

Honor. He received two gold medals at the Paris Universal Exposition of 1889: one for his observatory at Nice, the other for his professional school on the Boulevard Bourdon, Paris.

In 1881 Bischoffsheim was chosen to represent the electoral district of Nice in the Chamber of Deputies; but he insisted upon preserving the independence of his political opinions, and as he would attach himself permanently to no political faction, he was not reelected in 1885.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: *La Grande Encyclopédie*; Paul Guérin, *Dictionnaire des Dictionnaires*.
S. J. W.

BISCHOFFSHEIM, RAPHAEL (NATHAN): Merchant and prominent philanthropist; born at Bischoffsheim-on-the-Tauber, 1773; died at Mayence Jan. 22, 1814. He went to Mayence during the French Revolution, and from a small merchant became a purveyor to the army. Bischoffsheim was president of the Jewish community of Mayence. In a list dated April 21, 1808, he is included in the twenty-five foremost Jews of that city, from among whom the authorities were to choose notables for the great Sanhedrin of Paris.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Family records in the register's office, Mayence, Nos. 55 and 439; record of deaths, *ib.*, for the year 1814, No. 1039; *Le Guide de la Ville de Mayence*, year ix. of the republic; *Mainzer Memorialbuch*, 1883-1887, No. 1239; *Allg. Zeit. des Jud.* 1883, No. 8; *Isr. Wochenschrift*, No. 15, Magdeburg, 1883; *Israelit*, xxiv. 13, Mayence, 1883; *Rev. Etudes Juives*, 1831, vi. 156; *Monsieur Belge*, Feb. 9, 1883; *Kaiserling, Gedenkblätter*, Leipzig, 1892; G. Vapereau, *Dict. Universel des Contemporains*, Paris, 1893; *Erinnerungen von Ludwig Bamberger*, Berlin, 1899; *Etat de la Ville de Mayence*; MS. in the municipal archives of Mayence.
S. S. A.

BISCHOFFSHEIM-ON-THE-TAUBER: City in the district of Mosbach, Baden. At Landau and the neighboring Tauber-Bischoffsheim seven prominent Jews were tortured and burned, Jan. 1 and 2, 1235, on the accusation of having murdered a Christian. Nearly the whole community was annihilated by the hordes under Rindfleisch July 24, 1298, and again by those under Armleder's leadership June 10, 1337. Another persecution took place in 1343; and on the appearance of the Black Death in 1348 many Jews were martyred. Jacob of Bischoffsheim, with his wife and son, is mentioned at Nuremberg in 1329. In 1336 the brothers Johann and Eberhard Voyte ratified an agreement that of the yearly tax on the Jews of Bischoffsheim one-half should thenceforth go to Otto, bishop of Würzburg, and the other half to themselves until the chapter should have bought back the city from them. On Dec. 23 of the same year they agreed to turn over their share to the town council. In 1338 Archbishop Heinrich of Mayence released the knight Johann von Rieden and his family from all the claims of the Jews of Bischoffsheim on account of the Jews that had been slain in that city. In 1343 Archbishop Adolf of Mayence promised to cease taxing the Jews in the nine cities of the archbishopric to which Bischoffsheim belonged. On June 27, 1400, the burgrave Friedrich addressed a letter to Isaac of Bischoffsheim. In 1710 the houses of two Jews, near the church, were exchanged for others. In 1731 and 1746 the electoral government issued decrees forbidding the desecration of Sundays and holidays by Jews. The

poll-tax of the Jews amounted to 20 kreutzer in 1724. From early times the city belonged to the electorate of Mayence, and the Jews were included in the rabbinate of Aschaffenburg, or Mayence; representatives of Bischoffsheim are mentioned in all transactions of the electorate. When Baden became independent Bischoffsheim came under the rabbinical jurisdiction of Wertheim. The first and the last rabbi of Bischoffsheim-on-the-Tauber was Jacob Löwenstein (1851-69); while his learned son, Leopold Löwenstein, rabbi at Morbach, had charge of the rabbinate in 1870-71. At present (1902) the community numbers 40 families, and is included in the rabbinate of Morbach.

Jacob ben Eliezer Brandeis, who died in 1768, is mentioned as rabbi of Neckar-Bischoffsheim. A Rabbi Hellmann, of the family of Chief Rabbi Löb of Prague, was the author of a commentary on the Shulhan 'Aruk, Eben ha-'Ezer. He died at an early age, and was succeeded by Rabbi Moses Bamberger, who died in old age in 1820. The latter's only son, Koppel Bamberger, rabbi of Worms, died in 1864. The Jew Joseph, baptized in 1705, was a native of this place.

Jews are also mentioned as living at Rhein-Bischoffsheim.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Salfeld, *Martyrologium*, pp. 124, 209, 238, 281; Menken, *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum*, iii. 338; Salfeld and Stern, *Nürnberg im Mittelalter*, p. 210; Wiener, *Regesten*, p. 119, No. 126, p. 119, No. 127, p. 121, No. 137; *Zeit. für Gesch. der Juden in Deutschland*, iii. 325, v. 190; Bamberger, *Juden in Aschaffenburg*, 1900, p. 3; Steinschneider, *Cal. Boll.*, No. 9139. For Neckar-Bischoffsheim, see Wibel, *Hohenloheische Kirchenhistorie*, p. 757; Löwenstein, *Gesch. der Juden in der Kurpfalz*, p. 273.
A. F.

BISENZ: Town in Moravia, Austria. About the earliest history of its Jews nothing is known. Pesina, whose "Mars Moravicus" was published in 1677, calls it "nidus Judeorum."

In the time of the margraves (up to the fifteenth century) the Bisenz Jews must have enjoyed great privileges; for, according to the oldest "mountain-laws," they were permitted to own vineyards, it being a matter of great importance to the margraves to market their wine through the agency of Jewish traders. In the wars between George Podiebrad of Bohemia and Matthias of Hungary (c. 1458), Bisenz, and with it the Jewish quarter, was entirely devastated and came under constantly changing feudal proprietors.

According to the feudal "Urbarium" of 1604, the Jews even then possessed thirty-two houses, a hospital, and seventeen smaller buildings, called "Hoferi Zidovisti." But only a year later (May 2, 1605) the Jewish community was totally destroyed by Stephen Boeska; so that in 1655, when the new edition of the land-register was made out, twenty-five Jewish holdings still lay in ruins.

In the first Silesian war (Feb., 1742) the Jewish community suffered severely from the Prussian invasion, especially as its inhabitants had to bear their share of the general levies. At the close of this war the empress Maria Theresa in 1753 issued the so-called "Familien-Verordnung" (Family Ordinance), according to which only 5,442 Jewish families were allowed to live in Moravia; and of these 137 were allotted to Bisenz. On May 17, 1777, almost the

entire Jewish ghetto, in which there were ninety-three houses, was burned. Up to 1782 the Jewish community was subject to the feudal lord; but in criminal matters they were under the jurisdiction of the city authorities.

Of recent events may be mentioned the organization of the Jewish congregation into a political community in 1852, and the building of a new synagogue in 1863.

D.

J. Hf.

BISHKA, NAHMAN BEN BENJAMIN COHEN ZEDEK: Russian Talmudist; lived in the second half of the eighteenth century. Together with his brother, **Shabbetai Bishka**, he wrote the "Shebet Ahim" (The Brothers' Sitting), essays on different passages of the Talmud, with an appendix entitled "Shem Olam" (Eternal Name), being comments on different passages of the Haggadah and the Bible. The work was published (Wilna-Grodno, 1833) by his grandson, Joshua ben Kalonymus Cohen Zedek, who added an appendix of his own Talmudic essays under the title "Nahal Yabбок."

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Fürst, *Bibliotheca Judaica*, i. 120; Benjacob, *Ozar ha-Sefarim*, p. 567.

L. G.

I. BER.

BISHOP OF THE JEWS (*Episcopus Judæorum*): Title given to an official of the Jews in the Rhine country and in England in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. At Cologne it appears to have been used as an equivalent to "parnas," or warden of the synagogue. In England the parnas is mentioned under that name, and there appear to have been in each large community three, and three only, of these "episcopi" (for example, in the communities of London and Lincoln); and it has therefore been inferred that they were equivalent to the three dayanim or ecclesiastical assessors who constitute the bet din in the Jewish community, known in the English records as a "chapter of the Jews" (*capitulum Judeorum*). Originally an official title, the name became afterward a cognomen; and in French-speaking countries several Jews are found with the name "Evesque" or "Levesc." Some TALLIES of the English Exchequer have lately been discovered in which the Latin name is given as "Levesc," but is signed in Hebrew as "Cohen"; and it has been suggested that the name when used as a family name is simply equivalent to "Cohen."

Besides the bishops, there was in England a **PRESBYTER**, who appears to have been a kind of chief rabbi, associated chiefly with the treasury; he would correspond to the ab bet din.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Höniger, *Judenscheinsbuch der Laurenzpfarre in Köln*, Nos. 233, 234 *et passim*; Jacobs, *Jews of Angeln in England*, pp. 372, 373.

J.

BISLICHES or **BISSELICHES, MORDECAI LOEB:** Editor of some valuable Hebrew works of medieval authors; born at Brody, Austria, at the end of the eighteenth century; died about 1851. He was married at the age of thirteen (a fact of which he bitterly complains), ultimately divorced his wife, and, after the death of his children, went to Paris. There he was very prosperous in business, devoting his leisure to the study and publication of Hebrew manuscripts in the Paris Library. Later he went to

Holland and Italy, where he collected a number of Hebrew manuscripts. Returning to his birthplace, he prepared for publication, with the aid of his brother Ephraim, the following works:

(1) "Yeshu'ot Meshiho," of Isaac b. Judah Abravanel, Carlsruhe, 1828; (2) "Sefer ha-Nefesh," of Shem-Tob Palquera, Lemberg, 1835; (3) "Moreh ha-Moreh," of Shem-Tob Palquera, Presburg, 1837; (4) "Ma'amar Yikkavu ha-Mayim," of Samuel b. Judah Tibbon, Presburg, 1837; (5) Moses Nahmanides' *Iddushim* on "Shabbat," under the title, "Ozar Nehmad," Presburg, 1837; (6) "Minhat Kena'ot," of Abba Mari b. Moses of Lunel, Presburg, 1838; (7) "Sefat Yeter," of Abraham ibn Ezra (edited with preface by Meir Letteris), Presburg, 1838; (8) "Ha-Palit," a catalogue of eighty valuable Hebrew manuscripts in the possession of Bisliches (described by L. Zunz, with additional critical remarks by Senior Sachs), Berlin, 1850.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: His prefaces to the books *Ma'amar Yikkavu ha-Mayim*, and *Ha-Palit*; Steinschneider, *Cat. Bodl.* cols. 800, 962, 1959; Fürst, *Bibl. Jud.* i. 129; Zedner, *Cat. Hebr. Books Brit. Mus.* s.v.; Geiger, *Jüd. Zeit.* iii. 282.

D.

H. M.

BISMARCK, PRINCE OTTO EDUARD LEOPOLD: Prussian statesman; born at Schönhofen April 1, 1815; died at Friedrichsruh July 30, 1898; member of the Prussian Diet (Vereinigter Landtag), 1847-51; representative of Prussia at the Bundestag at Frankfort-on-the-Main, 1851-59; Prussian ambassador at St. Petersburg from March, 1859, to May, 1862, and at Paris from May to Sept., 1862; secretary of state and premier from Sept., 1862, to Aug., 1866; then chancellor of the North German Federation until 1870, and of the German empire from Dec., 1870, to March 20, 1890.

As a delegate to the first Prussian Diet, convened in 1847, Bismarck, a strong adherent of the feudal party ("Junkerpartei"), opposed the new law which favored the emancipation of the Jews. He eloquently advocated the idea of a Christian state in which Jews might have all personal liberties, but should not be accorded the right of serving as magistrates. He evinced the same spirit of religious or, rather, racial prejudice when Eduard Simonson was elected speaker of the Erfurt parliament and himself one of the secretaries: "My late father," he said, "would thrice turn in his grave should he hear that I had become the secretary of a Jewish savant" (Simonson had been baptized). In 1881 Bismarck praised Simonson as one of the most distinguished and patriotic representatives of the national idea.

Time and experience wrought a change in Bismarck's views. Many years later (1870), at Versailles, he confessed that he had heard and had delivered "many a stupid speech at this Diet."

As Prussian minister of state, he acquiesced in the full emancipation which had come to the Jews through the revolution of 1848; and under his chancellorship the North German Federation passed the law of July 3, 1869: "All existing restrictions of civil and political rights, restrictions derived from the difference of religion, are hereby abolished. Especially the right of participating in the representation of the municipality and of the state, and of holding public office, shall be independent of the religious creed." In words and deeds Bismarck proved himself a staunch defender of these principles, which were embodied in article 3 of the constitution of the empire. "I shall never consent to any attempt at curtailing the constitutional rights of the Jews" (Poschinger, "Fürst Bismarck," p. 227). With the