

An Old School. Ordinance.

a contribution to the History of Jewish
Education in Germany.

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The ducal Franzschule in Dessau was for half a century (1798-1848) a source of blessing for its more immediately surrounding and more distant fatherland. Aided by a kindly-disposed Prince, supported by high-minded men directed by excellent, devoted teachers, the Institution might well bear the best fruits from the seed scattered there. The same motives which led to the founding of similar schools in Leesen, Wolfenbüttel, Frankfurt and Breslau, were the determining factors in the establishment of this school. Originally a Vereinsschule of the *תורה ודבר* *ישיבה*, later becoming a State-institution, the young undertaking had the good fortune to find in Dr. David Fränkel, the descendant of great forefathers, a director who was up to his old age busied in bringing sacrifices of all kinds to his school and himself devoted all his means to it. How the "Franzschule" developed, why such a one must have arisen in Dessau, and what pauses brought about its end, have been thoroughly discussed by the author in his "Geschichte der herzoglichen Franzschule," based upon the material found in the ducal State-Archives. An ordinance of the year 1802 is little known; it is: "Einrichtung der jüdischen Frey Schule in Dessau." This small document offers so

much that is interesting regarding the inner and the outward life of the school that a statement of the contents should be read still today by many.

Number of Classes.

The Jewish Freyschule of this place shall consist of four classes, in which instruction shall be given the young properly and judiciously, from the very beginning up to the knowledge which the future well-educated man will require.

The aim of the School.

This shall be: to ~~prepare thoroughly every child for his future destiny~~ instruct every child properly for his future destiny as business men, and to prepare thoroughly also students and those who wish to fit themselves for teachers.

Subjects of Instruction.

1. Several preliminary exercises to arouse the attention and powers of reflection of the children, so as to enable them to read Hebrew and German correctly and with understanding.
2. Religious instruction, whereby instruction in the Bible, according to Mendelssohn's translation, is combined with his Hebrew commentary. At the same time, the children are taught the customary prayers, not only according to the text, but also with a good German translation (such as for instance, that of David Friedlander).
3. Writing, German and Jewish, where with attention is given to penmanship as well as to orthography.
4. Arithmetic, all the generally useful forms of arithmetic as well the bookkeeping necessary for the merchant.

5. Natural History, under which title a knowledge of the works of God is understood.

6. Geography and History.

7. Languages namely: Hebrew, German, Latin and French.

8. Style in writing and the art of speaking for practical use in general as well, as in business, etc.

9. Logic, according to the work successfully used in the different Jewish schools: סלולת הג' by Rabby Moses Maymonides with the Mendelssohn interpretation.

10. Knowledge of the best German and Hebrew authors. (Of the latter, among others, the popular work: ספר המדות (Moral teachings) by Hartwig Hessele).

The Division of these Subjects for the single classes.

IV. In Quarta

a beginning of all instruction is made. This class is for the smallest children from about four or five years of age on, and the instruction consists at first of a simple conversation held by the teacher with the children on subjects easily understood by them, which served to arouse their attention and powers of reflection. Also, of exercises in letters, syllables and reading, Hebrew and German, and in addition, exercises in counting as a preparation for arithmetic. As practice for the memory, several Hebrew vowels, a proverb from the Bible or a small prayer is recited aloud to the children for them to memorize.

The text-books for this class are:

The Picture primer by Inspector Funke. תפלות ישראלי (Prayers of Israel)

4.
III. In Tertia

the above-mentioned exercises are continued and extended; thus, for example, the children must learn by heart small passages from a good Hebrew book. There are also taught to read written matter, a beginning is made with them in writing, with which exercises in orthography are at the same time connected, and small sums are placed upon the black-board for them.

The textbooks for this class are:

Sulzer's Vorübungen Part I, the Bible, and תלמוד (The children's friend) by Wolfsohn (Inspector of the Royal Wilhelmschule in Breslau).

II. In Sekunda

the children are busied with a continuation of the instruction in the Bible, with the articles of faith, with the theoretical instruction in the Hebrew language, writing, German and Jewish, practice in the compound forms of arithmetic, with the reading of an instructive German book, with which there were constantly connected the necessary interpretations and other exercises for the reasoning faculties, as well as with the elements of geography and history. Besides the Hebrew language, there were also taught the German and French languages ~~was~~ according to the rules of Grammar.

The textbooks are: besides the Bible,

תולדות ישראל (Short extract from the Bible) by Beer (Instructor of an imperial, royal Normalschule). Prayers of the Jews with the translation already introduced.

עמוד השטן Elements of the Hebrew language: by Prof. J. Löw; also Sulzer's Vorübungen Part III, Brühl's French Grammar, Robinson par Campe; several maps, etc.

I. In Prima.

several subjects mentioned in Sekunda are continued and besides a thorough instruction in the Bible, instruction in the Talmud and in Logic ~~was~~ added. Latin is added to the above enumerated languages. Geography and history are taught in their broader significance. In the art of writing the German and French languages, special attention is given to exactitude and good expression, and arithmetic is brought to its completion and book-keeping is also well taught. By means of written essays, as for instance, stories, letters, etc., by language grammatical exercises in ~~elaboration~~, by moral readings from different good works and by orations which the pupils ^{must} write themselves in accordance with an outline assigned to them by the instructor and ~~and~~ declaim after they have been approved, by means of such exercises efforts are made to bring the pupils to a point where they are prepared to speak on scientific matters.

Textbooks are: besides the Talmud, תלמוד לשון עברי (The Bible); (complete course of Hebrew language); ספר הדעות (Moral Teachings) by H. Wesseli; סלולת ההגיון (Logic) by R. M. Maimonides; Sulzer's Vorübungen Part III, Natural History and Technology by Inspector Chunke, Telemach, Bröbler's Latin Grammar, Lectiones latinae, Cornelius Nepos, Cicero's Letters, Suetonius, Cicero's Orations, Sallust, Fabri's Handbook in Geography, combined with Saffmann's complete Atlas, Schöck's History of the world, and other useful books with regard to this aim."

School and home should, however, go hand in hand. Therefore, the school authorities directed "a few words to the Dessau household-heads, and expected "from every well-disposed father that he shall recognize these laws as necessary and observe them carefully."

1. The time ~~for assembling~~ for class-work in winter as well as in summer is from a quarter of eight to eight o'clock, in the morning and from a quarter of one to one o'clock in the afternoon.

2. The pupils must always go quietly and properly from home to school and not tarry long upon the street, still less be noisy or shout in an improper manner, but always go duly and modestly to their classes.

3. Every pupil must always appear in the school clean and orderly not only with regard to his body, but also to his clothes and things, that is, with his face washed, with clean hands, etc.; for, otherwise he will not be admitted to the classes.

4. When the pupils enter the school, they bow to the teacher and then sit still and orderly upon their benches and quietly wait for the instruction to begin.

5. That pupil, who does anything against the cleanliness or orderliness of the school, and injures in any way the tables, benches, the teachers' chairs, the

boards, walls or any such thing, will not only be punished for his piece of mischief, but he must also immediately give compensation for the damage he has caused.

6. For the furtherance of order and convenience in the school, the regulation has been passed that in all classes the necessary ink, chalk, sponges,

7. slate pencils, rulers and pens ^{are to be} ~~were~~ provided by the school, and each pupil — the poorer class excepted — pays 1 Gr. a month for them. The things ~~were~~ ^{are} such as writing-books and the like, are all locked up in the schoolroom at the end of the lesson.

7. The parents are asked ^{not only} to see that their children are diligent in their study at home, but also to let them come to school late as seldom as possible; on the other hand, if a negligent pupil learns less or lags behind the more diligent, it must not be attributed as a fault to the school.

8. The aim of the pupils in class is to learn. Therefore, anything that is contrary to this aim must have absolutely no place in the school. Under this head, there is, among other things, is the habit some parents have giving their little children their breakfast to take along with them, or of sending them something to school in the afternoon. Both are forbidden, inasmuch as children are in school to learn, as said before, and not to eat.

9. Every pupil — the poorer class excepted — must own the text-books ~~of~~ for every class he attends.

10. When instruction is given, the pupils give careful attention to everything that is taught; but only the one whom the Teacher questions may answer or speak out. But if the pupil called upon cannot answer, then the one who knows better may show by a movement with his hand that he knows it; he must not speak, however, without the

8.
11. Running about in the school, dangling and playing with hands and feet, eating and running out for a drink during the time of instruction is strictly forbidden. If any is forced to go out during school hours, he may receive permission from his teacher at recess for this, provided he does not misuse it, but never during the lesson itself.

12. Every father, as well as every stranger is permitted to visit the school, but no one, without exception, may disturb either the pupils or the teacher by questioning or otherwise speaking during the time of instruction; still less can it be permitted that the visitors converse in the school or cause any disorder by speaking aloud; but a quiet, orderly course of conduct is recommended to every one, since otherwise it would become necessary to lock up the school during the lesson-hours. The pupils too, should not look around on the appearance of their parents or of any other stranger, but rather be the more attentive and more modest.

13. No pupil may reproach another for a natural mistake made or for punishment received in the school, and ~~never~~ speak of them neither at home, nor in public.

14. No pupil shall soil or damage either his own books and things or those of another fellow-pupil; least of all should one use the things of another, neither should they quarrel, contend or fight with one another; improper and disgraceful abuse and cursing is most strictly forbidden and will be severely punished.

15. We expect of every father that he not only hold his children to a

mannerly and modest course of conduct, but also forbid them absolutely to use all improper forms of speech, such as abuse, cursing, swearing; so as to accustom the same to a pure and good style of expressing themselves in conversation.

16. If complaints ^{or charges} should be ^{made} by parents or any one else against any pupil, this cannot occur during the lesson-hour, but it must be made in writing or by word of mouth to the Warden of the school or to the instructors outside of school-hours, and the latter will punish them for the mischief done in accordance with a prescribed method.

17. Mischievous pupils shall be punished as follows: First, ~~an~~ effort is made to check the pupils from committing similar misdeeds in the future by warnings and admonitions; should these have

no effect, they are threatened with punishment; if the threat too proves fruitless, the next step is the punishment itself; and if no improvement follows this, then there remains nothing more except to expel the naughty pupil from the school, so that he may not corrupt the better pupils.

Least forbearance will be shown those pupils who are addicted to uncleanness, or who are caught in a lie, which is such a disgraceful thing and is strictly forbidden by the religion itself, or else in a false oath. The teachers shall thereupon direct their attention especially toward punishing faults of this kind and towards rooting them out altogether.

18. At the close of the lesson-hour, the pupils may not leave the room, until the teacher indicates that they may do so; then they are dismissed

a row at a time. But no one may push another, still less may anyone climb over tables and benches. The pupils must leave the school in twos, going slowly and quietly, must not tarry on the street, must not play, shout, run after one another, or commit other wild pranks."

These explicit regulations will draw a smile from us ourselves. But we must remember that these were children, who up to this time had attended only a Cheder, and we shall not consider that this School Ordinance has outlived its usefulness even today.

A plan of the lesson-hour from the year 1804, when the school had five classes, might interest professional men. The abbreviations are: W - for Joseph Wolff; M. Ph. - Moses Philippsohn; N. - Neumann (later Director of the Wilhelmschule in Breslau); R. - Rector Dr. Richter; Sal. - Gotthold Salomon; J. - Joachim; M. - Rektor Mette; S. - Samson.

First Class.

Sunday.

9. Bibel. W.
10. Calligraphy. W.
11. Hebrew. M. Ph.
1. Commentary. W.
2. Arithmetic. M. Ph.
3. Natural History. W.
4. Talmud. M. Ph.

Monday.

- Bible. W.
- Declamation. M.
- History. R.
- French. W.
- Jüd. Writing. W.
- Talmud. M. Ph.
- Latin. R.

Tuesday.

- Psalms Trans. N.
- German Gram. M.
- History. R.
- French. W.
- Logic. M. Ph.
- Arithmetic. M. Ph.
- Latin. R.

Wednesday.

9. Psalms Translation. N.
10. German Comp. M.
11. Geography. R.
1. Telemach. W.
2. Calligraphy. W.
3. Talmud. M. Ph.
4. Latin Composition. R.

Thursday.

- Commentary. W.
- German Comp. M.
- Geography. R.
- Telemach. W.
- Hebrew Comp. W.
- Talmud. M. Ph.
- Latin Comp. R.

Friday.

- Hebrew. M. Ph.
- Arithmetic. M. Ph.
- Technolog. R.
- Declamation. M.

Second Class.Sunday.

9. Bible. M. Ph.

10. Arithmetic M. Ph.

11. Calligraphy W.

1. Natural History N.

2. Jüd. Writing W.

3. German Reading N.

4. Talmud. Sal.

Deductive

Monday.

Jew. Hist. from N.

Bible. M. Ph.

Geography. N.

French. N.

Hebrew Grammar M. Ph.

Geschichte N.

Talmud. Sal.

Tuesday.

Calligraphy. W.

Declamation and

Conjugation. W.

Geography N.

French. N.

Jüd. Writing W.

History N.

Commentary M. Ph.

Wednesday.

9. Practical Exercises W.

10. Arithmetic. M. Ph.

11. Heb. Gram. M. Ph.

1. French. N.

2. Bible. M. Ph.

3. Talmud. Sal.

4. Deductive Jewish Hist. N.
from Heb. Text.Thursday.

Commentary. M. Ph.

Grammatical W.
exercises

Geography N.

French. N.

Arithmetic M. Ph.

Talmud. Sal.

Reading. N.

Friday.

German Comp. W.

Technology. W.

Arithmetic. M. Ph.

Third Class.Sunday.

9. Bible. Sal.

10. French. N.

11. Ger. Reading N.

1. Jüd. Writing. Sal.

2. Natural History. N.

3. Recitation. Sal.

4. Hour for prayer. J.

Monday.

Hebrew. M. Ph.

Calligraphy N.

Bible. Sal.

Arithmetic. M. Ph.

French. Sal.

Orthography. Sal.

Religion. M. Ph.

Tuesday.

Bible. Sal.

Arithmetic. M. Ph.

Jüd. Writing. Sal.

Hebrew. M. Ph.

Reading. N.

Ex. in Gram. Sal.

Commentary. Sal.

Wednesday.

9. Bible. Sal.

10. Commentary. Sal.

11. Calligraphy. W.

1. Arithmetic. M. Ph.

2. French. N.

3. Natural History. N.

4. Religion. M. Ph.

Thursday.

Commentary. Sal.

Hebrew. M. Ph.

Calligraphy. W.

Jüd. Writing. Sal.

French. N.

Reading N.

Recitation

Friday.

Bible. Sal.

French. N.

Orthography. Sal.

Fourth Class.

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>
9. Extracts from Sam. Biblical History.	Jüd. Writing. Sal.	Extracts from Biblical History. Sam.
10. Jüd. Writing. Sam.	Reading. Sal.	Reading. Sal.
11. German Reading. Sal.	Calligraphy. W.	Arithmetic. M. Ph.
1. Extracts from Biblical History. Sam.	Extracts from Biblical History. Sam.	Jüd. Writing. Sal.
2. Exercises in Grammar. Sam.	Religion. Sam.	Exercises in Grammar. Sam.
3. Hebrew Vowels. Sam.	Translation of Sam. Prayers.	Hebrew Vowels. Sam.
4. Translation of Prayers. Sam.	Hebrew vowels. Sam.	Moral addresses. Sam.
<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
9. Extracts from Biblical History. Sam.	Extracts from Biblical History. Sam.	Extracts from Biblical History. Sam.
10. Calligraphy. W.	Reading. Sal.	Reading. Sal.
11. Jüd. Writing. Sal.	Translation of Prayers. Sam.	Translation of Prayers. Sam.
1. Religion. Sal.	Arithmetic. M. Ph.	
2. Translation of Prayers. Sam.	Jüd. Writing. Sal.	
3. Exercises in Grammar. Sam.	Hebrew Vowels. Sam.	
4. Reading. Sal.	Exercises in Grammar. Sam.	

Fifth Class.

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>
9. Orthoepography. W.	Hebrew Reading. Sam.	Small Prayers. J.
10. Hebrew Reading. Sam.	Orthoepography. W.	Orthoepography. W.
11. Extracts from the Heb. Kinderfreund. Sam.	Practice in counting. Sam.	Extracts from the Heb. Kinderfreund. Sam.
1. Jüd. Writing. J.	Jüd. Writing. J.	Practice in counting. Sam.
2. Hebrew Vowels. J.	Extracts from the Heb. Kinderfreund. Sam.	Jüd. Writing. J.
3. Small Prayers. J.	Hebrew Vowels. J.	Hebrew Vowels. J.
<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
9. Small Prayers. J.	Orthoepography. W.	Orthoepography. W.
10. Orthoepography. W.	Extracts from the Heb. Kinderfreund. Sam.	Extracts from the Heb. Kinderfreund. Sam.
11. Extracts from the Heb. Kinderfreund. Sam.	Jüd. Writing. J.	Small Prayers. J.
1. Hebrew Reading. J.	Practice in counting. Sam.	
2. Hebrew Vowels. J.	Hebrew Vowels. J.	
3. Jüdisch Writing. J.	Small Prayers. J.	

The Frangschule, as a Jewish institution always strove to offer the young a knowledge of the Torah, in addition to profane subjects. But the Institute could not exist long, for from its founding there was the germ which brought about its end - it lacked large endowment-funds. The income was always uncertain and seldom covered the expenses for the year - not even when the fund of the Dessau Beth-hammidrassch was added. When the year 1848 brought compulsory attendance, the school had to be abandoned and was taken up by the State. The few Jewish teachers became State-officials, but after their death, no new appointments were made. The Jewish institution was changed to a commercial school, later to a Realgymnasium, when a few years ago a new Commercial School in which Jewish teachers worked, was established from funds given by a magnanimous lady, the Baroness von Bohn-Oppenheim. Thus, the Frangschule formed the foundation-stone for that institution.

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