

Memoirs of Mendel Beilis

Victim of Russian Persecution Writes His Own Story for The Bee Readers

MENDEL BEILIS brings to a close today his extraordinary story of his Russian life and persecution in this newspaper. In March, 1911, the body of a Christian boy, Andrew Yuschinsky, was found in a cave. A few days later Beilis, an honest working artisan, was arrested, charged with the killing of Yuschinsky. The Russian police, backed by the powerful anti-Semitic element, brought forth the baseless and wicked superstition of "ritual murder," the charge that the blood of a Christian is used in Passover ceremonies, as a motive for the death of the boy.

At once the plot behind the arrest of Beilis became apparent. If such a charge could be "proven" against Beilis pogrom after pogrom could be incited, thousands of Jews would be massacred and the remnants of the race left in Russia could be oppressed with still greater cruelty.

After two years of imprisonment and torture Beilis was acquitted. He is now in Palestine.

In his previous installments Beilis has told of his early childhood, his experience during the pogroms, or massacres, of the Jews; his arrest for the murder of Yuschinsky and his torture in the Russian prison—torments by which his persecutors hoped to force from him a false confession. He closed his last chapter with his cry of protest against the unfair appeal of the public prosecutor of Kiev for his death—"God strike me dead if I have done this!"



Three soldiers seized hold of me and led me away to the cell. I suppose my words must have caused a commotion, for the president adjourned court for an hour. When he returned, Mr. Schmakoff, the counsel for Cherberiak, began another violent attack on me, but this time I was able to remain silent and I tried to pay no attention to what he said.

Later, Mr. Zamilovsky made a second speech which made me very unhappy. He told the jury that as it had not been proven that either Vera Cherberiak or Singevsky committed the murder, therefore I must be the guilty man. I watched the jury. It seemed to me that they agreed with him.

But the next day my hopes began to rise. The court seemed more crowded than ever before. I was told that high prices were being offered for seats. At the start, the president ordered the doors to be locked, and because of this the news became terrible. About the middle of the morning I myself was taken ill, and thought I should have fainted. I pulled myself together, however, but several people looking on had to be carried out.

The speeches of my lawyers had begun. Mr. Maklakoff was the first. His address put new heart into me. I had never dreamed that a man could speak like him. My confidence once more returned.

"Surely," I thought, "the jury cannot resist this."

"Beilis is innocent," was what he kept saying. I also remember he said, "If the police were honestly to follow up the clues there is no doubt that Beilis would be set free and Cherberiak would be in the dock in his place."

I am sorry I broke down when he said this, but the strain was too much for me. I felt that my heart would break. I forgot that I was in court and could only think of my prosecutor. One day, Mr. Zamilovsky, the one sitting near me, handed me a glass of water and begged me to be calm. I pulled myself together, although the president offered to stop the trial for a time.

A little later Mr. Maklakoff's story of the death of Cherberiak's little son, and nearly every one in court cried. I remember Mr. Maklakoff saying:

"Remember, there is an innocent man here you. If you convict him, you convict not only Mendel Beilis, but Russian justice."

My other lawyers followed, all being able to speak eloquently for me. After they had finished I thought the jury must acquit me.

But again my hopes were shattered. Mr. Wipper, the prosecutor, spoke again, and was even more furious against me than before. Watching the jury's faces; they seemed to be fascinated by what he told them.

That night I was told that trouble was expected in the town. It seems that members of the Black Hundred were arriving in Kiev, and there was every sign of the commencement of a pogrom. I could not sleep for thinking of the horrors that might come about, of which I might be the unfortunate cause.

I lay awake thinking of this, and hoping that by some means the trouble might be averted. The strain was beginning to tell on me and I was very excited.

But one ordeal yet awaited me. For the last time they began to search me, as usual, and one of the policemen tore the shirt from my neck in such a fashion as nearly to strangle me. I felt as though my tongue was going to fall out of my mouth. As usual, the others laughed. I could stand it no longer. I tore the shirt away from him. I was absolutely hysterical. I shouted:

"You devil! You monster! You wild beast! Your heart should be torn in pieces like you have torn my flesh! Haven't you any human feelings at all? Why should I be tortured like this, you devil!"

He went white with rage. I thought he would have killed me. He made a dash at me, and I thought my last moment had come. But his companions must have thought that he had gone too far, for they threw themselves between us and would not let him strike me. I think God must have made them protect me.

My tormentor glared at me.

"Wait, your dirty Jew," he cried. "By tomorrow it will be all over with you, and you will be on your way to Siberia. They will treat you there as you deserve, you dog!"

Next morning brought me good cheer. For days past the weather had been very dull, but as I stepped into the prison van the sun suddenly came out and gave me new hope.

I noticed when court had reassembled every one present seemed agitated at the thought that the end was near. My guards had been increased to five, and they formed a ring around me. Also, there were many more soldiers in court, because, I suppose, of the possibility of a disturbance.

president began to sum up. Somehow I had hoped that he would help me. Once or twice during the trial he had seemed kindly disposed toward me. I soon discovered my mistake.

The president spoke all the time as though I committed the murder. My hopes fell to nothing. I could not believe that the jury would not take notice of what the president said. I looked at my lawyers. They seemed almost as sad as I, and I began to prepare myself for the worst.

At last the president finished speaking. Looking toward me, he said:

"The last word is with you, Beilis."

I nerved myself and, looking the president full in the face, said:

"Judges, jurymen, I am weak and exhausted. I can scarcely stand. I swear I am innocent and implore you to acquit me and allow me to return to my unfortunate children, who are waiting for me."

The president handed to the foreman of the jury a paper on which was written two questions, which they were to answer. The first asked whether the boy had been murdered for ritual purposes, and the wounds inflicted in the manner described. The second was:

"If this is proved, is Mendel Beilis guilty of the murder?"

I cast a hurried glance around the court. The jury were beginning to walk out. I caught the eye of the student, Golubov, who, I had been told, was my great enemy. It was he, I learned, who had my wife's belongings searched and ordered the arrest of my son, David. A shiver ran through me, and I hardly felt the soldiers touch me on the shoulder to take me to my court cell for the last time.

I was kept waiting an hour and a half. It seemed a lifetime. All my hopes had gone after the president's speech. I tried to pray, but could not. Even the soldiers who guarded me took pity on me and tried to cheer me.

At last the bell sounded. I heard for the last time, "Bring in the prisoner!" My guards had been increased to nine soldiers, who entered the court with me and stood at my side and all around me with drawn swords. I felt sure I was a lost man.

Then the jury came in. I looked at them and tried to read their thoughts. They refused to look at me, and I thought they were ashamed of me. I knew then I was lost.

In a few moments, which seemed to be an eternity, the foreman stepped forward and read from a paper he held in his hand. It was the long first question. I watched his face while he read. He told me nothing. But soon he stopped reading, and, looking up, said:

"Yes, it is proved."

The words came in a husky whisper. I was shaking with emotion. My doom was sealed. It must be all over with me. I clutched at the rail and steadied myself.

One thought came into my mind—"How can I take my life?" But even for this I was not enough educated.

Then the foreman read again:

"Is Beilis then guilty of having, with premeditated intention and conspiring with other persons, undetected, from motives of religious persecution, committed murder?"

There was a pause. Looking at the president, in a highly pitched voice the foreman almost shrieked:

"No! He is not guilty!"

Then I fell on the floor in a dead faint. When I came to, I was back in my court cell. One of my lawyers and some soldiers were throwing water over me and giving me brandy. For a moment I could not realize what had happened. My lawyer told me I was a free man, but later, when they took me to the president's room, I asked:

"Is not my persecution over yet?"

But the president was no longer that stern man who had made that awful speech against me. He looked at me almost kindly. My knees were still shaking and I could not keep myself steady.

"Mr. Beilis," he began.

I could not believe my ears. Fancy being called "Mr. Beilis! It had always been 'Beilis' before.

He went on:

"You are a free man. I cannot keep you here any longer. I can understand how you feel, and how much you want to get back to your family. But for the sake of peace and order and for the sake of your own safety, I advise you to go back and remain in the prison tonight. Tomorrow you can be safely set free and taken home."



A Drawing That, Found in One of His Rooms, Aroused the Fear of the Superstitious Czar and Caused Him to Order Harsher Measures Against the Pale, Because He Was Told a Jew Had Drawn It—and Above Beilis With His Family After His Acquittal.

seemed to pass. Would they ever come and fetch me, I wondered?

At last the soldiers came to take me home, and one or two of them tried to be quite pleasant, but one was very cross. He was the man who had nearly strangled me that morning. He looked at me, and his words cut my heart like a knife.

"Oh, you animal!" he said. "You dirty Jew! Acquitted! We'll see whether you remain alive, you devil! You shan't escape us, you dog!"

I was taken first to prison, where I had spent many weary months. Many of the wardens smiled on me. They came and brought me my watch and all my possessions quite cheerfully. Numbers of the officials and their wives crowded around me, congratulating me and giving me their good wishes.

"Beilis, Beilis," said one official, "you are to be our friend in future. If you decide to remain in Kiev we will appoint you caterer to the prison."

I thought their kind speeches were never going to end, but I welcomed them. But during all this time one of them stood by silent, glaring at me. It was the same soldier who had just threatened me, and nearly murdered me on a previous occasion—he who had been making my life a heavy burden.

If it was this soldier who months before had been on guard outside my cell, and one night while I was undergoing solitary confinement I awoke in the middle of the night to find that the door of my cell was open. I stayed perfectly still, but kept my eyes glued on the open door.

Then I noticed his figure standing there in the dark. Just then a ray of light from another warden's lantern fell upon him. There was a revolver in his hand. Then I understood. He had unlocked the door, hoping that I would try to escape. If I did so, he would have shot me. I had heard of such happenings before, and I lay there shaking, but I did not move.

This man was now eyeing me like a wild beast. I thought I must speak.

"Look!" I screamed, pointing to him. "There is the one man in this prison whom I never can forgive. He made my life one long torture. He tried to murder me only this morning. God will want an answer from him for all the pain, suffering and misery inflicted upon me. This man has made my life a hell. Now that I am leaving prison, I want him to remember that God sees everything, and if he treats other prisoners as he has me, God will have vengeance upon him!"

At that moment I believe he, himself, felt afraid.

I was then taken to the police station. Here the first words spoken to me were:

"Now, Beilis, you are acquitted, but you are a Jew. You have no right to live in Kiev. You must leave the city at once."

Fortunately, one of my lawyers was with me. He pointed out that the fact of my eldest boy being admitted to the gymnasium entitled me to remain, at least for a few days, until the question of the government's decision as to appeal had been settled.

They agreed, and once again I was placed in the prison van. It was packed with soldiers inside, and a great number on horseback escorted us also. It was now early morning.

We lumbered along that bumpy road at what seemed a snail's pace. But this time I did not feel the discomfort. My thoughts were fixed on my home and children, and my only other desire at that moment was for those horses to gallop.

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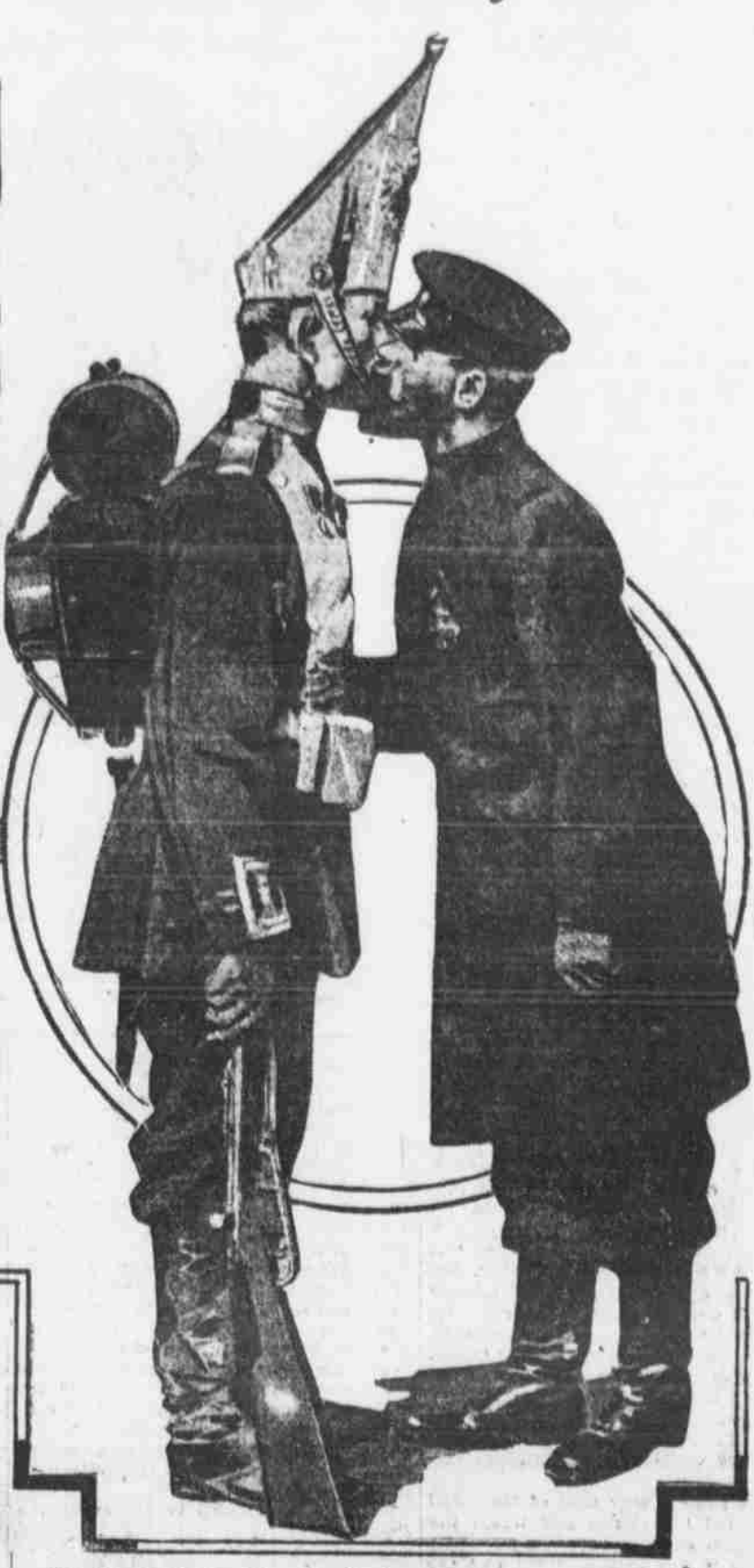
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The moment came. We were at my home. After two years and a half I was home once more. Two soldiers came and unlocked the door of the van. The soldiers jumped down and I followed.

It was half past five by now. How fine the morning air seemed! I glanced at the windows. There were lights in all of them. I wondered if the children had waited up all night to see me. Coming closer, I could see their faces pressed against the window panes.

My wife, with the children at her heels, rushed to the door and flung it open. But, for the moment, I could not get to her. A crowd of journalists who had been waiting all night came between us. Fortunately, the soldiers were there, and they cleared a way for me.

My wife was overjoyed to see me, and my children caught hold of me, clamoring for kisses. Our joy was too great for



The Czar's Easter Kiss. By Custom the Autocrat is Forced to Kiss His Sentries on Easter Morning. The Sentries Are All Carefully Picked for This Occasion, Which the Czar Performs in Abject Fear.

me to describe. I tried to keep back my tears, but I could not, and we all went together.

It was not long before our house was besieged. Hundreds of people, old friends, Jews and Christians, and many people whom I had never seen before, came to offer me their congratulations.

Soon letters and telegrams began to arrive in shoals. I could not read them then, and I have not had the time to finish them yet. The postman brought sacks of letters, which are still pouring in on me. They come from all parts of the world, from people of all races and religions. Some sent money. Others sent their photographs. The majority were written in the same strain. They wished me joy on my release, and they thanked me for having suffered in prison so that this foul lie on the Jewish religion had been proved false. Here is a typical letter:

"Dear Mendel Beilis: We real followers of Christ, do not believe that Jews require Christian blood, but rather that the Russian government drinks the blood of Jews. Accept the photo of my family, and believe me that the sympathy of all good Christians is yours."

Altogether, I have received nearly 1,000 telegrams and over 4,000 letters of congratulations.

An old priest, in charge of the church near my house, came to me among the first. He embraced me, saying:

"My wife and I have prayed for you throughout the trial," and he blessed me and my wife and children.

After him came one of the ordinary peasants with long beard and rough clothes.

"Dear Mendel Beilis," he said, "I have never known you, but I thank you. You understand my feelings," and saying this, he broke down entirely and went away.

The soldiers remained in my home. They kept the crowd in order, and often a man or woman had scarcely time to speak to me before a gruff voice was heard saying:

"Pass on!"

During these days I was not free from worry. There was still time for the government to appeal against the verdict.

Although my lawyers told me they thought this unlikely, yet all the same I was on thorns night and day. Toward the end of this time the strain became awful. I could not sleep, and my nerves failed me. That was one of my worst times of agony.

What is more, I was receiving every day letters threatening to kill me in hundreds from members of the "Two-headed Eagle." Then I was told that the Black Hundred had also sworn a solemn oath to kill me. I was afraid to venture out of doors, and any moment I felt I

might fall under the hand of the assassin. I was just as nervous as ever.

But this terrible time passed at last. One day the news came that it had been decided not to appeal. I was really a free man at last.

My future I left in the hands of the gentlemen who had provided the money for my defense, and in so many other ways looked after me. They told me I could not remain safely in Russia, but where I am to go has not been settled yet.

After my acquittal I received many offers from all parts of the world. Some came from vaudeville and theatrical managers, also from moving picture concerns. They offered me big sums to appear on the stage or allow a cinematograph film to be taken of the incidents of my trial.

But on the advice of Dr. Hychovsky I decided to refuse them all, as I was told that the trial was too solemn and important for myself and the Jewish people for me to accept them.

But I think that some true account of my experiences and sufferings should be published, so that everyone can know what happens today to a Jew in Russia. This is my reason for writing my memoirs.

My future has not yet been decided. It is still uncertain to what place I shall go. I would prefer a quiet life among my own people, where I might perhaps own a small farm and make myself happy and contented. The police have given me permission to leave Russia, and I expect to go any moment now.

I have told how I was brought up under the most miserable conditions; how my early days were full of privations and went, and how the best years of my life were clouded with darkness and sorrow. The last two years and four months of my life have been passed in Kiev prisons, torn from wife and children, kept in a dark cell as a sacrifice for my brother Jews, who did their best to prove my innocence.

During this time I have had time to think what a mean thing it is to remain a Jew only in name and not to follow the laws and observances for which I became a sacrifice.

And now my greatest ambition is to bring up my children in the real Jewish faith, and educate them as good Jews. I want them to be honest, faithful servants of God, as a Jew should be. In the years to come they will recall their father's sufferings for the dear name of "Jew," a name which in Russia does not give us any right to remain or reside in a town quietly, as I should have wished.

But I hope that time, which is so much stronger than all else in the world, will bring me peace and comfort, and that my friends who have sustained me in my hours of trial and misery will help me to be successful in this desire.

I am leaving Russia, my birthplace, forever. I thank all my dear good friends who came to my aid when things were at their worst, friends both in Europe and America.

I thank all the journalists and the newspapers, and I especially thank the New York American, which has done its utmost for me, for championing my cause, working to prove my innocence and helping me in all kinds of ways.

(Signed) MENDEL BEILIS.

How to Look Years Less Than Your Age

The most aged face will look years younger after the use of ordinary mercurial soap for from ten days to two weeks. This remarkable substance, because of its peculiar absorptive power, actually removes the thin veil of faded or withered outer epidermis, a little at a time. Gradually the fresher, more youthful skin underneath is revealed. This absorption process being a purely hygienic one, an entirely natural complexion is acquired—quite different from the artificial complexion, which appears anything but girlish, though often bearing painful evidence of childlessness. An ounce of mercurial soap, obtainable at any drug store, is sufficient to rejuvenate any complexion. It is put on like cold cream at bedtime, and removed mornings with warm water.

To eradicate such age marks as wrinkles and furrows, make a wash lotion by dissolving 1 oz. powdered azolectin in 1/2 pt. witch hazel. This has wonderful astringent and tonic properties. It quickly effaces all kinds of wrinkles, no matter how caused, making the skin firm, smooth and young looking.—Advertisement.

\$6,000.00

Cash and Premiums

The Bee's M. & M. Voting Contest

CLOSED

Saturday Noon, March 28th

The names of the winners and the number of votes held by each contestant will be published in The Bee.

Sunday, April 5th

At the same time the date on which the premiums will be awarded will be announced.

Watch for the Announcement

Less Meat if Kidneys Hurt or You're Backachy and Rheumatic

Meat forms uric acid, which clogs Kidneys; causes Rheumatism and irritates Bladder.

If you must have your meat every day, eat it, but flush your kidneys with salts occasionally, says a noted authority who tells us that meat forms uric acid which almost paralyzes the kidneys in their efforts to expel it from the blood. This becomes sluggish and weakens, then you suffer with a dull misery in the kidney region, sharp pains in the back or sick headache, dizziness, your stomach sour, tongue is coated and when the weather is had you have rheumatic twinges. The urine gets cloudy, full of sediment, the channels often get sore and irritated, obliging you to seek relief two or three times during the night.

To neutralize these irritating acids, to cleanse the kidneys and flush off the body's urinous waste get four ounces of Jad Salts from any pharmacy here; take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast for a few days and your kidneys will then act fine. This famous salt is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia, and has been used for generations to flush and stimulate sluggish kidneys, also to neutralize the acids in urine, so it no longer irritates, thus ending bladder weakness.

Jad Salts is inexpensive; cannot injure, and makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water drink.—Advertisement.