

a festival of freedom

of followers, won a series of victories against the well equipped Syrian legions in 168 BC. The last victory at Emmaus opened the road to Jerusalem in 165 BC. Following that, they gained possession of Jerusalem and began to clean and rededicate the temple.

After the cleansing and restoration, preparations were made to rededicate the temple. But ritually prepared oil could not be found. After much searching a little cruse of oil was found, bearing the priestly seal. This quantity of oil might normally have been expected to last for one day. But the oil lasted for eight days and was called the miracle of Hanukkah, which is the Hebrew word for dedication.

SINCE THAT TIME, Hanukkah lights have been lit in Jewish homes in all parts of the world. These lights commemorated the relighting of the eternal light or the "Nehr Tomid" in the ancient Temple in Jerusalem by the Maccabees. They have come to signify the right of people to freedom of religion and to loyalty to one's traditions. It represents the triumph of democracy over tyranny.

So it is that Hanukkah is a happy Jewish holiday that is essentially celebrated at home. It is marked by the lighting of candles. Beginning with one candle on the first night, an additional candle is lighted each successive night of the holi-

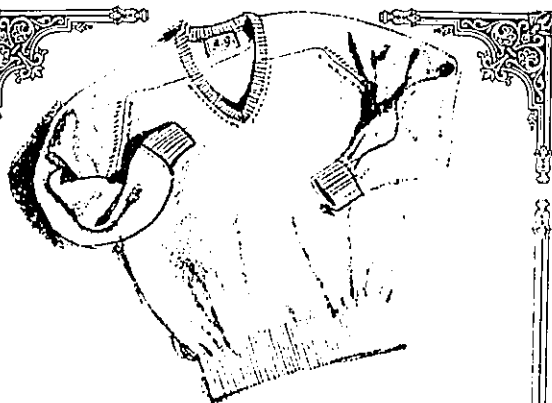
day until on the final evening, eight candles will be lit. A special pilot candle or "shammas" is used to light the candle which are placed in a menorah, an eight-branched candelabra reminiscent of the candelabra in the ancient temple.

The candle lighting is accompanied by the chanting of blessings and is followed by songs. Prayers of praise and thanksgiving hymns are recited in every service throughout the eight days.

HANUKKAH IS OFTEN marked by the giving of gifts. In some instances, a child is given a different gift after the blessing of the candles each night of the holiday.

Among the special foods prepared on Hanukkah, latkes or potato pancakes are the most popular. Kugen or potato pie and the loaf of bread called Chollnare also served.

Hanukkah is a time to receive guests, as well as a family reunion. Jewish homes are decorated with candles and flowers. It is also the occasion for community celebrations. There are parties, concerts, dramatic presentations in gaily decorated settings. Synagogues and religious schools and other Jewish institutions usually arrange special events in celebration of Hanukkah. But with all the festivity, the poor are not forgotten. They are usually recipients of Hanukkah gelt, gifts of money, or other necessities.



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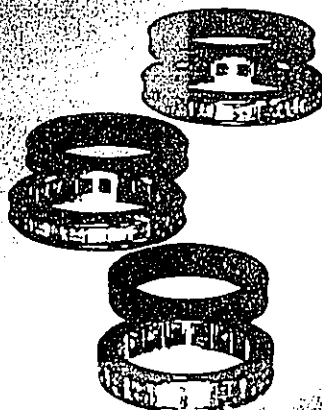
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