JEWISH LIFE IN SOUTH AMERICA

A Survey Study For
The American Jewish Congress

By

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WITH A FOREWORD BY
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JEWISH LIFE IN SOUTH AMERICA



Map of
SOUTH AMERICA
Showing Recent Estimates of
JEWISH POPULATION
in the Various Republics
June, 1941

TO PAULO-ALTA

Whose family forbearance
and sporting cooperation
made the long journey possible

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FOREWORD

J. X. Cohen, my associate in the ministry of the Free Synagogue, entered the service of the congregation immediately following his graduation from the Jewish Institute of Religion, a graduate school preparing men for the Jewish ministry and community service. Prior to entering the Institute, he retired from the engineering profession, having served as designing and consulting sanitary engineer. He had been president of the Syracuse Chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the author of numerous published technical studies and professional papers.

In this volume on Jewish life in South America, Rabbi Cohen has performed an important service in relation to the whole of the American Jewish community, perhaps the more important and enduring because it was rendered as a phase in the task of identifying American Jewry with the Americas in their entirety and solidarity. In his book, which is an echo of personal and immediate impressions set down in precise diaries and accurate reports, Rabbi Cohen has brought the very mood and quality of the South American democracies to the Northern Democracy. The report on his recent visit to South America is particularly important

in the light of the forthcoming Inter-American Jewish Conference at Montevideo, Uruguay, July, 1941.

Renewed visits on the part of Rabbi Cohen to the Southern section of the American Continent may deepen his impressions and enrich their coloring. But this volume will stand as the story of a pilgrim of clear vision, of open mind, of generous spirit, to the great peoples of a great continent. The pilgrimage, enriching to the seeker after truth, will bring light and leading to whosoever shares it by reading these pages. It is a tale worth telling, worthily, reverently, humanly, illuminatingly told.

STEPHEN S. WISE.

INTRODUCTION

THOUGH Jews came to South America long before a Jewish community was established in North America (in fact the New York Jewish community originated with a group of refugees fleeing Inquisitional wrath in Catholic Portuguese-controlled Brazil), yet the four and a half centuries since Columbus have seen far greater Jewish development in our own land than below the Equator.

Today the emphasis is rightly placed on continental solidarity, on hemispheric security. Vast international changes have brought our Southern neighbors nearer to us. With almost uncanny prescience our gifted President developed, from the very beginning of his first Administration, the "Good-Neighbor Policy." This policy is metamorphosing the old fears of *Yanqui Imperialismo* into a steadily ripening friendship for the "Colossus of the North," whose very greatness is now viewed as safeguard instead of menace.

The Jewry of the United States of America has grown in these past centuries to five million souls. The Jewish communities in South America now total but a tenth of this number; they too turn with ardent hopes for moral support, in these days of deep crisis, to the great Jewish community north of the Rio Grande.

But Jews in the north, appointed by destiny to the high station of safeguarding the Jewish future in a war-torn world, know but little of our South American Jewish neighbors. Little has been written about them; the few texts are outdated by the swift changes of recent years.

Hence it was gratifying when an invitation came to the writer, as a member of the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, to visit South America as one of a group of college presidents and professors, clergymen, sociologists and economists, and to serve as the "authority" on Jewish matters. The mission was enabled to make close studies and first-hand observations in a mode and measure beyond the range of the ordinary tourist, for it had the benefit of the joint leadership of Hubert Herring, noted author on Mexico and Latin America, and Samuel Guy Inman, outstanding writer and long-time student of South American affairs. Dr. Inman is the author of eleven volumes on South America, four of them in Spanish. Both Dr. Herring and Dr. Inman are well-known liberals; Dr. Inman is particularly distinguished as an *Oheb Yisroel,* a warm friend of the Jewish people and an earnest worker in behalf of stricken Israel.

The World Jewish Congress, whose executive had been needfully transferred to New York City successively from Geneva, Paris and London, heartily joined the American Jewish Congress in designating the writer as their official representative on this mission. The program was arranged with the State Department through its

Division on Cultural Relations with Latin America, in cooperation with the Washington embassies and legations of the countries visited. Such auspices ensured the finest opportunities for study and enabled the mission during its three months' tour to accumulate considerable information of value in building a better understanding of South America and its problems.

We met several score of Government officials, including such outstanding personalities as President Getulio Vargas of Brazil, Dr. Oswaldo Aranha, Brazil's distinguished Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Carlos Muniz, Brazilian Minister of Immigration and Colonization, and others of high rank and station in Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Peru, and the other countries visited by the mission.

The journey was undertaken with a background which included travel over considerable stretches of Europe, a careful personal study of conditions in Mexico, and a long familiarity with South America through previous professional experiences in public health engineering.

As we journeyed down the East Coast of South America, and then, after a memorable, truly breath-taking four-mile-high flight over the Andes, up the West Coast, notebook and camera were constant companions.

Only the exigencies of the present international situation prevent releasing for publication texts of certain confidential memoranda sent northward concerning matters of deep interest. These included long handwritten reports, penned in the dead hours of the night,

while the others of the group rested; reports written on the thinnest of flimsy paper, in minute script, to keep down the high airmail costs.

For many years the writer has been a close student of the development of National Socialism in Germany, and of its international ramifications, particularly in the United States. As far back as 1930, at the request of the American Jewish Congress, many meetings were attended of Nazi inspired organizations serving as agencies for spreading Nazi propaganda in America. These agencies went through various modifications in name, finally flowering forth in the German American Bund, whose leader is now earning his keep in a New York State prison.

Some of the reports on Nazi activities in the United States, prepared for the confidential information of the officers of the American Jewish Congress, were deemed of sufficient consequence for reference to governmental authorities. Many conferences then followed on the possibilities of espionage and sabotage by Nazi agents and Nazi tools, years before these subversive activities were generally considered consequential to the welfare of our country.

Because of the familiarity with what has more latterly been termed Fifth Column activities, this phase was not disregarded while in South America. Contact was established with certain informed newspaper men and other well-placed sources. Certain matters were also personally uncovered of such character that when they were transmitted to a key contact in the United States,

he personally conveyed them to high officials of our government in Washington. Some of these reports went direct from South America by diplomatic pouch to Washington.

The American Jewish Congress paved the way for its representative's coming to South America by notifying the different Jewish communal leaders of the mission, and the probable dates of arrival. To make clear his status in the New York Jewish community, they wrote that he was the President of the New York Board of Jewish Ministers, an organization which includes leading orthodox, conservative and reform rabbis in the largest Jewish community in the world.

Two delegations usually awaited the general party on its arrival by steamer, train or plane. The large official delegation was for the general party; the second was for the rabbi. After the usual flashlight press pictures had been shot of the group (and the South American press is even keener about its "rights" than the ubiquitous U. S. A. cameramen), the Jewish welcoming committee started their search for the rabbi. They frequently reported great difficulty because they sought a bearded gentleman—and were non-plussed to find their awaited guest cleanshaven.

But the lack of beard was quickly explained, using what I came to call *Pan Americaner Yiddish* as a medium of communication. This *Pan Americaner Yiddish* is a catch-as-catch-can compound of a little English, a little Spanish and a heap of Yiddish. But some of the North American Yiddish, full of English terms

and expressions Yiddished by adoption and intonation, left its hearers as mystified as their local Yiddish, richly spiced with Spanish and Portuguese adaptations, left the *Yanqui.*

It was my privilege to address many Jewish meetings and to hold numerous conferences with Jewish leaders. Everywhere I sought to impress upon my auditors that the Jews of the United States of North America were deeply interested in the welfare of the Jews of South America. Attention was devoted to the grievous problems created by the tragedy which has engulfed European Jewry, and much consideration was given to measures which might be taken by South American Jewry to cooperate in the relief work conducted by the World Jewish Congress in Europe, and with the Jewish Agency for the upbuilding of Palestine. The situation in each South American country was canvassed in detail, respecting participation in the projected Inter-American-Jewish Conference. General plans were laid for the conference, which is now scheduled to be held during July, 1941, in Montevideo, Uruguay.

North American Jews who will attend this conference may find something of interest in this volume concerning Jews who are doing their share in helping to build the economy of the South American countries. They are doing this as farmers and tradesmen, as peddlers and bankers, as doctors and industrialists, as writers and teachers. South American Jewry, though older than our own, is nonetheless on the open frontier of the Western Hemisphere. The sketches in this volume,

which appeared in large part serially in the CONGRESS WEEKLY, it is hoped will throw some light and give some guidance upon this frontier.

In the course of our travels on the Southern continent, I took about two thousand pictures. Some of them have been found good; quite a number have been acclaimed excellent photographs of scenes and personalities of the countries visited and have been published in leading pictorial magazines. A few pictures appear in this volume, selected mainly not because of their quality but because of their Jewish content.

The keen interest in South America is indicated by the large attendance at a series of eleven lectures on the theme given at the Free Synagogue, New York, this past winter. These lectures were illustrated by slide presentation of pictures "shot" in South America. The lectures proved so popular that they were repeated in many communities in the United States. They dealt with such themes as "Behind the Curtain in South America," "Fifth Column Activities in South America," "Zionism South of the Rio Grande," and "Jewish Life in South America."

Within the limitations of time imposed by the burdens of other pressing duties this little volume has been composed of material used in these lectures. In fact the book grew out of the enthusiastic suggestions offered by auditors at the lectures, who expressed the hope they might have something to pass on to friends of what they had heard from the platform and seen on the screen.

Kind friends who helped supply the data may find their kindness sadly unrequited through neglect of detailed acknowledgment, which is here most gratefully expressed in a blanket of thanks. Worse though than non-acknowledgment may be slips of the pen, through faulty notation of the accurate data these gracious folk so generously supplied. For this I ask forgiveness, and promise correction should a second edition of this little volume ever be needed.

The changes in Jewish life in South America are proceeding apace. Though immigration has been slowed down by the political barriers erected as a result of Fascist propaganda and national fears created by World War II, when peace happily dawns with Fascism crushed, a new era in Jewish life will begin in South America.

BRAZIL—FIRST AMERICAN JEWRY

NEARLY four centuries ago, Jews came to the newly found American continent. They came to Brazil, like the founding fathers to Plymouth Rock, as refugees from intolerance. Many were sent by the Inquisition from Portugal because, as Marranos, they were too bad to be kept in Portugal with their dangerous heresies, and yet not bad enough (or perhaps not poor enough) to be condemned to the stake, their properties confiscated for the good of the Church. As early as 1625, the Jewish community in Pernambuco numbered almost 5,000, including the residents of nearby Recife.

Historic record is clear that in the seventeenth century there came to America the first rabbi to reach our shores, Rabbi Isaac Aboab from Amsterdam, Holland. Brazil was then under the liberal administration of the Dutch. The Jewish community later sacrificially assisted the Dutch garrison to meet the counter assault of the Portuguese, who finally regained control of all Brazil. A shipload of Jews then fled Brazil. After many vicissitudes they disembarked at New Amsterdam to form, in 1655, the first Jewish congregation in New York, active today as Congregation Shearith Israel, on Central Park West. Some Jews remained behind as Marranos; others came in later years, but only earnest research can uncover their traces, so thoroughly have they been assimilated into the general Brazilian community.

At a service one Sunday morning last July, I was privileged to occupy the pulpit of the American Union Church of Rio de Janeiro. I told the congregation something of the story of the Jewish community in Brazil, the first in all the Americas. A lady of a distinguished Rio family, after the service, told me of certain books in her home. "They have," she said, "queer characters and the page numbers run backward." These books came into the family on her husband's side, and, she added, he was probably of Jewish origin, even as she was of Dutch origin, from Recife.

Jews Brought Sugar-Cane

The Recife district now produces large quantities of sugar. For a long period during the seventeenth century, Brazil was the world's major sugar supply source. The first cane was brought to the country by two Marranos in 1548, from the Island of Madeira, so that nearly 400 years ago Jews came bearing great gifts to Brazil and America.

The present Jewish population of Brazil is about 75,000. Only a small number are "old-timers." Not many are engaged in farming, though the agricultural resources of Brazil, developed and undeveloped, are literally enormous. The country is larger than all of Europe—larger than the United States too—and it could easily produce enough food to sustain Europe's teeming, underfed peoples.

The physical potentialities of Brazil for future colonization programs are tremendous. There are three great

states among the twenty of the nation, each very much larger than Texas. The Amazon area is the largest undeveloped area in the world with the least population. In all of Brazil the population is estimated at about 45 millions.



President Getulio Vargas, Dr. Inman, Mrs. Inman, Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Oswaldo Aranha, and the Author, in the Patio of the Presidential Palace at Rio

I had several conferences at the *Palacio Itamaraty,* seat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rio, with Dr. Toao Carlos Muniz, Minister of Immigration and Colonization, concerning Jewish colonization matters. These conferences were arranged through the kindness of Dr.

Oswaldo Aranha, whom it was my pleasure to meet several times, including an intimate luncheon conference at the *Palacio,* where I was privileged to offer the toast to the President of the United States of Brazil, Dr. Getulio Vargas. Dr. Aranha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, responded with the toast to his Good Neighbor and personal friend, the President of the United States of America.

Refugees Create Industries

Dr. Muniz expressed himself as highly gratified with the valuable contribution the Jewish community was making to Brazil. With regard to the refugees who had come in recent years he said that some of them brought new industries, supplementing their limited financial capital with large technical and intellectual capital. Thus, he added, these refugees provide work opportunities for native Brazilians, for under the law every employer of eight or more persons must use 75 percent Brazilian labor.

He expressed himself as more than willing to discuss a future large colonization program, provided it was with a responsible Jewish body, and not with anyone who happened to be fired with the desire to "do something for Jews."

There are tremendous tracts of rich land, government owned, which could be developed under a land grant, to accommodate the energetic immigrant population Brazil needs. When turning me over to his first secretary for detailed material, Dr. Muniz assured me

of his willingness, as *Ministro do Imigracao E Colonizacao,* to cooperate fully, for it meant, he said, the good of Brazil.

It should be made clear that Brazilian immigration is per quota, directly patterned upon the United States of America immigration act. Two percent of the "country of origin" population resident in Brazil in 1890 is the general base underlying the quota, of whom 80 percent must enter as agricultural workers and 20 percent as technicians. Jews come in under their respective countries of birth. Many Brazilian Jews who had planned to migrate to the United States were deflected from their European homes to Brazil by our 1924 quota law.

From 1934 to 1937 a large number of refugees, in the thousands, entered Brazil. Because of internal pressures, largely fomented by Nazi propaganda, further severe restrictions were recently clamped down to reduce refugee immigration. Nonetheless, Dr. Muniz assured me, Brazil will admit 150 families per month, if the head of the family can come in as a "capitalist," ready to start in industry or business with 200 contos (about $10,000 USA). In addition there is a "reservoir" of 3,000 visas available, without time limit, for refugees entering without capital, but only to join relatives resident in Brazil.

Jewish Population Data

Jews are found in every city and town of Brazil, even in distant Manaos, one thousand miles up the Amazon River, in the old rubber jungle area. At one time, before

the Brazilian rubber bubble burst, Manaos handled the lucrative traffic at its ocean steamer docks. The Amazon is such an amazingly large river it is navigable for ocean vessels up to Iquitos, 2,300 miles from the mouth.



Midnight on the Avenida Beira Mar—from the Hotel Gloria in Rio de Janeiro

Precise data in Brazil about anything is hard to get. *Mas ou menas,* more or less, is always a qualifying phrase. There are about 25,000 Jews in Rio de Janeiro, the capital city of 2,000,000 population; about 15,000 Jews in Sao Paulo, the great industrial and commercial center of 1,200,000 population. Porto Alegre, capital of the most southerly state, Rio Grande do Sul, with a

population of 370,000, and a very important commercial center, has a Jewish population of 6,000, *mas ou menas.* About 3,000 Jews now reside in Pernambuco, or about half the number who dwelt there back in the seventeenth century.

Rio is a tropic combination of summer resort and busy metropolis; Sao Paulo has the feeling of a bustling Boston with a New York tang, in a Miami sub-tropic floricultural setting. Both have flourishing Jewish communities, though the smaller, Sao Paulo, is the better organized.

Rio has three Sephardic synagogues, one Ashkenazic synagogue that seats 300, and a large Ashkenazic "Temple," with space for 1,300 congregants, and a social hall for 1,000 persons. This Temple is not yet complete; in a city notable for its beautiful public structures it would not qualify for even the last prize. This is a pity, for Brazilians place great stress on esthetics.

Rio Community Weak

The general weakness of the Jewish community in Rio is due to its comparative newness. In 1910 there were perhaps 500 Jews in Rio, except for an old time Sephardic group whose members are now largely assimilated. After World War I, heavy immigration set in, principally from Poland and Rumania, as well as a Levantine stream, mainly from Morocco and Greece.

The Jewish community maintains its own schools, for though public education is a major interest of the Government, it favors private schools as a budgetary relief

in the program to reduce the fearfully high rate of 80 to 85 percent illiteracy now prevalent in Brazil. There are three Jewish schools in Rio, with about 425 pupils and sixteen teachers, each located in a separate building, in different sections of the city. Curricula are not super-



Trio in Rio, Studying Torah

vised by the Government, except for non-Jewish subjects. These must meet standards set by Government inspection. The Government provides no subvention; the government inspector's salary is paid by the school, annually in advance. It should be added that Jewish children are freely admitted to the Government schools, and many attend, but it should also be noted that in

Rio, with two million population, there is only *one* public high school.

The orthodox group, which is not very numerous, maintains a Talmud Torah under the direction of *Rabino* Mordco Tzekinovsky, who is the rabbi of Rio. There are about sixty boy students; girls are not allowed. *Siddur, Tanach* and some *Gemarah* are the subjects of instruction; the technique used is East European. The rabbi, who is a scholarly, modest soul, wears a slightly modified East European garb. He arrived from Rumania about thirteen years ago.

Conference With Rio Rabbi

When I called at his home to meet him and *Rabino* David Valt of Sao Paulo, for a discussion of Jewish religious life in Brazil, the dear little *rebetzin* served tea most self-effacingly, and timorously peeked out at the men folk. I am afraid she was puzzled by the beardless *Norte Americano Rabino,* who probably was Jewish, for he carried credentials from the *Gran Rabino* Doctor Stephen Wise, and was reported in the Rio newspaper *Imprensa Israelita* to be president of the New York Board of Jewish Ministers. The two orthodox rabbis were also puzzled, withal delighted, when I told them that the leading reform, conservative and orthodox rabbis of New York had been meeting monthly, for nearly sixty years, in helpful discussion of problems of mutual concern.

Rio Jews are engaged in small manufacturing enterprises and in business, principally jewelry, clothing, furs

and furniture, with heavy concentration in the last. One estimate given me in Rio stated that perhaps 70 percent of Jewish traders were "customer peddlers." This was a form of enterprise many Jews followed in New York, and other North American cities, a generation ago.



Children in Kindergarten Class, Jewish School, Rio de Janeiro

Their sons and grandsons now operate the large installment houses, some of them tremendous enterprises.

The Rio Jewish Community lacks centrality of organization. This is due in part to the comparative newness and heterogeniety of its elements. They have come from all over Europe and—until tied together by the

national language, Portuguese—they lack a common medium of communication, for many do not speak Yiddish. The post-Hitler groups from Germany, Austria and Italy have expressed their need for a Portuguese speaking rabbi who would preach in the Temple, and be the communal organizer and community leader.

As yet the community is too poor adequately to support such a functionary, though there are a few wealthy Jews who could bear the burden easily. But the complaint poured into my ears in Rio was that most of these "old-timers" are indifferent to Jewish matters. Some of them have even gone the way of the baptismal fount, with Catholic schools for their children, to end their outer ties with the Jewish community.

I asked a Jewish business man, a director of the Y.M.C.A. in Rio, for the address of the "Temple." Though he had been in Rio for fifteen years, he had not even heard of its existence. In fact he claimed unfamiliarity with Jewish life in Rio.

Sao Paulo Jewry

Sao Paulo Jewry has a beautiful temple, also without a rabbi, and seven other synagogues. Most of Sao Paulo's 15,000 Jews arrived after the end of World War I. The community has just completed a Home for Aged. It maintains a Day Nursery, has a Free Loan Fund and supports a Talmud Torah. Through the Society Ezra, in existence for twelve years, a *Sanatorio para Tuberculosos Pobres* is maintained in a salubrious

district, for the care of poor Jews afflicted with tuberculosis.

Jewish institutions in Sao Paulo include three schools now seven years old, with an enrolment of 350 children. They attend full time and study a curriculum approved by the Government. Half of the teachers are non-Jewish Brazilians. The children are from five to twelve years of age; upon graduation they enter the Government schools.

These children also receive Jewish religious instruction. Their books came from Poland. There is now danger that within a year the school text books will be too worn for use. Replacement from United States sources is very expensive, on account of the very unfavorable rate of exchange. This text book and prayer book problem afflicts the Jewish communities of all South America, except Argentina, which is more fortunately situated.

BRAZIL – II

PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION

The Jewish position in Brazil cannot be clearly understood without some comprehension of the present political situation. Since 1930, Getulio Vargas has been president of the republic in name, and dictator in fact, ruling every phase of Brazilian life by personal decree and filling all governmental posts by appointment. The internal policy is based upon Vargas' expressed determination to rule "until the crisis is over."

The foreign policy is shaped by international developments, with one eye upon the United States of America, powerful, capable of great financial generosity to a "good" neighbor, anxious about continental solidarity and gravely concerned about its life-line, the Panama Canal, only three hours' flight from western Brazil, even as eastern Brazil is but six hours' flight from Africa. The other eye of Brazilian foreign policy is turned toward Europe, its best export customer, now under the heel of a totalitarian Axis. They don't know, in the *Palacio Itamaraty,* who is going down to defeat, Germany or Britain, and so they are wary about taking any irretraceable steps, which might align them with the losing side.

Some of those who rule, with and through Vargas, are strongly inclined toward totalitarianism. None is more so than Francisco Campos, Minister of Justice and

outstanding personality in the Vargas cabinet. He is an outspoken denouncer of "decadent democracy."

Until recently, the pro-fascist movement operated under the name of *Integralismo.* In May 1938, the Integralists sought to capture the government, even attempting Vargas' assassination. Their *coup d'etat* failed, bringing down upon them and all Brazil the severe repressive measures that now rule the country.

Decrees Curb Anti-Semitism

This has gravely affected the Jewish community in many areas of activity, but is welcomed, on the whole, because it has also served to curb the rising tide of anti-Semitism generated by Nazi propagandists, who worked through the Integralists. The three Nazi subsidized papers in Rio and the three in Sao Paulo, plus the outpouring of all other sorts of anti-Jewish material, led some Jewish leaders to feel that an *erev-pogrom* atmosphere was being created.

Anti-Semitism among the Brazilians, despite their native kindliness and their innate sense of *simpatico,* gave fearful promise of rapid tropical growth. There was danger of its flourishing with profusion. Many Brazilians are highly emotional, easily stirred into dangerous overt acts which they would sincerely regret the next day, but then it would be too late. The Integralistas finally over-reached themselves; but the anti-Jewish poison they implanted has not disappeared, despite their suppression as a political menace to the Government.

Until the coming of Nazism engendered anti-Semit-

ism, well circumstanced members of the Jewish community told me they had felt they were "living in a Paradise," socially, culturally, and esthetically. Even in midwinter, I saw beautiful hibiscus, bougainvillea and poinsettia flourish and bloom brilliantly in this tropical



Panorama of Famed "Sugar Loaf Mountain (extreme left) and Section of Rio de Janeiro from Mount Corcovado

land. But the bloom now wastes its fragrance on those Jews who find themselves visited with minor and major discriminations.

Regime Semi-Totalitarian

Jews in Government service—and there are some—now feel a changed atmosphere. Many are worried over

the immediate future, for in a semi-totalitarian regime, decree laws come by whim, overnight. One high Government official not long ago delivered an attack that seemed to have been written by a Goebbels graduate, for he was reported in the *Diario Da Noite* to have said:

> "It is easy to discover and identify those elements among the exploiters of all times, the war breeders, those who are without a Fatherland; who if they had a Fatherland, would not be able to conduct it. Many of them, unwanted elsewhere, have stolen into our own land, with prejudice against those who do the work of the community, and abusing our kindly hospitality, they have become involved in the instruments of unscrupulous world finance."

But the Brazilian Government is now so zealous of maintaining its reputation, especially in the United States of America, that it does not allow anti-Semitic material to circulate. The above reported statement was censored from later editions of newspapers.

Whereas two years ago the press carried heavily subsidized streams of anti-Semitic material, they do not run such articles now. Several fierce anti-Jewish pamphlets came from the envenomed pen of Gustavo Barroso, who combined his position of director of the National Historic Museum at Petropolis with that of propagandist for Integralismo. When the Integralist attempt at a *coup* was crushed he was placed in temporary protective

custody and removed from his government post as a pro-Nazi propagandist.

German Embassy Propaganda

After the present war began, the German embassy in Rio increased its staff by nearly a hundred persons. Previous to the outbreak of the war, the embassy had been the scene of many brilliant parties to flatter and favor high Brazilian officials, especially their wives. Many important business men, industrialists and professional men had been invited to Germany on "reduced fare" trips. They had been dined and wined there, and returned well fed on Nazi propaganda.

This propaganda in Brazil subsided for a while, but it is once more on the increase. Pro-British propaganda does seek to counteract it. But, as one official in Brazil whispered to me, "it is a struggle between a conscienceless, ruthless Al Capone and a polite Little Lord Fauntleroy." The Nazis now seek to capitalize on the money they have spent profusely for the past seven years in Brazil, and are doing all they can to tie up their anti-British propaganda with the Jews as allies of England.

The Jewish communities of Brazil may not organize themselves to prepare and circulate any material that would counteract the anti-Semitic influences generated by the Nazis in Brazil. Brazilian Jews attempting to do so now would be charged with engaging in political activity. As political activity is completely interdicted, self-defense is impossible.

To crush all political activity, a Vargas decree prohibits any meeting of twelve or more persons, in a private home or elsewhere, except for religious or social purposes, unless a police permit has been obtained five days in advance, and a police recorder is present. The only language allowed at a meeting is Portuguese. Meetings to discuss political matters—a very broad term—are completely prohibited.

Zionism Prohibited

Not knowing of this regulation, I suggested a conference, while in Rio, to discuss Jewish relief problems with communal leaders. The meeting was called off because I do not speak Portuguese. Attempts at surreptitious meetings are stupid; police surveillance is thorough and drastic.

This interdictment of "political" activities has dried up all Zionist work for Palestine. To keep a *pushke* at home into which to drop a few pennies for Palestine is illegal and dangerous. The *Hatikvah,* however, is not prohibited at Jewish religious gatherings, for it is regarded as a sacred hymn. Similarly, the Zionist flag may be shown near the ark in the Synagogue, for it, too, is regarded as a symbol of religious significance.

The Jewish religious status is satisfactory vis-a-vis the Government, which is most tolerant and liberal in this field. In fact, marriage by a rabbi is now civilly valid; previous to a recent decree only civil marriage was recognized.

Rio Jewry has a fine library called the *Bialik Bibliotek.*

At a Herzl memorial anniversary gathering held while I was in Rio, about 250 persons assembled to hear addresses on the life of Theodor Herzl. The police censor was present, and as he understood Yiddish, the speakers were permitted to speak Yiddish. But the



Rio Children Singing Hatikvah in Patio of Jewish School

central motif of Herzl's life and work could only be referred to as "a certain idea, well known to all, which Herzl helped to establish."

Cryptic Letter-Writing

While in Rio I saw a sample of cryptic writing produced by the very real fear of mail censorship. The

letter dealt with a certain Jewish problem. The writer, in Buenos Aires, told the recipient, who was visiting Rio, that his disease had been described to a "wise" physician in New York, with an office on West 42nd Street, who asked the advice of a famous specialist recently arrived from Geneva, Switzerland. They had both decided the nature of the affliction warranted consultation with the greatest medical authority in the United States, who has a large white clinic building in Washington. The sick man in Rio was urged not to lose courage; a cure for his malady might yet be found, and would be rushed to him by Pan American clipper.

But I must be clear on this point; the Jewish community on the whole is pleased with and grateful for the Vargas regime, for among many benefits may be counted the throttling of Nazi anti-Jewish propaganda.

Though no Brazilian Jew dare dream of attending, as a delegate, a World Zionist Congress—to do so would mean the loss of his passport and non-return to Brazil—yet the efforts of the Government to crush anti-Government forces have been indirectly beneficial to the Jewish community. The problem for American Jewish leadership is to work out the *modus operandi* whereby the Brazilian Government can be diplomatically informed that Zionism contains no element of danger to the stability of the Vargas regime. Only in this way can the 75,000 Jews of Brazil help to contribute to the great program of reconstruction now in progress in Palestine.

Brazil's Refugee Problem

Another great concern in Brazil is the refugee problem. Fearing an influx of refugees, and, as Dr. Carlos Muniz graciously phrased it, the "attendant complicating social problems," the refugee "flood" was throttled down to those who came to join relatives. Dr. Muniz emphasized at my conference with him that "this permission extends even to grandparents."

There are some hundreds of refugees in Rio with "tourist" status only. They, of course, take chances if they work; their employers likewise. I met several such refugees, who are being grossly exploited because they are "illegal." Though the police do not campaign against the "illegals" in the country, the refugees are harried by the constant fear of the police descending upon them. The Government, aware of the situation, has declared that legalization may be attained through certain documentations, but the stamp tax is 1 *conto*—a huge sum ($50 U.S.A.) for the average refugee to accumulate from his own stripped resources.

There are about 3,500 German refugees in Sao Paulo —some of them have not yet legalized their change from "tourist" to *permanento*. The tourists, of course, are not allowed to work. They are supported by the Jewish community.

One of the finest personalities I met in Brazil is saintly Dr. H. C. Tucker, an American Protestant missionary and social worker, beloved for his self-sacrificing service to Brazilians for over a half century. I learned

that Dr. Tucker rescued a young Jewish refugee from jail, who had been arrested in Rio for peddling without a permit. A license was non-issuable to the youth, for he was a "tourist." He had been in jail from January 23 to July 1, 1940, and might have stayed on indefinitely. But good old Dr. Tucker got him out, loaned him the money to legalize his status, and found him a job in Sao Paulo as mechanic.

Dr. Tucker is doing a grand job right now, at my request, to help a poor Viennese Jewish orphan girl who entered Brazil as a novice-in-training to become a nun—and now repents of her adolescent decision.

Indeed, I learned of some refugees who found that their entrance to Brazil could be facilitated if they would but accept the Catholic faith. Some of them are following in the very footsteps of their Marrano brothers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—only now it is the hideous Nazi terror, as then it was the Holy Inquisition, that sends them to Brazil. So once again, after four hundred years, Brazil receives on its hospitable shores men and women seeking freedom of body and peace of soul in the first Jewish community established in the Western Hemisphere.

JEWS OF DEMOCRATIC URUGUAY

URUGUAY is a small South American country, with a population of 2,135,000. It has an area of 72,153 square miles, or about the size of the New England States. A large section of the population dwells in Montevideo, the capital of the nation, which has a population of 520,000. The Jewish community in Montevideo now numbers about 30,000, including about 5,000 refugees. About 20,000 Jews live in the "camp," i.e., the country outside Montevideo.

The early Jewish settlers coming in large numbers began to arrive after 1910. They found very few Jews in Montevideo. By 1917, their number had reached a point where they could organize a *kehillah,* and as time went on they established several communal societies and institutions. These include a home for aged and two orphan asylums also serving as day nurseries. The second orphan asylum was recently established by German refugees, with the assistance of funds from the United States. The principal Ashkenazic and Sephardic synagogues are housed in excellent buildings; each is served by a rabbi.

There are five Jewish schools where instruction is in Yiddish. The schools operate in morning and afternoon shifts; the morning shift children attend the Government schools in the afternoon, and vice versa. This

arrangement meets with Government favor on account of the shortage of school buildings.

Jewish leaders reported to me that, in the main, the German Jews refuse to mix with either the Sephardic or Ashkenazic community. They have established their own synagogue, etc., including cemetery, despite the efforts of the East European Jews to create a single community. When the refugees first arrived, the community assisted them with money for purchasing goods to be peddled, sewing machines for craftsmen, and other services. It also operated an employment office to help the refugees find work. But community cooperation between the two groups has not yet been achieved.

Thus the 30,000 Jews of Montevideo are divided into three groups—East European, German and Sephardic. Quite a number of "second generation" Ashkenazic and Sephardic Uruguayans now live in Montevideo, and it is hoped these will help bring the communities together. To date, however, all efforts for a union of the three groups have been fruitless.

Cooperative Customer Peddlers

About ten years ago the Jewish community (East European) founded a "customer peddler's" cooperative. These peddlers sell merchandise on long terms and weekly payments. Their activities have made possible the purchase of goods many Uruguayans could not otherwise have acquired. The cooperative owns a five-story building (cost 100,000 pesos) in which is stored and exhibited to prospective customers of peddler mem-

bers, all kinds of dry goods, furniture, housefurnishings, radios and anything else a customer may care to buy on long terms.

The cooperative has two hundred members, a paid-in capital of 250,000 pesos, and has sixty employees. The dividends are ploughed back into the enterprise, which is conducted on a high level of efficiency. The cooperative is an essential element in the life of the Jewish community, and is concededly of benefit to the Uruguayans generally. Without it, they would have difficulty acquiring many of the comforts that now enhance their home lives. Incidentally, the cooperative helps trade with the United States of America.

Another interesting institution is the Jewish cooperative bank, with 100,000 pesos paid in capital and a surplus of 22,000 pesos. In 1939, it earned for its 1,200 active and 400 inactive members a net profit of 10,000 pesos. It has twelve employees, working full time in a good building owned by the bank. The affairs are managed by a board of fifteen members, who make loans up to 15,000 pesos to approved persons. The interest rate is one percent per month. Other banks in Montevideo make loans at from 7 percent to 9 percent per year, but their credit policy is not so liberal to all Jewish applicants; their managements are too conservative to deal with Jewish newcomers who are without means.

The Cooperative Bank

The most interesting feature of the operation of this cooperative bank lies in its distribution of 70 percent

of its profits to Jewish communal causes and organizations, including schools, home for aged, etc., as well as contributions to Palestine upbuilding through the *Keren Hayesod* and *Keren Kayemeth.* It also helps support ADCA, which will be described later.



Jewish Community Leaders at Cooperative Bank in Montevideo, Uruguay

There is another and larger Jewish cooperative bank, which was in great difficulties when I was in Montevideo because it had fallen under Communist control. These difficulties were creating serious drafts on the resources of the smaller bank. The directors of the smaller bank, at a special session convened to meet with me, pleaded

for support from North American Jewish financial sources through a well secured loan. This would increase their working capital, enlarge their effectiveness to the struggling members of the Jewish community and help to tide them over the critical phase of their affairs.

I was greatly impressed by the earnestness and unselfishness of these men, who realize that only through financial cooperation can they work out their serious problems of economic adjustment and development in their new home. American Jewish financial interests could make a genuine and lasting contribution to Jewish welfare in Uruguay by assisting this credit venture.

The "Communist controlled" bank situation deserves description. This bank has about 5,000 members, made loans on attractive terms, and also conducted several cooperative facilities, including medical aid for its members. The approximately 300 Jewish communists in Montevideo are a well disciplined group. By zealous "front" work and through the general inattention of the Jewish community, this Communist crowd obtained control of the management of the bank. As there is only a weak Jewish press in Uruguay, those who opposed the infiltration of the leftist influence made little headway.

Communists Control Bank

The Communists then used "their" bank to help destroy capitalism! They gave financial support to their daily paper—patterned after the New York *Freiheit,*—and even helped to finance non-Jewish Communists in

their work in Uruguay. When the Government assailed them, they ran to cover crying "anti-Semitism!" In the bank building run by the Communists they staged a party in celebration of the "freedom" that had come to the Jews of Bessarabia, Poland and Latvia, through incorporation into Soviet Russia.

It has been reported to me that some of these "Communist bankers" resorted to manipulation and grafting, a few suddenly acquiring expensive homes. These peculations were hidden for a while, but distrust finally spread among some of the depositors. When the situation became acute and bankrutpcy imminent, the issue was postponed by declaring a "moratorium" on account of the war, which had just broken out.

There was financial distress among many of the depositors. It is especially regrettable that some refugees deposited their rescued pittances in the closed bank. The "moratorium" excuse saved public face for the time being, but the scandal may yet break, with double barreled results because of the tie-up of Jews and Communists. Such a scandal will have bad repercussions throughout South America, and may well have an equally bad reaction in the Untied States.

At present the Communist party is legal in Uruguay. It polled about 5,000 votes in the last election; of these it is estimated that perhaps 6 percent were those of Jews. But the general talk in Uruguay, fomented by the Nazis and their collaborators, is that all the Communist votes were those of Jews.

ADCA Fights Anti-Semitism

To meet the rising tide of anti-Semitism fomented by the Nazis, the Jewish community in Uruguay, about three years ago, organized the *Asociacion de Defensa Contra el Anti-Semitismo,* popularly called ADCA. The president is Senor Mauricio Milies, engaged in the fur business, whose son, born in Uruguay, is one of the prominent physicians of Montevideo. On the day of my coming to Montevideo an audience took place with the President of the Republic of Uruguay, General Alfredo Baldomir, at which the committee of five prominent Jewish leaders discussed matters of consequence to Uruguay, its Jewish citizens and residents.

I understood the President to have stated among other things that German refugees now dwelling illegally in Uruguay would be permitted to regularize their admittance, provided the Jewish community would help to assist the authorities in sifting out from among these refugees those who are fake and fifth columnists. A serious responsibility was thus placed on the Jewish community, which delegated the task to the ADCA.

Nazi activity in Uruguay has been serious and determined, for Montevideo is the strategic key to the Rio de la Plata basin, which is the outlet for and gives control of Paraguay, Bolivia and northern Argentina, as well as Uruguay. Quantities of incriminating correspondence, propaganda material and military equipment were seized by the authorities, through information placed at their disposal by certain well-posted persons in contact with the ADCA.

It was established that Uruguay was the center of Nazi activity for South America and Central America. One letter was found, I was informed, from the Uruguayan Nazi headquarters to the German Embassy at Washington, D. C., asking for help in establishing contact with Germans in a certain Central American country without a German minister. Astoundingly full details were discovered of a coup to take over Uruguay, upon signal from Berlin.

U. S. A. Cooperation

With the cooperation of the United States of America, some of the facts disclosed were released for publication only after the United States cruiser Quincy appeared in the harbor of Montevideo. As one Government minister told me, tiny Uruguay, with its 8,000 soldiers and twenty minutes' supply of ammunition, could not stand alone against the might of Nazi Germany.

Arrests were made and some—not all—of the details of the plot were publicly disclosed. Heavy pressure from Germany, plus equally effective pressure from the pro-Nazi group in Buenos Aires (across the River Plate from Montevideo) resulted however in the gradual release of most of those arrested. But the danger of a coup for the time was passed. But only for a time.

Uruguay is greatly concerned about Nazi activity and looks to Brazil, large neighbor on its north boundary and to the United States of America, its powerful friend up North, for support. Because of this reliance it is now

holding the Fascist conspirators on trial for their crimes against the state.

Fascism has many friends in Uruguay. These fascist sources carry on serious anti-Jewish propaganda in newspapers, by pamphlets, stickers and the other usual means.

Officers of the ADCA, discussing the matter with a Government official, were told that the Jews could start an action, under existing Uruguayan law, which he felt sure could stop the stream of anti-Jewish publications. The matter received earnest study by ADCA officials, who may turn to others for guidance and support.

Zionist Activity Enthusiastic

Under cover of a decree to "raise the cultural level" of Uruguay, some of the anti-Semites are planning a bill to prohibit the public use, both written and oral, of languages that are not academically recognized. This would, they hope, block the Yiddish press and the Yiddish language at public meetings in Uruguay. One of the Uruguayan Senators has already drafted the bill and recently introduced the measure. Its progress must be carefully watched, for it would set a dangerous precedent in South America.

Zionist activity is carried on with enthusiasm under the general supervision of the Zionist Federation, of which Senor T. Schaffer is president. That such activity is possible is an index of the liberality and intelligence of the Uruguayan Government, and a credit to the alertness of Jewish leadership. When the Govern-

ment, in its efforts to curb Fascist and Communist activities, sought to develop decrees against organizations with international connections, there was great danger that Zionist work would be seriously affected.



The Ashkenazic Synagogue in Montevideo, Uruguay

During the debates in the Uruguayan Congress on the proposed legislation, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Alberto Guani, specifically declared on the floor of the Chamber of Deputies that the laws would not apply to Zionist work in Uruguay. When another series of laws was being drafted to curb anti-Uruguayan activities by organizations within the country, the texts were so framed at first that, under an adverse interpretation,

the Jewish communal organizations would have been crippled.

The situation was saved when it was suggested to the authorities that a clause be inserted exempting religious bodies from the prohibitions cited. Under this clause the Jewish group is able to carry on its proper work, without menace or harm to Uruguayan interests, and with great cultural and social benefits to the Jewish community and the causes it seeks to serve.

Uruguayan Jewry some months ago convened a national conference in Montevideo to plan a campaign for War Relief, World Jewish Congress and Palestine. Sixteen delegates with known Communist connections attended. They walked out, however, in a body, when the conference insisted on including Palestine in its program. Thereafter the Communists organized a separate relief project, using a euphonious "front" name.

In Uruguay we have a small but well-knit Jewish community struggling to its feet, in an atmosphere of liberalism and democracy, not altogether free from Nazi-inspired anti-Jewish feeling. It is plagued by certain Communists who as Jews seek to disrupt and weaken Jewish life in Uruguay and use resources they have captured to aggrandize and strengthen Communism. Some of the problems this tangled situation presents must be speedily resolved, and their solution cannot come as much from Uruguay as from the great Jewish community in the United States of America to which the Jewish leadership in Uruguay looks with much hope and high anticipation.

JEWISH LIFE IN ARGENTINA

ARGENTINA is a land of extremes in wealth and poverty. The proverbial Argentine millionaire of our old time musical comedies is a reality in his own land. He shares the stage of life, on his vast *estancia* domain, with the impoverished peon who possesses little besides the garments on his back. It is a land of contrasts, a land without much of a middle class. About one-fifth of its people—2,500,000—dwell in the sprawling metropolis of Buenos Aires, third largest city in the Western Hemisphere. Here a middle class is rapidly developing. In this center, as in Rosario, Cordoba, Mendoza and other Argentine metropolitan centers, Jews are to be found making their contribution to the economic development of the country.

There are about 23,000 Jewish business firms in Argentina, ranging from the tiny haberdashery shop kept by a lone Sephardi in the *Judengasse* in Buenos Aires to the colossal "Bunge-Born." The latter is an organization headed by Senor Alfredo Hirsch, with vast capital resources. It deals with and owns lands, grains, flour mills, real estate, cattle, banks and a huge grocery chain called *Grandes Dispensas Argentinas,* popularly known as GDA. So great are its resources that an important attache at the United States Embassy said to me, half seriously, "Bunge-Born owns most of Argen-

tina." Though decidedly in error, it is the common talk, despite the fact that the rich *estancieros,* with their almost limitless landholdings, are certainly not Jewish.

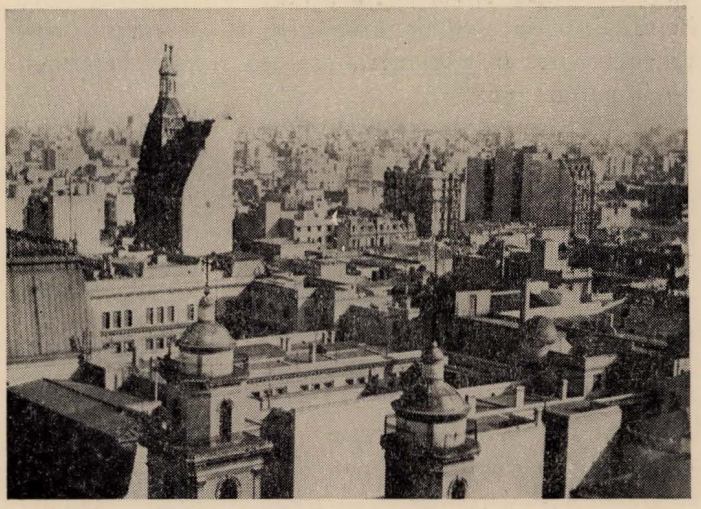
It is true that there are Jews important in commerce and industry, and that a few like Senor Ezra Teubal and Senor David Calles have reached high rank as industrialists. Senor Teubal, a Sephardi, is a remarkable personality,—a sweet simple man, who is the essence of gentility and kindness. He is that *rara avis* in North American Jewish life—an humble, non-self-opinionated millionaire. And he possesses another quality rarely found today among our North American millionairedom —deep spirituality and genuine religious feeling. Senor David Calles is an Ashkenazi; vigorous, alert, creatively ingenious, less facile in speech but decidedly constructive in action, a builder of his own fortune and a sacrificing servant of the community. There are quite a number of such men as Teubal and Calles, but I cite them from first-hand observation, as typical of their group in the Argentine.

Some Jews head large textile and rayon plants—notable among them is Jose Mirelman, who in himself is the Jewish Publication Society of Argentina. He is the patron of a fine collection of books, projected for publication in Spanish, to stimulate Jewish cultural life in Argentina.

Jewish Cooperatives

Many Jews, of course, are employees and workers in industry, for Buenos Aires is a compound of Chicago,

Paris and Detroit. They are leather workers, furniture makers and garment operatives, and are banded together for mutual benefit in trade cooperatives. Many hundreds of Jews are engaged in merchandising as "customer peddlers," selling direct to the consumer at



Roof Top Panorama of Vast Buenos Aires, Third Largest City in Westehn Hemisphere

long terms and on installment payments, maintaining their offices "under their hats." They operate principally through cooperatives of the type found in Montevideo, Uruguay. The *Sociedad Commercial Israelita* was founded in 1913, with 400 members and a capital of about 2,800,000 pesos. The *Cooperativa Commercial*

Israelita Argentina was established in 1923, with 800 members and a capital of about 1,700,000 pesos. Both are flourishing organizations. There are many Jewish firms engaged in import and export trade, the latter, before the present war crippled commerce, dealing in large shipments of cereals, hides and wool. These three items are major surplus products of the normal Argentine economy. In this normal economy Jews have played an important part.

It is fair to summarize the situation in the words of an old resident of B. A., as Buenos Aires is popularly called, "a great deal of industry has been created by Jews; there are a few wealthy Jews and a small section in the middle class. In the main, Jews are proletariat, seeking earnestly to consolidate their positions." This same authority, after we had gone over the field from all angles, said that "Jews in Argentina are gravely concerned about the future. It all depends on the outcome of the war. If Germany wins, Argentina could easily turn totalitarian. And," he added, "dictatorship is a century-old technique in Latin America." On the other hand, with Britain the victor, the Argentine people, who are friendly to the British, will go strong against totalitarianism and the Jewish position will become definitely more favorable.

Zionism in Argentina

Hence the Jew in the Argentine, as everywhere else in the world, anxiously watches the progress of the Battle of Britain. He knows from bitterest experience

what a Nazi victory will mean, and he is familiar with the widespread Fifth Column efforts to add Argentina to the Nazi domain.

The Jew in the Argentine is also an enthusiastic Zionist, anxious to contribute to the speedy upbuilding of Palestine. Much of Jewish activity in Argentina revolves around Zionist thinking. Many meetings are held to discuss Zionist developments. It was my privilege to attend many conferences of Jewish organizations and to address meetings and large gatherings in Buenos Aires, Cordoba, Mendoza and elsewhere in Argentina. Women, Jewish women, were conspicuously absent. This was especially true at evening convocations, and is in accord with Argentine *mores.*

Nonetheless, Jewish women do not play an inconspicuous part in certain Jewish philanthropic movements in Argentina, nor are they absent from the Zionist movement. WIZO, the Women's International Zionist Organization, has over 5,000 members in Buenos Aires alone, with active branches in Cordoba, Rosario, Mendoza and the other centers of Argentine Jewish life. In fact WIZO is so well organized that it occupies its own building in Buenos Aires as national headquarters.

All genuine Jewish work, I was assured in Buenos Aires, is under Zionist-minded influence. The Argentine Zionist Organization has over one hundred centers in Argentina. Its six thousand members contribute about 300,000 pesos a year to the organization, which occupies a large central office building as headquarters in Buenos Aires. This building is owned by the

Federacion Sionista Argentina, of which energetic Samuel Rabinovich is *Presidente.* Like the WIZO central office building, it is used for administrative purposes and cultural activities.

The Mizrachi, orthodox wing of the Zionist movement, took on new life on the East Coast of South America this past summer, through the visit and labors of Rabbi Wolf Gold, who is president of the World Mizrachi Executive Committee. We met in Buenos Aires at a convocation, where he most uncomplainingly and self-effacingly endured a long-winded address by me in "Pan Americaner Yiddish," while he patiently waited for the opportunity to present what proved to be a stirring address for Mizrachi Zionism.

Zionist Flag Prohibited

Though Zionism is vigorous as a movement throughout the Argentine, the exhibition of the Zionist flag is prohibited by the Government. It has not been allowed even in Jewish schools and synagogues for the past three years. Thus the situation is the reverse of that in Brazil, where Zionism as an active movement is interdicted, but the Zionist flag is permitted in synagogues as a religious symbol, and the singing of *Hatikvah* is permitted in Jewish schools, as a religious hymn.

The Zionist center of all South America is located in Buenos Aires, for after all about seventy percent of South America's half million Jews dwell in Argentina. From Buenos Aires go forth representatives of the Jewish Agency for Palestine to all parts of South America,

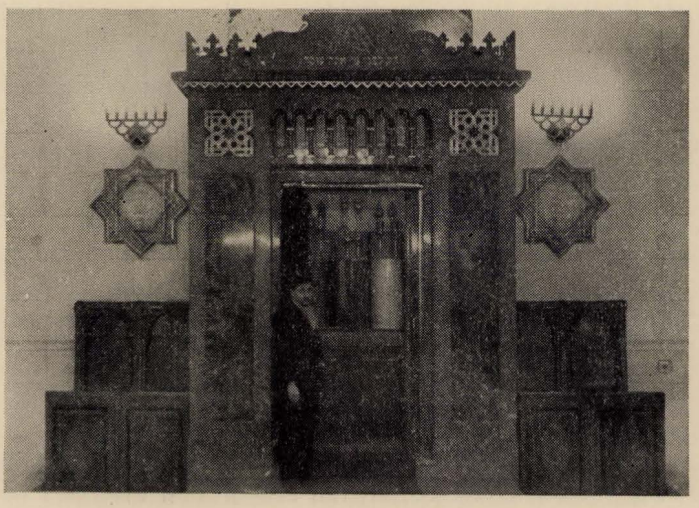
to obtain the cooperation of the Jewish communities of the continent in the upbuilding of Palestine. For the past two years a unified campaign has been carried on among South American Jews for relief of stricken Jewry in Europe and creative work in Palestine. This is the joint campaign of the World Jewish Congress and the Jewish Agency. The funds raised are apportioned equally.

The World Jewish Congress, which has established a record for relief work in the European area, is supported by the funds which Buenos Aires sends to the World Jewish Congress executive, now located in New York. The work of the World Jewish Congress is highly regarded in Argentina, where it maintains a Bureau headed by Dr. Jacob Hellman, noted Jewish publicist and former member of the Latvian Chamber of Deputies.

The DAIA

The major strength of the World Jewish Congress in Argentina is derived from the cooperation extended by the Argentine Jewish Congress, popularly known as the DAIA. The *Delegacion de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentina* was founded in 1933 as the first step in a wide campaign to boycott Nazi-made merchandise. The DAIA early took the position that any Jew who dealt in German goods should be dropped from any Jewish communal position he might hold. If a director on the board of a Jewish institution, he had to cease handling German material, or be dropped from the

board. The Buenos Aires *Hevrah Kadishah,* a uniquely powerful institution, to be later described, declared, as a member of the DAIA, that burial in its cemetery would be refused to any Jew guilty of dealing in German goods.



At the Open Ark of Beautiful Sephardic Synagogue in Buenos Aires

The executive board of the DAIA, made up of leaders in Jewish life, meets weekly under the presidency of Dr. Moises Cadoche, a Sephardi of the third generation in Argentina. To communicate with this zealous leader of Argentine Jewry, who like most Sephardim does not speak Yiddish, I had to shape my thoughts in

English, express them in *Pan-Americaner Yiddish* to Dr. Moises Goldman, the brilliant Secretary of the DAIA, who conveyed them to Dr. Cadoche in Spanish.

Both the President and Secretary of DAIA are comparatively young men; both are third generation Argentinians. In their persons they represented a happy blending of the powerful Sephardic Jewish community and the more numerous Ashkenazic community, united in a common front to meet the problems facing Argentine Jewry.

The principal work of the DAIA is combating anti-Semitism. The methods include issuance of weekly releases to the Argentine press, which many papers publish extensively, and the publication of pamphlets rebutting anti-Jewish pamphlets issued in large quantities in a country where the pamphlet is a popular propaganda vehicle. It is not permitted, under Argentine regulations, to use the radio for propaganda. Many non-Jews in high station are friendly to the Jewish cause; these voluntarily, by pen and voice, by pamphlet and book, have risen to the defense of democracy and the Jew.

Anti-Semitism Increasing

The pre-Hitler days in Argentina were not disfigured by anti-Semitism. There was some, though slight, economic discrimination against Jews prior to 1933. Eight years of Nazi propaganda have borne evil fruit in an increase in discrimination against Jews seeking jobs, thus paralleling the development in the United States.

Certain social discriminations suffered by Jews in

the United States, such as being denied accommodations in places with "restricted clientele," do not exist in Argentina. Until very recently the social relations between Jews and Christians have been of the finest. In certain circles, the intensification of pro-Nazi war propaganda has led to a slight rift, but as yet this is not considered serious in extent or character.

Several years ago the rising tide of Nazi propaganda swept into the pro-Nazi camp one of the higher officials of the great medical school in Buenos Aires. Quite a number of the students were also caught in this pro-Nazi wave. The official addressed these one day, ending with a declaration that "No Jewish student would be able to stay after the following Monday."

There were about 200 Jewish medical students enrolled at this time. Being forewarned, they came on the fatal Monday prepared for the scrimmage equipped with stub length of rubber hose. The Nazis came armed with blackjacks. A terrific fight took place. Many students were hurt. But the Nazis were defeated, numerous Christian students having come to the aid of the outnumbered Jews.

The medical school was closed for several weeks. The influential papers of Buenos Aires,—and no city in South America has a more outspoken press—assailed the Nazi-minded school official. He was forced to resign; school was resumed. But since the unfortunate fracas the enrollment of Jewish students has been dropping steadily; whereas it had been about five percent of the student body, it is now about two percent.

Jewish Interne Assaulted

In one of the large hospitals in Buenos Aires, of about 600 bed capacity, interneships were annually awarded to graduates of the medical school with highest standing. The awards were always made without discrimination, until Nazism infected the pro-German directorate of the hospital. Deserving Jewish students were told not to apply, despite high rank.

About three years ago one Jewish lad refused to withdraw his application; under the hospital rules he was given an interneship. All sorts of hazing followed, but he bravely hung on, obtaining a police permit to carry a revolver, for his life was threatened. One day several of the pro-Nazi internes ganged up on him, took away his gun and proceeded to punish him. Apparently they were under instructions not to inflict "visible" punishment. So they dragged him into the X-ray room of the hospital and bound him on a table. Then the X-ray machine was turned on him for sterilization!

As the "non-visible punishment" proceeded he was urged to resign, but the boy held out. When he realized that his torturers were as much in deadly earnest as though he were in the torture chamber of a Munich Braunhaus, he consented to resign before the deadly rays had been too long applied. Two credible informants advised me, as we sat in the lounge of the City Hotel in Buenos Aires, my notebook filling up with this almost incredibly bizarre story, that there has been no Jewish interne in this hospital since.

FIFTH COLUMN IN ARGENTINA

The Fifth Column in Argentina is no journalist's invention. Neither does it operate underground only. Its activities soon become obvious to one who has studied Nazi *ausland* techniques. I found the Nazis shaping their Argentina propaganda to harmonize with the general pattern of trade rivalry between Argentina and the U. S. A., as in the United States they shape their propaganda along isolationist and anti-Jewish lines.

Though a Good-Neighbor Roosevelt is now in the White House, the old Argentine motto, current during the days of Theodore Roosevelt—that the Yankee peril is greater than the Yellow peril—is used, in revised form, by the Nazi propagandists. It should be recalled, as we enter a new phase of World War II with the enactment of the lease-lend law for our all-out-aid to the democracies, that though Argentina was not officially pro-German in World War I, it was definitely, in mood and manner, anti-United States.

When I asked Dr. Navarro Monzo, of the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs, what Argentina thought of the proposal for achieving continental security through continental solidarity, his reaction was frigid and unsympathetic. With uncommon frankness for a diplomat he added, "It would be worse, if in order to escape from a hegemony from Europe (here he was diplomatic

enough not to name Nazi Germany) we should throw ourselves into the hands of another country."

German propaganda in Argentina is both pro-Nazi and anti-U.S.A. Large colored caricature placards are paraded through the main streets of Buenos Aires



Anti-U.S.A., Anti-Jewish Magazine Being Sold in Streets of Buenos Aires

accompanied by leather-lunged hawkers. These call attention to the placards and sell *La Clarinada,* an anti-U.S.A., anti-British, anti-Jewish periodical.

Nazi propaganda in Buenos Aires, one Jewish leader assured me—and his word was re-echoed by non-Jewish Argentinians—may seem silly to us *Norte Americanos,*

but it is carefully geared for different classes. It registers sharply with certain groups despite the seeming stupidity of its assertions.

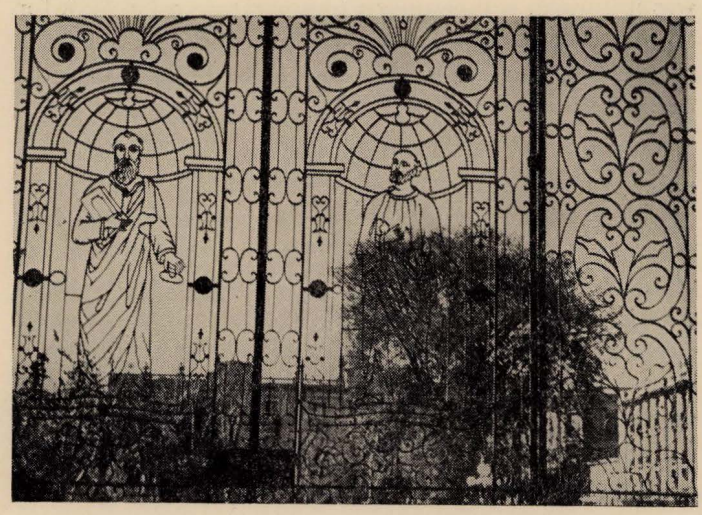
Somewhere Robert E. Sherwood has written, "We cannot ignore the fact that Nazi Trojan horses are grazing in all the fertile fields of South America." Certainly I felt that way about the rich pampas of Argentina after talking with Senor Carlos Sanchez Viamonte, leader in the Argentine Socialist Party. He declared forthrightly that Nazi propaganda is under the direction of the German embassy in Buenos Aires, and that the larger German business houses are really functioning as political organizations.

Nazi Penetration Serious

One of the most courageous battlers for democracy in the Argentine is Senator Alfredo Palacios, outstanding in the Socialist Party and successful assailant of the grafting officialdom in the Palomar land scandal which rocked the Ship of State while we were in Buenos Aires. Senator Palacios declared, in a conference with a few of our group, that "Nazi penertation is far more serious than the public believes."

One authority, who asked to remain anonymous, said to me, "Ninety percent of our Catholic clergy is pro-Fascist. There are two certain newspapers in Buenos Aires; one is subsidized by Rome, the other by Berlin. Both are pro-Fascist; both are edited by the *same* man." Should Franco be forced, however reluctantly, to join the Axis powers, Spain's numerous cultural contacts will

become dangerous to the United States. The Catholic clergy in Spain might well win over the influential South American Catholic clergy. In Argentina this influence is large.



Moses and Aaron Depicted on the Beautiful Wrought Iron Street Gates of the Famous Catholic Cathedral in Cordoba, Argentina

In certain sections among the wealthy ruling group there is much sympathy for the Nazi totalitarian system. They note with anguish the rise of liberalism in their land; like certain deluded pro-Fascists north of the Rio Grande, they would abandon liberty itself to "save" their positions.

The President Resigns

President Roberto Ortiz had just tendered his resignation because of the Palomar land scandal involving members of his administration. He is anti-Nazi but, I was informed, is surrounded by some men who work for his downfall. He has been a very sick man now for many months, and his hold on the reins of the Government is none too secure.

Several important Jewish personalities of Buenos Aires and I were seated in a cafe the day Ortiz had sent in his resignation. It was far beyond midnight: we had come from one of those long Jewish conference meetings. No one dreamed of going to bed. For one thing it was too early, by Buenos Aires standards. For another, everyone was tense with political excitement. Fear was in the hearts of these Jewish leaders; anxiety was written on their faces, though they sought to hide their emotions from their North American guest.

Two things brought them hope, helped to cheer them up. One was the harsh, deep-throated cry of thousands of men whom that night we had seen marching the streets of Buenos Aires in solid phalanxes, demanding "Ortiz, Ortiz, Ortiz." They found this an omen that the populace would urge the Argentine Congress not to accept Ortiz' resignation.

The other gleam of hope came to them from my report of a conference some of our group had held late that afternoon with Dr. Rudolfo Luque, managing editor of *La Prensa*. Through a fortunate previous

engagement, we came to Dr. Luque's office at the very moment of crisis in Argentina's affairs. The equanimity with which Dr. Luque received us was amazing. As I remarked at the time to Dr. Samuel Guy Inman, leader of our group, "Imagine attempting to see the managing editor of the New York *Times* just as the proposed abdication of the President of the United States had come over the wires." Inman answered. "Why, of course, even the third assistant office boy would have been too busy to see some foreign folks from way below the Equator."

But, as I told my avid cafe listeners, Dr. Luque had sat there calmly during the interview. He had expressed to us the firm belief that the Congress would reject the proferred resignation. He even declared that Ortiz would come out of the ordeal stronger politically.

Argentina Orientation European

And this words proved true, to the immense relief of the Jews of the Argentine. It was a great relief as well to the Hon. Monett B. Davis, U. S. Consul General at our Embassy in Buneos Aires, upon whom fell the great burden of keeping our State Department posted on the extraordinary developments in Argentina. Our Ambassador, Norman Armour, happened to be in the United States at the time. When I called on Mr. Davis, it was gratifying to find him self-possessed, despite the stress of the critical hour. As much as anyone he knows the ramifications of the Fifth Column in the Argentine, and the key positions held by certain none too friendly

Argentine officials in the complex of Argentina-U.S.A. relations.

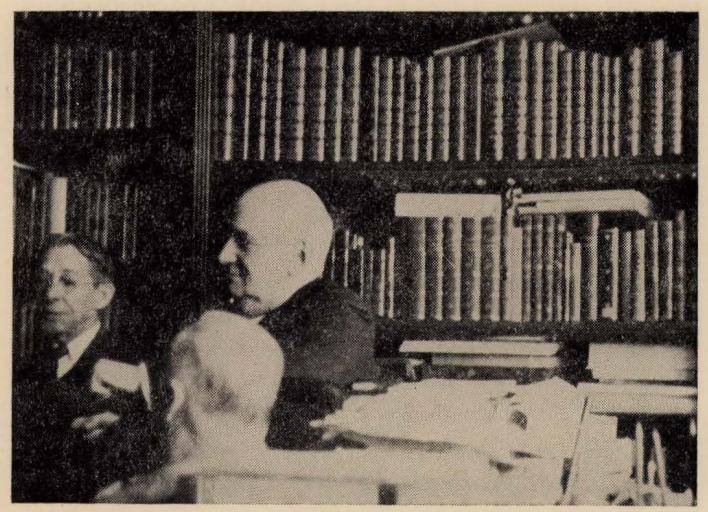
The major orientation of Argentina is toward Europe, cultural as well as commercial, financial as well as political. The Argentine army has been trained by Germans; many of its officers were students in Germany or Italy. Nearly one-fourth the population of the country is of Italian origin. However, the Socialists in the Senate and the Lower House are strong opponents of Fascism. They frequently protest with vigor at the weakness of the police and the Government in dealing with pro-Nazi manifestations. Their fears concerning the Fifth Column are warranted. In 1939 the Government discovered a Nazi plot to take over Patagonia, a pastoral province in the southern section of the country. Spurred on by anti-Nazi sentiment, the Government has taken vigorous steps to obtain complete command of the territory.

Another hopeful element in the picture today is the rapid development of a vigorous anti-Nazi youth movement, the *Accion Argentina.* From a handful it grew in less than half a year to 300,000 and is growing steadily in both numbers and influence throughout the nation. Liberal elements in all groups of the population are giving aid and guidance to the *Accion* youth.

Alvear, Liberal Leader

Chief among Argentina's leaders, and outstanding proponent of friendship with the United States of North America, is Dr. Marcelo T. de Alvear. With growing admiration, the few United States visitors who had

crowded into his study listened to this really great man expound his views. Dr. Alvear's tremendous figure pulsated with restrained emotion. His eloquence eclipsed the small study; we were uplifted by the power of the man and the sincerity of his deep convictions.



Dr. Marcelo T. De Alvear (right), ex-President of Argentina, in the Study of His Buenos Aires Home. Dr. Inman on Left

Dr. Samuel Guy Inman, noted North American authority on South America, personal friend of Secretary Hull and intimately familiar with the leaders of South American life, had graciously asked me to accompany him to Dr. de Alvear's home in Buenos Aires. Dr. Alvear is ex-President of the Republic of Argentina,

Taftian in physique and Rooseveltian (II) in his trends. He is leader of the Radicalist Party, which is the Argentinian equivalent of our New Deal. In the last Presidential election he was believed to have won by the balloting, but as sometimes happens in South American national elections—and in some North American municipal elections as well—the balloting and the counting become inextricably confused. Alvear was counted out.

He remains one of the great stalwarts of Argentine political life—and this is well for the United States of America, for he is a true, understanding friend of our country, in a land where we have too often been attacked as the imperialistic Colossus of the North.

His generous cooperation with the Jewish community of Argentina is clearly evidenced by his helpfulness in their efforts to establish a Hebrew University endowment fund. This fund is to create and maintain a chair, bearing the name of the Argentine Republic, in the Hebrew University at Jerusalem. Senor Ezra Teubal, founder and president of the "Argentine Republic Chair" fund, said of Dr. Alvear that he "is the illustrious democratic leader for whom Argentine history has already singled out one of its most brilliant pages."

University Chair Symbolic

Concerning this chair, Dr. Alvear said to his Jewish friends:

> The foundation of a professorship in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem bearing the name of the Argentine Republic and created by the efforts of

the Jews in this country, many of whom are already Argentine citizens definitely incorporated in our political, economic and social life, with patriotic sentiments deeply rooted, as is proved by the name given to the new University professorship, has a transcendental and symbolic value.

There is something strangely suggestive in this singular endeavor for the colors of one of the youngest nations in the world to be seen presiding over a tribune of science erected by the efforts of an ancient people, thousands of years old, that today arises from its ashes to invite the free men of all the world to voice their thoughts and their faith from the new University, built on the site of the home of their forefathers.

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and especially the Argentine Chair, will serve as a bridge to span history and unite in one desire the spirit of all men who, wherever they maybe, struggle for the great ideals of liberty, of justice and of peace.

We asked Dr. Alvear for his reaction to the Fifth Column in Argentina. His response was: "Here the Fifth Column is more dangerous, for the country is younger and not as strong to resist its inroads." Then he added, were the British fleet crippled, "Germany could occupy Argentina almost as easily as it took Holland or Belgium." He was certain that if Germany defeats Britain, the American continent will be attacked by the Nazis.

Fifth Column Corruptionists

Dr. Alvear accused the Fifth Columnists of trying to corrupt the Argentine national spirit. They do this, he said, "by attacking the most eminent persons of today; by depreciating the great men of the past who gave liberty to Argentina."

Without my seeking to turn his thoughts Jewishward, he added, "In Germany they invented the false conception of a superior Aryan race. Then the Nazis proceeded to persecute the Jews. In this they had the approval, more or less, of the Catholics and Protestants. But the Jews were only first; the Nazis then turned on the Catholics, with Protestant approval. Finally, the Nazis, having submerged the Jews and the Catholics, turned on the Protestants."

As a statesman, Alvear looks ahead. He discussed the removal of the wreckage of the war, when the end happily comes with the destruction of Hitlerism. He considered the task of clearing up the debris created by the Fifth Column in Argentina. Dr. Alvear joined other liberal Argentina leaders in declaring that on the American continent, North and South, men will have to create the basis for economic, moral and spiritual unity in the Western Hemisphere.

In that effort, we assured him, Jewish leadership will play its worthy part, within the framework of their several countries, and in accordance with the highest ideals of Israel.

Eagerly they fired questions at me about Jewish farmers in North America. Each answer I followed with questions about the Jewish farmers of Argentina. We



Members of the Executive Board of the FAIA. Seated with Author at Center is Julio Levin to Left; David Sevi and Issac Kaplan to Right

were gathered in Buenos Aires, at a special meeting of the executive board of the *Fomento Agrario Israelita Argentino.* Around the table sat such agronomic experts

as David Sevi, sub-director of ICA; Isaac Kaplan, manager of the Jewish Cooperative of Cooperatives, and others who are devoting themselves to helping Jewish agricultural development in the Argentine under the leadership of Julio Levin, President of FAIA.

These men take the position that since they and their colleagues in FAIA were the beneficiaries of the Jewish Colonization Association agricultural aid policy, they now want to help other Jews engage in agriculture, as well as to extend the ICA plan beyond limits laid down in the original Baron Hirsch program.

They all agree that the Jewish Colonization Association, commonly known as ICA, laid a firm basis for Jewish "landworking," but they also deplore the inflexible ICA rules which make no provision for continuity of interest in the children as farmers, except for the eldest son, when he inherits the farm. Many younger sons, lacking capital for land, tools and stock, leave the colonies and the land to seek city opportunities.

ICA helps only would-be immigrants to emigrate and prepares them, in advance when possible, for their new vocation. It does not help those who are not immigrants, nor others who did not enter Argentina under their auspices. In other words, it's not ICA's job to help those who enter Argentina without ICA's help.

Hence it was recognized that a need existed which must be met; thus FAIA was organized with authorized capital of 1,000,000 pesos. About half has been subscribed; the paid-in capital amounted to 130,000 pesos when I was in Buenos Aires. The capital is to be

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handled on a commercial basis; the philanthropic element is the secondary phase. The directors of FAIA were surprised that North American Jewish interests are devoting so much attention to the Santo Domingo enterprise, when for considerably less capital outlay greater benefits could be derived in Argentina. Every phase, political, agronomic, economic and climatic, is much more favorable in Argentina than in tropical Santo Domingo. They expressed the most earnest hopes that North American capital would see the wisdom of subscribing for shares in FAIA, to assist Jewish agricultural work in the Argentine.

FAIA Needs Support

Argentina has a climate suited to every type of immigrant the North American Jews would like to help develop, "from the Tropics to 'Siberia,' that is, Patagonia," as Julio Levin, President of FAIA put it to me. The moral and financial capital of the Jews already working on the land in Argentina should be reinforced; North American Jews should not neglect their opportunity and responsibility in this area, he urged.

ICA has agreed to work with FAIA to the extent that it will supply land from its reserve areas, provided FAIA will extend credits to the prospective colonists. FAIA plans to concentrate on projects near the large cities, to produce the readily marketable garden and dairy products.

In the past years about 300 Jewish farmers were individually established in Argentina, without benefit of

ICA assistance. Many of them have had a very hard time of it, for lack of technical advice and shortage of capital. In addition, they sorely miss organized Jewish community life as their children grow up, and are grieved by the absence of religious institutions. Nearly two-thirds have had to give up their farms; FAIA hopes to help the remainder hang on and to improve their communal arrangements.

Some of these farms are located in the Province of Entre Rios, where Nazis are numerous and anxious to grab the farm of a Jew distressed by bad harvests. Part of the work of FAIA is to keep these Jewish farms from falling into unfriendly hands.

Refugees Become Farmers

The technical commission of the FAIA agronomists is also planning to train Jewish refugee children in agriculture. These children may enter Argentina under the present severe immigration regulations. They are also hoping to train some of the "illegal" immigrants already in Argentina and help them legalize their status. Once established, they could become Argentine citizens, with the right to bring their relatives to their Argentine farm homes, thus adding to the Jewish rural population of Argentina.

In the Province of Rio Negro, a Jewish farm colony was established about 1905, without benefit of ICA support, by a group of forty-five Jewish families who came direct from Poland. They came upon the invitation of the then active immigration and colonization

division of the Argentine Ministry of the Interior and were settled in one of the agriculturally rich regions. They have worked hard and are now thoroughly established as good farmers.



Refugee "Colonist" on his ICA Farm in the "Colonia Avigdor"

New ICA settlers have been few in recent years. Twenty-six families were set up in 1936 and eighty-five in 1937. Seventy-seven were German refugees. They were established in the "Avigdor," "Cohen" and "Oungre" colonies of the Jewish Colonization Association. All have made good, showing the value of the careful selection exercised and the preliminary training

given them in Germany. The most successful poultry raiser in the large Avigdor colony is a formerly famous Ph.D.

Prior to 1890, it is estimated, there were perhaps 1,000 Jews in all the Argentine. Today the estimates range from 300,000 to 400,000; some authorities feel that 360,000 is approximately correct. Of these about 160,000 are in the great metropolis of Buenos Aires, with its total population of nearly 2,500,000. Jews reside throughout the Argentine. In cities and villages, on the pampas and in the vineyard sections, Jews everywhere are making their contribution to all phases of economic activity in Argentina.

One of the most interesting chapters in the whole story of the Jewries of South America, however, is the one that deals with their role as farmers on the rich pampa soil, with which Argentina is so generously provided. In this story the Jewish Colonization Association has played and continues to play the predominant role. Before dealing with its work, a word is in order concerning the quality of the pampa soil. "It is almost like a prepared seed bed," said the United States Agricultural Attaché in Buenos Aires to me. It is so free from stones, trees and other natural obstructions, said an *estanciero* to me in Central Argentine, that he can plow a straight furrow on his *estancia* for over ten miles without interference. No wonder the ICA experts picked Argentina for their first project.

Baron Hirsch Founds ICA

The Jewish Colonization Association was founded in 1891 by Baron Maurice de Hirsch after his offer, made in 1885, of 50 million francs to the Russian Government to cease Jewish persecution, was rejected. He then applied his vast wealth and his great organizing talents to a scheme for promoting Jewish immigration to lands of freedom.

Baron Hirsch, who was born in 1831 and died in 1896, added greatly to his inherited wealth by his successful enterprises, particularly in building European railroads which more conservative British capital hesitated to undertake. He applied this wealth as a trustee in many philanthropies, his favorite being ICA.

His colonization experts, after a study of South America, reported favorably on Argentina. ICA was established with a fund of ten million dollars, to which by bequest there was later added about forty million dollars. Its charter forbids use of capital; shrinking income has curtailed service. The total of the Hirsch charities are estimated to have exceeded one hundred million dollars.

An administrative office was set up in Buenos Aires in 1891. It now occupies its own building and is under the direction of Simon Weil, who came to his post from Paris, where the central council of administration was located.

The ICA Contract

Baron Hirsch and his ICA trustees laid down rigorous rules to control the development of their colonization projects. The colonist came finding full preparations made in advance for him, including house, furniture, livestock and farm tools. In return for the aid and guidance given the colonist he must agree not to engage the labor of others to work his land. That is, only he and his family may work his land. Neither may he rent his land to others, to be worked by them while he sits back and receives the rent. Should a colonist abandon his farm within seventeen years of his contract entrance he loses all payments he may have made to ICA. This provision is intended to discourage settlers leaving their land. Baron Hirsch insisted that the ICA contract shall not be a charity device. Everything the settler needs is to be advanced to him, but meticulous records must be kept. Interest, at about 4 percent per annum, must be paid on all advances, until the colonist has eventually paid for everything he has received.

Violations of ICA rules are enforceable through a demand for full amount due on advances for land and equipment. If the crop year is a good one—and the ICA office in Buenos Aires knows every detail down to the *centavo*—the agreed payment on debt liquidation must be fully met. On the other hand, in a bad year, ICA not only allows deferment of payment but will even advance additional credits.

When the colonist is free of debt to ICA, and fully owns his farm, home, stock and equipment, he is no

longer bound by ICA rules. Many of them, I was told, rent out part or even all their farm land. Some also hire labor to help work the land, and in other ways seek to add to their land holdings. By engaging in what ICA officials called "land speculation" some have greatly increased their valuable holdings; others, through poor management, or market factors beyond their control, have lost all their holdings. This last number, however, is small and is not the main factor in the flow of farm population to the cities.

Hirsch Envisaged Millions Coming

The first ten years of colonization, that, is from 1889 to about 1900, saw a considerable turnover of colonists. The going was rough, the pioneering was tough and the prospects seemed harsh and unattractive. By 1893 the population had dropped to 2,700, many having abandoned their farms. The settlers had come largely unprepared from European ghettos into the wild pampas. They came expecting a Promised Land and found a wilderness. Naturally there was continual squabbling between them and the ICA administrators, who were bound by bureaucratic rules that seemed harsh despite philanthropic intentions.

Hirsch had struck the utopian note himself. He had envisaged a vast achievement in the Argentine. The Government had at first objected to land settlement by Jews, but was finally persuaded to allow Hirsch to go forward. He planned to settle 25,000 Jews the first year, to settle greater numbers each succeeding year until

several million Jews would become landworkers in Argentina. But Hirsch was finally persuaded, shortly before his death, that his program was too utopian. The land was available, the natural resources were tremendous, but the human elements involved baffled even his great organizing talents and bewildered his administrators.

Elkan Adler in his *Jews in Many Lands,* published in 1905, says, "One cannot help feeling somewhat discouraged at the prospects of Moisesville or the aptitudes of the Jewish agriculturist there. The Jew seems to be too speculative to make a good agriculturist even in the Argentine." Then he adds, "One year there is drought, locusts ravage the pampas in another year, and next year, heavy rains, out of season, spoil the harvest. The Hope of Israel is hardly to be found in South America," he concludes. Despite his disbelief, the 30,000 Jews Adler estimated in South America when he visited it thirty-five years ago, have now grown to an estimated 500,000. Moisesville, the first colony established by ICA, is a rich and flourishing rural community.

Tailors Run Threshing Machines

The Russian agronomist Kruikov visited some of the Argentine ICA colonies in 1905, after they had been in operation about fifteen years. Contrary to Elkan Adler, he wrote approvingly of their work, for he knew the former petty shopkeepers and needleworkers. He was delighted to see them skillfully handle plows and even complex American threshing machines. "The growth of

their well-being was evident," he says, and adds "that with proper organization and a definite budget for establishing the settlements, it is possible to convert the Jewish inhabitants of dirty villages and cities into successful farmers."

After 1900, with better administration and more careful selection of colonists, the settler turnover was reduced. The farmers did not properly diversify their crops until recent years. ICA advices and technical urgings were less effective than the succession of disastrous droughts and single-crop failures. Diversified farming was finally adopted, with beneficial results.

To meet social needs, many farmers were set up in units of four families, with the homes placed at the abutting corners of the four farms. After 1910, the tendency to leave the farms for the city showed a steady decrease. In the past fifty years, since ICA has been at work in Argentina, about 5,000 colonist families were placed on the land by them. Of these about 3,500 families remain.

For the past twenty years, I was told, the departure of non-Jewish youth from Argentine farms has increased, and that of Jewish youth has decreased to a point where they are now proportionately equal.

Women are the base of colonization success. That is an Argentine ICA slogan. *Cherchez la femme,* said polylingual Senor David Sevi to me. In the ICA office I was addressed in good French, Spanish, Hebrew and Yiddish, and in fair English, as we dug away for facts concerning the Jewish farmer in Argentina. About

75 percent of the children on the ICA farms were born on the farm, many of them third and fourth generation Argentinos. Quite a proportion of the girls seek city husbands; not many of them return to the farm. Among the young men, from thirty to forty percent leave for the city seeking higher education, preparation for the professions and the other numerous opportunities city life offers.

Many "Moisesville Graduates"

I met some of these "Moisesville graduates," prominent physicians in Buenos Aires, important lawyers in Mendoza, and university faculty members in Cordoba. Some of them are important political personalities; many of them have become major merchants and industrialists, making significant contributions to Argentine economy. They are like the typical farm boy who has made good in the American big city. Their number is legion in New York, Chicago and points west. That some Jewish youths in the Argentine have followed the familiar pattern is neither surprising nor regrettable.

THE ICA COLONIES

There are seventeen ICA colonies, scattered in five provinces of Argentina. At the end of 1939 there were 3,431 *colonos,* about half of whom held their farm lands under contract with ICA; the others were listed as having completed their payments and were designated *proprietarios.* The latter own nearly 600,000 acres of rich farm land; the *contratos* control, under partly-paid contracts, over 400,000 acres. Between them they farm over one million acres of Argentine soil, their holdings raging in size from 125 to 1,100 acres.

There was 17,372 persons on these farms and 9,790 other Jews resident in the colonies, whose service as craftsmen, etc., is essential to maintaining economic life in the colonies. In other words, about 27,000 persons are engaged in agriculture and allied pursuits on the ICA colonies. The colonies are centered about hamlets and villages, whose rural population may well be considered part of the Jewish population engaged in agricultural enterprises in Argentina. There are seventeen such rural communities, with a population of 16,926. Hence the total Jewish population in the ICA colonies numbered over 44,000 persons at the end of 1939.

Jewish communal and cultural life in the colonies is greatly furthered by the schools, of which there are seventy, with over two hundred teachers and more than

7,200 pupils, and also by the numerous societies. In the schools, besides the usual general courses, agricultural and domestic science subjects are heavily stressed. There are over one hundred *sociedades culturales y de beneficencia,* which are centers for cultural activity and of mutual benefit. They have nearly 11,000 members, and make special effort to aid the sick, the widow and the orphan.

The two principal colony centers are Moisesville and Basavilbaso. The former has a population of about 2,400; the latter 7,000. Basavilbaso has about 200 commercial establishments; Moisesville about fifty. These shops supply those material needs of the farm population not met by the cooperative enterprises.

Moisesville Established in 1889

Moisesville was the first of the colonies, established in 1889, in the Province of Santa Fe. The community was named after the first colonist, *Rabino* Moises Goldman, whose grandson, Dr. Moises Goldman, I met in Buenos Aires, where he is a prominent physician and the zealous secretary of the Argentine Jewish Congress, officially known as the *Delegacion de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentinas,* and colloquially as the DAIA.

Two years before Baron Hirsch established the ICA, a group of Russian Jewish families sought to go to Palestine. They sent an emissary to Baron Rothschild in Paris. He could not arrange their entry into Palestine, but he did obtain permission for them to emigrate to Argentina. By private contract this group bought some

farm land from Dr. Pedro Palacios. Two bad crops came in succession. The colonists, in despair, were about to give up when along came ICA. A fresh start was made toward a most successful agricultural achievement.



Resettled Refugee Family on Their ICA Farm in "Colonia Avigdor"

The Moisesville tract now comprises an area of over 292,000 acres. It is approximately 20 miles wide and about 25 miles long; its area is about 460 square miles. The land is owned by ICA, except such portions as are now owned in full by the colonists. When it was first purchased, during the early years up to 1904, farm land was worth about 22 pesos per hectare (about $2.00

per acre). At present the average value of colony land is about 150 pesos per hectare, with a range of 100 to 300 pesos per hectare.

Moisesville has 575 *colonos* with 4,700 Jewish farm dwellers. These *colonos* own over 25,000 head of cattle. Their farms average a capital value of 10,000 pesos each. With the 2,350 village dwellers who serve the farmers as artisans, craftsmen and tradesmen, the entire Jewish community of Moisesville totals about 7,000 souls. To this satisfactory status have grown the 138 families who arrived in 1889 from Kamenetz-Podolsk to establish the colony.

Lucienville—100,000 Acres

A small railroad station in the Province of Entre Rios called Basavilbaso was chosen as the center of the colony Lucienville, which now comprises an area of over 40,000 hectares, or about 100,000 acres. So many of its Jewish farmers formerly came from Poland that the natives call the station *Warsovia Chica,* Little Warsaw. There are more than a dozen synagogues in this tract, many communal bathhouses, ten schools and a community hospital. There is a large cooperative creamery to handle the heavy output of dairy products.

Lucienville was named after the Baron's son, Lucien, who died a young man. On his death, Baron Hirsch said, "I have lost my son, but not my heir; humanity will receive the inheritance. The Argentine "inheritance" held by and through ICA comprises over 1,500,000 acres of land. About two-thirds has been colonized;

the remainder forms the reserve for future colonization projects, when the international situation permits the Argentine Government to relax its present severe immigration restrictions.

The broad extent of ICA's technical assistance to the colonies, and the careful supervision maintained over their production, surprised me as I sat in the Buenos Aires office of ICA and went over the voluminous reports with Senor Simon Weil and his staff experts. They spent many hours with me, and were indefatigable in assembling data to answer questions and in providing maps and documentary material.

Senor Weil is the son of a famous French rabbi and the brother of Felix Weill on the faculty of Columbia University, New York. His sub-director is David Sevi, Palestinian by birth and agronomic engineer by profession.

Jews Win Many Farm Prizes

For each ten new colonists there is one ICA assistant to train them, by both demonstration and lecture, in all phases of their work and the operation of the farm equipment and machinery. Each colony has a minor agricultural school and every effort is made to have the farmers become intelligent husbandmen.

The results of this training and supervision shows at the annual stock show held in Buenos Aires. Since Argentina is primarily an agricultural-pastoral country, the farm stock show is the main event of the year. It is

always opened by the President of the Republic in person, and is the gala social event of the year.

I had the opportunity to attend the 1940 show, which was opened by Vice President Ramon S. Castillo, President Roberto M. Ortiz being incapacitated by severe illness. At this show the gold medal champion for flax (the Argentine exports over a million tons annually of linseed as a vehicle for paints) was Bernardo Freiman, a second generation farmer from the ICA colony Palmar in the Province of Entre Rios. Three other Jewish farmers received second class prizes, one of them a German refugee in his second year at the special refugee colony Avigdor.

The third prize for wheat (Argentina annually exports 175 million bushels as compared to 65 millions exported by the U. S. A.) went to Gregorio Erujimovitch, of the colony Narcisse Leven, in the territory of Pampa Central. Stock raisers from the oldest colony, Moisesville in the Province of Santa Fe, received record high prices for their excellent cattle.

Governor Praises Jewish Farmers

In the provincial show at Parana, held a month previous to the national show at Buenos Aires, four Jewish colonists received highest awards for their Leghorn and Rhode Island breeds of poultry. More than that, they received public praise from the Governor of the province for their fine work.

ICA also distributes annual prizes, to stimulate colonists to improve their production and their produce. The

colonists specialize in products best suited to their soils and their nearby markets. For instance, those farming in the *Colonias Santa Isabel, Palmar* and *Yatay,* Province of Entre Rios, sell their milk in the nearby city of Concordia, a port city on the Uruguay River,



The Milk Cooperative of the Jewish Dairymen at "Colonia Avigdor"

with 35,000 population. Because of the high quality of this milk they receive double the normal price per liter. All this is an index of the beneficial results achieved by zealous labor, combined with technical knowledge, under the skilled ICA agronomic supervision.

ICA has demonstrated to the Argentine Government

that the Jew can become once more, as in ancient days, a good farmer. ICA too has demonstrated that it has evolved techniques of control which enable it to escape the pitfalls of a bureaucracy bound with red tape. At the same time it saves the individual colonist from struggling alone and staggering unaided over the harsh road of individualist effort in an enterprise that history has established can best be achieved through cooperative endeavor.

Comparison With Palestine

The only other comparable Jewish agricultural activity in the world is, of course, now developing in Palestine. It will be of interest to note briefly a few comparisons between the progress achieved in ancient, arid Palestine and the new, fertile Argentina.

It will be recalled that Moisesville, Argentina, was settled fifty years ago by Russian Jews who wanted to enter Palestine but were forced westward instead. After fifty years of consecrated effort by ICA in the Argentine there are about one million acres under Jewish cultivation and another half million acres in reserve. In Palestine, I am informed by the Palestine Economic Corporation, "the total Jewish area is a little over one and one-half million dunams, or 375,000 acres, of which approximately 1,200,000 dunams are cultivated."

It is hardly necessary to point out that prior to 1920 the proportion of Jews in Palestine engaged in agriculture was very small. At that time the entire Jewish population of Palestine numbered about 60,000 and

the bulk of them had come to Palestine to find a holy final resting place. They subsisted principally on remittances from abroad.

In 1938 in Palestine, after less than two decades of major effort, "the number of persons engaged in agriculture, including dairying and poultry raising, was 31,000, to which should be added 38,000 dependents, making a total of 69,000, as the Jewish population dependent directly upon agriculture." The comparative total figure for Argentine ICA colonists is 17,000, or about one-fourth the equivalent Palestine farm population.

Palestine's Farmers Thrice Argentine's

In the Argentine ICA colonies there are about 10,000 Jewish artisans and craftsmen, serving in the rural communities. "The number of persons engaged in collateral pursuits in the rural villages of Palestine as craftsmen, etc., is approximately 56,000," I have been informed. Hence the total Jewish population in Palestine directly or semi-directly dependent on agricultural enterprise is 125,000, as compared to 27,000 in Argentina. Should we add the 17,000 other Jewish persons dwelling in the Argentine ICA rural communities the total Jewish rural population becomes 44,000. This latter figure is perhaps a fairer comparison with the 125,000 Palestine Jewish rural population. This makes the Argentine total 35 percent of the Palestine total.

The latest available figures on Jewish agricultural production in Palestine would also be of interest for

comparison with the Argentine data previously cited. The latest figures available, the 1937 production, as reported by the Department of Statistics of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, was 3,791,700 Palestine pounds as compared to 13,291,749 Argentine pesos, as above noted. Roughly this means that the value of the Palestinian Jewish agricultural products was between five and six times the value of the Argentinian. Detailed analyses and comparisons would be of interest to many, but cannot be here presented.

The significant fact which emerges from all these figures is that substantially two decades of extended effort in Palestine have brought results far outstripping the achievements of a half century of Jewish farming in Argentina. This in no way depreciates the success that ICA has achieved in Argentina. The success is far below that envisioned by Baron Hirsch when he poured his millions into the project, but nonetheless it has brought happiness to the thousands of Jews who now work and live on Argentine farms and who by their labors have again demonstrated the capacity of the Jew to till the soil.

When—and may it be soon—men will again send their swords to be beaten into plowshares, Argentina and Palestine will both welcome the Jewish husbandman. The first will work the rich soil of the Argentine and help that country to develop. From his surplus earnings he will gladly assist his brother, courageously toiling on the rocky soil of Palestine, to build up the National Homeland of the Jewish people.

BUENOS AIRES SYNAGOGUES

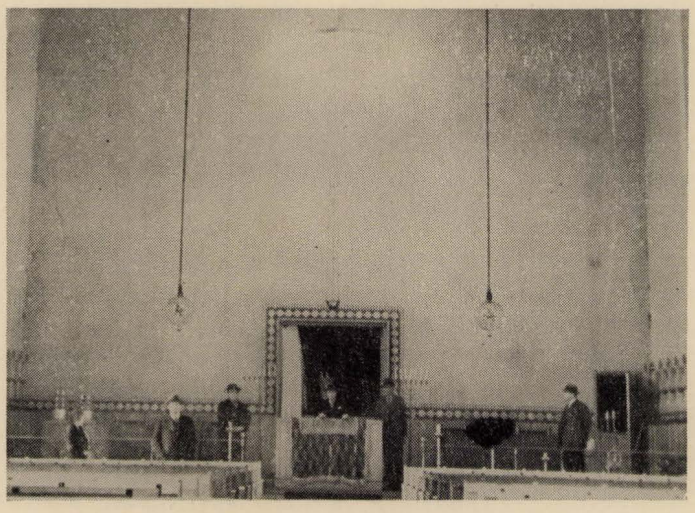
There are numerous synagogues in Buenos Aires. They fall into two categories—not three or four, as in the United States. We have Reform, Conservative and Orthodox congregations. Occasionally in orthodox circles we find a Sephardic congregation. But in Buenos Aires, as throughout the Argentine and all South America, the divisions are within orthodoxy, viz., Ashkenazic and Sephardic.

The oldest synagogue in Argentina is *La Congregacion Israelita de la Republica Argentina,* founded in 1868. Its beautiful house of worship is located on the *Plaza Libertad.* It is led by *Rabino* Dr. Guillermo Schlesinger, formerly of Switzerland. His sermons are delivered in Spanish. The *Siddur* used has parallel Spanish and Hebrew texts. Most of the *minhagim* are customs similar to those in use in orthodox American synagogues. When the *Chazan* chanted the *Kiddush* prayer over the cup of wine at the Sabbath Eve service which I attended, the melody was traditional, though the mode of passing the cup from choir boy to *Chazan* to assistant chorister betrayed the earmarks of certain Latin influence.

When the time came for the recital of the *Kaddish* prayer by the mourners, it was interesting to note that the thirty-five or more men who participated all came forward to the rail at the foot of the pulpit. They stood

there in a manner quite parallel to communicants at a Catholic mass.

But after all Argentina is a Catholic country; the constitution declares that the President of the Republic *must* be a Roman Catholic. How Al Smith would have



Ancient Sephardic Congregation, from Island of Rhodes, in Modernistic Synagogue in Buenos Aires

found that helpful back in our 1928 presidential campaign!

Many Sephardic Congregations

There are several Sephardic synagogues, grouped largely by communities of origin. Thus the 150 mem-

bers of the *Congregacion Israelita Latina* are mostly from Morocco; the Syrian Jews have the *Asociacion Israelita Sefaradi.* The members of the *Comunidad Israelita Sefaradi* are Turkish Jews, and the *Union Israelita Sefaradi* members, about 500 in number, are mainly from Bagdad.

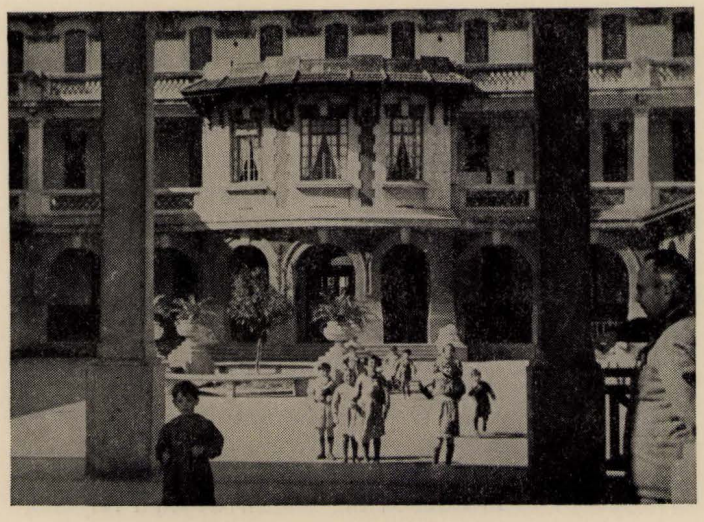
I visited the delightfully modernistic building recently constructed by the Sephardic congregation whose members came from the Mediterranean Island of Rhodes. It was an intriguing experience to look over some of their very old parchment manuscripts and Torah scrolls in the new-world modernist setting designed by a young, brilliant Jewish architect of Buenos Aires.

The Sephardim maintain their own central organization. Their Rabbi is Dr. Joseph H. Panigel, whose official title is *Gran Rabino de la Colectividad Sefaradi.* The community also maintains its own cemetery.

The Orphan Asylum

Among the many philanthropic institutions in Buenos Aires should be mentioned the Jewish Orphan Asylum, which is supported by the 3,000 women who are members of the *Sociedad de Damas Israelitas.* This institution was built after the Ukraine pogroms had swept many Jewish orphans to Argentina. It was patterned after the famous orphan asylum in Vienna. I clearly recall visiting the Viennese institution in 1936. Perhaps it has been destroyed by the Nazis in their hate-blinded campaign to make Vienna *Judenrein.* Its Argentine copy is ably administered, but in North America, as I

told its director, we are abandoning regimented, institutionalized care. We place children with families, first in foster homes, and then in adopitve homes where the children grow up in the wholesome atmosphere of a family circle.



Children in the Patio of the Jewish Orphan Asylum, Buenos Aires

I told them that the Free Synagogue Child Adoption Committee has been doing this work for twenty-five years, placing 1,700 homeless children in childless homes. I further told them that we were unable to meet the demand for placeable children; that we would be glad to arrange to take over their surplus output. The chil-

dren stay in the Asylum until about sixteen years of age—some of the young women a little longer. The director of the Orphan Asylum told me that the young women "graduates" are in demand for marriage, because, say the grooms, the marriage involves only the bride, and not the vexing problems that usually come with the appended family.

Excellent Health Work

Another major institution is the Jewish Hospital, which is supported by about 10,000 members, has a staff of about 100 physicians, and serves the poor and moderately circumstanced members of the Jewish community. It is noteworthy that the Hospital is run in accordance with the dietary laws.

The *Liga Israelita Contra La Tuberculosis* maintains a dispensary to combat tuberculosis, which has a high incidence rate in Argentina. It is supported by nearly 8,000 contributing members. Respiratory diseases take a heavy toll throughout South America, undoubtedly because of the generally low economic level of the victims. When I was in Buenos Aires last August, their winter weather was unusually severe. As most homes are not equipped with adequate heating facilities—even the wealthy relying on artistic fireplaces and portable kerosene heaters—the morbidity rates for influenza and pneumonia were fearfully high. One physician told me that nearly one-third of the 3,000 doctors had broken under the strain of caring for patients in the corridor-clogged hospitals of Buenos Aires.

As a scientist he expressed concern lest present high speed modes of transport might not lead tourists and travelers to become unwitting spreaders of the disease to the United States. His fears proved only too well founded when our own winter came along some months later, for an influenza wave swept across the continent from our West Coast ports.

The Great Hevrah Kadishah

The Ashkenazic cemetery is administered by the *Hevrah Kadishah.* The Hevrah Kadishah in Buenos Aires, to North American Jews, is a strange institution, unlike any known to us in the United States. We are familiar of course with the "Holy Society" in Jewish life, which reverently prepares the remains of a deceased person for interment in accordance with Jewish tradition. But the Buenos Aires Hevrah Kadishah does all this, and more.

It owns and controls the only Ashkenazic Jewish cemetery in Bueons Aires, that is, in a community of about 150,000 persons. As such it exercises a taxing power which is as unavoidable as death itself. No one may purchase a family plot or burial space in this cemetery in advance, or even arrange the terms of purchase with the officers of the Hevrah Kadishah.

These gentlemen are leading personalities in the Jewish community, who consider it a prime honor to serve. So great is the communal status of a post in the Hevrah Kadishah that men have been known to make generous

gifts to the Hevrah's funds for the privilege of filling a vacancy. The president, Senor David Calles, who was most generous to me of his time as guide and informant, is a multi-millionaire in Argentine pesos (that makes



Monuments in the Cemetery of the Buenos Aires Hevrah Kadishah

him a millionaire even in U.S.A. dollars) and is a leading industrialist of Buenos Aires.

Senor Calles' Work

Senor Calles owns several factories. His first pride is the large rubber boot and shoe plant which he built from the ground up. That takes one back a generation

ago, when, as youthful immigrant, he collected cast-off rubber products. Now he turns out 10,000 pairs per day. His second pride is the cemetery maintained by the Hevrah Kadishah, under his presidency. Of course I visited both; mine host was both gracious and insistent. The factory amazed me by the ingenuity of the self-designed devices created by Senor Calles to facilitate production. The cemetery interested me by the simplicity and democracy of its arrangements and monuments, and by the thoughtful provision for the poor of the community.

Most members of the Jewish community in Buenos Aires are members of the Hevrah Kadishah. Last year 25,000 members each contributed their two pesos per month, or more, to the Society. When a member dies the family immediately communicate with the Hevrah Kadishah to make the final arrangements. If the deceased was a poor person, or of a poor family, the terms are moderately low. In the event of real poverty the Society makes all provisions gratuitously.

But if not of a poor family, the unofficial taxing powers of the Society swing into action. The financial status of the individual, and the measure of his support of the communal institutions during his lifetime, are placed in the balance by the assessment committee of the Society. With all factors sharply before them the Society decides, without possibility of appeal, how much the deceased's estate shall pay for a grave in the cemetery.

Delinquent Pay Heavily

In most cases the amount fixed is a reasonable one, but if the committee finds the deceased has been ungenerous in support of the communal institutions, it



Argentina's Oldest Congregation, the Libertad Synagogue, Led by the Distinguished Rabino, Dr. Guillermo Schlesinger

places the figure as high as 1,000 or more dollars for the grave. Where a person failed to give of his means decently while alive the committee has exacted and received up to 5,000 dollars for the grave.

Dr. Guillermo Schlesinger, Chief Rabbi of the Ashkenazic Jewish community in Buenos Aires, and head of the great Libertad Synagogue, who was my guide and

mentor for days in my studies of Jewish communal life in Buenos Aires, told me that occasionally there is delay in the holding of the funeral services while the Hevrah Kadishah and the family work out the "tax" problem. In one case, of a notoriously uncooperative wealthy member of the community, the interment "donation" was 100,000 pesos, which is a lot of money for a grave even in American dollars—about $25,000 U.S.A.

The Hevrah Kadishah was founded in 1894. The organization will undoubtedly evolve, as the community matures, into a society that will derive its support from a well-knit membership, prepared to give adequate support to the worthy Jewish institutions of Buenos Aires through a less gruesome technique.

Society Collects Great Sums

The funds thus obtained are prudently distributed, as reported publicly in great detail. In the fiscal year 1939 its receipts of "Donations and Payments for Burials" totalled over 360,000 pesos. Essentially, it is a widely supported, wisely administered, powerful central community fund.

The Hevrah Kadishah extends helpful subventions to "Institutions and Others." Their 1939 report, before me as I write, shows a total annual subsidy in the amount of 170,000 pesos. It is a three page list containing 175 items; these range from $5,000 ($ means pesos in Argentina) to the *Amigos de la Universidad Hebrea de Jerusalem,* to $300 for the local *Teatro*

Popular Israelita, showing the wide variety of its cultural and communal interests.

The subventions include an allotment of $15,000 to the *Asociacion Bikur Joilim,* (J is "ch" in B.A.) for aid to the needy sick; $1,300 to the *Comite Contra el Racismo y el Antisemitismo,* to counteract anti-Jewish propaganda; $3,900 to the *Delegacion de Asociones Israelitas Argentinas,* the Argentine Jewish Congress; $12,000 to the *Keren Hayesod,* for its work in Palestine; $5,000 to the *Liga Israelita Argentina Contra la Tuberculosis,* to assist in controlling disease; $17,000 to the *Sociedad de Beneficencia Ezrah Hospital Israelita,* for the same laudable purpose; and $23,000 to the *Sociedad de Damas Israelitas de Beneficencia* to help the women in their charitable work.

Many Cultural Subsidies

Many other Jewish cultural institutions are also subsidized, including several libraries, over twenty schools, five small synagogues, eighteen Talmud Torahs and numerous Zionist organizations, including the popular *Organizacion Sionista Feminina,* which has wide acclaim among the Jewish women of Buenos Aires.

The financial status of the Hevrah Kadishah is shown by its balance sheet; at the end of the 1939 fiscal year its assets totalled 1,260,620 pesos.

But beyond its valued financial contributions to the community have been the benefits of its centralized control, as applied to a problem that plagued Buenos Aires Jews for years. How it effectively dealt with the

Buenos Aires white slave traffic is an epic episode deserving space to detail.

White Slave Traffic

Until recent years Jews in Buenos Aires were careful not to mention to outsiders that they lived in that city, for it was tainted with the shame of being the center of the white slave traffic. Though less than one-sixth the traffic was in the hands of certain foul Jews, the remainder being Turks, Moroccans, French and others, it was generally said, and widely believed, that it was a Jewish controlled traffic. The late lamented League of Nations even appointed an international committee to deal with the grievous problems created by the traffic in women.

The traffic was a blot and a shame on the growing, self-respecting Jewish community of Buenos Aires. Finally the officers of the Hevrah Kadishah said, "we must put an end to Jewish participation in this evil thing." So they declared that no one associated with the traffic —or any member of his family—would be permitted interment by the Hevrah Kadishah. No one connected with it would be allowed to enter any synagogue in Buenos Aires. Any one engaged in it who was on the governing board of any Jewish institution would have to resign.

Social Ostracism Invoked

If any such person were seen served in a Jewish restaurant, it would end all Jewish patronage. If he would come to a Jewish theatre, all Jewish persons seated with-

in fifteen feet of him would find seats elsewhere, or leave the theatre. Any Jewish hostess inviting to her home any member of a family tied up with the traffic, would find she had no other guests at that gathering, nor at any other gathering in the future.

Leon Malach, writing from Buenos Aires in the "Menorah Journal" says, "The time soon came when war was literally waged. Blood ran in the streets. Jewish workmen armed themselves with clubs and iron pipes, and invaded the brothel quarters, determined to drive their debased brethren by force from the city or at least from the Jewish community. The war was carried on in the streets, in the cafes, in the theatres, until finally the Jewish section at least could be said to be cleansed, made fit for honest Jews to come build, to work, to live in a Jewish manner." At the time of which Malach writes the three Jewish theatres in Buenos Aires had this sign posted: *No Admittance to White Slave Dealers.*

In other words, a *Cherem* was placed on social and communal intercourse with these banned outlaws. It was a remarkable piece of community control over an acute communal problem. Coupled with a fortunate political change which ousted a key police official who was chief protector of the traffic, this ban proved so effective that today no Buenos Aires Jew is ashamed to speak up when asked—"Where do you live?"

German Jews in the Argentine organized the *Hilfsverein der Deutchsprechenden Juden* a few years ago to give aid to the refugees who came from German-speaking lands. An understanding, self-sacrificing personality, Senor Adolfo Hirsch, who is a well established business man in Buenos Aires, divides his time between running his business and managing the *Hilfsverein.*

This Society maintains an employment agency and a bureau for supplying direct relief. It also conducts classes in Spanish and other cultural activities. It does not attempt resettlement work, as is done by the National Refugee Service in the United States. Though refugees are urged to leave Buenos Aires, no pressure is exercised upon them to do so.

When I asked Senor Hirsch if they tried discontinuance of relief to refugees whom they felt could be better adjusted outside of Buenos Aires, he replied, "In the few cases we tried this, they peddled their pleas about the community to such a degree that they created unpleasant scenes."

Refugee Gauchos

But by no means do all refugees refuse to go into the provinces, and to the numerous smaller cities of Argentina. It was both interesting and picturesque to meet a

Jewish refugee *gaucho* (cowhand) at the *El Rinco Estancia* in central Argentina. That boy had learned to ride his cow-pony well. On the same estancia another refugee was serving as one of a large corps of "milk boys." Both were getting along satisfactorily, and seemed content in their work.

Some *estancias* certainly require plenty of "milk boys." I met the owner of one such *estancia* who has 12,000 cows. What a milking job they present! The milk is collected by hand. It is processed into various kinds of cheese, now beginning to enter the North American market. These carry the label we will and should become increasingly familiar with—*Industria Argentina.*

Senor Hirsch said that Argentine Jewry is raising its own funds to take care of the refugee problems. They are well able to do so. The Joint Distribution Committee, he said to me, is making but a token payment in Argentina. The spokesman of a group of Jewish journalists, at a luncheon tendered at the Pension Wertheim in Buenos Aires, in honor of the guest from the American Jewish Congress, said that it was scandalous that Jews in the United States should have been called on to send money to Brazil for refugee work. "That Jewish community," he declared, "was well able to provide full support for the work." All these Buenos Aires Yiddish newspapermen felt, as far as the Argentine was concerned, that no outside assistance was required. They reviewed the various Jewish resources potentially avail-

able to aid the stream of immigration, which of late has been sharply reduced.

The Children's Home

One of the institutions recently created by the Buenos Aires community, of which refugees are in part the bene-



Orthodox Children in Class at the Sephardic Day School in Buenos Aires

ficiaries, is the "Children's Home." It is now a little over two years old and accommodates eighty children. About one-fourth of the children "sleep out," that is, their parents bring them to the Home before they go to work, and call for them at the end of the day. The

parents pay about 60 centavos (15 cents U.S.A.) per day. Fifteen percent, I was told by the matron, herself a refugee, cannot as yet pay their full fee. Her staff consists of eight persons, who give full care and instruction to the children.

Children of school-age go to the nearby public school. The others are given suitable instruction in the "Home." All receive special lessons in Spanish, and some Jewish religious instruction. The members of the Women's Relief Association support the institution, which is housed in an old building, once the home of a famous figure in Argentine history. The Jewish women take just pride in the high standards of hygiene and pedagogics maintained in this "Home" for the new immigrants.

HICEM and Its Work

The earlier stream of Jewish immigration came from non-German speaking lands. In 1922 Buenos Aires Jewry established the *Sociedad De Protecion A Los Immigrantes Israelitas,* as an affiliate of HICEM, to assist the many immigrants then entering Argentina. They have been rendering a notable service to the more than 100,000 Jewish immigrants who settled in Argentina in the past twenty years.

The heaviest immigration came in 1923, when a total of 13,700 Jews arrived at Buenos Aires. This stream originated largely in Poland, as an aftermath of the brutalities Jews suffered in that unhappy land. In the decade 1920-1929, 71,829 Jews came to Buenos Aires. Then the annual volume dropped to a low of 1,747 in

1932. The advent of Hitlerism sent the number upward to 4,919 in 1938 but the effect of the late 1938 immigration restrictions is shown in the drop to 2,834 in 1939. The 1940 official statistics are as yet unavailable, but the indications point to a further and even sharper decline.

From 1920 through 1939 the total net immigration of Jews into Argentina was 108,005 persons. These, however, include only those who came as second or third class steamship passengers. It is estimated that about 22,000 Jews entered as first class passengers during this period, so that all told about 130,000 Jews entered Argentina from January 1, 1920 to December 31, 1939.

Refugees Create Difficulties

German Jews did not begin to come to Argentina in large numbers until 1936; their number reached a peak in 1938, and would undoubtedly have risen further if not for the sharp governmental limitations. As one high government official said to me in Buenos Aires, with ill-concealed resentment in his voice, "We could not walk our promenades as freely as before; we were being crowded out by German-speaking persons, who also arrogantly elbowed us out of our tables at our favorite cafes. Something had to be done," he added, "to keep these noisy Germans from over-running Argentina." He would have said "noisome Jews" instead of "noisy Germans" had he not been a polite diplomat who noted the *Mogen Dovid* dangling on my watch chain.

Nothing I did in South America, by the way, aroused more comment or elicited greater surprise among Jews than my wearing this small silver star, with its *Zion* inscription in Hebrew. Some thought it foolishly heroic; many called it a symbol of Jewish freedom in the United States; all found it a mark of high hope in blessed America.

In the course of its nineteen years of immigrant service the *Sociedad Immigrantes,* which is headed by Benjamin Mellibovsky, has beneficially intervened with the authorities for over 50,000 persons. Senor Mellibovsky graciously arranged in advance to have a member of his staff compile considerable data for my Argentine note book, given me when I hurried to his office (in absolutely unorthodox non-South American fashion) to learn about their operations. All manner of aid has been extended by the *Sociedad,* including certificates of character to meet police requirements, correction of faulty papers demanded by immigration officials, and provision to needy persons of transportation to the provinces.

Numerous Migration Problems Solved

Passage tickets were sold, at low prices and also on installment credit, to about 5,900 persons, at a cost of over 2,200,000 pesos. The *Sociedad* has disbursed over 600,000 pesos for board, lodging and miscellanies. It has acted as agent to transmit money and food packages to European relatives of 24,000 Argentine immigrants, to the value of over one and a quarter million pesos.

One of its most difficult problems is the legalization of immigrants who have somehow managed to enter the country. The Government, realistic in dealing with the matter, has established a tax of 192.50 pesos (about $45.00 U.S.A.) if the person entered without a visa, and 165 pesos tax if he entered with a short period tourist visa. Toward this work the *Sociedad* gives considerable attention and in the past two years has helped nearly 400 "illegals" with technical advice and expended over 30,000 pesos to obtain their legalization papers.

The combined results of World War II blockade and marine warfare plus the present Argentine immigration restrictions, have sharply curtailed all the burdens on the *Sociedad Proteccion A Los Immigrantes Israelitas,* but a small staff is being hopefully maintained for future availability.

Argentina Needs Population

One of the outstanding Jewish personalities I met in Buenos Aires is Senor Rodolfo Lustig. He is Directing Manager of the great South American Mining Company, and is at home all over the continent. It was his conviction that all except about one percent of the able-bodied refugees are at work, and that they have found work without displacing Argentines. Nazi propaganda, of course, beats the drum constantly with the tune that Jews take away the jobs of Argentines, but all informed persons assured me this was the usual Nazi lie.

The great newspapers of the Argentine—and no democratic country is blessed with a better press—have

often pointed out that Argentina is a new country with an expanding frontier; that it is a land which needs population. Jewish authorities estimate that approximately 30,000 refugees, all told, have come to the Argentine. Of these about 25,000 have remained in the great metropolis of Buenos Aires.

Wherever I went I discussed future colonization possibilities with Government officials and Jewish leaders. All were in accord that no large immigration would be possible until the end of the War, and none thereafter if Britain were defeated. And there is keenest anxiety over the outcome—for a Hitler victory will be critical for the Argentine and catastrophic for Argentine Jewry.

All felt, however, that with Hitler's defeat the country would be prepared to accept a large scale selected Jewish immigration, provided these came trained in advance. It was urged upon me that these immigrants would only be accepted if they were *trained* technicians, *trained* industrial workers, *trained* agricultural workers, and the like. And then too, responsible persons urged upon me these trained persons would be expected to come under the auspices of a recognized Jewish organization which should make preparations in advance for the coming of the colonists.

Post-War Colonization

Under the present Argentine law, aimed at preventing compact national bodies being injected into the Argentine corpus, colonization projects must not have more than twenty-five percent representation of any one

nation. This, however, will not be an obstacle for large scale Jewish immigration projects.

When I talked to a certain Government official in terms of 100,000 to 300,000 post-war Jewish immigrants, he said to me, "Be sure of one thing, though ours is a new, expanding, growing country, we do not want, we do not need, another 100,000 retail dealers." As I talked to this vehemently outspoken official I sensed that the Argentine Government restrictions were motivated by factors beyond the stated "increase of unemployment."

As another official, speaking off the record, phrased it, "We do not desire persons in our country who would come because the international situation sends them to Argentina for accidental reasons." "Accidental reasons" forsooth! As I write, word reaches me of a would-be immigrant who wishes to come to Argentina from France. In France, as a public-spirited millionaire, he had established a special institute for the study of cancer. A certain physician in Buenos Aires, leading research worker in cancer, was decorated by this French Institute for his high achievements. A notable prize was also awarded him by the generous French patron of science. Today that patron is an humiliated, despoiled wanderer. Through the "accidental reason" of his acquaintance with the Argentine scientist he has written appealing for help to obtain a visa for himself and his wife. She, he is sure, can earn a living as a dressmaker. With heart-rending humility this robbed patron of science writes,

if only his Argentine friend will help him enter, he is certain he will find work, perhaps as a bookkeeper.

Wise Argentine officialdom, I am sure, will pave the way for this man to enter their land, even though his coming, like tens of thousands of other immigrants, is due to "accidental reasons." It is the accidents of history which helped advance America to its high station. They can do as much for Argentina.

BOLIVIA – NO JEWS NEED APPLY

THE itinerary of the tour of our group did not include Venezuela, Paraguay or Bolivia. To round out mention of the ten countries of South America, however, a brief section is included covering each of the three countries not visited. The material included is based on data supplied by various authorities.

Many United States folks first heard of Bolivia when some U.S.A. bankers, who were more keen about underwriting profits than about the safety of their clients' funds, floated bonds in our country. These now are sunk to the extent of about sixty million dollars. The bonds are in default; an authority in Buenos Aires told me: 'Bondholders can kiss their funds goodbye." The country, nonetheless, affords great economic potentialities.

It is a domain vast in extent, comprising about 700,000 square miles of territory, including the fertile Chaco area in the south. The area could include France, Germany, Italy and Spain. Bolivia was named in commemoration of Simon Bolivar, the great South American liberator, and its first president. The country is very sparsely populated. The latest estimate shows about 3,200,000, of whom 55 percent are Indian, 30 percent mestizo, and 15 percent white. A good deal of the area is mountainous; more than three-fourths of its people live at an altitude of over 10,000 feet.

The principal city is La Paz. It is called the highest capital city in the world, being located at an altitude of about 12,000 feet. The legal capital of Bolivia is not La Paz but Sucre, which is about three hundred miles distant from La Paz and is at an altitude of about 8,500 feet. Sucre has a mild climate and is considered the "most handsome city in the country." It has a population of about 32,000 and contains the Government Palace, the Legislative Palace and the Cathedral.

Sky-High La Paz

La Paz has a population of about 200,000. Its high altitude produces a cool climate; the temperature averages 50° Fahr. throughout the year. Because of the rarified atmosphere, travelers are cautioned to watch out for colds, which may rapidly develop into pneumonia. Pneumonia may be deadly at such high levels. I recall having been cautioned in Mexico City, at an altitude of 7,000 feet, to be careful about catching cold in the chilly summer evenings, for the onset of pneumonia would be fatal. All the greater is the risk in La Paz, where people live nearly two and a half miles high in the sky.

From Buenos Aires on the East Coast to La Paz is about three days by rail. But La Paz is nearer the West Coast. From Antofagasta the rail journey takes only about thirty hours. From Mollendo, Peru, the journey requires about a day and a half, partly by rail and then by steamer across Lake Titicaca. This lake is the highest navigable body of water in the world. It is nearly half

as large as Lake Erie, occupying an area of 4,500 square miles. The maximum width is 69 miles; the length is 138 miles. Its level is 12,500 feet above the Pacific Ocean. The steamers used for navigating this strange body of water were built in England, transported in sections, and were lugged up the Andes Mountains, piece by piece, for final assembly on Lake Titicaca.

Bolivia became a republic in 1825, following the war of independence from Spain and the victories achieved by Simon Bolivar and his colleagues. It had been a part of the Inca Empire; the break-up of the vast domain ruled by the Spanish Viceroy in Peru left to Bolivia the heritage of boundary disputes with Peru, Chile, Paraguay and Brazil. Some of these disputes have been resolved. The Bolivia-Paraguay frontier dispute involving the fertile Chaco region, produced many wars, the latest of which persisted from 1932 to 1935. A peace treaty was finally signed in July, 1938.

Bolivia Landlocked Country

As a result of defeat at the hands of its western neighbors, Bolivia is now a landlocked country. Its exports, which are valuable, must pass through foreign territory before reaching the sea. Basically Bolivia is a mining country; almost the sole exports are minerals. Tin, a mineral of vital military importance and an essential in economic life today, constitutes over 70 percent of the exports. Bolivia is second to the Malay Straits Settlements as a source of tin.

There is also produced a considerable quantity of silver, copper, lead and zinc, and among the rarer minerals, bismuth and tungsten. The principal mines are located in the Potosi district. The mines near Potosi were discovered in 1545, only about a dozen years after Francisco Pizzaro came to Peru. Bolivia was then a part of the vast Inca Empire, which had endured for five centuries prior to Pizarro's murder of the Inca Atahualpa.

Potosi, with a population of about 35,000, is the center of this famous mining district. It is located about 375 miles from La Paz and is even higher, at an altitude of about 13,600 feet, making the labor in mines and other physical work extremely arduous because of the low content of oxygen in the air. The native Indians, through generations of evolution, have developed huge barrel-like chests; the extra-large lung capacity increases the oxygen intake to meet their physical needs.

Many Marranos in Mining

During the Spanish regime there were many Marranos in Bolivia, especially in the mining sections. Some of them are reputed to have become wealthy mine owners, but they apparently were completely assimilated into the environment, or succumbed to the Inquisition in Lima, Peru.

Among the wealthy mining figures in Bolivia today we can count one outstanding Jewish personality, Maurico Hochschild. I endeavored to meet Senor Hochschild while in Buenos Aires, as he spends part of his

time in the Argentine, but to my great regret he was not in town. He is a colorful personality whose gifts and talents were vividly described to me by one of his colleagues.

Edward Tomlinson, in his recent *New Roads To Riches—In The Other Americas* presents the role of Mauricio Hochschild in such fascinating fashion that I venture to quote at length.

"Mauricio Hochschild is an Argentine-born gentleman of German-Jewish parentage. He is a giant of a man, nearly six and a half feet tall, with a bristling black moustache, and a circle of unruly coarse hair draped just beneath an enormous bald pate. He fairly bores holes in you with eyes that are widely separated, by a nose only a little less impressive than Jimmy Durante's. He has an amazing command of the Spanish, French, English and German languages, as well as a startling facility for the picturesque profanity peculiar to each.

"The Hochschild activities and enterprises in Bolivia have also had an interesting history. In the beginning they were financed by German bankers. In turn Senor Hochschild hired German managers, lawyers, accountants and engineers. In the early days a meeting of his entourage in the big conference room in the Hochschild Building in La Paz, sounded like a German Tower of Babel. All of which gave the Germans reason to believe they actually controlled his holdings, but proved how little they knew about the Senor.

Hochschild Ousts Nazis

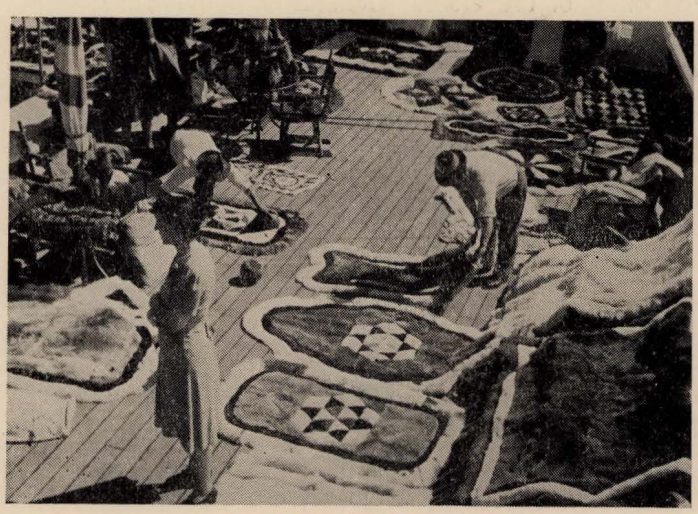
"With Hitler's first blast against the Jews, Hochschild left La Paz and went on a quiet visit to several world capitals, Buenos Aires, Paris, London and New York. Upon his return, having provided himself with new and ample financing, principally from the Phelps Dodge Company of New York, he dismissed his German bankers, fired his German employes, from engineers to office boys. Today at a meeting of his staff in *Edificio Hochschild,* only English and Spanish are spoken. All of his engineers, managers and office force now are either Americans or Bolivians. And thus ended the Nazi bid for participation in Bolivia's principal industry."

Another Bolivian "industry" is followed by the Indians who make beautiful vicuna rugs they call *colchas,* which they send down to the West Coast to tempt tourists. Other fur-bearing animals common to the mountainous section of Bolivia are the llama, alpaca and chinchilla. The principal outlet for the furs is Mollendo, Peru, where the Grace Line steamers anchor off the rugged sea-swept shore. Hardly has the rattle of the anchor chain ended when the vendors clamber aboard with their lovely *colchas.*

One of the great potential resources of Bolivia is its timber, which is as yet largely unworkable on account of the acute absence of transportation facilities. The Bolivian hardwoods are remarkable. Some of them are so heavy that they cannot even be rafted down the river.

Included among its hardwoods is the valuable *tajibo negro,* popularly known on account of its strength as the "iron tree."

Industry is only in its very early beginnings. Such small activity as there is centers around La Paz. Cheap



Lovely Vicuna Colchas Displayed on Steamer Deck by Mollendo Vendors

fuel for prime movers is unavailable; transportation of coal to such high altitudes is exceedingly costly.

No Visa to American Jew

Desiring to learn something of the country at first hand, I made inquiry about going up to Bolivia while in Argentina. I was told that under Bolivian regula-

tions, foreigners entering the country must "observe faultless conduct and not concern themselves with internal political questions." I was sure of being able to meet the second requirement and agreed that I would rigidly endeavor to meet the first. But when I went to the office of the Consul General of Bolivia, in Buenos Aires, I found the following decree posted on the wall of the anteroom of the Consulate:

"Decrete de 6 de Mayo de 1940.
Articulo 1° —Prohibese con caracter general a los consules nacionales ortogar pasapartes y visacion de turismo en favor de *elementos semitas.*
Articulo 2° —Incorporase la presente disposicion al reglamento organico de turismo, de 24 de Noviembre de 1939."

Dado en el palacio de Goberno de la ciudad de La Paz a los seis dias del mes de Mayo de nil novecientos cuarenta años.

Firmando,
General Enrique Peñaranda
Alberto Ostria Gutierrez

In essence, this decree means that no Jews, of *any* country of origin, can obtain visas to enter Bolivia. The Consul General assured me that in view of the character of the group with which I was traveling, he would endeavor to obtain a special visa for me, but that the request would have to go to the Government office in La Paz. He added that many days would ensue before permission might be received. He also stated that such

permission, if granted, would be for a period of not more than five to ten days.

In other words, the Bolivian Government refuses to recognize, except under most special circumstances, the passport of the United States of America, if such passport is carried by a Jew. This is an important matter which can be taken up at some future date. But, under the decree of May 6, 1940, I was unable to get a first-hand view of the Jewish situation in Bolivia.

Few Jews in Bolivia

Bolivia is a country where the Catholic religion is recognized and supported by the state, although the constitution allows religious freedom. The record shows that there were very few Jews in Bolivia prior to 1900. A few Russian Jews arrived in 1905, but by 1917 there were only 25 Jews in La Paz, including three women and one child. Prior to the advent of Hitlerism there were perhaps 200 Jews in all Bolivia. Of these about 100 were in La Paz, 50 in Sucre, and the remainder scattered in the various centers of the country.

After 1933 refugees began to stream into the country until an estimated total of about 6,000 entered. In 1938, the Government offered free land to those refugees who would come in, and remain, as agricultural workers. A farming colony, *Villa Sacaba,* was organized in 1939 by about 200 German refugees. About this time a refugee visa scandal broke out similar to the one which had unfortunately developed in Chile. The Government appointed a special commission to

investigate charges of irregularities involving certain high Government officials. In July, 1939, this investigating commission reported that some Jews had entered the country illegally. It recommended their deportation, and internment prior thereto.

I could obtain no information as to either internment or deportation. Most probably the deportation did not take place. In September, 1939, the Bolivian Secret Police raided the *Circulo Israelita,* the Jewish community center in La Paz. Many anti-Semitic attacks also appeared in the press, the most shocking of all being printed in *El Diario,* previously considered the most important liberal newspaper of La Paz.

It is hoped that Jewish travelers to South America who may have an opportunity to enter land-locked Bolivia will become familiar, at first hand, with what is transpiring in this large section of the Continent. It is a country which has great economic potentialities, deserving earnest study and detailed consideration.

PARAGUAY, A PEOPLE-LESS LAND

PARAGUAY is landlocked like Bolivia. This geographic situation creates many political complications for, as Napoleon said, geography is the mother of politics. It comprises an area of 160,000 square miles, so that it is larger than California. Half of Paraguay is a vast forest; the other half extensive grassy savannah plains. The forest soil, where cleared of overgrowth and exposed to sunshine, proves amazingly fertile. The plains are adapted to pastoral activity; some cattle raising has been developed.

The latest official estimate of its population (1938) is 955,000. A good deal of Paraguay is the *Chaco,* with an area of about 100,000 square miles. This tremendous territory has been fought over by Bolivia and Paraguay in several wars, the last peace having been signed July, 1938. It is hoped that the boundaries which were then settled will remain fixed, but like other South American boundary disputes, they are grist for the Nazi propagandists.

The largest of the cities, and the capital of the country, is Asuncion, which is about 1,000 miles up the Paraguay River from Buenos Aires, and about two days journey from that city by rail. The population is about 110,000. It is a sunny, pleasant city, founded over 400 years ago in 1536, is filled with picturesque

buildings and is made attractive by varieties of roses and orange blossoms.

The second largest city is Villarica, with about 40,000 population. It is the center of the *yerba maté* and lumbering area. Industrial activities located in its environs include saw mills, sugar refineries and small flour mills. Concepcion, with about 8,500 population, is another center that produces *yerba maté* and *quebracho* wood, the extract of which is used industrially for tanning.

Paraguay Dictator Ridden

Paraguay has the unenviable distinction of having had the first dictator of the type that ruled many South American lands following independence from Spain. Dr. Gaspar Rodriguez Francia reigned as *El Supremo* from 1814 to 1840. Later came the harshest, and in many ways the worst dictator who ever ruled any Latin American country, Francisco Lopez. He swept comparatively puny Paraguay into a horribly decimating war with Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil, madly taking on all three countries simultaneously. The war lasted for five years, until Lopez' death in 1870. The country lost nearly 75 percent of its population. Its million people were reduced to about 225,000 women and to less than ten percent of this number of "men," who were mostly boys and aged folk, too young or too old to fight. It required half a century to recover from the devastating effects of the mad Lopez war.

As a result of the decimation of the population, there has been a grievous inadequacy of human labor to de-

velop the country's resources. There is also a considerable lack of capital to improve the present largely primitive modes of communication.

Country Lacks People

The Government, recognizing the need for increased population, adopted a liberal attitude toward the immigration of agriculturists. Indicative of their policy was a huge grant of land made to a colony of Mennonites. They were given three million acres of the amazingly rich Chaco terrain. This is twice the area purchased for development by the Jewish Colonization Association in the Argentine during its half century of operations. The land was conveyed to the Mennonites by a charter which provides religious freedom, exemption from military service and gives autonomy in local domestic matters.

Cotton could be grown to a tremendous extent in Paraguay if it were not for the acute lack of labor. The *Banco Agricola del Paraguay* estimated that about 75,000,000 acres of land are suitable for the cultivation of cotton, whereas only 75,000 are now being worked. In other words, about one-tenth of one percent of the area has been developed in cotton.

Paraguay also offers considerable possibility for the commercial development of the castor bean plant, the oil of which is so important medicinally and industrially. This castor oil plant grows readily as a perennial in Paraguay.

Produces Much Yerba Maté

Throughout South America a very popular beverage is *yerba maté*, which is an excellent substitute for tea. This maté has become popular on the West Coast of the United States and will be increasingly used in our country as its stimulating and healthful properties are more generally recognized. *Yerba maté* grows wild in over 25,000 square miles in Paraguay. A few companies are the main factors in the industry, processing about thirty million pounds of the leaf each year.

The forests of Paraguay also contain many fine hardwoods. There are thousands of square miles of territory which have been untouched; some of the rarer woods, with valuable properties, are almost unknown outside of the country. They exist to an almost limitless extent in Paraguay.

General industry is a minor activity. There is some production, but only for local consumption, which includes the manufacture of flour, soap, ice, furniture, matches and similar items.

It is distressing to report, but not surprising to find, that tuberculosis has the highest death rate in Paraguay, as in most of the other tropical parts of South America. Epidemiologists undoubtedly have an explanation for the high incidence of this disease in the tropics. Probably one of the major factors is the low economic level. There is also considerable goiter, because the country is inland and distant from the sea with its iodine. The country is afflicted with many cases of leprosy.

One of the members of our party visited the leprosy mission in Paraguay, conducted by his national church organization in the United States. He reported that there was a great need for the expansion of this leprosy work but that there was a quiet, but effective opposition by representatives of the Catholic Church, who do not desire the extension of evangelical missions in Paraguay.

Small Jewish Community

Though the established religion of the country is Catholic, religious freedom exists. There are some Jews in Paraguay but the community is very small. Definitive data is not available. The best estimate I could obtain gave a Jewish population of about 1,200 in the entire country, largely centered in Asuncion, Concepcion and Villarica. Jews started to enter Paraguay about 1912. In 1917 there were about 600 Jews in all of Paraguay, of whom about 400 were living in Asuncion. Most of them were Ashkenazim of Russian, French and German origin; some were Sephardim from Turkey. They engaged in commerce and trade largely, with a few doctors and lawyers practicing their professions. Both the Ashkenazic and Sephardic communities in Asuncion have their synagogues and utilize a part of the general municipal cemetery for their burial needs.

Jewish agricultural workers were encouraged for a time by the Government to enter the country, resulting in a small Jewish farming area called *Colonia Franca.* In 1936 the Government announced the relaxation of immigration restrictions to permit non-agriculturist Jews

to enter, provided they came in with some small capital. Later, following probably upon the anti-Semitic activities generated by Facist propaganda, the Government issued a decree which "forbids entry of Jews, irrespective of nationality, into Paraguay."

A good many White Russians, fleeing the Soviet Union, came to Paraguay. Some of them served as officers in the Chaco war against Bolivia. In 1938 these White Russians provoked a number of anti-Jewish acts and made many charges against the Jews as radicals. As a result seventeen Jews were expelled as Communists and all Jewish immigration was clamped down.

But many Jews served faithfully in the Chaco War against Bolivia as loyal Paraguayans. Their loyalty was recognized and their continued residence in the country was unchallenged. By 1939 the Jewish population had grown to about one thousand persons. Jewish communal activities had developed fairly well, including a flourishing Zionist society in Asuncion.

Paraguay offers great potentialities for development, for its resources, pastoral and forestal, are tremendous and its need for population very great. It is a pity that more data is not available on Jewish life in Paraguay. The 1941 Inter-American Jewish Conference at Montevideo should help produce data that will be a guide to students of the problem of Jewish life in Paraguay, and other countries of South America, and of the opportunities which these countries present for fruitful development.

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THE "PARADISE" – CHILE

CHILE is situated on the west coast of South America; it is a land sharply defined by the Pacific Ocean and the Andes Mountains. It stretches between these two physical barriers, at an average width of but eighty miles, for a distance of 2,800 miles, or about as far as from New York to Los Angeles. It extends from an utterly rainless desert with merciless sunshine on the north to the near Antarctic Tierra del Fuego at the south.

Jews began coming to Chile, as Marranos, at the time of the Spanish conquest, early in the sixteenth century, and have continued to come to the present day. The earliest arrivals merged with the general white population, so that Jewish descent is marked in much Chilean high society.

At the beginning of the present century a few Jewish families arrived from Russia and Rumania, some from Alsace-Lorraine. Beginning with 1910, the first numerous recent migrations began, Jews coming principally from Russia, Poland, Rumania, Turkey and Jugoslavia. Some came directly, but the major part crossed the Andes after a short sojourn in Argentina. Following the First World War, many more Jews came from Russia, Poland and the Ukraine, mostly in flight from the fiendish pogroms in the Ukraine. Since 1933, the

immigration has been largely from Germany and Nazified Europe.

An organized Jewish community was established in Santiago in 1916, as the *"Centro Commercial de Beneficencia,"* which was later organized as the present *"Circulo Israelita."* The same year there was organized in Temuco, a city about 430 miles south of Santiago in a rich agricultural area, with a population of 72,000, the *"Centro Macedomico Israelita,"* the members coming for the most part from Jugoslavia.

In 1917 a meeting of representative Chilean Jews assembled in Santiago and organized the *"Primer Congreso Israelita,"* which later changed its name to the *"Primer Congreso Sionista de Chile."* This afterward became the present *"Federacion Sionista de Chile."* In Chile it may be said that Judaism and Zionism are identical; all Jews are Zionists. There are no anti- or non-Zionists.

Jewish Population Data

The Jewish population of Chile in 1900 was about 100; in 1914 before World War I, about 200. By 1930 it had reached 6,000; and in 1933, before the refugee migration began, about 10,000. The present estimated total for all Chile is about 20,000. In the capital city of Santiago, with a population of 852,000, there are now about 18,000 Jews. Valparaiso, the port city for Santiago, with 45,000 population, has about 800 Jews; Temuco about 300.

Concepcion, a city of 78,000, has about 200 Jews, and in the city of Valdivia, 48,000 population, there are also about 200 Jews. The remaining 500 Jewish persons are scattered over the long stretch of Chile in groups of two to fifty persons, in the various towns and cities along the coast.



The Hebrew Institute in Santiago de Chile

Chilean Jewish life is largely centered in Santiago. Here the Jewish communal activities are found largely in the *Circulo Israelita* building, erected in 1930 at a cost of $250,000. Here are located the offices of the Zionist Federation, and the subordinate Zionist groups, the Women's Aid Society, the several youth groups, the

Free Loan Society and the Committee for Chilean Colonization.

All organizations have quarters rent free. One room in the building seating about fifty persons, is used as a synagogue Saturday mornings. On the Holydays the large hall, seating 500, is needed for the worshippers.

The *Circulo,* as it is popularly known, has 600 supporting members. The Sephardim also have a small community center, with a school of 28 pupils and one teacher. They also pay toward the maintenance of the official rabbi of the community, Rabino I. M. Maguenzo, even though he is an Ashkenazi. The Ashkenazic school, known as the Hebrew Institute, was founded in 1933. It now has 212 pupils and nine teachers. The children attend six hours daily and study a curriculum which is Government supervised. The school is recognized as official by the Government, which grants a subvention of 80 pesos per child per year. Instruction is given in Spanish, Yiddish and Hebrew; there are also special classes for religious instruction.

Jewish "Public" School

Most of the children pay ten pesos per month. Poor children are admitted gratis; others pay up to twenty pesos per month. The deficit in the 5,600 pesos monthly budget is met by contributions from communal organizations. Children attend from four to twelve years of age, after which they enter the general Government school system. It is of interest to note that there are about 20 "non-Jewish" children in the school. It was

reported to me that the parents of these children had not been identified previously with the Jewish community, but that in the last few years, with the rise of Hitlerism, they began sending their children to the Jewish school.

Jews earn their livelihood in Santiago as manufacturers, merchants and as professionals. About one percent are engaged in the professions and over 38 percent in light industry as manufacturers. The bulk of the community, about 60 percent, is engaged in trade; less than one percent are in industry as workers.

The Jews in trade, however, do not constitute any great proportion of the total community; they are not a major factor in any economic situation, as the total Jewish population is only about two percent of the aggregate population of Santiago. There are few very wealthy Jews, but there are some who are affluent, by Chilean standards. Some Jews, holding high place in the general life of Chile who had refrained from identification with the Jewish community, met the increase of anti-Semitism by returning to take their share in carying the burdens of the community.

No Trace of Anti-Semitism

Before the rise of Hitlerism in Germany, relations between Jews and other Chileans were very cordial. Few ever thought of the Jews as a problem in Chile, for until recently they numbered only about 10,000 in a population of 4,600,000. Except for a brief press campaign in June, 1932, against some Jews who were ar-

rested for participating with non-Jews in "black exchange" transactions, nothing occurred to mar the friendly relations which existed.

Quite a number of the Jewish families who had come to Chile toward the end of the 19th Century had inter-



The Campus of the Splendid Federico Santa Maria Technological Institute (Founded and Endowed by a Former Jew) in Valparaiso, Chile

married with non-Jews. In some sections of the country, especially in the provinces, non-Jewish friends frequently attended Jewish feasts. In the schools and colleges there was no trace of anti-Semitism. Many Jewish students attended the Catholic University and still continue

to do so. There are many Jews in the Chilean army and one notable personality in the diplomatic service, Senor Benjamino Cohen, who is at present Chilean Ambassador to Bolivia. (Bolivia incidentally is the country which has a regulation denying admission to *any* Jew from *any* country. The Bolivian consul in Buenos Aires told me he could arrange a "special visa" for me, as an American citizen, if I would not stay more than five to ten days.)

The Government maintains a generally neutral attitude, in accordance with the Chilean constitution, which does not recognize any official religion (some South American countries do—the Catholic) or permit any racial distinctions. But with the expansion of Nazi power and prestige, certain members of the personnel of the Chilean ministry of Foreign Relations came to reveal a frank anti-Semitic tendency.

Nazis Extort Huge Sums

At a personal conference with a high United States authority in Chile, I was told that the Nazis carry on tremendous propaganda in Chile, which they finance largely by imposts on Germans in the country. They raise from one and a half to three million pesos monthly. Even wage-earners who receive only eight dollars (U.S.A.) per week must pay 25 percent of their wages into the "Nazi Relief Fund." The threat of terror to relatives or friends in Germany is used when necessary. Business men with connections in Germany face economic terrorization. Even Norwegians in Chile, after

the German occupation of Norway, were forced, by Nazi gangster methods, to contribute to the "Nazi Relief Fund."

Naturally the propaganda stressed the usual anti-Semitic note. It took the shape of reports, in a paid press, that Jews were responsible for starting the War, with its attendant ill-effects on Chilean export trade. There have been large and frequent mailings of anti-Semitic material to people in the middle class, including teachers, professionals and army officers.

The Nazis have carried on anti-Semitic street propaganda, operating through an organization they are fostering, *Movimiento Nacionalista de Chile,* headed by Senor Guillermo Izquierdo, who receives considerable favorable press reports in certain areas.

On May 11, 1940, Senor Ismael Matte, chief of the radio service which operates under the Ministry of the Interior, delivered a radio address heard throughout Chile, in which he attacked Jewish immigrants who had recently arrived from Germany. Certain newspapers also carried on a systematic campaign against Jews, including the important *Diario Illustrado* of Santiago. Likewise, the chain of newspapers controlled by German funds, operating the *Sociedad Periodistica del Sur,* spread anti-Semitic material throughout Chile.

Jewish Congress Organized

To meet all this propaganda some Chilean Jews organized the *Comite Contra el Antisemitismo* in October, 1936. Others at about the same time organized the

Comite Central de las Colectividad Israelita de Chile. These merged in April, 1938, but the joint enterprise did not function well, coming to an end late in 1939. How reminiscent of the tragically vain efforts to achieve genuine unity in North American Jewish life, which also faces a virulent anti-Semitism.

Finally, officers of the *Federacion Sionista de Chile* called a convention of the representatives of all important Jewish organizations in Chile. This convention created the *Comite Representativo de la Colectividad Judia de Chile,* and delegated the functional organization to a governing council of 21 members, which currently directs the work against anti-Semitism. Chilean Jewish leaders told me in Santiago they consider the *Comite Representativo* the Chilean Jewish Congress.

The Chilean Jewish Congress leaders were gratified by the visit of the representative of the Amercian Jewish Congress and the World Jewish Congress. Contacts made and friendships built should do much to facilitate the future work of these organizations on behalf of stricken Israel, with benefit to Chile and its people.

There is no Kehillah in the Santiago Jewish community, but the *Comite Representativo,* because of its membership and character, may well become the nucleus for a future Kehillah. It obtains financial support for Jewish communal institutions. It receives contributions, on a monthly basis, from 3,000 members within the community, which are supplemented by donations.

Numerous Jewish Organizations

There are 28 Jewish organizations and institutions in Santiago. Some of the more important among these, in addition to the *Comite Representativo* and *Circulo Israelita* already noted, should be mentioned. They are the *Federacion Sionista,* with 2,000 members; the Women's Zionist Organization with 900 members; the *Sephardic Comunidad,* with 600 members; the *Beneficencia Bikur Cholem,* with 500 members; the *Chevrah Kadishah,* with 700 members; and the Women's *Sociedad Beneficencia,* with 800 members. There are 16 Jewish societies in the provinces, the most important being found in the cities of Valparaiso, Concepcion and Temuco.

In addition to maintaining the local institutions in this well organized community, its members contributed to last year's United Relief Campaign, conducted by the World Jewish Congress and the Jewish Agency for Palestine, the sum of 650,000 pesos, or about $20,000 (U.S.).

Serious Refugee Situation

The refugee situation in Chile deserves extended consideration. Prior to their coming, Chilean Jews felt, as one phrased it to me, as though they dwelt in a paradise of comfort and friendliness with the general populace. Since their coming the situation has changed for the worse, not so much because of the refugees as through the scandals involved in the obtaining of visas for the refugees. For weeks the press cam-

paign and the Government debates in the Chilean Congress were such that Jews feared to read the newspapers with their glaring headlines.

In terror of concentration camps, or because of the imminent expiration of their transit visas while en route, some Jewish refugees had obtained Chilean visas by paying private premiums to those in a position to assist them in their dread emergency. A traffic was disclosed in these visas, and the Chilean consul in Great Britain was dismissed from his post. Two of the principals involved, after a few days in police custody, were expelled from Chile to Argentina. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Senor Abraham Ortega, though not personally implicated, resigned his office. Despite the reports I heard in other parts of South America, no one, Jewish or non-Jewish, has ever been or is now in jail because of the visa affair.

Naturally this affair was seized upon by the Nazi-Fascist sympathizers to intensify their anti-Semitic campaign, and the party in opposition to the Government exploited the matter politically. They criticized the administration for its liberality to Jewish immigrants, and their press carried on a vicious campaign against the Government. Their slogans declaimed that Jews were coming to take away the bread from Chilean workingmen. Previously the Government had been increasing restrictions against refugee immigration. When the scandal broke, the Government was forced to suspend immigration completely.

Jewish refugees had started to come in large numbers to Chile in 1939, following the pogrom in Germany of November 10, 1938. When they arrived, the Santiago *Comite Israelita de Socorros* gave those who needed it



Nitrate Shipping Port in Rainless City of Antofagasta, Chile

assistance, some of them up to three months. The funds for this work were raised locally. These were supplemented by small grants from HICEM, the Jewish immigrant aid society.

Refugees Become Farmers

The arrival of refugees in large numbers—several thousand in one year—into a community which now

only numbers 18,000, created serious financial strain on the community. The stream of refugees for a while nearly broke the morale of the Jewish community, but it is a vital, resilient community and it rallied to the situation, despite the severe crisis created by the visa scandal.

The anti-Jewish press yelled loudly that the refugees were flocking into Santiago, and were not going out into the country, to do agricultural work. This was not in accordance with the facts, but facts never bother anti-Semites. About twenty refugee families have started small farms in the rich agricultural area of Chile. They were aided by the *Sociedad Israelita de Colonization Agricola,* the funds being raised in Chile. At present the *Circulo Israelita* has a commission to assist refugees now in Santiago to get on the land.

Many refugees, on their own, are starting farms, on bought or rented land, and are engaging in dairying and live stock raising. Some have begun to work the forests. Agricultural possibilities in Chile are very large. The Government desires to promote land development. It extends aid to Chileans and newcomers alike, but unfortunately, the funds at the disposal of the colonization department are not large.

Some of the older Chilean Jews work *haciendas* (plantations) and *estancias* (farms) in various parts of the country. The Jewish Colonization Association does not operate, however, in Chile in the same splendid

fashion as in neighboring Argentina, so that these older *haciendados* and *estancieros* make their way without the expert technical and financial assistance of the ICA.

Could Absorb Thousands

With proper external economic cooperation, from 3,000 to 5,000 families yearly could be agriculturally established. Such is the physical situation. Politically, however, colonization and immigration are, at present, out of the question.

The general immigration policy of Chile is patterned after the national origins quota system used by the United States of America, and even if the specific restrictions against Jewish immigration were later removed, the number of immigrants would not be up to the capacity of the country until and when the Chilean Congress changes the present general statutes.

The present Government is considered liberal in local circles, but certain officials are prejudiced against Jews. Future colonization prospects will be determined of course by the Government, but the political situation will be largely shaped by the outcome of World War II.

In the ghastly and unthinkable event of Germany defeating England, large scale Jewish immigration into Chile would be impossible, should the economic tie-up between Chile and Germany continue. Until the start of the present war, the greater part of Chilean exports went to Germany, via blocked exchange. Such exchange control would enable Germany to exercise severe economic and political pressure on Chile.

It should be noted that Mexico and the United States of America are the two countries standing highest in the favor of the present Government. With the United States there are strong sentimental bonds, shaped by the similarity of democratic principles and practices. Chileans hope that the United States will recognize the common danger arising out of Nazi victory, and that economic bonds with the United States will be strengthened through loans and credits from the Export-Import Bank.

The friendly attitude of the Chilean Government toward the United States finds reflection among the Chileans. Except for the Communist segment that is constantly denouncing *Yanqui Imperialismo,* the leftists look with much sympathy on the United States Good-Neighbor policy. There is, however, little knowledge of the United States among the workers generally. Excepting those with fascist leanings, Roosevelt is liked by all, particularly the middle class.

Among the rightists, too, there is a favorable feeling toward the Good-Neighbor policy, so that the political future in Chile may readily be oriented toward the liberal policies of the United States Government. Hence Chileans in common with the rest of South America, and all the world, are closely watching the developments of the war and hopefully counting on a victory for the democracies.

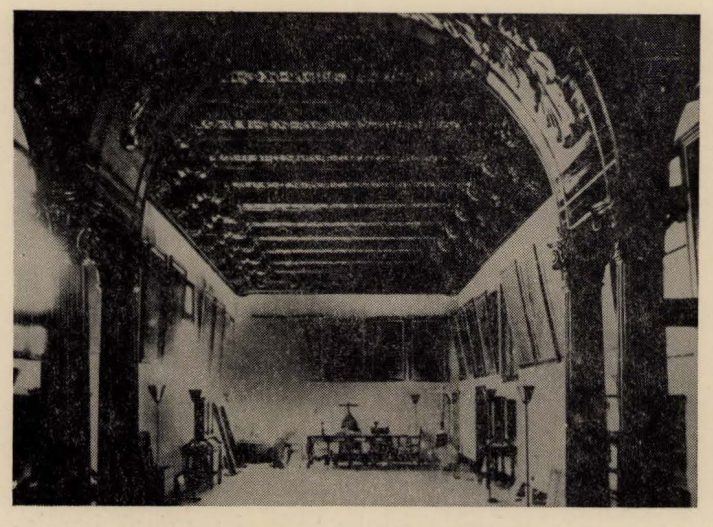
THE OLD-NEW JEWRY OF PERU

THE Jewish community of Peru is of post-World War I development, though there were many Jews in the city of Lima, capital of the great South American Spanish continental colony, as far back as 1569, when the Inquisition was established in Lima. Many Jews died for their faith in Lima *autos-da fé*. With an upsurge of emotion that carried me back three hundred years I stood on the very spot in the Hall of the Inquisition where Jewish men and women had stood to receive warrants of death by torture rather than abandon their sacred faith.

Almost breathlessly I examined trial documents, carefully preserved, which meticulously detailed the awful path from the informer's tale to the inferno of death. I could almost hear the grim halls of the dank Inquisition chamber re-echo with the toneless but sustaining *Sh'ma Yisroel* from the lips and hearts of staunch Jews being led to death. The first of the *autos-da fé* in Lima which involved Jews occurred on November 15, 1573; the last on July 17, 1806. The tribunal of the Inquisition ruled in Lima until 1813, for a dread total of 244 years.

The records show that 131 Jews were condemned by the Inquisition during this rule. On January 23,

1639, sixty-three Jews were condemned. The property of all condemned persons was, of course, confiscated to the Church. Among the estates so acquired was that of Manuel Perez, who went to the stake leaving over



The Tribunal Chamber of the Holy Inquisition in Lima, Peru

one million dollars to be divided among his torturers. This was an enormous sum by seventeenth century standards. After the 1639 holocaust, the 6,000 members of the Jewish community in Lima raised the tremendous sum of 200,000 ducats as a "gift" to the Spanish viceroy. They were not molested after that—for a while.

OLD-NEW JEWRY OF PERU

Historic City of Lima

Lima to-day is a beautiful city of 400,000 population. It may well be ranked next to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, but in its historic associations it is far richer in almost fantastic history than any other South American city. Pizarro, conqueror of the Inca Empire, founded it in 1535. It is a city where it almost never rains; from May to October it is cloudy and damp, with sometimes a foggy drizzle. That is the winter. But in the summer, from November through April it is hot; hot and dusty.

Peru is an old country, with cathedrals whose splendor rival those of Spain; its cloisters are gems of Middle Ages architecture. Lima is the seat of the oldest university in the Americas, San Marcos, founded in 1551, eighty-five years before John Harvard established his school of learning in Boston. It was strange to see the old classrooms of the university—the same as nearly four hundred years ago, with lacks in their physical plant which would drive our twentieth century faculties frantic.

I visited the classroom of a noted professor of law. It was a large, cavernous room, opening onto the central patio through a doorway which was the solitary source of light and air for the entire room. All the other walls were solid masonry. The room was so cold and clammy that students sat huddled in their jackets; the professor stood bravely lecturing in an overcoat. This was buttoned too tight to see whether the wing

collar he wore was accompanied by the professorial Prince Albert coat; it probably was.

And the huge library; that was a gem of interest. Many thousands of volumes, some of them rare works, but all stacked in accordance with their accession num-



Burros and Men on Main Street, at High Noon, Mollendo, Peru

bers! What a nightmare for a modern librarian, who would be aghast to find an edition of Aesop's Fables next to a volume of Commercial Law simply because that was the chance order in which the books were acquired. But the system must have its good points too, for has it not worked for three hundred and ninety years?

Pizarro Wrecks a Civilization

When Pizarro came to Peru he found, and ruthlessly destroyed, a culture developed by the Incas which marked the highest known degree of civilization in the western world. It was even higher than that of the Aztecs of Mexico, whose calendar was better than the Spaniards possessed at the time the Conquistadores descended on the continent. Inca life was centered in Cuzco which, for three hundred years before Pizarro, was the seat of a communistic society stretching from Colombia to Chile.

This society made complete provision for *all* the people; there was no starvation and there were no rich, for there was no private property. All manner of social welfare devices existed. But there was no freedom. Instead of liberty there was despotism. A priestcraft hierarchy ruled absolutistically, under the Inca, who was the Son of the Sun.

Pizarro imprisoned the Inca Emperor Atahualpa. After receiving a fabulous ransom in silver, Pizarro, true to type, treacherously slew his captive. The exploitation of the Indians that followed is a frightful story of Spanish rulers' depredations.

The soldiers of the Spanish crown swept through the country, taking with them missionary friars who were not servants of the Church but rather employes of the Crown. After a village feast came many promises to the populace, followed by mass baptism, with the Indians doubtless mystified at the meaning of the ceremony. A member of the San Marcos University faculty said to

me, on this point, "Despite four centuries of effort with the Indians, Christianity today is a slight veneer over Indian customs." I was reminded of a service I had attended in famous Guadalupe Church, in Mexico City, where I had observed an Indian worshipper furtively slip a small baked clay idol of Quetzalcoatl into the floral bouquet she held up for the priest's blessing.

Indians Considered Sub-Human

The Peruvian Indians were not considered human by their rulers! The College of Cardinals in Rome actually debated for half a century whether Indians, being non-human, could receive the sacrament. During the latter part of the Sixteenth Century the Pope decided they could receive the sacrament.

The Indian population, through forced labor in the high altitude mines, was cut to less than half, in the greedy haste of the "git and go" viceroys, and their brutal underlings, to strip the country of its mineral wealth. Copper is still the chief mineral. The great mines at Cerro de Pasco produce copper at exceedingly low cost, because of the rich gold and silver content of the ore.

The Cerro de Pasco district, I was told in Lima, has produced about 500 million dollars in silver alone since 1800, and this only as a by-product of the copper mining. "The Central Cordillera," said an American mining engineer to me, "is one immense vein of silver—its value beyond calculation."

But despite the vast mineral wealth of their fantastic

land, many of the Indian descendants of the Inca civilization now live in a stone-age culture. Many of them are serfs, uneducated and disease-ridden. Typhoid and dysentery are prevalent everywhere; tuberculosis is the second worst disease. It is especially prevalent along the coast. The tuberculosis rate is high because the fogs and mists of the winter spread their pall for six months of the year, without the relief brought by rain. Over a large portion of coastal Peru it very rarely, if ever, rains.

Few Qualified Voters

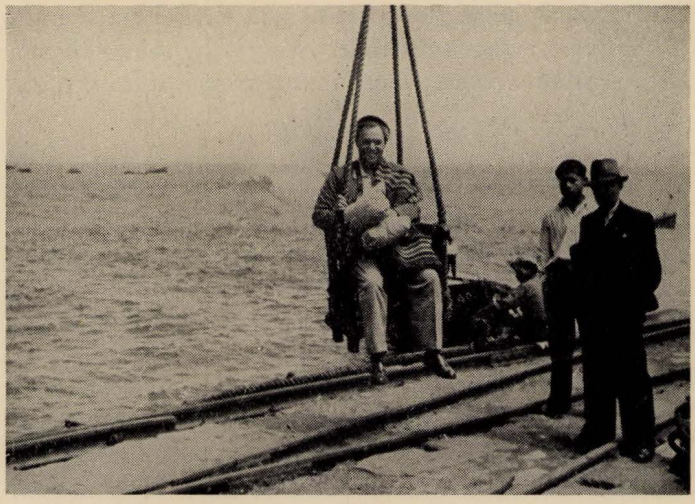
The general political level of the country, which since its independence from Spain has been plagued by graft and dominated by dictators, is shown by the fact that there are only 350,000 qualified voters in the entire Republic. Voting is restricted to men, over 21 years of age, who can read and write.

The total population of Peru is about 6,800,000. There has been no census since 1876. About 600,000 it is estimated, are white; the remainder is Indian or mestizo. The Church law prohibited single white women coming to Peru, so there was much intermarriage.

Peru is located entirely within the Tropics, with an area equal to Texas and California, though the exact border between Peru and Ecuador is in dispute. In fact, while we were in Manta, Ecuador, a nasty border skirmish took place between Ecuadorean and Peruvian frontier guards. It had all the earmarks of a made-to-order situation awaiting exacerbation by Nazi intrigue.

Peru has a coast line of about 1,400 miles, or about

the distance from New York to Miami. The coast has been most aptly described as "a snarl of rocky bays flecked with lacework of surf." Callao has recently been developed with expensive port works, making it the only decent port between the Panama Canal and



The Author en Route to Embarkation Launch via Railroad Crane Chair, at Mollendo, Peru

Valparaiso, Chile. Mollendo is the only port of entry to La Paz, capital of Bolivia. Mollendo handles much freight and passenger traffic, though it is the most dangerous port in all South America, on account of the wildly heaving sea and lack of breakwaters. Passengers

are lifted from the swaying debarkation launch by a railroad derrick; debarking is no lark.

Jewish Population Small

Today there are about 2,600 Jews living in Peru. Of these about 2,200 dwell in Lima. The others are found in the several other cities of Peru. About 500 refugees have come to Peru, most of them in the past two years, all of them from Germany.

Immigration into Peru now is impossible. Severe Governmental decrees have hermetically sealed the doors, preventing naturalized Jewish Peruanos from bringing in parents; even refugee husbands cannot obtain papers to admit their wives. Jewish persons seeking entrance to set up small factories in Peru are denied admittance, despite good credentials, experience and capital because, it is reported, those in control of the Government bureaus are unfriendly to Jewish immigration. Much of this is Nazi-inspired, so that for the past five years no visas have been granted to Jews from east European lands.

Colonization possibilities in Peru are great, physically, but the political factors are all unfavorable under the present national regime. About four years ago, a law was adopted prohibiting the vending of merchandise by what is known as the "customer peddler." As about 70 percent of the Jews earn their living in this way, the decree, if applied, would be calamitous. The authorities are not rigorous, but the Jewish merchants feel the menace of the overhanging threat.

The Lima government controls all business through a system of licensing. The intent of the licensing system is to promote handling of trade by Peruvians, but under it Peruvian Jews suffer difficulties. When seeking the license which would permit them to open a business, and thus end their jeopardized status as illegal peddlers, Jewish applicants appear to find almost insurmountable obstacles.

Community Excellently Organized

Fortunately, the Jewish community is well organized under intelligent leadership. Perhaps a bit too much organized, as there are three separate central bodies. One is for the east European Jews, another for the German Jews and the third for the Sephardic community. Efforts to amalgamate these three have not yet been successful.

The presidents of the three respective communities personally cooperate. The three came down to Callao harbor as the reception committee to meet me when I landed, and each expressed the hope for ultimate union of their bodies. Already, Zionist activity is carried on by one central body. Last year the Zionist workers, men, women and the youth, which includes an arm of the Betar (Revisionist) group, together raised 16,000 soles ($2,600) for various Palestine projects.

The cemetery, always an index of Jewish communal organization, is communally owned and conducted jointly. The principal Jewish organization is the *Union*

Israelita del Peru, founded in 1926 and given Governmental recognition in 1937.

This *Union* is of and for the Ashkenazic (east European) group. It is perhaps unique on the entire continent—north and south—as the only body with acknowledged powers of taxation of those who belong to the Jewish community. It is a *kehillah,* supported by members through graduated taxes imposed by a tax committee. Those adjudged by the committee as too poor to pay, are exempt from the minimum tax, which is 1 sole (16 cents U.S.A.) per month. Others pay, as assessed, up to 25 soles per month.

I was privileged to address an evening gathering at the *Union Israelita* building. The attendance was 250, which is not bad for a community of 2,200 persons at a meeting arranged on four hour's notice. All seemed tremendously interested in the address by a Jewish visitor from the *Estados Unidos;* a lengthy forum period followed, which severely taxed my "Pan-Americaner Yiddish." Nonetheless the officers of the *Union* were gracious enough to elect the visitor their first honorary member, and I was supplied with the prized certificate of membership in the *Kehillah* of Lima.

Kehillah Controls Community

The *kehillah* owns and operates its building,—dedicated, incidentally, in 1935 by Dr. Samuel Guy Inman, great friend of the Jewish people and noted authority on Latin America, who was in Peru at the

time on refugee problems for the United States of America authorities. This building gives free space and facilities to all Jewish organizations, including the small Jewish school, the Zionist bodies, the youth and sport societies, the women's aid society and the cooperative bank. It also houses the small synagogue chapel, used throughout the year. The ark and other ecclesiastical furniture are moved into the main auditorium (with the balcony for the women) on the High Holydays.

The *kehillah* supports the local *mohel, schochet* and rabbi; all three functions are exercised by one person. He does not serve at weddings, circumcisions, funerals, etc., unless he is shown a certificate of membership in the *kehillah* by the family. Each member carries a small identifying book, complete with photograph, and pastes his quarter-annual dues tax stamps therein. As the *kehillah* also owns the cemetery and does not permit burial therein of non-members, its control is quite complete of those who seek to be identified with the Jewish community.

There have been instances when the community has refused membership to those persons who have come to Peru with unsavory records. The president of the *Union* is Senor Max Heller, who came from Vienna in 1928. He applies himself enthusiastically to the problems of the *Union.* His colleagues are Leopold Weil, President of the *Sociedad de Beneficencia Israelita,* the German-speaking group and J. Castoriano, President of the *Colectividad Sefaradi,* the Sephardic group.

Hitlerism Promotes Propaganda

Prior to Hitler, the relationship of the Jewish community was on a friendly co-equal basis with the other elements of the Peruvian population. With the advent of Nazi propaganda, carried on openly in all Peru by the German embassy, the situation followed the usual pattern of change for the worse. A lull came with the Hitler-Stalin pact, and some favorable change in the attitude toward Jews occurred.

But in recent months the pro-fascist propaganda has been increased by both Germany and Italy. And in Peru we find a new Fascist note struck; considerable pro-Axis sentiment is being created by Japan. The Japanese wield much economic influence in Peru. I heard from the highest non-Jewish authoritative personality in all Peru, one who could know and would dare speak, that the Japanese unit of the fifth-column is real. It includes a strong military organization among the Japanese, who dwell in many key places in Peru.

Under the Peruvian constitution all except the highest Governmental posts may be held by non-Peruvians and non-citizens. In a number of cities and towns the mayors, chiefs of police, etc., are Japanese, Italian and German nationals. In 1915 the Germans constructed a port in the harbor of Sechura, to be operated by them for 25 years. The contract and lease have now expired, but the Government is making no move to ask the Germans in control of the harbor works to step out, though the Germans effectually keep out of the

harbor, and the town, all whom they consider undesirable, including Peruvians who are opposed to the present national government of Peru.

The Nazi anti-Jewish campaign circulates considerable noxious press material, including Henry Ford's "International Jew," in a simple, low-priced Spanish edition. Much vicious printed matter is in circulation. Support for the anti-Jewish movement also appeared in the pages of *El Comercio,* published in Lima and the most influential daily paper in Peru.

U. S. Medal to Lima Paper

El Comercio is designated by some as the New York *Times* of Peru. About a year ago the trustees of Columbia University, New York, awarded the Cabot gold medal to the publisher of *El Comercio* for helping to "advance sympathetic understanding among the peoples of South, Central and North America." Perhaps the trustees ought to have known more about *El Comercio* than they did when they awarded the medal to it. The award created dismay and consternation among Peruvian Jewry, who were amazed and disheartened by the action. It has been interpreted generally in Peru as an approval of the paper's policy by the United States of America.

The attention of Dr. Carl W. Ackerman, Dean of the School of Journalism, Columbia University, was drawn to the CONGRESS WEEKLY article on Peru, with its reference to the gold medal award. Professor Ackerman thereupon declared,

"It has been a long standing policy of the University not to comment on the awards made by the President and Trustees. In the field of journalism the basis for our selection is always professional achievement without reference to political policies."

"Professional achievement" forsooth. If that is the basis of recognition, may we not expect an award to Dr. Joseph Paul Goebbels, for certainly his has been the most distinctive "professional achievement" in journalism in our lifetime.

Anti-Jewish speeches have been made in the Peruvian Congress. Though the President of Peru, Don Manuel Prado, is friendly, many of his advisers are unfriendly to the Jewish people.

Report Provokes Attack

Upon my return from South America, in an address to the Administrative Committee of the American Jewish Congress, I reported that some South American countries were honeycombed with Nazism and menaced by fifth columnists. Many South American newspapers carried the story as a United Press dispatch. Thereupon Senor Calle Eskahadio, a deputy in the Peruvian Parliament—and a known anti-Semite—insultingly attacked the Lima Jewish community and assailed me vituperatively. He declared that "the Jews had no right to take part and mix in the internal matters of the country."

Seeking some propagandistic scapegoat, Senor

Eskahadio looked for a Jewish victim on whom to concentrate public condemnation. He found one in a poor Jewish tailor, who runs a bit of a repair shop, located on the plaza opposite the Presidential Palace. Reckless of the consequences inflicted on this poor man, this



Entrance to Presidential Palace, Lima Peru

malicious anti-Jewish member of the Peruvian Congress invented the fiction that "this shop was the special obesrvation point where the agents of International Jewry keep an eye on the Holy Palace."

The Jewish community cannot, or rather dare not, locally conduct a defense campaign against the anti-Jewish propaganda. Individuals can and do take action

in specific cases, but it would appear dangerous to the present weak status of the community to conduct an organized campaign against anti-Semitism. So we find the anomalous situation of an excellently organized Jewish community—placed in a position where its status might be jeopardized if it defended itself locally.

Few Government positions are available to Jews; Jewish youth in Peru (about 200) prepare for personal professional service in engineering, medicine, pharmacy, law and like activities. Craftsmen occupy a low status in Peru, offering little attractions to youth, because of the low standard of living.

With the destruction and disintegration of European Jewries, every Jewish community in South America, no matter how small, is now an important element in Jewish life, deserving nurture, support and encouragement. It would therefore appear that a great need exists for considerable counter anti-Semitic material, to be made available in good, simple Spanish, to combat the stream of Fascist propaganda now in circulation. The young Peruvian Jewish community has neither the financial capacity, the intellectual strength nor the political position to engage in this necessary work. As an outpost, and as a nucleus for a new Jewish life on the continent, it should be helped to maintain and make secure its position.

JEWISH LIFE IN ECUADOR

ECUADOR is a small country, situated on the west coast of South America, on the Equator. Its economic develpoment can perhaps be glimpsed from the statement that "the area has never been measured," (176,000 square miles is an approximate estimate, so that it is somewhat larger than California), and no census was ever taken until 1939. The population is 3,200,000.

Being on the Equator, Ecuador has but two seasons. The winter runs from December to May; it rains most of the time and it is hot! In the summer it is cooler and drier. When Ecuadoreans speak of a beautiful day they mean a *cloudy one*. In the jungle there are also only two seasons: the rainy season and the "lesser rainy" season.

Ecuador has been priest-ridden since the Spanish conquest. For a time it was even under a theocratic form of government. Until 1903, no one could live in Ecuador without the approval of the Catholic Church. To be known as a Protestant was to be subject to the danger of assault and stoning in the streets. Jews were almost unknown.

Four Jewish families came about 1904; they mark the beginning of the present Jewish community. De Haas in the 1934 edition of the "Encyclopedia of Jewish Knowledge," says this—and nothing else—of Ecuador:

"A South American republic on the Pacific Coast. There are a few Jewish families in Guayaquil." Most of the present Jewish population of Ecuador might be classified as of very recent origin. Till about twelve years ago the very few Jews in the land were principally Sephardim, from the eastern end of the Mediterranean basin. Today the Sephardic Jews number about 500 persons, located principally in Guayaquil and Quito.

The present Jewish population is estimated to be about 3,000, of whom about 1,000 reside in Quito, the capital city. Quito is located inland, in a valley 9,500 feet above sea-level, and about 300 miles from Guayaquil, the chief seaport and commercial city of the country. By train, which runs thrice weekly, the 300 mile mountain-climbing journey from Guayaquil to Quito is a two-day ride; the train runs only in daylight hours.

Comfortable Quito

Quito is today a city of 110,000 population. It is one of the three pre-conquest cities which attained a high state of culture and an advanced civilization long before the marauding Spanish conquistadores descended on it. The others were Tenochtitlan (now Mexico City) and Cuzco in Peru. The Quito climate is made comfortable by the altitude. This led to its development by the Spaniards, who were also grateful for a spot free of the tropic fevers infesting the lowlands. At the same time, its inaccessibility was prized as a barrier to the bloody raids of the British buccaneers.

Guayaquil is located on the Guayas River, about 30 miles from the mouth. The river, a mile wide at Guayaquil, is the largest on the west coast of South America. The city is a hot, tropic, dusty community, the bulk of its 135,000 population largely mestizo, resid-



Bamboo Homes in Guayaquil, Ecuador

ing in Chinese-appearing bamboo houses. The climate is enervating; the mean temperature is both awful high and awful mean. It is hard on whites until their blood is physiologically readjusted to the heat.

The Jewish population of Guayaquil is now about 1,250, of whom about 1,000 are recently arrived refugees. Until about a decade ago Guayaquil was a

tropical pesthole. Steamship passengers were not permitted to land, for fear of dangerous infections. Even today "there is some bubonic plague in the dingier quarters of the towns." Guayaquil was called the "Hell Hole of the West Coast" because yellow fever, typhoid and bubonic plague were endemic. Through the cooperation of the United States public health authorities, who feared this menace so close to the Panama Canal, and the Rockefeller Foundation, Guayaquil has been cleaned up, making decent living conditions possible.

Most Newcomers Refugees

The bulk of the Jewish immigration entered within the past four years. A large proportion of the most recently arrived refugees will probably not be able to remain residents of Ecuador, because the low economic level of the country makes difficult meeting the requirements of their entry visas, which stipulate that they work in industry or agriculture. Most of the refugees came with such professional experience as does not qualify them for general work. The tropic climate is also a genuinely serious barrier against their becoming laborers or farm hands.

Economic standards in Ecuador are indicated by the existing low wage levels. The pay rates range from one sucre (about six and a half cents U.S.) per day for a laborer, to five sucres for skilled craftsmen. A school teacher averages 160 sucres per month, or less than eleven U.S.A. dollars.

Over ninety percent of the population is Indian or mestizo; whites range up to perhaps ten percent of the population. Many of the Indians live in the equatorial jungle, where life is cheap and basic foods can be had for the picking. Beyond basic needs, the Indians don't know their needs; their wants remain very few. They live as though the twentieth century gadget civilization is yet to be invented. Some of them earn a bit by making straw hats for the North American Panama hat trade.

Panama Hats Made Here

The famed Panama hats are made in Ecuador, of jipijapa straw. Some Jews handle these in the export trade. The hats are woven by Indians on a wooden form, and about a week is required to weave the average hat. Indian women receive from ten to twenty-five cents per hat, depending on the quality of the straw and craftsmanship. Exceptionally fine hats may take many months to weave. Panama hats are made only during humid nights; work ceases at sunrise.

An illicit tourist trade exists in Indian heads—yes heads, not hats! The Jivaro Indians of Ecuador have a penchant for exercising their secret skills upon the heads of their decapitated enemies. These are shrunk to the size of a man's fist—and kept as souvenirs of the fray. Some of these are brought to the port city of Guayaquil and surreptitiously offered to tourists, who are known to buy anything—no matter how gruesome.

The Government has forbidden the traffic in human heads, for fear of encouraging murder in the jungle lands of Ecuador. But I was offered one in Manta for fifty dollars, in a furtive manner reminiscent of speak-easy days in the United States of America.



Delegation of Delighted Children Greeting the Cameraman from "Estados Unidos," at Manta, Ecuador

The Government has also forbidden private traffic in matches. It has the match monopoly. Hence travelers are warned not to bring matches into Ecuador; a mechanical cigarette lighter is as contraband as fire-arms in American cities. On the other hand, Ecuador is one country where you can buy stamps *wholesale* from

the Post Office, provided you are a licensed stamp dealer. But if you want a few stamps, the Post Office will not sell them to you. It prefers to sell at ten percent discount to the petty private trader, who, in appreciation of the privilege of serving you, most graciously licks your stamps.

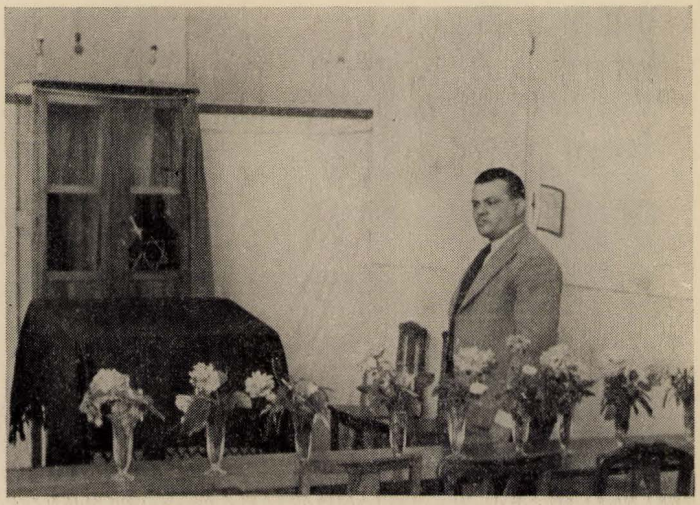
Few Small Industries

In the few small cities of Ecuador, handicrafts and some small industries exist. The Government, however, is not issuing licenses for business and industry to refugees who have entered on other type visas, though a few have been authorized to establish small enterprises. These include a small paint manufactory, a paper bag factory, and two textile weaving plants. A few Jews are also engaged in the interior in gold mining. Ecuador produces about 60,000 ounces of gold annually.

Some of the refugees have found positions as teachers in the state school system; primary education is compulsory to the age of twelve. One refugee, from Italy, is the calisthenics instructor of the Ecuadorean army. There are also a few Jews in Government service. The Government has been neutral in its attitude toward Jews generally, as they constitute less than one-tenth of one percent of the population.

German economic influence in Ecuador is large and the native friendly feeling has been disturbed by Nazi-inspired items in the press attacking Jews. These attacks take the line that if England defeats Germany, Jews will get control of Ecuadorean industry, with dire results

to the workers. The Ecuadoreans have not forgotten that until recent years peonage was the rule for labor. "Today," one official said to me in Guayaquil, "the Ecuadorean workingman can labor for whom he pleases."



Senor Max Wasserman in the Small Chapel in Guayaquil, Ecuador

Nazi-Inspired Attacks

The entire industrial group numbers about 20,000 workers in all Ecuador, but they constitute a large element among the newspaper readers of the country. Hence Senor Max Wasserman, merchant in Guayaquil and communal leader, resident in Ecuador for fourteen

years, seeks to counteract these press attacks with statements of the truth. But there is no organized Jewish communal effort in this connection.

There is very little organization of any type among the Jews in Ecuador. There are two small synagogues in Quito and a chapel, seating 25 persons, in Guayaquil. There is a small synagogue in Ambato, which is an industrial-agricultural center of about 19,000 population, with perhaps 250 Jews. Ambato is known as "the garden city of Ecuador," because of its temperate climate and lovely home gardens.

There is no Jewish religious functionary in Guayaquil. The community needs and has asked me to help them obtain some one person qualified to act, among other capacities, as *mohel, hazan,* rabbi and teacher of children, of whom there are fifteen. These children now receive meagre, unorganized tuition in Jewish history and religious practices. The community wishes to regularize the instruction.

Guayaquil has a small Zionist society and a social club, with about a hundred members, which meets in rented quarters, with restaurant attached. (One of the members pleaded with me to help the community obtain the name of a responsible American shipper of herring.) Each of the Jewish communities owns cemetery space; that of Guayaquil has space for perhaps twenty interments, thus giving a clear index of the tiny size of the community. One of the recent interments therein is

of a harried refugee who died shortly after arrival in Guayaquil, following a hazardous journey around the globe.

Mass Immigration Possibilities

Back in 1933 a *Comite Internacional de Immigracion* was organized in Paris to study possibilities for Jewish immigration to Ecuador. The committee did some surveying, and compiled some data. They found the authorities ready to welcome Jewish enterprise, which they hoped would bring to Ecuador the benefits of Jewish capital and labor, as had been brought to subtropical Palestine. The committee thought the land eminently suitable for Jewish mass immigration. Except as a last resort, I do not join in their enthusiasm, for there are lands with equal immigration potentialities which possess more equable physiographic and climatologic conditions.

At any rate, in November, 1935, the *Comite* and the Government entered into a thirty year contract, under which the *Comite* received a free grant of about 500,000 hectares (about 1¼ million acres) for development by European immigrants. Three years tax exemption, and citizenship after one year, are among the liberal terms of the contract. The lands unused by 1965 will revert to the Government. With Nazi propaganda growing stronger in Ecuador and the economic position of the *Comite* in Paris weakening, little has resulted to date from the concession.

President del Rio Friendly

Senor Max Wasserman has been acting as the HICEM representative in the port city of Guayaquil. Until about a year and half ago the Joint Distribution Committee sent fifty dollars monthly for refugee assist-



Green Gold—Loading Bananas by the Million onto Steamer at Guayaquil, Ecuador

ance. What help is now needed the community supplies from its own resources, for the inflow of refugees is a tiny trickle. It is hoped that through friendly contacts with Dr. Arroya del Rio, recently inaugurated president of the Republic of Ecuador, permission will be obtained for admitting trained Jewish craftsmen, to the number

of five hundred, because of the great economic benefits such immigrants can bring to Ecuador. It is also hoped to obtain transit visas for several hundred refugees, en route to the United States of America, with permission to stay in Ecuador until their United States quota numbers are reached.

Between the tropic coastal zone and the cool highlands, one can grow almost anything in Ecuador, but access to markets is difficult and costly, because roads are few and maintenance costly. When the present primitive pre-Columbus conditions have been corrected, Ecuador has much to offer. On the whole, however, the immigration and colonization possibilities of Ecuador are not very favorable because of the limited material resources of the country and the difficult climatic conditions. But these conditions are subject, within a measure, to modern economic and technologic controls. Hence Ecuador should not be overloked in a program for colonization—after the war.

THE JEWS OF COLOMBIA

COLOMBIA is one of the northern republics of South America; the only one bordering on both the Atlantic and the Pacific. Its area is about 477,000 square miles, or, about ten times the size of New York State; and its population is about 8,700,000, of whom about twenty percent are whites. The Jewish population totals about 7,500, and is concentrated principally in Bogota, the capital, Barranquilla, Cartagena and Buenaventura, the port cities, and Cali, the chief commercial city on the Pacific side.

Colombia is an equatorial country, but the climate is modified favorably by the high altitudes, for the great Andean mountain ranges cut up the country with three high spurs, giving the terrain wide variations in climate. These mountains, however, add almost insuperable obstacles to commercial and industrial development, making highway and railway construction costly to construct and burdensome to maintain.

Bogota, the capital, is located deep inland and on a plateau 8,600 feet above the sea. The climate is so cool that winter-weight clothing is worn the year round, though Bogota is less than five degrees north of the Equator. The population is about 230,000. About 3,000 are Jewish, mainly of Russian, Polish and Rumanian origin. Some came about 1910, but most

of them after the close of World War I. There are about 1,000 refugees in Bogota, who arrived in considerable numbers during 1939.

The Bogota Jewish community also includes a number of Sephardic Jews, who maintain identification separate from the Ashkenazic group. The latter do not have a synagogue and use a private home for their Sabbath and Holiday services. Unfortunately the small community, made up of heterogeneous elements, has not resolved its discords; all efforts to create a central Jewish organization have, as yet, been unsuccessful.

Only a small proportion of the community observe *Kashruth,* though there is one religious functionary in Bogota who serves as *mohel* and *shochet.* There is no organized Jewish religious instruction for the children, who attend private schools for their general education. Under the Constitution of Colombia, the national religion is Roman Catholic. "All teaching in the public schools must be in conformity with the Roman Catholic religion" but it should be made clear that there is freedom for other creeds, provided these "do not contravene Christian morals or law."

Bogotans Customer Peddlers

The languages spoken among the Jews are Spanish and Yiddish, except that few of the Sephardim speak Yiddish. Most of the Bogotan Jews are engaged in trade as merchants and "customer peddlers," though they have not yet evinced enough organizing ability, as have other South American communities, to establish

cooperatives to facilitate their enterprise. There are less than ten Jewish professional men in Bogota; these include five doctors, three dentists and one architect.

The most significant Jewish contribution to the field of Colombian literature was made two generations ago by Jorge Isaacs, born in Cali, and author of many beautiful poems and novels. His mother was a Colombian Catholic; his father an English Jew. His great novel *Maria* was published in 1867; an English translation appeared in America in 1890. Though the book appeared in the days when the books-of-the-month and other mass production techniques did not exist, its record dims the greatest of our own day. It created a sensation throughout the Spanish literary world; over 8,000,000 copies were printed. Critics acclaimed this delightful tale of Catholic-Jewish life in Colombia a "mountain peak of classic literature."

An American appraisal declared that "it has achieved undisputed position in the front ranks of the world's literature." Another critic rhapsodically wrote, "Here truth is contemplated by a man of genius, and is exhibited with an art that conceals itself in simplicity."

Barranquilla Enterprising Port

Barranquilla is the major Colombian seaport, on the Caribbean sea, 450 miles due north of Bogota. The journey from Bogota to the port takes about nine days because of the difficult topography and need for frequent transit changes. By plane the trip takes less than three hours. No wonder Colombia was the first South Ameri-

can country to establish commercial air transport. Barranquilla is a city of about 150,000 population and has over 500 luxurious modern villas, built by North American engineering enterprise, located on an elevation overlooking the city and the majestic Magdalena River, the main artery of transport in all Colombia.



Wood Burning Stern-Wheeler (Made in U.S.A.) on the Magdalena River, Barranquilla, Colombia

There are about two thousand Jews in this progressive community, of whom about six hundred are Sephardim. Some of them are well established industrialists, operating fairly large rayon, silk and woolen textile plants. Most prominent among the Sephardim

is the former Syrian, Senor Elios Muvdi. He is the leading real estate developer of the city and is recognized as its most generous philanthropist. The Jewish community as a whole is moderately well off, with the bulk making a fair living in trade and industry. Except for a very few old-timers engaged in medicine and dentistry, there are no professionals, because under a recent non-retroactive law none is allowed to practice except Colombia born. The community is as yet too young to furnish graduates from the National University at Bogota, which has splendid professional schools.

Seventeenth Century Cartagena

Another segment of Jewish life is found in the Caribbean port city of Cartagena, one of the most interesting cities in all South America. The present Jewish population is about 500 persons, mostly of recent origin. The community possesses an old cemetery, for Cartagena was the seat of Jewish life early in the Seventeenth Century. Cartagena was made the seat of a tribunal of the Inquisition in 1610, to guard the territory of New Granada against heresy and "Judaizing."

This tribunal continued in operation until 1819, when it was abolished by order of Simon Bolivar, the liberator. During its reign about 800 persons were brought to the final stage of condemnation. The records have not been studied as to the proportion who were Marranos. Today Cartagena is an active tropic port of 120,000 population, kept busy as the terminus of the oil pipe line which brings valuable petroleum products to the docks from 300 miles distant Barranca Bermeja.

Though Medellin is the second city of Colombia, with its 171,000 population, it is inland and off the beaten path of the hurried traveler. But if a fraction is true of what a deck-chair companion told me one moonlit night as we steamed northward, over the phosphorescent iridescence of the slowly swaying Caribbean, it must be an American Shangri-La. "Here is a city," he said, "where spring flows on the whole year through, on a sheltered plateau a mile in the sky."

Medellin—"Jewish" City

It is both an agricultural and industrial center. Colmobians swear that Medillin coffee is the mildest, finest, most aromatic in the world—and only in Medellin do they know how to prepare the bean and the brew. I was sold on Medellin that moonlit night; it remains indelibly recorded in my "Notes for Future Trips." Tomlinson, in his recent *New Roads to Riches,* has whetted my tourist appetite still further, for he says, "Medellin is old Spanish America, the only genuine Spanish America on the continent. No Indians or Negroes in this valley."

And then he makes this historically fascinating assertion that ought to send some Jewish research fellow packing— "All are devout Catholics, especially the Spanish Jews. Medellin is not only a Spanish city but a Jewish city." What an opportunity for a genealogist, —which Jewish foundation will give the subvention? But some of our proud *Norte Americano Judios,* who

control foundation funds, may not like Tomlinson's concluding word, "Most of them, although Jews by race, are Catholics by religion."

Cali, a city on the Pacific slope, with a population of about 160,000, lies in the Cauca valley, at 3,400 feet altitude, in one of the most productive areas of Colombia. It is the chief western commercial city, with a Jewish population of about 800 persons.

The refugees who have come to the Cali area have created some difficulties through their concentration in merchandising. As one "old time" Cali Jew explained it to me, "They have surfeited the community with small shops."

Cali Has Only Synagogue

Cali happens to be the best organized Jewish community in all Colombia, with the only synagogue in the country. This synagogue, which also serves as a social center, is maintained by the Sephardic group, who in 1928 organized the *Sociedad Israelita de Beneficencia Sefaradi.* Most of them came from Syria, Turkey and Palestine.

This group now numbers about 300 persons. They maintain a cemetery, jointly with the Ashkenazim. They also make their synagogue available to the German refugee group, who now total about 200 and include many pious folk. The Ashkenazic group organized their fraternal benevolent society in 1932, called the *Sociedad Hebria de Socorro.* The two communities, however, have not succeeded in establishing any school

for the Jewish children, partly for lack of teacher and funds, and partly because, as a comparatively new community, there are not many school-age children.

Immigration Severely Restricted

There is little likelihood of much communal growth for the duration of the war, because Jewish immigration was severely restricted on January 1, 1940. Only skilled technicians, coming with certificates of necessity for Colombian industry, are now admitted, and then only for a limited period. Two factors contributed to this closing of the gates. One was the spread of Nazi propaganda, which charged in the press and by a whispering campaign that the "Jewish invasion of refugees" endangered the bread of Colombian workers, adding that "the clever Jews will oust the Colombian merchants."

The other factor arose from the mess produced by a Colombian consul in a central European land who sold about 1,000 visas for prices ranging from $100 upward. When the Goverment discovered the traffic, it cancelled outstanding visas and ordered that all visas, from any part of the world, must originate in Bogota, the capital. Whereas formerly immigrants entering Colombia were required to deposit with the authorities 200 pesos, for two years, the Government further restricted immigration by raising the required deposit to 1,000 pesos.

The Government, on the whole, is very liberal and in full accord with the Good-Neighbor policy of President Roosevelt. The people generally are cordial to the

United States of America, and call Roosevelt *"El Papa."* The democratic spirit is widely prevalent, with freedom of assembly, speech and press. Only a very small percentage of officialdom is pro-Nazi minded. But Nazi propaganda stressed the rising tide of refugees, who first began coming in 1936, and in larger numbers in 1939. Almost every ship that docked that year brought twenty to thirty refugees, who were forced to stay in the cities because there is no colonization organization, such as ICA, at work in Colombia.

Goverment Favors Farmers

The Government stood ready to supply land, for millions of fertile acres are available for colonization, but access and transport facilities were lacking, and the Government was without resources to build the roads through the jungle and mountains needed to start new farming areas.

In all of Colombia, I was told in Barranquilla, there are about ten Jewish families who have established themselves as farmers. On their haciendas, none of which is large, they grow principally sugar cane, corn and rice. They employ peons to assist them and pay the prevailing rate, which is about one peso (fifty cents) per day, plus keep.

But colonization projects are practicable, after the end of the war, provided, of course, Nazism is destroyed and its malign influences extirpated. Literally there is room for millions of immigrants in Colombia, with a vast virgin territory. Every project would have to be

under the skilled guidance of a responsible body, with adequate finances and intelligent leadership. All, however, depends upon the outcome of the war and the cessation of Nazi-inspired anti-Jewish propaganda.



Charcoal Burner's Jungle Home, Surroundings Almost pre-Columbus, near Buenaventura, Colombia

There is no organized effort made by the Jewish communities in Colombia to meet the anti-Semitic attacks. The geographic setting helps to keep the several groups isolated—and the present lack of internal cohesion militates against an early improvement in the situation. Individual Jews personally take some matters in hand, but their efforts are frequently frustrated by

the resentment produced by the misdeeds of a couple of foul Jews personally involved in local immigration irregularities.

Permit to Build Refused

Shortly before I was in Colombia, the Bogotans finally achieved sufficient unity to plan for the erection of a Jewish communal center, with space for a small synagogue, school and social facilities. The Government authority with jurisdiction over such projects was asked for permission to proceed. He scornfully said, "Go see Jaime .....," one of the Jews involved in the immigration scandal. Bogotan Jewry understood this to mean that permission to build was refused. The misdeeds of Jaime ..... had blocked the way to Jewish progress. This same Jaime (pronounced Chaime), I was told by an indignant Bogota Jew, somehow managed to open a large business in Bogota and now refuses to have any contacts with Jewish life or help in any Jewish cause.

Zionism is one of the causes in which Colombian Jews are interested, but their enthusiasm comes and goes in waves, as engendered by the representative of Palestine projects who happens to come to this part of the continent. On the whole, however, no important Jew in Colombia refuses to be identified with the Jewish community. This was gratifying to find, after my distressing observations in Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires and Santiago.

The Colombian Jewish communities have yet to find

themselves. They will yet achieve unity and cohesiveness, for they are but new. They are blessed with a Government genuinely dedicated to the high principles of democracy, which clearly recognizes that the country's resources need human capital and intellectual capital to develop their tremendous potentialities.

VENEZUELAN JEWRY

VENEZUELA is one of the Caribbean Sea countries of South America. It has a coast line of 1,750 miles. The area of the Republic is about 394,000 square miles. Its name, which means "Little Venice," was given to it by the early Spanish explorers because the Indian villages located on Lake Maracaibo were reminiscent of Venice. Lake Maracaibo, which has an area of about 8,000 square miles and is navigable throughout by ocean-going steamers, is an inland lake connected to the Caribbean Sea by a strait about thirty-four miles long. It is the scene of the chief part of Venezuela's famed oil industry.

The city of Maracaibo is the principal port for oil export. Its population of 110,000 live in a damp, hot climate. The temperature averages 82° F., and the humidity makes this mean temperature even worse by ranging around 95 percent saturation during the year. The rainfall is very heavy throughout the country and has produced over a thousand river systems. The principal stream is the famed Orinoco River. In all of Venezuela there are about six thousand miles of navigable river systems, which provide one of the principal sources of transportation.

The population is estimated at about three and a half million. Tourists approach Venezuela principally

through La Guaira, a port city located on a beautiful harbor, one of the finest in the world. This harbor is ringed around by mountains like Rio de Janeiro. The population of La Guaira is 9,000; the city is connected to Caracas by an electric railway which makes the twenty-three mile journey in about an hour and half. The line system ascends mountains, some 9,000 feet high, affording prospects and vistas of entrancing mountain scenery in rare combination with the brilliant blue of the Caribbean Sea.

Caracas Pleasant Capital

Caracas, the capital, with a population of about 300,000, was founded by the Spaniards in 1567. As it is located at an altitude of about 3,000 feet, it has a fairly pleasant climate even though located in the Torrid Zone. The city is provided with excellent municipal facilities and has quite a number of industrial establishments.

The largest manufacturing center in Venezuela is Valencia, which is about one hundred miles distant from Caracas, and has a population of about 50,000. The climate here is delightful and the atmosphere reminiscent of old Spain. Valencia is the third largest city in the Republic.

Venezuela is one of the rare countries of the world which is without debt, either internally or externally. This is due to a combination of circumstances revolving largely around the discovery and development of oil in the Lake Maracaibo district. This area ranks among

the most productive in the world and has made Venezuela the third largest oil producing country. Though the deposits are not large it is of interest to note that Venezuela also exports asphalt, derived principally from a hot asphalt lake located at Guanoco, which is about one thousand acres in extent.

Coffee and Cocoa Exported

The principal agricultural products of the country are coffee and cacao. Together they make up a large part of the exports. The average coffee production is about one million bags, of 132 pounds each. The production comes from about 450 million coffee bearing trees. As Venezuela is located in the Torrid Zone, it is not surprising to find great floral riches, indicative of which is the identification of nearly seven hundred varieties of orchids.

The forest resources of Venezuela are tremendous, nearly half the country being covered by jungle growth in which six hundred different species of woods have been identified.

There is a comparatively large amount of manufacturing and industrial activity in the country, due to the ready availablility of hydro-electric power. Labor enjoys the protection of good social laws. Foreign employers must have on their staff, both in office and factory, not less than 75 percent Venezuelans.

The greatest need of the country is transportation facilities. Large sections have not been penetrated by

railways and highways; until this has been done the enormous economic potentialities of the country must wait development.

Venezuela Dictator Ruled

Columbus first sighted the coast of Venezuela in 1498; about thirty years later the city of Maracaibo was founded. Sir Walter Raleigh sailed up the Orinoco River seeking the elusive *El Dorado.* Francisco Miranda launched his first attempt at independence from Spain in 1806, the expedition embarking from New York City under his leadership. In 1811 independence from Spain was proclaimed, but was not recognized by that country until 1845. After liberation from Spain by Bolivar and his colleagues, Venezeula fell for a century under the rule of dictators, the last of whom was the famous General Juan Vicente Gomez, whose death in 1935 ended the rule of dictatorship in Venezuela. He was the type of Latin American autocratic ruler popularly known as the *caudillo,* the man on horesback.

It is of interest to note that German financial involvements in the Caribbean area have been numerous. It is also of concern to point out that Germany did not hesitate to back up her claims by military force. Germany sent an armed force to Nicaragua in 1878, and to Haiti twenty years later. Then came, in 1902, certain complex financial claims against Venezuela. England and Italy, which also had claims, joined Germany in blockading the country. Theodore Roosevelt was President of the United States. When German

warships fired on the San Carlos fortifications, he expressed American indignation by threatening Germany with the dispatch of Admiral Dewey's fleet if German vessels did not leave Venezuelan waters. Germany then submitted the matter to the International Court at the Hague, where all claims were satisfactorily arbitrated.

Jewish Records Obscure

The early history of Jewish life in Venezuela is quite obscure. The records indicate that the official Government census in 1873 showed 30 Jews living in the country. By the time of the 1891 census there were 247 Jews in the country. In 1917 the Jewish population had reached a total of about 500. They were mostly Sephardim from the Mediterranean Basin, engaged in shopkeeping and peddling, with some few owning and operating cattle ranches in the pastoral area.

Less than 200 Jews dwelt in Caracas. They were engaged principally in commercial activity but neither in Caracas nor in any other community in Venezuela was there a synagogue. The 1936 Government census showed Caracas with a population of 135,000, of whom 253 were Jews.

In the entire country at that time the total Jewish population was 882. It is estimated that the present Jewish population of Venezuela is about 1,500. Their activity follows the general pattern of Jewish life in the tropical sections of South America. They cooperate with the World Jewish Congress and the Jewish Agency in Palestine in the annual campaign for the upbuilding

of Palestine and the succor of Jews caught in the war-stricken areas.

The economic potentialities awaiting development in Venezuela are tremendous. There is no doubt that following the end of the Second World War, the administration of the country will recognize the great opportunities that peace will present by opening its frontiers to development. In this program it is hoped that Jewish participation will be generously welcomed by the liberal forces of Venezuela.

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