

"THE HISTORY OF THE ANGLO-ASHKENAZIC
COMMUNITY DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY,
BASED ON TAKKANOTH AND OTHER HEBREW SOURCES."

by

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Preface

The following pages attempt to delineate the organization of the Anglo-Ashkenazic community during the eighteenth century, using the Takkanahs which regulated its affairs, as the main source. The history of any period of Jewish life would be incomplete without a picture of the background of the country and the times against which the Jews lived. This is even more true in the present case, for the Jews rapidly absorbed and assimilated the ways and culture of the people amongst whom they lived. The external environment exerted a strong influence in the shaping of the community. One can almost see exact parallels in the course of the English and Anglo-Jewish history of the period, for the failings and shortcomings of the English people readily occur in the Jewish group. For these reasons the first chapter contains a resume of English history of the period which intends to show why the Jewish community could develop particularly during this era and the influences which penetrated Jewish life. The first chapter includes a bird's-eye-view of the forces operating in English history, and a picture of Anglo-Jewish history, insofar as it affected both the Sephardic and Ashkenazic communities. The second chapter is a resume of the social and cultural history of the Ashkenazim, which is designed to give a background to the Takkanahs which were formulated during this period. Both chapters include only that material which is pertinent and relevant to an understanding of the Takkanahs.

The remaining chapters present the actual organization of the Anglo-Ashkenazic community. The mode of presentation of these Takkanahs has been, of necessity, an almost exact reproduction of the text of the Takkanahs, arranged in a systematic and topical order. This method was preferred to a collated description of the contents, because of the important and distinctive differences inherent in the Takkanahs of each synagogue. A synthesis of all this material would have obscured and beclouded these significant differences. This presentation also made possible a chronological arrangement of the Takkanahs which may give us a deeper insight into the form and shape of the community as it evolved.

Although the various Takkanahs are interpreted and commented upon as they are presented, the introduction and final chapter are intended to survey the characteristics of the material as a whole and to summarize their similarities and differences.

Most of the material relevant to the subject, with the exception of minor sources which were not available, have been examined and treated accordingly.

The English terminology for the various technical terms has been used consistently in all the Takkanahs. Whenever a Takkanah has used a term in a different sense, this variation has been explained in the notes.

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Introduction

The social and political changes of the eighteenth century made themselves felt in the organization of the Jewish community. The comparatively increasing freedom and franchise of the Jew in England weakened the autonomous authority that the Jewish community enjoyed in the previous century. Previously, the Jewish authority could circumscribe one's commercial and social activities, because the collective restrictions placed upon the community by the government. The community as a whole had to answer to the government and the authority for the administration of internal affairs was vested in an autonomous body. Expulsion from the community meant not only social ostracism, but also the loss of the privilege to do business in that community. Moving to a new community meant new entry fees, and one would perhaps have to bring a small fortune with him in order to gain entry into a new place. The Jews did not want paupers, only newcomers with capital who would increase the volume of commercial enterprise were desirable. These conditions made it desirable for an individual to remain in one place and submit to the local Jewish government. The London community however, assumed a different shape and form. Although the Jews lived in a compact and organized unit, there were no governmental compulsions

which made them an autonomous community, collectively responsible. The late establishment of Ashkenazic Jewry under these new sociological conditions contributed to the breakdown of the old type community. It was only an inbred tradition which held them together in a compact group and made membership in the Jewish fold advantageous. The only compelling reason for joining the Jewish community was the fact that the community controlled the religious rites and the cemetery and they could refuse a Jewish burial to a non-communicant and deprive him of the benefits of clergy and synagogue. The members of the Jewish set might also sever social connections and even business relations with a non-conforming Jew, and cause unnecessary ill will.¹ These bonds were not too strong, for in spite of these disadvantages, some members separated themselves from the Jewish community.

The powerful restrictive and dictatorial influence of the Jewish community was on the way out. In Holland, where there were Jews who had been exposed to the liberal and democratic spirit, they sought to break the strangle-²hold of the Parnassim and his officials. The all-embracing form of government known to the Jewish community in earlier years was slowly losing ground before the onslaught of emancipation. Although membership in the synagogue with attending privileges was called קהל it was really nothing

else that a membership today in a synagogue. One could sever his relations with the Jewish community and continue to live on and do his business.

However, there was a different type of bond which united the community. It was the religious communion and faith that integrated the people. The expulsion of an observant Jew from the community was even as late as 1750, a harsh punishment. He was deprived of all the rites of a Jew and even after death, his expulsion would pursue him to the grave. With the development of a number of smaller synagogues and the increasing complexities of more modern life, these expulsions became insignificant because the central authority was broken and anarchy prevailed. If one synagogue expelled a member, another would be glad to take him in.

One of the most interesting points which is brought out in a study of the Anglo-Jewish community in this century, is the transition in the form and significance of its organization and authority. Here we can see the remnants of the old system slowly being transformed into a new one. It is interesting also to notice how this development and its results so closely parallel the basis of our communal life, insofar, as the old conceptions of community are destroyed before the new environment.

The Anglicization of Jewry and the harbinger of eman-

cipation dealt the old system its death blow. As long as the English government and people showed outward signs of hostility, the Jew was willing to be hemmed in by communal authority and jurisdiction. We find no mention of a law which deals with the procedure of settling a law suit in courts. This example illustrates that even until the last decade of the century the Jews probably preferred their own Beth Din. Not so with the Sephardim, for we read of them bringing their domestic troubles to the civil courts³ for adjudication.

Another reason for the transition in the definition of the Jewish community was the make-up of its constituency. The Jews in London were a conglomerate group coming from all parts of Europe. Although the Hamburg influence permeated their organization, the lack of homogeneity allowed an indigenous evolution to pursue its own course.

The shape and form which the community assumed at the end of the eighteenth century was to endure through the nineteenth century and exists basically even until today.

Chapter One

Historical Background
of the
Eighteenth Century

- a. English
- b. Jewish

a.

The eighteenth century was a culmination and climax of the strident march of civilization since the Renaissance. It was the unfoldment of man's contriving ingenuity and inventive genius which had been gaining momentum in earlier decades, and after a long process of maturation finally blossomed forth during this century. The era distinguished itself in the practical application and utilization of the approach and theory which had been forged in the latter half of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Newtonian world machine, the deep penetration of rationalism into all spheres of life and activity, the mechanistic theory of nature, creating a scientific new approach to man and the cosmos, were the dynamic forces which converged upon the eighteenth century. The realization of these ideas in a practical and utilitarian form changed the entire complexion of the continent, transforming

it into a seething cauldron of transition and blazed the trail for our modern civilization.

This spirit of change seized England in its grip first and reshaped the old tendencies and molded the new trends which were to become the determining factors in the future development of the nation. The impact of this new epoch was felt first in England because of many predisposing factors. England had by the beginning of the eighteenth century run the gamut of ills a nation must suffer before it becomes a consolidated and unified body. The revolution and its turbulent aftermath had given expression to all the dissension and divergencies inherent in any conglomeration of people. Issues had been fought out and dissenting tendencies fell in line with the general trends. The economic revolution accompanied by the tumult of expansion drew off the latent energies of the people which might ~~see~~ ^{use} Jew-baiting and other riotous issues as an outlet. At the turn of the seventeenth century, England was ready to pursue its normal course of growth and rise to a position of preeminence among the powers of the continent.

The growth of England branched out in many directions. The entire century, with only one interval of respite, was pockmarked with wars of conquest. England was engaged in a duel with France and Spain and she won. At the end of this period, the English empire finally took the shape which was

to persist into the nineteenth century. The growth of industry which flowered into the Industrial Revolution changed the social setting as well as the economic structure of the country. This process was aided by the no less important Agricultural revolution which contributed a parallel increase in agricultural products by more efficient methods and drove many men from the land to the factory. These revolutions wrought such change as to make the England at the end of the century, almost unrecognizable from her former self.

The first fruits of the long process of cultural development and activity in the seventeenth century was the underlying change in government. Although this change in political theory occurred a decade before the turn of the century, it made its influence felt most during the eighteenth century. In 1688 William of Orange and his wife Mary ascended the throne of England as King and Queen. Before bestowing the crown upon the royal couple, Parliament drew up a bill call the "Declaration of Rights." This bill recited the misdeeds and evils of James II and stated that henceforth, the King could not make or suspend laws, levy taxes, raise loans or maintain an army without consent of Parliament. The bill further enumerated the rights and privileges of the people and insured the freedom of Parliament. This meant that William had become king only because of

Parliament's pleasure. By holding the purse strings and removing the king's prerogative to legislate arbitrarily, the government was more or less in the hands of Parliament. The king was now a subject to Parliament and indirectly controlled by the voters. Many months later, this bill was made a regular statute under the title of the "Bill of Rights" and assumed a permanent form.

This bill was a deathblow to the theory of "divine right of kings," which had persisted so long and tyrannized the people. This ideological revolution had greater far-reaching effects than can be seen at the first glance. It broke the undisputed restraining force that the king might apply to anything which he disliked or looked upon unfavorably, and gave a greater leeway and more freedom to unrestrained progress. Affairs might pursue their natural course without being aborted by a short-sighted individual, who was the prey of whim and impulse. Moreover, it placed the power in the hands of a deliberative body who were to some degree the representatives of the people, and of whom one could expect more than from a single individual. One of the more important effects relevant to our topic, is the break that was now created between religion and the kingship. The strong influence of rationalism was also at work helping to put a wedge into the theory of divine right of kings. Religion itself was not only being

overhauled but its undue influence in spheres which were unrelated to religion was slowly diminishing. Thus the influence of religion in political affairs was diminished and was destined to become insignificant. The king no longer ruled because he was God's chosen, but because he was granted the throne by Parliament. This was the first wedge driven into the church and state theory, which was to result in a wider breach. Although it must be stated, that there never came about a complete and sharp severance of the church and state idea, nevertheless, they were so distantly set apart, that religion was no longer the powerful influence in political issues. This was important for the Jewish problem, for although the state was Christian, the Jew in spite of his different faith could still become a citizen and member of the state during the latter half of the ^{19th} century. If the complete freedom of citizenship and naturalization was not granted the Jew during this century, it was not because there was an underlying philosophy deterring the bestowal of such privilege on the Jew, but because of prejudice and other selfish motives. As far as the state was concerned it was ready to grant such privileges, for in fact such legislation was passed, but had to be repealed on account of the mob violence which was stirred up by irresponsible and diabolical
4
agitators.

The most important change of the century occurred in the industrial field which came to be known as the "Industrial

Revolution." The appearance of this phenomenon affected almost every phase of English life and created new conditions and situations. As we have previously stated, this century took over the scientific approach and applied it in principle. The result was a crop of new inventions replacing older and slower methods of production and contributing an increase in national wealth. A number of inventions, one following upon the heels of each other, made ^{Eng}land the foremost textile country. With a surplus of raw cotton growing in India, all that was needed was a machine to make a fine and strong cloth in greater quantities and at a lower cost. In 1733 John Kay invented the flying shuttle with which doubled the production of broadcloth. This of course meant that there must be an increase of thread to supply the looms. In 1764, James Hargreaves, invented the "spinning Jenny," a machine which spun eight times as much yarn as the ordinary spinning wheel. This helped keep the balance between the supply of yarn and the increasing demand of the looms. In 1769 Richard Arkwright perfected the "spinning Jenny" and produced even better and stronger yarn than before. In 1785 Cartwright invented the power loom. These machines made it impossible to do the work at the ^{domestic} spinners and weaver's looms, and there grew up specialized buildings known as factories to house the machinery. Also the use of water power made it necessary to move these factories near sites which could provide the necessary water power.

The iron industry, as a result of the inventions of new manufacturing machinery was also developed. New methods were perfected, by Abraham Darby and son which made the smelting of iron simpler and in 1784, Henry Cart developed a process which produced sheet iron, which was used for the making of stronger and better machines.

The steam engine too, which was a valuable source of driving power was perfected. In 1705 Newcomb invented the steam engine which was later perfected by Watt. The steam engine as developed by Watt became very important and by the end of the century replaced water power as a source of energy and found its way into many factories. Naturally, the new method of smelting iron and the steam engine made great demands upon the coal mining industry which had to be expanded and developed in order to meet the increased demands.

Agriculture too, did not lag behind the times and played a highly significant role in the industrialization of England. In 1733 Jethro Tull in his book, "Horse-Hoeing Industry" advocated new methods of plowing and planting which were designed to decrease the amount of labor in planting and increase the yield. Lord Townshend discovered the principle of "rotation of crops" which is even employed today. By this method he showed how to preserve the fertility of the soil and provide fodder for the starving cattle during the winter. New methods of fertilization, new ways of

breeding cattle and developing hardier strains, helped to keep agriculture apace with industry.

The rising industrialism coupled with the newer methods to produce a greater yield at a smaller outlay dealt a hard blow to the small farmer and completely revolutionized the agricultural structure. Up until now, farming had been done on a cooperative basis and there were communal meadows for pasturage, fuel and many other purposes. Under this system, it was difficult for the new methods to make headway and much land was going to waste. When the large landowner heard of the new discoveries in agriculture and were informed that the waste lands could be made productive, they set about to find some way to put these lands to a profitable use. By petitioning Parliament, three-fourths of the population of a village could request that their land be redistributed in small individual parcels and each parcel would require an expensive hedge stone fence to enclose the property. Sometimes, a few people could petition and even only one man, if he were an important or wealthy individual. The landlords petitioned Parliament for a bill of enclosure and commissioners would come down to the village and redistribute the communal lands. The rich landlords would receive large parcels of land to which they could apply the new methods of cultivation and could operate these lands profitably. The poor individual farmer could not apply these methods

to his parcel of land because it was too small and the expense involved was too great. Moreover, he could not afford to enclose his land with a hedge stone fence because it was too expensive. The landlord would then approach the farmer and buy out his rights very cheaply and add it on to his estate. Thus, the wealthier landlord accumulated large estates and the poor farmer was driven off the land and was forced to go to the city where the factories were utilizing all available manpower.

As the discoveries and inventions increased, making industry and agriculture more productive and profitable, the wealth increased with it. New classes came into being and the economic system became more speculative or capitalistic. From 1700 to 1783 the combined exports and imports increased from ten to twenty-eight million pounds. By 1793 the total jumped to thirty-nine millions and by the end of the century, it was seventy-three millions. The shipping industry took a parallel jump, from two hundred eighty-nine thousand tons, it jumped to two million one hundred and thirty thousand tons in 1800⁵. The increased production made it necessary to have large factories with large investments, which gave rise to the capitalistic organization of industry. It was no longer possible for the individual laborer to manufacture his own product.

The growth of the speculative system can be illustrated by the notorious incident concerning the "South Sea Bubble."

This company was financed by floating large stock issues for the investment of funds in a South American venture. The entire venture failed and the watered stocks fell causing a crash in which thousands lost their life's savings. This crisis threatened the Whig party, which almost toppled because of this unprecedented financial failure.

The increase in production and the rising position of England among the nations led to another development in its foreign policy. A rising industrial nation needed a colonial empire for many reasons. It could import its necessary raw materials and could use the colonies as an outlet for the manufactured goods. Throughout this century England waged war with France in Europe and abroad, in an attempt to gain these sources and markets. The war of Spanish succession lasted from 1702-1713. Spain and England allied themselves against France, and Marlborough, the English general, won repeated victories. In 1713, the Peace of Utrecht was signed. England gained control of the English channel and kept Gibraltar and Minorca and was allowed ^{to send} one trading ship a year down the Spanish Main. In 1739, England decided that the Spanish possessions offered a valuable source of trade and she violated the Peace of Utrecht and declared war on Spain. England did not fare so well in this war and gained very little. However, when the peace was signed at Aix-La-Chapelle in 1748 France and Spain were also so weakened that their opposition really was of no account. England, however, was learning from her

mistakes and was building up a tremendous store of experience which was to serve her well at a later date. In 1756, a new war was begun, France was regaining control of the Mediterranean, much to the chagrin of England. The Mediterranean even as today was an important trade route and empire link. England also looked upon the French colonial empire with jealous eyes. During this same time a small war was again fought with Spain. This conflict ended with the Peace of Paris in 1763 and England bit off a big piece of the French empire. She took Canada and Nova Scotia from Spain and she took Havana, Manila, which she returned for the cession of Florida. France and Spain were practically driven from North America. This war gave England the desired victory; at last she had gained supremacy and commercial leadership. Her joys were to be soon dampened for towards the end of the century, George III's stubbornness and hard-headedness lost the American colonies for England. In India, too, Clive helped further English aims and consolidated the Indian empire. The shape of England's colonial empire at the end of this century assumed the form it was to keep for the next century.

The dislocation of population came as a result of the rapidly increasing industrialization. The advance of mechanical contrivances necessitated that industry be localized in conveniently situated centers. The enclosure legislation gave the farmer two equally unpleasant alternatives. Either he could become a laborer under the vassalage

of some absentee landlord, or else he could leave the soil and flee to a nearby manufacturing center. These unfortunates became the prey of the slums at its lowest level. Even Dickens' descriptions of these areas fail to picture the conditions as they flourished. The wealthier group were busy exploiting these wretched souls for their selfish gain. These workers had no choice except to labor for the benefit of their employer. To better their conditions would mean to give them sufficient strength perhaps to rebel. The factory owners themselves prevented the alleviation of the evils which preyed upon the worker and prevented any beneficial legislation from being passed in their favor. Education for the poor was practically non-existent. Children were enslaved for long hours in the unhealthy environment of foul factories. They were physically and mentally stunted and were the material which created slums. Women too were drawn from their homes to work in the factories, and were used for the lighter tasks in the factory and for unskilled work; they constituted a cheap source of labor. The poor conditions of the factories combined with the poor compensation and slum areas, depraved the unfortunates and constituted a menace to the nation.

The disorder of the times was reflected in the social and moral condition of the people. No doubt, the rapidly growing slums caused by industrial expansion contributed its share to these conditions. The change in the sociological

structure of the population created new problems, which were a direct result of industrialism. The industrialization of England brought on an increase of population which was needed in the building and expansion of England. Then again, the reaction to the severe and sober Puritanism of the last century, caused a complete upheaval in the daily lives of the people. The upper strata too felt the effects of these changes which were reflected in their changed ways of living. The economic wealth of the country was naturally increasing, because of the new avenues opened into industry. The transformation from town to city was responsible for the chaos which was introduced into English society. The corrupt court and its depraved minister served as prototypes of the low social and moral level of the day. Walpole himself lived for many years in open adultery. The horrors of gin can very well be pictured from the statistical reports of 1741. In London alone there were twice as many deaths as births. This increase of drunkenness brought on an increase in disease and vice. The lower classes were known to spend as much as half of their earnings. Even the upper classes were not immune to these vices. In 1750, eleven million gallons of gin were produced. This vice grew to such dimensions as to constitute a national curse.⁶ In 1742 the government took cognizance of the matter and passed severe and stringent legislation regulating drink.

The previous description serves as an introduction of the degradation of England's social life. Each vice in its turn created a host of vices. Gambling was so widespread that Westminster Bridge was built almost entirely from funds raised by lottery. Gambling was the program of the day. Fortunes were lost and stakes were unseemingly high. Even women were indulging in this vice.

Parallel with these conditions was a complete insensitiveness of the people and especially among the higher circles from whom help was expected. They could look on horrible scenes without a shudder or attempt to remedy the situation. The prisons and jails were of the worst kind. There were public executions to which a fee was charged for admission. The poor were uncared for, and the slums were allowed to exist and grow worse from day to day.

Religion in this period withstood the indictment levelled against it by the evil social conditions, but it was attacked on a different front. The church was made powerless by the various political squabbles which sapped its strength. The accession of William III who had little sympathy for the Anglican church handicapped its activities. The church became an institution which was constantly juggled according to the views of the politicians, or reigning monarchs and they extended their patronage to clergymen of their choice. The post reformation period with its complete religious upheaval dealt the church a terrific blow. It was floundering in the

sea of confusion created by the impossible impositions made upon it by Puritanism. The change from country to city, also helped to weaken the church's strength as the mainstay of the people. In the village, the church could account for each individual and socially or otherwise force him into the religious fold, but in the city it lost ~~the~~ influence. We know ^{THAT} even today, that the city is not fertile ground for fostering religion. The inadequacy of the church in dealing with the evil conditions and its failure to help the people weakened its influence. The rapid growth of crime and vice naturally created a spirit of indifference in the people.

The most striking blow dealt the church came from the rationalistic spirit which was dominating the continent. Skepticism and Deism were undermining the faith in the church. David Hume, historian and philosopher was an outstanding skeptic. Matthew Tyndal advocated Deism in its most extreme form. While these controversies were raging in the higher intellectual spheres, the common man was left to his own devices. A reaction to these trends came with the rise of Methodism which intended to offset the extreme emphasis of rationalism. Its founder, John Wesley, preached mysticism and tried to stir the emotions of the people. He and his followers tirelessly travelled throughout the country into every hamlet, trying to spread his beliefs. He preached an emotional religion which could be grasped and felt by the people. Religion became

a thing of the heart and he imbued the people with this intangible feeling which defies analysis. He accomplished his goal, for Methodism took hold of the lower and middle classes and gave them a new and stronger faith. By the end of the century, the results of this program became visible. Under its impulse the established church began to slowly recover its strength and took a foremost position in English life.

b.

It is not mere historical coincidence that the rise of the Jewish community was coeval with the growth of England, for the very same factors that were operating in the building of a greater England were also at work shaping and directing the growth of the Jewish community. At the beginning of the century, the Jewish community had already struck roots in English soil. The Sephardim had three noted Rabbis who had filled their pulpit and at the opening of the century, the incumbent was the famous Haham David Nieto. In the year 1699 the Sephardim decided to build a new synagogue and in 1702 was completed at a cost of approximately two thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds and called it Bevis Marks.

The Ashkenazim also possessed a synagogue as early as 1660 in St. Helen, however, because of their poverty

and small number, their presence was hardly noticeable and of no real significance.⁷ The Jews had already suffered much defamation and degradation at the hands of their calumners, and they were to continue to suffer as late as the nineteenth century. However, the worst was over. In the year 1689, when the Jewish community was hardly more than sixty families, there were attempts to levy a tax upon them of one hundred thousand pounds which was one-twelfth of the national income. There were attempts to tax their commercial activities to a ridiculous degree and there was even a plan to confine all the Jews in a Ghetto. In the eighteenth century, although the anti-Jewish attacks continued, they were no longer as maniacal or rabid as previously and there were already hopeful signs that these troubles would soon come to an end.

The unprecedented growth of the Jewish community during the century can be attributed to many causes. As Manasseh ben Israel foresaw, the persecuted Jews of Eastern Europe, Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland were constantly driven from place to place. The mania of persecution signalized by the Chmelniecki massacres swept like an epidemic across Europe. These Jews slowly made their way to more peaceful places and many of them after a time eventually reached the shores of England. The slowly rising star of England because of its growing sea power and economic supremacy began the transfer of commerce from

Holland to England. Already with the arrival of William of Orange, many Jews accompanied him and the bullion trade was being shifted from Holland to London's markets. Marranos escaping from the suspicion of Catholic countries came to London and brought their wealth with them. The commercial activity which accompanied the Industrial Revolution and the rapidly expanding small merchant class, could use these foreigners and their business talents. The appearance of new forms of merchandising and business absorbed these able foreigners to some extent. Although there were sudden cries of antagonism against the newcomers they either came from within the Jewish group or from an insignificant source and soon died out.

The Sephardic community, because of its wealth and large membership, outshone the Ashkenazim at this early date. They had an elaborate system of charitable organizations, their synagogue, Bevis Marks, was a proud edifice which created prestige for the Jews. Their attitude towards the influx of foreign Jews is typical of the same attitude which prevailed in America when the Ashkenazim arrived in the 1840's. They might stoop to help these unfortunates, but they refused to associate or to intermarry with them. The Sephardim moved in higher circles and were recognized as the spokesmen for the Jewish community. As the century progressed and the Ashkenazim were rising in wealth and importance, and were soon outnumbering the Sephardim, they began to take notice of them. They even joined in some

common cause and the Sephardim and their Rabbis might be called to arbitrate some conflict among the Ashkenazim.

The Sephardim were perhaps instrumental in that the Jewish community was allowed to grow, relatively speaking, unmolested. Indeed they made a fine appearance and front for the Jews. Many members of their community were in the confidence of the higher officials because of their commercial adeptness and financial adroitness. They also contributed to the welfare of the government and helped the English cause. Under the reign of William and Mary, Sir Solomon Medina was their financial advisor and army contractor. For his great services to the crown, he was knighted, being the first Jew to receive such honor. Another member who was a pride and aid to his people was Sampson Gideon. He was a trusted adviser of Walpole and Pelham. During the invasion of the Pretender to the throne, Gideon put his fortune at the disposal of the government and even floated a loan for them. Although Gideon divorced himself from the Jewish community, he remained a firm and true Jew and when he died, he requested that he be buried in the old Jewish cemetery.

The Sephardim had a very fine system of communal organization from their early beginnings. As early as 1664, they already had a Hakam, Jacob Sasportas, whom they brought to London from Amsterdam. The board of governors of the community was the Mahamad and their laws were called Ascamoth, which were styled after the laws of Amsterdam

and Venice. Their first organization was established to serve the sick members and probably render the last services to its members, and it was called the Hebra Bikkur Holom.

The Sephardim had a very efficient financial system and found no trouble in raising funds. They taxed all the meat that was sold at one farthing per pound and laid a tax upon all goods bought or sold by their members.

The Sephardim looked down upon the immigrant Ashkenazim and would have very little intercourse with them. They might distribute some alms amongst them, and at first this was the extent of their interest in the Ashkenazim. According to their Ascemoth anyone could be admitted to the community upon the approval of the Mahamad. In fact, Benjamin Levy, a wealthy Hamburg Jew who came to London in 1670 was a member of the Sephardim for twenty years, until the Ashkenazim organized their own synagogue.

The inquisition in Portugal at the end of the century as well as the wars in Belgrade, brought many Sephardim to the shores of England and the community increased considerably. In 1699 they decided to build a new synagogue and in 1702, it was consecrated and called Bevis Marks.

With the arrival of David Nieto in 1701, as Hakam of the Sephardim their community took on a new cultural life. Nieto, who was not only a Rabbi, but also a physician, was very active in intellectual circles and a prolific

writer. However, even amongst the Sephardim, a rabbi's life was not a bed of roses, and he was accused of expressing himself in favor of Spinozism in one of his sermons. This conflict divided the community and the case was referred to the Beth Din in Amsterdam, whose opinion was ignored because they were accused of prejudice, and then to the Sephardim in Hamburg. The Hamburg Mahamad appealed to Zevi Ashkenazi for a decision and it was he who vindicated Nieto from these charges.

During the first half of the century the Sephardic community grew and prospered. They had a very fine organization and presented a very fine appearance. They had a hospital for the poor, and even had a society for providing poor brides with dowry. But in spite of its pretentiousness the community was torn by internal dissension. The Mahamad was dictatorial in its control of communal affairs and would brook no opposition. The problem of Shehitah was very distressing and almost created a secession. Conversions were becoming increasingly notorious, and many Sephardim seceded from the community and severed their relations. This created a problem of ever-increasing proportions, and threatened the entire community.

The relations between the Sephardim and Ashkenazim were quite tolerable. When the Jewish question was discussed in 1746, a committee of the Sephardim were organized to protect the interests of the Jews in Great Britain and Ireland. The Ashkenazim were later invited to join this group. When

the Ashkenazic congregation were divided, the Sephardim would usually be called in as an impartial judge in the matter.⁸ It seems that the efforts for united action however came from the Ashkenazic side. They looked with a great deal of admiration and respect upon their wealthier and Anglicized brethren. When the Shehitah plan was proposed the Ashkenazim were requested to join which they refused, because they wanted to maintain their autonomy.⁹ The same situation occurred when a united plan for relief was organized.¹⁰

Towards the end of the century the Ashkenazim began to eclipse the Sephardim. In time, many Ashkenazim achieved wealth and became important even in the higher non-Jewish circles. While the Ashkenazim were continually increasing, the Sephardim remained at a status quo, or were even diminishing. The breach between these two groups instead of healing became wider and wider. Intermarriage between them was now unthought of whereas previously tolerated. In one case where a man requested the Mahamad to marry an Ashkenazi, they gave him such permission but under embarrassing conditions.

Throughout the century the Sephardim were vitally interested in their co-religionists all over Europe and in the colonies.

They were quite active in ransoming captives and lent money to distressed Sephardic communities which very often was not repaid. The beginning of the nineteenth century

witnessed them receding to the background and the Ashkenazim slowly moved to the forefront.

As the Jews gained positions of eminence, a danger which was constantly lurking in their midst became more threatening. There were still some disabilities which prevented the Jews from reaching the rank they rightfully deserved and earned. As usual, there was internal strife and dissension which was distasteful and vulgar. Petty quarrels and spiteful quibbles flared into raging controversies and secession movements. Even the Sephardim were embroiled in strife. Under ordinary conditions, such situations would be tolerated and hushed up. However, when a Jew harbored the desire to go over into the Christian camp, because of the unlimited opportunities open to him as a Christian, he could seize upon no better pretext than pointing with disgust to the internal disunion. When Isaac D'Israeli wanted to give his children an opportunity to achieve the position they deserved he severed relations with the Sephardim because, as he stated, they fined him when he refused to become a Parnass, which he thought was quite unusual. Ricardo, another famous man, also left the fold of the Jewish community as a youth when he saw the glittering opportunities which he might obtain if he accepted Christianity. Picciotto says¹¹ that inter-marriage was one of the great causes for many conversions. It is, interesting to notice that most of the conversions

occurred among the wealthier Sephardim. They were better integrated in English life and could associate with gentile friends. This closer intercourse with Christian friends was a factor in the desire of these Sephardim to become converted. The Ashkenazim as Picciotto says were busy with their business enterprises, their families and their synagogues. Another source of trouble was the fact that Jewish boys were sent to fashionable English schools and the only way to gain entrance and complete acceptance into the circles which they had already met and probably enjoyed, was the baptismal font.

The unmitigated stubbornness as in the case of D'Israeli, also estranged many Jews. The authority of the Jewish community was weakening. There were many factors which were undermining the old stringent religious faith and authority. The growing spirit of rationalism, the mechanistic approach to the universe, the chaos caused by the Industrial Revolution were contributive factors to the weakening of the religious influence. The Jewish community which was built on the basis of religious authority was slowly losing ground, because its foundations were beginning to crumble. The Ashkenazic community which was becoming a dominant force in English life was too heterogeneous to form a close well-knit body, with the result that disintegration was creeping into communal life.¹²

One of the most urgent desires of English Jewry which

must have struck a disillusioning blow to many and which weakened the force of Judaism were the many disabilities that persevered in this century.

The long road to toleration and ultimately emancipation began with the struggle of the Jews to achieve citizenship by naturalization.

In 1740 a naturalization act was proposed which aimed to remove the obstacles inherent in the legislation of 1609, which prevented any Jew from becoming a citizen unless he became a Christian, and the law of 1663, which only allowed those Jews who had been engaged in flax or cotton manufacture in the colonies for three years to become naturalized citizens. This law was obviously enacted to promote the cotton industry which was becoming the economic backbone of the country. Members of the Jewish faith were now to be exempt from receiving the sacrament as a condition of naturalization and were permitted to omit the phrase, "and the true faith of a Christian," from the oath of abjuration.

About two hundred Jews, the majority of them from

Jamaica availed themselves of this opportunity and became English citizens. The apparent acceptance of this step in the emancipation of the Jew by the English populace, and the advantages the Whig party gained from the Jews, led the party under the leadership of Pelham to propose and pass another bill in 1753 which offered the Jews a greater opportunity and wider leniency to become citizens. It must not be thought that this bill was a manifestation of an unrestricted spirit of friendship and tolerance towards the Jews. One of the provisions in the bill was that a Jew was barred from purchasing or inheriting an "advowson or right of patronage or presentation or any other right or interest whatsoever in any benefice, prebend or other ecclesiastical living or promotion in school or hospital." A petition signed by two hundred influential merchants, manufacturers, and men interested in the shipping industry, enumerated the manifold benefits to be derived by granting the Jews these rights. On the other hand, the corporation of London, under the leadership of the Lord Mayor, Sir Crespe Gascoigne, bewailed the calamities that would befall the country if this bill were passed. He described the great economic misfortune and contamination of Christianity which would occur if these foreigners were given full rights of citizenship. In reality, while the big firms and merchants had much to gain from the entry of new capital, the small London merchants had much to fear

from the competition and business rivalry of these newcomers. Already they had experienced the competition of the Jews who were in the country only a short time, and they feared that the new privileges would encourage new immigrants and create greater competition. After much heated debate in Parliament the bill was passed. This legislation gave rise to a violent campaign of Jew-baiting which cropped up throughout the country. Rumors were spread that poor Jews would flood the country, the Jews would gather all the wealth and purchase all the lands, the Jews would seize all the governmental positions and the opponents of this measure went so far as to say that this bill was a contradiction of the Biblical tradition that the Jews must be scattered over the face of the earth and must not be allowed to congregate in one place until they return from their infidelity. Appeals to reason and the presentation of actual facts were useless and in vain. The members of Parliament, amazed and frightened by this torrent of popular opposition met in 1754, and at their first session repealed their previous legislation. In the House of Commons similar action was taken and the bill was made null and void. The agitation against the Jews was so strong that an attempt was even made to repeal the small concessions of the Act of 1740; however, Pitt and Pelham succeeded in defeating this proposal. It was

very fortunate that the repeal of this bill did not have any serious repercussions but quite to the contrary, the Jews were indirectly granted some concessions and Jewish life resumed its natural course.

Until 1753, the marriage laws of England were in an unsettled state. The lack of a system of registration and recording of marriages led to many abuses. Since marriages were indissoluble, unscrupulous individuals would dupe wealthy maidens into an undesirable marriage much to the shame and embarrassment of the family. All sorts of irregularities were practiced by unscrupulous clergymen and the lack of records made it impossible to check these fraudulent unions. These evils were but another manifesta-¹³tion of the immorality of the day.

In 1753, Lord Hardwicke framed legislation designed to plug the loopholes in the law. A bill was enacted which made a marriage valid and legal, only if it was solemnized by an authorized priest in order and that notices of the forthcoming event were published or announced in church for three successive Sundays. This bill explicitly stated that these laws were not applicable to Quakers or to Jews. Technically, this law was meant to exclude the validity of Jewish marriages. However, as the opinions about the Jews became more favorable, this law was interpreted in their favor. It meant that Jewish marriages although not solemnized by a priest were valid. This

was the interpretation given by Lord Stowell in many divorce cases. About 1790, before he acted on a divorce proceedings, he referred the case to the Beth Din to ascertain their opinions on the legality of these weddings¹⁴ based on Jewish law.

This same Lord Hardwicke, whose legislation was unfavorable towards the Jews, declared in 1744 that the will of Elias de Paz who left a legacy of twelve hundred pounds for the maintainance of a Yeshiva, to study Torah was invalid. He ruled that the establishment of such institution was for superstitious purposes and therefore such will was null and void. Instead the money was confiscated and was diverted towards the building of a Foundling hospital. Another such incident was repeated in 1786, when a legacy of forty pounds per annum for the maintainance of the synagogue in Magpye Alley was considered invalid. It seems that as late as the last quarter of this century there was a tinge of prejudice against the Jew in some courts and there were attempt to dislodge or at least to prevent the Jew from permanent establishment in the country.

The colonial empire of England offered the Jew wide commercial opportunities and in some cases, an escape from restrictions and persecution which might have appealed to London Jewry. When Oglethorpe organized his company to settle in Georgia, the Sephardic community thought that it might be a solution to the problem created by the East

European immigrants. The Sephardic Salvador family had no interest in this company and besides their sincere interest in the immigration problem they were also interested in the financial advantages that these Jews might create. The first group of Jewish colonists were Sephardim who went to seek their fortune with the company. The second group of colonists were these poor Ashkenazim who were so numerous that they constituted a third of all the colonists. Oglethorpe was very liberal and admitted these newcomers but the office in London was displeased and ordered Oglethorpe to discourage any new Jewish settlers. Oglethorpe ignored these orders and was very kind to the Jews. The first white child born in the Georgia colony in 1734 was a Jew.¹⁵

Another plan was made to found a Jewish colony in Georgia and later in South Carolina but it failed.

The revolution in America was of great concern to London Jewry. The rupture between the colonies and England caused great financial distress. Rabbi Schiff¹⁶ complains that his emoluments were curtailed because of the crisis. It is interesting to note that some Jews, in spite of their losses, were of the belief that the colonial cause was just. Reverend Emanuel Carajavel was threatened with the charge of high treason because of his sympathy with the colonists. He later emigrated to America and served as a minister in New York, Charleston,

and Philadelphia.

The London Sephardim also aided the building of the first synagogue in New York and contributed liberally to the cause. They also assumed the task of choosing proper Chasanim for their co-religionists and helped in sending them abroad.

The first sign of adjustment and permanency of a newly founded Jewish community is their literary output. When a people reach the stage where they find the need of perpetuating their culture and disseminating their literature, then we can be reasonably sure that the community is in a healthy condition. It is indeed quite unfortunate that the first literary production of the London press symbolized the early strife which rent asunder the Jewish community.

The printing of Hebrew books began about 1704 and continued with some regularity until the death of Rabbi David Nieto in 1728.¹⁶⁶ Then there was a lapse for forty years and the printing of Hebrew books were again resumed. Most of the books that were printed were mainly liturgical works, and were printed by a non-Jew, Thomas Illive, who was commissioned to bring the Hebrew type from Amsterdam. Roth surmises that the lack of a Jewish press can be attributed to the anti-Jewish attitudes prevalent during these times. However, in 1770, a new type was brought to London by Moses ben Gershon and others, and they set it

up at a non-Jewish printer's establishment owned by William Tooke. This accounts for the lapse in printing Jewish books, after David Nieto's death and the resumption in 1770. Margoliouth, who lived much closer to this period, reports that already in 1767, the Jews were in possession of a number of Hebrew printing presses; one under the auspices of the Sephardim, the other under the auspices of the Ashkenazim.¹⁷ The first Hebrew book was printed by Rabbi Uri Phoebus, who excommunicated Mordecai Hamburger in the famous divorce proceedings and published the defense of his attitude in a book called "Urim and Tumim." This defense did not go unanswered, and¹⁸ Holleschau wrote a similar book "Maase Rah" in defense of his actions.¹⁹ This book however, had to be published in Amsterdam because it was directed against the official-²⁰dom of the community. The "Urim and Tumim" is a badly printed book, containing many typographical errors since it was the first book, but it contains very few important facts which are of historical value. In the same year, the Hebrew Professor at Oxford, Rabbi Isaac Abendana published the "Discourse of the Ecclesiastical Polity of the Jews" in English. This book received a favorable reception from Christian scholars.

The second Hebrew book printed was the "Mateh Dan" by David Nieto in 1714. This book was a polemic against the Karaites and their denial of the oral law.

In 1715, Rabbi Joseph Irgas published a book called

"Tohaqhat Meguleh" This book informs us that the printing of the Hebrew books was done by a Christian printer and that there were not as yet any Jewish printers.

In 1715, David Nieto published another book, a "Esh Dot" in Hebrew and Spanish which was a polemic against Hayyun of Amsterdam and his Sabbatianism.

In 1722, the "Jew's Catechism" was reprinted to teach the children and "initiate them into the knowledge of God and the laws of nature." This book was originally written by Rabbi Abraham Jagel under the title of "Good Advice" and translated into Latin and then into English in 1680.

With the death of David Nieto the printing of Hebrew books came to a halt and was resumed in 1770. Margouliouth states that until 1767, there were no Jewish presses probably because of some restrictions or surreptitious suppression.

The printing that was done from 1770 to the end of the century were mainly liturgical works, which were published to fill the local needs.

Attempts were made to establish congregations in other cities besides London. These congregations were formed by the Jews who hawked their wares over the countryside, but they did not last very long. These groups were transient and did not attempt to establish themselves permanently. It was perhaps the wish of these

people to ultimately return to London and pursue their trade amongst their brethren.

Thus the Jewish community lived through the eighteenth century, with its trials and hardships, which are the lot and portion of the pioneering Jew. The Jewish population grew in numbers and influence and was ready and prepared to face the new century.

Chapter Two

The Social and Cultural History

of the

Anglo-Ashkenazic Community

of the

Eighteenth Century

The eighteenth century witnessed the growth of the Anglo-Ashkenazic community from its cradle to maturity. At the time of the reentry of Charles II, the Jewish community in London consisted of thirty-five families. The Sephardim, who were mainly Marranos who threw off the guise of their Catholicism after the Restoration, constituted the majority of the thirty-five families. They already had a well-defined and systemitized communal organization designed to take care of their needs. There were also a few Ashkenazim but very little is known about them except that "they had a synagogue in St. Helen and a Rabbi named Meir." ²¹ Doubtlessly this was just a private minyan and a layman officiated at the services.

Although many Ashkenazim emigrated to London, before the eighteenth century, we find very few references to their community. With the increasing persecutions in

Eastern Europe which spread like a contagious epidemic over the continent, a steady stream of these immigrants made their way to London. The Chmelniecki massacres were the beginnings of a series of pogroms which echoed throughout Europe.

These successive waves of pogroms caused the Jewish population to shift almost overnight. Thousands of Jews were uprooted from their homes and wandered from city to city and even from country to country before they could find some place of refuge where they were allowed to stay and settle.

The earliest group migration of Ashkenazim came with the arrival of William of Orange on English soil. The Dutch Jews, particularly the Ashkenazim supported him financially and he was inclined favorably towards the Jews. Ultimately, these Jews, were in all probability, followed by other immigrants from Holland who fled there during the persecutions and settled there only temporarily.

There was also an influx of Marranos, but these Sephardim either came to rich relatives or brought part of their fortunes with them. The Ashkenazim who arrived and those who were to come in the future, were usually penniless, having been stripped of all their possessions during the massacres. They were sent wandering from one community to another by the usual "abfertigengeld"²²

methods which prevailed in the Jewish community.

Wanderers were not very welcome and were usually given enough money and sent off to the next community.

As the century progressed and the persecutions of the Jews cropped up each time in different places, the stream of refugees became heavier and heavier. Already in 1690, restrictive measures were imposed upon Jewish immigration which allowed the community to gradually adjust itself to the rapidly growing population. The increasing number of paupers alarmed the Sephardim for they not only had to contribute heavily towards the relief of these poverty-stricken immigrants, but they were afraid lest these motley Jews would create a bad impression and perhaps harm the welfare and comparative tranquility of the Jews. This condition was observed by the Court of Aldermen in London or was brought to their attention by the Sephardim who did not feel themselves duty-bound to care for the Ashkenazim for whom they had a healthy dislike. Consequently a law was passed that no Jew "without good estate" would be allowed to reside in London. Hyamson²²⁶ thinks that his law had a good effect upon the Jewish community. Now, these new immigrants could not hamper the growth of the community by becoming too great a financial burden. Moreover, they were not only prevented from becoming a public eyesore, but they were

forced to comb the countryside to seek a livelihood and to establish provincial congregations such as Portsmouth and Hull. The result was that in 1690 only one-fourth²³ of a community of four hundred were receiving charity.

We must not think that the entire Ashkenazic community were paupers for there were also a number of wealthy Jews amongst them. They were merchants from the port of Hamburg, through which English trade with Germany flowed, who envisaged a new and unexploited field of operations as their economic system of the country was expanding, and transferred their firms to London. They brought with them the traditions and customs of their native city and continued to live in the same style and fashion as in Hamburg. Already at this early date, they employed fine Rabbis as²⁴ private tutors to their children.

It is very interesting to make a comparison between the early Ashkenazic community at the beginning of this century and how it changed and appeared at the end of the century. The early Ashkenazim inherited all the pettiness and evils of the continental Jewish community. Fortunately, at the end of the eighteenth century, the community took on a different and more modern form and became the forerunner of the present day Jewish community.

The following incident, which resulted in the resignation of the Ashkenazic Rabbi and the founding of the Hambro synagogue, illustrates that the early Jewish community was

at first only a continuation of the typical continental community with its dictators, hatred, and dissension. It gives us an intimate picture of the communal life and organization which rapidly perished before more progressive forces.

If a spirit of liberalism and democracy was slowly gaining ground and coming to the forefront, it certainly hadn't reached the Ghetto. The communal affairs and activities were dictated by a ruling clique or an individual tyrant, whose only claim to leadership lay in his wealth and unscrupulousness. These qualities were inherent in R. Abraham of Hamburg more intimately known as Reb Aberle, and consequently he was the Parnass of the Ashkenazim. Because of his wealth and influence he was also not without power even amongst the Sephardim. The first one to feel the wrath of Reb Aberle's indomitable will was the Rabbi Jehuda Loeb Anshel of Hamburg. Since the Rabbi was the civil and religious head of the community, it is not difficult to understand why Reb Aberle chose the Rabbi as his victim. Some difference of opinion must have arisen and Reb Aberle decided that the Rabbi must go. Using the foulest means at his disposal, Reb Aberle hired some agent, most probably the sexton, to cut one tzitzah of the Rabbi's Talis, as he was about to wear it. Immediately, a rumor was spread that the Rabbi was wearing an invalid Talis and that he was negligent in his ritual

and failed to examine his Talis as every good Jew should do, before putting it on. The Rabbi declared a cherem in an attempt to find the culprit, but his work was in vain, for Reb Aberle had accomplished his purpose in discrediting the Rabbi and there was nothing left to do but leave. This was probably the culmination of a series of mortifications and the Rabbi left.

In the year 1705, Uri Phoebus and his brother, sons of a noted and wealthy Jew, Naftali Herz Hamburger of Breslau came to London as a result of the expulsion of the Jews by the Council of Breslau in 1697. Uri Phoebus, was a well-learned man with a fine Talmudical training, who married into an illustrious rabbinical family, and was at one time head of a Yeshiva in Poland. Uri Phoebus, who because of his reputation and his familial ties with the most influential Ashkenazim in London was the logical successor. Doubtlessly, he also had a part in the systematic persecution of the former Rabbi, but to show his unselfishness, he promised the retiring Rabbi that he would not accept the vacant pulpit, at least for three years and fortified his resolution with an oath. He soon forgot his pledge, probably upon the insistence of Reb Aberle, and within a short time he became the Rabbi. In the meantime, some members of the community were disgusted with the state of affairs, especially Marcus Moses,

the son-in-law of Gluckel of Hameln, and shied away from the whole mess. Reb Aberle suspected them of secessionist tendencies and urged the new Rabbi, Uri Phoebus, to decree a cherem on anyone who intended to separate or secede from the community. Other Rabbis, who dwelt in the community, most prominent amongst them Jochanan Holleschau, were induced to append their names to this document.

Evil and crime have a way of reappearing to plague their perpetrator and within a year, in 1706, Reb Aberle was again embroiled in a new conflict, and this time he was on the losing side. A wealthy Jew, Asher Ansel Cohen, gambled away his fortune and accumulated a heavy debt which he could not repay. The only way he could escape the dire consequences of his default and bankruptcy, was to escape to the West Indies, where he could not be molested. In accordance with Jewish custom, he gave his wife a conditional divorce, which would become valid if he failed to return from his proposed venture. The family conspired to conceal this scandal and the divorce proceedings were held in complete secrecy. Uri Phoebus presided at the proceedings and the Sephardic scribe, De Silva, wrote the divorce. The Ashkenazic scribe, Reb Aaron was not called in on this case, because his son-in-law was also ruined by Cohen's gambling and it was felt that Reb Aaron might reveal the whole scandal. In spite of all the precautions, the secret leaked out

and caused a tumult in the community. Here was the opportunity for Reb Aberle's enemies to settle an old score. The legality of the divorce was decried by Mordecai Hamburger, also known as Moses Marcus, because of the unusual procedure of the case and because he was convinced that the Sephardic scribe could not have written a perfect bill of divorce, for this was an exacting task which required a great amount of learning and experience. He denounced the entire proceedings as a fraud and swindle. This was indeed a serious charge, for in traditional Judaism, a divorce is considered a very important case which involved many intricacies and technicalities of Jewish law. The case soon became notorious, and Uri Phoebus and his sponsor Reb Aberle felt the full brunt of the attack and were confronted with the displeasure of the entire community. In addition, after hearing all the commotion aroused by this divorce, the divorcees became very disconsolate because she felt that she had been tricked and was unprotected. Her wailing and bickering also helped to add fuel to the fire and Reb Aberle and his Rabbi²⁵ were in unpleasant straits.

Uri Phoebus did not allow the attack to go unanswered and availed himself of a legal precedent to silence the accusations of Mordecai Hamburger. Since the times of Rabbenu Tam a Takkanah is in force that anyone, who objects to the validity of a divorce after it is published,

is liable to be excommunicated. Mordecai Hamburger was informed of this possibility if he would not cease his vituperations. But he refused to listen and even refused to appear before an impartial Beth Din which included two Sephardim whom Hamburger himself at one time had declared were the only judges capable of trying this case. It must be said in his favor, that Uri Phoebus was one of the judges, hence he had good reason to absent himself. Nevertheless, Hamburger lost his opportunity to settle this matter and life was made very uncomfortable for him. Hamburger was not daunted and he resorted to a subterfuge and with the aid of his children's teacher and his counselor, the well-known Jochanan Holleschau, he persuaded Uri Phoebus to give him a copy of the witnesses' depositions, agreeing to submit to the lesser cherem of thirty days. Uri Phoebus, regretted the entire incident and was moved by the remorse of Hamburger and even promised to have him called to the Torah on the High Holidays. As soon as Hamburger obtained the documents, he wrote a letter to his famous brother, R. Hendle, in Hamburg describing his plight and asking him for help in this matter.

During this entire controversy, Reb Aberle was absent from London and upon his return, Uri Phoebus lost his mild manner and acted differently. No doubt, Reb Aberle realizing the gravity of the situation saw an opportunity to

bring down the full punishment of the law upon the head of Hamburger and administer the final devastating blow. Jochanan Holleschau was advised to stay out of the case and Hamburger was ostracized from the community. His business suffered, and nobody would speak to him, even the poor couldn't come to his house for charity. Uri Phoebus, upon the advice of Rabbi Loeb Charif of Amsterdam and David Nieto, fulfilled his promise and Hamburger was called to the Torah and after that the ban was continued in full force. During the festival of Tabernacles, there was only one Essrog in London and Hamburger was denied the privilege of its ritual use. Even his granddaughter, who was born during this time, could not officially be given a name in the synagogue.

In the meantime, Hamburger's letter to his brother, Hendle, brought some favorable results. Hendle brought his brother's urgent plea before Hakam Zevi Ashkenazi requesting him to intervene in this matter. Zevi Ashkenazi realized the plight of Mordecai Hamburger, who was being subjected to the rigors of the law only because of the hate and bitterness of Reb Aberle. Immediately, he wrote a letter to London declaring that the decree of Rabbenu Tam had not been properly used and hence Mordecai Hamburger was released from the ban. ²⁵¹

Reb Aberle was stunned by Zevi Ashkenazi's decision. Moreover, even Rabbi Loeb Charif of Amsterdam, who had been

consulted in this matter was also of the opinion that a cherem was too harsh a punishment for such offense. Reb Aberle could not allow his authority to be challenged and he persuaded Uri Phoebus to continue the ban in spite of all the authoritative decisions which had declared it null and void. He even made an entry in the Pinkos that when Hamburger died he was not allowed to receive a proper Jewish burial.

There verdicts in favor of Hamburger gave him new confidence. The ban had almost ruined him financially, for while it was in force no one could transact any business with him and every Jew avoided him socially. If it were not for the Sephardim who took no notice of these squabbles and continued their relations with Hamburger, he would have been completely lost. Now that he had been vindicated he decided to break the power of Reb Aberle. He opened a synagogue in his house and R. Jochanan Holleschau, who was his counsellor in this case, became the first Rabbi. A parcel of ground^{was} purchased for use as a cemetery and now the secession was complete: for as we have stated, the only thing that held a Jew within the folds of the Jewish community was the fear that he would not be buried as a Jew. Now the separation was complete.

Fate was not kind to either of the contesting parties. Both lost their fortunes and became quite poor. Hamburger was forced to depart for the East Indies where he tried to regain his fortune, which he did and upon his return he carried out his project and organized the Hambro Synagogue.²⁶

Aaron Hart or Uri Phoebus died in 1756 and he was followed by Hirsch Lobel or Lewin, also known as Hart Lyon, a grandson of Zevi Ashkenazi.

Zevi Ashkenazi was considered very highly among the Jewries of Europe and was consulted by the Jews of London, even the Sephardim, on many occasions. When David Nieto, the Sephardic Hakam was accused of Spinozism, it was Ashkenazi's word which stood him in good stead. In the Aberle and Hamburger case, Ashkenazi's intervention settled an issue which might have resulted in even greater scandal. After this controversy in 1714, Ashkenazi visited London and was accorded a tremendous reception. The Sephardim were equally impressed by this sage and gave him a gift of five hundred pounds which he accepted with great reluctance.

As soon as Lobel assumed his post, a Sephardic Jew, Kimchi came to him and asked him to intervene in a controversy raging amongst the Sephardim concerning Shechita. Kimchi had appeared before the Sephardi Beth Din with complaints against the validity of the Sephardic

Shochetim and he was rebuffed. He asked Lobel to investigate the matter which he also refused. Then Lobel in turn became the object of Kimchi's wrath and he was insulted and ridiculed by Kimchi.

In 1761, a new congregation known as the New Synagogue was formed but not without the censure and reprobation of the other existing synagogues.

The Jewry of London had outgrown the capacity of the existing two synagogues and a group of Jews decided to form another synagogue at Bricklayer's Hall on Leadenhall Street. This secession seems to have been an offshoot from the Great Synagogue. It was not caused by any grievance or disagreement, but was a practical necessity because of the increasing Jewish population. The executives of the Great Synagogue were hostile to this new synagogue, for they felt that it was a threat to the welfare of the synagogue and the community. On August 19, 1761, the executive body formulated a resolution which was read in the Great Synagogue and a copy was sent to the Sephardic community. The resolution warned the Jewish people not to join the group and stated that the Rabbi of the Great Synagogue will not officiate at any religious ceremony or ritual, as wedding, circumcisions, etc., for those Jews who are members of the New Synagogue. The secessionists did not take these words to heart, and on June 1762, the building of the New Synagogue was begun. The members

of the Great Synagogue were awakened to their needs by the building of the New Synagogue and they also decided to enlarge their synagogue. In 1763 a sum of two thousand pounds was raised and an adjoining parcel of land was bought for this purpose.

At first the spirit of antagonism was very strong but as time passed, the relations between them became normal. In fact in 1792 when the Great Synagogue was without a Rabbi they even availed themselves of the services of the Dayan of the New Synagogue indicating that at this time, the New Synagogue had achieved equal status with the existing congregations.

The vacancy left by Rabbi Lobel or Hart Lyons was filled by R. David Tevele Schiff from Frankfort A.M. At the same time another Rabbi, Meshullam Zalman, a son of Jacob Emden, the famous controversialist, was elected as the Rabbi of Hambro Synagogue. The original plan had been to have one rabbi for both synagogues, but the disagreement was too great to effect such union. In the usual manner which occurs even in modern day, both rabbis called themselves, "Chief Rabbi of London and provinces."

The increase of Ashkenazi population did not bring an increase in wealth but on the contrary, the number of paupers were overwhelming. The Great Synagogue found itself in such inconvenient financial straits that they even de-

cided to obtain a mortgage on the building in order to be able to cover their liabilities.

During the middle of the century the persecutions of the Jews in many parts of Europe drove flocks of Jews from their homes into wandering. The Lisbon earthquake in 1753 drove many Marranos to England, but they were negligible compared to the Ashkenazic influx. The expulsion of the Breslau Jews, the partition of Poland in 1772 which followed the Polish wars of 1768, and the Bohemian massacres

increased the number of refugees and subsequently the number of immigrants into London. The immigrants sought to come to England for many reasons. There were no restrictive laws against the Jews which prevented them from settling there. The country was expanding industrially and offered many opportunities for petty tradesmen. Thus, by 1753, the Jewish population had risen to eight thousand souls.

The rapid growth of population created a serious social problem. In 1771, the executives of the Great Synagogue decided to refuse to help immigrants who could not show good cause why they left their homes. ²⁷ They did not stem the tide of newcomers and finally after a serious crime was committed, the government investigated this matter and brought it before the Jewish authorities. The Jews replied that the Polish uprisings created these refugees and since there were no restrictions nothing could be done. The government issued a law stating that no Jew

should be admitted unless they had a passport and had paid their full passage fare. There was a system whereby an immigrant could obtain passage at a reduced fare which enabled these impoverished Jews to come to England. The situation was so bad, that the Lord Mayor of London tried to rid London of Jews and even offered to pay the expenses of anyone who wanted to return to their native country.

The miserable conditions of these Jews was climaxed by a heinous crime committed by a band of Jewish scamps and the entire situation was at last brought right to the threshold of the prominent Jews. In 1771, a band of six Jews committed numerous crimes and even a murder which received great publicity and caused a great deal of anxiety for the Jewish community. The entire incident was spread out on the pages of London's newspapers and created a sen-
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sation. The Jews attempted to counteract this adverse publicity by issuing a statement to the press declaring that these criminals were unworthy of the name Jew, and that they were excommunicated from the Jewish fold and would not receive Jewish burial nor any other religious rites. In addition to disclaiming these Jews, the Jews set out to search for the miscreants. Fortunately, one of the criminals came to the officials of the New Synagogue asking for immediate help for he was forced to leave the island immediately. This created some suspicion and after investigation the whole gang was caught and they were turned over

to justice. This indeed created a favorable impression for the Jews and counteracted the bad publicity. Even the magistrate, Sir John Fielding, praised the efforts of the Jews and helped to exonerate the community from any blame. This was not the first time that criminals had besmirched the good Jewish name. There were other cases which caused great tumult. In 1740, a Jew was hanged and in 1752, the case of a Polish Jew, Henry Simons created a sensation and two pamphlets which received a wide circulation villified the Jews. Even these serious events did not stir the Jews to action and the evil social conditions continued to exist.

The appalling misery, poverty, and crime that lurked amidst the Ashkenazic community was the result of the neglect and indifference of the Ashkenazic communal leaders and the wealthier members of the community. The Ashkenazic immigrants were, for the most part, paupers who had fled persecution and oppression. Most of them landed on the shores of England without any means of subsistence. They had recently fled the German Ghettos and the Polish village, and were unacquainted with the country and its language and customs, and above all, they lacked any profession or trade with which to earn a living. While the Sephardic community had developed an elaborate system of charitable assistance which no doubt took care of some Ashkenazim, the Ashkenazic community hardly possessed any relief organization. They organized an inefficient Talmud Torah in

1732, and an association for clothing orphaned children and the Hahnasat Brit society, which did very little to alter the situation. Unlike the Sephardim, the Ashkenazim had not provided any societies for the reorientation of the newly arrived immigrant. They did not organize any society to help the apprenticing of unskilled men to master artisans, or provide means whereby a poor man could borrow funds to set himself up in a respectable business or occupation. The Sephardic community possessed such institutions which were functioning at this time and should have served as models to the rapidly growing Ashkenazic community, but the indifference of the affluent Ashkenazim allowed this situation to continually grow worse. They were perhaps too concerned with themselves trying to amass fortunes or were scattering their money in attempts to gain the goodwill and friendship of their Christian neighbors and achieve a small measure of fame. In a sense one cannot place the entire blame for this anarchical condition at the door of the Ashkenazim. The charitable organizations of the Sephardim, which encompassed almost every phase of social service inhibited the growth of an Ashkenazic system of charity. The Sephardim took care of some of the poor Ashkenazim as a gesture of their benevolence and even showed condescension to the poorer brethren. The Ashkenazim perhaps were not too rich and were willing to allow their over-wealthy Sephardic co-religionists share the burden for they had too much money anyway. We can see how this might have created a

social lethargy among the Ashkenazim and forestalled the development of their own institutions. Yet in some instances, in the latter part of the century, when the Ashkenazim became the predominant group, they were impressed by the activities of the Sephardim, and at times followed their example and initiated similar projects. These new projects were merely competitive imitations rather than attempts to remedy the ubiquitous evils. The bewildered immigrant left to his sorry plight had no other choice but to seek the easiest way out of his miserable circumstances. He either became a hawker and travelled throughout the countryside peddling his wares, or made his home in the poorer section of the city and became a contributor to the ills and evils which rose out of the slums.

As late as 1771, when a scandalous crime committed by Jewish vandals shook the entire community, nothing was done to ameliorate the sad conditions of those immigrants. Eight years later, and then only under public pressure and compulsion, an attempt was made to relieve the situation.

The prevailing poverty was aggravated by the serious economic depression of 1778, when the distress was so great that there were riots in the streets of London, which are known in history as the Food riots. The Sephardim set up an emergency organization to take care of the increasing demands for relief. The Ashkenazim followed suit

and made their first serious efforts towards relieving the distress of the poor people and established the Meshivat Nefesh society, better known as the "Bread, Meat, and Coal Charity,"²⁹ which was destined to be a successful undertaking. This organization was to distribute bread, meat, and coal to the needy.

The success of this venture was due to the zeal and devotion of Mr. Levy Berent Cohen, the father-in-law of Sir Moses Montefiore and Nathan Mayer Rothschild, who was its first president. He not only contributed unstintingly but converted many sincere adherents to the cause. The men who continued in his footsteps carried on his great work and the society became a permanent and prominent organization in Anglo-Jewish life for more than a century. Mr. Joshua Van Oven, the social-minded physician, who fought so zealously for the establishment of a system of charity, was the next president; after him a wealthy diamond merchant, D. Eliason was the president and the next presidents were the Goldsmid brothers whose charity and benevolence even to non-Jewish organizations created a good name for English Jewry. The first secretary of this organization was Joseph Israels, who at the first meeting called for this purpose, outlined the purpose and function of this charity. After he retired, I.A. Levy assumed this office and held it until 1851.

The society raised funds by the subscription of members to this cause, and from the proceeds of an annual

dinner. Each year, an announcement would be made in the city's synagogues, since there was no Jewish paper, and Jewish advertisements in the dailies were unknown even as late as 1817, and tickets would be sold for this affair. These dinners with their gaiety and revelry give us insight into the internal life of the Jew. The Jews imitated the fashion of the day which was known for its drinking bouts and drunken orgies. It was the custom to finish a dinner by getting " 'gloriously drunk.' At first the anniversary dinners of the charity were held at the Paul's Tavern, "Catterton-street" (now Gresham-street), but subsequently at the New London Tavern, Cheapside, and afterwards at the City of London Tavern, Bishopsgates Street. On one occasion we find that about one hundred people sat down, when they drank no less than one hundred seventy-five bottles of port, eleven of sherry, one of Madeira, and several quarts of brandy. On another occasion, when about the same number of diners was present, two hundred bottles of wine, fifteen pints of brandy, and a large quantity of hollands and rum were consumed." ³⁰ In the following years, these banquets became exclusive and the price of the tickets were prohibitive.

Here we can see how Anglo-Jewry of the eighteenth century had assimilated and entered in English social life. They took over most of the social customs and became anglicized to a great extent even as far as to succumb to the bad habits of the Englishman. The banquets must have been

quite a wild affair for as Lucien Wolf aptly remarks, "The free-and -easy style adopted at these entertainments may be gathered from the fact that in 1807, when a ball was given instead of a dinner, the charges included eight shillings for tobacco and pipes, and the happy revellers seem to have been determined to have no spiritual wet blankets imposed on their gaiety, for in 1793 the stewards passed a resolution to exclude Shamashim and Chazanim from their entertainments for particular reasons."³¹

The dinners, in spite of their unwholesome character helped to create the funds which were needed to relieve the indigent. In the beginning the society was very inadequate in facing the existing problems. We must remember that this charity took care of only a small phase of the general situation. In spite of this seeming inadequacy, the organization quickly grew in importance and became an indispensable institution in Anglo-Jewish life, for already in 1817, the organization had to hire an official collector whose salary was between twenty and thirty pounds and who could offer a bond of five hundred pounds as security. This is indeed an illustration of the proportions which this organization assumed. In 1879, English Jewry celebrated the centenary of its existence with an imposing affair.

Occasionally a voice would be heard condemning and challenging the Jewish community for allowing these evils

to continue without a serious effort to reach a solution. Levy Alexander, a Jewish printer, wrote and published a pamphlet in which he gave the rich Jews a merciless lashing. He decried their ostentatiousness, opulence, and accused them of profligacy. He bitterly criticized their shallow philanthropy, which was distributed only where the benefactor could obtain more honor and the favor of Christian society. A notorious example of this type of philanthropy was the donation of Benjamin Goldsmid who founded the Naval Asylum and contributed two thousand pounds to its upkeep. While the Jews were wallowing in the filth of the slums, Goldsmid was honored for his misdirected benevolence by sitting on the left of the Duke of Kent, which he considered ample reward for his benefactions.

In the year 1795, Abraham Goldsmid, a brother of the vain Benjamin Goldsmid whom we already described was struck with the idea of the necessity of a hospital and asylum for needy Jews. It seems that he was moved to action by the example of the Portuguese Jews who had just enlarged their own hospital, or perhaps he thought to emulate the benefactions of his own brother and counteract his injudicious philanthropy. He sent out an appeal amongst his friends for funds to build a "Jew's Hospital." Within a few weeks he raised eleven thousand, nine hundred pounds. Most of the forty-two Jewish subscribers were his

relatives. There were also forty-two Christians and two Sephardim, Abraham Mocatta and Emanuel Lausada, also Goldsmid's relatives among the subscribers. Money continued to flow in until a sum of twenty thousand pounds was reached. However, like all good Jewish organizations, the subscribers disagreed as to the application of the funds and for seven years nothing was accomplished. In the meantime in 1796 the Jewish community received in honorable mention in Patrick Colquhoun's "Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis." Colquhoun, a police magistrate in the London courts, wrote rather unbiasedly about "the deplorable state of the lower orders belonging to the Dutch Synagogue,"³² (the Ashkenazim were called Dutch) and the difficulties in making them useful. In this work, the author gave the Jewish community a scathing criticism which should have aroused the Jews from their lethargy. His scathing report was not exaggerated at the testimony of the records show. However, nothing was done until 1802. In the meantime, conditions grew worse and worse.

Joshua Van Oven, a doctor who was the medical officer of the Great Synagogue and was therefore acquainted with the intolerable situation, did not allow Colquhoun's charges to go unanswered and he wrote him defending the impoverished Jew. "The Jews," wrote Mr. Van Oven, "are refused the privilege of exercising any trade or calling and are necessarily driven to the business of money transactions, which leads to the idea that Jew and usurer are

controverible terms. The poor Jews practice petty knavery
absolutely for bread." ³³ He proposed the erection of a
system of charitable institutions which would take care of
all the needs of the poor. From Van Oven's remarks, we
learn that there were a number of rich Ashkenazim but there
also was a very large majority of paupers. Then again,
there were no fixed rates which the Ashkenazim had to pay,
thus the communal income fluctuated and the funds for the
poor were quite insecure. ³⁴ After studying the situation,
Van Oven in collaboration with Coloquhoun, who had the
welfare of the Jews at heart, drew up a plan which was
called a "Compulsory Scheme for the Relief of the Jewish
Poor." It was submitted to Abraham Goldsmid who changed
some proposals and he submitted it to a Mr. Addington, who
was chancellor of the Exchequer accompanied with a petition
requesting that Parliament vote upon it and make it an act
of Parliament. The plan proposed that a committee should
be appointed by this Act of Parliament and should consist
of twelve representatives of the German Jews, four from
the Portuguese, two aldermen from the city of London, two
magistrates for Middlesex, Kent, Essex, and Surrey and the
four presidents of the four city synagogues. This committee
was to be empowered to purchase a parcel of one hundred
acres of ground to build a home for aged and infirm persons,
a hospital, a secular and technical school, a workhouse,
for the vagrant poor. The committee was to have the authority

to levy an assessment upon each synagogue and if the revenue was sufficient they were empowered to levy another assessment on the individual members of the synagogue. They also had the power to raise loans as high as ten thousand pounds. Another function of this committee was to investigate into the circumstances of immigrant Jews who had no means of subsistence.

This plan, as it appeared on paper, seemed to strike at the roots of the terrible condition of the poor Jews and was a serious attempt to cope with the situation. At this point, the Portuguese Jews stepped in and uttered their protest. They maintained that the organizations which the plan contemplated to found already existed under the auspices of the Sephardim and they could not see any reason to alter the system which was in existence for more than three-quarters of a century. Moreover, there were few Sephardic paupers and the majority of poor Jews were from the ranks of the Ashkenazim. Moreover, the Sephardim actually had already something similar to the proposed plan in action. Every Sephardic Jew who was a member of the community paid a set sum and a sort of income tax, whereas the Ashkenazim had no regulated income, but depended on the arbitrary individual donations and the sale of pews. Moreover, the Sephardim actually had already something similar to the proposed plan in action. Every Sephardic Jew who was

a member of the community paid a set sum and a sort of income tax, whereas the Ashkenazim had no regulated income, but depended on the arbitrary individual donations and the sale of pews. Moreover, if this plan would be executed, it would destroy the autonomy of the Sephardic community and they would have to work together with these newly arrived immigrants.

The Sephardim appointed Mr. Isaac Aguilar and two other representatives to present their objection to Mr. Hobhouse who was entrusted with the proposed bill. Even some Ashkenazim opposed the plan, because they feared to vest the authority of taxation in a body, which might make excessive demands on the wealthier members. Moreover, they refused to assume the burden of the Ashkenazic paupers. Thus the plan was aborted and it never became a reality.

The eighteenth century passed without the creation of any social machinery for the relief of the indigent. The last decade however witnessed at least an awakening to the situation and a foundation was laid for future building which fortunately materialized.

The final pressure which forced the hand of the Jews to begin building an institution was the conversionist activities in the East End. The conversionists who were at work trying to persuade the Jews to accept baptism had struck at the heart of the problem. They had anticipated

the meagre wants of these pauperized Jews and offered them all types of trade and technical training hoping to eventually win them over. The particular activities of a capable and successful conversionist Frey, succeeded in convincing the Jews to forget their differences or else they would have no poor Jews to worry about.³⁵ In June 1806, a block of houses were purchased in Mile End for two thousand, three hundred pounds and a school and asylum were founded, housing five aged men and five aged women, ten boys and eight girls. Thus we have the origin of the Neve Zedek, an institution which was later to become a pride to English Jewry.³⁶

Although there are many instances where the synagogues of the Ashkenazic community organized on some common project, there were many cases of dissension and conflict which disturbed the tranquility and caused hard feelings. The continuous influx of immigrants taxed the funds of the community and on some occasions a quarrel would arise as to who should shoulder the expense. One evening in September, 1780, the remains of a poor Jew were lying in the middle of Dukes Place because of a quarrel between the Duke Street Synagogue and the Leadenhall Street Synagogue, as to who should inter the deceased Jew. This created a difficult situation and a Sephardic Jew took the coffin into his home to prevent a neighboring church from burying the body. This Sephardim went to the Parnass of his synagogue that very night and they finally persuaded the Leadenhall

Synagogue to inter the body.

In June 1794, a similar situation arose between the Dukes Place and Hambro Synagogues. Mr. Alexander Phelips, Parnass of the Dukes Place Synagogue, E. P. Solomons, Parnass of the Hambro Synagogue, Mr. Asher Goldsmid and Solomon Solomons of the Germans, and the Sephardic Parnassim, Emanuel Lausada, Gabriel and Raphael Grandon, A Lopes Pereira, and Isaac G. Serra, met in order to reach some agreement. It was decided that the Hambro Synagogue should pay the Dukes Place Synagogue the sum of fifty pounds from Nisan to Tishri so that the latter could take care of the poor. It was understood that in the event that this decision was not executed then another meeting should be held on the following week. The anticipated disagreement happened but because of the absence of a Mr. Joseph Gompertz, who was also to be consulted in this matter, the meeting was not held. The Hambro Synagogue, now repudiated the intervention and arbitration of the Sephardim because the decision was against them. At a later date, much to the credit of the Ashkenazim, an agreement was reached in this matter between the Great and Hambro Synagogues and the Sephardic Parnassim were profusely thanked for their sincere efforts in the case.

The sale of kosher meat was a problem and at times a source of friction in the Ashkenazic as well as the Sephardic community. The dispensing of meat was under the juris-

diction of the Beth Din who supervised its koshruth. Their supervision was very poor and there were cases of unscrupulous butchers who sold meat under false pretenses. These irregularities were of much concern to the community and on April 19, 1792, Mr. L. de Symons called a meeting at which he presented a plan proposing to unite all the synagogues in this project. His plans provided that each of the three synagogues should elect two representatives to a general board and a central abbatoir should be built. Thus, the centralization of the sale of meat would facilitate better supervision and would save the community the added expense and overhead of individual scattered butchers. This plan was also presented to the Sephardic community by Mr. Bing, the secretary of the Great synagogue and it was pointed out that the Sephardim would save one hundred pounds a year and that the project might even provide a profit. The Sephardim were eager to unite and consolidate the Shekita board, so that a central authority would regulate the sale of kosher meat, but they were opposed to the idea of a central abbatoir. They stated that it would be difficult to move all the butchers to a central location; it would be too distant for some families and that it would create a nuisance on Sundays and might offend the Christian neighbors. The three synagogues replied that they were bent on carrying out their plans and the Sephardim could join whichever they saw fit. Thus the negotiations ended in a very friendly manner. The Ashkenazim set out to carry out

their plans but they met with little success. The plan for an amalgamated Shekita board was held in abeyance and finally in 1805, negotiations were again started and were successfully carried out.

Chapter III

The Organization of the Great Synagogue

A Jew could become a member of the community of the Great Synagogue³⁷ only if he would first be approved by the council and then pay a fee of ten guineas to charity. This Takkanah makes it very clear that residence alone does not give one a gush unless he fulfills the aforementioned conditions. If a householder gives his children in marriages either to a householder or to a non-householder they are eligible for householdership in the community upon the payment of two and one-half guineas. These newly weds must declare their intentions of becoming householders and must pay their fee of two and one-half guineas within twelve months of their marriage. If they apply for their membership after the twelve months have elapsed then they must pay an additional fee of thirty-nine shillings to charity and if they apply two years after the time has elapsed then they must pay seventy-eight shillings. After three years they lose this privilege and if they desire to enter the community as householders they must go through the regular procedure. One of the conditions of obtaining these privileges is that the parent of either the bride or groom are not in

debt to the community for their dues or for donations to charity. If a man became a householder the children already born did not automatically become householders also but they had to be reckoned with separately, and the father had to pay such fees as the council would decide.

The son of a householder who has reached the age of thirty and is a bachelor may apply for householdership in the community but in contrast to other cases he must obtain the approval of the council. However, his privileges are limited to some extent and he cannot be elected to a communal office.

An applicant would not be considered a householder unless he signed his name to the Pinkos and accepted all the rulings stated in the Takkanahs. The secretary would then inscribe his name among the membership roster for which he would receive a half of crown.

Any Jew who lived within ten miles of the city of London and did not rent a pew in the synagogue but wanted to be a householder in the community had to pay a fee which decided by the council. If he lived more than ten miles outside of London or in a different country, then he had to pay a standard fee of one-half guinea per annum. ³⁸

It is understood that when a man is a householder his wife also shares the privileges of his membership. If she becomes a widow, then as long as she doesn't marry, she continues to retain these rights. If she remarries and her second husband is not a citizen then he does not

obtain any privileges by this marriage. She can, however, continue her householdership if she pays five shillings per year to charity. If she ceases to pay this fee then she is no longer entitled to any of the privileges ~~entitled~~ **of** a householder and after death her estate must pay for her internment.

When a daughter of a householder married a non-householder and she wishes to continue as a householder in the community then she must pay five shillings dues each year until her husband becomes a householder. She can continue her membership under all circumstances as long as she continues to pay five shillings per year. In every instance, the children of any marriage whose father is not a householder in the community do not share the privilege of their mother's householdership. If she discontinues to pay her fees for five years then she loses her membership.

A widow can apply for householdership in the community and in order to gain admittance she must go through the regular procedure. If she has any children then she must pay an additional fee if they are to share in these privileges. In case that she remarries then her second husband does not share in her privileges. However, she, like any other woman, does not have the privileges of expressing her opinions in communal matters.

The Parnass, Gabbai, or Council were authorized to bestow householdership on any of the salaried officials of community but only with the conditions that they pay the

initiation fees. If the wife and children of the employees are to share this privilege then it must be specifically stated in the minute book.³⁹

When a householder finds it impossible to continue to pay his membership dues he must either come personally or send a letter to the council informing them of his inability to meet this debt. If, upon investigation his plea is found to be correct, then he and his children shall be exempt from paying dues and continue to retain their householdership.⁴⁰

When a man leaves the congregation because of some argument or conflict, his wife had the privilege of continuing her membership in spite of his resignation. If, however at a later date this individual decides to rejoin the community then the council shall decide what methods to persue in this case.⁴¹

The Council shall not have the power to deprive a householder of his membership for any charge unless the full council meets together with a committee of eighteen laymen who pay at least two guineas a year pew money.

All of the affairs of the Congregation were governed by a body consisting of two Parnassim,⁴² a Gabbai, a Collector of taxes, Seven Elders, and members of the vestry.⁴³ These officials outside of the members of the vestry were elected by the vestry during the intermediate days of Succoth. Their term of office extended from Heshuan

to Meshvan. These officials were responsible for the government and management of the community and were sworn to observe and carry out all the rules prescribed in the Takkanahs. If during the year one of these officials passed away or resigned from office, another member had to be chosen in his place within a month after the vacancy occurred. This newly elected official was considered for all practical purposes as if he had been elected in Meshvan and he had to abide by all the Takkanahs and fulfill all of the responsibilities as if he were the originally elected official.

Upon being elected to office the cantor would recite a special benediction on Shemini Atzeret in which he would mention the names of the newly elected officials. They would also have a special seat which was assigned for⁴⁴ the officers of the congregation.

The system of government prescribed in these Takkanahs was promulgated in the year 1791, but this very system was in practice before that date with only minor differences. The question arose as to how one should consider the individuals who had held office prior to 1791. Should everything in the past be forgotten and things started anew, or should some provision be made in respect to those who had already served. It was decided that the services of those who had held offices prior to 1791 would be recognized in accord with the new rules, except that one who had served as an Almoner prior to 1791, could again be chosen as communal

collector, and if he refused he would be required to pay⁴⁵
a fine.

In order to avoid collusion by the officials the following blood relations could not serve during the same year as Parnassim or Gabbaim; two brothers, a father-in-law and his son-in-law, two brother-in-laws. Any other blood relations could serve in official capacity during the⁴⁶
same year.

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Since the duties of the Parnass were quite numerous, two Parnassim were elected. During the first half year of the term from Cheshvan to Iyyor, one of them served as the Senior Parnass, or as he is called in the Takkanahs, Parnass President, and during the remaining half of the year from Iyyor to Cheshvan the other one served as Senior Parnass. If, however, one of them felt that he could carry the major part of the functions of the office, then by agreement amongst themselves he could serve the entire year as the Senior Parnass.

Before anyone could be nominated or elected to the office of Parnass he must have served at least a full term of one year as communal collector and Gabbai. These qualifications were necessary so that one who assumed the important office of Parnass would not be inexperienced, and would be acquainted with the ways and affairs of governing the community. If one had already served the term of office as Parnass, then he was not eligible for reelection

until a period of five years had elapsed. If, however, an individual was willing to waive this privilege then he could be elected for as many successive years as he desired and was elected.

The duties of the Parnass were onerous. Practically nothing could be done in the community without his permission and consent. He was in fact the dictator of the community. As we shall soon see, he too was the leader in synagogal affairs. His powers were so great that it is not surprising that the Parnass would sometimes abuse these powers and tyrannize the entire community.

The office of Gabbai was also a very significant position and ranked third to that of the Parnass. The entire community council nominated a ticket of seven men who were eligible for this office. Requirements for eligibility were primarily financial. One must have been a householder of the community and must have paid at least two guineas or more for his pew in the synagogue. The community council would then proceed and would choose a candidate, by a majority vote, from this list. If the electee refused the honor of this office he paid his fine and the candidate who received the next largest number of votes would be chosen as Gabbai. If all the candidates on the ticket refused, then the council would either make up a new ticket or would choose one of the householders in the community.

The office of Gabbai was considered very good experience

for learning the intricacies of communal government. If a Gabbai served two terms and continued to pay two guineas annually for his synagogue pew, then he automatically became a member of the vestry. This was considered quite an honor and a concession for ordinarily one who desired to become a member of the vestry after 1791 had to pay eight guineas for his pew. If one had served for three years as Gabbai, then it was considered as if he served as communal collector and was eligible to be nominated for the office of Parnass.⁴⁸

The communal collector was second in rank to the Parnass. His responsibilities were very grave for he charge of all the monies of the community and supervised the collection and expenditure of communal funds. He also was in charge of the financial end of the cemetery, the sale of pews in the Synagogue, and he was required to have a complete inventory of all communal property. He also supervised the secretary's books and observed that they should be kept in order. On Purim he would stand on the Bimah and he himself would collect the traditional one-half shekel which every Jew donated on this festival and on Passover he would take care of the finances of the grinding of Passover flour.⁴⁹

One of the important constituents of the community council was the group of seven Elders. The Elders, as we shall soon see, held a very responsible position and they

were required to have as much communal experience as possible. Before one could be elected as an Elder he had to serve in one of the following communal offices: as a Parnass, as a Collector, as a Gabbai for two terms (years), or as an Elder prior to the year 1791.

The Elders were empowered to spend as much as one hundred pounds for any communal need that they saw fit, and to regulate the salaries of the communal employees. They also managed the financial investments of the community and could float a loan in order to make up any deficit that might occur.⁵⁰

These fore-going officials actually constituted the community council. However, in certain instances another group whom we shall call vestry members would join with the council in deliberating issues which needed the consent of the entire community. A householder could become a member of the vestry by virtue of his financial contributions to the community's treasury. It was perhaps a logical conclusion that the wealthier member, because of his success in business, was in a position to offer some valuable advice. Experience in the management of communal affairs was also considered a qualification in order to become a member of the vestry. Thus the members of the vestry were a combination of men of wealth, who were included because of their wide business knowledge and men of experience who were included because of their knowledge of communal government. It was perhaps a very wise system for the council as a

whole really worked as a committee and limited size helped to facilitate the governing of the community. Those individuals who were members of the vestry prior to 1791 were to remain according to this revision of the Takkanahs as members of the vestry providing that they continued to pay two guineas per year for their pews and did not owe any debts to charity. They, however, were given a privilege in respect to the amount of their contributions to the synagogue. Unlike the householder who desired to become a member of the vestry after 1791, they did not have to pay eight guineas for their pews but as long as they paid two guineas per annum they were given this concession because their experience warranted their inclusion within the vestry. Also, anyone who had served as Gabbai for two terms automatically became a member of this body, for his experience made his advise desirable and hence his presence in this body was of value to the welfare of the community. If a householder desired to become a member of the vestry and he had had no previous experience then only his financial status could make him a member of this body. Any householder who desired to become a member of the vestry would submit his name to the executive council and if a majority of its members approved of this candidate, then his financial status was examined and he was considered. If he paid at least eight guineas per year for his pew and that of his wife, (the money paid for his children's pews was not considered in this sum) then he was considered a member of the

vestry. If, however, in any time in the future, he did not pay eight guineas for his pews then he was no longer a member of the vestry. If, an individual was stricken from the membership of the vestry because of non-payment and he decided at a larger date to again become a member of this body, then he had to go through the same procedure as at first. If a bachelor wanted to become a member of the vestry then he had to pay the full eight guineas for his own seat. In all instances, however, the executive council had to approve the candidate. This was indeed a very wise precaution for any undesirable member could be excluded and denied the privilege of becoming a member of the vestry. Thus wealth alone did not supercede character or reputation.

If a misfortune befell a member of the vestry and he became poor, and he had to accept charity from the community, then he could not continue to hold his position. Naturally, he could not pay the eight guineas for his pew. If at a later date this poverty-stricken individual regained his fortune and desired to become again a member of the vestry he would have to return all the charity that he took from the community before he could resume his position.

When a member of the vestry became a paid employee of the community he was dropped from the vestry, and could no longer offer his opinion in this body. This provision is quite understandable for the vestry dealt with the salaries of the communal employees, and if he were to remain a member

in this body he might influence them in his behalf.⁵¹

From the above Takkanahs describing the various offices of the community we can readily see that the executive council was vested with dictatorial rights, and could, upon its own decision, act as a representative of the entire community. Only in certain instances, were the members of the vestry called in upon the deliberations, and even then, the entire community was not represented but only those who were either elected or were wealthy enough gave their opinion.

3. Refusal of Candidate to accept office

The duties of office were usually burdensome and many candidates and officers preferred to decline such honors. This practice was discouraged, since able men who could officiate with dignity and efficiency to the benefit of the congregation, would refuse to shoulder the burdens. Hence a fine was imposed upon anyone who declined or refused an office. Whenever a candidate is elected and declines the office, then the one who receives the next largest number of votes shall receive the office. This procedure if necessary continues until a candidate finally accepts the office. If all of the candidates are exhausted,⁵² then another election shall be held.

When a Parnass refused office, he had to pay a fine of forty pounds sterling; a Collector, thirty guineas; a Gabbai, twenty-five guineas; an Elder, five guineas. The candidates who decline the office had to pay the fine and the community could not free them from this obligation.⁵³

When a candidate accepts an office and then before he assumes it decides to decline, then he must pay double the fine enumerated above, since he showed disrespect for the community's trust and upset the entire procedure. The same Takkanah applies to an officer who resigns his office in the middle of a term.

These fines did not apply to a septuagenarian who was excused from all service, because of the infirmities of old age. He could only be elected to office if he gave his approval.

4. Finances

The financial matters of the Congregation were handled mainly by the seven Elders who regulated the salaries of the employees and had the authority to spend as much as one hundred pounds without the approval of the entire community.⁵⁴ The Parnass was limited when it came to the expenditure of money and this function was taken out of his hands, for perhaps a very good reason. He was thus prevented from using the funds in an irregular manner and patronizing whom he pleased.⁵⁵

At times the community would find it necessary to borrow funds in order to pay its indebtedness. The entire council had to approve any of these loans and the loans would be made in the name of the entire community. The secretary was required to keep an exact record of all the proceedings which took place when this loan was passed.⁵⁶

When the community had any surplus monies which it

did not need for immediate use, they would try to invest these monies in some business enterprise. The council would choose three reliable members who understood the intricacies of finance to invest this in profitable securities.
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The communal finance books which were kept by the collector were examined annually, before Shebat. Three members of the council were chosen to audit these books carefully and they had to turn in a report of their findings to the council within a month of their examination of the books. If the accounts were found to be correct, then the council would proceed to settle any debts and reimburse the collector for any expenses which he might have paid out of his own money. At the expiration of the office of collector, he would also turn in all communal documents which were in his possession. Even if the collector was elected to keep his office for another term, the same procedure had to be followed, and he had to obtain a certification that
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his accounts were in proper order.

The books of the Gabbai were audited periodically and an annual inventory was also made during the month of Shebat. In this case also, three members of the council would examine his books and settle any debts with him if his accounts were correct. His accounts dealt primarily with the alms distributed to the poor and any other expenses
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for charity.

5. Meetings

In order to insure the proper regulation in the governing of the communal affairs, the Takkanahs provided that the executive council should meet at least during the first week of each month and that the entire community council (the executive council and members of the vestry) should meet at least four times annually during the first week of ~~Cheshvan~~ Cheshvan, Shebat, Iyyor, and Ab. The Parnass was the official who was supposed to call the meeting and if he neglected his duty then the next officer in rank was supposed to call the meeting, and if he forgot then it was the duty of the next officer in rank, etc. A meeting of the executive council had to have a quorum of five people. At a meeting of the entire community council a quorum of ⁶⁰ eleven people was required.

The second Parnass would take the chair at a meeting in case the Senior Parnass was absent. If both Parnassim were absent, the collector would take the chair, and if he were absent the Gabbai would take the chair. If all the officials were absent then the people at the meeting could select their own president and he possessed all the powers that the Senior Parnass would have if he were presid-
⁶¹ing.

The secretary of the community would be present to take minutes of all the proceedings. He would also make note of all those who were present, and they would be re-
⁶²quired to sign their names to this list.

The Parnass would have to inform the members of the

meeting at least two days before it was to take place. He would also have to give the exact date and hour when the meeting was to be held. If the meeting was important enough the Parnass would inform the individuals who were called to this meeting that failure to attend would be penalized, and in such cases the penalty could not be less than five shillings. Whenever the executive council met, the secretary drew up a list of all those who had been informed to attend this meeting and after the meeting was in session for one full hour and if these people whose names were on this list did not appear, then they had to pay a fine to charity. If an individual came to a meeting and would leave before the meeting or before the business was completed, then it was considered as if he were absent for the entire meeting and he had to pay a fine to charity according to the estimation of the Parnass. When a individual who was informed that a meeting was to be held, could not attend the meeting and he wished to avoid paying the fine, then he had to write a letter to the council giving the specific reasons why he could not attend. If the council considered these reasons valid then he was excused from the fine. If he did not sent a letter and was absent,
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then he had to pay the fine.

As we have already seen the Parnass was practically the dictator in the community, and he could use his powers to evade any issues or not place an important matter on the agenda. In order to prevent such malpractice, any

seven householders of the community could petition by letter affixed with their signatures, demanding that the Parnass call a meeting for any specific issue and they had to state specifically in this petition the particular matter which they desired to have discussed. If they failed to include any such statements in their petition then the Parnass needn't call the meeting. The requirement that the petition contain a statement of the particulars was necessary so that the executive council would not be surprised by any moves on the part of the householders and could prepare themselves for such eventualities. If an emergency ever arose and a certain matter had to be decided upon immediately and it was impossible to call a meeting, then the Parnass could circulate a statement describing the business on hand amongst the various members of the executive and receive their opinions. The sexton and the notary were entrusted with this task to see that it was properly carried out.

Sometimes a meeting would be very heated and opponents on any issue might become very excited and come to blows. The people tried very much to avoid such situations and did their best to reconcile two antagonists before they left the meeting place so that any arguments would not be continued after the meeting. If two members were arguing and the Parnass called them to order and they did not listen, then he could fine them accordingly.

6. Communal Employees

Whenever the community had a vacancy for a Rabbi, Cantor, Sexton, or any other communal position which paid more than ten pounds, they would announce this vacancy in the synagogue, so that anyone who was qualified and desired the position could apply. The applicant would either present himself personally to the Parnass, send him a letter, or have someone else speak for him. They would also set a time limit for the application which could not extend for more than six months after the announcement of the vacancy. Eight days after the time limit set for the filing of applications had expired, an election would be held. The time and place of the election would be announced in the Synagogue on the Sabbath preceding the election, and anyone who came after the fixed time could not vote.

Those householders who paid at least two and one-half guineas for pews in the synagogue were considered eligible to vote in an election which was held to fill the position of Rabbi, Cantor, Assistant Cantor, Sexton, or Assistant Sexton. If the election was held to fill a vacancy for any other communal position, then only the community council was eligible to vote.

On the day of the election the Parnass would stand near the ballot box, with a list of the names of those householders who were entitled to vote. He would then give the voter a list of all the applicants and the voter would check the name of the candidate whom he desired and he would deposit

his ballot in the box. After a voter had cast his ballot the Parnass would strike his name off the list so that he could not present himself to vote again. One could also vote by proxy ~~only~~ if his choice was specifically written out on paper. The votes would be counted by the Parnass and other members of the vestry, and the candidate receiving the majority of votes received the position.

After 1791, an applicant for a communal position must be a householder or the son of a householder. If there is no householder who can qualify for the position then an outsider may be chosen. An applicant for the position of Rabbi or Cantor needn't be a householder. This provision was necessary because it was advisable to appoint a complete outsider as a Rabbi, for as the proverb goes, "There is no prophet without honor, save in his own country," and the selection of a local man as Rabbi might create dissension. Also it might be difficult to find a qualified applicant who was a Rabbi or a Cantor.

The salaries for the communal employees were paid monthly by the communal collector. The collector was not allowed to advance any salary to an employee without the permission of the executive council, and if he did so, then he had to pay it out of his private means and would not be reimbursed. If the occasion arose where a communal employee needed some money and desired to obtain some of his salary in advance, then he had to write a letter to the executive council and obtain their permission.

A communal employee did not receive Passover flour

gratis, in spite of the fact that the grinding of flour was a communal project. However, he was exempt from paying his taxes to charity and if he was a householder, he needn't pay his assessments during his tenure of office. This was indeed little concession in view of the fact that the salaries paid to these employees were very meagre.

A salaried communal employee, even though he was a householder and paid for his pew in the synagogue could not vote in any matters which required the approval of the entire community. If such individual finished his term of office or was discharged, then he automatically returned to his former status.

The senior Parnass had the right to suspend any employee because of failure to execute his tasks and duties in a proper manner. However, the Parnass did not have the right to deprive any suspended employee of his salary or to penalize him in any other way. If a Parnass would suspend an employee because he neglected his duties, or for any other reason, then the Parnass had to call a meeting of the executive council within eight days after the suspension and inform them of the charges. The council would then meet and decide the fate of this employee. If they wanted to rid themselves of an employee without any delay, then the community council would have to meet and decide the matter by a majority vote. These precautionary measures protected a communal employee against unfair and unjust treatment. In a sense it deprived the Parnass of making the communal employees his lackeys be-

cause he alone did not have the power to discharge any employee who had incurred his displeasure. I believe however, that a strong-will Parnass could persuade the executive council to carry out his will in spite of these precautions.⁶⁸

In theory the Rabbi of the community was the civil and religious authority and his opinions were binding. We shall see from the following Takkanahs that the Rabbi was only the nominal head of the community for he was surrounded by many restrictions which limited his authority.

The main function of the Rabbi was to determine all religious and ceremonial laws and to answer all the queries which the members of the congregation would bring to him. He usually preached twice a year, on the Sabbath of Penitence and on the Sabbath preceding Passover, Shabbat Hagadol. On these two Sabbaths he also was considered as an obligee to be called to the reading of the Torah. He also had the right to preach on any other Sabbath during the year except that he could not preach during the morning service before the reading of the Torah. The Rabbi was also given the honor of reading the prayers for dew and rain and the closing prayer on Yom Kippur.

The Rabbi did not have the authority to issue orders to any of the communal employees, but if he desired anything he could tell the Parnass who would then ask the employee to carry out the Rabbi's wish. This prevented the Rabbi from using a communal employee as his pawn and perhaps per-

form any unauthorized act.

The Rabbi could not issue a Herem against anybody even though the entire population approved of this. This meant that the Rabbi could not force anyone to do his will nor could he threaten anyone with excommunication. The only form of threat that remained was the Issur which could be imposed upon any member who was recalcitrant. But even for this too the Rabbi had to obtain the consent of the Parnassim and Gabalim.⁶⁹

The Rabbi performed all divorce actions and halitzah 23/4. Before he could perform these acts he had to receive the permission of the Parnass. I do not believe that this was to check upon the Rabbi's authority, but that the person involved should be investigated by the Parnass who might know more about his character than the Rabbi to ascertain the circumstances of the case. The Rabbi usually received a fee for this service but in case the people involved were poor he had to officiate gratis.⁷⁰

Various foods such as wine, whiskey, cheese, etc., had to be endorsed by the Rabbi. Also all foods that were imported from other countries and contained the endorsement of another Rabbi had to be approved by the Rabbi. His fees for his services in such case was five shillings.

The Rabbi also conferred a certificate of Shochet and Bodek for which he received not less than five shillings.⁷¹

The usual custom in the Continental communities was to

confer the title of Haber or Morenu upon individuals who had attained certain degree of Jewish scholarship. Usually the Rabbi of the community was the one who was supposed to determine whether an individual was worthy of this honor and he would confer it upon him. Sometimes however, an unworthy person, who was a possessor of great wealth and desired this honor, would persuade the Rabbi by fair or unfair means to bestow it upon him. Therefore, the Rabbi had to confer with the Parnass whenever such honor was to be bestowed upon a member of the community which would prevent the unscrupulous bestowal of such honors. ⁷²

The permanent cantor must be in the synagogue during the morning and evening services. If a cantor is tardy and comes too late to officiate, then he must pay the following fines: week-day morning and evening services, one crown; evening, morning, or additional service during the Sabbaths or Holidays, one-half guinea; Sabbath afternoon service or closing services, five shillings; morning or evening service on Purim, one-half crown; Rosh Chodesh, Chanukah, and Intermediate days, five shilling. When the cantor is absent the second cantor shall officiate in his stead, and if he too is absent then he also must pay the same fine. The collector was warned to take special care in collecting these fines or in deducting them from the salaries. The Parnass or Gabbai were not allowed to waive these fines for this might encourage lassitude.

The cantor had to arrive in the synagogue before the

beginning of the service and whenever he read the prayers had to begin from _____ and on Saturday and Holidays he had to begin from _____ until the end. If the cantor wished he could allow the assistant cantor or the Sexton to read the services from _____ to _____, but he must not leave during the interim.

The cantor had to read the services on the following days; Sabbath, Holidays, High Holidays, Intermediate Days, Rosh Chodesh, Chanukah, Purim, Hoshanna Rabbah, the Memorial anniversary, Fast days, on the Minor Yom Kippur, on the Day of Circumcision.

He also had to read the Torah during the week days, Sabbaths, and Holidays and on Purim he had to read the Megillah.

The Assistant Cantor was required to read the services on: evenings and mornings on week-days; afternoon service on Sabbath; and the closing Sabbath service; and during any other prayer service where his services were required. He also served as a substitute when the Cantor was not present.

The Parnassim could change the duties of the Cantor⁷³ as they saw fit and as the situation demanded.

The Sexton was the handy man of the congregation; he took care of all the property of the synagogue and had in his possession the keys for all the closets and drawers; he performed errands for the executive council, and reminded them of any particular function or occasion; he opened and closed the synagogue and prepared everything

for the service; he substituted as the reader of the services when the Cantors were not present. The Sexton was also the official Collector of the community and each week he would turn over the donations which he had collected from the members to the communal Collectors.⁷⁴

7. Synagogue Procedure

The community zealously guarded any apparent encroachments upon their congregation. They tried to prevent under all circumstances the forming of private minyanim in homes or elsewhere. Such meetings usually ended in secession or in the building of a new congregation, and they tried to forestall such actions. Under no condition was a private minyan allowed to be held on any day when the Torah was read in the synagogue. The reason given for this in the Takkanahs is that this would decrease the attendance of worshippers in the synagogue and there would not be many worshippers which might lessen the possible contributions which were usually made when one was called to the Torah. A minyan could be formed only in the house of a mourner during the entire seven days of his mourning but not on the Sabbath. They did not, however, stress attendance in the synagogue during the morning and afternoon prayers and private minyanim could be formed for the reading of such prayers. Since these prayers were very short, it was perhaps too troublesome to walk to the synagogue and so this privilege was extended in this case. On Tisha B'ab a minyan could be formed in any place in the city even though

the Torah was read on this day.

During the High Holidays, if a man was sick and couldn't attend the synagogue, he was permitted to form a private minyan at home so that he could pray with a minyan. The invalid had to pay one guinea to charity for this privilege and all the donations that were contributed during the reading of the Torah belonged to charity. In addition to these conditions the people who owned a pew in the synagogue were not allowed to attend this minyan. Only such individuals who did not own a pew could attend this minyan. Obviously, all these Takkanahs were aimed to keep any member who might be a contributor to the synagogue from attending this service and thus lose the possibility of obtaining his donations.

The fine for violating these Takkanahs was very severe. One who formed a private minyan, and those who attended such minyans without permission had to pay five pounds and the person who rented the place where the minyan was held or who owned it, had to pay ten pounds for every service that was held in this place. Their names were also to be recorded in case of such offense in the Pinkos so that they could never, if the necessity ever arose, receive any
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charity.

8. Rental of Seats

The Parnassim and the Gabbaiim occupied special seats
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in the synagogue. When the Parnass was not in the synagogue the second Parnass would take his place. The officer next in rank to the Parnass would always occupy the Parnass'

seat, if he was absent. If all the officers were absent, then one of the oldest laymen who was a member of the council would occupy the Parnass' seat. If anyone refused to occupy this seat, then he would have to pay one-half guinea fine. The Sexton would usually take care of all these matters⁷⁷ in the absence of the Parnass.

The pews in the synagogue were rented out to individual members for an entire year. Parents who wanted their children to have a permanent designated seat also had to pay for this privilege. The fees for these seats were collected every half year on Adar and Elul. If anyone did not pay their fees and the collector nevertheless allowed them to retain these pews, then he had to pay the money out of his own means.

The fees for the seats were set by the council and women and men's seats were rented separately. The prices for these seats could not be changed without the permission of the council. Children's pews were rented at a reduced rate and anyone older than eighteen years of age had to rent his own seat and pay the regular fee. If a man could not afford these fees then they would grant him a pew free⁷⁸ of charge.

If one was a member of the community and did not pay fees for a pew in the synagogue, then this would be mentioned publicly in the synagogue in an attempt to shame him into renting a pew.⁷⁹

We have mentioned previously that one of the reasons

for the estrangement of many Jews from the synagogue was because of their abhorrence of the disorder in the synagogue. Attempts were made to dignify the service and remove this evil. No one was allowed to wander about the synagogue and if he failed to obey this rule, then he was fined five shillings. No man was allowed to stand on the bimah unless he was called to the Torah. One can sympathize with this provision, for even today in the Orthodox Synagogue it is very painful to notice how everyone crowds around the bimah which creates a very unpleasant scene.

There were probably many complaints that the service was too long and as we have already seen that on Simchas Torah instead of calling the entire congregation to the Torah, they limited this ceremony to fourteen people. They also made a provision that the Sexton had to roll the scroll to the portion that was being read on the particular Sabbath prior to the service, and that this scroll should not have to be rolled to its proper place during the service, and waste the congregation's time. He also had to read through the portion of the week in order to see that there were no mistakes in the scroll which would make it invalid and time would be consumed in changing to another scroll. If the Sexton failed to fulfill this duty then he would be fined one-half crown.

The Sexton had to appear in the synagogue dressed in a black coat which he used for official and special occasions. Usually this coat was presented to him by the congregation

for he was too poor to purchase one himself. This was intended to make him appear more dignified and not to detract from the dignity of the service.⁸⁰

If ever a tumult would occur in the synagogue, both contending parties had to pay five shilling⁸¹ fine. If they did not cease quarrelling at the command of the Parnass, he could have them ejected from the synagogue. If the argument developed into a serious quarrel, then both contending parties would have to appear before the council on the next day in order to adjudicate the matter.

Most of the information which was to be conveyed to the community was announced in the synagogue from the pulpit. All announcements had to receive the official permission from the Parnass in order to prevent anyone from spreading false or malicious information and also to prevent individual speech making. No one was allowed to post any announcements in the synagogue or on the cemetery unless he received the permission of the Parnass. All announcements had to be signed by the secretary.

No changes could be made in the fixtures or any other articles in the synagogue belonging to the synagogue or to the cemetery. Only the council was vested with the privilege of making these changes.⁸²

9. Aliyahs and Donations

The synagogue's funds were augmented by the various donations contributed when a man would have an aliyah. Usually, every aliyah would have to be accompanied by a minimum donation. The donations would be increased according to the

importance of the day or of the aliyah.

Large donations were very desirable and their contributor would receive many honors. When a man donated more than twenty pounds in cash money, his name would be inscribed in the Pinkos as one of the benefactors of the community and also on a plaque which was in the synagogue. On every opportunity this individual's name would be mentioned for a special benediction or memorial prayer. Anyone who prior to 1799 made a contribution of ten pounds to the synagogue would continue to receive the same privileges after this date, as the person who donated twenty-five pounds. Prior to the promulgation of these Takkanahs the standards were quite lower and even ten pounds was considered quite a large contribution. This Takkanah, which raised the standard of contribution indicates that the people were becoming wealthier. Hence, greater contributions were demanded of them.⁸³

When a man was called to the Torah on Sabbaths and Holidays, he had to donate at least six shillings for charity, for the Bikkur Cholim and for cemetery repairs. On the afternoon service of the Sabbath, and on the Intermediate Days he had to donate at least two shillings to at least one of these three charities; on week-days there was no requirement to contribute.⁸⁴

After the Sabbath or Holiday was over the Collector had to write out the names of those who had donated money and turn it over to the Sexton who was to collect it. All the accounts had to be cleared quarterly, on Cheshvan, Shebat, Iyyor, and Ab. Whoever did not pay his debts to

charity after these periods could not receive any honors in the synagogue. The secretary of the community made up a list of all those who owed money to charity and this was placed on the pulpit so that they would know who was a debtor and not eligible to receive an honor. If the officers disregarded this list, then they were fined accordingly.⁸⁵

The order of calling up individuals to the Torah, as even today, was a very delicate matter, and great care had to be exercised in the preference of individuals. Usually, one who was celebrant of special occasion would have the preference of being called to the Torah before any other man and he was called "an obligee." 2nd Such obligee had to inform the Sexton on the Thursday before that he desired to receive the aliyah. In the meantime, the Sexton would inform the Parnass of the various obligees and it would be ascertained whether they had to settle any accounts or not. If an obligee was aware of his debts and still couldn't pay them, he could place some security with the Parnass which would show his good intentions to pay his debt and the Parnass could then call him to the Torah.

A Bar Mitzvah, Yahrzeit, a groom who was to be married within a week, one who recovered from an illness, or a man whose wife had given birth to a child were considered obligees. The afore-mentioned individuals however were not considered obligees to be called to the Torah during the Festivals. If there were two individuals deserving of the same aliyah, then the one who was a householder or who

held a higher rank in the community would be called first.

Since the different synagogues had different minimum donations for an aliyah, a member would sometimes go to another synagogue where the minimum donations were less and save himself some money. For such evasions, one would be fined thirty-nine shillings, unless it were conclusively proved that he was a member in the other synagogue also, and then he would have to pay only five shillings.

If a man were given an aliyah and he left the synagogue before he was called to the Torah, or he refused to accept it, then he was fined nineteen and one-half crowns. The reason that this fine was so heavy was so that refusals and evasions should not become prevalent and to prevent any disruptions during the service.

The father of the Bar Mitzvah, if he was a householder, was entitled to the Aliyah of Segan, for which he paid a half of crown. He also had the privilege of calling whom he pleased to the Torah in honor and celebration of this event. If there were two Bar Mitzvahs on the same day, then they would decide by lot, who should be the Segan and both parties would include their guests and share the aliyahs.

If an orphan had a Bar Mitzvah then his nearest relative would have the Aliyah of Segan.

If the son or daughter of a householder were to be married, then the father was to have the Aliyah of Segan on the Sabbath preceding the marriage. For this honor he

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paid one-half crown.

The Parnass also occupied the leading position in the synagogue in regard to the distribution of aliyahs. He always took the Aliyah of Segan whenever it was not sold. He could also distribute the Aliyahs of Shebee and Maftir to whom he pleased.⁸⁸

When the occasion demanded that two or three scrolls be read, then the honor of taking out the second and third scrolls would be sold to the highest bidding householder. They would take the scrolls from the ark and carry them to the bimah and sit down on the bimah and await the time when these scrolls had to be read. They were not allowed to give these scrolls to someone else to hold for them while the other scrolls were being read. This provision, I believe, might have been enacted because of religious reasons. Since sitting on the bimah and holding the Torah was merely a boring task an individual might call upon a youngster to hold the Torah for him until it was needed. This was perhaps not considered as being respectful to the Torah; hence the injunction that one must hold the Torah during the entire service, before and after it is read.⁸⁹

The Aliyah of Segan was a very desirable aliyah, since he who purchased it had the privilege of calling seven people to the Torah, in addition to those who had to be called because they were obligees. If, however, it was impossible to call some people of his own choice, then he had to relinquish this privilege. This aliyah could

not be purchased by anyone who was not a householder in the community.

The Sexton usually assisted the Segan and informed him as to the procedure in calling the people. He had to observe the principles of rank, and call the people to the Torah in the order of their prestige.⁸⁹

The Aliyah of Chamishi, Shishi, Shebee, and Maftir, were sold separately and the Segan could not honor anybody with these aliyahs.⁹⁰

On the following holidays, High Holidays, Festivals, Hashonah Rabba, Shabbat Bereshit, the Aliyah of Segan was not sold, but was offered to the Parnass. The householders who were to be called up during the holidays were chosen previously to the holidays and were informed of the aliyah that they were to have. These householders were required to either accept or decline the aliyah and inform the Sexton at least one day before the holiday as to their choice. Anyone who failed to send this answer would be fined two guineas. If they accepted and then were absent they also were fined two guineas.⁹¹

An unmarried man was not allowed to have an aliyah on the High Holy Days, even though he were a householder. One who was not a householder also was not allowed to have an aliyah on the High Holy Days.⁹²

The aliyah which included the withdrawal and replacement of the scrolls from the ark on Hashonah Rabba and Simchas Torah were not sold, but were distributed by the Parnass.

One of the most important innovations in the procedure of aliyahs on Simchas Torah was the abolition of the calling of the entire congregation to the Torah. Only fourteen men were allowed to be called to the Torah on this Festival, thus preserving decorum in the congregation and limiting the time of the service.⁹³

On the first day of Succoth two lots were chosen designating the Hasan Torah and the Hasan Bereshit. The Sexton was to inform the individual of the choice and if one declined, he must inform the Parnass before the Hashonah Rabba of his decision and pay then guinea's fine. However, if he delayed and informed the Sexton after Hashonah Rabba, then he had to pay a fine of twenty-five pounds. This was indeed a heavy fine; but we must understand that a member might intentionally try to upset the entire system of the synagogue because of his ill-will and create disorder. The impositions of such heavy fines tended to dissuade any member from such purposes.

Once a member refused these aliyahs no one else would be chosen, but the Parnass and Gabbai would take these aliyahs and they would fulfil all the requirements of this aliyah. In order not to penalize the Parnass for he had to contribute and donate quite heavily when he was called to the Torah, he would be apportioned five guineas to reimburse him for his expenses. This money was taken from the the fines that the declinees paid when they rejected the aliyah. The Hasan Torah and Hasan Bereshit would be

honored by sitting with the Parnass during the Simhat Torah and Shabbat Bereshit. They would also be called to the Torah on Shabbat Bereshit and would be required to donate one-half crown each to three charities, as well as to the Sextons and Cantor.⁹⁴

10. Solemnization of Weddings

The authority for the legal solemnization of marriage as we have already described, was only vested in the properly qualified clergymen.⁹⁵ In the Jewish community the Cantor and the Sexton as well as the Rabbi could legally perform the wedding ceremony. The Rabbi, however, could not solemnize a marriage without the approval of the Parnass. The Parnass had to be informed of the forthcoming event a week before it was to take place, so that he would have time to investigate the particular case, to see if there were any reasons why this marriage should not be solemnized. All debts to charity or to the congregation had to be cleared up before the ceremony could be held.

The Rabbi usually was the one who performed the wedding ceremony. If he was called to another community to officiate at a wedding, he also had to obtain the permission of the Parnass. Anyone else in the community who would perform the wedding without the permission of the Rabbi and Parnass would be fined according to the decision of the Parnass, and the witnesses also in this case would be fined. Although we know that according to Jewish law almost anyone can solemnize a marriage there were good reasons for these

restrictions. First, the authorities of the community had to be informed in order to force settlement of any outstanding debts, and these weddings were a source of income to the Rabbi and other minor employees. Secondly, in an attempt to prevent any malpractice, English civil law specifically stated that only a regularly qualified clergyman could solemnize a marriage. However, if the parties in question were of a notorious or infamous character then the rabbi would not perform such ceremonies, because of the dishonorable nature of the case and he would send the Cantor or the Sexton in his place.⁹⁶

The Rabbi's fee for a wedding was one guinea. If a person could not afford this sum, the least that he could offer was a half of guinea. When a dowry was involved in the marriage then the Rabbi received a fee in proportion to the dowry. Up to the sum of one hundred pounds he would receive one guinea; from one hundred to five hundred, he received a guinea for the first hundred pounds and one-half guinea for every additional hundred pounds. If the dowry was more than five hundred pounds, then he would receive the regular fee for the first five hundred pounds, and one-fourth of a per cent for anything above the five hundred pounds. If a couple who resided in Westminster had the wedding ceremony performed in another community then they had to pay the Rabbi half of his regular fees. If the couple, however, at some future date, decided to become householders in the Westminster community, then they had to pay the re-

maining part of the Rabbi's fees which they did not previously pay.⁹⁷ The Cantor, and the Sexton were required to attend every wedding and for this they received a fee which amounted to half of what the Rabbi usually received.⁹⁸ The Assistant Sexton was the one who usually approached the family to ask them if they wanted to invite the communal employees to the wedding dinner. The reason that the Cantor or Sexton had to stay for the dinner was to recite the seven benedictions, but sometimes one of the guests would do that, and the services of the Sexton or Cantor were not required. When two weddings occurred on the same day one of the Cantors or Sextons had to remain at one of the weddings in order to recite the seven benedic-⁹⁹tions. If one of the communal employees received his fees and did not attend the wedding, then he was penalized as if he violated one of the Takkanahs.

11. Hebra Kadisha

The Great Synagogue did not have a separate and autonomous Hebra Kadisha, but it was probably included as a part of the entire organization. Their cemetery was divided into two parts: one part reserved for members only, and the other part, for itinerants, paupers, and non-members, and was actually called, the "Itinerant's ground." Before any deceased member could be buried, all of his debts and liabilities to the congregation had to be paid or else the Parnass would refuse to give a permit.

Anyone who was not a member of the community and died had to be buried on the section called "Itinerant's ground." If the deceased possessed any money then he could not be

buried until the council decided how much should be demanded for the ground. However, if one was poor he did not have to pay for the cemetery ground and they would even allow him burial expenses from charity funds.

All of the Cantors and Sextons of the synagogue had to be present at a member's funeral and had to escort the funeral cortege until it reached the cemetery. They were also required to wear their special cloaks (these were their black coats which were worn on these special occasions).

If a member desired to reserve a grave for himself after death, then the council would sit and decide the fee for such regulation.¹⁰⁰

Every year at a certain time the entire community would celebrate a Memorial Anniversary which would usually be held on the cemetery grounds. Everybody, members and non-members were required to attend this ceremony. The council as a whole would take charge of this affair.¹⁰¹

12. Violation of Takkanahs and Loss of Membership

If anyone abrogated one of these Takkanahs and no provision had been made for punishing this individual, then he should be called before the council when they met in the vestry and they should decide accordingly.

In case a council decided that a man committed a grievous offense and he was deserving of losing his citizenship in the community, the council alone could not consummate this action. Only the entire council together with another eighteen laymen who paid more than two guineas per

year for their pews could give the final decision in this matter.

The council could not discuss the expulsion of any members from the community unless all of the members of the council had been informed prior to the meeting that such matter was on the agenda.

These Takkanahs indicate that steps were taken to prevent the unjust expulsion of any member from the community. These regulations checked any bias attempt to expel a member and did not rely on the judgment of the Parnass and the officials alone.¹⁰²

13. Disputes in Civil Matters

The following Takkanah I would suppose is an indication of the advance stage that this community reached at the end of the century. In no other set of Takkanahs prior to this date do we find any specific provisions to take care of any civil disputes. The Great Synagogue, however, had a standing rule for such cases. If any member owed another member a sum less than two pounds, then he could not bring this matter before the civil courts without the permission of the Senior Parnass. The Parnassim would meet once or twice a month to adjudicate in money matters. If, however, the sum of money was greater than two pounds, and the litigants were willing to allow the Parnassim or any one of the council to adjudicate in this matter, then they had to sign an agreement that the opinion of the council would be binding. The Takkanah uses the actual words in this case as "Arbitration bonds."

Peculiarly, the Rabbi who usually was a judge in civil matters was not very highly considered when it came to disputes about money matters. Members could not be forced to appear before him for his decision unless both litigants agreed upon it.¹⁰³

14. Change of Takkanahs

These Takkanahs could not be annuled, amended, or increased unless a definite need arose for such action. In order to change or amend these Takkanahs the entire council in joint session with eighteen laymen who paid more than two guineas per year for their seats had to meet and pass upon this. These changes would become effective only when they were finally inscribed in the Pinkos.¹⁰⁴

Chapter IV
The Organization
of the
Hambro Synagogue

The synagogue which was later to become known as the Hambro Synagogue was born out of the quarrel between Reb Aberle and Mordecai Hamburger.¹⁰⁵ After Hamburger was vindicated by Zevi Ashkenazi, he created his own minyan in his home at Magpye Alley. Soon he purchased a site at St. Mary Axe and burial grounds at Hoxton and he was ready to build a synagogue which would outshine the existing one. Moses Hart, a brother of Uri Phoebus determined to put an end to such desires and he conferred with Abraham Mendez of the Sephardim. These two congregations petitioned the Court of Aldermen, who were always willing to limit Jewish activity and an injunction was issued to prevent further progress.

The congregation returned to its old house of worship in Hamburger's home and continued to function there for twenty-two years. When Hamburger returned from India, after regaining his fortune, he decided to carry out his plans. In 1825, in face of the resistance presented by the existing congregations, Hamburger built the Synagogue in the site adjoining his garden and consecrated it in 1826.

The synagogue was known as Hambro, probably because of Hamburger's name and later when Wolf Prager took it over, it was called Prager's Shul. In November 1892, the synagogue was closed.

1. Membership

Membership in the Hambro Synagogue was based primarily on financial considerations. One should not infer that a pauper was excluded from all the benefits of the community. On the contrary, the pauper caused no complications. Once it was established that a man was a pauper, he would be entitled to a minimum of all the basic services enjoyed by a member. In life as in death, he would be provided with the things indispensable to a Jew. However, in order to have a voice in the governing of the community, one had to have a certain financial status. In order to become a member and possess a שליח, one had to pay at least fourteen guineas as an initiation fee, in addition to whatever assessments are levied on all members. His past record in previous communities was investigated to see if he was of unblemished character and then a committee consisting of the community council and six laymen who paid fourteen pounds in taxes had to indorse a new member. ¹⁰⁶ The membership was not limited to Londoners, but even those who lived outside London could belong to the community, but they were not required to pay any assessments except a standard fee of one-half guinea. ¹⁰⁷

The question of the rights of a householder were extremely complicated in the situation where a householder's daughter married an outsider. The groom, if he was an outsider, now became a householder and he didn't have to pay the initiation fee of ten guineas, except to make a donation of two guineas to charity. The privilege of becoming a householder was conferred upon the groom before the wedding

at which time he must accept this privilege. If he refused and after a time he desired to become a householder, then he had to go through the same formalities as an outsider.¹⁰⁸ If the bridegroom's father is also a householder then he must contribute only one guinea to charity.¹⁰⁹ When a householder married a widow who was not a householder in her own rights, the children of the former marriage did not acquire by this marriage.¹¹⁰

2. Taxes

The community levied some kind of a tax which is called an assessment upon its members or as we shall henceforth call them householders. The exact details of this tax are not specifically mentioned, but we can conjecture by analogy with the method used in other communities and with the method used amongst the Sephardim that it was based upon wealth and income. All householders, including widows had to pay this tax semi-annually on Nisan and Tishri, or at the latest, at the end of the year.¹¹¹ A boy who reached the age of fourteen was considered taxable.¹¹² This leads one to believe that the tax was perhaps also per capita, since a child of fourteen would probably not have an income and his parent would pay for the entire household.

The assessment was to cover the taxes for the entire year, but one was not required to pay an additional sum for the additional month of leap year.¹¹³ This provision is not clear. Since the tax was not on a monthly basis, why should an extra month be a problem? Perhaps this statement was necessary to prevent an additional levy.

The council could not collect these taxes by force, since as we have stated, there was no collective responsibility thrown upon the community by the government and the forces for compulsion were weak. The officers however, were allowed to use any means at their disposal and even bring a case before the civil authorities in order to collect the assessments.¹¹⁴ Their case was strong, because when a man became a member, he assumed a share of the burden of the community. The budget was formulated considering his taxes and if he failed to pay, he caused a heavier burden to fall on the other members.

3. Communal Officers

The affairs of the community were decided upon by an executive council consisting of two Parnassim and a Gabbai and seven trustees.¹¹⁵

The election of these offices took place on the Sunday before or after Rosh Hodesh Nisan according to its closest proximity. The term of office was for one year and they were not eligible for reelection. At the expiration of their term of office, the retiring Parnassim and Gabbai automatically became trustees for the next year and an additional four men would be elected as trustees to bring the number of trustees to the required seven.

The nomination for officers was carried out in the following fashion. For the office of Parnass, a list of fourteen householders who paid eleven pounds in taxes were placed on one ticket from which two Parnassim were chosen. Another list of four householders who paid six pounds in taxes were selected

and the Gabbai would be chosen from this list. If a tie occurred then the candidates in question were chosen by lot. The electorate was made up of those who paid at least six pounds in taxes and they would assemble in the communal hall and would cast their votes in a ballot box for the candidates. The votes were counted by the retiring Parnass and were recorded in a special ledger.

Before one could be nominated for the office of Parnass he had to have the following qualifications. He had to be a householder; twenty-eight years old; married (or a widower); and must pay at least ten pounds in taxes.¹¹⁶ A Gabbai must be a householder; twenty-five years old; and married (or a widower).

The results of the election were to be announced the same day of the election and the elected candidates had to accept or decline within a period of three days. If a tie occurred, then the candidates in question were chosen by lot. The Cantor would then recite the names of the new officers in the synagogue on the first day of Passover during the "Hagbohah" ritual during the morning service.

If any of the newly elected officers should decline their office, then they must pay a fine: a Parnass, twenty guineas; a Gabbai, fifteen guineas; a trustee, seven guineas. A septuagenarian could decline an office because of age or ill health and was exempt from any penalties.¹¹⁷ When an officer declined, the one who received the next highest number of votes was elected to the office.¹¹⁸

If any official resigned his office because of some

conflict or difficulties, before the expiration of his term, then he must pay a fine: a Parnass, forty guineas; a Gabbai, thirty guineas, and a trustee, fourteen guineas.¹¹⁹

The new Parnassim had to occupy their special pews in the Synagogue on the first night of Passover and the Gabbai had to take his seat on their left. The officers were given special pews as a mark of honor, since the pews were assigned in the synagogue according to rank and honor.¹²⁰

A meeting of the council had to have at least a quorum of five members.¹²¹ If a Gabbai finished a term of service and retired from office and continued to pay six pounds taxes per annum, then he must be called to attend all the meetings and to give his opinions on matters, since he already had experience in communal affairs. The calling of meetings was very democratic and representative. There was no possibility of delaying action on any issue because any five householders who paid at least fourteen pounds in taxes could inform the council that they would like to have a meeting convened by signing a petition for such request.¹²² Although those who paid fourteen pounds or more were the ones who were privileged to attend the general meetings and had the controlling vote; however, when some matter affected the welfare of the entire community, and an extraordinary general meeting was held, even those who paid only five pounds were also called.

The officials made sure that all the members who were required to attend the meetings interested themselves in the affairs of the community. It was perhaps usual to be absent from these meetings and leave the burdens of the agenda to be

assumed by others. The fine for not attending a general meeting was one guinea; for not attending an extraordinary meeting, one crown. A septuagenarian could be penalized because of his old age. If anyone had to be absent himself from a meeting and did not want to incur a penalty, he would write a letter to the committee in charge and state that he could ^{not} attend, and give his reasons.¹²³

4. Finances

The accounts of the organization were audited once a year on the Sunday in closest proximity to Rosh Hodesh Iyyor. The report of the Gabbai was recorded in a special ledger provided for this purpose.¹²⁴

The synagogue's funds were sometimes augmented by donations and legacies. When there was a surplus of money left after all expenses had been covered, this remaining money would be invested to yield a profitable income. There was a special standing committee perhaps of some outstanding businessmen who advised as to how these surplus funds should be invested. The invested funds could not be appropriated, but were to remain as a trust fund. The interest yielded by this fund was to be used for synagogal purpose. The capital of this fund could be drawn only if a majority of the householders who paid fourteen pounds in taxes voted their approval.¹²⁵

5. Communal Employees

Peculiarly, no mention is made in these Takkanahs, of the appointment of a Rabbi or Ab Beth Din. In my characterization of these Takkanahs, I shall explain the reason involved in this matter.

The Sexton, Cantor, and Scribe were elected by all the members who paid five pounds in taxes or more and owed nothing to the synagogue. Since these officials were not so important and they had to satisfy all the members, it was perhaps deemed advisable to have all the members, even the poorer ones, have a voice in their selection.¹²⁶

The Cantor received a hundred pounds per annum and his assistant received twenty pounds. The Sexton received fifteen pounds per annum and his assistant received six guineas. The Scribe received ten pounds per annum. These officials also received mazot on Passover since the grinding of mazot was a communal project, and they also received coal as part of their salary.

The Sexton's salary was increased by the additional perquisites he would receive from time to time and the commissions he received for collecting the communal taxes. Occasionally, the Sexton was also the Assistant Cantor and thus he received an additional ten pounds for his work and the synagogue would save the five pounds which they ordinarily paid the Assistant Cantor.

It is very gratifying to see that the community was mindful enough to take care of the Cantor and Assistant Cantor's widow if they should unfortunately die. The Cantor's widow, as long as she did not remarry received thirty-six pounds per annum and the Assistant Cantor's wife, twenty pounds. Why they only provided for the Cantor's wife and not for the other employees' wives is not stated and it is

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also difficult to conjecture about this situation.

The community could not pay any of its officials any more than the amounts stipulated in these Takkanahs. However, in good business-like fashion, they could hire a man for a smaller salary.¹²⁸

6. Synagogue Ritual

When Hamburger severed his connections with the Great Synagogue and organized the Hambro Synagogue, he instituted, according to Adler, (p. 117) the Ashkenazic ritual which was used in Hamburg. The other synagogues used the Minhag Polen.

The time for services was an established matter and was not arbitrarily decided from time to time. The weekly morning service was held at seven o'clock from Purim, the fourteenth of Adar, which is about the middle of February until the second Monday after Succoth. For the remaining part of the year, from the second Monday after Succoth until Purim, that is, during the winter season, the weekly morning services were held at half past eight. On Sabbaths, the morning service was so arranged that they would begin with 37 min at eight o'clock from Passover until Succoth and at nine thirty during the remainder of the year, which was the winter season. The reason for the shift in hour during the summer months to an earlier hour is quite obvious. Because of the length of the morning service on the High Holidays, the service was commenced at six o'clock in the morning.

The afternoon service on weekdays was commenced at the same time as in other synagogues. Although no specific time

is given we can say that it was probably commenced in the later afternoon at an appropriate time so that both the afternoon prayer and the evening prayer, which, according to Jewish law cannot begin until the evening stars are visible, should be recited in succession. The afternoon service on Sabbath and holidays commenced at two o'clock and on the Eve of the High Holidays at one in the afternoon.¹²⁹

The services during the week-day were read by a lay-reader and the Cantor officiated only at that part of the service which was well attended. This procedure is followed even today in our orthodox synagogues. The first half of the service is usually read by a lay-reader and the other half by the Cantor.¹³⁰ The Cantor also chanted the Torah portion and recited the benedictions *qide u.* Before a layman could approach the reader's desk, he had to obtain the Parnass' or Gabbai's permission. If he failed to do so, he was penalized accordingly.¹³¹ The mourner or one who is observing the anniversary of a death could go to the reader's desk and recite a psalm after which a Kaddish is recited or the *hazman*.¹³² A Yahrzeit, because this is his only opportunity to be a reader, takes precedence over a mourner, and a householder over a non-householder. If there are two Yahrzeits of equal status, then the reader is¹³³ decided by lots.

When the Cantor officiated, he had to obtain the Parnass' or Gabbai's permission to be accompanied by a choir. This choir had to be paid from communal funds and could not be paid from charity funds. If a lay-reader wanted the accompaniment

of a choir, he first had to obtain permission and then he had to pay the choir from his own means. It seems that the choir was paid only when it sang and for each individual performance. Hence, the request for a choir by the Cantor had to receive special permission since it entailed an expense and the layman had to pay their salary himself if he desired their services and not out of communal funds.¹³⁴

A Cantor or preacher from a different community could not officiate unless they obtained permission from the entire council.¹³⁵

The pews in the synagogue were assigned to a particular member. There were special honorary pews for the communal officials, at the head of the synagogue. The pews were assigned according to rank and payment of taxes. This was in a sense discrimination, yet those who paid more money, felt that they should have a choicer pew. This has been continued even unto our day. Those who paid no taxes used the unassigned pews.¹³⁶

The continual bone of contention in the Jewish community was the aliyahs. These aliyahs were considered an honor which all were desirous of obtaining. In order to avoid conflict, most of these honors were sold or auctioned. It was not only a means of obtaining money, but it also avoided conflict and thus it became a necessary evil. Those aliyahs which were not usually auctioned were also distributed in an equitable manner which should have satisfied everyone. The names of all the householders were put into one ballot box and were drawn for the apportionment of the aliyahs until all the names were exhausted. Each member had the opportunity of being called to

the Torah at some particular time.¹³⁷ Anyone who was not a householder or unmarried or itinerant could not be called to the Torah.¹³⁸ One who did not pay at least five pounds per annum in taxes was not eligible for the Aliyah of Segan. They could purchase this honor and bestow it upon someone who was eligible.¹³⁹

On Monday and Thursday, on Sabbaths and on Intermediate Days the aliyahs were sold at auction. During the holidays, the aliyahs were not sold but were apportioned by the choice of lots as previously described. By this system, all members had the equal opportunity of obtaining an honor on some holiday.¹⁴⁰ This provision indicates the working of the selection of those aliyahs. Obviously, if an auction was held on the holidays, the bidding would have yielded a considerable income, more than on week-day aliyahs. Yet, they wanted at least to observe some decorum during the holidays and avoid the tumult of auctioning which desecrates many of our modern Orthodox synagogues. Moreover, they wanted to give the householders an opportunity to receive some outstanding honors because of their affiliations.

It was customary, in accord with good Jewish tradition, that when one had an aliyah, he would make a donation to some worthy cause. In this case, the same procedure was followed but with a peculiar arrangement. If a householder bought an aliyah on a Saturday, Holiday, or Intermediate Day, he was privileged to donate a sum which was the equivalent of the taxes he paid to the synagogue and he would not be required to remit the sum and his debt would be considered as paid. If

his donations exceeded the amount of taxes he paid, then he would have to remit the difference. However, if anyone recited a benediction for a sick person or one embarking on a journey, the donated amount had to be paid under any circumstance.¹⁴¹

The Cantor was the one who called an individual to the Torah and he would recite the benediction. He could not add the title of Morenu or Haber to anyone's name unless the Parnass or Gabbai gave their consent. This precaution was necessary so as not to abuse the privilege and honors of these titles.¹⁴² The Cantor could also not recite a benediction g'm'la unless he received permission from the Parnass or Gabbai. This was also necessary in order to limit the number of benedictions a man might desire, since sometimes they would carry this to the extreme and annoy the congregation unnecessarily.¹⁴³

The aliyahs on Simhat Torah were very burdensome and expensive and special provisions applied to these festivals. The Aliyah of Hatan Torah which ended the cycle of the reading of the Torah and Hatan Bereshit which commenced the new cycle had to be distributed in a non-partisan manner. The names of all the married householders who paid at least five pounds in taxes per annum were placed in an urn, and two names were drawn. Since both Aliyahs were honors, the one who was married for a longer number of years received the choicer of the two aliyahs, Hatan Torah. The selection of their names took place between Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur, and was announced on the first day of Succoth in the synagogue.

If the chosen individuals should refuse to accept the honor of these aliyahs, then they must pay six guineas to charity and other lots were drawn. If the second selectees also refused the honor then no new names were drawn. From the following rules, we can easily discern why this honor was refused and why lots had to be drawn, and why these had to be drawn so early and announced in the synagogue, a week before Simhat Torah.¹⁴⁴ The householders who were Hatan Torah and Bereshit had to donate at least one-half guinea each to the general charity, Bikkur Holim and for cemetery repairs. The Sabbath after Simhat Torah they were again called to the Torah and had to donate one-half crown to each of the three afore-mentioned charities. This money had to be paid in full and could not be discounted as part of the taxes. This was probably not the only expense attached to the honors, but there were other fees and gifts also. Thus we can see that, if possible, the householders tried their best to avoid the honor.¹⁴⁵

The Hatan Torah and Bereshit also had the honor of sitting on the same bench with the Parnassim on Simhat Torah. This was another incentive to induce the householders to accept the honor.¹⁴⁶

The Hakafot which were performed on Simhat Torah and Hoshannah Rabba were not sold but were apportioned by lots.¹⁴⁷

An attempt was made to keep order and decorum in the synagogue by penalizing any disturber. If anyone caused a tumult or had an argument in the synagogue during the services,

he was fined by the Parnassim and Gabbai in proportion to his offense.¹⁴⁸

All announcements which were to be made in the synagogue had to be approved by the Parnass or Gabbai and then recorded in a permanent record book. This was a measure to safeguard against any later dispute. Since an announcement was an official statement equal to law, it had to be recorded for future reference.¹⁴⁹

7. Marriage

The Sabbath before a wedding the groom would be called to the Torah and would be honored with the binding of the scroll *afk* after it had been read. On such occasions the Cantor would sing out melodiously the name of the groom as he was called to the Torah and would chant the prayer with his finest tunes.¹⁵⁰

The Rabbi or the Ab Beth Din usually performed the wedding. In their absence the Cantor would officiate.¹⁵¹ The Cantor had to receive the Parnass' permission and if he failed to obtain his permission then the first time he committed such offense he was fined three guineas, the second time, five guineas, and then the third time, he was removed from office.¹⁵² If there was any scandal or notoriety attached to the wedding, the Assistant Cantor would officiate.

The fees for the Rabbi or Cantor and the Scribe for writing the wedding contract were in proportion to the amount of the dowry:

less than 100	- - -	1/2 guinea
100-200	- - -	1 guinea
200-500	- - -	2 guineas

500 - 1000	- - -	4 guineas
1000 -	- - -	6 guineas.

The Scribe's fees for writing the Tannaim and Ketuba were as follows:

less than 100	- - -	1 crown
100 - 500	- - -	1/2 guinea
500 and up	- - -	1 guinea

If the Assistant Cantor officiated then he received only one-half of the regular fees, since he was not of such high rank as the Rabbi. However, if the Assistant Cantor officiated because the marriage smacked of scandal and notoriety, then the usual fees were doubled and the Cantor received the additional fee. Ordinarily, the Rabbi would have received a fee if there had been no scandal and since the party in question spoiled the opportunity for his perquisite, they were nevertheless forced to pay it.¹⁵³

When a man called upon an outside clergyman to perform a marriage, he would also have to pay the regular fees to the resident clergyman.¹⁵⁴ A man who was married in another community and returned to reside in London, had to pay a half of the fees he would ordinarily pay if he were married by the resident clergyman.¹⁵⁵

8. Charity

In a previous chapter we have described the inadequate aid rendered to the poor people. There were small insignificant charities with limited funds, which tried to aid the poor as much as possible. Their limited resources prevented larger operations and it was as a drop in a bucket. The Gabbai

distributed the alms to the paupers and he had to keep a record of all the expenditures to charity. He could not give more than one crown to an individual without the permission of the Parnass.¹⁵⁶ If a pauper received a relief ticket and he requested that his rations be increased, he had to receive the permission of the executive council.¹⁵⁷ We can see from these inadequate statements the serious lack of any system of help and relief for the poverty-stricken.

9. Hevra Kadisha

The Hevra Kadisha was a separate unit of the synagogue having its own particular laws and dues. Yet it was closely connected with the synagogue and even under the synagogue's control. The Hevra Kadisha could not perform any of its service for the deceased, until it received permission from the Parnass, certifying that there were no outstanding debts to the synagogue. If the committee of the Hevra failed to follow this procedure and buried an individual who was indebted to the synagogue, then they would have to pay the debt.¹⁵⁸

The only way that these Takkanahs could be amended or changed was to call a meeting of those householders who paid the sum of fourteen pounds in taxes and obtain a majority approval of the new measure.¹⁵⁹

Copies of these laws were printed and distributed to every householder so that he might be informed as to the rules by which he must abide. If a change was to be made, then the new law should be announced on three successive times in the synagogue when the Torah is read and these changes need not be printed, for it was assumed that everyone would be informed

by this method.¹⁶⁰

Chapter V

The Organization of the Hebra Kadisha of the Hambro Synagogue

1. Membership

Any Jew, whether he was a member of the Hambro Synagogue or not, could become a member of the Hebra Kadisha. Unmarried men who attained the age of twenty years, were also eligible for membership. A Cohen, although he could not serve or attend the burial rites of another member, which is in essence the main function of this society, was also admitted since his dues helped to increase the funds and he too would need¹⁶¹ the services of the society.

The entire presidium consisting of two Gabbaiim and three laymen, were to decide whether a candidate for admission to the society was desirable or not. Only a majority vote of this body was necessary either to accept or reject the¹⁶² candidate.

From the terse provisions of the following Takkanah one can gain a knowledge of existing conditions in relation to the Hebra Kadisha. Prior to the promulgation of a definite set of rules or constitution this organization functioned in a haphazard manner. At the writing of the constitution

in 1797 the laws were promulgated with the intention of obtaining the immediate membership of all the neighboring Jews. It seems that individuals would join the society only at an opportune moment, or when they were in need of the society's benefits. Aiming to eliminate such evils, they passed a law that if anyone became a member within six months after the constitution was in effect, ^{he} had to pay an initiation fee of a half guinea to the society and one-half crown to the Sexton. Some people who lived in the community did not want to join immediately, but wanted to wait so that they could save some money by not paying dues for the time they were not members. In order to eliminate any such attempts, it was decided that if anyone desired to become a member at some later date, he must pay back dues for the entire period he was not a member of the society. ¹⁶³ If a man did not want to be a member and then suddenly a death occurred in his family and he was forced to join in order to obtain the services and ground of the society, then he had to pay in addition to the required entry fees an additional assessment which the presidium would decide. This additional assessment could not be less than five guineas. If, however, the person failed to belong because he was poor, ¹⁶⁴ then he would be considered accordingly. All sakried employees of the community could become members without any initiation fees or payments.

The members were very reluctant at times to pay the fines which had been imposed upon them for their negligence

or other violations, and they would refuse to pay them and consequently they would be stricken from the membership. However, these individuals were aware that they would need the society's services and when they decided to reenter they would be heavily penalized for their stubbornness and non-conforming attitude. They would have to pay their fines, their arrears in back dues for the years that they did not belong and a guinea for reinitiation.¹⁶⁵ This same ruling applied to one who was suspended from the society because of non-payment of dues. These penalties made a man think twice before he would act in a rash manner.

2. Dues

Every member had to pay six shillings as annual dues. If he desired to be exempt from actual participation in the funeral arrangements of any member which was one of the duties of a member, then he was required to pay an additional fee.¹⁶⁶ A Cohen had to pay eight shillings dues because he could not, according to Jewish law participate¹⁶⁷ in any funeral.

No member was allowed to owe the society for more than one year's dues. If any member owed his annual dues then the presidium should send the Sexton to the defaulter and remind him of his debt. If the defaulter fails to pay his debt within three months, he should be stricken from the records.¹⁶⁸

3. Purpose and Function of Society

The society served a member not only in death but also in life. In keeping with Jewish tradition, when a member was

critically ill or in a dying condition, the society would send four members, who were chosen by lots, to stay and watch the patient during the night and to attend to his needs. They would serve in pairs, in six hour shifts, through the night. If any member who was chosen by lot refused to serve, then he was fined one shilling. The comparatively small fine leads one to believe that there were few who would not wish to observe this Mitzvah, for if the privilege of refusal was abused, the penalties would be much higher as in other cases.

One would be apt to think that the society would naturally discriminate and offer its services only to members; however, it is unusual and gratifying to know that even a non-member was served by the society. In the case of a non-member, they provided only two watchmen who would stay with the patient through the night (in six hour shifts). If the patient died they were required to stay with the corpse until the Gabbai came to arrange for the funeral. ¹⁶⁹

When a member died, the Gabbai was to provide the funds for the hiring of a hearse and two carriages. If the member belonged to a benevolent society in addition to this society, then the Gabbai need only provide for two carriages alone. The existence of a benevolent society is an organization about which little is known and has been heretofore unmentioned. In all probability, a society existed which worked on the principles of an insurance company, paying out a sum to a sick or deceased member. Apparently, if a member belonged to such society, he must have shouldered part of

the burden and the Hebra Kadisha did not feel obliged to give as much aid to such member as it did to one who had no other source of money.

When the wife of a member died she was provided with only two coaches and children under twenty were provided with one carriage.

A deceased pauper who did not belong to the society was also taken care of and was provided with a hearse and a carriage. If the pauper was under thirteen years of age, ¹⁷⁰ then only one carriage was provided.

4. Officers of the Society

The society as was remarked, was governed by a presidium ¹⁷¹ of two Gabbaiim and three laymen. The nomination of these offices was carried out in the following manner. The incumbent Gabbaiim would prepare a list of four candidates for the office of Gabbai and another list of six candidates from which three would be chosen to sit on the presidium.

The election of these officers was held on the day after the election for communal officers. The reason for holding these elections on the next day was because one who was a communal officer was not eligible for any office in this society. The members of the society would convene on this day and by a majority vote would elect the officers. If anyone of the officers failed to attend this meeting he was fined a half crown.

The officers-elect were informed of their office on the same day of election and were given twenty-four hours to

accept or decline the office. A Gabbai-elect who declined his office was fined two guineas and if any other officer-elect declined his new office, he was fined one guinea. Since the office of Gabbai-elect was much more burdensome, the fine was higher so as to discourage refusals. In case of refusal to accept an office, another officer should be chosen from amongst the defeated candidates. If the entire "ticket" declined their respective offices, they had to pay their fines and the incumbent officers retained their positions for the ensuing year. It is difficult to understand why no new election was held and why the burden of office was imposed on the incumbents.

In order to avoid burdening an individual too often with an office a rule was made that one could not be drafted to serve again in an official capacity until the expiration of four years from the time he last held office.

The Gabbaiim of the society were responsible for the proper care of the cemetery. They must also supervise the various services rendered by the society and see that they were performed in accordance with the rules and regulations of the society. The Gabbai had to keep an accurate record of those who were buried in the cemetery. If he failed in his duty he was fined one-half crown. ¹⁷² He was also obliged to keep the accounts of the society and the names of the members who gave contributions.

5. Meetings

The Gabbaiim and any three members had the power to call

a meeting. If there was any business of great importance and the Gabbaiim didn't want to shoulder the responsibility, then they could call a meeting of the entire presidium for a decision. Such procedure was not unusual, for if something went wrong, the Gabbaiim might be blamed for the damages and even be required to reimburse the treasury. The following Takkanah indicates how careful they were to avoid controversies and made sure that all critical opinions were attributed to those who had helped make the decision. When a significant matter was voted upon unanimously by the entire presidium, then they all had to affix their signatures to the measure, in order to show that it was approved unanimously. This was probably necessary in order that if anything came up later, the entire presidium could not be held responsible and nobody could shirk his responsibility.¹⁷³

All income and expenditures had to be recorded in a specific ledger by the Gabbaiim. The books would be audited on the Rosh Chodesh after election by a committee of seven men who would examine the accounts and affix their names to the report. Sometimes, the Gabbaiim would make an outlay from his private means and one month after the auditing, they would be reimbursed. If a member chosen for this committee refused to attend the meeting then he was fined one guinea. If the incumbent Gabbaiim absented themselves, then they were fined two guineas. Their absence made it more difficult to audit the books, for a difficult case may arise in which their aid was necessary. This was perhaps the reason for such heavy fines.¹⁷⁴

7. Employees

The society retained paid officials to serve the needs of the members and the society. The Sexton of the society was elected by a majority of the members and his salary was eight guineas per annum. Since his salary was very small, the Sexton received extra fees and gifts. He was given two guineas for shoes and every three years he was given 30 shillings, to buy himself an overcoat. The extra money for shoes and coat was necessary, because the salary he received was so small that he could not dress very well. Since the Sexton visited the homes of the members quite frequently, it was necessary that he be well dressed and present a good appearance. The Sexton received some perquisites in certain cases. The Sexton received one-half crown for officiating at a funeral. If the deceased was a pauper then the Gabbai gave him eighteen shillings. For a stillborn child, the Sexton received one-half crown, and he must bury the child himself. Failure to carry out his duty would result in a fine of a crown.

The Sexton had to visit sick members and render his report to the Gabbaiim. He was required to visit the sick person for three successive days to see if the patient's condition became worse or improved and whether the services of the Rabbi for death-bed confession were necessary in which case he called him. He also was to report on the members who watched the patient during the night, and see if they attended to their duties. When a member died, and had to

lifted off the bed onto the floor as required by Jewish
176 law, the Sexton had to perform this rite. The Sexton had
to call the members who were chosen to participate in
the burial rites. He also obtained the permission from the
Gabbai to bury the deceased. The Sexton had to inform the
members who were chosen to perform the religious rites of
Taharah at least three hours before the ceremony. He also
provided the carriages and called a minyan together. The
preparation for the funeral had to be finished at least a
half hour before the funeral was to be held. The Sexton
was fined one-half crown if he failed to comply with the
regulations and a whole crown if he neglected any of his
duties. If the carpenter failed to make a coffin in time
he was also fined.

These Takkanahs mention the existence of a woman Sexton,
who took care of the women when they died. The only thing
mentioned about such person is that if she failed to carry
out her duties, she was also fined. She was perhaps hired
by the society, since the entire family was cared for by the
society and there was no separate woman's organization.
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The Gabbai of the men's society would however, arrange the
funeral and send the report to the Gabbai of the women by
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the Sexton.

The society also hired a teacher or "Rebbi" who was
elected by the members and was paid three guineas per annum.
He would recite the confession of faith with a dying Jew
and would remain with the dying individual until he passed

away. He was required to follow every funeral to the cemetery and perform the necessary rites.¹⁷⁹

8. Cemetery Guards

The society also paid a watchman to keep watch at the cemetery. Before anyone could dig a grave in the cemetery, they had to present to him an order from the Gabbai. Another reason for having a watchman was to prevent the desecration of the cemetery. There was a practice to open graves at night and exhume the bodies and search for any valuables¹⁸⁰ that may have been buried.

The staff of guards consisted of five Jews and one non-Jew. The presence of the non-Jew was desirable because it was probably considered that his presence offered better protection in case a dangerous situation arose. Each guard received twelve and one-half pounds per annum and five pounds for coal and candles. These additional expenses were paid, because it was probably much more costly to warm the guardhouse at the cemetery and to keep lights always burning as a precautionary measure. These wages were paid from the treasury of the Hebra Kadisha and its Gabbaim were responsible for the management of the grounds and the hiring of the guards. Peculiarly, this Takkanah does not appear amongst the Takkanahs promulgated by the Hebra Kadisha, but in the Takkanahs of the Synagogue. This indicates that although there was some sort of separation and division of authority, yet the Hebra was really an adjunct of the Synagogue.

When a person died and the Gabbai was informed and if there were no financial obstacles, the Gabbai proceeded to choose the members who were required to participate in the rites. There was a ballot box in which all the names of the members were placed. Those members who were over sixty did not have their names placed in the box since they were¹⁸¹ not required to serve an account of their age. Upon the unfortunate occasion of a death, the names of the members who had to serve would be drawn from this box. These names were not replaced, but selections would be made whenever necessary until all the names in the box were exhausted. Thus every member would have the opportunity to be selected to serve at some time. Then, when the names were exhausted, they would replace all the names and begin all over again. The number of members who participated in these burial rites varied in number according to the age of the individual. If the deceased was under five years, then only two members would be chosen; from five to thirteen, three men; from thirteen to twenty, four men; and if the deceased were over forty years old, then six men would be chosen. If a member refused to serve on the committee, then he was fined one shilling. If he accepted to serve on the committee and then does not appear, he was fined one crown. This was a large fine, but it was reasonable since the man disrupted the entire procedure and he should be penalized accordingly. If a member accepted and came late or left too early, then he was¹⁸² also fined a shilling.

Any member who participated in the funeral rites of an individual without the permission of the Gabbai could be fined¹⁸³ or suspended from the society. This was very necessary, because it was the only means of controlling the members. The only way they could enforce their rules was to be strict and not allow a corpse to be buried if there were any liabilities involved. When a member died and the Gabbai had to approve the burial, he would first have to confer with the Parnassim and receive their consent also, and only then¹⁸⁴ could he issue a permit. If a man owed a debt to the society and it was established that he left some funds, the Gabbai would not draw the lots for the members to perform the burial rites until the debt was paid. If there were no funds and the heirs could not afford to clear up the debt,¹⁸⁵ then the society would provide the funds.

The Gabbai would confer with the family of the deceased and would arrange the time of the funeral. If the family preferred to change the usual procedure of the funeral ritual, because of some valid reason, the Gabbai would have to obtain the consent of the Parnassim to make the change. If the Gabbai made any changes, of his own accord, he was liable¹⁸⁶ to be fined five guineas.

The Sexton took care of all the funeral bills and would submit them for approval to the Gabbai before he approached the family. This was necessary because the Sexton would sometimes pad the bill and render a false account and make some extra money. If he did not submit it to the Gabbai to ob-

tain his approval and signatures, then he was fined a guinea and if the account was padded then he would also be fined a guinea.¹⁸⁷

9. Purchase of Graves by Non-Members

An occasion may have arisen whereby it was necessary to purchase a grave from the Burial Society. In such cases it was necessary to obtain the consent of the entire community and the purchase price could not be less than six guineas. The purchaser also had to abide by all the present and future Takkanahs relevant to the rules concerning the cemetery. It was made difficult for one to purchase a grave as a penalty for not belonging to the society. Sometimes, a man might have been refused membership in the society because he was an infamous character and hence when he died it was necessary to obtain the consent of the entire community to purchase a grave for him, for it was not considered desirable to have an infamous character buried amongst honest and hard-working people.¹⁸⁸

10. Erection of Tombstones

The society also obtained some extra funds for its purposes from the erection of tombstones. If a member wished to erect a tombstone on the grave of his parents, wife, or unmarried children, he was not required to pay a fee. Anyone who was not a member and desired to obtain permission to erect a tombstone had to pay one-half guinea for a single stone and a guinea for a double stone. If they couldn't pay

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this, then the Gabbai could reduce the fee. One who erected
a tombstone had to pay one-half crown to the Sexton and to
the watchman of the cemetery. They would be present at
the erection and see that the monument was set up in a
proper manner. If they were not paid this fee, then they
needn't be present. However, the watchman must see that the
Parnass gave his permission for the erection of the monument. 190

11. Change of Takkanahs

If a situation would arise for which the society had
no rule or it became necessary to change a Takkanah, then
the Gabbaiim should call a meeting of the presidium and
ten other laymen and should promulgate a new rule. This rule
rule should be approved by the Parnass and communal Gabbai.
The new Takkanah had to be announced in the synagogue in
order to acquaint the members with its contents. Failure to
attend such meeting was penalized by a one-half guinea fine. 191

Chapter Six

Organization of the Westminster Synagogue

The Western Synagogue, also known as the Westminster Synagogue had a checkered career and then after a long process of gradual growth, it became an important and imposing institution. Its early origins began in the home of Wolf Liepman in Westminster. As the Jewish population increased in London, they spread as far as Westminster, for even as late as 1773, retail trade in the heart of the city was restricted to freemen: hence the Jews were prohibited from trading there. Amongst the Jews who lived in this neighborhood was Wolf Liepman, a brother of the famous Jewish tax farmer, Baruch Leibov, who was killed in 1738, for converting a naval captain to Judaism. Wolf Liepman found it inconvenient to walk to the Synagogue at the other end of the city.¹⁹² In 1768, this private minyan developed as an informal group and in 1774, it assumed the form of a synagogue. The records of the earliest beginnings of the synagogue are scanty and one cannot gain much information from the minutes. There are records which were in the possession of a Mathias Levy, who also wrote a short essay on the history of the synagogue which goes as far back as 1767. According to these records, this society began its existence as early as 1761 and was really a Hebra Kadisha. The dues were six pence per

week and they rendered the usual services of a Hebra Kadisha. They would provide a continual watch at the bedside of a sick member and would make a minyan at the house of a mourner. As the congregation became more or less permanent, they decided to hire a Shochet licensed by the London Beth Din, and a butcher called Baker in Red Lion Court was to handle the meat. The Shochet was also the teacher of the group and he would hold a weekly lesson in Talmud. The Shochet received a salary of twenty pounds per annum of which twelve were paid by the butcher, and he also received gratuities of coal and money. In 1768 ~~Mr.~~ Nehemiah was appointed as Sexton at the annual salary of two pounds, twelve shillings, six pence. In 1768, the organization had thirty-two members and amongst them was a physician, R. Isaac.

During the years 1775-1794, the synagogue moved from house to house. At first it was in the home of Judah b. Isaac Levy who received eight pounds as annual rent; from 1776-1780, in the house of Mr. Munro at ten pounds annual rent; and in 1781, the synagogue finally moved to Denmark Court.

During this period, the synagogue acquired some new scrolls and furniture and began to take on the appearance of a real synagogue. The pews were sold to the members and the prices were dictated according to the ranking of these pews and there was an Esrat Nashim specially reserved for the members' wives which were also sold. In 1776, they even allowed themselves the luxury of having a Cantor from

Emden officiate at the services, for which he received five shillings.

In addition to the dues paid by the members, there were other taxes such as house tax, window tax, and the poor rates, and money paid for better pews. There were also offerings and bids for aliyahs which raised some funds. The total income of the synagogue was between forty-five and seventy-five pounds. The members also performed some charitable deeds in their own small way. They sent kosher meals to Jewish prisoners and would help out poor Jewish families.

In 1797, the congregation grew to such proportions that they finally could afford a lease and furnish a building. They leased a building in Denmark Court, which had two floors and three rooms. The building was remodeled at a cost of six hundred forty-five pounds, eleven shillings, four pence. The members donated some of the furnishings and a woman, Esther b. Jacob, donated the ark, reading desk, and the lamps.

On Friday, September 15, 1797, a week before Rosh Hashanah, the synagogue was consecrated. The Sexton received a new suit and great coat as a gift on this occasion. A doorkeeper was hired for the day and a canopy was borrowed from the Hambro Synagogue to escort the scrolls into the synagogue. A special dedicatory song was written and translated by David Levi. The scrolls were brought into the synagogue and placed in the ark; the afternoon service was read and an acrostic poem by Eliakim b. Abraham was read.

The bimah was circled seven times and a benediction was recited for the royal family. The service was concluded with the chanting of the one hundredth and fiftieth Psalm.

1. Membership

Any Jew living in the vicinity of the Western Synagogue could apply for membership in the Synagogue. Prior to 1799 the initiation fee was one guinea; after that date, one who desired to become a member had to pay two guineas. If a non-member married the daughter of a member, or if one of the sons of a member married and they desired to become a member, they had to pay only one-half guinea. Orphans who wished to maintain the membership held by their deceased fathers, also had to pay one-half guinea.¹⁹³ When a man moved out of the district of Westminster, but still desired to maintain his membership in the synagogue, he had to pay¹⁹⁴ one guinea.

2. Election of Communal Officers

The executive body which governed the synagogue affairs consisted of two Parnassim, two Gabbais, and five laymen. Another six laymen were added on to the governing body so that the entire council excluding the Parnassim should consist of thirteen people. There is no reason given in these Takkanahs why there had to be exactly thirteen people, but it seems that the idea of having thirteen people to decide on certain matters, occurred in other instances in these Takkanahs. The afore-mentioned body was called Kahal.¹⁹⁵

The election of the communal officers took place in the interim between Yom Kippur and Succoth.¹⁹⁶ The executive council would meet and choose thirteen members from the community who paid at least one guinea for their pews and did not owe more than a year's dues to the synagogue. These newly selected thirteen members together with the thirteen laymen of the executive council met and they in turn would choose six members of the community who paid a guinea for their pews and did not owe more than one year's dues. Then they would draw up a list containing the names of the retiring two Parnassim, two Gabbaiim, and the six newly-elected laymen. The twenty-six laymen about whom we have been speaking, would select two new Parnassim and two new Gabbaiim for the coming year from the list of the ten people which they had just prepared (the two retiring Parnassim, two Gabbaiim, and the six newly elected laymen). The newly selected communal officers would then proceed and select a group of ten members of their own choice from which the previous electoral body of twenty-six laymen who elected these officers would choose five people to serve on the executive body of the community. Then the newly elected council which consisted of two Parnassim, two Gabbaiim, and the five laymen would choose according to their own desires¹⁹⁷ another six laymen and this body would be called the Kahal. This procedure of election seems to be indeed a complicated affair; in fact, I have not yet encountered such intricate machinery for an election of a community council. As I have

previously mentioned, I do not know why the number thirteen appealed to the legislators of these Takkanahs. However, one can try to interpret why the procedure of electing the communal officers was done in such round-about ways. Immediately, one notices that the retiring Parnassim were excluded from the group of the thirteen laymen of the executive council who nominated and elected the new communal officers. In other words, the community council which consisted of the two Gabbaim, five laymen, and other group of six laymen making a total of thirteen laymen were considered the electoral body. The Parnassim were excluded from this affair. It seems reasonable to conjecture that the reason that the Parnassim were excluded was so that their dictatorial influences should not be felt during the elections, and that they should have no opinion in the election of the new officers. Now, in addition to the thirteen laymen of the community council another thirteen laymen were added making a total of twenty-six members who constituted the electorate. The reason perhaps for choosing an additional thirteen laymen from the community at large was so that the council would not have complete authority and power to elect the new communal officials. That means that the additional thirteen laymen who were elected from the community at large were not only intended to counteract the influence of the council, but were also chosen to represent the community. To us, it seems that this was a very poor method of representing the community since it was not representative of the

entire community, but at that time, it was perhaps sufficient. We also notice that the retiring Parnassim and Gabaiim were placed on the new ticket with an additional six members, so that the electoral body, if they so desired, could reelect the old officers. This amounted to actually drafting the retiring officers, who were thus automatically renominated and if elected had to serve again or pay a fine.¹⁹⁸ The selection of the eleven laymen to complement the four officers and complete the council was carried out in a fashion which reminds us of our cabinet system. The newly elected four officers, two Parnassim, and two Gabbaiim, would draw up a list of ten members from the community and would submit this to the electoral body of twenty-six laymen who would select five laymen from this list to be a part of the community council. In this fashion the communal officers could select people of their own liking but still had to submit to the electoral body in order to obtain their approval, so that the council could not become entirely a one-man affair. Then, the council, as much of it as had been elected, (two Parnassim, two Gabbaiim, and five laymen) now proceeded entirely on their own initiative and elected another six laymen and the council was complete. The reason that the officers nominated those with whom they desired to serve was so that the entire council should be a harmonious group who could get together and agree on an issue so that they could get their work done.¹⁹⁹

3. Refusal of Office

Sometimes an individual did not want to serve in an office and was elected again against his own will. In such cases, he would probably decline, but he would have to pay a fine. If an elected Parnass declined he had to pay a fine of three guineas; a Gabbai, two guineas; one of the five laymen, one guinea; one of the thirteen laymen, one-half guinea. The fines were graduated in amounts in proportion to ranks of office. If another one of the communal officers accepted the office upon being elected and then after a day or two decided to resign then he had to pay twice the fine enumerated above. This was to teach these people that they could not trifle with the community.²⁰⁰²⁰¹

When a member had served one term in office, or had paid a fine for declining, then he could not be elected for three years. However, if he wished to waive his exemption he could do so.²⁰²

4. Functions of Officers

The Gabbai, in addition to his duties, concerning charitable matters, had other synagogal duties. He had to keep a record of all the synagogal properties and he also was entrusted with the purchase of the essrogim.²⁰³

The second Gabbai was technically called "Pew Gabbai." He was the one who set a price upon the pews and would try to collect this money if possible every quarter-year, or at least at the end of the year.²⁰⁴

5. Meetings

The Parnassim or Gabbaiim could call a meeting whenever they desired. If the Parnass failed to come to a meeting, then he had to pay a fine of one-half guinea; the Gabbai, one crown; one of the five laymen, one-half crown; and one of the eighteen members, eighteen shillings. If one of the officers was sick and could not come, then he had to inform the council either by letter or through the Sexton.²⁰⁵ As in other instances, the people here too, could petition the Parnass to call a meeting to discuss any matter that they desired. If seven people sent a petition affixed with their signatures to the Parnass, then he was forced to call a meeting within a few days.²⁰⁶

All issues were to be decided by a majority vote and if the vote was equal then the Parnass would cast his vote to decide the issue.²⁰⁷

Anyone who left the meeting before the business was finished, was considered as if he was absent and had to pay the fine accordingly.²⁰⁸

6. Finances

Every three months the Parnassim, Gabbaiim, and the five laymen had to meet in the vestry room, and audit the accounts. They also had to appropriate thirty pounds to the Gabbai as a revolving fund for charitable purposes and to the Gabbai twenty pounds. If there was any surplus money, they would authorize three members to invest this money in appropriate stocks to yield an interest. If any of the Parnassim or Gabbaiim failed to come to this meeting then

they had to pay one-half guinea fine; the five laymen
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had to pay one crown.

At the end of every fiscal year which occurred on the first day after Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan, the communal accounts would be examined and the Parnassim would affix their signatures to them, if the accounts were correct. The entire balance sheet would then be recorded in the communal
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minute book (Pinkos).

7. Synagogal Procedure

No member was allowed to hold a private minyan in a home outside the synagogue, except in the house of a mourner, which was required by traditional law. If anyone violated this rule they were liable to loose their membership. This was a precaution which attempted to prevent any secession from the mother synagogue or the formation of mushroom
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synagogues.

Most of the pews in the synagogue were sold for a year and their value was according to the nearness of the altar. The "Pew Gabbai" would collect the money every three months or at the end of the year. The authority was vested in the Parnassim and Gabbaim to change one's pew even in the middle of the year. This provision was perhaps a very necessary one for sometimes two neighbors might be continual talkers during the services or they might suddenly become antagonistic to each other, so it was for the best that their seats could be changed according
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to the regulations.

No one was allowed to walk around or get up from his

seat during the service or change his seat. This was to prevent any disturbance and keep the decorum during the service. If anyone violated this regulation then he had to pay five shillings fine.²¹³

A servant who was dressed in his livery clothes was not allowed to circle the bimah during the Hakkofot nor could he be called up to the Torah. Such dress was not considered proper apparel for synagogue worship.²¹⁴

The Sexton was paid a very meagre salary and his clothing perhaps was not as clean as it should have been, or he might have worn a combination of rainbow colors. In order that the Sexton should present a fine appearance in the synagogue he was required to wear his special coat (mantel) which was black. He also wore this coat to funerals.²¹⁵

A youngster who was less than thirteen years was not allowed to circle the bimah during the Hakkofot with the Essrog and Lulav.²¹⁶

Children less than four years were not allowed to be brought to the synagogue, and if the parent did bring them he had to pay a fine of one-half guinea.²¹⁷

Any man or woman who stirred up a fight or argument in the synagogue had to pay five shillings fine. If he did not obey the Parnass to cease the argument, then the latter could have him thrown out of the synagogue. The next day this recalcitrant person should be called before the council which would fine him as they saw fit.²¹⁸

We can see from the preceding Takkanahs that strong attempts were made to eliminate many evils which occurred in the synagogue and which were very repugnant. They tried somehow to fine these evils out of existence.

It is of particular interest to study the importance of the following Takkanahs: If a man lived publicly with a non-Jewess, he was not allowed under any condition to be called to the Torah. If anyone intentionally bought an aliyah for him, then the purchaser had to pay a fine of one-half guinea. It seems unusual that a man who lived with a non-Jewess should be so nonchalantly accepted in the Jewish community, and not censored or ostracized. This shows that probably in the year 1799 this was not an uncommon occurrence and therefore had to be tolerated.²¹⁹

8. Reader of Services

The reading of services, as even today in the Orthodox Synagogue, was considered quite an honor and many people would like to perform this ritual. The only way to avoid any strife was not to allow anyone but the Cantor, Sexton, or those people who read the services during the ten days of Penitence to read the services during the year. However, any householder was allowed to read the h.3.14²²⁰

A householder possessed certain privileges in the synagogue which were not available to a non-householder. This was one of the incentives to make a man a householder in the community and to help share in the communal burdens.

Only a householder could read the services when he was a mourner. It was considered quite a privilege as it is today in the Orthodox Synagogue, and an honor for a mourner to be allowed to recite the prayers at the reading desk. This restriction against a non-householder was probably used in an attempt to make a man a householder in the community if he desired certain privileges. A non-householder could not have the Aliyah of Segan, nor could he honor another member by buying a mitzvah for him. However, he could buy an aliyah and honor a member with it.²²¹

9. Aliyahs

One of the great sources of income was the donations offered in the synagogue at the reading of the Torah. Here one could stand before the public eye and peacock-like have the Cantor call out his great benevolence. If a member donated at any one time the sum of five pounds which was considered quite a large sum, then they would recite for him a benediction for for the rest of his life, and when he died they would recite his name at every memorial service. This was quite an inducement for any individual to donate this sum for the benediction was a perpetuity.²²²

When a man is called to the Torah he had to request the Cantor to recite a benediction for the members of the council. For every benediction that one had recited, he had to donate something to the synagogue or to charity. Sometimes he would try to avoid having this benediction

recited so that it would not cost him any money. Therefore the Takkanah continues, even if the person who has the aliyah does not make this request for a benediction the Cantor or Sexton should make it of his own accord. This provision may also have been necessary in the case when the one who was called to the Torah was angry with the officers and would not want them to have a benediction at his expense.²²³

As we have previously stated, every benediction had to be accompanied with some kind of donation. Sometimes an individual would try to crowd in as many members of his family as possible, in one benediction so that he would not have to pay an additional sum for the benediction of each individual person. In order to prevent such evasion, the Takkanahs provided certain regulations for such instances. A man who was called to the Torah could have a benediction recited for the whole council, and his entire family, for the sum of six shillings and for an additional six shillings he could have a benediction recited for the families of three individuals. On Holidays and the Intermediate Sabbath, he could bless his entire family for one shilling; the entire council for another shilling, and six people for the third shilling; after that, he had to pay six shillings for every three people he wished to be blessed. The reason for the reduced rates during the holidays was perhaps because the expense involved in these aliyahs was quite heavy, and so the benedictions were offered at a reduced price.

On the High Holidays the required donations for a bene-

diction were quite high. For the first benediction recited for his family, he had to pay eighteen shillings; and for the second benediction recited for the council he had to pay another eighteen shillings; for the third sum of eighteen shillings, he could have a benediction recited for nine²²⁴ people.

One who was called to the Torah could not donate any arbitrary sum, for the Takkanahs specified the minimum sum which one had to donate when called to an aliyah. On the Sabbath one must donate at least six shillings; on the Sabbath of Intermediate Days, or on a Holiday, he had to donate three shillings three times which made a total of nine shillings. On the High Holidays, he had to make three²²⁵ benedictions which cost him three times eighteen shillings.

On certain occasions an individual would be considered an obligee פ"ח, that is, he must be called to the Torah for an aliyah. Usually these occasions were individual festivities, when some happy event occurred in the individual's life. When a householder was entitled to be called to the Torah because he was a mourner or a celebrant of some festivity, he had to inform the Sexton on the Thursday before the Sabbath on which he was an obligee. If he did not do so then he was not considered an obligee and hence might²²⁶ not receive an aliyah.

When a man was an obligee because his wife had a child or his son was getting married or he himself was a bridegroom, or he had a Yahrzeit, then he could not be called before the Torah until he settled his entire debt or at least

a part of the debt which he owed to charity.²²⁷

When a householder's son was to be Bar Mitzvah, the youngster had to be called to the Torah during the Sabbath morning services, and not during the Sabbath afternoon services. If this Takkanah was violated, the father would have to forfeit a fine. The reason that the father would try to avoid having his son called to the Torah during the morning service was because there was a greater expense²²⁸ involved in the morning service than in the afternoon.

If one of the householders gave his son or daughter in marriage or had a Bar Mitzvah, he had to accept the honor of Segan. This aliyah was usually sold but in this particular case the father paid eighteen shillings for the honor and it was reserved for him. In case there were two or more householders who were entitled to the honor of Segan then²²⁹ they would decide by lot as to who was to receive it.

The Aliyah of Segan was usually sold; however, if no one bought it, then the Parnass would be honored with it. When the Parnass was not in the synagogue the Gabbai²³⁰ would take his place.

If anyone bought the Aliyah of Segan, he couldn't honor someone else with it, but he himself must stand by the Torah. Only the Parnass could be the recipient of such²³¹ honor.

When a man bought an aliyah for Shebil or Maftir for an individual who owes a debt to the synagogue, then²³² he must give it to someone else who has paid his debts.

During the holidays not all aliyahs would be sold, but would be distributed to members who were chosen for this privilege by lots. On the first day of Succoth the Parnassim, Gabbaiim, and five laymen would meet and draw up a list of those who were to be called to the Torah. Usually, the Parnassim and Gabbaiim were called first because of the position which they held in the synagogue. Then the members of the congregation would be called up according to their status and rank.²³³

The Aliyah of Segan was not sold on the High Holidays, the Pilgrimage Festivals, the Intermediate Sabbath, the Sabbath of Repentance, the Sabbath of Bereshit and Hoshanah Rabbah. This honor was given to the Parnass. On the aforementioned festivals, the fifth and seventh aliyah and maftir²³⁴ were not sold. These aliyahs would be distributed by²³⁵ the Parnass to any member he desired.

On Simhat Torah there were only twelve aliyahs including Kohen, Levy, Hasan Torah, and Bereshit. The Takkanah particularly provides that no additions (Hosafot) could be made on this day in order not to burden the congregation, and they were allowed only to call one Kohen²³⁶ and one Levy. We can see here a definite attempt to modify and even modernize the service; elsewhere we shall see that even the circuits were abolished to some extent. Today in the Orthodox Synagogue, every male is called to the Torah on Simhat Torah, and one who has experienced these services realizes what a burden it is.²³⁷

We are now coming to the aliyahs which involved a great expense and for that reason perhaps refused by almost everyone chosen for these honors. It was quite difficult for the officers to find a member who would accept the Aliyahs of Hasan Bereshit and Hasan Torah. In order to be fair and not choose any member arbitrarily, lots would be cast. On the first day of Succoth, after the reading of the Torah, the Gabbaim and Parnassim would gather around the reader's desk and the Gabbai would draw two names from the ballot box containing the names of all the members of the congregation for these two aliyahs. The older of these two selectees would be the Hasan Torah, and the younger one, the Hasan Bereshit. The selectees were immediately informed after the drawing of the lots, and if they were not present in the synagogue, the Parnass would send the Sexton to the selectees' homes and inform them of the choice. If one of the selectees refused to accept the aliyah, then he had to pay a guinea fine and another would be chosen in his place by another drawing of lots. If there were two consecutive refusals, then the Parnassim themselves took the aliyahs.²³⁸ Since these aliyahs were very expensive the Parnassim usually were awarded the fines that were paid by the people who refused to accept the aliyah, so that the Parnassim would not have to donate their own money since these Aliyahs involved quite an expense.²³⁹ If the selectees accepted their aliyahs and later on refused them then they had to pay a double fine of two guineas, because

they treated the honor of the community lightly.²⁴⁰

The Hasan Torah and Bereshit participated in the services three times because of their particular position. On the Eve of Simhat Torah three scrolls were taken from the ark, one was held by the Cantor, the others by the Hasan Torah and Bereshit. When they were called to the Torah on the morning of Simhat Torah, they each had to donate a half-guinea for charity and one crown to the Sexton. They were again called to the Torah on the Sabbath of Bereshit and they had to donate a half-crown for charity, and a half-²⁴¹ crown to the Sexton.

10. Preacher and Cantor

Usually every synagogue had its share of itinerant preachers and rabbis who would come for the donations almost every week. The Takkanahs tried to obviate such occurrences by refusing to allow any itinerant rabbi or preacher to officiate unless he obtained permission from²⁴² the Parnassim or Gabbai.

11. Charity

From the very origin of the Westminster Congregation there were some means of charitable assistance but this aid was very meagre and quite unorganized. From the provisions in the Takkanahs it seems that even at this very late stage there still was not a systematic distribution of charity but merely hand-outs by the Gabbai. This was one of the causes of the poor social conditions which existed during the century.

The Gabbai was allowed to distribute a half guinea to

every pauper whom he thought was deserving of aid. If he thought a pauper needed more than that sum, he would have to obtain the approval of the Parnassim, and his fellow-Gabbai, and then they could give the pauper no more than one-half guinea. However, if the pauper needed an even larger sum, then they would almost have to obtain the approval of the five laymen of the council and the name of this pauper had to be inscribed in the records. The reason for all of this red tape seems quite understandable, for some pauper might become the protege of the Gabbai or Parnassim and they might give him unduly large sums. Perhaps, they might not be completely aware of his circumstances. Thus a check was provided not to allow unfair distribution of funds.²⁴³

12. Hebra Kadisha

The Westminster Synagogue, unlike the Hambro Synagogue did not have a separate Hebra Kadisha, but the synagogue membership as a whole functioned in the same manner. The Takkanahs do not mention any of the benefits which were paid out to a member in case of death or any other services which they rendered. If a death occurred in the family of a householder then the members of the synagogue would form a minyan in the home of the mourner for morning and evening services for the entire seven days of Shiva. These members were chosen in the usual fashion by lot. The Sexton would notify each member when he had to attend the minyan and if the Sexton failed in this duty he was fined. (It seems that these fines were not very serious

and usually were relinquished because the Takkanahs specifically stated that the Gabbai hasn't the power to release the Sexton from his fine without the permission of the Parnass. If a member, when he was chosen, failed to attend the minyan he would have to pay a fine of one shilling; if there was no male in the mourning family who could say the kaddish, and six shillings if there was a male who should recite the kaddish in the presence of the minyan. Apparently, it was a greater offence to miss the minyan when there was a kaddish because the negligent member deprived the mourners from fulfilling a very important rite, and might have caused extreme inconvenience to the mourners.
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The Jews in the district of Westminster were quite spread out in the entire neighborhood and sometimes it would be quite a task for a member to attend the minyan. If the mourners lived farther than St. Martins' Lane, Drury Lane, or Long Acre, which was quite a distance outside of the Jewish neighborhood, then the Gabbai would hire six people to attend the minyan and the other four were comprised of members chosen by lot. The reason these people were hired was naturally because it would inconvenience the members to walk such a distance, and would take much of their valuable time. On the other hand, at least four members were required to attend the minyans to pay their respects
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as well as to represent the congregation.

Chapter Seven

Resume

The Takkanahs of the London community which were enacted during different intervals of the growth of the community reveal the vicissitudes of development which Anglo-Jewry underwent during this period. Essentially, the basis and prototype of these laws was the communal organization of the Continental community from which most of the Ashkenazim emigrated. In our particular case the external environment exerted its influence upon the formation of the Jewish community and tinged the communal organization with a particularly distinctive hue.²⁴⁶ The Sephardic community which was already existing at the time that the Ashkenazim began to organize themselves, also impinged itself upon the growing community and some of the forms of their Ascamoth²⁴⁷ are unmistakeably recognizable in the Ashkenazic Takkanahs. The Takkanahs as we have presented them in their chronological order reveal a continual development, and as they reach the end of a century they become more specific and detailed which makes them a bit complicated. It seems that these Takkanahs were formulated not only according to the forms which were standard in all communities, but they were legislated also on the basis of their experiences and experiments in the communal organization.

Membership in the Anglo-Jewish community²⁴⁸ was open

to all Jews of good character who were willing to pay the various taxes and assessments levied upon them, to rent a pew in the synagogue and to subscribe to all of the Takkanahs which the particular synagogue enacted. Practically speaking, membership was based on the financial abilities of the individuals. If a man had no money it was very difficult for him to become a householder in the community and even the man who could afford to pay a small sum had very few²⁴⁹ privileges, if this sum was less than a certain minimum. This minimum varied from congregation to congregation. For example, in the Great Synagogue, one had to pay an initiation fee of ten guineas whereas in the Hambro Synagogue the fee was twenty guineas. It is of interest to notice that the Western Synagogue in contrast to the two synagogues which we have just mentioned required only an initiation fee of two guineas in order to become a householder. This perhaps would be a clue in revealing the economic status of the Jews in the various parts of the city. This does not mean that if a man was a pauper and could not belong to the synagogue that he would be left to his own devices. For every Jew was entitled to the services rendered by the Synagogue and by the Hebra Kadisha if his inability to pay the necessary fees were established.

The privileges of householdership were usually conferred upon the children of a member when they married and they could become householders upon the payment of a very small fee. Even when a daughter married a non-householder who didn't want to become a member, she could retain her privileges.

Before a man would be accepted into the community he would have to prove to the satisfaction of the council that he was of blameless character and that he was willing to abide by their rules. The council was the body which decided whether this person was acceptable to them. They could accept or reject any member according to their opinion and desire.

We have already mentioned in our introduction that failure to be a householder in the London community only meant that a man was not entitled to receive the services rendered by the synagogue. However, he could not be prohibited from continuing his business and living in the city. It is quite understandable that in the case of the Continental communities, even though a man left the community to live elsewhere that he still might want to maintain his membership in his former community. This meant that he could always return to the former community and reestablish himself. Peculiarly, in the London Takkanahs we find a similar situation. A man might want to continue his membership in the community even though he lived in another country. Individuals who lived outside of London could also become members in the London community. This points out that even though the Anglo-Jewish community was not a highly restricted community, yet individual Jews desired to keep their membership because of the religious services which the synagogues rendered and indeed even at this late period the Jews had not learned to disregard their religion.

The leading figure and ruling power in the community

was the Parnass. In some instances, there were two Parnassim, who shared the burdens of leadership. They would alternate in this office and each one would serve for six months and during this time he would be known as Parnass President. The Parnass in the English community was not by reason of the Takkanahs a virtual dictator, for his powers were limited and circumscribed. The Parnass' powers were limited by delegating certain powers to other peoples. The appointment of officials was by election. The distribution of alms greater than the usual amount given to paupers had to be passed upon by the council. The householders could even call a meeting if they wished. These were all attempts to limit his powers so that he could not favor his cronies. However, in spite of these limitations imposed on the powers of his office, I am inclined to believe that he could surreptitiously evade these Takkanahs. He was usually a wealthy man who had the fear and reverence of the community and could probably sway the opinion of the council. It seems reasonable to conjecture that the Parnass would keep them well in hand and would carry out his will. Whether these Takkanahs actually held the Parnass in check or not can only be judged from the actual happenings.

The next ranking official in the community was the Collector. His duties were mainly to supervise the collection of debts owed to the community for various reasons. The actual collection was done by the Sexton. He also paid out the salaries to the employees and took care of all the general expenditures. The Collector had to be a man of wealth be-

cause sometimes he would have to lay out monies from his private means and the community would later reimburse him.

There were usually two Gabbaim; one who supervised the distribution of alms to the poor, and the other who apportioned the pews. The former also took care of the property of the synagogue and even that of the separate synagogues where there was no separate Hebra Kadisha. The "Pew Gabbai" took care of the renting of the pews and the collecting of fees.

The council was made up of the afore-mentioned officers in addition to seven laymen who were called Elders. ^{זקנים} זקני הקהל. In the case of the Western Synagogue we have a situation where there are eleven men represented on the board.

These officers were usually nominated by the outgoing council who would draw up a list of the eligible candidates. These candidates had to have certain qualifications and especially financial status. In the case of the Hambro Synagogue only a householder who paid ten pounds in taxes per annum could be a Parnass. The rank of office that a man was eligible for was proportional to the amount of taxes which he paid.

The holding of office was not always considered a very desirable task and many times an electee would decline office. Anyone who declined an office after being elected was penalized with a fine because he refused to aid in carrying the burden of the community. Usually the next highest candidate received the office.

The term of office was for one year and one was eligible

for reelection if he desired. However, a man could refuse to accept an office, if he already served once during a period of three years and he could not be penalized. In some cases the retiring officers automatically became members of the seven Elders of the council. This was a good plan since these men were experienced in the administration of communal affairs and their advice was desirable.

The officers were given a place of honor in the synagogue and were supposed to be respected by the entire community. If any man insulted or committed an effrontery against the Parnass he would be fined.

The Collector as we have already stated was in charge of the finances. However, the final and ultimate authority in all financial matters was in the hands of the council. In the Great Synagogue the council had the power to spend as high as a hundred pounds without the approval of the entire community.

The books of the Gabbai and the Collector and all the financial transactions of the community were audited very carefully annually. In case of the Gabbai his books might be audited sometimes every three months. The report of this accounting would usually be included in the Pinkes. In the Western Synagogue an auditing of the books was held every three months.

Although we have commented upon the poverty of the Ashkenazic community it seems that sometimes the synagogue would have excess funds. These funds were usually obtained from large donations or legacies. There is a specific

Takkanah which states that all excess and surplus monies were to be invested in good profit yielding stocks and were to be administered by a committee of three men.

Meetings were as a whole not regular events and were called at convenience. The Takkanahs of the Great Synagogue state that in order to insure proper governing of the community a meeting could be called every month. Usually only the council met and the rest of the community who were eligible to vote were called whenever necessary. In the case of the Great Synagogue those who were eligible to vote on any matter were called vestry members and were called upon quite often. These were individuals who were entitled to vote on communal issues either because they had served in an official capacity or because they contributed certain amounts in taxes. In order to have a vote one had to pay at least five pounds in taxes. However, when issues which affected the welfare of the entire community at large were discussed, even those who paid a small amount in taxes, were invited to vote.

The community employed a Rabbi, Cantor, and Sexton. In the larger synagogue they would also have an Assistant Cantor and an Assistant Sexton. The Sexton was usually very poorly paid, and he would receive gifts from the community in the form of a cloak, coal, and matzos and commissions from the money that he collected. The Rabbi, in addition to his salary would receive various fees whenever he officiated. In the Hambro Synagogue they even paid a pension to the Cantor's widow which seems to be a very unusual occurrence.

We have already discussed the relief and the charity situation in the Second chapter. We described the inadequate and poor system for the distribution of charity. These facts are revealed and substantiated in the Takkanahs, for we find very few statements in regard to the distribution of charity. The Gabbai could usually give any pauper who came for alms a standard sum which was set by the council. If an individual pauper was in need of more money then the matter would have to be decided upon by the council. We do not find any mention of "abfertigungsgeld" amongst the Ashkenazim. However, we can infer that the Sephardim did have such
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charity.

In the Continental type of Jewish community we usually find that a doctor was attached to the synagogue to render his services for sick members. Our Takkanahs do not mention this fact, but we have another source which refers to a doctor, Schönberg who was a physician of the Great
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Synagogue.

In later years, particularly in the Great Synagogue we read that the community had a project by which it lent money to responsible Jews to help tide them over or to establish them in business. This type of charity was probably copied from these Sephardim who had such system in practice for a number of years.

One of the services which the community rendered to the Jew was to provide him in death with the things necessary for a Jewish burial. They provided a grave and even paid some of the expenses of the funeral. They would see that

a minyan should be held in the house of the mourner and the Gabbai would provide members to make up this minyan. Peculiarly, the only instance where we have a complete detailed picture of the workings of the Hebra Kadisha is in the case of the Hambro Synagogue. This synagogue had a separate Hebra with an autonomous organization; however, in the Takkanahs of the other synagogues we only have a casual mention of these services and it is probable that the Hebra was an integral part of the synagogue. It seems reasonable to conjecture that all the synagogues rendered the same services to their members. However, I can only describe the services rendered by the Hambro Synagogue through their Hebra Kadisha and assume that the others did likewise. The Gabbai of the Hebra Kadisha would arrange the entire funeral and would provide the necessary things. The Society would also provide coaches for transporting the mourners to the cemetery.

The synagogue was one of the more important institutions and concern of the community. The ritual used in the synagogue was the Ashkenazic ritual the "Minhag Polen." In the Great Synagogue before the tenure of Rabbi Lobel, they used the Hamburg ritual and during his term of office they used the "Minhag Polen."

The community tried very hard to preserve the unity of the synagogue. They would not allow any private minyanim to be held upon the penalty of a heavy fine. Only a sick person or a mourner could hold services with a minyan in his home. However, one was allowed to assemble a minyan

in his home for evening prayers. These restrictions were necessary for two reasons. It might encourage a group to secede from the synagogue and then again if worshippers were to stay away from the synagogue it would decrease the attendance and would deprive the synagogue of donations that these people might make.

One of the chief complaints made against the community was that the service was too long and noisy. Many attempts were made to remedy these defects. For example, the services on Simhat Torah were shortened, and instead of calling the entire congregation to the Torah, only fourteen members were called, thus saving time. Children under a certain age could not be brought to the synagogue. Fights or noisiness were heavily penalized. Other innovations were made in attempts to achieve a decorous service.

The synagogue was a good source for fund raising. Every aliyah had to be accompanied by a contribution. If a man gave a large contribution, his name would be perpetually remembered in the synagogue during the appropriate services.

The aliyahs would usually be auctioned off to the highest bidder. However, on holidays they would be apportioned among the members by lots. This apportionment was a continual bone of contention, because of favoritism exercised in choosing the member. The choosing of members by lots eradicated this evil and apparently everyone was happy.

A man who had a Yahrzeit or a Bar Mitzvah or any happy occasion was an obligee. The father of a Bar Mitzvah

was usually given the Aliyah of Segan which meant that he could distribute the aliyahs to his friends and relatives.

The Aliyah of Hasan Torah and Hasan Bereshit caused a great deal of trouble. The ones who were given these aliyahs had to spend quite a bit of money and those who were chosen usually declined the honor. In order to be fair, the individuals who were to receive these two aliyahs were chosen by lots and if they declined they were fined accordingly.

A very interesting statement, which in my opinion is very revealing, is the provision in the Westminster Takkana that a man who married a non-Jewess can rent a pew. This shows a very liberal attitude and perhaps the synagogue officers did not want to estrange such a Jew when he came to worship with his people.

Generally speaking, the description given in this chapter tallies very closely with the Orthodox Synagogue as it exists today in America. I do not believe that this parallelism exists because the American community took over the forms of the English community, but because both of these communities grew up in a similar environment, with similar conditions and therefore, took on the same appearance.

Thus we have described the early founding of the post-restoration Anglo-Jewish community as the Ashkenazim became the majority group. The work that was done during this century was the foundation for the growth and development of the Jewish community in the nineteenth century. Indeed the nineteenth century grew, upon this foundation, to such

dimensions that it compensated for earlier deficiencies and failures.

This community evolved out of the old Continental system of Jewish self-government and represented a new type of Jewish community. Life had completely changed for the Jew of the eighteenth century. It seems that today we have not, in a sense, advanced very much beyond the type of community pictured for us in this chapter. In fact, we have lost the religious compulsion which bound the Jew of the eighteenth century to his synagogue and to his faith. Today, this lack of spiritual compulsion has created a dejudalized Jew who is known to us as the unaffiliated Jew who has no relationship with his synagogue and even sometimes with his faith. Perhaps we are again witnessing a period of transition which is moving towards the creation of a new type of community.

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Appendix

In addition to the larger synagogues which we have already mentioned in the third chapter, there also sprung up in the course of time several smaller congregations in the form of small minyanim. These congregations probably came into being as small study groups who would assemble every evening or every Sabbath to study the portion of the law. After the hour of study they would stay to recite their prayers and thus a Hebra and ultimately a congregation would be formed. However, it was very expensive to own a private cemetery and so the members of these private congregations would belong to the larger synagogues and would retain their membership in the larger synagogues for this specific purpose.

The Beth Hamidrash, "Shaare Zion" was a congregation of the afore-mentioned type. It was headed by a scholar, Moses Ben Judah of Amstelslav in Russia, who had fled from Poland during the pogroms. When he came to London, a group of his friends or "Landsleit" who were members of the Hambro Synagogue organized this congregation in order to support him. The Great Synagogue looked askance at this synagogue and were very hostile towards it. We learn this from his book "E ben Hashobam" (Onyx Stone) which was printed in 1772 by Moses ben Gershom, the first Jewish printer.

The Rosemary Lane Synagogue grew out of a small Hebra, called the Mahaziki Torah, which was founded in 1748.

Rabbi Tobias Goodman was their first preacher and he was the first one in the country to deliver sermons in English. He also translated Bedaḥsiḥ Behinot Olam into English. This synagogue seems to have had some relationship with the Western Synagogue, for the records of this synagogue mention the name of Tobias Goodman.

The synagogue was located in the heart of the section which was a center for the second-hand clothes merchants. Since many Jews seized upon this trade, and moved to this neighborhood, they built the synagogue in Rosemary Lane.

The Sunyard Synagogue in 1792, was founded as a Polish minyan and was under aegis of the New Synagogue. For some time it was under the leadership of a Mr. Philips and was known as Philips's Shool.

In 1873, a new synagogue was built in Little Scarborough Street and Rabbi Aaron Hyman, the well known scholar was the rabbi. At a later date it merged with the "Kolisher Shool"

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The Hambro Synagogue

NOTES

1. See incident of Reb Aberle and Hamburger, p. 50
2. Graetz, Vol. IV, p. 457
3. Picciotto, p. 108 ff.
4. See p. 33
5. Lunt, p. 622
6. Robinson, p. 597
7. Hyamson, p. 108
8. See p. 49
9. See p. 70
10. See p. 64 ff.
11. Picciotto, p. 100
12. See Introduction, p. 4
13. See p. 34 f. and next note
14. Picciotto, p. 107, Jewish Marriages
15. Hyamson, p. 214
16. Adler, p. 136
- 16.b. Roth Hebrew Press in London, Kiryat Sefer, Vol. XIV, 1937
17. Margoliouth, Vol. II, p. 117
18. See pp. 47, 49
19. See p. 49
20. Roth in his article on the "Hebrew Press in London"
has a question mark next to the title of this book and
is not sure about the place of its publication.
However, it was undoubtedly printed in Amsterdam
and not in London because of the reasons given.
21. Hyamson, p. 168

22. Although there is no direct reference to this system one may infer from the incident which describes how a group of criminals were apprehended by the leaders of the Jewish community when they asked the community to give them money so that they could hastily leave the country. See p. 56

22.b Hyamson, p. 183

23. Lucien Wolf, p. 193

24. See J. H. S. Vol. III, p. 104

Even at this early period the community already supported five teachers.

25. Urin Tumin p. 5

25.b Defense of Uri Phoebus against the accusation of the misuse of the Takkanah of Rabbenu Tam. Ibid, p. 14

26. See Chapter VI, p. 114

27. Hyamson, p. 237

28. Adler, p. 153

Adler reproduces to some extent the reports about this case.

29. Psalms, 29:7

30. Lucien Wolf, p. 190

31. Ibid, p. 190 f

32. Adler, 159

33. Ibid. These reports make very interesting reading.

34. The Takkanahs illustrate this point. See p. 66

35. See p. 241 ff

36. See Margoliouth, Vol. 2 p. 137

He gives a very complete list of the program of this institution during its early days. It really began to function after the turn of the eighteenth century. The data that Margoliouth gives seems to be a good description of the institution. Ultimately, it grew and became one of the finest institutions of English Jewry during the nineteenth century.

37. See p. 53

38. The following numbers represent the notation of the Takkanah as they are listed in the Takkanah book of the Great Synagogue. (See number in the bibliography.) The first number represents the page and the second, is the number of the Takkanah. This system of notation was necessary because sometimes two Takkanahs may occur on the same page and sometimes one Takkanah is spread over a number of pages. This system makes it easier to locate the data.

22b 23 - The reason that a member usually held his citizenship rights in one community even though he moved away to another country was so as to insure himself that in case he had to return to the original community from which he left, he would be permitted to do so. This is particularly true in the Continental communities where membership was a high privilege and entry into a community was quite difficult. Therefore, one would always retain membership in his old community so that he could always return. Although this was not true in a London community for entry in this body

was not difficult and the privileges were not many. Still this was probably a common occurrence. I believe that the main reason for this Takkanah was, that since many Jews travelled throughout the country as hawkers they would still retain their citizenship in London. I think that this Takkanah was especially aimed at these cases.

39 G.S. 19 - 22

40 G.S. 22b23

41. G.S. 43 b 49

42. G.S. Usually the Parnassim divided their duties into six months each, during which time one would tend to the major duties of office. This Parnass was called the Parnass President which was the custom followed amongst the Sephardim also.

See Gaster, p.

43 G.S. The technical term for these men is שק"ד' הציבור

44. G.S. 3-3 This was usually at the head of the synagogue.

45. 14-15

46. G.S. 12 b - 12

47. G.S. 4 - 4

48. G.S. 8 - 6

49. G.S. 4 b - 5

50. G.S. 8 b-7

51. G.S. 2 b - 2

52. G.S. 12b - 12

53. G.S. 6 - 5; 4- 4; 6 - 7; 12b-12

54. G.S. 8 - 7

55. G.S. 17 b - 19

- 56. G.S. 18 - 20
- 57. G.S. 18b - 21
- 58. G.S. 5b - 5
- 59. G.S. 8 - 6
- 60. G.S. 11-10
- 61. G.S. 11b - 10
- 62. G.S. 11 - 9

The reasons that he would have them sign their names to this list was so that when these members were fined for not attending the meetings they could not refute the accusation or deny the charge, or perhaps if an important piece of legislation was decided they would know who was present and would know who was responsible for the Takkanahs.

- 63. G.S. 12 - 11
- 64. G.S. 13 b - 13
- 65. G.S. 13b - 14
- 66. G.S. 40 b -44
- 67. G.S. 31 a-33
- 68. G.S. 32 b - 34
- 69. G.S. 34 b - 36
- 70. G.S. 50-63
- 71. 50 b - 65
- 72. G.S. 50 b - 64

72 b. The Cantor had to begin the service from its very opening. However, on a holiday when the service was a bit longer and when the Cantor would show his vocalistic abilities, they allowed the Sexton to officiate at

the comparatively unimportant part of the service and the Cantor would continue with the second half of the morning service (Shaharit) and Musaf service.

73. G.S. 35 b - 36

74. G.S. 35 b - 37

75. G.S. 39 - 43

76. G.S. 4 a - 3

77. G.S. 30 - 30

78. G.S. 15 b - 18

79. G.S. 47 b - 46

We must remember that one could be a member of the synagogue and rent a pew and yet not have a Hazakah in the community and vice versa.

80. G.S. 37 - 40

81. G.S. 40 b - 44

82. G.S. 46 - 52

83. G.S. 47 b - 57

84. G.S. 26 - 27

85. G.S. 15- 17

86. G.S. 27 b - 28

87. G.S. 29 b - 29

Margoliouth, Vol.IIIp.236 says that Segan was an Aliyah where the recipient held the pointer and pointed to the words in the Torah as the reader read them. This is an erroneous conception, for Segan refers to the one who decided who should be called to the Torah.

- 88. G.S. 30 b - 31
- 89. G.S. 39 - 42
- 90. G.S. 26 - 26
- 91. G.S. 41 - 45
- 92. G.S. 41 b - 46
- 93. G.S. 43 - 48
- 94. G.S. 42 - 47
- 95. See p. 34 f.
- 96. G.S. 48 b - 58
- 97. G.S. 48 b - 59
- 98. 49b- 60
- 99. The Shema Yisrael Singer Prayer Book, p. 444
- 100. G.S. 23 b - 24
- 101. G.S. 24 b - 25
- 102. G.S. 51 - 67
- 103. G.S. 44 - 50

This indicates a different condition than that which previously existed in the Jewish community. Whereas previously, the Jews tried very much to avoid the civil courts we find that in the London community cases were allowed to appear before the civil tribunals and only if the parties were willing to submit to the rabbi's jurisdiction could they bring their case before him. This indicates the extent of change that took place during this time and the assimilation of the outside culture, and adjustment to their environment.

- 104. G.S. 52 - 68

105. H.S. See p. 46 ff.

The Takkanahs of the Hambro Synagogue are notated in the following notes only according to the number of the Takkanah and not the page. This procedure makes it easier for the reader to find the data.

106. H.S. 29

107. H.S. 4

108. H.S. 3

109. H.S. 40

110. H.S. 42

111. H.S. 1

112. H.S. 5

113. H.S. 3

114. H.S. 1, 35

115. H.S. 10

116. H.S. 8

117/ H.S. 8

118. H.S. 11

119. H.S. 12

120. H.S. 11

121. H.S. 10

122. H.S. 33

123. H.S. 32

124. H.S. 13

125. H.S. 53

126. H.S. 49

127. H.S. 48 The reason that the Cantor's widow was given a pension was because when he took his position he usually gave the community monetary security to insure the community that he would stay with them.

The Sephardim, however, pensioned also their rabbis
and their widows.

128. HS. 48

129. H.S. 26

130. H.S. 21, 22

131. H.S. 21

132. Psalm 20

133. H.S. 21, 25

134. H.S. 22

135. H.S. 24

136. H.S. 6

137. H.S. 15

138. H.S. 18, 19

139. H.S. 18

140. H.S. 17

141. H.S. 2

142. H.S. 51

143. H.S. 51

144. H.S. 14

145. H.S. 16

146. H.S. 16

147. H.S. 20

148. H.S. 23

149. H.S. 50

150. H.S. 41

151. H.S. 43

152. H.S. 44

153. H.S. 43

154 H.S. 46

155. H.S. 45

156. H.S. 54

157. H.S. 55

158. H.S. 36

159. H.S. 52

160. H.S. 56

161. HHK. 1

The Takkanahs of the Hebra Kadisha are notated in these notes only according to the number of the Takkanah and not the page.

162. HHK. 9

163. HHK. 20

164. HHK. 19

165. HHK. 21

166. HHK. See note 3

167. HHK. 2

168. HHK. 29

169. HHK. 12

170. HHK. 15

171. HHK. 6

172. HHK. 18

173. HHK. 28

174. HHK. 7

175. HHK. 16

176. HHK. See note, p. 139

HHK. 12. The civil health law required that if someone died suddenly he must not be removed from the bed before 24 hours.

177. HHK. 11
178. HHK. 17
179. HHK. 10
180. HHK. 14
181. HHK. 32
182. HHK. 13
183. HHK. 24
184. HHK. 14
185. HHK. 30
186. HHK. 14
187. HHK. 25
188. HHK. 38
189. HHK. 22
190. HHK. 23
191. HHK. 26
192. Roth: R.W.S. p.
193. The following notes are preceded by the abbreviation
W.S. which signifies Western Synagogue.
W.S. 1.
194. W.S. 2 See note 38
195. W.S. 25
- This term did not refer to the entire community but
 specifically to this executive council.
196. The three day interval.
197. W.S. 26
198. W.S. 26
199. W.S. 26
-

200. W.S. 27

201. W.S. 28

202. W.S. 30

203. W.S. 33

204. W.S. 34 See note 87

205. W.S. 37

206. W.S. 46

207. W.S. 38

This procedure is very similar to the parliamentary procedure of today.

208. W.S. 29

209. W.S. 35

210. W.S. 36

211. W.S. 42

See appendix for the Small Synagogue which existed side by side with the Great Synagogue.

212. W.S. 34

213. W.S. 40

214. W.S. 41

215. W.S. 39

216. W.S. 41

217. W.S. 48

218. W.S. 43

219. W.S. 49

220. W.S. 47

221. W.S. 5

222. W.S. 45

223. W.S. 14

This procedure has been carried down into our modern

Orthodox Synagogues.

224. W.S. 17
225. W.S. 16 Eighteen means life in Hebrew.
226. W.S. 9
227. W.S. 8
228. W.S. 15
229. W.S. 7
230. W.S. 11
231. W.S. 6
232. W.S. 10
233. W.S. 19
234. W.S. 12
235. W.S. 13
236. W.S. 20
237. W.S. 20
238. W.S. 22
239. W.S. 22
240. W.S. 24
241. W.S. 23
242. W.S. 44
243. W.S. 32
244. W.S. 3
245. W.S. 4
246. I draw this conclusion from numerous other Takkanahs
247. When the Ashkenazic community developed and found itself
they began to establish organizations modeled after
the Sephardic ones.

248. See p. 177

A Jew who married a non-Jewess might not be admitted as a member into the community but he was not ostracized.

249. It was not enough that a man paid taxes to the community but his taxes had to be a certain minimum amount before he could give his opinion as a voter.

250. See note 22

251. The Sephardim had a physician attached to the synagogue to serve the poor people. He was called the "Charity Doctor." Gaster, p. 21

252. Perhaps at this date such occurrences were quite frequent and they learned from experience not to penalize or ostracize such members. This also shows a tolerant attitude towards any Jew, who disregarded some of the Jewish laws but still wanted to be part of the Jewish people.

253. J.H.S., Vol. III, Miscellanies, p. 1.