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ANTECEDENTS AND BEGINNINGS
OF THE REFORM MOVEMENT IN AMERICAN JUDIASM.

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the title of Rabbi and degree of Master of Hebrew Letters.
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To my grandparents
Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Spero

and

Mrs. Rebecca Kaufman

who planted and nurtured my love for Judaism

this thesis is affectionately
dedicated.

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PREFACE

AT the very outset of this thesis, it became apparent that a study of the reform movement in American Judaism could not be an introspective work. Judaism does not exist in a vacuum. The pressure of world events effect it perceptibly. Furthermore, the Judaism of the last one hundred years is by no means divorced from the larger body of Jewish history which preceeded it for so many centuries. A comprehensive examination of the subject under discussion demanded a broader perspective than that through which it has usually been viewed. For that reason, a shorter period has been covered than originally contemplated but the stone has been placed in its proper setting and it is hoped that it will show to better effect, therefore.

Mention should be made of the diction employed in the text of this dissertation. It is the fond hope of this writer that this preliminary investigation may be the beginning of a completed history of American reform Judaism. For that reason an effort has been made to employ a lighter style of writing than the careful, precise form expected in a thesis.

I should like to extend my thanks to Dr. Jacob R. Marcus whose suggestions helped me avoid ~~the~~ many blind alleys and steer a straighter course in my research. I should like to express my special gratitude to Shulamith Reigrod for her tremendous help in readying this manuscript and to Helen Weber and Erna Dösendruck for their kind assistance in typing several chapters on such short notice.

Jay Kaufman

CHAPTER 1.

REEXAMINING JUDAISM

"Make you a new heart and a new spirit for why
will ye die, Oh House of Israel?"

--Ezekiel 18:31

It is inevitable when one carefully examines the fabric of Jewish history, that he comes to discern an intricate array of design quite different from the pattern he had envisaged from a distance. Moreover, the casual observer scans Israel's lengthy chronicle from the far-sighted perspective of his own times and, as to one who looks through the wrong end of his binoculars, the scene is dim and distant, so indistinct as to allow for myriad and fanciful explanations of what has been viewed. The student, who follows the strands that make up Jewish history, as they weave through the larger patchwork of world history, perceives, from his proximity to the scene, the chameleon-like adjustment Judaism makes to its environment, shading its hue akin to that of its milieu, yet maintaining through a spectrum of diversity its own distinctive tone; bright, colorful, undiluted, ever gaining and giving lustre throughout the centuries.

Separated, the strands are a wondrous cloak, a Judaism, which like the garments of Israel's desert wanderings, never wears out and is never outgrown. No other philosophy of

life has ever been exposed to so diverse an array of civilizations; and, Judaism, because of its adaptability, has been able not only to keep alive but to continue as a dynamic force in the life of the Jew regardless of the language he spoke or the year in which he lived. For Judaism is a cloak and not an armor. It is soft and pliant; it can be mended and emended, made to fit, so that it is not out of fashion in any century or clime. It is ever tractable and will never remain constant for an extended period, nor will a definitive, final state ever be achieved.

When oppression isolates the Jew, the form of his faith remains fixed but as soon as he returns to the company of his fellowmen, he remodels his Judaism as befits his conscience and his newly-approached circumjacent. When reaction dims the insight and vision of Israel's leaders and they insist upon the preservation of a bygone style of Judaism, there is a tendency for individuals to throw off the cloak completely, for no living, vital creature can bear the presence of a dead organism.

Such was the tragedy of the Emancipation period when tradition-alists sought to preserve the outmoded ghetto pattern of Judaism and hundreds flocked to the Cross to cut asunder the burdensome folds of their father's faith which was impeding their progress, stifling their very breath in the fresh,

new world. The German reformers and their American off-spring fashioned a new form of the ancestral heritage, perhaps too rapidly, lopping off too much in their haste to ready it for the crisis at hand, yet providing an acceptable faith which served momentarily, to stem the flow. Now, at our leisure, we are more carefully and judiciously fitting our reform Judaism, bringing back some aspects unwisely discarded in our haste, re-evaluating the whole as the influence of a new era shapes our thinking.

This is not to imply that modern Jews have learned the lesson these past centuries have demonstrated. The repetitious moral of the Biblical book of Judges emphasizes the fact history must repeat itself because man never learns the lesson history teaches. The early American reformers, who championed the adaptability of Judaism, who refused to consider a "reformed" Judaism, have forgotten their own didactics and now quote their statements from an outmoded era to prevent the present evolution of American reform. They call to life the inanimate words of another day to battle a Zionism which has budded in this era and whose exigencies must be evaluated by modern day deliberation.

Change itself is not the summum bonum of Judaism nor is it always desired. Many sects have arisen which provided racial digressions that were never adopted and the sects

themselves died in a few generations. Each of these contended it was advocating a vital reform essential to the contemporary needs of Judaism. History has disproven their contention but we do not have to await the dilatory decision of history, as did the disciples of the prophets, to ascertain the validity of our proposals. There are certain basic essentials which remain immutable, certain principles which constitute the very woof about which our faith is inextricably woven. Delete part of this core and you no longer have Judaism: build around this entirety and you have an eternal faith.

What are the component parts of this core which Judaism has kept intact and which in turn has given Judaism everlasting life? Around a single, incorporeal Deity, Whose perfection is the goal of Jewish emulation, there is wound a faith which is not a formal creed or pattern of salvation reserved for Jews only but one wherein conduct is the criterion of piety and wherein every ceremonial act and festivity is, not an end in itself, but a means

of elevating man to a loftier, nobler end, a step toward a closer approximation of God and just as salvation is not reserved for Jews alone, so the ethical precepts of Judaism are universal and eternal, acceptable to all men; able to bear the severest test of time, encouraging non-sectarian as well as Jewish charities; fostering pandemic sympathies and absolute standards of social and economic liberalism. Judaism, this basic core, contains no dogmas which violate reason or outrage common sense and allows for no asceticism to stifle the congenital joie de vivre which fills every human breast. It pulsates through every work-day hour and is not reserved only for the Sabbath or holiday observances. Unlike its daughter faiths, it is not concerned with other-worldliness to the disregard of this life but focuses upon the present day and is most concerned with it.

Into every avenue of human existence, the home and school, the shop and country lane it moves, showing, as has been mentioned above, a continual development, a constant ebb and flow; never dormant, the scene of incessant, intellectual wrest-

ling, reflecting the evanescent spirit of the age. Lastly, and most uniquely, it is organic and not mechanical for it depends not on synods and councils or ecclesiastical discipline. The congregation is a community wherein the majority conducts and regulates its affairs, electing its own rabbi whose role is that of a teacher and spokesman, who is to influence but not dictate. There is no outward bond, the strength of its unity comes from within, from the universal consciousness and conscience of the Jew.

The sects, that arose intermittantly, played their turbulent scene and then slowly retired to the wings, each violated an aspect of this core; ignored or mutilated part of this kernel and without the entirety were unable to last and passed from the scene.

The oldest of the major sects, the Samaritans, first appeared as a vocal force in 537 B.C.E. when they viciously plagued the exiles returning from the Babylonian captivity.¹ They had remained in Palestine during the captivity maintaining a strict adherence to the minutia of the Hexateuch, allowing for no development, rejecting any religious expansion, and feeling that theirs was the purest form of Judaism, demanding that the returnees follow their leadership in matters religious and civil. When spurned, they adopted a "dog-in-the-manger" attitude and worked every possible harm against their home-coming, co-religionists. Removed from Jewish fellowship and rejecting Jewish theological advance they soon became a moribund, isolated community. They had not retained the core essential to a living Judaism, they promulgated a motionless faith which stagnated in the brackish thinking of a bygone day. Today, a handful, some one hundred and fifty souls, remain alive still clinging to sacrificial ceremonies proposed in Leviticus, remaining upon their ancestral home, Mt. Gerizim, which they insist is the

sacerdotal mount;² serving as a living proof to the hypothesis that all of the essentials of the basic core of Judaism must be maintained if Judaism is to continue.

In the period of Jewish history following the death of Alexander, a debased form of Greek culture captured the imagination of a sect of Hellenistic Jews.³ It must be said, in all fairness, that the pursuit of physical, mental and moral excellence which was the essence of Greek virtue in its period of glory bore little resemblance to the perverted excesses of this Hellenist sect. Even in classic Greek philosophy there is an unjust and undemocratic partiality for the powerful and wealthy classes but the vicious class-divisions and abject abuse of slavery instanced in this cult rendered the Hellenists doubly objectionable to democratic Judaism with its emphasis on equality and respect for the individual. In addition, the Hellenists carried the Greek exaltation of the human body to a degenerate and immoral exaggeration, with an exclusive devotion to the

physical development, neglecting the mind and soul. The basic Jewish emphasis of righteousness and chastity was submerged beneath the pagan worship of sensual delights, and eventually, the actual worship of pagan dieties.⁴

The Sadducees were the priestly descendants of the Aaronic family of Zadok, who appeared on the scene during approximately the same period as the Hellenists, extending their priestly responsibilities until they had assumed absolute and tyrannical control over all matters of faith and ceremony.⁵ The general populace eventually severed its social relationship with this priestly clique as a protest to their exclusive authority. They, too, as had the Samaritans before them, clung to the literal letter of the Torah, reserving for themselves the exclusive privilege of judging any manner of dispute, particularly those challenging their hegemony. Thus, by negating the democratic imperative and attempting to stifle the natural flow of Judaism, they had failed to keep

the core intact and were brushed aside in the inevitable development of Israel.

Another ill-fated sect were the Essenes⁶ whose pious and mystic excesses led to asceticism and a unhealthy concentration on other worldliness. Eventually, they separated themselves physically, as they had done ideologically, from Judaism and because of the extent of their digression, produced another form of religious thought. It was this sect, which, subsequently produced John the Baptist, and which served as the forerunner of Christianity.⁷

The most vigorous of the sects, advocating a return to the outmoded rigidity of the Pentateuch, were the Karaites.⁸ In 8th century Babylon, the very seat of Talmudic development, they opposed what they called "Rabbinism" and declared only the Bible binding. Under the leadership of their headstrong and vindictive leader, Anan ben David, they abolished the century-old prayer form and substituted Biblical passages as vehicles of devotion. They stripped away all of the post-Biblical growth in Judaism and introduced increasingly ascetic

amplifications of the Scriptural dicta. Furthermore, they abused one of the basic tenets of Jewish growth; they allowed any and every student to interpret the Bible as he saw fit, ignoring the Jewish practice of abiding by the decision of the majority. In their intense zeal they drifted away from Judaism, first ideologically and then severed all relations, removing themselves completely from the stream of Jewish life.⁹

The last of the major schismatics were the Chassidim.¹⁰ Extending the natural mystical leanings of the Jew, they lost themselves in occult dreams and searchings, making magic respectable in their midst and well-nigh deifying their rabbis assigning to these "Zaddikim" the ability to produce miracles. Arising as it did in a period of black oppression, Chassidism provided an inner world of light and peace in fantastic flights of the imagination but the overemphasis of the supernatural and the elevation of individual men to the status of semi-deities resulted in a debased form of Judaism. Overladen with superstition, seeking succor in the Zohar rather than the Bible, seeking aid from

amulets rather than God, Chassidism deviated, too far from the basis of classical Judaism^(*)).

The few major sects that have arisen throughout Jewish history have shown in the repeated pattern of their existence, that change itself is by no means the secret of Israel's eternity nor the desideratum of its development. Change within Judaism must be wound around its indispensable core, then it may or may not become an integral part of our faith, depending on whether the innovation reflects the mood of the times and better adapts Judaism to contemporaneous living. Without the essential core as the very foundation of any innovation in Judaism, it is inevitably doomed to death.

What, then, of the reform within Judaism during these many centuries which has built itself around the above-mentioned essentials? Our present example of reform here in America is by no means the first such large-scale innovation. Quite to the contrary, in every instance wherein Judaism has had civil and religious freedom a similar reform has resulted, reflecting the influence and often the trends of the surrounding environment. There are three major parallels to American

reform which undoubtedly would have been duplicated innumerable had the civil and religious status of the Jew allowed.

The Jews of Alexandria had been extended the selfsame generous privileges by the first Ptolmey¹² as had Alexander before him, they had declined the opportunity to return to Palestine with Ezra and as a consequence of both, remained to develop an autonomous, assimilated (the word will be used in the sociological and not in the religious sense throughout the paper) community. Their diligence and native skill in the handicrafts and commerce soon won prestige and wealth for them and they accepted their role as citizens with grace and bearing. They built a glorious temple, perhaps the first extra-Palestinian sanctuary to be erected since the three and half tribes set up an altar on the far side of the Jordan.¹³ Its magnificence became legendary and it is referred reverently even by the sages of the Talmud¹⁴ who declared "He who has not seen it has not seen the glory of Israel," thus refuting the doctrine of "galus-pessimism", indicating that a normal life can be had "outside the land."

This Temple of Onais never sought to rival or dispute the preeminence of the sanctuary in Jerusalem and Egyptian Jews sent their tithes for the Palestinian poor, their donations to the temple, their representatives to the festivals and yet under their ethnarch and and later their own Sanhedrin enjoyed autonomy in both civil and religious affairs. It would seem that a device to improve the decorum in the huge temple was also introduced, for a signal was arranged so cloth might be waved at the proper moment instructing the whole congregation that the moment for an audible "Amen" had come; the distance of some of the rear pews from the podium made united and decorous responses difficult.¹⁵

The mission ideal, so precious to modern day reform Jews, was clearly articulated by their Alexandrian predecessors. Feeling that the treasures of Israel should not be hoarded but shared by all mankind, they insisted that "the children of Israel shall mark out the path of light to all mortals, for they are interpreters of God, exalted by Him and bearing great joy for all mankind."¹⁶ It was in pursuance of this ideal that the first translation of the Bible, the famed Septuagint, was created making its wonderous lore available

to the Jew who had lost his facility with Hebrew and for the non-Jew as well. Even before the fusing genius of Philo served to reconcile Judaism with the current Platonic philosophy, and certainly after that period, the missionary zeal of the Alexandrian Jewish community was eminently successful, far more so than ours today. Conversions to Judaism throughout the area influenced by Greek culture were frequent and multiple indicating the success of the efforts and enterprise of that ancient reform community.¹⁷ So complete was this first reform attempt that it has been characterized as the matrix which produced "a Philo whose 'Life of Moses' and 'On the Decalogue' form the first catachism-I had almost said Shulchan Aruch-of reform Judaism."¹⁸

In Babylon, where the rivers had carried away the tears of the mourners for Zion, another self-sufficient Jewish community grew up with only the crooked-finger span of the Fertile Crescent separating it from Palestine. Unwilling to return to their ancestral home, the Jews enjoyed religious freedom and extensive civil rights and, as Jews have always done under such circumstances, shaped their mores and folkways to accord with

the demands and drives of their milieu. In this invigorating air of freedom, the Jew breathed deeply, bursting the encumbering bonds of outmoded tradition and spoke out to Jews throughout the Diaspora, using their own experience as a criterion. "Wherever thou goest follow the customs of the place" they advised and following the suggestion of the great Mar Samuel they declared that for Jews in any land, "the law of the land is the law that is binding."¹⁹ They advocated comfortable citizenship not a rebellious insistence upon foreign and outmoded legislation.²⁰

Aramaic became the lingua franca of academic endeavor as well as social and business conversations, supplementing and often replacing the "loshon hakodesh" in the "base hatefilla" and "base hamidrash" as well as in the "base hakenesses". The liturgy was extended and modified with contemporary poems and prayers, Piyyutim and "shirim", which, while authentically Jewish in mood and content, were imitations and adaptations of the secular songs and sacred litanies of the non-Jewish sects in Babylon.²¹ Today, these innovations

of yester-year are accepted as essential but protests are offered when similar modern parallels are introduced.

In Babylon, not only were many reforms instituted but the very hegemony of Palestine as the undisputed home of Jewish thought and scholarship was challenged. Babylonian scholars felt that they had surpassed those of the parent academies and formulated their own basic doctrines as are reflected in the lines of the great Babylonian Talmud. This mighty tome reflects the reforming and liberal spirit of its authors. Minority and contrary opinions, instead of being deleted, are included in juxtaposition to the majority or accepted views. So carefully is each shade of opinion considered that it has become "an enormous theatre in which thousands and thousands of voices from at least five centuries, speak in confusion."²² Here, in this weighty and revered voice of Judaism, we hear overtones of perpetual reform, as the varying decisions of its authors are displayed for all generations to probe and decipher, selecting for their day the decisions that are most apropos, just as did Taanaim and Saboraim in days gone by.

The Judasim of the community of Babylon was a constantly evolving development, adapting and adjusting its life around the basic core of the ancestral faith in accord with the mood and temper of that ancient day. Today those once contested reforms are considered part of the sacred essence of Judaism, just as the vital and authentic reforms of this era shall be regarded in centuries hence.

Another example, and perhaps that running most parallel our own, is the spark struck between a friendly environment and Jewish living in the fabulous "Golden Age" under Arab suzerainty during the Middle Ages.²² Here again the vernacular became the vehicle for Jewish prayer and productivity. The Bible found its way into translation and became available to the Jewish "amay aretz" and Arab intellectuals and theologians. The science of Hebrew grammar reached a new height because the surrounding Arabic discipline was precise and prompted detailed and exacting examination of all of Jewish lore. Sparkling gems of poetry and philosophy were mined from the Jewish soul and polished by Arabic

speculation. The legendary figures of medieval Jewish scholarship were nurtured on this soil rendered ~~so~~ rich by the fertile flow of contemporary Arabic thinking into the black loam of Jewish genius. We wonder in hopeful anticipation if the mating of Western civilization and Jewish intellect might not produce another similarly fruitful offspring. The expanding mind of the Arabic Jew was not bound by rusted bands of outmoded customs, "Israel takes precedence over Torah, not Torah over Israel" he insisted.²³

In addition to the reshaping of Judaism that was prompted by the influence of those communities where the spirit of reform was sufficiently sustained to become recognized, there was a continual evolution within Judaism from Biblical days through the Talmudic, Gaonic and oppressive ghetto years. Within the Bible itself we can follow the wholesome adjustment early Judaism made to the congenital holiness of the first born,²⁴ eventually allowing a substitute²⁵ to be made rather than send every eldest son into a service for which he may have been ill-suited and unhappy, finally, with the acquired wisdom of experience, the specially trained

Levitic family took over the sacred responsibilities.²⁶
A sharper, more revolutionary deviation from the custom of the Biblical period, occurred when the Deuteronomic reformation cut through the layers of priestly traditionalism. This early reform movement maintained that the pyramid of priestly mysteries and sacerdotal ceremonies, which had piled one layer upon another, had become burdensome and rendered any access to the underlying spirit of Judaism restricted only to a select few, those well-versed in the intricate minutia of ceremonial life. Was not the Torah the "heritage of the whole congregation of Israel?"²⁷ Was not all of Israel to be "a kingdom of priests and holy people?"²⁸
By plumbing the depths of the spirit, removing the encrusted accretion of centuries, the Deuteronomic Reformation was able to bring back to light the original intent and sparkle of ancient Mosaism, providing a much need "reformulation and adoptation to new views of an older legislation."²⁹

In the person of the sage and gentle Hillel, Geiger sees the first in an endless line of individual reformers.³⁰ His seven rules by which the Bible was to

be expounded also were to be applied to those new cases in which the Oral law was to be used as a basis for a systematic and liberal development of Biblical exposition. The famed Prosbul³¹ was a radical departure abolishing a Biblical law which had become impractical and which worked a grave hardship on the poorer element of the population.³²

The Talmud itself is like a restless, shifting sea whose boiling, tempestuous surf rises once high and then low as the tide of time hurls its waves across the shore of Jewish life. As has been mentioned before, within its depths age-old precepts and new-spun suggestions float side by side, reflecting the conflicting pressure of adjustment and stability which seethes below the surface. Because it is the central sea, and because Judaism has, since its canonization, lived about its shores and been nourished by the Talmud appears to be a fixed, immobile body, whose every ripple has meaning and import. But too many of its statutes such as the "profligate son", the "faithless wife", "the infected house," "never have or never will be enforced."³³

This sentence is incomplete

Within its pages we can follow many developments indicating that instead of opposing reform it is the champion of adjustment. Such is the reshaping of the Bible, reflecting the falling standards of general education which the Talmud carefully reports; first, the transliteration of the Holy Book into the common script,³⁴ followed by the division into verses, chapters and books and finally even altered and emended when recited aloud, "out of respect for the public."³⁵

Individuals like Joshua b Hannanya were vigorously opposed, and expressed themselves plainly as such, to forcing unwarranted and unwanted customs upon their fellow Jews, even if tradition so dictated.³⁶ Joshua went so far as to declare that human reason should dictate policy even if a "heavenly voice" was heard in contradiction.³⁷ Mar Samuel introduced changes as basic as a calendar revision and went on to abolish tithes and innumerable fast days whose meaning and importance had long-since dissolved.³⁸ The Torah was not a final product, its promulgations were "like wheat

that was to be ground into flour, like flax to spun into cloth"³⁹ providing the basic ingredients which the men of each age were to refine into the spiritual food and covering they needed for inspiration and internal warmth.

From the lips of the great Rambam, servant and savant of rationality, iconoclast and zealot, comes one of the classical statements of Jewish reform. "Why should their (the Talmudists) gezeroth be more binding than the statutes of the Torah which every Beth Din may invalidate? Should it even necessitate the abrogation of a positive, or the affirmation commandment, we must conform to the requirements of the time. Even as a physician is in duty bound, sometimes to amputate a hand or leg to save the rest of the body, so should the Beth Din sometimes teach to disregard certain rites, that the rest may remain; as the ancient sages expressed themselves, 'Let one Sabbath be broken, that many Sabbaths be kept,'⁴⁰

Nor was Rambam the only one of the great rabbis who understood the value of authentic change and necessary contradictory stands. In the introduction to his "Battles of the Lord", Rabbi Levi ben Gershom of France censures

those who "avoid whatever is based upon investigation and philosophical postulates and is not transmitted from others. Should our research lead us to contradict a statement in the Torah, we would not, because of the Torah, falter to tell the truth. The Torah is not a code which enjoins us to believe what is not so; its main object is to direct us, as much as possible, on the path that leads to truth."⁴⁰ *Reference 37*

There are scores of similar instances in Judaism where men and customs have indicated that reform Judaism is more a phenomenon then phenomenal, the normal tendency rather than an exceptional modern heresy.

Chapter II

Leaks in the Ghetto Wall

"'Let this be written for the generations to come' applies to the present generation which are in imminent danger of death. 'And a people shall be created, praise the Lord' applies to the present generation because the Holy One, blessed be He, will at some time create them afresh."

--Vayikra Raabban 30:3

Because of the length and breadth of Jewish history, there is the temptation to consider it as an isolated entity, paying little heed to the surrounding non-Jewish world. A picture of Jewish history can be thus obtained but in order to appreciate the third dimension, to get a vivid, realistic view--just as we must consider the role of the sea when describing the journey of the ship -- we must investigate the Gentile environment and watch the cross-currents of general moods and movements.

The influence of the non-Jewish world is not always ephemeral. Scholars maintain that the Deuteronomic reformation was largely induced by the reaction to Babylonian influence. The reaction to the Babylonian-Assyrian threat toward world peace and the constant challenge these military

titans offered in their incessant strivings toward world conquest and world empire, prompted the integral and lasting doctrine of a universal God, who uses such powers as his lash. From this reaction stems the idea of one God, fathering all of mankind, thus reassuring the world brotherhood in their fear and foreboding(41). From the Babylonian exile also came a refined concept of pure monotheism transmitted through the exiled prophets of Israel (42) becoming forever a basis of Judaism.

The influence of Persian and Greek thought which surrounded and impelled Jewish life for so many centuries had its salutary and lasting effect. From this contact, Judaism absorbed and acclimated to its theology the doctrine of the future life which wrought important permanent changes not only in the psycho-emotional areas of Jewish thought and sentiment but in daily life, in the ritual and ceremonial customs of the creed. From this source came a broader concept of God with an accompanying broadening of the image of divine justice, atonement and retribution in the Jewish mind (43).

From the Moslem world the loose, shapeless mass of Jewish thought, bulky and all-inclusive, received the bracing formative discipline of Arabic philosophy and logistics. Not only was this mass distilled by the rational atmosphere, it was also sweetened by its proximity to Arabic literature and produced its own lovely essence of Jewish poetry and prose (44).

It is wiser, then, to examine American reform, not as a lone, lost, indigineous "sport" but to consider the flux and reflux of the human tide that bore and shaped it. First, we must examine the European scene that gave the original impetus to modern reform in Judaism and secondly, we must turn our attention to the American milieu which provided the matrix in which the movement was shaped.

An ideology does not spring full-blown from the mind of a single man, nor in a single age. Modern reform Judaism was not born in that brief period between the end of the ghetto compulsion and the Hamburg temple (45). Nor was it developed in one country alone, as has so often been suggested(46). The tendencies toward modern reform

and actual breaks from rigid orthodoxy injunctions long foreran the German movement and occurred simultaneously, though less intensively, in other countries in preceeding centuries. The ship was not in drydock, as many would have us believe, though it must be admitted the ghetto walls served a breakwater which quieted and partially negated most of the turbulence of the outer world. Some of the ebb and flow of world thought slipped through, however, and made its motion felt.

It must always be remembered that in many instances, especially Western Europe, the communities of Prague, Frankfurt on Main, Rome, for example, the Jews were in daily contact with non-Jewish neighbors in spite of the residential and occupational restrictions (47). Nor were these contacts without effect. We find numerous conversions to Christianity among men of ability who won enviable positions in the Gentile world. It would be naive to suppose these conversions were not somewhat impelled by tempting offers of potential well-being but regardless to what extent sincerity prompted them, they were obvious proof of contacts the ghetto Jew had with the Christian world.

Bernard Cephier became Luther's advisor and eventually was made professor of Hebrew at Wittenberg (48); Immanuel Tremellius became a Dominican friar and a close friend of Calvin's (49); Marco Perez was converted to the Reformed Church in Antwerp but evidently was a man of means for he had 30,000 copies of Calvin's "Institutio" printed for distribution at his own expense (50). Whether he sought an entree into more lucrative fields or not we do not know.

7 Lucas Helle joined the Moravian brethren (51); Johannes Levita Isaacs became professor of Hebrew in Louvain (52); Abraham de Luna became abbot of the convent of Villeneuve (93); Jacob Laurez won notoriety as the second general of the Jesuit order (54). How many more can be names who left the ship rather than wait until it was struck loose from its moorings!

7 It is not to be supposed that these converts were the only Jews who had contacts with their Christian neighbors. Most remained faithful to Judaism, however, and often succeeded in gaining converts to their ranks as a result (55) of their relationship. Elijah Levita taught Hebrew to

Christians and aroused the anxiety of his co-religionists to such an extent the rabbis were pressed to discuss his activities, possibly with a view to curtailing them and questioned the validity of such pedagogy under rabbinical law. He maintained, however, that these Christians were warm friends of the Jews and were using their knowledge of Hebrew to prevent anti-semitism (56).

The Renaissance, which left few areas of European culture untouched, could not help but influence Jewish life in spite of the height and thickness of ghetto intolerance. In the spread of this contagious movement, we find the germ of modern Jewish reform. Levita, as did all Renaissance scholars, critically examined through historical research the accepted beliefs of his generation, and finally proved that the "nekudot" were not inserted in the Biblical text at Sinai but were added no earlier than the 7th century. On the basis of this he showed that the author of Ecclesiastes spoke not of the immortality of the soul, but seemed to express his doubt of it. Further, with the new concept of the vowel signs to guide him, he questioned the intent

of Job and, in general, shocked the rabbis of his day with his heretical views (57) (many of which have long since been adopted and accepted as traditional). Though a German by birth, Levita was influenced by the intellectual stirrings in Italy, for Germany from which he had fled with the family during a 17th century expulsion edict, had no monopoly on the new spirit. He brought the spirit of reform to activation in a country other than Germany a century before any such activity there.

Azariah dei Rossi, a younger native-born Italian contemporary, was even bolder than Levita (58). He maintained in his "Meor Enayim" that the Talmud was not an authoritative source of information on matters of science. The earthquake of 1570 which destroyed his home city of Ferrara plus the discussions he had with a Catholic priest on the contradictions between Josephus and the Talmudic literature and then finally the revolutionary theory of Copernicus - all indications of the contact between 17th century ghetto Jews and the general world - completely shattered his faith in the authenticity of the Talmud. His works received the

same heated reception from the traditionalists of his day as did those who doubted Talmudic authority in succeeding generations (59).

Dei Rossi's denial of the absolute authenticity of Talmudic Haggadah merely preceded the shattering blow struck by Leon Modena against the heretofore inviolable Talmudic Halachah. He contended that the true meaning of Biblical law is distorted by Rabbinical exegesis in his book "Beheinat Ha-Kabbalah" which goes on to condemn rabbinism for the travesty it makes of religious sentiment, rendering it repulsive both esthetically and ethically. He went so far as to attack the prayer service (60), declaring it tedious and brought upon his head the same rain of castigation as greeted the reform prayer books of Merzbacher and Eihorn two centuries later (61).

Modena condemned the Cabbala as an outright fraud and the notion seems to have received extensive publicity. When the matter was submitted to Joel Saerles, prominent rabbi of Cracow by the people of Amsterdam, where freethinkers such as DaCosta and Spinoza and their sympathizers abounded in some number, he declared that the Jew who denies

the authority of the Cabbala worthy of excommunication (62).

Other fissures in the thick wall of Ghetto tradition are apparent. The increasing laxity in the observance of dietary laws drew numerous angry comments from the rabbis which increased alarmingly in the first half of the 17th century.

"These sinners were reformers of the pre-Reform era, people who simply did things that they considered justifiable without waiting for any Sanhedrin or rabbinical convention to sanction their act. The result was occasionally that some rabbi found a legal reason for the existing practice, but almost invariably theological authority condoned silently what it could not change. An example of the first instance is that the people, regardless of the clear statement of the Bible and its embodiment in codes of rabbinical law, lived in Egypt, which the rabbis afterwards qualified as a temporary measure which had ceased to be valid. An example of the latter, very frequent in rabbinical literature, is the advice of the otherwise very rigorous French school of Talmudists (The Tosafists) of the 12th century not to prohibit the wearing of jewelry on Sabbath because the women would not obey such a rule. When, however, the question was put as to the possibility of changing a burdensome law, rabbinical authority as every other ecclesiastic or bureaucratic authority would answer in the negative, usually as a matter of policy. So we find in regard to the levirate marriage...that the trustees of the Portugese congregation of Hamburg in 1656 ask the rabbi for an abrogation of this law, and are met with the theological 'non possumus!' (63)

Though, as has been stated before, Germany was the scene of the most intensive outcropping of reform, its ideology was not the exclusive growth of German Jews. Olry Terquem, a French Jew, published between the years 1820 and 1827 a series of pamphlets called "Lettres Taar-phatiques" which indicated the sore need for synagogual reforms and advocating a Sunday Sabbath (64). Contemporaneously, Leghorn, long the stronghold of orthodoxy, became the site for the writings of Aaron Fernando who blatantly advocated the abolishment of all ceremonial law (65). In London, the Sephardic congregations admitted much discontent with the form of their prayer services (66) and when the Bevis Marks congregation refused to introduce reforms, a group from this congregation united with a like-thinking sector of an Ashkenazic synagogue and established the West London Synagogue of British Jews. The Charleston congregation, closely associated as it was with Bevis Marks of London (67), seems to have produced a reform which seemed to be influenced by the same thought-current that evidently swept most of the Jewish world in the 19th century and which created the greatest and most telling effect in Germany.

Chapter III

The Turbulent, New World

"What is man born for but to be a Reformer, a Remaker of what man has made...imitating that great Nature which embosoms us all, and which sleeps no moment on the old past, but every hour repairs herself, yielding us every morning a new day and with every pulsation a new life."

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson

From the American revolution and, more particularly, from the French revolution the idea of the rights of the common man began to grow and extend themselves and the realization that no human should suffer disabilities blossomed in the soil of Western civilization. By 1791 the French Assembly extended "the Rights of man" to the Jews of the Republic and subsequently, in 1806 and 1807, respectively, Napoleon gave the Jews nominal autonomy in the Assembly of Jewish Notables and the Sanhedrin, at least granting formal sanction to the newly-formulated concept of Jewish emancipation(68). As a cocklebur clings to a man's clothing and is thus carried to distant fields, so the "people's army" of Napoleon spread the maturing ideals of the French

revolution all over Europe. Jew and Gentile became aware of the new role of the Jew and either strove to prevent or promote its fulfilment.

German Jewry was doubly blessed. The seeds of enlightenment born by the fresh breeze of 18th century liberalism found fertile ground in Germany. These exciting, new ideas which gave the Jews their first freedom in centuries were rendered more readily accessible by the work of Moses Mendelssohn. His translation of the Pentateuch into German gave his co-religionists the key to which to open the rusted gates of their intellectual ghetto and thus granted them free passage into the great world of secular literature and life. (69). It is not to be thought, as many do (70), that Mendelssohn was the conscious forerunner of the reform movement. Quite to the contrary, he felt that every requirement of rabbinic Judaism was valid and would remain so eternally. Mendelssohn maintained that ceremonial law was Divinely revealed and would continue in its present form until another such revelation replaced it. Though not a reformer, he was one of those who sought to promote

the emancipation of the Jew from the physical and intellectual ghetto. Though not a reformer, his translation of the Pentateuch did provide the tool which made reform possible.

The work of Mendelssohn in the direction of complete emancipation was carried on by one of his best-known disciples, David Friedlander (71). Interested, as was his master, in the much-needed cultural advance of the German Jew, Friedlander opened the Jewish Free School of Berlin in 1778 to teach secular subjects to Jewish children and thus prepare them for entry into the gentile world heretofore forbidden their parents. He further developed the language tool when he translated the prayerbook into German. Friedlander's efforts were mostly negated by his succeeding activities and consequented an air of ill-favor which soon surrounded his work and that of others who strove along similar lines. He offered to accept Christianity if he, and his friends who were to follow him, might dispense with the doctrine of the trinity, the divinity of Jesus and the observance of Christian festivals. It was like enjoying the play Hamlet without Hamlet and of course he was refused. But the harm had been done. Any man who advocated enlight-

ennment or reform was accused of similarly advocating conversion. Such was the mark firmly affixed upon the brow of any who suggested change and no amount of refutation could erase it.

But those who cried for change could not be so easily intimidated or hushed nor could the vituperative condemnation of the opposition shout down the voices calling for reform. Had the ghetto walls still been standing, the close-knit ghetto society might have suppressed the clamor. If the world was at ease, supinely, phlegmatically accepting the status quo, the solitary call of Jewish reform would have echoed hollowly upon the ears of men and soon faded from hearing. But such was not the case. The ghetto was gone. The world was wrestling with itself, change was the protagonist. The Jewish community could not ignore the conflict.

There was reason for this international turbulence and restlessness. The Napoleonic wars had consequented huge debts, both sides suffering greatly. Social stress mounted, discontent stirred many breasts. The iron hand

of Metternich stretched across the continent and crushed every liberal uprising that rose above the surface. The 18th century idealism that prompted this growth could not be killed. From the rubble of one unsuccessful attempt, other liberal insurrections sprang up. Such incessant efforts merely strengthened the resolve of these revolutionists. Their success was inevitable. Countless factors contributed to their growing need and might. The new ideas were shaking the very foundations of human thought. The industrial revolution, begun haltingly and unevenly in many places, was now moving swiftly and was revamping the staid concepts of commerce and finance. The lid Metternich attempted to keep over all Europe was shaken by the mighty blasts of these new forces.

The Jew could not escape the effect of these stirrings. Even though centuries of tradition had encrusted and solidified his every thought and deed, the old clay was drying and the rumblings that shook the earth beneath his feet cracked and split the age-old rabbinical form. His ancient standard of values was replaced by a new set. He had to adjust his daily living to his new perspective. Many felt that Judaism could not fit, no matter how altered, in the new life. Others were ready to try modifications.

First there came external changes and then spiritual adjustments followed. Trial and error was the yardstick; schools and temples and rabbinical conferences were the laboratory. Germany was the scene of the preliminary efforts; America the site of advanced endeavor.

Though American reform borrowed freely from the thinking of German reformers, it was not borrowed wholesale with no thought of its need. A similar set of circumstances prompted the movement in this country. A seed cannot be transplanted unless the soil is fertile and the environment is favorable. The healthy growth of the plant indicates that such was the case.

The aftermath of the Napoleonic wars had its doleful, if somewhat later, effect in America, too (73). Wretched economic conditions (74) and the exciting idea of progress stirred the American scene but the condition was intensified by the growth of the West and the advance of science and technology (75) serve to shake the foundations of 18th century tradition. This is not to imply that American thought was not affected by the immigrant, it certainly was but,

in turn, it affected the immigrants and the entire populace. The revolutionary impulse, the rise of an industrial culture, the formation of new religious sects are all recognizable as influences of European culture (76) but the form they took in this country, the extension and modification they underwent rendered them distinctively and unquestionably American.

The common man, here in the United States, came into his own more readily than his European brother because of the additional factors active in this environment. He readily expressed his advance in political, social and economic matters (77) and made himself felt as a formative, vital force in all such endeavor. It is little wonder that the by-product of this opportunity for self-expression and equalitarianism should be a democratization of religion. Many denominations admitted the laity to a larger share in church government. Not only did the occupant of the new pew enjoy greater freedom within the confines of the church, he even asserted himself by defying the established sects and authorities and traditions, and in many instances created new cults altogether, in a movement known as "come-

outism" so wide-spread did this religious revolution become (78).

Orthodoxy became the target of much abuse. A group of Catholic laymen defied canon law and insisted on sharing control of church property with the clergy. Throughout New England the dogma of Calvinism laid heavy upon the laity. There was no expansion or development in this teeming era of expansion and development, only "turning over the exhausted soil and reaping an ever scantier harvest (79). Calvinist preachers thundered forth speculation and weighty syllogisms but offered a people hungry for basic change no reexamination of major premises. "The stigma of atheism was put upon every harmless bantling... and in the terror of reaction, the pulpit, following the lead of the reactionary pew, aroused itself to cleanse the pew of every innovation (80)." The fear of religious reform became almost psychopathic on the American scene. "Let us guard against the insidious encroachment of innovation," said Jedidah Morse, but it could have been M.J. Raphall or Isaac Leeser or any champion of uncompromising orthodoxy, "innovation, that evil and beguiling spirit

which is now stalking to and fro on the earth seeking whom it may devour (81)."

"As with Jewish orthodoxy, "traditional Calvinism defended itself with spirit, asserting so vehemently that the corpse was not yet an authentic corpse, that it succeeded in at least postponing its own burial. It was deeply entrenched in the inertia of custom, but intellectually it was in desperate straits (82)."

Such was the spirit of illiberal America, strait-laced by the tautog of English rationalism and Edwardian dogmatism but finally freed from this binding intellectual heritage by the advent of social Utopianism from revolutionary France, idealistic metaphysics from Germany and literary romanticism's new and wide spread cultural development. These fresh, bold concepts served to burst the ties of the old feudal order, making way for a new middle class society, replacing the broken aristocratic ideals (83).

It must be emphasized again, however, that the same forces which awoke these liberalizing influences abroad, did so in America. American thought was not wholly borrowed or formed by European influence. Americans found

their own philosophy erected in a system and they eagerly included the metaphysics of Kant, the mysticism of the Jacobites, the idealistic egoism of Fichte, the transcendentalism of Schliermacher in their own less advanced thought structure.

Such was the matrix, itself shaped by the new enlightenment and the spirit of rebellion against the staid, uncompromising forms, from which reform Judaism was cast in America. Now we will examine the specific products of the mould in American Judaism.

Chapter IV

Charleston: An Abortive Beginning

We "wish not to overthrow but to rebuild - not to destroy but to reform and revise the evils of which (we) complain - not to abandon the institutions of Moses, but to understand and to observe them; in fine (we) wish to worship God, not as slaves of bigotry and priestcraft, but as the enlightened descendants of that chosen race...of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

--from the Pronouncement of Principles,
Reformed Society of Israelites

While German reform was still struggling (84), a full-blown manifestation of the reform spirit forced itself through the hard rock of opposition and flourished in Charleston, S.C. In Europe, reform ^{though} through orthodox Jewish opposition as well. In a land wherein there were no political or civil disabilities and where Jews moved readily into positions of high trust and prestige (85), it is little wonder that the growth of the American plant proceeded more rapidly.

America at this time, as has been described before, was a sprawling, straining young giant, impatient with the past and eager for the new. It would be well for our purpose to focus upon the scant Jewish population of some 2,500 persons who added their dab of color to the American panorama. Only a few congregations worthy of the name

existed at this time. Shearith Israel of New York was the dean and one of the largest; Yeshivat Israel of Newport - much depleted with the post-Revolutionary shift of population - stood second. Two smaller congregations bearing the same name, Mikveh Israel, served the Jews of Savannah and Philadelphia. In Richmond, the Jewish community had called their congregation Beth Shalom and in Lancaster, Pa. a tiny group had organized themselves (87).

In Charleston, the largest group of Jews in the country, about 500 in number were organized as Beth Elohim. The state of South Carolina provided a rare combination of liberalism and opportunity for its inhabitants. Her constitution, quoted by John Locke in 1669 stated, "...That Jews, heathens and aliens, dissenters from the purity of Christian religion may not be feared and kept at a distance... (88)." The only individual prevented from becoming "...a freeman in Carolina" was he "that doth not acknowledge a God, and that God is publically and solemnly worshipped (89)." In the nineteenth century, the populace of Charleston were outspoken in their contempt for German

cruelty to the Jews and ridiculed Maryland "for her bigotry in denying certain civil rights to the Jews (90)." These outspoken instances of liberalism evoked commendatory comments from personages of no less-import than John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

Hence into every branch of trade and commerce, in the arts and professions, and in public life as well, the members of the Charleston Jewish community poured their energies and natural talent and gained prosperity and security in the life and economy of the South. It became the wealthiest and possibly the strongest congregation in the country (91).

The services and form of worship marked it the product of another century and another clime; and such it was, "an offshoot of the old Spanish and Portugese congregation of Bevis Marks (92)" in London. Its members were forced to move through the straight, well-worn^u, high intolerable grooves of tradition. An English writer describing the parent congregation in the London Jewish Chronicle holds up a mirror before the son (93).

"The Jews were strictly orthodox....Members of congregations were ruled with a rod of iron. The most venial offence was punished with a fine, failure to pay which might be visited with severer penalties still. Members were frequently called before the Kahal (congregation) and made to explain their conduct or apologize for it... In Bevis Marks the government was far more autocratic than in the German congregation and it is an oft-told tale how the tyrannous character of their Aseamot (by-laws) had the effect of driving Isaac D'Israeli and many others from the fold of the community. Among the Portuguese the penalty for establishing or even attending a Minyan (assembly for prayer) within the city of London and its suburbs, except during the week of mourning was excommunication. Anyone even knowing of such a meeting and not informing the Mahamad (Board of Elders) of it, was liable to the same penalty. And as late as the year 1822 a gentleman was visited with the utmost rigors of the law because he ventured to have a Minyan at his house on the first night of Pentecost, followed by prayers in the early morning. He and his fellow-worshippers were deprived of their seats in synagogue, their names were erased from the list of Yehidim (voting members), they were relegated to certain places at the back of the reading desk, disqualified from being called up to the law, declared ineligible for two years for any pious duties, and finally fines of £40 and £20 respectively were inflicted upon them.... Anyone openly desecrating the Sabbath ceased to be a Yahid. A person who married out of the faith was excluded from being a Yahid and from all the offices and honors of the synagogue.... Then there was a whole system of fines in vogue for refusing to accept office, for refusing to

be called up, for not attending synagogues when due to be called up, for not attending congregational or committee meetings, for not being present to answer to one's name when it was called, or leaving before the meeting was over without the President's permission....The wonder is that people could be found willing to submit to such extraordinary penalties. The synagogue must have had an immense hold upon people in these days to exact so entire a submission. It could only have wielded such a power so long as it remained the centre of the social life of the community. A defiance of its ruling would have involved a social ostracism, the fear of which must have exercised as strong a deterrent as the religious penalties that would have been incurred by contumacy. Nor is it difficult to understand why, in early times, the synagogue should have desired to maintain so strict a rule. Some such imperium in imperio was necessary in the interests of the Jewish community. The synagogue authorities felt themselves in a measure responsible to the political powers for the good behavior of their coreligionists. The position of English Jews was not yet consolidated. The footing on which they had been admitted into this country was still somewhat insecure, they enjoyed but scant liberties. A single false step might retard their emancipation, or endanger the liberties already won. With the growth of a new order of things, this regime has passed entirely away."

In Charleston with its broad principles of freedom and equality a reality rather than a dim promise or hope, the basic need for such severity had long since been removed, making its retention a needless piece of asceticism. A few quotations from the congregational constitution in-

dictates that such was not the view held by those who formulated congregational policy. The iron hand of Bevis Marks was inherited by its American offspring and its stern and uncompromising mein jealously guarded (94).

"The Parnass President shall have sole direction in the Synagogue, during divine service, and all officers under pay shall be under his control....He shall be authorized to call before the Private Adjunta any person or persons who may misbehave either in Synagogue, its enclosures during divine service, or other legal occasions of meeting....No person or persons shall be sanctioned to combine for the purpose of erecting any other synagogue or uniting in any unlawful Minyan within five miles of Charleston nor shall any person, or persons...be permitted, under any pretense whatever to aid, toin, assist at any such unlawful Minyan or Combination... All strangers arriving here, who do not after a fine lapse of time affixed...become members of the Congregation, shall be liable to all penalties and restrictions that members are subject to, and shall not be admitted as members, until such restrictions are removed.... If any person be guilty of an atrocious offense... (he shall) forfeit all his rights and privileges in this Congregation, and be subject to a fine not exceeding two hundred dollars; and such offenders shall never be reinstated into their rights and privileges and moreover be deprived of the right of burial inside of the Beth Hayim, until they by themselves, executors, or administrators, relations, or friends pay up and settle the fine afflicted. And any person placing themselves in such a predicament shall incur the penalty...(and it) shall extend to the whole family....No person being called to the Sephar,

having Portos-Hechal, or going up there to offer, shall leave the same, without offering at least one shilling for the Parnass Presidenta, and prosperity of the Congregation, nor shall any ridiculous or unusual offering be permitted. Any person offending in either of these cases, shall be called before the Private Adjunta, and at their discretion fined, or dealt with according to the nature and aggravation of the offence, and shall continue under all disabilities in and out of the Synagogue, until such decision is compiled with.... Any person or persons publicly violating the Sabbath, or other sacred days, shall be deprived of every privilege of Synagogue and the services of its officers. He or they shall also be subject to such fine and penalties as the Parnassim and Adjunta may deem fit, nor shall he or they be readmitted to the privileges aforesaid, until he or they shall have paid the fine and suffered the punishment to be inflicted under the law."

These dicta were not merely written perscriptions which remained unfulfilled, We have documents and notes showing instances of fines and censures distributed in accord with the dictates of the constitution.

The rabbi of the congregation was a pitiful figure, underpaid and abused, he was forced to seek his livelihood by means increasingly degradating, heaping calumny and gross disrespect upon his person. In his Reminiscences, Isaac M. Wise describes the Jewish clerie that preceeded

his own ministry in this country (95)."

He was reader, cantor, and blessed everybody for chal pash, which amounted to 4½ cents. He was teacher, butcher, circumciser, blower, gravedigger, secretary. He wrote the amulets with the names of all the angels and demons on them for women in confinement, read shiur for the departed sinners, and played cards or dominoes with the living; in short, he was a kol-bo, an encyclopedia, accepted bread, turnips, cabbage, potatoes as a gift, and peddled in case his salary was not sufficient. He was sui generis, half priest, half beggar, half oracle, half fool, as the occasion demanded.

"The Reformed Society of Israelites"

It is little wonder, then, that members of the congregation, assimilated into the secular culture and life of their surroundings, meeting the leading intellectuals of the south in their daily dealings, discussing and implementing the new ideas of change that stirred them, just as they activated their non-Jewish fellow-citizens, should become sensitive to the distasteful, unprepossessing aspects of their ancestral faith and should be moved to open complaint. The only instance of compulsion in their lives occurred in their synagogal activities. There, as the constitution indicates, an authoritative, unbending and generally

despicable regime held sway so that they could not implement the changes they felt so necessary. In civil life there was no instance of such totalitarianism, they were free to conduct their own affairs in accord with the dictates of their own affairs in accord with the dictates of their conscience and their sensativity. The charged atmosphere of Europe which produced a Jew "accostomed to speak with bated breath and whispered hopelessness" was alien here. To live the old life in the new world was oppressive! What was natural in Bevis Marks was artificial in Beth Elohim. The rebellion was inevitable!

In 1824, a group of forty-seven members of the congregation submitted a petition asking for reforms in the ritual. This was not merely an effort to "stem the tide of already existing disloyalty and irreligion, which were enormous in volume before the reform movement took hold (97)" nor did it "come into existence in consequence of early tendencies toward laxness and irreligion (98)." These were not the only reasons for the petition, though they must have contributed considerably. This was not solely a negative movement, a finger jammed temporarily into the

the dike; it was a positive movement designed to adapt Judaism to the conditioning of a new generation and make it permanently palatable and inspiring. They hoped to keep Judaism meaningful for their generation just as it had done for their fathers before them so it might continue for their children in succeeding eras. Without adaptation, there would be death, these men contended, "as the tabernacle gave way to the glory of the stationary temple, so does life necessarily move on and institutions must change so as to keep life, or be enervated and atrophied by abandoned custom (99)."

Chafing under the many restrictions placed upon them, eager to do away with the unintelligible Hebrew and mongrel Spanish that made up their language of prayer, annoyed with unduly protracted, indecorous, uninstrusive service, these forty-seven men submitted the following petition(100):

"Your memorialists seek no other end than the future welfare and respectability of the nation. As members of the great family of Israel, they cannot consent to place before their children examples which are only calculated to darken the mind and withhold from the rising generation the more rational means of worshipping the true God.

"It is to this, therefore, your memorialists would, in the first place, invite the serious attention of your honorable body. By causing the Hazan, or reader, to repeat in English such part of the Hebrew prayers as may be deemed necessary, it is confidently believed that the congregation generally would be more forcibly impressed with the necessity of Divine worship, and the moral obligations which they owe to themselves and their Creator; while such a course would lead to more decency and decorum during the time they are engaged in the performance of religious duties. It is not every one who has the means, and many have not the time, to acquire a knowledge of Hebrew language, and consequently to become enlightened in the principles of Judaism. What then is the course pursued in all religious societies for the purpose of disseminating the peculiar tenets of their faith among the poor and uninformed?

"The principles of their religion are expounded to them from the pulpit in language that they understand; for instance, in the Catholic, the German, and the French Protestant churches; by this means the ignorant part of mankind attend their places of worship with some profit to their morals and even improvement to their minds; they return from them with hearts turned to piety, and with feelings elevated by their sacred character. In this consists the beauty of religion--when men are invoked by its divine spirit to the practice of virtue and morality....

"With regard to such parts of the service as it is desired should undergo this change, your memorialists would strenuously recommend that the most solemn portions be retained and everything superfluous excluded; and that the principal parts, and if possible all that is read in Hebrew, should also be in English (that language being the language of the country),

so as to enable every member of the congregation fully to understand each part of this service. "In submitting this article to our memorial to the consideration of your honorable body, your memorialists are well aware of the difficulties with which they must contend, before they will be enabled to accomplish the desirable end; but while they would respectfully invite the attention of your honorable body to this part of their memorial, they desire to rest the propriety and expediency of such a measure solely upon the reason by which it may be maintained.... "Your memorialists would next call the particular attention of your honorable body to the absolute necessity of abridging the service generally. They have reflected seriously upon its present length, and are confident that this is one of the principal causes why so much of it is hastily and improperly hurried over.... "According to the present mode of reading the Parasa (Pentateuch) it affords to the hearer neither instruction nor entertainment, unless he be competent to read as well as comprehend the Hebrew language. But if, like all other ministers, our reader would make a chapter or verse the subject of an English discourse once a week, at the expiration of the year the people would, at all events, know something of that religion which at present they so little regard."

As might have been expected, the petition was tabled without any discussion by the vestry (probably the Board of Trustees) of the congregation and the right of appeal was similarly denied the petitioners (101). They might have come to the realization that just as they were violating rule VII (102) of their own constitution with their ar-

bitrary stand, so they were violating a basic principle of human psychology: no group of idealist will be frustrated in their efforts by a high-handed, ill-considered rebuff. The group was merely spurred by the action of the vestry and on November 21, 1824 called a meeting which evolved the "Reformed Society of Israelites" and within six months had fifty member families, only a hundred less members than did the congregation (103).

This intrepid, resolute group of "Reformers" were sincere and resourceful. They were not anxious to start a vast, popular movement and thus seek personal aggrandizement and vindication nor did they publicize their novel endeavor seeking fanfare and notoriety. They withdrew from Beth Elohim because their convictions demanded modifications. They did not seek afar for famed leaders to spur or extend their movement. From their own ranks they selected readers and preachers and performed their short, simple services "without benefit of clergy." An English sermon was included and an equally radical reform of the form of instrumental music graced the services bringing a storm of abuse upon their uncovered heads when these innovations became known (104).

Perhaps the best insight into the thinking of the group can be had from an examination of their prayerbook. It was written by Isaacs Harby, David N. Carvalho and Abraham Moïse in chaste, classical English (105). References had been made to the "Frankfort Journal (106)," German organ of reform, and it might be suspected that the prayerbook might follow that of the Hamburg Reform service which was the classic in Europe. But such is not the case, there is no similarity between the two works. The Hamburg book follows the Ashkenazic ritual and the work of the Charleston group followed the Sephardic service used by Beth El-chim. A list of twenty-eight English hymns are added for the convenience of the group, many of which were written by members of the Society themselves (107).

The prayerbook included the Sabbath eve and morning ritual and prayers for special occasions such as burials, confirmation, circumcision and such (108). The preface promised a new and enlarged edition in the future, an unrealized hope, as we shall see. But also in the preface were ten articles of faith, patterned after the thirteen promulgated by Maimonides. Here was an indication of the differences of belief held by the members of the "Society"

showing that this reform was more than a demand for a well-ordered service or an anti-conversionist front, but a basic reform altering some of the outmoded, untenable, theological concepts long demanding reinvestigation.

The "Society" contended that these ten articles contained all the essentials to faith in revealed religion and that this lowest possible denominator could not be further reduced without rejecting the divine origin of the moral law. They assured the reader that the incorporation of these laws into one's innermost thinking would bring happiness in this world and the world to come (109). The liberal attitude that they had been denied was nourished in their thinking and fed by their actions, they "do not presume to restrict the faith or conscience of any man,..." "they act for those who, as free agents, would obey God's laws (110)."

The first four of these articles compare to the first five of the "Ani Maamin" which deal with God. Both sets acclaim His existence, unity, incorporeality, eternity and agree that He is the sole object of man's veneration. The fifth tenet of the "Society" contradicts corporeal

reincarnation but stresses the immortality of the soul. The sixth statement of the "Reformers" may be compared to the 10 and 11th of the Maimonidean code and both agree on Divine omniscience and the inevitability of His retribution. As might be expected, the seventh article, which deals with revelation as does Rambam in the sixth through the ninth of his statements, disagrees with the concept of revelation as the sole true foundation of piety and morality. The eighth article of the "Society" contends that "morality is essentially connected with religion and that good faith towards all mankind is among the most acceptable offerings to the Deity" and like the ninth which states that "the love of God is the highest duty of his creatures and the pure and upright heart is the chosen temple of Jehovah," has no parallel in the thirteen articles of rabbinic Judaism. The tenth which deals with the coming of the Messiah rejects the idea of a personal Messiah such as the twelfth of its pattern code and speaks of the redemption of all mankind assigning to "the Creator (the role) as the only true Redeemer of His children... He will spread the worship of His name over the whole earth (111)."

So we see a sharp creedal difference grew between the "reformers" and the prevalent theology of the orthodoxy. They had consolidated the thirteen articles into eight of their own, refecting the concept of bodily resurrection, the Divine origin of the entire Law and the belief in the coming of a personal Messiah. In turn they had added the concept of the immortality of the soul, the authority of the ten commandments and the belief in the universal redemption of mankind.

The prayerbook followed the theology of the ten articles presented in the preface and referred constantly to morality, piety, to the pure and upright heart, to the immortality of the soul and to the rationality of human reason and the hope for the universal redemption of all men. The references to a return to Palestine and the reestablishment of the sacrificial cult are carefully omitted.

The "Reformed Society of Israelites" had thus worked out its theological principles and was eager to perpetuate this theology, certain that such a belief offered the sole salvation for Judaism. A program for the education of their youth "so as to render them fully competent to perform the

divine service not only with ability, bearing and dignity, but also according to the true spirit of Judaism, for which this institution was formed" was readied for activation (112).

On November 21, 1825 the group celebrated its first anniversary and elected its officers. Aaron Phillips became president with Michael Lazerus, Isaac Mordecai and Abraham Moise serving as vice-president, treasurer and preacher respectively. A "corresponding committee" under the chairmanship of Isaac Marby consisted of Abraham Moise, Isaac N. Cordoza, E. P. Cohen and David Nunez Cavalerho, the latter also serving as Reader. Morris Goldsmith was the congregational secretary and from his Directory for 1831 we find the creed of the "Society" as formulated by them for posterity (113).

"This Society was formed with the view of making such alterations in customs and ceremonies of the Jewish religion as would comport with the present enlightened state of the world. It adopted, in its outset, this fundamental principle, that a correct understanding of the divine worship is not only essential to our own happiness and a duty we owe to the Almighty Dispenser of events, but it is well calculated at the same time to enlarge the mind and improve the heart. In their creed, which accompanies the ritual,

they subscribe to nothing of rabbinical interpretation or rabbinical doctrines. They are their own teachers, drawing their knowledge from the Bible, and following only the laws of Moses, and those only as far as they can be adapted to the institutions of the Society in which they live and enjoy the blessings of liberty. They do nothing against the laws of Moses, but omit everything belonging to the former independent condition of their ancestors. They have simplified the worship of God and brought the great objects of public meeting - piety, morals and sense - so as to be perfectly comprehensible to the understanding of the humblest capacity.' In the appendix to their constitution, they say, they wish not to overthrow, but rebuild - not to destroy, but to reform and revise the evils of which they complain - not to abandon the institutions of Moses, but to understand and to observe the; in fine they wish to worship God not as slaves of bigotry and priestcraft, but as the enlightened descendants of that chosen race whose blessings have been scattered."

Though no idealistic movement is the work of one man, each such endeavor generally possesses in its ranks one or two fervent, untiring spirits who impart a strength to the organization which accelerate its advance. Such a man was Isaac Harby who strode in the van of the Charleston "Reformers" and was its vibrant force until his

sudden passing in 1828 (114). He was renown in the secular world, a brilliant though impoverished dramatist, critic and essayist whose meteoric career flashed brightly showing promise of a great future only to end abruptly in his untimely death. He left Charleston in June of 1828, after the crushing loss of his wife, and was soon hailed by his cosmopolitan colleagues as a "distinguished and eminent scholar and writer of nor ordinary taste and intelligence(115)," as the "ripe and refined scholar, the respectable citizen, and the upright and moral man(116)." It was a cruel twist of Fate that removed him from the scene of his early triumph only six months after his arrival in New York, cutting off his literary productivity at his very outset and depriving the "Society" of its most fiery, formidable force.

Until that unhappy time, he was able to lend his energies to the group, working and planning in the days before its inception and finally knowing the thrill of early achievement. Harby addressed the "Society" on its first anniversary, delivering the definitive statement of the group. In part, Harby spoke as follows(117):

"What is it that we seek? The establishment of a new sect? No, never.

"What is it then that we ask of the Hebrew Vestry? The abolition of the ancient language and form of Jewish worship? Far from it... our desire is ... to throw away rabbinical interpolations; to avoid useless repetitions; to read and chaunt with solemnity; to recite such portions of the Pentateuch and the Prophets as custom and practice have appointed to be read in the original Hebrew, but to follow such selections with a translation in English, and a lecture or discourse upon the law...instructive to every age and every class of society.... Is this sapping the foundations of our venerable faith? No...this is stripping it of foreign and unseemly ceremonies...beautifying that simple Doric column, that primeval order of architecture, which raises its plain but massy head amid the ruins of time and the desolation of empires!

"The bigot tells you, seek not to understand what is above your comprehension; seek not for reason, where you have only to exercise faith. But the learned king has said, 'Wisdom is too high for a fool' ... and the proverb of the heaven-gifted Solomon is confirmed by the doctrine of philosophy which tells you that faith is the result of rational demonstration, not of blind acquiescence....

"The temperance of our proceedings shall disarm hostility; and the authority, the true legitimate authority of the BIBLE on which alone we act, will lull the vigilance of bigotry to sleep ...we wish to abstract, not to add--to take away whatever is offensive to the enlightened mind; but to leave in its original

grandeur whatever is worthy to be uttered by men or to be listened to by the Diety.

"This is the course of things which every politic, every moderate man must prefer to the most successful schism....It would prove a victory over ignorance accidentally possessed of power; a victory... that would make AMBITION? VIRTUE.

"But virtue itself cannot always command success; the most that man can do is to deserve it. Perhaps... all our moderation may be mistaken for weakness; our temperance for indecision; our very pride in the interest of the Jewish name and ardent desire not to leave it a subject for cavil, may be construed into a partial abandonment of our great objects. Disappointment will attend all who 'lay this flattering unction to their souls'....

"When nothing but Hebrew was the language of the Jews, common sense and true religion prompted our ancestors to worship God in Hebrew. It was the language of the people--it was the language of the heart. It would have been as absurd for the Israelites in the days of David to have addressed the God of their fathers in any other language than that understood by the people, as it is absurd at the present time for the Jews of these United States to address God in Hebrew only which is not understood by our people."

How splendid is the elevation of his conclusion! "But be the promised land what it may; whether new Jerusalem or old Judea, renovated and blessed by the munificence of Heaven; or whether with Chrysostom, we take it to signify the City of

God, happiness hereafter, yet we are contented while we remain...in this temporal state, to live in America; to share in the blessings of Liberty; to partake of, and to add to political happiness, her power and her glory; to educate our children liberally; to make them useful and enlightened and honest citizens; to look upon our countrymen as brethren of the same happy family, worshipping the same God of the universe, though perhaps differing in forms and opinions."

This "Discourse" was considered the best of Harby literary works, the man's very soul was fired by this ideal which he had helped kindle.

In 1826 the "Society" decided it could best continue its progress and implement its planning by moving from Seyle's Masonic Hall on Meeting Street, the building it had used for its activities since its beginnings, into a new temple of its own. To that purpose it issued an appeal for funds to supplement the sum they could raise themselves "for erecting in the city of Charleston a new place of worship in honor of God Almighty (118).

Unfortunately, an insufficient amount of money was subscribed and in a special meeting held on May 2, 1833, the "Society" elected to return the money already collected

with the accrued interest and then resolved to terminate its activity; its members were to return to Beth Elohim (119).

Amidst cries of glee from their erstwhile opponents (120), the first overt aspect of reform in America came to an end. But only its physical form ceased; its ideology and fervor flowed into the parent congregation quickly changing its mood and tempo. The causes for failure are several and quite different from what might have been expected. The pressure from without, from the orthodox forces had little effect. It was the pressure from within the internal strife between family and friends on their individual theological differences which shattered the group's solidarity. Harby admitted that "the Jews born in Carolina are mostly of our way of thinking on the subject of worship and act from a tender regard for the opinions and feelings of their parents and friends in not joining the "Society (121):" Now was it hampered by the absence of a trained leader a rabbi, but by the loss of its ~~by~~ leader, Isaac Harby, whose departure sapped much of its strength.

Such was ^{the} short and volatile existence of the first man-

ifestation of reform in America. It was an amazing growth shocking to its Jewish opponents, unbelievable to the non-Jewish world for it achieved "what all the power and cruelty of the potentates of Europe could never have wrung by force or bribery from the persecuted remnant of Israel(122)" in that it modified the ancestral faith. It was undoubtedly an indigenous growth for though it referred to the "Frankfort Journal" it was more by way of quoting a statement to fortify one of its own (123). The Hamburg Prayer book was not used by the group, possibly never seen by the authors of the Charleston reformed Siddur and there is a tone in the creedal statements of the group which reflect the spirit of freedom alive only in the United States, inconceivable to a European Jew.

The "Reformed Society of Israelites" lasted but eight years and its influence upon other, later reform groups is difficult to discern. But its influence is of relatively little importance for our purpose. If the philosophy of history is constant then those forces which spawned the Charleston movement will, most of a surety, repeat themselves elsewhere. The "Society" does give us, however, an insight into the character and development of such a group as it first reared its head in American soil.

The Return to Beth Elohim

The immediate influence of the "Society" became apparent upon the return of its members to the parent congregation. They were all accepted back into the fold, their rights and privileges as full-members restored, but they were all fined various amounts for their indiscretions (124). A new, tumultuous, somewhat-disastrous period broke upon the congregation. The convictions and determination of the former "Reformers" was greatly enhanced by the new rabbi who came to minister over Beth Elohim. Gustav Poznanski, though of Polish birth, was influenced by the doctrines of the Hamburg reformers and came to this country resolved to see their implementation(125). The call to Charleston, after a brief stay with a small New York congregation provided his much-desired opportunity. It was to be a bitter experience for both rabbi and congregation.

Poznanski came highly recommended (126) and he soon justified the kind words of his friends. He was scholarly an eloquent speaker and writer (127). He was a gentleman, possessed of those qualities which gained such a title in

the nineteenth century south although Isaac M. Wise found him priggish during their meeting (128). The congregation responded to his warm and gracious personality; his every effort met with success. Both parties received him and there was a revival of interest that even his latter day opponents had to admit for upon his arrival "laxity in attending the religious observances gave place to strict attention to time honored observances (129). Poznanski was not lulled into inactivity by the sweet sound of acclaim and the constant strains of praise that were tendered him; he merely awaited a suitable opportunity to implement his ideas, and the reformers also waited and watched patiently.

In April of 1828 a great fire swept the city and razed the synagogue to the ground. The congregation quickly made plans for the erection of a new building. That year Poznanski, riding a wave of popularity, was elected for life. Two years later the corner-stone of the new building was laid. The opportunity Poznanski and the reformers had awaited now was before them. They did not hesitate to act. Their action was to plunge the congregation into bitter internal strife.

The Organ Controversy

While the building was being constructed, a petition was submitted to the trustees asking "that an organ be erected in the synagogue, to assist in the vocal parts of the service (130)." Accompanying the petition was the rabbi's written statement declaring the request a lawful one. The storm broke! The trustees denied the petition and a general meeting was called. When after heated debate, a vote was finally taken, the trustees were overruled and the petition granted. The "Society" dead only in name, had won a major victory. This time the orthodox group, now the minority, seceded and in 1843 organized congregation Shearith Israel (131). So radical a step had not been anticipated. The differences between the two groups swelled in angry proportions. Even the barest social amenities and intercourse ceased between the two factions. Not only the living kept apart, those who lay in the newly acquired Shearith Israel cemetery were separated from the adjoining Beth Elohim plots by a high wall (132). Tempers flared, friendships ended, an

compromise and conciliation were beyond hope. Into the public courts the case was brought, bringing unpleasant attention to the shameful strife but also evoking a magnificent statement from Judge Butler supporting the reformers (133).

Nor was this the end of the reforms introduced by Poznanski. On Passover, 1843, he recommended the abandonment of the observance of the second day of the festivals declaring them unnecessary (134). Not only were the orthodox elements in the country shocked by this proposal, even the reformers within the congregation were not as yet ready for so radical a departure. The trustees who had formerly authorized him "to make such remarks and observations as (he) might deem proper (135)" requested that he inform them "whether he intended in his future lectures to propose or advise innovations of the established form of service as observed by us (136)...." His reply indicated he realized the need for future conditioning among his congregants before attempting the implementation of such reforms. Perhaps this serves to indicate further the ingenious character of the American movement which could not accept this tenet of German reform.

In his reply, Poznanski unhappily agreed to be more discreet, "...with the sole view of restoring and preserving peace and harmony in our congregation, I am determined, in accordance with the words of your query, not to 'propose or advise in my future lectures, innovations of the established forms of service as observed by us...' until the general desire of the congregation to hear the truth on every religious subject, and to have our holy religion divested of all its errors and abuses shall be expressed to me through their representatives, your honorable board (137)...."

Another petition was directed to the board, this time by a group who had remained with the congregation and evidently were not opposed to the organ but asked "that the established service of the congregation embrace all the Mosaic and Rabbinical laws (138)." This petition was rejected and the discontented petitioners straight-way resigned and joined Shearith Israel (139).

The Jewish community of Charleston was hopelessly split in two with families similarly divided and tender affections curdles to sour feuds. None suffered more than Poznanski. Every malicious charge conceivable, with no attempt

at veracity, was hurled against him. Even his legitimacy was assailed (140). He was broken-hearted over the distressing outcome of his well-intentioned reforms. With a view to restoring some peace, he resigned and did not continue his ministrations, hoping that his removal might allow the rupture to heal (141). When the Shearith Israel group was allowed the use of the temple on alternate Saturdays he returned to his active duties but here again he was assailed (142). What a price this former darling of the South had paid to see the implementation of his reforms!

By now Poznanski was completely diheartened and offered his formal resignation as minister of the congregation. His friends were insistent that he remain and finally convinced him that he would do the congregation and the cause of reform immeasurable harm if he were to leave. But after several months his position became so intolerable that he was certain his presence in office could only work to the disadvantage of the congregation. Advertisements were inserted int the Occident, the London Jewish papers, the Archives Israelites, and in the Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums at his insistence, seeking out a possible successor. Twice applications were received and approved by the congregation only to have the two candidates, Dr.

Julius Landsberger and Dr. Isaac M. Wise, decline after their election. So Poznanski continued in office on a temporary basis, refusing to accept any remuneration, waiting only until a replacement should be procured (143).

It was shortly before this time that the famed Raphall-Poznanski debate took place. Wise had travelled to Charleston to discuss the position and at the same time Dr. M.J. Raphall, champion of orthodoxy, was visiting the community (144). Evidently Raphall had been in the audience during Wise's "trial sermon" before the congregation and straightway returned to the orthodox synagogue and "inveighed against (it)...completely demolishing the reform movement." Wise responded shortly afterwards and for several days, before large, excited audiences, the two sought to disprove the other's arguments (145).

The open debate between the two camps came to a lamentable ending. A public, face-to-face debate was to be held between Poznanski and Raphall. This had been arranged before either Wise or Raphall's arrival in Charleston. In bold, broad strokes, Wise paints the aggitated scene of the event and its tempestuous conclusion (146).

The doughty champions appeared at the appointed day. A long table stood in the upper part of the hall. On it lay the folios to be used in the fray. Dr. Raphall, a rotund little man with a black velvet skullcap on his head sat at the head of the table, and next to him Mr. Poznanski in full dress, stiff, cold, and self-satisfied. The chazan and the officers of the orthodox congregation sat at Raphall's side, while the officers of the reform congregation, with myself at the head, sat at Poznanski's side. The house was crowded with the adherents of both parties....Poznanski had read the proceedings of the rabbinical conferences, and writings of Jost, Geiger, Zunz, Holdheim, Solomon, Kley, and Mannheimer; besides, he still retained some Talmudical reminiscences from his early youth. Raphall ignored the German literature, and referred exclusively to the rabbinical codex of Maimonides. Poznanski cited Albo....No principle of procedure was established; no judges had been appointed. The debate was a kind of pilpul in a new form, but without basis. No especial acumen was displayed. Raphall was being worsted, for Poznanski was a skilled dialectician, and remained calm; while Raphall grew excited, and declaimed violently. Finally Raphall grew angry, and glowed with holy zeal. Instead of arguing, he began to catechise. He asked the public, and finally myself personally: "Do you believe in the personal Messiah? Do you believe in the bodily resurrection?" I have never refused to answer a direct question; therefore I answered Raphall's question with a loud and decisive No! This ended the drama. Raphall seized his books, rushed angrily out of the hall, followed by his whole party. He had apparently given up the fight. The reform party was satisfied with the result.

A few months later, Dr. Julius Eckman of Richmond accepted the Charleston pulpit and Poznanski retired permanently after thirteen years of valiant, contentions service, amid complimentary resolutions rendered officially by the congregation. He remained an active member of the congregation until he moved to New York some years later (147).

The Charleston community never recovered from the loss of Poznanski. If his tact and inherent kindness could not prevent the rift that kept the congregation split surely Eckman, who indulged in violent denunciations and "arraigned intellectual opinions on doctoral grounds" and his successor Dr. M. Mayer, a scholarly but vindictive man, could never hope to heal this raw and sensitive breach (148).

Of the two, Shearith Israel fared better because its members were in accord, and "in unity there is strength." They were fortunate in procuring ministers suited to their needs and moved along on a comparatively smooth keel. In the early 60's the great Civil War broke out consequenting a large migration from the Jewish community of Charleston.

Neither congregation having been particularly strong since the split, both were forced to cease activities before this additional drain on their resources and numbers. After the war, the two groups were reunited but the Jewish community had been so depleted as to render it of little importance in the history under discussion (149).

Only with the war did the reform effort subside. The dissolution of the "Society" did by no means mark the end of reform activities and progress. Nine years after the return to Beth Elohim, Leeser's call to establish an ecclesiastic authority over the country received this reply from Abraham Moise. "It is 'entirely at variance with the spirit and genius of our institution' and 'would it not be worse than idle for our congregation to send to Philadelphia delegates to meet in our congregation to send to Philadelphia delegates to meet in your convention, when it is well known that we are at present the only open and avowed reformers in the United States (150).' Unfortunately, the Charleston movement, though rich in experience and unbending in its efforts, ended abortively. 'Although the salient points of (its)...reform were repeated later...in America, it is readily conceded that the great influence

of this earlier movement was practically confined to Charleston and its vicinity. Einhorn, Wise, Merzbacher, Lillienthal, Felsenthal, Samuel Hersch and Samuel Adler, the pioneers of later reform, knew little or nothing of that which had preceeded in Charleston (151)." It can be said, however, that it was a genuine example of reform in Judaism reflecting in its constitution, creed and prayers the mood and spirit of this liberal land. Now, it would be well to explore the second outcropping of reform, one which maintains its influence and hegemony to this day.

CHAPTER V

HAR SINAI: THE INNOVATION LASTS

TO HAR SINAI

Three-quarters of a century ago
 The master pilots launched upon the sea
 A little craft; their steady glance and free
 Surveyed the waters they alone could know.

Full well they understood what lay before:
 The rocks of prejudice, the shoals of fate
 That often unsuspected, mark the fate
 Of goodly vessels ere they reach the shore.
 Tho' waves of opposition dashed their might
 Against the craft, it firmly held its course,
 And bravely battled with the lessening force
 That soon abandoned the unequal fight.

Unswervingly did Einhorn's guiding hand
 Steer steadily past dangerous rock and shoal;
 His eye undimmed upon the longed for goal:
 The light of Truth on yonder distant land.

Long since the master's hand has ceased to guide;
 Past rock and shoal, past fog and perilous storm,
 On tranquil waters floats the ship Reform,
 'Neath favored skies forever to abide,

-- Jennie Reizenstein.

December, 1918.

The second instance of American reform occurred, amazingly enough, in an area that had long been condemned because of its illiberal, anti-Jewish attitude. The earliest settlers of Maryland, the Calverts, were Roman Catholics who intended that the colony be an asylum for the persecuted members of their faith alone.

Being subjects of Protestant England, they were forced to allow Protestants as well as Catholics but were able to prevent the immigration of any who denied trinitarian Christianity. In 1649 a "toleration act" was passed which removed the possibility of any official toleration of Jews, for it provided that "no person in this province professing to believe in Jesus Christ shall in any way be troubled" but that any person who denied "Jesus Christ to be the son of God" should be punished by death and suffer the forfeiture of his property and goods (152).

Fortunately, the law was not observed with the same harsh tone its words suggested. Jews did slip into the colony and from the names listed in the Records of the Provincial Court of Maryland, there seems to have been an appreciable number carrying out their respective business endeavors (153). They were most discreet, however, "percolation rather than influx, and quiet rather than open profession of the faith seemed to distinguish the period (154)."

It is perhaps because of this laxity - only one case appears to have been brought to

(155)
 court - that Jews settled increasingly in Maryland and eventually were a community of appreciable size. The disabilities continued to slip away. By the end of the Revolutionary period, a new constitution had been cast by the Maryland legislature which included a broad declaration of rights, permitting the Jews to profess and practice their religion openly. They still were not able to hold state office unless they were willing to pronounce the required declaration of belief in Christianity (156).

As in every section of the United States, Jews moved into positions of importance in the commercial and public affairs of their area. Under the leadership of two such individuals, Solomon Etting and Jacob Cohen, Jr., the Jews of Maryland, chafing under this medieval disability, organized a determined drive which sent petitions to the legislature demanding constitutional amendments (157). Their efforts were not unrewarded; a group of prominent non-Jews rallied behind Thomas Kennedy and for eight years fought for the implementation of the "Jew Bill" abolishing the anti-Jewish laws (158). Finally, in 1826

an act was passed providing "that every citizen of this State professing the Jewish religion who shall be appointed to office of profit or trust shall, in addition to the required oaths, make and subscribe to a belief in a future state of rewards and punishments, instead of the declaration now required by the State (159)." This archaic profession is still in the statute books of Maryland.

It was shortly after this time that the first congregation was organized in Maryland's largest city - the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, later known colloquially as the "Stadt Schul (160)." The congregation was not organized until 1829, much later than communities of similar size throughout the country. Its tardy development is attributed to the sociological phenomenon that took place there. The vast majority of its Jewish settlers were penniless Germans who sought out the only means by which they, with their limited means and limited language resources, could earn a livelihood. They shouldered heavy packs of whatever merchandise they could purchase and travelled incessantly throughout Maryland and Virginia, allowing but little time in their home community of Baltimore for

the establishment of permanent institutions. Their process was slow and it took almost another decade before the second congregation, the Fell's Point congregation, was organized in 1838 (161). Three years later a permanent rabbi, Abraham Rice, was elected to the pulpit of the "Stadt Schul (162)."

At this time the entire Jewish congregation of Baltimore consisted of some two hundred families(163). Rice soon became the recognized spiritual head of the community. William Rayner, a shipmate of Rice's, when both of them sailed from Hamburg in 1840 on board the "Sir Isaac Newton," writes of the rabbi (164), "Rice was from Würzburg, Bavaria, a sincere, upright, honest man, true to his religious convictions but a zealot nonetheless..." The second Sabbath following his arrival the rabbi delivered a sermon at the Henry Street Synagogue in New York. In that sermon he stated that his mission in coming to America was "to establish the true orthodox faith in this country." His rigidity was unbending. Filled with holy zeal, he clamped a bigoted, uncompromising regime upon the community. If a Jew who did not rigidly observe the Sabbath was called to the Torah, the congregation was instructed not to respond to his "Berocha" with the usual "Amen(157)." Rice declared

such a benediction, uttered by one not sufficiently scrupulous in his Sabbath observances, was not acceptable to the congregation. Abuses piled one upon the other and individual members of the congregation writhed in frustrated anguish. The proverbial straw that broke through all restraint was consequented at the funeral of Jewish Jacob Ahrens, a member of the Masonic and Odd Fellow lodges (166). In those days, when Jews were first gaining a foothold on the social life of their non-Jewish neighbors, these non-sectarian lodges provided an excellent entrée and allowed them an opportunity to become integrated into the community; they were, therefore, of great importance. The lodge members attended the funeral and performed their customary ritual at the grave, thus paying their last respects to their departed friend. Rice was enraged. In his funeral address he denounced the practice, threatening darkly that where such a practice was repeated, he would refuse to officiate. Mr. Rayner recalls the alarm and distaste experienced by some of Ahrens' Jewish friends (167). "

"There were present at the funeral a number of Jews who were members of those lodges, who were very much startled at that threat. Thus it was, that a few Jewish men concluded that what threatened to become a Jewish hierarchy

in our midst should not be tolerated any longer."

This group immediately put their protest into active form.

The Har Sinai Verein

For the High Holiday season of 1842, a group of these men rented a large hall on Baltimore Street and Post Office Avenue and held their own services (168). There was a goodly attendance, many were present, undoubtedly out of curiosity, many more were sincere (169). Their efforts to obtain a Sefer Torah from one of the Orthodox congregations were of no avail and they were forced to read their Scriptural portion from an ordinarily bound Bible. Several reforms were introduced into the very first service; notably the Hamburg prayerbook and a parlor organ to accompany the hymns which were sung on that memorable occasion, the day of Rosh Hashonah (170). Two of the group, Joseph Simpson and A.T. Wachman, read the services and it was concluded that "altogether, the service was more decorous and elevating, and a decided improvement upon the orthodox ritual (171)."

Thus was born the Har Sinai Verein whose

avowed object was " to form a separate religious congregation, freed from surrounding influences, and introducing such reforms which were considered essential for its members (172)." It has been characterized by one of its strongest advocates as " being actually the first Jewish reform congregation in America (173)." This statement, of course, is founded more upon enthusiastic loyalty than scrupulous scholarship because Beth Elohim in Charleston was thriving at this time (174). It was, however, the first group to be organized as a reform congregation and to continue so without interruption until the present day. It is unfortunate that there is little data available on the important early works of the congregation's history. The records of that period have all been lost and the publications of that day and a few personal reminiscences serve as the sole record of the group's beginnings (175).

After the first holiday season, the Verein moved to the dwelling of Moses Hutzler, whose son provided one of the above-mentioned reminiscences, and in a large front room on the second floor held their regular Sabbath services (176). Max Sutro, a layman, one of the founding members, was appointed Lecturer, combining the duties of Preacher and Reader which had been assigned sepa-

rately in Charleston (177). The group thrived, membership increased steadily, and by 1843 a charter was applied for to the State authorities. This charter, incorporating the Har Sinai Verein Society, was passed at the December session of the Maryland legislature (178).

Shortly after this, the congregation outgrew the room in the Hutzler home and moved to three new sites, one rented hall following quickly upon the other as the congregation evidently grew in size (179). In July, 1845 a cemetery plot was acquired beyond the city limits and the first body was laid to rest there six months later (180). By this time enough copies of the Hamburg prayer-book had been obtained to serve the whole group and the Verein modelled itself after the German reformers.

An important milestone was passed when the Har Sinai Verein was able to purchase a permanent temple of their own. After the inconvenience of the many halls they had occupied, they entered their new edifice on High Street with much fanfare. The American and Commercial Daily Advertiser of Saturday, September 8, 1849 describes the momentous event, giving us an excellent insight into the form of the tri-lingual service (181).

"The services incident to the consecration of the beautiful Hebrew Temple took place yesterday afternoon, and were witnessed by a crowded assemblage, consisting both of Hebrews and Christians; among the latter we noticed several clergymen. The services, which were conducted in Hebrew, German and English, were opened with a prayer in German by the Reader to the Congregation, Mr. William Rayner. Then followed an appropriate hymn, also in German, by the choir, with the organ accompaniment, the whole led by Professor Klautcheck, of the Steyermarkische Band. At the close of this hymn a rapping was heard on the front door of the Temple, and on it being opened the committee appeared bearing the Sefer Torahs, or Books of Moses. As the bearers of the Law advanced up the aisle of the Temple they were met by the Reader, the pastor, Rev. Mr. Brown, and the President of the Congregation, Mr. Lewis Lauer, and by them conducted up to the altar. When the Torahs were deposited in the Ark by the Reader passages from Psalms in Hebrew were recited by him and the Congregation and choir alternately during the solemn ceremonies. The Books of the Law having been deposited in the Ark the Reader turned to the Congregation and pronounced the blessing in Hebrew, to which the choir responded. A hymn in German was

then sung by the choir, when the Torahs or sacred books were again taken from the Ark, the Reader and the choir alternately reciting in Hebrew during the ceremony. The Books borne by the Reader and others were then carried three times around the altar, at each circuit resting for a short time before the Ark, the choir and Congregation joining in singing in the meantime the first three verses from the eighty-fourth psalm. At the third circuit the Books were again placed in the Ark, and the curtains in front of it drawn. The Rev. Mr. Brown, pastor of the Congregation, then came forward and delivered the consecrating sermon in German, of the merits of which we are unable to speak from personal knowledge, though we heard it extolled by those who understood the language in which it was delivered as an erudite and eloquent discourse. At the close of the sermon a hymn in English, commencing with the words "How holy is this place," was sung in excellent style by the choir. The Congregation was then addressed in English by P.J. Joachison, Esq., of New York, after which an opportunity was afforded for the reception of donations in aid of the Temple. Then followed the usual evening service of the Sabbath, and the ceremonies were concluded with a hymn by

the choir. They were conducted under the superintendence of a committee consisting of Messrs. Lawrence Lowman, Samuel Dellevie and William Moser. The performance of the choir was highly creditable and added much to the interest and beauty of the services."

Sutro continued in his capacity as Lecturer and was aided by the Rev. Moritz Brown, who eventually succeeded Sutro, but at first served as congregational teacher, conducting a boarding school for the children of the congregation, teaching them German and Hebrew in full, day classes (182). The services of the High Street Temple days bore little resemblance to what we would call reform. The men still wore their hats and the women were still confined to their special section. The Sabbath and dietary laws were carefully observed and the traditional "Shabbas goy" still made his rounds igniting the Sabbath lights and fires (183).

From Germany came word of the rabbinical conferences and many members of the congregation were deeply impressed by some of their resolutions. Foremost among the reformers at the second conference was David Einhorn of Budapest who was fortunate in having a congregation which heartily endorsed

his proposals. Einhorn was convinced of the necessity for a shift from the traditional Sabbath to Sunday as the day for weekly religious services, and with such strong support was able to implement it. Evidently this shift in his own congregation was quite successful, for Einhorn later told of great crowds of Jews and Christians, as well, who flocked to services on Sunday morning. It began to appear, he jocularly observed, as if the prophetic prediction, "My house shall be a house of prayer for all nations (184)." was being fulfilled (185). The alarmed orthodox group appealed to the government for aid in arresting this movement, pointing out that it was not only undermining Judaism but also rendering Christianity a great harm by drawing Christians to the Temple. The government action was swift and severe; it closed the Temple and forbade the congregation to hold further services (186).

In Baltimore, the Sunday service seemed attractive to some of the Verein's members and in 1854 this group inaugurated a similar prayer-day shift. The less radical members felt this reform too severe and by vote of the majority of the board, the Temple was locked on the following Sunday morning. Undaunted, the group desiring the Sunday service,

rented one of the halls formerly used by the Verein in its pre-Temple days and with Dr. Morris Weiner serving as reader and preacher and Abraham Pollack as president, they conducted their own services. After six months of uninterrupted Sunday worship, they came to the realization that their removal from the Har Sinai Verein might endanger its existence and so they gave up their separate worship and returned to the fold (187).

In 1850 the Rev. Mr. Brown resigned his official position but remained available until 1855 when other duties demanded his time and the congregation thus deprived of his talents, was left without leadership. It was at this time that the group resolved to obtain a rabbi of repute who was an ardent exponent of the reform ideology for which they stood (188). Their history up to this point appears peaceful and successful in an over-all review such as this. To inspect their daily living would be to reveal great suffering. They were shunned by the community-at-large for their unpopular religious principles. Yet in spite of this social ostracism, which a minority group finds doubly distressing, they continued undaunted. There were encouraging signs which gave promise of a brighter future and the certain vindication of their stand.

The members of Beth Elohim had dedicated a lovely temple of their own in 1841; in New York, congregation Emanu-El had been organized dedicated to reform principles; Rabbi Isaac M. Wise of Albany was eloquently propounding the principles of reform in his frequent travels. Meanwhile, news from Budapest came that all efforts to reopen the Temple had failed and the congregation had well-nigh exhausted every possible avenue of appeal. The Har Sinai Verein resolved to invite the fiery rabbi, now languishing, idle, to fill their pulpit, and extended a formal invitation to that end. Einhorn accepted immediately and arrived in Baltimore on September 29, 1855 to begin his ministrations (189).

The Einhorn Period

David Einhorn has been characterized as the clear-headed, uncompromising and unfaltering standard-bearer of reform Judaism, who not merely gave positive and permanent shape to his principles, but embodied them in his life (190)!" He was born in Bavaria in 1809, blessed in his chance to develop his extraordinary talents most fully through fitting media. His father died early in his life but left his mother with a comfortable income so that she was able to provide books and teachers

to feed his natural hunger for scholarship. When nine he was admitted to the Rabbinical High School at Fürth and soon won the astonishment of both his instructor, Rabbi Wolf Hamburger, and his fellow-students, all of whom were much older than he, with his amazing skill at settling the sharp disputations of the Talmud. At the age of sixteen he was granted his smicha by the faculty which served as his Beth Din and which lauded the commendable fund of erudition he had amassed so early in life. He matriculated at the University of Warzburg, tasting the forbidden fruits of secular philosophy and mathematics and in four years, amidst further plaudits and amazement, received his Ph.D. (191).

What Hamburger believed to have been firmly implanted in the boy Einhorn, Schelling uprooted in the young man. He absorbed and promulgated the concepts of this new idol of Germany who sought to "entwine philosophy and religion, unifying the ideal and the real, so as to make seer and sage seekers after the One God (192)." Such radical beliefs were not bought cheaply. He learned quite early the discouraging price the reformer must be willing to pay. In spite of his eloquence and obvious comp-

tence, he met with nothing but refusals in his first ten, disappointing years in the rabbinate. Eventually " after hot discussions and even legal proceedings had been resorted to, Einhorn finally found a rabbinical office in the town of Hopstaden (193)." During his incumbency in that pulpit, he was able to attend the second great rabbinical conference at Frankfort on the Main in 1845 and by virtue of his lucid, compelling reasoning and scholarship, he was instantly recognized as one of the leaders of the conference (194).

Two years later he was elected to succeed the famous Dr. Samuel Holdheim, an erstwhile opponent of Einhorn's, though also in the reform ranks, who later became his loyal friend. As chief rabbi of the Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Einhorn's many talents were given free rein and his fame spread throughout the continent (195). In 1851 he was called to the great city of Budapest to serve its reform congregation. The strength of the orthodox group in Budapest has already been described for, as we read, they succeeded in closing Einhorn's Temple and frustrating his evolving efforts. During this period of enforced idleness, he wrote his "Principles of Mosaicism" in which he " endeavors to prove that the statutes of the Pentateuch are not unchangeable; that while the truths enunciated therein must remain and rule Israel everywhere, the ceremonial

code may be modified and altered, or even abrogated agreeably to times and circumstances (196)." By 1855 when he left Europe his reputation was already made, his fame spread, his position well-known.

Einhorn's vision of America contributed greatly to his cherished hopes for the development of a reform Judaism free from abuses and excrescences of outmoded rituals and concepts. Aware of the broad humanitarian spirit which throbbed through the pulse of the nation, he felt free to give full vent to the liberal stirrings that excited him. He sought to define the purpose and principles of the reform movement in America which he proposed, clearing what he considered the timid fretful thinking of the hesitant leaders of the movement in this country. Perhaps his unbridled flights of thought and theology were too high-flung for his day. Perhaps, as with Poznanski before him, the ideals he expressed, the reform he advocated may have been too advanced for even his fellow reformers (197). Such might have been the feeling of Wise, Merzbacher, and Lilienthal, it has been suggested (198). They united against him, fearful lest his impetuous surging rip asunder the still frail structure they were so painfully, purposefully erecting. The protracted struggle between Wise and Einhorn, the titans.

of early American reform, could have persisted so intently only for such reasons. Each had his sufficiency of personal aggrandizement; the East and West were divided to give each of them ample room to exercise his ego without a clash so fierce as was theirs. Idealists, such as they, who suffered so intensely and frequently and willingly for the implementation of the cause, would surely have put petty personal differences behind them for the greater good of American reform. We would like to believe their differences were fundamental and ideological and not personal. Wise was fearful of the structure he was erecting; Einhorn was ruthlessly uncompromising.

A few paragraphs from Einhorn's memorable inaugural address at Har Sinai will serve to show the fire this nineteenth century Elijah brought to earth to his own altar (199).

"In the development of our community we fear no Pharaoh on this sacred soil of religious liberty, no brute force which is used so often in the interest of a court or state religion - - where oaths and hearts are equally broken, where the prevailing religion and the masses clinging to it are alike denied the natural unfolding of their powers. Nor within our own fold is the indifference so great as to frustrate our efforts. The sacrifices you have already made to establish a nobler worship, your successful endeavors to lend, provisionally at least, a becoming garb to a religious service that has fallen in to such decay, and finally, the unanimity with which you extended the call to me to repair the breaches of our house - all this gives promise of gladsome and harmonious labor for the high aim we have in view . . .

The Law of God, with relation to man, consists like man himself, the child of God, of a perishable body and of an imperishable spirit.

The body is to be only the servant of the spirit and must pass away as soon as the spirit ceases to dwell in it.... We have here the very essence of the covenant between God and man which is binding for all times, in all places, and on all peoples.... All other divine ordinances are only signs of this covenant, a fence and hedge around the eternal and universal Law; now recalling holy memories, now proclaiming solemn convocations, and now again urging a wholesome separation from heathen customs. By their very nature they cannot always and everywhere remain the same, as there is nothing in them of an abiding or universal character. Not that man will ever be able to do entirely without objective signs; but their mode and degree must conform to the different stages of civilization, to national, industrial, and social conditions -- in short, to all that is implied by the subjective and objective life of man. The religious idea can no more be held rigidly to the same form through the whole course of its development, from the first blossoming to its full ripeness, than the fruit in the bud, than the butterfly in its chrysalis. And the same alteration that was imperative in the developing process of the religious idea of the Jew in the course of its own growth is also demanded by the Jew's wanderings through the world, by the changes in the stream of life flowing around him....

Our religious history, in fact, shows a transformation of the Biblical religious forms to such an extent that in the past two thousand years by far the largest number of them have completely passed out of Jewish life. True, our pious forefathers went to great pains to keep themselves from rejection of these forms from which the spirit had fled; they have mourned over the death of these usages as though Judaism itself had received a mortal wound; and they endeavored to console themselves with the vain hope that they were only seemingly dead. "No," they said, the glorious house of David has not forever sunk into the dust, nor the wonderful Temple with its sacrifices and priests and Levites; neither has Israel been cast out of his father's house. A time will come when the Lord will raise up again the fallen tent of David, gather the scattered tribes of Jacob in their ancient habitation, and restore the sanctuary of Zion in full glory." But the lament and the hope alike rest on untenable ground, springing from the attempt to equalize or, more correctly, to confound the religious body with the religious spirit. It led them to regard both as equally immutable.

Instead of seeking to refine and exalt the body through the spirit, they tried to coarsen the spirit into mere body, applying their standard of ceremonialism even to the sphere of morality. The voices of the prophets had long been hushed who, with indefatigable zeal, proclaimed the spirit of the Law of God as the banner of Israel, around which all the people would one day rally, by which the pomp of ceremony -- sacrifices, fasts, all -- would once and for all be rendered useless and unavailing. At the time of the destruction of the second Temple they seemed to call out: "Be comforted! The ceremony is now dead, but out of the grave has arisen the unfettered spirit ready to soar in flight over the whole earth. From the ashes of the Temple of an isolated Israel will gradually arise that mighty edifice for all humanity of which the Lord has said, " Mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." Out of the ruins of Judah there shall come forth a Messianic world. Often will you cement the stones with your heart's blood; but that glorious goal is worthy of these sacrifices, and such sacrifices are more precious than a thousand rams and goats." ..

Judaism has arrived at the stage where it must part company with dead and obsolete ceremonies, if it means to keep the Jews within the fold or prevent their moral decay. In consequence of the irresistible stress of everyday life there is a growing antagonism between the activities of the outside world and our religious convictions -- a condition that is gradually robbing conscience of its disciplinary character. No greater evil than the continuance of such a state of affairs could befall Israel. On the one hand, we are wont daily to violate the weightiest ceremonial laws, though as Israelites we acknowledge them as binding; on the other, we give expression in our prayers to pious hopes and aims to which there is not the slightest response in our hearts; which are moreover, in flat contradiction with the real spirit of the Sinai Law. It is inevitable that, little by little, our religious sensibilities must either become completely dulled or find expression in other beliefs. In the face of this antagonism, experience has shown that all persuasion and pleading in favor of tradition -- to galvanize dead forms into life -- is ineffective. Even the praiseworthy attempts to bring back something of the old charm by harmonizing our public service, externally, with modern life are futile and will remain so, because at bottom they only serve to hide the decay within.

We have here a flaw which goes sheer down to the very heart of the Jewish faith, which no specious palliation can remedy. The remedy must be thoroughgoing. The evil which is gradually draining our strength and sapping our life must be plucked up by the roots. This we can accomplish only by recognizing whatever is decayed and untenable in our religious life and then, in the name of our faith, by solemnly freeing ourselves from its authority. Thus alone we may effect for ourselves and for our children the liberation of Judaism if we are to prevent a defection from Judaism....

We should at once set to work to remove the debris - not however, to destroy, but to build up; not in a spirit of vanity or self-exultation, nor without that piety which rightfully belongs to holy relics, but with deep reverence for our sanctuary and an ardent desire to shield it from threatening perils. Our repudiation of obsolete religious ideas and usages should bring us with increased and undivided attachment to that real inwardness of our faith which is affected by neither time nor space, which will still endure "when the earth shall wax old like a garment and the heavens pass away like smoke." No, we have no faith to offer that is of our own making, no Judaism tricked out in the approved fashion, no mere polishing of old Jewish customs, no aberrations into a formless void. On the contrary, we want a clean-cut, sharply defined Judaism which, rooted in majestic Sinai, shall yet crown its four thousand years of history by blossoming anew and bringing forth glorious fruit."

A few weeks after his arrival in Baltimore, a conference was held in Cleveland, Ohio. It had been called by six rabbis who acted as a "Provisory Sanhedrin of American Rabbis" in order to consider among other things "a regular and permanent Synod or Sanhedrin of American Rabbis (200)." One can imagine the delicate manipulation Wise and Lienthal must have worked in order to bring their orthodox opponents together in order even to consider joint action. Evidently both groups, orthodox and reform, agreed to compromise for the sake of a possible unity because they were all most eager

to develop a single, regulative body for American Judaism. A set of resolutions was passed which showed how much the reformers had to sacrifice of their convictions for the sake of this hoped-for solidarity (201).

"The Bible, as delivered to us by our fathers, and as now in our possession, is of immediate divine origin and the standard of our religion.

The Talmud contains the traditional legal and logical exposition of the Biblical laws which must expounded and practiced according to the comments of the Talmud.

The resolutions of the Synod in accordance with the above principles are legally valid."

This was a tenuous beginning to a possible union of American Israelites. Einhorn was not in attendance at the Conference. Whether he knew of the compromise that was evidently being effected is not known. He tore into the Talmudic authority admission of the resolutions with blind fury contending that

Talmudic enactments cannot be made binding on the consciences of modern Jews and that any Synod would eventually develop into a hierarchy which is basically contrary to the fundamental principles of Judaism (202). His adoring congregants followed his lead, other advocates were gained (203); the Synod was killed. So was this opportunity of creating a single, universally accepted body by the Jews of America. Whether Einhorn was justified in his uncompromising attitude, whether he was aware of the consequence of his action will ever remain a moot point. Right or wrong, justified or not, such was the character of the man and his zeal was applied with similar intensity in every avenue of his endeavor.

The "Sinai"

Einhorn was eager to air his beliefs and impart his ideas to all the Jews of the country. He needed an advocate, an organ to serve as a sounding-board. In February, 1856 he published the first issue of "Sinai" which continued to appear on a monthly basis for seven years (204). Its language was German, Einhorn never became Americanized in his mode of expression; its motto was "My brethren do I seek." His desire to win adherents to his views never flagged. In the pages of his newspaper he presented his gr^at theological contributions to reform. As Wise was the builder, Einhorn was the educator, teaching the leaders and often the laity the course they were to follow. It was from these writings that much of our present reform theology has been derived, for it was here that Einhorn expounded, modified and developed the theological structure of nineteenth century American reform. Though written in ponderous German sentences, with characteristically involved language structure, he nevertheless brought through the pages of the "Sinai" a profound, clear-sighted, latter-day development of Geiger's

beginnings adapted to the needs of American Judaism as he conceived them.

In its pages he published his sermons and quarrels, his theological disputes and polemic disputations. Holdheim remained a regular contributor as long as he lived; Samuel Adler and Bernard Felsenthal gave him support in its columns. His ~~parent~~ opponents were castigated; his own ideas glorified in the close German print of the "Sinai." It was a vibrant, clarion voice that sang of growth and life in the face of death-dealing opposition. Its influence was felt in every major American community and in Germany as well - - a militant advocate for the cause of reform.

The Prayerbook

Probably the greatest, positive contribution of Einhorn's was the "Olatz Tamid", his prayerbook for "Israelitish Reform Congregations," which first appeared in May 1856 and achieved its full form in 1858 (205). This work was begun during his ministry in Mecklenburg-Schwerin and during his forced idleness in Budapest. Not until he reached these shores did the invigorating air of freedom set wings to the flights of his inspiration prompting the full beauty of this work. In a land wherein the

Jew enjoyed great happiness and looked forward to an even greater future rather than pine longingly but futilely after a land that had once granted them glory, Einhorn was stimulated to great poetical and religious heights, filling the volume with prayers that glowed with Divine inspiration. He followed the outlines of the ancient liturgy as it had been outlined by Zunz but cloaked this ancient form with singing, stirring devotions of of modern vintage and intent (206).

Wise, too, had compiled a prayerbook, the famous "Minhag America" in which he revised the ritual, much as had the authors of the Hamburg prayerbook, Meyer of Stuttgart (206), Geiger (207) and Merzbacher (208) in their respective works. They had, each of them, deleted references to the sacrificial cult and the Messiah, expunged expressions violently hostile to heretics and foes of Israel. Einhorn was more daring, thorough, and original. His prayerbook was cut anew from the fresh-spun cloth of American reform. It retained the best elements of the ancient ritual, phrasing them for the modern Jew in the sweet accents of the Psalmist and Prophet and medieval poet. It is little wonder that it was so readily and eagerly adopted by the German Jews of Baltimore, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis and Philadelphia (209).

In his preface (210) he pointed out the one great, glaring fault of the other prayerbooks, one which he carefully avoided. The others had painstakingly removed most of the objectionable features of the old liturgy but had failed to replace them with new thoughts. Herein lies the strength of the "Olath Tamid." There was no ambiguity, or compromised phrase, for every falsehood accepted in prayer, the preface contended, was blasphemy before the Lord on high. His prayerbook revealed not a negative set of deletions but a positive series of additions to Judaism. In glowing phrases he added to the age-old sections of the ritual which he retained, positive pronouncements of the new theological concepts of reform. Its lofty prayers expressed the spirit of the ancient Jew as he lives again in the new age. It provided loyalty and reverence for the past thus filling the present with body and substance. It reincarnated the glory of days gone by in the promise of a new day for both Israel and humanity.

It was understandably slow in gaining wide-spread acceptance because of Einhorn's insistence upon German as the language of expression. To those for whom German was a ready tongue, as has been mentioned before, the thought was pleasing; those who found German dif-

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man difficult clamored for a translation. Samuel Adler, lifelong friend and staunch supporter of Einhorn, warmly recommended the "Olath Tamid" to others but his own congregation in New York retained the English version of the Merzbacher version. Not until 1896 when Dr. Emil G. Hirsch's glorious translation appeared, was the much-needed English version provided. In 1894 the Central Conference of American Rabbis published its second volume of the Union prayerbook and based it directly on the "Olath Tamid" and thus those inspired lines found perpetuity and have served to arouse and strengthen untold worshippers in the reform congregations of the country. (211).

Einhorn remained in Baltimore until his outspoken views on slavery forced him to flee from that hotbed of secession and on April 22, 1861 he and his family were smuggled into carriages and slipped out of the city (212). He made his way to York and eventually to Philadelphia where he served as rabbi of Keneseth Israel whose reform tendencies had prompted its joining with the "Reform Gesellschaft" of that city in 1856 and organizing a reform congregation (213).

Har Sinai Congregation

Not until December, 1862 was a successor to Ein-

horn elected. Dr. Solomon Deutsch of Keneseth Israel of Philadelphia received the call and accepted, serving as rabbi until 1874 (214). During this period a new charter was granted by the Maryland legislature on November 3, 1873 changing the name to Har Sinai Congregation. The charter contained the usual technical details referring to the means of self-perpetuation, property, and corporation dicta but its first article is unique and merits our inspection (215).

"The object of this corporation is to perpetuate the cause of true Judaism in all its essential purity by impressive and solemn prayers and comprehensive language, by the disuse of all superannuated forms, and by observing all such which, whether ancient or modern, tend to promote the true principles of Judaism."

On April of the same year, the congregation joined in the happy task of dedicating a new synagogue which it had purchased on Lexington Street. With suitable fanfare, an overflowing attendance participating in the beautiful ceremony which converted it from a church into a synagogue (216). Several additional reforms were worked within its walls, Dr. Deutsch continued to wear a cap and gown as had Einhorn before him but discarded the talith that had been worn by his predeces-

sor. The Einhorn prayerbook was in full use by this time and the prayers were read in German and Hebrew (217). The sermon was also preached in German so that no English was heard in its service for at least another five years (218).

One Sabbath morning a conspicuous sign appeared in the forehall of the temple which read, "The men are ordered to remove their hats upon entering the Temple. By order of the President." Deutsch was annoyed and his displeasure was shared by many of his congregation. He stormed into the pulpit, when the time for his sermon came, still wearing his hat and denounced this proposed innovation vigorously. Several meetings were held by the board and finally a committee was sent in the attempt to persuade him to change his views. It was signally successful and it was finally concluded that men would no longer wear hats in ~~Har~~ Sinai. Eventually the separation of men and women was ended and family pews became a Har Sinai institution as they had long since become in reform congregations throughout the country(219).

Conservative in adopting physical reforms yet foremost in the promulgation of theological innovations was Har Sinai. In its turbulent infancy, through the vehicle of the stormy petrel

who led it through its formative years, Har Sinai articulated and implemented the ideological basis of classic reform upon which the structure of latter American reform has been built. With its feet anchored in the very beginnings of the movement and its head still erect in our midst, it stands as a monument to the lasting quality of reform and remains a living refutation of its nineteenth century critics who branded reform as ephemeral and insincere.

*Not dead
as to the future
of the law: it lives*

Chapter VI

Emanu-El: The Laity Implements Reform

"If all ceremonies could have been life-giving and all Jewish concepts invigorating there would have been no necessity for reform. Nothing is so pleasing as a symbol where a moral can be deduced, or where the concurring act will point an ethical lesson. No conception of Judaism that would lead to a better life was criticised.

"Just such regulations that were not binding, because of Israel's altered condition or by reason of their loss of ethical force... were attacked. Israel could not lead a double life, and the sacrifice of the letter to the spirit... was not only essential, it was obligatory."

--Meyer Stern on the occasion of
Emanu-El's Fiftieth Anniversary.

What came to be the wealthiest and, for a period, the most influential reform congregation in the country arose in the very stronghold of orthodoxy, New York City. Prior even to the beginnings of this congregation, there were stirrings of reform in the great metropolis. Mordecai Emanuel Noah was called upon to deliver the dedicatory address at the pompous ceremonials inaugurating the new Mills Street Temple of congregation Shearith Israel in 1818 (220). He had heard these murmurings for change and warned his aud-

ience lest they join forces with those who spoke such blasphemy and who would, if their principles were ever activated, "impair the essence and beauty of the Jewish religion." Noah, the playwright, author, diplomat and dreamer (221), spoke with earnest conviction in order that his audience might be heedful. He soon forgot his own words for in 1834, Noah, himself, advocated a refinement of the service, recommending the introduction of English prayers and the inclusion of instrumental music (222). It must be stated, however, that he did not even consider the dissipation of rabbinical authority. Upon the birth of the first reform congregation in New York, he was so shocked when he learned of its denial of rabbinical authority, he returned to his more conservative thinking as expressed in his address of dedication. "Reformers create schisms," he wrote in horror, "and promote divisions besides impairing the unity of faith." He felt that any renovations should be implemented by the rabbinical authorities rather than by antagonistic layman. Either the rabbis removed the admittedly needless repetition of the prayer-service or this needless padding would remain. Never must the hegemony of the clergy be threatened (223).

It is only natural to wonder if Isaac Harby might not have had some influence upon Noah. Though no reference has been found indicating any acquaintanceship between the two men, yet Harby, who came to New York in 1828, probably travelled in the same literary circle as did Noah (224). It seems unlikely that two such talented, forceful personalities, two such devoted, vocal Jews, two such reknowned personages should not have met each other, residing in the same city, at the same time, as they did. One might reasonably conjecture that Noah's change in mood as expressed by his statements in 1843 might not have been the result of Harby's influence.

The early stirrings of reform, feared by Noah, never developed. It was not until a group of young, German immigrants were drawn together by their liberal cultural and religious views that any permanent body was evolved. These young men did not join any of the existing congregations in New York for they had evidently tasted the fruit of reform and were unwilling to partake of the flaccid religious nourishment offered them in the city.

They organized themselves in 1844 to form a "Cultus Verein" and met frequently to discuss the pertinent issues of the day (225). As they slowly became acclimated to the new environment to which they had come, they felt obliged to aid succeeding groups of their countrymen become better fitted for their eventual roles as American citizens. At first, they were organized solely for this purpose, "...questions of ritual being entirely tabooed (226)." But after a period of development, they rejected this self-imposed abnegation and published this circular, bearing the names of William Renau, Dr. Bruckman, J. Meyer, Isaac Rosenbourgh and J. Mulhauser (227).

To the Friends of Religious Progress:

Convinced of the eternal truths of the religion of Israel, admonished by sentiments of sacred duty, encouraged by the successful example of their enlightened brethren in faith, the undersigned have concluded to form a Jewish Cultus Society, the object of which shall be to introduce an improved worship, in accordance with our times, thereby to elevate the religious and moral culture of their co-religionists.

We would occupy a position of greater respect amongst our fellowcitizens of different faith and would better deserve of it, if in faithful attachment to the precepts of our father, we would remove all the abuses and desecrations from our sacred cultus, and use in public worship the customs handed down in their original venerable simplicity, without the confusing ceremonies added by later periods.

It would have a salutary effect upon and be productive of true devotion. Our growing generation would become more attached to a faith, the customs of which are instinct with thought and veneration; their hearts would glow warmer for its convincing truths; their minds would then be in harmony with the sense of its lesson and the sacred prescripts of our religion would be observed with more exactness, if its confessors as true worshipers of the One God would occupy a position of respect before the community.

Yours, therefore, pious and educated Israelites on whom shines the light of truth and knowledge, is the duty to help in furthering with a strong hand the sacred cause of our religion and the welfare of our brethern; you are called upon to take charge of this sacred cause, and to assist it manfully to the honor and glory of God.

All those, therefore, who desire to join the Cultus-Verein which is already enjoying a promising growth, will send in their names to the undersigned directors.

After eighteen months of earnest endeavor in behalf of the general Jewish community, the group, with a reg-

ular membership of thirty-three, decided to organize themselves into a regular congregation. On April 6, 1845, gathered for such a purpose, they formerly entitled their group "Emanu-El and resolved to hold regular divine services, altered so as to meet the needs and demands of their congregation. The Reverend Dr. Leo Merzbacher became their rabbi and Mr. G.M. Cohn was to serve as cantor, both men to receive two hundred dollars per annum. In a private dwelling on the corner of Grand and Clinton Streets, a large room was rented and furnished to serve as a synagogue (228).

The innovations introduced by the young Emanu-El group were scant and slight. The old prayerbook was still employed with the elimination of the "Yekum Pirkum," "Ezehu Mehomom" and a few other slight modifications. The women were compelled to remain in the rear of the room while the men occupied the front benches, still wearing their hats and "tal-aysim." It becomes apparent that decorum rather than innovation was the desire^{desire} of the group. The noisy sale of mitzvohs was eliminated but the "Mi Sheberachs" were still offered (229). An all male choir, with no instrumental accompaniment, was instituted in order to help beautify the form of the service (230).

Later a German hymnal was introduced to allow those to whom the Hebrew was unintelligible an comprehensible part in the service and a sermon designed to educate the group in the fundamentals of Judaism became an integral part of succeeding Emanu-El services. The dietary laws were maintained, even on the Passover and the Succah was erected yearly to commemorate the Feast of Tabernacles. Only a few piyyutim were eliminated but the dhant of the hazzan continued to intone the otherwise full service (231).

The group was much less radical at this time than its detractors would have the contemporary world believe. Called the "Mendelssohnian Society of New York" by one (232), they were reported as " a society or congregation having in view a reform a la mode de Hamburg, has been established.... Whether the members are numerous or not we cannot tell, but they must be for the most part persons but lately arrived in this country, who have brought with them the spirit of 'young Germany' alias 'experiment in politics and religion.' We cannot say we wish them success if they are really in earnest to reform the mode of public worship...."

Undeterred by its detractors, the congregation grew rapidly. By 1847, two years after its formation, the group was able to purchase their own building, a former church on Christie Street. With the new house of worship came new forms of worship. The triennial cycle of the Torah reading was introduced replacing the one year cycle. A new list of piyyutim was printed further eliminating many of the outmoded, barely-intelligible paragraphs of the prayerbook. Neither the Bar Mitzvah boy nor any of the laity were to read from the Torah, only a professional, elected by the congregation was allowed thereafter to perform that function (233).

The musical aspects of the service were extended and beautified the following year. German hymnals were printed and put into use, an organ was installed and an organist engaged so that instrumental music beautified the vocal offerings of the cantor and choir. Other reforms were introduced during the seven year period at the Christie Street Temple. The Succah was abolished against Merzbacher's wishes and he was compelled, by Board ruling, to submit any

of his proposed reforms in suggestion form to the committee in charge before seeking their implementation (234).

Another church building was purchased in 1854 and the growing congregation moved to its imposing new structure on Twelfth Street (235). Here, at last, the family pew was introduced, the upper gallery had separate women from their menfolk in the Christie Street Temple, and the following year a new prayerbook, the "Sefer Tefilah" was compiled and arranged by Merzbacher and introduced into the congregational service (236). Hebrew remained the lingua franca of the service with only one German prayer, read after the Torah service, inserted. Music played an increasingly greater role in the service. German hymns were sung before the sermon and at the end of the service. The choir, now extended to include women but still allowing only Jews (237), contributed a great deal more to the ritual. The cantorial chanting was eliminated and the hazan now either read or sang the prayers assigned to him. There was a noticeable shift of participation from the congregation to the professional participants, fostering an unhealthy emphasis on the position of the minister and forcing the worshipper

into a more passive role. A contemporary writer, sympathetic to reform notices this tendency and is disturbed by it. Reporting on a service he has witnessed at Emanu-El, he writes (238), "The minister and reader do all the praying, the organ and choir perform the music, the visitors appear as mere dummies, none of these hearty responses so significant to Jewish worship are heard in this new worship, in fact the visitor acts no part but that of an auditor."

One of the heated subjects of debate among the various members of the congregation was the decision to abolish the second day of the pilgrimage festivals. In April 1854, the matter was debated at a general meeting of the congregation but was tabled until the fall because no decision could be reached. When the High Holidays came about, a decision had been reached, the extra days were abolished and in addition, at this time (239), the sounding of the shofar was modified, hereafter requiring less blasts than had been formerly sounded (240).

Merzbacher journeyed to the Cleveland Conference in 1855, but did not arrive until after the platform had been promulgated (241). Einhorn's vigorous protest against the publicized statement of the Conference found ready accord among the members of Emanu-El. The Board, following Einhorn's advice, did not accept the statement as binding upon the congregation (242). Einhorn was subsequently invited to preach at Emanu-El and did so with "eloquence and power both in language and argument" for which he was accorded a public resolution of thanks and presented with a silver service plate (243). Isaac Mayer Wise had also addressed the congregation on one of his tours in the interest of Zion College (244). His efforts did not meet with similar success for the institution was forced to close shortly after its inception because of the lack of funds (245). There were repeated requests from the congregation for sermons in the language of the land. Merzbacher did speak in English on occasions and a committee was appointed to secure an English lecturer because the rabbi was in poor health and could not be overtaxed with such assignments (246).

On Shemini Atzereth, 1856, Merzbacher ascended the pulpit preached as usual, blessed the congregation, and on his way home was stricken and never spoke again. His funeral "was the most affecting and imposing that had ever been seen in this city(247)." After the period of mourning, the congregation set itself to the serious task of electing another spiritual leader to occupy the congregational pulpit. Finally, after much consideration, an invitation was extended to Dr. Samuel Adler of Worms, circuit rabbi of Alzey, who accepted and preached his inaugural sermon on the Sabbath before Passover, 1857. Although Adler was all that the congregation had hoped for, there was still a growing desire to hear the venacular in the pulpit. In April, a resolution was officially passed empowering a committee with the responsibility of procuring a lecturer. Arrangements were made with Mr. Raphael J. DeCordova, an accomplished and well-known speaker, who was to address the congregation on alternate weeks after the close of the service (248). Though DeCordova was compelled to consult with the rabbi before selecting the subject or form of his address, there was, nonetheless some discord between Adler, and some of the members of the

congregation who, like him, felt the lecturer ought to be a theologian, and DeCordova. Complaints were made that his addresses were not of a particularly religious character but dealt with secular subjects. Because of the delightful manner of his presentation, he was reelected in 1861 but three years later his term was allowed to expire, the demand for a theologian having become strong (249).

Adler's regime saw innumerable reforms and radical innovations included into the form of the congregation service. On June 5, 1859, he submitted a report, at the request of the Board, recommending the removal of hats in the synagogue during DeCordova's lecture (250). Unfortunately, the minutes of the Trustees meetings of this period are missing so that many of the details of this controversy remain unsolved. Adler, we know, eventually allowed heads to be uncovered during his sermon as well as during the lecture but many members of the congregation, in the face of fierce opposition, sought to have them removed throughout the entire service. The matter was the subject of much controversial discussion and then tabled for six months, perhaps to allow tempers to cool. During this interim period some removed their head-covering during the sermon as was allowed, while others, in protest, kept their hats on (251).

During this strained period, a dinner was given in behalf of the proposed orphan asylum. Upon the completion of the meal, the "benching" was recited and the majority present, in accordance with the prevalent custom, donned their hats. Adler and his congregation refused to do so. A near riot ensued (252). Once established, the reformers would not compromise their reforms.

In the midst of this continuing deviation from orthodoxy, it was surprising to learn that Adler, a "kohen" reintroduced "duchan" giving the special priestly benediction at the close of the holiday service (253). This was the exception, the movement away from traditional observances continued. The hurried, unsympathetic sometimes burdensome customs which surrounded the death of a congregant were alleviated. An abbreviated three-day period of mourning replaced the seven-day "shevah." The mourner was absolved from "keriah" and the awkward compulsion to remove his shoes. The hasty burial was not only frowned upon but forbidden and a twenty-four hour period of waiting had to precede the interment. The body of the deceased was similarly not to be removed from the bed with unseemingly haste, not until six hours after the deceased had been pronounced dead, was removal allowed (254).

A somewhat hazy departure from the strict observance of the holidays is discussed with reference to a solicitation for contributions to the orphan asylum of a "yom tov." Adler permitted the subscriptions to be written on that day. Some of the congregants hesitated before writing and thus desecrating the holiday; others hastily did so out of shame, not wishing to be considered unreformed; still others refused outright (255). The traditions of orthodox had not been completely discarded as yet but by 1860 a whole era and evolution of reform had been originated and crystalized in the fifteen years of Emanu-El's history. Some of the reforms had attracted members of other congregations; others had alienated members of Emanu-El, causing their resignation as they sought less radical houses of worship. Its membership shifted, but always grew steadily, fortunately for the congregation always gaining people of affluence and influence thus enhancing Emanu-El's prestige and status (256).

Throughout this period, the Merzbacher prayerbook remained in use. Adler revised it, shortening its form, but the same book withstood the competition of Einhorn's

"Olath Tamid" and Wise's "Minhag America" and remained the sole vehicle for Emmanu-El's prayer-service for many decades.

The Radical Laity of Emanu-El

One cannot help but notice, in reviewing the position of Merzbacher and Adler, the strong, almost dominant role played by the laymen of Emanu-El throughout its early history. Often they led, and the rabbis followed, or they suggested and the rabbis complied. Their views were often more radical than those of the rabbis and maintaining a powerful hold over congregational affairs, as the Emanu-El Board did, they exerted a considerable influence on the intensity and acceleration of reform innovations in the congregation.

Though Merzbacher was radical in theory, he would advocate only those reforms for which he felt his were prepared. His plan for implementing a reform well considered and would have been the absolute yardstick had he had his way. He first demanded that the rabbi investigate the custom to be deleted to ascertain whether it was of Mos-
ianic origins and whether it had religious value for the

present day. Further, he insisted that the sensitivity of any minority of the congregation, who might still wish to see the custom continued, be considered. If its origin and present value were not such as to befit its retention, and no minority were offended by its dismissal, then it was to be submitted to the congregation for their verdict. The laymen of Emanu-El were willing to assign Merzbacher to the task of determining the origin of the custom under examination but all other considerations they ignored, considering neither the sensitivity of any minority or the evaluation of the rabbi. And they were powerful enough to implement those reforms they deemed fitting (257). In the early days of the congregation, a committee of Trustees voted on any proposed changes. The new constitution of 1854 provided that the trustees should present the problem to the congregation-at-large in an open meeting for a decision. "It would appear," one writer observed, "that the minister, on the whole was more conservative than the laymen, wished to restrain the onrushing progress of reform, but was pulled along by the tide created by the radical lay leaders (258)."

Merzbacher was overruled when he advocated the retention of the Succah, though a minority in the congregation shared his views (259). He also wanted the congregants called to the Torah on the High Holidays but the Board had abolished all aliyahs and refused to restore the practice even on the special season (260). So strong were the demands of the lay leaders that Merzbacher and his opposition was trampled asunder. So completely was he ignored that a campaign was even underway to declare his position vacant, though it must be admitted he was suffering in the last stages of tuberculosis at the time, and when a question of Jewish practice arose, it was suggested that books on the subject be purchased so that an investigation take place, rather than calling in the rabbi for consultation. Merzbacher was not considered incompetent nor disliked, the "cleavage occurred over radical reforms... Merzbacher had refrained from going far enough (261)."

Adler's fate was little better. When asked to render a favorable report on the hat problem, Adler suggested that hats might be removed during the secular sermon, but

that "old men", really those members who objected to remaining bare-headed in Temple, might keep theirs on. The Board would not hear of this compromise and eventually even abolished the wearing of the hats during the services altogether (262).

In 1860, the rabbi was allowed a slightly more significant role when a by-law was introduced which granted him the power of veto in matters of ritual reform. No new measure could be passed, however, unless it was sponsored by the Ritual committee and approved by the Board. It read as follows (263):

"No important change or alteration of the Ritual of the Congregation shall be made or any new form adopted unless such alteration or amendment be recommended by the Ritual Committee,, proved by the minister or Rabbi and the Board of Trustees."

"Sefer Tefilah"

In the matter of the prayerbook revision, Merzbacher was given a free hand. Whether it was because he took a

more radical attitude in this area or whether the laymen recognized their incompetence for such an undertaking is not known. Merzbacher's was the second of the four early reform prayerbooks but the first to win wide success. Only "The Sabbath Service" of the Reformed Society of Israelites which appeared ~~early~~ in Charleston preceded it (263). The preface declares the purpose of the volume (264),

"first, to take a historical retrospect of the liturgy.
second, to view the causes of dissatisfactions and complaints.
third, to look also at the different reforms in their general application and success."

It was a remodification of the old prayerbook with the numerous repetitions carefully deleted, the unintelligible piyyutim mostly eliminated and the prayers removed which applied to a political and social position under which the Jews no longer suffered. Probably foremost, above even these logical considerations was his desire to short-

on the lengthy, well-nigh intolerable service. To achieve this, he greatly reduced the "Psuke D'Zimra" and abolished the Tefilah Lachash, merging it with the Tefilah BeKol. The entire Mussaf service was taken out, but the Shachrit and Arvit prayers were retained in their entirety. Merzbacher did not accept the Hamburg principle of rendering some of the prayers in the vernacular. Instead, he kept the entire prayer service in Hebrew, but added an English translation alongside, so that the worshipper might follow the meaning of the Hebrew prayers (265).

Adler, when he worked his revision of the "Sefer Tefilah" in 1860 retained the basic foundation which Merzbacher had prepared, but deleted additional portions. He removed selections from both the "Shachrit" and "Arvit" services which Merzbacher had left intact and further eliminated sections of the "Psuke D'Zimra." The ideological pattern which Merzbacher advocated was accepted in toto by Adler and all mention of the sacrifices, the return to Palestine and the election of Israel were similarly avoided. Adler, even more radical than Merzbacher, also removed any references to the resurrection of the

dead and eliminated not only mention of the Messianic era for the Jews alone, as had the original editor, but also the concept of the personal Messiah (266).

The "Sefer Tefilla" held a middle course between the more radical "Olat Tamid" of Einhorn and the "more conservative" "Minhag America" of Wise, both of which appeared on the scene at a later time, serving as influence not only on *Emanu-El* but guiding other reform congregations in the country as well.

In *Emanu-El*, we see the influence of the interested layman upon the development of reform. While both the Charleston and Baltimore reform movements were instigated by laymen, their eventual development was directed by their ministers. In *Emanu-El*, the rabbi played a secondary role merely aiding in the implementation of reforms promulgated by the laity.

Chapter VII.

Sinai: The Classic Example

"There is a time to tear down and a time to build up. Thus speaks the holy book imbued with the spirit of God. Our age, in as far as it concerns itself with Jewish religious life, is evidently intended rather to build up than to tear down. But what shall be built up, what shall be constructed anew? The inner, deep-seated belief in God, the moral sense in all the relations of life, the attachment to and love for Judaism, the teaching of Moses freed of all heathenism and foolishness; with this must be combined the excision of all statutes and observances intended for other times, places and conditions."

--Bernard Felsenthal in "Kol Kore Bamidbar"--

The development of reform in Chicago affords us an excellent opportunity to observe the gradual deviation from orthodoxy and allows us to trace this pattern of reform in one of its earliest and most clear-cut manifestations in this country. The young, liberal elements of the congregation attempted to work out adaptations from within but, finally, despairing of producing any wholesome, permanent reform in the parent group, organized a society in which to order their thinking and direct their efforts., eventually breaking away completely to form a congregation of their own.

First, we shall trace the evidences of reform as they appeared intermittently in Kehillat Anshe Amaariv, the oldest congregation in Chicago and the entire northwest area of the

United States (2604). Growing up with the mid-west, K.A.M. was organized only a decade after the great city of Chicago was granted its charter and elected its first mayor. Only a handful of Jews found their way that far west in the early 1840's. A bare minyan, with no extra males, held the first known Jewish service in that area on Yom Kippur of 1845. The records of that period, from the formation of the congregation until 1871, unfortunately, were completely limited. We do know, however, that the Illinois and Michigan Canal and the Galena and Chicago Railroad, which were built at the close of the decade, made Chicago a great trading center and served to attract Jewish families by the score, eager to develop this virgin economic field (2614). Slowly the Jewish community took shape as the tide of immigration continued to spill into Chicago. Institutions were established, the Burial Ground Society, a rabbi for the congregation, one Ignatz Kunreuther, and finally, a synagogue in 1851. Jews moved into positions of trust in public life and became men of means and respectability as their natural acumen took effect and their business prospered (2624).

There arrived in 1852 one, Leopold Mayer, a personable, young, German Jew. On the occasion of the first day of

Passover, he was invited to preach before the congregation. That day the first German sermon was heard from the pulpit of K.A.M. and using this opportunity, Mayer urged that German be utilized as the language of the synagogue in order that the prayers might be recited in a comprehensible tongue. This suggestion, surprisingly enough, though not acted upon, was well received and the congregation not only offered Mayer its hearty congratulations but retained him to instruct their children (263). Such would not have been his treatment had he voiced the same opinions before the die-hard reactionaries of the East.

By 1854 the congregation had outgrown its building and purchased a larger edifice to which they even added a basement to house their religious school and meeting rooms. The following year, once the congregation was settled in its new building, marked a new era of increased prosperity and activity. A new constitution was formulated and adopted and a flood of newcomers augmented the membership rolls (264). Many of these young people fleeing from the abortive liberal uprising of 1848 which had threatened the hold of reaction throughout Europe. They brought with them a spirit that would not be quenched in any milieu and K.A.M. was to see its manifestations in a very short while.

Some important events, thus consequented, stirred the congregation as soon as 1857. The founders of the congregation were orthodox Jews, though somewhat more tolerant to the new influences of the age, being on the edge of the constantly evolving and shifting frontier, than their co-religionists in the East. They were ever open to suggestions (265), but discord and disagreement ran loose.

The election of congregational officers in 1857 was preceeded by several weeks of heated campaigning on the part of both factions in behalf of their candidates. The orthodox group, led by Abraham Kone, past president of the congregation, and the reform party, headed by Elias Greenebaum, marshalled their full forces (266). A considerable expenditure of money was made by both parties, both paying up the back dues of delinquent members in order that these worthies might cast a vote in favor of their candidates (267). The office of the president was the contested office. The orthodox party had nominated Samuel Cole, the incumbent. Greenebaum had been the nominating committee's candidate for the vice-presidency but at the last minute the reform group had nominated him as their candidate for president.

Both parties had articulated platforms. In the "Israelite" of October 16th, Abraham Kone, after the election, reported

this group's motto as "Peace, Harmony and Moderate Reform" indicating their desire to heal the enlarging breach and ^{also} ~~thus~~ showing the trend toward reform in the main body, consequented both by the direct influence of the reformers and the pacifistic effort to compromise toward eventual harmony. Kone insists in this article that the issue at stake in the election was not that of reform. "It was not for principles but for men that election of officers was fought (268)." However, another writer to the "Israelite", who signs himself "An Observer," declares that the heated difference was on the subject of reform. The reform party, he informs us, had as its motto, "Equality, Reform and Education." He goes on to explain that "Equality" indicated his party's desire to democratize the control of congregational affairs removing from power "self-constituted privileged class (of but few) who have from time immemorial, continued to manage congregational affairs in accordance with their own 'out of place' ideas (269)." This agreed with Kone's statement. But our "Observer" goes on to indicate that the word "Reform" in their motto represented the party's intent to introduce a choir and insistance upon the maintainance of decorum by the members in services, a sadly neglected bit of

discipline. They also urged the procurement of "able and competent men to fill the places of preacher, teacher and reader."

When the ballots were counted at this "most spirited and closely contested" election, Greenebaum was elected by a count of fifty-one votes to thirty-two. Cole, the presiding officer, in a flare of temper and chagrin, immediately declared the meeting adjourned. But the jubilant and unexpectedly victorious ("such a glorious triumph on the one hand and complete defeat on the other was anticipated by none") reform group would stand for none of this and forced the meeting on until the rest of the offices were filled.

Once in office the reformers, true to their campaign promises, sought to introduce the Hamburg prayerbook, an organ and a permanent choir. Though the religious school was reported to be "in good condition" (270) they were not at all satisfied with it. The reformers had won the election, but evidently were still a minority group because they could only introduce their suggestions and agitate for their adoption but were unable to bring about their implementation. The fight for control continued within the congregation. It was thought that perhaps the proper rabbi might effect a happy

compromise and bring peace to the torn congregation. The two men elected between this period and the eventual secession of the reform group were informed that the healing of the breach would be their main function and both agreed to set that as their prime task.

The first, Dr. M. Menson, was requested, shortly after his arrival to suggest a ritual revision. He did so and his recommendation was unanimously adopted. That was his last official act for the congregation. He was discovered as a fraud and "paid for nine months salary in advance, given travelling expenses, and this German-Irish gentleman with his high priest hat, his Hibernian wife and his plagiarized stock of sermons was sent back to the Emerald Isle (271)"

The second rabbi elected in an attempt to assuage the antagonism was Dr. Solomon Friedlander, gifted man with a splendid rabbinical background. He had been associate preacher to Dr. Samuel Holdheim in the Berlin Reform Society and then became professor at the Jewish Teacher's Seminary at Munster where he also served as preacher for the reform congregation. Whether he would have been able to affect a reconciliation will never be known. He was bitten by a spider, blood-poisoning set it and within six months after his arrival

in Chicago, he was dead (272). With the fading of this last ray of hope, and with an open breach almost inevitable, the majority group made some major concessions to the reformers. The three-year cycle of the Torah reading was introduced; an organ was built into the synagogue; a choir was retained; and an appropriation of one thousand dollars was allocated to improve the education of the children of the congregation (273). At the next election in 1859, Benedict Schlossman, another reformer, became president and induced the board to add female voices to the choir (274).

It was at this time that Dr. Bernard Felsenthal's pamphlet, "Kol Kore Madibar" was published and circulated throughout the country. Its impact upon Chicago was stunning (275). Immediately a new congregation, "Ohabe Or," dedicated to the principles articulated by Felsenthaler, was organized under the aegis of the two brothers, Leon and Samuel Straus. A Reverend Dr. Cohn was engaged as minister and in a rented room, they held their services (276). The congregation lasted for only a few months but its influence was out of proportion to its apparent strength. Helping to clarify the thinking of those members of K.A.M. with reform tendencies,

it served to cut a straight, conclusive line through the congregation; the orthodox and reform parties emerging well-defined. After the rapid demise of "Ohabe Or", indicating the time inopportune for such a full-blown attempt at reform, the "Reform Verein", organized some months before under the presidency of Elias Greenebaum, with Felsenthal serving as secretary, intensified its activity.

It is now time for us to consider this "Verein" which fostered and developed the spirit of reform in the Jewish community and which eventually grew into Sinai congregation. At the first meeting Felsenthal, the secretary submitted a paper containing twenty-seven theses which were read and accepted as a basis from which the "modus operandi" of the group would be constructed. The paper expressed the purpose of the group (278):

"We are deeply convinced that Israel has been called by God to be the Messiah of the nations and to spread truth and virtue on earth. In order to fulfill this high mission, Israel has to undergo a process of purification in its own midst. This object will be best accomplished in free and blessed America where no material forces check spiritual progress. The special mission of American Israel, therefore, is to place Judaism before the world purified in doctrine and conduct, and so as to become a shining example for Israelites the world over. In order to do our share in this work, we organize to-day a Jewish reform Society, for which we draw up the following guiding principles."

The prospective basis of the "Verein" is carefully outlines indicating the need for extending and intensifying Jewish knowledge and improving the moral and ritual quality of the Jewish community. Recommendations for the constitution of the group were presented and, in addition, a section was included discussing the form and religious shading the congregation which would ultimately grow out of the "Verein", would adopt. The entire paper was eventually accepted with only a few, slight, verbal modifications. Because, the secretary realized the length of time that would be required to discuss the whole program, he recommended that the group devote its immediate "attention" bear directly upon congregational life and reserve others which attention to practical questions which are more theoretical and less connected with congregational life for consideration at a later time (279)."

"We propose at present the following points:
 1. As sacred days we consider the weekly Sabbath, which shall be celebrated according to tradition on Saturdays, and the seven Biblical holydays, to wit: First and Seventh days of Passover, one day of Pentecost, one New Year's Day, one day of Atonement, one day of Tabernacles and day of Atzereth.

2. Besides, there shall be distinguished in public worship the days of Chanukkah and Purim, New Moon and Chol-Hammod and the ninth day of Abh.

3. In every public worship, even on those days, on which according to tradition, the Torah is not read, the reading of a portion from the Torah shall form an integral part of the services.
4. The Torah shall be read in a cycle of three years. The Prophetic portions shall be independently selected and adapted to this triennial cycle.
5. The reading of the Torah shall be in the original Hebrew. The Prophetic portions, however, shall be read either in the mother-tongue intelligible to the congregation or in the language of the country.
6. Of the traditional prayerbook, there shall be retained some portions which scientific investigation has recognized as most ancient and which on that account already possess a high degree of religious power. Still we have the right to make such changes as are necessary to bring these prayers in harmony with our convictions. Besides these old liturgic portions, prayers and hymns in the vernacular shall have a prominent place.
7. From the liturgy everything that is contrary to our convictions, shall be eliminated. Other parts, however, which in our days possess a greater sanctifying power, shall be more strongly accentuated.
8. Services shall be held with the greatest possible solemnity, and if feasible, shall be made more impressive by the solemn choral song and organ music.
9. In the public worship of the congregation, there shall be no discriminations made in favor of the male and against the female worshippers.
10. The congregation does not recognize any privileged clerical order....There is no priesthood, either by inheritance or by ordination...preaching, consecration of marriages etc., which are incumbent upon the clergy, are merely a mandate of the congregation."

Modern day reformers, reading over the verbal modifications suggested, would brand the "Verein" as conservative, not reform. The group decided to strike out the words, "which shall be celebrated according to tradition on Saturday" as superfluous as it was inconceivable to hold Sabbath services on any other day. A like conservative note would be recognized in the clause which was to be appended to the report, viz., "Concerning the second day of the New Year, the question whether it shall be kept or abrogated, shall be left open for the present, and a later meeting shall further consider the matter (280)."

On December 27, 1858, the Verein issued a call to all the Jews of Chicago interested in advancing the position of reform in that city. The paper cited the great indifference in Jewish circles to religion. Fearful, lest this vacuum suck the base and materialistic aspects of life into the Jewish mass, eliminating the enactment of the nobler endeavors of the human spirit, it proposed that a Jewish congregation be founded which would awaken the religious spirit and make Jewish life noble and ingenuous. Two main points would be implemented by the proposed congregation: first, the creation of a genuine Jewish liturgy, eliminating the expression of views which had lost their meaning, but accentuating those views

which are recognized as valid and important; second, the abolishment of rites and customs which are defunct or based on erroneous notions and create, in their stead, rites which are full of life and truth (281). It was, of course, too early in the movement's development, a similar attempt also failed two years later (282), and the "Verein" continued its activity while the majority of its constituents continued their membership in K.A.M.

In order to receive mature advice from a known authority on reform, the members of the "Verein" wrote to Dr. Samuel Adler of congregation Emanu-El in New York and submitted the following set of questions (283):

- "1. Is it desirable to establish a reform congregation here?
2. What do you think of "Minhag America?"
3. What ways are to be pursued in a mixed congregation, that is in a congregation consisting of members differing in their religious views, in order to satisfy, at least, the most urgent demands for reform?
4. Eventually, what ways should be pursued by a pure and unmixd Reform congregation?"

Adler answered these questions very carefully in a lengthy reply, a paragraph of which is worthy of repetition here (284).

"The answer to this question (the fourth) would quite fill a book, and cannot be even fully indicated in a letter. However, in order not to leave you without any satisfaction, I would state that the first and most important step for such a congregation to take is to free its service of shocking lies, to remove from it the mention of things and wishes which we would not utter if it had to be done in intelligible manner. Such are, the lamentation about oppression and persecution, the petition for the restoration of the sacrificial cult, for the return of Israel to Palestine, the

hope for a personal Messiah, and for the resurrection of the body. In the second place, to eliminate fustian and exaggeration; and, in the third place, to make the service clear, intelligible, instructive and inspiring."

A month after their first letter, the group wrote again asking his opinion of the Einhorn prayerbook, his comments on the "Minhag America" having eliminated it from consideration. He replied that "no prayerbook in existence can stand comparison with that of Einhorn" and supplied substantial arguments proving his statement (285). The questions and answers were later published in a brochure along with Felsenthal's "Kol More Bamidbar." The booklet received much publicity. The "Sinai" gave it a lengthy and very favorable review (286). In Germany the work was less warmly received and generally considered too radical (287). As in Chicago, there were many in Germany who could not accept the concept expressed by Felsenthal which claimed that "the Bible is not the source of Judaism, but a production of Judaism."

The reformers of the congregation made a last effort to have a new ritual introduced into the service. They were willing to settle for the Hamburg prayerbook, as they had once before suggested. The conservative group, for it could not longer be considered orthodox after having innovated so many reforms, suggested Merzbacher's prayerbook. At the end of the heated disagreement, the Frankfort Minhag, a

very slight modification of the Ashkenazic ritual, was reintroduced (288). Dissatisfied, restless, despairing of ever implementing their reforms into the congregation, twenty-six members of K.A.M. resigned and in 1861 organized Sinai congregation. On February 17th the Einhorn prayerbook was adopted as the ritual of the new temple. The constitution was ratified by the entire congregation and printed in April of the same year (290). The preamble created quite a stir, it was printed in toto in the Sinai with the following statement of Einhorn's accompanying it, "We hardly believe that there is another reform congregation in America which at its very beginnings had such a clear conception of its aims (291)." Philipson declared that it "expresses the purpose and object of a reform congregation more clearly than any like document I have come across (292)." It may be well read for our purpose in its entirety.

"Whereas, there appears to exist among Israelites a large degree of indifference in religious matters threatening to drag life more and more to materialism and degradation, and stifling all nobility of sentiments, all sympathy for higher pursuits, all appreciation of the more sacred boons of humanity; while, on the other hand, Jewish religious life, clinging to obsolete ideas and maintaining antiquated usages, has taken its course in a direction of which we cannot approve;

And whereas, we share the conviction that a truly religious life is the most powerful agent to create noble thoughts and good morals;

And whereas, especially the Jewish religion, having a past of four thousand years, most glorious and eventful, is evidently destined, in the future, too, to act a most important part in the development of mankind and in its onward course to the lofty positions of the Messianic time coming;

Therefore, a number of Israelites have associated themselves with the avowed intention of fostering the inestimable inheritance of our fathers, of restituting the original spirit, purity and sublimity in Judaism, and thus to perpetuate the same and secure its duration.

The means of attaining this sacred object are chiefly as follows:

1. A Divine service, which, without divesting the same of its specific Jewish character, shall be in consistence with the laws of reason and truth, and which in its pure form, shall be such as will meet the demands of our times, claiming public instruction from the pulpit as an essential of the same;

2. A sound religious education of the rising generation, by sustaining a school in which at least, a thorough instruction in religion, in Hebrew, and in the branches connected therewith be imparted, - a school inspiring the tender hearts of the children from the pulpit for Judaism and for everything that is good, just and noble;

3. The removal of usages and ceremonies outlived...and the substitution of others more vital...and the formation of such arrangements and institutions which tend...to promote and fulfil the objects of religion and to advance its professors to a higher state of perfection."

The congregation was chartered on July 20, 1861 by the State of Illinois with the following men serving as incorporators: Benjamin Schoenman, Leopold Mayer, Raphael Guthmann, Joseph Liebenstein, Benedict Schlossman and Elias Greenebaum (293).

On June 21st the temple, a former Christian church on Monroe street, was dedicated by Dr. Samuel Adler and the Einhorn "Olat Tamid" was given its first hearing in the West on that momentous day. (294). Felsenthal was elected rabbi and served for three years. A controversy arose between the congregation, who were very much pleased with his services, and the rabbi over the traditional method of electing the rabbi from year to year. Felsenthal refused to be subjugated to this form of uncertainty and retired from the pulpit in June 1864 (295). He was succeeded by Dr. A. Chronic, probably the most radical of the rabbis Sinai had had, ^{was} who recommended to the congregation by the reknown Abraham Geiger. He founded a monthly called, "Zeichen der Zeit" while in Chicago and continued his ministrations there for five years (296). Then, unhappy, he returned to Germany but not before he had planted the

the idea of the "Sunday service" which was eventually introduced by his successor, Dr. Kaufmann Kohler for the first time in America at Sinai (297).

Such was the creation of what might be called the classic example of early reform in the United States. Most of the succeeding congregations, with only a few minor deviations, followed the pattern of Sinai. Working within the congregation, the liberal spirits sought to implement their thinking and then through the medium of an extra-curricular society, concretized their ideas and eventually made them manifest in the form of a congregation. Reflecting the mood of their day and milieu, these reformers burst all bonds, in spite of the discomfort and abuse it consequented, and created created their own edifice, thus satisfying the deep-felt urgings of their inner selves.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY: AN INTERIM PAUSE FOR REFLECTION.

"How dangerous to defer those momentous reforms which the conscience is solemnly preaching to the heart. If they are neglected, the difficulty and indisposition are increasing every month. The mind is receding degree after degree, from the warm and hopeful zone; till at last, it enter the arctic circle and become fixed in relentless and eternal ice.

--J. Foster.

This summary serves as a mere tourniquet, it is designed to temporarily stop the flow of this dissertation. Eventually, it is hoped, these "Antecedents and Beginnings" will grow into a full history of reform Judaism in the United States. Perhaps such a work will serve to remove the many accusations hurled at reform Judaism by those who have the interest and perpetuation of Judaism at heart and who sincerely feel that the reform movement is purposefully or unconsciously, but inevitably, working toward the eventual dissolution of our ancestral faith. With only the perspective of their own lifetime as a guide, many Jews are not aware of the constantly evolving nature of Judaism but assume that the form their grandfathers passed on to them is the inviolate product of Jewish posterity. Quite the contrary is true. Succeeding generations have engendered modifications, added and deleted, and passed on to their children

a slightly altered component. Just as the rotation of the earth is imperceptible to those who live upon its vast circumference, so those who dwell within the great framework of Judaism are unable to discern its gradual evolution. Judaism, too, revolves about a fixed axis, never altering its basic core but always responding to those cosmic forces which move the universe and necessitate a shift in position but never in essence.

Opponents and protagonists alike must realize that reform in Judaism is a phenomenon and not phenomenal, that it is an essential quality of any living organism without which it would stagnate and die. It can be overdone. The sects in Judaism, in their adaptation, mutilated the core and the resultant group limped and was left behind in the swift race of life.

The reformers of the nineteenth century have been accused of lopping off too much of the tree when they sought only to remove the dead branch. Such was not the case. The core was kept intact but possibly too much of the emotional stimulus, so vital to every religion, was pared off when the outmoded ceremonials were removed from the body of Judaism in a wholesale amputation. In this fourth decade of the twentieth century, we are witnessing a careful replacement of those customs so hastily eliminated, which are still fitting vessels into which reform

Judaism may pour a wholesome, vibrant content.

Such is the secret of Israel's eternity. Through trial and error, following the inexorable law of Nature which offers either adjustment or death, Judaism has experienced incessant mutation, adapting itself to the swift pace of each era. Neither power nor proportion determines longevity. The civilized mastadons and behemoths of antiquity have become fossils in the increasing strata of human geology but the lithe, tractible people of Israel are never caught in the petrifying clutch of the past.

A Jewish orthodoxy which will allow no change will soon, weighted by the ponderous accretion of outmoded thinking, sink into the mire of oblivion. A "deformed" Judaism, as it has been colloquially called, which observes its Judaism in the breach will float away for lack of substance and ballast. The early American reformers seemed to have been aware of this principle. They were eager to remove the moribund practices and concepts of the past. They have been accused of curtailing all Jewish responsibilities with an eye toward their own comfort rather than an interest in the perpetuation of Judaism. That is hardly fair. Their aforementioned "deformed" offspring are patently guilty of such. These early reformers, to the contrary, took the path of most resistance.

Had they wished to be free of the burdensome aspects of Judaism, they need only have observed it with the same laxity that characterized many of the Jews of this country in the 1800's. They were often men of means, they could have purchased their way to power and prestige as "parnassim" or "gabbayim" - and so many did - ^{almost} in any orthodox synagogue they wished. Their religious negligence would have been tacitly overlooked.

These men were sincerely concerned with the preservation of Judaism, however. They consciously and willingly faced the abuse and ostracism of their co-religionists, suffered the shame and stain of the pariah because they sought to purge their faith of the throttling rot that had accumulated ^{upon} ~~about~~ it. They brushed aside this collected ceremonial and theological decay and plumbed the spiritual depths so that Jews could once again drink of its sparkling contents instead of dying of spiritual thirst at the mouth of a sealed well.

The nineteenth century reformers by no means "reformed" Judaism nor created a definitive form for our generation. We, in turn, must carry on their efforts, further adapting our faith to our time as our fathers did before us and our children must surely do, if they, too, would be refreshed by its draught.

Janus-like we must search the old for our vision of the new. Ceremonials of yesterday must be modified, the theology of another era must be reinterpreted; the custom and wisdom of the past will be the matrix in which we shape the Judaism of the present. It will be a positive growth, not only uprooting that which is no longer of use but planting in its stead a finer shoot.

Reform in Judaism will continue as long as our faith remains alive. Men will strive to keep it constant, others will fight to make it new. The struggle will wax eternal but, then, Judaism does, too!

הדרן עלך

NOTES

(Due to an error in collating notes 22, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267 have been repeated and have a letter "b" suffixed to the second note to indicate the difference.

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200. "Asmonean," December 7, 1855, 58; December 14, 60;
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" Ferner wurde beschlossen, dass ein Bar Mitzvah ~~weder~~ den ganzen Abschnitt desselben Sabaths noch einen Theil deselben vorlesen, und dass überhaupt Niemand ausser der eigens dazu angestellten ohne Genehmigung der Direction zu Gottesdienstlichen Funktionen zugelassen werden soll...." Q

234. Minutes, Emanu-El September 24, 1851.

"Seiner Meinung war noch sollte auch eine Laubehütte aufgestellt werden, weil einige der Mitglieder diesen Religionsbrauch gerne beibehalten mochten. Beschlossen dass dieser Grund nicht hinreichend sei und also keine Laubehütte aufgestellt werden soll.

235. Stern, 38.

236. Minutes, Emanu-El, Januray 1, 1854.

"Der Prasident berichte hierauf den Entwurf einer neuen Reform im Gottesdienste ~~beurtheilt~~ durch das dazu ernannte Committee und eines Gebatbuches bearbeitet durch Herrn Dr. ^{W.}erzbacher und mit den Kosten und mit der Vertheilung der Exemplare unter den debatirt und mehrere Mitglieder ausserten die Meinung, dass werden solle und deren Genehmigung bedurfe. Ws wurde beantragt und beschlossen diesen Gegenstand zuruckzulegen zur Besprechung bei nächster Versammlung...." ✓

236. (cont'd) Minutes, Emanu-El, February 15, 1854.

Stern 38.

237. "Asmonean" IX, 141, 196-7; "Israelite" I 206, 354,

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238. "Israelite" II 15.

239. Stern 38, 39.

Minutes, Emanu-El, April 16, 1854, September 30, 1854.

240. ~~Stern 42~~ "Israelite" II 114, IV 101.

241. Stern 42.

242. Stern 42, 43.

243. Stern 44.

244. Stern 41.

245. Wise 285, 315, 325.

246. Stern 41.

247. Stern 50.

248. Stern 52, 53.

249. Stern 53.

250. Minutes, Emanu-El, April 24, 1859.

"Resolved that the Revd. Dr. Adler be and is hereby respectfully requested in consort with the ritual committee to submit to this congregation a full explicit report and recommendation whether it be proper or not for this Temple to uncover heads during the service at the Temple including the English lecture."

250. (cont'd) Stern 53, 54.
251. Grinstein 358.
253. Gribstein 35, 37, 38.
254. *ibid.*
255. "Occident" XVII 206.
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 Grinstein 358
257. Evident from the tone of Emanu-el minutes.
258. Grinstein 360.
259. Minutes, Emanu-El, September 15, 1852.
260. Grinstein 358.
260. Minutes, Emanu-El May 3, 1853.
262. Grinstein 358.
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270. F & E 34/

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