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The Religious Life of the
Eastern Jewish Immigrants
to America,
as Expressed in the Prin-
cipal Products of their
Literature.

Thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Rabbi.

Benjamin Kelson.

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Introduction.

Any study of the religious life of the Eastern Jewish immigrants to America must begin with a survey of the background, with a study of their religious life in the countries from which they came. These immigrants from Russia and Poland, Galicia and Rumania, came mostly from cities, towns, and villages where life was distinctively Jewish. Their adherence to the Law as developed in the Shulhan Aruch and as understood by their rabbis, was complete. The life they led, until the beginning of the Haskalah movement and the revolutionary agitation in Russia was patriarchal. They adhered strictly to all the minutiae of the law. It was unthinkable, for instance, that any Jew should dare to defile the Sabbath (שבת); that any Jew should shave or trim his beard; that any Jew should neglect his prayers thrice daily. The education which the growing generation received was that of the חברה and the ישיבה, the traditional schooling dating at least from Talmudic times. The education of women often consisted of no more than the teaching of the alphabet, so that they could recite their prayers, and of the script, so that they could write Yiddish. The love of study so well described in Bialik's התורה and in that beautiful lyric אשכנזי, and the poetry of Hassidism portrayed in Peretz's stories were elements that added beauty and worth to the lives of these traditional Jews. Gedaliah Bublik, in his book התורה, eulogizes as the two great twin-ideals of Judaism the התבונה (studious zeal) of the דור החסידים and the התבונה (mystic enthusiasm) of the חסידים. It was from an atmosphere of love for traditional Judaism and zeal in the observance of all the

religious duties that most of the immigrants came, beginning with the year 1881.

However, before the wave of immigration to America there had been a movement for Russification among the Jewish intelligenzia.¹ Some of the notable Yiddish writers in America belonged to this group. There had also been the movement known as Haskalah, which was linked to the neo-Hebrew literature and Zionism.² In Poland, too, there had been a strong assimilationist movement, on the part of the upper strata of society. A portion of the Jewish youth was also drawn into the Russian revolutionary movement. "The fundamental article of faith of the Jewish socialists was cosmopolitanism, and they failed to discern in Russian "Populism" the underlying elements of a Russian national movement. Jewry was not believed to be a nation and as a religious entity it was looked upon as a relic of the past which was doomed to disappearance."³

The Jewish immigrants to America from Russia, Poland, Galicia and Rumania may therefore roughly be divided into three classes: Orthodox, Maskilim, and Radicals. Most of them had of course the orthodox background; the fact that so many who were vocal in America were of the radical school, and that some who manifest sympathy for traditional Judaism were yet influenced by Haskalah, is easily understood when it is remembered that Jews who live the traditional orthodox Jewish life do not often feel the need of self-expression, and are not disturbed by the problems that confront those who have stepped out into the dazzling light of the life of the Western World. They are wrapped in a cloak of traditionalism; the interests of the men are confined to Halacha and Midrash, and of the women to the *Shema* and the "Teutsch-Chumesh." The proportion

of orthodox among the masses cannot be estimated by a study of the intellectual leaders, who were mostly radicals or Maskilim.

However, some of those who were articulate in America, like Mary Antin and Morris Ruvache came from a wholly orthodox environment. Very few of these however remained orthodox in America. Men like Professor Solomon Schechter were the great exception. The influence of America upon the religious life of these Jewish immigrants will be the subject of this study.

What did America do to the Orthodox Jew? Has his simple childlike faith survived in the new world? Has his piety resisted the insistence of his new environment? Has he been able to transmit his inherited ideals (such as love of wisdom and mystic enthusiasm) to his descendants? What, too, has America done to Jewish institutions? What has been the influence of life in America upon Jewish morality?

These are difficult questions to answer, and no answer can be given with assurance. Ideals cannot be measured and weighed, and the evaluation of them is greatly influenced by the subjective element. The evaluation of the ideals of Eastern Jews in America which will be attempted in this study cannot of course be free of bias. Perhaps indeed it may be made the subject of further investigation on the part of some future critic who may desire to delve into the religious psychology of American rabbis.

The usual assertion is that America has destroyed all Jewish values. Is this true, and if it be true, is it necessarily a cause for alarm? Are there any signs of a revival of interest in Judaism and things Jewish and of a survival of Jewish idealism?

These questions can best be answered of course by men and women who know conditions at first hand. To some extent the answers arrived at in this study are the result of observation and of introspection. For the rest, memoirs of Jewish immigrants, and stories about such immigrants by authors who are themselves Jews and natives of Eastern Europe, judgments in regard to the question by students and observers whoever they may be, writings of whatever kind, be they poems essays, novels or articles by Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, which throw light on the attitude of the author to Judaism, and the Yiddish Hebrew, and English Jewish press will be used.

Chapter I

The Orthodox Jew in America.

The great wave of immigration created large Jewish communities in the principal cities of the Atlantic seaboard, especially in New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Baltimore. The life in these settlements is rich and varied. There were from the first little synagogues, where the pious could gather, and Houses of Study where the Talmudic discussions could be carried on in the traditional manner. Here the older generation found the means of satisfying their intellectual cravings and the poetic and mystic side of their natures. The rationalists fed their minds on Halacha and pilpul; the dreamers plucked flowers in the garden of Jewish lore, the Midrash and the Hag-gadah. All around these men, there surged the tide of a new life, but they remained anchored to the past, moored in the serene harbor of their traditional usages. There was the same old House of Study which has preserved the precious Jewish lore for centuries, where grey-bearded men could gather and dream, oblivious of the hubbub and tumult of the busy life about them. For the Hassidim there was and is the Stübel, where the old *שבת קדש* could be fostered.

The congregations were usually groups of "Landsleut", often men from the same town; sometimes they named the congregation for the town whence they had come, as for instance, *קרית קהילה*. In the New York Ghetto there were distinct sections, or little ghettos, where Jews from different countries gathered. There was the Lithuanian, the Polish, and the Gali-

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cian district; it was as Morris Ravage puts it, "A federation of allied states". Life outgrew the synagogue and the traditional faith. The congregations were frequented not only by the grey-bearded, old-fashioned Jews, who lived in the world of the Talmud, but also by some who were younger and more alive to their surroundings, and who had faced the realities of life in America. Few of the latter clung to the traditions. The Sabbath was generally discarded as soon as business demanded it.

For the older generation, it was but natural to cling tenaciously to the customs and beliefs that had served them all their lives. It is not easy to change the habits of a lifetime; many of the old Jews and Jewesses, transplanted to a new land, yet never lived in America. Their lives were almost wholly what they had been in Russia or Rumania or Galicia. Often the children supported them, and the old grandfathers spent their days in the Shul or שול, while the "Bobe" remained at home and read her prayers. Many of these old people never learned to speak English. S-, for instance, whom the writer knew, came to America about 1890 from that province of Russia known as Curland. He insisted to his last day that Yiddish be spoken in his presence. He did nothing in America to earn a livelihood, but spent his days in the little Hassidic synagogue known as the Rüssische Shul. In his case there was no attempt made at adjustment to the new environment. In Russia he had been a well-to-do householder; in America he failed to take root. These old-world men in a new world environment were bewildered and lost. Their minds were in Pumbeditha and Sura while their feet were on East Broadway. Sholom Asch, in his powerful novel, "Uncle Moses", has portrayed for us such a character in the person of old Berel. Although his wife and chil-

dren had been moulded by the new environment, and although his clinging to the details of his religion meant a widening breach between himself and his family, yet he meticulously observed the time-hallowed ritual. He was like a stranger in his own home. His wife, Genendil, and his two younger children, Charley and Clara, who had been reared partly in America, treated him with growing disrespect, and often reminded him that he was no longer אביר ארץ, that this was America, and that the important thing was אדם אדם. Only his older daughter, Deborah, who could not forget that her father had been, in the little Polish town of Kuzmin, a respected householder, and one of the leaders of the Jewish community, treated him with proper consideration, and regarded with complacency his study and his prayers. In the early morning, he would rise and sit in a corner and study the Mishneh, before the family should awake. In the hustle and tumult of getting ready for work and school there would be no place for him. He failed to exert authority over his children and to win the respect of his wife. The scene between father, mother and son is typical.

"When the boy came to the table, hatless, unwashed, and without having recited his prayers (אשר יאמר), Berel, who was just about to recite the שמע ישראל and who could not be interrupted, grunted to the youth, 'Nu, Nu, Nu.' 'What, Nu? all right, Nu', Genendil took the boy's hat and placed it on his head, 'Come, Charley, say the Krias-Shema.' The seventeen year old boy did as his mother bade, he grabbed his father's Tallith by the fringes (אשר יאמר), mumbled a few words, gave it a kiss, and sat down to eat. 'Genendil' Berel growled angrily. 'What's wrong?' 'All right. You pray for him. In America no one has time to pray.'"

The old folks who clung to their piety found themselves

out of place in America. Their children could not understand them; they were estranged even from those of their own generation whose outlook had been altered by life in America. Genendil Berel's wife, was one of these latter.

"Auron stared at his sister-in-law as if she were a stranger. Was this the pious woman who in the old country used to lead the women of the synagog in prayer, and run every once in a while to the House of Study with a spoon or a pot to ask a ritual question? (*73XW*). But Genendil, as we have said, had in America become 'liberal'."

Grandmother R- was another of these old-world folk lost in the tumult of the new world. While her husband lived, she led with him a complete Jewish life, and the old couple observed all their precious customs together. Their children were married, lived apart from the parents, and contributed to their support. But when her husband died, Grandmother R- was left destitute, and was forced to go to live with her children. The story of King Lear was repeated once more; the old Jewess, meticulously pious, and observant of every detail of her traditional ritual, could live with none of her children. She could not eat the food they cooked, because she suspected that it was not "Kosher." She could not brook their violations of the Sabbath, and their lack of interest in other religious customs. Her life was intensely unhappy; she could not adjust herself to the new environment. In "The Melting Pot" Israel Zangwill has portrayed with much delicacy and art such a character; the sweet old grandmother whose desire for the observance of the Sabbath is the cause of much friction, and whose religious loyalties are valued most by the Irish servant girl. Thyra Samter Winslow in her story "A Cycle of Manhattan"¹ brings out the tragedy of the life of the grandmother who accompan-

ies the Rosenheimers in their progress up from the Ghetto to the new apartment on W.116th St., where in the midst of all the splendor, she dies of loneliness in her rich and strange surroundings.

Rabbi Jacob Joseph of New York appears to have been typical in many ways of these ghostly shadows of the past, these wanderers from another world misunderstood and mis-valued, lost in the busy life of today. Abraham Cahan calls him "a flower transplanted to strange soil". The people who had brought him from Lithuania to be their Chief Rabbi had grown away from him. Between the Talmudic scholar, interested in the casuistry of the Law, and the men of the modern world, there yawned a great gulf. Yet at his funeral there was a most impressive demonstration, showing the deep-seated love and veneration for the beauties of Judaism which all the years in America could not kill. The synagog leaders of New York had brought over the rabbi from Vilna to be their *רב גדול*. It was their desire to have only the best, to outstrip all the organizations of Europe, just as the Jews of New York insisted upon having the best cantors, wedding jesters, and actors procurable in the old world. But when they had this man, who was famous in Lithuania for his lore and piety, they could not understand him. Their thoughts were not his; his methods were of another world and even of another age. So there were quarrels and recriminations; his enemies charged him with trying to force a "corobka" (meat-tax) upon the people. But he was a scholar, not a fighter, and had little to do with the practical aspect of this action. The organization which paid his salary was accused of working with a butcher-trust, and he of serving the rich and neglecting the poor. Several sermons which

he preached against trade-unionism made him exceedingly unpopular. He explained the burning to death of three Jewish children as a manifestation of Divine wrath called forth by the fact that a number of Jews belonged to labor unions. These somewhat simple and childlike beliefs of his, his straightforwardness, his intensity and sternness, and his love of study, were all strange and foreign to his congregants. Those things that had made him beloved in Vilna were hindrances to his success in New York. And although there was a spontaneous expression of reverence at his death, he was unhappy and unappreciated in his lifetime. Morris Rosenfeld touchingly describes the death of the ייִדישער רבי in one of his essays. The Jews who neglected him during his lifetime now gave him a magnificent funeral. One old Jewess wept unconsolably, because there would be no one to give אַ שוין פֿאַר אַלע. Poor old lady, there will always be אַ שוין פֿאַר אַלע but never another Jacob Joseph.

Another sketch of Rosenfeld's treats delicately the story of a loyally pious Jew in America. The sketch is called "Die Yiddische Familie." Mr. and Mrs. Levi are Jews of the old generation, who have been fairly well to do. Mr. Levi, although he has lost his money, is still given honor in the synagog, and is elected to be president. He observes all the ancient customs, and cherishes especially his long flowing beard. When his children desire to move out to the Bronx, he refuses. He wishes to remain with his Jews. But the children are the support of the household, and therefore become disrespectful to their old father. Little by little the synagog grows emptier; some householders move away, others die, and the young never join. Finally the "Shamash" decides that his job doesn't pay and tells Mr. Levi that he is forced to resign. The old man is

angered, but accepts the resignation. Then, after the services, he ascends the "Balemar", and tells the congregation to elect a new president. He will himself take the place of the resigning "Shamash". He is not too proud to serve God, although others desire better opportunities and Gentile friends. The old man remains as "shamash" in his beloved synagogue, and his wife and children move away to other surroundings.

The hero of this sketch is one of those who are anchored to the old beliefs and customs, and remain friendless and lone, when their own loved ones are swept away by the tide of change and by the resistless current of life in a new land. In Sholom Asch's novel, "Uncle Moses", the old man Berel finally decides that he can no longer remain in this country, where the environment is so unfriendly to his beliefs, where even his own children cannot hear the voice of his soul. He decides to return to the little Polish town where he was born, and to spend his last days in the home of his boyhood. He is typical of those whose lives are rooted so firmly in the past, that at last the past calls them to itself. His departure is touchingly described.

"'Indeed I could have wished it otherwise ' he says, 'but it cannot be helped. But promise me this, and let us shake hands on it, that you will keep your promise—that when you hear that it is all over, you will observe the Kaddish. Promise me, my son.' All the landsleut, watching, understood, and all felt how great was the cleft between themselves and their children in America. Charley promised, pitying the old man, but his father was really a stranger to him.

"When it came to parting with his wife the pair first understood what America had done to them. They had brought their children to America, and America had taken them away.

And themselves, America was casting out, throwing them away like a worthless useless rag. America had separated them in their old age. From the old mother it still derived a little benefit. The old father it sent home to die."

In the Ghettos of the large cities it was easier to cling to complete orthodoxy than in the smaller cities and towns where some of the immigrants found their way. Many of the Jews of the large cities ceased to desire to observe their traditional ritual, even though there was every facility for such observance. But in the smaller towns the observance was much more difficult and often even the staunchest succumbed. "Witte Arrives", by Elias Tobenkin describes the Jewry of a small town where orthodoxy must be discarded for business, Aaron Witkowsky (Witte), remains orthodox stubbornly, however, except in minor details, thus injuring, but not destroying his economic stability. In many of the smaller towns throughout the country which have Jewish communities of modest size, there is no orthodox congregation; and those Jews who desire to worship in the old way and to observe the dietary laws, and other regulations, find it very difficult to do so. The town of D-, for instance, has only several orthodox families, who attend no services at all, and who buy their meat at a larger city several miles distant. In K-, the few who desire to observe orthodox customs must also buy meat at a distance and have no services of any kind to attend. In P-, the same condition obtains. A man is hired to conduct services for the High Holidays, but during the remainder of the year there no orthodox services whatever. Outside the Ghettos of the large cities, the difficulties in the way of maintaining orthodoxy in an American environment

make themselves felt. Of course, these conditions are by no means universal. It is possible, if the community has determination and pluck, to hire a ^{sh}~~vi~~ and a cantor, and to live more or less the orthodox life. It is possible to observe the dietary laws, even in the smaller towns and villages, by maintaining a Schochet, or by getting meat from the nearest town where one is maintained. But these are merely the externals. The Jew who lives outside the Ghetto quickly becomes changed; his outlook upon life is altered materially. His mind is broadened, so that he can no longer accept the traditional formulations of the faith; even though his educational opportunities be limited he imbibes something of the spirit of America. Outside the Ghettos of the large cities, where, as Firshtein says, the immigrants huddle at the gateway to the new world, afraid to enter, the spirit of America quickly takes possession of the impressionable Jew. He may cling to his customs, even to the third generation, but his outlook and his mental habits are altered materially.

There are notable instances however, of touching loyalty to the old faith, despite all the difficulties which that loyalty entails. However one regards the traditional Jewish practices-and no person who is free of bias can fail to value them at least as embodiments of Jewish values-one cannot fail to admire the constancy and pluck of some faithful Jews who adhered to them under all circumstances. There are those who refuse all admiration for this constancy on the ^{score} that it is merely the effect of habit and fear of change. But one who has sympathetically studied the emotions of these loyal Jews can find in them the great virtue which the Jewish race has achieved-devotion to principle, loyalty to an ideal. For these

Jews, the ritual, the prayers, the observances of Judaism, constitute means of expressing their love of their people, and their faith in the universe. They are of course not philosophers. They are not students. They are merely devoted children of Israel, in love with Israel's bride, the Torah.

The writer met in a small town in Indiana, a Jewish lady who had come from a still smaller village, a place of but a few hundred inhabitants, to the town of 10,000 which seemed to her a metropolis. She had come largely because she hoped to be able to observe the dietary laws and to teach her children to understand and value Judaism. She knew nothing about the origin and development of the dietary laws, of course. She could give no reason for her clinging to them. But, "My mother observed them and I was taught to do so." This lady was American-born, and had received the elementary American education. She had mingled freely with her non-Jewish neighbors, and had been, as she put it, "treated very well." But the love of the ancient faith, in the only way she knew how to express it, still lived, after many years of life in that little village where her family were the only Jews. There are some American Jews who adhere loyally to some traditional practices, although of necessity or perhaps because of convenience they have discarded others. They are inconsistent, as all human beings who live in the real world must be in practice, and as, apparently, like Kant with his antinomies, even those who live solely in the realm of ideas must be in theory, if they be indeed consistently thoughtful. But they have at least admirable feelings of attachment to their traditions, of loyalty to the group, and of reverence for the past. Certain symbols which they retain are for them the means of expressing these emotions. Young Mr. J-, for instance,

Usually those who are by nature of the type that thrives in in the East European Jewish environment, who are incurably Jewish, attached to tradition, meticulously pious, or studious and contemplative, find themselves out of place in America. Their observance of the ancient rites is frowned on by the younger generation, and by the Americanized members of their own generation. If they are of the type of the Yeshiva-Bachur, the Talmud student, whose world is the world of ideas and fantasy, they find themselves unwelcome in America. Rabbis of the old school, like Rabbi Jacob Joseph, find it difficult to flourish. They cannot take root. The demand of the time is for a "modern man", whose English is pure and undefiled, whose interests are communal and social rather than purely religious or Jewish in the racial or cultural sense. Rabbi F-, for instance, who is comparatively a young man, and whose English is impeccable yet has been tried and found wanting by several congregations. He is a truly "spiritual" man, in any sense in which that much-abused word may be employed; he has a profound love of Judaism, a reverence for the literary and cultural treasures bequeathed to us by the past, a love of humanity that permeates his whole being, a sincere desire to be helpful, and a tender spot in his heart for every child he sees. But he is unadjusted to America, for his mental setting is that of the Talmud student of the old world. He has not enough energy, vigor, and efficiency for an American congregation. Rabbi R- was recognized as the head of the Orthodox Jewry in a city of 120,000. He was respected and valued for his scholarly attainments. It was generally admitted that he was a scholar of first rank. But when he decided to leave for Palestine to end his days in the Holy Land, his congregation sought a younger man, who could interest the grow-

ing generation. When the scholarly and beloved Rabbi Abraham Iesser one of the oldest rabbis in America, died in Cincinnati, his congregation, holding his memory in due reverence, yet planned to build a new organization around a man who was more nearly adjusted to the American environment. Rabbi Iesser was one of the old school, who lived in America the complete orthodox life as it is lived in Eastern Europe, who was saturated with Jewish lore, was an exemplar of piety, and bore upon his shoulders the whole weight of the Galuth. These men who are now passing from the scene, were often misunderstood, and sometimes maltreated; but now when they go from us, we bethink ourselves of the loss. For if some of the mental and emotional baggage which the East European immigrants brought with them is mere deadweight, some of it is incalculably precious, and one's fear is, that in the rapidity of the adjustment, we may have in our haste to cast away every useless impediment, discarded ideas and customs valuable not merely as relics and mementos of a distant past, but also practically in our own world. There are, for instance, those two wonderful twin-ideals of East-European Judaism, with the life of the Jews was saturated, learning and ^{work} ~~work~~ ^{which} ~~work~~. The old generation possessed both; these men who were shoved out of the way, sometimes despised and usually ignored, may have been great scholars, or true poets, enraptured by the dream of God. Who knows how many Rambams, Ibn Gabirols, and Joseph Caros the ghetto life in America has frustated. And even if it be true that genius of the first rank always manifests itself despite every untoward circumstance of the environment, yet at least men of potential ability and power as students of Jewish lore, as thinkers and poets, have been stifled in the drear ghetto and in the busy marts where they found themselves, often in want of food and shelter, and

almost invariably in want of that friendship and understanding which a thinker or an artist needs perhaps more than food. The unhappiness that resulted was perhaps inevitable in a period of readjustment, the penalty of the transition. Yet one cannot think of these men, who possessed the finest of intellectual gifts, and that wonder of enthusiasm for the ideals of their forefathers, without heartache.

Israel Zangwill has said that we Jews possess more than our just proportion of "Luftmenschen." In Eastern Europe such were understood and protected, and enabled to become proficient students of the Gemarrah. It was not thought a disgrace for a man to be impractical—it was taken for granted that a certain number of Jews must be walking encyclopedias of Talmudic lore, "who cannot stick the hand in cold water." But in America, everybody's hand must be dipped in icy water, and everybody's head, too, and sometimes, alas, one contracts pneumonia. And while one is struggling to free himself from the claws of an unfriendly environment, from poverty and illness, there is no leisure to think of aesthetic, intellectual, or religious satisfactions. The first necessity in America was economic adjustment. Many of the immigrants came penniless; even those who had been reasonably well adjusted in the old home, who had been householders of some means, and respected members of Jewish communities, had very little left upon arrival in the new world. The expenses of the journey often were to them quite a drain, and sometimes whatever valuables they possessed were stolen on the way or upon their arrival. Coming to the new world, expecting to find a new life, they found the drear Ghetto. Seeking the promised land they came to another wilderness. Instead of Geulah they found a more terrible Galuth. That many of the immigrants came with slender means is unde-

niable. In a euphemistic way Ezra Brudno makes this point; he says that every head of the family brought with him ^{an} ~~an~~ ⁵⁶ a pair of ^{1/2} ~~1/2~~ ⁵⁶ a strong body and a sober mind. Apparently, little else. And the struggle for existence which was usually his fate, made the observance of ritual very difficult, just as it allowed for no development of the finer nature. Poverty deadens life and makes religion impossible. The first reaction to America was one of extreme disappointment. In the case of the young and the vigorous, that disappointment, as we shall see sometimes resulted in protest. The older generation, however, remained anchored to the past; if they were thrown into contact with the new environment, they suffered agonies, and only if they were protected and sheltered by their loved ones were they happy in their dreams of the past, and in the observance of the ceremonies so dear to them. Happy were those who were understood and protected and sheltered by their loved ones. If with time the burden of poverty was lightened, the conflict became less acute; but, when, as it ^{was} ~~did~~ in many cases, the observance of Jewish ritual, such as the Sabbath or the dietary laws, was in the way of economic progress, the conflict between the zealous pietists, who clung to tradition, and the more practical or more enlightened who opposed them, was heartrending. This conflict we have seen described in Sholom Asch's novel, "Uncle Moses." Bertha Pearl's novel "Sarah and her Daughter" treats of the conflict between a pious Jew and his more practical wife. Elias Mendel was a native of Curland, and a meticulously observant Jew, who chose to starve rather than violate the Sabbath. He was soft, lovable, dreamy, impractical. Because of his religious feeling and his scrupulous honesty, he failed to earn a livelihood.

"He is crazy honest," the relatives said, "and his Sabbath kills him!" In the old home he had been able to give time to the study of the Talmud, although he was the proprietor of a dry-goods store which maintained his family. But America meant a great change: To work a whole day, and that there should be talk even of violating the Sabbath. It was unheard of. America was a queer country."

In many families there was this conflict: The writer has observed it repeatedly; and, as in every conflict, there was intolerance on both sides. Neither group seems to understand its kinship to the other; father and son espouse with the same intensity different causes. Sometimes this kinship is understood, however. Yehoash (Solomon Bloomgarten) has a clever little sketch in his volume of essays, that with its loving laughter at the foibles of humanity, and its humor without a sting, stamps him himself as "Mein freund der Menschenkenner". He tells of an old Jew who comes to him for advice. The old man is flustered and perturbed; his son will not be a "practical man", will not "get down to business", but insists that he has literary talent and spends his spare time writing silly poetry and stories. With difficulty the old man is persuaded to leave, assured that the "great author" will speak to his son and tell him that his productions are worthless. But in a moment he reappears, and producing a manuscript, lays it upon the writer's desk, with a request that he read it and pass judgment. "What's this?" asks the bewildered recipient. "That's my own. It's a commentary to the Zohar I have been working on for years."

Sometimes there was a beautiful serene understanding between those of the elder generation who were able to tolerate the strange ways of their children and those of the younger

who found it in their hearts to love their uncouth yet wise elders. Rose Cohen writes : "In my own case it was through the illness which had seemed such a misfortune that I had stirred out of Cherry Street. But now that I had had a glimpse of the new world, a revolution took place in my whole being. I was filled with a desire to get away from the whole old order of things. And I went groping about blindly, stumbling, suffering, and making others suffer. And then, through the experience, intelligence and understanding of other beings a little light came to me, and I was able to see that the old world was not all dull and the new world not all glittering. And then I was able to stand between the two, with a hand in each."

In "Whatever Gods" there is a striking picture of the grandfather, whose thoughts are of the past, to whom the youth of today, whose ideals are the same, though he expresses them differently, comes for a blessing. Maurice Samuel, himself a Jew, and even a Jew militant, undoubtedly had in mind at least to some extent, the passing generation of observant and religious Jews:

"To the old man it was as if a shadow had entered the room and had passed out again. His eyes turned back to the broad street and the shining river and he looked beyond them, as he had been looking before Arthur entered, at a vague and troubled world in which he could not determine what belonged to the realities he had outlived and what to the glories he had not yet known. And at times he repeated, remembering the boy, 'God be with him!'"

Sholom Asch's "America" describes the whole tragic experience of immigration, disillusionment, and lack of adjustment to America. Their teacher leaves his family and comes to America

to build a new home. "Like a man lost in the wilderness Meir sat in the third floor of one of the Tammany buildings of Essex Street in Greater New York, in the midst of a population of 5 million and 900,000 of his own brethren. He belonged to no lodge, no society.... His "landsleut" had found him a "Jewish place"-a job where one doesn't work on the Sabbath.... He, Meir, the son of Reb Jossel, whose name was known to all the townsfolk, as that of a student, he a pupil of the Gerer Rabbi, must now be a shirtmaker, like Sender, the ladies' tailor of former days in his little town. But everything was possible here; everything is possible in America."

At first Meir clung resolutely to his Judaism. He rose before sunrise to read a page of the Talmud. At first he disturbed his room-mate, but soon the latter became accustomed to him. Meir retired to the corner of the room where his bed was, and there he lived and dreamed. He became oblivious of his surroundings; here in his little corner he lit the Sabbath candles; here he took leave of his Sabbath. Once on a Sabbath eve his room-mate took it into his head to perform some manual labor; on another Sabbath he played cards with a friend. But Meir lived in his own world, and did not concern himself with them at all. "In his corner the holy Sabbath reigned." Meir joined no synagog. The first Sabbath eve he visited one, and that one visit was enough. The great square was full of people, just as if it were the outgoing of the Sabbath. The swarm of hucksters and haggling women came up to the very steps of the synagog, and even on the steps themselves Jewish women sat peddling their wares to those who came to pray. Inside, he found no platform in the prescribed place, but when the time came someone fetched a praying-stand from the corner. A second lit the lights, although the Sabbath had long since begun. One by one the worshippers came ^tstraggling

in. The one who led in the prayers had in the old home been a common blacksmith. "Meir thought of the Sabbath at home. All the shops are closed, everything worldly in the village is put aside... In the home the table is clean and bright, the lights burn." Meir however joined in the prayers with fervor. When he had finished, he remained bent over his book to muse for a while. But to his amazement the praying-stand was at once shoved aside; although the praying-stand and a Thorah were on one side of the room, in the center there stood musicians with young people around them. A man approached Meir and told him that he must now leave, since the hall was rented to a dancing teacher after eight o'clock; the Congregation occupied it only from six to eight. Meir seized his prayer book and hastened away. He never returned.

Meir sent for his wife, Fannah Lea, and his four children. On the ship the little family joined in the celebration of Chanukka. These immigrants had not begun to lose their love of Jewish tradition. The scene depicted is very touching and beautiful. These Jews who had never seen each other before, joined in the prayers, sang the Chanukka hymn, and felt that they were all brothers and sisters. "A few minutes later these Jews from different countries, who had not known each other, were already seated together... ate from one dish, shared their food, and felt like members of one family, like old, old friends from distant ages, who had already known each other when the Holy Temple stood, who had set out together into the Exile, and who met here again, to go into the new Exile, in America."

And indeed America was exile for these men and women whose whole existence was rooted in the past. Meir found that his children, the two sons who were admitted to America (the young-

est, Jossele, was rejected by the immigration authorities, and little Rachel went back with him to the old home, grew away from him. They became interested in sport, and despised their father as a "greenhorn" who could speak no word of English. They soon acquired American independence, and sold newspapers after school. "They prayed only when they desired to do so; they went out wherever they wished and troubled themselves very little about the Jewish ritual." Meir soon found out that America was not Leschna. Whenever he complained, he was told to "mind your business." The older the children grew, the more they grew away from him. At last, however, the old man's dearest wish was fulfilled, and little Joseph was admitted to America. Joseph was a better Jew even than Meir; although he was but a young child, his whole heart was given over to Judaism. He was much hurt at the change in his brothers, who had forgotten all their Jewish manners. They had no respect for their father, and ate without praying and without the washing of the hands. "Even Meir had become different. He wore a short coat, and when he came home of evenings, he read the newspaper." It was a strange bewildering world to little Jossele. He was a Jewish child, a son of the Ghetto, blinded by the light of the great world.

"Everything seems to him strange; the room, his brothers, and even his mother, who, he remarks, is dressed differently. He does not know in what sort of world he lives. Often he fetches a Talmud folio from the ~~base~~ ^{shelf}, and reviews the chapter he has just studied. Mother stands in a corner and weeps for joy. Then the brothers come bounding in, make sport of him, and drag him away from the Talmud. Through the open door and the window comes a terrible noise; outdoors there are shouts and the sound of blows, and a hurdy-gurdy is playing-and all this disturbs

and confuses him at his study..... Only sometimes, of an evening, when Father is at home, when Josselle fetches the Talmud, opens it to the last chapter and goes through it with his father, loud, in the ancient singsong, -only then does he feel as if he were in the old home, as if he has found again something precious; and both, father and son are close to each other again in the home from which they have been torn. And they become, father and son, as one heart, one soul, in the night, studying the Talmud in the great strange city of New York."

Josselle goes to school, but cannot flourish in America. He becomes pale, and ill; and in the hot sweltering days of the summer in the tenement district, he dies. In his death he feels that he is being taken up into the bright realm of heaven, where are all his ancestors gone before:

"Behold, he is travelling on a long gleaming road, which is white and shiny like heavenly light, and on this road and on the fields around, Jews are marching. Jews from the whole world, and from all past generations have gathered here. For the Messiah has come, and all the dead have arisen. In the midst of them all he stands, the Messiah, wrapped in a ^{great} praying-shawl. And all the great patriarchs, crowd around him, and all the prophets, with Moses at their head, and all the sage and pious who ever walked on earth; among them, too, the Rabbi of Ieschna who recently has died - Josselle sees him clearly. In front of the Messiah there moves a funeral procession; a great God-fearing man in Israel has died, and he is being carried, high over the heads of the great assembly, which has gathered here in his honor. It is a funeral, but all are filled with great joy. Levites play on harps and the sounds of a flute and a choir are heard. The whole assembly joins in the song, and everybody presses forward, to carry the body of their dead. But angels appear in starlight,

who stand and await the funeral train... ..and suddenly Joseph feels that it is he, the dead, wrapped in a praying-shawl, and that he is being led up to heaven.....".

So dies this true Jew, this son of Israel in the latest land of the exile, who though yet a child is the bearer of the august heritage of his people.

Yiddish

Sholom Asch is perhaps the greatest writer of the day. He is the authentic voice of the immigrant Jew, whose heart is torn when he is wrenched from the home of his childhood, when all the symbols that are the sole food for his spirit are lost to him. There have been countless Meirs among the Jewish immigrants, and perhaps many little Josephs. The pathetic story of the faithful Jewish lad is not overdrawn; for although most children born or bred in this country were moulded by it, yet a certain number of them were of this type: shy, studious, and Jewish. For them life in the new world was very difficult. The precocious lad of the Ghetto, with his serious, sober mind, with his perpetual seeking of a meaning in life, is foreign and strange to American children or to children who have imbibed the spirit of America.

The authors quoted above approach the problem of Jewish life in America from different points of view. None of them is completely orthodox; the orthodox group, as we have said, remains largely inarticulate; it is not vociferous, and does not continually air its opinions. These faithful, pious Jews are wrapped up in the Gemorrh, and do not feel the need of literary expression. To an old-fashioned Jew, indeed, the writing of anything "secular" seems something of a sacrilege. Rabbi Bernard Drachman in the preface to his volume of tales, "From the Heart of Israel", finds it necessary to apologize for devoting to story-telling the precious time and energy that might have been given to

the Torah. The intelligence and enthusiasm that might have been applied to the writing of books of science or philosophy, or for the creation of works of art, was expended upon the folios of the Talmud, and over the pages of Midrash.

The writers quoted are immigrant East European Jews. Sholom Asch was born in Poland; Solomon Bloomgarten, Morris Rosenfeld, and Abraham Cahan in Lithuania. But, although they all originate from the completely orthodox East European Jewish environment, no one of them has retained that orthodoxy in America. Sholom Asch and Yehoash may perhaps be classed as Maskilim, who have found in America an opportunity to acquire the culture of which the early protagonists of Haskalah could but dream, and who have made contributions to world-literature in the Yiddish tongue. Although the fact of their acquisition of culture freed their minds from the "four ells of the Halacha", neither of these two truly remarkable writers has lost his love of Judaism. Sholom Asch writes of Judaism with appreciation, and of the emotions of the older generation that clung to tradition, with sympathy. His treatment of Jewish symbols, ideals and values is invariably sympathetic; he recognizes, however, the existence of superstition, and presents some of the crude and harsh aspects of Jewish culture without attempting to trick them out in pretty colors. For him, as a lover of beauty and ideals, Judaism is a source of nobility and of idealism; he describes the love of learning that survives even in the harsh American environment, and the burning passion for justice which is part of the young Jew's inheritance as well as the pathetic lives of the unadjusted immigrant Jews. His attitude is that of a cultured Jew who remembers the past without malice, and who finds much that is surpassingly beautiful in the life and the ideals of his own folk. He describes

the tragedies that accompany immigration and adjustment; but he also understands that out of the struggle new values are being created. He has learned to love America without ceasing to value Judaism. Equipped with all the paraphernalia of culture, with all of the arts and graces of a skillful writer, he is yet a Jew at heart—he feels with the exiles that are tossed from land to land, he comprehends the tragedy of the true Jew. Above all, he possesses a stern unflinching moral fibre. He writes, as almost every Jewish writer must, if he is to be himself, intensely, and with a purpose. He has something to say. The motif of stern justice is found in "The God of Vengeance" and in "Uncle Moses". "Uncle Moses", indeed, may easily be turned into a sermon. "That the uncle has done to the restaurant-keeper, Sam does to the uncle. The child is not his after all—or who knows, whether it be his or not? All the strife, all the effort, all the pursuit of money, of youth, of sex—all ends in death. His place beside his first wife has been waiting for him all the time. Whoever outrages nature and violates the laws of life must fail. The grave is the answer it waits for us all. And while we approach it, ^{why} we be so flustered so excited?

Solomon Bloomgarten (Yehoash) is a true poet, the author of whimsical, delightful essays, and the translator of several books of the Bible into Yiddish. His attitude to Orthodox Judaism is that of one who loves and pities and understands. His essays reveal a wistful, poetic nature; they portray him as a disillusioned seeker of beauty, one whom the tumult of America has bewildered in his search for God. His book of essays contains tender reminiscences of his own life as a boy in a Jewish community in Eastern Europe. The children who are drawn together reciting the

Kaddish, "der Zadeh Zalman", the shtadlan and town-boss, the little boy so proud to be chosen "shamash" for the "Chevra Shas", the beautiful old Bible stories in a Jewish setting, the mother whose prayer was that her son should be a rabbi;—all these are treated as only one who has lived the Jewish life and loved it can treat such themes. There are aspects of that life that seem a bit unsatisfactory, perhaps ludicrous, such as the efforts of the old Jewess *יודע* to procure a bit of *אגוד* for the "Epicuros" Rabbino-witch; but they are told, we are sure, with a twinkle in the eye, for Yehoash is a lover of Jews. One essay describes the first doubt, the child's questioning of *אמונת אבות*; to allay the doubts of the ignorant Ibbé, he found himself expressing his own firm faith. "And the serpent of doubt gave me a long rest, which ended many years later". Although, therefore, the faith of his childhood vanished with maturity, Yehoash is a truly religious man and a loyal Jew. His nature is contemplative, gentle and loving; he therefore never turns sour, though he possesses all of the Jewish comprehension of the harshness of life. He toys with ideas, but he loves people. Religious thoughts are expressed in an essay called "Soul Reckoning", which is an indictment of the religious attitude of our day. We think only of counting money, not of spiritual goods. We believe in nothing. Our gods are statues which we admire with the aesthetic sense. In a cemetery we foster poetic feelings, and admire the monuments and the flowers. There are, however, noble thoughts and feelings buried in the secret places of the heart; when one comes to us with true faith he can awake them. One great soul, like Tolstoi, achieves faith for millions. We believe in the division of labor and allow our religious leaders to seek our atonement. We seek the approval of the world, not our own approval, and therefore do not achieve a true "soul-reckoning". The essay on "Thanksgiving" expresses admiration for "the beauty of thankfulness which weaves heart

heart." Primitive man gave thanks for everything; we neglect even to thank one another. Just as if one cannot love he cannot hate, so also, if one has never been thankful, he cannot denounce his bitter lot as did Job, fearlessly. We need to express our emotions; we live emotionless. "The Season of Our Freedom", contains Passover thoughts. The people did not free itself, but Moses freed it. There is ever a great leader and an unthinking mass. The essay called "New Year Thoughts" contains a passage that justifies completely our appellation, "religious." "The world is an ocean of joy and light. Open your soul, a little way; and the whole stream will flow through you. If you wish to collect a tax for yourself from the stream, you will drive it away." Another significant statement reads, "He who seeks God believes in Him before he finds Him. God-seeking is belief in God" In a truer sense than some dogmatists perhaps know, Yehoash is a God-seeker, and therefore truly a religious man. Of him it cannot be said that life in America has destroyed Jewish values (apart from the question of ritual observance, in regard to which we can furnish no data; although the impression left by his writings is that he is of such nature that he enjoys doing his share, out of love for his fellow-Jews).

The love of Yehoash for Judaism can be seen in his Poetry. He is a lover of the Bible and the Talmud. The first division of his book of poems is called *ספר ברכות א' ח' ט' י' י"א י"ב י"ג י"ד י"ה י"ו י"ז י"ח י"ט*, and contains poems that show a profound understanding of the spirit of the Bible. He adds sometimes a bit of his own fancy, as every poet must; very often he preserves wonderfully well the spirit and even the tone of the original. A very pretty piece is the interpretation of IK19, the revelation of God to Elijah through the still small voice: ⁶

ד' ה"י גע' שט' ק"ט ד' דוה' גע קרפ
א' פ' גע' שט' ק"ט ד' דוה' גע קרפ

tion of the book, ~~that~~ manifest sympathy and understanding of the trials of the ~~1870~~; and a love of the folk, an understanding of its quaint ancient beliefs quite rare in our day. "The Collier's Daughter", "The Bridegroom's Death", "The Stolen Bride," preserve the atmosphere of fear and mystery, with the touch of witchery and charm that accompanies it, of old time. "From an Old ~~1870~~", tells the story of an informer's attempt to betray a Jewish congregation, and the miracle that ensued. Many other poems deal with Jewish legends in a picturesque and attractive way. "The Organ," is a poem that could hardly have been written by an Orthodox Jew who was not a Maskil, for the organ is treated with respect:

"הערס איזר נען אן ארגעל שפיעלען
אן איד קלעסעס א ניסער ווערטאג
קענט איזר שווערען פון בית-מקדש
קופט דאס טהייערע כל-דבר"

There is a hint here of the recognition of the fact that many customs which old-fashioned Jews reject were originally Jewish and were adopted by the Church from the Synagog. "Lyrical Songs" are exquisite poetry, many of them make use of imagery derived from the Bible, and later Jewish literature, and many of them are examples of beautiful Jewish idealism. "Naked Souls" is an expression of the Jewish ideal of the sanctification of reality. It condemns the denial of evil, pitying all ~~אויסלאזן~~ souls that lose themselves in dreaming, that fashion only,

"היילע שפינוועבס אירעאלען
וועלכע ווילען אלץ אן קענען
דארט אן אין טהאטען
ווערען קיינמאל נישט פערזאנלעכע!"

"Venus and Shulamith" compares the luring siren beauty of Greece with the pensive and serene beauty of Israel. Other poems use

imagery from the Bible, such as "Fragments of the Tablets". Some of the lyrics are written in a mood of despair (The Eternal Question:

די גאנצע וועלט ארום איז בלוז
א גרויסער פראגע צ"כע/!

but all are beautiful and all express the search for beauty, truth, holiness, ideals-which is the search for God. "National Songs" give expression to the hope for the rebirth of the Jewish people. "Olympus and Foreb" is a confession of a Jew's inability to revel in Greek beauty while his folk is in misery. דער חורבן

mourns Jewish weakness:

"א פאלק פון אבילות האט נישט
אפילו אין שפחות פערטויערט
דאס פיינטסטע פארארץ פון חורבן
און טויט
לייגט צוגעצ אין בנוסט דיר פערטויערט."

expresses the pain and the anguish caused by the innocent deaths of the victims of oppression:

"My cup with human blood runs o'er,
My Kiddush-cup with red red blood";
The future with its woe and sin,
With human blood I usher in."

"The Heroes of Zitomir" praises the self-defense movement "After the Funeral" is a plea for Jewish unity because of common suffering. "Empty Times" expresses the conviction that the world will long remain in darkness and the dove will not find a resting-place in the angry waters:

"פעררוק דיר אין דין תיבה שט"ז
אין שטיקענס און שטעטל
אין האנט פון שייפעל וועלכען לאנג
דיין לופט און ערד און די שטעטל"

"The New Song" is a call to struggle. "Far from the Folk" is a beautiful little poem which expresses the feeling of many a Jew whose heart is linked to those of his brothers, in blood and in faith, when feels that he has become estranged from them:

"Sundered from the great sea,
Where the waves wildly beat,
Lies a lonely shell
But it feels".

Yet the life of the folk surges in the poet who is sundered from it, and he responds to all its joys and sorrows. "May in exile," "Jewish Romances," and other lyrics portray the bitterness of the Jewish lot. "Emigration Plans" satirizes plans for settling Jews in various lands, which may palliate but not cure Israel's perennial ill. "More and More Shadow," is a subtle little poem, containing the Galuth-plaint. In the Jewish Succah there must not be too much light. "A Yom Kippur Story" tells of the rabbi who was missing from his place in the Synagog for Kol Nidrei, and who was found hushing a babe to sleep. Other poems show strong Jewish feeling, and lament the Jew's lack of self-respect and combativeness; these include, "An Empty Dream", "To Esau", "Out of the Depths Did I Call Unto Thee, O Lord." חַנּוּכָּה is a protest against mere sentimental romanticism, and sweet contemplation, and a call to action. Let the Chanukka lights be used, let them be not merely to look upon. "The Chorus of Light" is a most beautiful use of the symbol of the Chanukkah lights: each light has a message of beauty and ideals, and all glean together in chorus, a harmony of light, to symbolize unity and cooperation:

א פול און רייך דאס לאב צו א י
פון דעם "אס טרוט זיין פליס
און מעכטיגער פון טויט א סך
די ברידערשאפט פון ליכט

2x 65x75x77 77 80x80 77x77 77x77
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 77x77 77x77 77x77 77x77

Men such as Asch and Bloomgarten, although not Orthodox Jews in the most limited sense of the term, are truly religious Jews, loyal to the best part of the Jewish heritage. America may have helped to destroy the faith of their childhood, but that destruction is beneficent, if it result in the acquisition of a firmer and truer faith. Of course, artists and poets are not to be taken as types. Yet perhaps they represent to some extent at least the inchoate and inarticulate desires of the masses, the moods and fancies which many possess but cannot communicate.

The fact that works of Jewish scholarship have been produced in America is evidence of the ^{survival of the} love of learning at least in some of the immigrants. Anyone who knows Mr. Z- can never doubt that survival. He is a specific human type - the Talmud-man. When he opens a Talmud-folio and reads, his eyes sparkle, his sallow cheeks seem even to have color, and despite his forlorn and neglected exterior he seems to be as happy as mortal can ever be.

Among Eastern Jewish scholars in America may be mentioned Rodkinson, Eisenstein, Rosenberg, Weilprin, Ginsburg, Rhine, Raisin, Schechter, Friedlander, Kaplan, Fusik, Walter, Halper, Neumark, Lauterbach, Mann, Waldstein, Davidson, Jastrow, Wolfson. The great achievement of Jewish scholarship in America has been the Jewish Encyclopedia. Rodkinson has translated the Talmud. Eisenstein has edited the ^{אורח חיים} and collected the ^{מקראות}. The ^{אורח חיים} and the ^{אורח חיים} have been made available in English. The Jewish Publication Society has issued translations of Jewish novels and also an anthology of post-Biblical Hebrew literature, and has prepared the Jewish version of the Bible.

Some of these scholars labored in obscure quarters, with very little hope of reward, and almost no recognition. Abraham H. Rosenberg, once Rabbi of Nikolayev, in New York became a printer in a dingy cellar in Canal Street, where he wrote learned dissertations, and compiled an encyclopedia of the Bible, *אוצר השניות*. The traditional Jewish love of study did not disappear utterly in America. But the environment was unfriendly, and many of these men were not properly valued. There have been brochures and monographs written in America on subjects connected with Jewish ritual, especially on Shechita and Milah. J.D. Eisenstein claims to have consulted 100 Teshubot of American rabbis. Halachic questions have arisen, and decisions have been given in accordance with the traditional law. Professors Ginsburg and Lauterbach both have solved questions involving minutiae of Jewish law.

Literature written in Hebrew in America is surprisingly rich in content. It includes poetic, philosophic, exegetical, rabbinical, controversial, homiletical, historical, and descriptive works. ⁷ Shalom or Solomon Joseph Silverstein (born 1846 in Kovno, Russia, resident since 1881 in America) is the author of five philosophic works, two of which are in Hebrew, *הקדמה לתורה* (N.Y., 1887) and *מציאות "והעולם"* (N.Y. 1893). The other three are in English. Rabbi Drachman says that Silverstein cannot be considered a specifically Jewish thinker, since he betrays a "Fundamental lack of comprehension of the religious significance of Judaism". Jekiel Judah Levinson (born, Russia, died 1895 in New York) for many years a preacher in various American synagogues, published in New York in 1885 a critical essay *הגות בדת* called *אורח* *הגות*. He was thoroughly familiar with the Hebrew philosophers, and possessed critical acumen. He was also versed in Arabic. Among the exegetical writings produced in Hebrew in this country, were the *מפרש* of Arnold Bogumil Frick, (b. 1848 in

Russia), a collection of critical notes on different passages of the Bible. Eleazar Uri Phillips, a scribe (79/0) published in 1881 מגן דוד , a commentary to various passages of the Bible.

Some of the Halachic works published in America deserve to rank beside those written in Europe, according to Rabbi Drachman. ⁸ He gives a list of such works printed before 1900. These include works by Aaron Specter Spiwak, Eleazar Solomon Grazewski, Zebi Hirsh Grodzinsky, Benjamin Gittelsohn, Shabbatai Sofer, Abraham Sherskewsky, Baruch Ettelson, Abba Baruch Cohen. The works written by these men include collections of responsa, commentaries to the Talmud, ^{Aggadic} Halachic and ~~Halachic~~ discourses, a commentary to the מגן אברהם of Maimonides ("an excellent compendium of Rabbinical ethics."), and other homiletical and exegetical works. The ^{were} authors of these works all born in Russia, and most were officiating orthodox rabbis in various American cities. These men preserved in America the traditional Jewish love of learning.

⁹ Rabbi Drachman also enumerates authors of controversial works that have appeared in America. Among these he mentions Meyer Rabinowitz, author of מגן אברהם (New York 1898, press of Brody and Chelmer), a study of the conflict between orthodoxy and reform, marked by great Talmudic erudition, and standing upon a platform of enlightened orthodoxy; and of several other works mentioned in the preface; Solomon Jacob Friederman, a native of Russia, for a time rabbi in Boston and later in New York, author of מגן אברהם (New York, press of A. F. Rosenberg) a vindication of "the unity and authenticity of the Mosaic books"; Wolf Shur, born 1846, in Russia, and resident since 1897 in America, author of מגן אברהם (Chicago 1897, press of W. Schur),

a treatise on Judaism full of Jewish enthusiasm and of Zionist sentiment; and of two books of travel; Abraham Loeb Benjaminson, (born, Russia, 1844, d. 1892), author of *ספרנו בשמים*, a defense of Judaism against missionary endeavor, in the form of a dialog between a priest and a rabbi, and *אמרי חכמים*, a treatise on various Jewish sects, *מגמגמים*, a study of Jewish problems, and *ענין ענין* and *קטיל אבשלום*, two unpublished didactic dramas. Judah or Julius Kaletsky, a Pagan in Cincinnati, wrote *שאלות ותשובות*, a series of articles on Jewish history. Moses Weinberger published a description of New York Jewry called *קריים ויהודים בני ארץ* (1887, press of New Yorker Judische Zeitung). Among other satiric writings are those of Gershon Rosenzweig, author of *מכתב* *אספיקא* a sharp though humorous criticism of the state of Jewish life in America, Abraham Hatlier (born, Russia, resident in Cleveland, Ohio), author of *מכתב דרך ארץ החדשה* (Pittsburg 1898, press of J. Glueck), Solomon Joseph Schwarzberg, author of *מכתב מאת* *לדון אחרון*, "a bitterly hostile description of the attitude of American Jews to Hebrew literature", (New York, 1898, press of A.H. Rosenberg). Zionist writings in Hebrew, mentioned by Rabbi Drachman, include *רוח יעקב*, by Jacob Forowitz (born, Russia, 1858, arrived, 1890) which betrays a warm Jewish religious as well as a Zionist feeling,; *כחמה של בעם* and *עמוד ישראלי* by Ephraim Deinard, editor of the Zionist journal *הלאומי*. Deinard also wrote a work called *ספרות ישראל* dealing with certain Jewish sects. Contributors to the periodicals published in Hebrew, who have not already been mentioned, include A.B. Dobsevaige, author of a series of articles on Talmudic proverbs, Moses Fa-Cohen Reicherson, author of Hebrew grammatical articles, poetic parables and aphorisms, Herman Rosenthal

author of philological and Zionistic articles, Joseph Iosb Sosnitz, writer on religio-philosophical themes, Meheliah Samuel Libowitz, author of critical essays on Jewish literature and history, Jacob Zewi Sobel, who wrote essays on Jewish science and history, as well as the *שירי צה"ל*, Hyman Charlap, author of Hebrew tales, Jacob Aaron Raus, I. Vernik, D. M. Hermolin, Israel Davidson, Akiba Fleishman, Noah Schechter, Mordecai Zebi Ruisin, Alexander Markavy, Abraham Barsitsky, Gerson Krakaur, E. M. Frank, W. Jacobson, M. M. Sheikewitz, M. Garsson, Jekuthiel Berman, and M. M. Porowitz. This list is given by Rabbi Drachman in the article cited. Among Hebrew poets he mentions Isaac Rabbinowitz (born 1846 in Kovno, Russia), a man of tender sympathy and an ardent Jew, whose best work was done in America. His published works include, *דפירות ישראל* (Wilna, 1891), *נצחית בתי יקודקד* (New York, 1893), and *פרחי חורף* (New York, 1900). Menachem Mendel Dolitzky has written some good Hebrew poems in America, where he has lived since 1893. His chief work is *שירי מלחמה* (New York, 1900). Gershon Rosenzweig has published a collection of verse, *שירים משלבים ופכתיים* (New York, 1893, press of S. Levine.) Other poets mentioned are, Hayyim Weinschel, born in 1843 in Russia, a Hazzan in various congregations, author of a work *שירי* (New York, 1891, press of A. Ginsburg); Abraham Luria, or Lewis, born 1853 in Russia, author of *הפעמים*, a poem and *אגדה נשגבה*, a novel in four parts. He is interesting, we are told, because he combines the intellectual traits of the Has-kil with sincere religious interest and with feeling for America. Ezekiel Leavitt has written some poetry in America, although his best pieces seem to have been produced before his arrival. There have been other writers of Hebrew verse, some of

which has not been published, although it richly deserves to be., (for example, the Hebrew poetry of Harry Wolfson). Reuben Brainin has written studies of Hebrew literature, and David Neumark has produced philosophical works and has contributed to various Hebrew periodicals. Israel Efros has written some notable poems.

These writers may be divided into two classes, Orthodox, and Maskilim. Those who were completely orthodox were mostly rabbis, although some did not care to officiate as such in America (a significant commentary on the state of the American Rabbinate.) Among completely orthodox Jews, the rabbis seem to be the only intellectual caste; on the whole only those who were professionally connected with Judaism, as rabbis, cantors, Shohet-im or Mohelim, wrote books. The masses felt no need of expressing themselves in literary form.

The writers who contributed to the neo-Hebraic literature in America were the salt of the East European immigration, profoundly versed in Jewish lore, deeply imbued with love for Israel, and possessing an understanding of Israel's place in the world. Orthodox Jewry in America was not barren-it produced scholars and poets. Of course the Maskilim were not regarded as orthodox, because of their laxity in the observance of ritual, and in some cases, because of their attitude to the traditional principles of the faith. Yet at heart, the Maskilim in America possessed the same Jewish love, and manifested the same outreaching for the ends of life, as did the writers who were entrenched in the orthodox camp. Those who had a keen interest in the preservation of Jewish ideals in the home and the market place, were made unhappy by their realization of the fact that observance of the traditional ritual was fast disappearing, and that many things so dear to them were becoming obsolete. Their tragedy was part of the larger tragedy of all

peoples who were uprooted from their origins and transplanted to America, where before they found a new home for the spirit in the ideals of the new land, they felt that they had come to a barren wilderness. The expression of unhappiness differed of course according to the nature of the writer. Some express their disappointment in bitter and satiric terms; others in melancholy poems. Almost all, however, seem to feel that Jewish life in the new land is below the standard of life in the countries from which they came. Not only the decay of the traditional cult, but the lowering of standards of morality and culture, aroused their ire and their dismay.

Gerson Rosenzweig in his *אמעריקא פסכת* is bitterly satiric; America he calls *פּרֹמ דערק*, a place where everything is permissible. In a satiric passage such as this he has his fling at the Eastern Jew in America:

גאָס טאָג לאָג נבראָ אַמעריקא גאָס לאָרץ פּערלא
 .. יודיק לאָס שטאָט כלל נוצח.
 פּערלאַ פּערלאַ שטאָט גאָס אַמעריקא וואָסלעו דואַ פּערלאַ
 שוין שטאָט אין בו פשוט בדיון כלל פּערלאַ שטאָט דיון בו
 די-נאָם וואָסלעו יש בו גנבה ידבּלה אין בו פשוט אונאָק
 כלל דואַ אַפּער חכמים בפּערלאַ כלל אונאָק פּערלאַ חוץ
 פּערלאַ עינאָ

His poetry, too, expresses the same feeling; his verses are often epigrammatic, scornful and biting. *אמעריקא*, he says is to be read *על נאָם*.. He laments the disorganization and lack of leadership of his people. The people are saug and indif'rent to the fate of their persecuted coreligionists:

"Because of my brothers, who do not hastily bring help to their exiled brothers; and because of those rabbis who sleep peacefully and are not troubled by the destruction of their people." ¹¹

In the same poem he blames editors and writers

for lack of consideration for the public and for petty squabbles. In a few caustic stanzas he attacks the rabbis who pay no heed to the needs of their congregants and disgrace Israel, the rich who despise men of learning, the editors who print lies and provide "provender for Mamorim", the poets who sing in praise of wine, the vain outlanders who plagiarize, the Epicureans who yet lean on his faith in time of trouble, the Maggid who himself needs a good Doroško, the cantor who uses an unknown language in his prayers and yet loves himself not a little, and the Yellammed who uses a heavy club as a substitute for good pedagogy. ¹² *אֵלֶּיךָ יְהוָה אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה* compares Israel to a lion's whelp grown old, from whom, now that he has grown weak, even the donkey is emboldened to seek revenge; even *הַכֹּבֶשֶׁת שֶׁאֵין עָלֶיהָ מִלְחָמָה*, of whom Israel may say *גִּבּוֹרֵי קָדִים עָלָיו*. "Except the Holy Tongue" is a clever bit of satire directed against ignoramuses who become instructors in Hebrew (*עַל סֵפֶר*).

Rosenzweig is not always satiric. The small volume of his collected verse contains also some very touching lamentations and some poems that express love for the folk and hope for the Redemption. "Lost Sheep Were My People," "The Driven Bird," "Wanderers on the Sea", "The Ninth of Ab," "Comfort Ye, Comfort Ye, My People," are among these. There is also a poem that deploras the unhappy lot of the wage-slave, who has become a machine, and one with a true Jewish flavor, *כֹּכָב דָּוִד*, an acrostic on the initials of *הַשְּׂדֵה הַשְּׂדֵה*, which accepts poverty with a mixture of good nature and bitterness. Biting as his satire is, there is a touch of good humor in it; one feels that it is due, not to spite or envy, but to a desire to lift and to admonish.

Morris Weinberger in his *הַיְּהוּדִים בְּנֵי אֶרֶץ נְיוֹרְק*, also flays the Jews of New York mercilessly. At the same time he expresses

grief:

"And I am pained greatly, for it is impossible to relate everything else, and to give a complete picture of the gatherings of the Kehilloth here; for if I attempted to tell everything in detail I could not refrain from scorn and ridicule. But in truth my heart is troubled and my soul is bowed in grief, and I shall cease to be flippant since it is more fitting to sigh and weep bitterly."¹³

He criticizes the communal organizations and the butchers, the Shohetim, the Hazanim, and laments the decay of Jewish education;¹⁴ the laxity of observance, and the decay of moral standards.¹⁵ He is full of scorn for the American Jewish reader, to whom he says:

אכן לא בשבילך ולא בשבילי, מביטים אנחנו
כיוצא בך נאמרו הדברים, מביטים אנחנו
לפרחוק אל אחינו שבדולה¹⁷

There is a topsy-turvy world in America:

החכמים כן בחכמת הנהגון עולם הפוך באמצעיקא
- עליונים למטה ותחתונים למטה.

Menahem Mendel Dolitzky also has some bitter things to say about America. His own life is another instance of the lack of appreciation of culture and beauty that at first seems to have characterized the life of the immigrants, both when they were too poverty-stricken to think of aught but the endless struggle, and later when they became "alrightniks." It is but lately that Jewish philanthropists have undertaken the support of Hebrew literateurs. Dolitzky's own experience of course explains some of his bitterness:

לא מאפריקא יושע ישראל

he cries.¹⁸ The generation produces dogs, but not ¹⁹קטן נוכח

על החסר. He weeps over the decay of Hebrew literature. America

is no place for wisdom: ²⁰הנח לאסעניקא עחכפה יפדעים
 Fe calls upon his friend not to attempt to sow the seeds of
 Jewish learning: ²¹הנה נחכפה לקיות יהודים נשנים
 פרנסים נשגחים וקושרי הכשרים

but let us cease to hope to be Hebrew writers. ²¹There are, how-
 ever positive notes in his poetry; there are some expressions
 of love of Zion and of Jewish ideals. The poet's passion for
 the ancient land is expressed best perhaps in the well known
 lyric, ²²אם אשכח, "He weeps over the Galuth and expresses the
 heartbreak awakened by the pogroms. Cynical expressions never-
 theless seem to predominate; the poet was embittered by his
 lot as a Jew and an immigrant. He bewails the necessity of being
 false to his Hebrew muse and of paying court to the despised
 Yiddish, ²³אפת נכל השוהדה. A very caustic poem, satirizing the
 smug coarse life of the Jewish immigrant to America is ²⁴פנת
²⁴הארץ, "the song which the Jews of Rumania recite in the
 new land", which begins:

ברוך שנקמא פקערטו ה גדול

The poem is the prayer of the immigrant to his tribal god who
 has given him freedom to feed himself with greasy food and to
 peddle "פנשים ישנים". Dolitzky is not in any sense an or-
 thodox religionist. There is too much bitterness in him; not the
 bitterness of a Ryalik, which is prophetic, but the biting satire
 of a weakling. He strikes out maliciously. Only when he sings
 of Zion is he truly lyrical. Perhaps America helped to embitter
 him; she certainly did not afford him the opportunity to devel-
 op his poetic talent. It is an indictment of American Jewry
 that Dolitzky with his undoubted gift should not have been ap-
 preciated.

Many of the writers produced by Orthodox Jewry, although they themselves are evidence of the survival of the love of Jewish learning, yet are manifestly exceptional, since they lament the decay of Judaism. Some however seem to have been somewhat more serene. Zevi Hirsh Masliansky, the great Maggid, continued to produce his powerful sermons in America, and throughout his long life has loyally clung to the orthodox position. Bernard Drachman, an orthodox rabbi who wrote some very pretty tales of Jewish life in America, was not embittered by the new world. Neither his serenity nor his belief in Israel was disturbed by the life that others found so imperfect. He was convinced that Orthodox Judaism could flourish in a free environment:

"In the imagination of such persons, deceived by prejudiced or sensation-seeking writers, Judaism is a feeble, pale cellar plant which leads its anaemic existence in darkness and slime, but which withers and fades when exposed to the fresh strong breezes and the bright warm sun of heaven. These notions...are incorrect both as regards the alleged facts and the inference drawn therefrom." ¹⁵

A serene and lovable soul was that of Isaac Rabbinowitz. The unhappiness which was his lot was partly due to the transplantation to a new land, but perhaps some of it was the inevitable lot of a sensitive man, unfitted to bear the brunt of the struggle. In the introduction to his book of poems he confesses his despair at being thrown into a new environment, where "under the new skies I saw a new spirit among our brethren." "where some threw off the yoke of the law, and others" ²⁶ "gave a bill of divorce to the Holy Tongue," and where children were born who did not know whether they were "אשכנזי", or "חסידי". But he was cheered and enheartened by the fact that his poems did

find some appreciative readers, so that it was possible to gather them in a volume. The poem, *מקדמוני* is an expression of gratitude to those who made the printing of the collected poems possible:

עוד לא נבדל גזעה לא פניה שחת
 על פניה אדני לא יחירך המור
 מי פלל לי ה אפצא אדני
 אנגלה בת יהודה מעבר אים ?

The poet bewails the suffering of the Jews in foreign lands, and laments the decay of Judaism in his generation. He condemns his generation as perverse and stubborn and as departing from the ways of God and deserting the Hebrew tongue. All of his poems manifest a deep love for the Hebrew language, the Torah, the *תורה*, and the Jewish liturgy, and betray a touch of mysticism. He loved all the customs and traditions. Especially interesting is the poem "I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes unto the Hills," wherein the poet expresses his sorrow and loneliness. He is weary of life in the busy town. There is a lack of warmth and happiness in America. The world is a stepmother to him:

ואני אל קדשים אשא צינח
 סאין יבוא עזרי? ברגתה אשאלה
 הוה לי הסה ציני שמים
 ללב קלל בקרב תה נפאומי העלה
 אם בכל איתח ארץ לא אפצא פנחמים
 הרים נדפעות בקשו עלי כחמים

Hazan, Maggidim, Badchanim, Shochetim, Mohelim and orthodox Rabbis continued to function in America as they had done in Europe. But somehow, everything was altered. Even in the Ghetto, where outwardly the life was the same, the influence of

the environment seeped in; it undermined observance, it destroyed the ancient regard for the sacred lore, it worked havoc with synagog attendance. Blahum Zenser, the old-time Sadchan, in America continued to write his songs. Among some of them written in America were "The Plough," "The Piddlar," "Columbus and Washington." He seems to have retained his racial sympathies, and his love for the traditions, although a remark of his to the effect that the state of Judaism in America left little to be desired, may be taken as indicative of a certain deterioration. ²⁸ The remark may have been inserted to please a certain group of readers or may have been due to a genuine understanding of the opportunity of Judaism in this country.

Philip Raskin, Ezekiel Leavitt, and Louis Smirnow are among the Jewish poets in America who manifest strong nationalistic tendencies, possess a great deal of Jewish pride, and preserve some of the lovely folk-traditions. Raskin has found some happiness in America, and looks back to Russia without regret. Some of his poems are very effective and pretty. Among others are some good renditions of Talmudic legends. Others are the plaints of exile. "There shall I find," asks the poet in the name of Israel, "as vast as my sorrows a grave?" Yet his sorrow is the sorrow of Israel in all lands, not specifically that of Israel in America. Leavitt has tender and prophetic strains. In powerful verses he cries out at the atrocities of Kishineff. He sings beautiful little lyrics of the new Zion:

בְּמִדְבַּר הַיַּבֵּשׁ
יִשְׂרָאֵל יָשָׁב
יְרֵאֵת וְיִשְׁמַח

There is bitterness in him, too, and some satire; but he is predominantly the enemy of all wrong and the lover of Zion. He sees much that is unsatisfactory in the state of Judaism in America and criticizes both Reform and Orthodoxy. ²⁹

Most of the writers, as we have seen, though themselves orthodox, or with orthodox leanings, confess that observance in America has declined; many of them seem to feel that there has been a disruption of the moral life, a decay of standards, a cheapening and a coarsening of all of life. The writers of the 20's and 30's, such as Rosenzweig, Weinberger, Rabbinowitz, seem to be obsessed with the idea that life in America is spiritless, tasteless, and un-Jewish; this is because their own souls were lightless and cold. This may be attributed to the difficulty of the transition, as we have said; yet the fact of the decline of observance seems indisputable. Orthodoxy failed to hold American Jewry, and was not transmitted to the second generation. Some of the most prominent protagonists and financial pillars of the orthodox institutions have been the most blatant offenders against the ritual regulations. This plaint on the part of Orthodox Jews has been carried down to the present day. It was the burden of numerous editorials and exhortations in the Orthodox dailies, such as the "Taggeblatt" and the "Tog", and has been reiterated from almost every Orthodox pulpit. The newspapers mentioned have themselves evolved away from their former complete preoccupation with Jewish news and Jewish culture; it is significant that the "Taggeblatt" now has an English supplement. Gedaliah Bublik, the present editor of the "Taggeblatt", in a very interesting and well-written book, published in 1923, complains vehemently that there are very few faithful observant Jews left. His attitude in some respects is typical of that of the comparatively small yet very zealous and strong-minded company that still adheres to the orthodox position. Whenever his arguments are not typical, they are very original, and for both reasons seem to the writer to deserve to be detailed in full. The book is significant both for the psychology of the writer, and of the group, itself inarticulate, for which he writes, and for the infor-

mation it conveys concerning the status of the Jews in America and their attitude to Judaism, concerning which the author, an active publicist, and a resident of New York, is without doubt very well informed.

Judaism in the past, the book asserts, has survived only by virtue of the existence of a sense of superiority on the part of the Jews. It is in danger now that Gentiles have attained to culture. Are we to have Harvard or Volozhin? How were romantic were all the fasts and feasts of the Ghetto. The Maskilim forgot the grandeur of Volozhin, and the poetry of the Ghetto; the principal theme of their discourses was the worthlessness of the "Jewish Street," and the superiority of all things of the Gentiles. (ש' 17). The war which they began on traditional Judaism was carried on by Reform, which is the child of Haskalah, the servant of assimilation, and the road to apostasy. Opposition to the Talmud is characteristic of this school; because of the wish to placate the Gentiles, who have proscribed and burned the Talmud. The Hassidim and Misnagdim were not warring camps, but two allied armies, fighting Haskalah respectively with *מ' 275* and *מ' 275*. Hassidism emphasized many beautiful aspects of the faith—its poetry (seen in the thought that the stones worship God in "singing silence," and in the idea of the sanctification of the whole of life—an inheritance from the Kabbalah), love of Israel (the battles of R. Yitzchok Levi with God for the sake of Israel), love of Eretz Israel (many went to Palestine; the Besht wished to do so), the love of study. The standpoint of both armies was the principle that Jews need not worry about pleasing the Gentiles, but should draw strength from their own resources. To the question, Can the Jews live without Judaism? Maskilim, Reformers, and some Nationalists answer, Yes. They agree in that they all alike wish to dispense with the practical aspect of Judaism.

the practical commands, *(מצוות מעשיות)*. The much abused prophets are invoked as a support of this attitude. To disprove the foe's contention that the prophets are "opposed to Judaism" Mr. Dublik quotes Jeremiah on Sabbath burdens and Ezekiel. You cannot, he asserts, cut Judaism into pieces. Philo, the early Christians, the Mohammedans, the Karaites and the "Reformers," have all attempted it-but it won't do. The Mitzwot are the "pot of grease" that preserved Judaism. Jews may have differed in theory, but even the Rambam accepted all the Mitzwot. There are "souls that go about naked," without means of expressing their ideals. Customs are symbols of ideas; opposition to them is due to Christianizing. Every Jew, believing in Unity and Brotherhood, is a philosopher and an idealist. The conflict between Greek naturalism and the Jewish God is allied to that between nature-worship, allied to idolatry, and morality, which is based on belief in a Power Above nature. All the great Greek philosophers, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, lacked Jewish morality. Judaism recognises the *(עץ קדוש)* but insists on Free Will and the ultimate triumph of the good; it eschews both naturalistic libertinism and asceticism. Modern Jewish idolators, worshippers of Hellenism are not in harmony with the Hebrew spirit (such as Tschernichowsky). The new Hebrew literature makes unjust attacks upon Jews and Judaism and the true Jewish life. The editor of a Hebrew textbook (S.L. Tsitron) falsely describes Jewish life in Vilna as Benjamin Mandelstamm did forty eight years ago. All the attacks on "Rabbinism" are unjustified. "Rabbinism" never ruled by force. Abraham Zakheid writing to Dr. Fürst in Leipzig about Jewish life in Vilna, shows the other side of the shield, the beauty of Jewish learning. Today the Reformers, the Radicals, many Nationalists, and those with no Jewish upbringing are Maskilim in that they hate Judaism.

The radicals in New York have ~~many~~ ^{many} ~~good~~ ^{good} Jews. Many good Jews are somewhat tainted with Has-
kalah—they think it a synonym for culture. The Maskilim were ac-
tuated only by fear of the Goyim and hatred for the Jews. In
Austria they kow-towed to the government, not merely in order to
gain citizenship, but to betray all Jewish self-respect. The mod-
ern writers seem to have had one theme, the misery of Jewish life.
Lapin's ^{works} ~~works~~, G. Y. L. Gordon's works, and other works of the Maskil-
im are examples. The Maskilim drew a false analogy between their
own time and the period of the Renaissance. Judaism had no "ty-
ranny" to be freed from, no priesthood, no dispensations and no in-
dulgences. Judaism is not ascetic. Man is not a machine. There is
an ideal; a God! Socialism, based on materialism is a "blood-en-
emy" (~~enemy~~ ^{enemy}) of Judaism. Marx's position was just the op-
posite of that of Judaism. Nihilism, the ideas of Bakunin, the pos-
sibilism of Russian writers are all foreign to the true Jewish
spirit, which is optimistic. The Russian writers influenced the
Maskilim. Smolenskin was the first "Nationalist-Maskil"; Fess, how-
ever, was not a true Maskil, for he learned to love Judaism when
he turned from Communism to Zionism. Nationalism without ^{Judaism} ~~Judaism~~
is worthless. Judaism without Nationalism is likewise incomplete.
Ahad-ha-Am discards the Torah, for Nationalism; the Jewish con-
cept of nationality is not merely physical, but includes Jewish
ideals, as expressed in the Jewish religion. The Hebrew language
should not be the sole object of our solicitude, The ideals ex-
pressed in the language should be cherished instead. Our weap-
ons in the eternal struggle are the Jewish customs, the Sabbath
and the dietary laws. The Mitzvot are our fortress. Dubnow wants
new Mitzvot, "National Mitzvot." Of what use could new mitzvot
be? They could not satisfy those who wish to "throw off the yoke."
Who can assert that any Mitzvot are superior to the ones we al-
ready have? The new "nationalistic education" is less intelligent

and inspiring than the traditional Jewish education. The neo-Hebrew literature copies the Gentiles and is too often pornographic. Dr. Klausner is one of the moderns who reject religion as having nothing to do with nationalism. There has not yet come a great writer who fully understands and correctly values Judaism. Zweifel and Perez described Hassidism, but Perez was aloof—he was an artist and analyst, not one who lived and loved the faith. Horodetzky and Buber use Hassidism as a pretext for fighting Judaism, declaring that the purpose of the movement was the opposition to study and the observance of religious duties. Ryalik, despite his praise of the Bet-ha-Midrash, yet is tainted with Maskalah and cannot be considered the true Jewish poet. Why pity the Jew! Jewish life is the most beautiful, noblest and happiest in the world. Neo-Hebrew is not truly Jewish; the masses are not with it. Antisemitism due to difference and superiority, will last forever, though the violent manifestations if it may disappear. It aids Judaism.

The author then enters upon a discussion of Judaism in America. Can we create a healthy Judaism here? If so, we can save Judaism. Judaism has lost the first fight; American Jews have lost the Sabbath and Jewish Education. The Sabbath is less observed in New York than in London or Berlin, Jewish Education in America is of little account. Fifteen years ago, there was almost none; now there is a slight improvement, but most Jewish children still today have no Jewish education whatever, and those that do have it, derive little benefit from it. The Jewish schools teach for one hour and a half daily, after the public school hours, when the child is tired, and many useless subjects are taught. True Jewish education requires learning, and that takes time. A few inspirational words will not do. "It is not our ideal of Jewish education that children after feeding a whole day at a strange table should sit down for dessert at a Jewish meal at an hour 7:55 x 5/ 0' 15' ."

There should be schools where the Jewish child spends most of the

day in Jewish studies (1920). Everyone knows that the Jewish generation born or reared in America has no interest in things Jewish except as a matter of charity. Judaism for them is no life-philosophy, but rather something the old man brought from Europe; they observe perhaps the High Holydays and the Yahrzeit. Those who do know something about the Jewish life do not live it. Those who live the Jewish life are East European Jews. This explains the absence of a literature describing the life of American Jews. There is nothing to describe. Israel Sangwill once said that a Jewish literature without a Jewish life is an anomaly. Among the forces that work against Judaism today are: (1) The time-a time of no faith. (2) Spirit of American civilization: ideals of use and not service. America has religion, but its religion is practical; the business man is worshipped. (3) Freedom has meant license. (4) The State: when there is ^{less} respect for government there is less for religion. (5) The large cities: Jewish life requires patriarchal conditions. In the small towns in America the Jewish communities are not large enough. Besides, the environment interferes. A true community should be all-Jewish. The author takes a violent slam at the Reform movement. It denies both of the fundamental principles: Torah, and Jewish nationality. It was "made in Germany," It is a bridge to Christianity; it is not self-sustaining, but draws its resources from Orthodoxy. The Reform Jews monopolize places of honor in America. Semi-reform is a new danger.

Perhaps the most valuable contribution of Mr. Sublik to the study of American Jewish life is his classification of American Jews. He groups them as follows:

I. Immigrants.

1. Socialists and Radicals.
Enemies of Judaism.

"
1."Plain Jews." Those who have pleasant memories of Jewish life, but lack the strength to live as Jews now.

3. Nationalists. Students of Hebrew literature; Hebrew teachers and Zionist workers.

4. Orthodox.

- a. Those who cannot rear their children as orthodox, although they themselves are orthodox.
- b. Those who observe the customs and teach their children to observe them, but do not give their children real Jewish knowledge. (i.e. "lernen.")
- c. Those who find it possible to give their children full Jewish education in knowledge and practice.

II Native Born.

1. Jewish Americans. Those who are interested rather in America than in Judaism.

2. Colorless Jews. This class comprises the greater number—at least 80%—of the native-born Jews of the second generation. They have no relation to Judaism, although they remain in Jewish circles and observe some vestigial customs, such as the Bar-Mitzvah, Circumcision, the Kaddish.

3. A small number of American-born or-bred Zionists.

4. American-born or-bred Orthodox.

The saving remnant.

Mr. Dublik's book has been summarized in detail because in many respects it may be taken as representative of the attitude of the staunch Orthodox party to this day. But many of the staunchest would refuse to follow the romantic extremism of the author. It may surprise some that a man of the twentieth century should come out so boldly in opposition to education and to enlightenment. But one should avoid the mistake of identifying Mr. Dublik himself with the heroes of his fancy, the stubborn Jews who resist all environment & influences. He is himself the best reju-

tation of his own arguments, since he is equipped with all the paraphernalia of culture, and were he not, he could not so forcefully and tastefully defend the orthodox position and his own hazardous, romantic and impractical views. His admission of the fact of the decay of observance bears out the judgments of many others.

Chapter II

The Radical School in America.

The older generation upon finding untoward conditions, remained unhappy and inarticulate, grieving over the change that America had wrought. But the young and vigorous often were stirred to protest. Of these younger immigrants, some had not had the advantage of a complete Jewish education, and had no attachment to things Jewish. It is noteworthy that some of the most vociferous of the "radicals" were women; perhaps this may to some extent be attributed to the meagre education of the Jewish woman abroad. Others came with a mind prejudiced against government and religion because of unhappy experiences in Russia, or because of affiliation with the radical movement which spread among the Jewish youth in Russia during the revolutionary agitations. Considering the oppressive nature of Czarism, and the inadequacies of the Greek Catholic priesthood, it is not strange that the intelligent passionate Jewish youth should become revolutionary and should oppose government and religion. In Russia, too, the Russification and Haskalah movements had pointed^{out} the inadequacies of traditional Rabbinism; the Jewish youth aspired to a larger and a fuller life.

These antipathies were transplanted to America, where, instead of disappearing, they grew and flourished. Had the immigrants found the true America, the larger and fuller life of freedom which they sought, their ideologies would have been modified and made constructive; but they found only the life of the Ghetto, the sweatshop and the tenement. Poverty, disease, greed, indifference were all about them. Their yearning for light and love, the infinite longing of the Ghetto Jew for freedom, was but intensified by the brutalizing existence of the sweatshop. Some of the immigrants had gifts of mind and heart that might have made them scholars or artists. Judging

from the few that were articulate in America, in Yiddish and in English, it is possible to begin to conceive of the potentialities of some of these men and women.

Morris Rosenfeld has come to be known as the poet of the group. He seems to have been affected by the American environment in a rather unhappy way. With the background of ילד and גלוי, he yet seems to have lost in America the faith of his childhood; poverty and severe labor cast their shadows over his soul, and he became the poet of the sweatshops, instead of the sweet singer in Israel. He manifests, indeed, a sympathetic understanding of the Orthodox Jew. It is evident that at least to some extent the loves and sympathies of childhood endured. He evinces an interest in the Synagog, and in Jewish customs and observances, and at times even expresses his feelings in the way and in the words customary for observant Jews. He was born in Bokshah, not far from Seni, government of Suwalk, Russia; his ancestors were fishermen. He received the traditional Jewish schooling. He journeyed from Poland to Holland, to England, back to Poland, to England again and finally to America.

In poignant verses he describes the suffering of the workers. His sweat-shop songs are well-known; they include, "The Millionaire of Tears," "The Pale Operator," "The Sweat Shop," "A Tear on the Iron," "The Bride of the Hills," "My Boy," "Despair," "Whither?" "What is the World?" A few familiar lines from "The Sweat Shop," will bear repetition, for they express adequately the mental and emotional condition of the laborers in the shops in the early years of the immigration.

א'ך יער א'ך די שווערע און צווייגלעך
א'ך און א'ך א'ך א'ך א'ך א'ך א'ך א'ך

To the poet, the world is "our great sea of pains and wails." He takes an oath to sing songs of pity for the people who suffer in

the shops, and to hate demagogues and hypocritical preachers. In the life enslaved to labor there is no room for love and God. To his beloved he sings, "Come not to the shop. . . My hands are hired out. I cannot embrace you." "What is the World?" he asks, is it a dream, a dance, a garden? Or is it a battle? "Then care I not for wife and child. I remain not coldly at a distance. I throw myself into the fight for the weaker." Whatever the worker creates he creates for his ex-
 ploiter.¹

Rosenfeld himself divides his poems into three parts, and treats of his personality under three headings; he writes of himself "as worker", "as nationalist", "as satirist." Predominant in him seems to have been the ideology of the class-conscious working-man; his religion in America became identical with his hope of the social revolution. The life of his toiling brethren filled him with bitterness; he describes himself "as worker", in the following terms:

"I became a sick slave, and left the beautiful wood, and rotted away in the cursed slave-prison. My youth was sacrificed with many others. I could not think coldly of great joy, being in chains. I could not follow the coffins of beloved with cold glances; my tears fell and my sighs were heard. I said no לך פ'י'ר, for this should not have happened. I wept not merely for the sake of weeping, but to incite action; I did not damn the rich because they were happy, but because they prevented others from being so. These songs are myself, my own emotions, born out of my own sufferings. So did I become the poet of the sweat shops."²

The bitterness, frustration and resentment engendered by poverty were directed against religion. There must be someone to blame; the god of the "freethinker" is the personification of his antipathies. Note the resentment expressed against the idea of לך פ'י'ר.

Other "Songs from the Street of Poverty" weep for the poor and unfortunate, the prostitute, the barefoot girl. What is their sin? asks

the poet; and replies, Only their weakness and their helplessness. Frankel, " is a ballad of a worker's life; the life-sap was drawn out of him at his machine. Social distinctions, the poet complains, are preserved even in the cemetery. He hurls defiance at the megalomaniacs. Why grab and hustle? There comes death, inevitable. "The Bradley Morton Ball" chastises the rich who dance while the world suffers. "O folk, when will you awake from your sleep? When will you become impatient?" The poet bewails his own lot. He too is a slave; he has escaped from the sweat-shop only to become a slave to the pen. "A Prophecy," predicts an uprising. The folk is like a volcano. It will leave the exploiters naked to march to their graves in shame. God will turn away from their bloody hands. The poet sings of two gardens, one the school, the other the factory; the garden of children and the autumnal garden of withered flowers which must result:

איך קוק אײך ד' גערטלער די צו"ו
 און וויס װאס ד' ענדע וועט זײן
 און פיערל אגא ביטערען ווער
 און פיערל אגא ביטערען פײן.

The factory girl deserves a song; the rose, the lily, and the nightingale do not, for they are beautiful of right and by nature. But the laboring-maid, in the midst of pain and disease and hate is, *א היפאטאס* . Poignant is the little poem "Leah'le".

װײַט דאס קלײנע סאדלע
 װײַט און בעס - אן אײגע
 מאמעל קאך אפ!
 און די מאמע טרױערדיג
 קוקט זיך אום בעדײערדיג
 שאקלט פילן קאפ.

Other pathetic poems of poverty are, "The Rich Mother," whose wealth consists of impressions of a penny upon a frozen window made by her

little son; *פאקט דאס*, which complains that poverty interferes with love, marriage and the order of the world.

*האט דאס ווערן אבגעשטעלט
האט דאס פארשטעלט
די פאמיליע אפגעטוישט
אך ווען מען איזט ליבער?*

The poet concludes with an address to God. "Is Thy world coming to an end? Is Thy labor vain? Will the idol of money destroy Thy creature?" In "Night Songs" the poet attempts, not very successfully to give pictures of the night-life of the city. "The Sinful One," "Concert," "The Operator," all tell of frustrated lives and hopes; of the unmarried mother, the factory children who seek aesthetic pleasure by attempting to play the piano, the laborer who will find that when the shop casts him out, there is a *מאסעקאדע*. "For a Workers' Masquerade Ball," contains a pathetic thought. The poet addresses the workers: "Be happy for once. Disguise yourselves as real people. In the world all else is disguise; only your sorrow is real." ⁴ He encourages the cloakmakers to strike, and dubs the striking tailors "Heroes of the Shears". The factory fires awakened all his wrath. The rich man's happiness comes out of graves. Over the ruins hovers *ארייט'ס שיינקע*.

The association between enmity to the economic order and enmity to religion was made by Rosenfeld. The starved religious life expresses itself in religious perversion, just as does starved sex-life in sex-perversion. A man of Rosenfeld's sensibilities hungers for aesthetic and artistic satisfactions; he hungers too for religion in the highest sense-for objectified ideals. But his ideational life may be cramped and repressed. It is but natural that he should then curse his day. With bitterness Rosenfeld details the poor factory girl's naive faith. "Come home, my daughter," the mother in Russia had written, "I hear of fire-horrors in America." But the girl's an-

swering letter told her not to fear for the factory was fireproof.

איך שיק דיר איך פ'נה
 איך פערדד אויף וויין
 איך x נייע פל"ד
 פערניץ דאס פיס פרייד
 כוועל שטעלן א ליכט
 פאר פ"ן גאטענס דוה
 כוועל ווייניגן דערצו
 ניט דאנג זיך מוטער
 ניט קאב פ"ן גרייטאט
 ס'איז דא א הייסער
 ס'איז דא א גאט!

That night her charred body was found in the ruins of the factory with a hundred others,⁵

When Moses freed the Jews from Egypt, he tells us, he did so only to bring them to Sinai and fetter them with religion:⁶

דאס איז דער קנעכט פון א'הים
 דער איד דער פערט דער שיער
 פיר דעקען אין דאס וואסער איהם
 פיר דעקען איהם אין פ"ער.

The poet was embittered by the Jew's lot and the heavy load of the Galuth-
 גלות. At the Seder-table the Jew wears a shroud. The Galuth-
 wine in the cup of the prophet is untouched; it is red as if with our
 blood.⁷ The Jew is disused to nature and can no longer enjoy her beauty
 even when free from the factory for a respite.⁸ The New Year awakened
 bitter thoughts. In a satiric and embittered mood, the poet wrote
 "אומגענוג", attacking God:

בינט ערדו דאגער
 און שטראפער און שנייבער
 און סעזשיוס קל"בער
 א דיפלישער קיסר.

The souls on the Day of Judgment pass before God:

ד" געהען פערב" דיר
אין שורות און 107
" וועגן שס

Like the shepherd, God counts:

און תשובה און תפלה און צדקה
נא באטען און פאסטען און געלד
פענפ"דען דעם גדר.

דעם פערשעם ווערט
א וועלכע וואס ווערט נישט
א חלום וואס פערפליקט
אבער דו קעניג גאט ביזט אצבעדיג
דו ביסט און בל"בסט אויף שטערדיג.

The following reworking of גדיא may perhaps be construed as being irreverent:

ווי קופפט גאט פון די ערבות
און ער שעכט דעם פלך הסנה
וועלכע פיל א שווארץ געלעכטער
אבערשאכטען האט דעם שעכטער
אין ציגלען אין ציגלען.

For the old Simhas Torah, our poet would substitute a new observance. He carries a new flag:

צוריסען די פאהנע דאס ליכטעל פערברענט
דאך פלוצלונג ווערט ליכטיג איך האלט אין דיא הענט
א שיעור שיינענע שטארקערע פאהן.

The smug content of synagog-goers and rich בנים irritated the poet. One ballad of his tells the story of an old Jew, who had wandered far from his old home, to America:

א פערדלער אין ווי יארק געווארען
דיין פנים איז פיל שווייך פערנווען
ער האט די בחינה שוין פערלארען
און האט קיין נחת נישט געפונען.

אס שווייטט נישט פערדער דאן גייט אין ספרים

ער קען פון דער קיין שטייט פערדער נופען

ער פיל פערזאנלעך קראנק און ארעם
דאן וועגט דורך די גאסען שטופען.

ער ווילט און דאמערט פיל מנה

דאס פאכט איהם נישט פאר גליק א טרעפער

ער טראגט אין דיר אויך נאך השנה

א יום פיל רייד צו דעם בעשעפער.

They have sent his wife and children back. He hopes to find solace in "Schul" on Rosh Fa-Shonnoh. But he cannot earn enough to pay for a ticket. On the Great Day, he stands outside and drinks avidly the atmosphere of holiness within the Synagog. A policeman refuses him entrance. He persists; the policeman strikes him and he falls dead: (

היום הרבה צולם הי"ש וועלן
פערברעכען קליעצן דאן חלק
עס וועלן דיר צום פאסט שטעלן
די שטענדיג - דער טאג איז הייליג

There is to be noted in this poem a feeling of sympathy for the old Jew who loves the ancient traditions, and a suppressed feeling of reverence for the Day itself. Were there justice in the world, the poet himself would have desired, one feels, to observe the New Year.

Somewhat similar is the well-known poem "Die Licht Verkäuferin," in which ritualistic piety is condemned and the economic order cursed:

בעקאלט א"ער פלאם, א איהר הייליגע ליכט
ביד יענעם אלגעמיינען טאג פון גערונט
און דאן פאר גערעכט'דיק'ס היינטישן טאג
איהר נאך שמוע ליכט דאן צינדט דיר אן
דאס ליכט ווארפען ליכט אויף א פינטסטערע צייט
פון עקל'דיק'ס פערד און גערעכט'דיק'ס ווייט.

The poet's hunger for the practice as well the profession of the religion of the prophets prevented his enjoyment of the cult of his own day. He can understand the use of symbols, such as the symbol of light and himself uses the phraseology of religion. There may be some justification for calling him a Jew in more than a racial sense, for he was impregnated, as we hope to prove abundantly, with folk-ideals.

Rosenfeld was unfavorably impressed by the Judaism in the midst of which he lived. With all his profound love for the Jewish folk, he yet found none of their institutions satisfactory, and felt that both institutions and men had degenerated in America. He satirizes some beliefs and practices, as superstitious. He makes fun of עריות :

נ" ב צוהלע שניש
 נ שמוכעלען שיש
 דאס דעלביגע וויל ניק נ דסטאן
 דאס וויל יעדען גלייב
 יוצן נט פליהען נייגער
 יוצן נט טא געהט רופט א פאליסטאן
 און גאטט אינעם פליהערען
 א דעהט פליג אידען
 חאטש שוואך און טוהטען פון שונאים
 דאך וויינט יעדער מרה
 אין שוהל ב" פ"ל מרה
 מען פאסט ניק ווי עכטע יונגס

A "Malammed" he defines as a man who is forbidden to know anything about a comb, soap, תנך, or דקדוק, and who understands only the jargon of Shnorsk or Blotev. He makes fun even of בשר כשר, which instead of giving the Jews strength, makes them weak and yielding. The בר פסוקה כשרה comes in for satire; as does the בר פסוקה בחור who is described as a great Goy in short pants who cares nothing at

all for Judaism . The Maskil is a half-baked individual; he crumbles at a touch. "ד'גל ק" is a speaker who mixes together Shakespeare and Resh Lekish, has no true reverence or piety (יגדל ויגדל) and desires honor from both parties, the freethinkers and the pietists. Haskalah is a mixture of everything: Plato, Pharoah, Rashi, the ר"א, the Kelmer Maggid and Angelo. חסידים are told to ask no questions, they need only make grimaces and sing. Any ruffian and scoffer may be a leader in the prayers; they are very poor actors.

יגדל ויגדל is satirized; while the Rebbe and his Hassidim sit in the Succah, the Rebbe invokes the fathers, and in answer two cats jump into the pot of soup.

Hester Street, the Ghetto street par excellence, comes in for vicious satire, in verses called חסידים. Hesterkeh is some virgin. There are "minnyonim" at every turn, Somewhere else, Jews may become Americanized, but never here, where no English is spoken. Everything here is as in Kelem, Baltremanz, and Helem. Here there is the "kashering" of dishes, the reciting of "Thillim"; here bewildered Maskilim walk around. There are other satiric poems, directed against various persons and customs. חסידים is questioned. Why does God allow the rich and comfortable to sleep, and call the poor only to account, and wake them for חסידים? "as for the סדר on Passover-when Rachmiel wants to know what we have to be thankful for, since we are slaves to this day, no one can answer him. "The Kalvarier Datch" is a "ganzer macher" in America. The efforts of a חסיד to blow out חסידים from the חסידים are described without too much pathos. The "Klal thuer", חסידים, is satirized. He changes his party to fit his convenience. There is at least one of this ilk in every community to make trouble. חסידים is held up to ridicule together with חסידים :

ד' חסידים כלומר חסידים
אין בל"בין חסידים חסידים

די שבאנע און די שטאט
 ד"ר דעם פאר די סאכט'גע
 דאס ד"ר און א שטע צרות
 פון א שטע א שטע צ"ש
 א שטע און א שטע
 צו אונז און א שטע

The coarsening and the cheapening of life in America is reflected in the attitude of some orthodox congregations to their rabbis. "The Gaon of Brockton" is a little sketch that tells how the Jews exaggerate the ^עמעס of their new rabbi; he is a Gaon, and an actor and a great scholar, and all in bad grammar. "Yiddishkeit and Yankee-shaft" mix. Jewish life is colored by American politics; in a waste-paper barrel are old Jewish newspapers, and prayerbooks and Haddassim, and on the outside is affixed an advertisement asking for votes for an Irish "Friend of the Jews," and announcing that Rev. Rabbi Fakerovitch would speak on "Sabbath and Election." There is more in this satiric vein, and some poems that condemn ancient customs, such as the cutting off of a woman's hair at marriage, the practice of ¹⁰נפטר, and the ^{דקל}דקל.

Rosenfeld's attitude to customs was inconsistent. But he seems to have felt hurt at the lack of something sweet and uplifting in Jewish life in America; he seems to have looked wistfully back to Russia and the years when he knew the delights of faith. Although notes of despair and hatred abound in his works, there are also the more serene and beautiful words of faith; and if one be a seeker of beauty and love he may perhaps feel that were it not for the unhappy experiences of the poet, those notes might have been sounded more frequently. He became a radical, and a foe of religion, as all Ghetto radicals were, yet despite his profession of hatred for religion, his heart seems to have spoken otherwise. He retained important elements of the faith taught him in childhood. He retained a love of Jewish literature and a strong sense of loyalty to the Jewish group. He was socially-minded; in

fact, his very radicalism is evidence of this. And he had also rare moments of mystic exaltation, which, since the conditions of his life were so unfavorable to them, may perhaps be regarded as doubly significant.

In the preface to one of the editions of his works he writes in this strain:

"I have forgiven, be my witness, Father.

The love of man is my highest ambition,

I thank Thee, God, I have won the fight.

I hear a million hearts beat for me."

When his lyre sings of Zion the God of his youth seems to return to him:

"I follow Thee, my Ruler and my King.

I go, for I can no longer remain.

Thou wilt surely not drive me into disaster,

Nor lure my steps into danger.

And remaining true to Thee, O God,

I grasp with firmness my old wander-staff;

Let clouds cover me at every step

Thou hast guaranteed my existence, howe'er it be."

And again:

"O Thou Who ridest in clouds
In the name of the Fathers

Let us not be lost.

Thou Who dwellest in the heavens

Rebuild Jerusalem."

In the poem "Avremeleh", which is full of love for the folk, occurs the following line:

וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכְּנוּ בְּיָדְךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכְּנוּ בְּיָדְךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

And the poem, "A Prophecy" contains the following quatrain:

775 485 487 257 775 3450 775
 775 775 775 775 775 775
 775 775 775 775 775 775
 775 775 775 775 775 775

Other poems such as "Our Ship," "God and the Kenesseth Israel," "Job", "To My Mother," and "Alone with God" express faith in the traditional way. The poet praises the Chanukah light, which has outlived majestic suns; he sings of the eternal spark, the love in Israel's heart which all the waters of persecution could not drown. Among his "Songs in Prose" are some that are expressive of faith.¹¹ Some traditional observances aroused his enthusiasm. "Like precious pearls in a golden string the Holy Days of Tishri follow one another, and Simchas Torah is the gleaming medallion that hangs at the end." He was an intense Jewish nationalist, and sang of the new Zion, while he bewailed the Galuth.¹² He declares in one of his poems that he has consecrated his whole soul to his people.¹³ He manifests an appreciation of the Bible, Jewish liturgy, and the Midrash.¹⁴ In his rare moments of faith, his expressions of love for Israel, the Torah and Palestine, in his appreciative use of Biblical and Midrashic material and of metaphors drawn from the liturgy, Rosenfeld is a true Jew. Even in his moments of despair he sometimes groped upward. In some of his poems he alludes to the lost faith of his childhood with longing and regret.¹⁵ The poem "Graves" expresses the longing for the consolations of religion which many feel in the presence of death. How horrible is the grave untended and uncared for, without a blessing and without a God. The longing for the faith of his youth is best expressed in the poem "The Lost God". The poet comes to the realization that his God is with him always: "Now when my joys are gone I hear His voice.

I bolt the doors of my spirit. I will not lose Him again. " Apparently Rosenfeld felt that in his new social idealism he had found a faith to replace that of his youth. In these dissatisfactions, and in the thought conveyed by an essay that deals with a young Rabbi who thought that he could dispense with the traditions, only to find himself unable to live on his own spiritual resources,¹⁶ Rosenfeld seems to recognize the fact that most men need to lean on their traditional religious heritage. To some extent therefore Rosenfeld is typical of the sensitive, truly religious immigrant Jew, who felt despoiled of all spiritual happiness in America. He was not possessed of all the store of culture with some of the other Yiddish writers are gifted. His range was limited; yet within it he experienced every emotion. His poems express the feelings of all Jewish groups—the orthodox, who love tradition and are bewildered by America, and those who have lost their old-world standards and have become radicals and cynics.

The "Radicals" in the early days of the immigration formed a definite group among the intelligenzia of the ghetto. Their creed was defiance of organized religion, the ally of capitalism. Yet they were in their way dogmatic puritans, and had the fanaticism as well as the splendid idealism of religion. Some of them retained subconsciously at least the religious loyalties of childhood. Others were perhaps a bit too vociferous in combatting those things they had once held dear.

The clever "Yeshiva Bachur" turned freethinker applied himself to the task of thinking out arguments against religion; with Talmudic acumen, going to every length in order to discredit what he believed to be an outworn superstition. Cahan has described one in his short story "The Imported Bridegroom". Shaya, the bridegroom, almost as soon as he lands in America is transformed into

a sceptic. The Talmudic mind takes easily to Comte. We are made to feel that all that is beautiful in Judaism will disappear in Shaya.

B. Feigenbaum belongs to this class. He attacks all who attempt by "הרצון קודם" to justify the religious attitude, yet he uses every trick of pilpul to discredit religion. His book, "התורה והמצוות" contains some very keen reasoning, and shows knowledge of folk-lore. The arguments advanced against the dietary laws are that they are not hygienic, as some claim; but are based on tabus. The author makes fun of the system of piling up new regulations ad infinitum, seen in the Talmud itself and in the codes. He attacks Passover vehemently. How can one be free when fettered by religion? The real Jewish spirit is opposed to freedom, he asserts; to prove this he quotes only the chauvinistic passages in the prophets-what, one might ask, of Deutero-Isaiah? Withal our author is an idealist. He has a love of truth for its own sake, at least in theory. He has great intellectual curiosity, and something of the scientific temper, though his opposition to religion is too religious. Yesterday, he says there was the "fanatic service of God." Today, idolatry to the golden calf is the rule. Tomorrow shall come the golden age of brotherhood, of service to humanity. Methinks these words sound suspiciously "religious". Avaunt freethinker!

Jacob Gordin was the most brilliant and original of the early school of dramatists and writers. He was possessed of a great deal of scorn for religious "dogma" plus a religious belief in the principles of morality. Winchevsky, in the foreword to Gordin's collected works, describes him as a protagonist of righteousness, a friend of the poor, an enemy of all meanness, cowardice and exploitation. In America, Gordin found all types of Jews, and in his works manifests love for the folk. He was not a "דורשן" Jew.

Gordin uses the word "God" in a rather opprobrious way, often; but sometimes expresses godlike thoughts. He had a wonderful sense

of duty, a highly developed social conscience. Sometimes Biblical stories are used to illustrate moral ideas with an appreciative understanding of their power. Other aspects of the Bible are satirized. The outstanding trait of Gordin's writings is an uncompromising realism, which is the result of his essentially moral nature. Injustice aroused his ire and suffering his pity. Jewish life of his time gave Gordin many opportunities for satire. He was dissatisfied with Jewish organizations and organizers. There is a great deal of satire directed against Jewish lodges and "Landsmanshaften." Although our author was something of a poet himself, he failed to find anything poetic or mystic in much of the traditional symbolism. He was not by any means a misanthropist. He assails outworn customs and social injustice; he condemns equally the squalor of poverty and the smugness of wealth; yet he manifests love of his fellowmen. He is a foe of all Brahmanism, intellectual or artistic. He is, too, not without his positive Jewish side. Despite Russification, Enlightenment, socialism and the intensification of bitterness by the ugly life of the East Side, he yet found some aspects of Jewish life and of Judaism lovable. In some of his sketches he fulminates against religion and blames God for all the woes of the world. This belief in the existence of a monstrous Satan in heaven is interesting; it substitutes a horrible symbol for the beneficent one of the religionist. The awesome atmosphere of New Year's Day is preserved; there are echoes of childhood religiosity. May we not call our author godlike because of his immense sympathy and love; and is not the existence of such noblemen the best vindication of the religionist and the best refutation of his own attitude?

Cf poets, besides Rosenfeld, the radicals produced among others Morris Winchevsky and David Edelstadt. Winchevsky is, according to M. Wiener, a man of great culture and a master of his dialect. His American poems appeared mostly in *SDK* (published in Boston, 1895)

and in other periodicals. His collected poems were written mostly in England. He describes misery in all states of society. His poems include pathetic descriptions of the suffering of the poor, revolutionary songs and prophetic fulminations against the existing order. Some are very clever and others quite pretty. Religion is detested as the abettor of capitalism. Edelman wrote poems without any conscious desire to create beauty, but merely in order to express his disapproval of the existing order and his hope for a new and better society.

The prophets of "Radicalism" had among the inhabitants of the Ghetto many earnest disciples. They were almost worshipped. At any time the eager disciples would endure discomfort to hear a lecture on the beloved theme, or to procure a newspaper of the Party. There was a beautiful spirit of comradeship; a feeling that all were working for the cause. Morris Ravage has a fetching description:

"I had not realized that this grimy toil-worn airless Ghetto had a soul and a mind under its shabby exterior.... Our poor cramped souls were yearning to be inspired and uplifted... with my mind so busy then it is not surprising that I should be indifferent to what was going on in my soul. My ancient religion had under American skies vanished long ago; but I was scarcely aware that a burning new faith had taken its place with me, as it had with countless others. ... It came to me in a flash that everybody I knew was either a socialist or an anarchist. This social idealism was the soul that stirred within everything. And I understood that every intelligent was an atheist, partly because every clodpate was a believer, and partly because the established creeds were cluttering the road to social and spiritual progress... enthusiasm for the study of evolution was due to its implied denial of the Biblical story of creation. ... In short, I perceived that we were moved by a very vital religion of our own, though of course we would have scorned to call it by that hated name."

The two cardinal dogmas of this creed of the freethinker were: (1) scorn of all religious formulations of faith and of all ritual and ceremonial practices, and (2) the belief in the perfectibility of human nature which is the bedrock of all social utopias.

Dr. Zhitlowsky, lecturer and publicist of the group, for instance, in a lecture, in one breath speaks of religion as "that dark power, which kept free thought enslaved so long..that old putrid morality of love of one's fellow and sacrifice for ~~the~~ ^{the} world", and in the next alludes to "everything of which Free Thought is so proud: Civilization, Culture, Progress, Art, Science."

There are many books which may be referred to for a picture of the pathetic Ghetto life, and which bring to the reader a sense of the oppressive and insufferable conditions, but the best proof is to be obtained by a walk through the slum districts of any one of the great cities. Among the books read by the writer that were found to depict these conditions graphically may be cited Bertha "earl's" "Sarah and her Daughter"; "Rebels", by Marie Ganz, the autobiography of a Jewess who was brought to America by her parents from Galicia at an early age, and "Out of the Shadow" by Rose Cohen. The protest which these intolerable conditions evoked is hardly to be deplored. Emma Goldman's essays and the writings of Alexander Berkman may be consulted for violent denunciations and for expressions of dissatisfaction with things in general. These preachments of violence were the great exception; there is no need to make the incontrovertible statement that the Jews are a peace-loving people. Most of the Ghetto radicals were lovers of humanity, like Gordin, and are adequately characterized by Mr. Ravage in the forceful and almost lyrical selection quoted above. Some of them, when they attained to wealth and social status discarded radicalism. The creed of the freethinker was often but the result of the mental and emotional disturbance of the "Sturm und Drang" period, and sometimes the consequence of the upheaval due

to removal to America. Mr. Havage himself won his way out of the Ghetto, and attained a calm and dignified mental life, retaining his native Jewish objectivity, zeal for study, lyricism (1127 (171), and adding to it an American poise, a sense of sportsmanship, and a frank and wholesome acceptance of life, combining in Mr. Samuel's despite the eternal Jew with the American. He retained his freethinker's scorn for some Jewish customs, yet deplored the lack of true piety and reverence which was caused by the maladjustment of the immigrants of the first and second generation who remained in the Ghetto.

Anzia Yezierska upon her arrival in America, according to her description of her emotional life, seems to have had the psychology of the radical.²³ "But hunger drove me to the sweat shop, and I became a hand, not a brain, not a soul, not a spirit—a hand, fit only to grasp, not to give." Miss Yezierska however found that in the end she had something more to give America than mere revolt and whining. An Anti-Semite has said "All people suffer. But the Jew whines." The truth is, that the Jew suffers a great deal in silence; for one Emma Goldman there are thousands of Bonzye Shweigs.²⁴ And even those who momentarily are weak enough to complain, find the strength to seek to serve and to build despite all their disillusiones. So did Miss Yezierska: "Then I clenched my hands and swore that I would hold my dream of America and fight for it..building the beauty that men have dreamed was America...I make demands not in arrogance, but in humility, driven by my desire to give...not the immigrant starved and stunted, but a new kind of immigrant, full-grown, loving, serving, upholding America. " The acquisition of understanding of American life did not mean, however an obliteration of Jewish loyalties. In several of her short stories she describes the conflict between the two generations, with sympathy for both the young and the old.²⁵

Elizabeth Hazanovith, the daughter of a Hebrew teacher in South Russia, came to America as a young girl in September, 1912, in search of freedom and knowledge. She had not had the opportunity of attend-

ing the Russian schools because of the percentage norm. In America she found brutal disregard of human rights, the jungle morality of the sweat shop. She attempted to help organize the union and led ~~the~~ strikes. Her religion expressed itself in a passion for social service. ¹⁶ At last she comes to a realization of a glorious new life that is coming into being in America: "I no more feared a storm, for I knew that after the storm the sun must shine, and I sang, 'O mighty winds, I'm one of you! My soul like yours is blazing with indignation, and like you I am wrestling for freedom. Let us then unite our voices in a mighty chorus. Let us blow and scatter our trumpets far and wide-shake up the world, smash in dust the sinful structure of present society, cleanse the earth of evil and wake the people, wake them to consciousness, appeal and sing for the glory of brotherhood, equality and love..... The winds stilled. The storm silenced, the darkness vanished. And a bright new dawn was slowly rising from a remote corner of an infinite smooth path. It had a long, long way to travel, but it was so clear, so sure to come! Ours is the struggle for that wonderful dawn - and to us shall belong its glory! "

Julius Henry Cohen has described the achievements of the radical Jewish workers who had turned their thoughts to constructive achievement. ²⁷ The chapter which the Jewish clothing workers added to the history of the American labor movement is a significant one. It is perhaps the newest Jewish contribution to civilization.

The so-called "radical" school, then was and is made up of men and women who are in the main unselfish, idealistic, socially-minded-who, as the bearers of ideals, are worthy of the heritage of Israel. Although their emotions are similar to those of their elders, neither group perceives the kinship, and each thinks the other traitorous to the Vision. Alas for the hosts who battle in the night, not knowing that they are brothers!

Conclusion.

At first America was a bitter disappointment to most of the immigrants. This is true alike of the picus who clung to the old traditions, and of the enlightened and rebellious, who discarded them. Unhappiness was inevitable in the period of adjustment. The Eastern Jew has, however, already taken root in America. He has found a home; he has acquired a competence often with nothing to begin with but his two bare hands.¹ Some day a poet will adequately describe the Jewish pilgrims who came to America to seek a new life, who were wrested their substance out of an unfriendly society. With economic betterment has come a disappearance of many of the aspects of the life of the early years of the mass immigration. The progress from the lower East Side to Riverside Drive has involved a change in psychology. Sometimes the progress was external merely; it meant the acquisition of wealth, refinement and expensive tastes, and the discarding of Judaism, and many of the sweet simple graces of the traditional Jewish life. So Thyra Samter Winslow describes it.²

But there are some writers who find beauty and loveliness in the life of the Americanized Jew. In "Humoresque" Fanny Hurst portrays mother love and the wistful yearning idealism of the Ghetto/. Success and adjustment did not destroy the beauty of life. In the height of his success, Leon speaks jokingly yet lovingly of old Jewish customs: "Tomorrow we will call a Minyon-a regular old-fashioned Allen Street prayer party." The war-enthusiasm moves the sensitive Jewish artist. That idealism is amenable to many influences. Other characters are drawn by Miss Hurst with love: I.W. Goldstone, of Goldstone and Auer, ladies' wear; a home-loving American Jew; Max Mettzer, "White as the goods he sells"; David Feist, successful young man, charming, intelligent and refined; Samuel Lipkind, who loves his mother and his sweetheart. In "Lummox" we find interesting Jewish types, and an expression of love for humanity that makes Miss Hurst herself worthy of Israel; that is an addition to Israel's spirit-

ual treasures.

Had we an American Perez or Mendele to describe with love and understanding the new life that is blossoming in the household of Israel, instead of the authors of "Haunch Faunch and Jowl" and "You Gentiles" many gracious and lovable aspects of that life might be revealed. When economic stability is once acquired and the influence of the environment seeps into the home disrupted during the period of adjustment, the lives of parents and children are again cemented. The conflict between two generations, is of course not peculiar to the life of the Jewish immigrants to America. It is found in every society. Of course the danger is that the adjusted immigrants may become "smug". To be patriotic and home-loving and religious is not to be smug; it is merely to have attained a modicum of happiness such as the Jew has often longed in vain to possess. Some, it is true, who were essentially coarse and vulgar always, but who in the Pale in Russia or in the Jewish settlements in Galicia and Rumania were repressed in the face of social opinion and the rigid rule of custom, here in America unfortunately became rich and powerful, and are sometimes found in control of the financial resources upon which all cultural or religious efforts must rely. They, too are to some extent the result of the discomfort of the readjustment; in the American Jewish society of the future, their places will be taken by men who combine culture and ideals with practical ability. A word may perhaps be said in defense of the much maligned "bourgeois", of the bovine business man. He is not without ideals. He has been forced to build his life out of hard rock, and often has had little time for the subtleties of art, but the life that he erects may be sweet and noble. There are today in America countless middle-class Jewish homes where the serene atmosphere of affection and loyalty reigns, and where children are taught to be God-fearing and loyal. This

middle-class has been recruited from both the Orthodox and the Radical groups; they are the practical idealists who have turned their thoughts to constructive achievement. In the heat of the struggle some of them may have lost the enthusiasm that once motivated all their actions; they may have discarded ritual practices once very dear, or may have ceased to attend lectures on Darwin and Schopenhauer, and to swallow with avidity any extravagant idea presented in the name of "free thought," but beneath the surface, many of them still hunger for beauty and for ideals. They have unsatisfied mental and emotional yearnings. To satisfy these is the happy task of the religious leader of the future and of the artists and writers who are yet to be.

The assertion is often made by artists and writers outside of America, and sometimes by American Jews themselves that Judaism in this country has been barren, and holds no promise for the future.³ It is true, as they assert, that many forces have come from abroad; yet America has moulded these forces, and Jews in America are beginning to make significant and valuable contributions. Eastern Jews in America have participated in the reform and radical and Zionist movements, have produced a neo-Hebraic and Yiddish literature, the Yiddish press, the Yiddish theatre, and countless virtuosos and violinists. Some of these were native; and if most were immigrant, yet at least may it not be said that America allowed them to develop? Of those in the two opposing armies who were frustrated we have spoken at length; yet there were and are rich mines of talent that have been uncovered. It may be doubted if on the whole, any Jewry in the world is so colorful, and many-sided. Even Palestinian Judaism has its troubles. American Jewry is nurturing a generation who are loyal to the best in the past and yet have acquired something of the force and vigor of the new land. They are efficient in athletics, and are beginning to be heard from in the intellectual and artistic life of the country.

The real achievements of American Jews are yet to be studied and valued. In the future, both the extreme Orthodox and the extreme Radical camp must disappear; the exaggerated romantic sentimentalism of men such as Bublik which is allied to the romantic medievalism of Hilaire Belloc, and the somewhat unbalanced excessive theoretic radicalism of some Ghetto writers will alike succumb to the resistless forces of the environment. There will be room for enlightened Orthodoxy and for restrained intelligent radicalism, neither of which is of course at all incompatible with Americanism. The conservative movement in the Synagog undoubtedly has a future; sincere liberalism in any field of thought must always be given a respectful hearing. The progress toward a modern, enlightened orthodoxy, and the progress away from fulminating denunciation of all things that be, and toward constructive work in the labor unions, the business world and politics, is encouraging and hopeful.

The second generation, the children of East European immigrants, has yet to be studied. In some ways it is more flabby than the first. It has been coddled and over-educated. Some of its members nevertheless have had their struggles—they have had to endure a severance of home ties and to break with all the past. Many of them have had experiences of Anti-Semitism. The children of the "allrightniks" seem in many cases to have lost something of the indefinable Jewish charm of old; yet perhaps they have acquired desirable traits, such as pluck and straight-forwardness. The second generation has not yet become articulate; it has as yet no significant voice. With a proper approach it may perhaps be interested in Reform Judaism. The Jewish interests of this group are on the whole meagre; though of course exceptions occur. They have often revolted against the orthodox practices of their parents. Their thirst for knowledge has not entirely vanished; they are well represented in all the universities. It would, however, be an interesting study to compare the American Jewish student with

if the religious leaders do not take account of the living, throbbing life of the Jewish community, of the problems and needs of the Jews in America, then Judaism as an organized religion in America will stagnate. Religion must be coordinated with life. This is the task of the American Judaism of tomorrow.

Notes.

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21. Ibid. קהילה נחכפה, p.67
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