards Jewish immigrants.

Dr. Bryce's account of Jewish immigrants was nothing more than slander. As a government official he was in a position to know, for example, that the Montreal Civic Hospital for the Mentally Ill in Verdun in all the years of its existence had housed not more than four Jews. Dr. Bryce's remarks were an insult to Canadian Jews.

* "There are twenty thousand Jews in Montreal. Yet a drunken Jew has never been found on our streets ...

"Let him go among the Jews of the poorer class; let him visit the slums and haunts of vice where his own countrymen and co-religionists congregate, and he will learn how false and unworthy of a man in his position are the statements he has made to the press concerning Jews and Jewish immigrants." *

* Jewish Times, 1904, pp. 368-369

Fortunately such incidents occurred rarely and had little effect on the development of Jewish life in Canada. The impoverished immigrants who stood as a thorn in the side of many, later surpassed all expectations by their adaptability and their achievements. They adjusted more rapidly than newcomers of other ethnic groups to an unfamiliar language and culture, and in the space of a few years attained a remarkable degree of success.

Profound sorrow swept the community with the untimely death of the unforgettable Dr. Theodore Herzl, who died in July 1904. Memorial rallies and synagogue services were held in the larger cities as well as in other parts of Canada.

A small step forward was taken by the religious community when, in addition to the existing Shaare Tefillah Synagogue erected in 1904, the cornerstone was laid for a new building of the Adath Yeshurun Congregation in Ottawa. The latter ceremony was held in the presence of the mayor of the Canadian capital, members of Parliament and rabbis of Montreal. In Winnipeg the erection of the Beth Jacob Synagogue was undertaken.

In Ottawa strenuous efforts were made to maintain the Talmud Torah for children which was headed by Rev. M. Mirsky. Far more successful was the more modern Talmud Torah in Winnipeg, thanks to the work of its principal, Rev. S. Roubin, an extraordinarily capable religious and secular scholar, who also served as rabbi of the Shaarei-Zedek congregation there and as secretary of the Hebrew Benevolent Society.

Less promising was the state of Reform Judaism. After exploratory in Winnipeg, a Reform congregation actually was established in 1904 to which the name Holy Blossom was given. The presidency was assumed by Mr. N. Frankfurter, and Dr. Bornheim of Las Vegas, New Mexico, was engaged as rabbi. Efforts were made to attract more followers, but apparently without success, as the idea of a Reform Temple had to be abandoned.

We encounter the names of Mr. Frankfurter and of other members of the liberal congregation among the founders of the Shaarei-Shomayim congregation which later came into being in that city. Its charter, granted by the government of Manitoba, expressly declares the congregation to be Orthodox.

A recognized leader of Reform Judaism at that time was Rabbi Isaac Landman (1880-1946) of Temple Emanuel in Montreal. Later editor of the "American Hebrew" and of the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Rabbi Landman contributed much to his congregation in the few years he served as spiritual leader. He was succeeded at Temple Emanuel by Dr. I. Cornfeld.

Western Canada at this time was coming into the limelight as a result of the colonizing experiments carried out by the Jewish Colonizing agency which awakened many hopes of a new era of Jewish settlement.

The two oldest colonies at Oxbow and Hirsch as late as 1904 lacked as yet the most rudimentary needs for a Jewish community. A special meeting had taken place in April of that year at the school in Hirsch to consider the condition of their common cemetery which was inadequate and unenclosed. A committee headed by Rev. M. Berner was appointed to carry out the resolutions of the meeting. *

* The Jewish Chronicle, London, March 11, 1904

CHAPTER FOUR

Immigration Brings New Problems

Despite the hardships encountered by Jewish farmers in the prairie provinces early in the century, Western Canada, as indeed Canada as a whole, never ceased to beckon as a haven for Jewish immigrants. Driven by their tragic plight to seek new homes, the Jews of Europe more than ever turned their eyes to the New World. Jewish immigration into the country soared.

The Open Door policy of the Canadian government during this period allowed unrestricted entry of immigrants. Seeking able-bodied men to fill the shortage of labour both on the land and in the cities, Canada welcomed the new settlers arriving in ever greater numbers. The Jewish immigrant, however, did not always find it easy to accommodate himself to the new country, especially in the sparsely populated areas where employment opportunities were few, as in Western Canada.

This problem is evidenced in a report by Rev. S. Roubin of Winnipeg to the London Jewish Chronicle. In June 1904 a group of Jewish immigrants arrived in Winnipeg from South Wales. The group consisted of seven married men with their wives and children, together with twenty-six single men. But there were no jobs for them in Winnipeg, so that they were virtually reduced to begging on their arrival. The local Jewish welfare groups were not in a position to provide assistance. Winnipeg Jews were generous, but their means were sadly limited. Half of them barely earned an adequate livelihood for their own families. Yet, in addition to their own needs, they were also called upon to help support the impoverished Roumanian-Jewish colonists of Qu'Appelle, a settlement in Western Canada.

Some of the newly arrived immigrants were supplied with transportation to Montreal; others remained in Winnipeg. "Daily", Rev. Roubin wrote, "they besiege my house, clamouring for food or work. We do not know what to do with them or for them." *

Jewish life in Canada was undergoing rapid development as a result of the constantly increasing flow of newcomers. The outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war gave new impetus to the mass exodus from Russia. A single year saw the entry of 7,715 Jews into Canada - the largest number for any one year up to that date. (This figure does not include immigrants who arrived in Canada from the United States.) In distant, out-of-the-way areas, where no more than a handful of Jewish families had lived previously, there now sprang up sizeable Jewish communities.

* Jewish Chronicle, August 12, 1904

But the most significant impact of the vast migration wave was to be felt in the larger Jewish centres in the country.

A host of new problems arose. Uppermost was the need of aid to the newcomers, many of whom were penniless. Everywhere the communities exerted every effort to prevent the immigrants becoming a burden on the general population - a fact which often aroused the admiration of non-Jews. The Jewish philanthropic societies in Toronto, for instance, in the single year ending in the summer of 1905, disbursed twelve thousand dollars in relief to newcomers.

It seems that a large number of the immigrants at that time appear to have been sent to Canada from London, England, where the East End was becoming overcrowded with Jewish refugees from Europe. On a visit to London J. Obed-Smith, Commissioner of Immigration for Western Canada, conferred several times with Lord Rothschild concerning the project of settling them on Canadian farms.

There were proposals to found Jewish colonies in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories.* The Winnipeg Free Press expressed skepticism.** In fact, nothing ever came of the plan.

In Canada, meanwhile, there was no let-up in the stream of immigrants. More than any other centre, Montreal was to feel the impact. For it was here that the bulk of the refugees landed and from here they were sent to other points. The Baron de Hirsch Institute provided at times as much as a thousand dollars a week for their support.

The need to find shelter for families awaiting jobs or transportation became such that temporary quarters for the homeless were set up. This was the "Hachnossass Orchim" at 948 St. Lawrence Blvd., towards which the Jewish Colonization Ass'n, allotted \$15,000. Considerably more was required to house two hundred persons and to serve some 900 meals daily.

The noted Anglo-Jewish author Israel Zangwill, who later became the head of the Territorialist movement, looked to Canada as a land for Jewish settlement. He drew up a plan for the founding of Jewish colonies in Canada. Towards this end he approached the Secretary to the High Commissioner in London, Mr. W. L. Griffith, a man of liberal ideas and sympathetic to the plight of the Jews of Eastern Europe. In accordance with the wishes of his government he turned down the proposed plan.

"I believe I must say right here", he declared, "that the plan to settle Jews on a stretch of land allotted for a Jewish colony, or

* London Jewish Chronicle, April 7, 1905

** Ibid.

which should be placed under the control of any Jewish organization, is absolutely out of the question. I have discussed this question with Zangwill as head of the Jewish Territorialist Organization. We also contacted the Canadian government and results leave not the slightest doubt that it is entirely unthinkable at the present time.

When Sir Wilfrid Laurier visited England in 1907 to attend the Third Colonial Conference, he was approached by a representative of the Jewish Chronicle regarding the possibilities of Jewish colonization in Canada. From the reply of the Canadian Prime Minister to the questions put before him it was plain that the Canadian government gave little encouragement to such a movement. Claiming he was unaware of the extent of the growth of Jewish immigration into Canada or whether the question of Jewish colonization would be discussed by the colonial prime ministers, his remarks, as reported in the Chronicle, were significant "because they showed the limitations which Canada is ready to place on such a movement. This should clarify the matter for all concerned."

The Anglo-Jewish publication went on to say, in reporting the interview with Sir Wilfrid:

"Some organization", he said. "I believe it was the Baron de Hirsch Institute, but I am not certain, had approached us with a proposal to found a colony. We refused, however, to consider such a thing. In the past we had granted privileges of this sort, which however had unfavorable results, and for this reason will not be repeated. The Baron de Hirsch Institute up to now looked after Jewish immigration in Canada, but these immigrants have not settled in any compact group."

"There was some talk that even though you would be against a large colony, you would perhaps be pleased to allow a number of smaller colonies to be founded scattered one from the other?"

"No. We are not ready for such colonization. To allow Jews to form separate settlements is impossible. We would not allow Jews to do this, just as we would not allow others."

"This means, then, that you would be opposed to local autonomy, which the Jewish territorialist organization presents as a condition for the establishment of a Jewish settlement? It would have to be granted the right of local or municipal self-government."

"I think that if such a settlement were created, it would contain non-Jews as well as Jews. The former would therefore have the same chance of being elected to office in such a government."

"What is your attitude to Jewish immigrants as individuals, apart from the question of founding a specifically Jewish colony?"

"As individuals we gladly accept them. Canada is a very large country, and there is room for everyone who is willing to work. Canada is open to everyone who wishes to come. I must say, however, that we are not encouraging immigrants, except those who wish to engage in agriculture and services." *

These remarks naturally put an end to all the hopes of the Territorialists for the founding of an autonomous settlement of Russian Jews in Canada. The stand taken by Sir Wilfrid Laurier was a drastic departure from his views on the subject expressed in similar circumstances a decade earlier. **

Similarly there was apprehension among the officers of the Baron de Hirsch Institute in Montreal, lest the newly arrived Jewish families create a ghetto. Various measures were taken to redistribute the new settlers over a score of centres from the Maritimes to the Pacific.

This attitude is revealed by the London Jewish Chronicle in an interview with Maxwell Goldstein. Mr. Goldstein deplored the volume of Jewish immigration to Canada.

"The cause of all the troubles with which we are coping is the great influx of foreign Jews into the country. They form ghettos and arouse the hostility of others. The French-Canadian press agitates against them... It is difficult for us to co-operate with these people. Yet we cannot ignore them. What we ought to do is take them by the hand, guide them and teach them to recognize their responsibilities towards the community... I have no doubt that if the flow of immigration could be reduced for a few years, it would be possible for us to assimilate and consolidate all the different groupings in the Jewish population." Mr. Goldstein also noted that the immigrant Eastern European Jews were unresponsive to Reform Judaism.

A Russian-Jewish immigrant was one of the first Jewish pioneers of the rural settlement that sprang up in an uninhabited wooded wilderness near Englehart, Ontario - a colony which Stanley Bero once so vividly described. Of this Russian-Jewish pioneer he relates a poignant human tragedy that occurred when the settler brought over his two sons from Russia. Just after meeting them at the railway station, he was taking them home in a canoe over a turbulent stream, elated and happy over the reunion with his sons, when the boat overturned and his sons drowned. ***

With reference to the Jewish colonies in Western Canada, Rabbi H. Abramovitch, returning from a tour of Western Canada on behalf of the Canadian committee of the JCA, gave a detailed account of conditions

* Jewish Chronicle

** B. G. Sach. History of the Jews in Canada, vol. 1, pp. 236-37.

*** Jewish Chronicle, August 24, 1906

there. The first Jewish settlement he visited was Hirsch, which had 50 families, each of them owning 160 acres of land or more. In this colony there were three buildings used for schools.

At Qu'Appelle there were about 200 Jewish families engaged in wheat production and some mixed farming. On the whole he found conditions good; all the families lived in comfortable, attractive farm homes.

He had also seen the smaller settlements at Oxbow and near Medicine Hat, each of these comprising about thirty families.

The colonies were thriving and the Jewish farmers happy to be leading a healthy, normal life so far from the city. He was similarly enthusiastic about the colony in Macaza, Que., about 90 miles north of Montreal, where twenty Jewish farm families lived. The process of adjustment was not easy for these Jewish farmers, because of the densely wooded land which had to be cleared before cultivation could be undertaken and a colony begun. *

The annual report of the Institute for the year ending October, 1905 is gratified that no ghetto "in the accepted sense of the word" was in the making. Large numbers of Jewish families were concentrated in the poorer section of the city, showing a tendency to live in close proximity to each other, comparable to the French-Canadian population, but this was due not only to the lower rents but "because the men and the girls lived not far from the factories where they worked".

The year 1905 brought a renewed wave of pogroms in Russia that once again horrified the civilized world and aroused a torrent of widespread protest and indignation. The blood-curdling spectacle that unfurled itself before the eyes of the world awakened irrepres- sible feelings of protest. Once again the Jewish people and others raised their voices against the savage Czarist atrocities.

Protest rallies in which both Jews and others took part, were held in various parts of Canada. In Montreal three such gatherings took place because no single hall could accommodate the large audi- ences. A meeting in Ottawa on November 27, 1905, called by the Zion- ists of that city, was attended by the Mayor, by members of Parliament, and several Cabinet ministers as well as by Prime Minister Sir Wil- frid Laurier himself. This rally had an almost official character, for among the participants were such as spoke directly on behalf of the Canadian government. Sir Wilfrid Laurier bitterly criticized the Russian government for its barbaric treatment of the Jews which he termed brutal and inhuman. His words, clearly reflecting the lof- ty humanism of the great statesman, were to have a lasting impact not only on his assembled listeners but on the country at large.

* Jewish Times, January 29, 1909

Sir Wilfrid declared that the gathering expressed the horror at the gruesome atrocities that occurred in Russia, drenching the Russian earth with blood and leaving an ineradicable blot on its name. Can one read of the barbarities there, he asked, without one's blood freezing in his veins? He doubted whether the Ottawa protest would reach St. Petersburg. Nevertheless, he urged the voices of Canadians to swell the expression of reprehension, protest and condemnation which rose from all parts of the civilized world against the Russian rulers. This might perhaps put a stop to the atrocities.

Nor had he any assurance that the government at St. Petersburg possessed the power to prevent these horrible events. The Czarist regime had turned a deaf ear to the plea of thousands of its own people for a greater measure of liberty and justice. By refusing to grant land reforms, it had itself prepared the ground for revolution. And revolution in Russia came with all the terrors and outrages that go with it. After appealing to Canadians to contribute generously to the relief of the victims of the massacres, he concluded:

"There is still a lesson we can learn from the present troubles in Russia. We cannot bring all the Jews here, but whoever wishes to come to Canada may be sure we will welcome him. We hold dear the institutions under which we live. We appreciate, perhaps more than ever, these British institutions where there are equal rights for all, where everyone, regardless of origin, race or creed, is assured a full measure of liberty, justice, equality and sunshine. I am here with you as a Canadian, because I considered it a duty to come. As a Canadian and as a British subject, each of us should be proud to say that he believes in the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God." *

A protest demonstration took place in Toronto at the Beth Hamedresh Hagodol Synagogue on McCaul Street, with the participation of leading personalities, among them the mayor of Toronto, the Prime Minister of Ontario, and clergymen.

The first of three rallies in Montreal was convened by the Jewish Tailors' Union and the Cap Makers' Union.

One week later a giant mass rally took place at the Monument National Theatre in that city, under the auspices of the Canadian Zionist Organization, followed the next day by a similar gathering at the Baron de Hirsch Institute.

Protest rallies were held also in Kingston, Hamilton, Winnipeg and other cities. A national drive to collect relief funds to assist Russian-Jewish pogrom victims netted \$6,753. Two Kingston churches took an active part in the fund-raising.

* Jewish Chronicle, Dec. 1, 1905

The small Jewish community of Winnipeg was beginning to draw attention for another reason. The election of Moses Finkelstein as alderman in 1904 brought honour to the Jews of Western Canada.

About the same time Clarence I. de Sola of Montreal was appointed Belgian consul, succeeding Mr. Jesse Joseph, who died in February, 1904. The prominent Canadian Zionist leader was to hold this office at the Belgian consulate until his death in 1920.

In the municipal elections held in Ottawa that year, Samuel Rosenthal was re-elected alderman, while in Cornwall, Ontario, one year later Nathan I. Freed was unanimously voted to the local city council.

Though Jewish participation in Canadian political life was on the whole still insignificant, achievement in other fields soon became noteworthy, especially with regard to education.

Taking advantage of the new opportunities for study, children of immigrants, in many cases themselves immigrants, began to excel in the elementary schools, in the high schools and in the universities. Many interesting incidents illustrate this fact.

Of the five high school students who matriculated in Dawson City in the Yukon in 1904, qualifying for entrance to the University of Toronto, three were Jews.

The first Canadian Rhodes Scholar was Israel I. Rubinovitch of Vancouver, who had achieved the highest standing in his year upon graduation from Vancouver College, and then won great distinction at McGill University.

In Kingston, which at that time had a Jewish population of 30 families, Max Lesses, the only Jewish student at Queen's University, graduated in medicine with a gold medal at the hands of the Governor-General, Earl Gray.

At McGill, where the number of Jewish students reached thirty, Marcus M. Sperber (born in Austria in 1886) won the highest honours upon graduation in Law in 1906, and was awarded a Macdonald Travelling Scholarship - the first Jewish student to receive this honour.

In the world of music the career of Pauline Lightstone (Donalda) evoked widespread interest. The daughter of Michael Lightstone of Suvalk in Lithuania, she was born in Montreal in 1882. For a time she was a teacher at the Baron de Hirsch Institute. Achieving fame as an opera singer, Madame Donalda appeared in Nice, France, in Covent Garden, and in Manhattan. At a recital in her native city the Mayor of Montreal paid tribute to her as "a most famous Montrealer and the most brilliant graduate of the Royal Victoria College". *

* Morgan: Canadian Men and Women of the Time, 1912, p. 1010.

The exceptionally gifted pianist Ellen Ballon, then still a child, was beginning to make her mark as a child prodigy. She was the niece of the head of the Yeshiva at Telz, the Cambridge of Judaism. At the early age of five she had appeared in recital at the Windsor Hall in Montreal, leaving her audience overwhelmed at her rare mastery of the piano. Two years later, in 1906, she was acclaimed by music critics as a child wonder. The great pianist Josef Hoffmann, during a visit to Montreal, heard her play and advised that she continue her studies with the leading piano teachers in the world. Her first great teacher was Raphael Josephy in New York, under whose tutelage she was launched on a brilliant musical career that was to make her widely renowned.

CHAPTER FIVE

Nothing demonstrates more vividly the new trends and directions in Canadian Jewish life at this time than the growth of the Zionist movement. The more scattered the communities in all parts of the country, the deeper the roots that the Zionist idea struck in Canadian soil and the more numerous the adherents of the reawakening of the Jewish national ideal.

This was apparent at the sixth annual convention of the Canadian Zionist Federation in June 1905 in Montreal. As many new faces appeared among the participating delegates and the bulk of the gathering was made up of recently arrived immigrants, it was obvious that the growth of the Zionist cause was due above all to the expanding influx of European Jews. Communities from the Atlantic to the Pacific Coast were represented. Even the tiny agricultural colony at Wapella with its own Zionist association, sent a delegate. Some participants in the convention had arrived in the country not more than a few months earlier.

For the first time, also, a report was presented in Hebrew. This was a paper on "Dorshei Zion I" and "Dorshei Zion II" delivered by M. L. Sack.

From the welter of "isms", the program of socialist Zionism crystallized, winning the ardent support of class-conscious Jewish workers. It was from these early beginnings that the Poale Zion movement in America evolved.

The founders of the movement in Canada, which dates back to July 25, 1905, were J. Hoichberg, Jacob Solomon, M. L. Sack, Sarah Mann-Zucker, B. Lachovitsky and Dr. J. Bachrach. Gradually their numbers grew. A few months later a Poale Zion group was formed in Toronto, and the two branches became affiliated with the Canadian Zionist Federation, sending delegates to its annual convention the following year. The pending establishment of a Poale Zion branch in Winnipeg was announced there.

The role of the Poale Zion party in its incipient stages was necessarily limited, owing to a crisis that ensued within its ranks almost immediately, which resulted in a split in January 1906 when some of its members broke away and founded the Zionist Territorialist party. Perhaps its greatest achievement in the early days of its existence was its influence within those strongholds of radicalism where Jewish tradition or national consciousness were shunned and scorned as reactionary.

In Montreal, for instance, a group of Jewish anarchists, emulating their free-thinking socialist confrères of New York or Chicago, arranged a Yom Kippur dance at St. Joseph's Hall. They distributed circulars inviting the Jewish people to partake of dancing and refreshments on Yom Kippur day. Pious Jews on their way to synagogue were both horrified and infuriated at the distributors of the handbills. This flagrant violation of religious sentiments led to a skirmish, which ended only after the police intervened and the subsequent airing of the incident in court.

An episode occurring about this time in Quebec City had unpleasant overtones for the Jewish people and reached beyond the shores of Canada and into France. In November 1905 the noted French-Jewish actress Sarah Bernhardt was scheduled to appear at a performance in Quebec City. Advance notices of the forthcoming presentation of the "divine Sarah" had aroused the fervent interest of theatre lovers, but they also prompted certain newspapers with an anti-Jewish bias to a denunciatory campaign against the artist on the ground that she was a Jewess. A climax was reached when a mob attacked Madame Bernhardt and her troupe, hurling stones and shouting, "A Bas la Juive". Many French-Canadians were shocked by the incident. To Sarah Bernhardt an apology came by telegram from Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

The issue of Sunday observance had in the past created problems for Jewish storekeepers, when attempts were made in Toronto and Montreal to prevent selling bread or Jewish newspapers on Sunday. For "offences" of this type Jewish storekeepers had been arraigned before the courts. Hitherto the Lord's Day Alliance sought stricter enforcement of the Sabbath laws on a local scale. Jewish merchants, seeing no other alternative, had to comply with existing regulations even if this meant keeping their businesses closed on Sunday despite the fact that they also observed the Jewish Sabbath as a day of rest.

A different picture emerged, however, when the Alliance began a drive for national enforcement of the Sabbath laws through Federal legislation. Such a bill was finally brought before Parliament a few days after the opening in Ottawa on March 8, 1906, by the Minister of Justice, the Hon. Charles Fitzpatrick. Clearly, if passed, the law would seriously affect the livelihood of numerous Jewish families, and it therefore became a source of deep concern to community leaders throughout the country.

On March 15 a delegation from Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and Hamilton appeared before the Government at Ottawa. A memorandum was presented protesting certain clauses of the proposed bill on the ground that they contravened the spirit and principles of British law, which upheld equal rights for all citizens regardless of faith, these principles being also embodied in Canada's Consolidated Statutes of 1859. Moreover, attention was drawn to the fact that Jewish citizens

who refrained from business on Saturdays and all Jewish holidays - a total of 65 days in the year - if compelled to observe 52 Sundays as well, would find themselves deprived of the means of earning an adequate livelihood.

Received by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice, the delegation included a number of active Montreal communal workers. The Toronto community was represented by Rabbi S. Jacobs of Toronto, Ottawa by Alderman Rosenthal and Hamilton by Rabbi L. Weiss. Spokesmen for the group were Maxwell Goldstein, K.C., Montreal lawyer, and the Rev. Meldola de Sola.

On the other hand, the Lord's Day Alliance continued their endless propaganda on behalf of the bill, opposing any amendment whatsoever that would constitute a concession to the Jews. Rev. Dr. J. Edgar Hill, president of the Alliance, denounced the petitioners and the Jews in general for opposing the proposed law. He called them foreigners, aliens, virulently attacking them as an anachronism among the peoples, reminding them that they were living in a Christian country where a Christian government made equal laws for all.

The most incisive reply to his charges came from Rabbi S. Jacobs of Toronto. In a Saturday sermon at the Holy Blossom Synagogue he charged the president of the Lord's Day Alliance with ignorance of Canadian history. Otherwise he would have known that the first Jews came here with General Amherst's army. He should have known that we live in a land where all are equal before the law and that majorities cannot impose their will on minorities. "If majorities were always right", Rabbi Jacobs declared, "then the entire history of mankind would have to be re-written and our civilization set back --- it should not be forgotten that the duty of governments is also to protect the rights of minorities."

Meanwhile the question of Sunday rest came up in the House of Commons. The speech of the Minister of Justice proved a sad disappointment to the Jewish people, who had anticipated a more liberal attitude on the part of the Minister. The Minister had commented:

"One of the first obstacles in the way of legislation will be the religious convictions of some elements in our community; but, as the Archbishop of Canterbury pointed out during the course of a recent debate in the English House of Lords, it is not desirable for us to be too considerate of the wishes of alien immigrants who, as he justly said, while they are obtaining the benefits which this country is affording them, will not be subjected to undue hardship if they are obliged, in the public interests, to obey any rules which we, as a Christian community, find it necessary to lay down for the observance of the Sunday." *

* House of Commons Debates, April 3, 1906, p. 1014

The Jewish Times deplored the biased approach of the Minister, which contradicted the liberalism of his party chief. In particular, it took strong issue with his use of the word "alien" in his veiled reference to Canadian Jews. Had he declared that minorities have no rights that need to be taken into consideration, his attitude would have been understandable. But to dub the Jews as aliens was held to be unworthy of a member of the Government, least of all of the Minister of Justice.

Before a select committee of Parliament for point by point consideration of the bill, Maxwell Goldstein and Lyon Cohen once again presented the Jewish case against Sunday laws that would adversely affect Jewish citizens.

After deliberations of a few weeks, the work of the select committee finally came to a close on June 1st, when the bill in greatly modified form came before Parliament for final approval. One of the clauses proposed by Maxwell Goldstein was accepted by the committee after much discussion. This clause provided that under certain circumstances an exemption could be granted to Sabbath-observing Jews, provided that they do not work Sundays in public or in a way to offend the feelings of those who observe the Sunday rest.

From the tenor of the debates that followed, the prospects seemed none too encouraging. Apprehension among Jewish leaders grew as they contemplated the consequences of a law that would compel observant Jews to work five days in the week instead of six, which would be tantamount to depriving their families of one-sixth of their actual livelihood.

An open letter was dispatched to each member of the House appealing on the grounds of elementary justice that the plight of the Jews resulting from an enactment of the Lord's Day Bill be taken into consideration. Bearing the signature of Maxwell Goldstein, Clarence I. de Sola and others, the letter was dated June 25, 1906 - the same day on which Parliament in a vote of 79 to 57 rejected the clause proposed by Maxwell Goldstein.

A new petition was addressed to the House members urging them to take into account the economic hardship which the new legislation would create for segments of the Jewish population.

The bill was repeatedly returned to the agenda of the House of Commons, undergoing in the process a series of continuous alterations. Some of the original clauses were deleted, while new ones were added.

Not surprisingly, the member of Labelle, Mr. Henri Bourassa, was an active participant in the debates. What did prove a surprise, however, was the new stand he now took with regard to the Jews. Dur-

ing the early stages of the discussions he had sharply opposed any exemptions for Jews in the observance of Sunday, using such epithets as "vampires" and "bloodsuckers" of them. But he subsequently changed his attitude completely and became the only member to evince a sympathetic understanding of the Jewish interests in regard to the question under discussion. Stressing that it was wrong in principle for Christians to deprive a Jew or any other citizen from the right to earn a proper livelihood for his wife and children, he said it was difficult to believe that a single member of Parliament would advocate such a policy. He proposed an amendment along the lines of Maxwell Goldstein's proposal. But this was also rejected by the House.

It was Bourassa who made the further recommendation that the question of Sunday rest be left up to the provinces. In its final form, passed on July 12, 1906, just before the closing of the session, the legislation, though greatly altered from its original form, still compelled Jews to observe Sunday as a day of rest regardless of whether or not they also observed the Jewish Sabbath. The provinces, however, were granted the power to amend the law through their own legislatures as they saw fit.

And it was the province of Quebec which was the first to make use of this power.

This happened about seven months after the closing of the federal session, when the Hon. Sir Lomer Gouin, the then Liberal premier of Quebec, brought a bill into the Quebec Legislature containing the very clause which had been rejected by the federal parliament.

It provided that Sabbath-observing Jews should be permitted to do business on Sundays if they do so not in public or in a way to offend the feelings of those who observe the Sunday rest.

Sir Lomer's action was hailed by Jews as an indication of the province's traditional spirit of tolerance and liberalism.

CHAPTER SIX

By a strange coincidence, on the very day the Minister of Justice received the Jewish delegation, parliament took up another question involving Jews - this time on a world scale.

On March 15, 1906 a bill was introduced by the member for Toronto, Angus K. McDonnell, asking the federal government to condemn the Czarist pogroms on Jews. The resolution, as well as the address delivered by Mr. McDonnell upon its presentation, reflected a high degree of compassion towards Jews as a persecuted people. His resolution stated, after referring to the horrible crimes against helpless Jewish men, women and children, that

"The Canadian parliament, which embodies the sentiments of the Canadian people, regardless of race, creed or party, deplores the callous and bloody massacres of the Jews in Russia and declares that these cruelties are a blot on the civilization of the twentieth century. That this resolution should, through his Excellency the Governor-General, be sent to the Minister for Colonies, so that His Majesty may be informed of the feeling of his Canadian subjects, towards the end that measures ought to be taken as the advisers of His Majesty shall deem appropriate."

His speech was met with a mixture of surprise and uncertainty. There was surprise at the contents of the resolution and uncertainty as to how to deal with it. The power of the Canadian parliament to pass such a resolution was questioned on the assumption that Canada lacked sovereign status, being a dominion of the British Empire, and was therefore in no position to express an opinion that would influence or reflect on Britain's relations with a foreign power.

Strangely enough, it was Sir Wilfrid Laurier, a friend of the Jewish people, who first raised this point in a speech immediately following that by the member from Toronto. While sharing the sentiments prompting the proposal, and recalling his own recent participation in a protest rally, he revealed himself as a far greater imperialist than he was deemed to be when he expressed his doubt as to the propriety of any such action on the part of the Canadian parliament.

"I certainly have no exception to take to anything that has been said by my hon. friend (Mr. McDonnell)" the Prime Minister declared, "nor to the motive which has inspired him in bringing this resolution before the House. Our fellow citizens of the Hebrew race deserve every encomium he has bestowed upon them... There is no possible justification for the harsh treatment to which they have been subjected. What

"has taken place in Russia must instill a feeling of horror in the breast of any civilized man... It is right that the sense of horror of every man in this free country should be expressed, so that by the multiplicity and unanimity of these expressions of opinion some influence may perhaps be brought upon the government of Russia to induce them to protect the lives of their citizens. That is a thing that is quite within the duty of every Canadian citizen."

He had doubts, however, about the advisability of passing the resolution.

"I would like the House to remember that this parliament does not represent the full plenary sovereign power. We are a colony of England, and whilst we have full autonomous power, we have not at this moment the right to interfere in foreign matters as to which the Crown of England alone is responsible.... I believe it is quite within our power and quite within our right as British subjects to express opinions as to conditions which may affect our fellow British subjects in any part of the world, but I think we should hesitate somewhat, or at all events take some care to reflect, before we interfere in a matter which is purely within the domain of the Foreign Office and the relations of England with a foreign power... the relations of England at the present time with Russia are the relations which belong simply to the diplomatic service of Great Britain and in that service we have no voice whatever..."

A different opinion was expressed by W. F. Maclean, member for South York, who followed the Prime Minister in the debate. Wholeheartedly endorsing the resolution, the member for South York declared:

"I do not altogether agree with the doctrine that has been laid down by the Prime Minister on this occasion. The British parliament has taken up questions of this kind and has expressed sympathy with oppressed people in various portions of the world, and I think the parliament of Canada has sufficient rights, if it cares to assert them, to express its sympathy in the same way. This parliament is not secondary to the British parliament in matters of this kind."

The next speaker, then leader of the Opposition and future Prime Minister of Canada, Robert L. Borden, also disagreed with Sir Wilfrid Laurier's appraisal of the rights of the Canadian parliament.

"Technically as well as actually, this parliament has a perfect right to address the King on any subject whatever. From this standpoint one would think that this parliament might be very well justified in passing a moderate resolution with regard to what has taken place in Russia; and I join most heartily in what has been said by the Prime Minister and by the mover of the resolution as to the feeling with which these outrages have been regarded by the people of Canada as a whole."

Nevertheless, he agreed with the Prime Minister that the matter be given further consideration by parliament before taking any action.

The only member to oppose the resolution in toto was Henri Bourassa, member for Labelle. Revealing a strong anti-Jewish orientation, Mr. Bourassa proceeded to deliver a tirade against Jews in the spirit of Edouard Drumont's doctrines and the utterances of Goldwin Smith, whom he actually quoted from the floor of the House of Commons and to whom he referred as "one of the most illustrious of English writers".

Blaming the Jews in Russia for the misfortunes that had befallen them, he demonstrated a hostility which must have shocked many Canadians. In his opinion, pogroms took place in Russia because the Jews "had prepared a conspiracy to slaughter the Christians". Ignorant of the fact that Jews in Russia were prohibited to own land, he resorted to the inept accusation that, instead of becoming landowners, Russian Jews had lived and enriched themselves by exploiting the poor Russian peasants, from whom they extorted not only their money but the "blood of their life" for centuries; no wonder therefore that the latter now sought revenge. Moreover, Mr. Bourassa tried to convince his audience that money raised for the relief of pogrom victims was actually used for the purchase of arms for Russian revolutionaries. *

The opinions of the anti-imperialist Henri Bourassa, a political opponent of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and those of Laurier himself, converged; for different motives, they both advocated Canada's abstention from a voice in international affairs. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that the mover of the resolution as well as its seconder were members from Ontario, the traditional stronghold of British imperialism, and it was they who questioned Laurier's pro-imperialist stand.

* Bourassa later underwent a change of heart in his attitude towards Jews. In contrast to the anti-Semitic feelings evinced by this address, he later, on several occasions referred to Jews in an entirely different vein.

Though nothing further was heard in parliament about the protest resolution against the Russian anti-Jewish atrocities, outside of parliament an echo was heard.

Addressing the annual convention of the Canadian Zionist Federation several months later, Mr. McDonnell told his disappointed listeners what they already knew - that the resolution had aroused no great sympathy on the part of the members of the House of Commons. Had the elected representatives of the people felt differently about the matter, it would not have been shelved and forgotten as it had been. *

Strangely enough, this speech of Mr. Macdonnell's was not even mentioned in the Jewish Times. Was the omission to avoid embarrassment for the Liberal Party of Sir Wilfrid Laurier?

We have a description of the early days of the Toronto community in the memoirs of Rabbi Jacob Gordon, a resident of that city for many years. Arriving in Toronto in February 1905, he found a warm and friendly atmosphere and a community devoted to traditional Jewish values.

Every day brought a fresh batch of immigrants ready to strive against all obstacles to make a Jewish home in the new country. Some of them would find jobs in the clothing industry. A great number, however, turned to peddling, setting out "in their heavy boots, leather jackets and old country caps" over the streets of the city and the neighbouring towns, buying up old clothing and articles of all kinds, or selling new goods.

No event reflects more vividly the growth of the community at that time than the dedication of the new large Goel Zedeck Synagogue in Toronto, the second oldest in that city, on University Avenue.

One can discern also a strong interest in education. The Orthodox congregations opened Talmud Torahs where Jewish children might receive free religious schooling to prevent their alienation from Jewish learning and to counter the influence of the missionary plague which was then actively spreading among the Jewish population in Toronto as well as in Montreal.

A number of clubs made their appearance in Toronto at that time, most of them purely social, though some attempt was made to include cultural interests. Lectures and literary evenings were arranged by such groups as the Cosmopolitan Club and the Judea Club, with professors from the University of Toronto invited occasionally to speak.

* Jewish Chronicle, London, July 20, 1906

So Professor McCurdy of the University of Toronto lectured on "Jews in the Past and To-day".

In Montreal the problem of Jewish education had already been dealt with on a broader scale, a Talmud Torah having been established there as early as 1896. The accomplished pedagogue Moses Elimelech Levine became the principal of the Talmud Torah in 1906. He was the author of the first Yiddish book to be published in Canada - a volume dealing with child education and published by the Eagle Printing Company in 1910 (128 pages). Some members of the board of the Talmud Torah objected to Yiddish as the language of translation from the Hebrew when teaching the Bible and the prayers. In 1906 English began to replace Yiddish as the language of instruction and translation from the Hebrew. This was evidently prompted by those eager to hasten the "Canadianization" of immigrant Jewish children.

A growing aversion to Yiddish soon became apparent also in other quarters. In 1906 a news item appeared in the English press to the effect that plans were underway to establish a Jewish theatre. In an editorial which bitterly reproached those responsible, the Jewish Times concluded that "this means a revival of the ghetto-instinct".

As they lacked the training and qualifications for jobs in most other industries, the immigrants streamed into the clothing factories, most of which were in the hands of Jewish owners. The work week in the needle trades then consisted of 55 to 60 hours; wages were very low and working conditions bad. Yet the number of workers in the clothing factories steadily increased. More small shops were opened with the spread of the sub-contracting system, much to the detriment rather than the improvement of the lot of the workers. An economic depression which followed a financial crash towards the end of 1907 in the United States gripped Canada, creating a serious slump in the clothing industry, the effects of which were strongly felt among the Jewish population.

Hard times, coupled with the problems arising from the influx of immigration, led to phenomena of a different kind. As immigration brought a younger, idealistically inclined element which had before the pogroms and the Russian revolution entertained no thought of coming to Canada, it also brought a variety of ideas, slogans, catch-words, a spectrum of "isms" that were to become a part of the Canadian Jewish environment.

A heightened pitch of activity, a new vivacity became apparent within the community. Jewish youth indulged in animated debates and discussions arising from ideologies, parties and programs imbued with either nationalist or socialist philosophies.

Reference has already been made to the Poale Zion association and to the S.T. group. In November 1903 a Poale Zion group was founded in Winnipeg, with Mr. A. Osovsky as secretary. Among the founders of the S.T. in Montreal were the well-known communal workers L. Zuker and A. Komarov. At the first S.T. Convention in October in Boston, Mr. Komarov of the Montreal delegation reported the number of members to be 75. The figure might have been an exaggeration. But the S.T. at the time was more powerful than the Poale Zion, both in number and in moral strength.

In addition to the Poale Zionists and the Territorialists, other groups were active such as the Bundists, Anarchists, Social Revolutionaries, Social Democrats and others. As a result, many youth clubs and ideological groups were set up. Crowded meeting halls, enthusiastic audiences and lively discussions on theoretical socialism lasting into the small hours of the morning became common daily occurrences.

Both the left-wing and the progressive nationalist groups often invited well-known speakers from New York who would draw large audiences. We find the name of Ab. Goldberg, Dr. Chaim Zhitlowsky and Dr. Nachman Sirkin among this roster of the famous. Early in 1907 the S.T. movement in Montreal acquired new strength when S. Shneur took up residence in that city. An excellent speaker, he was the theoretical spokesman of Social-Territorialism. This exceptionally capable man was destined to spend the last years of his life in an institution for the ill.

Many of these groups, composed exclusively of workers, concerned themselves with the improvement of the lot of those in the garment industry, where a large portion of their own members were employed. It was largely due to their efforts that the various crafts in the clothing industry were organized. No easy task, it was nevertheless accomplished within a few years.

In Montreal there already existed a Jewish Tailors' Union and a Cap-makers' Union, a vestige of the old Knights of Labour, both of which, however, were poorly organized. About that time, also, the first Jewish Carpenters' Union was formed, Local 1270, of which Zavel Gilletz was one of the founders. The Jewish Tailors' Union which had broken down was superseded by another tailors' union, which became affiliated with the United Garment Workers of America and comprised four locals. In addition, a Cloak Makers' Union was formed, affiliated with the International Workers of the World. The Union affiliated with the United Garment Workers of America, though it continued to expand, ... later was dissolved after the demoralising effects of a theft of union funds by officials and of a strike that occurred in 1907. In its place a more powerful and better-organized union was to arise in the future.

The clothing industry in Montreal was eventually reorganized. Moreover, a Trades and Labour Council of Jewish workers was created there which embraced not only the clothing workers' unions but also the carpenters, bakers, butchers and other trades - in all a total of 11 unions. The newly formed Trades and Labour Council had high hopes of uniting all Jewish labour groups, but these were premature for the Council did not survive for very long.

The effects of the depression were diminishing as normalcy gradually returned. This could be seen from the report of the Baron de Hirsch Institute. To meet the everyday demands for aid to the sick and the poor even the augmented revenue was soon exhausted, however. This led the Secretary, S. W. Jacobs, to chide some of the wealthier members for their failure to make larger donations to the Institute. In the course of the year the Institute had assisted 173 families each month, as well as eighty-three widows and seventeen TB sufferers. No less than \$4,500 had been spent to help TB patients; and it was then that serious consideration was given to the idea of building a Jewish sanitarium in the Laurentian mountains.

We hear of a Jewish Cloakmakers' local in Toronto as early as 1897, affiliated to the I.W.W. The local existed until 1899, when it fell apart following an unsuccessful strike. Though reorganized in 1906, it still lacked the strength to become an effective union, becoming part of the International Ladies Garment Workers this time. Weakened further by lack of internal cohesion, this local too proved to be short-lived. *

In 1907 the first branch of the Workmen's Circle in Montreal was organized. This was Branch 151, consisting of newly arrived Bundists. About the same time we hear of the appearance of a Jewish Bakers' Union.

The first building of the Y.M.H.A., founded in 1906, was begun - the first home of an institution that was to grow into a model of its kind on the continent - in the scope of its activities, its diversified program of national and cultural and educational activities which very few on the continent could match.

The Hebrew Consumptive Aid society also came into being and was destined to perform valuable service in the relief of the sick and of the needy. It was out of this organization that the Jewish Hospital of Hope was born.

A student society, the Maccabean Literary Circle, began to function with a membership of about thirty, all of them McGill students. Its first president was Dr. S. Petersky, of Vancouver, and its aims were to stimulate a greater interest in Jewish national,

* H. A. Logan, Trade Unions in Canada, Toronto, 1948, p. 214

cultural and social problems. This Jewish student group, which carried on for many years before it disbanded, had first been organized under another name, with a membership of no more than eleven.

In Toronto, working conditions were far better than those in Montreal. This fact was no doubt related to the existence of a well-organized union in the clothing industry in Toronto, whereas in Montreal the union had fallen apart after an unsuccessful, ill-prepared strike. The brothers Joseph and David Stein of Toronto had been instrumental in forming the union in that city.

A comparison of working hours and wages in the two large cities reveals a glaring contrast. In Toronto, for example, tailors worked on an average 49 hours per week, for which they received \$15 to \$16 weekly, while the average work week in Montreal was from 55 to 60 hours, for which the pay was \$11 a week. Considering that a large percentage of these workers were family men, one can easily gauge their income.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The official report on immigration for the year ending June 30, 1906 tells us that 7,127 Jewish men, women and children entered Canada during that year, 588 fewer than the previous year. Of these, 6,056 came from Russia, 44 from Poland, 244 from Austria, 36 from Germany and the remainder from other countries. Among the immigrants were 2,852 men, 2,035 women and 2,240 children. They included artisans, labourers, merchants, and a number of agricultural workers. Half were to settle in the province of Quebec, which meant in or near Montreal in most cases; twenty-seven per cent in Ontario, and eighteen per cent in Manitoba.

The same report carries a statement by the Immigration Commissioner for Western Canada regarding Jewish immigrants. "Very few of them", he writes, "have in the past year settled on the land; they prefer to live in the towns or peddle in the country; and for this reason they cannot be regarded as possible homesteaders or major producers in an agricultural area of the country such as Western Canada". He adds, however, that "in the district of Wapella are to be found the best Jewish farmers in Western Canada, that their cultivated land comprises from 75 to 250 acres to a farm. These people are engaged chiefly in mixed farming, and that part of their land not used for cultivation is enclosed for pasture". The Inspector for the district of Lipton (Qu'Appelle) reports that "the Jewish colony located to the east and southeast is expected to produce for the market 40,000 to 50,000 bushels of wheat".

Jewish colonies were already in existence at Macaza and Ste. Sophie in the province of Quebec, both founded as early as 1904. The Ste. Sophie settlement, which was to be maintained for many years by its first pioneer founders, bore an unmistakable Jewish character, supporting among other things a Jewish school maintained by community tax.

The years 1905-1906 saw the beginnings of the colonies Ramsay, Sonnenfeld and Edenbridge in Western Canada. Of these, Edenbridge located in the northern part of Saskatchewan and founded by Lithuanian Jews, grew into a model agricultural settlement. Its history, as told by one of its pioneers, goes back to 1905 when a group of ten in South Africa decided to come to Canada and take up farming. By Passover, 1906 they had already arrived in Winnipeg ready to take up homesteads. Soon the group, among whom were the brothers Braude and J. L. Vickar, grew in numbers as additional would-be farmers joined its ranks, some from the United States and England as well as from other parts of Canada. Drawing upon their own resources, and by dint of hard work, they succeeded, without assistance from a

Jewish colonization agency, in establishing a model rural community. In later years, however, the number of colonists began to decline.

At the same time some of the younger communities in the West, which had only just begun to take shape in the first years of the new century, showed a substantial increase in size and importance as a result of the greater immigration. During the first decade one can already discern the outlines of an organized Jewish life in cities such as Calgary, Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton and other centres, though it is difficult to say exactly when the first Jews arrived there.

In Regina the community, to meet an apparent need, formed a Hebrew Bnai Jacob Society to assist new immigrants and others in need, as early as June 1906; its president, M. Bloomfield. * That same year saw the first beginnings of a congregation in that city, when a "minyon" was organized.

In Calgary and in Edmonton Jews had settled even earlier. The first to arrive in Calgary were the brothers Jacob and William Diamond, who came from Vilna in the early 1890's. We hear of William Diamond coming to Calgary in 1892, where his brother was already living. In 1904 the only Jewish community in Calgary met in a private house for the High Holy Day Services, though an organized community already existed under the presidency of W. Diamond. His brother, Jacob Diamond, led the services.** A Chevra Kadisha existed in Calgary in 1906, and a Ladies' Aid Society was organized.

The first Jews to settle in Edmonton began to arrive there at the end of the last century. Pioneers of the Edmonton community are A. Crystal and H. Segal, who arrived in that city in 1895. At first Edmonton attracted very few Jewish families. It was only after W. Diamond moved there in 1906, having established business contacts there over several years, that the first signs of a developing community began to appear. At a meeting held August 12, 1906 the cornerstone of the Edmonton Jewish community was virtually laid.

We find Jews at that time living in Saskatoon, Strathcona, Red Deer, Moose Jaw and other centres in Western Canada.

At the same time, however, the Jewish population of the coastal cities of Vancouver and Victoria remained small, their distant location presenting a forbidding obstacle to newcomers. Hence the continued weakness of the Jewish communities in the Pacific Province, despite the prominent role played by a number of Jews in local society there.

* Jewish Chronicle, London, July 19, 1906

** Ibid., October 28, 1904

We learn, for instance, from a report in the Jewish Times, that the Jews of Vancouver could not afford to maintain a permanent rabbi for their Reform Temple Emanuel, but that they hoped to engage one at least for the High Holidays. That the community as a whole lacked unity and cohesion is further apparent from the same report. *

In Montreal, special care seems to have been taken to ensure the support and development of the Reform congregation, which showed little increase in size but became established on a more solid footing, perhaps because of the greater wealth and status of some of its members.

In 1906 a significant step forward was taken when Temple Emanuel engaged as its spiritual leader the brilliant young Rabbi Nathan Gordon (1883-1938). Born in Odessa, Rabbi Gordon had come with his parents to New Orleans at the age of three. A graduate from the University of Cincinnati and Hebrew Union College, he became a lecturer in the Department of Oriental Languages at McGill University in Montreal in 1908.

His appointment lent tremendous prestige to his congregation. Early in life he became intensely interested in Jewish problems and began to take an active part in the life of the community, where he gained an outstanding reputation throughout a highly colorful career.

As fresh reports of pogroms in Russia were streaming in from abroad, defying the feelings of the civilized world in the extent of their horror, one man could be found who had the effrontery to justify these acts of barbarism; this was Goldwin Smith of Toronto, former professor of history at Oxford. Having no conception of the true facts of the Jewish situation in Russia, he employed the clumsiest arguments to defend those whose hands were soaked in Jewish blood.

On June 14, 1906 a massacre occurred in Bialystok which lasted two days, killing seventy-eight Jews and leaving seventy injured. The gruesome details froze the blood, but Professor Goldwin Smith of Toronto rolled up his sleeves and wrote an article under the seemingly innocent title, "Is This Religious Persecution?". This he submitted to the Independent of New York, an organ none too friendly to Jews, where it was published on the twenty-first of June. The article abounded in the most venomous slanders against the Russian Jews as well as Jews in general.

It received a reply from Dr. Gotthardt Deutsch, leader of Reform Judaism in America, and one of the editors of the Jewish Encyclopedia.

* Ibid., August 24, 1906

Exposing the falsehoods and distortions contained in the notorious article, Dr. Deutsch challenged the author to prove his charge that the Jews were a "parasitic race" and that the Jews themselves had provoked the slaughters in Russia. The Independent refused to print the letter from Dr. Deutsch, offering some banal excuses to justify its action. The letter did, however, appear in a number of American-Jewish publications as well as in the Jewish Times in Montreal.

One contribution in the discussions, from the noted Canadian Jewish journalist and community leader Jacob G. Ascher, who at that time was living in New York City, in the Canadian Jewish Times, attributed Goldwin Smith's hostility to Jews to a long-standing quarrel with Benjamin Disraeli. The latter, it appears, had little admiration for Dr. Smith and had derided him on more than one occasion.

As a result of this campaign of hatred, the atmosphere became infected with anti-Semitic prejudice which reared its head in the most unlikely places, reaching even smaller centres in Ontario. For instance, the Hamilton Herald carried an article viciously attacking the Jews, insinuating that they were an unclean people. When some one attempted to protest against such an allegation through the pages of another Hamilton newspaper, the Spectator, the latter responded with references none too complimentary to the Jews. *

The newly arrived immigrants included men and women of intelligence, anxious to learn more of the world about them. Unfamiliar as they were with the language and unable as yet to read the local newspapers, they craved reading material and periodicals in their own language, Yiddish. They eagerly grasped whatever Jewish newspapers were available from New York.

Towards the end of 1905 a small Yiddish paper began to be issued in Montreal by H. Hershman (born Bukovina 1878 - died Montreal, 1955) - under the name of The Telegraph. Printed at Kaplansky's Printing Company on Notre Dame Street, it caused a sensation when it first appeared - the successful culmination of an attempt to produce a periodical for Montreal Jews in the Yiddish language. Though it was no larger than a handbill, the first issue was quickly sold out. A second issue of the paper appeared, followed by a third, which, however, was the last.

The year 1907 saw the birth of two Yiddish newspapers - the Jewish Star (Yiddisher Shtern), an Orthodox organ published by M. Hyman and Rabbi Joshua Glazer, which ran for one year, and of which not a single copy remains as far as is known; and the Kanader Adler (Jewish Daily Eagle) founded by H. Wolofsky, which first began publication as a weekly. After the fourth issue the Eagle began to appear twice weekly, and since 1908 as a daily; in its early days it included an English page.

* Hebrew Standard, March 1, 1907

The first editor of the Kanader Adler was Michael Aronson. We learn from the first number of the Eagle that a strike of Jewish needle workers was then in progress. Though poorly organized, the workers were driven by unbearable conditions to leave their shops and to demand higher wages and shorter hours, as well as regular weekly pay.

"In no other city", states the article, "are conditions in the clothing factories as deplorable as in Montreal. Men and women in cellars where no daylight or fresh air penetrates. Moreover, they are forced to slave from early morning to late at night." It goes on to report that a number of clothing manufacturers had already granted the workers' demands. The second issue, dated September 6, 1907, relates that more shops had already accepted the strikers' terms. However, the union which had called the strike was itself too weak to carry through the strike to a successful conclusion.

In the first numbers of the newspaper we read of an immigrant aid society already existing at that time under the name of United Russian-Jewish Immigrant Society, with a membership of 695. The society was founded in February, 1905, its first secretary was Israel Cohen; a charter had been granted permitting the society to engage in immigrant relief.

The infant publication became the defender of Jewish interests, taking a stand when necessary against those elements in whose hands the responsibility for that defense presumably lay but who in reality fell short of discharging such responsibility.

So we read, for instance, on the front page of the Eagle of September 21, 1907, the fourth issue, a news story which appears nearly incredible, and which, it can be imagined, gave rise to considerable concern and distress among Montreal Jewry.

It happened that on the night of Kol Midrei the reporter of the Eagle, in this case Michael Aaronson, the editor himself, was startled to encounter a party of newly-arrived impoverished Jewish immigrants carrying their heavy valises, wandering aimlessly on the streets of Montreal, at a loss as to where to turn for help. On approaching them he was astonished to discover that not a single one of the official Jewish welfare workers had taken the trouble to see to it that these destitute newcomers be spared the ordeal of having to roam the streets of a strange city Yom Kippur night carrying their heavy packing cases, not even knowing where to seek shelter. We read further, "The reporter did not know what to do. He led them to a police station, but the sergeant said it was not his affair and advised them to seek shelter elsewhere. The reporter then took them to the Beth David Synagogue and left them there."

The writer bitterly criticized the "gentlemen of the Baron de Hirsch Institute", accusing them of behaviour that amounted to something worse than neglect; in fact, it was a "crime", he charged.

No mention of the founding of the Jewish paper is made in the Jewish Times, the only Anglo-Jewish publication in Canada at that time. The event is entirely overlooked, not out of rivalry, though this factor cannot be ruled out completely, as many of the readers of the Times were themselves immigrants or children of immigrants who were certainly able to read Yiddish. More likely the omission reflected the deprecating attitude of longer-standing members of the community towards the Yiddish language and to any undertaking arising out of the initiative of the newcomers.

A new wave of pogroms occurred, not in Russia, but in Rumania. Again Jewish people everywhere rallied to help their unfortunate brothers in Europe.

In Montreal a conference of representatives of fraternal and other organizations and orthodox congregations decided to establish a Central Rumanian Relief Committee for Jewish victims overseas. Rabbi H. Abramowitz was appointed chairman of this committee.

Several days later a much larger gathering was held at the Baron de Hirsch Institute. Under the chairmanship of Rabbi Abramowitz the meeting raised \$1,128. Another meeting on a mass scale was held in Ottawa under the leadership of A. J. Freiman. Donations for the victims of the Rumanian persecutions arrived also from Toronto, Kingston, Hamilton, Winnipeg and other centres.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Crisis of 1907-8

As Jewish life became firmly rooted, attention was increasingly focused on the education of the young. Wherever a synagogue was founded, a Talmud Torah was invariably near by. In a city like Winnipeg, where in the year 1907 the Jewish population stood at six thousand, a second Talmud Torah was opened, its chief benefactor being Simon Lechtzier, who had donated the sum of \$550 towards its building. In the fall the new Hebrew school was opened; among the speakers was Rabbi Israel Isaac Kahanovitch (1872-1945). *

Rabbi Kahanovitch, a distinguished Talmudist, was born in Grodno and was educated in the Yeshivas of Lithuania. A man of rare qualities, he had obtained semicha at twenty. Possessing profound wisdom and learning that won for him the love of all who knew him, the influence of Rabbi Kahanovitch made itself felt from Toronto to Vancouver. Most significant was his dedication to Zionist interests and his unflinching faith in the ideal of the rebirth of the Jewish nation.**

In cases where tiny communities of Jews were suddenly faced by a rapid expansion, problems were bound to arise. In Sherbrooke, for instance, where in 1907 there were one hundred Jewish souls, it was necessary to institute legal proceedings to obtain permission to organize a congregation. The step was finally taken at a meeting presided over by a non-Jew, following a court injunction. The congregation thus founded was the Agudath Achim.

In Hamilton the community was confronted by a problem of a different nature. Congregation Anshei Sholem was threatened with a division on the question: should it remain Orthodox or join the Reform affiliation? Under the presidency of Edmund Scheuer, the Reform influence was strong. However, this was later counteracted, so that the Congregation was once more brought into the Orthodox fold. Now, however, at a special meeting convened in May 1907, the proponents of Reform once again gained the upper hand, and agreement was reached that the Congregation adopt permanent Reform affiliation.

In Montreal the need for an orphans' home, which had been felt for decades, loomed with greater urgency than ever. The Baron de Hirsch Institute, the main philanthropic agency, lacked adequate means to undertake the creation of such an institution. But in 1909, in the face of growing need that reached tragic proportions, a group of women with singular dedication and determination, managed to collect a fund for the realization of this goal.

* Jewish Daily Eagle, September 20, 1907

** Dos Yiddishe Vort, June 27, 1974

An indication of prevailing conditions: the streets of Canada's metropolis swarmed with Jewish boys and girls selling newspapers, harassing passers-by in a desperate attempt to augment the family income. Showing a remarkable lack of understanding, the Jewish Times described them as "screaming, shabby, unkempt little street-Arabs".

A major cause for concern was a decision of the Protestant School Board that it would not admit Jewish children who were unable to speak English ("incompetent"). This pronouncement, incongruous as it was with the tenets of the 1903 agreement between Jews and Protestants, nevertheless presented a delicate situation. It seemed obvious that some motive lay behind this latest action of the School Board.

When leaders of the Baron de Hirsch Institute requested a hearing with representatives of the Protestant School Board, their request was turned down. Feelings ran high at this outright insult. Yet some support was expressed for the Jewish cause in newspapers such as the Witness and the Herald, both of which vigorously defended the Jewish cause in this latest dispute.

Doubts began to form as to the intentions of the Board towards the admission of Jewish pupils in general.

A proposal of a separate Jewish school panel - this time offered not by a Jew but by a Protestant who objected to the joint schooling of Jewish and Christian pupils - evoked further apprehension. *

The editorials in the Jewish Times confirmed the lack of a bold stand on the whole question. One article, closely approaching a tone of obsequious appeasement, contends that Jewish parents are quite indifferent to the type of education their children receive in the Protestant school.

"We are willing to sink national and religious considerations in order that our children should grow up worthy citizens of the land of their adoption", said the Times. "Despite the clause in the existing School Act regarding Jewish conscience considerations, they are nevertheless willing, for the sake of peace and to avoid embarrassment, to permit their children to receive religious instruction from their teachers."

The economic depression which hit the United States at the end of 1907 was beginning to make itself felt in Canada, and nowhere was its impact more acute than among the Jewish working classes of the metropolis. The number of unemployed rose sharply, the streets swarmed with hundreds of bewildered, impoverished men wandering about, their faces bearing the mark of anxiety and helplessness.

* The proposal was contained in a letter to the Witness.

Not all the facts concerning the situation are available to-day, but there is sufficient evidence to form a picture of the way matters stood. In Toronto Rabbi Jacob Gordon of the Goai Zedeck Synagogue, in a sermon on Rosh Hashanah, bitterly reprimanded his audience for the sorry state of the welfare organizations in that city. For Montreal the statistics speak for themselves; figures released by the Baron de Hirsch Institute in its annual report and commented upon in an editorial in the Eagle under the heading "Jewish Poverty in Montreal", reveal that the crisis "caused a disaster among the Jewish population in Montreal, and the Institute could only help perhaps one out of ten of those appealing to it for help".

Throughout the winter and during the Passover week of that year a continuous stream of hungry people packed the Jewish immigration centre at 332 St. Urbain Street. No needy man or woman was ever turned away. One hundred and twenty persons were fed daily, in addition to sixty families being provided with bread, meat and other supplies.

Poverty was leaving its mark, as can be seen from a startling revelation by a chance medical investigation. This involved the Jewish Bakers' union, whose members had applied for life insurance within the International Bakers' union. Of sixty-three members making application, only twenty-three were accepted as eligible, the remaining forty-two being rejected because of tuberculosis.

However incredible this may seem and whatever reasons offered in explanation, one thing is certain: the poor health of the applicants did not stem from good working conditions and a reasonable work week.

Relief finally came, thanks to the efforts of a group of organizations of the more radical segment of the community which had joined forces to alleviate the hardships of the hungry and unemployed.

Eighteen organizations in all, they included the Cloakmakers' Union, an affiliate of the I.W.W., the Carpenters' Union, the Workmen's Circle, the Mohilever Benefit Society, the Poale Zion and the Socialist-Territorialists. A "crisis conference" was convened where plans were made to gather funds for the opening of a public kitchen for the unemployed. H. Hershman was appointed Secretary-Treasurer.

The "people's kitchen" was opened the beginning of February 1908. Located at No. 10 Ontario Street West, it was immediately filled to capacity with hungry people seeking food. For the price of five cents they could obtain a meal; those who lacked the nickel paid nothing. During the first two weeks of its existence, the kitchen provided as many as 2,223 meals, of which 556 were served without payment. Three hundred and fifty-three dollars was the total raised.

Pathetic scenes are described by an observer who witnessed the handing out of meals to the hungry. Writing in the Jewish Times, the correspondent is overwhelmed by the sympathy and warmth of the personnel. He tells of young mothers with babies in their arms coming to obtain a meal. Possibly as much as ninety per cent of those frequenting the soup kitchen were non-Jews. The food served was prepared according to Jewish dietary laws, despite the unorthodox tendencies of the founders.*

Heart-rending incidents occurred also when unemployed Jewish workers came to the Baron de Hirsch Institute clamouring for help. They virtually besieged the premises, often creating a scene when their insistent demands went unheeded. On occasion the police were summoned to bodily compel the suppliants to leave the building.

When a number of unemployed visited the Eagle offices to complain of the treatment they had received (which formed the subject of an editorial by A. Wohliner), the Baron de Hirsch Institute replied that it had already disbursed more than twice the usual amount for relief and that their funds were depleted. The Institute was actually on the verge of closing, according to the letter.

Despite these conditions, the community's cultural life suffered no set-back.

In Toronto, for instance, Jewish workers arranged a series of literary gatherings to raise funds for the unemployed. A particularly successful evening of this kind took place when the noted Jewish author David Pinsky was invited from New York. His reading of excerpts from his famous drama The Treasure drew enthusiastic response.

The Toronto section of the Social Territorialist Party invited Dr. Nachman Sirkin, editor of Dos Folk, to address two crowded gatherings. Earlier that month he had visited Winnipeg and Calgary as well as Montreal.

A movement in Montreal began for the promotion of the Hebrew language, spearheaded by the "Ivria" group, which consisted of Maskilim, proponents of a secular modern Hebrew culture. Literary and musical events were arranged and conducted in Hebrew. The level of Hebrew teaching prevailing at the Talmud Torah was pitifully low. Partly this was due to the effects of the depression which seriously curtailed the resources for maintaining adequate teaching facilities; the financial problem indeed was so great as to bring the Hebrew school dangerously close to the brink of being shut down completely.

* Jewish Times, March 7, 1908, pp. 120-121

The spreading of anti-Semitic poison continued to contaminate the atmosphere. In Toronto a number of incidents occurred that could be directly traced to the influence of Goldwin Smith. In Quebec City a conference of Young Catholics resolved to organize an anti-Semitic party to fight the Jews. When the Montreal Le Canada opposed the proposed resolution, the latter found a supporting voice in the pages of the Quebec Action Sociale.

The situation in Montreal deteriorated so that Jews were beginning to fear having to walk on certain streets where they could expect to be accosted with stones or insults. The Kanader Adler found it appropriate to advocate self defence units of Jewish youth. A Cabinet Minister who visited the Laurier Political Club, founded by Jews, was bitterly denounced by the anti-Semitic La Croix. Nor was this paper the only one to spread vicious accusation against the Jewish people; a continuous stream of hate propaganda poured forth from a long string of anti-Semitic sheets.

The depression did not prevent a rift within the community which arose out of a rabbinical controversy on a question of Kashruth, the religious supervision of slaughter. The Montreal community soon found itself divided into two opposing camps.

CHAPTER NINE

The Kashruth controversy, which grew into an unseemly scandal, caused anguish and embarrassment for the Jewish population of Montreal. Arising out of a dispute over the supervision of the ritual slaughtering of animals, the matter involved the authority of the shochtim (ritual slaughterers) and rabbis, and had to be settled in the civic law courts. Bitterness reached serious proportions as one Jewish newspaper was actually "excommunicated" by a certain rabbi.

The trouble began when Rabbi Joshua Glazer, "Chief Rabbi" of Montreal Jewry, sought to impose his authority. He even went so far as to appeal to the local city council that no Jewish butcher be granted a permit without his approval. Nor was this all. In his determination to overrule his opponents, Rabbi Glazer submitted allegedly false testimony in court declaring that certain rabbis issued divorces not in keeping with Canadian civil law. This accusation aroused profound distress and resentment. Because of its outspoken criticism, the Kanader Adler came under a decree of excommunication from Rabbi Glazer.

Though the dispute was finally settled, the disgrace it had caused the community was not easily forgotten. In the wake of the controversy a Christian judge was called upon to act as an expert in Jewish law, being asked to hand down decisions on such matters as Kashruth, marriage and divorce. *

The economic hardship following the recession was felt in Canada for a long time. What affected the Jews most was a measure by the Federal Government restricting immigration in the face of continuing unemployment in the country; there was a drastic reduction in the number of Jews allowed into the country.

Under the new measure every immigrant was required to have in his possession no less than \$25.00 in cash and enough funds in addition to pay for his transportation to his destination.

Aggravating the unemployment situation among Jews was the open discrimination practised by certain industries which refused to hire Jews.

In their desperation many job-seekers left Montreal for Western Canada to try their luck there. But the West, too, had its share of unemployed, as indicated in a letter to the Kanader Adler from Brandon, Man., which sounded a note of caution to would-be settlers from the East.

* The Friend. St. Petersburg, May 7, 1908, No. 92

All this was of course a reflection of the general conditions prevailing in the country at the time. It is no wonder, then, that the Canadian Trades Union Congress meeting in September of that year in Halifax adopted a strong stand against the immigration policies of the government. It demanded more drastic curtailment of immigration than had hitherto been applied. Speaker after speaker at this convention, where the noted British labour leader Kier Hardie was a guest, stressed essentially the same point: that foreigners were taking away jobs from native-born citizens, thus depriving them of their rightful means of earning a livelihood.

On the bright side can be noted the goodwill shown by many non-Jews to their fellow Jewish citizens. Kingston stands out as an admirable example. When in 1908 the small Jewish community in that city undertook the building of a synagogue and found their own resources inadequate for their goal after they had already purchased a site on Queen Street, their Christian neighbours came to their aid, contributing the sum of \$1,600, which represented a fifth of the cost of the building.

Another incident typifies a certain attitude towards the idea of Zionism. At a Zionist rally in Hamilton an unexpected element of surprise and excitement was added when a member of the local city council, Alderman Farrar, arose from the audience and, asking permission to speak, launched into an inspired recital of praise for the Jewish people and the Zionist ideal, showing a profound knowledge of Judaism, which he said he had gained from thirty-five years of reading the Bible. So effective and moving were his words that more than one hundred people present signed up immediately as members of the local Zionist association.

The highlight of the Zionist national convention was the appearance on July 1st of Canada's Minister of Justice, the Honourable Allen B. Aylesworth, along with the Honourable William Patterson, Minister of Customs. They were greeted by a storm of applause as they approached the platform. Mr. Patterson told his audience that in his view the national ideal of the Jewish people should receive the support of all men and women who were aware of the hardships and suffering which Jews had endured over the centuries.

That day Mr. de Sola received a letter from the Minister of Justice, Mr. Aylesworth, enclosing a cheque for eighteen dollars as a donation to the Jewish National Fund. The Minister was forwarding this amount in honour of the forty-first anniversary of Canadian Confederation, which fell on that day, for the planting of trees in Palestine. The thought had occurred to him as he sat listening to Mr. de Sola during the convention, appealing to members to mark special occasions by the planting of trees. His wish was to have twelve trees planted in Canada's name, representing the twelve tribes.

Events such as these, however, were not too frequent. On the whole, overt expressions of extraordinary interest in Jewish affairs were the exception rather than the rule. By contrast it can be noted that manifestations of the opposite kind, occasioning fear and anxiety among Jews, were not lacking.

Certainly this was true of the inflammatory propaganda carried on by anti-Semitic journals in the province of Quebec. The effects of this propaganda soon came to be felt as instigation of the populace led to open acts of violence.

One shocking encounter in Montreal raised doubts as to the role of the police. An elderly Jew was attacked on Main Street in the heart of the Jewish district, by several ruffians who beat the old man. When some Jewish boys who were passing by ran to defend the old man against his attackers, they were arrested by the police, while the aggressors went unapprehended. This unpleasant episode was reported not only by the Montreal newspapers, where it was prominently featured, but carried also by the press to other parts of Canada. *

On Yom Kippur Eve at the Shaar Hashomayim Synagogue in Montreal, just as the Kol Nidre services were ending, two shots were heard from outside. A window in the women's section was shattered and one woman injured by fragments of falling glass. Two boys were practising marksmanship in a yard adjacent to the synagogue. They were arrested but subsequently released when their case came before the court and the circumstances of their arrest explained.

In Toronto the local Board of Education decided to introduce the study of the New Testament in the public schools, contrary to the wishes of the Jewish population. A movement to fight this decision of the board won a large following, being led by such personalities as Rabbi Gordon, Rabbi Weinrib, Advocate L. M. Singer, Mr. Cash and Mr. Granatstein. A similar attempt to introduce the New Testament into the public schools of Toronto a decade earlier fell through because of Jewish and other opposition at that time.

If the situation called for energetic initiative, there were few signs of this anywhere in the country. An editorial in the Kanader Adler of February 10, 1909 paints a gloomy picture of the prevailing state of affairs.

"This is not the first time that we draw attention to the spiritual poverty that prevails in our communal life in Canada, and we are afraid that we will have occasion to mention it for a long time to come."

* Montreal Herald, August 25, 1909
Montreal Star, August 25, 1909
Le Canada

"Zionism", the article continues, "is weak. Territorialism is breathing its last; the trade unions are tottering on unsure foundations, while the charity institutions, syndicates and associations are insignificant and on the verge of going under, forced to content themselves with penny budgets. The communities do absolutely nothing except for personal ambitions to blow up the old and withered issue of Kashruth." The editor concludes with the observation that the financial report submitted by Stanley Bero, Superintendent of the Baron de Hirsch Institute, shows that Jewish charities in Canada spent only one tenth of the amount spent by Jews in the United States.

Of course this can be explained by the terrible economic plight of Jews in Canada at the time. A grim testimonial to this fact: figures released by Dr. Ward, statistician of the municipal department of health in Montreal, revealed that in 1908 Jews had a higher infant mortality rate than any other ethnic group in the city.

Yet the picture was not all as black as painted by the Kanader Adler. Here and there were unmistakable signs of vitality in certain aspects of Jewish life.

In Toronto, for example, we hear of a local businessman, Charles Pasternak, undertaking to establish a Jewish theatre; an old building was purchased which he planned to rebuild for this purpose. In Montreal a permanent Jewish vaudeville house was opened by L. Mitnick at the Auditorium Hall which was to present performances four times a week; this in addition to the visiting Jewish theatre companies from New York, also managed by the same Mr. Mitnick.

The idea of one Jewish welfare body to unite all existing charity groups was proposed by Bero in Montreal, an idea which later led to the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies in that city.

Kanader Adler suggested the formation of a representative Jewish body or Board of Deputies which would embrace all the communities in Canada; this prior to the setting up of the Legislative Commission which the Baron de Hirsch Institute had decided to establish. The proposal was endorsed by the Baron de Hirsch Institute, which called an exploratory conference to discuss the idea; among the participants at this conference were Maxwell Goldstein, Clarence I. de Sola, Rev. Meldola de Sola, S. W. Jacobs, Rabbi Abramovitch and H. Wohliner, editor of the Kanader Adler. The idea of a Jewish Board of Deputies met with a large measure of support.

This movement for unity, originating in Montreal, was taken up in Toronto, where the proposed Board of Deputies to be modelled after the Anglo-Jewish body aroused keen interest. As a matter of fact, the faltering financial status of the Baron de Hirsch was a spur towards the broadening of its membership. For its annual budget of

\$7,000 it had to rely until now solely on its 400 members. The need for new members became of pressing importance. Thus the idea was born of drawing in "down town" Jews into the work.

Due to certain misunderstandings, however, the projected Board of Deputies had to be given up. The idea apparently met with little response from the general public, who were not convinced of its importance and poorly informed of its implications. As it turned out, only six organizations replied to the invitation extended by the Baron de Hirsch Institute to all Jewish organizations, congregations, syndicates and landsmanshaften in Montreal to send delegates to a Board of Deputies.

CHAPTER TEN

Two disturbing phenomena emanating from different sources brought uncertainty and anxiety into the newly developing community. One was the Christian evangelical movement that pursued young and old in practically every corner of the country; the other, a hate campaign carried on in the province of Quebec by the anti-Semitic yellow press.

Missionary leaders in cities such as Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg were none too scrupulous in the methods they employed to gain converts: they often resorted to enticing young children with candy to draw their mothers to the mission. In Toronto they maintained a clinic in the Jewish section of the city where they openly pursued their evangelical aims while helping the sick and the needy. This prompted a number of Jewish citizens to open a dispensary of their own. The physicians Levine, Singer and Willensky donated their services free so as to make it unnecessary for Jews to frequent the missionary clinics.

The Montreal Jewish Daily Eagle (Kanader Adler) and the Jewish Times vigorously campaigned against the missionary clique, exposing the shameless methods by which the latter attempted to lure their victims.

One day a spokesman for the missionaries appeared in the offices of the Kanader Adler to warn the editor and all Jews that unless they desisted from attacks against the missionaries, they would be charged before the Christian world with obstructing the spread of Christianity.

In Winnipeg evangelist activity reached such flagrant proportions that Rabbi J. K. Levine of the Shaar Hashomayim congregation, an immigrant from England, protested sharply at a gathering of Protestant clergymen, winning the sympathy of some of the ministers present. Jewish youth in Winnipeg organized an anti-conversion league that began to harrass the converters. One day a raid was made on a missionary house and its leader, a convert, was beaten; the house was eventually shut down by the police.

The virulent anti-Jewish propaganda that flowed from French journals in Quebec such as Le Nationaliste, La Vérité and Action Sociale became a disturbing factor that could not be passed over in silence by the Jewish population. Its effects began to be felt in overt acrimonious manifestations. Advertisements of "houses to let" stated that Jews need not apply. These were discussed by the Legislative Commission of the Baron de Hirsch Institute, but no decisions were

arrived at regarding possible action.

The situation grew worse. Anti-Jewish bias and prejudice in the columns of the English language press, which ordinarily could be relied upon to show tolerance and understanding, became commonplace.

One incident was brought to public attention by Mr. S. W. Jacobs, the prominent Jewish advocate and community leader, in the Montreal Herald. A number of employees at the Grand Trunk Railway, both in Montreal and Toronto, were arrested for using counterfeit train tickets. Out of the fairly large group thus charged there were three Jews, a fact which the local press lost no time in announcing.

Mr. Jacobs commented that a Jew charged with a crime was immediately identified, but race and religion were never mentioned when a member of the Jewish faith obtained an honour or a distinction.

Yet the community continued to develop and strike ever deeper roots. In the small Montreal suburb of Lachine a Jewish settlement sprang up and set about building a synagogue. No less than 95% of Lachine's Jews became members of the new congregation. Many of these were simple labourers and craftsmen who virtually built the synagogue with their own hands.

Overshadowing all other issues for a time was the vexatious school question in Quebec, which once again began to draw attention all over the country. The uneasy truce between Jews and Protestants that followed the agreement of 1903 lasted no more than six years. It was broken, this time by a demand for Jewish representation on the Protestant School Board.

With the increase in Jewish population in Montreal, more than one-third of the revenue of the Protestant schools now came from Jewish tax-payers. It seemed reasonable, therefore, that the Jews be entitled to at least one seat on the Board, which counted six members in all, of which three were clergymen.

A bill to this effect was introduced in the Quebec legislature by Dr. J. Finnie, provincial member for St. Lawrence riding. Specifically the Bill recommended that the membership of the Protestant School Board be increased to twelve, and that one of these be of the Jewish faith. This was enough to cause a loud outcry from the Protestants. Letters streamed into the daily newspapers protesting the bill; circulars were mailed to prominent citizens warning of the danger facing the Protestant schools. Should this legislation be passed, they argued, and Jewish teachers be hired, the Protestant schools might lose their Christian character. Teachers of Jewish faith, in their view, were not suited to teach Christian children. The public was exhorted to apply all possible pressure to prevent the passage of the said bill.

On April 20, 1909 a hearing took place before the legislative committee set up by the Legislature to deal with the bill, under the chairmanship of the Premier, Sir Lomer Gouin. Montreal Jewry was represented by Maxwell Goldstein, K.C., S. W. Jacobs, K.C. and Mr. Lyon Cohen. The words of the first Protestant speaker, the Rev. Dr. Barclay, were enough to arouse the deepest consternation. Commenting on a remark he had heard that day in the Legislature regarding the brotherhood of man, Rev. Barclay admitted... "a Jew is my brother... but so is an infidel my brother, and even a thief is my brother... yet I would not willingly entrust the education of my children to a thief". *

The insult was felt deeply by members of the Jewish delegation. A dignified, courageous, if somewhat restrained, reply came from Mr. Jacobs. "If the Protestant School Board", he said, "were opposed to the bill merely on the ground that it advocated the election of school commissioners, the Jews would find no cause for protest. It is different, however, when the cry is raised about a Jewish danger so as to twist the basic issue. The Protestant school board has sent out a circular to Protestant citizens urging them to fight the bill so that their fellow Jewish citizens should not be granted representation on the board. All we ask is ordinary justice; there is to-day not a single Jewish teacher in the Protestant schools, though many of them hold diplomas as such. The Protestant commissioners consider Jews good enough to allow them to pay for training and graduating from the teacher colleges, but when they ask for positions as teachers, they are told by the Protestant, Methodist and Anglican ministers that the Christian character of their schools must not be contaminated through Jewish teachers. This is shameful. I demand justice!" **

Consisting at the time of not more than a handful of members, the majority of whom were opposed to the bill, the Legislative Committee lost no time in accepting a motion for the bill's deferment. Not a single French-Canadian deputy supported the Jewish cause. Only two voices were raised in support: one was the Honourable William A. Weir, Provincial Minister of Finance, later a judge in Montreal, and the other, Dr. Finnie, author of the bill.

It is also interesting to note that the Montreal Witness and the Huntingdon Gleaner were the only two Protestant organs in the province which saw fit, in the name of elementary justice, to defend the right of the Jews to a seat on the school board to which they paid taxes and under which their children received their education.

Dr. Barclay's words were not easily forgotten. That a leading Protestant divine should compare Jews to thieves in a speech from a public tribunal aroused the keenest resentment. In a sermon at the

* Jewish Chronicle, London, May 7, 1909

** Jewish Chronicle, London, May 7, 1909

Shearith Israel Congregation, Rev. Meldola de Sola took the minister to task for his derogatory remarks about Jews. Had he better not reconsider his words? Had he ever given a thought to the debt Christianity owed to the Jews whom he called infidels? The Jew gave humanity all its moral laws, but Dr. Barclay compares him to a thief....".

Similar reactions were heard at a gathering in the Baron de Hirsch Institute. Maxwell Goldstein reported that the prevailing mood at the hearing was decidedly anti-Semitic.

The speech of the Honourable William A. Weir in defence of the proposed legislation is worth recording.

"The cry was raised that the Christian character of the schools would be undermined. If in truth such a danger existed, the bill could be so amended as to prevent it. Elected school boards are acceptable in Toronto and in all other Canadian cities, and I do not see why it is different in Montreal. Nowhere under the Union Jack are Jews disqualified from taking part in elections for school boards, and I would truly regret if the Protestants of Montreal were the first to set such a backward precedent." *

Education for Judaism was not being overlooked. The Talmud Torah located on St. Urbain Street reported two hundred and eighty pupils enrolled, and advanced classes opened for the study of Gemorrah. The principal, Moishe Elimelech Levine, stressed the appalling shortage of space. Overcrowded classrooms constituted health and safety hazards. He had received a warning from the Department of Municipal Health that unless drastic improvements were made, the Talmud Torah would be forced to shut down.

The matter was immediately dealt with by the meeting and a decision adopted to purchase the building adjacent to the Talmud Torah for the purpose of enlarging the institution at an expense of \$10,000. Two distinguished members of the community, Lazarus Cohen and Max Sessenwein, each donated \$500, promising further contributions of the same size as they became necessary. Within a few years the building was completed. In the interim classes were held at the Baron de Hirsch Institute. A branch was opened in Papineau, a suburb of Montreal where Jews had begun to settle a few years earlier but where they were moving to in increasing numbers.

Considerable advance was also reported by the Talmud Torah Anshei Sfard under the guidance of Rabbi J. Glazer and Mr. Skubelsky, its principal. Among its teachers were I. Yampolsky, who later joined the staff of the Kanader Adler, and the well-known pedagogue Israel Figler. One hundred and sixty children attended this Talmud

* Ibid.

Torah, the majority from poor homes; not more than sixty paid fees; the rest were taught free.

From Winnipeg came a more disturbing account. In a letter to the Montreal Kanader Adler a leading member of the Winnipeg Jewish community wrote: "It is a pity to see what has become of the Talmud Torah at the Shaare Zedek Synagogue, which cost the community over \$40,000. The building now serves as a warehouse, and the one hundred and twenty children must crowd into two dingy little rooms for their lessons. Their feelings towards such a school and how it reflects on their eagerness to study can be easily surmised." *

The London Jewish Chronicle wrote: "There are from fifteen to twenty thousand Jews in Toronto. They own real estate and in some parts of the city have become decidedly influential. As a group they are exceptionally thrifty and full of enterprise."

"We have among us no more industrious and law-abiding people than they. In popular literature there is a tendency to draw a line between native Canadians and foreign-born citizens. Much of this writing is harmful... We must realize that Canada is not the natural possession of a certain type of person alone. The immigrant from Europe and the United States who takes the citizenship oath has the same interest in this country as the native Canadian, and the right to be recognized in accordance with his abilities. We must therefore interest the Jews in our various social and municipal activities instead of excluding them from areas of responsibility. We must remove from our newspapers and periodicals, and from the speeches we hear on all sides, the notion of our superiority."

"It is said that there are between thirty to forty different languages spoken in Winnipeg. Perhaps just as many are spoken in Toronto, though not as noticeably here,... the upshot of all this being that if we want the foreign elements to be loyal to this country we must encourage them to participate in all that is taking place around us, and we must help them to understand that in Canada freedom has no racial or religious limitations." **

New congregations, associations and welfare bodies were springing up here and there. In Quebec City, for example, there were two congregations, both struggling to survive - the Beth Israel and the Ohev Shalom. After a dispute between them as to which of them should continue, the two congregations merged, and only one synagogue remains to this day.

In Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, there was a small community of some seventy souls. It possessed all the facilities essential to Jewish

* Kanader Adler, Nov. 7, 1909

** Jewish Chronicle, London, July 30, 1909

community living. It had a beautiful synagogue, though heavily mortgaged, a Sons of Israel Association, a Hebrew Ladies' Aid Society and a Zionist association.

In Sydney, not far from Glace Bay, there were just over twenty Jewish families. They, too, were organized in a congregation although they had as yet no permanent place of prayer, meeting for this purpose in a rented house. A shoichet, who also served as rabbi and cantor, was maintained. But there was no Jewish school for the children.

On July 19, 1909 the first branch of the Jewish National Workers' Alliance (Farband) was founded in Montreal. Drawing its members from the ranks of nationalist-minded Jewish workers seeking cultural and national expression, the Farband grew rapidly in numbers; branches were later established in Toronto and Winnipeg.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

A series of "Letters from Winnipeg" by A. Osovsky in the Kanader Adler presented an interesting picture of life in Western Canada.

Numbering between five and six thousand Jews, the community possessed eight synagogues, with cantors, sextons, a rabbi and a preacher, in addition to a dozen tiny congregations which met for services on the High Holidays.

A zestful, searching youth, split along various ideological lines was reflected in an imposing array of "isms" ranging from General Zionists to Poale Zionists, Socialist Territorialists, Social Democrats and Anarchists. No less than four separate libraries were in existence, all of which were to prove short-lived, however. A progressive dramatic club staged better plays for a year and a half. There were two meeting halls for lectures and other gatherings.

Economically, the Jews of Winnipeg were fairly well off. While represented in diverse occupations, the majority were engaged in the clothing trade, where sixty per cent of all employees were Jews. There were also Jewish carpenters, bricklayers, as well as tinsmiths and blacksmiths working for the CPR and CNR. Some Jews on the outskirts of Winnipeg were vegetable and dairy farmers, bringing their produce into the city for sale.*

A Young Men's Hebrew Association was organized which in turn created the setting for further social and cultural organization. This was made possible through the efforts of a group of young men, among them Max Steinkopf, M. J. Finkelstein, Dr. N. Margolis, Narovlansky and H. E. Wild.

An attempt to begin a Yiddish press to serve the Winnipeg community was made in March 1910, when the first issue of the Jewish Courier appeared. Backing this venture were a group from the "Radical" elements, among them Chaim Zaltzman, Zussman, Elkin and Moses.** The Courier saw the light for a few brief months, after which it was forced to discontinue publication.

The idea of a Jewish newspaper, however, was not given up. In fact, it was soon to become a reality, thanks to the energetic initiative of the Poale Zionist Osovsky. He was able to muster sufficient support in the community to begin publication of the Canadian Jew, a new Yiddish publication, in September 1910, under the editorship of B. I. Goldstein, who formerly had been on the staff of the

* Kanader Adler, Dec. 2, 1909

** Jubilee Souvenir Issue, Dos Yiddishe Vort, Winnipeg, 1932, p. 24

Kanader Adler. Beginning as a weekly, it was later published semi-weekly. The first issue, for "technical reasons", was printed by the Kanader Adler press in Montreal. In 1914, under the editorship of J. Hestrin, the name of the paper was changed from Canadian Jew to The Yiddish Word (Dos Yiddishe Vort). Mr. Hestrin was succeeded as editor by S. M. Selchen.

An event that brought Winnipeg Jewry into the limelight was the electoral victory of a young Jewish lawyer, S. Hart Green, who won the seat for North Winnipeg in the Manitoba Legislature on July 11, 1910. His success was all the more significant in view of the campaign which had been conducted against him by left wing Jews who had joined with Conservatives and even anti-Semites to defeat him. Some of the Jewish "comrades" spread the word that S. Hart Green had once been a missionary and that he was not even a Jew.*

When Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Prime Minister of Canada, was introduced to the new Liberal member for Winnipeg North, who was described as the first Jew to sit in a Canadian legislature, the Prime Minister interrupted, "Pardon me, but the honour of being the first to elect a Jew to the legislature belongs not to your province but to mine, the province of Quebec, which elected Ezekial Hart over a hundred years ago".

These words were spoken by Sir Wilfrid at a time when the atmosphere in Quebec was being polluted by the poison of anti-Semitism. The hate-mongers were outraged by his historic allusion. "What kind of an honour is that to us?" they asked with bitter sarcasm.

The distressing situation of the graveyard in Three Rivers was suddenly revived with all its painful implications. An exchange of letters in the Montreal Star in September 1909 served to draw public attention to the fate of the old cemetery, and prompted the Rector of the Protestant St. James Cathedral in Three Rivers to address the following missive to Chief Rabbi Glazer.

The Rectory,
Three Rivers, P.Q.,
September 5, 1909.

Dear Sir:

The correspondence which appeared in the last two issues of the Montreal Star prompted me to write you about the small cemetery of the Jewish Orthodox community here, which finds itself in a state of scandalous depredation.

Several years ago a sensation was caused in the Montreal papers over the sale of a local Jewish cemetery. But the Montrealers who were concerned about the matter apparently failed to understand

* A. Osovsky in Kanader Adler, July 23, 1910

what it was all about. In fact, there are two small Jewish cemeteries here - one a private one which used to be called the "liberal" one, and the other, about which I now write, the Orthodox burial ground which I believe belongs to the Orthodox congregation in Montreal. The owners of the private burial ground sold the land several years ago, removing the graves to another cemetery. The Orthodox graveyard is surrounded by a stone wall which by now is already broken; located behind a school maintained by the Christian Brothers, it is in a horrible state. The last burial there took place thirty years ago. A decade ago there were about a dozen, perhaps twenty, fine tombstones of coloured granite, but they have by now, I believe, all been thrown down. They were erected for the most part by members of the Hart and Judah families.

Since no one cares about this cemetery, and it appears that the Montreal congregation has even forgotten that it exists, I have decided to write you about it and about the condition it finds itself in to-day.

Yours respectfully,

H. S. Stuart,

Rector, St. James Cathedral *

For many years the old cemetery in Three Rivers adjacent to the LaSalle Academy of the Christian Brothers lay unenclosed, until a fence was eventually erected. But the toppled and broken stones were a silent testimonial to the end of a chapter in the history of Jewish settlement in Canada, the pioneer era of the first Jews to come to this country, in the very spot where the first Jewish community arose.

Once more the old wound was opened, the old injury revived. This time the leaders of the Spanish-Portuguese congregation felt that the situation must not be allowed to continue any longer. It was imperative that steps be taken to end the shameful state of affairs - the open, flagrant degradation of holy ground, of the first Jewish cemetery in the country - the disgrace heightened by the fact that a Christian minister had to bring it to their attention. This was indeed a humiliation, not only for the Spanish-Portuguese, but for all the Jews in Canada.

After an on-the-spot investigation by one of their own members who had been dispatched to Three Rivers for that purpose, a unanimous decision was made to effect the immediate transfer of the graves and broken headstones from Three Rivers to the Portuguese cemetery in Montreal.

* The Glazer Collection, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati

Nor was this all. Another poignant tragedy was enacted during the disinterment and removal of the graves. Acts of such horrible vandalism occurred as to necessitate the calling of police. *

An incident which illustrated how deeply the venomous anti-Semitic propaganda had penetrated into the various echelons of Quebec society occurred at this time in Quebec City. This episode arose out of a lecture delivered by one Jacques Plamondon, a Quebec notary and journalist, on March 10, 1910, before a Catholic youth club in the suburb of Saint-Roch. This address, a vicious diatribe against the Jews, was published by René Leduc, a printer, as a pamphlet for circulation. Leduc was also the owner of the anti-Semitic journal La Libre Parole, which appeared in Quebec.

This kind of propaganda did not fail to bring results. Soon attacks on Jews in the streets began; windows in the synagogue were broken. Two Jewish storekeepers, Benjamin Ortenberg and Louis Lazarovitch, filed a suit against Plamondon and Leduc for damages incurred as a result of his incitements. The trial that followed aroused the most extensive interest because of its unusual nature.

Other examples of the bitter prejudice against Jews prevalent among French Canadians can be cited. Some French Canadian landlords refused to rent houses to Jewish tenants.

One such case, which led to proceedings in a law court, is recorded. A Christian tenant in a house owned by a French Canadian proprietor, wishing to vacate his flat before the expiration of his lease, sub-let it to a Jew, transferring the lease to the new tenant. The landlord, upon learning that the new tenant was a Jew, sought to evict him, and appealed to the court for a legal order to enable him to do so. The petition came before Judge Guérin; appearing on his behalf was Abbé Bélanger, who defended his refusal to rent a flat to Jews.

Judge Guérin reprimanded both the appellant and his "defender" for seeking to nullify a perfectly legal agreement without valid justification, questioning the Abbé as to whether his views derived from the law, or whether, in any case, it was human to persecute Jews. **

In such an atmosphere it is easy to comprehend how an episode occurring in Rome should have led to formidable anti-Jewish demonstrations in the province of Quebec. A remark made by the Jewish mayor of Rome in 1910 about the Pope was enough to evoke bitterly hostile demonstrations of thousands, both in Montreal and in Quebec City. Incited by the inflammatory speeches of their leaders, the mob marched and shouted: "A bas les Juifs!" (Down with the Jews!)

* Kanader Adler, November 10, 1909; Jewish Chronicle, London, December 31, 1909

** Jewish Daily News, New York, February 14, 1910

The school question was once more in the news in Quebec as Dr. Finnie's bill came before the Legislature a second time, this time presented by Godfrey Langlois. In somewhat amended form, the bill asked for Jewish representation on the Protestant school board and for the acceptance of Jewish teachers in the Protestant schools. It was a foregone conclusion, however, that the bill would not be passed, judging by the tremendous agitation against it. Though not defeated, the bill was once again dropped from the agenda.

It is interesting to note that it was the Montreal Star and the Gazette that fought granting Jews school rights, while some of the French-Canadian press defended the proposal. It even recommended the setting up of a separate Jewish school panel. The suggestion was taken up by the Protestants, who declared that they would bring in a bill to this effect at the next session of the legislature. It was obvious, however, that this move was nothing more than an attempt to intimidate the Jews. *

Two very important institutions came into being at this time in Montreal. One was the sanatorium for TB patients in Ste. Agathe. This hospital, built on the model of the Jewish sanatorium in Denver, begun around this time, was not completed until 1912 and officially opened in 1913.

The other was a home for Jewish orphans - to fill a need which had long been of the utmost urgency. The lack of such a home constituted a case of extreme neglect; homeless Jewish children in the care of the Baron de Hirsch Institute very often ended up in Christian institutions.

Almost a replica of the Montreal community, Toronto was undergoing a similar development. We hear of the opening of a Zionist Sunday school; other Zionist leaders were actively engaged in setting up a Jewish library.

* Jewish Chronicle, London, May 27, 1910

The craving for culture and the high esteem for its creators is testified to by the numerous literary events taking place in the community. During the latter part of 1910 two well-known literary personalities visited Montreal. One was the distinguished Hebrew author, Zionist thinker and journalist Reuben Brainin, and the other the Yiddish poet Yehoash.

Brainin gave two lectures, the first presided over by Rabbi H. Abramowitz, and the second under Lyon Cohen. On both occasions the Baron de Hirsch hall was filled to capacity, many being turned away owing to lack of space.

Describing the conditions of Jews in various countries throughout the world, Brainin stressed the importance of Zionism and the Hebrew language. So inspired was his audience that it was spontaneously moved to inscribe the author's name and that of his wife in the Golden Book of the Jewish National Fund, the money for which was raised in a matter of a few minutes.

No less an impact was made by the visit of the poet Solomon Blumengarten, known by his pen name of Yehoash. Coming to Canada at the invitation of the Poale Zion, he delivered two lectures at the Baron de Hirsch hall which were received with such tremendous enthusiasm that he was persuaded to give another two, one of these in English. He spoke on art and poetry, in particular the poetry of the Bible, which he had so masterfully translated into Yiddish.

An outstanding event of a similar nature in Toronto was the appearance of the poet Morris Rosenfeld, his visit made possible by the Workmen's Circle. Close to one thousand people filled the Association Hall where a program of recitations and songs by Rosenfeld was presented in his honour.

The historic Fifth Annual Convention of the Poale Zion of North America took place in Montreal in October of 1910. Such noted personalities as Dr. Chaim Zhitlowsky, Dr. Nachman Sirkin and others of a similar calibre took part in the proceedings. The blue-and-white flag flew from Jewish businesses and homes in honour of the occasion. Officially opened by M. L. Sack, the conference sessions lasted several days.

A sensation was caused by a proposal of Dr. Zhitlowsky that the Poale Zionists break away from the Zionist institutions such as the World Zionist Congress, National Fund and Shekel and form a separate structure of their own, independent of other Zionists. The proposal was bitterly opposed and finally rejected.

But another suggestion of Dr. Zhitlowsky was endorsed, advocating the establishment of Jewish secular schools. Three months later a school of this type was begun in the Mile End district of Montreal, the first of its kind in Canada.

In Toronto the meeting of the Canadian Zionist Federation evoked a gesture of good will by the city of Toronto towards its Jewish citizens: the city council voted a sum of several hundred dollars for a civic reception for the delegates. *

To what extent mixed marriages were frequent among Jews in Canada at the time is not known. That the problem did arise, however, can be seen from a public statement issued by a Reform Rabbi. Rabbi Nathan Gordon of Temple Emanuel in Montreal expressed his clear views:

"Recently I have been asked to officiate at so-called mixed marriages... I receive requests of this kind on the assumption that I will readily comply...

"I have no quarrel with my Orthodox colleagues - though I maintain - and this is well known - that there are certain misunderstandings between us. But in this matter we are in complete agreement.

"On the subject of mixed marriages my opinions are entirely conservative. In other words, I am against mixed marriages not as a Reform Jew, or a Conservative Jew, but as a Jew. I believe they cause us Jews an economic rather than a religious loss, because they lead to a diminution of our numbers and to our disappearance as a people.

"To-day we need, far more than ever before, Jews who are strong in spirit and integrity, Jews to help us, to fight with us so that we may shape our destiny in the future. Mixed marriages inevitably lead to the weakening of our ranks, rob us of our dynamic forces, undermine our existence and could lead to our total disappearance. We must think about our survival as a people. It should be our sacred duty to see that Israel lives and shall continue to live eternally. That is why mixed marriages are undesirable, apart from other reasons that could be cited. No thinking Jew can believe otherwise." **

In Montreal the Baron de Hirsch Institute became a community centre in the truest sense of the word. It became the regular meeting place for scores of Jewish organizations, unions, societies and diverse groups. Discussions and deliberations pertaining to major communal undertakings took place here. The Baron de Hirsch also served as a cultural centre where frequent lectures were given.

* Jewish Chronicle, London, December 16, 1910

** Ibid., March 25, 1910

All this activity was carried on in addition to the Institute's functions as a philanthropic body. The significance of its latter role can be gauged by the recognition it received when the Quebec Legislature in 1911 voted a subsidy of \$300 towards its welfare budget. A statement by the provincial Minister of Finance described the Baron de Hirsch Institute as a philanthropic institution of the highest order deserving wide support. During that year it had provided free medical assistance to 864 patients.

The census of 1911 revealed the substantial growth of Canada's Jewish population over the previous decade. There were 75,681 Jews in Canada in 1911 as compared to 16,131 in 1901 - an increase of 369.16 per cent. This phenomenal increase is not surprising in view of the open door policy of immigration that had been in force during that period when Canada welcomed new settlers, of whom nearly sixty thousand were Jews.

By far the greatest number of Jews were concentrated in Quebec and Ontario; to be exact, 76.1% of the total Jewish population of Canada made their homes in these two provinces. And it was here that Jewish life became most firmly entrenched, lending colour and content to the community.

We find a parallel process to the general expansion of the West taking place. While the number of Jews in Quebec increased four-fold since 1901 and that of Ontario five-fold, the increase in the three Western provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta was seven-fold, or two to three times the rate of increase in Eastern Canada.

On March 4th of 1911 the newly reconstructed Talmud Torah in Montreal, a modern Hebrew educational institution, was dedicated on St. Urbain Street. The new school could hold 500 pupils. The method of teaching which employed Hebrew as a language of interpretation from the original Biblical Hebrew ("Hebrew into Hebrew") had already been introduced.

The history of the Montreal Talmud Torah actually reflects the history of the local Jewish community. Both followed a parallel process of expansion, the former keeping pace with the latter.

We have repeatedly noted the anti-Semitic propaganda carried on by some Quebec journals. Le Devoir and Le Nationaliste criticized the president of the Canadian Zionist Federation, Clarence I. De Sola, who was also Belgian consul in Montreal. He was accused of failing to display the Belgian national flag from the consulate on the occasion of a Eucharist Congress held in Montreal. De Sola replied by filing court action against his accusers, charging them with libel and asserting that foreign consulates were not obliged to fly their

national flags on such an occasion. The writers were forced to apologize, claiming that they had been wrongly informed. The Belgian consul then withdrew his charges.

Deep concern was aroused by the scheming of the Citizens' League in Montreal, headed by Mayor Guerin, to revise the city lines. According to this plan, a district which was predominantly Jewish was to be merged with another neighbourhood in such a way as to preclude the possibility of a Jew ever being elected to represent it. Nor would this apply only for municipal elections.

A bill to this effect was already before the provincial legislature.

The English language press reacted negatively to the bill and its intentions. To voice the Jewish protest, a representative of the Kanader Adler visited Quebec where he had interviews with the Premier, Sir Lomer Gouin - a man noted for his liberalism towards Jews - as well as with other leading members of the Legislature. In consequence, the bill was finally amended. *

The Reform Temple Emanuel in Montreal opened its new building on Sherbrooke St. West, between Wood and Elm Avenues (burnt down in 1957), having previously been located on Stanley Street. Rabbi Nathan Gordon devoted his last sermon in the old building to a review of its past history.

In the summer of 1911 the Herzl Dispensary in Montreal was opened, a result of the efforts of Jewish doctors with the help of a dedicated following of Jewish men and women. Located at first on St. Dominique Street, the dispensary was moved a few years later to more adequate quarters on St. Urbain Street. The honour of officially opening the new dispensary was accorded Reuben Brainin.

Most distressing was a new wave of evangelist activity. In every corner of the country Christian missionaries revived their attempts to convert the Jews to Christianity. In Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg the religious onslaught reached large proportions.

Matters reached a climax when a Montreal conference of evangelist ministers placed on its agenda the question of spreading Christianity among Jews and decided to intensify their efforts in this direction. Rabbi Nathan Gordon of Temple Emanuel declared:

* Jewish Chronicle, London, Feb. 24, 1911
B. G. Sack in Kanader Adler, Dec. 15, 1957

"The Jew had withstood every kind of persecution, repression and torture but remained loyal to his faith. We have the right in this free country to adhere to our beliefs, and nobody can force us to do otherwise... We have nothing to learn or to appropriate from the Christians... the Bible and the Psalms are ours anyway... When Russian soil was steeped in Jewish blood, pious Christians barely protested..."*

Far more serious was the direction taken by the missionary movement in Toronto. One minister, Rev. W. H. Hincks, while extolling the Jews in one of his sermons, devoted another to describing them as foreigners constituting a threat to the Anglo-Saxon race on this continent; it was therefore incumbent on the Church to make Christians out of them - true Christians.

The convert seekers would make their way into the Jewish section of the city and hold open air meetings on the very spot where the Zionists used to assemble. One angry encounter between the Jews and the missionaries led to a disturbance that necessitated the calling of police. There was some suspicion that the Christians had planned the intervention of the guardians of the law when the latter appeared to side with the missionaries, dispersing the Zionist gathering and beating up Jews who resisted. Twenty Jews were badly injured, requiring medical attention; six were arrested.

A petition was forwarded to the authorities asking that the missionaries be kept out of the Jewish neighbourhood.

Some of the Toronto papers denounced the soul-snatchers and defended the Jewish cause. The Catholic Herald came out with a strong editorial along this line, while the World, one of Toronto's most influential dailies, sharply criticized the leader of the local mission.

An excerpt from the World editorial:

"Reverend S. B. Rohold (the most repulsive of the perverts), who is known as a Christian Jew and a Presbyterian minister, often seems to give the morbid impression of a creature born of abnormal mating. Under such circumstances he would do well to leave alone his former co-religionists, and instead turn his attention to that vast army of drifting Christians who are in much greater need of Christian teaching than the Jews we see around us.

* Kanader Adler, Feb. 12, 24, 1911

"Christianity means doing unto others what you would have others do unto you. Perhaps Mr. Rohold has not imbibed enough of this spirit if he believes he is doing good by taking part in such incidents as the one he provoked in the 'ward'... We are living in a free country, but as an ardent convert, he cannot distinguish between freedom and licence." *

Members of the Liberal Cabinet under Laurier had frequently appeared at public gatherings to condemn the Czarist persecutions of Jews. Laurier himself had done so. Two days before the elections, on September 19th 1911, the Prime Minister surprised Montreal Jewry when he appeared in person in the heart of the Jewish district, in front of the Kanader Adler building then located at 10 Ontario West, and addressed the crowd gathered there. About 6,000 people surrounded the building, spreading out over an entire city block, from Ontario to Demontigny. The tumultuous ovation given the Prime Minister lasted five minutes without letup.

"My friends", said Laurier, "I come here from a huge mass meeting, but I can assure you that my meeting here with you gives me the most heartfelt pleasure. The Liberal Party will do everything in its power to keep open the doors of the country for your brothers and sisters." **

* Jewish Chronicle, London, August 25, 1911

** Kanader Adler, September 21, 1911

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

With the growth of the Jewish population in Canada and its increasing participation in Canadian life, an ever greater inclination to enter politics became apparent among Jews.

In Webwood, Ontario, a village of 657 souls, of whom 16 were Jewish, a delegation of citizens in 1911 approached one of the Jewish residents, Sam Minder, with the request that he become a candidate in the voting for alderman. Minder accepted the offer, and, despite his youthful age of 27 and his being in the country for only four years, he won the election by a substantial majority in the face of strong opposition.

Several weeks later Jacob Miller, president of the Jewish congregation in Cornwall, Ont., was re-elected alderman for a second term by a large majority, polling more votes than either of two non-Jewish aldermen elected at the same time.

Municipal elections in Montreal in February 1912 also brought a surprise - the fulfillment of a long-standing dream, to have a Jewish representative on the city council. Abraham Blumenthal was elected alderman for St. Louis Ward.

Blumenthal's nomination took place at a special meeting of Jewish leaders in the offices of the Kanader Adler. His victory at the polls takes on special significance when weighed against the fact that for sixty years there had been no Jewish member on the Montreal city council. The Montreal Herald referred to the Jewish victory as a "dangerous precedent". The first Jew to be elected to public office in Montreal was Samuel Benjamin, in 1849.

Winnipeg also saw the election to the city council of a Jewish alderman. This was the well-known A. Scaliter, head of the Jewish Community Fund, who in 1912 ran for alderman in Ward Five and won the seat, which he was to hold for several terms. The same year another Jew, E. R. Levinson, was appointed Crown Prosecutor in Winnipeg - the first Jew ever to be appointed to such an office.

In the Quebec provincial elections, however, Harry Bloomfield and the already well-known Jewish lawyer Marcus M. Sperber had less success. Both were candidates for the legislature in St. Louis Division of Montreal. The former, running as Independent Conservative, withdrew his candidacy in the early stages of the campaign, while Sperber as Independent Liberal failed to obtain enough votes. The seat for St. Louis was won by Godfroy Langlois, official candidate of the Liberal Party, who was known as a friend of the Jews. In his weekly Le Pays Langlois had warmly sided with the Jews on more than one occasion. His victory was important in view of the fact that the parish priest of St. Louis de France had carried on an agitation against him, as against the Jews, throughout the campaign.

Bitter resentment was evoked by a bill introduced in the Federal parliament concerning Queen's University in Kingston. Presented by W. Nicholl, member for Kingston, the bill contained clauses which were discriminatory in intent. It aroused a series of heated debates, and was greeted with angry criticism from both Christians and Jews. One clause called for the designation of Queen's as a "national" university, which was interpreted as an expedient for excluding Jews. This clause was later changed, in the face of strong objections, to read that the university was to be "decidedly Christian in character". Under further protest, this point, contained in Section 20 of the bill, was finally amended in the Senate so that the phrase "Christian in character" should apply only to professorial and administrative staff.

Telegrams from Jews all over the country were dispatched to members of Parliament urging them to intervene for the amendment or rejection of the bill. Demonstrations were held in a number of cities - Montreal, Toronto, Kingston and Winnipeg - in which Christians as well as Jews participated. Among the prominent non-Jews who saw fit to join the protest were clergymen.

At a huge protest rally in the Lyric Theatre in Toronto, Reverend W. H. Hincks, pastor of the Broadway Tabernacle, submitted a letter:

"With great astonishment I read in the newspapers that a university wishes to create certain exceptions on the grounds of race and religious differences, endeavouring in this manner to exclude the most intelligent race in the world from the possession of equal rights." *

In March 1912 the famous Hebrew author Reuben Brainin became the editor of the Kanader Adler. This proved to be a milestone in the life of the Jewish press, which was to wield an ever-growing influence within the community.

Brainin became the spiritual spokesman and guide for Montreal Jewry, as his influence came to be felt through the contributions he made to the development of its cultural institutions. One of these was the Jewish library, which came into existence about this time as a result of the co-operation of Jewish organizations working towards this goal - among them the Poale Zion, the Jewish National Workers' Alliance (Farband), the Workmen's Circle branches 151 and 204, and certain Jewish trade unions. Taking an active interest in the organization of the library, Brainin was instrumental in bringing it up to the high standard it was to enjoy within a few years.

* Kanader Adler, March 24, 1912

Leon Chazanovitch, a well-known Poale Zionist leader and journalist, came to Montreal about the same time to become editor of the Jewish socialist weekly Folkszeitung, the first issue of which appeared on April 19, 1912. Among the contributors to the Folkszeitung, which lasted through twenty-six issues, were Dr. Sirkin, Dr. Birnbaum, Borochoy and other famous Jewish essayists, as well as the writer of these lines. The Yiddish poet Moishe Leib Halpern served as a member of the editorial staff of the journal.

Militant in outlook, the Folkszeitung rapidly became an influential factor in certain areas of Jewish life. Intrepidly, it raised the old-new school question in the province of Quebec in a light in which it had rarely been presented before. Chazanovitch was the first to pose the question in its sharpest focus when he published a five-column article in the Folkszeitung under a heading that stretched over the entire front page:

"Crime, Shame and Scandal. Jewish Children are being brought up in the Christian Religion."

Another issue carried a fiery editorial on the same theme under the heading "The (Star of David), Yellow Patch of Montreal Jewry."

It was under the inspiration of Chazanovitch that the Poale Zion movement in Montreal later flung itself with exceptional vigour into the fight for separate Jewish schools in Quebec.

A new Jewish paper came into being in Toronto. The Jewish Journal first saw the light of day on November 29th of that year. Starting out as a weekly, it began publishing daily one year later. Its first editor was H. Hersh. Changing hands frequently, the Journal was edited at different times by A. Reinwein, Samuel Mayer Shapiro and others. There is no doubt that it played a significant role as an instrument of Jewish public expression in Toronto throughout its existence.

In Montreal an attempt was made to establish a Young Women's Hebrew Association on the initiative of a small group of Jewish women, among whom were Mrs. Mortimer B. Davis and Mrs. I. S. Leo.

An association called the Friendly League of Jewish Women in Canada had been in existence for some time, under the presidency of Mrs. Clarence I. De Sola. It was out of this group that the Y.W.H.A. was formed, when 75 of its members immediately enrolled in the new association. The latter held meetings regularly in the Baron de Hirsch Institute. It gradually broadened its activities and gained immense popularity.

At the same time the Young Men's Hebrew Association conducted a two-week membership drive which turned out to be an overwhelming success: its membership soared from a mere 200 to the astonishing figure of 1400, making the Montreal organization the second numerically largest of its kind in the world. *

An event affecting the Jews of Montreal with far-reaching economic consequences was a general strike in the men's clothing industry.

Tailors, cutters, operators, pressers, pantmakers - all were involved in the work stoppage that lasted seven weeks, completely paralyzing the industry. Resorting to strike action after their demands for higher wages and better working conditions met with repeated refusals on the part of the employers, the strikers showed remarkable solidarity throughout the long weeks of strife. Union recognition and a reduction in working hours, which then amounted to 55 hours per week, were among the demands for which the workers held out.

It was a bitter struggle. After an unsuccessful attempt to break the strike, even by importing strike-breakers from Toronto, the manufacturers were finally compelled to comply with a large part of their employees' requests. Affecting directly a third of the Jewish population of Montreal, the strike left dire economic hardship in its wake.

About this time Lyon Cohen, true communal leader, proposed the unifying of all philanthropical activities and communal institutions in one single body or federation. As president of the Baron de Hirsch Institute, Mr. Cohen formulated such a proposal in his annual report for 1912.

It was apparently not the first time he had made such a proposal. In his own words, "I wish to raise again the question of how to co-ordinate our various charitable activities so as to achieve more effective results with less cost and effort." He then elaborated on the idea of creating a united Jewish communal body along the lines of the British Board of Deputies. **

The same thought was being expounded simultaneously by Reuben Brainin in the Yiddish press. In a series of editorials in the Kanader Adler, Brainin stressed the importance of a centralized community organization, which was sadly lacking in Montreal, and which would be of immeasurable benefit to the community. A central agency combining all communal functions - charitable, cultural and social, as an example of which he cited the Jewish communal organization in Germany - could give greater meaning and influence to Jewish life in Canada.

* Jewish Chronicle, London, June 28, 1912

** The Jew in Canada, p. 195

During the presentation of a bill in the Quebec Legislature to incorporate the Montreal Hebrew Free Loan Society, some reluctance was encountered on the part of the relevant legislative committee, owing to the opposition of some members. They refused to believe that Jews could ever lend money without charging interest.

An apology was later offered, as the innuendoes had been made in jest. The bill was passed. But the incident resulted in many newspapers carrying articles on the work of the Jewish Free Loan Society. Henri Bourassa, who at that time showed little sympathy for the Jews, extolled the institution, urging French-Canadians to follow the Jewish example and to set up a Free Loan society of their own. *

An event of significance was the visit of Colonel Sam Hughes, Minister of Militia in the Borden Cabinet, as speaker before the Montreal Young Men's Hebrew Association. Colonel Hughes paid tribute to the Jews for their loyalty and devotion to the British flag in all parts of the Empire, recalling with admiration certain Jews with whom he had come in contact personally during the Boer war and in England. Remarking that in Britain Jews were entrusted with the highest offices, he saw no reason why a similar situation should not prevail in Canada. He expressed the deepest admiration for the way the Jews had retained their cohesiveness as a people through centuries of persecution, ascribing this phenomenon to the system of educating Jewish children and the influence of the parents, which he regarded as superior to all other methods of raising the young. Though this was the first time he addressed a Jewish gathering, the Minister asserted that he felt very much at home. Lyon Cohen and Bernard Rose thanked the speaker for his visit.

For Montreal Jewry the Minister's remarks must have been especially gratifying. Colonel Hughes, who was once a school teacher himself, must have been unaware that his high regard for the upbringing of Jewish children was not shared by the authorities of the Protestant schools in Montreal, judging by the treatment Jewish pupils received. An unfortunate incident at Aberdeen school, where nearly all the pupils were Jewish, shows the ubiquity of this attitude.

Provoked by an insulting comment made by a teacher in the classroom, five hundred Jewish pupils left their desks in protest. In an attempt to mediate the strike, prominent Jewish citizens met with the school authorities. The offending teacher, after being forced to apologize to her Jewish pupils, was transferred to another school.

Though the matter was officially closed, it left hard feelings and more than a trace of apprehension concerning the spirit dominating the schools to which Jewish parents were paying taxes.

* Jewish Chronicle, London, Feb. 28, 1913

But a victory was scored when the Protestant School Board in 1913 freely agreed to accept Jewish teachers holding the necessary Teachers' Certificates.

An honoured guest of Canadian Jewry in the early summer of 1913 was the famous Hebrew writer Nachum Sokolow, later president of the World Zionist Organization. Mayor Hocken of Toronto bestowed on him the rare honour of the "freedom of the city".

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

An emergency conference of communal leaders in Montreal, convoked by the Legislative Committee of the Baron de Hirsch Institute in July of 1913, reflects the two major concerns of Canadian Jewry at the time.

One was the trial on slaughtering taking place in Halifax; the other was the Plamondon-Leduc case in Quebec, where the defendants were being charged with libel arising out of numerous malicious attacks on Jews and the Talmud.

S. W. Jacobs reported on the proceedings in Quebec Superior Court where he was conducting the case for the prosecution. Though confident that the court would find the defendants guilty, Mr. Jacobs expressed his readiness to take the case to the Court of Appeals, and if necessary, even to the Privy Council.

In Halifax a lawsuit was initiated by the Halifax Humane Society against the shoichet Abraham Levitt. On March 19th of that year Andrew Williamson, an inspector of the society, accompanied by a veterinarian, during a visit to the slaughter-house, observed a shoichet sharpening his knife in preparation for the slaughter of a calf. The calf's horns and hind legs were tied, while it was being hoisted by a machine, and then flung on its back; after which the horns were untied and the calf's head released for the slaughtering. The impression given was that the animal suffered undue pain by that method which lasted 14 minutes, pain which could have been avoided if it had been stunned unconscious before killing; that the latter method was more humane than the Jewish ritual slaughter.

The shoichet was charged in court with causing unnecessary suffering to an animal. Magistrate Fielding of the police court, who presided over the hearing, accepted the evidence of the veterinarian and found the shoichet guilty, imposing on him a small fine and court costs.

For the Jews of Halifax and the Maritimes - indeed, for Jews all over Canada - the verdict had serious implications. It was possible not only that shechita would be placed in question, but that it would be prohibited altogether.

The Halifax community took the case before a higher court, before Judge Wallace. The Halifax Baron de Hirsch Hebrew Benevolent Society appealed to Rabbi Joshua Glazer of Montreal for assistance in the case. The Baron de Hirsch Institute in Montreal likewise lent its support.

At the hearing the plaintiff and the chief witness contradicted themselves, thereby weakening their testimony. Under cross examination the veterinarian allowed that he might have erred, since the actual killing took no longer than one second.

Appearing along with Rabbi Joshua Glazer was Howard McPatridge, a graduate from an Ontario veterinary college, who testified that he had once witnessed the slaughtering of an animal according to Jewish ritual. Refuting the testimony of the prosecution, he confirmed that the slitting of the throat rendered the animal instantaneously unconscious, thus preventing any sensation of pain. This opinion was corroborated by Rabbi Glazer, who further testified that the shoichet in question was highly qualified to perform shechita, by which the animal loses consciousness instantly. He referred to the definition of shechita in the Jewish Encyclopedia and to the findings of experts that Jewish slaughter causes less pain to an animal than any other method of killing.

The last and most important witness for the defence, whose testimony led to the quashing of the verdict against the accused, was Dr. David Fraser Harris, Professor of Histology and Physiology at Dalhousie University.

A graduate in medicine from the University of Glasgow, he was the author of a book on the nervous system. After hearing the testimony against the accused, he asserted that when the jugular vein is cut and the head of the animal falls back, the neural connections with the brain are severed and within five seconds all sensory reflexes cease. The convulsive period that follows is no indication of pain, as there can be no pain without consciousness. An animal suffered far less from having its throat cut than from a hammer blow on its head. If the animal slaughtered on March 19th met its death in the manner described by the witnesses, its sensory perceptions ceased within six seconds.

Following this testimony Judge Wallace declared there was no doubt in his mind as to the decision he must make, and pronounced the defendant not guilty.

The "Talmud Trial" in Quebec City stemmed from a so-called lecture given by Jacques Plamondon, a Quebec notary and journalist, before a Catholic youth club in the Quebec suburb of St. Roc. This address, a horribly vicious attack on the Jews, was published by René Leduc and was being sold as a 32-page pamphlet. This propaganda piece contained most fantastic slanders and accusations against the Jewish people, and against the Talmud, reviving the infamous charge that Jews used Christian blood for ritual purposes. "In Europe", Plamondon wrote, "where Jews feared the law, this crime is practically repressed. In the eastern countries, however, it is still quite a frequent occurrence."

Plamondon's "teachings" had immediate results. In Quebec City synagogue windows were smashed; Jews were assaulted on the streets, cursed and beaten; open hostility to Jews became commonplace.

Two Jewish businessmen from Quebec decided to take legal measures against the anti-Semites. Benjamin Ortenberg and Louis Lazarovitch sued Plamondon and Leduc for damages suffered as a result of the incitement. The trial, scheduled originally for November 1910, was continually postponed, and finally took place on May 10th, 1913 before Judge Malouin in Quebec Superior Court.

S. W. Jacobs played an unforgettable part in conducting the prosecution against Plamondon and that of Rabbi Herman Abramowitz in his testimony as witness for the plaintiff. This was the first and to date the only case of its kind (and hopefully the last) to take place in the New World. It recalled the medieval era when the convert Pfefferkorn in Germany launched a violent attack on the Talmud and the Jews; their defence was then taken up by the Christian scholar Johannes Reuchlin.

The startling contrast between the world of four hundred years ago and the twentieth century was utterly bewildering. That by some sinister twist of fate this spectacle should now unfold itself in a country like Canada - rooted in two European cultures and embodying the progressive spirit of the New World - seemed incredible. The Talmud was being placed on the bench, and a rabbi was to plead for six hours in its defence, refuting false charges, vile fabrications and accusations emanating not from a Pfefferkorn but from a group of anti-Semites in Quebec City. This was a weird repetition of what happened centuries ago when men's imaginations still thrived on the wildest myths invented by bloodthirsty enemies of the Jews.

Spectators at the trial were spellbound by the superb case conducted by the prosecution. With rapt interest they followed the proceedings, especially the expert testimony of Rabbi Abramowitz. Explaining the meaning and nature of the Talmud, he showed how ridiculous, false and nonsensical were the allegations made by Plamondon. A profound impression was left also by the testimony of Rev. F. G. Scott, Rector of St. Matthews Church in Quebec City, and well-known poet, who repudiated Plamondon's charges against the Jews contained in his pamphlet, charges which had already been disproved in the 15th century.

The position of the defence, especially the performance of the experts appearing on its behalf, bordered on the ludicrous. Chief witness for the defence was Abbé D'Amour, editor of the anti-Semitic Action Sociale, Abbé Nadeau and Abbé Grandbois. Of the three, only Abbé Grandbois, who was a professor of theology at Laval University, knew a few words of Hebrew. As for the Jewish people, he admitted

that he knew little about them, and he had never seen the Talmud in the original. The others had certainly never laid eyes on it; nor did they understand a single word of its contents.

The same admission was elicited from the defendant himself. Confessing that he knew not one word of Hebrew, that he had no idea of what the Talmud looked like and could not say with certainty what it contained, Plamondon revealed that his only sources of information pertaining to the Jews and the Talmud were Edouard Drumont and other anti-Semitic writers. His star witness, Abbé D'Amour, described as an "expert" on Jewish matters, did not know that Cardinals Logue and Bourne had disproved the blood accusations.

A powerful impression had been made by S. W. Jacobs during the final session of the trial before Judge Malouin in Quebec Superior Court. "This case", he said, "is of the utmost significance for the Jews of Quebec and the whole of Canada, because in his speech Plamondon accused each and every Jew of belonging to a sect whose religion teaches them to commit the most horrifying crimes against Christians, and that in the view of the Talmud and the Jewish rabbis such crimes are commandments for which they will receive certain award."

"What are these trustworthy sources which Plamondon credits?", Jacobs asked. "At the hearing in court the defendant declared that he had spent two months studying the Jewish question, and that his pamphlet was based on the writings of Edouard Drumont, Abbé Lamarcque and other professional anti-Semites."

"The witnesses for the defence", he continued, "were not able to prove even the lesser charges against the Jews. The Abbés D'Amour, Nadeau and Grandbois, the three priests heard, repeatedly admitted that they were unable to read the Talmud (which allegedly contains the nefarious passages) in the original; that they understand no Hebrew, and that all their knowledge about Jews they derived from French books of the Drumont cut. They could not say whether the ideas ascribed to the Talmud are actually to be found there."

Dealing with the charge that Jews murdered Christian children for ritual purposes, he read to the court numerous papal bulls dating from the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th centuries, in which the Roman popes warned the Christian kings and archbishops not to be misled by the propagators of falsehoods, which were no more than pretexts for invading and plundering the Jewish quarters.

With biting sarcasm he referred to the remarks of Abbé D'Amour who had declared he hated the Jews because they do not assimilate with other peoples. According to the priest, assimilation meant nothing less than baptism. If Canadian Jews were to heed their new mentor, they would have to convert to Catholicism in Quebec, where Catholics were the majority, and become Protestants in Ontario.

Would Abbé D'Amour not object if we became Protestants, or would he expect every Jew in the country to submit to sprinkling with holy water through a Catholic priest?

Jacobs pleaded that incitement such as that instigated by Plamondon could lead to pogroms and to the spilling of blood and must, therefore, be stopped. "At the present moment", he concluded, "there are only two cities in the whole world where ritual murder accusations still figure in litigation lists. These are Kiev - and Quebec. One is located in backward Russia, and the other in free Canada. The difference here is that in Kiev it is impossible to bring the case to court, because the prosecution deems it not in their interest. But in Quebec, a British city with British courts of justice, the lawyers for both sides decided three or four weeks ago to begin this trial, which is now over. This is the difference between the British system of justice and the Russian."

"I am also aware that when the judgment is handed down in both cases, the lonely miserable person wasting away in prison waiting for his trial will obtain Russian justice, and that Plamondon and Leduc, the defendants in the present case, will receive British justice."

Counsel for the defence sought by every means to prove that the statements made by the accused were directed not at the plaintiffs or at individual Jews, but against the Jewish people as a whole. On this ground they argued the prosecution could not claim any damages.

This point was taken into consideration by the judge, who, after a deliberation of five months, dismissed the charges against Plamondon and Leduc in a ruling handed down October 22, 1913. Mr. Jacobs immediately filed an appeal.

Throughout the trial in Superior Court, and for some time after, the anti-Semitic hate sheets, supported mainly by the clergy, never ceased to pour invective against the Jews, as they reiterated the barbaric accusations contained in Plamondon's pamphlet. One of these journals, Action Sociale, official organ of the Cardinal of Quebec, edited by none other than the Abbé D'Amour, carried a report on the Beilis case in Russia in which it reproduced the story about Jews using Christian blood. * How deep a hatred was instilled in naive French-Canadian minds by this sort of insidious propaganda can be easily surmised.

What could not be achieved by the written word was completed by word of mouth. In a speech to the congress of the Catholic Association of Canadian Youth, Bishop Cloutier of Three Rivers injected

* Jewish Chronicle, London, Dec. 12, 1913

anti-Semitic poison into the minds of his audience. Characterizing the Jews as a detrimental element, he deplored the fact that Canada had opened its doors to them so that they might undermine the best in the French-Canadian way of life. *

The influence of the hate mongers played no part in the decision of the judges of the higher Quebec court. A new hearing under the presidency of Sir Horace Archambault, with the judges Cross, Trenholme, Carroll and Rouault in attendance, opened on October 2nd, 1914.

On December 28th of that year the court unanimously nullified the verdict of Judge Malouin. The decision elucidated the point that, even though damages could not be claimed by an individual arising out of incitement against an entire people, race or religion, the present case was different because the agitation affected a more or less limited segment of that people, of which the plaintiff was a part; and the charge was valid if he could prove that he incurred losses as a direct result of that agitation.

Plamondon was found guilty on the basis of the anti-Semitic speech he delivered in Quebec City, and Leduc on the grounds that he had printed it. They had attacked not only the entire Jewish race, but had taken as their special targets the Jews of the province and the city of Quebec. It was the latter fact that led to the victory over Plamondon and Leduc.

The former was sentenced to pay a \$50 fine, and Leduc \$25, and court costs of the trial in Superior Court as well as that in the Higher Court.

Judge Carroll explained that no legal measures could be taken against anyone for bringing false allegations against the Talmud or for slandering a people, but for specifically attacking 75 families living in Quebec. This view was shared by presiding Judge Sir Horace Archambault, who added that a still greater fine would have been imposed were it not for the submission of the plaintiffs' lawyers that it was not their objective to exact a monetary penalty from the accused so much as to protect the rights of their clients.

In Canada, as in other civilized countries throughout the world, the Beilis case in Russia continued to arouse horror and indignation. Protests against the medieval spectacle unfolding in Czarist Russia were heard in this country as in others. The strongest protest took place in Winnipeg.

* Ibid., Aug. 15, 1913

Other Canadian cities followed Winnipeg's example. In Toronto the city council and controllers adopted a resolution similar in substance to that passed in Winnipeg, condemning the blood libel trial. A protest was voiced also by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Toronto and Kingston. Montreal was the scene of a giant rally in which Mayor Lavallée and Godfroy Langlois joined prominent Jewish citizens in a massive expression of indignation. Rev. Dr. Simons of Christ Church Cathedral in Montreal lent his voice to the protest.

A major event in business and labour circles at this time was a strike in the clothing factory of H. Vineberg which affected 350 Jewish families. The workers left their jobs in the face of unbearable conditions, after their demands for improvement had been rejected by their employers. The strike dragged on for months, causing untold hardship for the families involved, while the firm employed every means at its disposal, including police, to suppress the work stoppage. The Kanader Adler printed editorials by Reuben Brainin urgently appealing to communal leaders to use their influence towards a just settlement of the strike. On one occasion an attempt was made to have Brainin arrested.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Jews were acquiring greater influence in political life. In Toronto the prominent Jewish lawyer and communal worker Louis B. Singer was elected alderman early in 1914. The same year saw the election to the Montreal City Council of two Jewish representatives: one was Alderman A. Blumenthal, re-elected in St. Louis riding, and the other the popular sportsman Louis Rubenstein in St. Lawrence division.

Rubenstein's victory was a certainty from the beginning. Well-known in the Canadian sports world, he had the support of non-Jewish as well as Jewish voters. Rubenstein took pride in being a Jew, refusing to be sworn into office on a Jewish holiday, the last day of Passover.

The election of two Jews to the Montreal City Council symbolized the rising status of the Jewish population. The same could be said of Western Canada, where in Kenora, Ont., for example, councillor Sam Cobrin was elected mayor by a sizeable majority. The town counted no more than ten Jewish families, Mr. Cobrin himself having been in the country only eight years. A Saskatchewan town, Willow Creek, saw the election of David Vicker of Edenbridge as mayor of the municipality; while in Vancouver the outstanding Jewish advocate Samuel David Shultz was appointed by the Federal Government as Judge.

Figuring prominently on the political scene at that time was the Montreal lawyer Peter Bercovitch (1879-1942), who would have reached even greater heights in his career were it not for his being a Jew. Following the resignation in 1914 of Godfroy Langlois, Liberal member for St. Louis in the provincial Legislature, Bercovitch proposed his nomination as Liberal candidate but was dissuaded by the leaders of the Liberal party in Quebec; presumably they feared a recurrence of the 'Ezekiel Hart episode in the Quebec Legislature. *

Two years later, upon the dissolution of the Legislature in 1916 and the calling of a provincial election, Bercovitch followed his own judgment and put forward his candidacy in St. Louis, despite the expressed opinions of the Liberal Party chiefs. He won the seat, which he subsequently filled with great competence.

In May 1914 the Jewish Library in Montreal moved to its first permanent home. This date marks the beginning of a new and meaningful chapter in the life of the library, which was to become an important cultural centre of the community. Reuben Brainin became president of the Library.

* Montreal Gazette, Dec. 28, 1942

The opening of the Jewish Library in Montreal was celebrated by a special literary-musical evening at the Auditorium Hall and attended by a capacity audience. Performances were given by invited artists, while the main addresses were delivered by Reuben Brainin and Dr. Yehuda Ibn-Samuel. Circulation of books began on July 15, 1914. The Library subsequently acquired renown when it inherited the valued book collection and archives of its illustrious founder, Reuben Brainin.

Among Brainin's many accomplishments was the founding of a Jewish People's University, under the auspices of the library, which drew a substantial enrollment of students.

Another significant cultural institution had its beginnings about this time. This was the Jewish People's School (Folk-Shule), which opened its doors in September 1914, with Dr. Judah Kaufman as principal. Though small in size and influence in its early years, occupying no more than two rooms in a house at 502 St. Urbain St., the Folk Shule was to grow and develop into an important factor in Jewish education in Montreal.

For a very brief period Anglo-Jewish readers were without a periodical, when the Jewish Times - its name had been changed to Canadian Jewish Times - closed down in April 1914, after being a staunch defender of Jewish interests since 1897. A few weeks later, on May 22, 1914, a new Anglo-Jewish organ came into being: this was the Canadian Jewish Chronicle, published by the owners of the Kanader Adler. Its first editor was Dr. A. A. Roback, psychologist and scholar, who had recently graduated from McGill University with the Prince of Wales Gold Medal. Roback edited the Chronicle to the end of September 1914, when he left Montreal for further study at Harvard University. Among successive editors of the weekly were Hyman Edelstein, Ida Siegler, Leon Crestohl and A. M. Klein.

The movement towards unity of Jewish communal services in Montreal once again came to the fore. A conference representing all organizations involved in such work was held at the Baron de Hirsch Institute under the chairmanship of Maxwell Goldstein. A committee was appointed to implement the plan initially formulated by the late Lyon Cohen in 1912.

From the West came opinion against the open-door immigration policy of the Federal government. The Winnipeg city council demanded the temporary curtailment of immigration in view of the high unemployment in Western Canada. In protest against the resolution a rally was staged by the Jewish people of Winnipeg under the leadership of Alderman Scaliter.

Not that the Jews would be most affected by immigration restrictions. As a matter of fact, the number of Jewish immigrants settling in Western Canada was small in comparison with those of other nationalities, the British predominating. Moreover, the depression sweeping the Western provinces was keenly felt by local Jewish welfare agencies. But the protest headed by Alderman Scaliter was prompted by concern over the tragic fate of the Jews in Europe for whom the last glimmer of hope would be extinguished if the anti-immigration forces had their way. *

The World War broke out. With growing suspense Jews followed the daily progress of the conflict. For a time the Kanader Adler appeared twice daily to make news dispatches available to its readers.

An offer to equip a Jewish regiment for the Canadian militia came from Toronto's Louis Gurofsky; a similar proposal was made by Hyman Edelstein in Montreal to the Canadian Jewish Chronicle. The Young Men's Hebrew Association in Montreal actually began organizing such a regiment; and Mortimer B. Davis (later Sir Mortimer) offered to outfit a motorcycle corps.

The idea of a Jewish regiment was premature, considering that there was not a single Canadian soldier yet at the front. No wonder the proposal was criticized by Reuben Brainin in the Kanader Adler as impractical.

"I wish to do my duty this time directly and briefly", he wrote in an editorial. "What do I think of the Jewish regiment that Mr. Edelstein in Montreal and Mr. Gurofsky in Toronto wish to organize? I think it is ridiculous and absurd."

"I want to state briefly why I am opposed to a Jewish regiment... Canadian Jews, just as the Jews of Britain, are citizens with equal rights to all other citizens, then why all this fuss over a Jewish regiment? The times are too serious to play around with pretty-sounding phrases." **

As the news from the war fronts continued to flow into the country, and as the plight of European Jewry became ever more dangerous, Canadian Jews were motivated by the dual impetus to contribute to their country's war effort and raise relief for their brethren overseas. Patriotic feelings impelled Jewish young men to volunteer for military service. By fighting in Canada's defence they, as Canadians, were expressing their gratitude for the freedom and equality they enjoyed as citizens of this country.

* Jewish Chronicle, London, June 26, 1914

** Kanader Adler, August 10, 1914

At one point Jewish soldiers at Valcartier Training Camp requested a visit by Jewish representatives. * A committee consisting of S. W. Jacobs, K.C., Rabbi Hirsch Cohen, H. Wolofsky and H. M. Crestohl were successful in securing the consent of the authorities to grant the Jewish soldiers leave during Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur.

One can readily see the effects of the war on economic conditions at home. This, of course, was reflected on the Jewish scene. That the times must have been far from prosperous for the Jewish community can be seen from the fact that in 1915, 288 members of the Baron de Hirsch Institute had to be dropped from the list of dues-paying members because of their inability to pay their fees. **

A fund-raising campaign for Jewish war victims was started in Montreal in response to an appeal launched by Jewish leaders in Britain. The movement had the backing and support of the Canadian Zionist organization.

The editorials in the Kanader Adler of Reuben Brainin continued to rouse the public awareness of the grave responsibilities of the hour. In an article entitled "Where Are You, Brothers?", he pleaded for an intensification of effort on behalf of the war sufferers in Europe.

Brainin subsequently left the Kanader Adler and began to publish his own daily called Der Veg (The Way), which appeared for a period of nine months. Brainin's influence on the community was tremendous, his accomplishments immeasurable and enduring.

The news from the military fronts could not fail to cause anxiety and concern in the Jewish world. The need for Jewish unity and solidarity became increasingly clear as thoughts turned to the problems that would result after the cessation of hostilities. To represent the Jewish cause at the peace table, to present Jewish demands, would require a united people to speak with one voice.

At the beginning of February 1915 the Jewish National Workers' Association Branch 8 in Montreal addressed an appeal to all Jewish organizations in that city to take part in a conference for the purpose of mobilizing relief for Jewish war victims in Europe. Only thirteen organizations heeded the call and sent representatives to the meeting on February 21st. Dr. Ibn-Samuel Kaufman, spokesman for the Poale-Zion, declared the gathering to be merely a preliminary conference, that a larger convention should be called to embrace

* Kanader Adler, September 1, 1915

** From annual report of B. de H. for 1915; Jewish Chronicle, November 26, 1915

every Jewish organization; and that a national Jewish body should be established to represent and defend Jewish economic and political interests arising out of contemporary events, to be known as Folks Farband of Canadian Jews (Canadian Jewish People's Association).

On March 28, 1915 such a convention took place in the Prince Arthur Hall in Montreal. 71 organizations, including 16 synagogues, six labour unions, ten sick benefit societies, and eighteen loan syndicates, participated, constituting a large majority of the local Jewish population. The conference closed with the passage of a resolution submitted by Ibn-Samuel outlining the program of the newly-founded federation. Reuben Brainin was elected president, Ibn-Samuel secretary and L. Zuker vice-president.

The underlying idea of unity inherent in the new organization soon found a response and a following in other parts of the country, where branches of the Folks-Farband were formed. At the same time, however, a certain amount of opposition to the movement emerged from the Zionist organization and other quarters.

Yet the aims and objectives proclaimed by the Folks-Farband continued to attract increasing numbers of avid followers, and as the movement spread it won ever-growing prestige and recognition.

At a conference called by the Farband in June 1915, Brainin delivered an address depicting the tragic plight of the Jews in Russia. A resolution was adopted to petition the British government, with the permission of the Canadian authorities, to intercede with the Czarist regime on behalf of the Russian Jews.

The movement for unity among Canadian Jewry, thus begun in the midst of the war on the initiative of the Folks-Farband, inspired by Reuben Brainin and Ibn-Samuel, soon found an echo among other sections of the community who had shown reluctance before. That they were now willing to heed the call for unity was no doubt due in large measure to developments in the United States, where a similar movement was taking shape.

Acting on their own initiative, those in opposition to the Farband action organized a separate conference towards the goal of community co-operation.

Resounding all over the Jewish world, the call for unity did not fail to meet with a response in Canada. But there were some who believed that it would be feasible for Canadian Jews to join with the American Jewish Congress across the border rather than form their own central body - a view prevalent among those who were reluctant to join forces with the Folks-Farband. The idea had to be abandoned, however, when it was proven to be impracticable.

As a result, a conference was convened in November 1915 - the first Canadian Jewish Conference - which took place at the Gaiety Theatre in Montreal. It was an epoch-making event, taking on special significance from the address delivered on that occasion by the Honourable Arthur Meighen, then a Cabinet Minister and later Prime Minister of Canada. Chairman of the conference was Clarence I. de Sola, president of the Zionist Organization of Canada; among the featured speakers were Dr. Shamariah Levine, Ab. Goldberg and Jacob De Haas.

Affirming that this conference was the first of its kind in the history of Canadian Jewry, the president elaborated on the aims and purposes of this imposing gathering in which were represented all segments of Canada's Jewish population from the Atlantic to the Pacific provinces. He emphasized in particular the necessity of unity for the sake of achieving these ends as well as the importance of a unanimous voice at the coming peace congress, to join the voice of world Jewry in appealing for justice and compensation for Jews who had suffered immeasurably as a result of the war.

A thundering ovation greeted the Hon. Arthur Meighen. In a striking address the Hon. Mr. Meighen extended the official greetings of the Government of Canada. He referred to the high esteem with which the Jewish citizens of Canada were regarded by this Government. He had come to the meeting to offer encouragement and at the same time to express his admiration for the spirit of brotherhood which the Jews embodied and for the sake of which they were gathered together.

He spoke of the history and traditions of the Jewish people, and of the debt which humanity owed them. Jews had withstood suffering and persecution, but when treated justly and humanely, showed themselves to be model citizens. Jewish civilization was the oldest in the world and had had a tremendous influence on many significant aspects of the history of mankind.

Referring to the centuries-old dream of the Jewish people to return to their homeland, Mr. Meighen's words carried a veiled allusion to the forthcoming Balfour Declaration, the news of which had apparently spread in Canada sooner than elsewhere. "I believe that I can speak for those of the Christian faith when I express the wish that God may hasten the day when the land of your fathers may be yours again. This goal, I hope, will be fulfilled through the defender of liberty all over the world - the British Empire." At these words, spoken by a Canadian Cabinet Minister, the crowd broke out into a long applause.

Mr. Meighen also paid tribute to the role of Canadian Jews in the war. According to information he had received, they were doing more than their share. In concluding his address, the minister cited the words of the British Prime Minister Asquith when he declared that the rights of the small nations must be secured before the sword is returned to the sheath. Clearly he thus implied that the rights of the Jewish people were guaranteed by this declaration, which brought a fresh outburst of enthusiastic applause from the assembled audience. *

Despite the tensions created by the war, Jewish community life continued its growth. The Mizrachi movement came into being during this time - the culmination of a visit to Canada by Rabbi Mayer Berlin and Rabbi Aaron Mordecai Ashinsky, the latter having been one of the founders of the Canadian Zionist organization.

Two highly distinguished visitors enriched the cultural scene. Honouring both the Toronto and Montreal communities with their presence were two eminent personalities of the Jewish literary world, the famous Yiddish humourist Sholem Aleichem and his son-in-law I. D. Berkovitch, famous in his own right as a Hebrew writer. No effort was spared by devotees of Jewish culture to make this occasion a memorable event.

We hear also of visits of other famous personalities about that time, among them Dr. Chaim Zhitlowsky and Ab. Goldberg, a leader of the Poale Zion in the United States. The underlying problem as reflected in the speeches of all the featured guests could be broken down into two major aspects - first, the immediate task of alleviating the sad plight of European Jews caught in the throes of the war; and secondly, the need for unity and solidarity of World Jewry.

* Jewish Chronicle, Dec. 10, 1915, pp. 12,13

INDEX

- Abramowitz, Rabbi H. 12-13, 25, 43, 51, 70, 84
 Action Society 29, 84, 86
 Adath Yeshurun Synagogue 30
 Agudath Achim Synagogue 7
 Ahavath Achim Synagogue 7
 Agonists 31
 Ansell, D. 12
 Archibault, Sir Horace 57
 Aronson, M. 47
 Ascher, J. S. 46
 Aschinsky, Rabbi A.M. 7, 95
 Austro-Hungarian Synagogue 17
 Aylenworth, A.B. 55
 Bachrach, J. 30
 Balfour Declaration 94
 Balloo, Ellen 29
 Baron de Hirsch Institute 3, 43, 57-59, 71-72, 82
 Beller, M. 56
 Belanger, Abba 59
 Benjamin, S. 75
 Bercovitch, I.D. 95
 Bercovitch, M. 89
 Berger, M. 21
 Bernhardt, Sarah 31
 Bloomfield, H. 30
 Blumenthal, A. 76, 80
 Bnai Jacob Synagogue 7
 Bodden, Robert L. 56
 Bornheim, Dr. 20
 Bourassa, H. 23-24, 37
 Bralin, R. 70, 73, 77, 79, 85-88
 Bryne, P.H. 19
 Calgary 44
 Le Canada 52
 Canadian Jew 53
 Canadian Jewish Chronicle 90-91
 Canadian Jewish Conference 94
 Carpenter Union 51
 Carroll, Judge 87
 Catholic Association of Canadian Youth 52
 Catholic Herald 74
 Cartland, Capt. 13
 Chasenswitch, I. 74
 Christ Church Cathedral 38
 Clark, Sir William 13
 Cloutier, Bishop 36
 Cochrin, S. 39
 Cochran, J. 17
 Cohen, Rabbi H. 7, 92
 Cohen, L. 18
 Cohen, L. 17, 63, 70, 79, 90
 Cohen, R.N.A. 6
 Cornfeld, Dr. L. 21



INDEX

- Abramovitz, Rabbi H. 12-13, 25, 48, 57, 70, 84
- Action Sociale 59, 84, 86
- Adath Yeshurun Synagogue 20
- Agudath Achim Synagogue 7
- Ahavath Achim Synagogue 7
- Anarchists 31
- Ansell, D. 12
- Archambault, Sir Horace 87
- Aronson, M. 47
- Ascher, J. G. 46
- Aschinsky, Rabbi A.M. 7, 95
- Austro-Hungarian Synagogue 17
- Aylesworth, A.B. 55
- Bachrach, J. 30
- Balfour Declaration 94
- Ballon, Ellen 29
- Baron de Hirsch Institute 8, 48, 57-59, 71-72, 82
- Beilis, M. 86
- Belanger, Abbe 68
- Benjamin, S. 76
- Bercovitch, I.D. 95
- Bercovitch, P. 89
- Berner, M. 21
- Bernhardt, Sarah 31
- Bloomfield, H. 76
- Blumenthal, A. 76, 89
- Bnai Jacob Synagogue 7
- Borden, Robert L. 36
- Borenheim, Dr. 20
- Bourassa, H. 33-34, 37
- Brainin, R. 70, 73, 77, 79, 88-93
- Bryce, P.H. 19
- Calgary 44
- Le Canada 53
- Canadian Jew 65
- Canadian Jewish Chronicle 90-91
- Canadian Jewish Conference 94
- Carpenters Union 51
- Carroll, Judge 87
- Catholic Association of Canadian Youth, 86
- Catholic Herald 74
- Chartrand, Capt. 18
- Chazanowitch, L. 78
- Christ Church Cathedral 88
- Clark, Sir William 18
- Cloutier, Bishop 86
- Cobrin, S. 89
- Cochrane, J. 17
- Cohen, Rabbi H. 7, 92
- Cohen, I. 18
- Cohen, L. 17, 61, 70, 79, 90
- Cohen, M.N.A. 6
- Cornfeld, Dr. I. 21

Cornwall 76
 Cornwall, Duchess of 6
 Cosmopolitan Club 38
 Courier 65
 Cresthol, L.D. 90
 La Croix 53
 D'Amour, Abbé 84-86
 Davis, M.B. 91
 Davis, Mrs. M. B. 78
 Dawson City 28
 De Sola, C.I. 6, 28, 33, 55, 57, 72, 78
 De Sola, M. 62
 Deutsch, G. 45-46
 Le Devoir 72
 Diamond, W. 44
 Donalda, Pauline 28
 Eagle 46, 52, 54, 56-57, 65, 73, 75-76, 91
 Edenbridge 43, 89
 Edmonton 44
 Engelhart 25
 Farrar, Ald. 55
 Fielding, Magistrate 82
 Figler, I. 62
 Finkelstein, M. 28, 65
 Finnie, Dr. J. 60-61, 69
 Folks Ferband 93
 Folkszeitung 78
 Frankfurter, N. 20
 Free Press 18-19, 48
 Freiman, A. J. 6, 19, 48
 Friendly League 78
 Gazette 5
 Gilletz, Z. 40
 Glace Bay 6, 63
 Glazer, Rabbi J. 46, 54, 62, 82-83
 Gleaner 6
 Globe 7
 Goel Zedeck Synagogue 38
 Goldberg, A. 40, 95
 Goldstein, B.I. 65
 Goldstein, M. 25, 33, 57, 61, 90
 Gordon, Rabbi J. 38, 51, 56
 Gordon, Rabbi N. 45, 71, 73-74
 Gouin, Sir Lomer 34, 61, 73
 Grandbois, Abbé 84-85
 Green, S. Hart 66
 Griffith, W. L. 23
 Guérin, Mayor 73
 Gurofsky, L. 91
 Hachnossass Orchim 23
 Halifax 82
 Hamilton 27, 31, 46, 49
 Harris, F. 83
 Hebrew Consumptive Aid Society 41
 Hebrew Free Loan Society 80
 Heilbronner, J. 13
 Herald 76

Hersch, H. 78
 Hershman, H. 46, 51
 Herzl Dispensary 73
 Hestrin, J. 66
 Hincks, W.H. 74, 77
 Hirsch 21
 Hoichberg, J. 30
 Hughes, Sam 80
 Huntingdon 61
 Immigrant Aid Society 2
 International Workers of the World 40, 51
 Jacobs, Rabbi S. 32
 Jacobs, S.W. 10, 41, 57, 60-61, 82, 84-86, 92
 Jewish Colonization Association 13, 23
 Jewish Comment 11
 Jewish Encyclopaedia 83
 Jewish National Workers Alliance 64, 77, 92
 Jewish People's Schools 90
 Jewish Public Library 77, 89-90
 Joseph, J. 28
 Journal 78
 Judea Club 38
 Kahanovitch, Rabbi I. 49
 Kaufman (Ibn Shmuel), Y. 90, 92-93
 Kenora 89
 Kingston 27, 55, 77
 Klein, A.M. 90
 Knights of Labor 40
 Komarov, A. 40
 Lachine 60
 Lachovitzky, B. 30
 Landman, Rabbi I. 21
 Landsberg, F. 6
 Langlois, G. 76, 88-89
 Laurier, Sir Wilfrid 24, 26-27, 31, 35, 37, 66, 75
 Lechtzier, S. 49
 Leduc, R. 82, 87
 Leo, Mrs. I.S. 78
 Lesses, M. 28
 Levine, Rabbi J.K. 59
 Levine, M.E. 39, 62
 Levinson, E.R. 76
 Levitt, A. 82
 La Libre Parole 68
 Lightstone, Pauline 28
 Lipton 13
 Maccabean Literary Circle 41
 Macaza 43
 Maclean, W.F. 36
 Malouin, Judge 84-85
 Mann-Zucker, Sarah 30
 McCurdy, J.F. 39
 McDonnell, A.K. 35
 McPartridge, H. 83
 Meighen, A. 94-95
 Miller, J. 76
 Minder, S. 76

Mirsky, M. 20
 Missionary Activities 59, 73-74
 Mitnick, L. 57
 Mizrachi 95
 Mophilev Benefit Society 51
 Nadeau, Abbe 84-85
Le Nationaliste 59, 72
 Nicholl, W. 77
 Obed-Smith, J. 23
 Oppenheimer, S. 6
 Ortenberg, B. 84
 Osovsky, A. 40, 65
 Ottawa 7, 18, 20, 31
 Oxbow 21
 Pasternak, C. 57
La Patrie 14
 Patterson, W. 55
Le Pays 76
 Petersky, S. 41
 Pinsler, J. 9, 15
Le Pionnier 13
 Plamondon, J. 68, 83-84, 87
 Poale Zion 30, 51, 70, 77
 Presbyterian Church 88
La Presse 13
 Qu'Appelle 26
 Quebec City 31, 63, 68, 83-84
 Queen's University 77
 Ramsay 43
 Reform 45
 Regina 44
 Reinwein 78
 Roback, A.A. 90
 Robillard, L. G. 13-14
 Rohold, S.B. 74-75
 Rome 68
 Rosenfeld, M. 70
 Rosenthal, S. 7, 32
 Rothschild, Lord 23
 Roubin, S. 20, 22
 Rubenstein, L. 89
 Rubinovitch, I. 28
 Sack, M. L. 30, 70
 Saint John 2, 7
 Ste. Agathe 69
 Ste. Sophie 43
 Scaliter, A. 76, 90
 Scheuer, E. 49
 Schultz, S. 6
 Scott, F.G. 84
 Selchen, S. H. 66
 Shaar Hashomayim Synagogue 12, 56
 Shaare Tefillah Synagogue 20
 Shaare Tzedek Synagogue 20
 Schneur, S. 40
 Shapiro, S.M. 78
 Sherbrooke 49

Sholem Aleichem 95
Siegler, Ida 90
Smith, G. 2, 37, 45
Sokolow, N. 81
Solomon, J. 30
Sonenfeld 43
Sperber, M. M. 28, 76
Stein, D. 42
Stein, J. 42
Steinkopf, M. 65
Stuart, H. S. 66-67
Sun 2
Sunday Observance 31
Sydney 64
Syrkin, N. 40, 70
Talmud Torah 17, 72
Tarte, I. 8, 14
Telegraph 46
Temple Emanuel 21, 73
Three Rivers 4-5, 66
Trades and Labor Council 41
United Garment Workers 40
United Russian-Polish Immigrant Society 47
Vancouver 44-45, 89
Der Veg 92
La Verite 59
Vickar, J. L. 43
Vickar, D. 89
Victoria 6
Vineberg, A. H. 13
Vineberg, H. 88
Wallace, Judge 82-83
Webwood 76
Weir, W.A. 61
Wilder, H.E. 65
Williamson, A. 82
Willow Creek 89
Winnipeg 7, 20, 28, 49, 63, 65, 76, 90
Witness 61
Wohliner, H. 57
Wolinsky, Rabbi H. 7
Wolofsky, H. 46
Workmen's Circle 51, 77
World 76
Yampolsky, I. 62
Yehoash 70
Yiddish 3, 39
Yiddishe Vort 66
Yiddisher Shtern 46
Young Men's Hebrew Association 41, 79, 91
Young Women's Hebrew Association 78
Yukon 4, 28
Zangwill, I. 23
Zhitlowsky, C. 40, 70-71, 95
Zuker, L. 40, 93



1. The first part of the report is a general statement of the work done during the year. It is a summary of the work done by the various departments of the institution, and is intended to give a general idea of the progress of the work.

2. The second part of the report is a detailed statement of the work done by each of the departments. It is a summary of the work done by each of the departments, and is intended to give a detailed idea of the progress of the work.

3. The third part of the report is a statement of the financial condition of the institution. It is a summary of the financial condition of the institution, and is intended to give a detailed idea of the financial condition of the institution.

4. The fourth part of the report is a statement of the work done by the various departments of the institution. It is a summary of the work done by each of the departments, and is intended to give a detailed idea of the progress of the work.

5. The fifth part of the report is a statement of the work done by the various departments of the institution. It is a summary of the work done by each of the departments, and is intended to give a detailed idea of the progress of the work.

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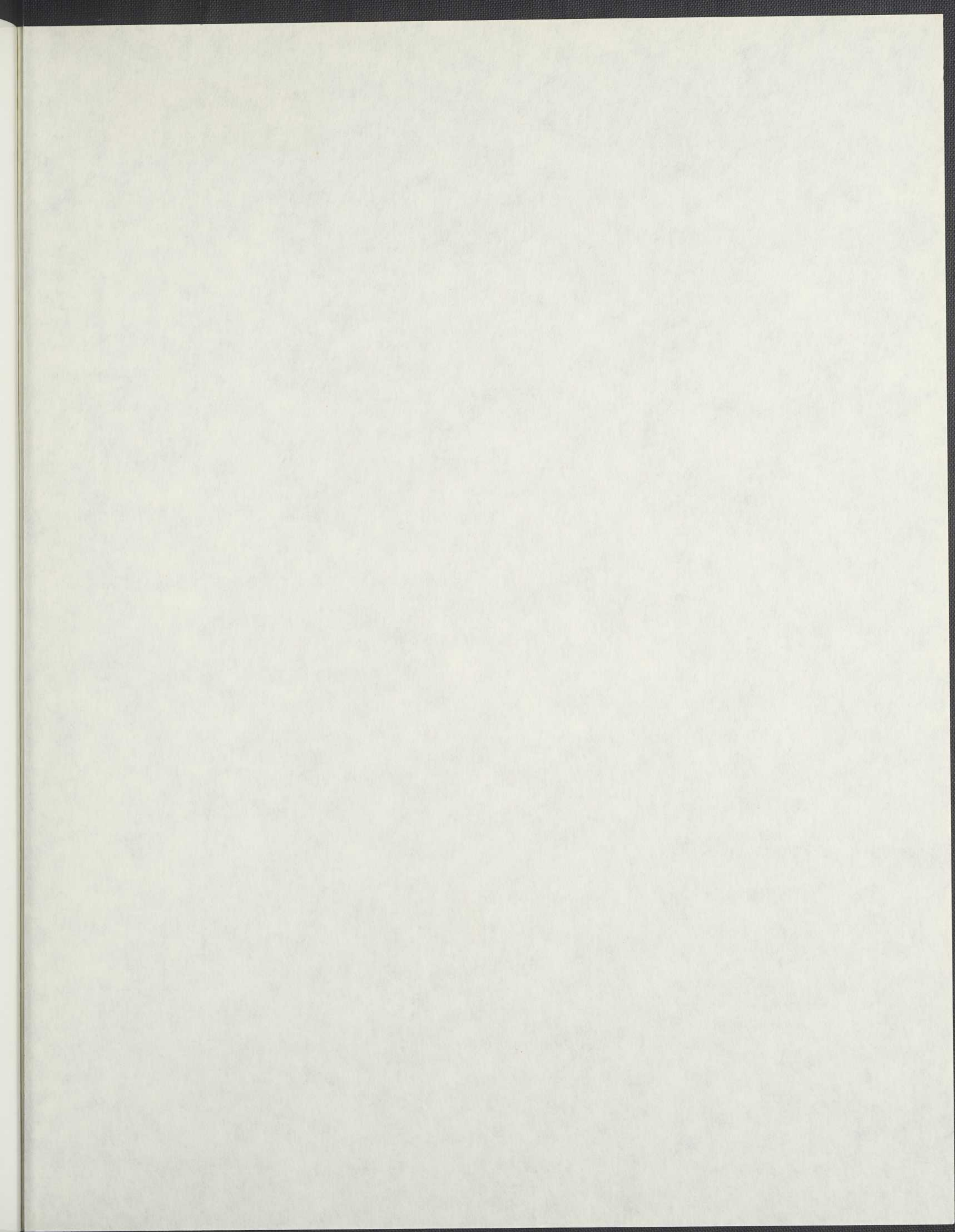
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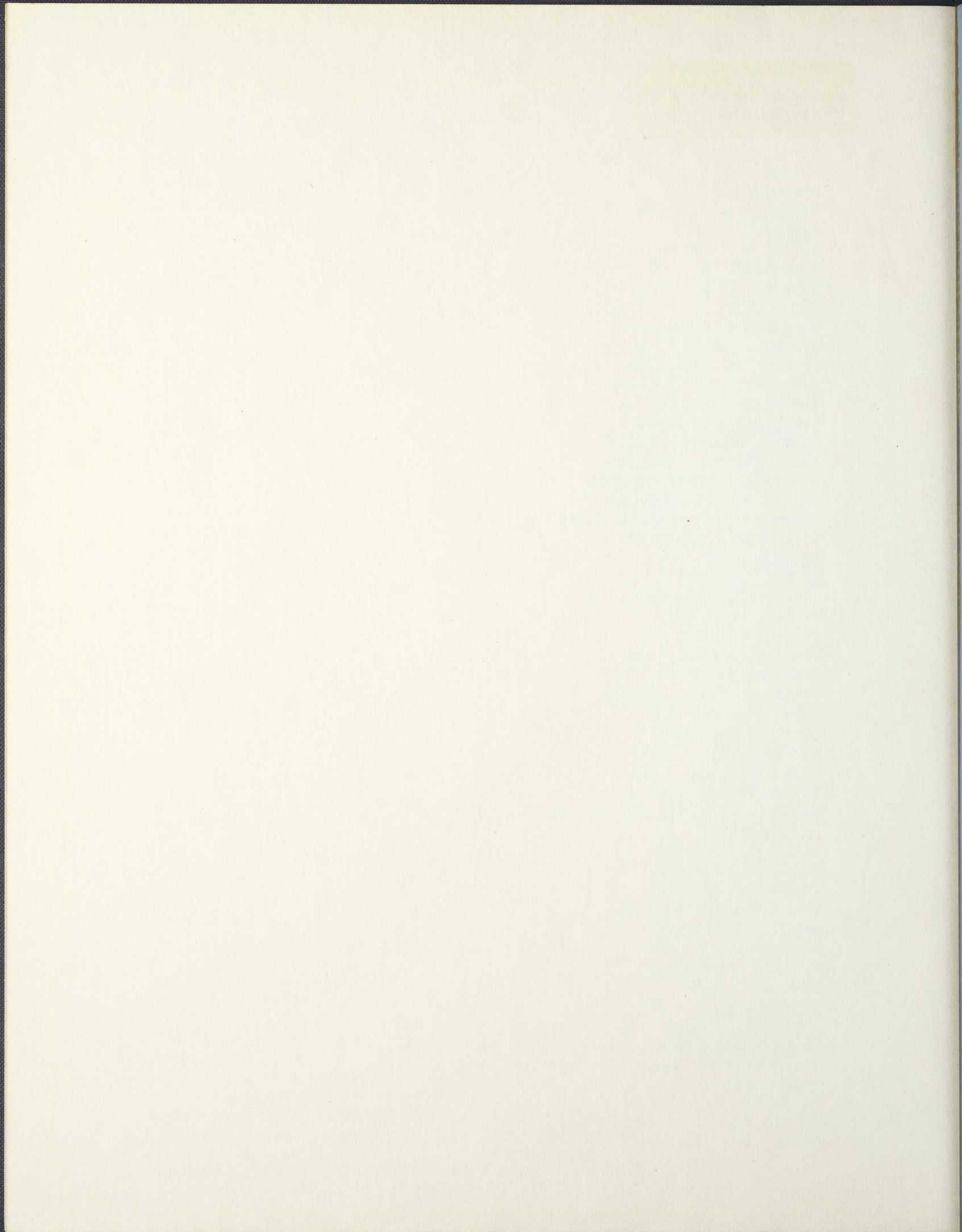
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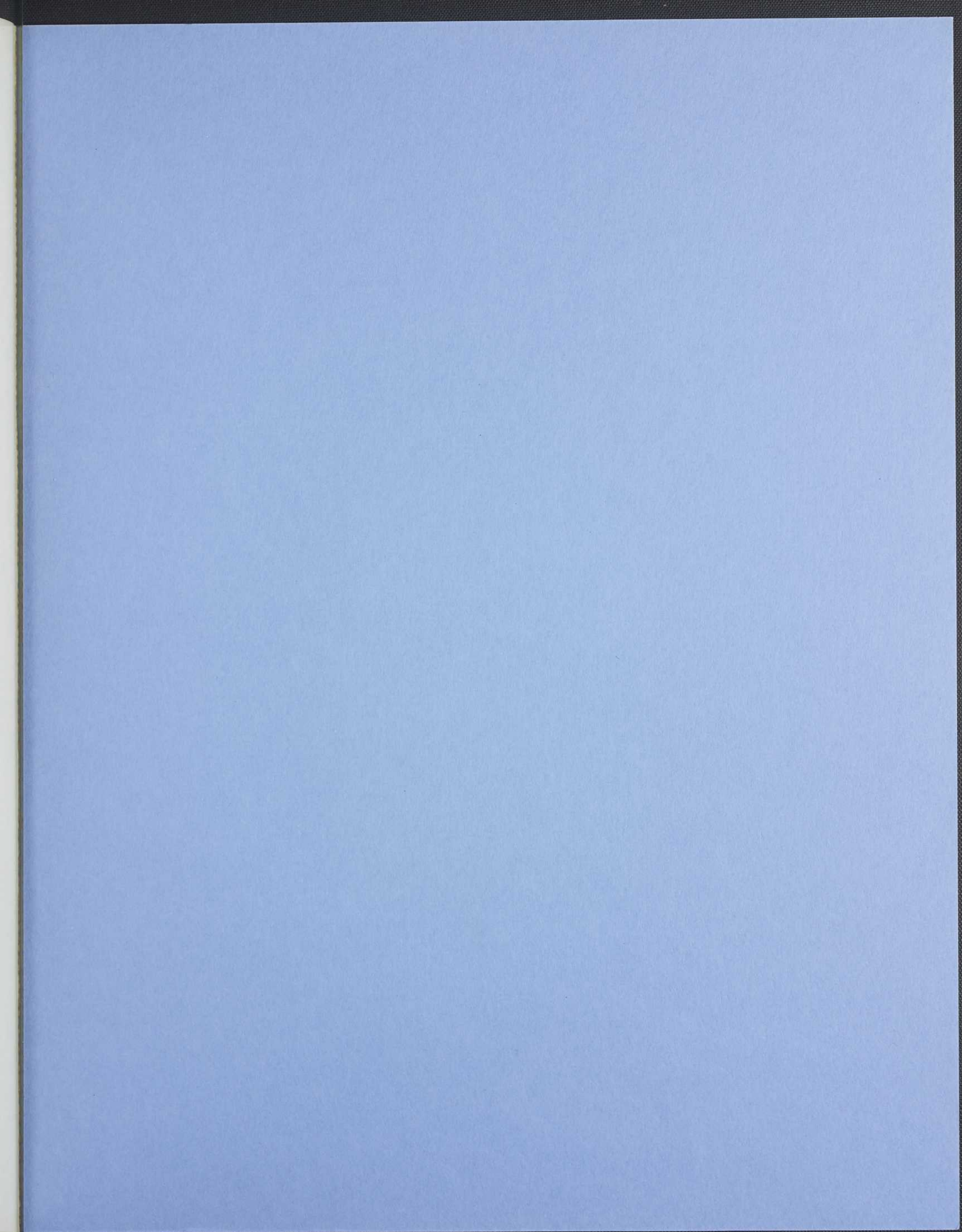
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