

the same thing can be said of almost every other modern tongue—to recognize that it, too, in the strict and literal interpretation of that term, is but a jargon, a composite mixture, the organized resultant of a vast amalgam of words and expressions brought together from out of the diverse forms of speech, ancient and modern, living and dead, of almost all the folk of the earth. We should have to object to English then, and to pretty much every other tongue, if we were to make Yiddish a subject of ostracism among languages on the ground simply or chiefly that it is a jargon.

Those of our local co-religionists, be it held then clearly in mind, on the two considerations indicated, have been asking no more than they have the right to ask in their application to the School Board.

But I would submit to their careful reflection at the same time, and to that of all other folk of alien stock as well, that there are higher considerations than "rights" of this character. It is the test of a higher and a nobler right many a time to forego—magnanimously to waive—what we are pleased to call and which may even be conceded to be "rights." And I would call upon these co-religionists of ours just now to manifest such magnanimity and come under the rule of the "higher rights."

The citizens of this land are lacking most deplorably at present—and this European war has served strongly to demonstrate it—in a proper "national" sense and spirit, a proper (if you will) "American" sense and spirit. The people of this country have not as yet, and need most urgently and rapidly to build up and develop an all-pervading and pervasive "Americanism," giving definite color and character—unto the very last element of their being—to all who here establish themselves. There is altogether too much hyphenism in our present Americanism. We are split up into a congeries of many nations, instead of forming one uniform nation as we should. We have our foreign settlements in almost all of our large cities, speaking their foreign tongues, preserving their foreign manners and habits of life, so that, going among them, one has the complete illusion of being in some town of Italy or Poland or Hungary or Slavonia instead of in some city of the United States.

It might, indeed, be asking and expecting too much and be even cruel to want these people at once to lay off their foreign manners and to take up with ways that are strange to them and become from the outset American in life and spirit; but it is not asking too much that they be put on the way to becoming thus American at the earliest reasonable moment. It is just this, however, that we are, to a quite culpable extent, neglecting to do. And this very policy of our public schools, with regard to instruction in foreign tongues, is an instance in point. There is nothing that so develops and deepens, vitalizes and intensifies a national consciousness as a language native to a people. There is nothing, on the other hand, that will so militate against such a consciousness as adherence to and persistence in the use of some other tongue. But yet here are we in our schools encouraging the persistence in just such tongues. If I had my way, and I say this advisedly in the full consciousness of the storm of objection it is likely to raise, I would not have a single foreign language taught in any of our schools below the high school, and I will be frank and say that I am not unmindful either, when I say this, of the German language and any peculiar claims it may have to consideration in this city. I admire the German language. It is a glorious language and has a rich and noble literature. And yet I see no occasion for teaching it, save for cultural purposes, as should be the case likewise with any other cultural language with a rich literature, in any other but the classes of our high schools. On strictly American grounds, with the end in mind of an Americanism as deep and intense as possible to be engendered in our youth at school at the earliest moment possible and taking possession of the whole field of their consciousness with the sense that nationally they are American and nothing else, I would object to any other language but that which has become natural and native to our citizenship. A foreign language as a household language tends to perpetuate foreignism, tends to color thought and feeling with a foreign tinge and to make for a divided national allegiance and loyalty instead of that alle-

giance and loyalty, single and undivided, which alone can mark the true citizen.

My appeal then is to them that are asking that our public schools give recognition to Yiddish, even in the limited degree that is asked. There is not, there never should be any hyphenism in Judaism. We can be Jews, most loyal and devoted Jews, religiously, even at the same moment that we are Americans, most loyal and devoted Americans nationally; however, we cannot be these co-incidentally if we persist in any form of foreignism. A religion, whatever it may be—since these United States, thank God, has no national religion—can

BROWNSVILLE, A PROGRESSIVE COMMUNITY

Isaac Allen

New York

The Matzoth Fund, or, as it is known in Hebrew, "Mo-os Chittim," is an old institution popular among the Jews throughout the world and in every Jewish community a fund is raised to provide the poor with all the necessities for the Passover.

Brownsville, like every other Jewish community, had such fund raised before every Passover and distributed among the poor in cash and in provisions, but there was no centralized agency for either the collection or the distribution of the funds. Every congregation, charitable society, or even clubs of young men, were wont to raise funds and distribute them to those who applied for assistance. The result was that many professional "schnorers" were getting money and provisions from several organizations while many deserving poor would go hungry on the Passover because of their inability to attract attention to their own misery.

About two years ago there was organized in Brownsville a society known as Adath Israel of Brownsville and East New York, whose principal activity consists in providing a burial place and the defraying of funeral expenses for its members and their families who by reason of their advanced age are not taken in or because of their inability to pay the excessive dues cannot join other organizations and belong to our Society for three dollars per year. This organization has now a mem-

bership of more than eight hundred, among whom may be counted many of the well-known Bale-Battim of the community. At a small conference of the directors of the Adath Israel held a few weeks ago it was decided to attempt the collection and distribution of Mo-os Chittim. With that end in view, the various organizations which had in former years collected such funds were visited and their co-operation in the distribution of Mo-os Chittim sought. While the co-operation of all organizations has not yet been secured, the greater number have entered into an arrangement which permits each organization to do its own collecting, but establishes one central agency for the distribution of funds, so that some control may be had which would prevent some from getting more than they are entitled to and others going without any assistance whatever.

Thus far the Adath Israel Committee alone has raised through its own efforts more than \$2000 and a conservative estimate of the total would be \$5000, which it is hoped will be sufficient to provide for every family whose want may be made known to the Central organization.

The first venture of the Adath Israel in the direction of co-operation having been fairly successful, an attempt to federate the various charities in the community will soon be made.