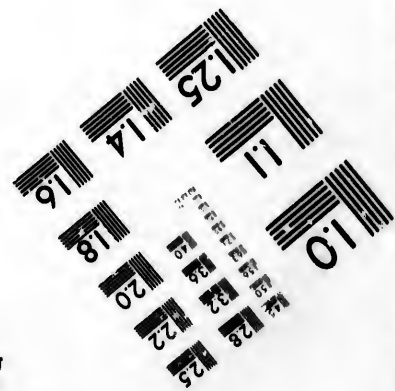
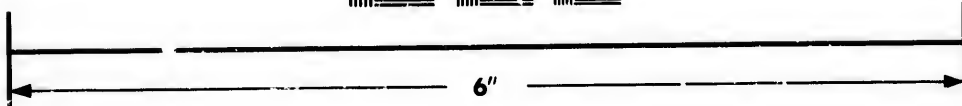
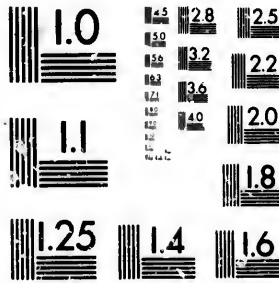


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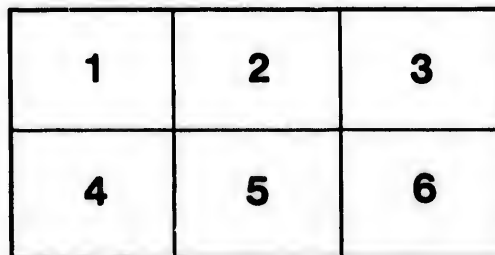
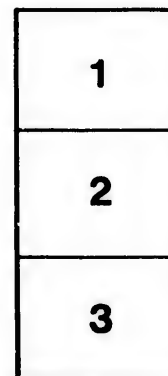
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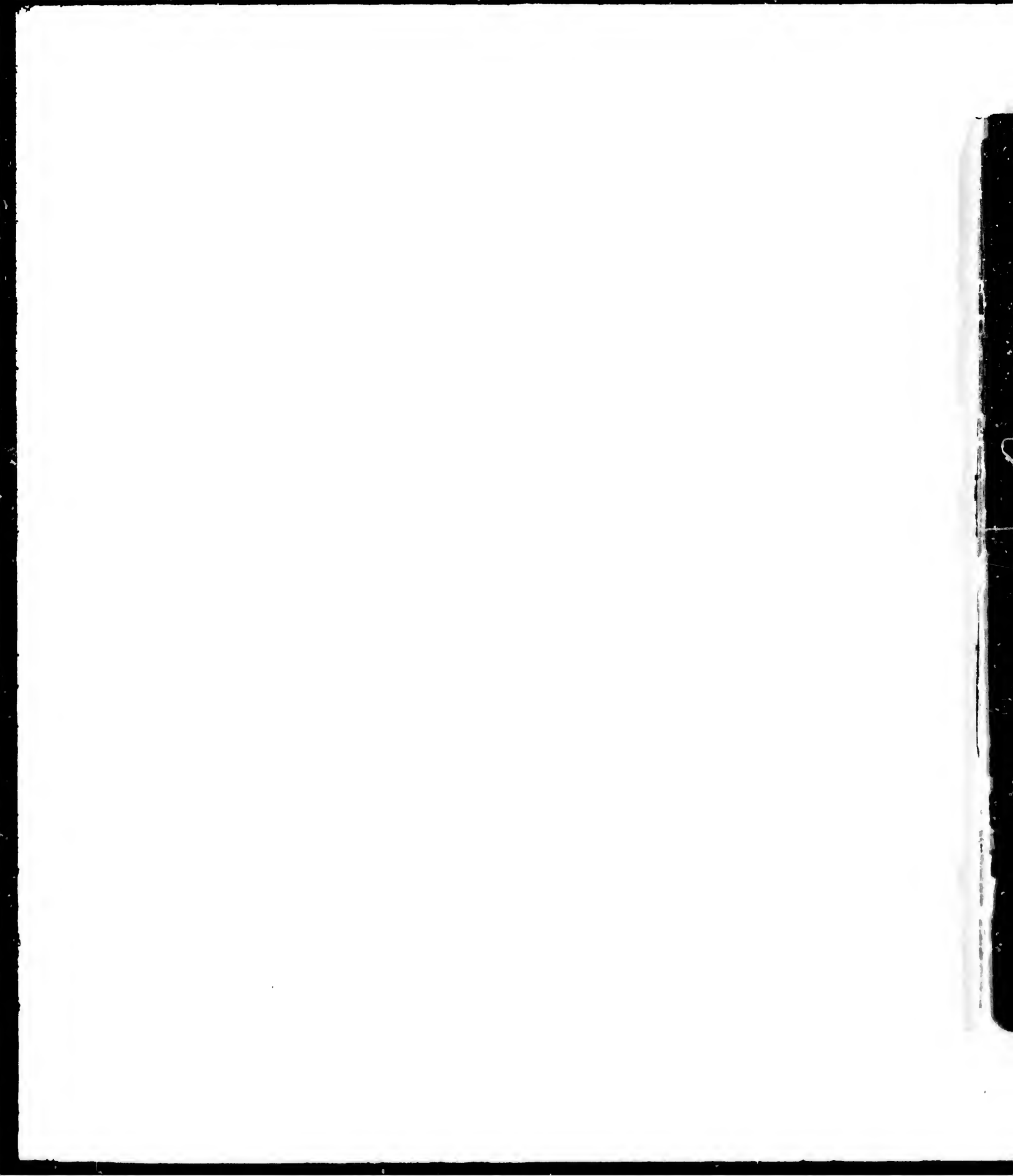
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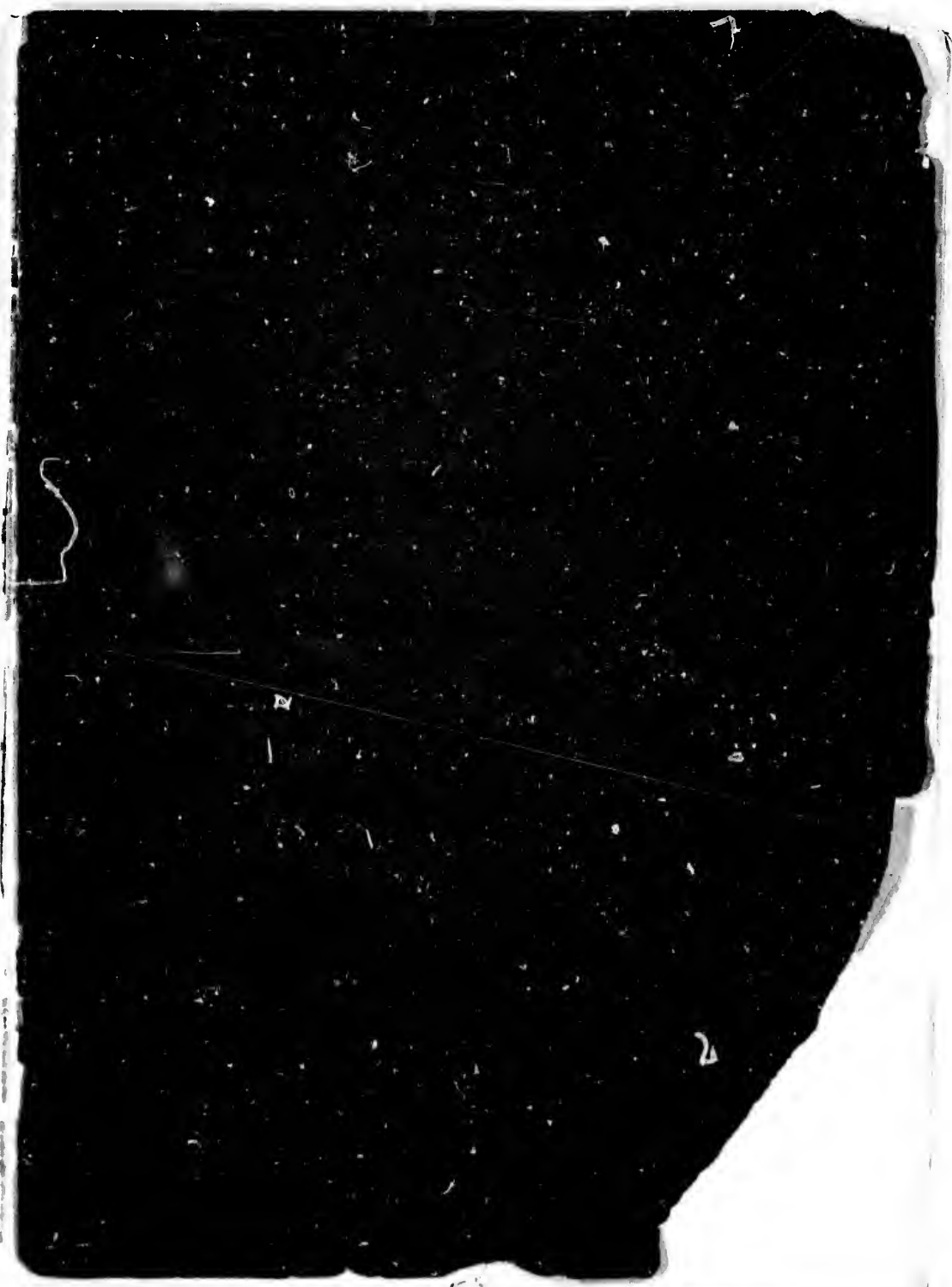
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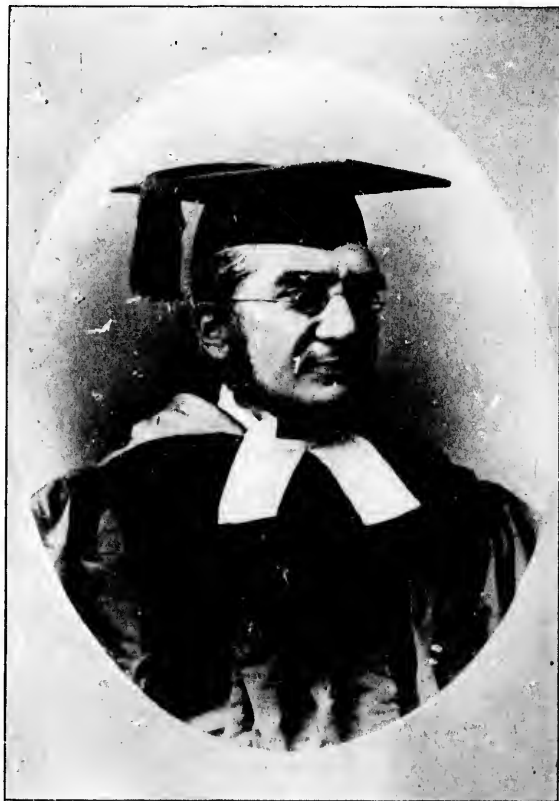
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DR. DE SOLA.

DR. DE SOLA

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REV. ABRAHAM DE SOLA, LL.D.,



Who for many years was so familiar a figure in literary circles in Montreal, and who earned so wide and deserved a reputation as an Oriental scholar and theologian, was a descendant of an illustrious Spanish-Jewish family. The marvellous history of Israel must ever be of peculiar interest to mankind, and, perhaps, no chapter in the post-biblical portion of that history possesses more charm than that which relates about the Jews of Spain and Portugal, or *Sephardim* as they are styled. These lived free and untrammelled during those mediæval times when their brethren in less favored countries were weighed down by the burden of oppression, and with the Saracens they kept alive the flame of learning and science in the Iberian Peninsula at a time when it burnt lowest in the rest of Europe. Power, rank and honor were theirs; and when afterwards clouds obscured the sky of their prosperity, and the storm of persecution burst pitilessly over their heads, their record of heroic martyrdom and thrilling adventure is a tale as fascinating as that of many of the most imaginative pages of fiction.

Among the many bright names which illumined Spanish-Jewish history, that of de Sola stands prominent. The de Solas had settled in Andalusia as early as the sixth century, whence they had come from Judea by gradual stages through Northern Africa. They held various offices under the Saracenic Caliphs at Toledo and Cordova, and afterwards when they removed to Navarre they were received with like favor by the Gothic Princes. From their estate in this province, their surname had its origin. A particularly distinguished member of the family was Don Bartolomeu de Sola, who, in reward for his services, was ennobled, and, after being a Minister of State, held for a while the position of Viceroy of Navarre.

During the 14th Century another de Sola distinguished himself fighting under the Infante of Aragon, and figured conspicuously in the Spanish Wars of that period. During the succeeding centuries the family continued to hold an illustrious place, owing to the large number of eminent scholars, physicians and statesmen it produced. Their fortunes, however, changed when King Ferdinand, having by the Conquest of Granada destroyed the last vestige of Moorish power in Spain, decided to drive therefrom all who did not conform to the dominant faith; and in 1492, was promulgated the terrible edict of expulsion, which, at one blow, deprived hundreds of thousands of Spain's most intelligent and industrious inhabitants of happy and prosperous homes. The de Solas took refuge in Holland, but a branch of the family continued to hold business connections with Lisbon, and eventually some of them settled in the Portuguese Capital, where they amassed much wealth. Watched by the Inquisition, they, like many other Portuguese Jews, for some time evaded the danger by assuming to become *Marannos* or *Nuevos Christianos*—as converted Jews were styled—while they secretly remained loyal to Judaism. In the latter part of the 17th Century, however, suspicion was attracted towards them, and David de Sola (who to elude his persecutors had assumed the name of Bartolomé) was apprehended,

and charged with having relapsed into Judaism. Although placed under the most fearful tortures nothing seems to have been proved, as he was allowed to afterwards go free ; but he was physically broken down by his terrible sufferings. Escape from the country by a suspect was then extremely difficult, but in the next generation his son, Aaron de Sola, managed to secure refuge on board a British Man-of-War, and to make good his escape with his family to England ; not, however, before two of his relatives had been imprisoned, tortured and condemned to death at an *auto da Fé*, by the Inquisition, for secret adherence to Judaism.

It was in 1749, that Aaron de Sola fled with his wife and family to England, and now that they were freed from the terrors of the Inquisition they openly avowed once more their loyalty to the faith of their fathers. From England they took passage for Holland, where they rejoined their relatives, and taking up their residence in Amsterdam they soon again rose to distinction in the various learned professions.

Previously to this—in the year 1690—one of the preceding generation, Isaac de Sola, had settled in London, and had acquired a high reputation in the Hebrew community there as an eloquent preacher and author. Several volumes of his works are still extant.

Four sons had accompanied Aaron de Sola in his flight from Lisbon in 1749, of whom the eldest, David, was the great-grandfather of the Dr. Abraham de Sola who forms the chief subject of this sketch. The youngest of Aaron de Sola's sons, Dr. Benjamin de Sola, attained to a foremost place among the practitioners of the last century. He was Court Physician to William V. of the Netherlands, and was the author of a large number of medical works. The other two sons of Aaron de Sola settled in Curaçao, and one of them was the grandfather of General Juan de Sola, who became so distinguished as a Commander of Cavalry under Bolivar and Paëz when the South American States revolted from Spain. He took part in the decisive battle of Carabobo, and led the charge on Puerto Cabello when that city was stormed by Paëz, receiving a sabre-wound during the fight. After the restoration of peace he held important public offices during the Paëz régime.

The Reverend Abraham de Sola, LL.D., was born in London, England, on the 18th September, 1825. His father, David Aaron de Sola, was Senior Minister of the Portuguese Jews of London, to which city he had been called from Amsterdam, and was eminent as a Hebrew author, having produced among many other works an elegant translation of the Jewish Forms of Prayer ; also, in conjunction with Dr. Raphall, an edition of Genesis, very valuable to Biblical students on account of its commentaries and copious notes, and the first English translation of Eighteen Treatises of the *Mishna*. His mother was the daughter of Dr. Raphael Meldola, Chief Rabbi of the Spanish-Jewish congregations of Britain. The Meldolas had given eminent Chief Rabbis to Europe for twelve generations. Abraham de Sola received careful tuition in all the usual branches of a liberal education. He became early engrossed in the study of Oriental languages and literature and of theology, and continued to devote his attention to those subjects until he acquired

that profound knowledge of them which subsequently won him so prominent a place among scholars. Having been offered the position of Rabbi of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Congregation of Montreal he accepted the call, and arrived in this city in the beginning of 1847, and here, for over thirty-five years, he continued to minister to the spiritual wants of his people. His able pulpit discourses soon attracted attention. Dr. de Sola's abilities, however, were not destined to be confined exclusively to his official duties. Before leaving London he had been associated in the editorial work of a Hebrew journal, *The Voice of Jacob*, and soon after his arrival in Canada he delivered a course of lectures on Jewish history before the Mercantile Literary Association. In 1848, he published his "Notes on the Jews of Persia Under Mohammed Shah," and also "A History of the Jews of Persia." Within the same year there appeared his important work on "Scripture Zoology." Soon afterwards he published his "Lectures on the Mosaic Cosmogony." This was followed by his "Cosmography of Peritsol," a work displaying such erudition that it gained a wide circulation in Europe, and was reprinted there in several languages. His next work, "A Commentary upon Samuel Hannagid's Introduction to the Talmud," was a book which deservedly attracted much attention, owing to the light which it threw upon an interesting portion of rabbinical literature, and to its depth of Talmudic knowledge. In 1853 he published, conjointly with the Rev. J. J. Lyons, of New York, a work on the Jewish Calendar System, chiefly valuable on account of its excellent prefatory treatise upon the Jewish system of calculating time.

Dr. de Sola's mastery of Semitic languages and literature early attracted the notice of our learned bodies, and, after first acting as lecturer, he was, in 1853, appointed Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Literature at McGill University. The high abilities which he displayed as occupant of this chair proved the wisdom of the appointment, and he continued to hold the position during the rest of his life.

For some time Dr. de Sola had been engaged in the preparation of one of his most important productions, "The Sanatory Institutions of the Hebrews." The work was published in two parts, and was an exhaustive exposition of the hygienic laws of the Hebrews, as exhibited in both Scriptural and rabbinical writings, critically examined in the light of modern scientific knowledge. It was a production which evinced how deeply the author had penetrated into scientific as well as rabbinical paths of learning. Shortly afterwards he published a supplemental work to it, entitled "Behemoth Hatemeoth."

The prominence to which Dr. de Sola had now reached among men of letters led McGill University to confer upon him the degree of LL.D. in 1858.

In 1860, Dr. Hall, the editor of *The British American Journal*, devoted to physical and medical science, induced Dr. de Sola to assist that publication with his pen, and, among other contributions, his series of articles "Upon the employment of Anæsthetics in cases of Labor, in connection with Jewish Law," call for particular mention.

Dr. de Sola's wide range of studies had made him very popular both as a public lecturer and as a contributor to various literary papers. The themes of some of these

were afterwards much amplified by him, and republished in their elaborated and completed form. At comparatively short intervals he gave to the public his works on "Scripture Botany," "Sinaitic Inscriptions," "Hebrew Numismatics," "The Ancient Hebrews as Promoters of the Arts and Sciences," "The Rise and Progress of the Great Hebrew Colleges," and "Philological Studies in Hebrew and the Aramaic Languages." Turning his attention again to Jewish History, he, in 1869, wrote his interesting "Life of Shabethai Tsevi, the False Messiah." The following year he completed his "History of the Jews of Poland," and in 1871 he published his "History of the Jews of France."

Dr. de Sola closely identified himself with many of our literary and scientific associations, notably with the Natural History Society, in which he was an active co-laborer of Sir William Dawson and Sir William Logan. He was for many years President of the Society, and received H.R.H. Prince Arthur (afterwards Duke of Connaught) when that prince visited the Society in 1870. His address upon "The Study of Natural Science," delivered upon that occasion, called forth a letter of approbation from Queen Victoria.

During all his intense literary activity Dr. de Sola was taking a very prominent part in all matters affecting the Jewish people. His mastery of Jewish theology, in all its branches, had earned him wide renown among his own race, and had gained him a high place among the very foremost Rabbis of the day. Convinced that the fences which orthodoxy placed around the citadel of his ancestral faith were the best safeguards against disintegrating forces, the upholders of Historical Judaism found in him an able and powerful champion. Equally noticeable were his bold attacks upon the weak points of the sceptical school of modern Biblical criticism. His intimate knowledge of all those branches of learning which bear upon this subject made him particularly formidable in this respect. The Jewish press and pulpit and the lecture platform were the vehicles by which he usually reached the public on these subjects. He had, indeed, since his first arrival in Canada been a particularly active contributor to Jewish journals, more especially to the *Occident* of Philadelphia, with which he was for years identified, being in intimate literary relations with its editor, the gifted Isaac Leeser.

Dr. de Sola's ability in the pulpit led to his frequently being invited to lecture in the United States, where he had acquired much prominence and popularity. On the 9th of January, 1872, he was invited by General Grant's Government to perform the ceremony of opening the United States Congress with prayer, and for the first time was witnessed the unique spectacle of one who was not a citizen of the United States nor of the dominant belief officiating at the opening ceremonies at the assembling of Congress at Washington. The broad liberality of this act, upon the part of the United States Government, was fraught with particular significance at that time, owing to the fact that diplomatic relations between Britain and the United States had then but lately been strained to dangerous tension by the "Alabama Claims," and this high compliment to a British subject was the first evidence of the growth of

a better feeling between the two countries. Sir Edward Thornton, the British Ambassador at Washington, formally extended to Dr. de Sola the thanks of the British Government, and Mr. Gladstone — then Prime Minister — also personally communicated his satisfaction.

Upon the death of Isaac Leeser, Dr. de Sola purchased the stereotyped plates of his works, and issued a new edition of that author's translation of the Bible according to Jewish authorities. He also brought out a revised translation of the Jewish Forms of Prayer, in six volumes, based upon the editions of D. A. de Sola (his father) and of Leeser. He was invited to become the successor of Mr. Leeser in his ministerial office but declined. He had previously refused several similar offers.

Dr. de Sola's onerous duties were at this time further increased by his being offered the Chair of Hebrew at the Montreal Presbyterian College, and later on he accepted the appointment of Lecturer in Spanish Literature at McGill University, a literature and language with which he was specially familiar, and to which he was particularly attached.

But such incessant application to work could not but prove exhaustive, and his naturally vigorous health broke down under the strain. A year's rest, spent in Europe, proved sufficiently beneficial to enable him to return to some of his duties. For a while he also resumed his contributions to the Jewish Press, and among other interesting writings we notice his "Yehuda Alcharizi and the Book Tachkemoni." In 1880 he published his last important work, "Saadia Ha-Gaon," a book giving a very valuable description of the writings and life of one of the greatest of Jewish philosophers, and also containing an interesting account of the Court of a Prince of the Captivity.

But failing health was destined now to check for ever the labors of his active pen, and while in New York, on a visit to his sister, he was seized by an attack of illness which terminated fatally on June 5th, 1882. The remains were brought on to Montreal and there interred. He had not yet completed his fifty-seventh year when he passed away.

In his death the Hebrew community sustained a loss whose magnitude could scarcely be over-estimated. His self-sacrificing devotion to the service of his race, his ceaseless labor in everything which could elevate and promote both their moral and intellectual welfare, his quick readiness to assuage, with kind counsel and help, the lot of those in adversity, and the rare talents which he had displayed in his multifarious writings, had won for him the warmest admiration and attachment of his people, and had gained him a reputation among them that was world-wide. His loss, indeed, was scarcely less regretted by Gentile than by Jew, for the prominence which his scholarly attainments had acquired for him among Canadian *littérateurs*, the active role which he had for thirty-five years played in our various learned bodies, and the distinguished position which he held in our leading University, achieved for him an illustrious place among Canada's public men.

Dr. de Sola was married in 1852 to Esther Joseph, the youngest daughter of Henry Joseph, of Berthier, one of the earliest Jewish settlers in this country. Of his several children, the eldest son, the Rev. Meldola de So'a, succeeded him as Rabbi of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue of Montreal, and another son, Mr. Clarence I. de Sola, is general manager of the Belgian Syndicate, "*Comptoir Belgo-Canadien*."

HENRY JOSEPH,

Who figures prominently among the early Canadian Hebrew colonists, was born in England in 1775, and, as stated in our sketch of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue (page 475), was induced to settle in Canada, when he was yet a mere youth, by his uncle, *Commissary* Aaron Hart. In those days Berthier was an important distributing point, owing to its being opposite Fort William Henry, the noted military post at the mouth of the Richelieu. As Henry Joseph had connections with the Commissariat of this division he took up his abode at Berthier. Afterwards from this central point he branched out as a very extensive trader, both west and east, establishing one of the largest commercial houses in that part of the country, and venturing into undertakings which were considered particularly enterprising at that time, when Canada's trade was only at its dawn. He was the first one to charter Canadian ships direct and exclusively for Canadian trade with England, and thus he became one of the founders of Canada's merchant marine. Among the vessels he controlled was the ship *Ewretta*, which brought many a cargo to this port. He was assisted in some of his enterprises by his brother, Judah Joseph. The latter, however, after amassing considerable wealth, returned to England. Upon the outbreak of the War of 1812-14, Henry Joseph once more joined the military forces and saw active service. Subsequent to this he became a dormant partner in the extensive mercantile firm established in Montreal by his brother-in-law, and, upon the death of the latter, he decided to take up his residence in this city, his business connections here having become so important as to render this change of domicile necessary. But shortly after his removal to Montreal there occurred that terrible outbreak of cholera of 1832, which devastated Europe and America, carrying death and gloom to many a house. His eldest son, Samuel, was stricken down by the fell disease, in Berthier. Hastening from Montreal to his dying son's bedside, Henry Joseph was himself seized with the epidemic, and within a few hours died from it. The body was afterwards interred at Montreal. His death occurred on the 21st June, 1832. One hundred and fifty-nine deaths took place that same day in Montreal from this dreadful scourge. Henry Joseph was married to Miss Rachel Solomons, a daughter of one of those who are mentioned among the first Israelitish settlers and founders of the Spanish and Portuguese Hebrew congregation. Four sons and four daughters survived him. His sons were J. H., Abraham, Jesse and Gershom Joseph, all of whom attained to prominence. We give sketches of the careers of three of them below, but it is out of our province, as historians of Montreal, to give any extended notice of the life of the second named son, Abraham, as the latter resided in Quebec, and that duty must therefore devolve upon the chronicler of the ancient capital. We may, though, observe *en passant* that Abraham Joseph was one of Quebec's most prominent men, and among the many important positions occupied by him we remark that he was President of the Dominion Board of Trade, President of the Stadacona Bank, a director of the Banque

Nationale and director of the Quebec and Gulf Ports Steamship Co. He also sat in Quebec's City Council, and once stood for mayor of that city. Of the four daughters who survived Henry Joseph, the eldest was married to Dr. A. H. David and the youngest to the Rev. Dr. Abraham de Sola.

JACOB HENRY JOSEPH

Was born in Berthier, but removed to Montreal when his father took up his residence here about the year 1830. While occupied with his own extensive business affairs he found time to take an interest in many public enterprises, and when later on he retired entirely from commercial pursuits he still continued to take a very active part in a number of our most important public undertakings, notably in several of our first telegraph companies, railways and banks. He was not, though, easily to be persuaded to accept directorship, although frequently pressed to do so, as it was always a principle with him never to allow his name to appear responsible for any enterprise which he could not fully control.

Noticing first his participation in the introduction of telegraph lines in Canada, it is interesting to observe that he was one of the original group of thirty who organized the first telegraph company here, and was also one of those that built the first line to the United States *via* Plattsburgh. He was, likewise, partner in the Newfoundland Telegraph Company, that formed the last link in the first Atlantic Cable line.

Mr. J. H. Joseph also very materially assisted in the construction of some of the very earliest railroads built in Canada. He was one of those who were connected with the Champlain Railroad Company, and was a director of the Branch constructed in the United States to Rouses Point—continuing to be a large stockholder until its final absorption by the Grand Trunk. He was also one of a half-a-dozen merchants who designed and constructed a railroad from Joliette to Rawdon, in continuation of the Lanoraie and Joliette Road.

Mr. Joseph largely aided in the formation of several of our banks. When the Union Bank was founded, 1,400 shares of stock, which had been allotted for Montreal, remained unsubscribed, and he took these up to further the successful organization of the Bank. He was, too, one of the original stockholders of the Bank of British North America—a certain portion of whose capital was allotted to Canada. Originally one of the largest shareholders of the Ontario Bank, he grew dissatisfied with the action of the Head Board, then in Bowmanville, and he expressed his disapproval of their course by disposal of all his stock. Events afterwards justified his views. He was also one of the original members of the Provident Savings Bank, but his independence and foresight showed itself here also, for, disapproving of the policy pursued, he withdrew all connection with it long before it met with the unsuccess which he prophesied.

Mr. Joseph was for many years closely identified with and the largest stockholder in the Montreal Elevator Co., of which he was for some time President. He was an active member of the Montreal Board of Trade, and was Vice-President

when Holton and Cramp were at its head. He was the originator of the Port Warden and Harbor Inspector's offices, and, though objected to by many at the time as unnecessary, experience has since shown the wisdom of their establishment.

Mr. Joseph has taken considerable interest in, and is a life member of, many of our important institutions, including the General Hospital, the Mercantile Library, the Art Association, the Mechanics' Institute and the Natural History Society. Of the last mentioned he has been Vice-President. He has also assisted materially towards the growth of Montreal by his extensive building operations, having since 1854 erected more buildings for his own personal holding than any other citizen; while of public buildings he had much to do with the originating of the Mercantile Library building, and the old Merchants' Exchange.

Apart from these public enterprises Mr. J. H. Joseph has always taken a deep interest in all political questions affecting this country. During the Rebellion of 1837-38, he took an active part, and was entrusted to convey dispatches at night between Sir John Colborne and General Wetherall—then in command at Chambly of the troops on the Richelieu,—the dispatches being hidden in the leather linings to escape risk of capture. He was officer in a regiment regularly enrolled under Colonel Dyer, forming part of the battalions employed to garrison Hochelega, Laprairie, Chambly and St. Johns at the time that the troops were despatched to resist the attack from the American line at Lacolle.

Always an active politician, from the days of Lafontaine and Baldwin, he was the *confidant* of Holton, Kinnear, John Young and Penny, and an unwavering Liberal until the General Elections of 1891. Some years ago he was invited to become the Liberal candidate for Montreal West, but declined. He also rejected overtures to enter the Legislative Council of this Province, refusing always to be bound by any party shackles.

Mr. J. H. Joseph is married to the niece of Rebecca Gratz. Two sons and several daughters are the offspring of this union, the sons being Mr. Henry Joseph and Mr. Horace Joseph. Miss Gratz was a woman whose lofty character, benevolent deeds and devoted efforts in the cause of education made her one of the noblest figures in Philadelphia society half a century ago, and an additional interest is attached to her personality from the fact of her having been the original from whom Sir Walter Scott sketched his character of Rebecca in "Ivanhoe." The incident is thus related in Morais's account of her life: "Washington Irving (who was one of the *coterie* of celebrities who formed her most intimate circle of friends) while paying a visit to Sir Walter Scott, at his home in Scotland, learnt from the latter that his novel of "Ivanhoe" was in course of preparation, and that a Jewish female character would be introduced. Whereupon the former remarked that he knew of a lady who would suit admirably. He proceeded to describe, in glowing terms, Rebecca Gratz, her acquirements and suavity of manners and her unyielding devotion to Israel's God. Scott attentively listened to the interesting narrative, and when he had finished "Ivanhoe," he sent the first copy to Irving, inquiring whether the "Rebecca" he had pictured compared with the pattern given."

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JESSE JOSEPH.

JESSE JOSEPH,

Who has so long occupied so prominent a place among our public men, and taken so leading a part in the administration of so many of our most important enterprises is the third of the sons who survived Henry Joseph.

He was born at Berthier, but removed to Montreal in his boyhood. Here he soon displayed those great business talents, and that inherent capacity for organizing and successfully directing large public undertakings which have so distinguished his entire career. Believing that commercial relations between Canada and Belgium could be advantageously cultivated, he became the earliest pioneer of commerce between the two countries, carrying on an enormous trade, and chartering the first vessels that were ever charged with cargoes between this port and Antwerp. The large volume of business that has since been developed with Belgium is to be credited to his initiative. Few, indeed, of our merchants ventured upon business on a more extensive scale, or did more to extend Canada's commerce at that time, than Jesse Joseph.

Rearing from commercial pursuits in 1864, when he was yet a young man, he devoted his attention to the many public companies with which he had become closely associated, and which he had, by his personal efforts as well as with his capital, largely assisted in furthering. His sound judgment, high executive abilities and mature experience, rendered his co-operation on any Board of the highest value; and hence he has figured prominently in the directorship of many of Canada's most successful enterprises.

Since 1877, Mr. Jesse Joseph has been President of the Montreal Gas Company, one of the strongest companies, financially, in Canada. During his administration its business has made enormous strides, having more than quadrupled in volume in fifteen years. As far back as 1863, he was elected one of its Directors, and thus for almost thirty years he has taken a most important part in the administration of its affairs.

He has also been, since 1884, President of the Montreal Street Railway Company, having seven years before that date been elected one of its Board of Directors. Under his presidency it has developed to very large proportions, being now one of the most extensive tram roads on this Continent, having over thirty-five miles of track at present in operation.

Among the large number of other public enterprises with which he has been connected, we remark that he has been for many years a Director of the Montreal Telegraph Co., and also one of the original Directors of the People's Telegraph Co. He has likewise been a member of the Board of the Banque Nationale.

Mr. Jesse Joseph has for over forty years been Consul here for Belgium, and was the first one appointed to that office in Canada. In recognition of his distinguished services in inaugurating relations with this country, he was some years ago created a *Chevalier* (Knight) of the *Order of Leopold* by the King of the Belgians, and in 1890 he was further honored by the King conferring upon him the *Décoration Civique of the First Class*.

GERSHOM JOSEPH.

MR. GERSHOM JOSEPH, M.A., B.C.L., is the youngest son of Mr. Henry Joseph of Berthier. Designed for a professional career, he was sent at an early age to Upper Canada College, Toronto, to be educated, and from there to Toronto University. After passing through the course in Arts, and receiving the degree of M.A., he took to Law, and graduated as B.C.L. In addition he studied for five years with Chief Justice Meredith and Judge Mondelet. After a long sojourn in Europe, he returned here and began the practice of his profession. He had risen to a very high position in the legal fraternity when the California Gold Fever broke out in 1849, and he became seized with a desire to try his fortune on the Pacific Coast. Casting aside his lucrative profession, he was among the earliest to seek the new field of enterprise offered at that time by California. Here his experiences were very varied, and spiced with adventure, but our limits prevent our relating more than one or two incidents. Having succeeded in accumulating a very large sum, he had some 60,000 dollars of this in gold dust placed in a safe in a building, standing, like many other San Francisco structures then, on piles in the water. A notorious gang of desperadoes, known as "the Hounds," who were the terror of San Francisco at that time, ascertained about this gold, and managed to make away with all by getting under the building in a boat at low tide. The depredations of this band gave rise to the establishment of the celebrated Vigilance Committee. Again setting to work, he had once more accumulated a good deal of property when the great conflagration, which swept over San Francisco in 1851, destroyed nearly all. For more than a decade after this he resided in San Francisco, engaged in various enterprises, and for a time associated in business with Mr. Belleau, the cousin of our former Lieut.-Governor, Sir Narcisse F. Belleau. He was also while in California the special correspondent of the "*Herald*."

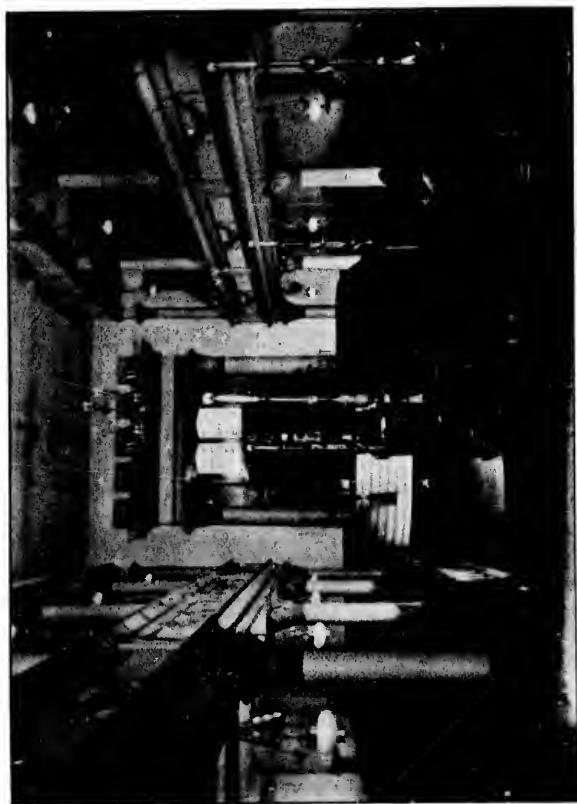
In 1861, Mr. Joseph married Miss Céline Lyons, and in 1863, he returned to Montreal and resumed the practise of law, entering into partnership with Mr. Rouer Roy, the present City Attorney. The firm was one of the best-known legal firms here during the 60's.

Mr. Gershom Joseph is now one of the oldest members of the Bar, there being only two or three at present practicing that ante-date his admission. He has occupied various honorary positions in some of our institutions, and has been at two different periods President of the Corporation of Spanish and Portuguese Jews, a position which he still holds.

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INTERIOR OF THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE SYNAGOGUE.

THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE SYNAGOGUE.

THE Congregation of Spanish and Portuguese Jews, "Shearith Israel," to which we have referred in our sketch of Dr. de Sola's life, has a most interesting history. There are probably not more than three or four Jewish congregations now existing in America whose record dates as far back as theirs. Many generations have passed away since it was founded by a small band of Sephardic Jews, who entered Canada at the time when France and England were locked in their final struggle for supremacy on this Continent.

Among the officers of Amherst's invading army was *Commissary* Aaron Hart. He became attached to the divisions of infantry under General Haldimand's command in 1760, and was stationed at Three Rivers, where he rendered good service to the British arms. He had come originally from London, where he was born in 1724. After the close of the war he became Seigneur of Becancour. About the same time there arrived in Montreal Lazarus David, who by his public spirit and enterprise attained to a position of considerable prominence in the community. These were among the first Israelites known to have taken up a permanent residence in Canada. Within the decade following the fall of Quebec there arrived here a number of Jewish settlers, among whom were Andrew Hays, David Salesby Franks, Jacob de Maurera, Elias Seixas, Levi Solomons, Uriah Judah, Fernandez da Fonseca, Joseph Bindona and Emanuel de Cordova. Most of them were men of means. Some were occupied in large enterprises, and three or four were attached to the army.

In 1768, this little band of early Hebrew pioneers formed themselves into a congregation, and took the name of "*Shearith Israel*" (Remnant of Israel), and thus was founded the Spanish and Portuguese congregation, which still bears that name; for the first colonists being nearly all descended from Hebrews of Spain and Portugal adhered to the impressive and venerable ritual of the *Sephardic* (Spanish) Jews, a ritual to which the descendants of these founders have ever since clung with unswerving loyalty.

After worshipping for nine years in a room, they, in 1777, built the first synagogue ever erected in Canada, upon a piece of property between Notre Dame and St. James street, near the Court House, and belonging to the David family. It was a low stone building with a red roof, and was surrounded by a high stone wall.

In 1775, they purchased a piece of ground near the present Dominion Square for a cemetery, and the first one interred was Lazarus David, who, born in 1734, had died during the year following the purchase of this ground. The original headstone, bearing the date 22nd October, 1776, is still to be seen standing in the present ground, at the side of a newer one that replaced it, the bodies interred in the old ground having been removed to the new one when the latter was purchased.

The number of men belonging to this congregation who attained to prominence was remarkably large. A near relative of David Salesby Franks was the celebrated Colonel Isaac Franks, who, having fixed his residence about this time in Philadelphia, joined the Revolutionary Army after the Battle of Lexington, and became Aide-de-

Camp to George Washington. It was at his house that Washington took up his quarters when he came to Philadelphia to attend the assembling of the first Congress of the then newly-born United States. Jacob Franks, his nephew, was also distinguished, nearly a century ago, for his success in establishing trading posts in the Hudson Bay Territory, penetrating into the very heart of the wild unsettled North West in his enterprises. Another one of the early Jewish colonists, distinguished for enterprises of somewhat similar character, was Henry Joseph. He had been induced to settle here by his uncle, the *Commissary* Hart referred to above. In our notice of the Joseph family we refer more fully to the very noteworthy part he played in public affairs.

Of the early members of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue one of the most eminent was David David, who was one of the sons of the above-mentioned Lazarus David. He was born in 1764, and was one of the wealthiest, most philanthropic and most public-spirited of Montreal's citizens nearly a century ago. He was one of the chief founders of the Bank of Montreal in 1808, and one of the Directors of its first Board. There was scarcely an important enterprise at that time in Montreal in which he did not play a leading role, and his benevolent and self-sacrificing spirit made him one of the most esteemed and most prominent of our public men.

In those days the Jews still labored under certain political disabilities in most countries, and although in Canada the laws were much more favorable to them than in other parts of the Empire, yet their right to sit in Parliament had never been defined. In 1807, the question of their political status was suddenly raised by the election in Three Rivers of Mr. Ezekiel Hart—son of *Commissary* Aaron Hart—as member of the Legislature. Having declined to take the oath on the faith of a Christian, in the usual way, the Clerk permitted him to take it in the Jewish form, and with head covered. The majority of the House, influenced, it is said, more by political partizanship than by any actual feeling of religious intolerance, objected, and declared the seat vacant. After an exciting scene he was compelled to withdraw, and the election was declared null. Ezekiel Hart again appealed to the people and was again elected, defeating three other candidates by heavy majorities, but once more he was prevented from taking his seat, and a bill was brought in to disqualify Jews from being eligible to a seat in the House of Assembly. On the 15th May, 1809, the bill was to have come up for its third reading when the Governor General, Sir James H. Craig, highly displeased with the measure, in angry and indignant terms dissolved the House. "You have dissipated your time," said he, "in passing acts which appear to be unconstitutional infringements of the rights of the subject, and repugnant to the very letter of the statute of the Imperial Parliament under which you hold your seats; and to have been matured by proceedings which amount to a dereliction of the first principles of natural justice." A struggle followed this dissolution, but it was not till 1831 that all disqualifications were removed, by a formal Act passed that year. It is a noteworthy fact that Canada extended full political rights to the Jews more than a quarter of a century sooner than the mother country.

The affairs of the congregation having got into a rather unsatisfactory condition, and the old Synagogue building near the Court House having been abandoned, an earnest appeal for re organization was issued on the 24th July, 1826, signed by Benjamin Hart. Steps were taken to raise the necessary funds for a new building, but some time passed before tangible results were attained. Meanwhile the congregation met for worship in a room provided by Mr. Benjamin Hart off his residence at the south-west corner of St. Helen and Recollet streets. Benjamin Hart was one of the sons of *Commissary* Aaron Hart. He had removed to Montreal from Three Rivers years previously, and was at this time one of the most active members of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue. The fact that the residence of a gentleman of means was then situated in St. Helen street is interesting as showing what a transformation has taken place in Montreal since that time.

Steps were taken in 1831 and 1832 to have the formalities required by Legislative Acts now properly complied with by the congregation.

On the 30th June, 1835, the congregation purchased a piece of land facing upon Chenneville street and Lagachetière street, north-east corner, and began the erection of a Synagogue thereon. The corner-stone was laid by M. E. David, the grandson of Lazarus David and nephew of David David. For fifty-two years the congregation worshipped within the walls of this edifice. It was a neat stone structure with a Doric façade, and a chaste and dignified interior. The building was planned and its erection superintended by Moses J. Hays, the son of that Andrew Hays whom we have mentioned among the founders of the congregation. He was a man of considerable prominence, whose restless spirit of enterprise led to his originating many important public improvements. It was he who first established Water Works in Montreal, and managed them for many years. He was also for some time Chief Commissioner of Police. It is a noteworthy fact that another Israelite, Jacob Kuhn, was Chief Commissioner of Police as far back as 1778.

In the erection of the Chenneville street building, the congregation was largely assisted by the munificence of Mrs. Frances Michaels, the sister of David David, whose generous gift of a considerable sum of money greatly facilitated the completion of the work. Mrs. Michaels had then become possessed of that piece of the David family's property upon which the congregation had been permitted to erect their first building.

It is a noteworthy fact that both during the War of 1812-14 and the Rebellion of 1837-38 we find a number of members of "*Shearith Israel*" acting as officers of British troops and rendering important assistance to the Government. We refer more particularly to members of the David, Joseph, Hart and Hays families.

The first regular Rabbi of the Montreal Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue was the Rev. J. R. Cohen, who came to Montreal in 1778, and after being here for some while removed to Philadelphia, where he became minister of the Portuguese congregation "*Mikvé Israel*" there. After his departure, Mr. Myer Levy temporarily officiated, and after him Mr. Isaac Valentine. Upon the completion of the Chenne-

ville street building the Rev. David Piza was appointed Rabbi. He held office for several years and then returned to England, where he had been appointed to the Bevis Marks Synagogue of London. In 1846, the Rev. Dr. Abraham de Sola was elected Rabbi, and for nearly thirty-six years this eminent man guided the destinies of the congregation with a sway that well attested his powerful influence over his flock. His brilliant career, which cast so much lustre upon the name of Hebrew in Canada, has been fully described by us elsewhere.

During its earlier years the congregation was unincorporated ; but after a while Acts were passed affecting it, and, in 1846, a new Act of Incorporation was secured, this having become necessary owing to the formation, that year, of another Jewish congregation here. This second congregation, however, was very short-lived, and it was not until between 1858 and 1860, nearly a century after the formation of the Portuguese congregation, that a second Hebrew congregation was permanently established here, by the foundation at this latter date of the present German and Polish congregation—made necessary by the immigration at this time of a number of Polish and German Jews, who now availed themselves of the Act of 1846.

Among the men who held office and figure prominently in the affairs of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, during or about the time of Dr. Abraham de Sola's long pastorate, we observe many well-known and honored names. There was Dr. A. H. David (grandson of Lazarus David), Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Bishop's College, whose notable life we have chronicled elsewhere. (See page 480.) He occupied in turn almost every lay office in the congregation, and was several times its president. We also remark Mr. J. H. Joseph acting as honorary treasurer for years. A very conspicuous place is held in the annals of the congregation at this time by Samuel Goodman and William Benjamin, who were such familiar and popular figures in Montreal over a generation ago. They all held the highest offices in the gift of "*Shearith Israel*." Samuel Benjamin was for some time a member of the City Council of Montreal. Mr. Jesse Joseph, too, has for nearly half a century figured among the most prominent and most important lay officers of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, and his ever-ready support of, and deep interest in, everything tending to promote its welfare has conduced very much towards its prosperity. Among other staunch supporters in years gone by were Mr. Alexander Levey, for some time president ; the venerable Gottschalk I. Asher, who passed away some while ago at the patriarchal age of 96 years, and Mr. A. E. Cohen and Mr. Louis Davis,—the last mentioned being yet in office. Another officer who has long and loyally worked for the best interests of the congregation is Mr. Israel Rubenstein, the present *Paranas* (ecclesiastical warden). A number of the descendants of the first settlers still figure among its members, among whom we notice Mr. Gerald E. Hart, the author of "*The Fall of New France*." Our limits prevent the continuation of a list that might be much prolonged. We will not, though, omit referring to Mr. Jacob L. Samuel, who for upwards of a quarter of a century has been honorary secretary, and whose indefatigable and faithful services have been as valuable as they have been unostentatious.

The death of Dr. Abraham de Sola, in 1882, led to the election of his son, the Rev. Meldola de Sola, as Rabbi of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue. As a preacher, the Rev. Meldola de Sola is earnest, forcible and fluent, and he is a zealous and conscientious worker in the field which he has chosen; laboring steadily in the Jewish press, as well as in the pulpit, to advance the cause of Historical Judaism as handed down to the House of Israel by their forefathers.

In 1883, a movement was inaugurated in the congregation towards the erection of a more commodious Synagogue, and, at a general meeting of its members, held in the autumn of that year, a committee was appointed to select a suitable site, and to receive offers for the old property; but it was not until the close of 1886 that sufficient funds were collected to proceed with the work. In the spring of 1887, a piece of property was purchased on Stanley street, above St. Catherine, and the work of erecting the new building was immediately begun. The Building Committee was composed of Messrs. Jesse Joseph, Louis Davis, Clarence I. de Sola, Jacob L. Samuel, Horace Joseph, Israel Rubenstein, and the Rev. M. de Sola, *ex officio*. The plans adopted were designed by Mr. Clarence I. de Sola, who directed the work of erection throughout, and to whose energies was due much of the success of the undertaking. The corner-stone was laid in September, 1887, by Mr. Gershom Joseph, and on the 31st August, 1890, the edifice was completed and dedicated amid imposing ceremonies.

The building is a most attractive place of worship, and is of peculiar interest from an artistic point of view, owing to its design being based upon the best traditions of what is known of Jewish architecture.—being a combination of the massive and imposing forms of Ancient Egypt with the graceful outlines and luxuriant features of Oriental Art—a combination at once chaste and elegant. Its noble colonnades, its beautiful ark of mahogany and marble, the strict correctness of its forms, and the harmonious tones of its coloring, all unite in producing a most pleasing and impressive effect, while the markedly pronounced Jewish characteristics which predominate throughout the entire edifice make it stand distinct in style from any other place of worship in the city, and give it an individuality appropriately in keeping with the striking individuality of the Peculiar People who worship within its walls.

Shortly before the completion of the building—during the Legislative Session of 1889-90—the congregation received a new Act of Incorporation, amending various points of the previous Acts. It was framed by two of its members, Mr. G. Joseph, B.C.L., and Mr. Lewis A. Hart, B.C.L. The latter was for some years Lecturer on Notarial Practice at McGill.

The present Board of Officers of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, "*Shearith Israel*," are:—Mr. Gershom Joseph, President; Mr. Israel Rubenstein, Parnas; Mr. Jesse Joseph, Treasurer; Mr. Jacob L. Samuel, Hon. Secretary; and Messrs. Louis Davis, Edward A. Benjamin and Clarence I. de Sola, Trustees.

A. H. DAVID, M.D.

AARON HART DAVID was the second son of the late Samuel David, Esq., merchant, who was born in Montreal in 1766. Dr. David was born in this city on the 9th October, 1812. He was partly educated in Montreal and partly at Round Hill School, Northampton, Mass., under the charge of the Historian, the Hon. Mr. Bancroft, and while there had the honor of being presented by Mr. Bancroft to the late General Lafayette as a Canadian, and speaking French; who shook hands with him, when he visited that celebrated school.

He commenced studying Medicine in January, 1830, in Montreal, and in 1833 proceeded to Edinburgh to complete his studies. He became a Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1834, and graduated in the University of that city in 1835, after which he returned to Montreal and commenced practice, where he remained to his death. He was Professor of Practice of Medicine and Dean of the Medical Faculty of the University of Bishop's College, and a D.C.L. He was president of the Natural History Society of Montreal, and also one of the physicians of Montreal General Hospital and St. Patrick's Hospital, and enjoyed a large and lucrative practice for many years.

He was a member and ex-governor of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Lower Canada, and a life member of the Natural History Society of Montreal, a corresponding member of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, an extraordinary member of the Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh, a member of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Montreal, a corresponding member of the Gynaecological Society of Boston, a member of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, a member of the American Association for the same, a member and general secretary of the Canada Medical Association, and was one of the oldest medical officers of the Volunteer Force in the Dominion, having served with the Montreal Rifle Corps in 1837-38. Dr. David went to the Front during the Fenian raid with the Hochelaga Light Infantry, of which corps he was surgeon. Dr. David married the eldest daughter of the late Henry Joseph.

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