

# Commentaries and

SOCIAL NOTES • PERSONAL

## MY SHITETELE CALIFORNIA California Palestinians

By Dr. Will Kramer

May I share with you a piece of Western Americana which my students at Hebrew Union College enjoyed. Titled "Frontier Jew", it appeared in an 1880 Jewish newspaper in San Francisco:

"Long before railroads pierced the semi-civilized regions of Arizona, and the border states of Mexico, enterprising and energetic Palestinians were to be found actively engaged in commercial pursuits at all important points in the west frontier regions south of us.

"Neither Apaches nor revolutions deterred those brave pioneers of progress from exploring the borderland and laying the foundations of a new and better civilization.

"To the frontier Jews must be given the credit of having first discovered that great practical industries and enterprises could be

built up in what was called a desert region.

"Now that the railroad has entered the heart of Arizona and New Mexico, and that even Sonora, the border state of old Mexico, is engaged in railroad building, there has been a rush to the regions mentioned of people of all lands and regions.

"Conspicuous among them are a large number of Palestinians, earnest and resolute, determined to seek their fortunes in the coming El Dorado, for there can be no doubt that the great border land of which we speak is destined to be the new mining and agricultural El Dorado of the future.

"In a conversation with Mr. Carlo Dondoro, a well-known Italian-American journalist of San Francisco, who has just returned from an extended trip through Southern Arizona and Northern Mexico, we learn that there are large and prosperous Jewish firms in Tucson, Tombstone, Harshaw and other growing centers in Arizona.

"Zackendorf & Co. of Tucson, keeps on hand a stock of goods estimated in value at over \$1,000,000.

"They do an immense trade in Arizona and the northern states of Mexico. The firm has magnificent warerooms and keeps a large force of men constantly employed.

"At Tombstone our young Italian friend, N. Belgrano, is the chief clerk for a Jewish firm there, and we congratulate the house on securing such an active, honorable and reliable assistant.

"At Altamira, Mexico, an old Jewish resident keeps the largest store in the place and has his sign out in bold letters — 'The American Store'.

"In Magdalena lives another old resident whom the Mexicans affectionally call Don Miguel, his name being Michel. He does a large business, owns a big ranch, is well-to-do and is married to a Mexican lady."

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