

PROVISION FOR WIDOWS, ORPHANS, AND CRIPPLES

Next, provision must be made for the direct victims of the war. The war leaves a legacy of helpless, disabled soldiers, of widows, and of orphans. Among the Bulgarians alone four hundred Jews died in the first war. More than half of those called to arms were married. A large number of widows and orphans will be dependent for a long time. Among the Turkish Jews no small number of the war's victims leave behind widows and orphans.

SCHOOLS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

More than ever it will be necessary to establish and extend a system of schools which will afford an education for Jewish children and give them a preparation that will make for economic independence. In the comparative absence of skilled workmen in the western part of the Balkans, the need is particularly for trade schools. For years to come the Balkan Jewry will require moral support and financial help in maintaining charitable organizations.

It is most essential that the work of reconstruction be undertaken for the 200,000 Jews in the Balkans, to make them self-supporting and economically independent and obviate a permanent problem of poor relief in the Balkans similar to that among the Jews in Russia, Galicia, and Roumania. If the work of rehabilitation is successful, and the Jews in the Balkans are enabled to resume their former pursuits or adopt new occupations, a development may be hoped for which will make them independent of outside charity—an outcome most sincerely desired by all Jews.

THE LEVANTINE JEWS IN THE UNITED STATES¹

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The Balkan wars lend special interest to the latest element in Jewish immigration to the United States, the Jewish immigrant from the Balkan States, more particularly from Turkey in Europe and in Asia. The coming of the Levantine Jews, using the term to designate the Jews of the countries bordering on the eastern half of the Mediterranean, first became noticeable nearly a decade ago. In the last five years the movement has assumed such proportions as to make it comparable with Jewish immigration from Roumania. We may well expect that the wars and the ensuing disturbed conditions will stimulate an exodus to the United States.

Evidence is at hand. In spite of the obstacles to emigration imposed by active hostilities, and interference with travel in Turkey and the Balkans, the coming of eight hundred Jews from Turkey in Europe is recorded for the last fiscal year at the port of New York alone. This figure has been exceeded for European Turkey only once, and then by the total immigration. From Turkey in Asia, which suffered only from the incidental effects of the war, the arrivals at New York are nearly twice as great as in any previous year. Small as is the immigration from the other Balkan States, it is notably larger than ever before. In view of the steadily increasing stream of Jewish immigration from Turkey during the past decade, and with the conditions there compelling further emigration, it is

¹The writer wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness for many valuable suggestions to several friends, especially Mr. Joseph Gedalecia and Mr. M. S. Gadol.

evident that the American Jewry may count on a lasting movement of Levantine immigration.

To the complex of the American Jewry, this wave of immigration offers new elements. The immigrants from Turkey and the Balkans are the descendants of the exiles from Spain and Portugal. The newcomers have preserved the Sefardic tradition and liturgy and even the Spanish tongue. The latest movement in the Jewish migration to this country thus relates itself to the earliest. The Sefardic, Spanish-speaking Jews bring with them the possibility of a distinctive contribution in an American Jewry so largely constituted of original German and Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazim.

The official figures published by the immigration authorities indicate that, during the past decade, approximately eight thousand Jews have come to our shores from Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, and Servia. The growth of the movement to the United States is shown below:

JEWISH IMMIGRATION FROM TURKEY AND BALKAN STATES

Year ¹	Turkey in Europe	Turkey in Asia	Bulgaria Servia Montenegro	Greece	Total
1899-1902.....	190	297	20	..	507
1903-1905.....	413	284	59	33	789
1906.....	252	209	20	23	504
1907.....	588	330	11	9	938
1908.....	379	256	25	15	675
1909.....	346	344	14	8	712
1910.....	953	435	14	19	1421
1911.....	723	454	13	35	1225
1912.....	760	621	15	31	1427
Total 14 years... 4,604	3230	191	173	8198	

¹ Fiscal year ended June 30.

In all, the number of Levantine Jews in the United States may be estimated at 10,000.¹

This exodus from the Turkish Empire, it should be observed, corresponds with a general and rapid increase of migration to the United States from Turkey in Europe and Asia. The greatest stimulus to emigration for Levantine Jews was the revolution of the Young Turks in 1908. This movement aimed at securing constitutional government. Incidentally, however, it worked hardship for many Jews; it introduced compulsory military service, an innovation for our coreligionists in the East that increased the difficulties of supporting a family and interfered with religious observance. The insecurity of life and the disturbed business conditions

¹ The figures given here are possibly below the true number of Levantine Jews in the United States. To the figures in the Federal Immigration statistics must be added over 600 Turkish Jews arriving at the port of New York between 1884 and 1899, and some allowance made for those who landed at other ports. Moreover, a number of Jews from Turkey and Greece have undoubtedly been passed as Turks or Greeks, because in name, language, and physical appearance they are not recognizable as Jews, except by those thoroughly familiar with Jewish conditions in the Orient. Others may have been included in the figures reported for Roumania and Austria, when their wanderings carried them to America through these neighboring lands. On the other hand, some of the immigrants have returned to their original homes; others have gone on to Cuba, Mexico, Panama, and elsewhere on the Western continent. As the immigrants are mostly young men, the mortality has in all likelihood been more than counterbalanced by the growth of population through births. Taking account of the various factors involved, we may estimate the number of Levantine Jews in the United States to be over 10,000.

This estimate is considerably below the one usually given. At the end of 1911, Mr. M. S. Gadol, editor of *La America*, estimated that there were twenty thousand Levantine Jews in the United States, of whom ten thousand were in New York City.

incident to revolutions and counter-revolutions, the Turko-Italian War, religious and racial strife, a series of disasters, such as the fire at Haskeui and the earthquake in August, 1912, together with the pervading poverty at home, have been the impelling forces for the increase of Jewish emigration. The movement has been further stimulated by the lure of the pictured fortunes to be made in peaceful America.

As is usual with the advance guard of a new wave in immigration, the first to come were, in the main, men, single or married, who went to America with the intention of returning after a short time to the land of their birth. The disturbed conditions of the Orient stood in the way, and, in keeping with the common tendency as immigration advances, the later-comers are represented in a growing measure by entire families arriving here with the intention of making this country their permanent home.

The most practical classification of these immigrants is by language rather than by country of origin. On this basis, they may be divided into three main classes, as their vernacular is Greek, Arabic, or Ladino.

Comparatively few of the Jews who speak Greek come from Greece proper. The majority of the Greek-speaking Jews are from Janina; others come from Prevesa. These districts were, until recently, part of Turkey. Arabic is the language of Jews coming from Aleppo, Damascus, Beirut, and Bagdad. It is also the vernacular of the few Jewish immigrants from the North African communities, such as Cairo, Tripoli, Tangier, etc. Ladino or Judæo-Spanish is the language of most of the Jews from Bosnia, Bulgaria, the districts formerly part

of European Turkey (except the Greek-speaking sections), and the numerous communities in Western Asia Minor. A few of the Jews from Roumania speak Ladino, and a number of the Jews from Greek-speaking communities are able to speak this language. The chief centres for Ladino-speaking emigrants are Constantinople, Monastir, Kastoria, Kavala, Smyrna, Rhodes, Salonica, Gallipoli, Dardenelles, and Angora. Ladino is the language of by far the larger number of the immigrants from the Levant.

The immigrants from the Balkans and Turkey, regardless of their vernacular, are Sefardim. The Ashkenazim are very few, and come from cosmopolitan centres, like Constantinople.

DISTRIBUTION IN THE UNITED STATES

In keeping with the general tendency of immigrants to this country, to make New York and the Atlantic seaboard their immediate destination, we find that between eighty and ninety per cent of the arrivals have settled in New York. Nevertheless, communities of Levantine Jews have grown up in many scattered centres throughout the Union. Leaving the settlement in New York for future detailed attention, we note that the largest of these communities is in Seattle, Wash., where perhaps as many as six hundred of the newcomers have settled. San Francisco, where the first Levantine Jew arrived over twenty-five years ago, Los Angeles, Portland, Ore., Atlanta, Rochester, Cincinnati, and Chicago represent some of the larger communities towards which this new wave of Jewish immigration has converged.

CENTRES OF LEVANTINE-JEWISH POPULATION OUTSIDE
OF NEW YORK CITY

Locality	Estimated number Levantine Jews	District of Origin
Seattle	600	Rhodes, Gallipoli
San Francisco	100	Aleppo, Bagdad, and Turkey in general
Atlanta	100	Rhodes, Budrun
Rochester	90	Monastir
Portland, Ore.	80	Rhodes, Gallipoli, Rodosto
Cincinnati	70	Dardanelles
Chicago	70	Morocco and Turkey
Los Angeles	75
Glenham, N. Y.	70	Gallipoli, Salonica
Raritan, N. J.	70	Gallipoli
Gary, Ind.	70	Rhodes, Marmora
Indianapolis	50	Monastir
Montgomery	50	Rhodes

The distribution of the newer immigrants from Turkey and the Balkans shows to some extent the effects of definite efforts to direct their settlement. The Industrial Removal Office has been active in this work. In 1907 it sent a number to Seattle, where they formed the nucleus of its large colony. More recently, it has sent Levantine Jews to Gary, Ind., and to various towns in Ohio, such as Cincinnati, Toledo, Columbus, and Cleveland. Under the auspices of the New York Kehillah, the communities in Glenham, N. Y., and Raritan, N. J., have been established.

Other centres where Levantine Jews are known to be in some number are Indianapolis, St. Louis, Baltimore, San Diego, Denver, Louisville, Cambridge, Mass., Buffalo, Detroit, Newport, R. I. Individual Ladino and Arabic Jews may be found as peddlers throughout the Union, particularly in the New England States and in Atlantic City and other summer and winter resorts of the country. In some States, such as Cali-

fornia and Texas, they are found in all the cities. Indicative of their wide distribution is the fact that they are to be met with as far afield as Honolulu. In passing, we may mention the existence of considerable colonies throughout Latin America. Havana, Buenos Ayres, Mexico City, and Colon are centres of importance. Latin America has naturally been attractive to Ladino or Spanish-speaking Jews.

Ignorant of English, and cut off from the rest of the Jewish community by their inability to speak Yiddish or German, coming to this country without any trade, the immigrants from Turkey and the Balkans throughout the Union have in general been obliged to content themselves so far with humble positions, at the foot of the economic ladder. Perhaps the larger number of them are engaged in peddling, selling fruit, candy, lace and embroidery, post-cards, flowers, and rugs; a considerable number are occupied in polishing shoes. They are to be found in a great variety of factories, working in different centres at the various garment trades, in woolen mills, in the steel mills of Pittsburg and Gary, in establishments producing phonographs, electrical apparatus, and cigarettes. The most prosperous have reached positions as storekeepers, many having opened shops for the sale of rugs and other Oriental wares. In California they own fruit stores; in Seattle they are engaged in the wholesale fish business; and everywhere they have opened boot-black parlors.

In the more important centres for Levantine Jews in the United States, communal life has reached the point of establishing some definite organization, usually a congregation. Below is a list of their organizations. The names are of interest, as indicative of their attachment to the districts of their origin and the language inherited from Spain.

COMMUNAL ORGANIZATIONS OF LEVANTINE JEWS OUTSIDE OF NEW YORK CITY

Locality	Organization and Date of Foundation
Seattle	Anshe Rhodes; Ahavath Shalom of Marmora.
Atlanta	Ahavath Shalom (and another name unknown).
Rochester	Or Isra'el Monastir'is, 1910.
Portland, Ore.	Chesed Israel Anshe Rhodes.
Cincinnati	La Hermandad, 1911.
Chicago	Union Israelita Portuguesa, 1910.
Los Angeles	Ahavath Shalom, 1912.
Raritan, N. J.	La Hermandad (disbanded).
Montgomery	Ez Hachayim.

COMMUNITY IN NEW YORK

By far the largest and most important settlement of Levantine Jews is, as we have noted, in New York City. Here we have representatives of the three branches of the newer immigration.

Greek.—The Greek-speaking Jews of the metropolis number several hundreds. The more prosperous of them are manufacturers of kimonos and aprons, with factories on Allen, Eldridge, and Canal Streets. The less prosperous are boot-blacks, peddlers of candy, cloak-room attendants, or laborers in kimono and apron works, or in cigarette factories.

They are organized in two societies: Downtown their organization is the Hebrat Ahava ve Achava Janina (Love and Brotherhood Society of Janina Jews), with a synagogue at 85 Forsyth Street, founded July 12, 1907. In Harlem, their organization is the Tikvah Tobah (Good Hope) Society with a synagogue, Shearith Israel Mitourkia (Remnant of Israel from Turkey). Most of the Greek Jews understand Hebrew and are Sabbath observers.

Arabic.—The Arabic-speaking Jews of New York City number not less than a thousand. Of these possibly eighty per cent

came originally from Aleppo. Two-thirds of the community are young men. Most of them are settled downtown. On Grand, Allen, and Orchard Streets they have stores for Oriental goods, imported laces, shawls, embroidery, etc., which are patronized largely by the itinerant peddlers, who form a considerable proportion of the community. Others manufacture curtains and table-cloths; some are exporters or importers. None are boot-blacks or fruit and candy peddlers. In this respect they differ from the Greek and Ladino-speaking Turkish Jews. The Syrian Jew is a keen business man, content with small profits, and thrifty. As a rule, however small be his income, he manages to save a part of it. Although there are many poor in the community, it is on the whole comparatively prosperous.

The Arabic-speaking Jews have the following congregations: Rodefè Tsedek (Followers of Righteousness, at 87 Eldridge Street), Agudath Achim (Band of Brothers, at 99 Hester Street), and Ahi-Ezer of Damascus (at 113 Delancey Street). They are all Sabbath observers, and are well versed in Hebrew. The Eldridge Street synagogue has a Talmud Torah attended by about fifty children. A philanthropic society of the Rodefè Tsedek was formed in 1911.

Ladino.—By far the larger number of Jews from the Levant in New York speak Ladino as their vernacular. To judge by the constituent elements of their earliest congregations, the oldest immigration of these Jews was largely from Constantinople; subsequently they came from Monastir, Kastoria, etc. In spite of the fact that many speak several languages, notably Ladino, Greek, Arabic, Turkish, French, and Italian, the standard of education among these immigrants, though higher than that in their native lands, is low according to American notions. Constantinople and Salonica Jews are

better educated than their brethren of other Turkish communities, and those who have attended the schools of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Smyrna, Constantinople, and other cities, have received a good modern French education.

The distribution of their congregations indicates that about two-thirds of the community live downtown, and about one-third uptown. Downtown they occupy the district from Chrystie Street to Essex Street, between East Houston and Canal; the uptown colony is settling in the section bounded by 110th and 125th Streets, and First and Fifth Avenues. There is also a small community in Coney Island. Individuals are scattered throughout the city.

On the whole, the members of this large community are not as yet economically successful. The more prosperous are lessees of coat-rooms, or wholesale candy merchants, ice-cream cone manufacturers, etc. The others earn a poor living as coat-room attendants, candy or post-card peddlers, factory hands, boot-blacks, waiters, etc. The recent strikes revealed the fact that many of the girls are employed in kimono and similar factories. In the pursuits followed by the Ladino-speaking Jews, employment is often intermittent; hence poverty and sometimes complete destitution.

Housing conditions are those of the tenement in congested districts. These together with the street-trade pursued by many of these people, involving exposure in all weathers, have disastrous effect on health.

The Ladino-speaking Jew is not so staunchly observant religiously as either the Arabic or the Greek-speaking Jew, and his knowledge of Hebrew is not so good. During the fall holidays in 1912 there were twelve separate congregations attended by these Jews. Four were uptown and eight downtown, five of

the latter meeting in Forsyth Street. Most of the congregations were temporarily formed under the auspices of permanent societies, of which the following exist:

Society	Locality of Origin of its Members	Date of Organization
Union and Peace.....	Turkey and North Africa....	1899
Oriental Progressive..	Constantinople	1904
(Ashkenazic)		
Ahavath Shalom.....	Monastir	1907
(Love of Peace)		
Chesed Ve Emeth.....	Kastoria	1910
(Love and Truth)		
Agudath Achim.....	Rhodes	1910
(Band of Brothers)		
Mekor Chayim.....	Dardanelles	1911
(Fount of Life)		
Chayem Ve Chesed...Gallipoli		1911
(Life and Love)		
Ez Chayyim.....	Salonica, etc.....	1912
(Tree of Life)		
Keter Zion.....	Angora	1912
(Crown of Zion)		
Ezrath Achim.....	Rodosto, Silivria, Tchorlu... 1913	
(Brotherly Help)		

Three have permanent synagogues, the Ahavath Shalom (at 98 Forsyth Street), the Mekor Chayim (at 73 Allen Street), and the Ez Chayyim (at 77 East 116th Street). Most of the societies tabulated above were organized originally for mutual benefit and to secure burial rights for their members.

Organizations have been formed also for educational, social, and philanthropic purposes. In April, 1913, the former pupils of the schools of the Alliance Israélite Universelle organized the Oriental Hebrew Educational Association (L'Association des Anciens Élèves de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle). A relief society, Ozer Dallim (Helper of the Poor), was founded in January, 1913. The Oriental Jewish Women's Club and a young men's musical society have been leading a precarious existence for several months.

The Turkish-Jewish coffee houses with their not altogether desirable influences have been social centres for the men of the community. Through the societies a better social life is being developed. Under their auspices, drama in Ladino has been attempted at least twice. In September, 1912, the Chesed ve Emeth Society of Kastoria acted a Ladino version of the story of Joseph and his brethren. In December, 1912, the Ahavath Shalom Society of Monastir presented *The Two Brothers*, and a Ladino version of "Le médecin malgré lui."

A weekly newspaper, *La America*, published in Judaeo-Spanish (in Hebrew characters), is now in its third volume. It was founded November 11, 1910, for the purpose of helping to organize the community. It circulates in all the Ladino communities of the continent. A second newspaper, *La Aguila*, a daily, appeared from February 23 to March 22, 1912. It failed for lack of support.

The three communities of Levantine Jews, Greek, Arabic, and Ladino, are all insulated from the Yiddish Jewish or American Jewish life around them by their ignorance of both Yiddish and English. They are furthermore separated from the organized Jewish religious life of this country by their Sefardic religious tradition, differing from the Jewish traditions around them in synagogue liturgy, ritual, and ceremonial, and pronunciation of Hebrew. To a greater extent, therefore, they are thrown on their own resources. These three groups of Levantine Jews took the first step towards self-help in March, 1912, by organizing the Federation of Oriental Jews in America.

The objects of the Federation are to improve the material, intellectual, and civic status of the Levantine Jews in America and to better their religious conditions by the establishment of

Talmud Torahs. With limited means at its disposal, the Federation is attempting much in all these directions, especially in encouraging the societies and in maintaining a Talmud Torah downtown with a branch uptown. In April, 1913, the Federation held its first annual convention.

The general Jewish community has made attempts through its institutions to help the infant colony. The Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society has cared for those entering the country. The Educational Alliance, the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue Shearith Israel, its Sisterhood and its Hebrew Relief Society, the United Hebrew Charities, the Employment Bureau for Handicapped Workers conducted by the Kehillah, and the Recreation Rooms in Chrystie Street have in their respective spheres attempted educational, religious, social, and relief work. But the growing problem has as yet been hardly touched.

Religious help is the first essential for safeguarding the young. The old Sefardic religious tradition should be preserved in this land because of its dignity, and because of the inspiration its glorious past gives to the present and to the future through memories of a Maimonides or a Jehuda Halevi. The colony itself is not in a position to meet adequately the religious needs, and the existing agencies in the general community, organized on an Ashkenazic or Russo-Polish basis, are unable to minister to the Sefardic element.

The new colony requires the guidance of the general community also in the Americanization of its older members. Stress should be laid on the teaching of English. This will help to break down the isolation of the Levantine Jews, and tend to raise their present low economic standing by fitting them to cope with American conditions. There is also

grave and immediate need for social work, in the prevention of tuberculosis and in forestalling physical degeneracy generally among immigrants transplanted from warmer climes, undernourished, poorly housed, and in general unadjusted to our conditions.

The need for systematic and far-sighted activity in behalf of Levantine Jews is the more urgent because their numbers are bound to grow rapidly. The attractive force of those now settled here and the devastation and political unrest in the Balkans and in Asia Minor resulting from Turkey's disastrous war will in all probability drive many more Jews from the Balkan States and the Ottoman Empire to seek a refuge in this country in the near future. It is therefore the imperative obligation of the general Jewish communities in New York City and other centres for Levantine immigrants to anticipate the evils and hardships to which all immigrants are subjected, and which are likely to bear even more heavily on immigrants isolated from other Jews by language and traditions. The aim should be to bring them under the best influences of American Jewish life.

EVENTS IN 5673

JULY 1, 1912, TO JUNE 30, 1913

INTRODUCTION

I

In the events of the year 5673 for the Jewry, the Balkan Wars rank first. Waged with incredible brutality, they brought widespread suffering to the Jews in the former limits of the Turkish Empire. The success of the Balkan States has resulted in the transfer of 120,000 Jews from Turkish sovereignty, under which they have lived since their exile from Spain and Portugal. Serbia and particularly Greece now have large Jewish communities within their territory, and the Bulgarian Jewry will be greatly enlarged. Roumania adds to her population and citizenship the Jews of Silistria. For the Balkan Jewry, the change involves new conditions, social and economic as well as political. Their situation in what was formerly Turkey in Europe, and their future, as described by the representatives of the Jewish organizations of Europe and America that united for the work of relief, cannot but be of great concern to the Jews the world over (see pp. 188-206).

Notable in connection with the Balkan War are two things: the prompt and generous response of the prosperous Jewries in Western Europe and America to the Balkan distress, and the effort to secure a guarantee for the civil and political liberty and equality of the Jews in the conquered territory. An international association, the Union des Associations Israélites,

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