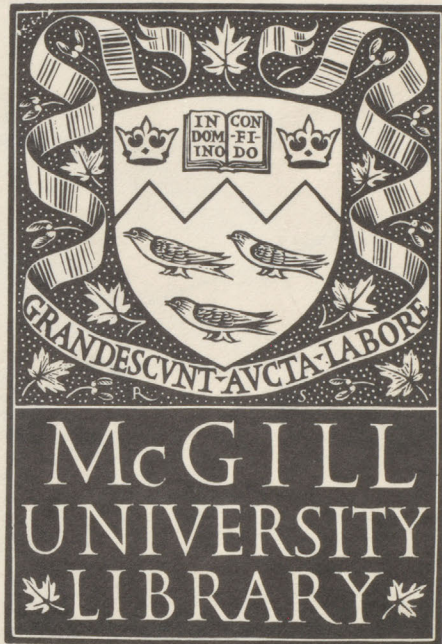


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THE LIVES OF
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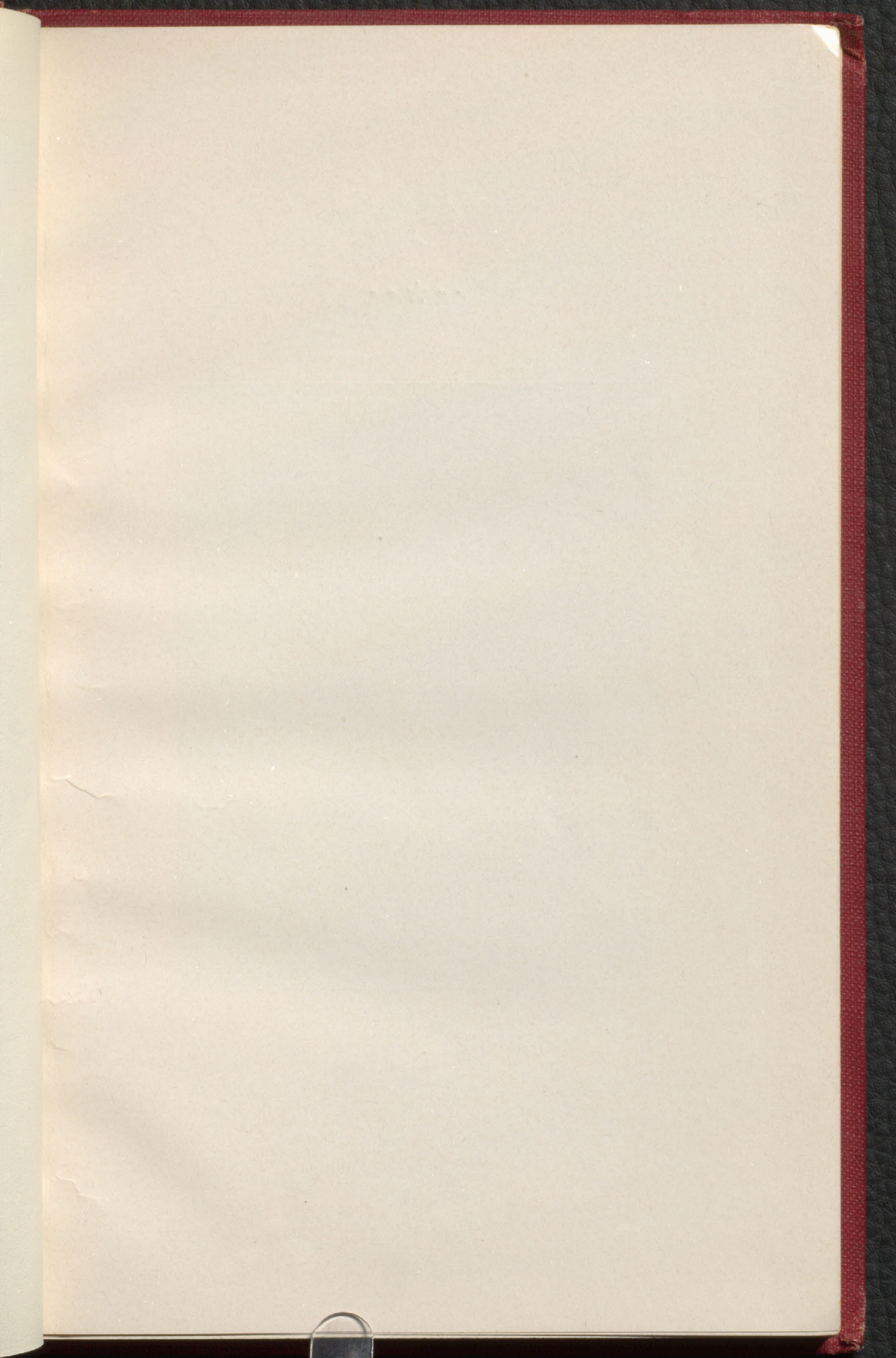
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MIRACLES of the LIVES
of
MAIER and DOBA
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To my beloved wife, Doba . . . and to my children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, numbering forty-nine. May God take care of them and prolong their lives . . . I dedicate these pages, the story of my life. As husband, father and grandfather, my wish and hope is that all of my beloved may, in years to come, read these lines, learn about their ancestors, the struggles and tribulations I had to face during all these years.

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MIRACLES of the LIVES
of
MAIER and DOBA
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To my beloved wife, Doba . . . and to my children,
grandchildren and great grandchildren, numbering
hundreds. May God take care of them and pro-
tect their lives . . . I dedicate these pages, the story
of my life, my husband, father and grandfathers,
my wife and hope, is that all of my beloved may
live long and happy lives. I have lived about
thirty-one years, the struggle and the joy, I had
to face during all these years.

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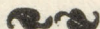
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My name is Isaac Maier, born in 1868, a week before Passover. My father's name was Mordechai, and mother's, Zeepah. The town of my birth was Steblev, on the Ukraine, State of Kiev. My mother died very young, in her thirties, when I was only seven years old.

Now, when I write my biography, I am close to 73 years of age. I look retrospectively upon the 70 years since my mother's death . . . I remember how mother, on her dying bed, pleaded with father not to foresake the three children—myself, my brother Leib and sister Chaye. I can still see her pale face, praying to God to watch over her orphans, that they may grow and become useful members of society. Those were her last words.

As a seven-year-old child, I hadn't realized the significance of my mother's death, its imprint upon brother, sister and myself. Our wise King Solomon said, "There is nothing new under the sun". And so life went on in the community and in our family; ups and downs were faced, a process that is familiar to everyone of us from time immemorial.

Our little town Steblev, I shall never forget. For it was there I was born, spent the years of my early youth—years that are still a sweet memory of streets, friends, schoolmates, dirt and all that is connected with it. (I attended Cheder—elementary religious school, for only six months.)

Father and we three children, lived quietly for awhile. Until father re-married and brought a new mother—stepmother, into the house. This was a very memorable day in my life. Everything had changed, assumed a new, very unpleasant outlook. I do not wish, however, to dwell on this new experience. The ways of a stepmother are well known, and besides, she is no more alive, and has undoubtedly been "rewarded" by Him Who watches over orphans and widows . . .

At the age of 10, the reality of life revealed itself more comprehensively, and I became aware that God helps those who help themselves. I knew I had no one to turn to for advice, nor should expect

to seek protection from evil influence to which children of my age are susceptible. My first step was to win the friendship of my step-mother, upon whose decisions depended my future existence. I also decided that I must work and earn a few cents. But what can a ten-year-old boy do? I went to the neighboring peasants, helped them in the field, assorted empty sacks and did other hard labor. At home, I had to take care of the smaller children, bring in water from the well, and go to the tea-house for hot water. I even had to sew buttons on my own clothes. But, I was independent—for from my earnings I could buy an apple or a candy, and even find time to play with my young friends.

I was liked by my friends. They even referred to me as a good boy of Motel Scholems (that was my father's name; instead of calling people by their first and second names, a man was called by his first and his father or a brother's first names. The father's name became what may be termed an adjective.) The older I grew, the more I became aware that there was no future for me in this little town; that I would never get anywhere here, especially with a step-mother over me. I compared myself with a piece of driftwood on the ocean . . . it is being thrown about by the waves, never sure that it will ever reach any destination. I was determined not to go astray, and no matter what the obstacles, I would struggle through.

After a few years of immense suffering, I decided to leave my home town. I felt within me a burning desire to do bigger things, to be useful, not only for myself but for others as well, and particularly for the future generations that would follow. One morning, I found myself hiking down the road on my way to Shpola, a neighboring city, larger and more industrial. Only 15 years old, and finding myself in a city where I knew not a single soul, I felt a fear within. At such moments, however, I always recalled the old folk song:

*"Man, no harm can you bring to me,
For God is always guiding me . . ."*

Courageously, I walked into the first wholesale and retail grocery store, and asked for work. The questions: who am I, where I come from, —lasted but a few minutes, but to me, they were like a century. Finally, I heard Mr. Chatskel Levenberg, owner of the business, say for me to come to work the next morning. I hadn't a cent to my

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name. I was hungry as a beast. But, the mere fact that I had found a place to sleep and eat—and these constituted my salary—I again thanked the Heavenly Father for His generosity. All this happened in the fall. And I had no winter clothes.

* * * *

My father was a very good-natured man, but he was not a good father. He didn't interfere in the household, and never listened to our pleas. It was only natural that we became estranged from each other. I knew, that in spite of my young age, I could not look for aid to my father. But nature ignores such incidents, and demands intercourse between father and children; and this I will relate in the coming pages of my story.

Every individual, no matter who he may be, has his problems. My father was no exception. First, my sister Chaye, a grown girl, demanded her rights and privileges in the house to which the step-mother objected. It caused my father many ordeals. By nature a man of silence, he suffered within himself, not even being able to share it with anyone. My sister married at last. This made a very unpleasant repercussion upon him. One morning, he left the house as usual, and a few days later, we were told that he was on his way to America—the land of unlimited opportunities!

It must be realized what such a step on my father's part signified. At that time, more than 60 years ago, when one left for America, he was looked upon as an outcast in the religious circles. And in those days, most of the Jewish life, particularly in the provincial towns, was religious. America to every Jew, was a land where God was forgotten, where no synagogues existed, where the dietary law (Kashruth) was not observed. My father was learned in Hebrew, and was looked upon by the Orthodox Jews as a decent, dignified man. In the business world, he enjoyed the same respect. And suddenly he leaves for America! It was hardly believable that Mordechai, or Motel, as he was called, a learned man, should commit such an unwise act. I, too, thought that the people who criticized father's action, were right. Years later, however, I changed my attitude and understood that he had no other way out. His cup of sorrow and woe was overflowing. And the only way to rid himself of this pressure, was to leave. He had undoubtedly reached an emotional crisis, and logic,

mind, had to make way . . . Remaining alone, without a father or mother, I turned for guidance and help to Him, who is the Father and Mother of all the forsaken. I sang within me a song about the man who had none to speak to, and when he noticed children walking down the street with their parents, he wept. It seems that hope had never left me, for even at such moments I was confident that following the long and dark night, dawn shall come . . .

I adjusted myself to the new conditions in Shpola. Winter approached, and I still had no warm clothes. My employers refused to give me any funds, or buy any garments to protect me from the severe cold. If God did not bequest me with riches and wealth, He did give me a good head which helped me to find a successful way to the customers whom I seemed to please. A few tips from one and another, helped a lot.

The youngest, with no one to watch over me lovingly, a sheep without a shepherd as the saying goes, I made my first blunder, which almost led to a catastrophic consequence. I became involved with a group of indecent evil boys, and almost had to face criminal prosecution. Who knows . . . sentimental as it may sound, mother must have protected me in Heaven, and miraculously I escaped prison.

I realized that the only way of being on the safe side in the future, and avoid similar retributions, was to turn to the teachings of God. As I have already related, my education was very meagre, but I recalled the little I learned—the just and divine injections—the Jewish traditions—and I knew that our Jewish foundation and basis of existence are the Ten Commandments. In our ancient books it is said that when the Angel approaches God, telling Him that he needs a soul for a new human being, God replies: "I can offer you the soul and tell you whether it will be beautiful, wise, learned or otherwise, but I cannot assure you of its honesty. This shall depend upon the human creature itself". In other words, whether one is to face life honestly, sincerely and decently, or surrender to the line of least resistance, is a matter that every one decides for himself. God compensates accordingly, and I now rejoice with happiness that I realized this in time. This, too, caused my departure for America, to join my father. But, about my journey, a little later . . .

Now, in my own way, I wish to explain what the feeling is like when one lives in observance of the Ten Commandments . . .

As it is known, the first of the Commandments commences with "Anoichi": "I am the Torah and your sacred God. Thus I insist upon you men to observe My Commandments and not to replace Me with any other God."

"You shall always remain true to the sacred teachings and have faith in Me, the Creator, for I have liberated you from bondage in Egypt.

"If you are in conflict with your religion, aim to adjust yourself to My teachings, and you will accomplish a great deal. All will respect you.

"Do not endeavor to free yourself of Me, for you will face punishment and torture.

"Do not lie, or mention My name in blasphemy. Always be thankful, and your name will be pure and immune.

"Keep the Sabbath, for this is My day of rest, and it should be yours." . . .

* * * *

My father had not forgotten us. A short time had passed and we received steamship tickets from him, for myself, brother Leib, and the step-mother with her children. The tickets were mailed to me. I put them in a safe place, by sewing them into the lining of my trousers. I took leave from my employers and new acquaintances, to see my step-mother. She received me very friendly and suggested that I turn the tickets and the other documents over to her. I refused to do so. I knew that she had her own ambitions and schemes. For, right then, she proposed that we go to my sister and take back the pillows and other domestic belongings that mother gave us before she died. My father's wife argued that these things were ours and we will need them in America. Her way of talking and her behavior, were those of a real step-mother. She even threatened me that in case I did not hand the tickets to her, and did not help her to take the pillows back from sister, she would report us to the government, saying that we were escaping the country to dodge military service.

Making her believe that I agreed to her proposition, I left the

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same day to see my sister. I told Chaye all that had occurred and prepared her for possible commotions to come. Then, bidding her farewell, I departed for the first nearby railroad station—Korsen, and took the train, on my way to the United States. It is difficult to relate the fear and anguish I experienced before we reached the Austrian border.

God again has shown His generosity by saving us from the many trials and tribulations that hundreds of others had experienced. Many were sent back by military convoy; it took months before they reached their homes again. As many others, we had no passports, and had to smuggle through the border at night . . . through byways filled with swamps and forests. And, at last, we were in Brod, the first city across the border!

But what next? We found ourselves in a strange city without a single person to turn to. Everyone looked upon us as a source of collecting revenue, trying to get out of us as much as possible, if not more . . . We left for Hamburg, the famous German port, from where we crossed the stormy Atlantic Ocean. Unbearable weeks were those we spent on the boat. None of us had the slightest idea what was in store for us. How much actual torture we had to go through! We traveled third class, on the bottom of the ship. The so-called dormitories were dirty, the beds—if one can call them beds—were close to each other. On stormy days, it was very uncomfortable in any part of the boat, particularly on the bottom. In those days, modern equipment and conveniences were not available, and only one who had actually experienced such a journey, knows what must be endured on such a voyage.

Many a day we were sure that we would never reach our destination, and that we were all doomed. I wouldn't even attempt to relate the misery we had to live through until we reached the shores of the country where millions of people found their paradise, a country to which we are thankful each day for the asylum she offered us . . .

* * * *

"Indiana", was the steamer that brought us to Philadelphia, from where we were transferred to New York. On Ellis Island, as newly arrived immigrants, we had to go through examinations, questionings and other inconvenient procedure. But, even in that isolated and very frequently dreadful place, one could feel the freedom of

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the great new land . . . Freedom and opportunity for each of us—our children—and our children's children . . .

We had to wait a few weeks before we received further transportation tickets from father, who lived on a farm near Bismarck, North Dakota. We had no idea that father could hardly make ends meet. Our road to Buffalo, and from there on a small boat through the Great Lakes to Duluth, Minnisota, a journey which today is nothing to speak of, was in those days an event of a thousand and one nights. Our courage and determination however, conquered all the obstacles, and, at last, we landed in Bismarck, which was only 30 miles from the farm where father lived and labored, or rather slaved.

The first look at father told the story. I saw that he was far from being happy, that he suffered immensely. A nostalgia came upon me for my home town, Steblev.

Perhaps it was not longing for the town itself, as for the people—certain people, like my sister, several friends, and particularly one who, years later, played a most significant part in my life. Already 17 years of age and fully aware of the natural emotions every human being experiences, I could not control those certain feelings. Somehow I felt that it was in Steblev that my life companion lived and that without her I would not be able to cross the dynamic ocean of life. Of course, the circumstances and surroundings, I found, were not very convenient or conducive to such thoughts and dreams. First of all I faced the problem of improving the conditions my father lived in, which, I knew, he would not be able to endure much longer. Again I turned to God, and within me, I heard a voice of reply:

*"Do not have fear, my child of Jacob,
Your enemies may wish to destroy you—
You in spite, however, will be happy.
As in the days of old, you shall be great again.
You are my only Israel!
You display your ability and power
In this land of America
From my heavenly castles and mansions
Happiness and abundance shall come unto thee."*

And still I did not know what actual worry meant . . .

As I have already related, my father was a man of decency, learning and wisdom. Wise people, however, are not always successful. He did not speak much, but in his silence, I understood his situation well. Still, what could I, a youngster do, to relieve his load? Regardless of the cold—60 degrees below zero—without sufficiently warm clothes and shelterless—we left the farm for Montana, where we hoped to get better and more work to enable us to feed the family of babies and little children, whose provider my father had to be.

The reason for going to Montana was because the building of a great northern railway had commenced at that time. The land was wild, deserted and full of Indians. We arrived at a labor camp where nearly 1100 laborers were camping, among whom were many tramps, mostly the genuine kind. We, not knowing a syllable of English, had to adjust ourselves to this new mode of life, if one can call it that—a life that neither we, our fathers or even grandfathers ever experienced. One does not need a great deal of imagination to visualize the torment and torture that had beset us. Through no fault of the others, but because of the peculiar stock we descended from, beer and pork were the meals, as well as other non-dietary dishes. Father would tell us that these are wild fish that cause illness. Our bedrooms were tents and the mattresses torn sacks stuffed with hay. The odor was so thick and impure that one could not even say his evening prayer. The laborers, young, healthy men, indulged in various kinds of tricks, yelling and shouting, which would not permit us to sleep. We were afraid to object. Also the snakes did their bit to add to our misery. Leib and I could endure this torture more or less but not father. He lived a hellish existence indeed. He did not work, but suffered just the same. The winter was severe. In the mornings we always found an extra blanket of snow over the torn quilts that were meant to keep us warm during the night. We had to go to Mainot, Montana, for our pay checks.

From there, we had to go to another place, a distance of 90 miles. The road was a remnant of Indian country—70 miles of which was unsettled. The cold was terrible and we were lightly clothed. Being fully aware that it would be almost impossible to make this journey in one day, we decided to start at sunset so that we could stop on the road overnight. Gaining but 10 miles, we stopped at a camp where we found laborers whose plans must have been similar to ours. They, however, had their tent, but we had to spend the night in the open. We were very concerned, not so much about ourselves, as about the horses who had to pull us through this difficult journey. We built

a fire and found that we were soon out of wood. So on we travelled, our only hope being in the animals to help us reach our destination. The others left for another direction. We travelled all day, often on our feet, running. We didn't want to exhaust the animals too much and by running ourselves we kept warm. Around eight in the evening we reached Hashborne, a small town. We were frozen to the quick. If we were to travel another 10 miles we felt that we surely could not have survived it.

In the morning the temperature had risen so high that I had to sit in the wagon and cover my head with rags. When we reached a little shack made of earth (clay), I had to be carried inside. My hands were frozen and chapped and the skin peeling. There was no medical aid to be had. I suffered, not uttering a word. We had no way of fighting this cold weather—as a matter of fact, when we needed water for ourselves and the horses we had to melt snow. In this little so-called shelter we remained—a family of 12! One room without heating facilities. Ironic as it may sound, we called it life. Sleeping outside was out of the question and inside, besides being crowded, bed bugs swarmed in multitudes. The future looked very dark. Not a ray of hope of earning a cent. Leib and I decided again to proceed and seek—perhaps we might find something, earn something and help our unfortunate father.

Mike and Pat, as we called our horses, were again on the road, leading us back to Minnesota, where we hoped to find our boss who could perhaps find a job for us again, perhaps the same hard labor. Covered with shabby clothes, supplied with several loafs of bread and onions and some nourishment for Mike and Pat, we commenced on our new journey. Fortunately, we found Hansen, our boss. He immediately assigned us to deliver a load of boxes and canned goods to the camp in Montana, a few hundred miles away, where we were supposed to continue our labor for the Great Northern Railway. We made this new journey in 10 days. I will describe some of our experiences of this inhuman tour (here, however, I wish only to say that our bedrooms were under the wagon and the cry of wolves at night, as well as other beasts, were reasons enough for our not closing our eyes).

Some days a heavy rain poured. The horses were not shod, and the wheels didn't turn. Mike and Pat were slipping and couldn't pull the load up hill. It looked as if the wagon would roll down the hill and we and the horses with it. That was in store for all of us. From

somewhere, however, a man appeared, placed a strong piece of wood behind the wheels and checked what had seemed an inevitable catastrophe. The good man who travelled in the rear, noticed the precarious situation and without telling me, did all he could, and thus saved me from being killed. He even did more, he waited until I rolled the heavy wagon up the hill. Until this very day I recall with horror the moment of facing death, prevented only by a Divine miracle.

On the second day we reached a small river which had to be crossed. One had to know the exact spot of crossing and besides, apply great precaution—otherwise he and all with him would be swallowed by the water. The center of that little stream was very deep and the current so strong that it could overturn the heaviest load and drag it to the bottom. Many people, horses and loads were victims of that little dangerous spot. The trick was to make the horses gallop. If one succeeded in this, the danger would be over. Facing these dangers, one after another, I made the horses run, almost fly—and we crossed the deadly stream. That was another miracle fulfilled.

And so again we found ourselves laboring at the camp, this time the work a bit lighter. First, it was summer; secondly, we could already speak a few words of English. But the suffering was not over by any means. We were targets of fun for the rest of the workers, particularly on Sundays. Still, we were thankful to God that we were not ill and could endure the ordeals, realizing that we are Jews, and, like our grandfathers, we must suffer.

I knew that the sun does not shine always. There must be darkness, too. Usually before I retired I visited the horses to see if they were all right. On one such visit I noticed that Pat was ailing, that he suffered from some sort of pain. Having had a little experience in veterinary, I cleaned his stomach and made him run for awhile, but all in vain. Seriously ill and not being able to receive the proper care, Pat—my handsome black eagle as I called him—died. About three in the morning I returned to my sleeping quarters crying and wondering what I would do with only one horse, far away from a civilized spot. We were laboring under the most unbearable conditions until fall, and were then sent home 100 miles from St. Paul, where father lived. We travelled on unpaved roads with one horse. It was a long, long journey. Loving and pitying our father, we lived very sparingly, slept on the wagon, ate almost nothing so that we could bring some

funds to the family. This trip, on coming home, is a story that deserves hundreds of pages—but why? It is said in our prayer book: "This, too, shall pass." But we were home at last. The "residence" consisted of a dining room, a small bedroom and a kitchen—the latter became our bedroom. Winter approached again and this time more unbearable than ever. Father could not go out to peddle his rags. But we had to eat! Rent had to be paid! And the house heated. I observed father's torture. I went to the city hall where brother and I got jobs as street cleaners. In this below-zero weather we had to be outside all day, carry shovels and other implements to break the frozen snow. In the early morning, before we left the house, father gave us a few slices of bread and an apple. During lunch hour we ran into a saloon for a glass of beer. And frequently the foreman would let us go home for lunch. He knew that we would not be able to survive being on the street all day.

It was still worse when we got home tired and frozen. The welcome by our step-mother made us forget that we were hungry or tired. Our earnings, about 30 dollars, were turned over to father, minus a quarter a day which we took off to be able to get beer. In spring we moved to Sutter Street, where at present the city hall is located. The house was always in danger during the rain, for, without a solid foundation, it looked like an island surrounded by water. Father kept his horse there and now he peddled fruits and vegetables. I cannot imagine how people could live in such a house but as the old saying goes, suffering is a good teacher.

Leib continued his labor of street-cleaning and I remained home, helping father in his business, taking care of the house. At last I found charm in my step-mother's eyes and she even moved my bed from the kitchen to father's bedroom.

Summer was gone again. All these difficult experiences and time itself contributed to my growth and my future became a very important problem to me. I had reached an age now when members of the opposite sex were looking for my acquaintance. I knew too well that to be able to meet girls I must be dressed neatly and have a few cents in my pocket, and so I looked for a new job. I found it with a junk-dealer. My labor consisted of driving a team of horses and loading cars. I liked this work and even invented new ideas beneficial to my employer, where I had board and room. Mrs. Markovsky, wife of my employer, took care of me. She fed me well, looked after my clothes and made me pray each morning. She was a very generous and

good natured person—may her memory be blessed.

* * * *

No matter how many difficulties one must face in his youth he always recalls those days with a sense of admiration, and many a time, a desire to live them through again. One night when I slept in the attic over the stable, I dreamed that I was in Steblev, my birthplace, engaged in all sorts of games with my childhood pals. Riding on Motke's back, I waved my sword, assuming the role of a hero. We rode up the hill and Itske waited for us. Together we proceeded to the lake, where, all galloping we hastened to our destination.

Joyously I recall the days of childhood and adolescence, the problems we encountered, the toy horses we built from branches, how we assembled every possible boy, and collectively ran down the hill to the river that seemed to flow parallel with us. Oh, those cheerful days . . . how distant they are from me!

When I awakened from my dream, a loud hearty laughter overtook me. That joyous mood would have lasted much longer, if the horses in the stable, had not been restless and insistent on being heard. They demanded nourishment.

That day and many following I was still under the influence of the dream which brought me back to Steblev. I felt that my nostalgia for Steblev is interwoven with a mystery I could not explain. I must have left something or someone there, and until I found it I would continue longing. As always I submitted to the will of God and understood that He had something in store for me and that something would come from Steblev.

And eventually it came . . . but what or who it was I wish to relate in the pages to follow. Patience, my beloved. It was this that gave me courage and determination to go ahead.

I stayed with the Markovskys a few years—years of hard labor, but also years that gave me maturity and a sense of responsibility. Leib and I went into business for ourselves. We used to buy bottles and iron from various junk dealers I knew, repaired them and then resold them to wholesale houses. We were successful and in a relatively short period of time, we had saved about \$1200. I was the treasurer,

and as such, I would not entrust my capital to any bank. I didn't think there was a bank in the United States that could be entrusted with such an extensive sum of money, so I sewed the money into the lining of my trousers and at night I kept them under the pillow. My mind was constantly occupied with business plans—what to do with the accumulated funds, etc? And remembering that I was now a man, an ocean of love swept over me.

The natural revelation reaches everyone of us, some sooner, some later. I was one of the "sooner". In reality, I didn't know whom I loved. But while being introduced to many girls, I very frequently dreamed about Steblev, and one night, I had an amazing dream.

A white dove came flying to my window and serenaded me. I distinctly heard the bird's utterings. "For me, you are the handsomest." The voice of the dove was filled with sincerity and charm. I opened the window and invited the unexpected pleasant messenger into the house. I responded whole-heartedly to the message that expressed beauty and grace. I saw in it an act of Providence which always spread its wings over me, protected and guided me into the right trend of thinking. I said to myself, "Pure as an angel, and beautiful." Those sweet dreams reiterated themselves and made my life worthwhile and happy.

Finding myself in such an elevated stage of life, I also thought of improving my economic position, by freeing myself of worry, lies and other unethical ways one had to apply in his business transactions. One day one of the Jewish neighbors approached my father, asked his advice on how to improve his way way of life and the possibility of leaving the cold St. Paul for a warmer place. My father, as I have already stated, was a man of wisdom, of biblical learning, and knew Hebrew well. People listened to his suggestions, and so, after many deliberations, the whole group decided to move to Portland, Oregon, where many later succeeded in their enterprises. When father asked us about the plan, we told him that for the sake of harmony and independence, it would be much better if Leib and I went our own independent way so as not to argue and quarrel constantly with our step-mother. We felt that we were old enough to take care of ourselves.

A Jewish colony in North Dakota existed, where 200 settlers worked the land and earned an honest livelihood. Those settlers were good Jews. They observed the Sabbath. Other religious customs

and life there was a sheer paradise, so it had been rumored. I heard about this settlement but I had never anticipated that soon I would be on my way to become a member of the colony.

One of the settlers visited St. Paul and spoke of the settlement in most glorious terms, and pictured the life of the colonists as the most blessed. I was impressed with his story and decided to join the land toilers. How and why I made my decision so hurriedly I do not know to this day. It is just one of those unforeseen things that come, no one knows where from. I look upon such occurrences as destined by a Higher power, beyond human control. Father pleaded with me not to leave him but I was determined and we separated. He and his friends left for Portland, and I for North Dakota, to the farm. By nature, at least in those days, I was of a paradoxical combination—fearful, shy and at the same time adventurous.

I arrived in Jamestown, a small town, about nine in the evening. My food consisted of a few pounds of walnuts I bought before I left St. Paul. Looking for a place to spend the night, I was told that the hotel charged two dollars, a sum which only a wealthy man could afford in those days. I was referred to a house across the street, however, where the railroad workers and some tramps were lodging. It was a huge house with many rooms and a few beds in each. It was a trespassing house—the doors and windows broken, no management, no caretaking, and the price fifty cents a night. With fear and overwhelmed adventure, I decided to remain in this so-called public hotel. I looked upon my savings and prayed to God to protect me. I placed the money in one of my shoes covered with both socks and went to bed. It is needless to say that I could not sleep. The commotion of coming and going lasted all night. When the first rays of dawn were visible I was the happiest man. A few minutes later I was already at the railroad station, waiting for a train to Devil's Lake, a spot nearest to the Jewish settlement. I still had some walnuts and I already had had my morning meal. Devil's Lake was still 25 miles from my destination. I inquired of many as to the possibility of taking me to the farm, but without result. I decided to hike. I was still young. At first I hesitated, perhaps I might get lost, but when I heard the singing of the birds I felt that He is with me and unaware of myself, I sang too. It was a ditheramb to the Creator . . . and I was confident that soon I would attain my first goal—one of the many I aimed to attain in my life. Heaven and earth were my companions and I was a free man who had experienced an historic day in his existence.

*"Where and why am I here,
Oh, God, please tell me."*

These words I sang and a sense of confidence overtook me. I was sure that here I would find my life's companion. I sensed the feeling of being alone, and young as I was, I was carried away with my thoughts. Suddenly I noticed a house, the first sign of the settlement. When I entered it, I found it filled with folk—Jewish farmers, their wives and children, mostly girls. For a moment I was lost because it was my first experience of facing so many people. I actually did not know what to say. A moment later, however, I was the center of attention. Everyone was eager to speak to me. They thought I must be somebody, perhaps a representative of Baron Hirsch. (The Baron sponsored Jewish colonization plans the world over.) Some thought I was perhaps a messenger of the government. The farmers began to argue, particularly those who had girls, as to who should have the privilege of being host to the distinguished visitor.

After considerable deliberation I was taken to a family by the name of Baruch, if I am not mistaken. The house, a tiny little structure, had no extra place for visitors, so a bed was made for me in the dining room. But I could not sleep. Thoughts and plans as well as the "red" companions, invaded my bed. In a bed near mine slept the farmer's eldest daughter. She could not sleep either. We indulged in a conversation about matters that are characteristic to young people. I spent a few days in this house and at the end of the week I was invited to another family where I spent the Sabbath. The meals were mostly from the dairy. Saturday night we played cards until the early hour of dawn. A young lady, another farmer's daughter, entertained us with stories. I had a good time.

The colonists were soon aware that I came to buy a farm. I learned that in this part of the state the government gave out land free. I also discovered that some old farmers were ready to leave the settlement because of family conditions. The children had grown, needed some religious education and the still older ones had to marry. I looked into the matter and soon learned the names of those who were planning to leave and with the aid of an agent, I went to Devil's Lake and filed for a place which was already deserted.

Entering my new property, I was the happiest man in the world. It didn't matter that my estate consisted of two wells without water,

of many other insignificant little things—there was the joy of knowing that it was all mine! This was the beginning of new happiness and sorrow at the same time, as I will relate later. Without any assistance I became the all-round man: the boss, the laborer, the cook, the housekeeper and the pupil learning farming.

It is much easier to talk about those things than to become accustomed to them. I was determined and did not ever think of giving up. Leib joined me and together we commenced a period of 13 years, which can only be described as hellish. My funds were very limited and I had to manage the business very economically. To begin with, I bought two bulls, and had to learn their language so they could understand me when I wanted them to go right or left, or obey a few other orders. The bulls did their share in making my farming miserable. They would not work during the day because of the heat. Many a day I had to work on the field until midnight. A trip to town took almost half a week. I recall particularly one journey: I left early in the morning, moving very slowly. I fell asleep and the bulls joined me. When I awoke it was already nine in the morning and we were merely five miles from the farm. We arrived in town late at night, and next morning, loaded with coal and other essentials, we were on our way home. On our return trip, I partly walked by the bulls; then, tired, I got back on the wagon and fell asleep. When I did open my eyes, it was dark. I didn't know where I was and wasn't even sure that I was on the right track. There was no one to ask—only the barking of a dog indicated that a house was somewhere near. Groping, I reached the house, knocked at the door, then at the window. A woman, speaking to me through the glass, warned me that if I did not leave, she would use her rifle. She didn't believe my story of being in trouble. I must have returned by a different trail, for when I came back, I couldn't see the wagon and the bulls. Helpless, I again turned to Him, and proceeded in a direction without reasoning why . . . twenty minutes later I fell over my bulls who were lying in the middle of the road.

Gradually, like the bulls, I became an integral part of the farm, working, managing, and above all, suffering. I bought a cow, learned the art of milking and how to make cream and butter. No family responsibility, still young and healthy, I developed a hobby. At sunset, after work, I would lie down on my hay-made mattress, and sing whatever entered my mind. From an operetta, theatre melody or prayer book—depending on the mood.

One such evening, I recalled that Purim was not far away, and so I sang "Scholeach Mones"—exchange of gifts.

*"Give us God, a new Purim, a new miracle.
 May all our enemies be dead.
 As Haman with his sons were defeated,
 And Mordechai, the Jew rode triumphantly . . .
 Give us God, a new miracle.
 Free us of Hamans and suffering.
 Write for us a new Megilah.
 Send us from Heaven Sholeach Mones,
 Health, prosperity for all Jews.
 Perhaps this will be our Sgulah."*

The winter had gone. Spring was in the air and again I was pre-occupied with new plans for the future. It is said if a man thinks and hopes, God helps him; and, as you know already, I am a great believer in God.

* * * *

Turning for awhile to my birthplace, Steblev, I wish to relate that my father was known as Motel Sholems. Sholem was my father's brother. There were still children of my uncle's daughter, Elke, and her husband, Menache. The children were taken care of by the uncle and aunt, Yocheved. Father, already in America, used to correspond with his brother. This correspondence, an exchange of information about personal affairs, led to what I call a miracle . . . for it resulted in my winning a life partner, and later in bringing into the world 11 capable children, 25 grand and great-grandchildren, as well as establishing myself as a respected member of society.

The farm became an unbearable burden and I realized that I must have someone to help me. Help could not be hired or employed, it must be someone who would share with me all gains and ordeals of life. I, like Adam, must have an Eve. It is a natural law and the wish of God. As a 19-year-old man, I felt the urge of love and companionship. As always, a man of decision, I made my first step to realizing my plans. Cognizant of the fact that to undertake such a change one needs funds, I sold the bulls for \$90. At the same time, a letter came from Uncle Sholem to say that if my brother Leib and

I thought seriously of a family life, he had two wonderful girls for us. This letter strengthened my constant thoughts of a certain little brunette I left in Steblev, whose presence always disturbed me. While in America, I tried to forget her, but I never could. It seemed like a certain invisible power kept reminding me of her. Father and uncle made a deal between themselves and sealed our future. We received two pictures of Sarah and Doba, the two girls. I liked Doba in the picture, for she looked to me the way I saw her all those years—and my intuition (though not a woman) foretold me that she was the one who would join me in matrimony, that we should be happy and our companionship would bear fine and noble fruit.

It was not an easy enterprise a few decades ago, to undertake such a responsibility. But Leib and I decided that we must. We wrote to Uncle that we would accept the proposition, but the final decision of engagement should take place after our meeting. The \$90 from the sale of the bulls were turned over to the steamship agency with an obligation on our part to pay out the balance in instalments. The tickets were sent to our future brides.

* * * *

Plans and plans again! How to prepare myself for this new era in my life. First, of course, the possibilities of earning money. I ploughed the land and got ready for the crop of the next summer. Usually three horses have 12 legs, but mine had only 11—Deff, one of them, could only walk on three legs, the fourth being paralyzed or atrofied. It happened frequently that the two four-legged horses had to carry not only the plough, or the load, but also their pal Deff. At such instances I felt very discouraged and sang a tune I became fond of:

*“Messiah, Messiah, where are you on your white horse?
 You, Messenger of God, come and redeem the soil—
 The world is suffering and is in grave danger,
 The people are all discouraged, burdened with sorrow.
 Come, come Messiah, son of David—
 Protect the name of Jehovah.
 Bring order into this world of ours.
 Give us proof that we are still the chosen people.”*

Usually after singing, I stopped work on the farm and assumed the role of the farmer's wife. I set the table, took the fifty-cent roast from the oven (it tasted delicious.) Before I retired I prepared the next day's breakfast, and by the light of a small lamp, I attempted to read an English newspaper. I say attempted, for I knew very little, if any, of what I looked at. Before going to bed, I thanked God and called upon Rafael, the Angel, for protection. Step by step I adjusted myself to a bachelor's life on the farm. I worked on the land and had to get all kinds of agricultural machinery without which it was impossible to materialize the products of the farm. North Dakota was known as a state where, in June, the harvest would freeze, and in August, reaping time, the cold weather visited us again. It was an unhappy situation, and, in addition, debts and payments on the machinery had to be met. If there were no payments, the machinery was taken away, and one had to go to work on someone else's farm, and with the small earnings pay at least the interest on the principal, which was to be paid out at next harvest time. I felt very humiliated when I had to drive a load of hay to town. The wagon would turn upside down and I had to reload the hay, scattered over the road, and still worse, just at such a critical moment, one of my horses, especially Deff, would lie down and rest. I had to wait and because of the cold, run around a little, until I could proceed.

At such moments, I sang a prayer to God:

*"Almighty God in Heaven, Creator of the universe,
Accept my prayer in your Holy of Holies.
What I request of you is a little favor.
The enemies of Israel, destroy them.
With your Divine power, protect us against
Human beasts that call themselves men.
Heavenly Father, I am confident you hear
My prayer—a Jewish prayer—filled with tears."*

The hay was loaded and we arrived in town. The next morning, selling the merchandise and buying salt for 5 cents, pepper for the same amount, kerosene, a box of matches and other essentials for the household, I returned home. Nothing more, because the three or four dollars I got for my labor didn't offer any better opportunities. Home again. Tired, the house not heated, preyed upon by unpleasant thoughts, I fell asleep.

Time passed, and man, a victim of it, must adjust himself to conditions and to accept what is in store for him—Destiny. Several months elapsed. My thoughts were on oceans and trains, where my future life-companion was making her journey on her way to America. I was worried. Somehow, I felt that she was suffering. But I had to be patient, wait for the day decided by God.

At last a letter came informing me that Doba and Sarah and the Uncles Sol and Abram had left . . . and that we were to expect them in June. But June and July had passed and not a single word from them. Again worries. Who knows, perhaps something had happened.

As I later learned, Dobe was ill and had to be carried from the boat. Then she had to make her further travels from New York to Devil's Lake on a freighter. I got busy making preparations to welcome the beloved and distinguished visitor. I painted the house, particularly the room where we were to spend 12 years together. My trousers were spotted with paint, and, not having another pair to change into, I had to go to the depot at Devil's Lake in them. As usual, with freighters, the train was late. My heart was beating fast and every minute seemed like eternity. The train finally stopped, men and women came out, and here I was eye to eye with Doba! We looked at each other not uttering a single syllable. I noticed that Sarah was whispering something to the uncles. I overheard her saying she would like to go back home. At such emotional moments it is difficult to read other people's minds. We walked towards the house where we parked our wagon and with Doba seated near me, we started on our way home.

I sang:

*"Your eyes give me endless joy . . .
 Though you do not speak, I know your thoughts.
 Your eyes are filled with melody and love.
 They awaken in me desires I had long suppressed.
 I recall my youth and love of times ago.
 And in dreams, endless dreams, always near me,
 I saw you . . .
 My heart filled with love,
 Eternal love, that belongs only to you".*

We arrived at our "palace" at sunset. It is needless to say that our guests were a bit discouraged. The so-called furniture and other furnishings of the room made them see our riches and way of life at a glance. For hours they would talk to us about Steblev, and the torture they had to go through on their voyage to the blessed land. The real difficulties we had to face, was when it was time to retire. One room, and so many people to sleep—two women at that. Somehow, we managed, and in the morning the girls started to bring order to the upkeep of the household.

The meagre and weak Doba assumed full responsibility. She cooked, cleaned, washed. She was determined, as I, to share the existing difficulties, confident that some day we would remember this when we had true joy and comfort. Funds were not available. Neither could one purchase anything. But the house was filled with love, friendship and sincerity. Sosen V'simcho (joy and gaiety), as it is said in Hebrew, prevailed. And the splendor of God (Shechunah), revealed itself from every corner of our abode, which I called the Holy Temple (Beth Hamikdash). Miracles occurred each day. Potatoes became Gefulte fish; onions, chopped steaks. The meals were delicious as those of our Father Abraham when he prepared himself to meet the Angels as is told in the Bible.

Doba herself assumed an angelic appearance. When I would return from the field she looked to me like the most attractive woman in the world—an angel God sent me from Heaven. Unity and understanding reigned in our life, in this little nook, where we lived over three months. But I almost forgot to tell you that my beloved Doba was the daughter of Shloimo Menashe and Elka Elta, from whom she inherited all her moral manners and traditions. She felt that it wasn't proper and not Jewish for a bride and groom to live in one house un-married. I, of course, agreed with her. Our wedding, however, had to be postponed to a later date, because of the mourning days in the Jewish calendar.

* * * *

The day of the wedding approached. New problems had arisen. First, a public bath (Mikvah), then a Chupah (a canopy), a wedding gown and many other essentials had to be prepared. Leib and I had never worked so hard. First we cleaned the neglected Mikvah in the colony. Of four old sticks and a red tablecloth, we built the

canopy and prepared some wine. I wish to tell you that in spite of all the insurmountable difficulties we had to face, it was worth while. If I had to work harder, to face more obstacles, I would have gladly done so. As already stated, I had no funds. But Maier never gives up! I went to town, bought two rings, one for Leib and one for myself and purchased calico for a wedding gown at five cents a yard. Doba herself made her wedding gown and it fitted her marvelously. On Saturday, before the wedding, the groom is honored in the synagogue by a part of the Torah being read for him. We walked six miles to a farmer's house where the ceremony was performed and then the day of the wedding.

We made tables out of boards. The wedding ceremony was simple. We heard the instructions and then . . . "Thee I wed, according to the law of Moses and Izrael." Doba, of course, cried, but later we danced and enjoyed ourselves until early morning. Dobbe and I, legally husband and wife, actually were one, heart and soul. We spent days and nights thinking of our future, building castles in the air and hoping to be the envy of our fellow men. One decision we both made solemnly: To follow the path of our parents, live and help others, be of assistance to anyone in need, and always be among and with our fellow men. These were our pledges, based on the teachings of the Bible.

*"If you feed or help someone, don't talk about it.
 Never consider yourself better than the other.
 God will reward you, and you will live better.
 If one needs a bed to rest in, give it to him joyfully,
 With a smile and sweet disposition.
 If you have two clean shirts, give one to your needy friend.
 Share with him all you can, and remember—
 No one but God is to know."*

Many more similar pledges we had made to each other. On the morning after the wedding night I rose earlier, made coffee and biscuits and served my beautiful princess. And then, to work in the field.

Day by day, and every day, we grew nearer to each other. Together we built our new home. Together we discussed and decided upon every detail. Sweetness and love ruled our existence. Neither words nor thoughts can describe the human and friendly relationship

that until this very day, are the wholeness of our holy companionship. That is a strength, a power, that no one can destroy! No evil force, no enemy, no matter how he should try, can demolish such a relationship. Because it is based on unity and peace. We never quarrelled, never insulted each other, nor did we ever insult our children or outsiders. Even when we did not have much, we didn't forget the hungry, the needy—such was our mode of life, until one day, we learned that soon we would bear the fruit of parentage.

Doba expected our first child. It was a time of fear and hope, suffering and joy. These were unforgettable days. Weak and lean Doba, only 17, was to be a mother under circumstances far from favorable or convenient. If there is, however, unity of purpose, a desire to live not merely for yourself but for your nearest ones, as well as for humanity in general, all the suffering, torture and ordeals are conquered, particularly when from or through the sufferings is to emerge a stronger tie between two people who love, respect and adore each other. This tie is a gift from God, and He takes care of all, including the most insignificant insect.

The severe winter with its 60-below zero frost visited us again. Often we were without bread and almost in darkness, as our only lights were self-made candles, but our walls were always ornamented from the penetrating frost. And when spring came we didn't have to wash the floor! The melting frost did it. We had no clocks, but the few chickens in the corner of the room wakened us each morning, and in another corner of our palace a small calf had its lodging, and it too, in its own language informed us that it was time for breakfast. Spring followed. And Doba and I, as nature itself, felt that a new era was approaching. We got busy to meet the season's demands. We raised poultry and ploughed the fields. We hadn't forgotten to thank God for His generosity and pleaded with Him for rain. I sang again:

"Spring has come, the sky is clear and the air pure.

Life is full of beauty.

Birds sing, and bees buzz,

The grass is growing, flowers blossoming,

And the winds are warm.

Old trees rejuvenate, bear new leaves.

Man is filled with vitality.

*With sweat on his face, he does his work
Ploughing the field."*

I have already told you that Doba was 17 when we married. 17 in Hebrew symbolizes goodness (Tov). 18 symbolizes life (Chai). I saw in the fact that Doba was to give birth at the age of 18, a deed of God. He wanted that my beloved Doba should bring a new life into the world when she herself reached the blossoming stage of life. Doba had to be in bed, expecting birth. Two days of suffering passed and no sign of new life. There was no doctor around but I had confidence in the Supreme Doctor. Still, when the situation became critical, I decided to call one. The house was gloomy. A neighbor, Greenberg, came in, and I, not losing a moment, galloped to Devil's Lake. I didn't want to leave Doba, but there was nothing else to do. When I bade her goodbye, I said to her that I hoped that upon my return she would already be a mother. Confident as ever in the Almighty, I drove my horse. The day was beautiful and somehow I believed that Doba would be alright. I thought of my home town Steblev, its dirty streets, a postoffice at one end and a mill at the other, the broken down stores, the same hopes and above all the hope of Messiah . . . When all will live in abundance, joy and gaiety. No more letters to the rich uncle in America asking for help.

As soon as I arrived in town I ran to the doctor, and with tears in my eyes, pleaded with him to come with me to the colony. Intoxicated, he looked at me bewilderingly and said he would be there in a few days. I realized that even if he agreed to go he wouldn't be of any help. So I rushed back home. When I returned, late at night, I found a tiny little tot, a girl, that my Doba gave birth to. After three days of suffering she became the mother of my child. I silently prayed and thanked God for His mercy and privilege of fatherhood. We named our new-born Elka. Thus we started our family life of father, mother and daughter. Doba, occupied with the baby, and I full of joy about the first addition to the family, didn't have much time to discuss our future plans and improvements. Doba, sane and practical, adjusted our so-called budget to the new conditions. Diapers were made from flour sacks, the carriage or hammock of a large sack, and so we had given the child all we could. Mother found old clothes and made them over for Elka. We were happy and every moment we thanked God for his generosity. Millions couldn't buy the happiness we had in this little shack of ours. Fall came and we were busy in the field, harvesting and getting ready

for the winter. Many matters had to be taken care of—the barns and so on. At last I went to town to purchase some domestic essentials for the winter. We didn't have any meat until December, when we called in the (Shochet) the religious slaughterer, from Grand Forks to slaughter a cow, and then labor began. Cutting the slaughtered animal and placing the meat in safe places so that it would keep until Pesach (spring). Then the meat was taken out and work began over again—preparing for the ploughing, planting of new seed carefully assorted. This lasted until June, when the corn, rye and other grain were growing. A growing that was the farmer's mirror.

A cold frost frequently demolished all our labor. Then we prayed for rain again to rehabilitate our investments upon which we depended for a year's existence.

This time we had a good year. The crop was abundant and it took twice as much time to harvest it. A separator—a reaping machine was needed, but not one was available in the colony. I had to go to another town to buy one. It took me a few days before I returned with the machine and the day I came back was the eve of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. We had to postpone the work until after the holidays. There is an old Yiddish saying: "The man thinks and God laughs." And we too, felt God's laughter, for on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, a heavy rain poured and later, a white snow fell. It was a great blow to all of us. The difficulties were partly overcome, but with hard labor and heavy losses to the crop. The stacks of grain froze and this later melted. The commodity had to be sold for a lesser price which did not even cover our expenses in the end. It was a very difficult winter. I had to work on another farm to earn additional funds to enable me to take care of my family at home. Besides, I had to help Doba attend the cattle, horses, and the house in general. For my work on the farm I received three dollars, and many a time, I had to sleep in a cellar on potatoes, without air and in the company of mice. I did some other work, but the endurance and the co-operation of Doba helped a great deal. Such winters which were very frequent, diminished our health, which, of course, in our younger days, wasn't very effective. My love for Doba was growing and before long we had another child. My desire was to have 12 children. Our second addition was a boy. Our eldest son, Abraham, whose entrance into the world and the Jewish community had to be sanctified by the ritual of circumcision. Proper preparations were to be made.

To bring over the Schochet was not an easy matter. He had to travel from Grand Forks, a distance of a few hundred miles and be met at the station in Devil's Lake, then brought to the farm and taken back to Grand Forks—in addition to the reward for his services. All this involved expenses, and funds were still not available. With God's help, however, we somehow managed.

We were the happy parents of two children, a boy and a girl, and no one could even dream of such happiness. Instead of one, we now had two hammocks made of sacks. The eldest child was already one year old. The neighboring mill had enough good sacks which could be used as diapers, and cloths. These were our humble possessions and my partner Doba, the master of all trades could sew, re-make, re-shape and even give haircuts. What a barber! Pesach approached and matzes had to be baked. But where and how? We also overcame this difficulty, for Maier and Doba never gave in. A plain fifty-cent oven was put up and the matzes were produced like those in a real bakery. Assuming this new role of a matzo-baker, I recalled a song:

*"Yosel the tailor goes to the market,
 Along with him is Yankel, the blacksmith.
 the peasant Mikita is the driver,
 And near him, Chaim Hirsh, the writer.
 Mikita naps and thinks of Jews . . .
 Yosel dreams noddingly of business.
 Hirsh sings of the moon and the stars.
 He longs for home, eyes filled with tears.
 The writer recalls his youth and love . . .
 Darkness has gone and dawn is nearing.
 And every passenger feels gloomy.*

In our part of the land spring was far from being warm. But the warmth of the holiday overwhelmed us. The sedder, with all its beautiful and impressive ceremonies, the wine, the special food, all were tasteful and delicious. I, the king and Doba the queen . . . for, as the old saying goes, Pesach at Sedder every Jew is like a king and his wife, a queen. It is a spiritual elevation and a physical joy. In all this exultation, one thing hindered the completeness of the festivity. We lacked a Mikvah, where the woman is supposed to bathe. There was no public bath as in the old country, where "cleanliness of body" was kept, according to the Jewish law. But the colony had a slough, not clean and in addition very cold. Doba, who would never violate

any ritual, used the available water. God watched over her and the ice-cold water did not hurt her in the least. Thus, our holiday was complete—we enjoyed it to the fullest. This greatest of our festivities, when Jews the world over celebrate their freedom from Egyptian slavery, was responsible for a third addition to our family. But at present, in reverence to Pesach, I wish to recite:

*“Remember the Sabbath and the Holy Day,
As Divine rest the human being must take.
It cements man’s faith and devotion.
We are to believe that in six days
He has created the world.
And the seventh day is to revere and esteem.
You should welcome them always,
Free yourself of worry and sorrow.
The house is to be gay and filled with joy.
Read the Torah as much as you can.
And tell it to your children.
Tell them about Genesis.
If not in Hebrew, then in Yiddish.
But do it! Otherwise you are not human.
Without morality and ethics—
You are then like a tiger
An animal on two feet . . .
Do not forget—you are a Jew.
For whose sins all the people are responsible.
Obey your parents and you will be happy.
They’ll share and give you all they have.
Do not envy others. Be content.
Prolong the life of your parents.”*

These citations are very important. Very few know of them, and that is why I appeal to you, my beloved . . . not to ignore them. For they are my expression of love for you. Old in experience, I wish to transmit all of it to you, my children; the only thing besides a good name that a man can leave when he is to depart from the world.

Time goes on and no matter what the difficulties are, people ad-

just themselves to new conditions. Doba and I, whose companionship and understanding have strengthened day by day, accepted these often and seemingly unbearable ordeals in life with a smile. The children helped a great deal to ease our difficulties. Came summer, and again ploughing and harvesting—but this time with more zeal and enthusiasm. And another addition to the family! This time a girl, whom we named Zeepah after my mother. More joy for the parents, but also more work and worry for the mother. Doba never rested. Always occupied 'till late in the night, by the light of a tiny lamp she labored, expressing her motherly love and did not neglect her husband. Sometimes I wondered why this poor, simple life was so dear, and it seemed that I would remain here forever. But not always does life run the way we plan it. Nature is capricious and plays a game with you that is frequently dangerous. Doba became very ill. She could not fulfil her domestic duties. No help from anyone. I felt very desperate, realizing that I dare not even think of leaving the farm. When alone with her during her illness I often felt helpless and frightened. She suffered immensely, not only from pain, but from the realization that she could not fulfil her duties as a mother to her children and a wife to her husband, and that the family structure was on the verge of demolishment. One could hear her pleading and appealing to God to save her, her husband and children. She fought the illness like a true warrior and she won. One morning she told me that her late grandfather had bought her a bottle of medicine and since then her health began to improve. And soon, our little kingdom was again on solid ground. To me it was another miracle. Moreover, I needed Doba's care myself. She always knew how to console and inject hope in one. I reiterate again, that without her I would never have reached my present stage as I will relate in the following pages.

I needed more horses and brought one from a neighboring farmer. Jesse, my newly acquired animal, was a great help and relief in many difficulties, but she herself however, caused me much difficulty. She was wild, she would buck, ready to kill—she would simply lay down and then have to be pulled up by her friends. It tired me out and at the end of the day I could hardly move. I had the most difficult time sitting on top of the machine one day, watching the horses to see whether they worked right, when Jesse grew wilder than ever and broke some parts of the machine. This meant a trip to town again where the broken parts had to be repaired or replaced. It was no use pleading with Jesse. She would not obey. Only one remedy could be

applied and that was to tie her up. But the next day, all the wildness was resumed.

Soon we raised a few ponies which later became very useful. A few years elapsed and we now had eight horses and about 50 head of cattle. We were then in need of a bull, and the one we acquired was another wild animal that caused us many surprises. This bull was a burden indeed! He would wander away and we had to search for him every day. We would usually find him on a neighboring farm and lead him home. The neighbors would complain that he disturbed their cows, and Doba, after a hard day of labor, would tend to him.

Rover, our dog, was very helpful in making the bull forget his flirtations and come home. Rover was a true and devoted friend. When we left the farm, he remained there and soon died from starvation.

During one of my trips to town to sell some meat which we could not use due to our dietary law, a blizzard broke out. Snow kept falling for hours and mounted so deep that the houses were invisible. Doba was home with the children. She could not open the front door which was blocked with snow. The house was cold and there was no food. The first thing she did was to use furniture to heat the room. When that was gone, she somehow managed to reach the barn, and if not for an old blanket she had once covered the door with, she would never have located it. The animals were so jumpy and wild that she miraculously escaped death. They hadn't eaten for three days. The rope and wood they were tied to were eaten and when Doba opened the door, they were all loose. What she had experienced only she herself can relate. At last I managed to return home and until this very day, when I recall all that Doba and the three babies were up against, I wonder how they survived.

The children have grown. We were faced with the problem of their education as well as their general upbringing. We realized that our work on the farm wouldn't mean a thing, that our life is worthless unless we do something for our children. We brought a Shochet and Melamed (teacher) into the colony, and hence, whenever a holiday or celebration occurred, these took place in our house. This brings to memory an incident of our obtaining the first Sefer Torah (Holy Scrolls) for our settlement. Doba was ill and I sincerely believed that due to this holy and sacred deed, she recovered. Our

house became the assemblage of the community. Whenever a Minyan (communal prayer) was necessary at the high holidays and on many other similar occasions, all came to us. All knew that the young Doba's house was strictly Jewish, where the dietary law was observed and the family life pure and dignified. When I was wrong in some way, Doba knew how to react, and the result always was an even stronger unity and closeness between us. This prevails to this very day, when I, thank God, have already reached the 77th year of my life. I state all this because it is written in our Holy Bible, that the man who is happily married has been blessed by God. And I thank the Almighty for the beautiful gifts He has bestowed upon me, and pray to Him that Doba may live long so that both of us may yet witness the wedding of our youngest son Shloime and we may for years to come enjoy our grand and great grandchildren.

Because of the growth of our family we had enlarged the farm. We bought more land and more cotton. Soon we built a new house. Although not plastered as yet and very cold in the winter, it was a step ahead. During that slow march forward I met with a serious accident. An animal hit me and broke a few of my ribs. I tried to act the hero and continued my labor. But a few days later I was on my way to the doctor in town. Doba and one of our hands accompanied me on a hay-wagon. The doctor healed my broken ribs and sent me home, forbidding me to work for the next few weeks to come. Thus, Doba, in addition to her many duties, had to carry the burden of the supervision of the farm. When I was able to partly resume my work, I was still very weak, particularly when I had to handle our wild Jesse. God seemed to have His way, and I the weak, had to postpone my duties until the day when He decides.

Doba whispered into my ear . . . I was happy again! This time David was added to the family. We now had four children, thank God. The more the better. We were not rich, but the house was lively, gay. Again the ritual of circumcision had to be carried out. Again a dear new little face appeared in our midst and we continued our summer labor to be prepared for the winter. A fire broke out in the middle of the night when I was away in town. Doba, with the help of a neighbor boy, extinguished the flames by covering them with wet sacks. It was a difficult job for a woman and she had felt its repercussions, for she became ill. But God was always near us, and this time, as on previous occasions, He gave us strength to overcome these difficulties which we, a family of seven were encountering. Our medicine had always been faith and confidence, and that these

MIRACLES OF THE LIVES OF MAIER AND DOBA CALOF

have helped was proven by the fact that we are parents today, and grandparents of many children.

Doba always had more faith and confidence than I, and it was she, with God's help of course, who was responsible for my being alive—a life that was always cemented by friendship and mutual admiration. Live and let live, had been and still is our motto in life.

The incidents I have related occurred about 45 years ago. It is difficult to recall all the details, and many a happening I do not relate at all—besides, I wonder whether you are not already bored with my farmer stories. But patience, my beloved, I will not keep you long in North Dakota. For the time being I will proceed with the most important object; the children. For they, besides being our greatest joy, were also our biggest problem. Leah was our new arrival. Her birth, however, was difficult for Doba. To avoid complications, Doba went into town where Sarah and grandmother lived. The house was not much more comfortable than our farmhouse. I was a frequent visitor there, for I had to come to town often on business. But above all, I longed to see Doba. It was awful on the farm without her. Leah's entrance into the world was heralded by herself, for this little infant had the habit of loudly yelling and crying from the minute she arrived. When Doba came home we were happy again. Her stay with her sister Sara was not altogether friendly. Home, though a poor one, but our own, where each was surrounded by love, admiration and devotion, was our little heaven. Our eyes met, and this was sufficient to realize our feelings and relations, which to this day, remain pure, human and of the highest respect for one another.

* * * *

Sitting now on the porch of our sweet home, at 2243 Michigan Avenue, I recall the bygone days with a certain reverence. I shall endeavor in a few citations to relate the emotions of my youth I always long for.

*"Days of my youth love, I wish you were here.
With your youthful dreams which I spun.
Where girls, with their grace and dreamy looks,
Suppressing their desires
Whispered a prayer to God the Creator,
That He may help His people,*

*Protect them from evil,
And send Messiah the Redeemer."*

That is how I, as a youngster, was overtaken by entanglements and inner confusion. But even now, I am still confused and almost lost track of my family affairs. I told you about the birth of David and Leah, and not a word of the birth of Brina. Truly speaking, I recall very little of her birth; but I want to include her among my precious possessions, and at some other place tell a bit more about her and her family. Our family had grown to eight, and at that time, Zelda, whom Sara wouldn't have in her home, lived with us. Zelda, as you know is Doba's sister. In spite of the increase in our family which demanded greater responsibility, we did not forget our nearest. Within a brief period of time, we had arranged the weddings of Abram Calof and Zelda on our farm. Abram had parents, sisters and brothers, but he could not find the warmth and friendliness that Doba and Maier surrounded him with. Zelda fell in love with a shlemiyel, Alec. Also Rochelle, surrounded by parents and friends, celebrated her wedding on our farm. But this is not all that happened for Rochelle was born there, too!

When Dobe returned from town, the household again was in order. In the evenings, we used to play with the children, dance and enjoy ourselves merrily.

Time went on . . .

The farm was developing, the crop increasing, and one year our harvest was quite prosperous—prosperous in the small farmer's sense of the word. But one never knows what tomorrow may bring. A man figures, plans, schemes, but there is a higher power that does its figuring, planning and scheming and usually the latter has the last word. Perhaps it is better that way. The human being is not a free creature; he is controlled and dominated by conditions, circumstances and above all, by the will of God. For, if someone would have told me that one year later I would not have been on that farm, I would not have believed them. As a matter of fact, I would consider such a prediction unbelievable and insane. But here we are—I sold the farm which I, Doba and the children learned to love, and we moved to Devil's Lake, where I bought a large house.

The reason for selling the farm was Dobe's physical condition, complicated by pregnancy, which brought the birth of Rachmiel. What was in store for us, no one could know. New plans, new hopes,

new difficulties—these seemed to be our destiny. Always on the go and constantly at the mercy of God. Our new home, with its many rooms, turned out to be a regular hotel. Friends—the farmers who visited Devil's Lake, all stopped in and lodged there. Unfortunately, the house soon became a hospital; the children and I were victims of typhoid, and one can visualize what Doba had to go through. Hospitalizing and nursing so many "patients". And with what devotion and motherly love she had won her battle again. In addition, she had to take care of seven other people—strangers, who demanded her undivided attention. God has created all kinds of people, and some with love and decent character. Doba did all she could and reminded one of an angel. All of us awaited the decisive day, the crisis. And, thanks to God, I, as well as the others won the battle. Only Elke was still in danger. She got a relapse and had to be watched day and night. Neither were we in a position to hire any help, nor could we even think of it. We were bewildered and did not know what to do. There were many who ate and slept in our house, but no one to help us in our need. I wish to recite a few lines to illustrate the condition we were in.

*"If you say something foolish,
 You are an idiot.
 If you insult someone,
 You're not a gentleman.
 If you're a gentleman, no one listens to you.
 If you are loud, people avoid you.
 If someone remains a bachelor,
 His life is worthless.
 If he takes an unsuitable partner,
 He is in constant trouble.
 Thus, the best way out
 Do not ask any questions and
 Do as you wish, and find it proper.
 Then God will help you in doing right."*

The houses of a half a century ago had no modern conveniences, no sanitary implements, water had to be carried from wells, wood was the only fuel for heat, and this too was done by the tireless and devoted Doba. Abram was, I think, only 10 years old then, had done the work of an adult. We remained with two horses, a farmer

wagon, attended by Abraham. It was fortunate that he had a light attack of typhus like the other children. It seemed that all the sickness was concentrated on Elke who had a very difficult time, and I shall never forget it. Only a divine miracle saved her. The doctors had given her up and there was little hope for her recovery. We discovered later, because of my illness and Doba's weariness, that we were not even aware of Elke's agony. Doba was ordered to stay out of her room, but like the devoted mother, she would sneak in often and do all she could. And who knows, whether or not her devotion brought on the second crisis which saved our daughter's life. That is another memorable day in our life together.

* * * *

This was the beginning of what is known in Hebrew as "Meshane Mokem—Meshane Mazel," (change of place—change of luck). We accepted all these punishments of God as Job did, the biblical martyr. God had tested Job by punishing him with all sorts of illness, ordeals and difficulties. But He never attacked Job's soul. We had experienced a similar situation. Very seldom has a household gone through so many catastrophes as ours. But we survived and remained together. Gradually we were all on our feet again. Doba was saved from any illness and when spring came, the little ones required food, shoes, clothes. So that was a new problem—where to obtain funds to provide for our birdlings. No funds, and in addition, I, because of illness, not strong enough to do a day's work.

Worry and thinking do not solve problems, particularly financial. Something had to be done radically, and so I decided to indulge in fish peddling. But where, and to whom would I sell fish? Leib told me about a few places where I could dispose of my merchandise. He told me about a German settler's farm—that I should travel until I reached a white fence, turn to my left, and there I would find it, and probably could stay the night there. But there were many white fences, and how could I know which one Leib had had in mind. It grew dark and I travelled on a side road, disturbed and even frightened. God knows where it could lead me. The horses were hungry—they needed food and rest. In such instances, all sorts of stories enter one's mind—stories which add to one's misery and uneasiness. Only around ten in the evening did I hear the barking of a dog and notice a house. From the distance, it looked as if the house were unoccupied, but soon I heard a man's voice inquiring what I was doing there so late at night. Weak and tired as I was, I told him my purpose of com-

ing. He believed me, and convinced that I was not a loafer, he told me to yoke the horses and put them in the stable. Then I followed him like a calf follows a cow. He led me to a small room upstairs with hardly any light. I fell on the bed, cried for a moment and before long I was asleep. I didn't even think of food.

Around three in the morning, I was awakened by a lot of noise. The whole house seemed in commotion. People were singing, dancing, praying and when I heard the name of the Nazarene spoken, I realized that it was Christmas. I could not sleep anymore. The next day they were all tired and drunk. The farmer gave me some food, pointed out the road and stated that after I crossed a dry lake about ten miles from the place, I would reach a little town. My only hope was that the horses would be able to carry the load and with my usual unbroken faith in God, I finally reached the so-called metropolis. It was about ten in the morning. The Christmas spirit prevailed everywhere. People were still sleepy from the eve before. For a moment, I faced a dilemma. What could I, a Jew, do on Christmas day in the town? My will power, however, and cognizance that was a provider for my family, left no alternative. I placed my wagon in an alley, took some fish from the wagon and approached the first house I saw. A neatly dressed man opened the door, asked me what I wished and when I related my purpose, he said: "I am the State attorney of North Dakota," and he asked me to follow him. For a moment I felt as if I was in a quagmire, but soon all the fear was gone. He led me to my wagon, selected several fish for which he paid very well. Before he departed, he told me to go to the others and tell them he sent me. At three in the afternoon I had a purse full of money. I bought a few crackers which constituted my meal, then continued on my journey. At night, I slept again at a farmer's home, but already a "rich man". Even Rothchild could not have compared his wealth with mine—the whole world belonged to me. And plans of what to do with the money occupied most of my thoughts. The next afternoon I reached a village where the people welcomed me with friendliness and before long, I sold the greatest part of the fish. My pockets were heavy with silver currency. There were no lakes around this village and fish were scarce. I was about 60 miles from home. mine was quite smooth without difficulties. But actually, it was not so "altogether". After supper, at the farm, I fed my horses and the farmer fed his. He had a wild one that didn't like company while being fed. No one could come near it, or even pass by—if one did, it I had to sleep another night at a farm. Altogether, this journey of

disturbed the creature and it greeted you in a manner that could cause serious physical harm, if not complete annihilation. The farmer had not warned me, and not being aware of the danger. I led my horses to the well for a drink. Passing by, I was hit by Branke—as it was called—and only a miracle prevented serious trouble. But it was bad enough. I had to be carried to the house. My leg swelled badly. Almost all through the night, I kept yelling, "Doba, Doba!"

The next morning the pain was still severe, but I could not stay there longer. The farmer helped me to yoke the horses. I hardly dragged myself downstairs. Then, "Hayda"!—as the Russian peasant calls—I proceeded to the nearest town, where I disposed of the remainder of my fish. I also visited a doctor who bandaged my foot and gave me pills to ease the pain. I used all the pills, but could not swallow them. Again to the doctor, who told me to crush them. He also advised me to go home immediately, for one never knows but what my injury could develop into if I kept on traveling. On the wagon, appealing to the horses I was on my way home. When I was only ten miles from the farm, one of the animals laid down, breathing heavily and would not move. I pleaded with God, why does He treat me like this and besides, Doba and the children were expecting me home. Applying my meagre veterinary experience, I brought Bessie on her feet and we were again on the go. I recalled a story about the great Jewish saint, "Baal Shem", who travelled thousands of miles with a poor, weak and lean horse.

It could hardly move on its feet. The story is something like this:

"He led his horse and meditated . . . The animal listened to his plea . . . We must work hand in hand . . . You to the wagon yoked . . . You know my wife must be ready for Sabbath . . . The wagon, a seat and wheel . . . You yourself a sack of grain . . . I would not use my whip . . . You know how to make this trip . . . The animal groans and feels the burden . . . We must be friendly, then we'll have food . . . Suddenly, his patched coat tore, his old shoes almost fell off his feet . . . Do not be desperate, as Michael with his houseful of infants or as the aged Yoel always silent, waiting in front of the synogogue for a meal . . . Yes, my friend, it is not good, says the horse, but do not worry, I'll bring you home!"

I would have liked to ask God a few questions, but overwhelmed with joy, I only pleaded with Him, not for myself but for my people.

"Pour your anger upon those who do not know You. Upon those who persecute Israel so mercilessly. As in the old days, the Egyptians—punish them for the reasonless hatreds towards us. Remember your promise to our father Abraham; That you will the children of Israel multiply, like sand on the beaches and stars in the sky. Pour your anger upon those who do not call Your name, reward them as they deserved to be rewarded."

Absorbed by my pleas to God, I hadn't noticed that I was in front of my home. Doba and the children were overjoyed. The house was in great commotion. Bessie brought me home as she promised; the moment the wagon stopped, she lay down again. This time, truly ill. But a while later she recovered. I too, was happy to be with my family and I forgot my pain which was still severe.

Doba as usual took fine care of me and soon the sore foot was healed.

Satan however, thought that his attacks upon us had not been sufficient. Although, still, all that occurs is under God's supervision. And who knows, perhaps I had to pay a debt for someone else to balance the heavenly books that are true and correct. We never know the reasons for, nor whose sins we are made responsible for, and in the Bible it is said that every Jew is responsible for the actions of the other, even for the entire people, some sort of a mutual responsibility. Questions as to how and why, therefore, are useless. We correct our errors by accepting God's punishment and consider them a blessing for our souls. That was the case with me and my beloved partner.

Satan always appears in the image of a human being.

One day, Alex, Zelda's husband, came to me with a proposition to buy a business in Winkler, Canada, where he lived. He assured me that he was prompted by sympathy to the family and he would like to see us get rid of the misery we live in. His flattery and persuasive way of approach made us believe him. I sold the farm, 329 acres of land, paid my debts accumulating a net sum of \$1500. I obtained two currency bills—one for \$1000 and another for \$500, so I would not use the money for any other purpose. In Winkler, I saw fixtures and merchandise. Not knowing yet the inside story of the business, we concluded the deal. I was glad that Alec recommended

the purchase of this business; he on the other hand poisoned me with his love.

In spite of them all knowing my pedigree, I have again related to them my full knowledge of business. Those experienced businessmen looked me over and from what I gathered, I could see that they considered me a good but not yet ripe vine. I told them about the experience I possessed after 13 years of labor on the farm and had \$1500 in cash. And here it is, I said.

As I have already stated, God punishes and blesses at the same time. After a brief deliberation, Mr. Stoberton said that only if I trust him and will consider him my representative, would he let me take over the store. Eagerly, but bewildered, I agreed. Thus, Mr. S.—God bless his memory—took my money and told me to come the next day when all the agreements and other papers would be ready for signature. The next day I signed the contract which was dictated personally by Mr. S. and as you see, I was now in business—the owner of a store in Canada!

The agreement was written to my advantage and in my favor. In all my dealings with non-Jews, I always had their confidence.

Now I am in the office—a boss. I am happy and I think the whole world is mine! Money pours into the office on a wire. Alex is the manager, he loads wagons of merchandise; he peddles, but not a cent comes in return. My dream did not last very long; I realized that things were far from being orderly. For articles which were priced one to three dollars, people offered 20c. The merchandise was old, and out of style. I began to see light; I did not make a good deal after all. And Alec is betraying me every moment of the day. He will ruin me yet. If I call his attention to or express my disfavor with his action, he tells me that he is a partner. The situation developed from bad to worse. When I at last told him in plain words that he is not to do or touch anything without my approval, he assumed the role of my worst enemy and even threatened to kill me, a thing he was capable of. On evenings, Alex, with a group of hoodlums, would come in front of the store and do all they could to disrupt the business and disturb me. My only hope was in God and Mr. S. who wrote me that he hasn't forsaken me and that I should not worry. If I had troubles with creditors or others, I should let him know. Mr. S. a real angel on earth, in the image of a man.

The house we lived in was very small, so I bought a new, larger one. But before I moved in, a new misfortune overshadowed our family. Brina was about 3-4 years old. Rachmiel was a baby yet and very weak, he was born in the seventh month. Breine complained of a pain in the eye. Winkler had no doctors, so we took her to one in the neighboring city. He gave her some eye drops, which endangered the sight in both her eyes. Doba and Brina then went to Winnipeg, where Dr. Goode, an eye specialist, warned us that unless an operation was performed immediately, she may lose her sight completely. Fortunately we had a good friend in Winnipeg and he and his family, may God bless their memory, were immensely helpful. He was like a father, he carried food to the hospital daily which was 3 miles away from town. Doba suffered greatly; the story she later related to me could fill the page of a book. Dr. Goode was a fine, good natured man, became attached to Brina and did all he could. He performed the operation and instilled hope in us. With Doba away from home, two more complications and quite serious ones have developed. Rachmile became ill, an illness which very few children survive and if they do, they remain crippled. Such an illness deserved as much attention as Brina's eye. But that is not all. I myself got into trouble by scratching my hand while opening a bottle of nails. It happened many a time before on the farm, but in this case with an infection that could lead to blood poison.

Dobe away, business needed to be attended to, and the store without the boss. The help in such instances, mostly "helped themselves". A desperate and helpless situation.

In our religious books it is written: that God created not only our own planet but millions of others, inhabited by his creatures. What and who they are, we do not know—we do not and probably will never know. Accordingly, every creature, every human being is a world in itself. Everyone of us must reveal his actions before the Heavenly Father. He has a court, where the prosecutor and defender argue each and every case. It is upon the records of all of us that the verdict of the case is mostly made. Doba and I must have had a record of good deeds which gave our Heavenly attorney evidence to defend us before the High Tribunal.

When I write these lines, I am already 73 years old and Doba 67. During our life time, we faced many difficulties, struggles and ordeals. But always managed with the help of God to survive. A few friendly neighbors took care of me, brought me some anti-poison pills, dissolved them in hot water, bandaged my sore hand and eventually I

was out of danger. One night, I spent in agony. But the next day I could attend to business and to the household. I was saved from destruction, physical and financial. When Doba returned home from Winnipeg we moved into the new house, solidified our family life and looked for a rest all of us needed so badly.

Weak, run down and underweight, I had to improve my physical condition. Before long, I gained weight, more than I wanted to, and was ready for real business. The store was a real headache, but I didn't lose my head. I looked around, schemed, planned and endeavored to find a way out. I knew that something radical must be done, because I am the husband of the most endeared woman and the father of children whom I love and respect. I tried and as the saying goes, if you try God helps you.

To begin with, I ordered new merchandise, but not enough of it. The people in the vicinity liked bargains, but I didn't have the necessary cash. The little I had on hand was far from being sufficient to get anywhere. But it seems that these were my good seven years. I gave a great deal of thought as to how to rid myself of the difficulties and had decided to go to Winnipeg to consult my good friend Mr. S. As usual, he listened to me very attentively and with his fatherly affection he advised me to go home, start the sales and if anyone shall hinder me or ask any questions, I should refer them to him. The little town of Winkler had a few other stores and their proprietors of course did not like my competition of sales. In his conversation, Mr. S. told me that ten cents in cash is more valuable than a \$100 in dead merchandise. He also told me to keep him posted on the results.

The moment the sales began, the store was full of people. At the beginning, little and awhile later, big money poured in. I was told not to make any deposits in the bank. I kept the money with me or gave it to Doba. I used to go to Winnipeg frequently to exchange small currency for larger. When I accumulated a few thousand dollars, I again visited Mr. S. who advised me not to give a single cent to anyone, but wait for his further instructions.

He called a meeting of all the wholesale creditors who, after long deliberations, decided that the man whom I bought the store from should take it over again, for he was the largest creditor. I owed him a few thousand dollars. We signed the necessary agreements and inventory had to be taken. This time, however, I wasn't "green" any-

more and applied the Biblical saying, "An eye for an eye". I was 10% in arrears; the creditors scratched it off and I was again a free man. A new and happier life began for all of us. We all recovered from the illness and plans how to improve our family life occupied all my time now. Dora, Doba's sister, lived with us. She was a healthy, good looking girl and she had many young suitors for many young men were eager of her company. At last, Phillip Goddmann was the lucky man. They were engaged and soon married. The wedding was a big affair. The entire Jewish population of Winkler as well as of the neighboring towns were present. Dora and her husband left for a nearby town where Phillip worked and earned their livelihood.

At last we moved to Winnipeg. Before leaving, we presented the community of Winkler with a holy scroll. Our departure was friendly and the storekeepers, Jewish and non, volunteered to provide us with eggs, chickens and other products so that we may start some business in the metropolis of our new residence. In a new town, the largest we ever lived in, new people, new circumstances, environment, we were a little fearful at first. Doba and I and the seven children, moved into a new house on Magnas and Aikins, adjoined by a corner lot.

The joy was overwhelming. The day we moved into this old—for us new—house we felt as if we were participating in a great feast. At last we are in a community where the children will have a Jewish atmosphere, be able to get Jewish education and the tradition of our parents.

Abram was already 12 years old, a fine understanding and devoted boy. All the children attended public and religious schools. We were happy to guide them, particularly Doba. I'll never forget when I earned the first dollar selling chickens. I dreamed about big business, to be able comfortably to provide for my family. I wanted wealth, not for myself, but for my children and to be able to help others.

I acquainted myself with various people, especially Schneur Diner, whom later I befriended very intimately. Discussions took place, advice was given and the result was a decision to erect a new building on the vacant lot; on top of this a new home, with a store beneath where I should open a grocery. As a man of action, within a few months the building was ready.

The moment arrived. We moved into the new building, and commenced the planning of our new business. We ordered the products, though I was not sure which, and the day of opening arrived. The store was full of all kinds of merchandise. I distinctly recall the first

customer, a woman who came to buy rice for a quarter. I was so excited that instead of three I gave her six pounds. Before long, I was an expert and successful grocery man. All in the family were occupied with the new enterprise. The railroad workers trusted me with their payroll checks, for which I was compensated. And in general, we were quite successful. Zeepah and Abram were excellent aides, particularly when I had to go downtown to buy additional products. The population was Russian speaking and my meagre knowledge of the language helped me a great deal.

Soon I found myself in the meat business, opened a butcher shop, had to engage more people to care for that part of the business, as I myself knew very little of it. The outside aid was not always trustworthy, but as time went on, also this situation improved. I started to build cottages and sell them with good profit. I almost forgot that we promised to have at least 12 children. Soon, we had a new arrival, Scheindel, who always has been and is until this very day, a very dear lovely and devoted child. Our life was a real paradise that reached its climax when our oldest, Abram, celebrated his Bar-Mitzvah. We had a big gathering, attended by the teacher, Rabbi Kahanovitch, many neighbors we had already befriended. It was a memorable and pleasant day. In spite of the fact that we were, relatively speaking, newcomers, we were already known among the Jews and non-Jews. The name of Calof was never a shame. It might be of to you my dears, why we were so benevolently treated by God. Let me tell you a few brief words worth remembering.

First, common sense and faith. These lead men to God. Goodness and refinement lead to human manners. The third and most important is what is known in Hebrew Sholem Bayis—peace in the household. It is defined in our ancient books as "Paradise on Earth". Peace in a family invites God's blessing and it is the most human expression that brings joy and pleasantness.

It is needless to say that our house was 100 per cent Kosher. D's father, Shloime Menashe, and her sister, Teibel, came from the old country. D's father was a very interesting man. A rare specie of a man to be found anywhere—particularly in America. He was extremely religious, very learned and as far as Kashrut is concerned, he wouldn't trust anyone but D. This, no doubt, caused difficulties in preparing the special meals for him. I had to go with him to the synagogue on Saturdays and holidays, observe all the rules and traditions in a true chassidic (very religious) manner. It was a real

pleasure and honor for anyone in any family to have him in the house. It meant, as stated above, more work for D. but she did it with great zeal and devotion cognizant that she is observing one of the ten commandments: "Honor thy Father." He lived with us a few years until he died. Teibel married in our house.

Business was very good. I made some good real estate deals and before long, I was worth about fifty thousand dollars, mostly in property but with a good name and credit in the bank. At that time our little girl Mendele, blessed be her memory, became ill. The apartment over the store had a room that served as a dining-living and what-not room in general. Many a time it was an interesting scene to observe D's sister and her four children who were also with us. When Dora had to give birth to a new child, she wouldn't go anywhere else but to us. Thus, our three bedrooms and the dining room turned out to be a little hotel and boarding house. It was a difficult job. And one may wonder how we managed. The floors were full of children and everyone of them wanted something different. They frequently got all mixed up, not only with their clothes, but even with their feet and other parts of their bodies. When they invaded the table for food, with mother in the centre, it was an unforgettable scene.

In the morning D was busy getting the children off to school and when they returned in the afternoon, the same process started all over again. In addition, she had to provide food for her sister Dora. In those days, I had frequent lumbago attacks and D had to take care of me. The dining room was filled with "secrets" and D, in spite of being so busy, also took care of some poor, green neighbors. But as usual, D had patience, understanding and love and health, and these were the reasons for being able to attend to the multiple obligations. Mindele's condition became very grave and I lost my patience. I advanced new plans on how to make our life easier. And this meant—to make more money. A weakness of human nature that frequently leads to unpleasant consequences. A man should be content, especially when he has a good income. We had to face these consequences.

It looked as if the sun that warmed and shined over us disappeared beyond the clouds and would never reveal its gold again. Mindele was very ill. We sold the grocery store, a good and profitable business, and I devoted myself exclusively to real estate. That would not have been so critical if the country in general were not on the verge of a crisis. I bought a whole block of lots for the price of \$10,000. I worked out plans to make the new deal go on successfully.

First, I commenced the building of a house for the family. The area had no water or sidewalks and I had to plead with the city officials to implement these deficiencies.

When we dug the foundation people thought we were building a hospital, so large it looked. Meanwhile we moved into a house on Alfred Street. In the fall our new home, with all modern improvements, was ready, including a tabernacle, which is still on the roof of the kitchen. By the way, our grandmother, Yocheved was already with us too.

When we were about to move into the new house, real estate was very poor. Rumors were spread that real estate dealers lost heavily and that rich people overnight were candidates for the poorhouse. I was not excluded and had to struggle to sell my deeds. It was a critical stage but I wasn't victimized completely. Without exception all of us faced shortages and it was very difficult. Our new son, Aaron, was a very stubborn child. Our little and beloved Mindele died. One does not need too much imagination to visualize the situation of a father finding himself unable to comply with the requests and needs of his children. In such circumstances the only consolation is a devoted, understanding partner and friend. That was D. Without her, I would never have been able to overcome and survive all the difficulties I had to encounter.

Timber business was my next endeavor. In partnership with my brother Leib and my cousin Moishe. I should have done that myself, but, as always, I considered their conditions and took them in. That was another of my unbearable experiences. Through forests champs at night, wolves and bears around me, sleeping with Indians in one bed, always afraid of the cash I carried with me, the business didn't last very long. I could not be everywhere at the same time and my partners on the other hand relied on me. And because of that, they turned out to be my enemies. All was wrong and every day we were nearer to collapse.

Suddenly, we noticed that Zeepah was limping. The doctor told us that she must cast her foot for three months and then he would be able to decide what to do. The time elapsed and her condition was still very grave. We took her to a specialist who ordered an immediate operation which was performed. It was a painful experience watching the doctor drain the puss from her foot. Days, weeks and months passed, until we heard the good news that the foot was saved.

It took three years, however, before Zeepah could walk again. The economic situation has not been very favorable either. Only due to my good non-Jewish friends could I go on with my real estate business, make and sell agreements. That kept me on my feet and from being subjected to complete failure as many other real estate dealers. During all these ordeals I managed to keep my name clean and honorable.

The Holy Bible teaches us not to do any harm to anyone . . . One had to live his own life and not interfere with others . . . Rumors and gossip lead to destruction . . . Don't avail yourself of other's belongings . . . No one is to perish because of you . . . If one has made a name for himself, keep your tongue to yourself . . . Do not take away any business from the other man . . . You may be the cause of his perishing . . . Do not be influenced by evil and barbarism . . . Don't enjoy other people's suggestions . . . If someone is in difficulties, do not do anything to increase them . . . On the contrary, help and encourage him . . . Live with your family in peace and be loyal to them . . . You'll be compensating by leading a joyful life . . . Behave honestly and truthfully . . . Be content with what you have . . . Be careful before you contemplate any action . . . Teach your children the Jewish way of life . . . Help your friends in need . . . You'll have then no difficulties to feed the family . . . Do not forsake the Jewish teachings . . . It will have upon you a divine bearing.

When I married my beloved mate Doba, I made a vow, so to speak, that I would support her and any children that we might have. Then, there were difficult times and I could not bear to see how my family was beginning to feel the panic that had overtaken the whole world and us as well. But, in my vocabulary there were no such words as "can't do this", or "can't do the other thing", To paraphrase the words of the learned Maggid of Vilna—"Where there is a will there is a way", or "God helps him who helps himself".

At that time, I realized my mistake in building so large a house and not even my pride prevented me from taking steps to get rid of the beautiful residence which we had just completed building only several months before. An opportunity presented itself to trade this new home for an old run-down one, way down Dufferin Avenue, which was a stable by comparison with the one we had just built. To my dying day I will never forget the let-down feelings and disappointment that Doba and I had when we had to part with our Machray Avenue home. But, for a fact, the new house had not been lucky for us.

"A drowning man will hang on, even to a straw", was in my calculations at that time. The house on Dufferin Avenue had a small grocery store in it with a branch postoffice, as well as a dwelling which we could sub-let. I figured that from all these I could for the meantime eke out a livelihood for my family; but try as I did, those times were too difficult and I was unable from this business, to make ends meet for our large family.

Once again I must marvel and admire the courage and fortitude of my Doba in adjusting herself to this new kind of difficult living and accepting it with her saying, "Perhaps God wills it so".

It must have been God's will, for our move certainly appeared without any sane reason. A few months after we moved to that old and dark home I threw all my efforts into earning any kind of a livelihood, but to no avail. We sucered for a few months and it appeared that not only were we in danger of losing our house, but our health as well. I kept up the struggle, never giving up hope, but finally we were compelled to move from there and seek other means of earning a living.

I recalled the Hebrew saying, "Change your abode and change your luck". But what could I do with this old house which no one would buy? The best I could do then, was to exchange the house for a prairie farm somewhere in Saskatchewan. This did not better our lot at all, and from there we moved to a cottage which was even worse to live in than the previous one we had.

In times like those, anyone would ordinarily lose hope and faith, but not Maier with Doba at his side and our faith in the Almighty! One fine afternoon I walked into the real estate office of a well-to-do man, Mr. Black, who was the proprietor. He recognized at once that I was in trouble and he insisted that I tell him of our predicament, namely, that our family had nowhere to live.

Mr. Black deliberated for a while and then said, "Do not worry, I have a fine bargain for you in a fine home on Selkirk Avenue. You do not need much cash as down payment." I forced myself to chuckle, when I told him that I did not have even five dollars to pay down on the house. But we were to have this house on Selkirk Avenue, for Mr. Black drew up an Agreecent of Sale and advanced the down payment himself, and told me to get ready to move as soon as we wished.

Ferber
PHYSICS

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY *Physics*

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Foster, James. **A short course in general relativity**, by James Foster and J. David Nightingale. 3rd ed. Springer, 2006. 292p bibl index afp ISBN 0387260781 pbk, \$59.95

Orig

As a short course on general relativity, this book (1st ed., CH, Jul'80; 2nd ed., 1995) joins the large number of other works at about the same level of mathematical sophistication either partially or completely devoted to general relativity, e.g., *Introduction to Relativity*, by William D. McGlinn (CH, Jun'03, 40-5857); *The Tapestry of Modern Astrophysics*, by Steven N. Shore (CH, Apr'03, 40-4591). The Foster-Nightingale book seems to display its origin as class notes made into a book. Very compact and concise, the presentation is clear and the choice of subjects standard. However, it is so dominated by the mathematics of the subject that it displays little by way of physical insight and is virtually devoid of any of the considerable data associated with modern cosmology, despite the chapter "Elements of Cosmology." It is presumably aimed at senior undergraduate and first-year graduate students, and would require much mathematical sophistication in students to be suitable at the undergraduate level. Further, the instructor would have to supply much of the "justification" for the math and all of the "romance" of the subject. It could serve very well as a handy resource for the outlines and basic applications of general relativity.

Summing Up: Optional. Upper-division undergraduates; graduate students.—
K. L. Schick, *emeritus, Union College (NY)*

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Imagine our joy and happiness when we made ready to move in on Selkirk Avenue! Our faith in God, that He will not forsake us, was stronger than ever.

Next, the problem of providing food for the children—there were nine youngsters running around at the time and the tenth one on its way. I can offer thanks to God for these three things: A wonderful wife, Doba, good children and a good name, which is more valuable than all the money in the world. And our neighbors on Selkirk Avenue, both Jews and non-Jews alike, imagined that Mr. Calof was at least a "half-millionaire". It wasn't long before one day, I had a caller with a proposition. A man who was in the lumbering and logging business in Russia. He used to cut down the timber, float the logs down the rivers to the sawmill and make them into lumber. In this country, too, lumbering was a good business, but it required a capital investment of at least \$100,000. The proposition interested me very much because I would undertake anything, no matter how difficult, in order to earn a living for my beloved family. Said and done!

The two of us travelled to a small town in Ontario in the woods and lake country. There we rented a canoe, and an Indian guide accompanied us and paddled the canoe and we had maps to direct us to the timber land. In the canoe we crouched upon our knees and held on to the sides of the canoe with our hands. The Indian guide warned us to remain steady in the canoe—he shoved off with his oar and we were gliding upon the lake like a bird. We had to portage once through wooded land, carrying the canoe upon our shoulders for over a mile until we reached water again.

Finally we reached the shore near our destination. Into the woods the three of us went. All we could see was trees and sky. We stayed close together for fear of getting lost. It was getting dark towards evening and the Indian guide took us back to where our canoe was supposed to be, but it was gone. Strong winds had come up and raised waves on the lake, but we finally located the canoe a little further down the shore from where we left it.

The guide explained to us the danger of crossing the lake in this stormy weather. He said that he could paddle the canoe alright but if it should upset we would surely be drowned. We certainly did not like that. But night was falling and we could hear various animal noises, informing us that they knew we were their unexpected visitors.

We decided, nevertheless, to camp there overnight. We built a camp-fire in a hurry to keep the wolves and bears away. Our Indian guide made a bed for himself out of twigs and leaves. My partner spread out his coat and the two of them dozed off right away. They instructed me to be sure to keep the fire burning. This I did. I broke up branches and fed the fire. I shall never lose the memory of that night with its strange sights and noises.

Towards dawn the woods became quieter. I woke up the two men and we started off again. I was quite fatigued and was glad when we finally arrived back in town. On our return trip home on the train, I knew that I would never want to see the timber country again.

But as always, God led me forward and this time as by a miracle. As you are all aware, there were many Jewish businesses on Selkirk Avenue. One in particular, among these, was a feed-store owned by a Mr. Ginsberg. He operated it for several years and could not make a go of it. Several times, I wandered into his store and saw that he was not suited for this business—he had no business sense and did not know how to handle his customers. One day, when I called in, Br. Ginsberg said, "Mr. Calof, you have a lot of money, why don't you buy my business and enlarge it? I'm sure you can do much better at it than I am doing." If he had asked only five dollars for his business I could not have bought it, so how could I think of it? But he persisted. His place was very badly neglected he had a wagon that was falling apart, a horse that was lame, a few bales of hay, a few sacks of oats and a few other feeds. All in total, he asked four hundred dollars. I wanted to buy the business, but where could I get the four hundred dollars?

I needed to earn a living for my family right away. I was well-known in several large business houses and could perhaps have obtained a job with one of them, but I could not write English and furthermore, I had no desire to work for someone else, as I believed myself to have good qualifications for business. There was a wealthy man who owned a large coal and wood business, whom I knew, and I called in on him for advice. Within five minutes only, I was out of there with the four hundred dollars. Within a few days I was the owner of the feed-business on Selkirk Avenue.

There were several feed businesses in the city that were long established and had done well, and I therefore, also had hopes that,

God willing, I would also be successful in time. I set myself diligently to work to build up this business. I had the aid of little Abraham, who used to come after school to deliver small orders. In time I added several more lines, such as flour, chicken feed, potatoes and others, and as the business grew I had to hire a man to do the deliveries. We delivered until ten or eleven o'clock at night, because the orders were very small and scattered over the city. Things became better for us as the business improved. We now had more money with which to buy food and other necessities for our family.

Things did not run smooth for long in our family. Doba's father took seriously ill just as we were expecting another child. Her father did not recover and died two days before the "briss" of our new-born son, who was named Shlomeh after him. Such is life—a birth, a briss, a funeral, all together; and I myself was not feeling well on account of my lumbago, which would keep me in bed for several weeks at a time. Nevertheless, we overcame all these in time, and I set myself with renewed enthusiasm to build up my feed business.

As I write this biography, the year is 1941, and the Second World War is in full flame. I thank the Lord that we and our children are in the blessed land of America, the United States. I am reminded of a request in verse form, which I wish to record at this point:

*"I have request of you, dear Uncle Sam,
Free all lands enslaved by Nazi-Fascist clan,
Show to the world that a true uncle you are,
Your needy brothers and cousins help from afar,
Send them food, planes all with open hand
Preserve thereby, liberty in this our dear land.
Drive the two robbers from land and sea
This, dear Uncle Sam, is my request of thee."*

As mentioned above, I had very fine non-Jewish friends such as those of the Windatt Coal Company, who loaned me the four hundred dollars for the purchase of my business; Mr. Black, of the real estate office, who provided us with a home, one of the largest Insurance Companies (who refused to carry insurance on Jewish homes); also the reliable and reputable law firm of Andrews and Andrews, whose advice and help was always offered to me; and the influential Northern Elevator Company, whose manager, Mr. Lehman, was really an angel from heaven in human form. With the help of God and with co-operation and assistance of these and other men of good character,

I built up a very fine feed business in time, which was everybody's envy.

In those days, there were no trucks in use, and everybody used many horses and each business recommended my feed store to others for reliable and honest dealings. Soon my feed business required more capital and better and more expensive merchandise for the better customers. Mr. Windatt sent me to see Mr. Lehman, manager of the elevator company for a line of credit. In those times, the price of oats was very high, all cash and no credit to anyone, and it sounds incredible, but my credit with the grain elevator was raised to as high as ten thousand dollars.

As the Jewish saying goes, "Nothing is impossible in God's will." There came into my small feed business, a young intelligent man named Barber, from England, of fine family and well recommended. He became my salesman and went out in search of new business. It wasn't very long at all before we needed three deliveries, for my salesman could sell "ice to the eskimos". He brought in a great many new orders and took away a great deal of business from the large and old-fashioned feed companies. Things became lively. I, as head of the firm, had to see that everything ran smoothly and that many good customers were satisfied and well-treated. I therefore, made a trip to the Mennonite country in Saskatchewan, where the better quality of oats is grown. There I purchased several carloads of oats, which made quite a favorable reputation in town for my feed business, as the place where the best feed is sold. Our business grew and prospered as profits increased. People couldn't figure out how we did it, but so it continued for over a year. Then we found that our premises were not large enough and there was the problem of obtaining more men for deliveries, more horses and wagons. Wagons were to be obtained, but a larger building was a more difficult obstacle to overcome. However, I saved up some money and did not waste any time investing it by building a few houses, also began earnestly making plans to accommodate my increased number of customers.

To transgress a bit, I omitted to mention that just about this time our Sid came into the world. I like to narrate the circumstances of his birth to explain why he was dark complexioned. When Dobbba was giving birth to Sid, I called in our family physician, Dr. Branson, but unfortunately he was busy on another case and we were obliged to call in another doctor. Just as the latter began to deliver the child, Dr. Brandson arrived and seeing the other man on the case, he became

angry and left. Thereupon, the other doctor, not wishing to continue with the case because of his sense of professional ethics, also refused to carry on and he left too. Just at that moment, there was a power failure in the city, lights went out and street-cars stopped running. That gave me just the time I needed to catch up with Dr. Brandson. I prevailed on his usual good and kind nature and he immediately agreed to return. The case-room was dark and we lit candles. Under such auspicious circumstances, Sid was brought into the world, and I attribute his dark complexion to the dim light under which he was born.

And so, the number of children reached ten, a "Minyan." It is hard to visualize how Doba managed with these ten small kiddies. We then purchased a cow which we kept at the rear of our house, right on Selkirk Avenue. It looked a superhuman task to rear so many children, but she did it, and well, too.

At that time I had a few lots near the C.P.R. Shops in Transcona, which I owned in partnership with a Mr. Cronson. We sold them to several Ukrainians. One of these was the owner of one of the best horse-and-buggy sets in the city. The team of horses alone was worth six hundred and fifty dollars. I traded with this man a few of these lots that were not worth very much for his "grand" team and buggy. When I would drive them to the store, I sure was the envy of everyone and they estimated my wealth at over one hundred thousand dollars. And on Sundays, when we took the family for an outing, it sure was a beautiful sight.

By now, with the improvement in our financial position, we began to think of a larger and more attractive home. Soon, we came in possession of our house at 393 College Avenue, which played so important a part in the next 20 years that we lived there. And with the acquisition of a new home, came the desire for an enlarged place for my feed business, and as hesitation and procrastination were not in my nature, it did not take long.

I purchased on the corner of Aikins Street and Stella Avenue, a lot with a small house on it, and began making plans to erect a large warehouse for my feed business. This meant raising an amount of approximately thirty-five thousand dollars. This was difficult as a mortgage was not obtainable for more than fifteen thousand dollars, and the maintenance expenses of such a building would be very heavy too. It so happened that a Mr. Buckwold, a baker, was in need of

a modern bakery building. In short, I built an electric bakery for him containing three ovens, on the terms of a five-year lease at one hundred and fifty dollars per month. In addition, I built the ideal feed warehouse for myself. It was equipped with a chopping machine that made a mill-feed for horses and an electrical elevator that carried the feed upwards, milled it and automatically filled sacks—the first of its type in the city. When this building was completed, it became the “talk-of-the-town”—everybody talked about me, Dobba and the family. My financial worth was now estimated by people at two hundred thousand dollars. I purchased more horses, more delivery wagons and added more men to my staff. My reputation was well-established and I was even awarded the contract by lowest tender to supply the Winnipeg Fire Department with feed for their horses, as all their vehicles were only horse-drawn in those days.

My competitors could not understand how I was able to do this, and as a matter of fact (I myself felt that my success was jumping too fast). But I believe that there was no end to a man’s success. Live and learn, do not wait for miracles, but take the reins in your own hands and with determination and will-power, move ever forward. What you do for others, God will do for you. Do not judge by appearances of a vessel, but better see what is contained therein. You must work and labor to reach the shore’s edge.

I write these thoughts July 1st, 1941—perhaps, these might guide you in your later years:

*Suppress your pain and woes,
 Make peace with your fate,
 Laugh at your troubles and aches,
 Lose not your hope nor faith in God.
 Think that others are suffering more
 And your own will not feel so sore.
 Never blame others for your woes
 Have patience and trust in God,
 He alone can alleviate your condition.*

This is my advice to you, my children, based on my life’s experiences.

To continue my life’s story. Man digs, builds and rushes about. He only proves that all is vanity and man is a fool. The more riches

a man has, the more are his worries—his brain is always working overtime and his life's span is shortened. But one can only see this in retrospect, not in advance.

The warehouse took three months to build and we were ready to move in and operate. I had a large credit at the Bank of Toronto and the Northern Elevator Company treated me very well and helped me considerably to carry my large stocks. I added several lines of groceries and the business grew day by day.

But as I mentioned above, man does more harm to himself, by his own actions, than any outsider can do to him. Many men can fly higher and higher in the sky of success, but they cannot go against nature and eventually they will harm their health and fall from their high pinnacles. Our children were growing up nicely, handsome, healthy and with fine reputations. There were times when audiences of several hundred people waited with their meetings until the Calof sisters arrived. Those were the days when Zelpha and Leah were doing such fine social work. The Calof name was well-known in the city and the Calof home was a place where a visitor was always welcome and his comfort and needs were our first concern. We always sought to help others and, to this day, it is Doba's and my pattern of living. We hope that you, our dear children, will take this to heart also, and teach this to our grandchildren. When you will try to help others, God will surely help you. Sometimes very soon but without fail later. I have an example of this.

Mr. Lehman, the manager of the Northern Elevator Company, was like a father to me and always was thinking of ways to help me. He even tried to help me towards improving my health and had me go to see one of his doctor friends in Minneapolis, who did a great deal to alleviate my sufferings from lumbago in my back.

At that time, Moishe, of blessed memory, Sam's father, was in very bad circumstances and would not accept the help I offered him. I placed a few hundred dollars in an envelope under his pillow without his knowledge, and this is the note I enclosed in verse form:

*No matter, my friend, how dark the day,
Lose not your hopes, your worries allay,
Strive and aim and hide your tears,
Chin up and away with your fears.
Let not failure hide the light,
Darkness will soon turn to bright,
Today may be full of sorrow,
But joy is sure to come tomorrow.*

If these three thoughts you will heed, you will never need any other help. Remember whence you came and what your mission is in life, also that you will some day be called upon to give a reckoning of the days of your life."

Man is greedy and when he has a measure of success, he wants more and more and before long he neglects his own soul and health. It is as one climbs a ladder up and up, and often he is dazzled by the height as he goes higher. He loses his balance and starts to tremble. Therefore, dear children, heed my advice which I give you after many years of experience in living. Hang on to the little success and happiness that God grants you and enjoy it, and move forward by degrees. I, myself, could not see this at that time and rushed and chased for more and more earthly treasure. My business grew too fast and I was making plans to fly higher and higher. This was my undoing. I began to gather cash reserves with the idea of getting out of this wonderful business. Why I did this, I will never know or be able to explain. It looks like an act of fate that causes man to take wrong steps leading to his downfall. I neglected my feed business and a short time afterward, I advised my dear friend of the Northern Elevator Company, Mr. Lehman, that I could not pay my bills. I will always remember that dark day, for all my creditors were amazed that I was unable to pay my accounts. A meeting of the creditors was held and Mr. Lehman acted as chairman, as his company was the largest creditor. In this capacity too, he assisted my case very much and prevented me perhaps from being in legal trouble because of a mistake that the lawyer, Mr. Max Finkelstein made in my statement of voluntary bankruptcy. After the meeting, Mr. Lehman took my arm, comforted me and promised to help me further. In time, I paid up all my creditors, and many times he took his own payment and paid it over to others so that they would not press me. He had an extremely fine character and generous heart. Later he even helped me to get another business, which I never could have purchased without his endorsement. This I will relate later.

Believe me, dear children, it is surely true in the long run that "honesty is the best policy," for everything that a man gains by dishonesty and deceit, the devil will ultimately take away. But where does one find truth and honesty? A few rhymes, now, about truth and honesty.

*"Why, beloved one, upon this earth
Of truth there is a dearth,
Falsehood is visible as ever,*

*But honesty is to be seen never,
And has broken off with us for shame
And in its place falsehood came,
Perhaps Truth has been killed by the sword,
And made escape from the lying word."*

As mentioned above, by now I lost my business and was left with the ill-begotten money. And as you know, money is made circular for it "makes the rounds." After this mess, I became nervous and in ill-health, and was in urgent need of a rest. I had to get away from the city for awhile so as I would not have to face my former good friends who helped me so much before.

At that time, Moishe, Sam's father, was in the city and he had his home in Vancouver. We therefore, decided that I should leave with him for Vancouver for a while and try to forget my serious mistake. I was required to make payments of eighteen hundred dollars every month to my creditors. Of course, this monthly payment was too high and too difficult for me to meet, but Mr. Finklestein made this mistake in the legal documents at the time of my bankruptcy, and I was forced to accept it in order to escape more serious trouble. Any man who took things seriously as I did, such as these obligations that I undertook, could find no peace of mind or rest. In this situation, I had the encouragement and gentle comfort of my beloved partner, Dobba. Instead of aggravating a husband's troubles, as some wives are wont to do, she lightened my burdens and sweetened life's bitterness. Her soothing words were as a relief to the soul.

I am now seventy-three years of age and have been in poor health for thirteen years already. Dobba has never for one moment missed attending to the needs of her sick husband. I pray to God that He will spare her for many years to come in good health and happiness for all the 50 years of our blissful wedded life. This year, on August 17th, we will celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary. I pray too, that God will not separate us for many years to come. She is like unto the women that King Solomon depicted in his "Songs of Songs"—truly a blessing of God. I trust that you, dear children, will love and honor her for all the days that she will be spared to live, and cherish her memory always after she has passed on. Then will God cause you to have pleasure from your own children in return.

Now back to the story. I promised Dobba that I would go away

for a rest with Moishe, of blessed memory. As I had never been away from home before for any length of time, Moishe took me to visit several of his acquaintances along our route. Our first stop was in the town of Morris and I almost purchased a clothing business there, which would have been a poor and impractical venture. From there our next stop-over was at Swift Current, 600 miles from Winnipeg.

We stayed there for a few days as we knew many friends there. Now here again, new troubles began, especially for Dobba and the family. I can't explain what I did, except that it was my nature and I meant no harm but just couldn't help myself for always undertaking things that should have been avoided. We didn't go any further than this stop.

I confess to you, my dear wife, and you, my dear children, that I have sinned by deed and word. I pray to God that he will accept my repentance and you, too, my wife and children. Man is but a fool for aiming at things beyond his grasp. God created heaven and earth. He took the heaven for Himself and gave the earth for man's abode. Man has defiled the earth with strife and bloodshed and eternal war.

Several pages before, I tried in vain to explain why I made the colossal mistake of giving up the feed business. I wish to relate an incident which might be the key to the fateful decision. There was a man that sold me a carload of hay and then proceeded to steal all the hay out of the car. On the unwise advice of my lawyer, Mr. Finklestein, I had this man arrested. When the trial began, I did not have the heart to see this man go to prison, and I tried my best to see that he be set free. This man then sued me for false arrest. After a few weeks of delay and aggravation, the court ruled that I must pay him \$2,500.00 in damages. Mr. Finklestein, then launched an appeal against this decision and it cost me five hundred dollars more. That troublesome incident caused me to take into my mind the idea of giving up my feed business. I confess that I should have taken the sound and clever advice of my wife, confide all my plans in her and heed her wise judgment.

But, as I always maintained, money that was ill-gotten must return eventually to the devil.

During my stop-over in Swift Current, I found the town and district booming and prosperous. I wanted, too, to be one of the lucky ones and get rich quick, but usually such schemes have disastrous out-

comes. I saw one particular business, a general store that looked quite successful, and was owned by a Jewish man, named Demmels. I decided to risk my money in this business and as I was paying all cash he agreed to sell. As soon as I took over this business, I made a big sale and things looked good.

I communicated with Doba asking her to come out with the family, but she felt that it would be unwise to leave the city with the children. She sent me Abraham, David and Alec. That is the way I started as a Swift Current businessman. But the desire of more success, again caused my downfall. I left Abraham in charge of the business and embarked on another venture. The news reached us that the C.P.R. was about to build a station and townsite called Vanguard about 50 miles away and would run a branch-line from Swift Current. Moishe and I rushed to be the first to purchase lots there. We decided to build a hotel and a parlor for beer and liquor there, and we judged that especially the latter would be a good business in that district. We believed that we could become "millionaires" at this business, but we did our reckoning without the help of God.

In order to get the liquor vendor's license, the hotel had to be built according to government regulations, 32 rooms, full cement basement and other requisites. Lumber and building material had to be hauled 50 miles from Swift Current. There was a lot of complications and trouble and we were even afraid that we would not get the liquor license, owing to interference of competitors and enemies. To add to the aggravation, I took ill with lumbago and had to go to see a doctor at Minneapolis.

Upon my return, I had a great many things to do that Moishe had left undone in the way of finishing touches. These required careful attention, patience and above all a little faith that is always important when one is in difficult circumstances. Firstly, I had to accompany a government inspector to the hotel so that he could make his report and recommendations to the Saskatchewan Liquor Control Board at Regina for licensing purposes. You can well imagine that in those days (and especially as regards this type of business) there were politicians aplenty who were of corrupt character. It was my good fortune that this particular inspector was a farmer and easy to work with. He sent in his report to Regina and I waited anxiously for the "Day of Judgment" when I would have to go there and receive the license, which was to be in my own name. Everything hinged on this license—my whole future financially and my family's welfare. It was

with a feeling of awe that I waited in Regina, knowing full well that there would be obstacles and protests. I prayed often and made many vows and pledges to several charities.

I had an appointment before the Board at nine o'clock in the morning. Time crawled slowly until I finally heard the name of "Maier Calof" called. It did not take very long at all, and I passed all their requirements for a licensed hotelkeeper. I was overwhelmed with joy and walked away as if floating on air. It seemed that I was not only running—I was flying back home.

Alas, my joy was short-lived only and temporary. I believe now that a man should remain at his own trade or business. It was unwise to go far afield into swamp and marsh country and away from one's family.

The first night that I was at the hotel, I surveyed my newly acquired business. There was a felling of foreboding and premonition about it that warned me that things would not turn out well. Many a night I lay awake thinking how foolish I was to embark upon such a business. Especially after some evenings when I witnessed drunken brawls in the parlor and blood could be seen to flow after the blows. After, too, they would start to molest me and want me to drink with them. Many times I was in danger of getting hurt.

It was not long before a red-coated Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer arrived in town. He was a symbol of law, of discipline and peace and order was assured. I hung on for about six months and then decided to get out of the hotel business. I received fifteen thousand dollars goodwill for the business and leased the hotel at a monthly rental of six hundred dollars. After a short period, the tenant with the aid of the breweries was able to purchase the hotel at a price of forty thousand dollars; five thousand dollars cash and the balance payable at one thousand dollars per month at eight per cent interest. It was a good agreement-of-sale and I could at any time borrow money on it from any bank as the endorsers were excellent credit risks.

I returned to Swift Current, again considered by people to be a "half-millionaire." But "man plans, and God smiles." Again I began to look for further ventures. In an adjoining town, there was a wholesale liquor business to be purchased. The owner asked ten thousand dollars goodwill, but we worked fast and Moishe and I bought this business. It was an easy one to operate—no hard work, no

worry about license inspectors and profits were real good, about twelve thousand dollars a year. But I was foolish and not content with my new-found luck. I left the business in Abraham's care for he was quite capable of managing it himself; also I took in my brother Leib as a third partner. Then, Moishe and I left town to look around for a site to erect a new hotel. No more towns like Vanguard but we arrived at a small town called Abbey and there we made our decision.

Often it is the case when a man plunges into some ill-advised venture, and he sees that he is making a mistake, instead of retreating, he just goes in deeper and risks further.

The building for the hotel was finally completed, the license for liquor vending was obtained and the hotel was opened for business. But, things did not work out well; business was not even one-hundredth of the one we had at Vanguard. We began very soon to figure our next steps. Our wholesale business was still very good and I visited it often, but certain events, which I do not wish to describe here, caused me after about six months, to buy out Moishe's share and own the Abbey Hotel alone, with the assistance of David and Sam Ludwig, whom I brought out as caretaker. Bringing Sam Ludwig out there was a mistake, for I found out very soon that I myself had no place there.

After consulting with Abraham, I engaged a manager for the Hotel, but, before long things looked worse and the next decision was to look for a customer for the Hotel. I did find one, but he turned out to be the biggest swindler in all Canada. In short, as a result, I was left with no hotel, no money, but with loads of trouble.

I recall at this point, the simple prayers of Rabbi Levi of Bereditchev, who used to talk to God in humble colloquial language of his own troubles and those of his people.

There is a well-known parable about a worm that crawled into a root of horse-radish and it believed that there was nothing sweeter. So it was with me, that I began to think that there was no other way of living than among drunkards. That is how the "West" transformed me, and changed my mode of living. Owing to the fact that I had no money, and my previous failure, I was reluctant to return to Winnipeg. I could not bear to face my previous friends and acquaintances, especially since my departure from that city was cowardly and unmanly. This explains why I tried, together with Abraham to purchase another hotel. My determination was not to be stopped, and very soon we

purchased a hotel in a small town, populated mostly by French speaking people. If a person was one of their own people and spoke their language, he could do real well there, I imagined. But a Jew among French-Canadians, and a man like myself whose heart and soul was set on Winnipeg could not make a success in such towns as this.

After carrying on unwillingly for six months, I decided that come what may, I must return to where I belonged, where my dear wife and family were. Like a spanked dog, I returned to Winnipeg. However, I heeded the advice and comfort of my dear Doba and children and I had faith again that God would guide me further on the right track. Meanwhile, we needed the necessities of life and other comforts. Our suffering was not at an end yet, nor were we to reap the best enjoyment of our lives so soon. Together with my son-in-law, Hymie Field, we bought a general store in a small town in Saskatchewan. There, too, we could have made a fine living but somehow we were doomed to failure as if it were decreed that we must suffer for our very serious sin.

We returned home to Winnipeg, defeated and broken in spirit, minus enthusiasm and initiative to strive forward, and also, as always happens, in an ailing state of health. The strongest men, in health and spirits, often lose themselves in such circumstances. But, if God is with you and you have faith in Him, you ask no questions and accept your lot and carry on.

Business, generally, in Canada and particularly Winnipeg, was beginning to improve steadily. Merchandise was being turned over more rapidly and people began to earn a better living, make larger profits and save more. I did not know what to do or where to turn for my livelihood. So passed that winter.

As if by divine guidance, I felt an inward urge to attempt the upgrade, confident that I would have the assistance of the **One-On-High**. Light must follow dark and eventually dawn breaks through the depth of night. I was beginning to see a ray of light, not in the matter of material ambitions, but in the spiritual life. Our daughter Elkeh gave birth to her first child. What joy and hope our first grandchild brought us, and, I like to think that a new addition to the family also brings new and good luck, new zest for living, new ambition.

As we held the darling little grand-daughter and played with her, joy of spirits was within us and we were in a rejoicing mood of song

and dance. With renewed vigor, I sought a new business and my choice fell upon wholesale fruit. It was entirely new to me—new worries and new calculations. The fruit being perishable, goods had to be sold quickly, very soon after it was received, and this meant that we needed a large number of customers right from the start of our business. Also, there was the matter of capital. Because of my previous bankruptcy, my credit with the fruit wholesalers and especially the banks was not in good standing, to say the least. However, "seek and ye shall find." Every "venture" is an "adventure" and it takes time before one can reap the fruit of his labors.

We leased an old dark building near the mines. We were in the fruit business, but oh, so green at it! No knowledge whatsoever of the different fruits required for each of the seasons of the year. The wholesalers were very unco-operative, for they knew that the Calofs would build something up in time, as we did in the feed business and take away trade from the old established firms. Lang Brothers, mentioned to me in jest, "we hope it will not turn out the same way as your feed business." They remembered well our previous rise and fall.

I will never forget the first order that Abraham brought in for a few boxes of apples, reliable and trustworthy as he was, he forgot to enquire what size the customer wanted. And our delivery equipment! The old rickety wagon that danced a rhumba as it wiggled from side to side, and squeaked out a musical tune as it rolled. The horse was stubborn, small as he was, and many a time he carried through a "sit-down" and "lay-down" strike, or else instead of being driven by the driver, led the way to where he wanted to go. Many a day we were fatigued, disgusted and despondent. I lay awake, during many a night, asking God for advice and direction—perhaps if we should give up again. At first, it did not pay enough even for the rent. The banks would not advance anything, as loans for fruit business, they said, but I knew my "original sin" was in their minds.

Encouraged by my beloved Doba always, I worked on, one week, one year, then another year, in tough sweat and toil. After about three years when we were already beginning to make a meagre living, even then our enemies, began anew to plague us and aim to break us. It was a battle of cents against millions. What was I to do? I prayed to God and consulted a Rabbi's advice. I wrote to Rabbi Nachumze, of sacred memory. He advised me not to worry, that my competitors would tire of their ruthless competition and price wars and would seek a truce. And so it came to pass exactly. They did stop and asked

for peace. Now, listen further of another miracle of the Lord's making, such a miracle that really was a boon to our life.

As I write these words, it is May 10th—Mother's Day—the day when we reflect on the queen of our hearts, her deeds, sacrifices and love.

Also, I feel like reording my deep admiration and respect for the president of our dear United States, President Franklin Roosevelt—the champion of human rights everywhere, defender of liberty and the "forgotten man." We pray that our American army will fight oppression and wrong-doing everywhere in the world, and that fascist and nazi terrorists will be crushed completely.

After the Rabbi's forecast or prophecy came true, things turned for the better. The family was growing up and needed more. Especially the girls were maturing into little ladies. Oft we held family conference and discussed the various problems that arose in our little circle. My mind turned to expand the fruit business and I decided to take a trip to British Columbia, the origin of most of our fruit and buy direct from the growers. It would be a new experience for me to meet new people and would involve more capital, a better knowledge of types and qualities of fruits. But I was bent on the idea of this trip and before long I was on my way to the west. My train stopped at my destination—a small town in B. C.

I registered at the small and only hotel, spent the night and then set myself to the matter of making contacts with the fruit growers. Our firm's name was not known to anyone. Competitors of ours tried to hinder us, but it was to be that success should be our lot. Carloads of fruit began to roll—20 in number, and in a matter of only a few weeks. We made a handsome profit and established our reputation both in B. C. and in Winnipeg. People marvelled how it was possible for us as newcomers to the fruit business to grow so rapidly.

I realize now that a man must accept whatever is his lot in life to have—that's the only motto for true happiness. As the rabbi put it, "He is a rich man who is satisfied with his lot." I did not understand this really well at that time, as I was too occupied with the hustle and bustle of competition, trying to race with the others and overtake them in business. Now, of course, in my old age, I see the wisdom of that motto real clear, and I cannot urge it upon you, my children, too strongly nor too forcefully. Stop in your daily business

MIRACLES OF THE LIVES OF MAIER AND DOBA CALOF

grind to realize this truth. Do not treat my message to you too lightly but study it carefully and pass it on to your children and grandchildren.

People, by now, began to take notice of the Calofs and many were coming forth with various business proposals. With trust in God and genuine hard work we strived to secure our future. One man in particular came to us with a proposition to bring in apples from Ontario in bulk and then sell them to various stores throughout Western Canada. He wanted a one-half partnership. This business required an initial investment of three to four thousand dollars. We reached an agreement and decided to meet on the following Monday. I was always one to take chances and I decided to take this business risk. Before this man left, he called up someone in Grand Forks, North Dakota and ordered a carload of potatoes, of which there was a shortage in Canada at the time. He left town soon after. The car of potatoes arrived the following week and we realized five hundred dollars profit. We hurried and re-ordered again and again, and within one week we handled ten carloads and made five thousand dollars profit. That is the way things run when God is on your side. What a partner he makes! You can never know wherefrom your blessings can come from.

Yet, it could easily be the reverse, too. A few days later a letter arrived from our partner in Ontario, advising that he had 32 carloads of bulk apples ready for shipping and required thirty-two thousand dollars. How could I raise such a sum of money. I went to see my bank manager at the Royal Bank. He warned me of the great risk involved and cited a case where the bank lost a large sum of money financing a similar venture such as ours. I was indeed frightened at the thought of the great gamble involved. However, he said that he felt certain that we would be successful. He called in the assistant manager and arranged the loan that we required. As I walked out of the bank building I offered thanks to God for assisting me in my hour of need. I will always be grateful for having met Mr. Pentland, the manager, and for his generosity and assistance. The large business deal we carried out was highly successful and we netted twenty-thousand dollars.

At the time of this writing the date is May 3rd, 1944. 24 years have passed since then. I could write another book of 300 pages, but I will leave the rest to my children to relate to their children.

MIRACLES OF THE LIVES OF MAIER AND DOBA CALOF

Evidently God has willed that I should pause and take note that there comes a time of reckoning in everyone's life, so to speak. And so my notice arrives.

A symbol of warning arrives from up above—the "head office" on high—where the accounts of all mortals are kept whether good or bad.

During my last trip to Nova Scotia where I spent two successful months, I began to feel the beginning of my penalty from the heavenly court—I offered thanks to God for bringing me home to my wife and family before I took ill. Then one fateful morning I suddenly felt as if the heavens trembled and with them my own heart. My children rushed me immediately to our home at 393 College Avenue, that house where we had lived for 25 years and was filled with so much family history—of poverty and riches, of sadness and happiness. I like to refer to it as a "Holy Temple in miniature". There are first: daughter Elkeh was married; then our oldest son Abraham, Zeepah, David, Leah, Brina, Rachmiel and Jenny, also. In that house, too, we witnessed the birth of our first grandchildren. It was a house of joy and gaiety, and a house famed for charity and hospitality. From this house, too, orphans and widows received succor, very often secretly and quietly. We established a private loan fund from which needy people could borrow up to 25 dollars at no interest, to be repaid in any manner and time that the borrower was able. Many a parcel of goods and clothing we gave away from this house quietly to needy families. We built a "Balemmer" in the Talmud Torah, assisted the Jewish Clinic, built a Hospitality House at the side of the grave of Rabbi Myer Baal Nes, and paid for the 600 copies of the book written by our relative by marriage, Rabbi Horowitz, who wrote it as a commentary on the Bible. We sent sums often to Palestine for aid to orphanages and hospitals, Yeshivahs and Talmud Torahs. God is a witness to the many more good deeds that are too numerous to mention. I do not enumerate the above in any manner of boasting for Dobba and myself, but rather so that you, our children, will take note and use this as an example for yourselves and your own children.

As already related above, I took ill and was compelled to cease attending to business and the office. It was a sad blow for I had become attached to my business duties, but it was "doctor's orders" from my son-in-law, Dr. Shubin. He advised me that I had a heart ailment, and comforted me by saying that it was not at all serious. I accepted my new fate and praised the Lord. I was 59 years of age at that time and at this point of writing, already 17 years have passed by and I am still among my beloved family.

As is natural with people in ailing health, I have had my ups and downs, but all in all I can truthfully say that I am highly satisfied and grateful for the circumstances of my fate.

When we arrived in Los Angeles our youngest daughter Evelyn was with us. She was a mere child and did not quite grasp the meaning of it all but she was good and understanding and had a heart of gold. She shared with Doba the anxiety and worry. We arrived here sad and alone. Our first residence was with a German landlady who proved a real friend to us. Soon, Jewish people learned about us and our reputation and helped to make our life more enjoyable.

I wish to relate to you about our life here in Los Angeles—the 15 years spent in bliss and contentment and accomplishment.

In one's old age, one very often thinks back on his childhood days and first homes and first impressions. One forgets most of the dreams he has in his lifetime, but the dreams of childhood are lasting and linger in the mind for many years.

I can recall an incident of my youth at the age of six. It was in Steblev near Gediali—cold and hungry days were common for us three children and mother used to share the few pieces of hard bread. The blizzard was raging outdoors in the middle of the winter season. Our pale mother wandered about our small house, her head heavy with the care of how to provide on the morrow for us, her children. She prayed continuously for divine assistance. But we were too young to grasp the dire need of the times and we sang aloud, jumped and sprang. We were hungry and wanted our breakfast, and tugged at mother's apron. We were three children at that time, Maier, Leib and Chayah. She gave us the only food there was available—some dry bread. We ate lustily and heartily and mother warned us to eat slowly and chew well lest it affect us. We were content and happy for young though we were, we accepted our lot as it was. But dark clouds were coming, for our dear mother was taken from us and in her place came a step-mother. Soon the three of us dispersed far and wide.

I remember the old and pious Shoichet and his blessed wife, who often showed us many kindnesses. I can see in my mind's eye the large Synagogue where we went each Saturday to pray, and across the way was the Beth Hamidrosh where the older men and women went early each day. I can still see before me, my father, of blessed memory, making the "kiddush" and mother used to take out from the brick

oven the Sabbath foods, rich soup and lokshen kugel and "pitzia" made from hen's legs. I can still recall the hearty appetites we had and even the aroma of these foods, the prayer of "thanks" we offered for these in our house of contentment when our real mother was still alive. But, when she died and our step-mother arrived, our father became estranged from us and our house was no longer the home it was.

We lost our gaiety and laughter and I myself made plans to leave my beloved hometown Steblev with its streets and stores, and the river that ran through our town called Rayis. I even recall our friendly neighbors Yosi and Abraham, Benjamin, Alter and others. Even now, as I live these childhood days over in my mind's eye, I get a feeling of youthful glee and heart-warming joy.

I could never shut Steblev out of my memory, especially since Dobba, my childhood sweetheart, was left behind. Nevertheless, my heart seemed to tell me that we would eventually be re-united and Doba would become my life's partner and guiding angel, and in later years the mother of our clever children, 30 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Such are the reminiscences that I have in my 76th year. I can relate a great deal of my own youth and Dobba's, and of our 53 years of married life in happiness and true partnership. Man is born with a wilful and foolish stubbornness that causes him to do things against God and nature, whose laws cannot be broken without punishment. That is why we say, "Man lives unto 70 and dies a fool". It is therefore very much in order for everyone to relate his life's story to his children so that they may know his errors and profit by them.

Let us hope that the generations that succeed us will live in harmony and peace with their brothers and sisters, with Nature and their Maker.

For myself and my own life, I certainly have made errors, but as I relate my life's story for you, make it a point to profit by my errors. I urge you not to disregard my story or treat it lightly—rather make of it a sacred book of memoirs, to read carefully and study, also to impart the lessons to your children and grandchildren. Words that are spoken by mouth soon lose their effect and are forgotten, but the written words are lasting and repeat their message every time they are read.

Now, to continue my biography from the point of our arrival in Los Angeles. Things were depressing for us and to add to our sadness we had no friends or acquaintances who could comfort us. I cannot repeat too often that my real companion and comfort in such times was none other than my dear Doba, whom I had at my side since my 23rd birthday.

I began to move around from one hospital to another, from doctor to doctor, from nurse to nurse. The financial cost of my illness was tremendous. At one stage, a very prominent heart specialist had given me up as hopeless and he could do nothing more for me. Only God could save me and He did spare me and alleviate my suffering for a while. Soon, however, another complication developed when I contracted Asthma. Many a night my life was in danger.

We lived on St. Louis Street in a district of older houses and the atmosphere there was sombre and dull. Soon we moved to Sotto Street which is close to Brooklyn Avenue. This was another and entirely different district, a hub of traffic and lively with people at all hours of the day and night. Also, one could meet there, people from all parts of the world, even from my home towns in Russia—Steblev, Sanderwka, Kerson, Kiev and Odessa. We met fine Jewish neighbors with good Jewish hearts. When we acquired some good friends among them and we became better acquainted, we regained our confidence in human nature and our optimism returned. Our house again became a gathering place for many people. They comforted us and cheered us and what is most important to persons in ill-health, we forgot about ourselves and our ailments and thought of others.

Soon our youngest daughter Evelyn began to have friends, girls and boys. And where there is youth there is always life and spirit. One day, a young man knocked at my door to sell a magazine. This appears to be a very insignificant incident to relate, but it nevertheless is true that the magazine turned out to be a sort of divine messenger. On the day following, a young man called to deliver the magazine ordered, but it was not the first young fellow, but his brother. We learned later that the first boy told his brother that in our house there was a lovely Canadian girl and the second one wasted no time in getting acquainted. It took two full years but he finally won the hand of our daughter, to our joy and eternal gratitude.

That summer our two sons, Ernie and Sid, motored in from Winnipeg in the old family Buick automobile. They came primarily to

visit with us, but at the same time they wished to look for a business in this "golden land". They had spent their youthful years in the fruit business, which they had learned real well, but they wished to find something else.

One day as Doba and I were eating in the Jewish restaurant on Sotro and Brooklyn Avenues, we recognized a man who walked in, a former Winnipegger by the name of Perlmutter, whom we had known 23 years before. He was a salesman for a small paper wholesale. We asked him if he knew of a business for our sons. In short, within a few days, we had purchased this paper wholesale. They certainly were green at this new business and it took some time to learn the management and conduct of such a type of business. As usual, and, as we had seen in previous similar situations that we were in, the large houses did not wish to tolerate us newcomers. However, we overcame the initial struggle and before long the sales were increased from two thousand dollars per month to one hundred thousand. We invested some more money so that our new son-in-law Kaufman could be a partner with our sons.

I am reminded of a little saying. The question is asked: "Where does God dwell?" and the answer is given, "God dwells where He is allowed in". I use this to illustrate that God can be with a person and make him successful, but that is just to test him to see if he will use his success wisely and for good purpose. If God wills, he departs and takes his blessing away. We believe that our children have God in their hearts and He has blessed them. We hope that so will it be always and with their children after them.

We still had two sons to marry off, Aaron and Shloime, as well as our cousin Sholom who was raised with our own children. But God had provided mates for them and we acquired new daughters, Etta of Winnipeg and Shirley of Los Angeles. They were married in true traditional Jewish ceremony, and, as the moderns would have it, followed by dinner at the hotel.

Now, at my age, 76, we still have to expect grandchildren from Sidney and Shirley. Ernie and Etta have already a daughter (Dianne) Deborah Raizel and a son, Moidechai Pesech. Cousin Sholom has not found his mate as yet but we hope he will get as fine a mate as he deserves. I believe her name will be Rebecca.

Next, as fate would have it, we moved to another house owned by

a woman. I guess it was our luck that we should have a bit more suffering there, as that house and the landlady caused us a lot of grief. Then we moved to another house on Western Avenue. There we enjoyed ourselves and had a great deal of pleasure from our children. Moe and Leah arrived from Eretz Israel to visit with us along with their two fine daughters and son Benjamin Hertz. From this house we moved into a house of our own on Michigan Avenue in a very fine neighborhood. There a new chapter of our life began—a very interesting one—which you will delight in reading in your later years and relate to your children and grandchildren.

This house of ours was on old one but well built of excellent materials. It was surrounded by beautiful grounds, a fine garden with fruit trees bearing lemons, oranges, peaches and grapefruit and especially figs which were in such abundant supply. When the fig trees began to ripen we always invited all our neighbors to help themselves. In this house we spent seven years. Of course there were ups and downs as in evryone's lif and we thanked God for everything.

About this time our daughter Jennie (Sheindel in Yiddish) visited us as well as our children from Winnipeg and scores of friends that used to visit Los Angeles continuously and made it a point always to call on us. We certainly were pleased to see all these visitors and we developed a kind of cycle welcoming one visitor and then looking forward to the next visitor. As for my health, I myself had gone through several heart attacks and bad periods with asthma.

One night in particular, about 2.00 a.m., we urgently summoned the specialist Dr. Coughlin, an Irishman—a truly devoted physician, who gave his all for every patient. He relieved me in my emergency. I had become very friendly with Dr. Coughlin. When Rosh Hashonah came around that year the world-famous Cantor Pinchik was in Los Angeles, and I went to hear him and took as my guest Dr. Coughlin, paying ten dollars for his ticket. To this day, I always attribute my good state of health to Dr. Coughlin's care. I, Doba and the family also received some care from Dr. Tandowsky, a Jewish physician who took a kindly interest in his patients.

Many collectors (Meschulachim) called on us during these years, as well as needy persons, whom we were pleased to assist with money and clothing.

I am hurrying to complete the writing of my story, while I am

still able to use my pen without difficulty. Possibly, my ideas may not be in correct sequence, as I hurry to record them as they run through my mind.

It is now the year 1944 and I reflect on the troublesome days we are living through. So many parents have their children in dangerous war areas—their sleep is disturbed by anxious thoughts for their safety—one son is perhaps in Australia, another is crossing over the Italian Alps. A daughter has not heard from her husband for so long—one daughter's husband has returned home but seriously wounded—and sometimes one's youngest daughter gets up and joins the W.A.C.'s.

Our youngest daughter Evelyn was expecting her first child. Her mother did quite a bit to allay her fears by relating to her how she gave birth to five children alone on a lonely farm, 25 miles from a town and doctor, without assistance and advice of mother or father. Finally, Evelyn was taken to a hospital and she gave birth to a son, Rachmel Asher. In true Jewish fashion the "Briss" was carried out on the eighth day and on the 30th day a "Pedyan Ha Ben" was celebrated. I told the guests about the warning Dr. Branson gave Doba that she must have no more children, but she went on and gave birth to Ev. Now we were celebrating the birth of a grandson from this daughter.

At this time too, we were getting ready to celebrate the wedding of our tenth child Ernie and Etta. It was a fine wedding in true Jewish tradition in Cincinatti Synagogue and a wedding reception in a large hotel.

We thank God for having let us live long enough to see these happy occasions. Also we are so proud of our fine new daughter Etta and later to see their two fine children, Deborah Ressel and Mordecai Phesel. I could write a long story about our children, Ernie and Etta, but this would make too large a volume.

Now about our youngest, Shloime Menasheh. His early days, his boyhood adolescence would make an interesting volume too, but we know his quiet unassuming nature and that he would not wish us to talk too much about him. He searched for his mate a long time wishing to find one with all excellent merits, beauty, intelligence and size. And he did find just such a one. What a happy day when we celebrated the wedding of our youngest child. It was held in the

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same synagogue as Ernie's and Etta's wedding and just as fine a reception too.

When they shall be blessed with a child it will be the 54th member of the Calof family circle.

I cannot help but observe and comment on youth of today—liquor drinking, dances, modern romances, elopements, quick marriages and large number of divorces. I think back on our early days in Europe, the quiet slow moving life, gentle running rivers and calm brooks. The Jewish families who lived in our town frequented the market on week days, but on the Sabbath and festivals, every humble home was sparkling clean and one felt the presence of a divine spirit that permeated everywhere and uplifted the soul. Now our town is wiped out and the Jews are there no more.

Our people are different today—they think they are intelligent and modern and deny their Jewish birth-right. We do not comprehend the ways of the Almighty and his pattern for the world. We know that the sun rises every morning and sets each evening, but not all events can be so classified and analyzed. We know from our history, how so many times the Jews were on the brink of destruction and annihilation, and some supernatural force intervened to save us. That is why our hope is strong that God is with us and will not desert us. We should continue to pray that Palestine will become the true land of Israel with recognition from all the peoples.

When we first came to Los Angeles we entered the United States as visitors and with permits and could only remain six months at a time. Consequently, we had to go back to Winnipeg every six months and return again. It was fairly difficult for us to do this continuously, although we enjoyed seeing our children in Winnipeg.

Finally we took steps to become American citizens. We were obliged to go over the border to Mexico, make application for citizenship and re-enter the U.S.A. Those were the regulations and formalities and we had to carry them out.

The border town was a small one. Our Shloime, of course, came with us and made arrangements for us. First registering at a hotel and next we began to make the rounds of immigration officials; medical doctors and consuls. We carried with us everywhere we went a large package of documents and legal papers.

In one immigration office we found several score Mexicans and numerous other nationals of all colors and sizes. Many women were among them. Everyone was anxious to express; everyone had a prayer on his lips and hope in his soul that all would turn out well and he would be admitted to the "golden land" which is the United States of America.

At long last and our turn had come and we were ushered into the office of the Assistant Immigration Consul, a Mexican. He began his examination and cross-examination. He looked us over carefully and minutely, examined the various papers relating to our history and asked many questions. Our hearts missed a beat because of the importance of this interview. After about one hour he told us to go and report back within a few days.

Everything appeared to be in order, but our problem was where to stop and where to obtain kosher meals. The town was quite a small one, the hotels were small, the homes very old and dirty in appearance and certainly not comfortable for older persons like us.

We drove out to another town about eight miles away. The climate was clean and the town was fun-loving where people went to spend late nights drinking, dancing, playing and singing. All would have been fine but we unfortunately obtained our room right next to the dance hall and bar. Of course we did not get any sleep. The food was monotonous in its lack of variety. The music we heard was a mixture of Indian, Mexican and Spanish and strangely enough was conducive to slumber.

When we went back to see the Immigration Counsel, we were told that we must wait for our quota number, which would mean that it would take about one month more if we were lucky. We went back for our long drawn out waiting period. Time certainly was long on our hands, especially the nights.

We moved to another town again eight miles away from the border town. Our hotel this time was near the ocean away from the din and clatter of the music and drunkards. Thanks to Al, Ernie and Sid, who took turns coming out to visit us and spend nights with us, we felt quite a bit better. Besides, Etta and Evelyn sent many tasty foods for us, which we happily received and enjoyed.

Our impatience nevertheless, was making us very uncomfortable,

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but finally we were advised that our quota number had arrived but there must be a two weeks' waiting period before it could be used. On the appointed day, we drove to the border-town and went to the Consul's office. Again more questions, new ones and repeated ones. As King Solomon has said, "this too will pass" and finally our examinations were completed and we were happy to be back in our American home on Michigan Avenue.

I feel that I have not written enough about our dear children who have done so much for us. Of course this is a sort of thing that parents repay to their children. Children understand as they grow older that they owe a debt of gratitude to their parents.

The greatest blessing on earth is for parents to have fine children who give them respect, love and devotion. We have been truly blessed in this. I attribute a great deal of the blessing to care and education that a mother gives her child in the early years. I can think of two biblical quotations in this regard, "they who sow in tears, shall reap in joy", also the Lord's cautious words, "And ye shall guard your bodily health", for the body houses the soul or divine spark for the duration of our life on earth.

I can see why families are likened to trees by so many people. As in our own case, God planted two little trees (Dobba and Maier) 53 years ago and therefrom grew forth two mighty trees whose fruit is pleasant to behold. One can readily observe that the fruit has drawn its life's blood from the trees. We are happy to see that the teachings that we have implanted in them is evident in their conduct and in their knowledge whence they came and where they are going.

It is true and correct that we are responsible to God for our own souls and for our children and grandchildren for humanity and (God forbid) for the widow, the orphan and the poor. Only God is all powerful and all-merciful and controls the destiny of all life—human and animal, beast, fowl and fish, mineral and vegetable-life—everything that lives above the earth, on the earth and beneath the earth. God has given life to everything and everything struggles to perpetuate that God-given life.

If we understood that our lot is pre-arranged and every mortal receives his true merits as he has earned, there would be less racing, chasing, robbing and cheating. If we exceed our just worth, we are inevitably punished by both God and Nature. If we live in harmony

and peace, we can surely build a happier and more contented world. Unfortunately this is not the case and we are punished for our conduct and we should not have to ask why and wherefore. Let us pray for an early arrival of the day, as the prophet Isaih has foreseen, when the wolf and the lamb will play together peacefully and will not destroy each other.

There will be no Hitlers to disturb the peace of the world and Israel will be an independent state. Then there will be no false gods and no false religions. The true and only ruler will be Messiah, the personal representative of God. But everybody asks when is this day coming? The answer is simple—it depends on ourselves and only us. Let us remember our ancestry—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—and return to the religion of our fathers. Live honestly and respectably and we will earn the respect of God and man.

But let us have faith and hope. Even our worst enemies have been unable to annihilate us no matter how hard they tried. We Jews, though only one and a half per cent of the world's population, have made our place of fame in learning, science, humanity. Even on the field of battle some of our people have distinguished themselves gloriously out of proportion to our numbers.

Back to the story of events. One fine morning I did not feel very well and Dr. Tandowsky was called in, like a messenger of God, and ordered me to the hospital. As before, I required motherly attention and care and I must repeat my everlasting gratitude to Doba and my children. Doba was always at my side ministering to my needs even when she was not well herself. We thank God for having blessed us and kept us together 53 years.

Our children honor us by remembering our birthdays and on Fathers' Day and Mothers' Day. These American holidays are wonderful days when parents derive great honor and pleasure from their children. The little gifts that sons and daughters bring on these occasions are such beautiful tokens and leave us with wonderful memories to cherish.

In this connection I recall my own youth and the memory of my parents. I can still hear the soothing tone of the bed time stories which so gently lulled me into sweet childish slumber. I can still hear too, my mother's soft prayers and sweet lullaby—even the exact words of her original and special lullaby for me I still recall.

The law of nature is such that motherly love is strong and lasting, that is a mother's love for her child and the child's love for his mother in return. Even today at my 76 years, I still have this profound love for my mother, though she is long departed from this earth.

Of course our large family loves us and respects us—they number 60 in all, children, daughters-in-law, sons-in-law and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We hope that they will have fond memories of us in their old age, also try to do to their children as we have done for ours. We can truly say, in the words of the psalmist, "they who sow in tears shall reap in joy".

A few months ago, Doba and I visited our children, Lynne and Moe, in Vancouver on the occasion of the marriage of our twin grandchildren. On the occasion of their birth everybody offered blessings that we should live to celebrate their wedding. Also, we went on to Winnipeg and celebrated our 53rd wedding anniversary. We returned home worn out from our trip as was to be expected with persons of our age. But we returned to some joyous occasions—the birth of a son to our children Shloime Menashe and Shirley, and of course the traditional "briss" and "Pedyan Ha Ben". And soon after a phone call came from Vancouver that our grand-daughter June, the daughter of our eldest daughter Elkeh, became engaged.

I hope all our children will read our life's story carefully and learn many lessons. In our prime years we rush about and are wont to make many mistakes and transgressions. We mortals can be likened to rivers or streams speeding on to our destiny and when we reach it, it is the sea and we are swallowed up in it.

Our life's span can be divided up into four periods—first childhood, from birth to age eight; second, from age eight to twenty; third, from twenty to forty; and fourth, from forty to life's end. The childhood period is taken up with simple and foolish things; the second period with more foolish things called love; the third period is taken up with anxieties of parenthood and earning a livelihood; the fourth is the most serious but also the most satisfying because we understand more the mystery of life, its purpose and goal. Now in my 76th year, I seem to think there is a fifth stage in life—the reaping of the nachas and fruits of old age and preparation, so to speak, for departure from this world.

I exhort you to read this story often and carefully, at least once a year and relate it to your children. By doing this you will not forget those numerous lessons that I have to impart to you and those many priceless messages that you should pass on to your children, which will teach them respect for parents and grandparents. The heritage of family tradition and love that is passed on from father to son is one of the finest moral assets we possess and is one of the sweet mysteries of life.

For example, take the case of our son Shloime Menashe. Who would have foretold that he would have been such a model father and devote so much time to his infant son who is only two months old? Already he is singing to his son Abraham, the tune of "Eli Eli". He weighs his son and measures him every day and the father's chest spreads with nachas. He plans his future and is already thinking of his elementary Jewish education, his bar-mitzvah and his chupah and grandchildren. "The apple falls near its tree". The world admires the carrying on of family heritage, but primarily there must be unity and peace in the family circle.

Our learned sages used to teach, "Where there is no harmony in the household, the divine spirit departs". There are disbelievers who refuse to admit to existence of a hereafter, a life after death; to them no heaven or no hell. But no one has as yet solved the mystery of the soul—where it departs after the mortal frame ceases to have life. None can deny that all life has a pattern and orderly system that has a supernatural direction.

As we chant in our Day of Atonement prayers, every living person's fate is set by the Almighty for better or worse. We see sick outliving well persons, rich end up poor and poor become rich. For thousands of years there has been nothing new in the routine of the world—the guiding hand is the same. Let us therefore heed the lesson of history. Adhere to our Hebrew religion which has been the foundation of every civilized man's religion that has stood the test of ages. Our elementary and wise moral laws have become the basis of all civilized society's legal codes.

As I write today, it is the day after Simchas Torah festival. What memories of days gone by, the Hoishanas, "Atto Horeysoh" recall to my mind. 70 years ago when I was a little boy in Steblev—no worries and sadness of older ages, just the sweet innocence and pleasures of youth. Joy is reigning in the large Beth Hamidorsh with its narrow

windows through which the feeble light of kerosene lamps sends its thin rays. The rounds that are made with the Hakofas, the songs and dances—the flags topped with the little candles set in apples. We kiss the torahs as they pass in procession and give wishes to the men carrying them. The cantor, like a general, leads and his strong voice rings out, “Ono adonoi, hoshyoh noh”. We youngsters sing and shout with him.

I can see the joyous faces of Shayeh the Shoichet, David the driver, and Chatzkil the teacher as they raise their coat-tails, tilt their heads with eyes skyward in dance and song “Ono adonoi, Hatzlichah noh”. The tables are set as if for a royal banquet to celebrate the happy festival. We do not forget in our levity to wash our hands, say grace before and thanks afterwards.

After the hearty meal we would play with our Simchas Torah flags, march on parade as if to war for Zion and the Holy Land.

To think back on these childhood days is to this day a refreshing mental excursion and a spiritual fountainhead. In these days, in that season, everyone's thoughts and anxieties were turned towards stocking up the requirements for winter. Fuel was a big worry—bundles of straw had to be prepared for the brick stove. It was my chore often to heat up the oven for the night and shut all dampers so the heat would warm the house. I imagined, as the straw crackled in the fire, that each blade was relating the story of its life—how a little seed was planted in the earth, how the little shoot sprouted forth towards the sun, the rain and dew gave nourishment, the birds chirping over it by day.

After harvest when the grain was separated from the straw—the grain was milled into flour and the straw for fuel as it was now sparkling in the oven. In that season skies would become dark and dreary, to warn of approaching winter and then not long after a silvery white blanket of snow covered our cozy town. The children's hearts were made happy as they rolled large snowballs with bare little hands and sculptured them into figures of cruel-looking giants.

Also Chanukah, the Feast of Lights, followed in early winter. Father would light the candles and we would sing Chanukah songs and receive our two or three kopeks as Chanukah gelt. The game of chance that was played with a dreidel, four-sided, the highest alphabetical letter winning all. And the latkes, what morsels these

were. All this because of the exciting events of the Maccabeans and the miracle of the jug of holy oil that was enough only for one day and burned for eight days.

On the subject of miracles, I regard the whole world as one big miracle and we can witness this before our very own eyes every day. We have seen before our living eyes how great and mighty powers, seemingly empregnable, have fallen from their high position in world rank and others have been elevated. We, Jews, have been spared from out of the mighty holocaust and conflagration. Is this not the fulfilment of the word of the Lord? Is this not the ever occurring miracle of the ages and enigma of the world? We realize what might have been had the Lord not been with us. That is why I consider it very proper and in order to relate to you the miracles of old and of the reminiscences of my youth and my birthplace of Steblev.

After the festival of Chanukah in the Hebrew calendar, soon thereafter follows the holidays of Purim, another miracle in Jewish history. The Hitler of that age was Hamman. You recall the age-old story of Mordecai and Queen Esther and the foolish king Achishverous. It has become proverbial in Jewish lore that when all other Jewish holidays will be done away with, Purim will still remain as a first-ranking celebration.

Purim in my youthful days! Spring is near at hand. The sun rises higher and sends its comforting warmth. As if out from hibernation, people begin to crawl forth from winter slumbers. The migratory birds begin to return from their winter trips and revisit their former nests. The snow is melting from the straw roofs in heavy noisy drops. All noises blend in the symphony or hymn to the Lord. The small creeks and streams are bursting forth seeking to join with larger ones and flow on to their destiny.

Several of us younger children visit the river—Shicke Shaihne's son Yosel, the teacher's assistant's and Isaac the tailor's son—we were watching for drift-wood and other floating objects that the thawing river was sending forth. The items we salvaged from the river were really of no value, but we were proud of the spoils of our adventure. My mother of blessed memory, is very busy making all the Purim goodies, Mondlech, floden and numerous other delicacies made of poppy seeds and honey. We all went to the Synagogue to hear the "Megilah" which relates the events of the story of Purim. Every one of us had our "gregers" and noise-makers ready to blast out when the

name of the villain "Hamman" was mentioned by the reader. We really felt within us that we were doing our bit to stamp him out for good.

Purim is a very beautiful holiday with such fine traditions. We would dress up in all our fine "capotes" or long coats and delivered the Purim gifts or shalech-mones to the Rabbi, the Shoichet, the cantor, neighbors and relatives. Then, too, we received payment, a groshen or maybe a kopek for our delivery of the gifts and bringing home those that people gave us in return. We regarded these monies in the same relative value as we would a dollar or more in this country. That is the way we celebrated the downfall of Hamman—he who wished to destroy all our people on the 14th day of Adar. The day was turned from an intended massacre to a victory and Hamman along with his ten sons were hanged from the scaffolds that they prepared for the Jews.

The next holiday of the Hebrew calendar was Passover—the anniversary of the miracle of the deliverance from bondage of Egypt. Four hundred years of bondage! One would think that the Jews in this time would have lost all hopes of redemption from slavery. But God in his own good time has set the date for removing the yoke and breaking the shackles. The days before Passover in Steblev.

The town appears to have had a renewal—washing, walls cleaned, the earthen floors sprinkled with new yellowish sand. Wine for Passover is ready. All utensils, cutlery and dishes are made kosher for Passover by dipping in boiling water super-heated with a redhot stone. All our clothes are cleaned well, especially must we watch for bread particles.

It was a Herculean task and of course our dear mother bore the much extra water had to be carried from the well at the foot of a hill—a climb of about 50 steps and also disposal of all the waste brunt of all the work. There were no waterworks of course, and so water. We receive new outfits sewn by the same weak hands. And now it is already Erev Pesach, the day before Passover—all the cooking, preparing of fish and chickens. Soon we will be at the Seder.

Father comes in from Shul with his cheerful "Good Yom-Tov". The candles that mother "blessed" are brilliant on the table. Father makes the "Kiddush" or blessing of the wine and we begin the Sedar. Father reads the first portion and then it is my turn next to ask the

"four questions". I am afraid inwardly but steel myself and go through with the "Kashias". I am careful not to make any errors. Everyone watches me carefully and mother is proud. I get through and father, in his fine voice, answers in the traditional words.

Mother is pale and exhausted from work but she wears a smile and partakes in the story telling of the "Exodus from Egypt". Stories about Moses, the ten plagues, the original baking of unleavened dough into Matzohs by the fleeing Israelites. Father and we finish the Hagadah and start with all the good Passover foods—a royal repast in our modest way. We open the door to let in the guest "Elijah the prophet". We say welcome to him and he is supposed to leave his blessing. And back to the recounting of the plagues and miracles of that historical event. Many of the events are understandable but others are not quite clear.

So it is in one's old age—one likes to ramble back over the ages and over one's own youth as I am doing now. I can see my past errors more clearly and regret them. Of course there is no changing those mistakes now but repentance and confession are good for the soul.

By reading my story, my children, you should benefit by being able to learn to judge yourselves earlier in your own lives and correct those ways that need correction. As I write this story I must thank God for having blessed me with a good memory that I was able to relate so many incidents of my childhood days and my youth. To be able to recall all these events and record them, has been a great satisfaction to my mind and soul.

I now come to the festival of Pentecost—Shevuoth—as it was celebrated in Steblev. Religious Jews have described this holiday as a kind of wedding, when the Jewish bridegroom is married to the bride, the Torah. The Lord Himself was the matchmaker and the bridal canopy the sky. The patriarch Moses officiated at Sinai and the angels played the wedding music. It is related in religious folklore that the mountains danced for joy. It is mid-summer when Shevuoth is celebrated. Everywhere the earth is covered in a new green mantle. Trees are bright with fruit blossoms, the sky is such a rich and beautiful blue.

Mother prepares milk dishes which are fitting for this festival—blintzes, kreplach and honey-cake, I wander around the kitchen hop-

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ing to be able to snatch one little delicacy. We eat two different meals really, first the milk courses, then the meat courses. We visit friends for kiddish and very often we do not eat our second course until late afternoon. We young ones are full of joy and do not know what to do first. We climb hills, visit the river bank and sing songs about the Torah. We feel happy in our souls and sing the praises of the Lord.

I have related to you some of the events of my youth. I would suggest that you, my children, should form the habit of writing at least one page in your diary daily. This record will be a great source of comfort and learning in your older years and for your children. If you will do this you will be grateful to me for the advice and will mention my name.

Now I wish to bless you with a father's blessing and that of your mother, Doba:



Our Torah uses an alphabet of 22 letters from Aleph to Tov.

FIRST is Aleph—"One" for the One-ness of God Almighty—may He bless you all.

SECOND is Beth—The first letter of the book of Genesis—may you be blessed in the name of the Holy Torah.

THIRD is Gimel—Third letter of the alphabet—for the three patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Also, since one of my names is Isaac, I wished to bless you with the letter "Gimel".

FOURTH is Daled—For the four matriarchs, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah—your mother's name begins with a Daled. We bless you with the letter "Daled".

FIFTH is "Hey"—For our five sons. May you, our sons, be blessed from God and us with the fifth letter which is also symbolic of the five books of the Pentatech.

SIXTH is "Vov"—For the Mishneh's six books, also for our six daughters. We bless our daughters in the name of Mishneh's six books.

SEVENTH is "Zien" and the Sabbath is the seventh day. In the name of the Holy Sabbath we bless you. May God's light shine down upon you and protect you from all evil, always and forever.



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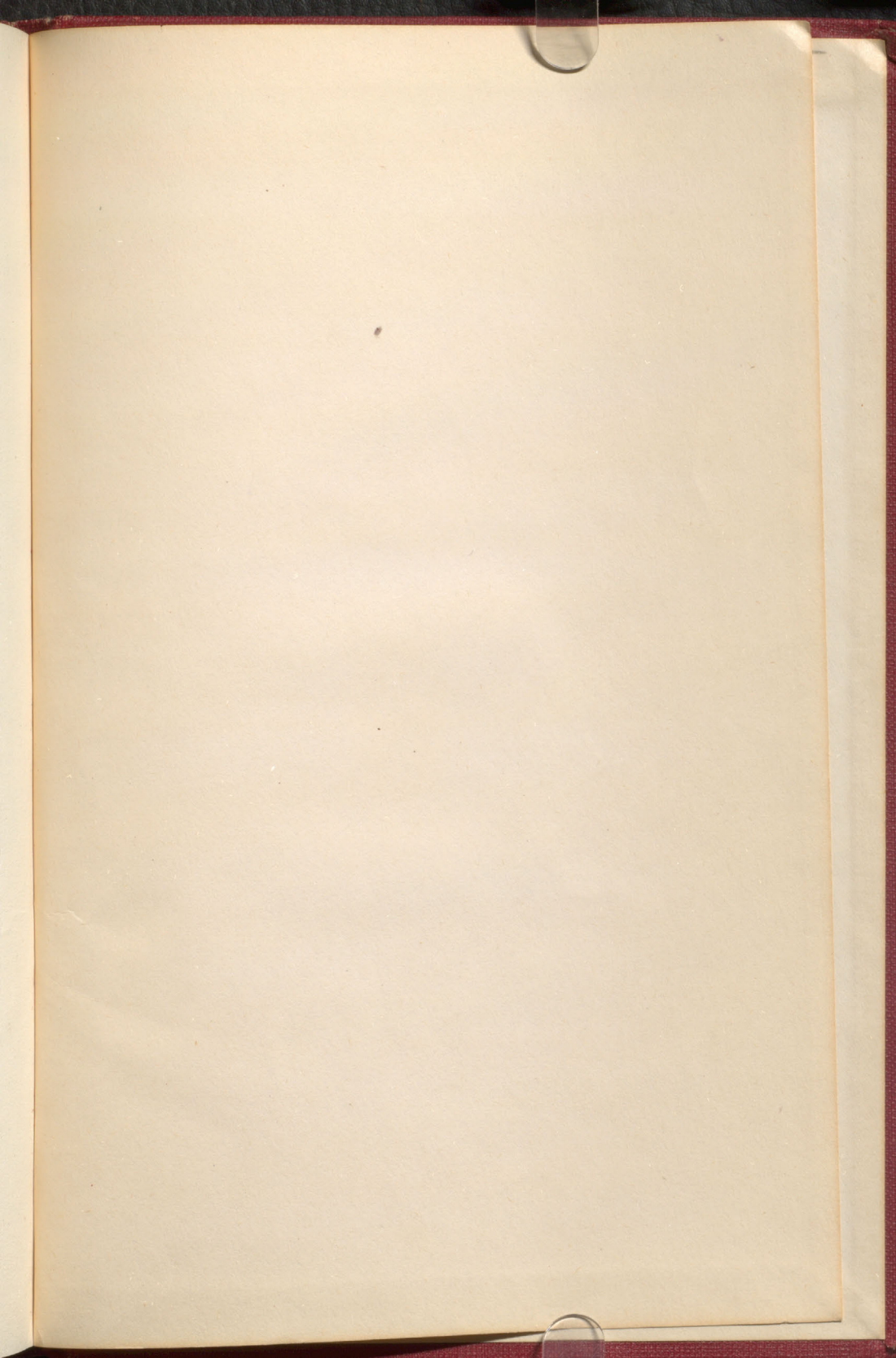
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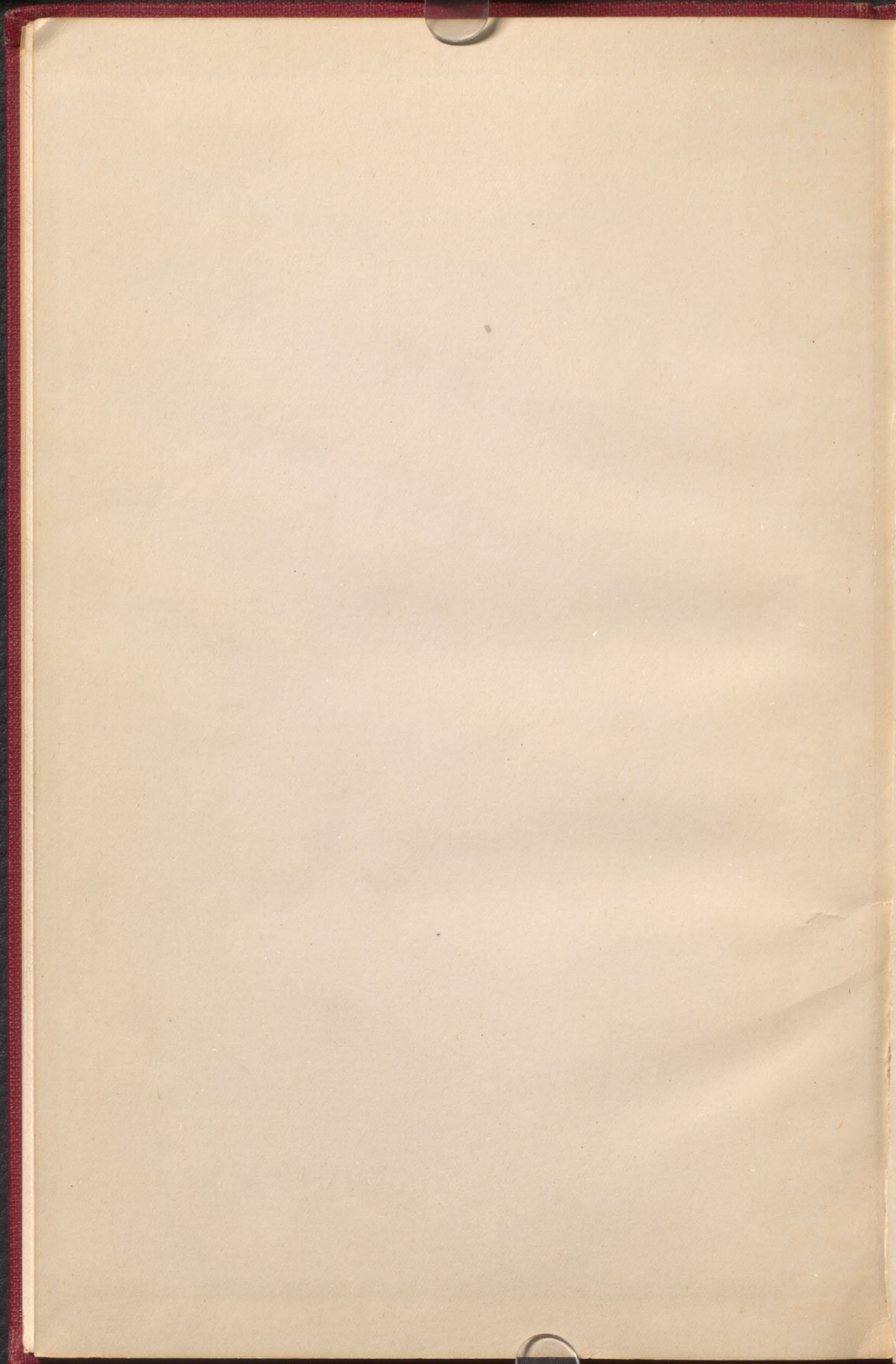
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