Amongst the people from Europe immigrating to North America in the nineteenth century many Jews from Germany came to the New World trying to begin a new life. Their religious experience in Europe and Germany, and ideas of organising (religious) education shaped to a large extent Jewish religious life and education in North America, especially in the emerging United States. Marcus M. Jastrow (1829-1903) was amongst these Jewish immigrants. He came to America in 1866, and only when he took over the rabbinate of the Rodeph Shalom congregation in Philadelphia (Pa.) did the external conditions of his life settle down. Yet two cities - Berlin and Warsaw - and the encounter with distinguished scholars of the Science of Judaism (Wissenschaft des Judentums) and their beliefs remained most formative in Jastrow’s life and legacy in America. Through this article I aim to trace back the elements of Jastrow’s education and experience in Germany and Poland and identify and measure the impact of it in his life and epistemology in America.