

Patriotism in Triplicate

Isaac Leeser's Occident of November, 1867, reported an event which testified rather strikingly to the spirit of patriotism and unity instilled in the American people by the Civil War experience. The circumcision of the Danziger triplets, of San Francisco, brought together Christians and Jews, including the city's pioneer Reform rabbi — Elkan Cohn of Temple Emanu-El — who participated without hesitation in an ancient ritual at an Orthodox synagogue.

Taken together, the names — synagogal and civil — given the three infants at the ceremony succeeded in paying tribute to the three Hebrew Patriarchs, two American Presidents, and a United States Senator — a remarkable instance of Jewish traditionalism blended with American patriotism. Only Leeser seems to have had doubts as to the propriety of a Jewish rite attended by Christians, even if some of them were notables like Governor Henry Huntly Haight, General Irwin McDowell, and United States Senator John Conness.

SAN FRANCISCO. — We learn from the [San Francisco Jewish weeklies] *Hebrew* and *Hebrew Observer* that three children of Mr. Henry Danziger, born at one birth, were entered into the Covenant of Abraham, Mr. A[braham]. Galland acting as Mohel [circumciser], at the synagogue Ohabai Shalom, on Sunday the 15th of September. Persons were admitted by cards to the synagogue, which was crowded to excess. Many Christians were present, among others, Mr. Haight, Governor-elect, General McDowell, Senator Connes [*sic*] and representatives from the Jewish religious and benevolent societies. The children were named respectively Abraham (Lincoln), Isaac (Andrew Johnson) and Jacob (John Connes) Danziger. The president[s] of the three congregations acted as Sandeks (godfathers), and when the children were named respectively by the ministers, Cohn, [Congregation Sherith Israel's Rabbi Henry A.] Henry and Frankel, they were held by Gen.

McDowell, Mr. [August?] Wasserman for Gov. Haight and Mr. Connes. Valuable gold medals, presented by a Masonic Lodge, were hung round the necks of the children. Altogether it was a curious scene; all sorts of people mingling in the ceremony. Still, it is worthy of being preserved, from the rarity of such an occasion.

[*The Occident*, XXV (1867), 416.]

Are You a Jewess?

A few weeks ago, Madame Levy, of Cleveland, Ohio, went out to rent a house. After finding one which suited her, she went to see the owner, to inquire as to the price and to conclude the transaction. After the two of them had reached an agreement, the proprietor of the house, wishing to have the rental contract signed right away, asked her, as he proceeded to fill out the form:

“Madame, and your name?”

“Madame Levy.”

“Are you a Jewess?”

“Yes, sir.”

“I do not rent my house to Jews.”

“Are you in earnest about this, sir?” asked Madame Levy, astonished.

“I am in dead earnest.”

“O, I feel sorry for you,” replied Madame Levy, with rare presence of mind. “Now I know why the virgin Mary had to be delivered of her child in a stable!”

[*Deborah* (Cincinnati), VI (1860), 103.]