

JEWISH PALESTINE

A Study in "Becoming"

BY JACOB RADER MARCUS

IN 1930 there were about 170,000 Jews in Palestine—slightly more than half the number in Chicago—constituting about eighteen per cent of the total population of that country and a little over one per cent of world Jewry. These statistics, however, give no intimation whatever of the important part that this little land, smaller even than the state of Vermont, plays in the thinking and the emotional life of the average Jew. His relation to his old homeland is a most unique one. To him Palestine means incomparably more than it does to the Christian or to the Moslem. For both of these Palestine and Jerusalem stand on the outer edge of their completely denationalized religions; for the Jew Palestine has always been more than an historic symbol or a pious reminiscence. From the moment of birth to the day of death almost every ceremonial act of the observant Jew is intertwined with the thought of Palestine, the land of the past and the hope of the future. Practically every page of the old liturgy is bound up with that land:

Let our eyes behold Thy return in mercy to Zion. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who restorest Thy Divine Presence unto Zion.

Sound the great horn for our freedom; lift up the ensign to gather our exiles, and gather us from the four corners of the earth. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who gatherest the banished ones of Thy people Israel.

Return in mercy to Jerusalem, Thy city, and . . . rebuild it soon in our days as an everlasting building.

The direction of prayer is toward the Holy City. The structural bases of the liturgy, the Jewish festivals, the law codes—all these reflect their Palestinian origin. The medieval and early modern Jew, in this way, carried Palestine with him wherever he went. Whenever the opportunity presented itself he pilgrimed back. Since the days of Constantine there has been a constant stream of pilgrims who returned to mourn at the Wailing Wall, and a whole literature of Jewish travels—just like the Christian pilgrim litera-

ture—testifies to the devotion of the wanderers and their joy at the sight of Jerusalem's walls:

Oh, I am the man who saw affliction. I am banished from my table, far removed from friend and kinsman, and too long is the distance to meet again. . . . But the loss of all this and of every other glory my eyes saw is compensated by having now the joy of being a day in thy courts, O Jerusalem, visiting the ruins of the Temple and crying over the ruined Sanctuary, where I am permitted to caress thy stones, to fondle thy dust, and to weep over thy ruins. I wept bitterly, but I found joy in my tears. I tore my garments, but I felt relieved by it.

(Nachmanides, c. 1270)

Palestine, romanticized, idealized, was the moving emotional force in the life of the medieval Jew. The greatest of the Spanish-Arabic poets, Judah ha-Levi (twelfth century) poured forth his love of the Holy Land in impassioned Zionides:

Beautiful height! O joy! the whole world's gladness!
 O great King's city, mountain blest!
 My soul is yearning unto thee—is yearning
 From limits of the west.

A century before him, the moody Solomon ibn Gabirol had mourned and wept:

How long, O my God, shall I wait Thee in vain?
 How long shall Thy people in exile remain?
 Shall the sheep ever shorn never utter their pain
 But dumbly through all go on waiting?

Century after century large groups of Jews wandered back and attempted to further communal life in the Holy Land: Anglo-French Jews in the early thirteenth century; cultured, embittered Spanish refugees in the late fifteenth century. The political motive, the desire to establish a state, was not missing. The pseudo-Christian, Joseph Nasi, later Duke of Naxos, in 1564 attempted to create a Jewish city-state on the site of old Tiberias, on the lake of Galilee, a city that would be economically independent through silk and woolen manufactures and offer a place of refuge, particularly for Italian Jews fleeing from the Italy of the pious and intolerant Restoration period.

The attempts to set up a permanent, autonomous state in Palestine made no progress till the nineteenth century, the century of imperialism, Eastern penetration and the small nationality. Russia of

the Czars first oppressed and after April 1881 began to massacre its Jews. Cultured Europe of the seventies saturated its Jewish citizens with local nationalisms and then developed an anti-Semitic theory which harped upon the cultural sterility and the racial menace of these very Jewish nationals. In the early nineties Russian disabilities, German and Austrian diatribes, the French Dreyfus affair, made thousands believe that there was certainly no spiritual future for them in modern Europe. The East European masses, always conscious of the political implications of religious Messianism, were now positive that their only hope and future lay in a peaceful resettlement and rebuilding of the land that their fathers had never forgotten, Palestine. Shortly after the first pogroms in 1881, Russian-Jewish university students began to leave for Palestine; within twelve months the "Lovers of Zion" (*Hovebe Ziyyon*) movement was founded by East European Jews to establish Jewish agricultural colonies there. Theodor Herzl (1860-1904), a brilliant Austrian journalist with an almost fanatical belief in his mission, now crystallized this East and West European Jewish sentiment for escape and self-expression into a program of national and political rebirth. His *Jewish State* (1896) rallied all Zionists about him and led to the first Jewish congress which met in 1897 at Basel and formulated the aim of Zionism as a desire for a "publicly recognized and legally secured home in Palestine for the Jewish people."

Herzl himself was not convinced that Palestine was the only land where the Jew might establish a state, but the Jewish masses were. They were not interested in offers of more fertile territories in the Argentine (the nineties), in Uganda, British East Africa (1903), or even in the hope of mass migration and settlement on the plains of Texas and in the southwestern states (1907). They would settle in the Holy Land or no place. The efforts of Herzl and the Zionist Organization from 1897 on to secure political privileges and to establish Jewish agricultural and urban colonies met with relatively little success until after the World War when the British Government received the mandate for Palestine in April 1920 at the San Remo Conference of the Allies. By the terms of this mandate the rather equivocal Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917 was to be carried out:

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achieve-

ment of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

Through the Jewish Community Regulations (1927) political autonomy was secured. Palestine Jewry is now united into a "Jewish Community" which governs itself through a democratically chosen Elected Assembly and its General Council. Alongside of the General Council there is a Rabbinical Council, and together they govern all who have voluntarily submitted to this type of organization. The Jews thus have control of their own cultural life. They have their own arbitrational and rabbinical courts, administer their own charitable endowments, determine and interpret their own laws of marriage and divorce, and exercise the right to tax themselves for the support of the poor and the sick, for the schools and other cultural institutions. All action taken is subject to the approval of the High Commissioner.

This type of inner autonomy—complete except for criminal jurisdiction—is but a continuation of the corporate or group form of government characteristic of Jewish history since the beginnings of the Diaspora under the pre-Christian Hellenic states, through the medieval Christian class state, down into the nineteenth century when the modern state abolished all national, class, and group privileges. The form of corporate political organization in Palestine is therefore antique in origin, but more favorable than modern equality where the same laws for all groups often prove to be a disability for religious and national minorities.

The mandate for Palestine has made possible, in a very limited form, the creation of a Jewish state. The World Zionist Organization, in accordance with the provisions of Article Four of that instrument, determined to enlist the aid of the non-Zionist Jewish masses to this end. They therefore created an enlarged Jewish Agency in 1929, composed of an equal number of Zionists and non-Zionists, who through an executive committee have taken over the practical work of re-creating a Jewish state. The actual enthusiasm, the active participation and the largest part of the sums expended come, however, from Zionist sources. Non-Zionists recruited largely from Central and Western European and American lands are

not really in sympathy with the establishment of an independent Jewish country.

The difficulty inherent in the lack of a united world Jewish support is increased by divergent religious, racial, and national aspirations in Palestine itself. It is tragic for the Jew that the land that he would settle, the only land that can command universal Jewish sympathy, is one that is already settled. There are at least four Arabs to every Jew. The intense nationalism on the part of the Jewish immigrant has fired the latent nationalism of the Arab, who is determined not to permit the creation of a Jewish state in a land where over eighty per cent of the population are Arabs. They dread the constant increase of Jewish land purchase, the steady volume of Jewish immigration and the ultimate possibility of Jewish economic control.

The Zionist Jews appeal for the right to remain because of the historic connection of the Jewish people with Palestine, because of the imperative need, as they feel it, of the spiritual sustenance of the Holy Land. A Zionide of Judah ha-Levi, they have said, is as much a legal claim as a hundred thousand settlers. They want that land because as a people they can live nowhere else. The "idea" of Palestine alone can hold them together. They believe that they can rebuild it industrially and agriculturally so as to support the thousands of Jews who have come in without limiting the just hopes of the Arabs. On the contrary, they are confident that their coming has been of decided material benefit to the Christian and Moslem natives. Though the mandate of the League of Nations gives them a legal right in the land, they believe that their accomplishments along economic, industrial, academic, and hygienic lines give them a moral right to remain and to persevere. The spiritual power of the Jews, which has so strikingly expressed itself in past cultural accomplishments, gives them, in the opinion of the Zionists, a right to expect the sympathy of the Christian and Moslem world. But the conflict between Arab and Jew goes deeper than economic rivalry, religious suspicion, or political fears. By far the greater mass of Jewish settlers are men and women of Western culture. They represent the West with its rationalism, its technique, its machines, its ruthless efficiency, its haste, its standardization. They are hurling a new culture at the East and hastening a tempo of change that has only begun. It is an aggressive West imposing its mechanics on an awakening East that is moving "Westward," but in its own good



HAIFA

time. The East is not inclined to accelerate its rate of progress because the pace-makers are Jews.

These newcomers in Palestine who would create a homeland have not only the racially and culturally conscious Arab majority to deal with but also the English government. Pursuing its traditional foreign policy—as old as the Tudors—England maintains the balance of power between the Arab and the Jew to the complete dissatisfaction of both groups. Palestine is strategically valuable for the British whose tenure in Egypt is constantly threatened; England is anxious to protect the Suez canal from the Asiatic side. It wants Palestine with the new harbor Haifa as the sea, land, and air terminus of the road from Haifa to Bagdad. It intends to keep open the road to India through Suez or over Palestine to Bagdad. Jewish Palestine, therefore, in order to develop must do so in harmony with the Arabs and the English, and in addition must count on the beneficent tolerance of France, Italy, and the Papacy, all of whom have a stake in Zion. These are the conditions that determine the political, economic and industrial development of that land, and even affect the spiritual and intellectual slant of its Jewish settlers.

What is the human material that makes up Jewish Palestine? There is a residuum of “native” Jews who are themselves a con-

glomerate tracing back for the most part to the sixteenth century—nationals from the Maghreb, Spain, and Portugal, the Germanic and Slavonic lands. They are now Arabic in type and speech and very often in standard of living. In al-Bukeia, in Upper Galilee, there is even an obscure peasant community that cannot be distinguished from its Arab neighbors. These Jewish peasants believe in the unbroken continuity of their settlement since the days of the second Jewish commonwealth. It is questionable, however, if they go back beyond the early modern period. Pious East Europeans have filtered in all through the nineteenth century. They came to die in Palestine and eked out a miserable existence on doles. They are still coming, clad in *caftan* and fur hat, speaking Yiddish rather than Hebrew, studying day and night in the old-fashioned schools as did their fathers before them for centuries. The "Lovers of Zion," men of the Western spirit, nationally conscious settlers with a desire to establish farming colonies, began to migrate in the early eighties. They were petty bourgeois in their economic aims. After the Russian *pogroms* of 1903-1905 groups of radical proletarians, socialistic Zionists began to come in; after the World War of 1914 the "Pioneers" (*Halutzim*), idealistically minded youth of Eastern and Central Europe, streamed through the ports of Palestine. It is this group that most typically demarcated the "New Settlement" (*Yishub*) from the "native" and the "dole" Jews. They spoke Hebrew, furthered modern secular schools and preached the religion of self-help through blistering labor. Finally, in 1924 there was a heavy migration of middle-class business men from Poland who, finding the gates to America closed by the Johnson-Lodge Immigration Bill, came on to Palestine. It is this latter group that has flocked to the new Jewish towns and has done so much to establish the shops and the petty industry of the country. The bulk of the Jewish immigration, about 120,000 since 1882, is European, but there has been a steady stream of the dwarfed but powerful Yemenites from southwestern Arabia, dark-skinned Bokharans, vigorous Kurds, Georgians, Persians, Moroccans, a stray Aryan-featured, black Beni-Israel from India, and even an occasional negroid Falasha from Abyssinia. The Jewish immigrants of 1930 came from forty-one different lands. Palestine ought to be a fertile field for the student of Jewish "*Rassenkunde*."

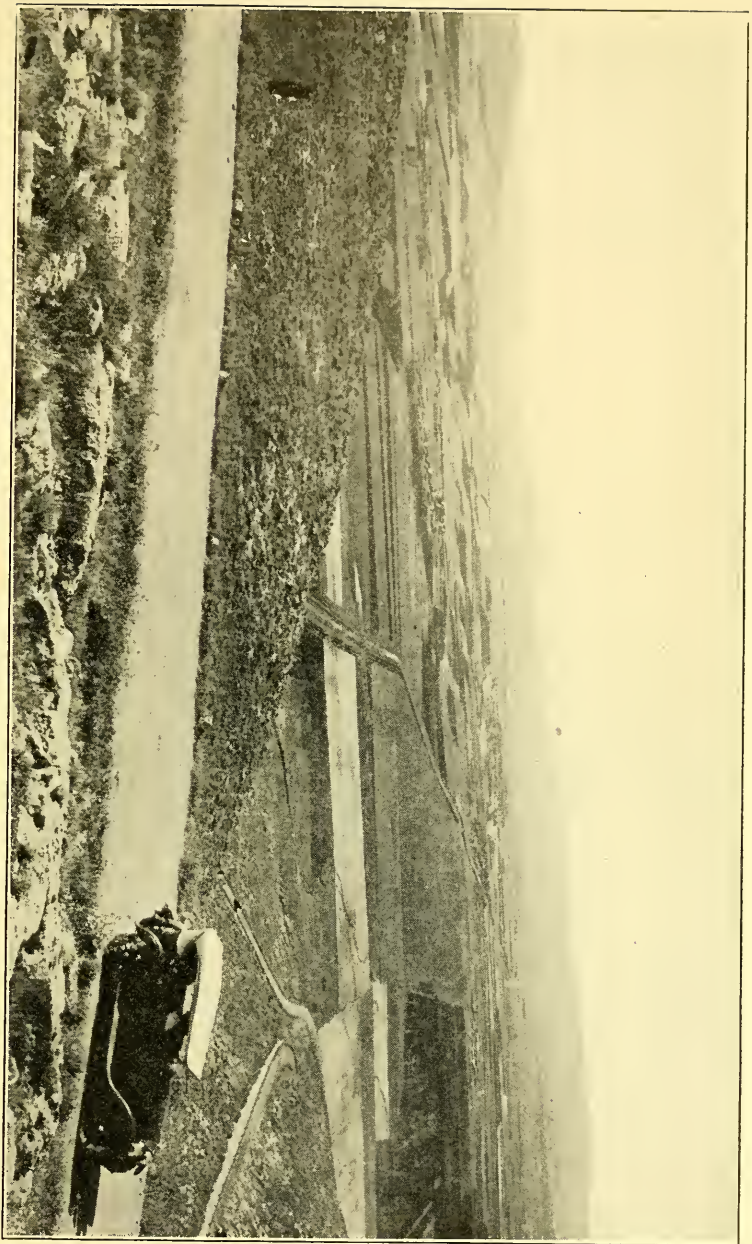
About twenty-eight per cent of the Jews, Orientals for the most part, follow the Sephardic, the old Spanish ritual; the rest, mostly

Europeans, follow the Ashkenazic or German rite. The differences between the two rituals are of no great consequence. Equally unimportant are the liturgic variations among the *Ashkenazim* or European orthodox—between the temperamental and exuberant *Hasidim* (Pietists) and the more rational and learned *Minaggedim* (Opponents). Around Shechem there are still a handful of Samaritans and in Jerusalem one sometimes sees a lone Karaite, a sorry reminder of that eighth-century protestant sect which for centuries disrupted rabbinic Judaism. Practically all Jews speak Hebrew, the colonists are most zealous in this respect. A few of the older colonists like the “natives” speak Arabic.

The East Europeans, the backbone of the whole settlement, are all men of some education. Many of them have gone through secondary schools or even colleges. The great majority are idealists, for Palestinian colonization is essentially an ideal movement. For them it is not an economic flight from trade or industry. It is the Jew's attempt at a final settlement of the “Jewish Problem”: the creation of a home for Jewish nationalists; a haven of refuge for those masses and “unassorted” Jews who have been crushed politically and economically; a spot where the sensitive Jew, who feels he is not wanted, can be himself intellectually and emotionally.

It is the East European Jews, primarily, who have gone on the land. Unlike their Hebrew ancestors who occupied the hill country, the central mountain range from Judea north through Galilee, the newcomers have avoided the barren mountains of Judea and the high, rolling hills of Samaria. They have established their agricultural colonies in the fertile coastal plain of Philistia and Sharon, in the valley of Esdraelon, and in Galilee along the upper reaches of the Jordan. But even these fertile areas required reclamation from sand dunes, swamps, malaria, and the general deterioration of field and road that had persisted under the sluggish Turkish régime.

Today Jewry in Palestine controls a little over 300,000 acres out of an estimated exploitable total of less than four million of which about three million, at the most, are cultivable. Only a part of these 300,000 acres belong to the Zionist Organization. About 145,000 acres are in the possession of farmers, private owners, who farm with the help of Jewish and Arab labor; about 94,000 acres constitute the holdings of the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association (PICA) controlled by the “Baron” Edmund de Rothschild of Paris, who has done more than any single individual to further agricultural



Courtesy of United Palestine Appeal

A VIEW OF THE VALLEY OF JEZREEL.
One of the Most Fertile Territories in Palestine

activity in Palestine and who is responsible for the wine industry in the colonies of the Philistian plain.

The most interesting settlements are those of the Zionist Organization. Their lands now amount to about 70,000 acres and are held in perpetuity by them and only leased to the farmers. They belong to the "Jewish people"; there can be no speculation in land values. The properties are purchased by the Jewish National Fund (1901) and are improved by the Jewish Foundation Fund (1921). Both organizations, deriving their support from world Jewry, have spent many millions to establish and improve the colonies.

The Zionist leaders and masses, convinced that a sturdy, natural state can only be built on agriculture, are anxious to create a peasant class and to this task the Jewish academic youth of Europe has dedicated itself. It is not at all improbable that this peasantry is the most intelligent in the world. The Zionist settlements are largely of two types. A number of colonies are *kebutzot*, large and small "collectives," conducted along genuinely coöperative and communistic lines. There is nothing primitive, however, in this type of organization. Modernism is the dominant note. The mothers, too, work in the fields or in the craft-shops; their babies are looked after in the common nursery in charge of competent nurses. There is no lack of such skilled professional help. Others, more individualistic, more desirous of gain, who are not enamored of the communistic *kebutzah*, farm their own lands, but do not hire help. This type of small-holders' settlement, where the farmers do all their own work, is called the *Moshav 'Ovdim* (Workers' Farm). But here, too, there is extensive coöperative purchasing and marketing. The Zionist Organization leases each man about twenty-five acres, but this is hardly sufficient if only grain is produced. The farmers are having a great deal of difficulty in finding themselves. The first settlers of the eighties were grossly ignorant of farm life; the "Baron" soon persuaded them to grow vines and through his paternalism almost pauperized them. Later they turned to cereal production, and it is only now with the aid of the Palestine Agricultural Experiment Station that they have begun to meet their problems intelligently. In the rich coastal lands, on small plots, carefully irrigated and richly fertilized, they have been growing citrus fruits. The orange producers are the most successful of the colonists. Jewish orange growers sent more than a million dollars worth of choice Jaffa oranges to Europe in 1930. But grapes, olives, and almonds

are also grown and there has been considerable experimentation with bananas and flax. The tendency today on the Jewish farms is to lessen the production of vines and cereals and to introduce a mixed economy of dairy products, cereals, fruits, vegetables, wine, and table grapes, bees, poultry, and eggs. The average farmer, who has a more modern and expensive equipment, a higher standard of living than the primitive Arab fellah, is struggling desperately to make both ends meet, and as a result the colonies are growing very slowly in numbers.

There are about 35,000 colonists in about 100 agricultural settlements who are either dirt-farmers or craftsmen or professional men serving the farmers directly. The great mass of the Jews, about eighty per cent, are in the towns. The "native" Jews and the bearded and earlocked pious of this modern day live in the holy towns of Safed, Tiberias, Jerusalem, and Hebron. This latter town was evacuated by the Jewish students and settlers after the massacre in 1929. The new urban settlers are concentrated in Jerusalem, Haifa, and Tel-Aviv. This latter is an all-Jewish town of about 40,000 near Jaffa. It is a charming modern city on the Mediterranean with all the advantages of an English or American seaside resort. A comparison between modern Tel-Aviv and the neighboring mother city, Jaffa, hybrid-oriental, most clearly shows the Westernizing influence of the Jewish immigrants of the last generation. The new settlers, particularly the business men from Poland, have established numerous shops and small factories. They manufacture furniture, shoes, clothes, cigarettes, leather-goods, paper boxes, and a host of other articles. There were in 1930 about 617 such factories employing 6,777 men, producing over \$5,000,000 worth of goods a year. In addition there were 1,854 craft workshops keeping almost 3,400 men and women at work. The larger businesses are the grain mills in Haifa owned by the Rothschilds, and cement, brick, textile, food-stuffs, tanning, oil, soap, and match factories. Haifa is gradually forging ahead as a center of Jewish industry, for it has the best natural harbor in Palestine and is to serve as the Western terminus of the Haifa-Bagdad railroad and a fork of the pipe line carrying oil from Mosul. The largest single industry in the land is the Palestine Electric Corporation now engaged in harnessing the water power of the upper waters of the Jordan and the Yarmuk. It hopes when its hydro-electric plant is in operation to supply enough cheap electricity so as to provide adequately for the industrial and light-



Courtesy of United Palestine Appeal

A TYPICAL RESIDENCE IN KFAR YECHESKEL
One of the Jewish Coöperative Colonies in Palestine

ing needs of the land. Besides the hot-springs of Tiberias the mineral resources of the Dead Sea are also being exploited. This lake, it is estimated, contains enormous quantities of mineral salts, minerals and chemicals, and it is confidently expected that the potash produced here will provide sufficient cheap fertilizers to aid the farmers materially in improving their fields. A new, promising source of revenue is the tourist industry with its demand for hotels, restaurants, chauffeurs, and guides. Palestine is uniquely qualified as a tourist land. In addition to its many sites of historic interest for Jew and Christian, it abounds in mountains, ravines, lakes, and brooks that are glorious in their beauty during the verdant days of spring. In one day, by auto, one can travel literally all the way from Dan to Beersheba, from the sweltering inferno of a mid-summer Jericho, eight hundred and twenty feet below sea-level, to the snow-clad peaks of Hermon, high on the outer edge of Galilee. The industrial development of the country is hampered by a dearth of natural resources and a barrier of tariff walls gradually rising in England, Egypt, and other lands. It is difficult for the Jewish workman to compete in the labor market with the native workers with

their lower wages and longer hours. The Jews of Palestine are not sufficiently numerous to consume their own manufactures or agricultural products, nor have the Arabs the money, the standard of living or the desire to absorb any appreciable amount of Jewish products. The balance of trade is still most unfavorable. In 1930 there were about \$34,000,000 of imports and only a little over \$9,000,000 of exports, but it is nevertheless a significant commentary on the new Jewish industry to recall that in 1913 the total amount of exports and imports was less than \$8,000,000.

The Jewish workmen hailing from Europe have brought not only their standard of living but also their cultural tastes, their political and economic idealism with them. Almost all are socialistic, but not all are Marxian. Many, under the influence of A. D. Gordon, reject the class hatred associated with the theory of the class struggle. Politically the Laborites are the most powerful party in the Jewish Community. United in the General Federation of Jewish Labor (1921) they have set up and attempted to carry out a program of social welfare which will protect the worker in unemployment, sickness, and old age. They are enamored of coöperative forms of enterprise and have developed coöperation to a high degree on the soil and in the town. For a time they organized and controlled the largest Jewish building corporation in the country: The Jewish Workers' Coöperative Association (1924). Until it was liquidated a few years ago it had undertaken contracts involving millions and had built roads, urban sub-divisions, and had practically created the powerful Jewish building trades. The Federation has its own bank, schools, printing shops, newspaper, circulating library of over ninety branches, and medical service.

The workers' *Kupat Holim* (Sick Fund—*Krankenkasse*) has its own hospitals, dispensaries, first-aid stations, and a medical service that goes with the worker right into the malaria-ridden swamps. Far larger than this "Sick Fund" of theirs is the Jewish medical service of Palestine controlled and financed largely by American women and called the *Hadassah* (Esther) in honor of that heroine of ancient Persia. The Hadassah maintains hospitals, dispensaries in the villages, a nurses' training school, and a series of laboratories in the larger towns. It provides meals for the children in the schools, playgrounds for recreation, and teaches them personal hygiene in school and home. Together with the Hebrew University and the

government it has done a great deal to fight malaria and trachoma, the two great ills of the land. The low rate of infant mortality among Jewish children is without doubt due to its infant welfare department which operates over twenty stations throughout the land. In 1930 the infant mortality rate among Jews was sixty-nine per thousand; across the river in Transjordan the government estimated the rate at 222.3. The Hadassah actually expends more for direct medical services than the Palestine government itself. The majority of its patients have been treated without charge.

Every intelligent Jew in Palestine pays homage to some school of political or economic or cultural philosophy. At the last communal election eighteen party lists of candidates were considered by 50,000 voters. This is individualism with a vengeance. Everyone was represented, from the *Mizrahi* workers who believe in the coming of a personal Messiah to the Communists who work for the coming of a proletarian dictatorship. Practically every Zionist is some form of a state-nationalist; this is the Herzlian heritage. But it is almost equally true that there are few rural and urban workers who have not been touched by the austere "religion" of the late A. D. Gordon, who preached the gospel of labor.

There is almost something unhealthy in his exaltation of farm work. Historically this reaction is understandable. The Jews were an agricultural people in ancient Palestine. It was only in the Diaspora that they were gradually weaned away from the soil, and there was no thought of a mass return to the land till the late eighteenth century. Then the physiocratic theory of the primacy of agriculture began to influence the first generation of modern Jews, who overestimated the value and need of farm labor, and failed to understand the nature of their own mercantile and industrial achievements. The Russian-Jewish *intelligenza* of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, into whose ears had been drummed the physiocratic arguments of the agrarian magnates, who had read their Tolstoi and Dostoievski, who had rallied in the seventies to the "Back-to-the-land" movement of the Russian Populists, turned sharply against the type of economic life that had characterized their ancestors for the last 1,600 years. This attitude is most strongly expressed by Gordon, a petty Russian farm official. The desire to return to the soil, to conquer it through love and labor prompted him when almost fifty to come to Palestine where, through his life and writings, he



SETTLEMENT OF THE NEW IMMIGRATION

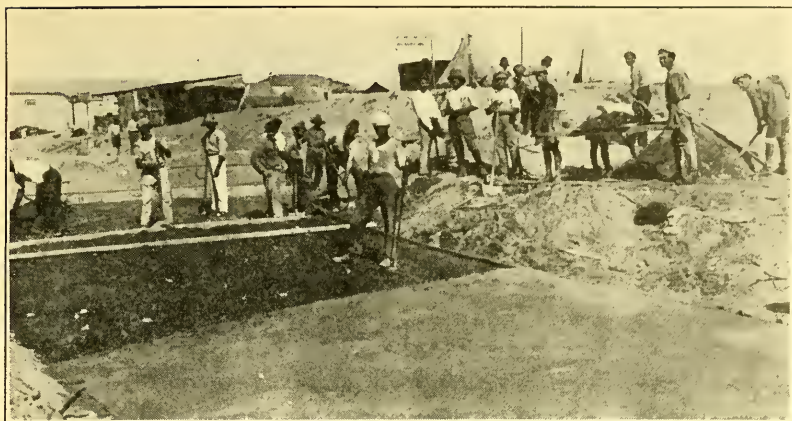


TEL-AVIV, A THRIVING JEWISH COLONY NEAR JAFFA

became the spiritual father of the post-war "Pioneers." He taught that the way to individual, national, yes universal "redemption" is through labor. Work, for him, was a cosmic concept—it united man with nature, with the soil of his native land. Through it man grew into nature and took root in the land of his fathers, through it one attained the most intimate union with all life and being. Gordon was a sincere pacifist, a socialist in his contempt for those who lived off the labor of others. Zionism was to be an ethical movement working to establish a model commonwealth. Palestine and Zionism, in the broadest sense, were the means toward a realization of a humanitarian idealism. His nationalism, therefore, was of an international, a universal character. His simple, high philosophy of life did not conquer the thinking of the Palestinian workers. Countries are not built by humble idealists. Yet through his message of the loving relation of man to man, through his own labors as a farm hand, he gave a moral tone to the toil of the Palestinian worker. He died in Daganian, near the Lake of Tiberias, on the edge of Galilee, in 1922.

His influence is still a moving force in the lives of the *Haluzim* who, through labor on Palestinian soil, hope for an inner spiritual rebirth. It is this collegiate youth, these "Pioneers," who are building towns, clearing fields, who are sweating in the quarries, digging roads, draining swamps, who through "black, galling labor," as they call it, are trying to "redeem" the land. It is they who preach the Hebraization of Jewish culture, who are bringing the beauties of Japhet into the tents of Shem, who even as they swing their picks into the hard soil may carry in their pockets a Hebrew translation of Plato's *Symposium* or Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks*.

Far more intellectual in his approach and more keenly aware of the hopes of his people was Asher Ginzberg, best known under his pseudonym of *Aḥad Ha-'Am*, "One of the People." Without question he has exerted the greatest influence on the cultural development of modern Palestine Jewry. In the late eighties, even in the pre-Herzlian days, Ginzberg already looked askance at philanthropic and political Zionism because he believed that they were inadequate as a solution of the Jewish problem. Palestine could not do away with the physical distress of the Jews, but it could and must help the needs of a Judaism threatened by decay in the modern state which demanded a slavish acceptance of its own cultural pattern.

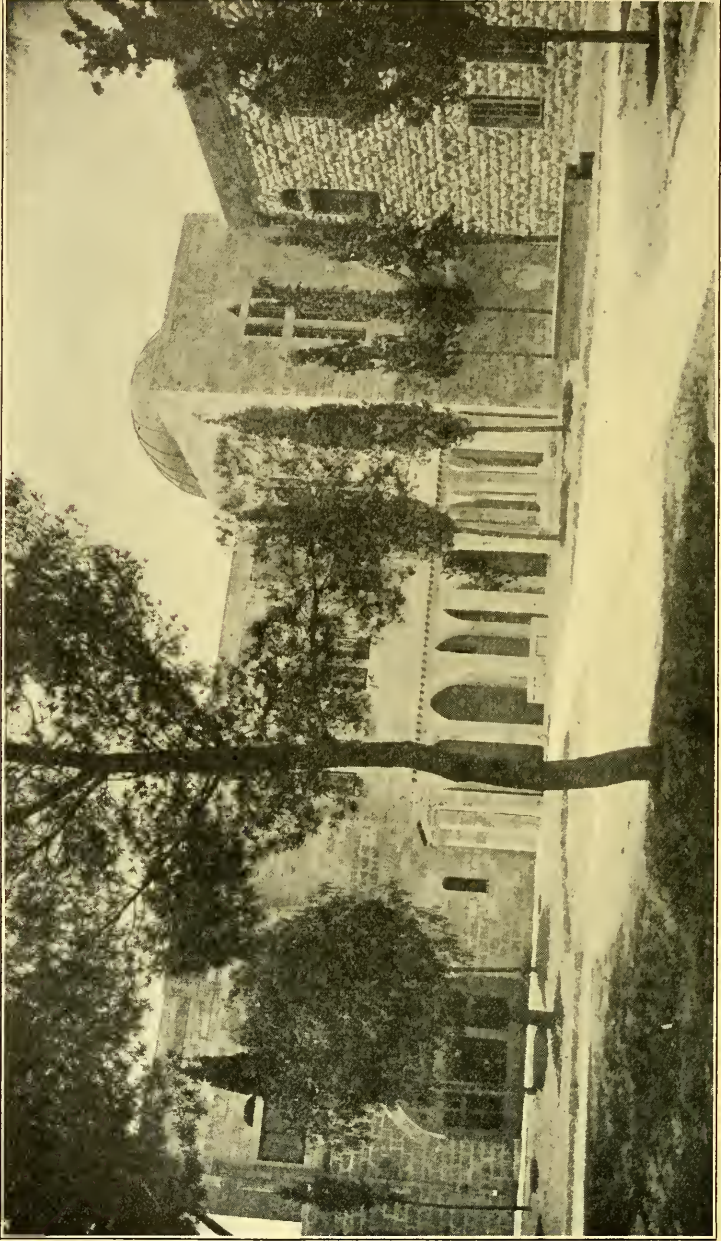


Courtesy of United Palestine Appeal

FROM UNIVERSITY TO ROADBUILDING

He wanted to save the Jewish people everywhere through a spiritual, cultural renaissance. For him the rebirth of "Judaism" was the real purpose and goal of Zionism. Judaism and the Jew everywhere could be saved only through a "spiritual center" in Palestine, a center which would serve as a unifying force to hold together and influence all Jews in the Diaspora, as an intellectual homeland where the ethical idealism and the emotional verve of the Jew would most naturally develop. Palestine was the only spot where this new religion, Zionism, could develop unhampered; where the Jew could assimilate without being assimilated. Through his writings and teachings he emphasized the need of modern Hebrew. As a stylist, he helped create its idiom, and it is in no small measure due to him that Hebrew today is the language of Jewish Palestine, that it is the language of instruction in the Jewish schools, that it is heard in the market place and has become the common tongue of practically all the colonists. It was the crusade begun by *Ahad Ha-'Am* which forced the Herzlian Zionists to add a cultural program to their purely political aims.

The intensity of the cultural and educational interest of the "New Settlement" is made manifest through a complete system of public schools, 330 in number, of which 230 are under the control of the Agency. In all of them the most advanced methods of pedagogy are employed. The school population is about 30,000, more



Courtesy of United Palestine Appeal
THE BIO-CHEMISTRY BUILDING OF THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY

girls than boys. There are fifteen schools and colleges with secondary classes in Tel-Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa, and the larger colonies. Though the Jews are only one-fourth as numerous as the Moslem Arabs, they have as many children in the elementary schools; in the secondary schools they have more than the combined enrollment of both Christians and Moslems. Their school budget is not so very much less than the entire amount expended by the state for educational purposes. This indicates an obvious desire on the part of the newcomers to maintain the same high standard of education and culture that has distinguished them in the Diaspora. It is a costly whim, for only about sixteen per cent of the budget of the 230 Agency schools is paid for by the Palestine government.

The crown of the educational system in Palestine is the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Dedicated in 1925 by Arthur Balfour it has adopted a broad and unique program:

to overcome the handicaps of disease and malnutrition and to make Palestine inhabitable for people from all parts of the world...to provide a permanent home for the tradition of science and learning among Jews...to be...a Palestinian University to which all sections of the population may turn...to promote better understanding between the peoples of the Near East.

The natural sciences are particularly favored; work of an intensive character is being carried on in chemistry, parasitology, microbiology, hygiene, and in the natural history of the land. With men like Hadamard and Albert Einstein on the Board of Governors it was inevitable that advanced work would be done in physics and mathematics. The authorities are about to open a school of sub-tropical medicine and hope ultimately to introduce post-graduate medical work. Originally the University was solely a research institution but under the stress of popular demand it began to accept undergraduates and graduated its first class in 1932.

An integral part of the University is the Institute of Jewish Studies, manned by a group of distinguished scholars who are furthering a critical and scientific study of Jewish lore. Not the least of their goals is that of introducing Hebrew as the common language of Jewish scholarship. Leopold Zunz (nineteenth century), the first to initiate a critical study of the sources of Jewish history and literature—the “Science of Judaism,” he called it—encouraged the use of the local vernaculars, for his motives were largely apolo-

getic. Today when scholars are writing in Polish, Hungarian, Dutch, Roumanian, when masses of valuable material are not available to the average student because of linguistic limitations, the Institute is encouraging the use of Hebrew as a common medium of expression. Alongside the Institute is the School of Oriental Studies with its Islamic Library, probably one of the richest in existence in works on Arabic culture. In this school scholars are now working on a concordance of classical Arabic poetry and a critical edition of the historical corpus of the ninth-century Moslem scholar, Baladhuri. It is the hope of the University to create a cultural center for both Jew and Arab, a center that will attempt a sympathetic but scientific evaluation of the cultural achievements of both groups. The University is maintained by world Jewry as is the National and University Library which, with its 250,000 volumes, is the finest in the Near and Middle East.

The keen intellectual interests of the settlers is reflected not only in their system of education and their varied ideologies but also in their press which prints, of course, not merely for Palestine but also for the Diaspora. There are three daily newspapers in Hebrew, one in English, and a host of literary, technical, and scientific publications which treat of subjects ranging all the way from philology to fertilizers. The high character of the publishing business is reflected in the activity of the *Debir* (Oracle) Press, headed by H. N. Bialik, the greatest living Hebrew poet. Among its numerous publications are editions of the medieval Hebrew poets, collections of memoirs, a large English-Hebrew dictionary, and translations of the most important works in the field of Jewish learning.

The Zionist schools today dominate the educational system of Palestine Jewry but by no means exercise a monopoly. Before the Zionists even engaged upon a cultural program various other organizations had already entrenched themselves. There are about 100 non-Agency Jewish schools in the land (1930). The *Alliance Israélite Universelle*, a protective Jewish association of French origin, has its own group of schools, some of which give vocational training; the Anglo-Jewish Association of London has a large girls' school in Jerusalem; and before the War the *Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden* was very active. All these schools represent the efforts of an earlier generation to educate the youth along cultural and trade lines. It is not at all improbable, too, that the sponsors of these schools wished to further the political interests of their re-

spective homelands: England, France, and Germany. Besides the schools of these various protective societies there are agricultural academies and orphanages, private schools and kindergartens, and a host of old-fashioned religious schools operated by orthodox, observant Jews.

The approach in the Zionist schools is nationalistic, neo-romantic, secular, and critical. It is just this secular attitude that has antagonized the religiously minded Zionists and the non-Zionist orthodoxy. Orthodox Jews who have remained within the ambit of the Zionist movement have their own schools. The *Mizrahi*, whose name is officially derived from *Merkaz Ruhani*, "spiritual center," ask that all instruction be in harmony with religious orthodoxy. They form the right-wing of the Agency schools, the Labor party schools form the left-wing, and the general Zionist schools the center.

Other orthodox Jews, about fifteen per cent of the whole, who dread any contact with the Zionist movement, have affiliated themselves with the *Agudat Yisrael* (United Israel), an international orthodox group devoted to traditional Judaism. They have rallied around themselves the pious pilgrims who still live on doles and look forward to a restoration, in God's own time, without man's help. They are punctilious in matters of ritual and are not enamored of the emphasis laid on female education. They have seceded from the Jewish Community, have their own schools, and as bitter opponents of Zionist secularism have hurled the ban against the University and the Library. The religious problem, however, is not an acute one, the rabbinical hierarchy has no real power to control consciences and is, therefore, not resented by the Zionist masses. The Judaism of the officially recognized Rabbinical Council is of a moderate orthodox type, yet not sufficiently liberal to tolerate an instructor of Bible at the University who might employ the critical method, nor assent to a medical school with an anatomical laboratory, for dissection is at variance with the orthodox hope for resurrection. Some type of liberal Judaism, adapted to Palestinian nationalism and with a radical social program, might find a hearing if it had proper leadership. No one as yet has attempted this.

The cultural life of Palestine Jewry is not merely limited to the liberal arts; the colonists are exceedingly interested in the fine and tonal arts. There are musical conservatories, and even an occasional opera in Hebrew. Concerts are frequent and, when some

distinguished virtuoso appears, the settlers ride in from distant colonies by the hundreds. There are two unusually fine theatrical companies, *Habima* (The Stage) and *Ohel* (Tent), an amateur laborers' group. The quality of the work and the type of play they produce, the *Dibbuk* for instance, reminds one very much of the Theatre Guild in this country and the *Kammertheater* work of Max Reinhardt in Germany and Austria. A Jewish art school was established years ago and called the Bezalel Arts and Crafts School after the designer of the tabernacle and the cult objects used by the Hebrews in their wilderness wanderings. It has encouraged painting and the plastic arts as well as the native crafts: weaving, silver filigree, hammered brass, and needle work. A Jewish architecture has not developed, no great monumental synagogue or temple has yet risen. It is too early for all this, the group is too poor, too small, the need of "bread to eat and raiment to put on" is too keen. They are not yet interested in form and rhythm; their qualities of taste and imagination are expressed only in literature; their creative instinct, true to past intellectual and ethical emphases, impels those who have experienced political and social disabilities toward new creations of a political, social, and economic nature. The art will come.

They have as yet produced no great literary work. They are still in the process of absorbing. They are still in the stage of translating; they are still reading Tolstoi, Oscar Wilde, and Goethe...in Hebrew. Last year they read Lawrence's *Revolt in the Desert*, J. H. Poincaré's, *La science et l'hypothèse*, Remarque's *The Way Back*, and Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*...in Hebrew. Only recently there were five book-of-the-month clubs grinding out translations of notable European and American "best-sellers." The Jews, as yet, have produced no great novel of the soil; their poets have only begun to chirp.

They have no desire to recreate a primitive Palestine of the Bible. Palestine is not a "Holy Land" in that respect for them. They are not mystical, romantic reactionaries. Thus can be branded only a few of the *Mizrachi* and the Agudists who still sedulously study the ancient sacrificial tractates. The average Zionist of today in Palestine—farmer, factory-worker, shop-keeper, professional man—wants to create a state in Palestine that will permit complete political freedom for the Jew, that will do away with poverty, long hours,



Courtesy of United Palestine Appeal

HARVEST TIME IN THE HOLY LAND

physical distress and helpless old age. He wants a truly democratic government where every man and woman will have the opportunity to live freely and to express himself openly. He seeks to create a national state of such an ideal character that the world will turn again to the ancient East for new guidance.

The Jews in Palestine, in defiance of the powers of nature and historicity, are deliberately and consciously attempting to beget a new world and a new people in an old and barren land. Are they succeeding? Their example has certainly brought new strength to many. They have fired the pride of ancestry and the historic consciousness of a far-flung people. This awakened self-respect is reflected in the writings of Ludwig Lewisohn, Arnold Zweig, Max Brod, Stefan Zweig, Beer-Hoffman, and André Spire. The new nationalism has encouraged a new feeling of solidarity among all Jews, stimulated a love for the Hebraic language and heritage, created new spiritual and social values in a harassed people and raised them again to heights of enthusiasm and sacrifice.

But all this has occurred only within the "ivory tower." What of the land, of the people? The coming of the Jew has meant more

fertile fields, plantations, and forests for all. It has brought a knowledge of hygiene, the control of disease. Roads have been built, new industries have been created, the standard of living has been raised. Western political and social ideals—ideals that have been justified by their fruits—are at hand for those who would take them. The lesson of the emancipation of women is being taught daily. If the School of Oriental Studies has any measure of success, it will bear fruit in a "Science of Islam" that will uncover a great culture and prepare the way, possibly, for one even greater.

But there is yet no clarity in the land. The problems to be solved are difficult. The West has come to the East. It is all welter and confusion. The burro is competing with the dynamo, the camel with the tractor, the flail with the thrasher. There is nationalism, chauvinism, hospitals, socialism, massacres, missionaries, and . . . much sacrifice. Palestine is a land of "becoming."

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