

Jewish exiles. Details appear from Appendices Nos. 40, 41, 58 and 77.

DISTRIBUTION OF ORANGES

The year 1917 was a Shemeeta-Year and one of our Jerusalem friends, whom I have had occasion to mention in the course of this report, Mr. Seev Schocher, presented us with the crop of his orange grove, as he might not sell it. We had to pay the cost of transportation, and distributed the oranges among all the poor. It is the only time that we have gone beyond the limits of the very minimum of necessity and I hope we shall be excused for it. The offer was accepted by the committee during my absence in Egypt, but I fully endorse the responsibility for its decision. So many years we had fed our people on dry bread and now that better times had come, there was such an immense longing for some little extravagance, something not absolutely necessary, that I really think we have done a good thing by responding to that call and bringing an ever so little tinge of flavor, an infinitesimal shade of luxury, into the lives of thousands of our down-trodden people and, before all, of their children. If we had invested the same amount in a few dozen sacks of flour, I do not think, that for once, the effect would have been equal. (Vide Appendix No. 73.)

COMMUNAL EXPENSES

As I have already explained, when speaking of the Rabbi's salaries, we had to provide for some general communal wants. In doing so we only carried on a tradition of the previous relief administrations. I must admit that I cut down those expenses, or our part therein, to their very minimum, as appears from Appendix No. 82, but below that minimum I would not go and the harm done by refusing these subsidies would have been out of all proportion to the very modest amount devoted to these purposes.

RECEPTION TO JEWISH BRITISH SOLDIERS

In the course of March I was asked by the military authorities if the Jewish Community of Jerusalem would care to receive as its guests those Jewish soldiers who would get leave to celebrate the Passover feast at Jerusalem. I at once answered in the affirmative, as, of course, everyone in my place would have been bound to do. The Community was still very far from prosperous, but yet it would have been able to arrange for a hundred or so Jewish families to receive two or three soldiers each at their homes for Passover. But when we began to arrange the matter, we were informed that the soldiers would not be permitted, for sanitary reasons (there was much fear of a typhus epidemic then), to visit private houses and so we had to provide for them in a large

private residence, in the Bookharian Colony, belonging to a Bookhara Jew who was absent owing to the war. There we celebrated two Passover eves (as they were guests only and not permanently established) and entertained them during the Passover days. I took the not inconsiderable expenses upon our administration, not only because there was no other cash to draw upon for communal expenses of this kind, but for another reason besides. The visit of so many hundreds of strong and brave, well-clad and healthy Jewish soldiers immensely strengthened the self-consciousness of our Jewish population and gave a fresh impulse to their lives. It was just the thing they wanted after so many years of famine, humiliation, and sickness.

When at Pentecost the visit was repeated in a somewhat smaller measure, I did not go into the same expenses and allowed only a much smaller subsidy, as appears from Appendix No. 83, which, however, together with other means collected within the Community, allowed us to prepare a cordial reception to our dear guests.

I am fully conscious that the expenses under this heading do not properly belong to war relief, but I am sure that—quite apart from our duty to exercise hospitality towards the boys who risked their lives for us, but as money used for the benefit of the Community, these expenses are one of our best investments.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATZOTH FOR PASSOVER

Passover is and has always been an expensive feast for all Jews who keep it! However poor a Jew may be—at Passover his children must have a pair of new shoes, a cap, a little Shabbes-garment or the house wants some new furniture. Besides food—and an expensive kind of food—must be provided for a whole week during which nothing or next to nothing can be earned.

During the war, Jerusalem Jews have learned to keep Passover without new shoes and new furniture—but not yet without matzoth!

Being at the head of the Community, and at the head of the relief administration at the same time, I was under the responsibility of providing matzoth for the whole Jewish population. And this at the time that one single ton of wheat played a large role in the food controller's calculations and the 120 tons wanted for matzoth were not to be found within the whole occupied territory.

I discussed the problem on several occasions with the authorities and, thanks to the energetic help of the military governor of Jerusalem, I succeeded, during my stay in Egypt, in getting from the food controller of Egypt a special permit for the import of 120 tons of wheat from Egypt to Palestine. It was not enough but it went very far to cover our wants and we were able to pro-

Joint Distribution Committee of the

APPENDIX 80.

LOANS TO INDIVIDUALS.

1918.		2 Loans @	P.T.200 =	P.T.400	
January:					
		1	"	100 =	100
		4	"	50 =	200
		1	"	30 =	30
					£7.800
February:					
		11	"	50 =	550
		3	"	100 =	300
		1	"	125 =	125
		2	"	500 =	1,000
					19.750
March:					
		2	"	25 =	50
		9	"	50 =	450
		1	"	75 =	75
		10	"	100 =	1,000
		3	"	150 =	450
		1	"	175 =	175
		15	"	200 =	3,000
		1	"	250 =	250
		17	"	300 =	5,100
		1	"	350 =	350
		7	"	400 =	2,800
		34	"	500 =	17,000
		1	"	2,000 =	2,000
					327.000
April:					
		5	"	1,000 =	5,000
		1	"	800 =	800
		28	"	500 =	14,000
		5	"	400 =	2,000
		14	"	300 =	5,700
		11	"	200 =	2,200
		4	"	50 =	200
		6	"	100 =	600
		1	"	1,500 =	1,500
		1	"	600 =	600
					326.000

American Funds for Jewish War Sufferers

May:

1 Loans @	P.T.2,000 =	P.T.2,000	
34	"	500 =	17,000
1	"	800 =	800
8	"	200 =	1,600
8	"	100 =	800
3	"	150 =	450
40	"	300 =	12,000
3	"	1,000 =	3,000
1	"	450 =	450
1	"	600 =	600
1	"	350 =	350
			410.500
309 Loans			£1,090.550

APPENDIX 81.

PASSEVER DISTRIBUTION.

A. MATZOTH.

a. Individuals:

2395 Ashkenasic Families with	10,386 Souls
2535 Sephardic Families with	10,502 Souls
4930	20,888 Souls
At one Rotel per soul	20,888 Rotels

b. Institutions:

	Rotels
Sephardic Orphanage	21.00
Diskin Orphanage	250.00
Hilfsverein Orphanage	33.00
Kolel Hungaria Orphans	28.00
Weingarten Orphanage	137.50
Blumenthal Orphanage	162.50
Teachers' Seminary	29.00
Tachkemoni Teachers	12.00
Shaare Zedek Hospital	81.00
Bikkur Cholim Hospital	37.50
Blinds' Home	40.00
Lunatic Asylum	56.50
General Old Aged Home	150.00
Sephardic Old Aged Home	20.00
Staff of Institutions	1,058.00
94 Souls at 1.25 Rotels	188.50
	1,246.50

cure the balance on the spot. I have already in my general report told the story of this Egyptian grain.

We had, being the only corporation in the possession of wheat, not only to provide for the free distribution of matzoth but also to bake the matzoth for those who paid for it. We were hardy pressed for time. At Purim, when in ordinary years all the Passover wheat is already ground and part of the matzoth are baked, we only began to receive a few tons out of the 90 allotted to Jerusalem out of the 120 brought from Egypt. But I got the millers and bakers to work day and night and they got through it in due time.

The details of the distribution appear from Appendix No. 81. We distributed some rice besides (which was specially declared allowed for Passover use) and also wine for Passover use.

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Apart from all these above specified branches of activity, we on frequent occasions have, without or nearly without making actual cash outlays, interfered on behalf of individuals, parts of the Community or the Community as a whole, with civil, military and consular authorities, very often with good success, particularly after the liberation. My position as head of the relief administration placed me, even before I was formally elected as such, de facto at the head of the Community, and so I had to represent it on various occasions, to plead for its wants and to protect its interests.

We have also tried to find work for all those who were fit for work. During the first period, our endeavors in this respect consisted mainly in the support of women's workshops. During the second period we succeeded now and then in getting some government work (road making, etc.) for our unskilled laborers. But much remains still to be done in this respect and the Zionist Commission is now giving particular attention to the matter.

It will certainly be noted with some interest that apart from the unusual concentration of Jerusalem charity in the American Relief Fund, during my administration, a further step was made towards the unification of Jerusalem charities. In the month of October, 1917, I invited the representatives of the Amsterdam Administration (Pekidim and Amarkalim Beeretz Hakodesh) and the Zionist Palestine Office to some conferences, in which we discussed most of the problems which were then before us. A practical outcome of these conferences was the common scheme for the support of the Melamdin and Talmudic scholars.

THE FUTURE OUTLOOK

I beg to be permitted to close this report with a few words on the probable future development.

We are already very far from the conditions of December, 1917. Children, swollen from starvation, are now no longer to be found, no orphans are begging in the streets, work is provided for many hundreds of women, the organization of relief work is steadily further progressing, the army brings some money into the country and the small traders and shopkeepers profit from it. There is a little revival in general trade and private remittances are forthcoming from America, England, South Africa, etc.

But we are still in war time and suffering from the war. The somewhat increased earnings are swallowed by the enormous increase in the cost of living and there is as yet no sound economic basis for real prosperity. War relief will have to be continued and there are particularly good reasons for continuing it, now that it is possible to administer it under favorable conditions.

I have spoken of the reform of Jerusalem charity and I have ventured to point out that the duty to carry it through rests on the donors. *Now is the time for it!* Most of the donors in America are united. With those in other allied countries they could easily come to an understanding and it should be possible afterwards, when regular communication with Russia will once more be established, to arrive at an agreement with Russian Jews, too. The Jewish Community of Jerusalem is organized; there is also a Central Relief Administration which enjoys the confidence of the government and the confidence of the donors.

A reform of Jewish charity in Jerusalem should be carried through on the following base:

- (a) Honest administration and public accounts.
- (b) Use of charity money only for those who are in want of charity.
- (c) Use of all further funds either for constructive economic work, for educational and general cultural work or for purely religious purposes.

The Halooka, need not be entirely abolished. It should, however, be thoroughly revised and brought back to its original idea, the support of Jewish learning in the Holy City, and its regional character should certainly be taken from it.

All this can and should be done or prepared now. There is no reason to wait and there is large danger in delay. Our work, that of the American Relief Fund, has laid strong foundations for this reform and it would be unpardonable if we let the proper moment pass.

I am under the impression that it belongs to the JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE to take the initiative in the matter.

S. HOOFIEN.

REPORT

of

MR. S. HOOFIEN

to the

JOINT DISTRIBUTION
COMMITTEE

of the

AMERICAN FUNDS *for* JEWISH
WAR SUFFERERS

NEW YORK

CONCERNING RELIEF WORK IN PALESTINE
FROM AUGUST 1st, 1917 TO
MAY 31st, 1918