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A Socio-Historical Study of the Jewish Community of Worcester, Massachusetts

William Harold Somers

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TITLE

A Socio-Historical Study of the
Jewish Community of Worcester, Massachusetts

AUTHOR'S NAME

William Harold Somers

ABSTRACT OF

A THESIS

submitted to the Faculty of Clark University, Worcester,
Massachusetts, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of
Economics and Sociology
and accepted on the recommendation of

CHIEF INSTRUCTOR

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Abstract

The present dissertation represents an effort to trace in socio-historical fashion the origin and development of the Jewish community in Worcester, Massachusetts. In the course of this investigation, the writer discovered certain recurring tendencies which definitely characterize the life of the local Jewish colony as that of a group in transition. Out of an original condition of solidarity, a considerable degree of disunity has developed which is undermining the very foundations of the community.

Not until the Russian-Jewish immigration of 1882 was there any evidence of a real beginning of a Jewish colony in Worcester. The early settlers were largely peddlers and small shopkeepers, maintaining residence and place of business on the fringe of the down-town business area. Much of their success in adjusting themselves to this environment was due to the patronage of non-Jewish mill hands working in the large factories adjacent to the "Ghetto."

By 1900 the colony had so increased in size that expansion became imperative. The more prosperous Jews began to move up Union Hill, displacing the Irish who had settled the lower section, and later--on the top of the hill--invading the neighborhoods of some of Worcester's oldest and most influential citizens. In ten years time, this migration of Jews away from the first settlement resulted in a virtual

2.

taking over of the hillside and the summit to the east as areas of second and third settlement.

Another migration from the ghetto, one which played a most important part in the life of the Jewish community, was a population movement to the west side of Worcester. Made up of Worcester's wealthiest Jews, it became an exclusive coterie which even today has entirely separate interests from those of the parent colony. Indeed, the separatist tendency has even evolved a manifestation of desire on the part of some to sever all Jewish contacts.

As a consequence of such ecological changes, the local Jewish population today is divided not only spatially, but more important, economically and socially, as well. The conflict growing out of this division centers largely in the attitude of resentment on the part of the impoverished East Siders against the social aloofness of their economic superiors on the West side. So deep is the cleavage arising from the economic factor that only in times of outside danger (e. g. the Hitler menace) do the local Jews show real community consciousness.

Most of the organizations of the community reflect the factionalism embodied in the East-West division. Synagogues, lodges, schools and youth organizations are differentiated according to East or West side residence. With few exceptions organizations which have attempted to include both factions in their membership have failed. Only in the field of

charity, namely, in their common support of the United Jewish Charities and the Home for the Aged and Orphans, has any appreciable progress ~~has~~ been made in overcoming this class distinction.

Contemporary trends indicate an even more complete disintegration. Recent migration is tending to distribute itself more widely than ever, with East Siders and West Siders alike leaving their respective communities for scattered sections of the city. Organizations seeking a new community consciousness by the appeal to a common racial inheritance are experiencing a high mortality rate. Religious training is rapidly declining as synagogues become less and less important to the youth. It is this rapid dissolution of community solidarity and religious unity in a group formerly held together by common bonds of ancient origins that constitutes the striking feature of Jewish life in Worcester.

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CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT	1
Introduction	
General migration	
Migration to Worcester	
Population growth	
Character of migrants	
Community organization	
The synagogue	
Social service	
Fraternal organizations	
II. ECOLOGY of JEWISH COMMUNITY.....	33
Segregation	
Segregation of the Jews in Worcester	
Invasion and succession	
Centralization and decentralization	
City-wide dispersion	
III. CONFLICT.....	62
Nature of the conflict	
Origin of solidarity	
Beginning of the conflict	
Opposition to exodus of the rich	
Detailed evidence of conflict origins	
How fortunes were made	
Sharpness of the conflict	
Bearing on social status	
Social cleavage	
Bearing of economic conflict on the religious situation	
Summary	
IV. SOLIDARITY.....	89
Racial consciousness	
Cooperation in the face of persecution	
Cooperation in philanthropy	
Fraternal cooperation	
Cooperation in drama	
Summary	
V. CHILD WELFARE.....	98
Education	
The reform school	
Orthodox schools	
Recreation	

Chapter		Page
	Social service Correction Summary	
VI.	TRENDS.....	114
	Chief value of study Population trend Financial cause of dispersion Social trends Educational trend Recreational trend Conclusion	

CHAPTER I

Historical Development

Introduction- An immigrant group in an American city is certain to provide the sociologist with a fertile field for study. The reason lies chiefly in the fact that such a group constitutes a people in transition, moving slowly, almost imperceptibly, away from old settled ways into the vigorous currents of a life marked by an entirely new tempo. When an immigrant group reacts quickly to the new environment, the study takes on added interest because the transition is so rapid; and when that group takes all that the new life has to offer, while persisting in maintaining much of its own culture, the study assumes a dramatic character that is founded in the effort to maintain a dual cultural personality. The Jewish immigrants in America have a history marked by just such a duality of social existence. Perhaps no alien group has been so quick to take what America had to offer in economic and social advantages; yet the Jew is only now beginning to strain at the bonds which have kept his racial solidarity intact.

The case of the Jews in Worcester may be taken as typical in considering the social experience of that race in American urban communities. And right at the outset it may not be amiss to say that the study of the Jewish community discloses traits and tendencies which characterize

no other immigrant unit in Worcester or elsewhere. The historical experience of the Jewish race and its identification with a deeply rooted religious solidarity provide group and individual variations from the norm of other immigrant groups. However, among themselves, Jews in their organizational life are not apt to vary much from city to city, or from town to town. Indeed certain common characteristics of Jewish communal life are to be found in any American city where Jews reside. It will be the purpose of this first chapter to trace, in a socio-historical fashion, the coming of the Jewish element to America and to the city, the character of the people, the growth of the Jewish population, and the development of their community life.

General Migration- Jewish immigrants first came to the United States as early as the seventeenth century. We hear of them in the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam, and research has disclosed their presence in many of the early English colonies. Most of these were Spanish and Portugese Jews who had come to America by way of England; those Jews who were in the country at the close of the American revolution came chiefly, it is reported, from the Iberian peninsula. The Russian and German Jews, coming at a much later date, have little in common with

the early Spanish Jews, but relative purity of race and fixity of religion. The German Jews, however, were the first to come to America in any appreciable numbers. They began to arrive in the early 30's and maintained a steady influx until 1848, when the revolutionary movement in Germany and Austria increased their volume as part of the great German migration of that period. Their total number was not great, however, and pales into comparative insignificance before the great masses of Russian, Polish and Lithuanian Jews who began to arrive about 1880 under pressure of the intolerant Russian Semitic policy of the time. Bernard Pares in his "History of Russia" makes clear the character of the conditions that drove the Jews, the settlers of the Worcester colony among them, from Russia.

"The majority of the Jewish population of the Empire was in Poland or the Western provinces. From 1881 these were declared to be the place of Jewish settlement; and Jews, except under special regulations, were not allowed to live elsewhere. Jews needed police permission to employ Christians; Jews were dismissed in 1886 from the judicial service and were excluded from all administrative posts and from most of the professions; only 10% of Jews were allowed even in the universities of their areas, and only 5% in St. Petersburg and Moscow; in 1887 the same restriction was applied to secondary schools;..... Special taxes, for instance, on the synagogue and on Jewish meat were imposed for the upkeep of special schools for the Jews, but by no means all this money

reached its destination. Jews were forbidden to trade on Sunday. Children were baptized against the wishes of their parents. Jews who became orthodox were given, at request, a free divorce." 1.

This illustrates the same old story, not at all novel in Jewish experience. But perhaps for the first time in history, there was one country to which the Jew could go without finding strings attached to his liberty. Small wonder that America became something of a magic symbol. Old Worcester Jews repeat to this day the stories that used to trickle through to Russia about the unbelievably prosperous land across the Atlantic. Thousands left Russia before the turn of the century, and in the four decades from 1880 to 1920, about two million Jews came to settle in the United States, most of them from Russia. 2.

Migration To Worcester- It is to the early impact of this great wave upon America that we must turn for the origins of the Jewish colony in Worcester. The few German Jews who preceded the Russian immigration were never an important factor in the local Jewish social scene.

- 1.) Pares, Bernard, "History of Russia" P. 412, (New York, 1926).
- 2.) B'Nai B'rith Manual, ed. by Samuel S. Cohon, P. 26, (Cincinnati, 1926).

A few figures will throw sufficient light on the importance of the Russian Jewish colony. In the year 1915, a survey showed that 94 per cent of all the foreign Jews in Worcester were Russian-born.^{3.} In that year 41.6 per cent of the Jewish population was American-born, and 1.2 per cent were born in England.^{4.} The fact of the preponderance of Russian-born Jews, or Jews of Russian-born parents, is important in view of later aspects of the social scene. For here we have an original solidarity, a group where nearly all are of like origin and substantially of like fortune. Subsequent social changes, however, operated to destroy this homogeneity, even in a racial group which most Non-Jews look upon as being a single, undisturbed unit. In a way, the preponderance of Russian Jews simplified the internal characteristics of the local Jewish colony. There were no influential German or Spanish groups to complicate and embitter Jewish relations. Whatever changes took place later can, accordingly, be traced to much simpler influences than animosities proceeding from ancient historical and geographical influences.

This same factor of the preponderance of Russian-born Jews is apparent if we glance at the figures for a neighbor-

3.) Talamo, Joseph, "Jewish Population of Worcester", p. 11, Clark (M. A. thesis) 1915.

4.) Ibid, p. 10.

ing Jewish community. Springfield, Massachusetts, has experienced much the same sort of problem within its Jewish group as has Worcester. There, in 1926, 83 per cent of the entire Jewish population was of Russian origin. Of the remainder, 11 per cent were of Polish origin, and 6 per cent of German background⁵. Since the Worcester figure of 94% for 1915 includes Polish Jews, it will be seen that the Russian percentage in both cities is precisely alike, although covering different years.

Population Growth- Figures on population growth show rates of increase that might be reproduced, substantially, for any industrial city in New England having a Jewish colony. In 1855 the first Jewish settler, a German, came to Worcester. It seems that for some time he was the only Jew in the city, since in 1873 only three Jewish families had their homes here. They were the Strauses, the Weinburgs, and the Hollanders. In all, these families totaled nineteen persons, an insignificant number in terms of group importance. Moreover, they neither professed their Jewish origin, nor did they observe the Jewish religious and social rites which are of such importance in keeping the race intact⁶. Of these early families only the

5.) Douglas, H. Paul, "The Springfield Church Survey", P. 126, (New York, 1926).

6.) Jewish Civic Leader, P. 2, December 23, 1932

Hollanders remain. In those first years, from 1855 to 1880, the increase in Worcester's Jewish population was practically negligible. In 1876, only four years before the first large group of Russian Jewish immigrants arrived in the city, there were not more than twenty-five people of Jewish birth in the entire community.^{7.}

The year 1880 marks the date of the first Worcester Jewish settlement of any consequence. The seventeen families then resident in the city totaled eighty-five members. With the exception of three or four families, all these newcomers were Russians who represented the first mass migration of Russian Jewry. Just why these early families selected Worcester is difficult to say. Most European Jews came to certain localities on advice given by friends already in America; doubtless, the flourishing inland factory towns offered opportunities to the immigrant that were probably well known to Jews in other cities of New England. At all events, the local Jewish colony began to grow more rapidly. While the twenty-five years from 1880 to 1905 produced no phenomenal increase, yet there were 1,000 Jews in the city in the latter year.^{8.} It is the period, 1905-07 that shows the sharpest increase. In these two years the

7.) Rice, Franklin P., "Dictionary of Worcester, Massachusetts and Its Vicinity", P. 49., (Worcester 1893)

8.) Jewish Encyclopedia, VIII, P. 372, (N. Y., 1904)

Jewish population jumped from 1,000 to 3,000^{9.} the explanation of which seems to lie in the rapid industrial development of the Worcester area. Since 1907, although the increase has been strong, there has been no such sharp advance. In 1915 a special investigation disclosed a Jewish population of 8,000^{10.} By 1917 there were 10,000^{11.} and by 1927 the number had advanced to 13,000^{12.} The slow increase during the decade between 1917 and 1927 is largely explained by the new immigration laws passed by Congress in the early twenties. Since the passage of those laws, the increase through immigration has been extremely low, and the population figure for 1930 actually indicates a drop to 8,150 in the period 1927-30^{13.} This last figure, however, can be accepted only tentatively. Rabbi Olan, leader of the local Reform Temple, flatly questions the accuracy of the latest figures indicating a drop from the year 1927^{14.} Certainly Worcester Jews hear the statement of total decrease with some surprise; and many who are well informed on Jewish matters in the city have stated in interviews with the writer that there has been no decrease whatsoever. In any event, it is clear that

- 9.) American Jewish Yearbook, 5668, (Philadelphia 1907)
- 10.) Estimate by Joseph Talamo.
- 11.) United States Church Census, 1917, Bureau of Census (Washington, D. C.)
- 12.) Ibid, 1927
- 13.) Jewish Bureau of Social Research.
- 14.) From interview with Rabbi Levi Olan.

the Jews in Worcester have registered a marked and steady increase since the arrival of the first important group in 1880. In general it has been a growth that has kept pace with the industrial development of the community, in keeping with congenial surroundings and commercial possibilities.

Character of Migrants- The early immigration to the Worcester colony was, on the whole, a family movement. Here, too, however, one discovers many cases illustrating a method of migration quite common among all immigrant groups in America. Frequently the husband came first, and, after a time, depending on his earning capacity, he brought out the remainder of the family. Occasionally it was an oldest son who came first and then sent for his parents, sisters and brothers. In addition to the two classes mentioned there were also groups of young people in their twenties and thirties, men and women who came here quite footloose and free seeking only a measure of political liberty and economic security.

As a class these people were thrifty and conservative. Natives of the East side colony tell poignant stories of the hardships undergone by sons and husbands that they might the more quickly bring out their families. A few of them sought out jobs in mills and factories, but far and away the greatest number turned to some sort of peddling.

The father would get himself a horse and team and a small stock of whatever articles he sold. Then would begin a business of street hawking that very frequently developed into some flourishing enterprise. These first Jews sold all manner of things to the poorer population of the industrial sections. Fruits and vegetables, clothes, dry goods, household utensils-the gamut of human needs-were handled by these men, and frequently by women, who managed to compete with established concerns and prosper in the long run. In those days the flourishing mills in the Blackstone Valley used to pay their help at three month intervals. The time between pay checks was so long that a worker and his family were forced to buy chiefly on credit. To these people would come the ubiquitous Jewish peddler with his tempting supply of cheap luxuries and necessities. He was always ready to give credit, and mill families who found it hard to open accounts elsewhere came to depend on him in no small way. As the mills prospered, the "hands" drew larger pay envelopes, and the peddler got a larger share of their earnings. Many a wealthy Jewish family in the city today can trace the source of its well-being to some hard-working, thrifty, illiterate ancestor who used to hawk his wares among the Blackstone Valley mill hands.

Community Organization- We turn now to the development of community organizations within the Jewish colony in Worcester. As is the case in most Jewish groups, organization was, and is now, based on the ground of strong racial solidarity. Whatever the character of the organization, and however liberal its viewpoint, its first and last purpose was to bring together the city's Jews in a closer union. To a large extent, of course, the Jewish population in Worcester, or elsewhere, is not to blame for this exclusiveness. It has been tacitly taken for granted for so many centuries that a Jewish organization is so wholly Jewish in aim and sense that no other social group dreams of contributing members. Yet, chiefly, it is the Jew himself who feels the need of reassuring social unity, and his organization is built more toward that larger end than toward any lesser or more immediate one.

The Synagogue- So it was with these first Jewish organizations. First and all important, of course, was the establishment of the synagogue. Wherever you find the Jew, you find the synagogue-the **symbol** of his racial and religious oneness. It may be reform or orthodox, Russian or Lithuanian in character, but it is everywhere the basis for the community life. One competent writer

on Jewish problems goes even so far as to declare: "Without a synagogue there would be no community"^{15.} The early Worcester Jews in the first years after 1880 were too few in number to establish an orthodox synagogue with all its detailed needs; too few, and too poor, as yet, to build a house of worship, hire a rabbi, bring in a cantor for the holidays, and so on. At first, therefore, regular services were out of the question, and the weekly religious requirements were met by individual prayer at home. On high holidays, however, a veritable exodus of Worcester's few Jews took place. They would go to Boston as a rule, and return at the close of the holy period. Since, according to the Jewish law, at least ten male adults are required for a public service, it was some time before the local Jews could summon their first spiritual gathering. In 1874 the requisite number of male adults was for the first time available; but so fearful were they that one of the members might fall ill, that a Boston Jew was imported at their expense for emergency purposes. This first^{16.} "Minyan" became the basis for the first congregation. They

15.) Wirth, Louis, "The Ghetto", P. 140, (Chicago, 1928)

16.) Any meeting of ten or more males for spiritual purposes is called a "Minyan".

continued to hold services at private homes until 1877 when they formed a congregation called the Sons of Israel.

This religious group has remained until the present day. In 1880, with only twenty-five worshippers, quarters were established at #476 Main Street. The immediate growth of the congregation following the rapid influx of Jews after 1880 caused a removal in 1884 to the Stevens Block on Southbridge Street. Four years later the Jewish community felt itself capable of supporting a real synagogue, and the first edifice was erected at #79 Green Street at a cost of \$11,000. At that time the entire congregation numbered only two hundred persons, and of these only fifty were members. That these fifty men met the expense from their small savings is some indication of the important place filled by the synagogue in the early Jewish community. By 1894 the growth of the congregation again dictated removal. On this occasion the members purchased the Swedish church on Providence Street, where they still remain.

As early as 1885 the first difficulty in the Sons of Israel group caused a permanent split in the organization. As a result of internal dissension arising over purely practical matters, such as differences in management, a small number left the parent organization and formed a circle called the Sons of Abraham. These people met at the

Warren Block near Union Station where they carried on independent religious services. They were by no means of a different religious disposition than the Sons of Israel. Both were of the most pronounced orthodox type, and the dissension might best be termed "petty bickering". At any rate, there was no reconciliation, and in 1888 the Sons of Abraham erected a synagogue at #10 Plymouth Street which was fully as costly as that sponsored by the parent group. In 1913 the growth of this congregation forced a removal to more commodious quarters; and, in keeping with precedent, they purchased the Methodist Church at Coral and Waverly Streets. The purchase of Protestant churches for growing Jewish congregations may have the appearance of gentle irony. However, expediency and availability were the sole factors in determining the moves.

The first dissension in a religious circle leads to a discussion of the causes for several later breaks. In general, the causes may be treated under four heads. In the first place, simple quarrels quite beyond the fields of theology or ethics caused social ruptures that produced repercussions in the religious sphere. Such bickering led directly to the first split and assisted materially in causing others. In the second place, the rapid growth of the Jewish community frequently taxed the older synagogues

for space; rapid arrivals necessitated new quarters before arrangements could be made for removal. A third reason, and, from a theological point of view, quite an important one, was the difference in rites practiced by persons of differing religious sentiments. The Jewish orthodox religion is divided into three denominations: the Chassidic, the Ashkenazi and the Sephardic. These divisions correspond to ritual distinctions held by various groups and are of small fundamental importance. Yet they provide reason enough for division, just as Baptists and Methodists and Congregationalists split on relatively small issues. The fourth reason is based largely on sentimentality. There is, among Jews, a tradition of "Landsmanschaftt," literally a felling of brotherliness based on the fact of migration from the same city or county in the old country. Russian immigrants on their arrival in America are often sought out by people who formerly lived in the same area. These people may be perfect strangers, indeed from different towns, but "Landsmanschaftt" impels them to exchange greetings and reminiscences. Needless to say this factor provided reason enough for separate synagogues. Thus, Jews hailing from Kiev banded together and worshipped in the same place, while Jews from Grodno or Vilna or Kovno sought out their own "Landsleite", and tended to

worship in separate quarters.

In Worcester all these influences tended toward a multiplicity of synagogues; more, indeed, than the number of Jews called for. After the Sons of Abraham had become established, a few immigrants in 1892 formed a new circle called the Tower of Truth. It was not until 1899 that they became affluent enough to establish a meeting house (#3 Summit Street). Two years later, in 1901, they removed to #16 Gold Street where they still remain. This body like the others was strictly orthodox.

In 1897 the wave of immigration from Russia brought a group who formed still another orthodox body. They practiced the Chassidic rites and in their case separate worship was purely the result of "Landsmanschafft." They called themselves the Good Brothers and took quarters at #19 Brown Street. In 1906 they removed to #9 Pond Street. By 1912, internal dissensions of a trifling nature had destroyed the original membership; but in that year a few of the congregation reorganized and, calling themselves "Teferris Israel," began anew at #42 Harrison Street. Since that time they have continued as a distinct orthodox congregation.

Still another of these "Landsman" religious bodies is the "Zemack Tsedek Anshe Smoliany". It later dropped

the last two words, which mean simply a brotherhood from a district in Russia called Smoliany. It was founded May 4, 1904, as an orthodox congregation practising Chassidic rites. It met first at #8 and later at #19 Brown Street, but moved in 1913 to the quarters recently outgrown by the Sons of Abraham at #10 Plymouth Street. In 1922 the band broke up and some of the members formed the congregation of the Sons of Jacob at #104 Harrison Street where they continue to meet today.

The "Shaarai Torah" was founded in 1904 by combined dissenters from the Sons of Israel and the Sons of Abraham. It became more influential than either of the older groups, and by 1908 it had 250 members while the Sons of Abraham had but 90 and the Sons of Israel only $55\frac{17}{100}$. This group continues its services at #32 Providence Street.

Still another circle, calling itself the Congregation of the Righteous, set up at #8 Beach Street in 1905. It was a small private group and disbanded after a few years.

There remain two other synagogues to discuss, and these are in many ways the most important from the sociologist's viewpoint. The first of these is Temple Emanuel, founded in 1920, and located at #111 Elm Street. It is the only reform synagogue in the city and is attended

17.) Jewish Year Book, 5668.

almost entirely by residents of the exclusive West side. In its policies and attitudes it follows closely the reform temples of Boston and New York. Its members are the wealthy and the so-called intelligentsia of the Jewish community. Many of its members have but a scanty interest in the religious services and look upon their membership as a further assurance of high social status. Stands are taken and positions defended from its pulpit which produce no little resentment among the orthodox. That is, it is by no means rare to hear a pointed discussion of social and political activities, problems which are wholly foreign to orthodox pulpits.

The "Beth Jacob" congregation is also a West side organization devoted to whatever remains of orthodox feeling in the more exclusive community. It was founded in 1925 and holds its services at #835 Pleasant Street. Both the Beth Jacob and the Temple Emmanuel bodies will be discussed in a later chapter dealing with internal conflict within the Jewish colony.

In sum, the experience of the Jewish community in Worcester with respect to its religious needs is much the same as that obtaining within other New England industrial centers. There is the same multiplicity of synagogues where no significant reason is apparent, and

there is the same recent development of the reform temple with its appeal to the "emancipated" Jew. On the whole, the arrangement in Worcester has proved quite satisfactory to the Jewish population. The small congregation with its congenial atmosphere is altogether pleasing to the Landsman or to the dissenting groups who have the satisfaction of "Running their own affairs". The situation may seem a bit unnecessary to the non-Jew, but to the Jew himself it is the most natural thing in the world. In recent years however, the development of the reform temple has assumed major interest by providing a new source of conflict, reference to which will again be made later on.

Social Service- In social service circles, it has come to be said that of all peoples the Jews are the most generous in caring for the unfortunate of their race. One hears this so **frequently** in public addresses that it comes as no surprise that Worcester Jewry has been highly effective in relieving the community at large of the burden of caring for Jewish charity cases. At first all work of a social service nature was the result of spontaneous solicitude. Racial pride dictated that the poor and otherwise unfortunate be cared for by the Jewish colony, and house to house collections were invariably successful.

in raising the funds required. Even today it is not at all uncommon to see Jewish men and women going from home to home for one charitable purpose and another; nor are these efforts seldom without success.

The first effort at organization in the field of charitable work came with the establishment in 1887 of the Jewish Traveler's Aid Society, or, in Hebrew, "Hach-nosis Orchim." Its avowed purpose was to supply poor Jewish travelers passing through the city with a meal and a night's lodging. The necessary money was raised by means of house to house canvass, and much good work was done by this means for many years. The service still goes on, but the original organization has been incorporated into the United Jewish Charities.

In 1888, the first society for purely local need was formed by a group of women. It was called the Ladies' Hebrew Aid and Literary Society and had as its purpose general social and charitable work. In 1900 the club had 85 members and was fairly prominent in a social way; but by 1906 it had become defunct without having accomplished much by way of charitable organization.

The first charitable group supported by definite contributions at stated intervals was the "Bikdr Cholim Society" founded in 1893. By 1909 it had 260 paying members

with an annual disbursing fund of three hundred dollars.^{18.}
The body did much good work as far as its fund allowed
and continued up to 1919 when it merged with the United
Jewish Charities.

In passing one might mention the Hebrew Charity
and Zion Society founded in 1897. It attempted charitable
work both within and beyond the city but became defunct
in a few brief years.

One of the most notable services provided by Jewish
charities in Worcester is the work done by the Jewish Home
for the Aged and Orphans. Jews are loathe to see their
aged and orphaned dependents in non-Jewish homes where
it is difficult to observe certain rites and obtain food
prepared in the proper (Kosher) way. By 1913 the problem
in Worcester had taken on sufficient magnitude to require
community attention. In January 1914, a committee looked
into the matter and recommended the establishment of a
home. In September 1915, the "Chevra Kadisha Society "
pledged \$1,800 towards the purchase of a house at #25 Coral
Street in order that two aged poor and three orphaned
children found living in non-Jewish homes might be fully
provided for. On January 12, 1916, the Homes received its
charter. Three years later the property adjoining on Coral

18.) Ibid.

Street was purchased. In 1912, a ladies' auxiliary for the home was formed. This is a group of women who offer their services gratis in such matters as providing clothes and luxuries for the inmates, or in providing amusement and educational facilities. By 1927 it became necessary to add more room and when, in 1929, a further addition seemed necessary, the Ladies' Auxiliary pledged \$18,000 for the purchase of a new site at #1029 Pleasant Street. The new Home was opened on September 22, 1932, and is in every way equipped to meet fully its special problem in Worcester and Worcester county. Many of the inmates pay for their lodgings, but, needless to say, the destitute are admitted without question. The Home is the only Jewish charity in the city that did not merge with the United Jewish Charities in 1919. Its directors felt that since its service was of a special and permanent nature, it could do its work best as a separate organization. Certain it is that its work has been highly commendable, and it is one of the features of social service effort in the city to which local Jews point with no small pride.

In 1919, the Jewish community in Worcester experienced the most far reaching change that had yet come about in its charitable organization. In January of that year a movement was gotten underway to unify all the Jewish

charitable organizations in the city. Rabbi Bienfield was the leader of the movement and he was strongly supported by the influential "B'Nai Brith". In the words of one of the sponsors of the idea: "The organization exists to help the Jewish poor of Worcester. It was organized to bring a responsible, permanent and intelligent agency to the problem of poverty and need in this city's Jewish community^{19.}"

On October 27, 1919, all the Jewish charities joined the new organization except the previously mentioned Home for the Aged and Orphaned. At one stroke, therefore, all charitable work was co-ordinated under one head. "In addition to relief work the U. J. C. maintains the Worcester Ivriah School, the Department of Medical Social Science, a weekly baby welfare clinic, a recreation and educational center, and a department of Passover and Transient Aids^{20.}." The United Jewish Charities has also made an arrangement with the Community Chest, which has worked out extremely well. To all appearances the Jewish Community in the city may be looked upon as thoroughly equipped to meet the ordinary run of welfare problems that come before it.

In addition to the conventional types of welfare work

19.) Jewish Civic Leader P. 7, April 7, 1933.

20.) Ibid, P. 7.

the Jewish community has developed aids in other directions that have been extremely helpful to needy or troubled members of the colony.

"It has been seen that Jewish charity did not limit itself to the province of the elementary necessities of food, raiment and shelter, but embraced a much broader area of service including the extension of loans, and the provision of work and necessities". 21.

The quotation is well taken in considering the miscellaneous aids offered by various Worcester organizations. Interesting among these, and most important to the orthodox Jew, is the "Chevra Kadisha" or burial society. The objects of this society ^{are} ~~is~~: "to be with the mourner the night of the death; to accompany the funeral cortege; to participate in the burial; to furnish consolation to the mourners; and to pray with them." 22. Jewish law requires that the dead shall lie in a Jewish burial ground. For example, the early settlement in Cincinnati, in 1825, though having no synagogue had a burial ground "in which they had already interred four persons. The body of one poor stranger was brought to interred from Louisville, a distance of near 200 miles." 23. In Worcester the "Chevra Kadisha" Society was founded in 1893 and continues to

21.) Frock, Ephraim, "An Historical Survey of Jewish Philanthropy," P. 91, (New York, 1924)

22.) Ibid, P. 156

23.) Wirth, op. cit, P. 141

perform its functions in strict keeping with Jewish tradition.

Other important aids that seldom fall within the usual types of welfare work are the loan societies supported by Worcester Jewry. These organizations give loans without interest to those in need and the funds are provided by members' contributions. The first two organizations of this type did not last long. In 1895 there was formed the "Gimilath Chassodim," or Free Loan Society, which rapidly passed out of existence. In 1914 the Worcester Free Loan Association was founded and quickly came to a similar end. In March, 1930, there arose the Hebrew Free Loan Association, which had as its purpose the assisting of struggling business men and families to remain independent of charity. Unlike the earlier societies, funds are acquired through donations, and the new method actually works much better. Since its founding, the organization has made 282 loans amounting to \$23,009. Of this sum \$19,190.70 has been returned while the rest is outstanding. At present the society has 96 active accounts on its books.

In sum, this brief historical account of Jewish charities in Worcester indicates how the early spontaneous efforts finally developed into a co-ordinated philanthropic

endeavor culminating in the organization of the United Jewish Charities. To see how efficient those purely Jewish efforts have been in serving the Jewish poor of Worcester may be ascertained by one ready method. The following record of Jewish families relieved by the Worcester Associated Charities ^{24.} shows a sharp decline in Jewish cases handled by Worcester's foremost private family welfare agency after the establishment in 1919 of the United Jewish Charities.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Cases</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Cases</u>
1895	0	1913	16
1896	0	1914	7
1897	1	1915	20
1898	2	1916	8
1899	3	1917	17 $\frac{1}{2}$
1900	3	1918	17
1901	0	1919	8
1902	1	1920	7
1903	4	1921	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
1904	6	1922	3
1905	19	1923	2
1906	2	1924	6
1907	7	1925	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
1908	9	1926	1
1909	18	1927	0
1910	7	1928	0
1911	8	1929	0
1912	9		

Note: $\frac{1}{2}$ indicates a case of intermarriage.

24.) Annual Reports of Worcester Associated Charities, 1895-1929.

Fraternal Organizations- The local Jewish community has been especially prolific in its establishment of fraternal orders. Most of these have had as their primary, and in most cases their sole, aim the maintenance of social solidarity among local Jews. Some of them have succeeded rather well, but it is important to note the rather high mortality rate of these organizations.

The first local attempt along the lines of fraternal organization was made as early as 1882. The name of the organization was: The Independent Order of the Sons of Benjamin. It died out in 1911 after the failure of a national order with which the Worcester lodge was identified. In 1896 and 1900, respectively, were founded Worcester Lodge 212 and Bnai Joseph lodge of the Order of Brith Abraham. This was a fraternal order featuring an insurance plan for its members. Both the local lodges died out sixteen to twenty years later, but their members formed the basis for one of the four local lodges bearing the Independent Order of Brith Abraham as its name. Of these four, Worcester Lodge 118 was founded in 1901; B'Nai Zion Lodge 338, in 1903; George Frisby Hoar Lodge 372, in 1904; and B'Nai Joseph Lodge 662, in 1918. The first two have continued to the present day; the third closed in 1924; and the last came to an end in 1925. The I. O. B. A., as it is called, is, like the extinct Order

of Brith Abraham, a fraternal organization with an insurance provision for its members and dedicated to a strong fraternal consciousness among men of Jewish origin. Other fraternal orders which met quick deaths are the following: Independent Order of United Hebrews of America, Hacheo Lodge No. 49, founded in 1909, closed in 1917; the Stars of Jacob, located at #19 Waverly street, founded in 1912, closed in 1914; Stars of Israel of Worcester, founded in 1917, closed in 1925; Stars of Israel, Freedom Lodge, founded in 1918, closed in 1920.

Perhaps the most active fraternal organization in the Jewish community is the Order of B'nai Brith, Worcester Lodge 600. Its purposes are charitable and social; and in both respects the work is of a high order. The order is national and highly influential in all matters of Jewish interest. Its balls and festivals mark high spots in the Jewish social life of Worcester. It sponsors smokers, prominent speakers and all manner of social entertainment. In addition it maintains scholarships at Clark College and Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Founded February 5, 1905, this lodge has come to be looked upon by Worcester Jewry as a most important adjunct to the social and intellectual life of the Community.

The Workman's Circle, Branch 907, has a quite dif-

ferent purpose. It is a labor organization which has for its chief end the distribution of loans to its members. It has a distress fund which is applied to emergency cases and is quite apart from the loan fund. The society was formed in 1908 and its present membership of 300 is one of the largest among Jewish fraternal orders in the city. Its loans, in the year 1932 alone, totaled \$125,000 and in terms of practical assistance it is one of the most successful and necessary orders in the Jewish community. It is, of course, interested in matters of a social and educational character and provides an active center for local Jewish workers.

For the most part, mutual benefit societies have had a luckless experience in the Jewish colony. The first one was called the Hebrew Benevolent Society and was founded in 1901. It came to an end in 1913 without accomplishing any great work. In 1902 the Independent Worcester Hebrew Benevolent Society was founded and ended abruptly in 1910 after a few years of financial difficulty. The one mutual society that promised the best services was the shortest lived. The Jewish Peddlers' Protective Association was formed in 1907 and died in 1909. It had fifty members and seemed sure to be a considerable aid to the many Jews engaged in peddling of various kinds.

statute and municipal regulations, however, defined many activities that the society would normally have controlled, and the mutual aid purpose did not seem to function with any great success. All these mutual aid societies intended to provide aids for their members in case of poverty or sickness. Their failure was due in part to faulty organization, but perhaps even more to the great number of social aids already filling many of the needs touched upon by these groups. Furthermore, membership was so small as to make impossible the practical realization of any program involving considerable expense.

There remain now several social and civic organizations which play an important part in the Jewish community life. The Maccabees, an organization of considerable importance in other Jewish communities, founded a Worcester chapter on May 15, 1890. At its membership peak in 1908, it comprised 118 young men and women. Its aims were of a general social and charitable nature, but the organization failed in 1923 through sheer inertial and indifference after several reorganizations.

Two girls' clubs, the Young Girls' Hebrew Association, organized in 1898, and the Young Girls' Social Club, founded 1902, were short lived. The former ended in 1910, the latter in 1908. Indifference and lack of definite

purpose brought on the failure of both.

There are, however, two women's organizations that are successful and quite valuable in a wide social sense. The Worcester Section of the National Council of Jewish Women does a good bit of satisfactory work in a general, somewhat pointless way. Its broad program aims toward social settlement through religious, civic, educational and philanthropic services. The second group is the Young Women's Hebrew Association. This was founded only in November, 1932, and, like Y's all over the country, aims at general social assistance for the young Jewish women of the city. It also attempts some philanthropic work, although the United Jewish charities leave small scope for that.

The young Men's Hebrew Association, founded in 1929, seeks to establish a bond of good fellowship between the Jewish youth of the city. Its central and immediate aim, however, is the establishment of a Jewish community center. So far it has been wholly unsuccessful, but the idea continues to provide a goal toward which the organization works.^{25.}

Prominent among local Jewish civic organizations is a highly active post of the Jewish War Veterans founded

- 25.) The Y. M. H. A. and Y. W. H. A. are usually classified under the heading of social service. However, in the local community they function merely as fraternal organizations.

in June, 1931. It is patriotic in aim but its primary purpose may be said to be the maintenance of good comradeship and mutual assistance among the Jewish veterans of American wars. Its social activities are extensive and well attended, and from the start it has found high favor among members and non-members alike.

Even so brief a sketch as is contained in the present chapter marks with some decisiveness the strong development of Jewish communal organization in Worcester. As nearly as such things can be determined, the growth has kept pace quite evenly with the needs of an increasing population and the advanced wants of a modern community. Present indications point to co-ordination of religious and fraternal organizations comparable to that achieved in general charities. But this kind of communal solidarity is threatened by influences which, in the end, may prove stranger than present surface indications of amity. These influences will be treated in a later chapter which will utilize much of the background provided in the foregoing pages.

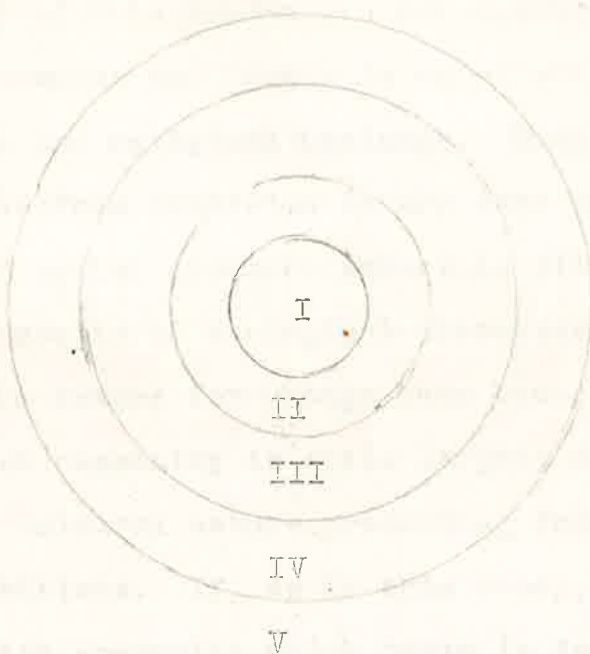
CHAPTER II
Ecology of ^{The} Jewish Community

In order to understand the sociological background of the various movements and shifts of the Jewish population some knowledge of ecological theory is necessary. Human ecology has been defined as "a study of the spatial and temporal relations of human beings as affected by the selective, distributive, and accomodative forces of the environment."¹ The various areas of settlement of the Jewish colony can be placed in their correct environmental surroundings through the means of a theoretical conception of city expansion propounded by Burgess.

"This chart represents an ideal construction of the tendencies of any town or city to expand radially from its central business district--on the map "The Loop"(I). Encircling the downtown area there is normally an area in tradition, which is being invaded by business and light manufactures(II). A third area (III) is inhabited by the workers in industries who have escaped from the area of deterioration (II) but who desire to live within easy access to their work. Beyond this zone is the "residential area" (IV) of high-class apartment buildings or of exclusive "restricted" districts of single family dwellings. Still farther, out beyond the city limits, is the commuters' zone--suburban areas, or satellite cities--within a thirty-to sixty-minute ride of the central business district."²

1. McKenzie, R. D., "The Ecological Approach", in Park and Burgess, The City, p. 63, (Chicago, 1925).
2. Burgess, E. W., "The Growth of the City", in Park and Burgess, The City, p. 50, (Chicago, 1925).

Chart A



In the Worcester situation, the "Ghetto" is located in Zone II, the second settlement in Zone III, and the third and fourth settlements in Zones IV and V. Each settlement represents a "natural area", with its own distinctive characteristics, influenced by ecological factors which will be illustrated at length in this chapter.

Considering first the general situation of environmental adjustment, we find in the case of the Jews a weakening of racial bonds under the impact of the ecological forces of segregation, invasion, succession and accomodation. The declining influence of Judaism

the world over and particularly in the United States is potent proof of this tendency. For centuries the Jew has fought changes and trends in an effort to maintain his cultural and religious heritage. That he is today shaking loose from tradition in the face of powerful economic and social pressure serves to illustrate the inevitable results of ecological processes. But, potent as the forces for change have been, the ecology of the Jewish community is still largely determined by causes of a cultural nature proceeding from deeply rooted inhibitions. If, as in this study, one investigates a Jewish community which began in America as far back as 1880, he finds that these special causes can in no wise be neglected. For instance, population changes in the Jewish community in America may be impelled by reasons non-existent in Czarist Russia; the socio-psychological forces operating to restrain those changes have not been altered a great deal as the result of migration. Here in Worcester, for example, it is readily discovered that the Jewish population is shaped by special influences that enter into the study of no other racial group in the city.

Segregation-The segregation of the local colony was largely determined by such special factors. The

segregation of the Jew in America arises from two primary causes. First of these is the historical which has hardened into a racial trait or habit. One can scarcely think of the European Jew without catching a mental picture of the Ghetto.

"With the example of the Roman Ghetto, instituted by Pope Paul VI in 1556, before them, ghettos^{became} general throughout Christendom, in every city where there was a Jewish community. These ghettos were walled in and had one or more gates, which were locked at night. At sunset the Jews had to be inside the gates, or suffer severe punishment."⁴

A race with a long past dominated by such checks can hardly be expected to live them down in a few generations. Even in the United States race consciousness is a large determinant of social conditions in the Jewish community. The ghetto is almost as prominent in our large cities as in old European capitals, having as its principle difference a voluntary rather than an enforced segregation. Here in Worcester, as elsewhere in America, the Jew has sought out separate quarters because the bonds that hold the race intact are, on the whole, stronger than the forces urging separation. The

4. Wirth, Louis, "The Ghetto", p. 32, (Chicago, 1928).

religious heritage plus the long cultural history has joined with a past of enforced separation to keep the Jewish colony well concentrated as to area of settlement. As Israel Cohen, prominent English sociologist and historian has written:

"The forces that have contributed to their growth and establishment have been mainly of a spiritual order: the racial consciousness that prompted concentration of residence, and the religious consciousness that sought expression in the traditional mode of service."⁵

In addition, attention should be directed to the influence of national origin as a factor making for Jewish segregation. In Cohen's words:

"A supplementary cause, and one of importance, was the foreign origin of the founders of the community which distinguished them from their neighbors and impelled them to form some sort of association if only for social intercourse."⁶

The second principle cause making for Jewish segregation is a practical one: the desire to live close to markets, schools and places of worship which are established for, and cater almost exclusively to, the Jewish race. Such needs, of course, find their roots in custom, tradition

5. Cohen, Israel, "The Jewish Community", Sociological Review, III pp. 221-222.
6. Ibid., p. 222.

and race history. Even the "emancipated" Jew long after he has divorced himself from the religious tenets of Judaism generally goes on centering his social and cultural life in the Jewish area.

Segregation of the Jews In Worcester-The Jewish
colony in Worcester developed its own little voluntary ghetto. For many years its boundaries were so precise that any well informed Worcesterite could name them almost to the house numbers in the several directions. That the ecological pattern has now become more fluid and more complex is due to reasons which will receive proper attention in their turn. First, we shall consider a small settlement that preceded the voluntary ghetto with its permanent establishments. This was composed of a small group of men who preceded their families in America just prior to the first sizeable influx of Jewish immigrants into the city. These men, most of them married, had come to prepare homes for their wives and children. They were drawn by common ties to a common center. Almost all of them were to be found in a cheap rooming house district that had grown up in the vicinity of Mechanic Street, which adjoins Main Street in Zone I. They lived frugally, saved tenaciously and were quite satisfied with the humblest surroundings though

located in a drab industrial area devoid of charm and beauty. Such conveniences as running water, gas lights, and bath tubs were almost beyond their experience, and many an old Worcester Jew will tell to this day the thrill that his first shabby room gave him.

Most of these men managed to bring their families to this country within a year or two after arrival. When their families came, the binding influences of race, religion, recent migration from the same land, and so on, caused them to establish homes in a common center, (Thomas Street, School Street and Layard Place) but a short distance from Mechanic Street. This section was chosen simply because it was cheap and settled largely by foreign immigrant groups. Properly speaking, this early place of residence can not be considered the area of first settlement for local Jewry since the stay was so short. From accounts given by old Jewish settlers the little colony lived in that district only three or four years. The reasons for the removal are not hard to discover. The School Street section was then a sort of helter-skelter, small business area spotted with minor industries. When the Jewish immigrants came there it was already in a stage of deterioration; housing conditions were bad and steadily growing worse. However, not only was it a slum area, but

it was in the midst of one of the city's prominent vice areas of that period. The new colony, like most Jewish colonies, placed a heavy premium on respectability; and it did not take them long to discover that the region was hardly one in which to raise their children.

Accordingly, as soon as they had prospered sufficiently to be able to bear the added expense, the Jewish families made haste to move to a more favorable location.

The area they chose, the real area of first settlement and the one still looked upon as the center of Jewish life, was the district comprising Winter, Water, and Green Streets and Conlin Court. This locality was certainly not exclusive, but it was considerably superior to the School Street section. The residences, while comparatively new, were nevertheless ugly; and though the whole area was occupied by a recent immigrant population, it was respectable at least in the sense that it kept within the law. The first migration took place about 1890 and was fairly complete in a year or two. Water Street began to develop into a typical Jewish-American Ghetto. The buildings were designed to accommodate stores on the ground floor and residences on the floors above. Kosher markets, Kosher dairies, and small stores of all kinds, quickly sprang up to care for Jewish needs and to

capture the trade of the immigrant neighborhood.

The Water and Green Street area was then, to a greater extent than now, an industrial center. When the Jewish colony arrived, many of the mills and factories were being removed, and the old buildings were left vacant. These vacant buildings were razed and Jewish homes built on the lots. These were ugly, vulgar and set extremely close together. In a few years the settlement was a thickly settled, vivacious community--a prototype on a small scale of the Jewish ghetto in the American city. Moreover, it became in a short time fairly prosperous. The surrounding mills employed a mass of small wage earners who found it extremely easy to deal with the small Jewish merchant on Water Street. And, needless to say, the entire Jewish colony sought to fill its needs at the shops and counters of its own brethren. The open air market, which to this day is a feature in any Jewish business section, began to thrive, providing the foundations of modest fortunes for dry goods and clothing merchants. As the years passed the rapid growth of the Jewish population brought on an enforced expansion. By 1900 a definite ^{movement} ~~expansion~~ ^{from} ~~from~~ out the 'ghetto' had begun.

It should be made clear that this first mass trend was based primarily, not on choice, but on necessity.

The small residential area of the first settlement was simply too small to absorb the natural growth of population coupled with the larger increases brought about by rapidly increasing immigration from Russia. At the same time there was no effort to settle a new section. New arrivals quite naturally sought to stay near the original center, and whatever expansion came about stayed close to Water Street. In the same way the direction taken by the movement was largely determined by contemporary physical conditions. North and northwest lay an industrial area given over almost entirely to mills and factories. In effect, the increasing Jewish population was faced with this choice: they could turn either to what is called the "Island" section, or they might spread out in the direction of Union Hill.

At that time, about 1900, there were a few Jewish families living in the "Island" who had settled there on arrival from Europe. They numbered in all about a half dozen, and, as they never attracted other new comers, the Jewish population of the district did not increase. It would seem to have been the natural thing for some of the overflow from the Water and Winter Street section to move into the "Island" which, at the turn of the century, was a fairly respectable residential area, largely inhabited by Irish. The reason that they did not do so lies

in the competition presented by another population movement which was going on simultaneously with the growth and expansion of the Jewish group. It was just at this time that large groups of Poles and Lithuanians, together with a few Russians, began to make their homes in Worcester. They moved steadily into the Island district and, as their numbers increased, the Irish began to move to other sections of the city leaving a few laggards behind. The rapid influx of Poles into the area meant its deterioration both from a physical and social point of view. Island streets, once neat and clean, rapidly became ill kept and dirty. Substantial residences were allowed to deteriorate by the Polish immigrants, and a maze of alleys began to develop with poor homes crowding in on one another. To the Jews, therefore, anxious to better their condition, expansion in some other direction was necessary. It becomes no matter for wonder, therefore, that the Jews turned to the only other immediate choice before them.

Invasion and Succession-A cursory examination of the area around Water Street shows how natural it is that the Jews have taken up the Union Hill section as a "second" settlement. In the first place it is directly contiguous to Water Street which was the main artery of the old colony. In the second place Union Hill was just

the type of area that the aspiring Jew could look upon as a distinct improvement over his first habitation. It is a sociological observation that in a hilly town or city, the poorest residences are generally found in the valley, while the better homes are found near and on the crests. This was true of Union Hill at the turn of the century. Living close to Water Street on Columbia, Harrison and the other adjacent streets were middle class Irish families. As one went up the hill the homes became more pretentious, the Irish thinned out and then disappeared, and families of considerable wealth were encountered. At the top of the hill, from Worcester Academy along the crest past Gaskill field, were the homes of some of Worcester's best known families. Here were the estates of the Cromptons, the Gratoms, the Whites, and the Inmans. Where St. Vincent's Hospital now stands was a beautiful wooded area much visited for its scenic advantages and known, for obvious reasons, as Lover's Land. Clearly, here was a desirable site, and the Jews living in the valley below cast envious glances up the hillside.

By 1900 the movement up the hill was well under way. Columbia and Harrison Streets were first settled, then Providence Street. The typical Jewish home in the new area was the ugly three-decker with its utter lack

of grace. The houses, many of them still standing, were set fairly close together. No effort was made to set out lawns or gardens, but ^{the} district was kept purely residential and constituted on the whole, a considerable advance in housing over the original Jewish settlement.

The spread up and over Union Hill in the years before the World War was due almost entirely to population growth. The new area was developed with considerable rapidity, and by 1905 or 1906 there was no open territory left between Water and Providence Streets and the site of Worcester Academy. For a time no attempt was made to get beyond the Academy. The rough triangle bounded by Water, Dorchester, Providence streets and Posner Square was first taken up; then began a westerly movement which went beyond Worcester Academy on the brow of Union Hill, continued past Grafton Square just beyond the top of Grafton Hill, and came to include what is now the Granite Street section. By this time, approximately 1912, the previously mentioned triangle was solidly settled by Jews. The movement west was the result of the check received when the colony reached Grafton Street. Beyond this street was a rough, irregular piece of land which adjoined the Boston and Albany railroad tracks. It was already peopled by poor immigrant groups and, although far from fully settled, offered small attractions

to the rapidly increasing Jewish population.

Up to this point the expansion had resulted in a new area which is situated in what Burgess would call "The Zone of Workingmen's Houses".⁷ The wealthier Jews began to develop a section which was only sparsely settled and which soon became the goal of most aspiring families. This was the area around and including Woodford and Granite Streets. Most of the houses were still three-deckers, but they were larger, more expensively built, and roomy. For years, most of the wealthy Jews in Worcester lived on Woodford Street, and it was from this section that the later mass movement was made to the West side.

In the meantime, natural growth combined with the growth from immigration had necessitated further expansion in the case of the less wealthy people. They pressed over Providence Street and continued until they reached the valley below. Old estates were bought up and the land divided into building lots. Out past the Crompton Estate and to the northwest of Dorchester Street was much undeveloped land which even today remains in somewhat the same condition. Whatever building has been done here was the result of this second wave of expansion. The building in this section is still slowly going on, and there is sufficient vacant land left to absorb a con-

7. See Chart A on p.34.

siderable population.

It must be re-iterated that the extensive spread over and beyond Union Hill was forced upon the Jewish community by sheer increase in population. We are now ready to consider a mass movement of the Jewish population of Worcester into a section geographically remote from both the original center and the area of second settlement. In 1905 the first Jew had moved to the exclusive West Side of the city, as yet untouched by any immigrant influences. From that year until the World War there was a slow but steady influx of the older and wealthier Jewish families into Lenox and South Lenox Streets and Chamberlain Parkway. This was a select residential district dotted with the fine homes of some of Worcester's most substantial citizens. It required some little wealth to settle there at all, and only the well-to-do could possibly afford the standard of living established there by the first residents. The Jews who came there were moved by considerations neither unusual nor hard to discover. Lengthy interviews with some of the first settlers on the West Side have disclosed a few candid reasons which scarcely vary from one individual to another. It might not be amiss to quote a typical reply from a prominent Jewish attorney in the city and one of the first to build a home on the

West Side:

"There is nothing mysterious about our coming here. We wanted to get away from the loud, vulgar East Side. We saw no reason for living in crude surroundings when our means enabled us to come to something more beautiful. (Here he waved his hand toward the beautiful view spread out below his garden.) Can you get this on the East Side? Can you get this freedom from noise, this relief from dirty streets, and gangs of impudent children? The truth is that those of us who came here first wanted something finer, more cultured, more decent than the East Side had to offer."

This reply from a second generation Jew crystallizes the facts as no objective study could. By 1914 a goodly number of families holding similar views had broken away from the East Side, and had formed an area of third settlement which, in its own way, was as definitely Jewish as the older colony.

"This is an area of second immigration settlement, generally the second generation. It is the region of escape from the slum, the Deutschland of the aspiring Ghetto family. For Deutschland, (literally "Germany") is the name given, half in envy, half in derision, to that region beyond the Ghetto where successful neighbors appear to be imitating German-Jewish manners of living."⁸

Although Burgess applies this description to an area of

8. Burgess, op. cit., p. 56.

second settlement, here, in our local study, it is a perfect picture of the third area.

The real "Drang Nach Westen" came, however, in the prosperous years from 1914 to 1920. Many Worcester Jews accumulated considerable fortunes, and the movement to the West Side was no longer dictated by feelings such as those expressed in the interview noted, but by the mere fact that the money was available and one might as well have as good a place as the next fellow. To the Jewish social climber the West Side had by now become a goal, and whoever could afford it made haste to leave the Union Hill Section. This new district is hilly, ascending from Pleasant Street on the west and rolling in a succession of sharp inclines and deep valleys to Chandler Street on the south. The first homes built were expensive and generally set in adequate grounds. In spite of the cost, most of them were too showy and ornate, while some were done in an architectural style wholly out of keeping with the typical New England topography and climate. Of late, however, that is, since 1920, whole streets have been built up by Jewish families which run to ordinary middle class dwellings such as may be seen in any of the outlying parts of the city. They are trim and neat, invariably flanked by the tiny

lawn, and occupied by the tradesman or professional man whose sympathies are with the West Siders but whose income forbids expensive living. A striking feature of this entire Jewish section is the absence of the three-decker which characterizes every other Jewish area in the city. Unquestionably, the West Side community is in every way superior, as a residential area, to the older sections. It is clean, healthful, and at times attractive. To be sure it is no longer exclusive in the sense with which the word might have been used, say, in 1912 or 1915; but it represents the most advanced communal development, from a physical point of view, that the Jews of Worcester have succeeded in establishing.

Simultaneous with the movement to the West Side was the development of a Jewish section at the top of Vernon Hill, another area of third settlement which constitutes an offshoot of the Granite Street section. This area was practically unsettled and, as in the case of the West Side, houses were put up by individuals as they selected sites. Those who came here also sought to escape the noise and untidiness of the Providence Street section. Since their means did not enable them to move to the West Side, they developed a neat section on and about Harlem Street, Cargill Avenue, and Fairfax Road. Here, too,

however, there is no other type of building but the ubiquitous three-deckers; still, it is quiet, clean and healthful. In this Vernon Hill colony may be found many orthodox Jews of means whose sympathies keep them near the original Jewish centers even though they are financially able to make the move to the "other side of the city."

It was while interviewing old Worcester Jewish residents that the writer came upon a case study which illustrates remarkably the entire ecological pattern discussed up to this point. It is included because it traces, in terms of a single Jewish family, the movements of the Jewish community from lowly slums to the comfortable West Side.

"Mr. D. came to the United States from Lithuania in 1882. He was alone, his family waiting in Europe until he should acquire the means to bring them across. He became a peddler of wearing apparel, going first from house to house on foot, with a suitcase in each hand. A young man of twenty-three, he lived along in a single third story room near Mechanic Street. He worked hard, knew practically no social life, and saved tenaciously. After three or four years he bought a horse and buggy, began to prosper a bit, and brought his wife and child to Worcester. They lived for a few years near Lincoln Square, but in 1889 they moved to Water Street where D. opened a store. The business prospered from the first and

*In 1897 the family moved some distance up Columbia Street where they rented a flat in one of the new three deckers. Here they lived until 1902 when another removal was made to Providence Street directly across from Worcester Academy. By this time the family included a son and three daughters.

The son went to grammar school and entered D.'s business. In 1917 he married and took his bride to live in the more desirable section on the other side of the hill near Mendon and Dorchester Streets. Here was built a large, roomy, withal ugly house and, in 1925, the mother having died, D. came to live with his son. D's son has managed the business since that time. During the war the firm prospered rapidly and the family, now augmented by two grandchildren, is fairly well off. For several years the wife and children of D.'s son had expressed discontent with their home and the environment of the Jewish area. The streets were ill-paved, there were no sidewalks, gangs of boys used to congregate on the corner, and the whole was touched with a certain irksome crudeness. A year ago (1932) the family moved to the West Side where they lived in a large comfortable residence on a street not yet taken up by Jewish families. D., now an old man, is well satisfied. He feels that his family has achieved a desirable level; and his grandchildren, who can scarcely converse with him because their "Yiddish" is worse than his bad "English", feel a distinct relief in having broken loose from their old surroundings."

← This story might be repeated in substantially like terms for five hundred other Jewish families in

the city who have made their way from Water Street to the West Side. It illustrates ^{the} and ecological process first dictated by physical conditions and then by powerful social

← and economic factors. There is no better key to the facts of Jewish family life and community development in Worcester.

Special interest centers in a sociological analysis of the processes of invasion and succession already alluded to and now definitely illustrated. In the area of first settlement the Jews were preceded by an industrial area whose residential streets were wholly given over to factory workers. About 1890, when the great Crompton-Knowles loom works began to be razed and a new plant set up on Grand Street, the workers, largely Irish, moved out in order to be closer to their work. When the plant was completely torn down it left a huge vacant lot through which were laid Harding Street and the small streets which connect that thoroughfare with Water Street. A wholesale removal of the Irish and American workers left the whole area around Winter, Beach, and Pond Streets open to the Jewish colony which was moving out of the School Street section. The Jewish invaders thus found themselves in a low rent area where new industries and encroaching business led to the deterioration of the residential neighborhood. Concerning the purely physical conditions of the new settlements, a few lines from McKenzie are quite definitive:

"If the invasion is one of change in use the value of the land generally advances and the value of the buildings decline. This condition furnishes the basis of disorganization. The normal improvement and repairs are, as a rule, omitted..."⁹

That is precisely what happened here; industrial land values went up, but the condition of the residences became poorer and poorer in the absence of repair work and because of the poverty of the inhabitants. At present this section is a fire hazard and wholly undesirable from every point of view. In those days it was highly convenient for the Jewish tradesman who had his store on or near Water Street. As McKenzie points out:

"It is a common observation that foreign races and other undesirable invaders, with few exceptions, take up residence near the business center of the community or at other of high mobility and low resistance. Once established they gradually push their way out along business and transportation thoroughfares to the periphery of the community."¹⁰

The reason for the succession ⁱⁿ ~~for~~ this area is readily apparent. It has been stated that this area of first settlement originally was the home of Irish factory workers before the removal of Crompton-Knowles and the Jewish invasion. These people were of a somewhat lower type than the Irish on Union Hill who were later displaced by Jewish invasions, but the standard of living

9. Mc Kenzie, op. cit., p. 76.

10. Ibid., p. 76.

maintained even by them was much higher than that which has obtained in the section since the exodus of the Jews and the incoming of other immigrant groups. When the Jews took up their area of second settlement on Union Hill, they were replaced by invading Poles and Lithuanians, with a sprinkling of French. The historian, Talamo, depicts the ecological process very clearly:

"To be true, the sections formerly occupied by the Irish are now mostly populated by Jews; but the Jews have been supplanted in their earlier abodes, not by Italians, but by the Lithuanians and Poles, who maintain a very low standard of living."¹¹

Since the above was written in 1915, the invasion of the Poles and Lithuanians has become complete; and only those Jews of the lowest incomes, ^{who} are left in the area of first settlement and are forced to accommodate themselves to their new neighbors.

Another good illustration is apparent in the situation at the lower part of Union Hill, which was formerly inhabited chiefly by Irish. These were of a somewhat higher type and included the better paid factory hands, skilled laborers, and minor officials in the mills. As the Jews began to fill this area, the Irish moved to other parts of the city. They, too, left laggards, but the section is overwhelmingly Jewish even at the present

11. Talamo, Joseph, "Jewish Population of Worcester," p.16, (M.A. Thesis) 1915.

time, while a "second" Lithuanian invasion is threatening to force them out in turn. This advance of the Lithuanian group is not apt to diminish in magnitude. Their parish church, St. Casimir, together with their parochial school, is located in the heart of the first area of settlement of Providence and Waverly Streets. With the recent movement of Jewish families to less exclusive streets on the West Side, it seems no improbable that the Lithuanians will be allowed to dominate this section. The movement, which has since become much more rapid, was, as early as 1919, characterized by another historian in these terms:

"There was been a movement of population on the East Side, the Jews taking the place of the Irish who have built or occupied homes elsewhere, and the former houses of the Jews being taken by Poles and Lithuanians.

"The Jews in turn are higher up on Union Hill, their former homes along Water, Winter and the Island District being occupied by Poles and Lithuanians, while the District between Winter Street and the Boston and Albany Railroad and lower Grafton Street is being taken by the newer Italians."¹²

In the area of third settlement, the West Side, we have previously noted that the Jews displaced no one. Here, as on upper Vernon Hill, they took over undeveloped sections and built their own homes. At the present time there is a tendency towards evacuation of certain West Side streets by non-Jewish families and the subsequent

12. Nutt, Charles, "History of Worcester & Its People", vol. I, p. 340. (New York, 1919).

purchases of the houses by Jews. Since the new Jewish settlers in that section are somewhat more undesirable, socially, than the first West Side Jews, it is not at all improbable that whole non-Jewish sections in that area will, in the future, be invaded by Jewish families.

Invasion Illustrated By Institutions-Invasion of new areas by Jewish families is rather well illustrated by the location of their synagogues. Throughout the group movements the ecological processes are well borne out by the effort to center settlements about religious institutions. In 1894, to cite an instance, the Jewish invasion in one direction had proceeded so far that the Sons of Israel found it expedient to buy the church of a Swedish colony on Providence Street. The Swedes, forced out, set up their church in the center of the city at Salem Square.

Again, in 1913, the Gentile population of another area had so far been displaced by Jews, that the Methodists sold their church at Coral and Waverly Streets to a Jewish congregation.

At the present time the invasion of the first Jewish area by other groups has reached the point where the Synagogue of the Good Brothers at 6 Pond Street has become a Baptist church for Polish, Russian and Lithuanian immigration. Succession is not only illustrated by the religious institutions but also by various other Jew-

ish organizations. The Hebrew School, which was originally located on Green Street in the heart of the first settlement, moved to Waverly Street, on the edge of the second settlement area. Evidence of the movement of Jewish stores will be given under the following topic of decentralization.

Centralization And Decentralization-In the same way institutions afford a means of illustrating the ecological factors of centralization and decentralization. Water Street, as the business district of Worcester Jewry, is the clearest example of centralization. Here are nearly all the kosher markets and dairies; Jews come from the West Side to buy their food here although they may have severed all ^{other} connections with the older colony.

Also centralized, most of the city's synagogues are still within immediate reach of Water, Harrison and Providence Streets,--the area of first settlement. The most important Hebrew school is located in the same district on Waverly Street.

Ecological decentralization is exemplified on a small scale by the kosher market and Jewish stores in the second settlement on Granite Street where a large Jewish population, distant from Water Street, is developing its own facilities. On a much larger scale it is noted in the establishment of the reform Temple Emmanuel on Elm Street and the orthodox synagogue, Beth Jacob, in

the third settlement on Pleasant Street. Both these institutions have been created to meet the spiritual needs of the West Side group.

City-Wide Dispersion-The present day dispersion of Jewish families is fairly well indicated by the school census for 1930. The 1630 Jewish children between five and fourteen years of age were in that year distributed among the city wards as follows:¹³

Wards	Number of Children
1	4
2	22
3	57
4	602
5	53
6	470
7	82
8	30
9	41
10	269

Ward IV, with the heaviest Jewish child population, includes the area of second settlement on Union Hill. Here one finds the most solidly settled Jewish area in the city. Ward VI, another solidly Jewish section, includes Haywood Street and the third area of Jewish settlement on Vernon Hill. On the West Side most of the Jewish families live in Ward IX, but it happens that the nearest school is in Ward X. An interesting fact disclosed by this census is the widespread distribution of the city's Jewish population. It is indicative of a decentralizing movement which is continually taking on greater momentum.

13. Jewish Bureau of Social Research, 1930.

Rapid decentralization of the Jewish community is the most discernible population trend at the present time. The city's Jews are moving from the chief centers of Jewish settlement and they seem to be selecting no definite spots. Only recently a number of families have moved to the Webster Square district, others have gone to Hadwen Park and a large number have settled on upper Chandler Street near the Normal School.

There are several reasons for this. Increased transportation facilities to outlying sections permit Jewish families to buy from Water Street markets and attend synagogues, while at the same time living away from crowded Jewish centers. The old West Side "pull" has become lessened in the past few years. A removal to the once exclusive section has now become a commonplace, and the area has broadened to include people of small means and like social stature. Perhaps the most important reason is the recent economic upheaval which has destroyed the fortunes of many West Side Jews. Unlike the home-sick Jews of Wirth's Chicago study, these people, forced to move from homes they can no longer maintain, have refused to return to the East Side and a loss of "caste". They will move to any section rather than return to the scenes of their first American experiences, and to friends once close but now disregarded.

This widespread disintegration of the Jewish com-

munity appears to be largely due to the breakdown of Jewish racial bonds. There is a general feeling among Worcester Jews that ~~community~~^{community} solidarity is being destroyed by an indifference to the old racial traditions. It will be the purpose of the next chapter to investigate this aspect of the local Jewish problem and the social implications flowing from it.

Chapter III

Conflict ¹/_—

Nature of The Conflict-Those who have come to look upon the Jewish population in any given area as a well defined social group will be surprised to discover that the essential characteristic of the Jewish group anywhere is internal conflict. In this particular study the writer does not refer to the differences that set off the Russian and Polish Jew from his German and Spanish brethren. Such dividing lines are determined by historical issues that are too remote from our present purpose, and too obvious on the face of them to demand minute consideration. In the present instance we must turn to incompatibilities more precise, and far more definitive; differences that transcend history and tradition, and find their roots in practicalities peculiar, in greater or less degree, to both contemporary America and to all times. In fine, a study of the Jewish community, ^{to be} ~~being~~ at all explicit, must concern itself with the economic differences that encourage subdivision in the Jewish group itself; that make of the wealthy and the poverty-stricken two distinct classes ar-

1) Owing to the requests of those interviewed, personal statements concerning local Jewish conflict, must of necessity, remain undocumented throughout this chapter.

raigned against each other on most of the issues that split social groups elsewhere. It is perfectly true that your Jew will rush to the defense of his brethren wherever and whenever dangers assail him. Witness the current Jewish problem in Germany, and the concerted drive of world Jewry to aid a national Jewish group that has for centuries despised the Jews of other lands. Such solidarity is impressive, and, in general, it may be looked forward to as a certainty in any large crisis. But such cooperation must not be considered a sign of internal peacefulness in any given subdivision. The same influences that determine economic and social problems elsewhere, operate to divide any Jewish group which happens to live under similar conditions.

“ Original Solidarity-in Worcester economic conflict among the Jewish inhabitants was some time in occurring. The immigrants were for many years all in the same circumstances. It was a case of hard and shrewd work in order to keep heads up at all in a country where laissez-faire operated with sharp intensity. For twenty-five years the local Jewish population was a solid unit. It lived and worked and played together. In religious and social activities, all were of similar attitude; and no break seemed imminent.”

Beginning of The Conflict-Then those forces which classical economists call economic laws began to play over

the fortunes of the various individuals. As in any group, natural talents and simple luck began to determine the financially elect, and by the turn of the century certain families and individuals were beginning to acquire fortunes of local reputation. These fortunes not only determined where a man stood socially in the community; they were the measuring rod for success, and, in a way, for intelligence. Certain it is that the new families of wealth began to feel their position. But as yet there was no sign of concrete conflict, no indication of distinct social cleavage founded on financial standing. Until 1905 or thereabouts not one Jewish family had left the colony on the East side of the city for more palatial surroundings. The solidarity which had kept the group together showed no signs of weakening, and when the first Jew purchased a home on the exclusive West side, the fact became a matter for community discussion. The action was questioned on all sides, particularly by the elders. It was felt that the man had, in no indefinite way, deserted his people, if not his whole heritage. It is difficult for non-Jews to consider such a simple event as a single man's removal in a fully appreciative light. To old people in the colony it was the beginning of an old story being retold in new surroundings. They knew its import. One family had left. Others were sure to follow. It spelled disintegration, and there is nothing the orthodox Jew fears more than the disintegration of the racial community. For

in close union there is a kind of tensile strength that means security.' A break in the circle anywhere is apt to be fatal. It is generally that way with any minority transplanted to a new environment, especially a Jewish minority.

Altogether, the elders remonstrated, the man in question was adamant, and the first break continued to be permanent. Others soon followed; not many, but enough to indicate the general trend that would operate in the future. Elders might fume but they had lost the power to restrain. Yet, after all, the rage of the old was scarcely the important reaction. It was the impression left on the youngsters that counted most. To them the slow trek, to the West side, (probably a few families each year) opened new social channels whose magnetism was difficult to resist. The East side was homey and cheerful and gay; but it was also crowded, ugly and dirty. To these young people this new migration began to take on a measure of high promise. Besides making them conscious of their present dubious social stature, it fired them with an ambition whose realization must transcend any stratum within the Jewish community itself. For this new outlet meant, not merely a new high place among their own group; ^{rather} it meant the certainty of future acceptance in the community at large.

Until 1905 or 1906 no Jew could aim higher than the social leadership of the old East Side. With the beginning of the exodus to the West Side, all this was changed. A new

field of settlement meant aspiration for a more pretentious leadership than the East side could supply. By 1910 the migration to the exclusive West side had become a commonplace. Only failure to attain economic superiority could check it. As soon as a fortune was made by a Worcester Jew, the pull toward "The other side of the city" began to operate.

Opposition to Exodus of The Rich-To be sure this demand for self betterment, or at least social preferment, was not an unresisted constant; as already indicated, the parents and grand-parents, as late as the early twenties, set their faces against removal from the old Jewish colony. Race prejudice, group solidarity shaped and welded by thousands of years of social experience, and to a certain extent a well defined indisposition toward Gentiles of the highest social level--all these factors combined to keep even many of the younger generation from the latest temptation. Moreover, as the movement got well under way, the social cleavage attendant upon it began to take on clarity. Those who were too timid to make the change, those who sincerely opposed it even while they had the resources to try it, those who were well satisfied to rest on their social laurels within the group itself--these provided an opposition that rapidly hardened into a sort of policy; and it required a potent pull toward the new emancipation to accept the break that migration promised. This fact of local migration among the Worcester Jews and the social and economic results following upon it would, in them-

selves, provide sufficient materials for a profound study. The comprehensive nature of the present dissertation forbids the over-emphasis that would result from a full treatment of this single phase. To deny it any consideration, however, would be to overlook one of the essential characteristics of Jewish group psychology. For without a knowledge of the social and economic forces that came into play as a result of the movement, contemporary Jewry in Worcester could not be understood from the sociological point of view. In sum, the Jewish social scene in present day Worcester is especially marked by a single, all pervasive influence that can be traced directly to the east-to-west trek. It is, namely, an influence centering in economic conflict and manifesting itself in a community social struggle, in which the East side residents are fighting to maintain a few vestiges of human dignity in the face of the arrogance and superciliousness of the West side community.

Detailed Evidence of Conflict Origins-Numerous examples abound concerning the details of the origins of this internal conflict. With one solitary exception all those interviewed by the writer, East and West side residents alike, declare that the answer lies in the economic superiority of the West side group. The amount of money possessed by the individual determines whether he shall be a part of one colony or the other. It is the rare Worcester Jew who continues to live on the East side after his financial status permits removal

to the opposite side of the city, and many of them, in their anxiety to climb a step on the social ladder, make the move when they can sorely afford it. The fact that money alone stamps the Jewish elite is not peculiar to the Worcester colony alone. In America, generally, most of the socially prominent, whether on a national or sectional scale, can likewise trace their position to the accumulation of wealth. What is so striking about the situation among the local Jews is the rapidity with which the caste lines have hardened, and the internal bad feeling which is raising havoc with a formerly strong group solidarity.

It must be remembered that the Russian Jewish group, comprising the greater part of Worcester Jewry, came to the city no longer ago than 1880, and most of them came twenty years later. ⁴None of these people were in any way superior to their fellow immigrants, unless it were in natural ability. All were without education, if we except Jewish schooling; all were poor and without a means of livelihood; all were of like humble origin. For many years the solidarity of the colony was unimpaired. Most of them began as peddlers and graduated into the small merchant class. In beliefs, aspirations, occupations, and general attitude all seemed to be molded after much the same pattern: Old Jewish residents look back today and wonder at the disintegration that has taken place. To them the surest sign of social change is the fact that this racial group, once held so tightly together,

is arraigned in at least two hostile classes that make no effort to mask their mutual dislike.

How Fortunes were Made-By the turn of the century a few Jewish business men had established the beginnings of economic independence. As more immigrants came and swelled the numbers growing yearly through natural increase, the Water Street merchants continued to prosper. They were ^{assured} of all trade their countrymen might bring as well as the steady patronage from nearby factory workers. These store owners and other Jewish business men were the first to buy homes on Union Hill, and they were in the van of all later movements. It was not until 1905, however, that one of them felt himself financially able to adopt a mode of life quite different from that which obtained in even the best of the east side homes. His fine residence on an exclusive West side street set a new standard in the Jewish community, and in the next ten years enough families had gathered on and near Lenox Street to form a definite little social clique which withdrew from the old associations."

It was the war period, however, which saw real fortunes made. In the few years from 1915 to 1920, several scores of families left the East Side; and during the last decade the movement had become a commonplace. Today, the West Side trend is stronger than ever before. Owing to present economic conditions, fine homes are being sold at prices so low that many East siders find it easy to make the change. The present

rapid influx has detracted greatly from the exclusiveness of the district, but it has also made the position of those who continue to live on the East side more untenable in a social sense.⁴⁴ At the same time many Jews are leaving the West side in an effort to establish an even more exclusive section in Westwood Hills, until yesterday a strictly Gentile and socially aloof neighborhood.

Sharpness of the Conflict-It is somewhat difficult to present without seeming hyperbole the sharp sense of conflict that plays over the contemporary Jewish community. It is even harder to believe that mere accumulation of wealth can have brought this about in the short space of fifty years. Yet one has but to interview an East-sider to discover a poignant feeling of resentment against aloofness based on money, or a West-sider to detect a greater or lesser degree of arrogance or frank contemptuousness for his poorer social fellows.⁴⁵ Because money is the sole criterion in measuring social status, a heavy premium has been placed on financial independence. In the words of one East side resident:

"We Jews in Worcester have a choice before us. We can stay on the East side or we can move to the West. Naturally we prefer the latter. We may resent West side superiority, but not one of us would refuse the chance to move. That takes money. I admit that nothing is so important to me as the acquiring of enough money to escape this sense of social inferiority which is forced on me by men and women with whom I once played on Providence Street."

When asked if East Siders were welcome, one West side resident stated candidly:

"Why not? If they can afford to play the game as we play it, they are welcome. The trouble is that too many come over who continue the same standards of living that they followed on the East side. That's what hurts our section now."

In the same interview this ~~same~~ man pointed out that only the present cheapness of real estate makes possible the coming of these not-so-well-to-do East Siders.

Bearing On Social Status-It would be a simple matter to indicate more forcibly the importance of money as a social status determinant, were one permitted to cite definite cases. A survey of socially prominent West-side Jews shows that their antecedents are invariably humble and their wealth of recent acquisition. A few, to be sure, can point to local prominence rooting back to the beginning of the century, but these are quite rare and form a special little coterie of their own. Many ^{of them} are wholly uneducated and make no pretensions to cultural attainments. The younger people are, of course, well educated in most instances and many of them are turning to professional life. But in this connection it must be noted that education and a profession in themselves help little in obtaining acceptance. Whatever college the young man or woman may boast, an East-side home and a weak bank⁷ account will suffice to close the doors of social acceptance. Many lawyers, for example, discover that an East-side residence and a poor family suffice to raise a social bar between them and their West side colleagues with whom they are in constant association professionally. As an example of the

extent^{to} which this discrimination based on wealth often reaches, an experience revealed in an interview is here related with the permission of the narrator:

"M is a well known business man in the Jewish community. Two years ago a friend suggested his name to an official of the Jewish country club as a desirable member. The official inquired of M his place of residence. When informed that it was on an East side street he made it clear that this unfortunate circumstance made it impossible for M to obtain membership. A year ago M bought a home on the West side. A short time after, the same club official called on M and cordially invited him to join the organization on the ground that he was now of the "elect"."

Such cases, or others analogous to them, are daily occurrences. The one cited is an example of a man of means who was not wholly accepted, in spite of his wealth, until he had moved to the right area. This does not happen often for the simple reason that most local Jews make the move as soon as they are financially able. That money alone determines the ability to achieve social position in the local Jewish community is a fact admitted by all interested people.

Social Cleavage-Pursuing further the evidence of the relation of economic status to social status, we find some interesting instances of social cleavage. Here we are at once confronted with the bold fact, as previously intimated, that the West-Sider wants as little to do with the East-side Jew as is conveniently possible. The latter feels it keenly. Old schoolmates pass with only cursory nods, and former neighbors are not even recognized. It seems to be the deliberate policy of most West-Siders to eliminate the Jews of

the poorer sections from their social world and they have succeeded to a considerable degree. The following is a letter, obviously written by an East-Sider which appeared in the local Jewish paper:

"Tuesday night last must have found the delicate nostrils of certain of our so-called elite in a state of high sensitivity. The ungodly odor emanating from in and about **Mechanics** Hall surely must have assailed the finely-curved proboscis of the West Side gentry with no little effect. For on that night, and in that hall, the local Y. M. H. A. made a heroic effort to gather together as many Worcester Jews as possible for the primary purpose of attaining a profit to be used for its laudable enterprises. Tickets were easily obtained; hundreds of "Y" members solicited purchases.

"We suppose it was not lack of, but rather, an over-supply of enthusiasm that led many "Y" members to believe that the Cabots and the Lodges (self-named, at best) who, through a greater ability at sham and bluff are able to bamboozle landlords and East Side grocers to thereby remain somehow in apartments with tile baths and fireplaces, might condescend to purchase a ticket or two. Strangely, any monies earned by the "Y" through these sorts of affairs goes to organizations for which these West-Siders are the loudest to shout appeals (and the slowest to honor promised contributions.)

"It is a pity that the bridge and pinochle and poker games (occupations of the great and intellectual, you see) could not have been postponed for one evening so that the devotees of the games could have spent the money for admissions to the "Y" show. (We suppose, however, that the landlords and innumerable other creditors would have been there first.)

"An almost unbelievable amount of effort and time was put into producing the show by earnest young men. Their own work and businesses were laid aside for the time being and every ounce of energy was unselfishly given to the presentation so that it might be "put over." The full amount of thanks and friendliness coming from the over-bloated (mentally and physically) West Side people was asinine turning up of their shiny noses.

"As Winchell would put it--a whole carload of scallions to these pitiful fakes."²

The pent up anger which escapes through this crude outlet is as nothing compared with the vehement denunciations heard from individuals during interviews. Like all socially ignored groups these people find it hard to see why lack of money invalidates their claim to social equality. What makes it even harder, they complain, is the fact that only recently all sprang from the same humble origin. The West side, however, shows but a scanty interest in genealogy. It has become his chief business to break with his background, and because the East Sider represents it in living flesh, he is ignored or treated curtly. Wirth illustrates this attitude, quoting from the Chicago Chronicle: "These newly rich want to be 'swell' and to be 'swell' is to run away from Jews and Judaism--that's the modern curse."³

A visit to one of those rare dances or balls where Jews of both sections meet is quite instructive. The writer was taken to one of these by a person well informed in local Jewish affairs. He designated the various groups about the hall classifying each according to social stratum. It appeared that the line of demarcation was sharp, and the tension was apparent even to a stranger. It was pointed out by

2) Jewish Civic Leader, February 10, 1932.

3) Wirth, Louis, The Ghetto, p. 257 (Chicago, 1925).

the guide that this was the usual thing at social affairs, that is, on those rare occasions when the two groups came together.

Such affairs as bridges, teas, charity showers, etc. given by West side women are exclusive affairs. East side acquaintances are neither invited nor do they expect invitations. Even those socials given in the name of the larger charities are tacitly assumed to be closed to those who have not "arrived," the social strain being much more heightened between the women of the two classes than among the men whose businesses bring them closer together. Local Jewish East side women have told the writer, with more than a little heat, that their West side sisters often seek their financial aid in charity affairs, but always forget to invite them to the socials at which they celebrate charity successes. Lawn parties, carnivals, and get-togethers are open to the East Siders when their money is need to clinch a drive of some sort, but that is as far as social intercourse is carried in the name of charity.

When we inquire into the activities of the younger social sets we find the same story; told, perhaps, in more explicit terms. The older people are apt to allow old sentimentalities to enter into their attitudes ^{Toward} told their old East side friends. Their children are not so likely to be affected by warm feelings dating back to days of common hardship. With them the situation has become crystalized to an

extent that is rapidly forbidding even racial unity to affect their attitude towards East side young people. One high school youngster, during a visit to his parents by the writer, interrupted to say when his father spoke kindly of the East siders: "But they are so crude! Why should we soil our cuffs to be nice to them just because the accident of birth makes us both Jews?" A generation ago any orthodox Jewish parent would have sharply silenced a child delivering himself of such sentiments. In this particular instance, the father, a first generation Jew who had acquired his money on Water Street, expressively shrugged his shoulders as if to say: "Well, these young people; they have other ideas."

Perhaps the most interesting interviews held in connection with the present chapter were those with the leaders of Jewish high school fraternities and sororities. Both the East side youngsters and their West side school mates were more sharp spoken than their parents. The children of East side parents were resentful. With true Jewish reproach they pointed out that they were every bit as intelligent, that school reports showed no innate mental superiority as part of the West side equipment. The West side young people showed a tendency to dodge the conflict issue. They were loath to admit even the smallest degree of snobishness, but in every instance they admitted that they were altogether satisfied to draw the line at East side associations. When asked the basis of their discrimination they answered in such vague

terms as: "They seem so far away from us." "Some of them can't shake the synagogue out of themselves." But all admit the cleavage, and practically all have been candid enough to admit that money alone establishes social differences. In the case of three prominent high school fraternities and four sororities, a check was made of members' names. Out of thirty members in the first fraternity, twenty-six were West side residents. Two lived in non-Jewish areas and the other two were East Siders. In the second fraternity the twenty-four members may be classified as follows: nineteen West Siders, two from non-Jewish areas, three East Siders. In the third group every member was an East side resident. The sororities showed the cleavage even more definitely. In two of them, all members were East-Siders. In another, every member was a West Sider; while the fourth was a mixed rather evenly and had an East side girl of considerable mental attainments as president.

Perhaps the present condition of the Young Women's Hebrew Association and the Young Men's Hebrew Association will lend more point to the fact of social cleavage among the young people between sixteen and twenty-four. Both organizations are in^a highly weakened condition. Well informed people declare that both will shortly be forced to dissolve, and the latter is actually closing its doors for the summer. In both cases, all the support comes from East Siders. In the case of the girls particularly, West side young women re-

fuse to be party to the activities sponsored by the Young Women's Hebrew Association. Here may be found a roll call devoid, with a scant half dozen exceptions, of West side names. The boy's group is in similar condition except that athletics bring young men from all sections into competition for places on highly successful athletic teams. However, the president of the Young Mens' Hebrew Association frankly admits that he has little hope for an organization unmarked by class lines. The president before the present incumbent happened to be a West side man. It was hoped that he would induce young men from his section to become interested in the "Y", and that he might be helpful in welding local Jewish young men into a unified social group. In spite of hard work toward that end, he failed completely, and the present executive realistically admits that cleavage has reached a point which makes solidarity doubtful if not impossible.

As another example of how far the social break has gone, we have but to consider a purely intellectual organization such as the Graduate Menorah Society. The Menorah society is a college fraternal order which aims to maintain Jewish culture in university circles. The graduate section has been developed to perpetuate the Menorah ideal among those who have taken degrees. Since the purpose of the society is wholly intellectual, it might be expected that social conflict would be eliminated from its meetings. The facts of the matter are quite otherwise. The local graduate Meno-

rah group was started by a West side young man, and so exclusive has it become that at present not one East sider holds membership in the organization. Nor is it due to an express repudiation of East side college men. It is due to the fact that a tacit understanding has developed which makes it clear that here is an intellectual organization which has been carefully nurtured along social lines and which is anxious to hold aloof from East side influence. A West Sider never suggests to an East Sider that he join; the latter is afraid to intrude. The understanding is a silent one, but it is most efficacious.

For some years past, Jewish leaders in the city have spoken of a community center which should serve to bring the young people together on matters social and intellectual. At first there seemed to be reason to believe that such an organization might be established with successful results. In the last few years, however, the whole idea has weakened greatly, and it is now held by people from both sections of the city that nothing will ever come of the ideal. The failure of the project is laid definitely to the distinct social lines that have split the city's Jewish youth. It is generally believed that the plan can never materialize because the two large Jewish groups in the city cannot be brought together for amicable social purposes. Only this year (1933) two prominent Jewish leaders in Worcester discussed the question without arousing even the slightest support for

the project. One was a West Sider opposed to the idea, the other was the local Young Men's Hebrew Association's president who strongly urged it. Their discussion appeared in the local Jewish newspaper and a few excerpts from the letter of the "Y" president will illustrate the East side point of view:

"A community center will cater not only to the physical well being (that is only a small part of the job) but it will serve also as the center for a combined spiritual and cultural life not only of the younger groups, but of the entire Jewish community. It will develop and foster a return to the ideals and the heritage of our race.....

"I will point out to Mr. Hillman that a community center will be a panacea for all the internal bickering and strife from which we Jews in Worcester have suffered so long."

"It will perhaps for the first time convince our leaders that most things are relatively of minor importance to the need of doing away with the internal strife that weakens our social and organizational life in Worcester." 4

Such sentiments as these have no effect on the West Siders. They seem quite content with conditions as they are and wave deprecatory hands when asked to express their attitude toward a Jewish community center. One prominent Worcester Jew wanted to know "Why in the world do we have to hang together like a flock of geese? Does being a Jew mean that one has to associate with any scoundrel just because he, too, happens to be a Jew?" Another deplored Jewish group

4) Jewish Civic Leader, p. 2, February 24, 1933

consciousness; one decried a community center as tending to halt racial assimilation and intermarriage, which he held to be the answer to the Jewish problem; still another declared that such a center would tend to focus attention on the local Jews as a highly segregated group and that this would result in bad feeling in the community. The important point is that every West Sider interviewed on the question refused to entertain the idea, while on the East side the sentiment was overwhelmingly in favor of the project. The reasons ran almost entirely to the ancient plea for Jewish solidarity and the necessity of maintaining Jewish culture. West side "snob-bishness" was strongly berated, and one person saw the Worcester Jewish community destroyed in a generation through the social and religious apostasy of the West side group.

Bearing of Economic Conflict on the Religious Situation-

Conflict in any Jewish group has reached the sharp point when it begins to affect the religious life of the community.' Here in Worcester that conflict has developed so rapidly that the two religious points of view held by the respective orthodox and reform organizations have diverged beyond all reconciliation in the opinion of prominent religious leaders. The old orthodox synagogues of the East Side continue to practice the faith brought here from Russia. The parents bring their children up in the same strict atmosphere that shaped their own religious views, and the Hebrew school is made a part of almost every child's educative experience.

In the past two decades there has, of course, been an abatement of the intense religious feeling brought here from Europe. Nevertheless, the East side colony represents a strong, if weakening, effort on the part of the Jewish parents to keep alive the ancient faith.'

In the more exclusive West side colony the picture is quite otherwise. Here is the home and center of the reformed synagogue in Worcester. There is, to be certain, one orthodox synagogue which is supported by old people who had remained loyal to the faith in which they were raised. But this single orthodox center is poorly attended. Except on high holidays it is ~~the~~^a rare thing to find more than a score of worshippers before the altar. Here will be found a few old men who have no interest in reform ideas and occasionally a son who attends to please his father. 'The real religious center of the West side community is the reform Temple. Here are cast aside the picturesque rites of the orthodox synagogue and the sermon is substituted for common and protracted prayer. Whatever appeal is made is generally based on the broad concept of human brotherhood rather than on the hardened theology of ancient Judaism.' It is not at all uncommon to hear the reform rabbi speak on matters of broad political, economic, and social interest. On the other hand, the orthodox rabbi lives and breathes the ancient faith. A short time ago the temple rabbi spoke on "Ann Vickers", the latest novel of Sinclair Lewis. There is no better example than this, per-

haps, of the sharp divergence present in the local Jewish religious circles. It is a far cry from the word of Moses to the pen of a contemporary American social satirist, and one can gain some idea of the impassable gap which is bound to develop between such distant points of view.

The local temple has drawn to it most of the West side Jewish residents. That the transfer from orthodoxy to reform, in the case of the first generation Jews, has been even chiefly the result of honest change of mind with respect to the Jewish faith, is questioned by many West Siders and most East Siders. A prominent West sider, who has broken completely with all Jewish religious ties summed the matter up as follows:

"The situation is not religious in character; it is social. These people (the first generation parents) moved over here to become socially advanced and part of it came in becoming 'reform'. Most of them are orthodox at heart."

He voiced an opinion that many repeated, and in several cases even Temple members admitted the charge. Again here is the case of L, a downtown grocer, who lived most of his life on the East side and attended an orthodox synagogue. Two years ago he moved to the West side. His wife became a member of exclusive social circles and his two children married into West side families. The following is his verbatim statement:

"I am as orthodox in my views now as I ever was. What would you do if your wife and children nagged you every day for a year and a half to join

the Temple? Sure, you'd join. That's what I did."

Another West sider put it as follows:

"No real Jew goes to the Temple for religion. He goes because Goldberg goes or his wife makes him go because Cohen's wife goes. Its killing Judaism but it puts nothing in its place. The Temple is a club, that's all, a social club."

Similar statements from West Siders would fill several pages, and those from angry East Siders would make a small volume. The same attitude is held with respect to the Temple Sunday school. In the last interview quoted, the speaker said: "Hebrew School, of course not. It's a childs club." The writer found no one who seriously contradicted the statement.

In short, what has actually happened is this: The West side Jewish community, in its eagerness to break with the East side and its traditions, has gone the whole way and has shaken loose from all orthodox religious practices. The movement was originally social, not religious, and at the present time many orthodox Jews go to Temple services to keep up their social front. It is another aspect ^{of} ~~to~~ the internal conflict which has made, in effect, two separate Jewish communities in the city. In the case of the children the situation is somewhat different. Brought up in a relaxed religious atmosphere, trained in the easy-going West side Temple school, or not at all, they can have no real attachment for the orthodox faith. They become reform Jews or they do not attend services at all; and because they have never

been influenced by orthodoxy it is easy for them to rationalize their religious indifference with some sincerity. They think it more than a bit old-fashioned when they hear of some East side young man or woman who attends orthodox services. They go to the Temple on high holidays, not for religious guidance, but for social intercourse, or because they know that the rabbi will have an interesting sermon to deliver. A rabbi who can speak intelligently about contemporary life is sure to appeal to the young Jewish intellectual, and if God is occasionally injected into the lecture the rabbi is mentally excused on the ground that it is a part of his job that he can't avoid and still be in good taste.

'That the reform element in the city is purely of West side origin is proved by the fact that the full membership of the Temple comes from that community. No East Siders belong.' Occasionally a young man or a young woman comes over from the East Side to hear a sermon, but beyond that the older community gives no support to reform Judaism. 'In short, the socio-economic conflict has taken on a religious face, and it is as sharply delineated in this direction as in any other that can be named. The real supporters of orthodox Judaism are extremely bitter against the reform movement.' It is possible to present here the views of the most prominent rabbi in the city, ~~and~~ a man of national prominence in Jewish affairs. His position is substantially that of most orthodox Jews in the city. Rabbi Silver has this to say of the con-

flict between reform and orthodox Judaism:

"There can be no effective Jewish religious upbringing so long as reform Judaism exists in this city."

In his first public statement of this nature since the formation of the Temple Emanuel in 1921, Rabbi Silver said further: " "

"Reform Judaism teaching the negation of fundamental Jewish religious principles was not only fostering disrespect of orthodoxy but was also at the same time causing disrespect of other religions as well.

"The problem of Jewish progress and development has its roots deep in the ground of Jewish religion. Jewish existence is a continuing process because it has been so intimately wound up with its beliefs. Take away the basis of its unity and you take away the means of its continued existence. That is why we must fight so strongly against alien invasions of our religious life, that is why we must oppose any attempts, especially those from within, to weaken the Jewish structure. Reform Judaism, attempting to keep abreast of the times, may be the means of developing among its proponents good Unitarians; they certainly cannot hope to develop Jews"5

Standing directly opposed to this traditional orthodoxy is the intelligent realism of a young reform rabbi, who strips his sermons of theology in an effort to explain the world in which he lives. Religion has become a kind of social zeal which has as its goal the realization of a better organization of human society than obtains at present. to his young listeners orthodox Judaism has become something archaic, a solemn trumpeting, sometimes strangely beautiful, but somehow far away from contemporary interest. They are not apt to return to the old faith when the clear light of intelligence

5) Jewish Civic Leader, p. 3, February 24, 1933

infused with social idealism offers a larger ground for the play of intellect and imagination. What began as a part of the social conflict based on wealth is quickly developing into a deeper spiritual conflict which will end only with a complete victory for either reform or orthodox Judaism. At present, in Worcester, the cleavage is so sharp, and both sides are so firmly aligned on one front or the other, that both amalgamation and victory for one or the other seem to be rather distant solutions. The local religious conflict seems likely to exist for many years to come.

Summary-The delineation of a contemporary social conflict is always a difficult matter. One is forced to deal with materials that change shape even as they are being recorded on paper. The present chapter is an effort to describe what seems to be the essential characteristics of the local Jewish intra-community conflict. There seems little question but that the entire phenomenon is directly traceable to the acquisition of wealth and the establishment of a separate community with a higher standard of living. The cleavage beginning so naturally in private social affairs has become extended to larger social circles; ^{it} has swept over organizational work and has rooted itself deeply in the religious life of the group. No figures are available, but the writer has been told by several prominent Worcester Jews that marriages are confined to couples within the respective groups; that, as a rule, young men from the West side ignore East side young

women, and West Side girls frown upon East Side young men. In practically every phase of community or private life the local Jewish group is definitely split into two sections which have their separate geographical moorings as well as clean-cut social differences. To the local Jew this conflict is the great, absorbing phenomenon. All talk about it, particularly the East Siders who writhe under a superiority which they hold is chiefly assumed. In a real way they are quite correct. The West side attitude is founded neither in tradition, family ties, or culture. Based as it is entirely on wealth, it has no substantial foundation; and many families who have lost their money in the past few years are faced with the embarrassment of again becoming "Jews without money". To the student of the problem, it seems a shifting basis for grave social differences; but the fact remains that the original Worcester Jewish colony, a solid unit only twenty-five years ago, is now largely disintegrated as a result of unequal distribution of wealth among its members. That has resulted in great bitterness and animosity is quickly apparent to the investigator, and it is something of an open question whether the break, now so definite, is to have effects of a deep and permanent nature.

Chapter IV

Solidarity

Racial Consciousness - Even the casual observer must quickly discover that the local Jewish Community is sharply rent by the influences discussed in the previous chapter. It is not so easy to discover the forces that tend in the opposite direction; that tend, in brief, to retain the racial and social solidarity which marked the Jewish colony in the first three decades or more of its American experience. To the city at large, of course, one is still a Jew regardless of internal conflict. The average Gentile is little interested in whether or not the Jewish neighbor is reform or orthodox, whether or not he obeys the dietary laws, whether or not he is a rich Jew or a poor Jew. As one West Sider put it recently in an interview;

"Unless intermarriage begins on a wide scale, the mere fact of our common Jewishness will tend to hold us together. To the Gentiles we're Jews whatever part of the city we live in."

At the outset, therefore, we are confronted with the important fact of a common race that tends to keep the Jewish community together, or at least mutually aware or its component parts. Whatever the social pretensions of the West sider may be, he is still interested in all things Jewish because he is fully aware that he cannot tear himself free from the fact of his Jewishness. In

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religion he may be an apostate; socially he may detest the East Sider; but his friends are still Jewish, withal Jews of his own kind; his chief interests are bound up with the special Jewish community of which he happens to be a part.

To be sure that kind of solidarity is not often of much value to the group. If it does not result in social organization, if it does not bring about a varied and daily intercourse between all members of the Jewish community, it becomes simply a negative force unless some great emergency arises which gives it a positive character. Such an emergency developed a short time ago and is still continuing. It has become, historically, a pretty well accepted fact that your Jew, whatever his personal opinion of Judaism or Jewishness, will rise to assist his brethren whether at home or abroad. Any type of anti-Semitism is sure to arouse him. What he feels perhaps more than racial sympathy is a deep sense of personal insecurity, a vague uneasiness that if Jews in one land are attacked simply because they are Jews, he too, is apt to become a victim at some future time. So he fights anti-Semitism wherever it develops; and in the fight, he tacitly assumes a racial solidarity which makes him a brother to Jews of all types and all lands.

Cooperation in the face of Persecution - This kind of solidarity was recently exhibited in the local Jewish

community as a result of the anti-Semitic policy of the Fascist government in Germany. At the height of the physical aspect of the alleged atrocities, almost 1500 local Jews gathered at a great mass meeting in the Hotel Bancroft to pass censuring resolutions and to adopt some method of retaliation. For the first time in years both sides of the city, East and West, got together for a common purpose, with all strife put aside. The resolutions instituting a local Jewish boycott of German goods was unanimously passed and the meeting presented a united front in every respect. The following day, Monday, March 27, 1933, was a day of fasting and prayer. All the synagogues held services for overflow gatherings and for once the reform sermon and the orthodox prayer were synonymous in point of view if not in specific terms. The editorial of the local Jewish paper for that week was frank enough to state that it was the underlying fear that did as much as racial pride or sympathy to bring about this act of solidarity:

"Every Jew, whether in the United States, South Africa or Tokio, should bear in mind one salient fact-THAT IF THE GERMAN NAZIS ARE TO BE PERMITTED TO WREAK HAVOC WITH GERMAN JEWS, THE SAME HISTORY MIGHT REPEAT ITSELF IN ANY OTHER COUNTRY ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH-AND THIS DOES NOT EXCLUDE THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA." (1)

Cooperation in Philanthropy - When we leave such an impressive phenomenon as the anti-Hitler meeting, we are left with little else in the way of unifying influence in

1) Jewish Civic Leader, P. 4 Apr. 28, 1933

the Worcester community. Perhaps the greatest single cause tending to bring about unified effort is the Jewish Home for Aged and Orphans. Unquestionably this organization is supported, if not wholeheartedly, at least substantially, by the West Siders; and the East side residents, particularly the poor, are unstinting in their united backing. The Home, is possibly the one local Jewish institution which can depend on the individual support of every Jew in Worcester in time of need. Merely let it be known that financial difficulty faces it, and social animosities are forgotten in the hurried and invariably successful effort to restore it to sound standing. To the non-Jew this may seem to be an indisputable evidence of racial solidarity. A little probing indicates, however, that this united front springs from reasons that are but little bound up with social unity.

The West Sider ardently supports the Home as a sort of pet charity. He does not look to it as a personal need because he is above and beyond it financially. To wealthy Worcester Jews, more particularly the prominent women, the Home has become a sort of monument to their charitable bridges, dances, and masquerades. Representing a good and ever present reason for holding various social functions, it is always there as a mark of their labors as leaders in the community. At least, interviews indicate little else.

The closest approach to fundamental earnestness in the attitude of West side women toward the Home came from one of the workers when she said:

"As Jews it would be dreadful to have Jewish old people thrown onto the city. It would look as though we couldn't take care of them ourselves."

In other words, the wealthy Jew considers it politic to see that no member of his race is forced on the city as a permanent charge because it might come back to him as an unwelcome boomerang.

On the other hand, the East Sider has every reason for being sincere in his support of the Home. He is closer to economic insecurity and it makes him feel better to know that his friends, perhaps his immediate family, need not be cast into unsympathetic hands in case of misfortune. The older orthodox people, of course, have a strong reason for supporting the institution that rises from the whole historical experience of the race. They feel that no Jew should ever be forced to turn to other than his own people for charity. It is the traditional Jewish point of view, and to the older folk it is as much a part of Judaism as any part of Jewish theology. The Home is to them a living proof that the Jew is still loathe to let his brethren fall into alien hands in time of great need. They give and give gladly, because it is in itself a laudable charity, because it is maintained primarily for their economic class, and because it assures

the aged and orphans of the Jewish community that they need not leave the tribal fold when evil times come upon them.

Fraternal Cooperation - In addition to the Home there is only one other Jewish organization that provides even an outward show of solidarity. That is the national fraternal order of B'nai B'rith. This society is devoted to the consideration of all things Jewish, to the development of Jewish unity, and to numerous charitable purposes. The local chapter has done some excellent work in the city. Its members come from East and West side alike and its meetings are conducted with considerable enthusiasm. Yet there are here, too, reasons for a show of solidarity which is not actually carried beyond the immediate work of the chapter. That is, the solidarity displayed here is not carried into the home; it does not result in the lessening of the wider social conflict that keeps Worcester Jewry in a state of growing disintegration.

Possibly the strongest reason for whatever success the B'nai B'rith has achieved is the fact that it is purely a male organization. The Jewish men of the city, meeting daily as they do in the course of business, carry the social conflict to a less intense pitch than do the women and children. They are somewhat more democratic, more liberal, perhaps more given to sympathy. At all events they meet at the B'nai B'rith in a wider spirit of

brotherliness than would mark a woman's group, if there were one analagous to the men's order. The sense of good fellowship and solidarity ends there, however. The West side men do not invite their East side lodge brothers to their homes, nor do they encourage other social activities which might bring their families together. The men never meet, say, at the Country Club, because that is a purely West side center; nor is the lodge spirit carried into other social channels. In short, the solidarity developed by the B'nai B'rith is either purely objective, as when the purpose is charitable, or it provides a small and infrequent exception to the general conflict that prevails. Certainly these friendly lodge meetings have failed to bring the two groups any closer together in the interest of general social unity.

Cooperation in Drama - A good example of an organization that started out with the purpose of achieving solidarity in at least one direction and ended in conflict is the "Workshop Presents." This was founded in 1930 as a dramatic society whose purpose was the encouragement of stage and playwriting talent in the Jewish community. Given over to an art that is allegedly democratic, it might seem that conflict would be a small factor in its experience. For a year or so matters ran on with some smoothness, but it was soon apparent that social differences were interfering with art. Quarrels began to arise

about parts; arguments concerning the direction of plays started, and it shortly became clear that the West side members were desirous of weeding out the East Siders. In a recent interview, one of the members frankly admitted that East Siders desirous of membership were strongly "discouraged." At present, judging from the roll, it is fair to say that "Workshop Presents" is an organization devoted to the furtherance for the histrionic art among ambitious West Siders.

Summary - A careful survey of the local Jewish community disclosed an utter paucity of any evidence pointing toward any real community solidarity. Even the few organizations here considered are really split from within or have a unity that is closely confined to definite, narrow channels. It is a unity, in every case, that is more apparent than real. It contributes in no real way to a present oneness, nor does it provide a secure foundation for future strengthening of social bonds in the community at large. A local rabbi was wholly correct when he said to the writer that "only an emergency touching fundamental Jewish chords" could suffice to bring the local Jewish community to "unselfish, concerted action." These words were spoken before the anti-Hitler meeting of this year. That event proved the prediction to be true; it also provided so strong a contrast to the prevailing conflict that the full extent of the cleavage became dramatically

apparent. Still the meeting⁹⁷ has had no repercussions beyond its immediate aims. The world outcry of Jews against anti-Semitism and the local part in that protest have in no perceptible way lessened the conflict that plays over every aspect of Worcester Jewish life.

Undoubtedly some feeling of racial solidarity does persist; but it is steadily growing to be an abstract consideration rather than a living fact calling for community cooperation. Look where you will in the Jewish community of Worcester, whatever solidarity is discernible is at best attenuated. Many local Jews believing that this is only an instance of what is going on all over the world look upon traditional Jewish life as drawing to its close. Others, however, entertain the opinion that the situation is peculiar to Worcester. They are vehement in declaring that in no other Jewish community can one discover such a "shameful" cleavage in the Jewish group. Certain it is that any attempt to illustrate community solidarity is sharply checked by a want of honest evidence tending that way. It would be difficult to find many communities which in three or four decades have so utterly lost their original unity.

Chapter V
Child Welfare

Education-It is obvious that with the steady weakening of community solidarity in the Worcester Jewish colony, any child welfare program within the group is bound to be seriously handicapped. At the same time it is clear that a program for children is quite essential if what little solidarity remains is to be kept from diminishing. The two go hand in hand. This is especially true in a Jewish community where early training determines the child's attitude towards his race and its religious creed. The study of Jewish history, theology and culture, when neglected in childhood, is not apt to be adopted when other and more practical interests develop. Accordingly, it becomes important to see just what the Jewish community provides in the way of educational and social opportunities which aim to bring Jewish children together and infuse into them something of the ancient pull toward group consciousness.

The local Hebrew schools, as in most modern American communities, are of two types. There is the strict orthodox "Cheder" with its teacher, or "Rebbe", steeped in Talmudic lore and unalterably stern in his teaching methods. The other type is that sponsored by the reform temple, modern in its approach toward Jewish history, language and theology. Unlike the orthodox schools which meet daily, the reform school in the local setting meets but once a week (Sunday mornings),

and for that reason is little more than a "Sunday School". It is apparent from this fact alone that the strict regimen of the orthodox schools does not apply in the reform school.

The Reform School-Taking up first the more liberal type of Jewish education, we note that the reform school is divided into three departments based on the ages of the children. There is one group ranging from six years to eight years, another from nine to twelve, and a third from thirteen to sixteen. These groups are taught by a rotation method which provides three teachers for each class in one morning. The staff is much larger than that found in any of the orthodox schools. It numbers eleven, of whom nine are active teachers, while one serves as superintendent and another acts as coach of dramatics. The tenure of teachers ranges from one to six years. Two have taught at the school for six years, one for five, one for four, two for three, three for two, and two for one year. These teachers are, of course, only part-time instructors. They are professional men, usually public school teachers, who devote their Sundays to the teaching of the Jewish youth. In some cases they receive a small salary, in others they serve gratis. All of them are well-educated, being either college or normal school graduates. They vary in age from twenty to thirty, but the majority are under twenty-five. Their comparative youth inclines them toward sympathetic understanding of modern educational viewpoints and problems of modern youth. It need hardly be added that

these teachers have traveled a long way from the stern precepts of the older Judaism.

The curriculum of the reform school is arranged to meet the needs of each of the three groups noted above. In the primary group, the emphasis is based on early Hebrew history told in the form of hero legends and stories. The second hour of instruction is given over to a study of Jewish ritual and ceremonials, while the third hour is devoted to an elementary consideration of the Hebrew language.

For the intermediate group, stress is placed on the Bible as literature. It is well to note at this point the great gap between the orthodox teaching and a system that considers biblical writing as literature, and which scarcely mentions the morality of the Bible as such. For example, the Song of Solomon is looked upon as poetry rather than as moral instruction. The second hour in this group is occupied with a chronological study of Jewish history which stresses the various phases and developments. As in the first group, the last hour is spent in the study of the Hebrew language. The course is, quite naturally, somewhat more advanced and comprises the easier portions of Jewish literature.

We come now to the last of the three groups. This last one is composed solely of high school students and pursues five courses instead of three. In addition to Jewish literature and history, these students study the history of the Jews in America, medieval Jewish thought, and the essentials

of Judaism.

In addition to the class work there is a general assembly which is attended by all the students. Here general talks are heard and occasionally some part of Hebrew or Biblical history is dramatized. The High School Class holds morning services which are conducted by the students themselves.

Although the school is not entirely self-supporting, the bulk of the expenses are met from student fees. The annual expenditure is about seven hundred and fifty dollars (\$750.00) of which six hundred and sixty (\$660.00) goes to the teachers' salaries. This sum is largely collected from two types of fees. The first is four dollars (\$4.00), paid by the children whose parents are members of the Temple Congregation. The second is fifteen dollars (\$15.00) and is paid by those who come to the Temple School only for instruction.

Orthodox Education-The largest orthodox school is the so-called Central School. It was formed in 1929 by a combination of the "Ivriah School", whose quarters it now uses, and the "Tarbut School". Classes are held daily from four-thirty to eight-thirty and on Sunday mornings. The school has only four teachers, and consequently these work much longer than those at the Temple School. The average age of the teachers is also much greater here than at the reform school. One is sixty years old, the second forty-eight, the third twenty-nine and the fourth twenty-two. All but one of these teachers

received their training in Russian Hebrew Schools. The youngest studied at the Hebrew Teachers College in Boston. The difference in age alone would suggest a more conservative type of instruction.

Progress in the Central school is determined by monthly tests and semi-annual examinations, the latter of which are sent to the Boston Principle's Association. Here, individual progress is expertly checked as the following statement taken from the school's report suggests: 1

"Our school bases its curriculum upon the high standards prescribed by the Hebrew Teacher's College of Boston and by the Hebrew Teacher's Association of Boston vicinity.

"The curriculum at our school consists of the following:

1. Mechanical reading in the 'Sedur' (prayer book).
 2. The Hebrew language and literature, including reading, writing, conversing in Hebrew and the elements of Hebrew grammar.
 3. The study of the 'Torah'.
 4. First prophets, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, First and Second Kings, and the books of Ruth and Esther.
 5. Jewish history and traditions.
 6. The most important "Dinims" (Laws), and customs of Jewish life.
 7. Explanations of daily, Sabbath and holiday prayers.
 8. 'Mafter' (Reading of the Scrolls for those attaining their 'Bar-Mitzvah' or Confirmation).
- 1) Principal's Report, Ivriah School, 1931

9. Reading, writing and conversing in Yiddish.

"Other activities connected with the school are:

1. A parent-teachers association, meeting monthly to discuss problems common to parents and teachers. A social hour is also enjoyed at these meetings.

2. A weekly news item is printed in the 'Jewish Civic Leader'.

3. Monthly visits by parents to the classroom.

4. Childrens' Saturdays at one of the orthodox synagogues when the children themselves officiate.

5. Dramatic and current event clubs which meet on Saturdays. The former presents plays in Hebrew while the latter discusses contemporary Jewish problems.

6. A public exhibition of the School's work".

A much smaller school than either of those just discussed is that conducted by the Workmens' Circle. This school has only one teacher; and considering that he has over fifty students to instruct, one can judge the caliber of the instruction given at this institution. The curriculum is similar to that of the orthodox schools in most respects, except that it stresses the "Yiddish" language, and "Yiddish" (Judeo-German) literature. The funds for the support of this institution come from the Ladies Auxiliary of the Workmens' Circle, who raise the money by card-parties and entertainments. A certain proportion of the profits of the workmens' Circle Cooperative Bakery goes to the support of this school.

Mention must be made of the many private teachers who

instruct Jewish children in their own homes. Formerly there were many parents who preferred to send their children to these men, but with the success of the organized schools, the tendency is to send them to the latter places so that the youngsters can receive a more balanced Jewish education.

According to well-informed people in Worcester, Jewish education is declining in power and effectiveness, as the youth turn from it to other means of spending their leisure time. No child goes voluntarily to Hebrew school; he is forced by his parents who feel that they have a duty to perform in instructing the child in the tenets and dogma of the faith. With many of the parents themselves indifferent to religion, we find that the number of children who attend Hebrew schools is yearly growing smaller. One leading Rabbi claims "that of sixteen hundred Jewish children in Worcester not more than three hundred are enrolled in Jewish schools".

One of the leaders of the Jewish community in a plea for support of Jewish education, which appeared in the local Jewish paper recently, attributes the decline to "the changing temper of the times and the fact that the second generation Jew here is native born". 2 He goes on to say that less than twenty per cent of the Jewish children here receive organized Jewish education; and claims that the Central School is in difficulty because of lack of unified community support. He clearly shows the prevailing indifference in stating:

2) Jewish Civic Leader, P. 2, February 10, 1933

"We live in an age of bridge and matinee idols, golf fiends and crooners, talkies and radios, and somehow or other we fail to find time to ground our youngsters in the fundamental factor of their development--Jewish training".

Many other local Jews whom the writer has interviewed likewise see little hope for the future perpetuation of the fundamentals of Judaism.

Recreation- When we consider recreation, the future is as dark as it is for education. The answer lies in the same attitude of indifference which affects the lack of patronage of the Jewish schools. Worcester Jewry for the most part regard recreation merely as athletics. They feel that this form of recreation amply fills the recreational needs of their youth. They do not realize that through a well-organized and balanced recreational program the young might be enticed into the religious fold. A quotation from the man who made the above plea for education is given in order to show the prevailing attitude toward recreation.

"Segregation in athletics and gymnastics is not necessary. I believe that there has never been a real need for a community center at the expense of some of the other pressing problems facing us". 3

This attitude of the elders is echoed by the children themselves. We find, for instance, few Jewish athletic organizations in the city. It is not that the Jewish youth has no interest in athletics or other forms of recreational activity, but rather that he feels his needs are amply met in the various non-sectarian organizations, such as the Young

3) Ibid, P. 5

Men's Christian Association, the Boy Scouts and the Boys' Club. Hence, most of the Jewish organizations, whose names suggest recreational aims, are usually restricted in function to cultural and social activities.

Youth Organization-An interesting phase of so-called recreational organizations in the Jewish community are the many, short-lived youth organizations. The explanation for this type of group activity resides in the tendency of Jews to want to belong to some organization; with the result that groups bearing Hebrew or English names, arise spontaneously and die so rapidly. When the initial enthusiasm dies down, the membership at meetings flags and the society is soon extinct. This procedure accounts for the great multiplicity of Jewish organizations and also their great mortality rate.

At present the oldest youth organization is "The Order of Aleph Zadik Aleph of the B' nai B'rith". The local chapter was founded seven years ago under the sponsorship of the local group of the parent organization. This society caters to the older boy ranging in age from sixteen to twenty-one. It represents quite an exception to the limited program of most of the youth organizations. The members' handbook states that its purpose is:

"The enrollment of all desirable Jewish young men in a fraternal organization having for its program: The mental, moral and physical development of its members; the strengthening of their Jewish affiliations; the abatement of the pernicious influences of bigotry and race prejudice; and the stimulation of interest in humanitarian, educational

and philanthropic endeavors". 4

Among the varied activities of this organization are: religious interests, revival of Hebrew, social service, and communal work, cultural interests-such as lectures and study, social affairs held periodically, and district tournaments held in basketball, debating, and oratory. The long life of this society with its comprehensive program may be attributed to the fact that it is under a definite sponsorship and does not exist entirely on its own initiative.

Other types of youth organizations are the various high school fraternities and sororities. These organizations limit their activities to social affairs which occur but rarely. Alpha Mu Beta, the most influential one, was founded in January, 1928; Lambda Theta Delta, in October, 1929; Mu Sigma, a national society in May, 1932. The sororities are like the fraternities except that they make a pretense of doing charitable work. The oldest one was founded in 1926, and was called "Ohavo Yaldois", while in the following year, Iota Phi and Delta Rho were established. These organizations are, on the whole, city-wide in scope.

Still other forms of youth ^{organizations} are those nurtured in religious institutions. At the reform Temple, a Young People's League was established in the latter part of 1931. This group meets weekly at the Temple for discussion of current Jewish events. Outside speakers are invited to present dif-

4) Member's Handbook, Order of Aleph Zadik Aleph of the B'nai B'rith, 1928-29,

ferent points of view. A series of lectures on Jewish history was given last year by the Rabbi to an inattentive group whose only interest is in the social advantages pertaining to the organization. Supposedly, an executive committee of the group plans the program, but under the dictatorial leadership of the rabbi, they merely carry out suggestions.

The orthodox synagogues seeing the youth slipping away from them formed Young Israel groups in 1932. The orthodox leaders are hopeful that this movement will restore the youth to orthodoxy. In the words of the chief orthodox rabbi of the city:

"The development of the Young Israel Group is one of the bright lights on the troubled Jewish religious horizon. Formed in this city by a group of thoughtful youngsters who have realized that they need some religious guide, it has grown by leaps and bounds. It has for its main purposes the practice of orthodox religious principles and ideals, and they are succeeding remarkably well in attaining them.

"Under its direction there has been formed a Jewish congregation of the Sons of Abraham Synagogue which meets regularly on the Sabbath and conducts its own services. Classes in various aspects of Jewish history have been formed. The club regularly meets to discuss Jewish problems facing it. It has regular speakers to lead Forum groups.

"With these young Israel groups as a nucleus, orthodox Judaism is in possession of a potent weapon to ward off the attempts to undermine the religion from within, and to take positive steps in bringing before the Jewish youth today the fact that the practice of Orthodox religion is fundamental for their continuance as Jews." 5

5) Jewish Civic Leader, P. 3, February 24, 1933

Despite these optimistic statements, the movement has not shown any great vitality and indifference is already the keynote.

Closely allied with these religious organizations for youth is the young Judean society. This group was organized for young girls under the sponsorship of the Zionist Organization and the Junior Hadassah. Its purpose is to advance Zionism through teaching the children a knowledge of the culture and history of the Jewish people; also, "how to live in a non-Jewish world and maintain Jewish ideals". The society is divided into three groups classified according to age: the primary, from nine to twelve years of age; the intermediate, from twelve to fifteen years of age; and the older girls, sixteen and seventeen years of age. This is a propagandist group working with children during their most impressionable years. Their activities savour of the religious, for they study Jewish history, current events, and the principles of Zionism. Parties and ceremonies are held to celebrate and commemorate the various holidays. Despite the idealistic program, this organization is very ineffective. It suffers from the same inertia that affects almost every Jewish organization in Worcester.

Another youth organization of limited recreational content is the Junior Montefiore Debating Society, designed for boys in their early teens. This group meets bi-weekly at the homes of its members for debating, recitation, and

declamation, and holds declamation contests which are well attended by the parents and the intelligentsia of the Jewish community.

Another youth organization, with a different program than the others, is the "Brith Trumpelder of America". The Worcester chapter was organized in April, 1933, ostensibly for the purpose of studying military training and promoting interest in athletics among Jewish youth; however, an underlying motive was the fostering of a spirit of solidarity among Jewish Young people. Credit must be given this society for starting its life with a new ideal: solidarity brought about through athletics. It is still in the formative stage, and, therefore, no estimate of its success to date can be given. However, the mere fact that the youth are cognizant of the need of solidarity is worthy of note. It is significant that this movement for solidarity is sponsored by the East Siders.

Social Service - Although there is a multiplicity of clubs of transitory character, for the most part the Jewish community has done very little in the field of social service for its children. With the exception of the orphan^age and the United Jewish Charities, they have not made any definite attempts to care for their needy children; instead, they have thrust them upon the community at large. For example, the lack of any provision for free service obliges Jewish mothers to travel quite a distance to a non-sectarian dental clinic at the Wall Street settlement.

The social agency that indirectly aids children as part of family case work is the United Jewish Charities. Its most direct service to children is its health service. A baby clinic is held twice weekly at the headquarters by doctors who contribute their services. Moreover, in order to publicize better health methods, they hold a baby show annually with a prize for the winning child. This constitutes the entire health program of the Jewish community--obviously inadequate for the size of Worcester's Jewish community.

For the dependent child, the situation is greatly improved. We have already noted the history of the orphanage and its value to the community; now we shall consider the care of the children living in the orphanage. The Home has on its staff a resident nurse who is prepared for any emergency; doctors, who give their services gratis, perform all necessary medical functions and also give periodic physical examinations. Children who are under weight and ill are given special diets, though the menu on the whole is healthful, well-balanced, and plentiful. A playground and large well ventilated play rooms allow the energetic youngsters opportunity for recreation.

One noteworthy feature is that the children attend the public schools and thereby come into contact with children or normal circumstances. Friends made this way are allowed to visit them. Encouragement is given these children to get as good an education as possible. Most of the older ones

go to high school; and one girl attended a professional business school. If a child has the ability and desire to go to college an attempt is made to find a sponsor for him.

Every child receives a Jewish education, and the rituals are strictly observed. From the first, this was strongly adhered to and may have been influenced by the plight of the first children admitted.

"The first children to be admitted were two little girls, three and five years old, who were being cared for by gentile people, and who were discovered by some of our directors. These children's father was dead, and their mother was an inmate of the insane asylum. They were being brought up as Catholics, and it required special training to bring them back to the fold." 6.

Formerly the children attended the Central School, but as the distance is now too far, plans are being made for a visiting teacher.

One observes, on a visit, that the children consider this their home. It has none of the appearances of an orphan asylum; nothing is uniform, for each child is permitted to express his individuality. Probably, the attitude of the Superintendent has fostered this home spirit for he has decreed that there should be a complete absence of visiting hours, rules and regulations.

Correction- Seemingly complimentary to the Jewish community is the relative absence of delinquency among its youth. In the year 1931, out of a total of four hundred and

6.) Jewish Home for Aged and Orphans, 14th Annual Report, p. 11.

forty delinquents, only seven were of the Jewish faith. Of those seven cases, one was from Dorchester and therefore cannot be considered in our local study. Of the remaining six, only one was sent away (to Oakdale) 7, and the remainder were placed on probation. A glance at the offenses shows that most of them were minor cases: one boy stole ten dollars from a store; another used a car without authority; a third was apprehended for receiving stolen goods; while the remaining three were placed on probation for playing ball in the streets on Sunday. In reality, the Jewish community cannot take unto itself the credit for this good record; rather the centuries of oppression, when disobedience of the law meant horrible punishment, have introduced the factor of law obedience into the mores of the Jewish race.

Summary--This brief survey of the child welfare program of the local Jewish colony shows the absence of any definite comprehensive plan. The Jewish educational system is not being used to its fullest advantage; the recreational system is practically non-existent, except in its cultural aspects, and the health program is merely in an embryonic stage.

7.) Worcester County Training School.

Chapter VI

Trends

Chief Value of Study - The primary value of the writer's investigation of social phenomena in the local Jewish community rests, in his judgment, upon the fact that it was a study of a group in transition. Here our interest has been not on societal changes which are common to all immigrant groups but on the peculiar metamorphosis of the entire attitude which once gave the Jew his pronounced character as a member of the social community. It was no so many years ago that the Jew in America could usually be found strictly within the ghetto; he was invariably orthodox in his religious belief and practice; his dietary laws and daily ritual were carefully observed; he married the women of his own race; his social life was the outgrowth of his racial and religious unity; and the surest approach to his attitude and general position was through a taut acceptance of the unalterable solidarity of the Jewish population.

Today, all this is much altered. The ghetto is now the home only of those Jews whose economic position has forced them to live in the old surroundings; orthodox Judaism is rapidly collapsing before the newer and, to the modern Jew, more intelligent position of the reform synagogue; dietary laws are looked upon as archaic encumbrances;

and the Jew no longer feels that his social life is indissolubly bound up with that of the ethnic group. That these things are true of the Worcester community is admitted by practically every Jew interviewed by the writer. In this concluding chapter it becomes the purpose to note carefully the trends which characterize the local Jewish population at this contemporary moment. It will be seen that in many ways they indicate the development of a new kind of Jewish group life; one that is of high sociological import, because it suggests an adaptation to American mores.

Population Trend - For some years the Worcester colony has been undergoing changes uninfluenced by immigration from other countries. Until 1922, Russian and Polish Jewish immigrants continued to swell the numbers of the local colony, and sowed the seeds for future differences within the group. Since that date, however, Jewish immigration into Worcester has been kept at practically a zero point. This is, of course, true in America as a whole, and for all racial groups. The result of this check in immigration has considerably simplified the understanding of interaction in the local Jewish community. All the young people are now American-born, and have generally the same educational advantages; which therefore eliminates the nationality factor in local Jewish relations and reduces the problem of living together primarily to one of economic differences.

Another cause for slow population increase is the widespread knowledge of birth control. The young Jewish couples whom the writer has contracted have one or two children, sometimes three, but seldom more than that. Many have none at all, after several years of marriage. Most of these young married couples have been wholly frank with the writer in attributing their small families to economic reasons. They want to establish themselves securely in the matter of finances before they accept the responsibilities of parenthood. Others showed a marked indifference to family life. For instance one young woman voiced the sentiments of several when she said: "We're having too much fun to take the chance of spoiling it all by having children. They're nice, but they're a nuisance too." In other instances, the working of the wife outside of the home makes family life rather an impossibility.

In general, the type of life led by many young couples: a life of bridge, visiting and outdoor sports, together with an attitude of broad indifference toward home and children, has resulted in a marked decline in population growth. Nor is there any reason to look for a change in this respect. Birth control, diminution of income, and a new manner of living indicate that the Jewish population of the city will grow but slowly in the future.

Ecological Trend - A second important trend of the

Worcester Jewish community, the ecological trend, presents a phenomenon which characterizes most Jewish urban groups in the United States. As frequently stated, the ghetto is rapidly becoming a dilapidated area in which only the poorer Jews remain as the invasion of other racial groups becomes more intense. Here in Worcester the old ghetto of the 1890's is very rapidly being occupied by Poles and Lithuanians. The Jews have already made great progress in building up the Granite Street section on the top of Union Hill, and have even proceeded into the open pasture lands which stretch toward Grafton. Before the present depression set in, ugly three deckers were being built at a fast rate in this area; and even today there is a slow building development to keep pace with the volume of removals from the Providence Street region. At the present moment, the movement from the lower part of the hill into this new section shows no signs of diminishing, and East side Jews take it for granted that in a few years the old Water and Providence Streets area (scene of the first settlement) will be completely evacuated as Lithuanians and Poles displace the Jews entirely.

It is interesting to note that these afore-mentioned movements towards Grafton Hill points toward the creation of a new ghetto. In this entire new section it is rarely that one comes upon other than Jewish families. It is simply a mass movement whose one purpose is to find quarters where the old life featured by racial solidarity

can proceed unmolested. Kosher markets and stores are springing up here, and the whole tempo of the community life is as distinctively Jewish as it was around Water Street fifteen years ago; even more so, perhaps, because here the Jews are building up an entirely new section and they do not find the laggards of other races to contend with as they once did on and around Water Street.

On the face of things, it would appear that this removal from one ghetto to another indicates a high degree of solidarity. However, it must be borne in mind that not all of the families in the old area are moving up Grafton Hill; they are moving to other sections of the city as well; and the total result of this movement will be a much smaller area of Jewish community solidarity than heretofore. One has but to consider the rapid migration toward the West side to see the truth of this. In the opinion of a number interviewed, the number leaving the East side entirely has been greater than the number moving to other locations on the East side in the last few years. Actually, then, instead of establishing a high degree of solidarity, this changing of ghetto locations is resulting in a more pronounced disintegration and a more sharply defined cleavage.

Other evidence of the disintegration of residential solidarity can be found in the families moving to the area of Clark University and Webster Square; others have removed to Oak Hill and Hadwen Park. There are some

clear cut reasons for these new settlements. Many families determined to leave the East side are financially unable to purchase homes in the West side. They are forced to move into sections where rent is reasonable, but at the same time, they insist on an improved environment. Accordingly, they seek out quiet, inexpensive residential areas which, in most cases, are not as yet settled by any large number of Jewish families. Strictly Jewish needs are easily satisfied by means of improved transportation facilities; hence no inconveniences need be experienced by a lack of Jewish surroundings. But it is important to note that this decentralization tends to weaken racial bonds originally based largely on proximity.

Still further evidence of ecological trends abounds on the West side where an interesting change is taking place in the character of the population and in the attitude of Jewish people toward the area. In effect, the East side is lifting itself bodily over onto the West side, because it is a sure mark of social consequence to say simply that one lives on the West side. This mass movement of East side Jews into the exclusive section has made it less desirable as a place of residence to the wealthiest Jewish families whose aim is to sever relationships with the colony as a whole. The propinquity of the new arrivals has resulted in still another ghetto, albeit a somewhat more exclusive one, but marked nevertheless by housing and living standards reminiscent of the East side. The position of ^{the} richest West Siders as a consequence is similar to that of the early East Siders

who began to leave the ghetto at the beginning of the century. The differences arises, however, in that the more prominent West side Jews no longer consider it a matter of escaping from poor physical conditions. Their aim is, rather, to escape all fellow Jews. The result then has been a removal of the wealthier families of the West side colony to an even more exclusive area. They have chosen the section called Westwood Hills near Salisbury Street, until yesterday occupied exclusively by old Worcester families. This is a new trend, not more than two or three years old, but it is taking on strength even in these times of financial depression. Ecologically, it may be designated as a "fourth" settlement of Worcester Jews.

Financial Cause of Dispersion - The dispersion of the colony is still futher complicated by the financial troubles of many West Siders who were formerly people of means. A considerable number of these families have found it impossible to maintain their homes and have been forced to seek homes elsewhere. They have, naturally, been loathe to turn to any Jewish area less comfortable than the West side. Accordingly, they have sought out quiet, middle class streets where few Jews are apt to see them daily in their lowered financial condition. They maintain their West side social connections simply because they are alienated from the East side, while hoping for a change of

conditions which will enable them to enter again the race for social preferment. . In the meantime, their children are drawn further and further away from Jewish influences, and the already weakened racial bonds are strained more with each day of life in a non-Jewish community.

Social Trends - In the realm of racial conflict the trend is strictly in the direction of a sharper cleavage. Since the whole problem is based almost entirely on unequal distribution of wealth, it might seem that the financial troubles of the past few years should have acted as a social leveler. However, the refusal of the demoted West Siders, noted above, to return to poorer Jewish quarters has resulted in sharper differences than existed before. The East Sider dislikes this last type even more than he does the West Siders who still remain, because he sees in this a tendency to raise barriers founded in causes more subtle, hence more irritating, than money. The result is that instead of two classes, East Siders and West Siders, there are now at least four definite Jewish groups in the city: the East Siders, those remaining in the areas of first and second settlement, the early West Siders, the new West Siders who are rapidly destroying the former exclusiveness of the district, and the various scattered families, now a considerable number, who are one in turning away from all East side associations.

These distinct groups, not one of them attempting to save what little is left of local Jewish solidarity, have made the element of conflict more complex than it was in the days when residence on the East or West side alone told the story. Today, the tendency toward dispersion and the easy discarding of the Jewish environment has combined with economic conflict to wreck any chance of real social unity within the community. Previously, people sought to achieve an entrance into definite Jewish cliques; now there is a candid attempt to escape "Jewishness" itself. Naturally, in such an environment the needs of conflict thrive and the social cleavage discussed in a previous chapter assumes an ever more menacing aspect.

Of any trend toward solidarity, it is almost useless to speak. With such organizations as the Young Men's Hebrew Association closed for the lack of interest, with the Young Women's Hebrew Association supported entirely by a small group of East Side girls, and the West Siders determined to have nothing to do with a proposed community center, it is obvious that group solidarity is a small possibility at best. When some resemblance of unity does exist, it is the result of expediency. Thus, the Home for the Aged and Orphans receives unified support because the East side feels the necessity of accepting the assistance of the charitable West side organizations without which it might be difficult to

maintain the establishment. Again, in the case of B'nai B'rith, it is charitable work that forms the basis of whatever unity obtains; and in the case of certain fraternal gatherings, the unity of the occasion extends no further than the meeting place itself.

Since no race has been more dependent on its religion in maintaining its historical and cultural unity, it is important that a review of the current situation be made in passing to the conclusion. We have already noted the formation of the reform temple in 1920 and the strong support it has been given by the West side people. At the present time the trend toward reform services is coming into increasingly greater favor. The young people of the West side, brought up as they are away from the stern influence of orthodoxy, turn to the reform synagogue as a matter of course. Even the young of the East side often drops in to hear the youthful reform rabbi deliver one of his intelligent and highly modern sermons. The elders of the West side are drawn towards the reform movement primarily because it represents a part of their community life, just as do bridge clubs and charity socials. A few of the older people still cling to the orthodox synagogue of the West side which has but a slim attendance even on the high holidays.

Offsetting the appearance of religious interest at the reform temple with its large membership is the fact

of the irregular attendance upon its services. Particularly is this true of the younger members. Their life is one of intense social activity, full of movement and color and some intellectuality; but religion for them has become a sort of hangover from the historical past. Various young men and women who spoke to the writer on the subject leaned largely toward an intellectual agnosticism. A great majority of them repudiated the entire dogma of orthodox Judaism and openly ridiculed such features of the faith as dietary laws and the like. They are drawn to the temple, if at all, by varied points of view discussed from the rabbinical rostrum; by the atmosphere of intellectuality bred in a house of worship where social idealism has taken the place of the word of God. Here they can listen to discussions that comprehend history, sociology, literature, and the sciences. At present a small group is regularly drawn to Friday night services which really become forums for the presentation of a hundred contemporary problems. In general the young Jew, at least here in Worcester, cannot be classed as a church-goer. Many go to please parent; still others have their social or business reasons for attending; the majority of them, however, scarcely see the synagogue except on high holidays.

It must not be thought that because orthodox Judaism is still unchallenged by a reform movement on the East

side that it attracts the young with as much authority as ever. This is not the case and becomes less so with every passing year. One has but to visit a synagogue on the East side to see how far from a practicing Judaism the youth have travelled. A typical Friday night service finds a few elderly old men together with an occasional son who obeys the wishes of a stern father. The young are almost never known to come of their own accord. Then, too, there prevails over allthings religious a sort of let argy or indifference that is far stronger than the tenets of Judaism in determining the attitude of the young toward the faith. However, the recently formed senior group of the young Israel movement which is attempting to restore true belief in orthodox Judaism provides a tendency in the opposite direction. Even the initial enthusiasm of a new organization has attracted only a small number; and one may safely conclude, from past experience, that it will be either short-lived or ineffective.

Contributing largely to the undermining of Jewish faith in this local community are the schools and colleges with their modern teachings. It is one thing to look upon Judaism with the eyes of an immigrant parent whose sole education was acquired in a Russian Hebrew School; it is another thing to view it in the light of a long, non-sectarian education which stresses the social and

physical sciences and treats the Bible as literature. For the latter reason primarily, religion among American-born Worcester Jews is something quite tenuous and of wholly doubtful validity. Recently a rumor was spread that a reform temple would be started on the East side. The rumor is unsubstantiated, but the mere suggestion shows how far the demise of the faith has proceeded in that section. Rabbis bewail the small congregation and see in this indifference not only the death of Judaism but of Jewish cultural unity. Not one rabbi was optimistic enough in the face of present conditions to hold out a strong hope for the future of Judaism. To them the handwriting has appeared on the wall, and if present indications are reliable, they have read aright.

Educational Trend - It is quite clear that the future character of any group depends largely on the education and environmental influences which affect its children. In the past, the Jewish child was given a strict religious training which sufficed, when combined with his strict Jewish home life, to keep him strictly within the racial fold. Community organization, as we now use the term, was not only largely unknown in the Jewish community; it was unnecessary. Religion and cultural traditions were more potent than any organizing influence that worked from without. In the Worcester

colony, in the absence of such motivation, we discover a considerable laxity in the teaching of Jewish culture to children. Second generation families pay scant attention to dietary laws and the like and know so little of Jewish theology that they are in no position to offer even the smallest insight into the meaning of their faith.

It becomes, therefore, the work of the Hebrew school to explain Jewish theology and culture to the children. It is at precisely this point that we discover the extent to which the old faith has been allowed to decay. Scarcely a first generation Jew in Worcester is without a strong Hebrew school education, and yet his children and grandchildren receive only the scantiest instruction. The local schools, far from keeping pace with population increase, are actually falling off in numbers, while the students enrolled in the few that are left diminish in number yearly. In the orthodox schools the decline is more surprising than in the reform school where it might be expected. In spite of the fact that all East side schools and synagogues are orthodox, it appears that it is a highly diluted orthodoxy that prevails. Certainly it is a sign of great weakening of the faith when the fundamental religious training of the Jewish child is permitted to lapse.

When we turn to the West side school, held at the reform temple, we find that the once strict training

has here become a sort of social exercise. An instructor quite candidly admitted the children learned little, or less, of Judaistic concepts and that for every practical purpose the institution served as an easy means for West side mothers to rid themselves of their children on busy Sunday mornings. To a foreign-born Jew, such a condition spells the complete collapse of the faith; for in his opinion, adults who have never been brought up strictly in a given faith during childhood are not apt to turn to it when the practical cares of living begin to absorb their attention. In sum, from all evidence which the writer gathered, Judaism in Worcester appears to be failing rapidly, largely because the Hebrew school, once so important in Jewish religious life, is no longer emphasized as part of the child's training.

If the Jewish child in Worcester is slowly being estranged from religious unity, what is being done to bring him in contact with the children of his own race by way of social or intellectual intercourse? Here again, the answer discloses the social change within the local colony and the lack of adequate community organization. The Junior Young Israel groups, dedicated to the purpose of fostering orthodox Judaism, are in reality, social clubs. Not only that but the attendance is so poor as to be almost negligible. The East side club is composed solely of children from that section, while the West side group is

as exclusively "West-sidish" as the other organizations in that colony. In the latter groups no effort is made to maintain the aim of the society, because the youngsters are incompetent to discuss matters of which they have no knowledge. The East siders are more serious; but here too, the evening usually develops into a period of childish pleasure. Of course, the Jewish children in both groups, are in this way brought together. When the attendance is taken into consideration, however, both groups of Young Israel may at least be regarded as fairly substantial efforts at Jewish religious education.

Likewise, in efforts at recreational organization, the Jewish community fails to provide adequately for its youth. Usually they join non-sectarian groups, such as the Boy Scouts and the Y. M. C. A. clubs; the latter, for instance, has more Jewish members than the members enrolled in the Young Men's Hebrew Association at its peak. Clearly the present trend in child training by the Jewish community is again away from unity and all in the direction of disintegration or assimilation.

Conclusion-We have now drawn to a close a survey that comprehends practically every factor and influence in the life of the Jewish colony in Worcester. As the study of a recent immigrant group, it indicates the extreme rapidity with which these people have entered upon a new way of life.

Their ecology presents a steady movement toward better physical surroundings; while, as a corollary, it is obvious throughout that a great change for the better has come about in their economic condition. These facts, important as they are, lack the interest that two other developments contain.

induct → First: we see a colony of one of the most persistently unified races in ~~the~~ world history in the process of social disintegration. Second: a race whose former unity was indissolubly bound up with its religion is seen, at least in this instance, discarding the Judaistic theology which the orthodox claim to be the sinew of the Jewish race.

In the case of the latter development, the questioning spirit of a modern age may be looked upon as the primary reason for dissolution. An ancient theology must be indeed tenacious to prevail in the face of modern rationalism. Judaism has long confronted and overcome all efforts to undermine it; today, at least in Worcester, it is fighting a losing battle for existence; and, as concerns social conflict, we see a more commonplace, less subtle influence at work. Here it is merely money that spells the gap between the highest and the lowest. To this problem there seems to be no reasonable solution in our present societal organization. As long as the rich are rich and the poor are poor, this cleavage in local Jewish circles is bound to persist. Social-economic conflict is the key to most of the problems

of the Worcester colony. It will end only when men have learned to see the wisdom of a more equitable distribution of wealth.

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APPENDIX A

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