

## THE JEWS OF ALSACE-LORRAINE (1870-1920)

BY CAPTAIN SYLVAIN HALFF

The victory of the Allied and Associated Powers, which has given Alsace and Lorraine back to France, has caused the re-entrance into French Jewry of a population of 30,000 souls, whose attachment to France was never doubted and who have welcomed with enthusiasm the return of the tricolor. The patriotism of the Alsatian and Lorraine Jews was manifested on every occasion before the war of 1870. It will be seen from the following account that it survived that war with the same tenacity and that 1914 found the Jews of Alsace to be good Frenchmen.

The novelist Edmond About, in his beautiful work *Alsace*, published sometime after the annexation of the provinces, wrote: "We have at Saverne a curé, a pastor, and a rabbi. At all times these three ministers have lived in complete harmony. They have been rivals for the past year, but they only vie with one another in patriotism. Each one tries to show that *he* loves France best."

Among the protesting deputies who, in the Assembly of Bordeaux, declared void the treaty which disposed of the two provinces without their consent, there was one Jew, Bamberger, deputy from Moselle. He presented to the national Assembly a petition against the annexation, which had been signed by 200,000 inhabitants of Moselle at the instance of

a Jew of Sarreguemines, M. Wolff, who paid for his patriotic zeal with a term of imprisonment. In the name of Moselle, Bamberger pronounced these fiery words addressed to Germany: "You want France to say to our country: 'I am tired; I am exhausted; I can do nothing more for thee; I leave thee to Prussia; thy children will become Prussian soldiers who will fight against my own children: The brother attired in the helmet will fight against the brother wearing the kepi.' But this thought makes my heart leap with indignation, and the blood which is thus poured out in an impious manner will fall upon your heads."

What curious coincidences have taken place in the interval of forty-seven years! In the name of Moselle, a Jewish deputy had said *au revoir* to France. In 1918, on the day of the armistice, at the first solemn session in which the French Chamber celebrated the victory, there were in the tribunal two of the deputies of Alsace and Lorraine, who in the Reichstag had, despite all obstacles, represented the eternal protest. One was a Catholic priest, Abbé Wetterle; the second, a Jew, a deputy from Metz, just as Bamberger had been. The latter was Georges Weill, who, on the first day of trouble in 1914, came to place himself under the French flag and who, in the course of the war, carried out important missions as an officer. On November 11, 1918, the Chamber proposed that special honor should be paid to restored Alsace and Lorraine, and these two deputies were the object of a continuous ovation.

And this is how Alsace, a French province once more, nominated in November, 1919, her representatives to the Chamber of Deputies. The concord which had always reigned among the different religions manifested itself once again. The

notabilities of Alsace met in a Congress in which the Catholic party dominated. It was demanded that, by reason of the social importance of the Jews and of their unshakable love for France, a place should be reserved upon the list of the National Union to a Jewish personage, and they agreed upon the name of M. Simonin, mayor of the Commune of Schirmeck, a great manufacturer who had had the honor, by reason of his French sentiment, of being deported by the Germans during the war.<sup>1</sup> He was elected member of the Chamber of Deputies by a very imposing majority. Some weeks later Alsace designated her representatives to the Senate. She reserved again a place for a Jew, M. Lazare Weiller, originally from Selestat, where his father had been *Shammash* (beadle) of the community. M. Weiller, established in France for many years, had greatly contributed to the development of industry and, especially, of aviation. Three of his sons served as officers; one of them, Captain Paul Weiller of the aviation corps, was cited thirteen times in the orders of the army for his heroic exploits.

Two Jews, representing the people of Alsace—both of them had served French ideals, one by fleeing his native soil, and the other by remaining there—that is the physiognomy of Alsatian Jewry after 1870. A large number did not desire to bear the German yoke; they departed, transferring to France their industry, their commerce, or simply their scientific ability, the scene of their intellectual activity. The exodus of the Jewish population is paralleled by that of the citizens of other religions. The cloth industry, for example, so pros-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix I.

perous at Bischwiller before 1870, was transported to Elbeuf. Among the principal manufacturers were Jews, the Fraenkels, the Blins; they took their workingmen along with them. The lace manufacturer Emmanuel Lang of Mulhouse, went to pursue his career at Nancy. The medical school of Strasbourg emigrated in its entirety to Nancy. Among its teachers was the celebrated professor Bernheim. Physicians, magistrates, lawyers, and teachers abandoned their situations in their native land in order not to be Germans. We will cite a few cases: Doctor Hirtz, of Colmar; Grand Rabbin Isaac Levy, of the same city, who accepted a modest post in order not to remain under the German yoke; Masse, the leader of the bar of Strasbourg; Widal, the talented author, under the pseudonym of Daniel Strauben, of *Scenes of Jewish Life in Alsace*, who went to spend the rest of his years as a teacher at Dijon.

The Jews of Alsace and of Lorraine thenceforth constituted the chief reservoir of French Jewry. They gave to it the most notable figures in all domains. Mention may be made of such men as Maurice Lévy, professor of the College of France; Durkheim, professor at the Sorbonne; Eugene Sée; Isaie Levailant; Cohn, prefect of the Republic; Schrameck, the present governor of Madagascar; painters like Lévy-Dhurmer, Jules Adler; sculptors like Emmanuel Hannaux. These provinces have also produced officers of every grade, from generals of division, like Leopold Sée, up to those who have just acquired their laurels in the last war: General Heymann who commanded an army corps; General Geismar, who commands to-day the artillery of the 21st corps; General Grumbach, who commands a brigade of infantry; General Dennery,

who has command of a division; General Camille Lévi, at the present time governor of Dunkirk.

These had departed from Alsace and Lorraine, but others who remained deserve no less admiration for their spirit of sacrifice, since they had patiently borne all kinds of trials and tribulations during forty-seven years, and yet had retained, at the price of the most terrible difficulties, their fidelity to France, and had cherished the hope in ultimate justice. Certain facts speak eloquently. Never in the course of that long period did a Jewish community of either Alsace or Lorraine accept a German rabbi for its religious chief,<sup>2</sup> and, if by force of circumstances the young rabbis had to make their studies at the Rabbinical Seminaries of Berlin or of Breslau, they none the less zealously guarded the imprint of their origin and their Alsatian traits. Whenever the German authorities tolerated it, praying in French had its turn on religious festivals. In the great centers, such as Metz and Strasbourg, societies for the study of Jewish literature and history were organized, which called upon lecturers from Paris. Even the Jewish newspapers of Alsace, obliged to appear in the German language, had French columns containing news of Jewish life in France.<sup>3</sup>

Religious tolerance was a sacred principle in Alsace-Lorraine, and it often manifested itself under the most touching circumstances. In each city there was always an understanding by which the various religions were represented in the Municipal Assembly in proportion to their numbers, and by

<sup>2</sup> There are one or two exceptions, due to particular reasons.

<sup>3</sup> At the Alsatian Museum in Strasbourg, special rooms are devoted to souvenirs of local Jewish history.

which the burgomaster was in rotation a Catholic, a Protestant, and a Jew.<sup>4</sup> Historians have recorded the following fact: When in 1874, Lorraine had to designate its first deputy to the Reichstag, a Jew from Metz, Edmond Goudchaux, took the initiative of urging the candidacy of the bishop of Metz, the patriotic Frenchman, M. Dupont des Loges. He rallied under the name of the prelate all shades of opinion and all the religious sects. In the Jewish quarter of Metz, it was unanimously said: "We will vote for *our* bishop." To this extent did the tolerant prelate represent the French ideal! After the lapse of years this beautiful act of interdenominational fraternity has just had its most happy sequel. The Municipal Council of Metz, wishing to perpetuate a memorial which should remain forever a lesson of sacred union, gave to the street, on which the Bishop's Palace stands, the name of Dupont des Loges, and at the same time to Doctor Reich Street, which symbolized pan-Germanic patriotism, it gave the name of Edmond Goudchaux.<sup>5</sup>

In every activity of memory or of hope, the Jews of the two provinces took a large part. Several of the monuments which, in the years that preceded the world war, were erected in Lorraine in the memory of French soldiers who fell in the other war, were produced by the chisel of the Jewish sculptor of Metz, Emmanuel Hannaux, established in Paris. The

<sup>4</sup> Several years ago the firemen of a little town of Alsace met at a banquet. In order to make it possible for the three Jews who belonged to the company to be present, a *kosher* repast was prepared for all.

<sup>5</sup> The city of Phalsbourg has also rendered homage to the memory of one of her Jewish children, Alexandre Weill, founder of the banking house of Lazard Frères, benefactor of the city, by giving his name to the street on which the synagogue stands.

close bonds between the members of a family residing on the one and on the other side of the frontier, the frequent exchanges of visits, the annual pilgrimages to the cemetery where relatives reposed, served to keep green the sentiment of French loyalty. The brother of the sculptor Hannaux, who remained at Metz as the director of an important bank, could never be the agent of Germanization. The French Government, after victory had been won, gave the Cross of the Legion of Honor to him. It has by this act also rendered homage, in his person, to the undying patriotism of the Jews of Lorraine whom he represents as president of the Consistory.

That is one example among many. Despite the sorrowful separation by force of circumstances, a profound love subsisted. If some manufacturers had believed it their duty to leave the country placed under the imperial eagle, others had continued to assure the development of their industries—not to cede their places was equally a way of safeguarding the historical patrimony. At Mulhouse, for example, the important lace manufacturer Lantz had contributed to the economic prosperity of Alsace. The family Lantz which had numerous attachments in France, and several members of which became French magistrates and officers, is one of those whom nothing could rob of their traditional attachment to France. The French sentiment was shared in common by all the Jews of Mulhouse as by the entire population of that great centre. Mulhouse is, perhaps, of all the cities of Alsace, the one where the French language lost its rights to the smallest extent. The Jewish citizens, who constitute a considerable element, have been some of the best agents for maintaining this tradition. Mulhouse has never understood how one of her children,

Captain Dreyfus, who became colonel during the war, could, for a single instant, have been the victim of the infamous accusation which troubled the public conscience for so many years. An Alsatian Jew does not commit a crime against France!

This state of affairs did not change when the great conflict of 1914 broke out. The Jews of Alsatian origin who had chosen their domicile in France exulted in the thought that the barrier was to disappear and that their native country was to see the reparation of the great crime of 1871. It is this thought that one of them, Captain Raoul Bloch, gloriously killed before having witnessed the realization of his aspirations, expressed in this touching letter to his family: "With what joy will I hurry to the boundaries of Alsace and what memories will awaken in me while penetrating in uniform into the country of our dreams! Our poor fathers would tremble in their graves! At last the revenge of which they spoke so much, with which their hearts overflowed! To be of those who will contribute directly to give back to you your native soil, that is for me a supreme joy. What a beautiful anniversary of our marriage—the street of the Mesange' again become French! What more beautiful present can I dream of bringing to you? And Lauterbourg, Niederbronn, Bionville—all under our tricolor! You can understand why I wished and had to go. All the family traditions, are they not in my keeping? To be able to lead you and our cherished children into Alsace-Lorraine and to say to them: 'Your father had aided, as much as was in his power, to give back

' Pamphlet published in memory of Captain Raoul Bloch.  
' At Strasbourg.



this beautiful country to France.' What a beautiful recompense for me!"

The Jews who remained in Alsace found themselves faced by a distressing problem. As German subjects, incorporated though they were against their wills, they ran the danger of shooting their kin in the trenches before them. There were many of them (all who were able to carry out their plans at the time) who escaped, and came to take their places in the French Army: Georges Weill, the deputy to the Reichstag, Alfred Weil, judge at Metz,<sup>8</sup> Schuhl, manufacturer at Ste. Marie-aux-Mines, who, as interpreter-officer, organized the service of propaganda against the enemy and carried out, on various occasions in the course of the war, the most important and perilous missions in Germany, and received in recognition the Cross of the Legion of Honor; David Bloch, of Guebwiller, the martyr hero, of whom more will be said later on. These are only some of the names. One should read the list of Alsace and Lorraine deserters published by the German Government in the course of the war. Among the persons who forfeited their German nationality,<sup>9</sup> the number of Jews who figure in these lists of proscription, which are for us lists of honor, is remarkably great. During the entire course of the war, every time an Alsatian or a Lorrainer, kept back by force in a *feldgrau* uniform, had the chance of getting away to rejoin the French lines, he seized it eagerly; Jews were numerous among these "deserters." But from the very beginning the Germans had little confidence

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix II for the very edifying sentence of removal from office pronounced by the Court of Appeals of Colmar against M. Weil, now president of the Regional Tribunal of Metz.

<sup>9</sup> See especially Florent-Matter, *Les Alsaciens-Lorrains contre l'Allemagne*.

in the loyalty of Alsatian soldiers. They were the object of special surveillance; their employment in formations in front of the French army was avoided, and they were given duties far from the lines.<sup>30</sup> In most cases, they were sent to the Russian front. There also they surrendered whenever possible, and the greater part of them were returned to France. Nevertheless, a very large number of Alsatian Jews fell in the service of Germany—they had not found it possible to escape.

When in the occupied regions of France it was necessary to render service to the French population, momentarily placed under the German yoke, the Jews seized upon the occasion with ardor. Here is a very edifying recital on this subject made in the newspaper *Le Matin* of January 28, 1919: "If there were any need of new proof of the attachment of the Alsatians, under the German domination for France, even under the execrated uniform of the soldiers of the kaiser, the act of M. Naphtalie Wallach, a resident of Mulhouse, would be a singularly striking one. Mobilized in 1914 in the German army as *vice-wachtmeister*, and attached to the staff of the 7th army, he was charged with the direction of provisioning meat for the troops operating upon the Chemin-des-Dames. The abattoir was installed at Montcornet, and M. Wallach lived at the house of a lady of this locality. Risking court-martial and the penalty of death, during four years he frequently distributed meat to the starving population of not only Montcornet but also the neighboring cities Vervins, Notre-Dame-de-Liesse, Monloy, Laon. He made possible the exchange of numerous correspondence between our unhappy

<sup>30</sup> See Appendix III, describing the fate of M. Arthur Francfort, of Metz, at the present time deputy mayor of that city.

compatriots in the invaded district and their relatives who remained in free France. His sister, Mme. Alphonse Lévy, who resided at Berne, served as intermediary. M. Wallach buried works of art in the gardens, and thereby saved them from the commandants, who coveted them. All in all, M. Wallach was a wonderful moral comforter for our compatriots to whom he communicated his faith in the final victory of our army."

The distrust which the German military authorities manifested for the mobilized Alsatians and Lorrainers was extended also to the civil population. They were made to feel it acutely by numerous vexatious measures imposed upon them, by the severe punishment visited upon them for the smallest misdemeanor and on the flimsiest evidence, and by the sentences pronounced by the German courts-martial. In this regard the four years of war were perhaps of as much service to the French cause in Alsace and Lorraine as the forty-four years which preceded it.

The following examples of condemnations pronounced against Jews will show the rigor with which they were treated and at the same time the profundity of the French sentiment which the Jewish population cherished.

Salomon Bloch, merchant at Mulhouse, was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for encouraging the desertion of his son.

Salomon Blum, butcher at Westoflen, to two months' imprisonment for having expressed hateful remarks against Germany and spreading unfavorable news.

Alphonse Dreyfus, of Colmar, three months' imprisonment for having said: "The Germans have been licked by the

French; the French will return; the war will be ended in three months, for the Germans will no longer have anything left to eat."

Mayer von Emrik, a merchant of Dutch parentage, established for twenty years at Strasbourg, eight months' imprisonment for having spoken French in a store and for having said that the German newspapers lied, that in order to know what was going on he found it necessary to read French newspapers, and that the tricolor flag would float soon upon the cathedral of Strasbourg.

Emil Heimendinger, of Colmar, two months' imprisonment for having said in public: "They will all have to go back across the Rhine; we must chase them over with pitchforks and scythes."

Alfred Lazare, storekeeper at Barr, was condemned to forced labor for life for the crime of high treason against Germany. "In the course of commercial trips," says the sentence, "he collected news destined for the French, made known to them the movement of troops, the position of fortifications and of industrial establishments working for the German army. His actions were the cause, in August, 1916, of an aeroplane attack by the French upon a large factory in Outre-Rhin." (Alfred Lazare died in prison. He was cited in the Order of the French Army in these terms: "Has paid with his life for his devotion to France.")

Daniel Lévy, merchant of Durmenach, two weeks' imprisonment. In March, 1915, despite the cold, he lodged a German soldier in his attic, in the midst of bales of merchandise, in a space where windows were broken, and refused to allow him to dry his clothes soaked with the rain.

Leon-Auguste Ury, engineer, son of the grand-rabbin of Strasbourg, went back to France on the first day of the war. The German authorities issued in vain an order for his arrest for the crimes of high treason and desertion.

Mme. A. Weil, of Strasbourg, one day's imprisonment for having, in the open street and in a spirit of pure opposition, spoken French, although she speaks German fluently.

But above all, it is proper to repeat the history of the heroism and of the martyrdom of young David Bloch, of Guebwiller, aged 21 years, who escaped at the beginning of the war in order to go and serve France. To aid his beloved France he carried out perilous missions. He was landed from an airship in the German lines in order to send information to the country which he loved. The tragic fate of David Bloch has been told to us in these terms by Abbé Wetterle, deputy of Alsace, in the French Chamber. In his book *Alsace and the War* he says: "On the first day of August, 1916, David Bloch, son of a storekeeper of Guebwiller, was shot at Mulhouse. The young man had been landed by a French aviator in the duchy of Baden. He was expected to procure information of a military nature and to return to France by way of the air. Bloch was arrested. Even though he was subjected to a long cross-examination, he succeeded in preventing the establishment of his identity. A German soldier believed, however, that he recognized him. Bloch answered this accuser with the most formal denial. It was then that his executioners had recourse to a clever ruse. They sent to Guebwiller for Bloch's father who did not suspect anything, and suddenly confronted him with his son. The father, not being on his guard, opened his arms to his child. The proof was established. David Bloch, thus innocently betrayed by the one

who loved him so tenderly, was condemned to death and shot."<sup>11</sup>

The most beautiful monument of glory in memory of this young martyr is the following text of a notice which on August 1, 1916, the German military authorities affixed to the walls of Mulhouse:

SHOT TO-DAY

THE SPY

DAVID BLOCH

Born on November 21, 1895, at Guebwiller (Upper Alsace), notwithstanding that he was under military obligations to Germany, he volunteered in the French army; then, placed as a workman in a munition factory, he had himself instructed as a spy and was landed by a French aeroplane in the theatre of operations, where, as a German subject, he expected to carry on, in civil clothes, espionage in the rear of the German troops.

The Council of War of the Etappen-Kommandantur of Mulhouse, had condemned him to death for the crime of high treason, on July 29, 1916.

(Signed) THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

<sup>11</sup> The French Government have posthumously cited David Bloch in the Order of the Army.

Then came the day of deliverance, November 11, 1918. It is reported that at the Jewish cemetery of Metz, a young girl, responding to the last wish expressed by her father, came to deposit upon his grave this simple and eloquent inscription: "Papa, *they* have returned!" And the following additional fact is also reported, which reveals so well the qualities of humor of the Jews of Alsace. Without waiting for the arrival of French soldiers, a certain number of Strasbourgers wished to raze from its base the statue of one of the German emperors. At the moment when the monument fell with a terrific crash upon the ground, a Jew detached himself from the group, and, placing himself by the side of the overthrown idol, stood motionless and recited: "*Yisgaddal we-yiskaddash.*" Is this last anecdote a fabrication, or has it some basis in reality? It does not matter; it translates a state of emotion, developed by the popular imagination into that form which it is well to preserve.

But here is a fact which will be registered in history and which has already been incorporated into annals of the first French newspapers of Alsace. According to the terms of the armistice, several days were to pass before the German troops evacuated Alsace and the French army came into it. These days of waiting threatened for a moment to be troublous ones, for though the Germans were falling back in feverish haste, they still remained numerous. The revolt which was menacing Germany threatened to break out in Alsace; some Soviet sailors of Hamburg arrived in Strasbourg, organized workmen's and soldiers' councils, and wished to lead the bad element of the population to disorder and pillage. They hoisted the red flag upon the steeple of the cathedral. All at once, at the *Polizeipraesidium*, an Alsatian presented himself, obliged

the German prefect to retire, and declared to him that he was taking his place. The newcomer was a jolly good fellow who spoke in a tone which brooked no denial! It was Jules Lévy, an Alsatian magistrate. He took all necessary measures to restore order, had the revolutionary flag pulled down from the cathedral, and replaced it by the tricolor; he sent emissaries to the French command to hasten the arrival of the first detachment of troops. He acquitted himself so admirably of his task that when the French authorities were established in Strasbourg, he was retained for the discharge of the functions which he had assumed for the safety of the city; he remained in this position until all the regular services had been organized. And then, as a mark of recognition, he was nominated vice-president of the regional tribunal of Strasbourg, a place which he still occupies.

An incident of another order deserves to be recorded. It was told to me at Strasbourg on the famous day of December, 1918, at the time of the first visit of President Poincaré and the representatives of the Allied and Associated Powers, by the man who was the hero of the incident, Captain Bernheim. Born in Strasbourg, he had, like so many others, left his native city. After the armistice, he was one of the first French officers who came back to it. He wished to give himself the pleasure of being at the bridge of Kehl, at the time of the expulsion of the Germans. He had the good fortune of seeing, among those who were being accompanied to the Baden frontier, a man whom he recognized as one of his former teachers at the Lyceum. He had retained the most hateful recollection of this man, for this *Lehrer*, a ferocious pan-German, had never opened his mouth without uttering words which were an insult to his Alsatian students and everything which con-



cerned France. Captain Bernheim told me how great his joy was to be able to give back one hundredfold to this odious *Schulrat* for all that he had ever said. I imagine, in fact, that he did it with what the Germans call *Schadenfreude*, the most vindictive words. The Herr Doctor, this time, lowered his head.

And now the French solemnly enter Alsace and Lorraine. Everywhere the Jewish population gives free rein to its joyful emotions. At Colmar, it is a Jewish mayor who welcomes the President of the Republic; at Metz, the Society of the Jewish Youth has its place in the procession of groups which symbolized Lorraine. The Jewish Gymnastic Society of Strasbourg goes to take back the flag, which, after the annexation, it had confided into pious keeping at Nancy. Everywhere the head of the state receives the homage of the Jewish community. At Strasbourg, an imposing procession goes successively into the temples of the three religions. On the public square, before the magnificent synagogue, regiments are assembled. The President of the Republic, the President of the Council, the marshal's staff officers of the Allies, are received here by the Jewish Consistory of Bas-Rhin. The President of the Consistory, at whose side stands the grand rabbin of France, M. Israel Lévi, and a delegation of the Central Consistory, utters these words: "I have the honor to address to you the most respectful homage of the Jews of Alsace and to bid you welcome into our temple. Jewish Alsace, ever faithful to France, French again in body and soul, is happy and proud to be able to salute in its temple the respected chief of the Republic, the incomparable statesman to whose energy we owe our liberation, the President of the Chamber, and the leaders of the French Courts. Our population knows how to value

justly the benevolent tolerance which the authorities of our mother country have manifested towards it. Your visit will leave in our temple and in our hearts an imperishable memory."

The President of the Republic answers: "I thank you, Gentlemen, for your welcome and for the sentiment which you have cherished towards France. I beg you to convey to the Jews of Strasbourg the gratitude and the wishes of the French Republic. It is not only, to repeat your word, with tolerance that we regard your faith. Be assured that France has a profound respect for all religious beliefs."

Little by little France was reinstalled. In order to re-establish close contact with the provinces, cut off during almost half a century from the country, preference was given, in choosing the heads of the administration of important public services, to men whose family roots were in the soil of Alsace. Here also Alsatian Jews—those on both sides of the ancient frontier—took their proper place. At the general commissary of the Republic, Colonel Kahn, whose two sons, officers in the French army, were killed by the enemy, took part in the general staff of the High Commission.<sup>12</sup> Two Jews were designated as administrators of the territory (sous-prefects)—one at Thionville, the other at Sarrebourg. To the University of Strasbourg came Professor Sylvain Lévi, teacher of Sanscrit in the Collège de France; Brunschvieg, professor in philosophy at the Sorbornne; Albert Lévy, Ernest Lévy, two eminent teachers in the University. The faculty of medicine kept the two Strasbourg teachers, Blum and

<sup>12</sup> Recently Colonel Kahn was given command of the regiment with which he served as major at the beginning of the war, and at the head of which he was struck by twenty-two bullets from a machine-gun.

Weill whose loyalty to France was always recognized. The direction of the archives of the Bas-Rhin was entrusted to Lucien Aaron, a noted historian of Alsace; one of the most important services of the administration of the railways of Alsace-Lorraine was headed by Edgard Sée. Jules Lévy is, as we have said, vice-president of the regional tribunal at Strasbourg; another Lévy is magistrate of the same tribunal; Alfred Weill is president of the regional tribunal at Metz where he had functioned as judge before the war; several Jews are magistrates of the tribunals of precincts. Schmoll, the president of the Consistory of Strasbourg, was designated as chief of the bar; Henri Lévy, one of the directors of the great mills of Strasbourg, was made a member of the High Commission of Alsace-Lorraine.

A number of elective offices were also given to Jews. We have seen that the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies of France have one Jew each. In the general council of Bas-Rhin, three Jews were elected: Georges Weil, ex-deputy to the Reichstag; Henri Lévy; Simonin, deputy of Bas-Rhin; Grumbach is at the departmental assembly of Haut-Rhin. In the municipal councils the same interdenominational harmony is manifest. Henri Lévy, whom we have already mentioned, is vice-president of the municipality at Strasbourg. Examples may be multiplied. Even in the smallest commune Jews sit on the municipal council.

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The two Jewish elements of Alsace and of Lorraine are thus restored and re-absorbed. Always united, despite the barrier of the Treaty of Frankfort, in the same love for France, they are now enjoying a fraternity which nothing can disturb. Free citizens of the same country, they will work in

common with their compatriots to repair the damages which she has suffered and to bring back her past greatness.

#### APPENDICES

##### I. DEPUTY SIMONIN. A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

M. Camille Simonin was born on October 5, 1865, at Schirmeck. He pursued his studies at Mulhouse and at the College of Epinal. Upon leaving college, he entered his father's business. He had taken interest in politics prior to the creation of the National Union in 1911. He played an active part in combating the Germanization of Alsace, and was a member of the Committee of the National Union, together with MM. Preiss, Wetterlé, Laugel, and Blumenthal.<sup>13</sup> In 1912, he founded the Circle of the Valley of the Bruche of Schirmeck, of which he was the president. This Circle comprised only important manufacturers and prominent persons in the valley of the river Bruche; German elements were not permitted to join it.

On August 2, 1914, even before the decree of mobilization was announced, he was arrested and imprisoned in the Departmental jail at Strasbourg. Upon the approach of French troops he was transferred to the prison of Cannstatt, near Stuttgart, and confined in a cell for two months. Becoming seriously ill, he was sent to Baden-Baden, then expelled from Wurtemberg, and sent to Giessen in the grand duchy of Hesse. Like all Alsations expelled from their country, he was indicted by the military tribunal of the empire. This court rendered the following judgment: "Simonin is a notorious enemy of the Germanization of Alsace-Lorraine. He was

<sup>13</sup> Deputies who represented the French spirit in Alsace.

a member of the National Union with Blumenthal, Laugel, and Wetterlé. He founded the Circle of the Valley of the Bruche which was anti-German and where he propagated French ideas and influence, a Circle to which Germans were not admitted. He is president of the Music Society called 'Fanfare de la Bruche,' an organization which is also purely French; in 1914 he even gave the members a French uniform with the view of making it appear that this was a French society. In 1909 he founded at Saint-Dié a factory for the manufacture of gun-cotton which he delivered to the French Government. He had connections with the Ministry of War of the French Government. In a municipal election in 1914 he fought vigorously against the German mayor. Besides it is also known that Simonin has an enormous influence upon the native population of the Valley and that if he went back to Schirmeck, they would give him an enthusiastic welcome and regard him as a martyr. He should not, therefore, be authorized to return home because his presence in the zone of operations would constitute a danger to the army and the empire. Furthermore, he should not be accorded any indemnity, for it has been proven by the above argument that Simonin is anti-German and that his deportation was necessary."

In April, 1917, appeals on his behalf were made, but the expulsion order was maintained. He was permitted to travel about in the interior of Germany, but not in Alsace-Lorraine. He went to settle at Baden-Baden with a great number of Alsatians who were in the same plight as he. On November 11, 1918, he crossed the Rhine and arrived at Strasbourg. He soon re-entered Schirmeck where he received the first French troops and was nominated mayor. It was only at the instance of

his friends at Strasbourg that he presented himself for nomination in the legislative elections.

## II. JUDGMENT PRONOUNCED AGAINST JUDGE ALFRED WEIL OF METZ

IN THE NAME OF THE EMPEROR

In the disciplinary matter against Judge Gerson Alfred Weil, born at Strasbourg August 21, 1876, domiciled at Metz, for a professional crime, the disciplinary senate of the superior regional tribunal of Colmar, in public audience on April 10, 1915, announced:

The accused is condemned to removal from office for violation of his professional obligations (first article of the Law of February 13, 1899); the accused is required to make good the actual expenses incurred in these proceedings.

### *Reasons*

The accused was sworn in as a referee on May 26, 1899, and nominated judge of the Tribunal of the Precinct of Metz by the Royal Decree of July 18, 1908. On the first of June 1912, he was transferred to the Regional Tribunal of the same city in the capacity of member of the said Tribunal. Since March 31, 1910, he has been married to Lily Baldenweck of Paris.

Towards the middle of the month of July, 1914, he left on vacation, and went with his family to the city of Saint-Palais-sur-Mer, France. Since then he has not returned to Metz, and has not sent his superiors any excuse to justify his remaining absent from his duties.

As respects his attitude at Metz outside of his service up to the moment of his trip to France, the following has been established: In the family of the accused only French was spoken, and he himself used by preference the French language even outside of his family and even in the presence of his German colleagues. He read regularly anti-German newspapers such as the *Journal d'Alsace-Lorraine*, and manifested in his conversation not only ardent French sympathies but also anti-German sentiments. His personal relations also conformed with this attitude—not that he absolutely avoided German society, but he frequented principally the natives and notably persons who were known as nationalists,<sup>14</sup> such as the advocates Bena and Braun, the engineer Rikenbach, and the notary Hahn. He was on good terms also with the nationalist Blumenthal.<sup>15</sup> As ex-member of the club of Alsace-Lorraine students, he belonged to the circle of former Alsace-Lorraine students, and on different occasions went to Strasbourg in order to participate in the annual banquets of this circle. The two societies, it is well known, were always the rallying-ground for a large part of the anti-German element belonging to the cultured classes of the country.

He was, besides, a member of the *Souvenir Alsace-Lorraine*, according to the testimony of the advocate Bena, from the establishment until the dissolution of this society on January 23, 1913. He was also present at the Constituent Assembly of March 17, 1912. Now, the *Souvenir Alsace-Lorraine* had no other mission than the continuation of the old *Souvenir Français Alsace-Lorraine*, a branch of the *Souvenir*

<sup>14</sup> Adherents of the party of the National Union which had superseded the French Protesting Party.

<sup>15</sup> Of Jewish origin, at the present time mayor of Colmar.

Français of France which, under the pretext of commemorating departed persons, pursued the aim to glorify France and French renown, to awaken among the population of Alsace and Lorraine exclusive sympathy for France in order to propagate and to maintain in the countries of the empire the idea of *revanche*. No reasonable person could make the least mistake about this aim, and as regards the accused it is even less doubtful that he was in close relations with Jean, who was one of the prominent leaders of both the Souvenir Français and the Souvenir Alsace-Lorraine. It has not been possible to establish the fact whether the accused had already become a member of the Souvenir Français itself or not.

These political sentiments and the manner in which the accused manifested them even before the war are in themselves sufficient to explain why the accused, when the war broke out, did not return to the German territory to assume his duties there. Besides, in a letter addressed, on August 6, 1914, to his sister Aline Lévy at Brussels, he has himself explained, in an indisputable manner, the motives of his absence. In this letter he says: "I at first had the intention of remaining here to put my affairs in order. Fortunately Lily kept me here. From the fate which has been visited upon many persons in Alsace-Lorraine, among whom are many of my friends and acquaintances, I see now what awaits me, especially because I never hid my sentiments. No matter what happens, I have decided not to return to Metz unless Alsace-Lorraine comes back to France. I am, besides, sure that this will happen very soon. I have moreover accustomed myself to the thought that at our house everything has been pillaged and looted, for without doubt our home has been taken over



by requisition. But all this is without importance if we are able to become French again."

It follows clearly from this letter that the accused remained voluntarily in France at the beginning of the war, and it follows from another letter addressed to the same sister on November 2, 1914, that the French authorities did not place any obstacle in the way of his liberty of movement. Now his absence and the liberty of movement which he enjoys in France are explained by his anti-German sentiments and by the fact that even abroad he was considered as an enemy of Germany.

In consequence, the accused is convicted of having left his post without legal reasons, since his leave expired towards the middle of July, 1914, and also of having manifested, during the exercise of his functions at Metz and after that epoch, sentiments entirely hostile to Germany. By this fact he had systematically, and in a continuous manner, violated the obligations which devolved upon him as a German functionary,<sup>16</sup> notably to the German emperor, by reason of the oath taken by him,<sup>17</sup> a violation so grave that it carries with it removal from office according to the terms of Article 4, No. 2, of the disciplinary law of February 13, 1899, the accused having been regularly called to public hearings and

<sup>16</sup> The magistrates were functionaries of Alsace-Lorraine, that is to say, they could not exercise their functions except within the limit of Alsace-Lorraine and they were only maintained from the budget of Alsace-Lorraine which was raised purely from revenues in these provinces themselves.

<sup>17</sup> An oath was to be taken by the deputies to the delegation and to the Chambers of Alsace-Lorraine, the general counsellors, the mayors, etc.—for example, Wetterlé, Preiss, Blumenthal—and has always been considered among Alsations and Lorrainers as a formality imposed upon all those who wished to serve the country, but which did not bind anyone.

the formalities of Article 20, line 1, of the said law, having been observed.

In virtue of Article 22, line 3, of the same law, in connection with Article 124, of the law of the empire on officials, the accused has been declared responsible for the reimbursement of the actual costs of this action.

(Signed)

PAFFRATH, LEUCHERT, KNAUDT, KORNMANN, DR. KOCH.

Exact copy.

(Signed) GRABLER, *Clerk.*

### III. NOTES ON M. ARTHUR FRANCFORT, OF METZ

In a report addressed to the Prefect of Lorraine, after the re-entrance of the French, M. Francfort sets forth his tragic history in the following manner:

I was arrested on July 31, 1914, in the course of the afternoon, and on the following morning I was sent to the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein.

Liberated on February 15, 1915, after two hundred days of captivity, I was incorporated by special order in the 66th infantry at Magdeburg. I affirm that it was by special order that I was incorporated, for during my sojourn at Ehrenbreitstein I received a notification dated November 24, 1914, of the military government of Metz, ordering me to quit the city in twenty-four hours, which proves that my incorporation should not have taken place. It is also possible that the visit of the Commissary of Police of Metz had something to do with this treatment, for the latter, during a short sojourn which he made at the fortress, questioned a number of the prisoners including myself. This despicable fellow offered me my liberty

and freedom to return to Metz if I would consent to indicate to him compatriots having pro-French sentiments. I believe that it is superfluous to reproduce the response which he received from me. My wife was also made to suffer on account of my response, for when she applied for a passport in order to come to see me, this same fellow answered her: "Your husband does not wish to be liberated, and therefore you have no need to pay him a visit." Later she was subjected to persecution by the Council of War for a trifle.

At Magdeburg I stayed for a very short time in the 66th regiment, where I was constantly under surveillance and where I was submitted to the same restrictions as at the fortress. I was forbidden to correspond with my wife in the French language, though she is a daughter of a French functionary, and, not understanding German, was compelled to have recourse to the courtesy of strangers in order to read my letters.

About six weeks after my arrival I was placed in a battalion of territorials, and on May 10, 1915, I was sent to the Russian front, although certified by the physician of the battalion as "good for garrison service only." After a stay of about three months on this front, prostrated by sickness and regarded as a dangerous influence, I was sent back on the road to Magdeburg. I was again attached to my old battalion, when by a new order I was sent again to Russia. This lasted up to the month of February, 1917.

My second sojourn in Russia was not of long duration, for after a few days I received an order to rejoin a battalion of laborers at Glogau in Silesia, whence I was able to flee during the first days of the revolution and to regain my home without molestation.