

# Pittsburgh Leads in Percentage of Children Receiving Jewish Education

Pittsburgh stands above and away from any other leading city in the Eastern part of the country in the percentage of Jewish children who receive religious education, either in the Sunday or daily schools or by private instruction.

In this city 60 per cent. of the Jewish boys and girls receive a sectarian education of some kind, whereas in Detroit the percentage is 50 per cent.; in Cleveland, 45 per cent.; in Boston, 40 per cent.; in Philadelphia, 39 per cent.; in New York, 30 per cent.; in Baltimore, 30 per cent., and in Chicago, 21 per cent.

The figures were given out this week by the National Jewish Education Committee of which Prof. I. A. Abrams, principal of the Hebrew Institute of Pittsburgh, is a director.

In Pittsburgh, it is estimated, there are 9,463 Jewish children and 5,100 of them receive religious training. In Chicago there are approximately 51,000 Jewish boys and girls and 11,000 of them are pupils in a daily, or Sunday Jewish School or receive private instruction.

The steadily growing enthusiasm in the plans for the promotion of Jewish education throughout the country is commented upon by the committee which points out activities in various cities as stirring evidence of the genuine interest being displayed in the educational movement.

Chicago, for instance, proposes to consolidate present schools, increase educational influence and provide for more pupils and schools; to enlarge efforts in extension of education for the masses of children, and to establish secondary and higher Jewish schools for the Jewish youth and the training of Jewish extension teachers and leaders.

In Philadelphia the educational department of the Federation of Jewish Charities will stage a drive for \$500,000 for educational buildings in the Fall. Biblical moving pictures were shown at entertainments for children which attracted 5,500 boys and girls on two days. In Pittsburgh, during the last 16 weeks there was an average attendance of 2,600 every Sunday at similar gatherings for children. Of 50,000 Jewish children in Philadelphia, 19,387 study Jewish history, the Bible and Jewish literature.

In order to stimulate better attendance in the Hebrew schools in New York, the Jewish Educational Association has offered a series of awards to pupils of record attendance. Two thousand prizes are offered which include certificates, medals and scholarships entitling the winner to a two weeks vacation in a Jewish summer camp. The New York Jewish Education Association has recently raised \$500,000 for the purpose of improving the present educational

facilities in that city. Israel Unterburg, president of the Association, has donated \$200,000 for a building for the Hebrew Teachers Institute.

Pittsburgh is expected to follow, so far as possible, other cities in certain steps taken to advance Jewish education. An important step, which is expected to exercise a considerable influence on the music curriculum of Hebrew schools has just been taken by the Bureau of Jewish Education of New York in the organization of a choir of 1,000 voices. This is a practical demonstration of the value of Jewish music in the Hebrew school curriculum, appreciation of which has been steadily growing during the last 20 years.

Two decades ago, "Jewish music, in the olden Talmud Torahs," consisted of the Haftorah accents and the Brochos. Then, as children's services came to be an established feature in the modern schools, the need for more music was felt, and a number of prayers with simple melodies formed the nucleus of the new course in Jewish music in the schools.

During the past ten years quite a number of Hebrew schools and Talmud Torahs have introduced Jewish music into their regular curriculum. With the systematic celebration of the Jewish festivals in the schools on a more elaborate scale, holiday melodies were also added to the former nucleus. Then during the past few years, Palestine and Palestinian melodies have taken their place side by side with the other.

A number of the larger schools are now beginning to spend fair sums of money for instruction in Jewish music and maintain school choirs in addition to giving class room training.

In Boston the new building of the Hebrew Teachers College was dedicated April 12.

Dr. Nisson Touroff has accepted the offer of the New York Agudath Hamorim to become the editor of the Hebrew Pedagogical Journal "Shvilo Hachninuch." There will be five issues a year, the first appearing about Shevouth. This is the first serious attempt to have a Hebrew pedagogical magazine in this country. Dr. Touroff who, for several years, was editor of the Hachninuch printed in Palestine, was considered by the Agudath Hamorium, of New York, as the man best fitted to start such a journal in this country. Many writers of note have promised their hearty cooperation.

Mr. Abrams leaves this week to attend a conference Sunday of the associate staff of the Bureau of Jewish Education. Reports on the work and progress of the organization in the last year; the organization of a Jewish educational council and the publication of a monthly Jewish educational news bulletin will be discussed.