

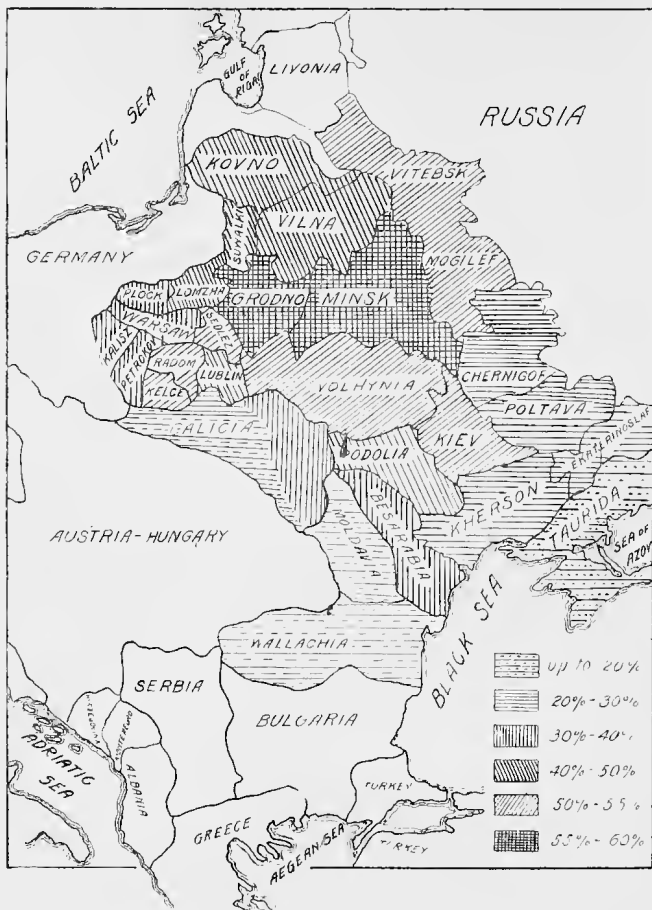
# THE JEW PAYS

A NARRATIVE OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF  
THE WAR TO THE JEWS OF EASTERN  
EUROPE, AND OF THE MANNER IN  
WHICH AMERICANS HAVE AT-  
TEMPTED TO MEET THEM

By M. E. RAVAGE



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## THE HOMELANDS OF JEWRY

PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL POPULATION ARE INDICATED BY SHADINGS

Courtesy of American-Jewish Committee

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THIS BOOK IS OFFERED  
as a tribute to the millions of  
Americans—Jews and non-  
Jews—who have cheerfully  
given of their plenty and of-  
ten submitted to sacrifices in  
order that the unfortunates  
of distant lands might live.



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## THE JEW PAYS



## CHAPTER I

### THE HOMELANDS OF THE JEW

THE outbreak of war in August, 1914, fell upon the ears of America as a tragic surprise. To the nations of Europe it came as an almost welcome relief from a nightmare of suspense. To one people alone the call to arms was an unmitigated catastrophe. The Jews of Eastern Europe, in common with the other peoples of the continent, had seen war lurking on the European horizon for a generation past; but, unlike their neighbors, they had beheld the thing in its naked barbarity, stripped of its traditional trappings. To the great nations of the West—or at least to their governments—a European war promised doubtless to be a day of reckoning with a menacing rival; to the small subjugated or half-free countries lying east of Germany, between the Baltic and the Mediterranean, such a war might well hold out the hope of materializing long-cherished national aspirations. To both alike a struggle in the open was in any event to be preferred to the threat and the tension of half

a century of more or less secret whettings of the sword.

Not that the common man and woman in every country of Europe was unmoved by the prospect of the blood and terror made familiar to them by the experiences of past struggles; nevertheless for the strong as well as for the weak, there was a complement and at least a partial reward in the high enthusiasm of belligerency and the high hopes for a brighter and a more stable future. The Pole, for instance, while thoroughly aware of his share of the pathetic cost of a great war, might yet be gladdened by the prospect of his country's unity and independent statehood resulting from the general ruin. The Vlach, projecting his vision beyond the gloom around him, might not unreasonably be stirred by the hope of reunion with independent Rumania. And each of Austria's subject peoples could welcome the bitter necessity of shedding its blood for the immediate benefit of its ancient enemy and oppressor, by reflecting on the inevitable collapse of the polyglot empire in a world war. France, in the face of possible annihilation, might take comfort in the gratification of her sentiment of revenge and find relief in at last coming to grips with a brutal and intolerable foe. While England, not reckoning the price and not heeding it, might well hold any cost trifling in exchange for the

freedom of the seas. Only the Jew of East-Europe, unblinded by any possible advantage to himself in the outcome, must view the lowering calamity with impartial judgment and set it down, both for himself and for the world, as all but a total loss.

There is not in all this the slightest implication of superior insight on the part of the Jew, nor of inferior patriotism. The Jew of Russia and Austria and the Balkans is, of course, gifted with no more statesmanlike vision than his fellows. Neither does he lack, by comparison with them, in devotion to his hearth and to the gods of his household. Even in lands where the Jew is deprived of the rights accorded to other portions of the population, there is no human creature more devotedly attached to home and family than he. And it is this affectionate attachment which is, after all, the very heart and meaning of patriotism. The European Jew's sober valuation of international warfare is only a logical outgrowth of his place in history. It inevitably proceeds from his unique position in the European polity. Whatever good or ill war may bring to others, to him every war is a chapter in extermination. Bound by ties which transcend national frontiers, all battle is, as far as the Jew goes, a fratricidal irrelevance. Whether or not there is in practice Christian brotherhood on this earth, there can be no doubt of the very real and,

to the war-makers, the very annoying existence of Jewish brotherhood. The status of Jewry in the world is, in this respect, exactly opposite the status of America. Both are international peoples. But while the American commonwealth partakes of the blood and bone of all peoples, the remnant of Israel is scattered among all the nations of the earth and its blood and bone is part and parcel of them all. It matters not what nation may battle against what other, every struggle in the Western world is a battle between Jew and Jew. Such is the penalty that Jewry pays for being the one dispersed people among the nations and for persistently carrying on its mission through the flux and instability of history. It is owing to the fact that the Jew retains his name, but not his local habitation, that he is, or should be, the single missionary of peace in a world that clings, despite its infamy and absurdity, to the military tradition of a past and utterly shelved age.

How quickly this Jewish premonition was more than vindicated is well known to all those who are in the slightest degree familiar with the records of the Eastern war zone. For it is to be understood that when I speak of the Jews in the world I am thinking principally of the unemancipated millions who inhabit that strip of territory which is the border-line between Western and Eastern

Europe, and, indeed, between the Occident and the Orient. Here, on a narrow band of the earth's surface, comprising a fraction of the fallen Austrian and Russian empires, and including the major part of the Balkan Peninsula, are concentrated not only the largest number of Jewish folk, but also that distinctive tradition and point of view and manner of life which is the recognized hall-mark of Jewry. It is here preëminently that the Jew is a Jew by every test and definition. It is here that for a thousand years or more the major fraction of the Remnant has survived (in the body as well as in the spirit) and has evolved a culture and a civilization of its own. Jews in the Western World generally, and in the Western Hemisphere in particular, have, to be sure, made precious and considerable contributions to the world's life and thought which not even their most inveterate enemies can gainsay, but these contributions are generally the gifts of individuals to the country and the polity of which they are, in a larger or lesser sense, a part. Heine was as much a German poet as Koerner or Goethe. Disraeli was an English peer and as much a British statesman as Gladstone or Palmerston. Spinoza was no more a tribal philosopher than was Spencer or Kant. That all these men happen to have been Jews is of no more significance than the fact that Mr. Gompers or Mr.



Adolph Ochs or Mr. Leon Trotzky are Jews—of no more significance than the fact that Mr. Frank P. Walsh is a Catholic or Mr. Bernard Shaw a Protestant. In the Western World a man may call himself a Jew for any one variety of reasons: it is only in Eastern Europe—in Poland, in Galicia, in Lithuania, and the rest—that a Jew is part of a people and a civilization.

It is in Eastern Europe, as I say, that the Jew is really a Jew in the genuine sense of the word. Here, as much as in the Palestine of the prophets and the kings and the early Christians, contributions to the common progress of mankind when made by Jews become first the inheritance of Jewry and are only indirectly, through the channel of the Jewish people, handed on to the rest of the world. Here a Jew, if he is a poet, will write in a tongue which Jews alone can understand, and draw his matter and his inspiration from sources distinctly Jewish. Here the thinker of Jewish parentage will be a Jewish thinker, and here statesmen like Ahad Ha'am and Mr. Sokolow, who are of Jewish stock, are Jewish statesmen. In the region stretching from Finland on the north to Jugo-Slavia on the south, the religion of the elder Jews is still quite recognizably the Jewish religion. On this strip of European territory the Jewish Exile, with all its distinctive character of discrimination tempered by

massacre, still follows the traditional models, so that no one can mistake it for something else. And here in this distant corridor, between East and West, the seemingly shattered Jewish spirit still knows at times how to flame into revolt after the fashion of the prophets and the founder of Christianity.

It was this distinctive civilization, this Jewish common life, primarily, that Jews with vision the world over, saw threatened with destruction in the last days of July, 1914. And the threat lay in the geographic and social and historical position of Jewry in the Christian system. Jewry was, to begin with, a buffer between the nations of Central Europe and the Russian Empire. It was lying ominously and helplessly in the path of huge armies rushing for each other's throat; which in itself was a sufficient promise of extinction. But there were elements in its position, besides, which exposed it to destruction vastly surer and more effective than that which threatened to overcome any other buffer people in Europe or Asia. For Jewry in Poland and in Rumania rested not only like a grain between the millstones of neighboring and quarreling states; it was a buffer between its individual next door neighbors as well. Jewry was threatened with sudden death not merely from without, but with particular suddenness and complete-

ness from within. The Jewish community in Eastern Europe was a tenant community. It had never owned its home. It was, in the best and quietest times even, a stranger in its own back yard; and its bitterest and most terrifying danger lay in the direction, not so much of the invading enemy, as of the foe at home. The Prussian, to be sure, might well be relied on to work havoc in his progress, but as an invader he might at least be expected to make it general and to play no favorites. His vengeance could with some degree of certainty be trusted to fall alike upon alien Jew and loyal Muscovite or Pole. What the loyal Muscovite and Pole, on the other hand, might take a fancy to do while his armed brethren were busy repelling the invader, was at once more mysterious and more certain. It was the more certain because these gentry had been gracious enough to exhibit fair samples of what they were capable of in peace times. And the mystery lay in just how far they could improve upon previous effort at a time when civilized attention was centered upon other things.

The suspense was mercifully not long drawn out. The moment that the great armies were let loose, East European Jewry was caught in the hurricane, and there began that grinding process which has persisted for five years and which will continue to the end unless the civilized conscience of man-





IN THE WAKE OF THE ARMIES

kind shall step in and bring that greater and more basic relief to supplement the heroic single-handed effort of the Jews of America at temporary salvage, which is the theme of this book. The pathetic tale of the woes of invaded Belgium becomes by comparison almost cheerful reading. Indeed, no people in history was ever overwhelmed by a disaster that in any degree could measure up to this one. For Belgium was an organized State, and when it was forced into the war it instantly became the ally of great powers and enlisted the sympathy of the entire world. Belgium was a country with a government of its own, it had a place in the political and economic scheme of the world, which insured it moral and material support from other nations. Its government could borrow, as it did, numberless millions to feed its people, against its own national resources and prospects. It could take the fortunes of war with some degree of calm and hope. Faced with a powerful enemy on the one side, it could at least rely on its powerful friends on the other. In time the tide might turn, the invader be thrust out, and the liberator be welcomed. Jewry could take no comfort in any such hopes in the hour of its trial. Enlisted though it was in the service of both belligerents, it could expect no protection from either. What it might await and what it actually got was the charge of disloyalty to both. I,

for one, should esteem the Jewish spirit the less if the charge should prove to be untrue; but whether the Jews of Poland and Russia and Rumania were pro-German or pro-Russian during the war does not in the slightest alter their case. German and Russian treated them with equal impartiality as their immediate and principal victims. It seems as if the governments and the general staffs of both countries had tacitly agreed that whatever might be the outcome of the major objects of the war, it should at least be made certain that one aim shall not remain unachieved, namely: the extermination of the Jews of Eastern Europe.

For it was not the mere routine terrors, which the civil population of a border country ought to expect, that these people were subjected to. From all accounts and all witnesses the conviction grows irresistibly that their fate was a matter of deliberate and diabolical conspiracy. As the armies attacked and counter-attacked and rolled each other backward and forward, the non-combatant population endured all the usual misery that belongs to warfare, and the Jew got of this no more than his share. What fell to his lot behind the lines is another story. And it is by the side of this story that the case of Belgium fades into insignificance. Wholesale deportations of women and old men and children—people of no earthly industrial value;

the looting of homes and shops without even the apology of calling it punitive indemnity; forced evacuations of whole towns without notice and in the middle of the night; freight cars filled with the sick and helpless, left on the railway tracks in the wilderness until their occupants succumbed from hunger or suffocation—such was the order of the day for the Jews of the Russian Empire regardless of which side was in control; while the vast masses who could not be either massacred or exiled remained in their places to survive or perish, as their stars might decree.

This was the state of things in the homelands of the world's Jewry in 1914, when the appeal and the cry went forth to America for help.

It was a cry and an appeal that was to be heeded before it was issued.



## CHAPTER II

### JEWS AND WAR IN EASTERN EUROPE

**T**HE terrible catastrophe which overwhelmed the great Jewish community in Eastern Europe had its roots in something much deeper and more lasting than the great war. The war merely served to increase the tragic burden. For one thing, it completed the isolation of the Jewish people by destroying communication with its sister communities in Western Europe and America. It diverted the attention of the world to more pressing problems and thus left Jewry to the mercies of its ancient enemies. The world war was in effect no more than the signal for bringing the age-long guerrilla between Jew and non-Jew in that quarter of the world into the open. The tinder had been there for centuries, everlastingly smoking, upon occasion emitting tongues of flame, but for the most part, smoldering covertly. It needed but a general conflagration in neighboring and distant parts to set off this highly inflammable magazine. In brief, the frightful and consuming misery of the

Jews in Russia and Poland was a product directly of anti-Semitism and only incidentally of war. The war was not its cause; it was only its occasion and excuse.

For a moment it looked indeed as if the Jews of Russia at least were going to bear no more of the burden than the other groups of the population. The Czar's proclamation, issued shortly after the declaration of hostilities, promised to wipe out the old discriminations. It really looked as if, in the midst of a great national struggle, even the infamous despotism of the Romanoffs would become sufficiently enlightened to see the wisdom of uniting the multitude of races and peoples, whom it had divided in order to dominate, purely as a measure of attaining their support. The promise, to be sure, was of no great merit coming from such a source. The word of the autocracy had too often in the past been plighted only to be broken. Nevertheless, Jewry heeded it hopefully, thinking that perhaps for once the leopard might really change his spots. The Jews were to be swiftly disillusioned.

The ground began to be prepared in the very first days of the war by methodically discrediting the Jewish population in the eyes of its neighbors. It was a process that proved all too easy. The Jews spoke a language closely akin to German. There-

fore it was logical that they should be sympathetic to Germany. Furthermore, the Jews were an "alien" people who had migrated centuries before into Poland and Lithuania from certain German provinces. Some of their fellows still remained in the German Empire and constituted a no insignificant part of the German armies. Therefore it was to be expected that Jewish soldiers of Russia would be in constant and fraternal communication with their kinsfolk among the enemy. The very infamy of the autocracy in its past dealings with the Jewish population was seized upon at once as evidence and as partial justification for the trumped-up charges. As a member of the Constitutional Democratic Party frankly confessed in the Duma in a different connection, "The Jews have suffered such cruel persecutions in Russia that they might well be excused even if the spy stories were found to be true." No resource was too base or too fantastic to be used against this helpless people.

And so the ball was rapidly and systematically set rolling. First it was a series of spy stories designed to injure selected individuals and indirectly to cast reflection upon the loyalty of the mass. For the most part these inventions were concocted and circulated in Poland, as might naturally be expected, both in consequence of the greater in-

tensity of anti-Jewish feeling in Poland and because of the fact that the war in its earlier phases was fought in Polish territory.<sup>1</sup>

The circulators of these damaging charges were not given to fastidious discriminations. The Jew was branded as disloyal now to the Austro-German, now to the Russian cause, depending only on which belligerent happened for the moment to be in power. It was of little consequence that the charges were invariably proven to be groundless. By the time investigation had been completed the effects of the indictment had traveled too far to be recaptured, and the intended injury was accomplished beyond recall. How many deaths of innocent people resulted from these accusations one can only faintly imagine. In the town of Zamosti near the Hungarian frontier five Jewish men were hanged by the Russian authorities without trial, in September, 1914, although seven others who had been charged with the same offense of having given aid to the Austrian enemy during his temporary occupation of the town were subsequently acquitted. At Lemberg about the same time nearly seventy Jews were subjected to severe bodily in-

<sup>1</sup> For material in the remainder of this chapter I am deeply indebted to the excellent material collected in a little volume entitled "The Jews in the Eastern War Zone," published in 1916 by the American Jewish Committee; to which I would refer the reader for further details.

jury in consequence of accusations made against them and a large number of their fellows of having fired upon Russian troops. They were in the long run, after due investigation, cleared of all guilt, but the frightful damage inflicted upon them had in the meantime been done and could not well be repaired. The Jews of whole towns—Kieltse, Radom, Mariampol, and many others—were subjected to endless indignities and downright physical suffering only to be declared innocent in the sequel. Perhaps the fiercest instance of the ravages of this spy mania and insane hatred of a whole people is the case of the Jews of Jusefow, nearly all of whom were ruinously maltreated and at least fourscore of whom were actually murdered on the never proven charge that they had poisoned the wells of the district. Sometimes, though all too infrequently, the victims of this wholesale plotting were rescued at the last moment from the clutches of their slanderers. Once it was a Russian priest; another time it was a Polish officer; then again military tribunals became the instruments of merciful justice appearing in the nick of time to present the redeeming evidence. But in the majority of cases no such fortunate accident intervened on behalf of the proscribed.

Affairs came to such a pass that even the most reactionary elements in Russia awoke to the danger

of this unheard-of procedure. Inclined as the average member of the ruling class might be to curry favor with the Polish population during the war, it became evident even to them that this constant repetition of unfounded charges, with all their consequences of execution, plunder and deepening animosity, was threatening to disintegrate the morale of the civil population and to create a spirit behind the lines which would inevitably undermine the effectiveness of the armed forces of the country. Wherefore it should not be surprising that in many a controversy between Jews and Poles, the Russians, many of them of long anti-Semitic prestige, were found taking sides with the Jews. The very leader of the anti-Semitic party of Russia, returning from Poland early in 1915, was constrained to admit that he had seen "nothing bad on the part of the Jews although the Poles made up all sorts of accusations against them." "In these Polish reports," according to an account of his remarks in the Russian newspaper *Rasviet*, of April 26th, 1915, "you feel prejudice, vindictiveness, hatred, nothing else. The Jews are loyal and brave and it is most inadvisable to pursue a policy which might convert six million subjects into enemies."

Unhappily this sanity came somewhat tardily to the traditional bureaucratic and military mentality of the old régime, and even then was somewhat

sporadic and capricious in its visitations. The lifelong custom and usage of an entire oligarchy swaddled and nursed in traditional practices cannot be changed by sudden conversion. The Jew had by long habit become entirely too convenient a scapegoat to be dispensed with in these strenuous times. For generations Russian officialdom, from the Czar down, had been trained to resort to race hatred as a way out of administrative difficulties consequent upon its own congenital imbecility. From time immemorial the Jew in Russia had been the safety valve of the inefficient despotism. Whenever the peasant or the town laborer showed symptoms of restlessness that threatened to become a danger to authority, officialdom had always known, as by a kind of instinct, how to deflect the popular sentiment in the direction of the Jew. Now the autocracy had once more boggled its job. The Russian armies were experiencing defeat after defeat in their combat with the vastly superior autocracies of Germany and Austria. It looked as if the whole immense military power of the empire would be crumpled up under the pressure of the intelligent enemy. Therefore the feeble-minded command, seeking an avenue of escape from the wrath of the people whom it had betrayed, fell back quite naturally on its ancient and well-tried instrument; and from this day on until its timely

end, at the hands of the revolution, one finds the constituted authority of the country itself engaged in spreading suspicion within the army and among the people.

It may seem incredible, but the records leave no doubt of the actual issuance of military orders calling upon the army and the civil authorities to take drastic measures against alleged Jewish treachery. It became a common daily occurrence for the Russian forces upon occupying a town to take hostages among the Jews and to threaten them with execution "in case of necessity." Jewish homes and shops were regularly searched for arms and instruments of communication. The use of the Yiddish language was prohibited. People who had for centuries been accustomed to no other speech were suddenly forbidden to employ that medium either publicly or privately. Jewish theaters and the entire Yiddish press were, as a matter of course and routine, suppressed. A deputy in the Duma furnished to that body, without contradiction, the following long list of discriminations perpetrated by the official censorship alone against the Jews.

1. It systematically expunged or mutilated the names of Jews to whom the cross of St. George had been awarded.

2. When the Mayor of Petrograd congratulated the Jewish community upon the heroic conduct of



a lad of 13, named Kaufman, the censor suppressed the fact that Kaufman was a Jew, and that the community referred to was the Jewish community.

3. Stories in the Russian press of the valor of Jews in the French armies are either suppressed or the Jewish names cut out.

4. A news item referring to the fact that General Semenov, whom Jewish soldiers had saved from capture by the Germans, was treating Jews kindly, was suppressed by the censor.

5. Letters of regimental commanders to the parents of Jewish hussars congratulating them on the valor of their sons, or notifying them of medals of honor bestowed upon them, were suppressed by the censor.

6. The military censorship also suppressed news of an absolutely non-military nature, whenever it might in any manner have been construed as friendly to Jews. Thus, a news item referring to the non-sectarian activities of the National Relief Committee, headed by the Princess Tatyana, daughter of the Czar, was suppressed. A news item regarding the disapproval of the Council of Ministers of the policy of expelling Jews en masse and of wholesale charges of treachery was also suppressed.

7. Even the official declaration of Count Bobrinski, Military Governor of Galicia, referring to

the correctness of the conduct of the Jews of Galicia, was suppressed.

8. But—outrageously false items published in the notoriously anti-Semitic papers were generally passed by the censor without hesitation. The *Novoe Vremya*, the *Russkoe Znamya*, and other anti-Semitic organs, systematically published reports of wholesale Jewish desertions, treachery, spying, etc., without at any time producing an iota of evidence. Thus, *Russkoe Znamya* declared that the loyalty of not a single Jewish soldier could be depended upon. The *Novoe Vremya* declared that the Jews were without exception embittered enemies of the Russian army, and that during the Japanese war 18,000 out of 27,000 soldiers voluntarily surrendered as prisoners to the Japanese. Stories without name, date or place to the effect that small Polish boys warned the Russian soldiers to take nothing from Jews because everything they would furnish was poisoned were passed by the censor, and made much of by the press. The notorious Kuzhi canard was not only passed by the censor and printed in the official and semi-official press of Russia, but the censors even hinted, to that section of the press which hesitated to publish a tale so manifestly absurd, that future relations with the censorship might be imperiled if the story were

not given proper publicity. Editors received a continuous stream of circulars forbidding them to touch upon questions which had absolutely no relation to the war.

9. When the great writers and publicists of Russia decided that it would be desirable, for the honor of Russia, to speak a good word for the Jews and thereby indirectly deprecate before the world the merciless governmental policy, the pamphlet containing their symposium was suppressed by the military censor. Even the preliminary letter of inquiry sent out by these eminent Russians, soliciting information as to the participation of Jews in the war, was suppressed. The Jewish weekly, the *Novy Voskhod*, was fined 2,000 roubles and ultimately suppressed because of the publication of this letter.<sup>1</sup>

The results of this policy of suspicion and suppression might readily have been foreseen. The dark forces of race animosity thus supported by official encouragement and coöperation grew bolder from day to day and continually multiplied their activities. Thy spy mania, never quite extinguished, broke forth with greater venom and intensity than ever. Atrocities upon the Jewish inhabitants, hitherto of a sporadic and local character, assumed the shape of an organized nation-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 57-60.

wide policy. Where there had formerly been casual expulsions of suspected individuals there was now a wholesale and standing order for the removal of the entire Jewish masses from the regions affected by the fighting, which might at any moment be executed without notice. The sudden enforced migrations to which reference was made in the last chapter were among the first fruits of this enlightened governmental attitude toward a portion of its constituency. Whole towns, particularly of the smaller kind, were cleared over night of their Jewish inhabitants under the now familiar pretext of military necessity. For a time it looked as if the long-desired expatriation of Polish and Lithuanian Jewry would be accomplished as one of the permanent achievements of a glorious world war. But at this moment the threatened disaster to the Russian armies occurred and Poland and Lithuania were overrun by the German invader.

Imagination can well portray the scenes incident upon these evacuations. But there happens to exist the most unquestionable sort of evidence which may at once assist as well as check the vagaries of the fancy. In a speech before the Duma the Deputy Dzubinsky, himself a non-Jew, offered this testimony:

“As a representative of our Fifth Siberian Division I was myself on the scene and can testify with what in-

credible cruelty the expulsion of the Jews from the Province of Radom took place. The whole population was driven out within a few hours during the night. At 11 o'clock the people were informed that they had to leave, with a threat that any one found at daybreak would be hanged. And so in the darkness of the night began the exodus of the Jews to the nearest town, Ilzha, thirty versts away. Old men, invalids and paralytics had to be carried on people's arms because there were no vehicles.

"The police and the gendarmes treated the Jewish refugees precisely like criminals. At one station, for instance, the Jewish Commission of Homel was not even allowed to approach the trains to render aid to the refugees or to give them food and water. In one case a train which was conveying the victims was completely sealed and when finally opened most of the inmates were found half dead, sixteen down with scarlet fever and one with typhus. . . .

"In some places the governors simply made sport of the innocent victims; among those who particularly distinguished themselves were the governors of Poltava, Minsk, and Ekaterinoslav . . . who illegally took away the passports of the victims and substituted provisional certificates instructing them to appear at given places in one of five provinces at a given date. When they presented themselves at these designated places they were shuttled back and forth from point to point at the whim or caprice of local officials.

"In Poltava the Jewish Relief Committee was officially reprimanded by the governor for assuming the name 'Committee for the Aid of Jewish Sufferers from the War,' and ordered to rename itself 'Committee to Aid the



DANGEROUS ENEMIES



Expelled' on the ground, as stated explicitly in the order, that the Jews had been expelled because they were politically unreliable—and, therefore, presumably, deserved no help." <sup>1</sup>

From the foregoing it will readily be seen that what the Jews of America were called upon to cope with was something enormously greater than the mere relief of a civil population suffering the consequence of a great war. The problem of America in dealing with Belgium was of that ordinary variety. The situation of the Jews in the Russian Empire was in an entirely separate class. Only the first act in this drama can in any way be compared with it. The second act, however, was but incidentally, as I have ventured to say before, a condition created by international hostilities. It was obviously and fundamentally the rescuing of an entire people from an ancient conspiracy endeavoring to accomplish its dastardly purpose in the chaos and darkness of a world upheaval. What the Jews of Eastern Europe were threatened with was not the temporary suffering and decimation inevitable in war, but the total extermination by ingenious and rapid torture of a whole race. Happily, the eyes of the world, for all its terrifying preoccupations, could pierce through this artifi-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 62-3. Quoted from *Evreyskaya Zhizn*, Aug. 9, 1915.



cially erected opaque barrier, and to a degree intervene. The climax of the piece was yet to be enacted. Bolshevism, that ingenious universal weapon invented by a generous Providence for the use of reactionaries everywhere, had not yet been perfected. How American Jewry and the decent lovers of justice and kindliness in the world are to cope with this new engine of misrepresentation is the problem that the Great War hands on to the coming period of peace.

### CHAPTER III

## THE RELIANCE OF THE JEW IN THE NEW WORLD

**F**OR more than a generation past the remnant of oppressed Jewry in the Old World has had its eyes turned to the West for salvation. With but little exaggeration it may be said that every Jew in Europe (failing the realization of the Zionist hope) contemplates America as his ultimate home. The Jews, more than any other unemancipated race, have taken the American experiment and the American tradition to his heart. To a greater degree than any other they have listened to the promise of the New World and accepted it literally. It should not be hard to understand why, when one keeps in mind that European Jewry has had the longest and bitterest career of oppression of all the peoples of the Old World.

But beyond the fond dream of some day becoming an American himself, the common man overseas, and particularly the Jew, has looked upon the New World as some sort of a divinely appointed

refuge whither his kin might betake themselves to escape the terrible uncertainty of existence in the ancient home and to come forward in time of need with proffers of counsel and material assistance.

Among European Jewry this is one of the vivid portraitures of America—that she is a land where a part of the Jewish people have prospered and been spared the struggles and sufferings of their fellows abroad, so that they might be ready in emergencies to help those whom they had left behind. It is characteristic of Jewish solidarity that the ghettos have ever regarded their more fortunate sons in free and prosperous lands as if they still were part and parcel of the communal body with all the responsibility of unbroken membership. The East-European Jew experiences a personal gratification in the thought that the children of his people are sharing the freedom and plenty of the far-away Republic; and he can face the prospect of dire misfortune with the thought that his brethren in blood and faith are so situated that they can come to his relief.

It is the modern version of the ancient dream of the Messiah. Even with the devoutest in the European ghettos, whose faith in the divine promise of a restored Israel is undiminished, this shift from the traditional trust in a legendary savior coming out of the East, to reliance upon a more realistic

Providence in the Western Hemisphere is unmistakable. In the past thirty or forty years the Jewries of Russia and Austria and Rumania turned ever more in their distress toward the nations of the West, and especially to America, as to the molders of their destiny. The rehabilitation of Palestine, the complex relations between Jews and local authority, the transfer of millions of their numbers to more liberal climes when life in their native homes became unbearable, the intervention of the decent opinion of the world in times of renewed oppression—in emergencies of endless variety, the Jew has become accustomed to look for help to his influential fellows in the democracies of Western Europe and the United States.

I am not certain whether the Jews of America have always been very keenly alive to this confidence on the part of their less fortunate brethren in the old countries. If they have not, they constitute a striking exception to the other peoples and races who make up the American nation. For among all other groups in the United States there is a very vivid consciousness of the responsibility that they bear toward the destiny of their kin in the homeland. We are accustomed to the sympathy of Irishmen and Germans in America with the proper strivings of their peoples in the Old World; but in the past few years we have seen an even

more striking demonstration of these family ties between European peoples and their American kinsfolk in the lively participation (countenanced and even encouraged by our Government) of Poles and Bohemians, Russians and Jugo-Slavs, Rumanians and Ukrainians in the nationalistic and humanitarian movements of their homelands. Never before in the career of this country had groups of European origin so persistently and openly attempted to advance the legitimate interests of their native countries.

Everywhere in the Old World America has become, by countless demonstrations, the shining hope of the unfortunate. At least it was so until we entered the war. Not alone the direct kin of European nations, but the American people as a whole, have time and again poured out their hearts and their purses to the victims of sudden disaster. When earthquakes shook villages from their foundations, when volcanoes left multitudes homeless and helpless, when great fires destroyed cities and cast their inhabitants upon the mercy of the elements; in famine, in wars and in pogroms, the American Government, on behalf of the American people, seldom failed to respond with a generous hand to the call of the suffering. America seemed to be the philanthropist among the nations, just as she had been for a century the model of revolution

and popular aspiration to liberty and the asylum of heroes and rebels against tyranny. And the poor and oppressed and the disinherited of the earth came to regard her as something more than a land of liberty and wealth. She became in their minds a friend and a prop in adversity.

Precisely as an individual family in the Old World sends forth one of its younger members to blaze the trail for the entire group and relies upon him later to draw the group after him to the New World and to make their lot more tolerable in the interval, so European Jewry has, metaphorically, sent forth portions of itself to America as a measure of security against future needs. The first of their pioneer-pilgrims were a handful of the so-named Spanish and Portuguese Sephardic Jews. In the middle of the last century the delegation was chosen from among the defeated democracy of the German kingdoms and dukedoms. And both, whether consciously or not, embarked as a kind of advance guard of the great Jewish community of the European continent. They settled in the New World and became the inheritors of the liberty and the material prosperity for the lack of which they had deserted the scenes of their childhood. Had it not been for the persistence of the Russian despotism with its recurrent measures of oppression and its petty aping neighbors—above all, had

it not been for the sudden calamity of 1914, American Jewry might, I suspect, have become utterly detached from its Old World ties and forgotten its mission and its responsibility.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE EARLIEST RESPONSE

**G**ERMANY declared war on Russia on the 1st of August, and within scarcely more than a fortnight New York City witnessed its first conference on behalf of the victims. I am not statistically certain that this meeting of a group of immigrant Jews was the very first to consider the problem for relieving war sufferers, but I venture the opinion that if any gathering preceded them the people who promoted it were equipped with seven league boots. The Jewish race has a tradition and a deserved reputation in benevolence which no other people can match, and its record is an outgrowth of its two thousand years of almost continuous oppression and suffering. There is no Jewish community anywhere in the world that is not prepared at any moment of the day and as a part of its ordinary routine, to respond to a call for help from its less fortunate brethren in one quarter or another. The Jews of America, especially, because of their fortunate position socially and economically, have in the past generation received an



education and developed a technique in the process of relieving suffering which is unique even among Jews. Beginning with the Russian massacres of 1881 and the migration of the masses of survivors which ensued upon them, the Jews of America have undergone a regimen of training of the most thoroughgoing sort and which culminated in the present emergency. Eighteen eighty-one was but a starter. It was followed in rapid succession by the misery of the Galicians, the movement from Rumania, and more recently by the pogroms which preceded and accompanied and followed upon the revolution of 1905. So that when 1914 came along with its budget of horrors the philanthropic Jewish purse in America was well filled and ready.

It was especially fitting that orthodox Jewry should be the first to step into the breach. For it is this element along with another group which was later to be organized into the People's Relief Committee, which was bound by the closest ties of kinship to the sufferers abroad. Orthodox Jewry in America consists almost solely of Eastern Europeans—of the very people on whose behalf the relief expeditions of the past generation were instituted. For the most part, the victims of the present war are their own blood relatives. The funds which they collected went directly to care for the comforts of the brothers and sisters and the

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fathers and mothers of the donors. Moreover, this was the first great opportunity that this group had had of contributing materially and on an organized scale to the welfare of that part of the Jewish people which still remained under the yoke from which they had escaped.

How readily and magnificently they met this opportunity is now a matter of proud record. For the initial gathering of the 18th of August which was of a preliminary character, was followed a month later by a much more representative meeting at which plans for an organization were actually outlined and an immediate attempt made to rally kindred groups throughout the United States. It happened that the solemn season of the New Year and the Day of Atonement was approaching. Therefore the meeting proceeded to address telegrams to some hundred religious bodies in as many cities, urging them to turn the fast-days to account by issuing appeals to their respective congregations on behalf of the war sufferers on those days. Within two months of the outbreak of the war an establishment was actually in operation with offices in New York and with machinery for collecting funds installed in many ends of the country. The organization took the name of the Central Committee for the Relief of Jews Suffering Through the War.

These early meetings and the men and women who gathered at them gave the new organization the tone and temper which they have preserved through their honorable career down to the present moment. They set their stamp not only upon the type of the personnel in the organization, but to a very significant degree also they laid the foundations of its approach and its methodology. The Central Relief Committee had and still has its constituency in that element of immigrant Jewry which distinguishes itself primarily by its adherence to the ancient Jewish faith and tradition. On the one side it is flanked by the reform group (which is Western European by origin), and on the other side by the great working mass whose affiliations are with the labor unions and kindred movements. The rank and file of the Central Committee are, socially and by tradition, the middle class. They consist in the main of the storekeeper and the small business man. Spiritually they belong in the camp of the traditional faith and ritual. Their leadership is preëminently to be found among the rabbis of the old dispensation and in a small but powerful group of intellectuals who constitute the modern prop of the synagogue. It is a middle class group not merely by antecedents and aspirations, but by the nature of its position in the Jewish community as well. It is a transition element, stand-

ing as it does between the more Americanized Western European wing and the class-conscious idealistic working party of the Left. Except for the constant progress of Jewish immigration into the United States, its numbers would have been increasingly thinning out by an inevitable process of assimilation and absorption into the other two groups. In actual fact, there can be no doubt that it is a diminishing body and that of all immigrant groups it is having the hardest struggle to survive the corroding influences of the American environment.

The reader should keep this characterization in mind in estimating the service of this committee. There is a disposition in certain circles to appraise the institution by a consideration of mere financial figures detached from their human implications, and thus to minimize the immense actual service which they represent. It has been said over and over again that there is no logical necessity for the existence of the organization at all. Considering its constituency, the argument runs, the amounts that have been collected by the organization could have been doubled or even quadrupled if the work had been conducted by the two other agencies in the field. Appeals for funds addressed to the membership of the Central Committee would have carried vastly more weight, according to its critics,

if they had emanated from the great influential leaders of the American Jewish Relief Committee. I am inclined to recognize the validity of much of this reasoning, but I cannot forget a number of factors on the other side which tend strongly to counterbalance the greater part of this adverse attitude. I cannot forget that the Central Relief Committee was the first organization to heed the call of the sufferers abroad; that its membership, both by origin and mental constitution, are excellently equipped to understand the needs of their unhappy kinsfolk, and above all, that the social and spiritual by-products of any such enterprise as they had been engaged in are of even greater worth than the enterprise itself, and that its usefulness in this sense could not have been achieved for it by any other agency. Nevertheless, I am strongly of the opinion that a coalescence of the Central and American Relief Committees, at this time at least, would be of immeasurable benefit to the cause for which both are laboring. The by-products of which I just spoke—the more thorough consolidation of orthodox Jewry in the United States, the revival of Jewish consciousness in individuals scattered far and wide in the remote ends of the land, the inculcation of a sense of responsibility on the part of such individuals, the development of an *esprit de corps* and a temper of mutual aid, and in par-

ticular, the heightening of the esteem for the immigrant Jew on the part of his neighbors wherever he may live in America—are things of enormous significance; but they now belong to history. They are achievements which may well make the Central Committee and its affiliated organizations proud of their record. But the future also has its claims; and for the future I can conceive of nothing more urgent than a union, as complete as may be, of the two bodies which have so much in common. Indeed, an organic alliance between the Central Committee and the American would in itself be an expression of that spirit of accommodation and co-operation which is to be reckoned as the principal benefit accruing to the American Jew in the process of his generous efforts for his brethren in Europe.

The religious cast of the newly formed committee at once began to color its activities. Beginning with its appeal to orthodox synagogues and their congregations all over the country, to which I referred above, the management proceeded to avail itself of whatever materials it could cull from the religious consciousness of its people and to turn them into assets for consolidating the structure of its tragic undertaking. The very history and tradition of the Jewish people furnished a tremendous store-house of memories and symbols which were

ready at hand to be converted into emotional stimuli. The very speech of ancient Israel in all its eloquent and touching modulations had been somehow prophetically fashioned for this supreme hour. The trained organizer, equipped with a knowledge of the Jewish soul, could turn to the sacred books and find therein texts without number for his purpose. One-quarter of the content of the Bible is a record of Jewish struggle and sorrow, and fairly teems with gems in the literature of exhortation and appeal to compassion. Half the Jewish fasts and feasts are redolent of exile and oppression and the threat of national extermination. The Passover service begins with an invitation to the hungry and the stricken to come and partake of the bread and prosperity of their more fortunate brethren. The New Year and the Day of Atonement are essentially days of repentance, and in the Jewish tradition repentance ever begins with love and charity toward one's neighbor. The Feast of Purim celebrates the memory of a man and a woman who were instrumental in rescuing the people of Israel from annihilation; and the Ninth of Ab is a fast of mourning over the destruction of the national life. No people can match this accumulation of tragic record.

The management of the Central Relief Committee had a vivid consciousness of the value of its

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resources and it promptly set about to make the most of them. It organized the rabbinical fraternity into a kind of auxiliary corps, and each rabbi in turn transformed his congregation into a subsidiary relief committee for raising funds. Scarcely a service was allowed to pass without some sort of reminder of the unspeakable events abroad. The printed matter which was circulated to every corner of the country was interlarded with references to the present woes of Israel in the language of the past. Each single day almost of the ancient calendar furnished some pretext for contrasting the splendid record of ancient unity with the contemporary danger of disintegration and disappearance. Traditional phrases, known to every Jewish child, were culled from venerable texts and found new applications in the service of the war victims.

Nor did the committee confine itself to the instrumentalities provided for it by the past. It early began to make an astute use of American custom and mode of life, in so far as these affected their immigrant constituency. In the summer, as an instance, the vacation hunters were circularized with an appeal which read, "Enjoy your vacation but remember that others need bread." It was one of the members of this organization who first saw the possibilities of the saving stamp



as an aid in collecting money. The device of getting storekeepers to contribute certain percentages of their sales on given days to the Cause, while not invented by this body, was put by it to excellent use. And finally it was this group of alien men and women, most of whom had scarcely acquired the use of the English language, that courageously presented its petition to the President of the United States for an official proclamation from him setting aside a Jewish Relief Day on the 4th of October, 1914. The proclamation was subsequently reproduced in a variety of forms and was the means of directing untold hundreds of thousands of dollars into the coffers of the sufferers of Eastern Europe and Asia Minor.

## CHAPTER V

### AMERICA TO THE RESCUE

THE Central Relief Committee had been but a gauge of the state of feeling in American Jewry upon the outbreak of the European war and the calamity to the Jewish people abroad which it was bound to bring in its trail. It had been quite natural that the tragedy to the Old World ghetto should reëcho first and most profoundly in its counterpart in the New. But ere long the wave of horror and sympathy spread to the remotest corners of the great Jewish community in America and gave impetus to an immense undertaking to cope with the emergency. On the 25th of October, 1914—less than three months after the opening of hostilities,—Mr. Louis Marshall made the first attempt to enlist the organized effort of American Jewry in the great task. As the President of the most influential Jewish body in America—the American Jewish Committee,—he invited the leading Jewish men and women in commerce, philanthropy and affairs to a meeting at the Temple Emanu-El. No more representative body had, I daresay, ever been

brought together in the history of Jews in America. Platform and floor alike were crowded with men as well as women whose names have become known far beyond the confines of not only their racial group but of America herself. It was a meeting almost wholly of world figures—men noted for huge industrial and financial enterprises; men whose names had been for a quarter of a century identified with international benevolences, leaders in religion and jurisprudence, commerce and science—men for the most part whose names had become a word to conjure with in the remotest corners of the earth.

Little parliamentary claptrap marked the deliberations of this distinguished gathering. The business in hand was as clear as it was urgent, and there was in consequence a unanimity of purpose and procedure not always characteristic, alas, of Jewish public affairs. It required scarcely any time to crystallize an organization, and there developed no opposition or partisanship in the choice of its directing officers. The new body was conceived of as an off-shoot and a subsidiary of the American Jewish Committee, and Mr. Louis Marshall, for this as well as for many other and better reasons was made the Chairman; with Mr. Felix M. Warburg as Treasurer and Mr. Cyrus L. Sulzberger as Secretary.

For a twofold reason the newly formed committee decided to use existing machinery in the pursuit of its task. To begin with, no one had the remotest notion of the length of time during which the organization would be necessary. It was rather hoped that the war and its consequences to European Jews would be of short duration. Moreover the employment of agencies already established would save time. The need over there was too urgent to wait upon the creation of special instrumentalities. Hence Mr. Sulzberger who as the Secretary was charged with the practical elaboration of the plans of the body invited the Industrial Removal Office and its directorate to take over at least for the time being the affairs of the American Jewish Relief Committee. The choice was a happy one in a variety of ways. Of all the existing Jewish philanthropies the I. R. O. was the one likeliest to be rendered inoperative as a result of the war. It was an institution whose object had been for many years past to assist the great masses of Jewish immigrants to spread inland from the ports. The war promised to put a sudden and at least a temporary stop to Jewish immigration. Here, then, was a peace establishment which could with the least dislocation be turned to uses created by war. Most important of all, Mr. David M. Bressler, the Director of the organization, had demon-

strated by years of service his capacity for adapting himself to untried tasks of magnitude and importance. Mr. Bressler hesitated for a time. He was willing enough to turn over his office but he was not certain, in his modesty, whether he was altogether qualified to become the directing head of an undertaking as vast and complex as this one was likely to become. Moreover, he had for some time been contemplating a change in his own career and he considered this a good time to effect it. Now that, for the first time since the organization of the Industrial Removal Office, a lull was about to occur in its affairs, it might be well for him to try his energies upon more remunerative employments. But Mr. Sulzberger would brook no pleas of either modesty or self-interest; and after long persuasion Mr. Bressler became the Director of the new Relief Committee with the title of Assistant Secretary.

I have carefully studied the records of my material and they leave little doubt in my mind that the tremendous success and influence of the organization in the past five years has rested on the foundations laid for it during these early months of Mr. Bressler's incumbency. Virtually without exception all the ingenious devices and instrumentalities which were employed with such incredible efficiency later on were either actually elaborated or at least conceived during this early period.

What followed later was in large measure a statesmanlike expansion and application of policies initiated at the beginning. I have no wish to clutter my account of a unique and stirring movement among the Jews of America with controversies, and least of all do I desire to be partial to individuals. Wherever the achievements and contributions of persons or loyal groups in the great Cause are in question, I have no other thought but to assign credit where it belongs. And I have no hesitation in stating my conclusions that the present splendid structure rests very securely on the underpinnings of its early Director.

Thus, for instance, the very bone and sinew of the great organism as we know it to-day consists in a country-wide system of state committees and county and local sub-committees, all of which center in the home office at New York; and this intricate and difficult establishment had its inception during the first six months of the Committee's existence. As a conception, it is, to be sure, one of the most elementary devices in large-scale organization; but Mr. Bressler's part in its elaboration went considerably beyond the mere inception. When the Committee made its historic departure three years later there was little to alter in its basic and original texture. The energies generated at that time were directed chiefly to an intensification of the process.

Mr. Bressler has himself admitted with characteristic frankness that neither he himself nor any one else that he can think of could have carried the work to the great heights which it has attained in the past two years under its recent management. But there can be no two opinions of the impetus which the Committee received from him in its earliest endeavors. Just what share of its effectiveness is due to him and, just what contributions have come from other sources, it will be quite impossible at this time to determine. Dr. J. L. Magness, Mr. Sulzberger and no end of others have, I know, labored devotedly with time and energy toward the general result. But there is no unfairness, I take it, in the custom of historians to lump the progress of an era under the name of its most active and titular administrator.

It was, as far as I can gather, the Assistant Secretary who in December, 1915, proposed that great historic mass meeting which in effect furnished the motive power of the undertaking for the next two years. That meeting was a milestone not alone in the career of the American Jewish Relief Committee nor merely in the annals of Jewish generosity. It marked an era in the career of the Jew in America. I have been present at gatherings, assemblies and conventions of many sorts where enthusiasm ran high; but there has been nothing in

my experience to equal that. This was not a mere mass meeting; it was one of those events which from time to time in the history of Israel have stirred an entire people to its foundations and marked a departure in its career.

The meeting was held in Carnegie Hall and it was made notable by at least three striking features. To begin with, the preliminary arrangements were novel. Remembering its purpose, Mr. Bressler and his co-workers were determined that, as far as it could be managed, no seat in the hall should be occupied by any one except a prospective generous contributor. Therefore it was announced in the press that no seats would be had at the door. Tickets could be obtained only by asking for them in advance. Therefore, again, the management must see to it that men and women of large means were properly inspired with the desire to attend. And the line was, in consequence, very lavishly and appetizingly baited. The names printed on the program constituted a catalogue of America's finest platform orators. The result, as Mr. Bressler tells me, was that scarcely any Jew of pecuniary importance was missing when the meeting was called, and that until the very hour when the doors were to be opened requests by telephone and messenger kept pouring in to the office of the Committee for tickets and more tickets. But it turned out that a



considerable number of the speakers as announced had failed to appear and this was one more of the unique characteristics of the occasion; for it left the field wide open to that unique orator in Jewry whose voice and whose prophet-like sincerity are reminiscent of the golden age of Hebrew eloquence. The speaking progressed as if by fore-thought to a more and more noble pitch, until it culminated in a climax when Dr. Judah L. Magnes arose before the great audience and delivered what was on all hands regarded as the most moving appeal that American Jews had ever listened to.

And then followed the third distinguishing feature of the evening. Never had an audience of well-to-do, comfortable and distinguished people been so thoroughly lifted out of their complacency. As Dr. Magnes proceeded from point to point in his masterly portraiture of the frightful scenes in the homelands of Jewry, one could hear women in every corner of the Hall softly sobbing until, as the speaker reached the end, the entire assemblage had thrown all reserve to the winds. Men arose in their seats and waved their hands toward the platform in an access of emotion, begging to be permitted to help. Women with tear-stained faces nervously wrenched jewels from their ears and fingers and tossed them upon the platform. At a signal from the speaker the ushers moved up the

aisles with their baskets to take up the cash and checks and pledges which were in all parts of the hall being spontaneously held aloft. An elderly man who had been standing in a corner by the door and who later proved to be a cap-maker out of work, elbowed his way through the throng and upon reaching the platform begged Dr. Magnes to accept the nickel he had saved for his carfare. "How," he said in a tremulous voice, "can I think of riding luxuriously in the car when my brothers and sisters back in the old country are suffering!" Until 2 o'clock that morning officials and ushers stayed in the hall to count the collections.

This first Carnegie Hall mass meeting was a barometer indicating the extent to which American Jewry was ready to succor its unfortunate fellows in Europe. To be sure, its audience had consisted almost entirely of New Yorkers. None the less, its splendid spirit and achievements left no doubt in the minds of the men and women who had organized it that what New York was willing to do, the rest of the country would surely be prepared to match proportionately. Hence the Campaign Committee decided that its previous goal of one million dollars should be raised to three millions. A vast quantity of stationery which had been printed for publicity purposes had to be the next day destroyed so as not to divulge the original

objective of the campaign. Two days later as new contributions and pledges began to pour into the offices of the organization, the Committee once more realized how modest its hopes had been and moved its quota up to five millions. It goes without saying that this latest goal was more than attained. But what was of even greater significance than the mere collection of huge funds was the consolidation of the Jewish community in the United States into a more unified body. The organization of committees in distant cities went on apace and almost without effort from the central office. It became obvious even at this early date that the sheer progress of the fund-raising campaign would prove a far more vital factor in extending the organization than any direct attempt at setting up subsidiary agencies.

The rapid advance of the movement throughout the country expressed itself in a growing and insistent demand from every corner of the land for speakers and for literature. Dr. Magnes's address had been printed and sent broadcast and, as was to be foreseen, there immediately arose a clamor for his presence and his eloquence. "We are trying to do our share in our city," so the demand usually ran, "and if you will only send us Dr. Magnes we will guarantee that we will over-subscribe any quota that you may assign us." But

Dr. Magnes could not, obviously, be sent everywhere. Therefore Mr. Bressler resolved to multiply his rare asset. New York and other cities were rich in forensic resources. There was an abundance of both talent and fame which were for the moment lying fallow and which could by proper diplomatic method and skillful direction be turned to account. The directorate began with the salient figures. It enlisted the coöperation of men of the caliber of Mr. Nathan Straus, Mr. Jacob H. Schiff, Mr. Louis Marshall. But these also were limited in number and restricted by time and space, and the demand for them was increasing from scores to hundreds. It became therefore necessary to recruit not merely leading personalities but all the talent that could be mustered. By the time the year was over the American Jewish Relief Committee had organized a speakers' bureau which could be set up favorably against any lyceum or Chautauqua.

## CHAPTER VI

### SLOW PROGRESS

**F**OR three years the movement progressed in this fashion. Millions of money were being collected. Enthusiasm was running high and the funds were actually reaching their destination and accomplishing all and more than could be looked for. But somehow the feeling began to grow among the leaders as well as the rank and file that the machinery was not developing all the power that it might. To begin with, the need had become increasingly greater since 1914 while the means, though also expanding, had not kept pace. It began to look as if one were trying to fill a leaking barrel with a spoon. Moreover, the spirit of giving, which had been educated to an undreamed-of degree since the opening of hostilities, was not expressing itself in sufficiently substantial form. The engine, as it were, was turning and spinning merrily, but it was not hooked up to the axle. Clearly, the time had come for more ambitious demands. If the technique that had been hitherto followed was adequate, then something must be done to apply it

more vigorously. It was not at all that there was inefficiency, or that anything was out of gear. Staff and organization were working wholeheartedly and devotedly, but it was a structure that had been devised to meet the emergencies of a brief war with proportionately moderate needs. The war had developed into one of the longest in modern times. Therefore an altogether new model of relief machinery must be invented and set in operation to cope with the unforeseen state of affairs.

It was to discuss this question that the little meeting which was held immediately following the resignation of Mr. Bressler, heretofore the director of the organization, was called. The gathering was quietly brought together on a memorable Sunday in December, and its deliberations were attended by a few men whom I should estimate as the intellect of the movement and whose names I therefore shall desist from mentioning. It was agreed before the discussion had progressed very far that two distinct and separate problems must be solved if the projected new machinery was to be set in motion and kept going. The first of these was the injection of new blood into the organism. A man must be found somewhere who had latent genius rather than vast experience. Vast experience, indeed, it was realized, might be a handicap. The business of collecting money had a tendency to smother the

energy that propelled it. The qualifications, therefore, of the new motive mind were few and simple as compared with the weaknesses that might disqualify it. The new relief engineer—for that is a precise description of what the new director ought to measure up to—must be simply a young man with inexhaustible energy and resourcefulness, and be equipped with a sense of artistic reserve. What he must not be, was a whole chain of things. He must not be known too well, he must not be too experienced, he must not be a business man. Certainly, he must not be an advertising man or a professional moneygatherer. In a word, he must not be stale. He must come to his task fresh and enthusiastic and unhampered.

Such was the mold into which the new director must fit. The practical problem was to discover somewhere, somehow, such a paragon. It was remarked with a twinkle by one of the conferees that the social service profession was not given to breeding paragons. A who is who was drawn up of all the philanthropic experts in the land that could be thought of, and an inquisition into their past records, their present status and their future possibilities was instituted. As they passed in review, each was weighed in the balance and his measure minutely taken. But the majority of those who promised to qualify were found to be already

engaged in some indispensable task; and the rest were found wanting in one direction or another. The field of choice was thus extremely limited and kept narrowing down further and further until but two candidates remained. One of these was a Mr. Jacob Billikopf, the director of Jewish communal activities in Kansas City. It was decided that he should be requisitioned.

Mr. Billikopf had given evidence of his ability to meet the emergency, of very striking promise. It was not so much the positive achievement in his career that was reassuring as the type of thing to which he had inclined. There was a quality about the tasks he had carried through quite out of the usual. He had evinced a capacity for meeting the greatest assortment of men and women on their own ground. Professionally the manager of a philanthropy, he had gone far afield in community enterprises which had no sort of relation with charitable institutions. Scarcely known outside his own city, or at best, his own state, he had by sheer personality attained a vast friendship among the leaders in his community. Neither had he confined himself primarily to Jewish enterprises. He had made himself one of the most valuable men in that great undertaking known as the Galveston Movement the purpose of which had been to deflect the current of Jewish immigration from the



Atlantic seaboard to the interior. He had been the prime mover, along with Mr. Frank P. Walsh, in establishing the Board of Public Welfare—a splendid statesmanlike enterprise—which, largely through the impetus he gave it, had in a very brief time developed into a national project. Personality and tact and an endurance which knew scarcely any bounds were the principal qualities of the director of the Jewish philanthropies of Kansas City; they happened also to be the principal qualifications of the prospective new engineer of the American Jewish Relief Committee. It was determined to telegraph for Mr. Billikopf.

But of him we shall see more anon and we shall be able to judge him dynamically. Meantime the select gathering which determined upon calling him was confronted with another problem. Even a latent prodigy could not be expected to attain the results which conditions overseas demanded unless he were to have the coöperation of a constituency alive to its responsibility. The new director, assuming that he could be got, could well be relied on to rouse his constituency to any desired plane of enthusiasm. None the less, much time might be saved and no end of misery be forestalled if the ground could be somewhat prepared in advance of his arrival. What seemed to be the fundamental need of the moment in the opinion of the meet-

ing was the dramatization of the movement in such a manner that it would transform the potential spirit of the American Jewish community into something positive and kinetic. Events abroad were, to be sure, all too stirring, but the experiences of the past three years had proven that the impulse of generosity will carry vastly farther if it is motivated by home influences. The tale of suffering in distant countries, if too often repeated, will in time pall and steadily weaken in emotional quality; but it will be found by actual test that a man's generosity will multiply itself endlessly if it is carefully stimulated to emulation. This is no reflection upon the quality of mercy; it is only a statement of fact in human psychology.

The usual array of schemes and suggestions were laid before the house. But they had all been tried. The great publicity campaigns; gigantic, stormy mass meetings; new variations in the style of appeal—everything had become stale. It was decided to wait until the new director arrived. He arrived, after much persuading and telegraphing, in the middle of February. Thereupon the caucus that had elected him was reconvened. Mr. Billikopf was asked what the approaching campaign ought to yield. He replied with an ultimatum: "I will have nothing to do with it if the quota for the country is below ten millions." The

conference was a bit taken aback. It had been a struggle the year before to raise half that amount, and this year of all years, with America herself about to enter the war, and new demands being constantly made upon the popular purse, it seemed impossible. Again, the dramatization of the cause was broached. Some one had an inspiration. What was needed, he argued, was not so much propaganda or publicity, but some great startling event here at home that would leaven the half-inert Jewry of America and set its spirit seething with a vivid realization of its duty and its opportunity. If only some leader of sufficient means could be persuaded to leap over the traditional bounds of generosity and set some new, some unprecedented mark. A million dollars—just one single donation of that round fancy-gripping figure—if that could be flashed over the country, it would amount to a break with the past and be a new departure in giving. It would be the needed beginning toward making the effort commensurate with the emergency.

It required no long discussion, no turning over of long lists of names, to decide on a candidate for this unique rôle. The roster of wealthy men was, to be sure, considerable, and the proportion of them who had established a record for magnificent support in charitable causes was above the common

ratio. For all that, the latitude of probabilities was narrowly limited. For so unconventional a part it required a mind gifted with more imagination than customarily fell to the share of millionaires. The man would have to think about philanthropy in the same large terms as he was wont to deal in in his business. And such as he—if they grew anywhere—were most likely to thrive and develop in that spacious region which is, of all parts of the country, the most characteristic—the Central West—where America is still youthful and brimful of her early aspirations and enthusiasm. In the East demands upon the generous were constant, multitudinous and exacting. The West was still young and self-reliant enough to leave the charitably disposed without too burdensome a field for their impulses in their own communities. But for purposes of benevolence the Central West meant Chicago, and Chicago meant but one man. That man was Julius Rosenwald. Both by quality of imagination and susceptibility to the appeal of misfortune, the record of the man left him solitary in the field.

Remembering his splendid work at the great Carnegie Hall meeting of two years before, it was suggested that Dr. J. L. Magnes should carry the message to Garcia. The committee regarded him as the master worker in stirring the mind and the

emotions. No one had any inkling at the moment that an intimate and gentle agent had already been at work to prepare Mr. Rosenwald for the part just assigned him. At any rate, Mr. Magnes begged exemption on the plea that he was unequal to the undertaking. He nominated in his stead Mr. Billikopf, the newly arrived director. Mr. Billikopf, an old friend of Mr. Rosenwald's, reluctantly and with misgiving accepted the task.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE PHILANTHROPY OF THE MASSES

AT this point I must pause to narrate the origins of the third and last of the Committees. If the American and Central Committees were dramatic in their origin and career, the rise a year after the outbreak of the war of a third organization in the field, was hardly short of spectacular. The elements constituting the former organization were the traditional mainstays of charity. The membership of the latter were, if not givers of long standing, at least firm believers in the theory of benevolence. The seventy-five people on the other hand who congregated on the east-side one day in August, 1915, to institute the People's Relief Committee were the very leaders and formulators of the doctrine that all philanthropy is an irrelevance and an impertinence. Surely there was something striking and characteristic of the times that labor union officials, former socialist candidates, and radicals and semi-radicals of every stripe and shade should be themselves instrumental in the formation of a charitable society. In ordinary

times these men had more than once led assaults upon the institutions of benevolence in their midst and had even gone so far as to discredit the motives of their supporters. All philanthropy, they had preached, was a screen devised by capitalists to mask their depredations and to salve their consciences. It was an instrument for misguiding the poor by blinding them to the causes of their poverty and inspiring them with a sense of gratitude toward their despoilers. It was a wedge in the solidarity of the proletariat designed to retard the triumph of the fullest democracy.

But these were not ordinary times. Therefore, contrary to the common belief that radicals are sticklers for theory, these leaders of labor faced reality with practical sense. Millions of women and children were perishing from hunger and exposure. Whoever might be at fault; whatever the sinister forces might be that were responsible for this vast misery, the first thought for sane men must be to devise methods for ameliorating it. Doctrinally, indeed, every attempt at relief might be a way of playing into the hands of the war-makers. But this was no time for doctrine. This was hardly in the category of usual benevolence. While whole peoples were being starved and tormented one could not sit back philosophically and wait for the victims to trace the origin of their sorrows in the

hope that they might swell the ranks of the discontented with the present order of things. The immediate concern was inevitably to lighten as far as one could the burden of the sufferers; and for men with open eyes the immediate concern excluded for the time every other thought.

Nevertheless a residue of the old distrust remained. The class-conscious working man could not even in these times be got effectively to join hands with banker and bourgeois in the promotion of a cause which he felt to be principally his own. The existing committees representing the independent classes had on their part given scant attention since their organization to the possible contributions of the labor masses; while the worker, on the other hand, found it difficult to respond as generously as he felt to appeals emanating from sources not representative of his class. It became evident that if the contributions (insignificant individually but enormous in the aggregate) of this element were not to be lost, a committee of their own ranks was urgently needed. Such a group would be in the closest contact with the rank and file in the factory and in their homes; it would know their minds and their means and would have their confidence and their hearty coöperation. Such a committee could not only add very considerable sums to the common treasury but, like its sister



organizations, it was bound to have immeasurable influence in developing a spirit of responsibility among the masses of Jewry which would be of incalculable value in the future.

From the purely democratic point of view this new organization is in my estimation by far the most interesting that has come out of the European war in this country. A mere glance at the names of the men and women who sit on its directorate leaves no doubt of its thoroughly representative character. The Central and the American Committees are largely self-constituted. They are representative, to be sure, in the sense of general leadership and influence. The People's Relief Committee is a sanhedrin of the elected spokesmen of the great mass of laboring Jews in the United States. All the great industries in which Jewish workmen are engaged, all the distinctive social and political and educational bodies of Jewish workmen, have contributed to its membership. There is scarcely a significant figure identified with labor or the political-economic movements which supplement labor, but has its representative on the Committee. There is a liberal air about the entire conduct of the organization—its method of appeal, its machinery of collection and the very atmosphere of its office—which renders it unique among benevolent societies.

It has not been as simple a matter as it may seem to draw the line always between the constituencies of this new organization and the Central Relief Committee. Broadly speaking, the one represents the intellectually emancipated mass while the other finds its support among the adherents of the old faith; one may be said to be the spokesman of the younger generation and the other of their conservative elders. But in another sense the line of demarkation follows the classification of labor and the so-called non-productive classes. The consequence is that boundaries are often impossible to draw. Station in life does not invariably go hand in hand with a class attitude in politics. Not all workers shun the synagogue and vote the Socialist ticket. There are doubtless thousands of humble factory hands who are spiritually of the same temper as their employers but who by the sheer circumstance of occupation put their monthly dollar into the treasury of the People's Relief Committee. Thus it happens, for instance, that an organization made up in the main of men remote from the ancient faith and its practices, finds it politic to keep its doors closed on the Sabbath.

The manager of the Committee's office relates the following incident which, aside from its fine pathos, illustrates how confusingly class and sect lines criss-cross each other in the ghetto:

“On Saturdays and holidays, though the office is closed, I frequently come in to read the mail. I have to do that because some of the most urgent matters often present themselves on such days. Not long ago I was at my desk on a Saturday morning when two men, taking advantage of my negligence to lock the door, walked in. The more elderly of the two promptly began to abuse me for being at work on the day of rest. I kept telling him that the office was not really open for its usual business; but to no purpose. Then it occurred to me to remind my critic that the very Talmud itself made exceptions in the observance of the Sabbath in the case of physicians and all emergencies where life and health are involved. ‘Our people,’ I said, ‘are starving and suffering by the thousands in Europe, and even if I were working here on their behalf on this day, as I do on all others, I should hardly be transgressing.’ This avenue of attack seemed to prove effective. Whereupon I proceeded to read my visitors the cable message which had just arrived from one of our commissioners abroad: ‘The famished had been keeping their bodies and souls together upon a diet of rats and mice. The result was that the price of even this article of food rose to impossible heights. In Riga people are paying as much as four roubles for a rat, and now the supply is vanishing. The rats

and mice are all cleaned out. Prominent men and women, one time the wealthiest in the city, may be daily seen rummaging in garbage stations for scraps of bone to make soup for their children.' I had barely finished reading when I observed that my visitors were in tears. After a moment the old man who had complained of my breach of the Sabbath began nervously to search his pockets. Then in a despairing and broken voice he turned to me: 'I have now been on strike for ten weeks, so I haven't any money. But can you make any use of this overcoat?' He began to take it off. 'It isn't much, but it's the best I've got and I can do without it. Oh, if I only could go there myself to throw it upon one of the living corpses over there! Please forgive me for my bigotry. There's no nobler work in the eyes of Heaven than this. Sick men may eat even on Yom Kippur; so why should I question the righteousness of your doing for others what you would have to be doing for me if I hadn't been lucky enough to be here?' He left his overcoat on my desk and I heard him sobbing as he disappeared."

As far as New York and other great industrial towns are concerned the People's Relief Committee works largely and very effectively through the trade unions and the social organizations of labor. Workingmen, it has been found, respond with

greater readiness to appeals when they are made to them by their own elected and trusted leaders. The actual collecting is carried on in a variety of ways. In the majority of instances the worker pledges himself to donate a set amount weekly or annually. Often, as in the past two years, the men and women of the factories have volunteered to work on certain holidays and to devote the entire proceeds of their toil to the cause. Now and then in the course of campaigns collections are made directly in the shops. A very considerable portion of the contributions of this Committee have come from immensely successful bazaars and public entertainments—traditional methods which are dear to the hearts of the rank and file. The first of the bazaars, for instance, netted close to one-half million dollars and generated more enthusiasm among the Yiddish speaking masses than any device that has been tried since. In December, 1915, a day was set aside by the People's Relief Committee for street solicitations. The occasion was made notable by the enthusiasm and devotion of the large number of young men and young women who had been assigned to posts in the city of New York. It was an atrociously dreary day. From early dawn the skies were overcast and leaden and the air was damp and penetrating. Soon after the solicitors had arrived at their places the rain be-

gan to come down in buckets. Following a hurried consultation in the office an order was issued to call in the volunteers. But these young men and women were a determined lot. They had been detailed to a post of urgent duty and they had no intention to be swerved from accomplishing their task by such trifles as evil weather. They unanimously met the request to disband with a resolute declaration that they were there to stick. They did stick. And at the end of the day they had the satisfaction of turning some fifty thousand dollars of hard cash into the coffers of the People's Relief Committee.

But the People's Relief Committee extends its activities far beyond the industrial cities of the Eastern seaboard. Its branches and sub-committees operate in communities numbering no less than one hundred and fifteen municipalities scattered over three-quarters of the states of the Union. In these distant localities it is customary for the workmen's committee to work hand in hand with the local representatives of the Central and the American bodies. But everywhere their identity remains separate and distinguishes itself by its constituency, by its methods and by its fine spirit of generous helpfulness. It is a safe surmise that proportionately to income no element of Jewry in this country does its duty by the sufferers aboard more com-

pletely and at a cost of a more genuine sacrifice than they. This is the first time in history that the Jewish labor masses have had an opportunity to give substantial evidence of the love that is in them for their fellows. They have responded to their opportunity with a nobility and an open-handedness which is incomprehensible and which cannot be forgotten.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DRAMATIC BEGINNING

**T**O return to the main currents, the account of Mr. Billikopf's trip to Washington in search of Mr. Rosenwald to deliver his bold message may be best narrated in Mr. Billikopf's own words:

You may judge of the humor in which I set out on my mission if you will remember that I had seen Mr. Rosenwald only a few days before in Chicago on my way to New York. We have been friends for many years and I had, as usually, paid a visit to his home. He knew of course of the call I had received from the American Jewish Relief Committee. He was not very optimistic about it. I believe he had a moderately good opinion of my ability—in fact a much better one than I could live up to. But he could not, he insisted, conceive of me in my new post. "What," he kept reiterating, "have you got to do with fund-collecting? You are a social worker. You are even, if you like, a diplomat, a statesman. But money raising is a profession in itself and you do not belong in it." He shrugged his shoulders doubtfully and added: "Still, the people in New York have chosen you and you are on your way, so here's my blessing. But I would not have advised calling



you if I had been taken into their counsels." And here I was on my way to try the abilities which he thought were not in me, on him for a starter. I was not over-sanguine.

To add to my depression it was a wild night. The rain and sleet were beating mournfully against the window of my berth. The train was packed with a vociferous throng of ward heelers and office seekers in factitious holiday mood. It was the night of the 3rd of March. On the morrow President Wilson was to be reinaugurated. And the gay scene with its laughter, its imitation good fellowship and its heavy clouds of tobacco smoke was almost insupportable. If only my quarry had been in his customary haunts so that the familiar scene might restore my ease and composure! But he too was at the seat of Government. It would be a crowded day for him. I had grave questionings in my heart as to whether I could even catch a glimpse of him. Affairs in New York were so situated that I must return by the midnight train on the day following. Mr. Rosenwald was not only one of the busiest members of the Council of National Defense, he was personally somewhat close to the President, and to-morrow was a great day in official Washington. Heaven alone knew whether, for all his usual generous leanings, he would be in a mood to listen to my horror-mongering anent the Jews of Eastern Europe.

But the fate of six millions of people in the shambles of the Eastern war-zone depended on the success of my mission. My first campaign was

doomed in advance unless I brought back what I had been sent for. There was no other way. Mr. Rosenwald was the only reliance of the Committee. If I allowed my discouragement to affect me and he failed us, all our plans would be headed for the rocks. All through the night I kept rehearsing the speech I was to make to him. I doubt whether I closed an eye all the way from New York to Washington. I sketched a most gloomy picture of the state of things abroad, drawing largely on my overwrought imagination and on a printed copy of Dr. Magnes's Carnegie Hall address. And I lay in bed repeating it silently until I knew it by rote and was almost in tears over its tragic details myself. As my train pulled into the Union Station I was crowding the porter off the car steps and I was the first to issue upon the street.

Arriving at the Willard Hotel I made for the Rosenwald suite. I was received with the usual cordial hospitality. I was asked to join the family at breakfast, but this was no occasion for broaching my project. There were one or two other guests with us at the table. I did however, manage to convey to my host that I had something of importance to talk about to him and he assured me that he would make time for the purpose late in the evening. The major part of the time during the meal was given over to small talk about the forthcoming celebration. Mr. Rosenwald insisted on getting me tickets for the inaugural celebration. I saw him again when he returned to dress for an official dinner, only for a moment.

For the remainder of the day I was left with nothing to do but to contemplate the trying business that was ahead of me. A friend in whom I confided the object of my visit succeeded in reducing still further the little self-possession that was left me. He thought the whole mission absurd and fantastic. Happily I had the good judgment later in the day to take Mrs. Rosenwald into my confidence. She listened to my recital with a quizzical smile, never interrupting me, and when I had finished she said quietly: "It is, I confess, a rather ambitious mission you are on; I suspect Mr. Rosenwald will throw you out of the window when you broach it to him." Involuntarily I glanced down on the pavement below. "It is not very serious," I said with a forced smile. "It won't be so much of a fall." We talked about other things, or rather I should say Mrs. Rosenwald did. She took considerable delight in mocking my brooding seriousness; all of which was exceedingly fortunate for me, or the suspense and uncertainty might have unnerved me altogether. Her excellent good humor and kindness and her efficient manner of keeping my mind off my preoccupations saved the day.

I joined the family again at dinner—the family, that is to say, without the parents. Then the little party disbanded and for the remainder of the evening I had my task cut out for me in pacing the lobbies of the Willard Hotel.

It was getting late and I dared not leave my post lest he should appear while I was gone and

retire to his suite before I returned. For the first time in my career I had a taste of a detective's life and I found it unsavory. Whether or not I was to succeed as a moneygatherer the future might tell, but for the moment I learned that man-hunting was distinctly out of my sphere. And in the meantime the hour for the last train to New York was drawing nearer and nearer, and far from having achieved the object of my expedition I had not as much as met the enemy.

At 11 o'clock, however, Mr. Julius Rosenwald appeared in the company of two senators. He stopped at the hotel desk to ask for his mail and, never hesitating an instant, I approached and touched his shoulder. He hailed me cordially and unsuspectingly. With his arm around me he led me to where the gentlemen of the Senate were waiting for him and proceeded to introduce me and to tell them my life history. One of the legislators was from my own State of Missouri; and being a friendly and talkative person, he fell into reminiscence. Did I know this one or that one? Did I recall the last political battle between the forces of light and the powers of darkness in Kansas City? How was Old So-and-So getting on? Did I say I had been instrumental in floating that magnificent organization called the Board of Public Welfare? Well, that was a noble piece of work! And all this while I was rehearsing anew what I was about to say to the man I had been shadowing an entire day, assuming that I could get him alone before train time. I squeezed Mr. Rosenwald's

arm significantly and whispered in his ear that I had something of importance to convey to him. He studied me calmly. "Is it very, very important?" he asked lightly, and before I could give him my emphatic reply he bade our friends good-night and drew me off to a sofa in a corner of the lobby.

"Well, tell me all about it," he said as soon as we had sat down. I glanced up at him and my entire harangue on which I had spent so much arduous toil and thought evaporated. I heard myself, to my own great surprise, telling him in the very simplest and most unadorned style that a campaign for ten million dollars was about to be launched, that it needed some powerful dramatic stimulus to start it off effectively and to end it successfully; that a committee had determined that nothing but a great single gift would serve and that he alone could make that gift. I dwelt hardly at all on the state of things abroad, merely indicating in a matter of fact way what he was well aware of, that the condition of the European Jews was growing increasingly worse, and that therefore a renewed effort on a much greater scale than had ever been tried must be initiated. He listened to me without comment while my appeal was gathering momentum and climbing logically from argument to argument to a climax. I had had hundreds of conversations with Mr. Rosenwald but I had never before asked him for contributions of any sort, and never before had I seen a face so transparent and

serene and yet so profoundly thoughtful. I kept praying, as I talked along, that he might not break in. We seemed both under the spell of a common great purpose, and I knew that as long as the spell was not broken the future of the undertaking was assured. As I concluded with my specific request for a round million the earnestness of his expression deepened. He said, "Do you think it will do any good?" I nodded and was about to make a highly colored forecast of the results of such a contribution, when he added: "Very well, I will do it. You may go back to New York and tell them that I'll do it."

No one who has known Julius Rosenwald will find any cause for surprise in the manner in which he acceded to my suggestion. It was thoroughly in keeping with the modesty, the vision and the utter selflessness of the man. I have a very vivid picture in my mind to this moment of the complete absence in his manner and mien of any thought of vain reward. His quick, unhesitating response had in it all the elements of an instinctive reaction. But his reward came nevertheless in the great incentive that he gave to his fellows throughout the country to follow his example; and that, for him as for any genuinely generous heart, was reward enough. Not alone the American Jewish Committee but the country as a whole was soon to feel the impetus of his unparalleled act. The President of the United States at once estimated its importance and telegraphed to him in these words:

The White House, Washington, D. C., Mar. 28,  
Julius Rosenwald, Chicago, Ill.

Your contribution of one million dollars to the Ten Million Dollar Fund for the Relief of Jewish War Sufferers serves democracy as well as humanity. The Russian Revolution has opened the door of freedom to an oppressed people but unless they are given life and strength and courage the opportunity of centuries will avail them little. It is to America that these starving millions look for aid and out of our prosperity fruit of free institutions should spring a vast and ennobling generosity. Your gift lays an obligation even while it furnishes inspiration.

WOODROW WILSON.

And the President of the American Jewish Relief Committee sent his acknowledgment and appreciation in a letter which, as a brilliant sum-up of the task of American Jewry and as a forecast of the good effects of Mr. Rosenwald's action, if for no other reason, should be made a part of this record:

My dear Mr. Rosenwald:

I take great pleasure in extending to you, personally and on behalf of the Committee, most cordial thanks for your great goodness and generosity. Your impressive action cannot fail to be a source of inspiration to every right-thinking man and will undoubtedly call into activity the latent energies of our co-religionists and arouse them to a realizing sense of their obligation to their suffering brethren in belligerent lands. We have needed just such an incentive as that which you now, with char-

acteristic insight and modesty, have imparted to us. There is nothing as contagious as a good example, and I am confident that your initiative will induce hundreds who have heretofore been indifferent, because of a failure to recognize the crying need which exists, to give liberally to the cause, which should enlist the sympathy and charity of every man and woman who has the slightest regard for the good name of Judaism.

Your offer was the first real ray of sunshine that has come to us in these dark days. It seems, however, to have been the precursor of that glorious hope which after so many years of anxious and prayerful waiting has at last dawned upon the inhabitants of Russia, and which I firmly believe will prove a harbinger of universal liberty and in large part lead to the solution of the many serious problems which have in the past confronted the Jewry of the world.

Be assured that we shall do all that lies in our power to earn the million dollars which you are prepared to give so unreservedly, and be further assured that the consciousness of your devotion to suffering humanity and to our own people, who have borne with so much patience the unspeakable hardships which have befallen them, will be an earnest of the undying friendship of your associates and of those in whose hearts abides the love of humanity.

I am, with sincere regards

Yours faithfully,

LOUIS MARSHALL.

to which Mr. Rosenwald replied:



Hon. Julius Rosenwald,  
Chicago, Illinois.

March 9, 1917.

Mr. Louis Marshall, Chairman,  
American Jewish Relief Committee,

Dear Mr. Marshall:

The marked change for the worse which has taken place in the condition of our co-religionists in belligerent lands, so graphically outlined by Mr. Jacob Billikopf, has impressed upon me most acutely the great need of raising immediately the fund which the American Jewish Relief Committee is endeavoring to collect.

In the hope that the urgency of the situation will be brought home to the Jews of the United States, I make the following offer:

I will donate to the fund of the American Jewish Relief Committee an amount not to exceed one million dollars conditioned as follows:

For every million dollars collected after March 1st, I will contribute \$100,000 but, in order that results may be obtained with sufficient rapidity at least in some small measure to meet the present crying needs, I put a time limitation—until November 1, 1917—upon this offer.

I regret that conditions will not permit my joining with you and your Committee actively in the raising of these funds, sincerely believing that no greater crisis in the history of the world has ever existed, where literally millions of people are on the verge of starvation.

Trusting that the total amount of ten million dollars will soon be collected and wishing you Godspeed on your noble errand, I am

Sincerely yours,

JULIUS ROSENWALD.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE CONQUEST OF THE COUNTRY

THE effect of the great contribution was enormously more profound than had been expected even by those who had inspired it. It was as immediate as it was widespread. That it generated a new and increased energy in the American Relief Committee goes without saying. That much at least had been foreseen. The newly devised machinery depended exclusively upon this impulse for its effectiveness. The additional stimulus, wisely provided by the conditions of the donation, served an excellent purpose. The great campaign of 1917 opened with a fanfare. A powerful impetus had been injected into the hitherto pedestrian affairs of the organization, and its new leadership saw to it that none of its fruits should grow unharvested. The new director, taking his cue from his initial achievement, proceeded to organize the entire country upon a scale and with an intensity undreamt of in the past. He had inherited the germ idea of State committees. He set about devoting the entire preliminary period of the campaign to a practical elaboration and extension of it. It is difficult,

owing to the vagueness of the records, to make even reasonably certain as to where the credit for specific schemes of organization belongs. But it is safe, I believe, to assert that it was Mr. Billikopf's skill in organization that was responsible for the highly effective State committees, as the expression is now understood.

In the past three years, the State committee had been scarcely more than an aspiration. Virtually all the moneys that had been collected had come from the metropolitan cities and now and then from the larger towns of the country. Scores of counties in every State had not been as much as touched. It requires time and toil of the most intensive sort to fine-comb an entire State, especially in the less populated regions. And the earlier organization had had its hands more than full in compassing the mobilization of the larger centers. Indeed, this preliminary work with the cities provided the backbone and nucleus for the lining-up of the entire country. State organization would have been almost unfeasible without these bases. Mr. Billikopf and his staff, vividly aware of the value of the legacy that had come to them from their predecessors, made the most thorough-going use of their agencies in cities like Chicago, Atlanta, New Orleans and San Francisco. By way of economizing their resources, they enlisted the aid of city

chairmen everywhere in their efforts to extend the organization into their respective States. It was a happy device which the new directorate was to use repeatedly and with great effect in the future, and it marked the initial recognition of the important psychological fact that the indifferent outsider of yesterday, having once been recruited, may readily be turned into an agent for the conversion of those who still remain outside. Every man who was now asked to undertake the organization of his particular State had perhaps no more than a month before offered vigorous resistance to the effort of the Committee to associate him with the work at all. Now, however, he was a part of the establishment, and with the customary human pride of organization, he was ready to go far beyond the limits of his original intentions in rendering the work as successful as might be.

The net result of this twofold endeavor—the renewed vitality at headquarters and the multiplication of the directorate in forty-eight separate centers—was that within very few months a network of intensely vigorous subsidiaries stretching from coast to coast had been effected. For the first time since the outbreak of the war, a complete mobilization of the country had been brought about, so that from now on collecting campaigns could be launched and successfully conducted from head-

quarters accessibly located and manned by people who were both familiar with the financial and psychological conditions of their sphere and who were themselves influential and well-known to their constituencies. In the majority of instances, the erstwhile chairman of the leading city was transformed into the State chairman, and he in turn was invited to get into touch with prominent men in well-chosen towns and counties throughout his State as a preliminary to the establishment of local committees. The national office, it goes without saying, coöperated intensively. A method had been devised whereby the State chairman could be aided in the choice of his lieutenants by supplying him with preliminary data as to the financial qualifications of candidates. The State chairman himself could be well relied on to supplement the information conveyed to him from New York, but it was of the utmost service to him to be presented with a small selection of names from which he might make his ultimate choice. The central office continually consulted the lists provided by the financial agencies in determining the standing in the community of a prospective local representative. Dun's and Bradstreet's provided the fundamental basis of selection. The State committee, starting from that point, determined the

rest of the necessary qualifications of candidates.

But it was not solely upon the Jewish relief organizations that the Rosenwald contribution reacted with such splendid effect. A new pace and standard had been set for benevolence generally, and men and women of means and generous impulses were moved to think upon the problems of both war and internal philanthropy in new and larger terms. To be sure, there had been in the past vast contributions of a semi-philanthropic character, directed toward the endowment of specific institutions. There had been for many years in existence in America great foundations which dealt in figures exceeding the Rosenwald gift. Yet all such funds had been contributed toward the advancement of what are called constructive projects. Clinics and universities, missionary bodies and establishments for the promotion of universal peace and their like, had been the exclusive beneficiaries of these staggering fortunes. Never before, however, had any mere charity devoted to temporary and palliative relief been known to scale such heights. The war had served to familiarize people with huge expenditures. But previous to March, 1917, a hundred thousand dollars had been regarded as the startling finality, even in war-giving. Such donations had

themselves been of sufficient rarity and they therefore never failed to elicit the wonderment and commendation of an entire continent.

Now, at one amazing leap, a revolutionary departure had taken place. A page in the history of philanthropy had been turned and a new epoch begun. A reclassification of worth was imminent. The givers in six digits found themselves overnight removed from the pinnacle of human generosity and relegated to second place. Henceforth, none but men and women who could think in terms large enough to actually meet the demands of a changed order, could hope to rank among the first line of world-philanthropists.

The impact was felt throughout the country by every variety of relief agency. Before the campaign of that year had been completed the United States had entered the war and the numerous war work associations which had arisen to coöperate with the Government became the inheritors as it were of Mr. Rosenwald's imaginative act. A spirit of generous rivalry and emulation had been created. Scores of men and women in the front ranks of these philanthropies took note of the altered atmosphere and opened their treasuries in accordance with the new standard set for them. It was not merely a feeling that they could not afford to be outdone; they had simply been orien-

tated anew. They were seeing their tasks and their responsibilities in a fresh light. The angle of approach to war philanthropy had been widened; the point of view had been shifted to rarer elevations.

The permanent peace-time social institutions likewise came in for their share. It was inevitable but that the revised philosophy of philanthropy should affect the pace and tone of general benevolence. Hospitals, orphanages and sanitariums of all sorts which in times past had had a struggle to raise trifling sums for their maintenance found themselves in a position where huge endowments exceeding the best dreams of their directors could be secured almost overnight and with a minimum of effort. The sympathetic ducts of the nation had been touched and set flowing with a liberality and regularity unknown before. Men and women—and generous ones—who had hitherto been accustomed to annual pittances in the interest of a news-boys' club or the like, began to be stirred by a new conscience and found themselves irritated by an uncomfortable sense of having been unforgivably slack.

The dramatic value of the Rosenwald contribution was turned to account in a manner so simple as to suggest the attributes of genius. It will be remembered that the donation had been promised on condition that an aggregate amount equal to



nine times its own size should be raised in the rest of the country. In other words, Mr. Rosenwald's share of the campaign receipts was to be ten per cent of the total, providing the total was not over ten millions. Taking this circumstance into consideration the directorate proceeded to canvass the country for other donors who might be prepared to play the same rôle in their own state or community as the Chicago merchant had agreed to play with respect to the country as a whole. The device worked magically. Everywhere in the United States "Local Rosenwalds" sprang up offering to contribute one-tenth of the aggregate contribution of their city, state or section. This development was beyond doubt the most fruitful of all consequences of the Rosenwald-Billikopf conspiracy as far as the immediate advancement of the relief cause was concerned. Without it, it is gravely to be questioned whether the most gripping relief project ever undertaken by Jews in America could have been carried to success. It was in a performance crammed full of fancy-stirring incidents, far and away the most impressive.

## CHAPTER X

### THE CONDUCT OF A CAMPAIGN

#### AN EXTERIOR VIEW

**H**AD it not been for the circumstance that the amazing spectacle of fortune-gathering as it has been perfected in the past two years occurred in the midst of the electric atmosphere of a world at war, I have no doubt but that it would have been noted as one of the most startling and stupendous exhibitions of organized popular effort. The modern world has made some very notable advances on antiquity in the matter of large-scale public performance. It has inherited and re-adapted the ancient circus, the arena and the open air amphitheater and it has gone many an impressive step beyond this meager legacy. It has invented and carried to a high degree of perfection the international exposition; it has projected and carried into the domain of reality the national park and the national playground—things that sprawl over territories immense enough to comprise an old-time empire, and draw multitudes undreamt of by ancient monarchs. Most curious of all, it has devised and developed that most fantastic of

spectacles of modern times, the national political campaign.

But in all seriousness there is nothing in any of these that can even remotely rival the fund collecting campaign as it has been developed in the recent past. For sheer diversity of mechanism, for the vistas it opens up into the exuberance of human ingenuity, for the scope and depth of its bewildering appeal to the senses and the emotions, for its startling utilization of the findings of the new science of psychology, and for its purely spectacular quality it is an entirely unique institution.

Consider the scene. Weeks before the opening of the first guns there commences, and imperceptibly develops, an intense barrage of carefully selected news, feature articles and pictorial material. The reading public which had all its adult life managed to plod on in felicitious ignorance of the very existence of Walloons in Belgium or Uhro-Rusins in Ukrainia or Jews in Lithuania is startled out of its indifferent stupor with a skillfully graded series of dramatized lessons in the history, ethnic antecedents, present economic status and racial aspirations of these somewhat vague, highly picturesque and heroic peoples. The purely educational content of this gratuitous information is, modestly speaking, enormous. The Mentor Asso-

ciation is by the side of this a mere tyro. You suddenly realize how your education has been falsified and skimmed. Glancing down the broad avenues of culture that stretch majestically before you, you become a prey to regret and resent the consummate frauds who called themselves your teachers at school and college. What do they know of art and archæology, of literature and geography, of history and anthropology? Why, here are whole races—to judge by the accounts, the very foremost members of the human family—with records in warfare, in the art of self-government, in the skill for divine song, whose very existence had never even been mentioned to you throughout your long arduous career at college. Of course your heart is set vibrating with an uncanny sympathy for these neglected portions of the race; partly, no doubt, out of sense of kinship born of the realization that you have yourself been carelessly passed over when the intelligence about them was being generally imparted. An irresistible yearning comes over you. You see these brave, stalwart races. You extend your fraternal hand to them to share with them their noble lives and worship communally with them at their sacred shrines.

And then—it is curious how many interesting things happen in the places and to the people we

have lately read about! Before you have had time to grasp the trend of your own tender emotions the tragic news is flashed across half the world to you, that these very recent friends and brothers of yours are in a most serious situation. Their venerable old men, their plucky, beautiful women, their tender, wide-eyed children are being starved, exiled and massacred by an unspeakable and cruel enemy. Things look as black as night. You, and you alone are the only prop in their adversity. Irrelevantly the reports of these regrettable incidents conclude with a query to you. Will you help? Of course you will. The mere question is a slight to your generosity.

This neat bit of propaganda is, as I say, but a curtain raiser; the actual performance has as yet scarcely begun. But the suspense is of brief duration. Things begin to move jauntily. Telegrams sail across the wires "not single spy but in battalions." Noted visitors make their appearance in the city—visitors curiously enough who have been public figures in American life for a generation, but who it is suddenly revealed are themselves scions of the gallant unhappy peoples in question. The accustomed tenor of the community's life is quickened and galvanized. The "social"—an institution normally associated with the effete centers—buds forth, blossoms and multiplies in tropical

luxuriance. Formal luncheons and still more formal dinner parties crowd the calendar. Public halls are rented and given over to nightly performances of undreamt magnificence. There is eloquence and histrionic talent, bazaars riotous in their oriental profusion of color abound; and all of this in the same persistent touching key.

The streets are lined with posters in endless variety of phrase, color and size. Nor are the public conveyances exempt. Mercantile interests are forgotten, the spaces traditionally preëmpted by familiar commercial announcements are suddenly and universally superseded by the pressing appeals of the distant sufferers from the war. The business houses of the town have with one accord turned over their plants and their high-salaried advertising experts to the service of the great cause; and these latter with their well-known skill portray, with pens and brushes dipped in the tears and sorrows of the victims, each pathetic detail of their misery. Only as an afterthought and in the most inconspicuous manner is it divulged that these spaces in railway and newspaper are "contributed by the First National Bank," or by the Universal Sweets Corporation.

The ancient easy relationships of the community have been set awry. At first glance it looks indeed simple enough. One hears a lot, to

be sure, of a committee which is in charge of all these amazing operations; and the appeals and exultations are addressed presumably to the public. In practice, however, the line between committee and public, between solicitor and solicited is not so readily drawn. The names printed on the deluge of stationery which comes by the morning mail are a fiction; the whole town is the committee. What is taking place is not a mere benevolent enterprise. Doubtless that is the eventual and ultimate object. But for the time being and in its effect on the home folks it is in round terms a conspiracy which is spreading with astonishing speed and engulfing all one's associates. One is walking on seemingly familiar ground, but every inch of it is overspread with an invisible net. There is no telling at all when one shall inadvertently wander into its meshes.

The entire delicate mechanism of mutual confidence in society, in business, in the very home has been undermined; so that one is at a loss as to whom to trust and whom to suspect. One gets invitations and instinctively accepts them. But before long one discovers that the very social amenities have been taken over by the campaign organization. A luncheon has ceased to be (for the duration of the campaign at least) a friendly hour's companionship, it has become one of the numerous

**Our Boys Freed Them—  
WON'T YOU FEED THEM?**



**AMERICAN JEWRY?** The wolves of hunger are still attacking  
Will we protect our own from starvation?

**SHALL WE SAVE THEM?  
WHAT WILL YOU DO?**



**Our Boys Freed Them—  
WON'T YOU FEED THEM?**



I plead for this mother.  
I plead for this babe at her breast.  
I plead for thousands of starving children  
Starvation is winning while you wait.  
I plead for your generosity, so that **THEY** may live.



CAMPAIGN POSTERS





methods of soliciting contributions. And what is true of the noon repast applies with equal force to dinners, card parties, the links and the club. There is no safety anywhere. The whole community has been reorganized overnight into a mutual association for soliciting funds on behalf of the Jewish or Polish or Armenian war sufferers. The teller at the bank, the stationer across the street, the bootblack around the corner, are no longer interested in their usual respective businesses; they are each and all the secret agents of the Relief Committee.

With the home and family life matters have gone even worse. The domestic establishment has for the moment been shelved and its place has been taken by a subsidiary of the campaign forces. The mother of the household is now the captain of a team assigned to the exploitation of a specified territory, which as all charity should, begins at home. Her badge is a mere external though impressive decoration. What astonishes her own husband particularly is the vast extent of her information about the past history, the present needs, and the future possibilities of her beneficiaries. One has never suspected her gifts of organization and resourcefulness as a business getter before. What a tremendous asset she could have been in her husband's economic enterprises!

The wife is no more than the leading factor in the plot. The dramatis personae include one's children and even one's very domestic servants. The cook is only incidentally a culinary expert. Primarily he is an Italian and a member of the Auxiliary of the Milk Fund for Sicilian Babies. The chauffeur has his own racial affiliations, and though he continues perfunctorily to perform his customary secular duties his chief and absorbing interest now is in determining by what methods he might most efficiently make the contribution of his employer to the Association for the Blind and Crippled by the War commensurate with the said employer's income. The eldest heir of the name announces modestly that he has resolved to turn over the entire savings of a lengthy and arduous lifetime to the French Orphans' Fund and there is a query in his voice as to the exact figure that his parent's contribution would come to should the latter, as he must, match it in a decent ratio to his own resources and sacrifice.

The outcome of this universal and persistent grilling is but a matter of time and endurance. In the end no mortal man can successfully hold out, and when the surrender inevitably comes, let it not be supposed that it is a mere matter of financial surrender. One capitulates unconditionally. And that involves (first of all, to be sure) a mone-

tary donation of handsome proportions, but chiefly a going over to the ranks of the enemy. One has in yielding, made common cause with the conspirators and tacitly agreed to do unto others as he has all this while been done by.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE CONDUCT OF A CAMPAIGN

#### AN INTERIOR VIEW

**W**HAT has just preceded is but an account of what every American has lived through while this community was in the throes of the campaign. It is an attempt at portraying what occurs on this side of the footlights and is visible to the throng in the pit. What goes on in the inner recesses of the stage in the process of assembling this amazing spectacle, is a phase of the story that is not so well known; but it is far and away the most impressive. I do not pretend to know to what heights this inner organization has attained in other bodies, but it is precisely here that the new director of the A. J. R. C. made his unique contribution to the labors and achievements of the American Jewish Relief Committee. The details of campaigning, the toil of country-wide organization, the complexities of publicity are largely mechanical tasks. They demand persistent energy and indefatigable application. And these qualifications have been very notable in the equipment of the earlier manage-

ment. What distinguished Mr. Billikopf was, as I have previously intimated, a rare personal force, a matchless capacity for winning to his side strategic personalities and recruiting them into the service of his enterprise.

It is this valuable gift that has enabled the new director of the A. J. R. C. to improve so richly on the past and to write a new chapter in the history of war philanthropy. He had not, as it will be remembered, any very considerable acquaintance among the leading figures of American Jewry, and in New York he had been practically a stranger. He had set down in his little note book a brief list of salient names, and had mentally resolved that though he was to be himself the titular Commander-in-Chief, he would make these influential men and women the generals in his forthcoming enterprise. The name was virtually all he knew of Mr. Jacob H. Schiff, of Mr. Felix M. Warburg, of Mr. Nathan Straus, of Mr. Henry Morgenthau and of Mr. Louis Marshall, and of half a dozen others.

He proceeded to get behind these names to the reality. He convinced himself, by way of a beginning, that he had the rarest of merchandise to offer to these influential persons and that it was, therefore, inevitable that they should become interested. It was this one twist in his psychology that saved him from failure. His predecessors had rational-

ized the state of things differently. They had hesitated to approach significant personalities because it had seemed to them that they had little to offer to their patrons. They were asking for large contributions (so they reasoned) and were giving nothing in return for them; therefore, their delicate sense told them it would be extremely presumptuous to accept, in addition to financial assistance, the time and devoted interest of their clients.

Mr. Billikopf stated the case to himself in characteristic terms. Far from regarding the transaction as accruing to the benefit of one side alone, he fell back on his grasp of realistic psychology and arrived at the somewhat startling conclusion that in all philanthropy, and especially in war benevolence, the benefit, in so far as it is one-sided, redounds almost exclusively to the giver. In large measure, he owed this inverted but upright logic to Mr. Nathan Straus, who some time before had altered the slogan "Give till it hurts" to read "Give till it feels good," and our new director, taking counsel with himself, came to see the relationship between solicitor and solicited in some such light as this:

"Of course, I have no material stock in my trade, but where has it ever been set down that material goods are the one species of irresistible merchandise? It is as true as it ever was that what men and women most earnestly seek is the intangible, unexchangeable, and

imperishable article. I am a trafficker in sympathy, and it is only a question of skillful merchandising, of competent methods in convincing my clientele of the supreme worth of the goods I offer them."

So Mr. Billikopf proceeded to avail himself of the really fundamental assets in his trade. Primarily, he was not interested in obtaining huge financial contributions from his leading figures. Great sums he regarded as being valuable to his purposes only in so far as they possessed psychological value—that is to say, in so far as they constituted an incentive to other givers. Often enough, to be sure, he went to disproportionate lengths in his endeavors to raise prospective contributions to some higher figure. He had worked up a scale in which each man or woman had his or her definite place, and he had made it a rigid policy never, as far as it was in his power, to permit any contribution to slide below the level he had set for it. But all this was part and parcel of his larger conception of the policy of the organization. In many an instance he felt that he could well afford to invest in publicity a sum actually greater than the donation he was aiming for. But the issue and success of an entire campaign often depended on the size of the offering of a given prominent person. If, for instance, the leading citizen of Atlanta should be known to have cut his share below a previously ap-



pointed figure, the fact would be nothing less than a kind of sabotage of the Atlanta campaign as a whole. Lesser persons would inevitably be guided by the pace set for them by the leader of their city; and the net result of such an apparently insignificant mishap at the outset would be not only a reduction in the aggregate, but a weakened, disorganized campaign and a virtually complete loss of those by-products of an intense atmosphere, which Mr. Billikopf always held to be the most valuable domestic increment of the entire affair.

It became, therefore, one of the fundamentals in the new technique to wind up the financial phase of a campaign before the public spectacle had begun. The preliminary maneuvers received the most detailed and careful manipulations. Commonly the curtain-raiser took the form of a luncheon or dinner given to a carefully selected,—and as a rule small,—group. It was essential that this group should include not only the financially and socially representative, but the utmost care was necessary in the selection to avoid an inadvertent chilling of the enthusiasm of the gathering. And this involved the most painstaking scrutiny of each prospective guest—a research into his past philanthropic record, his social temperament, and his recent and present relationship with his fellow citizens. To the local officers had, of course, to be delegated the details of

such a program, but in outline the director from headquarters became for the time being a deliverer into the communal ins and outs of every city which was about to undertake a relief campaign. Much of the data thus acquired was conveyed to the speaker who was invariably detailed to address this pre-campaign meeting. The speakers, by the by, ranged from bishops to financiers and back again to nationally known rabbis. Dr. Stephen S. Wise and Dr. Nathan Kraus gave, perhaps, more unstintingly of their time and their talents than the rest. But the honor list extends to every corner of the country and embraces well-nigh every name of oratorical importance.

It was not, however, in recruiting talent or even in the development of the technique of publicity in the ordinary sense that the new director made his departure from the past. The achievement, to put it roundly, consisted in a vigorous application to the task in hand of the fundamentals of psychology. I am not sure whether a publicity expert would find any startling improvement in the material achievements of the new director as compared with those of his predecessors. Emphatically the new start was a matter of marshaling unused private resources. The earlier management had looked upon the prominent men in Jewry as its chief asset in the direct raising of funds. The new manage-

ment turned its attention to the problem of securing the coöperation of newer and less known men by making an astute use of the fame and influence of these leading figures. Mr. Billikopf saw in such personalities as Mr. Straus and Mr. Schiff far vaster possibilities than the fortunes they might be induced to contribute. Names like theirs had quite a magic potency which, properly harnessed, could be rendered instrumental in bringing in untouched millions and injecting a spirit into the proceedings hitherto undreamed of. All of these men and a considerable number of others were heartily disposed to be harnessed, since they were already members of the council of the committee. The new director invited their attention to the tremendous services they were capable of contributing to the cause they were so vitally interested in by lending their names directly and with a minimum of reserve to the process of campaigning. The suggestion was irresistible. Never before had such eminent men of affairs participated so constantly and so devotedly in the interests of a philanthropy as did Messrs. Jacob H. Schiff, Nathan Straus, Louis Marshall, Julius Rosenwald, Abram Elkus, and Henry Morgenthau in the interest of the American Jewish Relief Committee.

Each of these men at one period or another gave a kind of blank check to the management. Each

wrote innumerable letters to prospective contributors who required special incentives. Mr. Schiff and Mr. Straus, despite their advanced age, were ever ready to make distant journeys, whenever in the judgment of the committee their presence was required in the opening of a campaign. Mr. Elkus and Mr. Morgenthau, during 1918, became regular bookings in the committee's far-flung circuit.

It would yield interesting results if one were to estimate the incalculable fortunes that were deflected into the coffers of relief in consequence of the personal influence exerted by these men at the suggestion of their young generalissimo. I have a vivid picture of the latter, flanked at his desk by a pair of telephones, in constant conspiratorial communication with the princes of earth. Latest reports indicate (he confides to one of these) that the leading personage of San Francisco will sabotage the California campaign by scrimping his proper share. Of course, one might withhold publicity in the matter until the end, but it were best if a little effective pressure could be brought on certain definite points of his position. Would Mr. A. write him in brief explaining the urgency of the situation? Or — the chairman of the State committee of Oklahoma is in the city on business. He has been an indefatigable and most valuable worker; a new campaign in his State is about to be

launched; and there is no telling how salutary to his personal spirits and the general result an invitation to lunch by Mr. B. would be. Or — an attempt is being made to line up the insurance fraternity on behalf of the forthcoming campaign in the city. Mr. X. is not only a wealthy and prominent member of the trade, but he is consumed with immoderate social ambitions. His acceptance of the chairmanship of the Insurance Men's Committee would be a foregone conclusion, if only Mr. C. could manage to be present at the committee's organization meeting to-morrow evening and bestow certain subtle signs of recognition upon him. The device, once one has captured it, is capable of infinite variation, and Mr. Billikopf's cabinet of fame and distinction is at his service for them all.

The human instrument, in brief, is firmly grasped in the nimble hands of our director and its every stop played upon to excellent purpose. He has studied and charted and graphed its possibilities in infinite detail. Given a specified impulse and he can, with striking accuracy, forecast the response. That, in substance, is the essence of his technique. The mechanics of mere organization, the intricate problems of public campaigning, he leaves to those who are gifted with the leaning and skill for that sort of thing: his is a novel and distinct trade in itself. And this trade is marked by a simplicity



IN THE WHIRL OF A CAMPAIGN



and a freedom from abstruse technicality characteristic of the artist and the pioneer in science. There are no fantastic instruments in his shop, no bustle and scramble, no impressive files and devices. He is but a modest searcher into the recesses of human motive, a practitioner in the art of making human contacts.

To the untrained mind there is a suggestion of cynicism in the contemplation of such an art. It thinks of a cold and somewhat desiccated adept, removed from the common emotions and concerns of everyday humanity, insensitively dissecting and laying bare the sacred infirmities of our nature. It is an overdrawn picture. This new arrival in the ranks of the subtler professions is not in the least remote. He is very much a part of his own subject matter—that is precisely why he is so astonishingly effective at it. He regularly begins his analysis with the nearest specimen at hand—himself. And he arrives in the directest way imaginable at the commonplace conclusion that though mankind is very profoundly moved by the impulse of unaided sympathy, the instinct for generosity is exposed to other modes of irritation and is no more immune than other human appetites to jading. Men are what they are, and it would be mere scrupling sentimentality to forbear when other powerful motives may so readily in the interests of a good cause be



called into play. The craving for adulation, self-advancement, and common vanity may not be creditable to the race; but it is idle to deny that they are part of all our equipment and it would be sheer negligence to decline them recognition, when the welfare of millions is at stake.

This resort to a subtler motivation by the employment of personal influences in due time develops into an instrument of the widest utility. Just as the Rosenwald contribution, coupled with the ten per cent. formula upon which it was conditioned, was at once adopted by numberless leaders in other places, so the device of direct individual pressure soon became a fundamental principle in local organization everywhere. Something in the nature of a hierarchy of social and commercial prestige was gradually elaborated; the national figures communicated certain forms of influence to a limited list of prominent men and women in various localities, and these in turn conveyed a similar form of motivation to strategic individuals in their respective districts; until the time came when every hamlet in the country was in some sort a link in the exquisitely graduated chain. This broad-gauged system was, furthermore, being continually supplemented by a parallel mechanism of official stimulation. The President of the United States having set the pace by his proclamation, the

organization succeeded in interesting, first, governors of states, then chief executives of municipalities, to give the enterprise a public send-off.

The purely monetary results of this astute management were enormous, as a mere glance at the figures would suffice to show. But the spiritual and social by-products of the intensive cultivation of a communal esprit de corps surpassed all expectations. New blood was infused into the civic and philanthropic leadership of scores of cities. Men and women without number and in every part of the country who had never before been active in communal affairs were initiated into the ways of social usefulness, and came away feeling that there were responsibilities for them which they could never again disregard. And, contrary to the common assumption, the common effort of disinterested people in behalf of a cause removed from barter and profit has served to knit indifferent and often exclusive and distrustful groups into a closer and more intimate community of understanding and coöperation.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF GIVING

**A** GLANCE at some of the salient facts in the history of war relief suggests a number of curious and rather pertinent generalizations. There is, to begin with, something striking to the imagination in the spectacle of huge fortunes accumulated upon foundations so intangible and imponderable. One sees practical men of affairs, whose outlook and habit of mind has trained them (presumably) to a rigid conception of values, suddenly and unaccountably flinging the principles of a life-time to the winds and engaging not merely their material resources, but their enthusiasm and their high-priced time and energy upon a fantastic, airy venture which yields no visible returns. In ordinary times, in moments when we lightly think of these men as being most themselves, you could not very easily get them to participate in activities outside the well-defined boundaries of their usual affairs. When all is said and done, the lion's share of the income of relief societies comes, after all, out of the pockets of people broadly belonging to the ranks of business—people popularly classified as the level-minded, the profit-seeking, the hard-

headed, the unsentimental. And one beholds them hobnobbing with social workers and charitable ladies, lavishly squandering their substance and their talents upon inconsequential concerns, weakly yielding to altruistic appeals, often even lending a hand in propagating them—and one wonders involuntarily, What has become of the far-famed tough back-bone of our most substantial class?

And this interest, be it noted, shows none of the ear-marks of the temporary hobby. It endures with unabated zest, not merely throughout an entire campaign, but holds its own from year to year and grows in intensity as time goes on. It is seldom, indeed, that the personnel of committees is changed to any appreciable extent in a given State or city, unless it is by the adherence of new converts to the faith. The appetite for good works far from showing symptoms of getting jaded, seems unmistakably to grow by what it feeds on. Other observers have noted, and the statistics confirm, that contributions tend, broadly speaking, to increase in geometrical progression. Defection from the ranks of donors is even rarer than back-sliding in the councils of active workers.

It is a strange phenomenon. Mankind is notorious for its capacity for fatigue. It tires of nearly everything. Men grow weary of their work and of their pleasures. There is no telling to what de-

gree reform and revolution, the rise of new sects in religion and the decay of old ones, the migration of races, and the exchange of monarchies for republics and republics for soviets—there is no telling to what extent all mutations in the body politic are influenced by the element of fatigue. If only populations could be kept interested, or at least indifferent, and disinclined to change, the heads of statesmen and pontiffs would, perhaps, not turn gray so prematurely. Yet the war relief engineer has been with us this half a decade with all his shouting and trumpeting and nagging and cajoling and downright threatening; and not a rumble anywhere of mutiny, not a stir anywhere to depose him. Still, as in the earliest blissful days of the autumn of 1914, the procession of magi bearing gifts moves on, headed for his sanctum—excepting only that its ranks are fuller and its burthens richer.

Is it not legitimate, then, to inquire into the sources of this astonishing vitality and growth? When the American Jewish Relief Committee, which congratulated itself upon its achievements in harvesting ten million dollars two years ago, now confidently sets out to raise twenty-five millions, with every sign pointing toward success, the search for the hidden springs of its mechanism becomes irresistible. Were the Jewish organizations alone in this uninterrupted progress, one might be in-

clined to answer that Jews have a habit of benevolence. But they are *not* alone. Drives without end or limit continue among us as if no armistice had ever been signed. We have scarcely done with the Near East, when the victims of the latest Italian earthquake are upon us. The Salvation Army scrapes its posters off the hoardings, only to make room for the placards of the Boy Scouts. The Victory Loan orators clear the rostrum, only to be followed by the Knights of Columbus. But the Jews themselves have kicked far out of the traces of mere tradition. Even they have not made a habit of accumulating imperial fortunes annually for distribution among the needy. The habit theory will not hold water. The indulgence in voluntary sacrifice is not pleasant enough to become second nature to any race.

Well, there has been the widest range of theorizing. Well-disposed psychologists have taken the shortest route to truth, and have submitted that the response is merely proportionate to the emergency. Mankind, they have explained, is normally moved to generosity by the spectacle of calamity, regardless of previous training and habits of thrift. The same man who will keep a whole office staff up until midnight to locate a missing penny in the accounts, will give away half a year's income without a qualm. Mr. Billikopf, as we know, holds

tenaciously to the ancient doctrine that those who have given their talents to the accumulation of great wealth here below, are most inclined to lay up treasures in Heaven where they may be least exposed to corrosion and theft. Others, on the other hand, have made much of the "motivation of vanity" and have seen an astute business sense in the exchange of large sums for still larger returns in social and even economic prestige. I am not eager to enter the discussion either as an umpire or as an added contestant. If I must offer a judgment, I should lean to the conclusion that the truth is with them all. There is no more a uniform philanthropic mind than there is an integrated mind among the mass of men who compose an army. Every class and temperament has been represented on the contributors' lists, and there is no theory but applies to some, and none that can fit them all. Between Nathan Straus, who had to be restrained from giving away his very home, and the insurance agent who looks upon his association with the Committee as a subtle mechanism of business-getting, there is a long road and there is room enough on it for every conceivable motive in real or factitious generosity.

Doubtless, the incentive of pure mercy is at once the most potent and of the widest application. Certainly, this is true of the earliest stages. Witness

the spontaneous enthusiasm of the classic mass-meeting at Carnegie Hall, and the warm response everywhere, when once the state of suffering abroad became manifest. It is, I believe, in sustaining an even level of interest that the influence of other impulses plays a real part. I have, myself, been impressed time and time again, as I observed the progress of campaigns, to how vast an extent workers and contributors alike are moved by immediate, as distinguished from remote, incentives. There is a civic phase in the matter of war philanthropy which is commonly overlooked. In most of the recent drives the element of pure benevolence is very slightly stressed; and for the most excellent psychological reasons. The participants have by this time ceased to visualize with any great vividness the tragedy which their aid is to mitigate. Subconsciously, they are, of course, aware of the ultimate destination of their funds; but what interests them directly is that dear old Michigan shall go "over the top" and incidentally teach proud, disdainful New York that Western States know how to be generous when duty calls. Now that the war is over, it can give no comfort to the enemy to suggest that the same subtle motive works in the raising of volunteers for our armed forces. The given community is, of course, primarily moved by the patriotic sense, but directly the pride of the imme-



diat locality counts for vastly more. One wants to beat Germany, no doubt; but Germany is a long way off, and the satisfaction of beating the adjacent village or the next State is enormously keener.

An added influence springs out of the curious human club-sense. The hardest work an organizer in any field has to do is to get people to cross his threshold. Once they are in, he can trust them not only to stay in, but to drag every one of their family and acquaintance, and every passer-by, in after them. It is a commonplace phenomenon. I may have some very lively objections to the synagogue or the Methodist church, but having been persuaded to join in its activities, I have become more than a mere member. I have become a missionary. But only yesterday Mr. Jonas Weil may have complained that the War Relief Committee was a pest and a nuisance; but somehow or other a member of his family or of his firm has succeeded in bringing him in, and from now on he will not only contribute heavily and with good grace, but he will regard every one of his friends and associates who remain outside as a quitter and a slacker and will never rest until they are in with him. How far Mr. Jonas Weil's behavior is a complex of the instinct for proselyting and the desire to see the rest of the world in his own shoes, I am willing to leave to the experts to determine.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE SHARE OF THE OTHERS

FROM its very inception, the movement for saving the Jewish people in the war-torn countries from annihilation assumed something vastly broader than a tribal or sectarian character. It will be remembered that President Wilson gave the movement his blessing and support before it had scarcely begun. But the American people, as a whole, seem to have realized from the first that when men and women and children are hungry and suffering, their origin and their faith and their local habitation are the least important things about them. Such has, time out of mind, been the American position wherever and whenever misfortune befell human beings. And this disposition of Americans is, I assume, a demonstration of the international color of American thinking and sympathy, and reminds one very vividly how keenly alive the American people are to their own international origin.

But whether it was a too sensitive Jewish pride or a fidelity to its record for independence in benev-

olence, there was for a long time a reluctance on the part of the leaders to accept contributions from the non-Jews. Even to this day there persists in various quarters a very deep distrust of the non-sectarian campaign, although this method of appeal has proved in many places its worth, not only by a virtual doubling of collections, but especially by its contribution to an enhanced community spirit and a better mutual understanding between Jew and Gentile wherever the plan has been tried.

But despite the proud reluctance and reticence of the American Jew himself, contributions large and small, financial and moral, became a feature of no mean proportion from the very outset. The generous non-Jew, undaunted by the modesty of his Jewish neighbor, simply insisted that he shall not be excluded from participation in a Christian cause even though its beneficiaries might be the unbaptized. To these dedicated men and women this was not a cause for any sort of limited group, however genuine or artificial the lines that separated that group from the rest of mankind might be. Churchmen reminded their followers that they owed a two-fold debt to the people of Christ—one, for that people's gift to the world of its faith and its prophets, and the other for the exile and sorrows which Jews have been subjected to in the past at the hands of would-be Christians and

in the name of Christianity. And laymen remembered that Jews in their respective American communities had ever been the first to participate in public undertakings with their money and their time, whether these undertakings were of a broadly communal character or of a distinctly sectarian and non-Jewish kind.

But, primarily, the American Gentile looked upon the relief of Jews in Europe as a purely human task. They declined to rationalize the matter. People were in want, and that was enough. As Mr. George D. Armistead, the postmaster of San Antonio, in declining to accept thanks for his share in the campaign conducted in his city, expressed it: "I did what I could in this noble work and I shall count myself undeserving of the respect of my fellow Americans if I ever thought of allowing race, creed or color to stand between me and the duties of a real man when confronted anywhere in the world by starvation and distress." North and South, on the Atlantic seaboard, in the middle-West and on the Pacific, men and women who were faithful to the humane American tradition, or who had not forgotten their Bible, or who had had dealings with Jews in their own villages, came forward enthusiastically to do their part in every campaign, egged on by a sense that a people, which in spite of twenty centuries of

persecution could still retain enough of their vigor to be continually making contributions to the world's civilization and be worthy citizens everywhere, should not be allowed to perish in the shambles of a world gone mad.

Judge E. B. Muse of Dallas has expressed, I venture to hope, the attitude of high-minded non-Jews in this matter in the most eloquent words—words which coming from a Jew would have been ungracious, but are all the nobler for their source:

“All we have to do is to stop and think—think, what the Jew has done for the world—think what a debt the world owes the Jew, to make honest, conscientious men step forth and do their best now in behalf of the Jew. The Jew first pointed man to the worship of the only true and living God, a personal God, a God of love, law, justice and mercy.

“The Bible, the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount—the foundation of all law in all civilized lands comes to us from the Jew.

“We proudly appropriate it all as our very own, then proceed promptly to deprecate and depreciate the source from whence it came.

“Christ was a Jew; we worship, praise and prate about the lowly Nazarene—We revere the spot and venerate the land in which He was born, and then straightway turn and revile the race that gave Him birth.

Oh generous, consistent Gentile! We take the gift and welcome it to our bosom, then turn our backs and shut the door in the face of the giver. Whoever saw a Jew beggar—whoever saw a Jew begging for bread in this

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country of ours? Point the time and place. They are a proud, sensitive people. They are a frugal, economical, thrifty and progressive people—all they ask is a chance and opportunity to live and be happy.

They have contributed of their blood and treasure unstintedly to every good cause for freedom and humanity's sake—from Bunker Hill to Yorktown and from Yorktown all the way to this good hour.

No purer patriots ever lived, no more loyal friends had any man or country than the Jews, who for country and friendship sake financed Washington in the dark days of the American Revolution.

The history of the world tells the story of their undimmed devotion and undying love for freedom.

It appears to me to be not only a duty, but it seems as well it should be the pleasure of every thinking, liberty-loving Gentile in America, to arise and say—Yes—yes, this is the first time I have ever been called upon to help the Jew—God help me, I will do my best, it may not be much, but much or little, I will do my best.”

Writing to the press of his State anent the combined campaign for one hundred thousand dollars for the Jewish War Sufferers and the Jewish Welfare Board, Judge W. R. Allen of the Supreme Court of North Carolina stated the case for Americans' coöperation with Jews in their supreme need in these emphatic terms:

“The Jews have been foremost in giving of their time and money for the upbuilding and improvement of our city and country.

They gave more than a third of the cost of our public hospital, have bought liberally of Liberty bonds, War Saving stamps, and have been generous contributors to the Red Cross and the Y.M.C.A.

Shall we be less generous and liberal than they?

Our President has said 'Give until it hurts.' I am not sure but that Nathan Straus has expressed the duty better when he says 'Give until it feels good.'

Jeanie Deans in her plea before the Queen for the life of her sister, regarded as one of the most eloquent passages in all literature, said truly, 'When the hour of death comes it isn't what we have done for ourselves, but what we have done for others that we think of most pleasantly.'

I regard this as an exceptional opportunity to express our appreciation to the Jews for what they have done. If I had it in my power as Chairman of the Goldsboro Jewish Relief Committee, *I should prevent the acceptance of any contribution from the Jewish citizens of this community, so that we, the non-Jews, might have the pleasure of raising the entire quota ourselves."*

I have, myself, seen scores of busy merchants, and still busier mothers, forgetting their normal duties for weeks at a time to devote themselves day and night without stint and without thought of themselves, to this work. Some drove motor cars over unknown and impassable roads to solicit in remote hamlets sums which in the aggregate barely equaled the value of their time. Others pounded typewriters or filed cards or talked from soap-boxes

or performed any one of a dozen clerical tasks on behalf of people whom they had never seen, inhabitants of countries whose names they could barely pronounce. I recall a banker in New Orleans who shunned his office and his desk for an entire month, and that, before he had had time to recover from the effects of a major operation; while his wife turned over the care of her child in the midst of the influenza epidemic, to a paid nurse, so that she might, herself, head a woman's team of solicitors.

And this splendid spirit, as it transcended the lines of race and creed, passed also beyond the boundaries of occupation and class. The wealthy and the influential did no more in proportion than the poor and the humble. Down in a town in Georgia a little group of young women proved once more that the love of mankind is no private privilege of the fortunate. They had been asked by the local committee to work for a little while after office hours in order to help wind up the campaign. The little while lengthened out until two in the morning. They stuck to their typewriters without complaint until the last letter had been written and the last card filed. Then the chairman offered them five dollars apiece for their services. With one accord they declined the offer and begged that their labor be accepted as



their contribution to the town's quota. These girls were not Jewesses. Some of them would have been hard put to it to tell what a Jewess was. They were mere American girls. From a village in North Carolina there comes the report of an elderly spinster whose only source of income was a meager property inheritance amounting to no more than two hundred dollars a year. She was among the first to respond to an advertisement inserted by a Christian church in the local newspaper—the church not being of her own denomination—with a contribution of twenty-five dollars.

Both for genuineness of sentiment and simplicity of language, I have no hesitancy in reproducing the letter which follows, as one of the purest documents in the annals of man's love for his kind:

J. S. MURROW

MISSIONARY AMONG INDIANS 60 YEARS—82 YEARS OLD

Under God's Direction Founder of

MURROW INDIAN ORPHANS' HOME

Bacone, Oklahoma

Atoka, Oklahoma April 20th

Mr. Herbert H. Lehman

Treasurer &c.

Dear Sir

I am not a Jew.—I am an old—worn out Christian—Indian Missionary—a Baptist.—

Your God is my God. Your Father—my Father. Your people are my Master's people. Your brethren are my

brethren. My means are small—but my heart greatly rejoices because of this privilege of sending the enclosed one hundred dollars for the relief of the suffering and starving Jews in Europe.

Sincerely,

J. S. MURROW,—

Atoka—Okla.

More impressive, perhaps, but in no way differing in spirit, was the conduct of a prominent citizen of Wilmington, Delaware, at the end of a stirring address. The speaker, who had been warned that—by a promise made to the community beforehand—no collections would be permitted at the meeting, was compelled before he had ended, by the clamor of a largely non-Jewish audience, not only to accept pledges amounting to more than three-quarters of the quota assigned to the city for the entire campaign, but to accept the promise of this prominent citizen, that the quota would be either over-subscribed by the community or that he personally would make up the deficit.

There is no parallel on record to this downright scramble on the part of men and women of other faiths to render service to a Jewish cause. One has but to read the hundreds of full-page advertisements in the press of our country to be struck with the depth and genuineness of this eagerness to help. The names of the individuals and firms and institutions signed to these exhortations are a revelation,

and constitute in themselves an amazing chapter in the history of human relations. Newspaper owners raced with bankers and business men; Protestant churches competed with Catholic bodies in their efforts to surpass one another's contributions. The newspapers gave of their space freely in news, editorials and in cartoons. And the churches, in addition to lending their buildings and even the services of their clergy, vied with one another in publishing, entirely without solicitation, full-page newspaper advertisements in which the plea of humanity and a fundamental Christianity was conveyed more effectively than in any appeals made by Jews themselves. As an illustration, I reproduce the facsimile of such an advertisement from a Louisiana newspaper on the opposite page.

In towns and villages without number, where Jews were either non-existent or inert, the non-Jews took the initiative altogether. The people would read their governor's proclamation, or the mayor's of the near-by city, and resolve to do their share. They would call a meeting of the most influential citizens or the most generous or the most capable, and falling back on their experiences in Red Cross, Liberty Loan and United War Work drives, proceeded to initiate a campaign and do what was expected of them. A member of the North Dakota Committee relates this incident: He



# Because Christ Commands It

## WE URGE EVERYONE TO HELP THE JEWISH SUFFERERS

BECAUSE THEY NEED IT.

BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN PAYING OUR DEBTS.

### Humanity Owes Much to The Jews

Moses gave us the Moral Law; David voiced every cry of joy or sorrow of the human heart to God; Christ, after the flesh, born a Jew, taught in the Good Samaritan story—

## THAT WHO NEEDS MY HELP IS MY NEIGHBOR

So, for Christ's sweet sake, HELP THE JEWISH SUFFERERS OVERSEAS with an open hand. In the U. W. W. campaign the Jews, knowing they would only get three million dollars out of the contributions, gave about twenty million dollars, and the Y. M. C. A. and the Red Cross were the beneficiaries of their liberality to about seventeen million dollars.

If not for sweet charity's sake, at least not to be put to shame, let us help those who, while giving to ours, never before have asked us to give to theirs.

### We Urge All Methodists to Give in the Name of Christ Born of the House of David

*--First Methodist Church.*

A BIT OF PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY

had traveled many weary miles to one of the out-lying counties in his State in order to confer with certain leading men on methods of extending the State campaign into that region. He arrived at the little town which was the county seat, late in the evening. Happening to be acquainted with the local Supreme Court Judge, he drove up to his house. His honor, he learned, was not at home; he was attending a meeting at the Court House; so to the Court House our committee man went to find around a great table all the wealth and prominence of the district. He was about to withdraw in embarrassment at the intrusion, when the president of the local bank boisterously invited him to enter. "You are just in time," he said. "You might be able to help us. We were just organizing a campaign for Jewish relief." "Gentlemen," he turned to the others, "this is Mr. —, Mr. — this is our Jewish campaign committee."

Not only in spirit, but in actual substance has the share of the Gentile in the cause of war-stricken Jewry been mounting higher and higher, until there is an inkling in the minds of many of the workers that it has become quite disproportionate. I have, myself, a suspicion that, incredible as it may seem, certain Jews, seeing the growing willingness of their non-Jewish neighbors to bear a part of the burden, are disposed to delegate it to them in its entirety.

It would therefore not be amiss at this time if some enterprising statistician were to determine just what portion of the funds that are now being collected are derived from Jewish and non-Jewish pockets respectively. Comparisons are odious, as Mrs. Malaprop held, but if they prove in this instance what I fear they might, the Jewish slacker will deserve all the odium that they may cast upon him. There are constant complaints, I am told authoritatively, from committees in scattered parts of the country headed by non-Jews, that their Jewish fellow-townsmen are remiss in doing their part. Chairmen write in from time to time to the directing heads of the committees asking for suggestions as to how such people might be brought to book. The answer, I would venture to suggest, in all cases, is the public exhibition of the names of backsliders wherever they may be found and in such a way that they will do the most good to the cause, and the most harm to Mr. Scrooge.

## CHAPTER XIV

### PROBLEMS OF DISTRIBUTION

**I**N the collection of moneys it had proven impracticable, even though desirable, to effect a fusion of the several committees and the constituencies which they represented. On the part of the immediate members of the committees there was and remains, to begin with, a pride of organization which constitutes a persistent and very real obstacle to amalgamation. In addition, the two minor bodies claim with an appreciable show of reason that, in spite of the inherent community of interest between all groups in Jewry and in spite of their common purpose in relation to the European situation, there remains nevertheless a very real residue of difference which is bound to express itself in separate alignments. Admittedly, the People's Relief Committee is doing a share of the fundraising which neither of its fellow-committees could do for it and which it would be wasteful to neglect. On the other hand, within the precincts of the Central Committee officials are prone to confess that while a large portion of its resources could undoubtedly be increased if they were tapped by the



Committees of both organizations to effect a permanent disbursement agency. On that date a meeting was called at the building of the United Hebrew Charities which culminated in the establishment of the Joint Distribution Committee. It was easily agreed that the membership of this new body should consist of the Executive Committees of its constituent members. The very name of the new organization was a concession to the lively sense of identity of the separate collecting agencies. And its officers were drawn with an eye to the sensibilities of all elements. Mr. Felix M. Warburg, recently elected Treasurer of the American Committee, was made the Chairman of the new organization, while the active directorship was turned over to a prominent member of the Central Relief Committee. The People's Relief Committee, having as yet not been formed, its constituency took no share in the proceedings.

It took but one afternoon for the delegations of the two organizations to arrive at an agreement. The fundamental need for a common instrumentality was too patent to need discussion, and there prevailed at the conference such a liberal spirit of mutual trust and friendly coöperation that the customary bickerings regarding representation and leadership were automatically precluded. By the sheer accident of its constituency the American

Committee was freely recognized as possessing the preponderant qualifications for taking the initiative in the counsels of the new organization. Its membership (apart from their extensive commercial affiliations in Europe) had had longer experience in extending relief abroad and therefore was in touch with a variety of groups and persons overseas who could at this time render valuable assistance. None the less the older Central Committee, both by virtue of its precedence in the field and because of its representative character, as well as in consequence of its profounder understanding of the problems of Jewry in Eastern Europe, was accorded an equal position with its younger and more influential partner.

The earliest operations of the Joint Distribution Committee extended chiefly to Palestine. It was from the Holy Land that the first direct cry for assistance had reached America. For half a century the Jewish immigrants of that country had been receiving regular support from their co-religionists in Germany and France and even in Russia and Rumania. And the declaration of the state of war, accompanied as it inevitably was by a dislocation of international relations, brought the severest consequences of misery upon these already pauperized colonies before it touched even the ghettos. Theirs, above all others', was the most

urgent case and, in a sense, the immediate occasion for creating the disbursing agency.

Ere long, however, the Joint Distribution Committee addressed itself to the more comprehensive task. Utilizing the relationships which American Jewry had established with Russia in the days of the Kishineff pogroms, the directorate quickly initiated correspondence with the leaders of Jewry in that empire. Baron Guinzburg, M. Schlossberg, and their many associates who had proved themselves such able and devoted workers in past emergencies, were again set to work and given plenary powers as the agents in their country of the joint American organization. In Austria the Allianz had had broad experience in administering aid to the Jews of Galicia. It was reorganized and rendered more representative by expanding its councils to include the orthodox and labor elements. During and after the German invasion of the Pale it was necessary for the Committee to conduct its affairs through the medium of the German forces of occupation, and by all reports these relations were throughout in the highest degree satisfactory. The American State Department was from the first day to this, at once the closest and the most helpful of the committee's allies. Even before the entry of the United States into the war it was virtually impossible for private citizens, however influential,

to conduct a traffic of such immense proportions without proceeding through diplomatic and consular channels. After we ourselves became a belligerent the difficulties of transportation and exchange became more complex than ever. The relations of the committee with the German and Austrian authorities as well as with private agencies within those countries, had as a matter of course to cease. Shipping facilities diminished continuously until they reached almost the vanishing point. Communication with the Eastern half of the European continent was almost completely cut off. The energies of the American Government and of the American people were, as was to be expected, deflected into military channels. And as if to complete the cycle of obstacles the formerly disguised chaos of the Czar's régime succumbed to open disintegration and revolution.

At this juncture the Committee found it expedient to shift its channels of action from the Central Powers to The Netherlands. The practical problems and difficulties in carrying out this change were, as may be readily imagined, of the utmost complexity; and the organization resolved to send over a mission headed by Dr. Boris Bogen to conduct negotiations with the governments affected as well as to open up communications through the North of Europe. In a very brief period Dr. Bogen

succeeded in establishing at The Hague a permanent committee of leading Dutch Jews who have ever since very ably carried on an important phase of the overseas affairs of the Joint Distribution Committee. Their activities have come to be regarded as an integral part of the New York body.

But the progressive distintegration of the erstwhile Russian Empire became an unending source of hindrance and obstacle to the distribution of relief. Continuous warfare, the rise and fall of mushroom governments, the uncertainty of life and the insecurity of property, the breakdown of railway communication and of the entire economic process of the immense country, the erection of ever-new "national" boundaries, could not but interfere severely with the movements of relief funds and materials. It, in effect, put a virtual stop to all operations. The American and the Allied governments, which continued to exhibit the utmost goodwill, were to all practical purposes powerless to assist. Since the fall of the ancient régime no government had been recognized anywhere in Russia, and consequently no channels existed through which the influence of the Allied and associated governments could express itself. On the other hand, the cessation of active fighting between the major countries had resulted to a considerable extent in reëstablishing a measure of communica-

tion between Western and Eastern Europe. Despite the collapse of the Central Empires, the ending of the war was a forerunner of something like normal relations in the heart of Europe. In Germany and in most of the new states created out of the wreck of Austria, Allied influence was paramount; so that it was at least possible to approach the outer walls of the Pale.

Moreover, and as will be seen more explicitly later, the condition of the helpless Jewish people became both clearer and distinctly more aggravated. As long as the fighting continued, the American rescue agencies labored in the dark. One got occasional glimpses, to be sure, of the state of affairs over there from travelers, correspondents, and now and then from a sporadic report issuing directly from the Committee's own beneficiaries and representatives. It is common knowledge, however, that reports from Russian Jewish sources were of the meagerest and the very worst that the New York offices received from anywhere. Now, with the opening up of the Continent, there came a sudden and most pungent revelation of the totally unimagined misery and decay that four and a half years of war had brought to the Jewries of old Russia; and the Jews of America stood appalled at the exhibition. Meantime, the horror, far from being an accumulation merely of the recent past,

was galloping on and growing continually worse and increasingly less controllable. It looked indeed as if the sheer physical and nervous state of six millions of people had reached a stage beyond the ministrations of relief. What these people were obviously suffering from was now not merely the absence of ordinary physical human necessities. That might have been their case three years before, or even one year ago. At the moment, the American agencies found themselves confronted with a population which had become, as a consequence of nearly five years of intense privation and suffering, utterly degraded. It was the backbone of East European Jewry that had been crushed. Pauperization was the least of the terrible effects of a prolonged siege. One was face to face with a great mass of humanity which had become devoid of nervous force, of the power to resist—almost of recognizable human form. Its vitality, its grip, its common human pride, almost its very will to life, had been destroyed.

And yet, desperate apparently as the problem was, there was but one thing for organized American Jewry to do. It was to plunge in with the utmost energy and to make an attempt at saving what remained. Dr. Boris Bogen, who had previously distinguished himself by his success in The Netherlands, was once more dispatched abroad,

this time to Poland, to survey the field and to render such aid as the immediate emergency demanded. He remains there to this day—a plenipotentiary of the Joint Distribution Committee, a diplomatic official, a correspondent, a social expert, a moderator between hostile races, a purchasing agent, a food dispenser, a nurse and a comforter, all in one. He was lately supplemented by a comprehensive delegation, representative of all committees in America. He is constantly collaborating with scores of local agencies in Poland, in Galicia and Russia, most of whom he has himself set up. He and the merciful organizations whom he represents are doing all that human effort and sympathy can do. It is not a great deal, in the circumstances. He is spending millions of money and rescuing whole communities of children and women and men from death by starvation and from a life which is worse than death. But no one is more keenly aware than they how far from the ends they have set for themselves are these painfully inadequate palliative efforts. The need of the moment is not merely greater financial resources—though that is the primary need—but a reconstructed medium to move in. And that is, of course, in a phrase, the problem that the period of war hands on to our era of peace.



## CHAPTER XV

### PROBLEMS FOR TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

**A**ND now at last the war is over. At least it is officially and technically over west of the Rhine. Hostilities are at an end. Armistices and peace treaties of a sort have been signed. The American people have done their celebrating, they have paraded and cheered, they have put over the last public loan, and are now ready to return to business and the normal conduct of life. For what is transpiring in Central and Eastern Europe, and in a goodly share of the continent of Asia, they have neither understanding nor concern. How should they? They undertook to participate in a war against a single power, and that power has gone down to a ruin complete beyond the dream of patriotism. The German war is over; and with that happy consummation, the share of Americans in the business is at an end. After all is said and done, they belong in a world of their own. They have never had, and they cannot have now, any abiding interest in the rows and petty rivalries of a strange and distant climate. The conflict with Germany had, by an elaborate and well-sustained

propaganda, come to have an intimate meaning for them. It had been idealized and dramatized. But the sequel is another affair. It is sordid and confused to the point of dullness. Leagues of nations and alliances, open diplomacy and secret covenants, the new international order, territorial claims and counter-claims, plebiscites, and the rights of racial minorities, are alien phrases to them. They are part of the jargon of European politics. And contrary to the expectations of the sanguine, the politics of the Old World are to Americans as meaningless after the war as they were before. The New World will have problems and difficulties of its own which will be somewhat distinct and separate; and good Americans are naturally eager to grapple with them.

Meantime, Europe is bleeding at her heart and in her vitals; the armistice was unhappily not a signal for universal disarmament and hand-shaking; it was, as a lone realist here and there had warned us beforehand that it would be, a bugle call proclaiming that Europe was at last and in earnest at war. Between the Rhine and the Pacific, the official count discovers no fewer than fifteen individual wars. The actual number is doubtless much greater. There are class wars, and slightly reduced copies of the war for democracy and ideals, and just plain old-fashioned national wars. Guer-

rillas, pogroms, and civil strife of the most colorful variety, scar the continent all the way from Munich to Vladivostock. The carefully drawn line between Entente and Quadruple Alliance has been utterly obliterated. The precious small nations for whose preservation the great war was initiated and prolonged, are now somewhat unideally conducting a set of small wars for each other's annihilation.

It was, I always had a private conviction, a very careless thing to begin the long-awaited European war; but it was the sheerest absent-mindedness to encourage a revolution in Germany and the disintegration of Austria. Popular uprisings and the collapse of polyglot empires are interesting pastimes which are much easier to start than to bring to a convenient and satisfactory finish. It was one thing to defeat Austria; it is quite another to cure the madness which Austria held in check. It was one thing, and a comparatively simple one, to fight a wild dog, even if he were many-headed; it is quite another to cope with an entire brood of scurrying pups, savagely snapping at you in an effort to devour one another. Wherefore it is not surprising that healthy Americans are disillusioned and annoyed and eager to wash their hands of the whole matter.

In the very center of this *beau spectacle*—of this much-heralded new world—six millions of Jewish

babies and women and men find themselves heirs to an estate beside which even the chaos of the great war seems in retrospect like the veriest salvation. While America and Western Europe, with the able assistance of Japan, Porto Rico, and Siam, are busy fashioning a New World under the tutelage of the League of Nations, the realists of Eastern Europe, thoroughly familiar with the efficacy of scraps of paper, are making a somewhat undignified scramble for *faits accomplis*. The game of grab and hold is on with greater zeal than ever. The little statesmen of the Baltic and the Balkans have a firmer grasp of the idealisms and the aspirations of Europe than even Mr. Woodrow Wilson. The President of the United States may rejoice unhindered over the happy dissolution of the Central Empires; it is for none but the eyes of the President of Poland and the potentates of the Danube to behold the collapse of the Entente as well. Europe is in flames and wise men rush into the burning structure and save what they can. Now or never is the time to gratify old cupidities, to avenge past wrongs, to settle long-standing accounts, and to get even with ancient foes. And the oldest enemy as well as the most helpless is, of course, the Jew. Japan, with all her reputation for cunning is nowhere in it beside these *Realpolitiker*. The most that she could devise was conqueror's terms to a peaceful ally and neighbor at a

moment when the watchful Great Powers were not looking. They do it vastly better in East Europe. They have out-grown the child's play of diplomatic clap-trap. Conquered people may revive. The dead alone cease to trouble.

East European Jewry finds itself exactly at the same point in the highway at the conclusion of the war as at its beginning. Only progress has become next to impossible. It is no longer a civilized highway, subject to the laws of traffic. It has become a miserable by-way outside of the pale of organized mankind; its sides are a series of ambush, the nests of brigands, and its terminus a bag's end. The customary sanity and good-will of peace have brought no more respite to these people than had the customary solidarity of war. The ever-lasting threat of Allied patriotism to make the Germans an out-law nation, may or may not become a fact. Outlawry is the unofficial, but, therefore, the more effective, status of the Jewish people. Jewry has become a huge prison camp. America is collecting ever larger sums for its relief, but its condition is beyond the ministrations of a mere bodily amelioration.

The commissions recently sent over there by the Joint Distribution Committee have returned with a message of despair. Some of them are, to be sure, going about the country appealing for renewed ef-

forts, but there is not one of them who will not confess that the problem of the East European Jew is a thing incapable of solution by the method of direct and unaided financial assistance. They started abroad with a conviction that the cessation of hostilities would begin a new chapter in the history of the salvage of European Jewry by American Jewry. The effort at mere palliative relief, they thought, would come to an end, and a greater and more comprehensive endeavor would be initiated looking toward the restoration of the victimized millions to self-respect and normal lives. That had been the primary object of the expedition—to discover ways and means of applying American funds to the permanent rehabilitation of Russian and Polish and Galician Jewry. The commission has come back in a skeptical frame of mind. Such members of it as I have spoken to invariably shake their heads doubtfully at the mere mention of constructive relief. How, they ask, can one be thinking of reconstructing a community whose very nerve and bone is in a state of advanced decomposition? A “convict population” is the startling phrase which constantly recurs in their accounts of conditions over there. Even emigration is, for a long time to come, out of the question. The war has made a sick people of the Jews of Eastern Europe, just as it has, I presume, made invalids of a great many

health of a dozen European countries hang upon an application of the Golden Rule and the political experience of the last century to the sorely stricken Jews of the Old World.

**FINIS**