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He cited the Philadelphia practice of mixing no more than fourteen pounds at any given time.

⁴⁸ *B. J. Tr. B.*, 2, pp. 15-16; *An. Ch. Tr. Min.*, Mar. 18, 1838; Feb. 10, 1839.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 9, 23, 1840. In 1841 Anshe Chesed wished to build an oven in the synagogue yard and bake the matzoth itself. The project however failed. *Ibid.*, Oct. 24, Nov. 7, 1841; Jan. 18, 1842. At Shearith Israel earlier, in 1806, a similar proposal was made but we are unable to say whether the plan was carried out or not. Cf. *Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, II, 43, 2nd numbering.

⁵⁰ Cf., e. g., *An. Ch. Tr. Min.*, Jan. 31, 1843; *Em. Min.*, Mar. 1, 1846.

⁵¹ *Min. United Germ.-Jew. Comm.*, Feb. 24, Mar. 1, 18, 1846.

⁵² It is quite possible that a machine was used by Moses S. Cohen as early as 1845. The source for this (*An. Ch. Tr. Min.*, Feb. 11, 16, 1845) is not quite clear. In the early Fifties Cohen advertised his machine-made matzoth using a crude drawing of his machine. Cf., e. g., *Asm.*, V, 232.

⁵³ *Occ.*, VII, 522 ff.; *Asm.*, I, 93; III, 118; Eisenstein, *Pinkas*, op. cit.

⁵⁴ *An. Ch. Tr. Min.*, Feb. 19, 26, 1854.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Jan. 27, Feb. 5, 14, 1856.

⁵⁶ This accounts for the fact that several New York congregations combined in the 1850s to purchase together and distribute matzoth for the poor, a topic which is discussed above, pp. 404 ff. By this time the bakers gave no free matzoth to the synagogues and the poor had to be supplied by other means.

The price of matzoth in New York City at various times was as follows:

1824 — 6 cents per lb. (*Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, IV, 141).

1840 — 7 cents per lb. (*An. Ch. Tr. Min.*, Feb. 23, 1840).

1841 — 8 cents per lb. (*Ibid.*, Feb. 28, 1841).

1843 — 6, 6½, 7 cents;

8 cents for "ground Matzoth" (*Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, V, 294;

An. Ch. Tr. M., Jan. 8/43).

1848 — 7 cents, meal 9 cents (*An. Ch. Tr. Min.*, Feb. 20, 1848).

1854 — 8 cents (*Ibid.*, Feb. 26, 1854).

1856 — 8 cents (*Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, VI, 258; *An. Ch. Tr. Min.*,

Jan. 27, Feb. 14, 1856).

Matzah-bakers in the city in 1855 were: S. Kummelstein, 175 Broome St.; Stern and Weil, 275 Houston; M. Cohen, 288 Front St.; Goldsmith Bros. and Co., 115 Broome St.; W. Kronenthal, 230 Houston St. In 1855 these bakers were said to have baked 237,000 lbs. of matzoth. In 1859 they baked 374,000 lbs. of which about 100,000 lbs. were shipped out of town.

There were a number of grocers in the city, especially in the 1850s, who sold Passover groceries. Passover wine was dispensed as well.

Several matters in connection with kosher food should be mentioned. In 1844 the question of the use of "Lard Oil" arose and a discussion took place in the pages of *The Occident* (II, 347, 407, 450, 552). Those who took part from New York were Noah, Jacob J. M. Falkenau and Dr. Abrahams. In 1851 S. M. Isaacs made arrangements to have kosher olive oil imported from France, bearing the seal of the congregation at Marseilles (*Asm.*, IV, 46). A good number of grocers and others sold kosher products in the city, such as cheese and baked products, but only those who advertised in the periodical press are known.

⁵⁷ *Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, I, 39-40.

⁵⁸ *An. Ch. Tr. Min.*, Oct. 25, 1835.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, July 10, Aug. 30, Sep. 25, Oct. 8, Nov. 12, 1836; June 18, 1837.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 26, 1854.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 21, 1858.

⁶² For the active interest of lodges in personal matters of this sort, see e. g. *Noah Lodge Min.*, Sept. 9, 1849.

⁶³ *Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, I, 74.

⁶⁴ Cf., e. g., *ibid.*, V, 18. In 1858 arbitration took place between the Beth Hamidrash and the *matzah* firm of Mark Isaacs over an attempt to cancel a contract. The board of arbitrators consisted of the Rev. Mr. Isaacs, C. M. Levy and Emanuel Goldsmith. The Beth Hamidrash, having lost the award, refused to abide by the board's decision and appealed the case in court on the ground that the arbitration proceedings took place on Sunday. Judge Daly, before whom the case was argued, upheld the board of arbitration, maintaining that proceedings on a Sunday would be legal for those who observe Saturday. This case incidentally reduced the prestige of the Beth Hamidrash. Cf. *Asm.*, XVII, 100; *Occ.*, XVII, 86.

⁶⁵ One minor point still remains to be mentioned in legal matters pertaining to family and the home. In 1811 S. M., a *kohen* who was married to a daughter of a Jewess and a Christian father, was declared to have violated his priesthood. Kursheedt and Seixas were consulted on this case and their decision was that a daughter of a mixed marriage where the father was Christian, was a Jewess, but that she could not marry a *kohen*. Carvalho, who was a third member of this board, refused to accept the decision of his colleagues because he could not decide for himself whether a *kohen hedyot* may marry a proselyte virgin and what was the exact definition of the term 'akum.

In 1815 S. M. produced a certificate from *Haham* Jacob Lopez de Fonseca which stated merely that a daughter of a Gentile father and of a Jewish mother was a Jewess. Upon producing this certificate Shearith Israel reversed its original stand and admitted him to priestly honors. Of course, the document that S. M. produced did not mention the status of such progeny with regard to marrying a *kohen*. *Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, III, 114, 282-83.

²² *Pub.*, 21, pp. 93-4, 112-13, 123-24. That Mrs. Hays conducted a boarding house see *Occ.*, IX, 70.

²³ *Occ.*, I, 101; IV, no. 4 advertising section; V, no. 3 advertiser; *Asm.*, I, 151, 175; IV, 40, 47, 71, 130; VI, 54; XI, 31; XV, 153; *Jew. M.*, II, 8; V, 7. Other places were: S. Cohen at 69 Duane St., Henry Lazarus at 38 Lispenard and also perhaps the Deutsches Kosthaus at 69 Ludlow conducted by C. Coblenzer.

²⁴ *Sh. Is. Min. of Electors*, Tammuz 22, 5550, p. 4; *Tr. B.*, II, 137-8; 15 ff. 2nd numbering, 40, 130; *Minutes of Common Council*, 1784-1831, IV, 57, 73. Cf. also Oppenheim, "Question of the Kosher Meat Supply," in *Pub.*, 25.

²⁵ *Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, IV, 375 ff.; *B. J. Tr. B.*, 2, pp. 266-7.

²⁶ *Pub.*, 21, pp. 56, 67-8, 77-8; 27, pp. 6-8, 12. In the letter from the *haham* at Kingston, mention is made of the need to engage a man who has *kabbalah* from a Sephardic *haham* "so that there shall be no unsoundness as regards *Sirchot*." This reference to *sirkhot* is, of course, the difference in practice between Ashkenazim and Sephardim in the matter of declaring these *sirkhot* kosher or *treffa*. Curiously enough Shearith Israel always engaged Ashkenazic men as *shohetim*, though its own *minhag* was Sephardic. There is only one mention of a case of a *sirkha* on a hind part of a calf which was considered kosher by the *shohet* but aroused some differing opinions. Whether this was a clash between Ashkenazic and Sephardic ritual is unknown. Cf. *Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, II, 156, 2nd numbering.

²⁷ The practice of the early 19th century is not quite clear. We may however assume that the butchers began to pay for slaughtering at the beginning of the century. Cf. *Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, III, 87-88, 293; IV, 169.

The salary of a *shohet* and his income ran as follows:

1728 — £ 20	1815	— \$230
1769 — £ 25 "with Tongues."	1830 (B. J.)	— \$150
1775 — £ 50	1840 (Sh. Is.)	— \$500
1795 — £ 80	(B. J.)	— \$250
1805 — \$250	1859 (Sh. Is.)	— \$500
1812 — \$400		

These salaries are taken from the minutes of the synagogues concerned.

²⁸ The other issues are not clear. Pool considers the 1813-1815 period one of general communal difficulties at Shearith Israel. Cf. his "Gershom Seixas Letters," in *Pub.*, 35, 198-9.

²⁹ *Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, III, 129 ff., 144 ff., 158 ff., 285 [305] ff.; *Minutes of Common Council*, 1784-1831, VII, 358, 364-5, 372; Oppenheim, *op. cit.*

⁴⁰ In 1828 Bnai Jeshurun elected Van Geldern as *shohet*. Relations between him and the *shohet* of Shearith Israel were far from cordial. Some difference arose between them, and I. B. Kursheedt sided with Van Geldern considering him at the same time more competent than

the official at Shearith Israel. Cf. *Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, IV, 240-41; *B. J. Gen. Meetings*, Dec. 28, 1828. At times in the '30s Bnai Jeshurun had its own *shohet*, at other times it relied on the services of the Shearith Israel official. During the 1850s it abolished the office completely. *Ibid.*, B. 3, p. 105.

⁴¹ Assistant *Hazzan* Jonas Hecht at Anshe Chesed was employed as a *shohet* by a Christian butcher. (Cf. *An. Ch. Tr. Min.*, Aug. 31, 1856.) So were many others.

⁴² *Min. United Germ.-Jew. Comm.*, Feb. 16, Mar. 18, 1846. A list of New York *shohetim* for that year is mentioned in this source. It is as follows: Mr. Heilner, Joseph Lewin, Mayer M. Cohen, H. Friedman, Jonas Hecht, Marcus H. Levy and Moses Hart.

⁴³ *An. Ch. Tr. Min.*, Oct. 29, 1854; Feb. 25, Apr. 15, 1855; *B. J. Tr. B.*, 3, p. 48.

⁴⁴ *An. Ch. Tr. Min.*, Feb. 25, 1855.

⁴⁵ Rabbi Rice of Baltimore was shocked on a visit to New York in 1858 to see the utter laxity in supervision of *shehita*. *Jew. M.*, IV, 12; *Asm.*, XIV, 172.

Several minor matters should be recorded here:

In 1835 Anshe Chesed was able to stop an unauthorized poultry *shohet* from plying his trade by circularizing the several congregations (*An. Ch. Tr. Min.*, Nov. 21 and Dec. 5, 1835; *Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, V, 105; *B. J. Tr. B.*, 2, p. 398; *Ohabey Zedek Min.*, Dec. 15, 1835). During the 1840s August Stern, a butcher, was permitted by Anshe Chesed to make a seal with the name of the congregation on it indicating that he had the patronage of this synagogue. Cf. *An. Ch. Tr. Min.*, Apr. 9, 1843. Jews who advertised as kosher butchers in the 1850s were: Phillip Friedman, 9 Essex Market and 131 Elizabeth Street, and Jacob Masberg, 238 Bleeker St. Cf. *Asm.*, VI, 225.

In the 1850s the New York Beth Hamidrash was regarded as a center for obtaining religious guidance as well as *kabbalah* for *shohetim*. By the late 1850s, however, it lost some of its standing. Cf. *Jew. M.*, IV, 109; *Isr.*, II, 35; IV, 133; V, 357. At this synagogue a secession occurred over a *shohet*. The charges were "meziut laaz fun seine freu." Rabbis of Poland placed an *issur* on his *shehita*, but rabbis of Lemberg sided with him. Cf. Eisenstein, *Pinkas fun Bet Hamidrash*. At Bnai Jeshurun in 1838 a question arose as to whether a *shohet* may slaughter on *Yom Tov*. Discovery was made that Jewish law permits this, but Bnai Jeshurun did not care to sanction such a practice. *B. J. Tr. B.*, 2, pp. 463-4. The problem of bleeding animals before slaughtering came to the fore after 1860. Cf. Berman, *Shehita*, 288 ff.

⁴⁶ *Pub.*, 21, p. 171; *Sh. Is. Tr. B.*, I, 154, 2nd numbering; II, 1, 4, 43, 2nd numbering, 48, 96-7; III, 335. In 1817 in addition to the usual matzoth the congregation also baked "sweet matzos."

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, III, [472]; IV, 49, 141, 143. Peixotto, minister at the time, called the attention of the authorities to the fact that too much dough was made at one time and that there was danger of it leavening.

synagogues still "patronized" one or another matzah-baker, but by far the larger number of New York Jews now bought their matzoth directly from bakers of their own choice without the intervention of any synagogue.⁵⁶

7

The Jewish community of old was as much concerned over the peaceful settlement of disputes among its members as it was over the correct observance of the ceremonial law. In many communities in Europe, the prevalent custom was that an aggrieved person might rise in the synagogue on the Sabbath, during the reading of the sacred Torah itself, and demand justice from the community authorities. He could delay the service until he was satisfied that his claim or grievance against his neighbor would receive due attention from the leaders. Arbitration and settlement of private disputes were matters of everyday concern for the *kahal* officials.

The records of early practice in New York reveal few cases of communal arbitration between private individuals. Where there are such cases, they tell the story of a complete break with the traditions of the past just before the close of the period of this history. The attitude toward synagogal arbitration seems to have changed completely. In 1785, the trustees of Shearith Israel appointed a committee to arbitrate an account between the estate of Isaac Adolphus and Mr. Judah.⁵⁷ As late as 1835, Anshe Chesed tried to intervene in a personal problem concerning a marriage, when two brothers refused to permit a suitor to wed their sister. The brothers refused to appear at the session of the board when they were cited, and no action could be taken.⁵⁸ The very next year, the congregation had cause to search for a certain H. J. in Frederickstown, who had left his wife in New York. The trustees ordered that a letter

patronage, refused to give him preference over any other, claiming that this was a matter for the individual members to decide. Emanu-El's action was the herald of a new day.⁵⁰

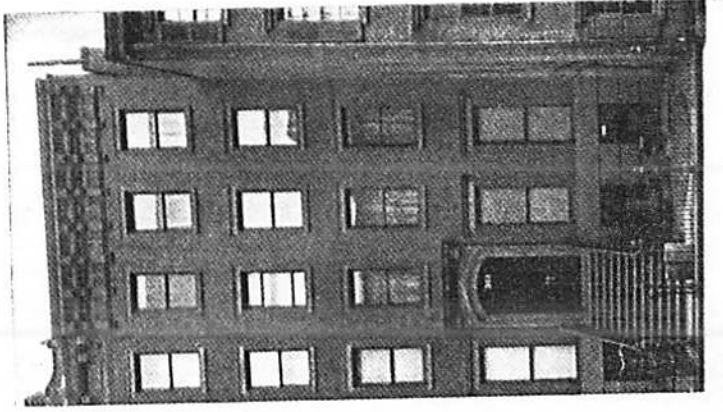
In 1846, Lilienthal, as rabbi of the German congregations, drew up a set of regulations for the baking of unleavened bread to be followed by Robert Spier, who had contracted to bake for the seven hundred and twenty members and seatholders of these congregations. These regulations stated, in minute detail, all of the many precautions that must be taken. Spier did all he could to live up to them, but Lilienthal was not entirely satisfied, for the Brooklyn mill which was used could not be induced to purchase a new sieve; and he accepted the matzoth only out of necessity. To obviate a recurrence of this situation Lilienthal suggested that his three synagogues should purchase the necessary machinery, including a new sieve for the mill, and either rent it to a baker or engage in baking matzoth themselves. Each member and seatholder would be obliged to place a two-year order with the community, and an extra cent or two would be added to the price of each pound of matzoth sold for several years in order to cover the initial cost of the machinery. The minutes of the United German-Jewish community break off abruptly at this point and no further details on this project are available in the sources. Undoubtedly Lilienthal was not successful in this attempt, for the community was now overrun with matzoth-bakers who sold their wares directly to the public. Under the circumstances it would be unlikely that the members of Lilienthal's congregations contracted for two-year supplies at a higher price.⁵¹

Machine-made matzoth were introduced in New York in the early 1850s.⁵² Before the product of these machines could be accepted, an opinion was sought from religious

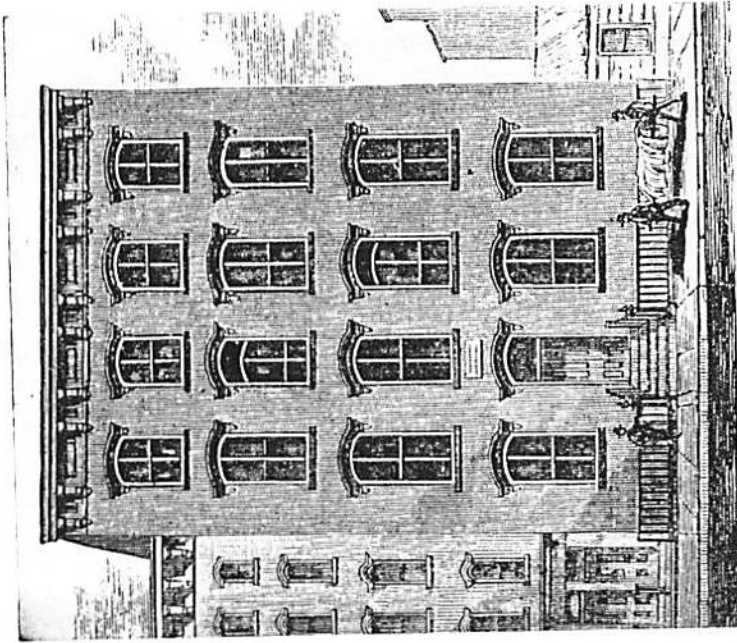
authorities. Chief Rabbi Nathan Adler of London permitted the use of the machine-made cakes provided that there was not more than a nine-minute wait before the dough was baked. Rabbi H. S. Hirschfield of Gleiwitz, Prussia, also approved of the use of the machine product. Judah Middleman, however, himself a matzah-baker, and others at the Beth Hamidrash advocated the use of hand-made matzoth only.⁵³

By the mid-Fifties, the change which had occurred was reflected in the minutes of Anshe Chesed. The "president called the attention of the Board to the usage of arranging a baker for supplying the members. . . with *mazot* and asked whether they [would] take any action about it this year." Apparently bakers were now baking independently of patronage as well as of supervision. In fact, a committee, appointed at this meeting, was told by baker Kronenthaler, on whom it called, that "he did not care about being engaged for supplying the congregation. . . and that he would not accept anyone appointed by the congregation to watch the baking of the *mazot*. . . [but] if the members. . . would buy their supply. . . from him. . . he would give in the same proportion [for the poor]."⁵⁴

In 1855, the bakers, with the exception of Goldsmith Brothers and Company, seem to have formed a "trust" to raise the price of matzoth. Incensed by this action, five New York congregations united in the following year to buy their matzoth from Goldsmith Brothers, partly to reward this company for staying out of the combine, and partly, too, because the company agreed to employ "watchers" sent by the synagogues. This "union" of synagogues seems to have been able to reduce the price of matzoth to its own members, at least, and perhaps to break up the combine as well. Nothing more, however, is heard of these five united synagogues; one can conclude only that their union ceased after 1856.⁵⁵ By 1860 a few



The Hebrew Orphan Asylum
1860-1863



The Jews' Hospital (Mt. Sinai)
1855

instead of the more usual brick oven. A committee on the baking of matzoth, which was appointed, considered this newer type of oven superior to the usual one, cheaper and "more conformable to our laws." Two men were now engaged to supervise the baking. So pleased was the congregation with this "patent" oven that when, in 1824, Mr. Spier, the baker, wanted to discontinue its use and to return to the older type of oven, the congregation re-engaged Mr. Hunter and his "patent bakery," claiming that the old-fashioned oven entailed the reintroduction of "shingles, Boards, etc., against which so many objections exist" and which, in the opinion of some, disqualified the matzoth. Mr. Hunter's oven could not, however, be used after all, because it had a copper part which could not be properly cleaned for Passover use; Mr. Spier's old-fashioned oven consequently had to be used once more.⁴⁷

When Bnai Jeshurun seceded from Shearith Israel, it followed the procedure of engaging a baker at a stated fee per hundred pounds and assigning two *mashgihim* as supervisors. In 1838, Anshe Chesed joined with Shearith Israel in the baking arrangements; in 1839, it combined with Bnai Jeshurun.⁴⁸ In 1840, some Jews turned to baking and competed with the non-Jewish bakers. Mr. Jacobs, "a Yehudi," sent a sample of his matzoth to Anshe Chesed; his product apparently did not meet the standards demanded, for the order was given to Mr. Parr, a Christian baker.⁴⁹

In the mid-Forties, many bakers found it profitable to solicit matzoth patronage of the several synagogues. As a rule, they permitted the synagogue to send one or two of its own men to supervise the baking. In exchange for the patronage of the congregation, the bakers donated a certain number of pounds of matzoth for distribution among the poor. In 1846, the newly-formed Temple Emanu-El, when approached by a baker who sought its

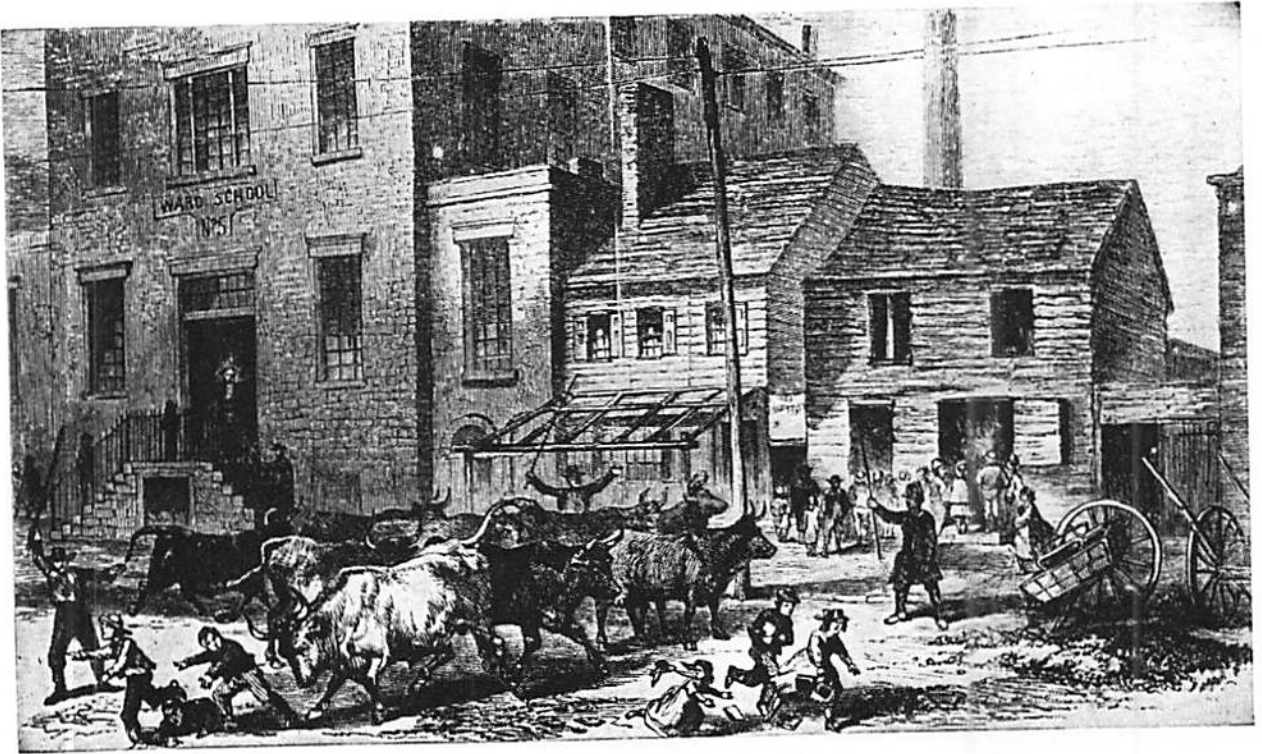
gogues may have had a great deal to do with its failure. Be this as it may, the union of the congregations brought forth a union of *shohetim*, probably the first union of such workers ever recorded.⁴⁴ Again the sources give little information; nothing is known beyond the fact that the purpose of this union of *shohetim* was to combat the projected union of congregations and that it printed a constitution of its own. Successful or unsuccessful, all these movements serve to underline the point which is apparent in all the sources that the sale of kosher meat was no longer controlled and directed by the Jewish community of New York.⁴⁵

6

The story of the arrangements for the baking of matzoth for the Passover holidays follows the same pattern as that of the arrangements for providing kosher meat. In the beginning, the unleavened bread was baked under the supervision of the synagogues. Then, after a transition period during the 1830s and 1840s, synagogue control broke down completely. By the late 1850s matzoth were, for the most part, purchased by individuals from baking establishments which operated independently of any synagogue supervision.

Non-Jewish bakers seem to have been the earliest in New York to bake the traditional Passover unleavened bread. Shearith Israel would arrange for the matzoth with some baker; a supervisor, usually the *shammash*, would be delegated to look after the *kashrut*. Each member of the synagogue then ordered from the appointed baker as large a supply as he needed; in addition, the synagogue itself purchased matzoth for the poor and for its paid officials.⁴⁶

In 1819, the "patent" bakery of Mr. Hunter was used; this patent bakery apparently consisted of an iron stove



A Public School and an Abattoir

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Archives

*The Rise of
The Jewish Community
of New York
1654-1860*

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