

JACOB HENRY SCHIFF  
A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
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I

Jacob H. Schiff was known in all parts of the American continent, in every country of Europe, in Japan, in Palestine, in fact throughout the civilized world. Vaguely he was considered as the combination of a great financier and a great philanthropist, but in neither capacity had the extent of his deeds been brought home to any considerable proportion of the vast numbers to whom his name was familiar.

What manner of man was this who, of no ruling family or exalted official station, so impressed himself upon the imagination of people in many climes and in all conditions of life? To answer this question is well nigh impossible in a brief sketch. And yet the attempt should be made, for mankind is enriched by the story of great personalities, and future generations are stimulated to high deeds by the knowledge of the acts of those who have gone before. The public, too, has a right to know of the lives of those whom it has followed and admired, so that it may be ennobled by the consciousness of the "merits of the fathers."

Jacob H. Schiff was born at Frankfort-on-the-Main on January 10, 1847, and died in New York on September 25, 1920. He was descended of a family known to have been settled in Frankfort since 1370. The pedigree carefully worked out in the *Jewish Encyclopedia* presents the longest continuous rec-

ord of any Jewish family now in existence. The earliest Schiff, named Jacob Kohen Zedek, was dayyan (ecclesiastical judge) of the Frankfort community in the fourteenth century. Another, Meir Kohen Zedek Schiff, was parnas (president) of the community in 1626. Among those who followed were business men and a number of Rabbis. Of the latter several were men of distinction, notably Meir ben Jacob Schiff, called Maharam Schiff (1608-1644). He was a prolific author, composing commentaries on the entire Talmud some of which were published in 1737. Another member of the family who gained eminence in the Rabbinate was David (Tebele) Schiff who became chief rabbi of England in 1765 and died in London in 1792. He was a preacher of great power and also a man of native ability as is shown by his correspondence recently published by Doctor Charles Duschinsky in his work *The Rabbinate of the Great Synagogue*.

It is impossible and indeed inappropriate even to endeavor to give here an outline of the history of this distinguished family. The few facts mentioned are intended to indicate that for over six hundred years there can be traced an unbroken line of rabbis, scholars, men of affairs and communal leaders, all of whose qualities went to make up the background of the very remarkable man who is the subject of this sketch and in whose single person nearly all the traits of this long line of ancestors were blended—some appearing in greater proportion than others but all nevertheless present.

His immediate forebears were Moses Schiff and Clara Niederkhofheim. The father, a man of high sense of duty, exact and stern, was rigorously devoted to religious observances, and demanded a similar devotion on the part of his children; the mother was a woman of sweet and conciliatory nature. The

distinctive traits of both of these personalities were found in the son, for Mr. Schiff set before himself a life of exacting duty, whilst toward others he showed great kindness and consideration.

His education, both secular and religious, was thorough for a layman. In the course of time by wide reading and contact with men he acquired a broad, general cultivation. He had a good knowledge of the Hebrew language, and could freely quote the Bible in the sacred tongue. He read some favorite commentaries, and kept himself abreast of the developments in biblical studies. His exactness in method and his knowledge of, and interest in, Jewish learning undoubtedly went back to the excellent if severe training of his boyhood days.

In 1865 he left Frankfort ostensibly for England, but he had already determined upon America as his future home. As the voyage across the Atlantic was in those days still a fearsome enterprise, he stopped in England long enough to write a series of letters to his mother which were left in the hands of a friend to be mailed at regular intervals, so that the mother should be spared the anxiety of his passage across the ocean until a letter would have been received from New York announcing his arrival there.

In New York he was employed for a time in the brokerage firm of Frank and Sons, and later became a partner in the firm of Budge, Schiff and Company. After the death of his father in 1873 he went to Germany intending to live with his mother, but the spirit of America had entered his soul, and his mother to whom he was deeply attached, herself suggested that he should return to the United States.

On January 1, 1875, he became a member of the banking firm of Kuhn, Loeb & Company, and before many years the

older members of the firm, recognizing his financial genius, were glad to accord him the headship of the house.

## II

To describe the financial career of Mr. Schiff is not the purpose of this sketch designed for the American Jewish Year Book which will naturally place a disproportionate emphasis upon his relation to Jewish institutions and to Judaism.

Still not even a brief sketch can be prepared without giving some idea of the financial operations in which his firm was engaged under his leadership. During this period it became one of the two most influential private international banking houses on the Western Hemisphere. It was characteristic of Mr. Schiff that as a banker his activities were all creative, looking to the development of the resources and the extension of the commerce of the United States. Hence, he was largely concerned in the financing of railway enterprises, recognizing that the prosperity of a great country depended, in large measure, upon the extent and efficiency of its transportation agencies.

He believed it important for America to bring the Atlantic and Pacific closer together, thus aiding in uniting the citizenship of the United States economically and politically. In 1897 he reorganized the Union Pacific Railroad which was described at the period as being "battered, bankrupt and decrepit"—an achievement of the first rank and constructive in the best sense.

Mr. Schiff had faith in his intuition of men, and being swift to recognize genius, gave his support to Edward H. Harriman. According to financial authorities the Harriman-Schiff railway combination became the most powerful, the most aggressive, and the most successful that America had ever known.

In like manner he was one of the first supporters and associates of James J. Hill, who, by the building of the Great Northern Railway, virtually became the founder of a vast empire in the Northwest. Mr. Schiff was for many years a director of the Great Northern, retiring only after a conflict of interest developed between it and the Union Pacific Railway. The operations of Kuhn, Loeb and Company as bankers for railways began with their association with the Chicago and Northwestern some fifty years back. One of their most important connections was with the Pennsylvania Railroad system which came especially to the notice of the general public under the presidency of A. J. Cassatt who dreamed the great dream of a tunnel under the Hudson and of a Railway Station in the City of New York commensurate with the importance of the great city. Kuhn, Loeb and Company succeeded in floating for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company large loans in this country and abroad. Two checks drawn to the order of the Company on February 17, 1915, for the amount of \$49,098,000, and on June 1, 1915, for \$62,075,000, which hang in modest frames in the offices of Kuhn, Loeb and Company, attest the magnitude of their loans.

Other railroads whose financial operations his firm aided were the Baltimore and Ohio, the Chesapeake and Ohio, the Delaware and Hudson, the Illinois Central and Southern Pacific. Of many of these railroads Mr. Schiff became a director, but his participation in large financial enterprises was by no means limited to them. He also financed a number of important industrial undertakings, such as the Westinghouse Electric Company, the U. S. Rubber Company, Armour and Company, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, and the Western Union Telegraph Company. He

served as a Director of the Western Union Telegraph Company, of the Equitable Life Assurance Society, of the National City Bank, of the Central Trust Company, American Railway Express Co., and of the Fifth Avenue Trust Company.

His advice was sought in these and many other enterprises because of his wide knowledge of affairs in America and Europe and of the sound conclusions he was able to draw from this knowledge. His confidence in the great trans-continental railways was heightened by his repeated journeys to the West and the South, so that he appreciated from personal observation the richness of our great national domain. He was alive to the fact that agriculture was the backbone of commerce, and once, when asked what the stock market indicated with regard to business possibilities of the season, said that he did not follow the stock market but rather the crop reports.

As to the correctness of his judgment, B. C. Forbes, a well-known financial writer, has declared, in speaking of him, that "Kuhn, Loeb & Co. have issued more good investments and fewer bad ones than any other banking concern in America."

The Japanese loan of 1904-5 which Mr. Schiff financed attracted world-wide attention, and had important consequences. In 1904 war broke out between Russia and Japan. Gold, Mr. Schiff said once, was not essential to the conduct of a war if the war was really a national effort—for the greater part of the cost of the war was borne by the people of the country who, if the war were popular, readily took the paper money which all governments put out to meet the greatly increased expenditures for military purposes. Gold was useful for stabilizing the paper issues and only necessary for purchases made abroad by the warring nations. He used emphatically to declare, long before it became the stock in trade

of a certain kind of propagandist, that the statement that bankers could make or prevent wars was a pure myth, and that nations went to war whenever they wanted to. When Japan requested a loan in waging what seemed at the beginning a very unequal war, Mr. Schiff welcomed the opportunity to undertake the financing of so much of the loan as was to be placed in America.

The Japanese Government and people have always been appreciative of this support, and have recognized his personal influence in securing it. In 1905 the Mikado conferred upon him the Second Order of the Sacred Treasure of Japan "in recognition of the services rendered by you in connection with the raising of the loans of the Imperial Government in the American and European markets."

On February 22, 1907, he undertook a journey to Japan accompanied by his constant companion Mrs. Schiff and a party of friends. Of this journey there exists a unique literary record in the form of a beautifully printed quarto on Japan paper and charmingly illustrated, bearing the title "Our Journey to Japan, by Jacob H. Schiff. Printed as a surprise to the Author January 10, 1907." The simple explanation of this rather unusual title-page is that Mrs. Schiff printed the letters which he sent home, and presented the volume to him on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday.

The volume contains a lively and intimate description of the stops of the party at Salt Lake City, San Francisco, and Honolulu, but naturally deals principally with Japan. Here is a part of the record:

"*Wednesday, March 28th* is the great gala day for me personally, the private audience with the Mikado being set for half past eleven o'clock, luncheon to be served right after the audi-

ence. I am told it is the first time that the Emperor has invited a foreign private citizen to a repast at the palace, heretofore only foreign Princes having been thus honored. . . . We are first shown into a large reception room, where we are received by Mr. Nagazaki, the Master of Ceremonies, who speaks English fluently, and who informs the Minister of Finance that the Emperor will receive me alone. He leaves us and returns shortly, stating to me that he has been commanded by his Majesty to invest me with the insignias of the Order of the Rising Sun, which the Emperor has graciously condescended to bestow upon me. Accordingly he divests me of the Star of the Second Order of the Sacred Treasure, which I had received the previous year, and replaces it by the two decorations, composing the second class of the Order of the Rising Sun. Thereupon I am taken through long halls into a smaller reception room, where the Emperor receives me standing. He is dressed in military house uniform (short jacket and Koppi), also wearing the Order of the Rising Sun and a number of medals. Mr. Nagazaki is at his side as interpreter. The Emperor extends his hand and bids me welcome to Japan, saying that he has heard of the important assistance I have given the nation at a critical time, and that he is pleased to have an opportunity to thank me in person for it. I reply that I feel my services have been over-estimated, but from the start my associates and I, believing in the righteousness of the cause of Japan, when we had the opportunity practically to prove our sympathy gladly embraced it."

There follows a description of the luncheon and of other festivities, notably the report of a speech made at a dinner by Mr. Bakatani, the Finance Minister, who, characterizing Mr. and Mrs. Schiff and their party as "the most distinguished



guests that we have ever had from the United States of America," recites the details of the aid Mr. Schiff had rendered to Japan. He said that when Japan was undertaking, in London in the spring of 1904, to negotiate a loan of ten million pounds and was finding difficulty in securing the amount "Mr. Schiff in a single conversation with Mr. Takahashi offered to underwrite single-handed a half of what we wanted." He concluded with the statement: "The amount of our loan subscribed by Mr. Schiff from the first to the fifth issue arrives at a grand total of £39,250,000." After the Russo-Japanese War was ended the firm of Kuhn, Loeb & Co. placed a large issue of City of Tokio Bonds, the only Far Eastern municipal loan ever taken in the United States. So recently as in June, 1921, the Japanese consul attended the opening of a Parkway in New York named in his memory "Schiff Parkway," while the Japanese Commissioner on his way from London to Tokio laid a wreath upon his grave.

Besides the Japanese loan, he financed loans for other foreign governments such as Sweden, Argentine, Cuba, Mexico, and China. Prior to the World War his firm had important transactions with the Central Powers. In 1900 in conjunction with The National City Bank they issued 80,000,000 marks of German Treasury Notes and in 1912 in association with The National City Bank and Kidder, Peabody & Co., \$25,000,000 of Austrian Treasury Notes.

Mr. Schiff on numerous occasions refused to participate in Russian loans and used his great influence to prevent the entry of Russia into the money markets of America, solely because of the ill-treatment of the Jews by the Russian Government. On various occasions, when Russia was pressed for funds, offers

were made to him by agents of the Russian Government to relax the restrictions upon the Jews in a particular province in exchange for a loan of fifty million dollars. Mr. Schiff invariably rejected such advances, declining to buy better treatment for a section of his coreligionists.

While not chronologically in place, there may yet be a certain orderliness in discussing here Mr. Schiff's attitude to the World War. Its outbreak filled his heart with anguish. He was the only member of his family who had migrated to America. Two of his brothers and his sister had remained at the ancestral home, while his other brother was established in London. During the war his near relatives were fighting in the armies of three countries in Europe, on opposing sides. Mr. Schiff was an American of the intensity which we sometimes witness in men who have migrated here. The natural born citizen frequently takes his citizenship as a matter of course. For the naturalized citizen it often becomes almost a sacrament. Lack of complete harmony with American ideals and aspirations was unthinkable to Mr. Schiff. Yet Germany was the land of his birth. He had many ties of affection and friendship there, and he beheld the conflict with horror. He hoped for a speedy peace and to that end urged a peace without victory, and, affrighted at the danger to civilization by the civil war of the white races in Europe, desired America to act as a neutral mediator.

From the very beginning of the war he realized the disaster to the world in a German victory. He recognized the iniquity of the German Government, and stood firmly with the American attitude toward submarine warfare. None was more bitter than he in denunciation of German outrages but,

like Mr. Wilson, he felt that there was a difference between the German Government and the German people.

Mr. Schiff maintained relations with individuals in Germany until the entrance of the United States in the war in April, 1917, but during the entire period of the World War, beginning with 1914, Kuhn, Loeb and Company did no financing directly or indirectly for the German Government or its allies. On the other hand, they placed large loans for the French cities of Paris, Bordeaux, Lyons and Marseilles, which were issued primarily for humanitarian purposes. He was also willing that the firm of Kuhn, Loeb and Company participate in the Anglo-French loan of 1915 if none of the money were made available to Russia. This statement was issued by him on October 1, 1915, in regard to the loan :

“ With differing sympathies on the part of individual members of our firm, we decided at the outbreak of the war to refrain from financing public loans for any of the governments of the belligerent nations.

“ Concerning the present Anglo-French Dollar Loan, we have felt that as American bankers we should assist in what we believe will result in promoting the interest of the country's commerce and industries, but it not having been found practicable to give any actual assurances that the Government of Russia—against whose inhumanity the members of our firm have ever raised their voices—is not to derive benefit from the funds that are to be raised through the Anglo-French Loan, I have felt constrained to advise my firm to refrain from becoming participants in the Loan. ”

When the Czar's Government fell in 1917, Kuhn, Loeb and Company at once advised the allies' bankers that there was no longer any impediment to their participating in the

allied financing. He was in sympathy with the Kerensky Government, and evinced this by a subscription of one million rubles to the loan issued by that Government which, for the time being, at least, is valueless. He sent congratulations to Professor Miliukoff, and received from him a cordial reply. He hoped for great things from this Government which he thought would establish a constitutional régime in Russia. It is needless to say that he was bitterly opposed to the Soviet Government and to all of its doctrines.

He participated largely in the Liberty Loans and in all efforts on their behalf, advised our Government in financial matters, and by word and act invited many another to patriotic effort—in fact did all that an American who had reached his seventieth year could do.

During his long life in America he took his duties as a citizen with great seriousness. In national politics he was a Republican, and supported that party. In 1913, however, he gave his vote to Mr. Wilson, aided his campaign, and supported him for his second term. Although personally very fond of Mr. Roosevelt and his supporter in state and national politics, when he represented the Republican party, Mr. Schiff did not approve of the Progressive schism, and never supported that party in either national or state politics. It was his intention, had he lived, to vote for Mr. Harding in 1920.

In the City of New York he was a strong adherent of movements to get municipal affairs out of the hands of machine politicians, and took a prominent and active part in all public efforts to that end. He was a member of the Committee of Seventy in 1898, of the Committee of Fifteen in 1902 and of the Committee of Nine in 1905.

## III

To many it was as the philanthropist—the man who not only loved his fellow-men but translated his creed into action that Mr. Schiff was most widely known. His method of giving unasked might be illustrated by many examples. One will suffice. In 1886 the Reverend Doctor Sabato Morais of Philadelphia decided to establish a Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. In the new institution a library was required and the securing of what then seemed a large sum (though it would now be insignificant) for the purpose was undertaken. Mr. Schiff had not been asked to participate. One day he wrote that he had heard of the enterprise, that if the entire sum had not been collected, he would like to contribute, and that at all events he always regarded it as a privilege to aid in the advancement of Hebrew learning and wished to be given the opportunity to take part whenever such projects were proposed.

From 1886 to 1901 Mr. Schiff contributed to the support of the Seminary as he did many other institutions. In the latter year, however, he realized that both for the conservation of Judaism as well as for the promotion of Hebrew learning in America it was necessary to place the Seminary upon a better financial and scholastic basis. Taking the lead as usual, with a few others, he established an endowment fund of \$500,000 to which he was the largest individual contributor. He purchased a piece of ground and erected a substantial fire-proof building, entirely at his own expense, and bought two valuable collections—those of Steinschneider and Kautzsch—for the library. On the occasion of his seventieth birthday he gave \$100,000 to the Seminary on the condition that the income should be used to increase the salaries of the faculty, and he

bequeathed \$100,000 to it in his will. Added to these large gifts, he made annual contributions to its various funds. He attended every meeting of its Board of Directors and Executive Committee, except when he was out of the country, was present at practically all the student dinners, dedicated their House, and attended and spoke at the Commencements, and in general showed the liveliest interest in the welfare of the Institution.

With Doctor Solomon Schechter he formed a firm friendship. These two strong natures, at the outset of their relationship, occasionally clashed, but they were both big men, and their differences ended in a laugh, Mr. Schiff saying: "We are both Cohanim (priests), and the priests traditionally have high tempers." With Professor Friedlaender, too, Mr. Schiff had formed friendly relations. The former's tragic death was a severe blow to him. When the news came in July, 1920, Mr. Schiff was already seriously ill. But all his thoughts were of the great loss the Seminary and Jewish scholarship had suffered and of grief and pity for the bereft widow and children. It required almost physical force to prevent him from going to the meeting held in memory of Professor Friedlaender on September 9, though Mr. Schiff's own final summons came but two weeks later.

In 1911 he created, in connection with the Seminary and the Hebrew Union College at Cincinnati, a fund for the support of two Teachers Institutes, one of them east and the other west of the Allegheny mountains. He so strongly recognized the need of proper teachers for Jewish religious schools that he came to regard these teachers institutes of equal if not superior importance to the rabbinical seminaries, though he

considered both essential and close co-operation between them of primary importance.

This opinion resulted in an incident very characteristic both of Mr. Schiff's temperament and of his bigness of character. In 1904 Dr. Schechter inaugurated the course for teachers at the Seminary Building on West 123rd Street. The classes were held in the evenings, and seemed to languish. After an experiment of three or four years Dr. Schechter became convinced that the Seminary was situated too far from the neighborhood in which nearly all of the students lived, to make night courses successful. Accordingly the question was broached of their being held elsewhere. Mr. Adolphus S. Solomons, the senior member of the Board of Directors, introduced a resolution providing for the removal of the Teachers Institute to a locality further down-town, which would be more accessible to the students. Mr. Schiff opposed the resolution. He considered it bad administration, tending to weaken both establishments, and rendering proper supervision of the Institute by the head of the Seminary impossible. His arguments were vigorously combated. Mr. Schiff had, as has been said, the priestly high temper, and replied with the statement that he regarded this resolution as so dangerous that if it were adopted, much as he loved the Seminary and close as it was to his heart, he would feel constrained to resign from the Board. The resolution to remove the Institute from the Seminary building was adopted by an overwhelming majority. Mr. Schiff left the meeting room deeply chagrined.

His associates felt that he would not continue on the Board of Directors. He appeared, however, at the next meeting of the Executive Committee held a fortnight thereafter, and without in any way referring to the previous occurrence, at

the close of the meeting arose, stated his conviction of the great need for the training of Jewish religious teachers, and announced his intention to create a special Trust Fund to this end to which he at once contributed \$100,000.

This story is characteristic of traits of Mr. Schiff, which were noticeable especially in his earlier years; a quickness of temper, a momentary insistence upon his own judgment, and a willingness to recognize upon reflection that he had been hasty, to accept the views of his fellow-fiduciaries and to make ample amends. Within a very few years, at about his sixtieth year, he mellowed greatly. The flashes of temper disappeared, and he in turn exhorted others not to be hasty and at all times to be patient.

But the Seminary was not the only Jewish institution of learning to which Mr. Schiff gave his interest and support, and since he aided institutions which represent different shades of Jewish religious belief and practice, it may be fitting at this place to endeavor to give some idea of his point of view with regard to Judaism. He had been reared in the rigid school of Frankfort Orthodoxy, of which Sampson Raphael Hirsch was the leader. Upon his arrival in America, he became a member of the Reform Synagogue, and so remained during all his life. He was attracted to this form of Judaism by a number of circumstances, but the one he mentioned most frequently was that it satisfied the religious cravings of those who could no longer adhere to the ancient rabbinical religion, and thus averted conversion to Christianity. He frequently asserted that had Reform Judaism regularly existed in Germany at the time of Moses Mendelssohn, his family and others like them would not have been lost to Judaism. There were, however, curious lapses in Mr. Schiff's adherence to the Reform Synagogue, and



he frequently said that no Jew could be a good Reform Jew unless he had once been an Orthodox Jew. In the discussions connected with the reorganization of the Seminary he expressed his notion of its policy as an adherence to "reasonable" orthodoxy, a phrase which offended some but which nevertheless was not devoid of theological value. He strictly abstained from all secular occupation on the Sabbaths and festivals, and always visited the synagogue on Saturday mornings. On Friday evening, before dinner, he read the services to his family, and that evening was his family evening. The Seder services at Passover were always a great occasion, never to be forgotten no matter what the circumstances. In his letters from Japan he gives this interesting note:

*"Monday, April 9th.* We return to the hotel and because of the weather stay indoors, preparing for the holiday which begins this evening. Thoughtful friend Neustadt has brought 'Matzoth' from San Francisco—we should hardly have been able to procure any in Tokio, as there appear to be no co-religionists here—and as the evening arrives we give the 'Seder' in our apartments, probably the first time this has been done in the capital of the Mikado. Mother has prepared the festive table just like at home—nothing is missing for the ceremonies—and with the entire party around the table, we read the 'Hagada.' Ernest [his nephew Ernest Schiff of London] reading the youngest child's part ('Ma Nishtano'). Thus in a homelike way we celebrate the old festival in distant lands." As late as April, 1920, showing that this event never lost its importance for him, he wrote: "We had eighteen at Seder which passed off quite pleasantly and I hope so did your own celebration."

The Hanukkah lights were lit not only in his own house, but he went to the houses of his children and was present at the lighting of them for his children and grandchildren, one of his dearest wishes being the transmission of these traditions to his descendants.

The Day of Atonement was a real day of fasting and prayer to him, and on the very last one of his life, Wednesday, September 22 (he died on the 25th) he fasted the entire day, read the services through with his family (not feeling able to go to the synagogue), and experienced the greatest satisfaction at having been able to get through the day.

But it did not require that a Sabbath or New Moon or Holy Day should remind him of God and his religion. He was essentially a devout person. Every morning he read his prayers at the stated time. After meals he said grace. He did not eat forbidden food. He stood outside the gate of the cemetery at Dr. Schechter's funeral because of the laws of the priesthood. During his illness he wrote once: "I shall try now to get my sleep, nerve and energy back; with care and with God's help I hope to succeed, but in any event I have so long a stretch of good health and happiness to my credit that I should have naught but gratitude to the Almighty."

This digression makes it unnecessary further to explain Mr. Schiff's interest in Jewish religious education of all kinds, even if the institution were not in exact accord with his own views. Frequently he quoted the sentence: "Would that all the Lord's people were prophets."

He was a generous supporter of the Hebrew Union College, making gifts to its Endowment Fund, its Building Fund, and in other ways indicating his interest in its progress. He attended the dedication of its new buildings, maintained an

affectionate relationship with its venerable president, Dr. Kohler, and made a large gift to the Pension Fund of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Shortly before his death the College conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Hebrew Letters.

The Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, better known as the Yeshibah of New York, also claimed his aid. In 1905 he hoped to bring about a useful modification in the policy of the Yeshibah, and at the same time co-ordinate its work with that of the Seminary. A conference was called by him to this end, and an agreement was entered into conditioned upon which he granted his assistance. Much to his regret, this understanding was not carried out.

Secondary education he recognized not only as intrinsically important but essential for the institutions of higher learning which he so greatly prized. And so it was that he interested himself in the Bureau of Education of the New York Kehillah, to which he became a generous contributor and whose activities he followed with unflagging concern. He likewise was a liberal patron of the Up-Town Talmud Torah, and of many similar establishments.

He had a good knowledge of Jewish literature and a deep interest in its diffusion. Prior to the establishment of the Jewish Publication Society of America he would occasionally aid an author to publish a work by guaranteeing its cost to the publishing firm. He had a plan in mind to set aside a sum of money to create a Fund for this purpose, when the project for a Publication Society began to take shape. He was abroad in 1888 when the meeting which organized the Society was held. He cabled his greetings and five thousand dollars. Although never in any way associated with the management of

this Society, he remained its steadfast friend, and through his interest and generosity enabled it to make the preparations for several important contributions to Jewish literature.

He was a constant reader of the Bible, and strongly favored the idea of a new English translation by Jewish scholars. In 1908 he presented the sum of \$50,000 to the Society to enable it to carry out this undertaking, and its successful completion was a source of great happiness to him. The first copy on India paper, elegantly bound, was presented to him with a suitable inscription.

That he was permitted to have the merit of having done this pleased him greatly, and he used to read from this copy to his grandchildren, though for his own study he went back to a familiar Hebrew edition with a German translation and commentaries.

A dinner was given to celebrate the completion of the manuscript of this translation, and at it he announced his intention to make further provision for the publication of Jewish literature, both in the original and translation. For this purpose he gave another Fund of \$50,000 for the publication, in text and translation, of a selection of the Jewish Classics. This work was delayed by the World War, but it may be expected that not many years will elapse before this Series—a further monument to his interest in Jewish learning and literature—will begin to appear. Not content with these gifts, he also gave to the Publication Society one-half of the sum necessary to create a press for the printing of Hebrew works which is now approaching completion.

The *Jewish Encyclopedia*, a monumental work which, in spite of shortcomings, has been of great service in the spread

of Jewish knowledge, was undertaken by the publishers as a purely business enterprise without a clear appreciation of the great cost and labor involved. After the first volume appeared the discontinuance of the work was threatened. Mr. Schiff had not favored the undertaking, believing that the time was not ripe nor the plans well matured. At the invitation of Isidor Straus, however, he attended a small conference, and, fearing that the honor of American Jewry would suffer if this widely-advertised work should remain a torso, he became one of a number to aid in rendering its completion possible.

He realized that the library of the Seminary in New York was designed for scholars and, situated as it was on the Heights beyond Columbia University, was far from the center of Jewish population. He knew, too, that the search after Jewish lore was unquenchable in the Jewish soul and that many a merchant or mechanic or news-boy might, by reason of the Jewish tragedy which forced the great migration from Russia to America, be a student or even a scholar. To render books accessible to these and to professional men living in the center of the city he made possible the establishment of the very excellent Jewish Department of the New York Public Library, which is probably the most largely used Jewish collection in the world.

In 1911 Mr. Herbert Putnam, the librarian of Congress, approached Mr. Schiff with a view to securing a considerable Jewish library which was then offered for sale. After consultation and consideration he agreed to make this gift to the National Library with the understanding that a competent Semitic scholar would be placed in charge of the collection and that funds would be provided for its growth and upkeep. By this arrangement an important nucleus for a Jewish library

was established at Washington which bids fair to develop steadily and provide opportunity for the ever-increasing number of students who resort to the National Capitol. Under the generous system of inter-library loans this collection is also made available to students all over the country.

Much earlier than some of these enterprises in behalf of Jewish and Semitic learning was Mr. Schiff's interest in that department of study at Harvard University. Through family connections he became attracted to that ancient American seat of learning. Both of his brothers-in-law were Harvard men—Morris Loeb, a distinguished chemist, who unhappily died in his early prime, and James Loeb well known for his collections of Greek antiquities, the publications describing them, and particularly for the Loeb Classical Library that remarkable production, originally designed to cover in text and translation the entire Greek and Latin literature from Homer till the fall of Constantinople in 1453, of which some two hundred volumes have already appeared. Mr. Schiff was also strongly drawn by the great personality of President Charles Eliot, with whom he formed a lasting friendship. When he was invited in 1889 to act as a member of the advisory committee on the Semitic department of Harvard University he readily acquiesced. Among his most notable acts was the establishment of the Semitic Museum at Harvard. A number of gentlemen had made gifts for this purpose, but at Mr. Schiff's request they were withdrawn in order that he might have the pleasure of erecting the building and providing for the collection himself. It was also due to his generosity that Harvard was enabled to send an expedition to Samaria, which uncovered that interesting site, and secured inscriptions

which have proved important for a knowledge of the early life of Israel and for Semitic epigraphy. Incidentally these activities brought him into close and affectionate relations with Professor David G. Lyon, the well-known Assyriologist who is curator of the Museum.

But his interest in higher education was by no means confined to Semitic learning. He was one of the early friends of Barnard College, an institution for the education of women connected with Columbia University. With Seth Low, its president and sometime mayor of New York, he had intimate relations, both political and personal. For a number of years he was treasurer of Barnard College and to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of his arrival in America he made a gift of a large sum to that institution for the erection of a recreation hall for the students. It is significant that in this act he not only aided the cause of higher education but marked his recognition of the opportunities which America had afforded him by a gift which would be useful to students of all creeds and which was a token that all America and not a mere section of it was embraced within his noble heart.

In 1898 he founded the Schiff Fellowship in Political Economy in Columbia University.

In 1912 he made a gift of \$100,000 to Cornell University to aid in the promotion of Germanic studies, and during the World War he withdrew the implied limitation upon the purpose to which the fund was to be devoted so that it might be applied to the furtherance of the study of any modern language or literature. He was a contributor to the funds of Johns Hopkins University and of other institutions of learning. He also aided in the establishment of the University of Frankfort his native town.

## IV

Charity in its large sense—the doing of deeds of goodness and mercy—Mr. Schiff was devoted to both as a Jew and a humanitarian. It was his rigid rule to give at least his tithe to the poor. He was, however, a strong believer in organized charity, either as expressed through institutions or carried on by an individual based upon inquiry and investigation—and through all his acts of loving kindness ran the feeling that as God had blessed him with plenty, it was but right and just that he should share it with those less fortunate.

Of the numerous charities in which he was interested, to none did he give the attention which he lavished on the Montefiore Home and Hospital. This institution, established on the one hundredth birthday of that great Jew, Sir Moses Montefiore, was created at the suggestion of Adolphus S. Solomons in 1884. Mr. Schiff was elected president in 1885, and held that office for thirty-five years. He saw it grow from a small home for chronic invalids to one of the greatest hospitals in the country, supporting over eight hundred beds, with a great medical staff, laboratories for research, and a modern plant, complete in all of its appointments. Much of this extraordinary achievement was due to his own efforts or to his personal gifts. He was familiar with every detail of the management of this model hospital and knew personally all but the transient patients. Besides attending numerous board and committee meetings he visited this hospital every Sunday morning, spending the entire morning and allowing no other call or engagement to take him away from this duty. He rarely wrote a letter about the Montefiore Home or made a reference to it without speaking of it as his “labor of love.” In



July, 1920, one Sunday morning, when already ill, he came in from the country to make his customary and last inspection and to chat with the older patients. The splendid pavilion which he provided was just approaching completion and he was happy to think that he had been able to create this additional instrument for the alleviation of human suffering. It was always a cause of satisfaction and pride on his part that this institution was conducted strictly according to the Jewish law, and that it contained a dignified and charming synagogue.

The Henry Street Settlement was another work of mercy and justice which had a strong hold on his heart and mind. This institution, under the inspiring leadership of Miss Lillian Wald, not only performed the function of a settlement in a congested neighborhood but also established and spread the idea of district visiting nurses. In illness the nurse has always been, even in the days before training was known, an agency as potent in the care of the sick as the physician. All know what the modern trained nurse has meant to the hospital and to the home. But what of the ailing poor? To bring this indispensable relief to the home of the needy was the admirable conception of Miss Wald, and for its realization she found Mr. Schiff, with others of his family and many friends, devoted champions. It was not simply the work but the atmosphere of the place from which it was conducted that exalted his spirit so that he not infrequently made pilgrimages to Henry Street, and ate his evening meal in that abode of high thinking and good cheer. But his interest in the visiting nurse was not confined to one institution. He gave a fund for rural district nursing, so badly needed, being carried on under the auspices of the American Red Cross of whose New York County Chapter he was for many years treasurer.

At the time of the Kishineff massacre, without organization of any kind and with the help of but a few friends, he brought together throughout the United States a vast sum for the victims of that atrocity.

When the World War broke out in 1914, the first call for help from the Jewish population of the affected zone was a request for \$50,000 received from Mr. Morgenthau, then Ambassador at Constantinople, for the Jews of Palestine. To meet this request the American Jewish Committee voted \$25,000, and Mr. Schiff personally offered to give \$12,500 (the first of many larger gifts), if the provisional Zionist Committee would give a like amount. The condition was met, and there was thus begun the great work of the Jewish War Relief Committees, which, through the centralized agency of the Joint Distribution Committee, under the devoted leadership of Mr. Schiff's son-in-law, Felix M. Warburg, has distributed nearly forty million dollars.

Into the work of these collecting and distributing agencies Mr. Schiff, though then nearly seventy years of age, entered with great ardor. He attended meetings, large and small, organized dinners, headed drives, wrote and telegraphed, gave largely himself, in fact did everything in his power to alleviate the dreadful sufferings which the war brought in greater measure upon the Jews of Eastern Europe than upon any other section of stricken humanity, with the possible exception of the Armenians.

And these labors were being carried on alongside of equally strenuous work for the Red Cross and the various war work agencies, to all of which Mr. Schiff devoted himself with enthusiasm. He took a particular interest in the Jewish Welfare Board, constituted of various national Jewish organizations, to

contribute their share to the welfare of the American soldiers and sailors and particularly to provide for the religious needs of those of the Jewish faith, an organization, to the work of which his son, Mortimer L. Schiff, greatly contributed. Yet he was not unmindful of the good work of other creeds. He made large contributions to the war work of the Young Mens' Christian Association, the Knights of Columbus, and the Salvation Army. American patriot that he was, it was the men in uniform whom he was eager to serve irrespective of their creed.

## V

But Mr. Schiff was not content to limit his labors on behalf of his coreligionists to the promotion of a religious life and the alleviation of their sufferings. He had imbibed the atmosphere of American liberty and equality. He knew that in the North American Colonies Jews had been granted British citizenship long before it was accorded them in the mother country. He remembered the words of Washington spoken to the Jewish congregation of Newport: "It is no longer toleration that is spoken of," and whenever he saw the oppression of his people, his righteous indignation impelled him to some sort of action—for to think of something meant with him that action should follow.

Mr. Schiff had for years been acquainted with the misery of his brethren in the Russia of the Czars. Like most Jews of the Western world he had in his earlier days known little about the Jews in Russia. In spite of the supposed solidarity of the Jewish people, there was but little contact between the Jews of the West and the East and even less knowledge the one of the other. Graetz, the great historian of the Jews, whose

monumental work was finished in 1886, practically ignored the Jews of Russia.

The increase in the hostility of czaristic Russia to its Jewish subjects, which began in 1881 evidenced by innumerable restrictive laws and regulations, added to in 1890, and followed by that horror the "pogrom," government-instituted massacres and looting of the Jews, gradually brought about a forced migration of hundreds of thousands of Jews from Russia to America. By reports and more still by actual contact with the refugees the facts became known to Jews in America, and Mr. Schiff was stirred to the depths of his being by the misery and suffering that his coreligionists—veritable martyrs to the faith—were enduring. For, be it understood, that, in spite of all statements that economic and racial questions were at the bottom of these persecutions, the waters of baptism into the Greek-Orthodox Church could always wash away economic or racial disabilities. Nor was it only the Jews who were suffering in those days. The Catholics of Poland and the Protestants (few in number though they were), in fact all dissenters from the Greek-Orthodox Church were under the harrow. There was thus presented a thoroughly cruel, illiberal, mediæval régime from which modern man had no hope.

If one wishes to have confirmation of the truth of the beliefs held by Mr. Schiff and others as to the policy of the Czar's Government towards the Jews, it can be found in the published Memoirs of Count Witte who held the important offices of Minister of Finance and Prime Minister to the Czar.

Mr. Schiff felt that the big questions connected with the condition of the Jews in Russia and Roumania and their immigration into the United States required drastic action. Sometimes he took it after consultation with others and some-

times without. Occasionally his indignation and burning zeal outran his discretion. On one occasion he seriously proposed to President Roosevelt that the United States should intervene in Russia as it had in Cuba! Again he asked Mr. Roosevelt to send a representative to the conference at Algeciras, called in 1906 to consider a settlement of affairs in Morocco, with instructions to labor for the securing of the rights of citizenship for the large number of Jews in that country. President Roosevelt did appoint Mr. Henry White, and thus took part in an International European conference in which no American interest was involved.

Mr. Schiff soon came to feel, however, that no individual should act on his own responsibility in such momentous affairs. There had been formed between New York and Philadelphia a small social group known as the Wanderers—a Saturday night supper club. This company was a variegated one. It included several lawyers, bankers, literary men, scientific men, Jewish scholars, journalists, a painter and an architect. These men smoked and talked, as such a group naturally would, about every subject under the sun; but largely under the influence of Jewish conditions in Russia and particularly of the brutal outrage at Kishineff, they came to the conclusion that an organization should be brought together calculated to help secure human rights for the Jews in Russia and in other lands where they were denied.

Moreover there was one grievance which the Jews of America had on their own account—one which they felt to be the single blot upon their American citizenship. In the days before the World War the passport was for American citizens traveling abroad an amiable formality, and the visa—the bugbear of these latter years was practically unknown, except in

the case of two countries—neither of which had reached the standards of Western civilization—Russia and Turkey. In theory the passport is a letter of credence given to a national of a country proceeding abroad and invoking courtesy on the part of the country or countries which he proposes to visit. There is no obligation in international law except as required by treaty provision for one country to receive a national of any other country. The old rule that everyone not a Greek<sup>a</sup> was a barbarian still held in theory. But in practice and as the result of travel and commerce this idea had been modified, and in many cases treaties had actually been made granting the nationals of the contracting parties mutual right of travel in the respective countries. Between Russia and the United States such a treaty had been entered into in 1832.

But Russia held that this treaty did not apply to American citizens of the Jewish faith and the Russian consuls in the United States interrogated every person applying for a visa as to his religion. If the religion was given as Jewish the visa was withheld. Incidentally it should be said that the same discourtesy was extended to Roman Catholic priests and Protestant missionaries.

It was to discuss and solve questions like these that Mr. Schiff joined with others in the formation, in 1906, of an organization known as the American Jewish Committee, to which he devoted much time and attention and in whose work he was always active.

As many misstatements have been made about the passport question and the abrogation of the treaty of 1832 with Russia, and propagandists have put a sinister interpretation upon it, it may be said without qualification that the attempt to secure a proper observance of the treaty of 1832 on the basis of equal

rights of all American citizens under it, had been recognized as the duty of every American President and Secretary of State for forty years. Every diplomatic expedient had been tried, and the Czar's Government had always answered by delays or evasions or the "appointment of a commission to examine into the whole Jewish question."

In a letter to Count Witte, when the latter was leaving America after the Portsmouth conference, in 1905, President Roosevelt urged that the Czar's Government straighten out the passport question and remove the only possible cause of irritation between the United States and Russia. Count Witte says that he gave this letter to the Czar in person, but for five years no action was taken.

At the close of President Roosevelt's administration, the American Jewish Committee brought the subject to the attention of President Taft, who endeavored to solve it by diplomatic measures with the same lack of success as had fallen to the lot of his predecessors.

Thereupon the proposal was made that since Russia was, in fact, and had been for many years, actually violating the treaty by maintaining that under its terms she had the right to discriminate between the nationals of the United States, and in pursuance of that right to conduct an inquisition into their religious beliefs on American soil, steps should be taken to abrogate this treaty. This proposal was laid before President Taft at a conference at which Senator Knox (then Secretary of State) and W. W. Rockhill (then Ambassador to St. Petersburg), Mr. Schiff, and several others were present. Mr. Schiff was treated with great honor on that occasion, which really reflected the respect in which he was held. The President, with the insistence of the Secretary of State, gave Mr.

Schiff the precedence at his right, and for two hours the subject was discussed. Some time later President Taft gave a luncheon for a number of Jewish gentlemen, and told them in effect that our Government could do nothing. As the party left the White House, one of the company said: "Alas, we are in exile," but Mr. Schiff said "this means a fight." An appeal was made to the American people and later to Congress and finally notice of the abrogation of the treaty was given by President Taft after a resolution to that effect had passed the House of Representatives with one dissenting vote and Members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations had informed the President that it would pass the Senate unanimously.

Mr. Schiff attended the hearing on this subject before the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives at a full session. The classic presentation of the subject by Judge Mayer Sulzberger and the masterly legal argument of Mr. Louis Marshall, lasting for three hours, in which he met all questions and all comers with answers based on international and constitutional law, treaties, and precedents, greatly impressed Mr. Schiff, and when he was called upon to speak he said that he had nothing to add to their presentation, but that he had a request to make. "I know," he said, "you gentlemen are going to pass this resolution. All I ask is that you make it unanimous." And they did. This was the shortest and most effective speech a man could make.

His profound gratification at the course of events he expressed a few days later in a letter in which he wrote: "The action of the House has been most gratifying and I agree with you that we may now expect equal action on the part of the Senate. It is all like a dream and I little thought when I



said to the President last February after he had turned us down, 'this question will not down, Mr. President, we had hoped that you would see that justice be done us, but you have decided otherwise; we shall now go to the American people' that the latter would be so readily aroused, and that action on their part would be so prompt and so effectual. Louis Marshall has outdone himself all through and to him more than to anybody else is due what we have accomplished."

This incident is narrated rather fully to show what part Mr. Schiff had in it and the motive which actuated him and his colleagues. It was in no sense an international action, and was dictated by the determination to clear away the last vestige of governmental discrimination against the Jews in America on the part of a foreign government and to secure recognition of the inviolability of the American passport in the hands of all of its citizens without distinction of creed. The benefits of this action would have accrued equally to Catholic priests and Protestant missionaries. It was in effect the greatest act of justice to the Jews ever undertaken by a great State and heartened the Jews of Russia in their misery.

## VI

Palestine—the Holy Land—has always loomed large in the hearts and minds of the Jewish people. The poets sang of Zion and the people daily prayed for their restoration to the land of their fathers. Mr. Schiff had joined that wing of the Synagogue in which the prayer for the restoration had been eliminated, and the mission of Israel was held to be the bringing of the knowledge of the one true God to all the peoples of all the lands in which Israel was dispersed. But there were several strains of Judaism woven into the texture of his soul,

and none chanted more fervently than he: "For out of Zion shall go forth the Torah and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

When the modern Zionist movement was organized by Theodor Herzl in 1897, Mr. Schiff, like many Jews, Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform, kept aloof from it. The absence of any distinctly religious pronouncement in the Basle platform, the presence and the leadership of a number of non-religious Jews, and the secular nationalist implications of the movement offended him, and he vigorously expressed the opinion in public and in private that his sympathies were with Jews by faith and not Jews by race.

Open-mindedness, however, was one of his most distinguishing traits, and he was attracted by the nobility and loftiness of the character of Theodor Herzl. The news of the death of that great man appeared in the press on a Sabbath morning. Mr. Schiff was very much saddened by the tidings. For many minutes he was silent, and then after expressing his grief, he related that the year previous he had made an appointment in Europe to meet Herzl, that the latter's health prevented the meeting, but that instead he had held a conference with one of Herzl's most trusted lieutenants, that Herzl's plans had been explained to him, and that to his regret he had been forced to the conclusion that they could not be carried out.

Meanwhile he was showing his interest in Palestine by aiding two projects—the Jewish Agricultural Experiment Station, planned by the late Aaron Aaronsohn, the discoverer of wild wheat, and the Hebrew Technical Institute at Haifa, originally begun by the Wissotzky family of Russia. To the latter institution he made large gifts, although he declined member-

ship on the governing boards of both. These institutions proved a great disappointment to him.

This interest in Palestine did not, however, modify his attitude toward political Zionism. When his friend Dr. Schechter joined the Zionist movement, in 1906, he engaged in a public discussion with him in the *New York Times* in which he expressed the opinion that Zionism was incompatible with American citizenship. A decade later he wrote: "It is quite evident that there is a serious break coming between those who wish to force the formation of a distinct Hebraic element in the United States, as distinct from those of us who desire to be American in attachment, thought and action and Jews because of our religion as well as cultural attainments of our people.

"I am quite convinced of it that the American people will not willingly permit the formation of a large separate Hebraic group with national aspirations, and that if not we, our posterity are to become sufferers in consequence."

With reference to the proposal that the Jews should seek representation as a nation in the Council of the League of Nations he wrote on August 29, 1920: "In view of what has been proposed by the Committee of Jewish Delegations in Paris, we can only pray, that God grant us protection against our friends and leave us to get on with our enemies as best we can."

As the war progressed and General Allenby captured Jerusalem, when the Russian Revolution indicated a break-up of the then great centers of Russian-Jewish learning, and the horrors of the Ukraine were super-added, Mr. Schiff began to despair for the future of Jewry in Eastern Europe. He adopted a more favorable view to the settlement of Jews in Pal-

estine, which he looked upon as a future center of Judaism and of Jewish culture. He made considerable contributions to various funds for the development of Palestine, and even offered to join the Zionist organization provided that upon the occasion of his being accepted as a member a statement which he had prepared would be published by the organization. The offer was declined, and Mr. Schiff lived and died outside of the Zionist camp.

The war period witnessed a great upheaval in Jewish life in America. One of its manifestations was the growth, under Zionist leadership, of a nationalist movement with the endeavor to capture or, failing this, to overthrow existing Jewish organizations which did not accept the new dogma. Mr. Schiff was one of those who initially strongly opposed these views. This fact and various remarks of his at meetings in 1916 made him the target for violent attacks in the Yiddish press and platform. He was greatly wounded by these attacks, and made a statement which has a dignity and pathos that reminds one of the words of Samuel after Saul was crowned :

“ I have lived for fifty-one years in New York. I am now almost at threescore and ten, and I believe ever since I have grown into manhood, there has not a day passed that I have not been seeking the good of my people.

“ Whosoever can assert that for the time he knows me, or who knows of me, I have ever denied myself to my people, have denied myself to their wants, have denied myself to any cause, that I have waited until Jewish problems have been brought to me instead of going after them in my desire to cooperate, that I have not given, not only of my means but day in and day out—and I may say night in and night out—have not given of myself, let him rise and accuse me.”

## VII

His last days were saddened by the appearance of an anti-Jewish agitation in the United States, the one country in which this mediæval monstrosity had never found a lodgement. He strongly urged the American Jewish Committee not to notice these scandalous attacks, and it was out of deference to his deeply expressed feeling and the pain which a contrary action would have given him during his illness that his colleagues, even at the risk of being misunderstood, delayed a reply. This suspension of judgment in a vital matter is a measure of the respect and affection which his long services and his personality inspired.

## VIII

This narration, it is hoped, has given the impression of a many-sided man of affairs and of good deeds always anxious to be of use to his fellow-men and of service to the public. But there were many other interests and incidents in his life deserving of at least a word. Convinced that a better distribution of immigration was desirable, he joined in a plan involving large expenditure and much trouble to land immigrants at the port of Galveston in Texas and arrange for their distribution through the South-west. He provided a building for the Young Men's Hebrew Association at 92nd Street and Lexington Avenue, in New York, and interested himself in the growth of similar organizations for men and women. He aided in the building of a large number of synagogues in small towns in the United States, always assuring himself by investigation that the local community was too small to bear the burden itself. He conducted a lively correspondence with Baron de Hirsch, and became one of the trustees of his foundation in America.

He was received in private audience by the king of England in 1904 and by the emperor of Germany in 1911. He served on the Board of Education of New York, and was vice-president of the Chamber of Commerce. In 1893 he anonymously gave a fund to Seth Low to enable students of Columbia University who did not possess the means to visit the Columbian Exposition at Chicago. He presented a model of the dinosaur in the American Museum of Natural History to the Natural History Society of Frankfort. He was chairman of the East Asiatic section of the American Museum of Natural History, provided the funds for an Ethnological Expedition to China, and made gifts to the Zoological Gardens in Bronx Park. He interested himself in the development of Cooper Union, and presented a fountain to Seward Park. He took part in the movement to create a park at 105th Street in memory of Isidor and Ida Straus, whose heroic death at the sinking of the Titanic produced a profound impression, and presided at the dedication. He was for a number of years a member of the Board of Managers of the New York Zoological Society and of the Board of Directors of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

He was keenly interested in the education and development of the colored race, made a number of large contributions to Tuskegee and other colored institutions, and maintained a close friendship with Booker T. Washington and his successor, Major Moton.

His early association with the Jewish Prisoners' Aid Society developed his deep interest in the problem of delinquency, and led to his being one of the founders of the Jewish Protective and Aid Society, to which he gave a substantial portion of its original building fund. This Society now covers the

entire field of delinquency among the Jews of New York, both male and female, adult and juvenile. He was also very much interested in the work of the Prison Association of New York (non-sectarian under Protestant auspices), of which he was one of the vice-presidents at the time of his death.

He gave hearty support to the work of the Hebrew Free Loan Association, as he thoroughly believed in constructive rather than palliative assistance. With this same thought in mind, he founded the Self-Support and Self-Help Funds of the United Hebrew Charities, which he maintained single-handed by large annual contributions.

He earnestly advocated cooperation among those serving the sick, as evidenced by the Hospital Saturday and Sunday Association, on the Committee of which he served for many years.

## IX

The tale of good deeds is not to be numbered, and if this story is told aright there has been awakened an interest in the personality of the man himself.

On May 6, 1875, he married Theresa, the daughter of Solomon and Betty Loeb, people of great sweetness of life and disposition. Mrs. Loeb was very much interested in the development of music, and herself sent many students abroad to have their talents cultivated. The relationship of members of the family to the foundation of the Musical Arts Society is probably due to her influence. The first impulse toward Mr. Schiff's interest in the work of district nursing also came from Mrs. Loeb. To Mr. and Mrs. Schiff were born two children—Mortimer L. and Frieda. The former, a member of Kuhn, Loeb & Co. since 1900, was closely associated with his father

in his business and other activities, the latter married Felix M. Warburg, also now a member of the firm and distinguished for his philanthropic work. With Mrs. Schiff's parents, their brothers and sisters, and with their own children, and later grandchildren and great grandchildren, a wonderfully sweet domestic life grew up of which as the elders passed, Mr. Schiff became the centre. In the midst of modern surroundings he maintained a relationship with all the members of his family which may be fairly likened in its dignity and simplicity to that of the patriarchs.

Mr. Schiff was short of stature, of medium build and erect carriage. He had blue eyes capable of expressing compassion or indignation. He wore a beard which had laterly grown white and was always carefully dressed appropriately for every occasion. A flower usually graced his button-hole.

Promptness was a distinguishing trait. He was always on time for an engagement, and answered every letter on the day of its receipt. He exacted promptness in return. He hated waste, saved pieces of wrapping paper and string, and used them to pack up with his own hands the newspapers and magazines which he collected in his house and which daily he sent to various hospitals and prisons.

He was a moderate, even a frugal eater for the last twenty years of his life. His exercise in the city was walking; he always walked from his house at 78th Street to 59th Street and sometimes as far as 14th Street before taking the subway to his office. At Seabright, his country place, he bicycled every afternoon—even after he had attained his seventieth year. At Bar Harbor he took long walks, and did a bit of mountain-climbing up to the summer of 1919.



He enjoyed the opera and the theatre, and usually planned to have three evenings of entertainment in the week.

In his house on Fifth Avenue he had good pictures and good books, but was in no sense a collector of either, though he took pleasure in his collection of jade.

His place at Seabright which he enlarged and rebuilt was a great delight to him. The farm, the stock, the gardens, the walks, the splendid alley of trees which he planted he was fond of showing to his guests. His hospitality was delightful; every individual's tastes and peculiarities were studied and provided for. Early every morning he was in his gardens, and himself brought to each lady of the household a rose or some other flower of the season.

He remembered innumerable people's birthdays and wedding anniversaries by a gift, a note or a telegram; and when he sent a gift it was quite certain that he had personally made the selection.

If a friend visited New York he called or left a card, or if one were ill he promptly made a visit to show his solicitude and friendship. For all the nice attentions of life he always found time, in spite of exacting business and public duties.

He was accessible to all people on all subjects, though not easily persuaded when his mind was fixed.

He was frankly gratified at a friend's appreciation. On January 10, 1917, his seventieth birthday, he wrote: "May I say to you that I am deeply touched by your beautiful, if to some extent at least, unmerited appreciation of my life upon my attainment this day of the Biblical Age. God has blessed me so lavishly that had I done less in the years that are now behind me than it was my privilege to do-I should feel no respect for myself, but that I have gained the respect and good

will of men like you is certainly the highest reward I can wish for." Again he wrote: "I care very much for the good opinion and good will of my friends."

He was a loyal friend to many men in the business world—Harriman and Cassatt have been mentioned. General Wilson was a close and dear friend and a frequent companion, President Eliot has already been spoken of. A phrase in a letter from Abram S. Hewitt (Nov. 21, 1901) speaks volumes: "Among the friends whom I have made in the evening of my life no one has endeared himself to me by acts of courtesy and friendship more than yourself." Levi P. Morton, Jacob Riis, James J. Hill and many still among the living he numbered in this company and he greatly valued their good opinion. With Sir Ernest Cassel, whom he originally met in a business way, he formed an especially close friendship which many differences in life and opinions never marred and which was close and intimate in spite of the dividing ocean.

He was fond of travel—crossed the American continent five times, made twenty trips to Europe, visited Egypt, Palestine, and Algiers, and took long motor trips in America and Europe. When air travel was still in its infancy he made an ascent in a Zeppelin, and wrote notes from that conveyance to a number of friends. This was much for a man of his conservative nature to undertake, for he was fond of the old things, and his horses only slowly made way for the swifter motor.

He was earnest and impressive as a public speaker, had a fine sense of humor and skill in illustrating a point by an appropriate anecdote or to enforce it by means of a pungent witticism. He attended the annual meetings of the many organizations with which he was affiliated and expressed his personal appreciation of the manner in which the officers and

boards performed their duties. His encouragement and appreciation to all who performed a public service included those in the humblest circumstances. He hated injustice and frowned upon all conduct that savored of self-seeking, disloyalty and dishonorable practices. His standards were high yet he was charitable in his judgments. He mingled with men of every shade of thought and natives of all parts of the world. He showed great interest in the well-being of his fellow-men and evinced solicitude and affection toward his intimates.

He had a charming way with little children and made close friends among them.

He was averse to public attention and when he reached the age of seventy and many societies and innumerable admirers indicated the purpose to do him honor he slipped away from New York with his family to Atlantic City. Personal modesty was a distinguishing characteristic. He cared little for distinctions and social preferment held no charms for him, though he was sought after in many circles both for his qualities of heart and mind.

He was very democratic in his dealings with men. His office was always open, and he received innumerable visits at his home from all sorts and conditions of men for the discussion of all sorts of subjects. Yet he had the pride of noble antecedents—of a great family and of a people which had distinguished itself by giving to the world a sublime literature and many men of genius.

He prized the degree of Doctor of Commercial Science which was conferred upon him by New York University in 1916 in the following terms: "JACOB HENRY SCHIFF: In this land of your adoption you have won a place of acknowledged leadership in financial and commercial pursuits. For enterprise and

breadth of vision, for probity and worth, for the patronage of learning; for fidelity to the best traditions of your race and for altruistic service that transcends the boundaries of race and religion, New York University bestows upon you the degree of DOCTOR OF COMMERCIAL SCIENCE and directs that your name be added to the roll of her Alumni."

About this he wrote (Jan. 12, 1916): "I have before this been offered similar honors but no degree, to which I could not claim some justification to receive has attracted me. The D. C. S. was not exposed to this exception and I therefore thought I might accept it."

His health began to fail in the winter of 1920. At no time, however, was he bedridden. In April of that year he went to White Sulphur Springs, in the early summer to White Plains, and in the latter part of July to the White Mountains. Not regaining his strength or sleep, he came back to Seabright and occupied himself with reading, writing, and even going to New York to his office during the last week of his life. He resented help, and by the exercise of his indomitable will was up and about—the veritable Master of the House—until the actual day of his death when he took to his bed and passed away without a struggle, just as the Sabbath concluded.

He was indeed a great man who worthily played his part.

ISRAEL FRIEDLAENDER  
A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

BY JACOB KOHN

When news of Professor Friedlaender's tragic death in the service of his people burst upon the Jewish world, the whole of Israel shuddered. The baffled heart instinctively uttered the old protest at thought of the scholar's martyrdom: "*Zo Torah wezo sekarah,*" and felt itself doubly bereft in that a lover of his people as well as one of its sages had passed away. Prof. Friedlaender had never been a cloistered scholar, but one whose activity was manifest in many lands of the dispersion and in many spheres of Jewish life and endeavor. In him the scholar and the worker were nobly blended.

He was born in Poland, September 6, 1876, and grew to manhood dowered with the intense Jewish consciousness characteristic of Eastern Jewry and immersed in that sea of Jewish lore and learning which was the breath of its life. In 1896, however, he went to Germany, where larger intellectual vistas opened before him and where the Jewish scholarship he already possessed could be properly clarified and disciplined. He at once entered Berlin University and the Rabbiner Seminar, at which he remained a student till the year 1900. The following year he received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Strasbourg, and in 1902 was conspicuously honored by an appointment as *Privatdocent* in the Department of Semitic Languages.

The companions of his student days in Germany bear testimony to the influence he exerted by his personality, his schol-

arship, his facility of speech and pen, and his profound sympathy and understanding of Jewish psychology. In the days when Zionist enthusiasm was gripping the hearts of university students and causing in many a young Jewish soul a complete revolution, away from a strident pseudo-Teutonism or a lackadaisical cosmopolitanism toward a fervid Jewish nationalism, a man like Friedlaender naturally became the centre of an admiring circle. At this time also he began his career as a translator, in the desire to interpret some of the Jewish thinkers of Eastern Europe, especially Dubnow and Ahad Ha'am, to the youths who seemed so eager and ready for their doctrines. He was anxious to place into the hands of the *Verein der Jüdischer Studenten*, whose members showed no little skill with the duellist's rapier, the shining sword of the Jewish spirit. To this end he himself inaugurated several courses in Hebrew and Jewish history, and his efforts bore fruit in the decision of the Society which required a minimum of Jewish study as a qualification for membership.

In 1903 Prof. Schechter invited Dr. Friedlaender to occupy the chair in Biblical Literature and Exegesis at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Thereafter, America became the immediate scene of his work and activity. Europe, however, had still one important contribution to make to his life. On September 26, 1905, he married Miss Lillian Bentwich of London, England. Her tender devotion, her deep understanding and sympathy for his work and aspirations, and her power of self-effacement helped to smooth the difficult path of his labor, and made possible his final brave sacrifice.

Prof. Friedlaender was never able to rest quietly in academic isolation. His vivid interest in Jewish affairs, his well-developed communal conscience, impelled him to answer the

need for men of light and leading so clearly manifest in Jewish life on all sides. A mere list of the movements and institutions with which he was intimately connected suffices to show his keen sense of public duty as well as the main directions in which his interest lay. His paramount concern was Jewish education. He was himself an able teacher in practice and anxious for the development of a right pedagogic system in Jewish schools. But quite apart from his personal contribution to the cause of Jewish education, he gave himself wholeheartedly to the upbuilding of Jewish educational institutions, whether devoted to higher learning or to the less ambitious but more fundamental task of popular instruction. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Educational Alliance. He was chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Bureau of Education of the New York Kehillah, which his influence had helped to call into being and which his energies had helped to guide and develop. The Jewish Publication Society was quick to enlist his aid on its publication committee. His own contributions, his expert advice, his sound literary judgment and his general good taste went to enrich the Society's output.

The influence which Prof. Friedlaender exerted in academic circles in his student days was paralleled by his influence among American students in the days of his maturity. His heart remained tender toward the Jewish youth and especially toward those elements among the Jewish youth which he regarded as the possible torch-bearers of Jewish culture. He was a member of the governing board of the Intercollegiate Menorah Society, high in the councils of the Intercollegiate Zionist Association, and first president of Young Judæa.

Prof. Friedlaender did not permit his preoccupation with Jewish organizations to blind him to the larger problem of

Jewish organization. His participation in the Kehillah movement as an active member of its executive committee, the part he played on the American Jewish Committee and the rôle of conciliator which he assumed during the Congress agitation, and the interest he took in organizing the American Jewish Congress, show his realization of the needs and his faith in the possibility of a united American Jewry. He was not discouraged by the fact that the course of events proved none of these organizations to be in possession of the complete formula for the realization of such union. The dogma of the unity of Israel was for him beyond dispute, and he was convinced that the proper organic expression of this unity would one day be found for Israel as a whole as well as for the various Jewries of the Diaspora. This larger unity of Israel he felt to be bound up with the Zionist movement. He was always to be found at the heart and center of Zionist endeavor in America. He was for many years a member of the National Executive Committee of the Federation of American Zionists, and later served on the Provisional Committee for Zionist Affairs when the exigencies of the Great War and the temporary disintegration of European Zionism called that body into being.

The influence of Prof. Friedlaender at public gatherings was a remarkable one. His catholic interest in all the important phases of Jewish life in America made him a familiar figure at Jewish meetings. This familiarity, however, so far from breeding contempt, gave birth to a genuine love only equalled by the respect felt for him by every element of the heterogeneous composite of Jewish life. He spoke and wrote, with equal facility and almost equal felicity of expression, Hebrew, German, and English, and knew Russian and Yid-



dish; but—what was more important—understood the complex psychology of Jewry as well as the varieties of its speech. He could evaluate and interpret the aspirations of Russian, German, and American Jews. His own personality had been moulded under the influence of all three. Besides, he was almost equally at ease before a learned body, at after-dinner speaking, or when addressing turbulent Jewish masses at meetings and conventions. His method of address was always quiet and soothing in tone and rich in the graceful use of the *mashal* in many varieties, ancient and modern. When a debate became stormy and beyond control, a word from Prof. Friedlaender would be sure to receive the respectful attention of contending factions and to radiate light in an atmosphere which had hitherto been all heat.

It is difficult to realize that, amidst this profusion of public activity, Prof. Friedlaender continued to live the life of the teacher and the scholar. At the Seminary he taught and expounded the literature of the Bible, and gave courses in the history of the Canon in the various phases of biblical history and archæology. In addition, he read with his students the mediæval Jewish philosophers, a branch of Jewish scholarship which, though not within the scope of his Seminary speciality, had been assigned to him by virtue of his wide acquaintance with Arabic literature in general and Jewish-Arabic texts in particular.

To his task as teacher he brought, besides the treasure of his learning, certain talents recognizable, in part, in his printed lectures and essays, but particularly noticeable in the class-room. He had a gift for popular exposition. One could detect the graceful essayist and the pleasant conversationalist behind the lecturer. The illustrations were always apt and

plentiful. As an exegete and critic, he took great pains to assemble all the divergent views on any point, but did not fail to distinguish those views which were based on an interpretation of philological, historical or archæological fact from those which were merely the expression of literary taste and predilection. His own sensitiveness to style and to literary harmonies and discords and his many interesting deductions based on these feelings did not blind him to their subjectivity either in himself or in others. He thus helped his students to evolve sound canons of criticism.

In teaching the mediæval Jewish philosophers, his wide acquaintance with philosophic literature, both ancient and modern, stood him in good stead. It was, however, his thorough knowledge of Arabic philology and Muhammedan theology and philosophy which proved most helpful to his students. The introductory lectures in these courses concerned themselves chiefly with related tendencies in Islam. The Hebrew translations of the works of Maimonides, Judah ha-Levi, and others are often difficult because of the many Arabisms with which they are laden, and the printed texts are often corrupt. Prof. Friedlaender's students soon learned that when they came to a difficult tangle in the Hebrew text, the thing to do was not to indulge in weird philosophic subtleties and to search for profound and hidden depths, but to await the simple Arabic key which would solve the mystery and which Prof. Friedlaender would be sure to have in his possession. Several of his pupils were stimulated to study Arabic; others, including the writer, continued to look to their professor as the "revealer of mysteries."

Prof. Friedlaender's interest in his students, however, was not confined to the stated hours for instruction. His pupils

had but to express a wish for some branch of Jewish knowledge, not included in the curriculum, to be sure of his services. For several years he taught Arabic voluntarily to small groups interested in that branch of Semitics, and, on the other hand, many a young man born in this country caught his first glimpse of the fresh green fields of modern Hebrew literature under the guidance of Prof. Friedlaender. The Hebrew prose of Ahad Ha'am was the usual vehicle employed for this introduction, and the reading and elucidation of the text became the occasion for prolonged discussions on the themes of the essays, discussions which continued through the late afternoon and into the darkening day. On those occasions Prof. Friedlaender was not so much the teacher as the disciple, and his enthusiasm, as it communicated itself to his pupils, blotted out the flight of time.

Prof. Friedlaender's contribution in the field of pure scholarship dealt for the most part with Arabic literature, but his main human interest reveals itself in his choice of those subjects which betray Jewish influence or influenced Jewish development. His training in Semitics, which included, besides Hebrew and Arabic, Syriac, Ethiopic, and Assyrian, was achieved under the guidance of that eminent master, Prof. Nöldeke, for whom his brilliant pupil always cherished the highest love and reverence.\* Among these Arabic studies mention may be made first of the inaugural address delivered by Prof. Friedlaender at Strasbourg on his

\* Prof. Marx, in an article in *The Maccabean* (August, 1920), calls attention to the hasidic veneration in which Prof. Friedlaender held his teachers, those within as well as those without the class-room. Prof. Nöldeke always remained one of his chosen saints.

appointment as *Privatdocent*. It was entitled "The Messianic Idea in Islam." Fortunately, this lecture was subsequently translated into English by Prof. Friedlaender himself and included in his collected writings. A work of larger scope, including, however, the matter dealt with in the inaugural lecture, was the book *The Heterodoxies of the Shiites according to Ibn Hazm* (Reprint from the Journal of the American Oriental Society, volumes 28 and 29), New Haven, 1909. The founder of the Shiite sect, in whose beliefs and traditions Prof. Friedlaender found so many traces of Jewish Messianism, was, according to the Arabic sources themselves, a Jew from Southern Arabia. It was of this Jew and the problems connected with his life and origin that Prof. Friedlaender wrote under the title "Abdallah b. Saba, der Begründer der Schi'a und sein jüdischer Ursprung" in volumes 23 and 24 (1909-10) of the *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*. A third book dealing with a hero of Muhammedan folk-lore, the prophet Al-Khadhir, also points to the connection between these folk-tales and the Messianic legends current in Jewish circles. It is entitled *Die Chadhirlegende und der Alexanderroman* (Leipsic, 1913).

There was also a series of Jewish-Arabic studies published by Prof. Friedlaender which ran through the first three volumes of the *Jewish Quarterly Review* (New Series). He likewise edited certain Genizah texts of Maimonides and other Judeo-Arabic authorities. The first scientific work of Prof. Friedlaender, however, was his thesis for the Doctorate, entitled *Der Sprachgebrauch des Maimonides*, which is an Arabic-German glossary of rare words used by Maimonides. In his introduction Prof. Friedlaender vindicates the purity of Maimonides' Arabic style. Certain extracts from the gram-

matical material which Prof. Friedlaender had collected in connection with this work, but which had never been completely edited and published, can be found in the introduction to his *Selections from the Arabic Writings of Maimonides*, in the Semitic Study Series (1909). A number of Arabic responsa by Maimonides appeared in several periodicals; but much valuable textual material which Prof. Friedlaender had collected for the Schechter Series, and on which he was at work at the time of his death, has not yet been made public.

In line with these latter studies, though popularly written in the graceful and flowing style which was his as essayist and lecturer, are the lectures on "Maimonides," the first of which was delivered at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Dec. 28, 1904, on the occasion of the seven-hundredth anniversary of the death of Maimonides; "Maimonides as an Exegete," delivered as one of a series of lectures at the summer meeting of the University Extension movement, Cambridge, England, Aug. 14, 1906; "Maimonides as a Master of Style," published originally in German, Leipsic, 1908. All three of these are included in *Past and Present*, and are therefore easily accessible to the general reader.

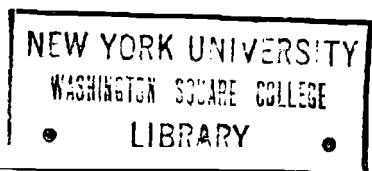
The influence which Prof. Friedlaender exerted on Jewish life, however, is not due primarily to his achievements in historical research. As essayist, publicist, and translator he enriched and refreshed the intellectual atmosphere of modern Jewry. Attention has already been called to the desire which manifested itself in his student days to interpret for the benefit of his western contemporaries those writers in eastern Europe who had particularly influenced his own thinking. His first attempt in this direction was an edition of Dubnow's *Die Jüdische Geschichte*, which he translated from the

Russian into German two years after his arrival in Berlin. In 1905 he translated *Grundlage des Nationalen Judentums* by the same author. A work much more ambitious but one which was also prompted not so much by an abstract historical interest as by the desire that the western world, Jewish and Gentile, should become better acquainted with the rich and varied life of eastern Jewry was the translation into English of Dubnow's *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland*. This translation was done largely from the author's manuscript, in part during the years of the Great War when mails were uncertain and the transmission of manuscripts, especially in Russia, was viewed with suspicion and subject to much delay. The painstaking labor required and the exasperating tedium of the long and anxious waits failed to discourage the translator only because he was convinced of the need of the work and because he had entered upon it as a labor of love.

This function of mediatorship between eastern and western Jewry Prof. Friedlaender exercised with warmest love and enthusiasm as an apostle of Ahad Ha'am. To the pupils with whom he read the collected essays of Ahad Ha'am he never failed to point out the importance of this essayist as a master of Hebrew prose, as the champion of cultural Zionism, and as one who not only understood the psychology of the Jewish people, but who, almost for the first time since the birth of the Haskalah, brought psychological rather than purely rationalistic criteria to bear on the interpretation of Jewish phenomena. As a teacher he could reach only a limited circle. He therefore published a collection of essays by Ahad Ha'am in a German translation. These essays were widely circulated, and several of them were in turn rendered into other languages.

In translating Dubnow's History, Prof. Friedlaender's motive was not solely admiration of the author's work or even the general desire to acquaint the western world with the story of so important a branch of the family of Israel. He was always keenly conscious of the significance of contemporaneous history, of the dire need created by present circumstances, and he never felt that the disinterested service of that need had other than a high claim upon the true scholar. That he was conscious of such service in the translation referred to is evident from these words in the preface: "The want of a work of this kind has long been keenly felt by those interested in Jewish life or Jewish letters, never more keenly than to-day when the world conflagration has thrown into ghastly relief the tragic plight of the largest Jewry of the Diaspora." His own heart, so keenly touched by this plight that it finally rendered up its life to ameliorate the woe, felt that to make the world understand the struggles of Russian and Poland Jewry, its age-long wrongs and its heroic endurance, would be the surest way to procure justice.

This keen awareness of the possibilities of post-war readjustment, this pervasive sensitiveness to the sufferings of his contemporaries in eastern Europe, led him also to hasten the publication of his own work, *The Jews of Russia and Poland: a Bird's-eye View of Their History and Culture* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1915), even while yet engaged in preparing the proofs of the fuller history by Dubnow. Dr. Friedlaender himself disclaims any attempt on his part to offer new and independent results of investigation (preface to Dubnow, p. 6). He says: "My natural reluctance to anticipate Mr. Dubnow's large work was overcome by the encouragement of several friends, among them Mr. Dubnow himself, who from their



knowledge of public affairs thought that a succinct, popular presentation of the destinies of the Jews in the eastern war area was a word in due season." This readable little history, in whose pages many an American Jew has caught his first view of the trend and spirit of Jewish history in eastern Europe, was based upon a course of lectures delivered at the Dropsie College in Philadelphia in March, 1915, and shows Prof. Friedlaender in the light of the popular historian and the inspired publicist, who knows how to speak the "word in due season" when the cause he loves requires a spokesman.

The book from which the average reader will best be able to judge Prof. Friedlaender's style, the wide range of his interest in Jewish life and thought, and his views on the great controversial questions which agitate the modern Jew is the collection of essays entitled *Past and Present*. The author explains the spirit of the volume very aptly in the preface: "While the diversity of subjects treated in this volume is undoubtedly due—as it is in every collection of essayists—to the personal equation of the author, representing the range of his literary and public interests, yet I venture to claim that the thoughtful reader will be able to detect the common bond which links all the essays together and transforms the apparently heterogeneous mass of material into one homogeneous whole. The volume is based upon the fundamental conception of Judaism as a living organism, which is one and indivisible at all times and climes; changing and yet unchanged; harking back to a great past and struggling in the midst of a harassing present towards a glorious future. That conception views Israel as a community in which the religious and the racial elements are inseparably intertwined with one another, in which the universal ideals and the national aspira-



tions form a harmonious combination—a combination which can be realized only through the untrammelled and unhindered development of the Jewish genius on a Jewish soil.”

These charming and stimulating essays in their variety of theme and treatment reveal the various aspects of the author's personality as well as his dominant point of view. Such essays as “The Political Ideals of the Prophets,” “The Prophet Jeremiah,” “The Messianic Idea in Islam,” and the essays dealing with Maimonides, are masterly expositions, graceful and intelligible, of scholarly themes. They reflect the gift which made Prof. Friedlaender a teacher in circles far wider than the class-room. “The Present Jewish Outlook in Russia,” “The Problem of Jewish Education in America,” “The Present Crisis in American Jewry,” and essays of a similar nature show another side of Prof. Friedlaender's spiritual nature, an aptness for dealing with a present situation, of analyzing the various factors in a problem close at hand which is seldom possessed by a mind devoted to abstract scholarship or to historical research. Even the suavity of the graceful essayist gives place to a certain fire, a polemical heat which only emphasizes the deftness of the writer in debate, in such essays as “Were Our Ancestors Capable of Self-Government?” or “A New Specimen of Modern Biblical Exegesis.” The author's own point of view is most clearly traceable in his discussion of “Race and Religion,” “Palestine and the Diaspora,” and similar themes. We might describe it, in view of what we have already said of the author's relation to Ahad Ha'am and Dubnow, as a synthetic view of Jewish nationalism containing elements of the “spiritual nationalism” of Dubnow, the cultural Zionism of Ahad Ha'am, and the political vision of Herzl—a true synthesis, not a mere

composite, made possible by a largeness of view and a sensitive historic consciousness.

The restoration of Zion did not, in Prof. Friedlaender's opinion, involve the abolition of the Diaspora. He realized that the bulk of the Jewish people would in all probability continue to dwell among the nations of the world. Hence the problems of the Diaspora were not to be thrust aside as belonging to the sphere of the temporary and the ephemeral. Dr. Friedlaender sums up his position in the phrase: "Zionism plus the Diaspora." In the midst of this wide-flung dispersion, he was convinced that the Jewry of America was to play a leading part. There is a hint of this point of view in the preface to *Past and Present*. "The author, moreover, thoroughly shares the view which is held and has frequently been expressed by many thinking Jews of Europe, that America is destined to become in the near future the leading Jewish center of the Diaspora and that it is the duty of American Jewry to live up to the great obligation placed upon it by history. . . . Zionism plus Diaspora, Palestine plus America—these formulæ express in a nutshell the leading thoughts of the present volume." The same thought is again alluded to in these words: "America has, in less than one generation, become the second largest center of the Jewish Diaspora, and bids fair to become the first, instead of the second, within another generation. No other country in the world offers, even approximately, such a favorable combination of opportunities for the development of a Diaspora Judaism, as does America; economic possibilities, vast and sparsely populated territories, freedom of action, liberty of conscience, equality of citizenship, appreciation of the fundamentals of Judaism, variety of population, excluding a rigidly nationalistic state policy,

and other similar factors" (p. 341). Indeed it might be said that the purpose of the essays in *Past and Present*, dealing with American conditions, is to arouse in the American Jew a realization of his spiritual opportunity and hence a sense of his spiritual obligation to Judaism and civilization.

Prof. Friedlaender was murdered by bandits in the Ukraine on July 5, 1920. He had left his wife and children and the safety of America to bring material relief and spiritual sympathy to his brothers in the turbulent, war-wrecked lands. He turned his back on Warsaw and the semi-security of Polish cities to hasten to the scene of direst distress. On the way, he and his companion, Dr. Cantor, were wantonly struck down.

To ask oneself what service Prof. Friedlaender might have rendered to his people, had he been spared to them—in that direction madness lies. The cause of higher Jewish learning, the needs of popular Jewish education in the Diaspora, the urgencies of the Palestine situation with its important Arabic element—all called to him, and all could have employed to their advantage his manifold gifts. Though his heart beat high with Israel's hope in the land of promise, he was willing to serve humbly to allay the agonies of the present amid the grim realities of the "wilderness of the nations." In his death the Jewry of America, the Jewry of the world, loses a teacher, an interpreter, a friend.

May the memory of the righteous be a blessing!

## ABRAM S. ISAACS

BY LEWIS M. ISAACS

Abram S. Isaacs was born in New York City on August 30, 1851, the youngest son of the Rev. Samuel M. Isaacs, who was one of the first Jewish Rabbis in this country to preach in English. His eldest brother was the late Judge Myer S. Isaacs, largely identified with Jewish affairs during his long and active career. Isaac S. Isaacs, also a prominent lawyer and a lifelong partner of Judge Isaacs, actively connected from its inception with the United Hebrew Charities of New York and other communal organizations, was another brother.

Dr. Isaacs received his education at the New York University, from which he was graduated, with highest honors, in 1871. Later he went abroad to complete his rabbinical studies at Breslau. Reared in a home where life and religion were inseparable, he was early imbued with that rare and fine appreciation of the underlying and essential tenets of his faith which so distinguished his sermons and writings in later years. Following in his father's footsteps he became a Rabbi and a teacher, filling for a number of years the pulpit at Barnett Memorial Temple at Paterson, New Jersey. For upwards of thirty-five years he occupied a chair at the New York University, first as Professor of Hebrew, then of Germanic languages, and later of Semitics; and at the time of his death he was the second oldest professor, in years of service, at the University. In 1878 he received from his Alma Mater the degree of Ph. D. *honoris causa*.

In addition to his work in the pulpit and University, Dr. Isaacs, from 1878, edited *The Jewish Messenger*, a weekly publication devoted to Jewish communal affairs, which had been founded in 1857 by his father and elder brothers, and wielded a genuine influence for good for almost fifty years. It became merged in *The American Hebrew* in 1903, at which time Dr. Isaacs withdrew from editorial work. During all these years he was a frequent contributor to the leading periodicals of the country, not only on phases of Judaism and Jewish problems, but also on topics of general literary interest. His first volume, *A Modern Hebrew Poet: The Life and Writings of Moses Chaim Luzzatto*, published in 1878, exhibited his extensive knowledge and power of expression.

Several books from his pen have been published by The Jewish Publication Society: *Step by Step* (1910), dealing with the life and time of Moses Mendelssohn; *The Young Champion* (1913), based on the life of Grace Aguilar; *Under the Sabbath Lamp*, a series of short stories on Jewish subjects (1919). At the time of his death a manuscript entitled *School Days in Our Home Town* and dealing in a charming way with episodes in his early life, during which his father conducted a Jewish school, was in the hands of the Society for publication. In addition, he published a volume of essays, *What is Judaism?* (Putnam, 1912), and *Stories from the Rabbis* (Bloch, 1894), which latter volume has passed through several editions. For both editions of the *Encyclopedia Americana* he edited the Semitic department. He was also a writer of simple and appealing verse. One of the best known of the hymns in the Union Hymnal ("A Noble Life, a Simple Faith") was from his pen.

In later years Dr. Isaacs added to his many other spheres of activity that of lecturer; and his simple, unaffected manner, combined with solid scholarship and interesting material, made him a prominent figure in this field. Among the subjects which he covered were "The Synagogue in Different Countries," "Holland and the Art of Joseph Israels," "The Child at School in Many Lands," "An Evening with Heine," and "The Art of Max Liebermann."

Dr. Isaacs died at Paterson, N. J., on December 22, 1920.

No more fitting tribute can be paid to Dr. Isaacs than the very beautiful letter written to his family, at the time of his demise, by the Rev. Dr. Samuel Schulman, on behalf of the Association of Reform Rabbis. The following is an extract therefrom: "He was not only the ideal priest and the active preacher of righteousness, but he maintained the noble tradition which his father, whose fragrant memory is a precious possession of the Jewish community of this city, bequeathed to him. For many years, he effectively influenced Judaism by his editorship of *The Jewish Messenger*. His predominant interests were intellectual, those of the scholar. He enriched our American Jewish literature by the books he wrote, which brought home the truths of our faith, with simplicity, but also with power, to the hearts of his readers. He combined loyalty to Judaism with broad culture, and he exemplified in his life this harmony of intensity of Jewish faith and catholicity of intellectual interests in the way he maintained his position in the academic world, by his professorship, for many years, in the New York University.

He rendered, as minister and as man, a fruitful service to American Judaism. And by his beautiful soul, he was its eloquent representative to the non-Jewish world. The heri-

tage of American Jewish life for the coming generation is enriched by the impress of his personality. He has left us a noble memorial of himself, as the faithful, modest, self-sacrificing Jewish scholar and gentleman. Bearing a distinguished family name, he has added lustre to it, by the high standards which he embodied in his own character and service."

# JEWISH AMERICANIZATION AGENCIES

BY CHARLES S. BERNHEIMER

## INTRODUCTORY

Within recent years serious students of social and political problems in American life have become interested in investigating the manner in which the numerous congeries of diverse nationalities are being welded into the American nation. These studies have applied particularly to the hundreds of thousands of immigrants who have arrived during the past quarter of a century. How and to what extent have these immigrants adapted themselves to those of the characteristics and ideals of the nation which are generally regarded as essentially national traits? Have they, in the process of adapting and adjusting themselves to new conditions in this country, added to these characteristics, so that they are able to point to a constructive program of helpfulness to later arrivals? We will endeavor to indicate the answers to these questions as respects the Jewish communities of the United States, in order to show to what extent the Jews of this country have recognized that they owe a duty toward their immigrant brethren and a responsibility toward the nation which has welcomed them.

In discussing the process of adaptation and adjustment generally called Americanization, it must be borne in mind that there is no single formula; that Americanism as an ideal or set of ideals does not necessarily correspond to all practices of



Americans, and that the immigrants themselves are constantly contributing towards the expansion and enrichment of the connotations of Americanism.

While Americanization has been defined as the process by which an alien acquires our language, citizenship, ideals, and an appreciation and love for American traits, the question may be raised as to whether true Americanism necessitates, on the part of the immigrant, the adoption of certain habits and customs, such as our method of preparing food, certain distinctive styles of clothing, and the like. While it is true that those who become Americans will want to conform in many of these matters, it may safely be said that the all-important thing is the adoption of the "spirit of America," and not mere outward conformity to certain habits and customs. It may even be said that although the English language is an important element, its acquirement is of itself not as vital as the attaining of the ideals of social welfare, righteousness, and justice which are the determining characteristics of the spirit of the nation. The newcomer must strive to obtain an appreciation of these ideals, and must at the same time endeavor to contribute towards their enrichment.

The history, ethics, and ideals of the Jews have made them peculiarly impressionable to American ideals, and have enabled them, from the very beginning of American history, to make important contributions in this direction. In an admirable study,<sup>1</sup> Oscar S. Straus, speaking of the Hebrew Commonwealth which preceded the establishment of the monarchy under Saul, says: "This scriptural model government which was democratic, . . . had a deep influence upon the founders

<sup>1</sup>The Origin of Republican Form of Government in the United States.

of our government and prepared the minds of the people, especially in the New England colonies, so that they not only longed for, but would not content themselves with any other form of government than that form which had the divine sanction, the government of the Hebrews under the Judges." In his volume on the spiritual life of the American people,<sup>3</sup> Dr. Stanton Coit devotes an entire chapter to the "Jews in America." He says that the Jews "see an astonishing likeness between that Moral Genius of their own race which they have worshipped and the Moral Genius that is revealing itself in American institutions and history."

That the Jew actually contributes to the ideals of America is attested by many students of immigrant nationalities. It is impossible, however, to go into this phase of the matter within the limits of this article, the purpose of which is to describe those Jewish agencies which are devoted to the Americanization of Jewish newcomers.

The most recent estimate of the Jewish population of the United States placed the number at about three million. It has been computed that about one-third of this number are foreign-born. The latter came to these shores because of religious persecution or economic oppression, and they required the assistance of their coreligionists already here, who responded with energy, intelligence, and good will. Immediately upon the arrival of considerable numbers of Jews from Russia, Roumania, and Austria-Hungary, in the eighties of the past century, many societies were organized for the aid of the immigrants. Organizations sprang up which first provided for the immediate material needs of the immigrant, as-

<sup>3</sup> The Soul of America.

sisted him in securing a livelihood, and aided him in adjusting himself to his new surroundings.

It is not necessary to enter here into the details of the work done by the various Jewish communities of the United States in the building up of organizations and societies for the social betterment of the immigrant Jewish population; nor is it the aim of this paper to show how leaders of the Jewish community have actively participated in the solution of problems relating to the settlement of immigrants of various nationalities in this country. The following pages will be confined to the description of the various types of Jewish institutions, educational, social, and religious, which have helped the Jewish immigrant to become a member of the American commonwealth.

Of the various kinds of organizations the educational agency has a far greater appeal to Jewish immigrants than the social, which helps rather to assimilate the adult immigrant indirectly through his children. "Of all immigrants," says John Daniels, "the Jews run most distinctly to educational organizations, in which, although social and recreational features are present, first place is given to immediate instruction through classes, text books, lectures and debates. In every Jewish neighborhood of any size educational societies which are really local in character spring up, usually in great profusion."<sup>3</sup>

Whatever movement has had in view the promotion of a wholesome social life in an atmosphere of Americanism, whether it be the community, social, or recreation center of the public educational system, the social settlement conducted

<sup>3</sup> America via the Neighborhood.

under private auspices, the Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association, or the Jewish community center, it has had an enthusiastic and satisfying response on the part of Jewish immigrants and their children, particularly Jewish young people. The clubs and classes, the lectures and forums, the gymnasiums, outings and camps, the neighborhood and civic gatherings, the entertainments, concerts, and dances, the music, art, dramatic, and cultural programs, and all the other features of neighborhood centers have met with great success in sections of the communities in which Jews reside. It has been recognized throughout the country that the activities of the social centers and settlements have received warmer response and enthusiasm from young Jews than from any one other element of our population; that Jewish young people have been a great factor in the organization and maintenance of young people's clubs and self-governing organizations; and that the social, literary, educational, and civic functions undertaken by these settlements and centers have been a potent force in placing thousands of Jewish young men and women in a wholesome environment.

#### EDUCATIONAL CENTERS

One of the earliest forces projected under Jewish auspices for assisting the Jewish immigrant in adapting himself to American conditions was the Educational Alliance of New York City. The Educational Alliance has been functioning for the last thirty years on the lower East Side of New York City, a section in which the Jewish immigrant population has always been a large element. Americanization has been the keynote of the Educational Alliance throughout its development. The late Isidor Straus, for many years president of

the Alliance, outlined the policy of the institution as follows: "We strive to help immigrants to understand American ideas—the dignity of American citizenship; to appreciate the American atmosphere of obedience to law and to recognize the rule of the majority." Similarly, Mr. Lee Kohns, vice-president of the Alliance, said: "Our aim is to Americanize without dejudaising the immigrant and his children."<sup>4</sup>

The Alliance, like several other Jewish organizations which assumed the responsibility of providing for the adaptation of large numbers of immigrants coming to the United States three and four decades ago, concentrated its attention on the work of educating foreigners. It helped to point the way to the public educational authorities as to means by which systematic education for foreigners could be established. The results achieved by the Educational Alliance and by similar organizations eventually led to the opening of classes for immigrants under public auspices. Referring to this matter, Mr. Kohns said: "We have been pioneers in the establishment of much that was subsequently relinquished to other organized agencies. Our method of teaching English to foreigners has been adopted by the Board of Education—as has been our evening class for immigrants. Our graded classes for immigrant children are now carried on in the municipal day schools. Our special summer evening classes in English for immigrants met a similar fate in being abandoned to the Board of Education, which now continues them throughout the year." The Alliance gave up many of its classes of "English to foreigners" when the Board of Education adopted

<sup>4</sup> Address before the Judæans, May 2, 1915, published in the *American Hebrew*, May 14, 1915.

the function of organizing such classes. It still continues, however, with classes in English and citizenship for those who especially need its assistance. It also conducts lectures in English and Yiddish, and maintains adult organizations, including a mothers' club and a mothers' forum. It is not necessary to go into detail as to the educational, social, physical, and religious activities which take place in this large institution. Mention should only be made of the motion pictures, the dramatic, musical, and social entertainments, often attended by more than five hundred persons at a time, the swarms on the roof garden, the attendance at the summer activities, the vacation camps, the large numbers of meetings, the clubs and other activities sponsored by the Alliance. It will be clearly seen that the Alliance is a large social institution functioning in the midst of a great Jewish population and that thousands upon thousands of this population have been influenced by its comprehensive activities.

Another outstanding organization promoting Americanization activities is the Chicago Hebrew Institute. The Institute's conception of its duty towards promoting Americanism is well exemplified by a survey it made in 1916-1917. Its purpose was to ascertain facts regarding approximately twelve hundred adult Jews of foreign birth who resided in the ward in which the Institute is located. The Institute organized a "Bureau of Civics and Citizenship" to advise and assist aliens to become naturalized citizens; and in connection therewith conducts lectures on American history and government. The Bureau has under its supervision a "New Citizens League" composed of men and women who have secured assistance from the Bureau. It is organized for the purpose of promoting civic welfare in the neighborhood. From the

Bureau radiate activities, meetings, lectures and celebrations—which assist in making the Institute an important element in the community in the process of Americanization. The Institute published a series of “news letters,” each with an illustration, one of which was entitled “A Citizenship Laboratory.” It said: “Do you know that your Institute is the only public or private agency giving regular daily instruction in citizenship, six times a week, fifty-two weeks a year? . . . that the Citizenship Department is the objective through which all other departments operate? . . . that thousands of men and women during the past years have been instructed in the English language four nights each week through the entire year? The Institute purposes that intelligent patriotism shall permeate every department of its activities.” Another “news letter,” entitled “3000 Children Sing the Star Spangled Banner,” described the activities of the Institute in the celebration of American holidays. The Institute is a Jewish cultural, educational and social agency with clubs, classes and activities of various kinds.

The Brooklyn Jewish community maintains a social center in Brownsville, a densely populated Jewish district. The Hebrew Educational Society performs a function in this district similar to that of the Educational Alliance on the lower East Side in Manhattan. Its work is naturally on a smaller scale. Like the Alliance, it was one of the pioneer organizations for the teaching of English, and the promotion of civic, educational and religious activities. It has for many years conducted classes in citizenship besides “English to foreigners” classes. It also provides lectures on political and social conditions of this country; it conducts a mothers’ club, which is a valuable means of acquainting foreign-born Jewish

mothers with conditions affecting their children, and aids them in meeting the problems that arise by reason of a difference of point of view between the parents who are influenced by old-world ideas, and their children who are affected by ideas of the new world. Like similar clubs it has been a vitalizing Americanizing influence in connection with the various campaigns and "drives" conducted during the World War.

In Philadelphia, the Hebrew Education Society has for many years been a center of educational and religious work among the immigrant Jewish population of that city. In its care for the welfare of thousands of Jewish immigrants year after year it occupies a deservedly distinguished place among the Americanizing agencies which welcomed the Jewish immigrants upon their arrival on our shores.

The Central Jewish Institute of New York City is a Jewish center which lays great stress on Jewish education and culture in its community work. It includes in its activities social and recreational provision, celebrates American historical, as well as Jewish, holidays, and fosters a genial neighborhood spirit which adjusts itself to American conditions as well as to the demands of Jewish community life.

There is at present a tendency on the part of Jewish congregations to establish Jewish "centers." The aim of these centers is to broaden the religious and educational activities of the congregations so as to provide social opportunities for the younger people. The club, the entertainment, the play, the dance, the gymnasium become features of these centers of synagogue and school extension. The Jewish Center of New York is the most prominent exponent of this type. Another center of similar character is the Institutional Synagogue of New York City, in which the synagogue is the basis of educa-



tional, social and community work, including lectures, meetings, and celebrations promotive of American ideals. Cleveland, Brooklyn and other communities have organized similar Jewish centers. Altogether, one can see a distinct movement, more particularly among congregations of Jewish conservative tendencies, toward developing social and cultural opportunities for young people.

#### SETTLEMENTS AND NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS

The Commission of Immigration of the State of New York, of which Mr. Louis Marshall was chairman, referring to settlements, institutional churches, educational associations, clubs, and recreation centers as "Forces of Assimilation," stated: "The settlements have devoted themselves to a large extent to interpreting the alien to the community at large. In the opinion of these friends of the alien, respect for his fine traditional qualities tends more rapidly to make of him a good American, and to understand the genius of our institutions than he would by attempts to instill American traditions and nothing else. Opportunities for service to the alien on the part of the organizations referred to are met by classes, lectures and clubs, but largely by personal association."<sup>6</sup>

The University Settlement of New York City, which has been a social factor on the lower East Side for over thirty-five years, may be cited as a pioneer in Americanization. It has always been under non-sectarian auspices, though its present headworker, several assistant headworkers, and some of its residents, as well as a number of its leaders of clubs and other

<sup>6</sup> Report of the Commission of Immigration of the State of New York, Albany, 1909.

activities, are Jews. It has exerted a valuable socializing influence among the Jews of the neighborhood. Large numbers of young men and women, sons and daughters of Jewish immigrants, have through its activities come into contact with Americanizing influences which their own homes could not offer. The Settlement has been their clubhouse, their gathering-place for dances, concerts, and entertainments, for holding debates and discussions on current topics, for attending educational and cultural lectures, for athletics, and for all the wholesome diversions which young men and women desire in the most critical period of their growth. The Settlement has published a number of studies relating to Jewish immigration and neighborhood problems.

Throughout her narrative telling of the manifold activities of the Henry Street Settlement, Miss Lillian D. Wald,<sup>9</sup> its projector and head, brings out the response of the Jewish people to its cultural, educational, civic, and social influences. Her narrative gives an interesting account of the participation of the Jewish youth of the neighborhood in the dramatic and musical activities of the Settlement which found an outlet in the Neighborhood Playhouse, opened in February, 1915.

The Jewish settlements are similar to those under non-sectarian auspices. There is usually a resident headworker with a small staff of assistants and a number of volunteer workers. The activities include clubs, classes, social and athletic functions, religious services, outings and camps, and contact with the people of the immediate neighborhood, thereby establishing a personal, neighborhood and community relationship.

Federation Settlement, located in the upper East Side of New York, includes as part of its civic work circles for the

<sup>9</sup> The House on Henry Street.

promotion of Americanism, lectures on citizenship, participation in the removal of neighborhood abuses, and the furthering of improvements in the immediate locality. Its educational program is outlined as follows: "It conducts classes in domestic arts, domestic science, music, drawing, dramatics, handicrafts, carpentry. It maintains a kindergarten and a library, and conducts classes in English to foreigners under the auspices of the Board of Education." There are also recreational, religious, philanthropic, and neighborhood programs. These are fairly typical of the Jewish settlements generally and of the sisterhoods conducted along settlement lines. The agencies under distinctly Jewish auspices in New York City are: Emanu El Brotherhood, Recreation Rooms and Settlement, Sisterhood of Spanish and Portuguese Synagogues, Stuyvesant Neighborhood House, Welcome House (part of the Hannah Lavanburg Home), Beth El Sisterhood, Emanu El Sisterhood, Henry Meinhard Memorial House, Temple Israel Sisterhood, and Bronx House. The settlements and the sisterhoods usually conduct "English to foreigners" classes. The organizations ordinarily maintain the rooms, and assist in securing pupils, while the Board of Education provides the instructors and supplies.

Each of these organizations usually includes a mothers' club. The Jewish mothers' club of the settlement and community center has been a potent means of Americanization. Here opportunity is given to discuss the problems of Jewish young people, to smooth the way for co-operation between parents and children, to point out to the parents the necessity for a tolerant attitude toward young people as they grow up amid conditions in this country quite different from those in the old country, and to point out to the young people that they

must not be too impatient of the lack of adaptation of their parents to conditions which are strange to them. The mothers' clubs were a factor in the various "drives" and campaigns incident to the recent war. They have been the medium of home economy, health, housing, and neighborhood improvement. The influence of these mothers' clubs naturally permeates that of their immediate neighborhoods so that they have had a most helpful Americanizing influence among the adult Jewish population.

The Neighborhood Center of Philadelphia is co-operating with other social agencies in an attempt to raise standards of social work in Philadelphia. The settlement includes among its activities classes in English and citizenship and in a number of educational, domestic science, art, and cultural subjects, as well as clubs for various age groups. The Kearney Community Center of Philadelphia is a non-sectarian social agency organized by a group of Jews. It utilizes a public school in a Jewish neighborhood of Philadelphia for social and recreation purposes, and is a pioneer of the public school community center plan in that city.

In addition to the Hebrew Institute, Chicago maintains the Jewish Educational Alliance; and in the newly developed section of Chicago, the Lawndale district, several centers have been organized by the community. Among these are the Lawndale Civic Center, Temple Judea Social Center, Herzl Community Center and Lawson Community Center. The last two mentioned have especially co-operated with public schools. The Maxwell Settlement was for a number of years a very active influence in the West Side section of Chicago. With the removal of the Jewish population to a very considerable extent from this section to the Lawndale District, the

Maxwell Settlement devoted part of its program to Lawndale until it gave up its activities.

In Cincinnati, the Jewish Settlement is responsible for having organized, nearly two decades ago, the first classes in that city in citizenship and in teaching English to foreigners. The Settlement has laid stress upon the use of Yiddish as a means of Americanization and has conducted lectures on American history and civics in Yiddish. It maintains a class in citizenship, graduation from which is accepted in the naturalization court in lieu of the usual examination. There are several classes in citizenship and in "English to foreigners" conducted by the Board of Education in public schools in the settlement neighborhood. The immigrant's co-operation has here been emphasized, and his ideas are frequently considered in connection with the Americanization activities.

The Jewish agencies of St. Louis have organized an Americanization Council of Jewish Agencies, one of whose functions is the establishment of classes for teaching English to the immigrant Jewish population. The Council has appointed an organizer, and maintains an office in furtherance of its plans. It co-operates with the public educational authorities, who are establishing the classes. One of the most noted of these Jewish agencies is the Jewish Educational and Charitable Association of St. Louis, which conducts a social settlement among other activities. In a study of "The Immigrant in St. Louis," Miss Ruth Crawford says: "By far the most complete and effective piece of social work being done for the immigrant in St. Louis radiates from the Jewish Alliance. Of course, the direct benefit is derived only by the Jewish immigrant; but, indirectly, as a community asset and

as an example of a consistently constructed program for immigrant betterment, its value cannot be overestimated.”<sup>7</sup>

In Detroit, the Board of Education opened night schools and special afternoon classes for women for the study of English. The attendance was very small, and there was little interest or enthusiasm. The United Jewish Charities, with an educational director of Americanization in charge, conducted a house to house survey explaining the purpose and value of attending these classes. It also arranged with the Board of Education to provide a special teacher to entertain the small children while the women attended the classes in English. This plan worked exceedingly well, and there was a marked increase in the attendance of the Jewish population in the night schools and afternoon classes for women. Upon the recommendation of the Jewish organization, additional classes have been opened in districts where none were held before. At present the only classes conducted in the city are those in the districts where immigrant Jews reside, all others having been closed on account of lack of attendance. In connection with these classes, mothers' clubs were organized, and by arrangement with the recreation commission, the children were entertained while the mothers attended the meetings.

The formal Americanization activities of the Council Educational Alliance of Cleveland, Ohio, include two mothers' English classes, a mothers' club with its own organized summer camp and outings, as well as lectures and a Red Cross home makers' class for mothers.

The Emanu El Sisterhood House of San Francisco, Cal., offers educational and recreational facilities as a neighborhood

<sup>7</sup> Studies in Social Economics, St. Louis School of Social Economy, 1916.

center, and provides residence to Jewish girls in need of homes. Its headworker co-operates with the Americanization activities of the Council of Jewish Women. There is also in San Francisco the San Bruno Settlement House which is a neighborhood center for a comparatively large population of Jews.

Among other Jewish centers in which Americanization, including classes in English and citizenship, is promoted are the Irene Kaufman Settlement of Pittsburgh, which recently celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary; the Jewish Sisterhood of Newark, N. J.; the Jewish Educational Alliance of Columbus, Ohio; the Jewish Educational League of Toledo, Ohio; the Jewish Educational Alliance of Baltimore, Md.; the Jewish Institute of Kansas City; the Abraham Lincoln Settlement of Milwaukee, Wis.; the Jewish Settlement of St. Joseph, Mo., the Jewish Educational Alliance of Atlanta, Ga.; and the Neighborhood House of Portland, Ore.

#### YOUNG PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATIONS

The Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association usually appeal to a group of older young men and women than the settlements, and reach a larger proportion of the more Americanized elements. Their function is to provide wholesome social, recreational, educational, and cultural opportunities in an American milieu. Some of them include in their programs formal classes in "English to foreigners." A large number of these organizations are affiliated with the Council of Young Men's Hebrew and Kindred Associations, which assists in the formulation of plans and programs. The total number of affiliated organizations is 342, of which 156

are Y. M. H. A.'s, 132 Y. W. H. A.'s, 17 Y. M. & Y. W. H. A.'s, and 37 community centers and communal organizations.

In connection with the oldest and largest Young Men's Hebrew Association of New York City the following, from an address of its president, Hon. Irving Lehman,<sup>8</sup> is indicative of Americanizing principles for which such an association stands: "All of these young men are sound Americans, eager to take part in civic affairs, and we try not so much to teach them as to give them an opportunity to learn for themselves the true meaning of democracy and of ordered liberty and especially the obligation of each citizen to bring to the service of our country the best that is in him and that, as Jews, they have received a precious heritage, a source of strength, that they must conserve for themselves and for their country."

The Young Women's Hebrew Association of New York City, the leading Jewish women's organization of its type throughout the country, houses a large number of working girls. The Association's work is similar to that of the men's associations, and includes lectures and classes relating to citizenship.

Among the inter-state and state federations of Young Men's Hebrew Associations, the New England Federation has more especially recognized the need of promoting naturalization and citizenship work.

#### THE JEWISH WELFARE BOARD

The Council of Young Men's Hebrew and Kindred Associations, organized as a national federating force, has become amalgamated with the Jewish Welfare Board, which now

<sup>8</sup> Delivered at the Annual Meeting, January 25, 1920.



combines the function of promoting soldier and sailor welfare work with the community work of Jewish centers in various cities throughout the country.

The Jewish Welfare Board stood shoulder to shoulder with the several organizations that assisted in the maintenance of the morale of the American soldier and sailor during the war. A number of national Jewish organizations affiliated with the Board in the promotion of its work. The Jewish Welfare Board aided the Jews and their fellow Americans in the army, in the navy and in the air service. Wherever specifically Jewish needs were to be met, the Board supplied them in religious, personal and community service. Wherever social, educational, and recreational needs were required, the Board assisted in furnishing them, irrespective of creed or nationality. The Board organized classes in English, inaugurated lectures in American history, civics, and social conditions, arranged for participation in patriotic celebrations, and aided men in the service in naturalization and citizenship. It shared, with the American Red Cross, the War Camp Community Service, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, the National Catholic War Council, the Salvation Army, and the American Library Association, together with the government's own educational, recreation and morale service, the responsibilities of providing welfare work for soldier and sailor. It is a sectarian agency recognized by the government as a means of promoting the efficiency of Americans of Jewish affiliation and of performing social service for the families of Jewish men who have been disabled or have fallen. It exemplifies Jewish service as a socializing and Americanizing influence.

## THE COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN

Of all the nation-wide Jewish organizations, the Council of Jewish Women has the most ramified activities along Americanization lines. The Council begins its activities in behalf of immigrants from the very moment of their landing on these shores. It has established a Department of Immigrant Aid, and through its representatives at the ports of entry, especially at Ellis Island, and through its field workers at the headquarters in New York City, the Department assists the Jewish immigrant girl to establish contact with the community in which she is to live.

The Council has 165 branches or sections in various parts of the country, and in Canada and Cuba. In each section there is an immigrant aid and Americanization committee whose functions include the organization of classes in English and civics. Over one hundred such classes, stimulated by the Council, were conducted during the past year. They were established at social centers and public schools, with the co-operation of private organizations and public educational authorities. Altogether over two thousand women in at least twenty-five cities were induced during the year to join "English to foreigners" classes. The Council has furthered the system of home teaching for mothers whose duties prevent them from attending school.

Through its several sections the Council is promoting the process of adjusting immigrant Jewish women and girls to the American environment. In New York City, the Council Home is maintained by the New York Section as a social center. Its Americanization activities include "English to foreigners" classes and an immigrant girls' club. The section's secretary for immigrant aid and the field workers have

their headquarters in New York City, and promote the work of naturalization, employment, and social adjustment. The Young Women's Hebrew Association of New Orleans is supported by the Council of that city. The Neighborhood House of Portland, Ore., is under the auspices of the Council. In San Francisco the Council has established a "Council Flat" where classes for mothers have been organized and where the resident teacher co-operates with neighborhood schools. In Los Angeles a home teacher has been appointed to teach alien mothers in their homes. In Nashville the Council took the lead in the organization of an Americanization Council in which are represented the various associations of the city. The Cincinnati organization, in co-operation with other agencies of that city, made a survey of Americanization activities. The Albany section is a member of the Americanization Council of that city.

The Council has also organized a notable piece of work in connection with Jewish women on farms. Classes and lectures in English, as well as in home care, home economics, hygiene, and sanitation have been arranged in the states of New York, Connecticut, New Jersey and Rhode Island for the benefit of Jewish women in the rural districts.

#### THE HEBREW SHELTERING AND IMMIGRANT AID SOCIETY

Complementary to the work of the Council of Jewish Women is that of the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society of America, which provides more particularly for men and their families. The report for 1919 says: "One of the objects for which the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society was founded is to facilitate the Americanization of Jewish immigrants." The Society has assisted thousands of

families in adapting themselves to their new environment. It meets immigrants on their arrival at the port, provides shelter and social aid for the homeless and friendless; it helps them to settle in their homes; it aids them in securing naturalization papers; it recruits them for its citizenship classes, maintained at its own headquarters in New York City and at other institutions in various cities; it provides lectures on American history and civics, celebration of legal holidays, and the holding of Americanization meetings. It maintains branches in Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, San Francisco, and Seattle. The 1920 report of the Boston Branch states: "We furnish, through the press and speakers, information on the industrial, agricultural, and commercial status of the New England states; we encourage newcomers to take advantage of all educational facilities and social activities which tend to promote their Americanization; we foster American ideals among the newcomers and instill in them, through a knowledge of American history and institutions, a true patriotism and love for their adopted country."

#### TRADE AND AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Prominent among the influences which have been potent in the Americanization of Jewish immigrants coming to this country from Russia, Roumania, and Austria-Hungary is the Baron de Hirsch Fund, which was established thirty years ago. At the outset of its career it fostered various local enterprises for the education of Jewish immigrants. It still subsidizes a few local organizations, but has gradually withdrawn from this field as organizations have gained sufficient strength to maintain themselves. The main activity of the fund has been the Americanization of the Jewish colonist or farmer. In

this connection mention should be made of its establishment of the Baron de Hirsch Agricultural School, formerly located at Woodbine, N. J., and now in process of establishment at Peekskill, N. Y. The education of immigrants has always been part of the program of the Baron de Hirsch Fund and its activities have made an impress upon thousands of immigrants. It fostered the Woodbine Colony, which is said to exemplify "the characteristically American qualities of self-reliance, self-help, and initiative," and, through the medium of its own neighborhood life, to have been "brought into essential union with the life of America."<sup>9</sup>

The Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society, organized in 1900, says in its report for 1920: "If Americanization is conceived to be broad enough to embrace all activities tending to elevate the standards of living, then the work of our Society in all its manifold phases is Americanization of the highest type."

Likewise, the National Farm School, at Doylestown, Pa. has, for nearly a quarter of a century, been active in the training and education of Jewish young men as scientific farmers and directors of agriculture, and has exerted a real Americanizing influence on the life of the Jewish community.

Reference should be made here to several local organizations in New York City which have been influential in trade, technical, and vocational education, and which have also exerted a socializing influence. These are: The Baron de Hirsch Trade School, maintained by the Baron de Hirsch Fund; the Clara de Hirsch Home for Working Girls; the Hebrew Technical Institute; the Hebrew Technical School for Girls.

<sup>9</sup> Daniels, *America via the Neighborhood*.

## OTHER NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Various other national organizations have been helpful in the work of Americanization. The Jewish Publication Society of America does the vital service of disseminating, through the medium of the English language, a knowledge of Jewish history, philosophy and literature. The American Jewish Historical Society, as its name indicates, promotes research with regard to Jews and their relation to American history and world historical events. The importance of the work of this society has won ready recognition on the part of Jews of America.

Throughout the country are to be found lodges of the Jewish fraternal orders, where the less Americanized and the more Americanized join hands in fellowship and mutual understanding. The lodge has been a medium through which immigrants have adapted themselves to the ways of this country; they have adopted its parliamentary usage and its methods of expression and decision; they have imbibed much of the spirit of America in the meetings of their organizations. As the younger immigrant or the son of the immigrant makes the club the place of his activities, so does the older immigrant use the lodge of his fraternal order. In an annual message to the convention of the Order Brith Abraham, Mr. Samuel Dorf, the Grand Master, says: "Our order has not been lacking in the work of Americanization of the foreign born who came within its fold. Our lodges have instilled in the minds and hearts of those who entered their portals the lessons of love of America, devotion to the stars and stripes, brotherly love of their fellowmen and patriotic duty to country." Notable Americanization work was accomplished by the Independent Order Free Sons of Israel during the war.

It organized a club house in New York City as a unit of the War Camp Community Service, provided for hospitals and camps, arranged concerts, Americanization meetings, and other functions of patriotic character, and made itself useful to men in service in numerous ways. The Independent Order of B'nai B'rith has established institutions and agencies of social service for the orphaned, the aged, the indigent, and has assisted in the promotion of "big brother" work among Jews. Its distinctively Americanization work has been the giving of lectures and the conducting of educational meetings in its several districts and among individual lodges throughout the country.

#### LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

Other significant factors in Americanizing influences are the labor organizations. The most conspicuous is the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, which has a very considerable membership of Jews. It has established an Educational Department, which provides for the educational and cultural welfare of its members. It conducts a Worker's University, and has secured the co-operation of the public educational authorities of New York City, Newark, N. J., Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Boston in the establishment of classes in English. The school buildings employed by the International are called Unity Centers. In New York City there are eight of these. A large place in the curriculum of these centers is devoted to the study of the English language; there are classes in English, of elementary, intermediate, advanced, and high school grades. The teachers are assigned by the evening school department of the Board of Education. At each Unity Center there is a recreation worker assigned by the Department of Community and Recreation Centers. The Union's Educa-

tional Department assembles all the members of a center to attend lectures on health and on economics, the organization providing the lecturers. In some of the cities these lectures are given at meeting-places of the Unions. The organization also provides its members with lectures on cultural subjects, and encourages their contact with educational and cultural movements by supplying reasonable means of access to concerts and theatres, and provisions for securing publications.

This movement, together with that of the United Labor Education Committee of New York, and similar movements in several other cities, is expressive of activities on the part of workers to stimulate their members toward cultural, educational, social, and civic knowledge, and is recognized as a helpful influence in the process of Americanization.

#### THE YIDDISH PRESS

It is no exaggeration to say that there are fully a million Jews in the United States who read exclusively the Yiddish press, and depend on it for information and enlightenment. The greater proportion of these do so under strict necessity because of insufficient familiarity with the English language. There are, however, thousands of fully Americanized Jews who prefer the Yiddish press to the English, or who read a Yiddish newspaper in addition to an English one, because it keeps them fully informed on Jewish affairs both in this country and abroad, and serves as a link binding them to their scattered brethren. The constant springing up of new Yiddish newspapers, trade journals, and literary reviews shows that there exists a sustained interest in the Yiddish press in this country.



It will be clear to the intelligent observer that the Yiddish press has fully realized its duty of inculcating in the heart of the Jewish immigrant a love for his new home, respect and reverence for its traditions and ideals, and ready obedience to its laws. It has constantly been urging the Jewish immigrant to study English, and has placed many facilities in his way. At the present moment several Yiddish papers are teaching English through their columns by a system of parallel readings in the two languages, under the direction of the well-known Jewish lexicographer, Dr. Alexander Harkavy. At various times the newspapers have carried on front-page campaigns, urging the Jewish immigrant to become a naturalized citizen, and have opened special naturalization bureaus to give the immigrant advice and information.

The Yiddish press is constantly striving to keep its readers informed of the passage of new laws and of the methods of government in general, maintaining special correspondents in Washington for this very purpose. One Yiddish newspaper has published a series of authoritative articles on civics, giving a lucid and at the same time accurate description of the various departments of the United States government. These articles were later reprinted in book form, and were sold at a very low cost to thousands of Jews. During the recent military draft every Yiddish newspaper in the United States opened a special bureau in charge of a legal authority to give the Jews of the district free assistance in the filling out of questionnaires, etc. Every Yiddish newspaper has on its staff a writer who is constantly occupied with answering queries with regard to the income tax, the new immigration ruling, etc. On the occasion of American holidays and historical celebrations, the Yiddish newspapers print editorials

and articles explaining in a popular style the significance of the event.

Without further enumeration of the various Americanization activities of the Yiddish press, it will be clear that it has been a potent force for good and has greatly aided the Jewish immigrant in adapting himself to his new environment and has endeavored to make of him a desirable citizen in his new land. The record of the Yiddish press in this respect is a strong argument against the theory that in order to become a good American citizen the immigrant must abandon his native tongue and customs.

#### CONCLUSION

We have presented essential ideals of Americanization to which the Jewish immigrant conforms. We have detailed activities affecting Jewish immigrants and their children by virtue of which they have been assisted in the process of being molded into the American nation.

We have seen that the Jew in this country brings and maintains ideals which make him a valuable element in the formation of the American nation. The Jew has organized educational, social, cultural, and religious activities which have been in accord with the best American traditions. Young Men's Hebrew Associations and Young Women's Hebrew Associations, social centers, settlements, and sisterhoods, technical, trade, and agricultural schools, organizations for the care, maintenance, and education of immigrants, agencies for their social advance, have been established with a view to the progress of the Jew in making himself a worthy part of the American people. Jewish philanthropic organizations, as

well as associations inaugurated by the beneficiaries themselves, such as the labor unions, have all had as an underlying basis the adaptation to American conditions. The organized efforts of Jews, by Jews, and for Jews have been a real force in Americanization and socialization. Their scope, breadth, and intensity have made their activities an important contribution to the elements of Americanization; they stand out as dominant factors assisting Jews to become members of the American community; they are a significant part of the social, cultural, and educational fabric of the American nation.