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**THE JEWISH QUESTION**

IN

**POLAND**

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# THE JEWISH QUESTION

IN

## POLAND

WHY HAS THE JEWISH QUESTION BECOME

ACUTE NOW?

Among the questions which the Polish state is facing at the moment of its creation, one of the most vexatious is the Jewish question. The difficulty is constituted in the three following facts:

- 1) The high percentage of the Jewish population in the territories of the Polish State.
  
- 2) The development of the Jewish national spirit, based mainly on the Jews in Polish territories, and the effectiveness of their intellectual activities.
  
- 3) The great part played by the Jews in the world's politics, thanks to their extraordinary activity, and more especially, thanks to their importance in finance and in the press.

Taking advantage of the circumstances arising from the organization of the state of things in the whole of Central and East Europe, they endeavor to assure themselves the best possible conditions of existence in the future on Polish territories, from an economic as well as a political point of view.

I. — HOW HAS THE PRESENT STATE OF THINGS  
BEEN BROUGHT ABOUT?

**The Jewish immigration into Poland.**

Already in the first centuries of history Jews were in Poland, though not in large numbers, until the XI century and probably only as traveling merchants, mostly caravan merchants. It was not until the XIV and XV century, in consequence of oppression, pogroms and banishment, to which they were exposed in Bohemia, Germany, and also in the Pyrenean peninsula, that the Jews immigrated to Poland. They did not bring with them however much opulence, for they were mostly deprived of it, but they brought the German language which was passed on by them to a handful of the Jews of eastern extraction. For it is a characteristic trait of the Jews, that they come under the cultural influence of the countries where they have been most persecuted, taking the languages of these countries with them to foreign lands. Such was the case with the Spanish and with the German Jews in the Middle Ages, as it is now with the Russian Jews.

**Jews as a vanguard of Germanism in Poland.**

While a considerable number of Germans, settled in the Polish towns and villages, became entirely polonized in the XV and XVI centuries, the Jews remained there as a vanguard of Germanism, with respect to the language as well as to economic relations. They contributed greatly to the development of German industry and commerce, by traveling in masses from Poland to fetch German goods from Breslau, Leipzig, Frankfurt and other towns.

**The economic basis of their welfare in Poland.**

Apart from trade, usury, and in a certain measure handicraft, the foundation of their existence consisted in taking on lease custom duties and other state revenues, and in participating in the management of estates as innkeepers, shopkeepers and commercial agents of large landowners. Poland never drove them away, never confiscated their property, which has won for her the name of “the Jews’ paradise” (paradisus judaeorum) *{NOTE (1) If Jewish pogroms occurred in Poland in the XVII and XVIII centuries, the Poles suffered equally from them, as it was exclusively the work of the Cossacks and Ukrainian peasants, who massacred one as much as the other and destroyed their estates.}*.

### **The juridical basis.**

As juridical basis of their situation in Poland must be considered the privilege granted by prince Boleslas of Kalisz, issued in 1264, and subsequently given to the whole of the Polish State by the king Casimir the Great (1334, 1364, 1367). He ensured them perfect safety and possibility of making their livelihood. As far back as in the XIV century Jewish confessional communities (kahals) were founded and enjoyed full autonomy. The elected chiefs of these communities occupied themselves with all religious, scholastic and charitable matters, also settling disputes between Jews conforming to the Talmud codicil, while the discerning of contests between Jews and Christians was subjacent to the voyevods as the king’s representatives. In the last quarter of the XVI century higher organs of Jewish autonomy were established: Jewish diets, called “waad” composed of deputies who were elected by the kahals or by minor diets comprising a greater number of kahals. These “waads” took place every year and lawfully regulated the interior life of the Jews, distributing the State taxes and representing the Jews in all State affairs. This institution lasted till 1764, whereupon it was abolished in consequence of abuse by the Jewish oligarchy, which caused great satisfaction among the Jewish masses.

The outcome of the mediaeval conception which looked upon the Jews as a social class, and the State as an assembly of organized classes, the Jewish diet, had to disappear since Poland became definitely a modern state.

### **The increase of the Jewish population.**

At the outset of the XVI century there were in Poland about 100,000 Jews (3.5% of the population of the country), in 1676 their number increased to 200,000, in 1766 to as much as 626,000, and at the time of Poland's second partition (1793), though the area of Poland diminished, they numbered 900,000 (10.2% of the whole population), the reason for this being partly; that the Prussian and Austrian governments banished the poorest Jews from the annexed Polish territories. No wonder that the impoverished country was unable to entertain such a large number of Jews; consequently the question of improving the material position of the Jews and of turning them into citizens began to occupy the minds of the most prominent Polish politicians in the last years of the Commonwealth, but the last partition did not allow the carrying out of a thorough reform.

### **The situation under the rule of the three partitioning powers.**

After the partitions, the Jewish question passed entirely into the hands of the alien powers. Prussia, Austria and Russia took away their former rights and tried to get rid of them as much as possible, the Poles having only had the opportunity of taking a standpoint with regard to the Jewish question at the time of the Duchy of Warsaw, of the Congress-Kingdom, and later on in Galicia.

### **The Polish standpoint after the partitions.**

The government of the Duchy of Warsaw was quite decided to bestow upon the Jews perfect equality of rights, according to its constitution. However the Jews themselves tried to hinder the fulfillment of this project; these were mainly the khassids, a sect which rigorously stuck to all the ritual regulations in life and which at that epoch developed prominently. It feared a coming together of the Jews and the Christian population, and their assimilation. Later in the Congress-Kingdom the government took up earnestly the Jewish question, but had no time to carry out serious reforms. When, for a short period, the Poles regained self-government under the rule of the marquis of Wielopolski, one of the first reforms which was brought about was, in 1862, the abolishment of all legal restrictions concerning the Jews.

In Posnania the provincial diet also claimed equal rights for the Jews (1847).

The same question was decided upon in the Austrian parliament by the Poles, and afterwards the Diet of Lwów, 1868, ordered the carrying out of this principle, notably on Galician territory.

### **The banishment of Jews and prohibition of sojourn edicted in Prussia against the Jews.**

Thus, conforming, to their traditions of tolerance, which were one of their characteristic traits of social organization, the Poles acknowledged the right of equality, whenever they had the chance to manifest their will after the partitions.

Far-reaching social changes and considerable economic progress, thanks to the ruling liberal policy, contributed to the development of the welfare and to the increase of the Jewish population in the Polish provinces. Further, two political events occurred which brought about artificially a conglomeration of Jews in Poland. The Prussian government proclaimed on the 26th of March 1885 an order banishing from Prussia instantly not only the Poles but also all Jews originally from Austria or Russia who had no Prussian citizenship, forbidding them to settle down in future within the limits of Prussia without special permission. This unscrupulous law still in force prevented the Jews entirely from immigrating into Germany.

### **Limits of Jewish settlements in Russia.**

Soon after this a similar method was adopted in the Russian empire (the notorious count Ignatiew's rules) for clearing Russia proper of the Jewish element, which was pouring in from Poland, contrary to ancient forgotten prohibitions, and so, the so-called "line of settlement" has been decreed, behind which the Jews were not allowed to dwell. This line corresponds more or less to the western frontier of the former Polish Commonwealth, including also the provinces situated to the south. The sphere of Jewish settlement in Russia comprised in all 945 thousand sq. kilometers.

The second anti-Jewish stage followed in the first decade of the XX century, when the propaganda and the pogroms, organized by conservative bodies (the so called "true Russian men") and supported to a certain degree immediately by the Russian authorities, began to drive out the Jews from the so called "western" provinces and force them to settle in Poland or to emigrate abroad.

In Poland these banished Jews became an excellent instrument of Russian policy; they increased those elements which were in favor of upholding the Russian State, they thus contributed to the uniting of Poland and Russia and moreover strengthened Jewish separatism and national feeling, hampering Polish national aspirations.

## II. — THE PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

### 1. THE NUMBER OF JEWS.

As it results from the preceding chapter, the Jews were artificially concentrated by the Russians on Polish soil.

The official statistics demonstrated in 1910 or the following number of people of Israelite faith.

	<u>population</u>	
The regency of Opole (Silesia) . . . . .	18,217	0.8%
Posnania . . . . .	26,486	1.3%
West Prussia . . . . .	13,813	0.8%
The regency of Olsztyn (East Prussia) . . . . .	2,587	0.5%
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Total in the Polish provinces of Prussia . . . . .	61,103	0.9%
In Teschen Silesia . . . . .	19,900	2.6%



In Galicia . . . . .	872,975	10.9%
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Total in the Polish provinces of Austria	883,875	10.5%
In Congress Poland . . . . .	1,770,000	14.6%
In Lithuania and White Ruthenia . . . . .	1,770,000	14.1%
Ruthenia (3 south-eastern provinces) . . . . .	1,520,000	12.5%
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Total in the Polish provinces of Russia	5,060,000	13.7%

Of this number 1,920,000 Jews dwell on territories which the Poles do not claim, according to the Polish Delegation map, viz. the province of Kovno, Witebsk, Mohylow, Kiew, as well as parts of Suwalki, Wilno, Volhynia and Podolia.

**Inaccuracy of Russian statistics.**

The total number of Jews, in free Poland, according to the statistics of 1910 relatively 1911 will be 4,085,000, 3,140,000 of which resided in the Russian part of Poland. In reality however the number of Jews in Congress Poland and in the country which belonged to the Russian empire, did not reach this figure at the time indicated. Indeed the Russian statistics were far from exact, not being based on the only census taken in 1897, but upon the movement of the population.

In 1897 the Jews numbered:

population

In Congress Poland . . . . .	1,321,100 i.e. 14 %
In Lithuania and in White Ruthenia . . . .	1,422,400 i.e. 14.1%
In Ruthenia . . . . .	1,200,100 i.e. 12.5%
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Total . . . . .	3,943,600

**Natural increase.**

As in the whole of Russia the Jews numbered them 5,110,500 one can estimate that 77.1% Russian Jews inhabited the territories of the ancient Polish Commonwealth (including Kiew), and that 26% inhabited Congress Poland. The natural increase of the Jews amounted, according to the official statistics, in the Russian empire (excluding Congress Poland) to 1.8%, in Poland (1904) 1.76% and in 1906 - 1908 1.31%.

Should we admit 1.8% as the yearly increase for all the Jews on Polish territories from 1897 till the war, which would be an exaggeration, considering the decrease in the number of births in the last years, the yearly accretion would amount to 71,000 (23,800 of which being in Poland).

**Jewish emigration from Russia.**

Meanwhile in the years from 1897-8 to 1910-11 the Jewish emigration to the United States from Russia numbered 858,226 Jews, at least 80% originating from Poland, for there is no doubt that the other provinces had a certain Jewish immigration. Every year 49,000 Jews left the Polish territories and settled in United States, while their emigration to other countries (England, Canada, France, Belgium, Africa, Palestine) amounted to 12,000. Thus their number decreased yearly by about 61,000, it means that, as a matter of

fact, their increase did not amount to more than about 10,000. During the years from 1911-12 to 1913-14 237,060 Jews left Russia i.e. 79,020 yearly, or in other words, their decrease by emigration was a great deal larger than their increase by natural accretion, taken even from the most optimistic point of view.

The difference in the number of Jews in Poland which we notice between the census of 1897 and the year of 1910 amounts to 449,000 and corresponds with the yearly accretion of 34,500, this being nearly 250% greater than the real accretion of Jews on the whole Polish territory. There is no doubt, that many Jews arrived in Poland from other provinces, but, on the other side, their emigration must have been considerable if, for instance in 1909, it probably amounted to 25% of Jewish emigrants from Russia.

#### **The state of Jewish matters.**

The census of the population in 1916 in the 3 provinces of Poland which were entirely under the Austrian occupation, gives the number of Jews at no more than 397,503 i.e. 14.4% less than was indicated by the Russian authorities in 1910. The increase of the Jews from January 1897 to October 1916 amounted there only to 45,738 i.e. 0.66% yearly and 13% in general.

The number of Jews in the whole of the Kingdom of Poland can be stated only on the strength of fragmentary notes, with regard to the population of the particular parts of the German occupation in Poland in 1916, which give a smaller number of Jews than the total computation, and on the strength of the pre-war Jewish emigration from the territories subsequently occupied by the Germans: Suwalki, Lomza, Plock, Siedlce. In spite of their increase in Warsaw and Łódz, their number in the whole of the Kingdom of Poland in 1916 amounts to 1,490,000. It means that since 1897 they increased by 169,000 i.e. at the rate of 8,700 annually. Therefore the result of the above is that on the territories of Lithuania, White Ruthenia and Ruthenia the increased of the Jewish population must have been insignificant and, their percentage in the total number of the population, which increased greatly, must have been diminishing. In fact, the fragmentary figured we possess from the census, the German military authorities ordered in Lithuania and White Ruthenia, demonstrate a great decrease of the Jewish population (f.i. in the province of Kovno the Jews numbered in 1897 13.8%, and according to Russian statistics of 1910 16%, while in 1916 they numbered only 5.4%).

### The Jewish emigration during the war.

During the war, instead of emigrating over the seas, they removed in masses to Russia, at first under the force of military considerations, and then of their own accord, in consequence of the abolition of the "line of settlement" in 1915. At present the number of Jews in Polish provinces certainly does not exceed the figures of 1897, perhaps it is even smaller.

It is also probable that the number of the Jewish population in Galicia, the percentage of which was since 1890 slowly diminishing, decreased to such an extent in consequence of the considerable emigration to other Austrian countries during war-time, that it has not increased since 1910. From 1881 to 1910 the number of Jews that emigrated from Galicia to the United States was 236,504. Besides this they emigrated to other countries, especially to Vienna, Ostrava in Moravia and to Budapest.

In the same degree as in the preceding decades the Jews in the Polish provinces under German rule must have been diminishing in number since 1910, so that most probably they number only about 52,000.

On the whole it has been scientifically proved that *at present* (1919) the real number of Jews in Polish territories is the same as in 1897 (relatively in 1910) and that their percentage is smaller. They are distributed as follows:

In the Polish provinces of Prussia . . . . .	52,000
"    "    "    "    Austria . . . . .	884,000
In the Kingdom of Poland . . . . .	1,430,000
In the other Russian provinces belonging	
formerly to Poland . . . . .	2,620,000
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Total . . . . .	4,986,000

Of this number there are on the area claimed by the Polish State 3,520,000.

## 2. WHAT IS THE JEWS' OCCUPATION?

### **Jews in town and country.**

Conforming to the Russian law the Jews were only exceptionally allowed to dwell in the country; thus in Poland we find 13.5% Jews living in the country, representing 2.7% of its rural population and 86.5% had returned to the towns, representing 38% of their inhabitants. In the two largest towns: Warsaw and Łódź 24% of the total number were Jews. However, the same state of things manifested itself in Galicia, though there was no restriction whatever as to their settlement, and the Jews had lived there for centuries; they only numbered 5% of the rural population and 34% in the towns.

### **Ghetto.**

In bygone times, in Western Europe the Jews were ordered by the State authorities to dwell in a separate Jewish quarter, the so called Ghetto; however, nowadays they themselves do not want to leave the ghettos; they even organize new ones, as f.i. in New York. This proves that the creation of concentrated quarters of religious and social life emanates from a deeply rooted need of the Jews and is not a consequence of oppression.

### **Professions.**

The statistics of professions afford the best basis for the economic situation and the social part, played by the Jews on the Polish territories. As for their professions, the census of 1897 in Russia and the computations of 1910 in Austria give the following picture of it:

Jews professionally occupied	in Russia	in Galicia
In agriculture . . . . .	3.55%	14 %
In industry . . . . .	35.43%	24 %
In transportation . . . . .	3.18%	4.1%
In trade . . . . .	38.65%	46.3%
In domestic service . . . . .	6.61%	3.8%
In official and free professions . . . . .	5.22%	4.9%
Without particular occupation . . . . .	5.49%	7.5%
In military service . . . . .	1.07%	0.9%

**In Congress Poland.**

The conditions of the professional existence of the Jews in Poland differ but little from the conditions of the Russian Jews generally. They are less numerous in agriculture (2.33%), more numerous in domestic service (8.1%), the same being the case in official positions and free professions, and still more numerous are those without a concrete occupation (6.56%). The difference, on the contrary, is so much greater, if we compare the Russian and the Galician Jews. Many of the latter are occupied in agriculture (as proprietors of estates, as tenants, as foresters and wood cutters in the great forest enterprises); a considerably smaller number make their living in industry and domestic service, while a greater number of them are without a definite occupation (mostly living from occasional trade enterprises, as well as from public charity).

### **Jews in agriculture.**

Of the 18,987 Galician Jews working independently in agriculture 533 were great landowners, possessing 301,619 hectares of land, and about 2,000 tenants of smaller and larger estates, the rest of the Jewish farmers having only taken up agriculture accidentally. In the Kingdom of Poland only 2,509 Jewish families were making their living on the land, on an area of 13,500 hectares.

### **Jews in industry.**

In the industry of the Kingdom of Poland and of other Polish territories, the part played by Jews is very prominent. We find them mostly as simple artisans, some of them employing assistants. Of the 500,986 persons working in industry (as counted in the JCA inquiry) 259,396 were maskers, 140,598 workmen and 101,062 apprentices, besides 46,313 industrial workmen. The Jews are working chiefly in the clothing line (tailoring, shoemaking), which embraces 45.5% of all Jews working industrially. Next come the Jews who make their living in the provision line (8.7%), such as bakers, butchers, pastry cooks, 8% are in timber yards, 7.8% in tin factories and 6.5% in textile industries. In comparison with factories the handicraft is overcrowded with Jews; in the clothing industry there are 51.4% of Jews in the paper and polygraphic industry 59%, in the tobacco industry 74%. Their handicraft has favorable conditions of development in those parts of Poland, which are economically behindhand and in distant Ruthenian provinces, at the fairs and on markets. Often hand in hand with the handicraft goes factoring with retail trade.

The statistics of 1897 show that:

*In Congress Poland* the Jews possessed 1,416 or 33.6% factories with 43,011 or 17.5% workmen.

*In Lithuania and White Ruthenia* 1,402 or 51% factories with 30,105 or 58% workmen.

*In Ruthenia* 913 or 34% factories with 23,969 or 27% workmen.

In Poland the greatest part of these enterprises are private concerns, and employ people working in their homes; the small percentage of Jews among the industrial workmen finds explanation in the observing of their sabbaths, and in their revolutionary disposition (frequent strikes).

In Galicia 43% of the industrial Jews were occupied in the making of clothes, 21% in the manufacture of provisions, 8%, in the timber trade, 6% in metal industry, 6% in the building industry, 4% in paper industry. In this country handicraft also occupies the largest part of the Jewish population, and it is highly subdivided (43% independent workers, 34% workmen, 9% apprentices), and does not enjoy any favorable reputation, even in the opinion of Zionists, because of its lack of professional efficiency among the workers. If we remember also that they are opposed to using various new arrangements for improving the handicraft and against co-operative associations, we shall understand that the situation of these workers is getting gradually less and less satisfactory.

#### **Jews in trade.**

However the main domain of their social occupation is trade; in Russia nearly half (46%) of the Jews make their living in commerce, trading in agricultural products, in corn and cattle, a fifth of them carry on trade in all sort of articles.

In Congress Poland we find them especially in the corn trade, in leather and fur trade (93-94% of all merchants occupied in these branches), in the cattle trade, dairy produce, building materials, machines and sale of spirits (the percentage of Jews varies between 80% and 90%). Of special importance is the part they play as intermediaries between Poland's industry and that of European and Asiatic Russia. In Galicia the Jews occupied in trade in 1910 numbered 150,660, 80% of which negotiating in merchandise, 18.7% being licensed innkeepers and the rest money-lenders. In the whole of the Galician merchandise-commerce there were 87% Jews and among licensed innkeepers 76%. The Jewish monetary commerce had often the traits of credit-co-operatives (advance-banks, like the Schultze Delitsch system); the members of these institutes are peasants, but the proprietors Jewish families who hold all the places in the offices. There were in Galicia in 1912 as many as 912 of these credit banks.

As to the free professions the Galician statistics before the war show that of 1531 lawyers 984 were Jews (68%) and of 1,464 physicians 411 were Jews (30%). This shows very unhealthy social



conditions. Not less numerous are the Jews represented as lawyers in Russia; in the Odessa law district there were before the war 49% Jewish lawyers and in Poland and Lithuania 34%.

The characteristic feature of Jewish commerce is the inadequateness of capital and the operation with credit, this state of things, often bringing about an unavoidable rise in prices and, on the other side; frequent bankruptcies. A further mark of their commerce is a considerable scattering, which leads to a very keen competition and makes it difficult for the workers to make their living, in spite of their professional efficiency, and an unusual capacity of adapting themselves to the economic conditions.

#### **General characteristics of the distribution of professional Jews.**

On the whole the Jews occupy themselves professionally in quite other ways than the Christian population; their professional differentiation is not sufficient, constituting one class which corresponds with the towns, being too numerous with regard to the economic development of the whole population in the country. In consequence, though very numerous, the Jews do not represent a full and independent social and economic body, but depend entirely upon the still more numerous Christian population surrounding them, and chiefly upon whether this population is producing and consuming enough to give so numerous a trading people a chance to earn their living, and lastly upon whether this population is not adverse to economic relations with them.

### 3. GENERAL ASPECT OF RELATIONSHIP OF THE JEWS

#### WITH THE POLISH SOCIETY.

#### **Western and Eastern or so-called Polish Jews.**

Contrary to the West-European Jews, those in Poland do not try even superficially to assimilate in a cultural way with the Polish population, so that, to define this difference, they were lately called "Eastern Jews" (Ostjuden) instead as heretofore "Polish Jews".

They have many deep-rooted characteristics, as it has been stated by several Jewish authors, especially the German scientist W. Sombart with whom we agree in the following remarks:

The religion based upon an agreement between Iehowa and the Israelites as a chosen nation, and a strict observation of numerous rules and prohibitions arouse in the Jews a sense of superiority, and of their secreation from all non-Jews or strangers, "goiim". Led by laws of their own and a different morality, prescribed by their holy books, the Jews sever themselves and do not allow the Christians to participate really in their life, hiding themselves as in ancient times in ghettos. Contrary to this, however, an insignificant part of them, those with progressive tendencies, try eagerly and sometimes, it may be said, in an intruding way to obtain a part and influence in the social life.

### **Orthodox and Khassid Jews.**

The study of their religion is the sole object among the orthodox Jews. In their childhood they are taught in the "khedarim", or primary schools. This religion codified in a series of theologic and juristic books which form a chain of supplements and commentaries to the "Torah", or the pentateuch of Moses, as the only subject being taught to children in the schools, called "khedarim". At a more advanced age they study religion in the Talmud Torah schools, or privately if they have the means for it.

The mass of Polish Jews is composed of orthodox, but a considerable percentage are the so called "eager Jews" or Khassidim who play a great part in many Jewish settlements.

### **Their appearance.**

Apart from their physical traits (anthropologic) they can be recognized much easier by their distinct national dress and distinctive cut of beard and hair, for they remain faithful to these customs obstinately for religious reasons, and contrary to the local public opinion, demanding a long time observation of the generally European customs in this respect. They decide upon their chance only when emigrating from the Polish territories in order to facilitate their earnings.

### **Their language.**

The Jewish idiom used amongst them in Poland is a German dialect with addition of Hebrew and Slavonic words (Yiddish), and is mostly written in the Hebrew alphabet. Among educated Jews living near the western frontier of Poland and in Germany they speak German, the Yiddish is being used only in Slavonic, Romanic and Anglo-Saxon countries. In the last decades this dialect, which is divided in three main parts (Polish, Lithuanian and South Ruthenian), becomes gradually a literary language, used by a large number of newspapers, journals and theatres. Moreover there is a Jewish literary movement in the German, Russian, Hebrew and Polish languages.

### **Their part in economic life.**

In strict connection with these national traits is their part in economic life. Scattered as they are over the whole territory, they have the best opportunities to intermediate in trade. Thanks to the contact with other Jews and to their dialect which, incomprehensible for the local population, ensures them in commercial relations considerable benefits, and facilitates their commercial relations with the neighboring countries, the Jews are able to overflow the Polish provinces with products of German and Austrian industry, hampering in a great degree the development of industry in Poland, and at the same time preventing cultural progress there.

The Jews are typical representatives of the capitalistic spirit i.e. of an unbounded and unrestricted covetousness for money. They busy themselves mainly in undertakings in which invention and cunning have a fairer play than capital and physical work, and render to others all sorts of services, as honorable as that of physicians, and as dishonorable as that of the white slave trade. The intermediation in commerce as well as in reporting or in journalism belongs, in fact, to the category of services they render.

### **The antagonism between Jews and the local population.**

Being quite strange in society, they can employ so much easier all unscrupulous means of dealing in relations with the economically weaker population.

Without giving here detailed proofs it is sufficient to call to memory the agricultural strike of 1902 in Eastern Galicia, which was due to Jewish abuse; more than 3/4 of the farms affected by this strike were in the hands of the Jews, either their property or rented by them. The agricultural disturbances which took place in Roumania in 1907 were also caused by the Jewish abuse of the peasants.

This is bound consequently to stir up an animosity and contention, though free of any racial hostility, a contention which can be compared with the antagonism between masters and workmen.

The antagonism we notice between the Christian population and the Jews in Poland is chiefly visible on the part of little landowners and commercial intermediaries.

The producer and the consumer look upon the intermediary in an unfriendly spirit, especially in money affairs, for the mediaeval opinion: "mercator sine peccamine vix esse potest" finds as well in these times many followers. In Poland, it must be stated, the Jewish agents affirm only too often by their dealings the above mentioned sentence. The credit banks which, as alluded to, even in small towns are very numerous, serve as intermediaries in obtaining loans with a benefit of 8 to 9%, usually however raised by additional fees to 10-11%, and with such guarantees that there is no risk whatever, while they themselves only pay 5-6%. Just as unhealthy are the conditions created by the Jews in the merchandise trade, where bankruptcies are very frequent, and fraudulent bankruptcies are not at all exceptional.

The law statistics show that there are whole series of offences committed more often by the Jews than by the Polish population, viz. usury, imposture, concealment of stolen goods, horse-stealing, fraud in alimentary provisions, false coinage, bribery of functionaries, false bankruptcy, etc.

#### 4. THE POLITICAL ATTITUDE OF THE JEWS.

### **Assimilation as basis of Jewish politics.**

The Jews political attitude depends entirely on their sense of estrangement and the defense of their interests. In politics they are no more divided than in professional matters. Formerly, ten or twenty years ago, the wide masses in Galicia as well as in the Kingdom, indifferent to the political questions and national matters, were under the influence of the so-called assimilators, i.e. that group of the Jewish intelligent class which, partly without personal interest, led by their conviction, partly in order to gain importance in the country, was fostering friendly relations with the political circles, acknowledging the political and economical solidarity of Jews with the Polish nation, and ready, up to a certain point, to oppose themselves together with the Poles, to the Austrian and Russian governments. These assimilators had the lead in Israelitic communities, in the "kahals", and in Galicia they also obtained mandates in the Viennese parliament and the Lemberg diet, held posts in the chambers of commerce, and had influence in other social institutions.

### **Nationalism.**

The first Russian revolution and universal suffrage law of the Vienna parliament had the effect that the nationalistic currents, long developing, came to an open conflict against the assimilators, and soon gained the upper hand, so that the political organizations of past times lost their influence, at least temporarily, and the number of Jew-Poles, or Poles of Jewish confession, diminished to an insignificant number.

### **The "Litwaks."**

Apart from the strong Zionist current from the West, an important part in the political evolution of the Jews was played by the "Litwaks", Jews from the western Russian provinces, who began to transfer their homes to Poland about 1890, coming either direct from these provinces or from Russia proper, from where they had been expelled. These Litwaks have taken the attitude of entire strangers, and created in Poland a Jewish press, were at first the chief representatives of the Jewish national movement. Thanks to their brutal, aggressive ways, they won for their cause by and by, the masses of local Jews.

The language of the Litwaks is a German-Jewish dialect, however in external relations they prefer the use of the Russian language to the Polish language; as to cultural and political aims, they took also from the very first a hostile attitude, favorable to the Russian State's unity, which seemed important to the Jews' welfare, they were opposed to every movement of independence, and this obviously was in the highest degree distasteful to the Poles.

### **The Jews' radicalism.**

Another characteristic trait of the Jews in politics is their radicalism approaching the limits of social revolution. This is the consequence of their heated temperament and their inclination towards analysis and criticism. All their political dealings are now more or less radical. Apart from the official Zionism, which is democratic and progressive, there is in Poland a Zionist Democratic party as well as a Zionist-socialist party (Poale Zion). There is also an ultra-radical People's Party and a Jewish socialist party, the "Bund", of international tendencies. Identical political organizations exist in Galicia and in Lithuania.

### **The Jews' influence in Polish political circles.**

The Jews' activity is so great that they inoculate with their radicalism the Polish and the Russian people, even to overwhelming them with it. It is well known that international socialism has been created by Jews, and that they are its most ardent propagandists. Not only did they play the well known part of a spiritus movens in the Bolshevist revolution {NOTE: *At the beginning of 1919, 80% of all the higher official positions in Bolshevist Russia were occupied by Jews, who mostly hide themselves under Slavonic pseudonyms.*}, but it is sufficient to point out the fact that the Jews exercised a predominant influence in the Social-Democratic party of Poland and Lithuania, and were of great importance in both sections of the Polish Socialist party and in similar organizations in Galicia. In the revolutionary movement on the Vistula in the years 1905 and 1906 they took the leadership, and this movement greatly endangered Poland's industry, brought it to the verge of ruin, exposing the Polish working people to many sanguinary pogroms on the part of the Russian government. It is a striking fact that while rendering to their political designs a nationalistic character, they were at the same time anxious to develop an intense international and revolutionary propaganda among other societies, in order to weaken by internal dissensions the nations who shelter them.

## 5. THE JEWS IN ECONOMIC AND POLITIC LIFE

### DURING THE WAR

#### **The Jews and the war.**

We must devote a special chapter to the part the Jews were playing in Poland in the economic and politic existence of the country during the war. Unusually daring and active in business, they profited enormously in supplies for the armies of all the countries who were engaged in warfare. Thus it is obvious that among the Polish population the Jews, who had such a preponderance in trade there, were the people who pocketed the greatest benefits.

#### **The Jews in the war economy of Austria-Hungary.**

However, special notice must be taken of the part the Jews played in the war economy of Austria-Hungary, that is in Galicia and in that part of the Kingdom of Poland which since 1915 remained under Austrian occupation. Following the German example, Austria established a whole series of central stores, to regulate the production and consumption of alimentary goods and other merchandise. In the management of these stores, which were being organized in a most unsatisfactory way, the Jews were the decisive spirit. The same was the case in all branches of the military intendancies, as also in the military administration of the southern provinces of the Kingdom. Maximum prices were introduced there, but while there were low estimates for rural products, the prices for the industrial manufactures were either enormously high or they did not exist at all. The increase of prices was also due to speculation and barter trade. Besides, now and again, to raise the prices, the merchants made the goods disappear from the market and hid them in secret stores.

One of the favorite operations of the Jews consisted in an unlawful exportation of alimentary articles to Germany on a large scale, most injurious to the population, which, through requisitions of the authorities and of the army, was already deprived of provisions.

It may easily be imagined what a chance was given, under these circumstances, to all kind of agents and speculators, under the cover of unbridled soldiery, owing to the proverbial indolence of the Austrian administration and the renowned Jewish solidarity. The whole period of the war was simply nothing but an orgy of abuse, swindles and offence against the population and the welfare of the State.

### **The Jews' political standpoint.**

In no smaller degree did the Polish population feel the Jew's political attitude. The generality of Jews manifested their loyal standpoint towards the Central Powers, in the territories of the said powers as well as in the occupied area. This was natural on their part, and in harmony with their unusually strongly developed sense of self-preservation. However, they went far beyond this; foreseeing Germany's victory, and founding upon it a brilliant future for themselves, the Jews flagrantly displayed, on every occasion, their ardent patriotism and their boundless devotion to the Central Powers. They forced themselves upon their military authorities, as informing agents and interpreters, distinguished themselves in unscrupulous requisitions of metals, food, etc. and obtaining appointments, rendered services to the censorship, political intelligence and espionage. In hundreds of books and pamphlets, in thousands of articles they represented themselves as a vanguard of Germanism in political, cultural and economic aspect, pointing out their dialect, and offering to the Germans and Austrians their assistance in the exploitation of Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine. {NOTE: *We mention here especially the publications of Fr. Oppenheimer, Max Rosenfeld, Mathias Mises, Davis Trietsch, S. M. Melamed, M. J. Bodmer, I. Kreppel, R. Kittel, F. Perles and a collective work entitled "Ostjuden", published in the Süddeutsche Monatshefte 1916.*}

### **Denunciations and the Jewish military service.**

Moreover they were impeaching the Poles publicly in the papers, reproaching them their lack of patriotism with regard to Austria, and denouncing by anonymous letters prominent men to the military authorities, exposing the whole country to chicanery, and hundreds and thousands of people to investigations, trials and executions. By such patriotic zeal they tried to escape from military service, systematically either swindling themselves out of it, or taking up positions in the service at the rear, where they had frequent opportunity of clandestine earnings. Obviously this occurred to the detriment of the Christian population, who consequently were forced to take a greater part in the service at the front and were killed in great numbers. As a matter of course all this led to a much greater embitterment of the Polish population against the Jews.



## **The Jews and the Polish State.**

With regard to the creation of the Polish State the majority of Jews took a cool, passive and indifferent attitude; a small part of them declared their satisfaction and readiness for participation in public affairs, while a very considerable part, exceedingly radical in their social views, active in politics and well organized, (this means the most important part, composed of the Bund, Poale-Zion, the Social-Democracy of the Kingdom and Lithuania, the People's Party), did not refrain from showing their animosity, and even their hatred in newspapers and at meetings, shouting and demonstrating against the Polish army, the Polish white eagle, the symbol of the State, and even against the State itself. There were even cases where they attacked the Polish soldiers and tried to disarm them, by force. These happenings were mainly in the Kingdom; but in Galicia the authorities also discovered at Cracow in February 1919 a Jewish plot, a secret military organization, which probably had its branches in the provinces.

The Bolshevist or communist agitation in Poland is being led almost exclusively by Jews, partly by those who immigrated from Russia, partly by native Jews, as may be seen from the number of people arrested, and the many reports in the papers. Fortunately the hostile attitude of the Jews, increasing day by day during the war, has awakened the attention of all classes of Polish society to such an extent, that their action does not bear any fruits, and the Polish laboring class is not likely to be inspired to action against the resuscitated Polish State and other social classes.

## **Jewish anti-Polonism.**

At any rate we may speak with more truth about Jewish anti-Polonism than about Polish anti-Semitism, which is not an aggressive movement displaying itself in consequent deeds, but merely a psychic reaction against damages suffered by the Polish nation from their part.

In recent times the relationship between the Jews and Poles has taken an inopportune aspect, however we do not believe that a pessimistic view ought to prevail about the mutual relations of the two societies in the future. Apart from the nationalistic movement, great influence in this matter has manifested itself through the unhealthy atmosphere caused by the war, in particular by the extravagant pro-Germanism, and still more by the unhealthy revolutionary breeze of Bolshevist contagion.

In peace-time the Jews will quickly make friends with a strong Polish State, where their existence will be a great deal better than in Russia, as they are in reality a sober-minded race, inclined to look at things from a practical point of view. A certain guarantee of a future peaceful relationship may be seen in the circumstance that the Poles did not let themselves be instigated by the inopportune and insolent attitude of the Jews, and did not lose their temper.

## 6. THE QUESTION OF THE SO-CALLED POGROMS

### IN GALICIA.

After Austria's collapse in November 1918, vexacious events took place in Galicia, which were described by the press as enormous Jewish pogroms; some people endeavored to see in this a proof for the assertion that the Poles are incapable and unworthy of an independent State existence, because their first steps were an outbreak of racial hatred.

What happened in reality?

#### **The Poles and the Jewish pogroms.**

Undoubtedly, since the first Russian revolution, the Jews were impairing their relations with the Poles, which especially during the war were getting worse. However even so great an embitterment would not have made the Poles lose self-possession. Their sense of justice as well as their human feelings strongly disapprove such methods of struggle as pogroms, the best proof of this being that there had never been any pogrom at all, or even serious riots, in Poland. In Russia in 1905, in the provinces to the East of Congress Poland about 690 pogroms took place, while in the Kingdom there were but five, all organized by Russian influence, especially by soldiers, while in Galicia at that period no pogrom whatever occurred. It deserves to be pointed out that the greatest of these pogroms in Poland, and the only great pogrom, organized at Siedlce by the Russian authorities, brought about the death of only 145 Jews, and not of 6 thousand, i.e. half of the local Jewish population, as was maintained by Jewish publicists ("Die Judenpogrome in Russland", published on behalf of the Zionistic aid fund in London, Leipzig, 1910, 2 volumes, and Abraham Grünberg: "Ein jüdisch-polnisch-russisches Jubileum. Der grosse Pogrom von Siedlce im Jahre 1906" Prag, 1916). The dimensions of this pogrom were restricted, thanks to an energetic defense on the part of the Polish clergy and population, on which occasion some Poles lost their lives. Prominent

representatives of the Galician Jews ascertained publicly that there was no case where a pogrom would have been instigated and executed by the Polish population. In the pogroms which occurred in White Ruthenia and Ukraine the Poles were often seen giving shelter to Jews in their homes.

### **Exaggeration in the description of the pogroms.**

The news of the aforesaid events have been enormously exaggerated for two reasons: 1, in consequence of a natural tendency toward exaggeration on the part of reporters, especially frequent in Jewish journalistic quarters, and 2, of a well planned Jewish method of raising a tremendous row, as a sure means of defense against imminent injury. More than once Jewish newspapers in Poland deemed it their duty to rectify some of the too flagrant falsehoods. Among these false reports was the impeachment of the Polish militia for having taken part in a robbery, the statement about the murder of Jews in Brzesko, though no harm has been done to them, the imaginary pogrom of Jews in Posen, during a street fight with the Germans, though only one Jew was hurt, lastly a suspicious letter of an eminent Jewish leader; Tobiasz Aszkenazy of Lwów (Lemberg), concerning other pogroms which were supposed to take place in the beginning of January 1919. However the foreign press did not follow their example in this respect.

### **The real cause of these troubles.**

The description of these events was wrong for this reason, because it represented the Jews as a mercilessly and inhumanly persecuted race, without any due cause or offense, merely in consequence of racial hostility. The Jews are generally unfit for self-criticism, and all attempts of criticism from other sides they take as an offence to their race and confession. Never has any notice been taken in these reports of the occasional most self-sacrificing defense, brought up for the Jews by the local police; on the other side they did not refrain from reproaching the Catholic clergy for not being energetic enough in their defense. It may be mentioned here that during the war the authorities and public opinion were severely condemning the Jews' usury in their trading of goods, but few rabbis openly admitted the blame of it, and even then in a weak and ineffective way.

### **Political tendency of the Jews in their anti-Polish campaign.**

Stress must be laid here on the fact that the Jews did not raise such a noisy alarm about the anti-Jewish troubles, not less numerous, and great uproars, having taken place about the same time in Tcheck [Czech], Hungarian, South Slavonic and Ukrainian territories, which permits us to suppose that, to draw public attention to the riots in Poland, they had a distinct aim, that of depriving Poland of the sympathy of civilized countries, and of preparing the ground for setting forth political demands.

If we take into account the scenes and the circumstances under which these riots occurred in Galicia, we must even be astonished that the rioting did not take larger dimensions and was so quickly suppressed.

### **No pogroms but riots.**

As a matter of fact there were no pogroms in Galicia, that is to say, no systematically organized massacres and robberies carried out with the aid of an indifferent attitude, or even of a co-ordinate action of the police authorities, as was the case in Russia; all that occurred there were comparatively insignificant riots, which would often break out very suddenly.

### **General misery.**

In Poland and mainly in Galicia there was after 4 1/2 years of warfare general misery, brought about by a lack of the most necessary articles, by a terrible speculation in trade and by the rapid decline in the value of money.

### **Wild demobilization.**

The falling to pieces of the army and the political downfall in Austria-Hungary were so sudden and so thorough, that for a time complete chaos reigned all over the country, attended by a lack of military force and executive authority.

The demobilization was taking place in a frenzied way, hundred thousands of soldiers were hurrying home by rail and other conveniences, in all directions and in utmost disorder.

### **Spontaneous return of prisoners of war.**

At the same time innumerable crowds of German and Austrian prisoners from Russia, and on the other hand Russian war prisoners from the Central Powers spontaneously began to return home. For several weeks Poland became the scene of a wild migration of nations. These hungry and freezing masses were stealing and robbing on their way, while, as usual under such conditions, all sorts of hooligans, and also gangs of Austrian deserters, already formed since the spring of 1918 and hiding in woods ("green brigades") and suburbs, were terrorizing the countryside.

### **No distinction made between Jews and Christians.**

Inns, containing spirits, were ransacked, as well as shops with victuals and clothing, military warehouses and occasionally also private houses, not only belonging to well-to-do people, but also those of peasants, priests, etc. No distinction was made between shops, whether Christian or Jewish; even co-operative shops with articles of food were robbed, as f.i. at Jaworzno near Cracow. As however, in Polish cities, chiefly in the smaller ones, 90% of the trade is in Jewish hands, it naturally follows that the Jews were the main losers. In the attempts to find secret stocks of victuals and clothing (whose existence had been more than once confirmed by official inquest), it often happened that Jewish houses had to suffer. {NOTE: Here it may be stated that in Warsaw, until the middle of March 1919, the Polish authorities discovered 255 secret warehouses, of which 218 belonged to Jews.}

### **Chiefly, material losses; loss of life exceptional.**

The losses incurred were chiefly material; loss of life occurred only exceptionally, where the Jews undertook a regular fight with the armed gangs of robbers. Altogether a few score of lives have been lost, Jews and Christians, mostly among the militia which had to fight these highwaymen.

### **The action of the new Polish authorities.**

The Polish authorities, speedily organized, undertook an energetic action against all this disorder, and they were helped by influential landlords, by the Catholic clergy and by the quickly developing militia, as well as by army volunteer forces, while the proclamation of martial law also proved of great assistance. The result of all this action was an immediate pacification of the country, as confirmed also by the Jewish press, expressing their thanks to the Polish authorities. To foretell and prevent, these disturbances was impossible, as they appeared unexpectedly; at the very moment of the political turmoil.

### **The general view.**

Considering the terror caused by the wild demobilization, the destruction of the country, the starving masses of people, the continuous threat of unrest, due to the great number of unemployed workmen, the attempts of bolshevist agitation and the ransacking by marauders, it must be stated that the first beginnings of Polish life have stood a good test of self-control, and that the Polish nation has shown much authority, culture, and organizing ability, certainly deserving approval, rather than meeting with reproaches of having a barbarous pogrom policy.

### **The disturbances of Lwów (Lemberg).**

Special attention must be paid to the question of the pogrom at Lwów, whose importance has been so much exaggerated in the press of Western Europe. From the first of November until the 22nd of that month, Lwów was the scene of very serious fights between the Poles and the Ukrainians.

### **The Jews as a fighting party.**

While the bulk of the Jews, so far, went together with the Poles in politics, part of them now declared themselves neutral, and formed their own militia which often infringed the rules of neutrality, while another part adhered openly to the Ukrainians, fighting against the Poles.

### **Particulars of the disturbances.**

Before being forced out of the town, the Ukrainians set at liberty several hundred criminals from the local prisons, who, together with the hungry rabble of the town and its suburbs, and with numerous deserters, started robbing and murdering in the Jewish quarters, taking advantage of the temporary anarchy, which followed the last struggles in the streets, intended to force the Ukrainians out of the town. About 50 houses were set on fire then, not 300 as published by Jewish papers! It is equally not true that a number of Jews, enclosed in the synagogue, were burnt with the latter. Christian shops were also not spared.

### **Reaction on the part of Polish authorities.**

By virtue of martial law, introduced within 48 hours after the beginning of the disturbances, more than a thousand people were arrested and between one and two hundred were shot. The Polish government thereafter delegated an investigating commission, consisting of Christians and Jews, to report on the whole matter. This commission came to the conclusion that it would have been practically impossible to master the plundering mob, as there was no authority, responsible for security in the town, whose situation was by no means settled.

The whole list of killed and wounded among the population at Lwów amounted to 3,000, of which, as officially stated, only 262, or about 12%, were Jews, although they represent nearly 30% of the inhabitants. The Jewish committee of assistance for the victims of the Lwów disorders could register only 73 killed.

The number of victims of the pogrom, as stated by the Jewish press, was made to comprise also those Jews who during the fights died a natural death and could not be buried, owing to the inaccessibility of the Jewish cemetery. Their number was relatively considerable, as influenza was just then raging in the city.

### **The opinion of Christian journalists from Western Europe.**

It must be stated that among the numerous foreign Christian journalists who have come to Poland soon after these disturbances, to investigate them, no one has found either the Polish people, or the government guilty. Soon also, some more reasonable elements among the Polish Jews have understood that such indiscriminate and undeserved charges against the Polish nation must necessarily have fatal consequences for the future common life of Jews and Poles, and have therefore undertaken the measures necessary to stop this anti-Polish campaign of the Jewish press.

## III. — THE FUTURE SITUATION OF THE JEWS IN POLAND

### 1. POLITICAL CLAIMS OF THE JEWS.

#### **Jews in political life.**

At all times and everywhere, since their so-called “diaspora” the Jews considered themselves as guests, so to say; watching for their seclusion, they were really only half-citizens, though often privileged ones. During the second half of the 19th century they obtained in all European states, except Russia, full rights of citizenship and of participation in public life, on a level with the remaining population, but, so far, they have claimed nowhere to be recognized as a separate nation.

#### **Present political claims of the Jews.**

At present they claim not only the formation of a Jewish state in Palestine, to remain under international control (the main program of the Zionists), but also 1) full rights of citizens, equal to



those of the remaining population in Poland, and besides this, 2) special rights as a national minority, having its own administration with the recognition of the Jewish language in all branches of public life; consequently in the administration of the country, in the schools, in the courts of justice, in the Diet and in the army. In principle, all the Jewish political parties in Poland have accepted this common political and national program.

### **National autonomy.**

The national Jewish autonomy, according to this program, shall be based on the Jewish national community, besides a provincial organization and one for the whole country, taking the shape of a Jewish national council, acting as legislative and executive authority for all cultural and partly economical questions, entitled also to levy taxes. All their political parties agree in claiming their own separate system of schools, but their points of view diverge considerably as to the language to be used in these schools, some being in favor of Hebrew, some preferring Polish, or the German-Jewish dialect (Yiddish); similarly there are divergences as to the choice between lay and confessional schools, and also as to whether they shall be supported by the Polish state or by a Jewish national organization. Some of the political parties want a national census, and special Jewish representation at the diet, in all social corporations, and a proportional share in all State offices.

### **Character of the Jewish claims.**

The claims of the Jews are based only on their number and on their strong feeling of common interests; they are in no way connected with a certain territory within Poland, but they embrace the whole country. These claims tend to create "a State in the State", a foreign Jewish State within the Polish State, to saturate the whole organism of the latter with quite an independent national Jewish organization, limiting thus its functions and reducing it to a sham State only, quite contrary to the predominating modern tendency towards widening and strengthening the sphere of activity of the State. In reality the Jews have always formed and form now a separate community, but now they want to legalize their seclusion and to safeguard its development in the future; they want to become, not simply citizens of the Polish State, but citizens of a Jewish State, situated within Poland.

These claims, due to a middle age conception of the State, have in fact nothing to do with the great principles of Justice or democracy, and their realization would mean an injustice to the Polish people and a very nice reward for its hospitality and tolerance shown to the Jews in the past!

### **Why Poland cannot consent to a national autonomy.**

Poland cannot give up the chance of creating a modern State, similar to other civilized states, existing at present, and cannot therefore let the Jews have more rights than have immigrants in the most liberal countries, as the United States, Great Britain, Switzerland or France, who have so many immigrants {NOTE: *In 1910 New York State had 1,603,000 Jews among a total population of 10,647,000, or 16% nearly, consequently even more than Poland. Are the Jews going to put forward here the same political claims as in Poland? It would decidedly be interesting to see how such claims would be met with in New York State!*}. Poland cannot be expected to agree to being used as experimenting ground for conjectural theories, which are simply utopian fancies; on the contrary she should be careful to treat her Jews just the same as they are treated in other countries; Poland cannot get ahead of other countries in granting the Jews special political rights, as this would probably cause an enormous Jewish immigration, highly detrimental to the welfare of both the Christian and Jewish population.

In this respect Poland must be more careful than other nations, for the Jews, as a general rule, owing to their dialect (a mutilated German) as well as to their cultural and trade relations always were champions of Germanism, while another part of them, the Litwaks, (the Jews from Lithuania) were ardent supporters of Russian rule and furthered Russian influences. Under certain conditions a Jewish national autonomy might easily lead to the most fatal consequences for the Polish State.

### **The danger of a national autonomy to the Jews.**

Even for the Jews themselves their national autonomy would prove fatal. Forming no independent community and representing practically only one social class, they cannot be self-sufficing and are bound to depend on the Polish population surrounding them, and who also greatly outnumbers them. Imposing on Poland a Jewish national autonomy would mean deepening the division between Poles and Jews, and would to a great extent render difficult for them the earning of their livelihood.

### **Obtaining full rights of citizenship and free settlement in Germany and Russia is more important for the Jews.**

First of all the Jews should obtain other and more fundamental rights, far more important than their national autonomy in Poland. The immigration into Germany should be allowed them within the same limits and on the same principles as is the case in Great Britain. Then, constitutional Russia should grant them full rights of citizenship, free settlement and the right of moving about on the whole of Russian territory in Europe and Asia. Such reasonable claims shall be strongly supported by Poland, as by the whole civilized world.

### **The difficulty of proposing special rights of a national minority to the Jews.**

Certainly a proposition enforcing on Poland to grant the Jews special rights of a national minority would be considered by the Poles as an unfriendly act and insincere proceeding, if promoted by a State whose Jews do not-enjoy the same privilege. It must also be expected that similar claims will not be put forward at the Conference by such representatives of other States, who themselves are of mosaic confession, as this would call into doubt their patriotism.

We must keep in mind that the Jews have in Poland, just as in the most liberal countries, complete autonomy in all matters connected with religion, charity and schools. Their parishes support the synagogues, praying houses, cemeteries and schools, general and professional ones, and hospitals; they are in possession of richly endowed charitable and cultural institutions and have also their own museums. They have every possibility and freedom to organize their own political, cultural and economical associations, in a word they can to a very large extent foster their own culture and nationality. No one wants to take these liberties from them, but on the other hand nobody would care to enlarge their rights.

### **Equality of rights for the Jews in Poland.**

Since 1868 the Jews have enjoyed full equality of rights in Galicia as an Austrian province, and not only in theory but in actual practice. In Galicia 13% of the civil officers, 12.8% of the persons employed in state offices, 10% of railway and other transport employers, 6.2% of the minor positions in these offices were Jews in 1900, not to speak of many other offices held by the Jews who professed Christian religion. In the middle class schools the Jews numbered 22%, or twice as many as the Christians, in relation to the total number of the population; in the higher schools 23% were Jews; in the Lemberg Diet there were in 1914 four Jewish deputies, and in the Vienna parliament — ten.

It was quite different in Russia, but here the Poles had no part in the government and were themselves just as much wronged in their rights of citizens. The Polish state will, no doubt, grant the Jews full rights of citizenship and carry through complete equality of rights. In reality the Jews already enjoy this full equality and there can be no question of persecution on behalf of their race or religion. But equality of rights cannot be made to mean the guarantee of a proportional part in all institutions and offices, as is being claimed by some political organizations of the Galician Jews. This would mean a kind of a national representative body whose further development might lead to full national autonomy. The system of proportional vote, as applied to the elections for the Diet; cannot be regarded as a precedent in this case. Although this proportional vote system practically results in the Jews actually having their representatives in the Diet, it was by no means meant to safeguard national minorities, but only political ones.

In the Warsaw Diet the Jews have at present 15 members, belonging to 4 different parties; they could have more representatives, if they were not split up in too many political parties (in Warsaw there were 8 Jewish lists of candidates, in Cracow 4).

Accordingly in return for complete equality of rights granted to the Jews, Poland must demand absolute political loyalty, sufficient knowledge of the Polish language and due respect for it; laws must be strictly observed and all obligations of good citizens fulfilled. Those who do not wish to comply with these conditions must naturally be considered as foreigners and treated accordingly.

## 2. ECONOMICAL CONDITIONS.

### **Too many Jews in Poland.**

The hard struggle for life which the great majority of the Jews in Poland are undergoing is due to their very one-sided and limited kind of occupation, and proves that their number there, is decidedly excessive, as unanimously stated by all Jewish experts and scientists who have studied their conditions of life. No country, indeed, can be expected to provide a living for one eighth of its population by retail trade alone. The strong emigration among the Polish Jews, prevailing since the end of the last century, proves that they are not inclined to change their profession, being one of the most conservative of races.

### **Jewish monopoly in trade intolerable.**

The eternal Jewish monopoly for trade was bound, at length, to come into conflict with the national tendency of the Christian population towards trade, as the number of the Poles was continuously increasing and in Russia because the latter were not admitted to any official professions. It would, indeed, prove a kind of mental deficiency, should the Polish population show no inclination or ability for trade, and should it not strive to earn its living or to better its economical situation by individual or co-operative commercial effort.

### **Natural evolution leads to development of Polish trade and industry.**

The Polish people could not forever continue to quietly look at others taking their place in certain functions, as this would cost them too dear and they have become aware that this, in the long run, would reduce them to dependence on a foreign element and cripple them economically and politically. It is not long ago that this danger became apparent and that steps were undertaken to meet it. That is why the results are not as yet very considerable, but it will be easily understood by any unbiased mind, or novice in the contest, accustomed to other economical and social conditions than those prevailing in Poland or Russia, that these efforts must continue and stress must be laid on them, as an inevitable feature of a healthy social evolution.

The Polish people have been kept back in their social development. Industry was developing slowly owing to having no government of their own and therefore enjoying no proper patronage. The Polish agriculture, except in Prussian Poland, was overcrowded, as per unit of cultivated area there were 2-3 times more people occupied than in countries such as England, France, Denmark or Germany. The quickly increasing peasantry was bound to look out for other spheres of occupation; this led to a very strong emigration, amounting to 3/4 of a million yearly, limited mainly to a certain season of the year; about 450,000 people sought work yearly in German agriculture and industry and about 180,000 went to the United States.

### **Hard conditions of life in Poland.**

Evidently a great many people settled also in the Polish cities, where they had to compete with the Jews; rendering their life very difficult. It is indeed to be regretted that struggle for life was so hard in Poland owing to the great density of population and to the unnatural conditions of life.

### **Co-operative movement.**

The great enemy of the Jews in Poland, threatening also merchants in general all over the world, is the co-operative movement among peasants and other consumers, which really has developed largely recently in the field of small credit and retail trade, in articles of food and special agriculture implements. Also inns for the peasants, kept by Christians, were beginning to spread, and serious happenings must be noted in certain Polish provinces, in the dairy and cattle trade, carried on by Poles. This movement, on the one hand, tends to diminish the number of middlemen, while, on the other, it introduces and furthers Christian middlemen on the market. It cannot be denied that this tendency towards social and economical development of the Polish nation is in a way detrimental to the Jews and therefore undesirable and disagreeable for them, but, it is inevitable. One thing is certain, however, that this competition, made to the Jews by the Poles, will be kept within limits, not only lawful, but also morally acceptable.

Moreover in these days it would be unthinkable to prevent the people or the government from patronizing these economical associations of modern times, or to expect the authorities to hamper this modern action, towards higher forms of social and economical life, although the Jews implicitly suggest restrictions of this kind. Just as Poland cannot allow the Jews to form a "State in a State", she also cannot guarantee them their position in trade and in the organization of credit, held by them up to the present time; as this would mean recurring to compulsion against her own citizens, possible perhaps in some feudal state but entirely impracticable in present conditions of life. All this, however, cannot be regarded as antisemitism or boycott, although usually called so by the Jews.

### **Means of mitigating the economical crisis for the Jews. Emigration.**

Are there any means of softening this economical crisis with regard to the Jews? Certainly there are, and among the first we must consider emigration, which already, since the end of last century has in a way regulated the economical situation of the Jews in Poland, as already shown in the chapter dealing with the number of Jews. In normal time of peace this emigration can develop very considerably, as conditions of life in Poland will not so soon cease to be hard ones. This emigration will be directed apart from the United States and England, which before the war were the chief centers for all emigrants, first of all to Russia, this great and rich country, so undeveloped yet and therefore

affording many openings of a very profitable nature, then to Germany, already well known and of such attraction to our Jews, owing to their language, being easily understood by them, and last but not least, to Palestine where they can begin to build up their own national state on a popular basis. If within some 10-20 years the percentage of Jews in Poland would decrease from 12-13% to 6-7% at least, their economical situation would be certainly greatly relieved, the high prices charged by the middlemen in trade would fall, as the number of middlemen in trade and their mutual competition would be considerably reduced.

### **General economical development of the country.**

In parallel with this, the best means to soften the economical crisis among the Jews will consist in a general economical development of Poland, promoted by the quickest possible reconstruction of the workshops and further development of industry and agriculture. This will greatly increase the turnover of trade, and therefore the possibility of earning their living as a trading people. In this connection it would be important for the Jews to stop unnecessarily slandering the Poles all the world over, and spreading mistrust in the Polish nation, also it would help their own interests if they would further Polish credit abroad, among their own co-religionists. There can be no doubt that who does harm to Poland, naturally renders more difficult her present position and hampers her future development and thereby also contributes towards making the position of the Jews in Poland worse, and bound as they are to earn their living through their relations with the local population, naturally depend on it for their welfare also. Helping the Jews alone would be an act of charity, but they are too numerous to warrant any practical results by this method.

### **Good relations with the Polish element necessary.**

A rational and permanent amelioration in the conditions of life among the Jews in Poland cannot be obtained by artificial means such as charity. It is necessary, on the contrary, that the feeling of agitation and strained relationship between the Jews and the Polish majority surrounding them should subside, and differences be smoothed and finally removed. With these conditions of normal life re-established the welfare will extend it self even to those classes of Jews who were actually deprived of it.