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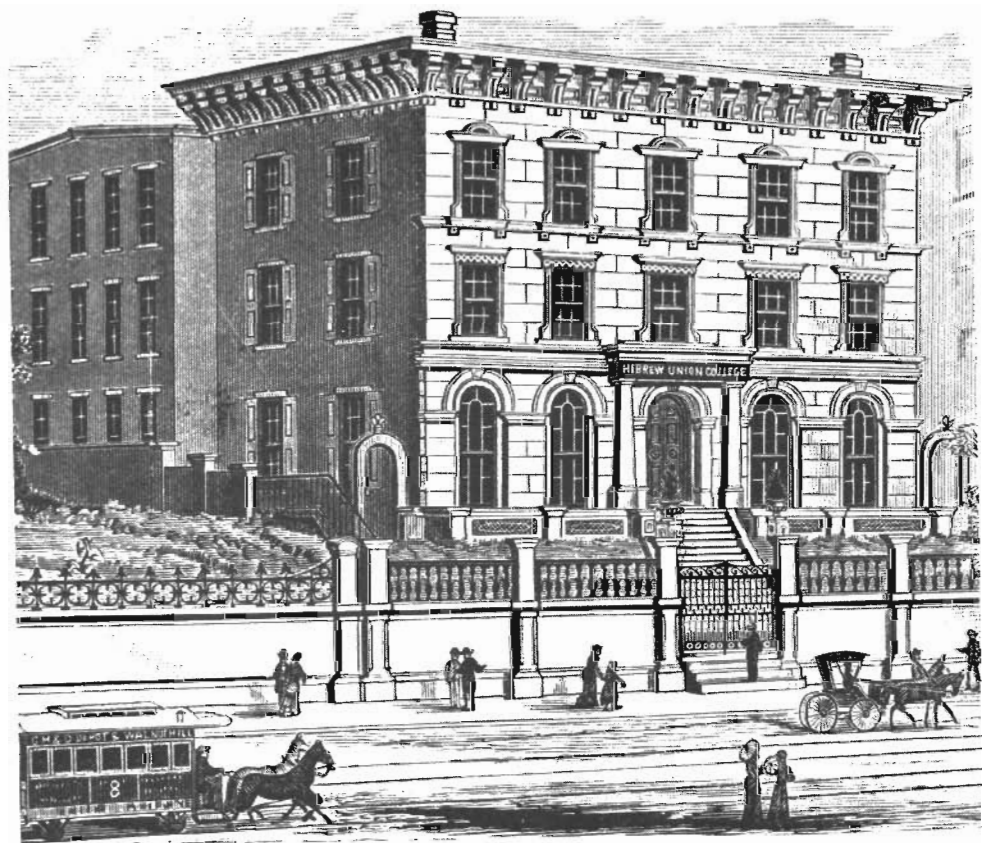


The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

A Centennial Documentary

VOL. XXVI NOVEMBER, 1974 NO. 2

Published at the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati



First building of the
Hebrew Union College—1881-1912

American Jewish Archives

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In This Issue

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion—A
Centennial Documentary 99

Founded in Cincinnati in 1875, the Hebrew Union College was conjoined in later years with New York's Jewish Institute of Religion and subsequently added campuses in Los Angeles and Jerusalem. It is not only the Reform movement's leading seminary for the training of rabbis but also a major center of Jewish intellectual endeavor.

Index to Volume XXVI 245

Illustrations

First building of the Hebrew
Union College

Inside Front Cover

Isaac Mayer Wise, Kaufmann Kohler, Julian Morgenstern, Stephen S. Wise, Nelson Glueck, Alfred Gottschalk, Vestry room at the Mound Street Temple, Interior of Cincinnati's Isaac M. Wise Temple, A Hebrew Union College Student makes a friendly visit, A corner of the Hebrew Union College Library, Prime Minister Golda Meir attends the dedication of a new building on the Jerusalem campus, Torah procession at the dedication of the Los Angeles campus. following p. 136

Dedicated to the memory of
Miriam Grad Tarshish
and
Thomas Jefferson Tobias
by
Allan and Rowena Tobias Tarshish

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The Journal of American History, and
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ALFRED GOTTSCHALK, *President*

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Hebrew Union College-Jewish
Institute of Religion

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion—A Brief Biography.....	103
A College Freshman, 1875.....	106
Faculty and Students, Boardinghouses, and the Ladies, 1875–1880's.....	109
The Nobles and the Teachers.....	111
Indigent if Not Indignant Students.....	112
How Well I Remember.....	115
The Ladies Come to the Rescue.....	117
Qualifications for the Presidency of the Hebrew Union College, 1876.....	119
How a Jewish Minister Advertises His Own Marriage, 1876.....	120
High Jinks In the New Home, 1881.....	122
Opening the Eighth Annual Scholastic Year, 1882–1883.....	126
The First Ordination and the Terefa Banquet, 1883.....	128
Rejection of the Pittsburgh Platform, 1886.....	133
The President Summarizes What the College Has Done and Expects, 1897.....	134
The President Denounces Zionism, 1897.....	137
Louis Ginzberg and the Hebrew Union College, 1899.....	140
The College President in a Lighter Mood, 1899.....	143
Moses Mielziner Opens the Twenty-Sixth Scholastic Year of the H.U.C., 1900.....	144
Shall Our Theological Schools Unite? 1900.....	147
The College and the Seminary, 1901–1913.....	153
In Memory of Gotthard Deutsch, 1903.....	156
Kohler, the Theologian, 1903–1921.....	160
The Kohler-Margolis Affaire, 1907.....	163
Pat Neumark, 1907–1924.....	166
Frank Gavin Studies at the College, 1909–1912.....	168
Adolph S. Oko and the Hebrew Union College Library, <i>ca.</i> 1913.....	170
College Yells and Songs, 1914–1915.....	174
A Student at War, 1918.....	177
Stephen S. Wise and the Jewish Institute of Religion, 1922–1950.....	181
A Distinguished Rabbi Graduates from the University, 1925.....	186

Freshman, Why Do You Want to Be a Rabbi? William B. Silverman, 1935.....	88
Morgenstern and Father Coughlin, 1938.....	190
The Task of the Hebrew Union College, Julian Morgenstern, 1939..	193
Chaplain Alexander D. Goode, 1945.....	195
Thomas Mann Receives a Degree from the College, 1945.....	197
With History as Our Guide, Julian Morgenstern, 1947.....	199
The American Jewish Archives, 1947.....	202
The Genius of the Jew, 1947.....	204
Golda Fish, <i>ca.</i> 1947.....	206
Integrating the Short Corner, 1950's.....	207
Abraham Cronbach and the Rosenbergs, 1953.....	208
What Is Reform Judaism? 1955.....	214
A Letter to My Son Who Wants to Be a Rabbi, Janice Yarmove, 1959.....	216
Training Rabbis for World Jewry, 1959.....	218
Premier Ben-Gurion Comes to Visit, 1960.....	220
A High Holyday Student at Work, 1961.....	221
The Israel Campus, 1963–1973.....	223
The New President, 1971.....	229
The Skirball Museum, 1971.....	234
Rabbi Sally—The First Woman Rabbi, 1972.....	236
The Yom Kippur War and the Student Body, 1973.....	238
What HUC-JIR Does, 1974.....	242

THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

A Brief Biography

No later than the second decade of the nineteenth century Jewish idealists here in the United States began making repeated efforts, all futile, to establish permanently an academy or college where Jewish and general subjects might be taught. There were too few Jews in the land to support such an enterprise. About the year 1818, when the first school was talked about, there were only 3,000 Jews in the United States, but by the time of the Civil War—so it was estimated—there were 150,000 Jews in this country, Russians, Poles, Germans, Austrians, Dutch, French, and English, all going their separate ways. There was liturgical disorder, every synagogue was a law unto itself; congregational leaders, lay and rabbinical, were frequently men without traditions of gentility or learning. The War of 1861 taught the Jews the meaning, the necessity, of union; and the telegraph and the railroads made speedy transportation and instantaneous communication a commonplace. Federation became a possibility. It was in those postbellum days that the Jews of this country pulled themselves together and created an assembly of synagogues. They called it the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. The adjective “Jewish” was avoided; “Jew” was still a dirty word. The man who more than anyone else pressed for the formation of a “Union” was Isaac Mayer Wise (Weiss), a Bohemian émigré who landed here in 1846 at the age of twenty-seven. He lived to be eighty-one, and by the time he was translated to the Academy on High in 1900 he had accomplished what he had been aiming at since 1848: he had built a union of congregations, a college, and a rabbinical association.

Wise was no great theologian, no modern critical scholar; he was a magnificent organizer, a persistent, undaunted fighter, and a charismatic personality. This man built a synagogal federation in order to gain support for a college, the only institution that could nurture and develop a religious movement. This school, the Hebrew Union College which he brought to birth in 1875, is America’s first permanent rabbinical college and today the largest Jewish theological seminary in the world. Aided by devoted laymen and rabbis, Wise created the

instrumentalities of American Jewish Reform, a religious movement dedicated to the firm conviction that Judaism could survive in free America only if it emphasized basic and distinctive religio-ethical principles and discarded those rituals and ceremonies which the Reformers believed isolated the Jew from his fellow Americans. Reform Judaism was a realistic attempt to stem the rising tide of complete assimilation and defection.

When the school opened on October 3, 1875, in the vestry rooms—the cellar—of the Mound Street Temple in Cincinnati, about ten students were present. Practically all were children who attended the high schools; one was a freshman at McMicken College, but before the academic year was over seven more youngsters sat around the large table—one of them an eleven-year-old girl still attending public school. The College library was locked up every night in a 2½-foot wooden box lest the mice come out of the panels and nibble at the books. In those early days the complete course lasted eight years; there were four years of high school and four more years of university training, all in the morning. The classes at the Hebrew Union College met only in the afternoon, starting after the pupils had hurried over from the secular schools. Finally, a ninth year, a graduate year, was added so that the students could devote all their time to the College, to the writing of a thesis, and to preparation for their impending rabbinical ordination. By the mid-twentieth century, the course required six years of graduate study; no man or woman was admitted without a university degree.

In 1881 the College vacated the cellars in which it had been housed and moved into a beautiful downtown mansion on West Sixth Street. In the fall of 1912, it trekked up to the eighteen-acre campus in the suburb of Clifton, across from the imposing University of Cincinnati. By that time Wise had been dead twelve years. Professor Moses Mielziner, a talmudist, served as president from 1900 to 1903, and on his death Gotthard Deutsch, an historian, took over for a few months. It was hard to find a successor for the incomparable Wise. Finally, in 1903, the theologian Kaufmann Kohler received the coveted post, presiding over the College until 1921, when he was succeeded by the Bible scholar Julian Morgenstern. When Morgenstern retired in 1947, a former student of his, the archaeologist Nelson Glueck became president, and when Glueck died in 1971, the new executive was Alfred Gottschalk, an historian of the Jewish cultural scene.

The College began an era of national and international expansion under Glueck. In 1948 it was conjoined with the Jewish Institute of Religion which Stephen S. Wise had founded at New York in 1922. A cantorial and educators school was soon attached to the New York campus of the merged Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. In Cincinnati, the American Jewish Archives and the American Jewish Periodical Center were opened, the museum was expanded, the Frank L. Weil Institute of Advanced Studies in Religion and the Humanities was called into being, and graduate studies leading to the Ph.D. degree for Christian and Jewish scholars were reorganized. With the growth of Jewish life in the Far West, Glueck sent young Alfred Gottschalk to Los Angeles, where since the mid-1950's a teachers college, a school of communal service workers, and a rabbinical preparatory college have been set up. To house these institutions, a beautiful new building adjoining the University of California was dedicated in 1971. It was during the decade of the 1950's that Nelson Glueck also laid the foundation for the Hebrew Union College Biblical and Archaeological School in Jerusalem, a postdoctoral research center for Palestine archaeologists. The Jerusalem school was expanded in the 1960's to include a preparatory rabbinical department for students of the New York, Cincinnati, and Los Angeles campuses. The first building to house the Jerusalem school was dedicated in 1963; an additional building was dedicated in 1970. Thus there are at present four campuses of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

The College-Institute is historically important because it is the nursery for Reform Judaism, a religious "denomination" which has spread to all the continents of the world. The College has graduated about 1,100 rabbis and scholars, and if one may parody a well-known statement, the sun never sets on the graduates of this school. As Jewry's largest rabbinical seminary, it has prepared the men who today lead one of the world's largest liberal religious movements. Today there are, it would seem, over a million Jews in the United States who adhere, directly or indirectly, to a religious philosophy seeking to harmonize and synthesize Americanism and Judaism. American Jewish Orthodoxy and Conservatism have patterned themselves structurally and in part even culturally and religiously on American Jewish Reform.

* * * *

The documentary which follows attempts to encompass the century since the College's founding in 1875. This compilation is not a formal record of curricula and teachers, of rules and regulations, of documents and creeds. It is not intended to describe the distinguished members of the Board and the notable professors who have graced this institution. That is not the purpose of this collection; these pages have been assembled in the hope that they may catch the spirit of the College, of its teachers and its students, and may grasp the essence, the real nature of a great school, its *élan vital*. The College-Institute was and is something vibrant, living, with an ethos all its own. And all this the editors hope to capture within the space of a little over 100 pages!

A College Freshman
1875

Among the freshmen enrolled in the first class of the Hebrew Union College in 1875 was a teenager from Columbus, Ohio, by the name of David Philipson. He graduated from the school with the first class in 1883 and went on to become one of America's most distinguished rabbis, serving for many years as the spiritual leader of Bene Israel Congregation in Cincinnati and as an adjunct professor at the College. He was typical of his generation in articulating an uncompromising anti-Zionism.

Seventy years have passed since I was a freshman at the Hebrew Union College. I may indeed say with the Psalmist, "I have been young and have grown old." I have been asked frequently how I happened to enter this nascent institution. The people who time and again have put that question to me have inadvertently made a mistake. The College was not a nascent institution; it had not yet been born when my parents, who were living in Columbus, Ohio, at that time, permitted themselves to be persuaded by Rabbi Isaac M. Wise to send their oldest son to Cincinnati to enter an institution which did not yet exist.

At the request of Dr. Wise, whom my father knew from former days, I was brought to Cincinnati in August, 1875, when I met the great Cincinnati rabbis, Isaac M. Wise and Max Lienthal. It seems

that I passed muster. I was thirteen years of age and I had been taught privately by the Reverend Samuel Weil, the rabbi of the congregation. I had passed my examinations for the high school. Had it not been my father's purpose to take me to Cincinnati, my education would have ended with the grammar school, as was indeed the case with all my cronies.

I was the only Jewish boy at that time who entered a high school. Inasmuch as the Columbus high schools opened in September, I revelled in the thought that I would have vacation a month longer, for the Hebrew Union College was not to open until October. How the boys envied me! They had all gone to work and here was I, taking it very easy at home.

ARRIVAL IN CINCINNATI

This halcyon condition continued until the receipt of a telegram from Dr. Wise asking father why I had not come to Cincinnati to enter the high school. It was all due to ignorance on the part of my father, who did not know that I was to attend the public school and the College at the same time. Hurriedly, my good mother, of blessed memory, outfitted me, and father brought me, a wondering lad, to Cincinnati in response to the telegram. We arrived in the southern Ohio metropolis on Sunday. Father had been informed that I was to live in a quasi-dormitory on West Eighth Street. We went there from the train. Father stayed with me until Sunday night, when he left for home.

There were, as I recall, seven or eight boys of varying ages in the Eighth Street house. I had never been away from home. And a thoroughly homesick boy cried himself to sleep in the new environment. The other boys who were sleeping in the same room dubbed the new-comer, "Cry baby." This did not add to the boy's happiness. But that first night passed. With what joy the morning was greeted! A member of the Board of Governors of the new institution came to the Eighth Street house to escort the incoming students to the high school. This experience was all so new that it seemed strange to me. I often wonder why I did not return home. But as Kipling says, that is another story. Hughes High School at that time was situated at Fifth and Mound Streets. And thither the kindly gentleman escorted us.

OPENING OF COLLEGE

I soon accommodated myself to the new life. September passed rapidly. October dawned and we boys were all keyed up to great excitement, for the Hebrew Union College was to open Sunday, the third day of that month. On that momentous day seventy years ago, we, the neophytes, were called for and taken to the Plum Street Temple, where the opening exercises were to take place. I have frequently described that great occasion. Even today, seventy years later, the memory of that great day thrills me. The brilliantly illuminated temple was crowded, for the people sensed that a historic event was taking place. All the participants in that service, of course, have gone to the great beyond. We boys, numbering about fifteen, were seated in front pews. Dr. Wise, having embarked on this great adventure, could not know what success it would have. To make sure that it would not be an entire failure, he prepared a number of his own scholars for entrance into the new institution—Edward L. Heinsheimer, Louis D. Marks, David Eichberg, and Fred Strasburger. These boys attended the College a few years and then dropped out.

Only four of the other entrants persevered until ordination. Of those four, I am the only survivor. Israel Aaron, Henry Berkowitz, Joseph Krauskopf—the other three did fine service. I am the last leaf on the tree planted by Isaac M. Wise on that October day in the long ago. The College was without funds. There was no building. The two temples, the Plum and Mound Street, offered their school rooms. The opening sessions were held in the Mound Street Temple. What a turn of fate! Thirteen years later, I became rabbi of the congregation in whose vestry I began my rabbinical training. The College opened with three teachers, two of these, Doctors Wise and Lilienthal, volunteering their services, and the third, Solomon Eppinger, the only paid instructor and very poorly paid at that. We attended the public high school in the morning and the College in the afternoon.

Two girls were in the opening class, one a granddaughter of the instructor, Solomon Eppinger, and the other a niece of Dr. Wise. The boys rather resented the presence of these girls. One day, one of their number hid the books of Julia Ettliger, the granddaughter of

the instructor. When the matter came to the attention of Mr. Eppinger, he flew into a rage. He reported the matter to Dr. Wise, who threatened to dismiss the class unless the books were returned. The culprit, thoroughly frightened, managed to get the books to Julia without betraying his identity, and the matter became a closed incident.

One of the students, and a very bright one at that, was Nathan Cohn, of Nashville, Tenn., who later became one of the leading Jewish citizens of Nashville. Nathan, one day, was rather inattentive. Mr. Eppinger asked: "Cohn, what is the matter with you?" "Oh, Mr. Eppinger, I have the blues." "Oh, you have the blues, well, I will give you the blacks," and promptly he put two black marks opposite Nathan's name. That was rather serious for the boy. He enlisted the sympathy of several members of the class; we appealed to Mr. Eppinger and succeeded in appeasing the affronted teacher and he removed the black marks. But our freshman class was studious. Our teachers were Dr. Wise, who taught us Mishnah; Dr. Lienthal, who taught us Jewish history; and Mr. Eppinger, who taught Deuteronomy and Hebrew grammar.

From these small beginnings the Hebrew Union College grew into the great institution that it is today.¹

* * * *

Faculty and Students, Boardinghouses, and the Ladies 1875-1880's

Rules and Regulations

Before the College got under way in the fall of 1875, a code of laws was set up governing the conduct of the faculty primarily. Its rigid, unbending discipline seems unnecessarily harsh in the light of the permissive attitude towards teaching personnel which prevails in American schools a century later. One suspects that these regulations were mostly pious wishes.

July 13, 1875

¹ *The Hebrew Union College Monthly [HUCM]*, Apr., 1946, pp. 24-25.

CODE OF LAWS FOR THE GENERAL INTERNAL GOVERNMENT OF THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE.

ARTICLE I.

SEC. 1. The standard for admission into the several departments of the Hebrew Union College shall be fixed by the "Faculty" in pursuance of, and consistent with, the constitution and laws of the Union [of American Hebrew Congregations], and subject to the approval of the Board of Governors.

ARTICLE II.

SEC. 1. The College year shall commence on the first day of July, and close on the last day of June of each year.

SEC. 2. The first session of the College shall commence on the first Monday in September, and end on the Friday preceding the first Monday in February, and the second session shall commence on the first Monday in February, and close on the last Friday in June.

SEC. 3. No Professor, Preceptor, or any other officer of the College shall be absent from any session, except in case of personal sickness, without the consent of the "Board of Governors," and all absentees shall forfeit their pay for any time lost, unless otherwise ordered by the Board.

SEC. 4. All Professors and Preceptors are required to be present in their rooms, and have such presence duly reported to the President, at least ten minutes before the opening of the College daily, and any violation shall subject the delinquent to a deduction of salary equal to one fourth of the day's pay, unless the Board shall otherwise order; and a register shall be kept by the President of the Faculty for that purpose.

ARTICLE III.

SEC. 1. The Faculty shall adopt proper rules of discipline for the government of the students, subject, however, to the approval or amendment of the "Board of Governors."

SEC. 2. Each Professor and Preceptor shall submit a monthly

report to the President of the Faculty, giving a history of the affairs under their management, and the same shall, together with a general monthly report of the President, be submitted to the "Board of Governors."²

* * * *

The Nobles and the Teachers

About a week after the school was opened, the teenagers were organized into a national Hebrew letter fraternity called the "Nobles of the Children of Israel" (Exodus XXIV, 11), the Azilai B'nai Israel. It persisted as a Hebrew Union College society till the turn of the century and seems to have died when Wise, its spiritual father, passed away.

In those early days the students had but one instructor, Solomon Eppinger. When he failed to keep order, Wise had to intervene and teach.

July 11, 1876

October 11, 1875, the collegiate association, called *Azilai B'nai Israel*, was constituted by the students of the Hebrew Union College, for literary exercises in composition and elocution, and lectures in Hebrew history; and to establish a union of students forever, as every student of the H. U. C. remains forever a member thereof, and every student or graduate of any high school, college or university may become a member thereof by election. The association has met every Sunday and has had its regular literary exercises and lectures on Hebrew history by the undersigned.

THE COURSE OF INSTRUCTION

The preceptor, Mr. Solomon Eppinger, instructed daily, Saturdays and Sundays excepted, two hours, from four to six P.M., in the College rooms at the B'nai Israel Temple on Mound Street. Besides, he instructed privately such students who could not go along with the class, enabling them to remain in the same. The preceptor is a

² *Proceedings of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations [PUAHC] (Cincinnati, no date), I, 145-46.*

practical, punctual, conscientious and successful teacher, always at his post punctually, and zealous in the performance of his duties.

...³

* * * *

June 6, 1876

Rev. Dr. I. M. Wise was unanimously elected President of the College for the ensuing year, and in the acceptance of the office he tendered to the Board his services gratuitously as Professor, and he has with remarkable zeal and ability discharged the duties of President and Professor and has devoted all his energy to the cause.

The Board also appointed Mr. S. Eppinger, of this city, as preceptor, for the class, at the salary of \$700.00 for the year, \$200.00 of which are for extra services in giving instructions to the students after the class-hours. Mr. Eppinger has assisted the President of the College with fidelity and ability. . . .⁴

* * * *

Indigent if Not Indignant Students

Most Jews in the decades of the '70's and '80's could not or would not send their children to a college. They were simply too poor. But even the rich and the well-to-do rarely thought of college; they preferred to take their boys into their stores and factories after their graduation from public school. For the College to have a student body, immigrant children and orphans without means had to be shipped to Cincinnati, where they were outfitted and fed at College expense. If the Board refused its help, Wise would take some of the youngsters into his own home at a nominal charge or provide for them at his own expense. Detailed published accounts of what each indigent student received were discontinued when Rabbi George Jacobs, of Philadelphia, protested.

November 1, 1876

There is now here a Russian-German boy, Morris Sachs, 14 years old, poor and friendless. He studied in the Gymnasium [high school]

³ *Ibid.*, p. 229.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

of Libau in Kurland, to the fourth class thereof, is tolerably versed in Hebrew and German, has a fair start in Latin, Greek, and mathematics, and appears to be quite intelligent and desirous to study. His father is a poor immigrant, now in Chicago. The boy appears to me very promising and worthy of your support. He came to me penniless and friendless. I will keep him in my house till you decide what shall be done with him. He could conveniently go along with Grade D, and has the qualifications of the law, because he was in the Gymnasium. I recommend this boy to your particular grace, and, if you resolve so, I will keep him in my house till July next for half price, at \$3 a week. I will also care for his clothing.

There is hope for the future of this College, with the help of God, the Almighty, who may bless you and your handiwork.

Your most obedient servant,
 President Isaac M. Wise, Hebrew Union College.⁵

* * * *

October 4, 1880

There are again, in Grades D and B, two students of talent and good will who must receive pecuniary aid; and, according to former resolutions of your honorable body, could not be supported from the funds set apart for this purpose on account of the letter of the law governing the case. Therefore, I am again under the necessity, as I have been in previous years, to provide for those students from my private means; and I mention this fact to correct wrong impressions which have been circulated outside of this Board.⁶

* * * *

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE H. U. C.

. . . . Commencing now, and annually hereafter, one free scholarship in the Hebrew Union College, including tuition, boarding, lodging, clothing, etc., shall be awarded to the most meritorious boy in each of all the Jewish orphan asylums in the United States, provided such boy shall on leaving the asylum at the time fixed as the limit

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 994.

of his stay by its regulations have the necessary qualifications for entering the College. . . .

B.[ernhard] Bettmann,
President Board of Governors.

Cincinnati, July 6, 1877.⁷

* * * *

Vestry Room, Mound Street Temple,
Cincinnati, August 20, 1877

. . . . The following accounts, duly audited, were presented and ordered to be paid:

J. J. Maas, for boarding and lodging students	\$200.00
Dr. Thad. A. Reamy, for services rendered	10.00
Glaser & Wolfson, for clothing	11.00
Brown & Laufer, for hats	2.50
M. Livingston, board, etc., for David Runes	55.00
L. Sholem, board, etc., for Isaac Rubenstein	15.00
S. Simon, board, etc., for Isaac Rubenstein	5.00
S. Eppinger, two months' salary as preceptor	116.66
Isaacs Brothers, for furnishing goods	6.13
F. Speth, for mending spectacles65
H. Imwalle, for repairing shoes	4.35
J. M. Potter, shoes for students	12.75
P. Halligan, repairing clothing for students	19.00
Samuel Krause, board, etc., for Isaac Rubenstein	20.00
	<hr/>
	\$478.04 ⁸

* * * *

Vestry Rooms Plum Street Temple,
Cincinnati, December 20, 1878

. . . . A communication was received from Rev. George Jacobs, of Philadelphia, suggesting the following, viz.:

First. That no itemized statement be published of the expenses of or for the indigent students. It is sufficient, if the Auditing Committee see that the various charges are supported by proper vouchers, instead of laying before the public the fact that a comb or toothbrush has been purchased for such and such a student.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 364.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

Second. That the names of indigent pupils, or applicants to become such, be not published, otherwise there will be the drawing of invidious distinctions between the self-supporting and the non-supporting pupils, and placing the stamp of pauper on some, perhaps never to be effaced.⁹

* * * *

How Well I Remember

Clifton Harby Levy, a scion of the Louisiana and New York Levys of colonial origin, came to the school in the very early 1880's. Almost seventy years later, he described in detail the Jewish boardinghouse where he had lodged and summed up in a couple of all-too-brief paragraphs his estimate of Wise, the man.

Shall I ever forget that September morn when I landed at 200 Richmond St., thereafter to be called "The Mansion," a name which I gave it, amid general applause?

It was conducted as the College Boarding House, under direction of the board of governors—only they did not direct. On that first morning they had pancakes for breakfast. I tasted one, and said I was not hungry—although I had been traveling a day and a night. I managed to eat them later, for lack of anything else, even though they were unappetizing.

I found that the third story of this mansion was reserved for the students. The family occupied the second floor. There was central heat, coming from a stove on the landing between the second and third floors, with wooden leaders passing to the third floor. It is easy to imagine how much heat we got.

When I was assigned my quarters, I found that I was in a room with three other boys. In that room was a dresser, with four drawers, one for each boy. There were two trundle beds in which the four slept. Under a shelf were eight hooks on which clothing was to be hung, two hooks for each boy. There were four bookshelves, four kitchen chairs, painted dark red to match the kitchen table of the same color. We found out that the paint came off when we put a hot apple pie on it one night. But the paint didn't taste right. In the center of the table was a student-lamp, under which we studied, long

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 628.

into the night, sometimes wearing our overcoats, because of the cold.

We were roused in the morning by a bell, and went down to the single bathroom where we found tin basins in which to wash. Each boy got his individual towel which he kept in his room for a week.

Then we assembled downstairs and one of the students rushed through the prayers in Hebrew. [Isaac L.] Rypins was especially popular for this duty, as he could read Hebrew faster than anyone else. Then came breakfast, usually consisting of a cereal, so-called coffee, and prunes. I have not dared to look a prune in the face during the sixty-five years since my release from this "Home."

The noon meal was largely stews, bread pudding, and anything that was cheap, which the cook could make most unappetizing. The suppers were so slight I cannot remember them at all. Was it any wonder that most of our spending money went for food! We were growing boys, and needed plenty to eat. We used to go to Levi's restaurant on Central Avenue, where we got a bratwurst, potato salad and bread for ten cents. What the waiters got, they couldn't count. Another favorite place was the Vienna Bakery, where we got plenty of bread with whatever we ordered and the waiters got as much as at Levi's.

To take a bath at the Mansion was out of the question, so we went to one of the bath-houses where a bath was provided for twenty-five cents. The boys did not take too many baths, needless to remark. Later some of us joined the Cincinnati Gymnasium, where we received valuable training—and baths.

A few of the students were fortunate enough to have some friend in the city, and I was one of these, being invited for Friday night supper or Sunday dinner, which was appreciated to the utmost.

On Sunday mornings some of the boys would go to open lots for a game of ball, or in winter, go skating in the park. Later some of us joined Spill's dancing school, and enjoyed their Saturday evening dances, which lasted from eight o'clock until eleven. [Edward N.] Calisch, [William] Rosenau, [William S.] Friedman, and I formed one of these groups, escorting some of the girls each Saturday and treating them to a soda, on the way home. That was the extent of our dissipation.

Boys will get into mischief, of course, and so someone taught them

how to play poker. They had no money, so they played for walnuts, and then ate the nuts after the game. . . .¹⁰

* * * *

He [Wise] was known never to refuse an invitation to dedicate a new temple, no matter how far it might be from Cincinnati; [he] carried on a tremendous correspondence all over the United States and Europe. Every immigrating rabbi came to him for placement and he served everyone, even though he was rewarded frequently with ingratitude. No schnorrer [itinerant beggar or "fundraiser"] was turned away empty handed, and he endorsed the notes of so many worthless men that his congregation saved him so often that the banks were instructed not to accept his endorsement any longer.

Edward Bloch, founder of the Bloch Publishing Company, was his brother-in-law, and was so generous to Rabbi Wise in all of his publishing enterprises as to impoverish himself. For Rabbi Wise was unmethodical in business. Bills were seldom sent out for the *Israelite* or *Deborah* [the newspapers Wise edited]—and if anyone remitted, Rabbi Wise put the money in his pocket and forgot to credit the sender. While Rabbi Wise had none of the graces of oratory, he was a forceful speaker, and left his hearers convinced of the truth of his position on public questions as well as the type of idealistic Judaism for which he stood.¹¹

* * * *

The Ladies Come to the Rescue

Some of the funds to support the boys came from "Ladies' Educational Aid Societies" which were established in the late 1870's at the request of Moritz Loth, the first president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Loth, a brilliant, imaginative Cincinnati businessman, was devoted to the College. He was typical of the dozens of dedicated laymen who held up Wise's hands and made it possible for him to build the school and to provide for its meager budget.

¹⁰ *Liberal Judaism*, Mar., 1951, pp. 14–16.

¹¹ *Liberal Judaism*, June, 1950, p. 32.

TO THE WOMEN IN ISRAEL:

Since the historical days when Miriam led in music and song to the glory of God, when Deborah arose as a mother in Israel, and by her counsel and courage rescued her country from the hands of the enemies of Israel—from those remote days to these, the women in Israel have always been the guiding spirit in the preservation of the Laws of Moses, and that glorious peace which the observance of those laws secures to every family, in whatever land it may dwell.

In order to perpetuate those teachings and expound them in befitting language, the Hebrew Union College has been established for the education of ministers and teachers, and, as many of the students are either orphans or children of parents who are unable to provide them with the necessaries of life, while they pass through their collegiate course, and in order to enable the Board of Governors of the College to admit all the applicants for a Hebrew and classical education, the Executive Board of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations make this appeal to the women in Israel to organize in every town and city Ladies' Educational Aid Societies, each member thereof to contribute one dollar annually as dues for the support of indigent students of the Hebrew Union College. To facilitate the organization of said societies, and to preserve the names of all who may join them, the Board has adopted a uniform subscription list, called "The Roll of Honor," and as soon as the list is complete it is to be returned to the Secretary of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, who, after duly recording its receipt, will hand it to the Board of Governors of the College, among whose archives it shall perpetually remain, and be accessible to all the visitors of the College.

Forms of these lists will be forwarded on application, or as the judgment of the officers of the Union may deem best.

By order of the Executive Board,

M. Loth, President.
Lipman Levy, Secretary.¹²

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¹² *The American Israelite* [AI], July 13, 1877, p. 4.

Qualifications for the Presidency of the Hebrew Union College
1876

By the time the College opened in 1875, Wise, who had been appointed president by the Board of Governors and the Council of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, was faced with a host of enemies. Distinguished rabbis throughout the country envied and hated him: he was an autodidact, a brutal infighter—and, worst of all, successful. This last in particular they could not forgive him. Once the College had begun and had evidenced some degree of viability, his opponents set out to displace him. Here is his—typically Wiseian—answer to that threat.

. . . . We expect of the President of the Hebrew Union College that he be a learned rabbi, not a common schoolmaster: a rabbi who has the classical, philological, and philosophical university education which this age requires, and which makes the enlightened man and educator. He must master the whole [of] Jewish literature, biblical, rabbinical, philosophical, and historical, not in the [uncritical traditionalist] style of . . . Rabbis Wolf Hamburg[er], Abraham Bing, Samuel Freund, Moses Sopher, or Nahum Trebitsch; but in the [Solomon] Rapoport, [Nachman] Krochmal, [Leopold] Zunz, [Abraham] Geiger, and [Zacharias] Frankel style, which is scientific and logical. To this end, he must have made history and archaeology, the Syriac [Aramaic] and Arabic languages specialties, and must be acquainted with the modern theological literature of Germany, Italy, and France, without which none can be today a theological scholar among Jews. He must be a fine English scholar, as we have no use for any jargon or broken English, and must have proved his scholarship in black and white by his literary productions on record. This is the man we must have; no other will do; and until that man is found, which is by no means so very difficult, if we have the money to pay an adequate salary—till that man is found and appointed, we will hold on to the presidency of this College, as long as the [Board of] Governors or Council [of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations] repudiate us not, which will not be done in a hurry, and as long as God grants us health and vigor to do the work. . . .¹³

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¹³ *AI*, Sept. 1, 1876, p. 5, c. 2.

How a Jewish Minister Advertises His Own Marriage 1876

Wise's wife Theresa Bloch died in 1874, and two years later he married Selma, the daughter of Jonas Bondi, a well-known New York rabbi and journalist, the scion of a very distinguished German family. Bondi, who was no admirer of the Cincinnatian, was already dead when Wise came courting. Many of his love letters resting uneasily in the American Jewish Archives are distinguished by an ardency that does credit to a suitor then in his upper fifties. Years ago the archivist who catalogued them suggested that they be wrapped not in cellophane but in asbestos.

When, in the Spring of 1876, President Wise informed his friends of his marriage in a "cute" announcement, his opponents in the East pounced upon him and attacked him mercilessly for his lack of "decency and refinement." Certainly the Cincinnati rabbi was no stuffed-shirt; his bucolic humor offended the effete and genteel Easterners. In reality, however, the attack on Wise was prompted not by his unconventional announcement, but by the fear in 1876 that he would absorb the Eastern congregations of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, a rival of the Union, and thus reign supreme over American Jewry. The New Yorkers, Philadelphians, and Baltimoreans strove desperately to create a rival college and synagogal union, but all in vain. Their fear of Wise was justified; in 1878 the Easterners were incorporated into the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. The fifty-nine-year-old lochinvar who came out of the West rode tall in the saddle dwarfing his enemies.

... We do not intend to tire our readers by a repetition of the reasons why we, why respectable Jewish ministers can and will not have any fellowship with Wise and his crowd; we will only call attention to the latest outrage against decency, against honor, against the good name of the Jewish clergy committed by the President of the Cincinnati College.

The man loses his wife a few years since, he marries again, and succeeds in winning the affection of an excellent lady, a descendant of one of the best reputed families. Of course all this would be and is nobody's business, but what is everybody's business, what is every Israelite's business, is the manner in which that man Wise disgraces his own household, his grown up children, the holy institute of mar-

riage, his profession as Jewish minister, Jewish morality, by making sport of his own marriage, by making a buffoon of himself and bringing ridicule upon everybody connected with him. Here is the precious announcement:

“The editor of the *American Israelite* has entered upon a life co-partnership with Miss Selma Bondi of New York, the daughter of the late Rev. Jonas Bondi, editor of the *Jewish Leader*. The articles of agreement were signed, sealed and delivered, Monday, April 24, in presence of Dr. Joseph Lewi and lady of Albany, N. Y., and the new firm. The Rev. Dr. A[dolph]. Hübsch of New York performed the ceremonies, and the Doctor’s excellent lady said the necessary responses. The capital invested in the said firm, to be known hereafter as Isaac M. Wise & Lady, consists of all the editorials and directing abilities of the first party, and the executive and corrective abilities of the second party. The firm to be dissolved three days after death. It is understood that Dr. Wise will attend to editorial and outside business as heretofore, and Mrs. Selma Wise will direct the home affairs at 126 Dayton street. In regard to sermons, it has been agreed that Dr. Wise continues to preach the sermons and deliver the lectures in the temple, and Mrs. Selma retains the privilege of delivering occasional curtain lectures; profits or losses to be shared equally, and no papers to be accepted or endorsed, especially no love letters, except by mutual knowledge and express consent. Friends are politely invited to call and inspect the new establishment.”

Can it be possible that a Jewish minister, whose duty it is to impress the founders of families with the sacredness of their new life, can it be possible that a Jewish editor writes and publishes this in his own journal you will ask? It is alas but too true! That man is the president of a so-called college. Such a man is not fit to teach an A B C class, much less to superintend and direct the education of our future teachers and ministers.

Every young girl with any feelings of decency and refinement should refuse to have wedlock consecrated by a man who makes sport of his own marriage with a second wife. A cynic is not fit to bless, nor is he fit to lead a movement of such vast magnitude as that of perpetuating the spirit of Judaism upon the virgin soil of America. Such sacrilegious hands shall not soil the reputation, fair name of any institution, if earnest men, and men that have a proper conception of what is due to the good name of Israel can help it.

No indeed. There is no opposition. Wise's college does not exist for us. He has gone far enough in his endeavors of making us ridiculous before the eyes of the world. His programme has been laughed at, it betrays an ignorance really astounding; the manner in which he speaks of his colleagues, the braggadocio style in which he announces his office as the headquarter of Judaism in this country, his lack of refinement, his moral bankruptcy, are enough to disgrace any man; if there are congregations that will suffer such a man [to] determine their standard of morality, that will endorse and uphold him, they are welcome. Men like [David] Einhorn, [Samuel] Adler, [Gustav] Gottheil, [Samuel] Hirsch, [Marcus] Jastrow, [Kaufmann] Kohler, [Bernhard] Felsenthal, [James K.] Gutheim, and [George] Jacobs will have nothing to do with him and his minions, and it is really absurd to think of a union in which Wise and men that still persist in looking upon him as the great man are the leaders.

Not in numbers is strength, not in loud talk, not in noisy clamor, but in a[n] earnest good purpose, and we doubt not that with the help of God the congregations represented in the convention to be held in this city will lay the corner stone for the future seat of Jewish learning in America, unconcerned [with] the wild, rambling, irrational twaddle of Wise. Let him talk as loud as he pleases, he cannot deter his betters from performing the solid work necessary to be done in the sacred cause of Judaism.¹⁴

* * * *

High Jinks In the New Home 1881

In 1881, the College moved into its new building, a beautiful, stately home on West Sixth Street. Eager to make sure that the rooms and the books would not be damaged by thoughtless youngsters, the Board in its wisdom saw fit to prescribe in detail the conduct of the students in their new academic home. Isaac Marcuson, of the class of 1894, sat down in 1944 to recall his student days under Isaac M. Wise. He entitled his reminiscences, "After Fifty Years." Actually it was almost sixty years since he had entered the school, for the lad, not yet thirteen, registered as a freshman in 1886.

Rules or no rules, the boys played pranks on one another, cut

¹⁴ *The Jewish Times*, May 12, 1876.

classes to go to a matinee, and even committed more heinous crimes, as the following documents most eloquently testify.

August 15, 1881-5641

The Students

- I. Students shall enter the College Building by the side entra[n]ce only, deposit their hats, overcoats, umbrellas, etc., in the place designated for that purpose, then repair to their respective class rooms, and shall at all times conduct themselves in an orderly and decorous [*sic*] manner while in the building and when retiring therefrom.
- II. They shall not willfully injure or deface any of the furniture, walls or closets of the building, nor in anywise interfere with the gas or fires, and shall not be permitted to use tobacco in any form while in the building.
- III. They shall not deface or willfully destroy any book, pamphlet or periodical, or write on the same, and shall place carefully in the cases or shelves all books used in their respective studies.
- IV. They shall not visit the President's room in his absence, and only when business appertaining to the College may require it.
- V. They shall not open any mail, nor destroy any circular, periodicals, etc., when addressed to the H. U. C.
- VI. Any student violating these Rules shall be punished by reprimand, suspension or expulsion from the College, according to the discretion of the Board of Governors. . . .¹⁵

* * * *

June 4, 1882-5642

To the President and Members of the Board of Governors,
H. U. C.:

Gentlemen:—I have the honor to report to your honorable body that during the month of May the Hebrew Union College has been conducted by the members of the Faculty with the same conscien-

¹⁵ PUAHC, II, 1191.

tious punctuality and undivided attention as usual; and the students, excepting those mentioned below, conducted themselves with the same propriety as always heretofore. Some of the students, however, frequently, and without any sufficient excuse, neglected to attend the regular lessons of the College, and did not conduct themselves in conformity with the rules and regulations of the Institute, although they have done nothing which might be called immoral or mischievous; but non-attendance to the lessons and other exercises of the College appears to me one of the worst offenses of which a student can be guilty.

Having lodged my complaints with you in my last report, your President admonished the classes and cautioned them in adequate language, and with paternal sentiments. But also this admonition was in vain; some of them insisted upon the same thing over again, as they also did partly in the High School, so that two of them, whose names I will mention presently, were not present in College half of the time during the month of May, and one or two of them, instead of attending the Sabbath afternoon exercises in the College, went out with other boys and played a game of ball, which was the case twice in one month. Therefore, in order to protect the classes against such demoralizing examples and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations against spending its funds on boys who do not appreciate the benefits which they derive from this Institute, I have suspended from the College Charles Silverman, of Cincinnati, and Morris Mayer, of Memphis, and hereby report them to your honorable body for further action.¹⁸

* * * *

AFTER FIFTY YEARS

Dr. Isaac E. Marcuson

The invitation of the editor to prepare some reminiscences of the early days of the Hebrew Union College brought real joy to me. To live again in the atmosphere sanctified by the presence of Isaac M. Wise, Moses Mielziner, Ephraim Feldman and Sigmund Mannheimer cannot but be a happy experience. That old building down

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 1228–29.

on West Sixth Street, though it lacked the external beauties of the present College [on Clifton Avenue], glowed with a warmth and affection which I fear does not pervade the present structure. Perhaps the fault is mine. I miss hallowed presences. In Sunday School I had as my teachers [Joseph] Krauskopf, [Henry] Berkowitz and [Joseph] Stolz. The last two were saintly souls that could not but awaken the enthusiasm of their pupils and inspire them to give their best. We were much younger when we entered College in those days. I was scarcely thirteen, and entered high school at the same time.

We used to have mixed classes. The D-grade took some studies with the older boys and of course we were the goats. When pranks were played at the expense of dear old Doctor [Heinrich] Zirndorf, Bill [William] Rosenau, of blessed memory, made it his business to prove that we, the younger students, were to blame for it, though we were sitting thirty or forty feet away at the end of a long table. When the book-marks, which Dr. Zirndorf had meticulously placed in his dozen or more volumes which he habitually brought to the class, and from which he would read, were mysteriously pulled out and lay scattered over the table, it was always the youthful D-graders who were told to "leef the room," in spite of the fact that we were quietly seated far, far away from either Dr. Zirndorf or the books; and it was usually Rosenau who, with a serious face, would calmly say: "Marcuson, why did you pull out those book-marks?" And then Marcuson left the room.

But there was a happy side to these pranks. Dr. [Samuel] Schulman once asked me why we loved Dr. Wise so much. He was so human. When the whole group was being reprimanded for cutting classes to go to a ball game or to a matinee, Dr. Wise would always end up his rebuke, stern as it might be, with a mild, "Boys, what was the score?" or, "What show did you see?"¹⁷

* * * *

At the formal opening of the Hebrew Union College classes for the scholastic year 1893-94 with fifty-seven students (seven freshmen), in absence of the President of the Board of Governors, B. Bettman, Esq., the Vice-President, Julius Freiberg, Esq., opened the exercises in the chapel with an appropriate address. He was followed with an address by President Wise, which was published in full in last week's *Israelite*. By request of the presiding officer, Dr.

¹⁷ *HUCM*, May, 1944, p. 7.

[David] Philipson delivered an extempore address to the class, in which he touched very gently on a rumor spread outside, that some boys of the preparatory department were seen smoking cigars in the street on Kippur [Atonement fast] day, but added at once that he did not believe it. This was taken up by some busy body, misrepresented as an established fact and puffed up to quite a sensation for the daily press. It is not true, however, that Dr. Philipson said he knew it, and it is furthermore not true that such a thing occurred. Furthermore, if it actually had occurred, it would be a disgrace to the gossips that whisper about anything of the kind without first informing the authorities of the college, through whom, when and where, such a breach of discipline took place. The most shameless in this connection is the reporter that offered for publication the fabrication of falsehoods. We can not see what the public has to do with the cigar smoking of this or that class of boys, nor how a well conducted newspaper can take notice of such a piece of gossip. But it is done and quite frequently at that. A kingdom for a sensation seems to be the rule, with a certain class of reporters anyhow. Veracity and good taste are out of the question with them. The difference between the old *Police Gazette* and a metropolitan journal vanishes, the cause of which is the eagerness of small reporters to make a dollar or two out of a spicy sensation or a dirty scandal. The decent public will have to close its doors against that sort of Bohemians.¹⁸

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Opening the Eighth Annual Scholastic Year 1882-1883

Intellectually the president of the College was a curious admixture of the liberal and the conservative. He was willing to reject the most cherished traditions of Orthodoxy: the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, the inevitable advent of the Messianic redeemer, and bodily resurrection—yet at the same time he believed in the divinity of the Mosaic Sinaitic revelation. Certainly, he believed the Ten Commandments had actually been given by God to Moses.

In October, 1882, at the opening of the eighth annual scholastic year, Wise went out of his way to proclaim his firm belief in the divine origin of the Torah, and this in a day when critical biblical

¹⁸ *AI*, Oct. 5, 1893, p. 4.

scholars all over the world looked upon the Pentateuch as literature, not as the Word of God.

October 2d, 1882-5643

We open this eighth scholastic year with the solemn ceremony of receiving into this chapel and placing into this sacred shrine a *Sepher Thorah*, the Law, on parchment, written in the ancient or original form. A brother and friend, Mr. Henry Rosenbach, of Syracuse, N. Y., donates this precious copy of Israel's banner to this College. God bless the donor! We accept the gift with gratitude, and deposit it to-day in this sacred shrine as a declaration of our faith in the Word of God. "This is the Law which Moses set before the children of Israel" [Deuteronomy IV, 44].

Whatever has been advanced in the form of scientific or frivolous criticism to invalidate the authority of Moses or the genuineness of the Law is insufficient to unsettle our faith in its divinity. The testimony and unbroken traditions of Israel and the common consent of the civilized world, that bases its whole fabric of religion and ethics upon the Law, by far outweigh all considerations urged against it by critics or unbelievers, whose number is small and whose judgment is unreliable. We base our faith upon the Sinai revelation. It comprises the religion and ethics of mankind.

We believe in the divine inspiration and mission of Moses whom God sent to liberate and organize his people, to reduce to practice those sacred doctrines in the forms of a polity, government, law and ordinance, partly for all ages and generations and partly for his people and country. We believe in the Prophets and sacred writers as the most reliable expounders of the Word of God and the most faithful historians of its development in the consciousness of Israel.

We respect and venerate the Talmud as the actualization of the Hebrew mind for many centuries upon the great principle of progressive reforms, basing on the Word of God with due deference for the wants and demands of men under different circumstances and vicissitudes. We glory in the Spanish school, which, in the darkness of the Middle Ages, unveiled the beauties and charms of the Word of God and endeared it to the reasoning mind and feeling heart. We look with pride and satisfaction upon the Italian school, which stood at the head of the Humanists to unite the Hebrew mind with the Grecian mind to the rejuvenation of the human family. We glory

in the resurrection of Judaism from its Kabbalistic grave and its liberation from its casuistic shrouds in the German schools of learning and reform. But above all schools, books, savants and systems, we venerate and adore the Torah, the Word of God, the *Sepher Torah*, which contains it, the Law of Moses, which is its first and most sacred realization. In this high noon of the nineteenth century, with its flood of light, we can only see more wisdom and truth, more salvation and human happiness in this *Sepher Torah* than our sires in the ages of darkness could behold in it.¹⁹

* * * *

The First Ordination and the Terefa Banquet 1883

Four men—David Philipson and his classmates who had entered the College in 1875—were ordained rabbis in 1883. In the first of the following two selections, Philipson recalls that glorious day in July, but actually the festival was a triune one. The Union celebrated its first decade of survival and achievement; the College graduated its first class; and the rabbis who had assembled as a conference enjoyed a literary and cultural program.

“Sulamith,” an Easterner from Baltimore, supplemented Philipson’s account. She was a member of the group that had looked askance at Wise for a generation but had come to Cincinnati, with some trepidation, to witness the triumph of the Westerners. Sulamith and a few others were outraged when terefa, ritually forbidden, food was served at the grand banquet. The Union and the College were not Reform institutions, officially at least; they were expected to conform, to pay deference to the respected traditions of all Jews. Apparently the Jewish caterer thought that “kosher” food meant only the exclusion of pork products; sea foods were so good they had to be kosher. Wise himself observed the biblical laws of kashrut, but made an exception for oysters, which he said were legally permissible. On his farm he kept two pigs to consume the leftovers; one was called “Kosher,” the other “Tref.”

And “Sulamith,” who was she? She was Henrietta Szold, destined in the next generation to fashion the largest Jewish women’s organi-

¹⁹ PUAHC, pp. 1329–30.

zation in the world, Hadassah, the American women's Zionist society.

. . . . That first ordination of American-trained rabbis was looked forward to by Reform Jewry in this country as an epochal event. And such indeed it was. Wise and his followers were in a glow of excitement. To provide a proper setting for this first ordination, the officers of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations arranged for the holding of the Council of the Union in the city of Cincinnati. The local Jewish community did its part brilliantly as hosts to the hundreds of delegates, who streamed to the Ohio city from all parts of the country. The high point of that Union convention was reached when the men and women from far and near gathered in the Plum Street Temple to witness the unique event of a rabbinical ordination in the United States. Most of the leading rabbis of the country were present. Prominent among them [were] the examiners, Dr. Kaufmann Kohler, of New York, the reformer; and the rabbis George Jacobs, of Philadelphia, and Benjamin Szold, of Baltimore, the conservatives. The pioneer years drew to a close when the first class of rabbis trained in an American rabbinical academy were ordained on the eleventh day of July. The Rev. Dr. Gustav Gottheil, rabbi of the largest Reform congregation in the country, the Temple Emanu-El of New York, delivered the address to the graduating class. This was symbolical of the peace that had come to the house of Reform Judaism. Gottheil and Kohler, the leading Reform rabbis of the Eastern part of the country, who had not always seen eye to eye with Isaac M. Wise, had now joined in the acclaim to the founder of the Hebrew Union College. What thousands had believed to be impossible had been accomplished. The doubters were silenced. The faith and trust of Isaac M. Wise were justified. His lifework reached its apogee when he laid the hand in blessing upon the heads of his four disciples—Israel Aaron, Henry Berkowitz, Joseph Krauskopf, and David Philipson—and declared them to be rabbis in Israel. It was a strangely thrilling moment when he pressed the kiss of consecration upon their foreheads. These four young men embodied the hopes of thousands of loyal American Jewish souls. They were setting forth upon a great adventure in the spiritual world. They were to blaze a new path. Upon their success or failure the welfare of the institution hung. . . .

I have lived through many great moments, but never have I seen a company so exaltingly excited as the men and women at the close of this first ceremony of ordination in the United States. Men wept for joy and women threw their arms around the necks of the participants in the ceremony. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to recapture the ecstasy of that thrilling moment. It was a high point in the career of Reform Judaism in the United States.

The convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, whereof this rabbinical ordination was the peak, closed with a great dinner at a famed hilltop resort, The Highland House. Knowing that there would be delegates from various parts of the country present who laid stress upon the observance of the dietary laws, the Cincinnati committee engaged a Jewish caterer to set the dinner. The great banquet hall was brilliantly lighted, the hundreds of guests were seated at the beautifully arranged tables, the invocation had been spoken by one of the visiting rabbis, when the waiters served the first course. Terrific excitement ensued when two rabbis rose from their seats and rushed from the room. Shrimp had been placed before them as the opening course of the elaborate menu. "The best-laid plans of mice and men oft gang alee," the great Scottish poet had written. And so it was here. The hosts had, as they thought, provided for just such eventualities by engaging a Jewish caterer. But he failed in the emergency. This Highland House dinner came to be known as "the *terefa* banquet." The Orthodox Eastern press rang the changes on the *terefa* banquet week in, week out. This incident furnished the opening to the movement that culminated in the establishment of a rabbinical seminary of a conservative bent [The Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York City]. . . .²⁰

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THE CINCINNATI CONVENTION

REVIEW OF THE PROCEEDINGS—COLLEGE ADDRESSES—AN IMPRESSIVE SCENE—A DESERVED REBUKE

The subject of my letter to-day is, as I promised in my last, the Convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. By

²⁰ David Philipson, *My Life As An American Jew* (Cincinnati, 1941), pp. 21–23.

no means, do I intend giving a full account of measures proposed, accepted or rejected. That were useless; there were far too many of each kind, and a round number might profitably have been suppressed. I wish only to sketch, so far as I can, the character of the Council and its animating spirit.

This Council was, to a certain extent, a special celebration. It was just ten years ago that the first Council convened at Cincinnati and established the Union, which, in the tenth anniversary of its existence, by the fact of the first commencement exercises at its College, justified its being and accomplished its object to a great extent. This has been done in spite of opposition, discouragement and sarcasm on our part in the East. It was with inward trepidation that I read the list of delegates and noted the strong Western representation, but felt re-assured when I observed how equally we were matched in talent and ability. I expected exultation and triumphant outcries. But the Council was animated throughout by a pacific conciliatory spirit; there were but few isolated notes of triumph sounded upon the achievement of such auspicious results. I could not tell whether it was intention or accident or genuine revenge that our former dereliction was but sparingly and tenderly touched upon. We were gracefully admitted to share the laurels although, in my opinion, we had shirked a considerable amount of work. . . .

Allow me but little more space to call your attention to one side of the social features which have distinguished the week almost as much as the religious celebrations. We strangers were received with the well-known hospitality of Cincinnati. It may seem graceless and ungrateful for a guest to go away from his host after such cordial treatment and cast reflections upon his feelings of justice. But I would be outraging my own, were I to omit recording the indignation which was felt by a surprisingly small minority at the manner in which the banquet was served. There was no regard paid to our dietary laws, and consequently two rabbis left the table without having touched the dishes, and I am happy to state that I know at least three more who ate nothing, were indignant as any one outraged in his noblest sentiments may be, but signified their disapproval in a less demonstrative manner. It was a painful revelation to me that there were so few who objected; I imagined that we, the half-conservative at least, were still the majority; we were, instead of that being the case, stared at as if we were mummies or fossil remains. I know how this stricture will be met in the mind of many a reader:

“It should be known that this is the nineteenth century.” “Those people are either hypocrites or fools.” “They are the worst materialists; they are bellowing because they have lost a supper.” “Their whole religion is concentrated in their stomachs.” Now, for my part, they may say what they will, and entertain whatever opinion they will. I shall not quarrel with their private tastes, however objectionable I may consider them; they may indulge in crabs and frogs’ legs, terrapins and clams, to their heart’s content. But wherever we stand opposed to the rest of the world as Jews, not an iota of our Judaism may be changed. This we owe to the outer world, however we may muffle our ears to the cry of those belonging to us. Is there another nation in the world that would act so contrary to its own old traditions? Nay, more than that: we who observe are the tolerated ones; they who neglect, our benignant tolerators who look upon us in bewildered astonishment. They make it a question of majority and minority, as if numbers ever decided a religious question; if it did, where would the Jews now be? They say that those who observe the laws are but few. But I ask whether it would do violence to the palate or the feelings of the majority to eat food prepared according to the law of Moses. I have never known their discrimination to be so fine. There has been and will be much sarcasm spent on the half a dozen who remained firm, but we can endure it and maintain our principle to the end. Eating is a minor matter when true, abstract religious feeling is in question. It is they who have made it important; it is so material to them that they cannot forego a few dainties and tid-bits for the sake of principle; they would rather misrepresent Judaism and outrage Jewish feeling; they have given it a high place since they evidently make it a condition of reform and progress, and consider the preservation of the dietary laws, those admired and imitated the scientific world over, as a relic of barbarism and superstition. There is, as [the eighteenth-century German Jewish philosopher Moses] Mendelssohn somewhere says, a fanaticism of atheism and materialism as well as of religion. My protest is only a religious one; socially nothing could have induced me to record a word against the kindest of hosts, the Cincinnati Jewish community.

Sulamith.

Cincinnati, July 16th.²¹

* * * *

²¹ *The Jewish Messenger*, July 27, 1883, pp. 4-5.

Rejection of the Pittsburgh Platform
1886

In 1885 many of the Reformers met in Pittsburgh and laid down a radical platform. Though Wise had his misgivings, he went along with the "leftwingers" if only for fear that the movement might get away from him—but he was not happy with this stance of his own disciples and of Kaufmann Kohler, the guiding spirit of the Pittsburgh Conference.

Disturbed by the rumblings of the conservative congregations, the Union leaders and the Board of Governors of the school issued a public protest declaring their adherence to the traditions of the fathers. And when the College opened that fall, Wise first made a bow to the Pittsburgh Platform, to scientific and critical studies, and then proceeded to declare that the school stood firmly upon the foursquare gospel of the Law of Moses. While doing so, the doughty battler for the Lord did not hesitate to take a vigorous sideswipe at the doctrine of evolution!

July 12, 1886

.... The undersigned respectfully begs leave to correct the erroneous impressions entertained by some men that the tenets of any platform other than Judaism pure and simple are permitted to be taught, directly or indirectly, in the Hebrew Union College. The institution is governed in strictest accordance with the laws enacted for that purpose by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the curriculum prescribed by Council is faithfully followed, and the fact that the College is supported by, and consequently owes equal duty to *every* congregation in the Union, is never lost sight of. For proof of the conscientious execution of our trust, we point to the reports of the various learned examiners during all the years of its existence, representing all shades of Jewish religious thought and opinion in the United States.

Respectfully yours,

B.[ernhard] Bettmann

President, Board of Governors Hebrew Union College.²²

* * * *

²² PUAHC, III, 2005-6.

Sept. 6, 1886

.... The spirit of this college also remains unchanged. Your teachers are reputed as men of superior learning, men of letters, honest, upright and true. They will skillfully open for you the sealed books of Israel's sublime literature with scientific methods and scientific conscientiousness. Nor will they neglect to acquaint you with the apparatuses and results of criticism and comparative studies which make the accomplished scholar of to-day. Nor will they lose sight of the fact that you are freeborn sons of a free country, who naturally claim freedom of thought, which always was the birthright of the Israelite, and is claimed now by every conscientious scholar. Freedom of thought is the effective antidote against dissimulation and hypocrisy, narrow-minded bigotry and slavish imitation of meaningless observances, all of which dishonor the learned even more than the illiterate.

But with all that, this college remains steadfast upon its traditional basis. The law which Moses commanded us is the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob and no deviation from that divine spirit as it reveals itself in Israel's prophets and sacred history; as it re-echoes in the literary treasures of our great and immortal teachers of all centuries of history; as it proclaims itself loudly and emphatically in the reason and conscience of all good men. No evolution; development is the watchword. No deviation; continuation is the key-note. The spirit remains unchanged. . . .²³

* * * *

The President Summarizes What the College
Has Done and Expects
1897

When Rabbi Wise greeted the students at the twenty-third opening day, he was in a somewhat morbid mood. The Old Man was in his seventy-ninth year, and many of his fellow-teachers and faithful friends who had helped him build the College had gone to their eternal reward. He must have had an intimation that his own days were numbered. At all events, he took the occasion to tell the students what the graduates of preceding years had accomplished on

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 2053.

the American scene. Even more, he told the young men in the chapel pews what he, the College, and American Jewry expected of them in the days that lay ahead.

Sept. 13, 1897

. . . . This Hebrew Union College has given to our co-religionists fifty-two rabbis and two lady teachers, college-bred men and women, whose influence upon American Judaism is felt all over the land. It has overcome the antiquated practice that a Rabbi must be an expert in the Talmud and ignorant in all other departments of human knowledge, for our graduated Rabbis must be also academic scholars. It has overcome also the mode in practice of making Rabbis of any student who knows little or even nothing of Judaism, its history and literature, for our graduates, as our established curriculum shows, go through an eight—now nine—years' course of Hebrew and Rabbinical lore, as complete a course of studies as there is in Berlin, Breslau, London or Paris.

Nor is our faculty inferior to any corps of teachers anywhere, and even far superior to the heads of the remaining Yeshiboth [traditional rabbinical academies] in Wuerzburg or Pressburg. The opportunities for the acquirement of thorough Rabbinical learning, as far as the teaching faculty, the library and the system are concerned, is as excellent as in any other institute of this character. Hence your *alma mater* has a perfect right to expect of her graduates to stand as high in learning and culture as do the graduates of any European seat of learning. So much this college has done for the promulgation of Jewish learning in this country, and so much, students assembled here, we expect also of you.

More than this has been accomplished by this college through its graduates. The entire synagogue all over the country has been reformed and reconstructed by them. What was formerly the case only in the largest congregations of our largest cities, this modernized and thoroughly Americanized form of worship, with its choruses and organs, its classical sermons, its faultless order and decorum, its well-organized Sabbath-schools, its annual confirmation days, is now common to all congregations in which any of our graduates officiate, and it influences many minor congregations about them. The spirit of humanity and culture has in them faithful and successful apostles. There is honor and integrity in the work, honor also to

the Jewish pulpit and to Judaism, which was looked upon in former days as an antiquated institution.

Those graduates of the Hebrew Union College in the various parts of this country have called into existence institutions of vital importance such as the Jewish Publication Society of America, the Chautauqua and Summer School, the National Farm School, the literary and social circles almost everywhere, the society for giving support to orphans that turn to professional studies, the post-graduate and normal classes attached now to almost every Sabbath-school, the Sabbath-school Union, and let me add that without the co-operation of those graduates the Central Conference of American Rabbis would have been impossible. This is what came practically, though indirectly from the work of this college. This is, students, what your *alma mater* expects of you when your time to act will have come. You prepare yourselves for this task in this school.

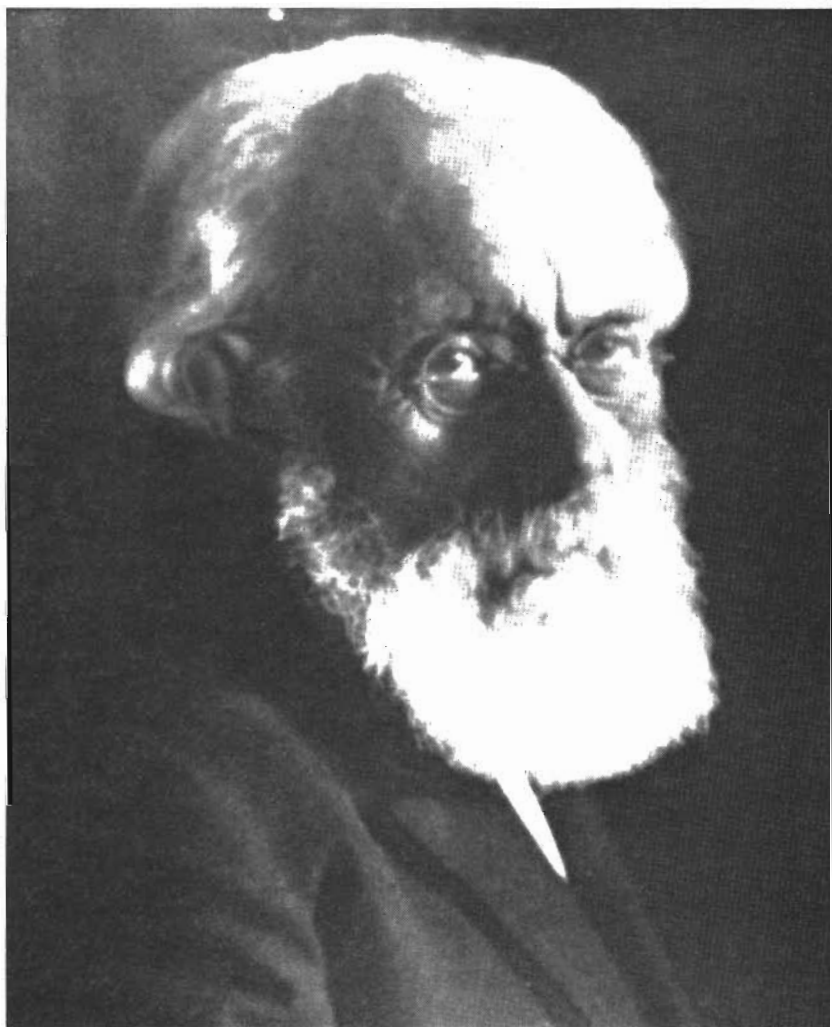
You have come here, no doubt, with the conviction and resolution to know, understand and appreciate the faith of Israel as laid down and brilliantly reflected in its matchless literature; to go forth as teachers of Judaism, not as Unitarian, Universalist, ethical culture, or any sort of preachers in this country or in Scotland, England or Germany. In fact, we educate no artistical, sensational or latitudinarian preachers at all; we educate teachers of Judaism, banner-bearers of truth and humanity; honest, upright, pure and outspoken men to teach the word of God, without hypocrisy, without flattery and ostentation, and without coarseness, insult and sarcasm hurled down from the pulpit at the heads of poor sinners.

The graduates of this college are not sent forth to bring war; they are appointed, as the Talmud declares, to love, spread and cultivate peace and good will among men (Berachoth 64). This college educates no priests to sacrifice upon the altar, for Israel has no priests and no sacrifices and no altar ever since the destruction of Jerusalem; and we maintain with the Talmud that *Talmud Thorah*, the study and the teaching of the law of God, is a divine service superior to offering up the daily sacrifices (Erubin 63). He who studies or teaches the divine law needs no burnt offerings and no sin offerings (Menachoth 100).

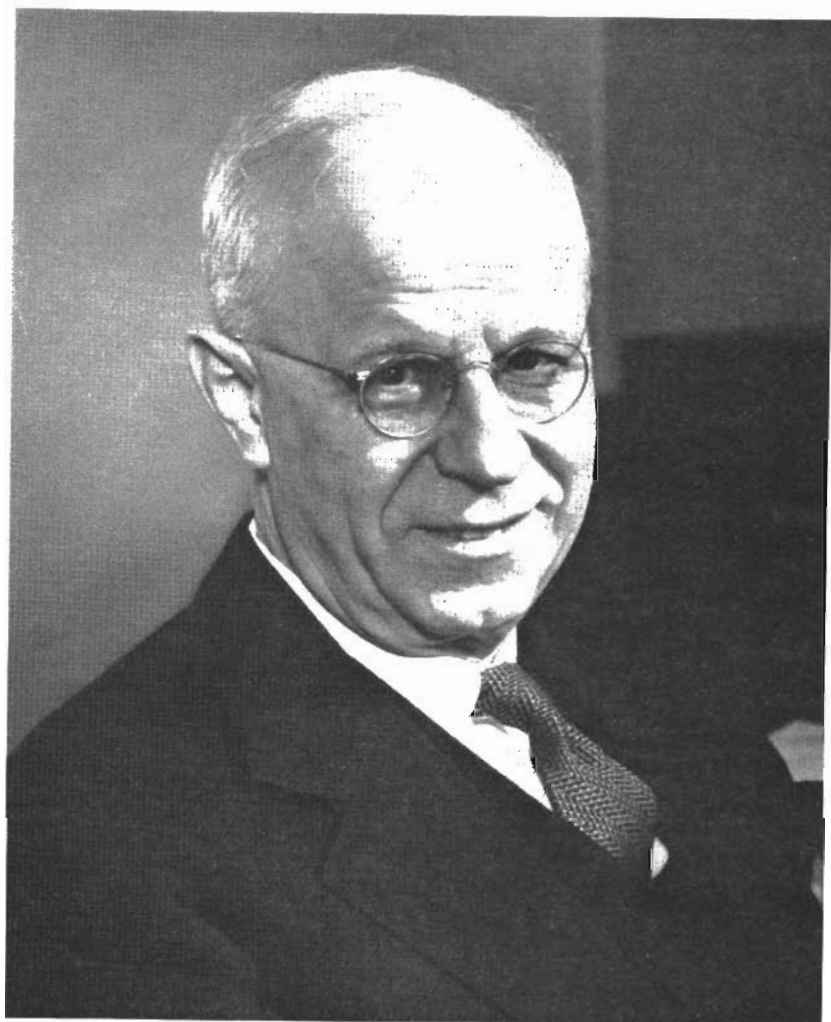
Talmud Thorah is a more meritorious divine worship than rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem (Meguillah 16). Talmud Thorah is the curriculum of this college; we want teachers of Judaism.



Isaac Mayer Wise
Founder and President
Hebrew Union College—1875-1900



Kaufmann Kohler
Distinguished theologian
and
Hebrew Union College President—1903-1921



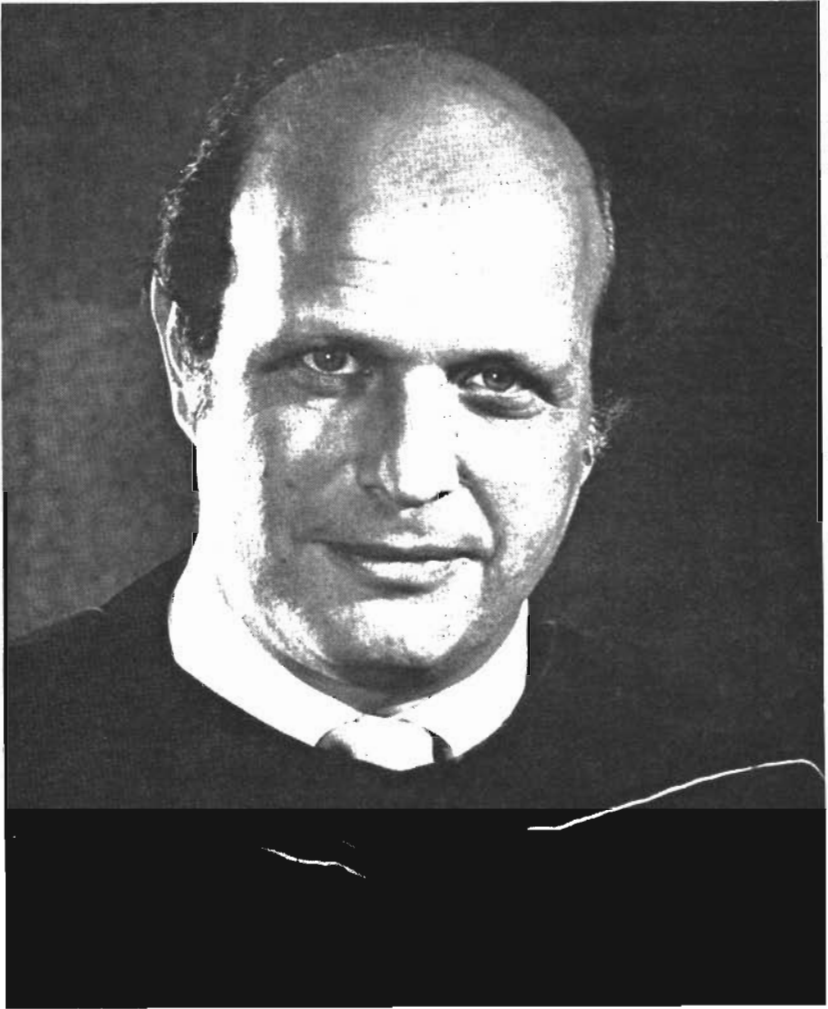
Julian Morgenstern
World famous biblical scholar
and
Hebrew Union College President—1921-1947



Stephen S. Wise
Political liberal, Zionist leader
and
founder of Jewish Institute of Religion, 1922



Nelson Glueck
Famous archaeologist
and President of
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion—1947–1971



Alfred Gottschalk
Scholarly humanitarian
and President of
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1971



Photo by Warner Studio, Cincinnati

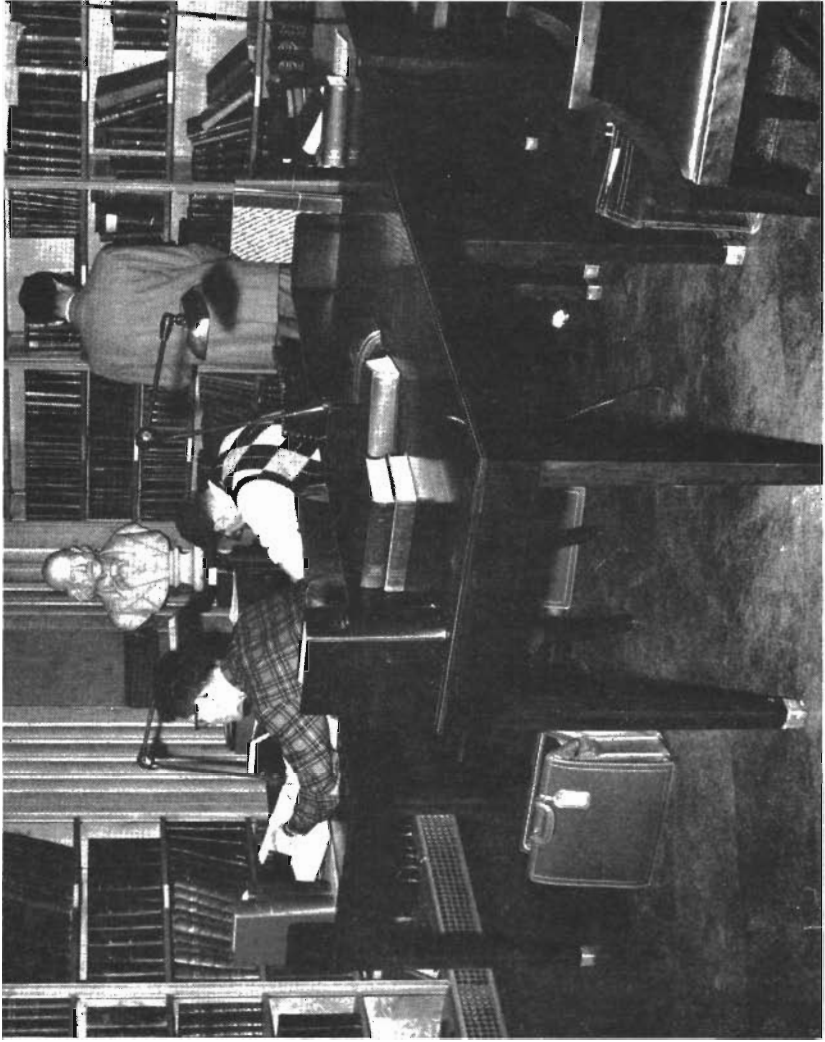
Vestry room at the Mound Street Temple
where the first Hebrew Union College class met
October, 1875



Interior of Cincinnati's Isaac M. Wise Temple
A Sabbath service at which graduating seniors
are ordained as rabbis, late 1950's



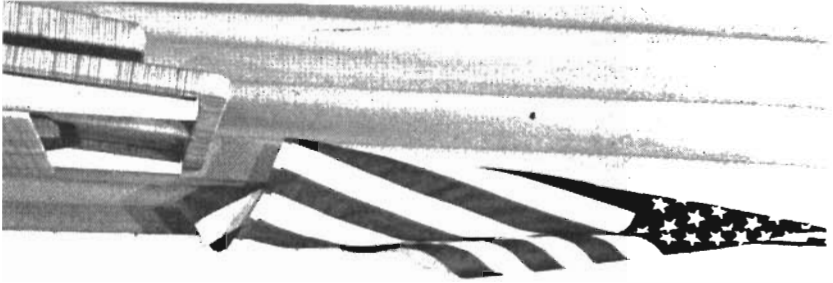
A Hebrew Union College student makes a friendly visit, late 1950's



A corner of the Hebrew Union College Library, 1950's



Torah procession at
the dedication of the Los Angeles campus
November, 1971



Prime Minister Golda Meir
attends the dedication of a new building
on the Jerusalem campus, October, 1970

Photo by David Harris, Jerusalem

Judaism, we say, and not nationalism; Judaism, and not Zionism; Judaism, and not Messiahism of any kind—that eternal Judaism which is not tied down to a certain piece of land here or there, or to a certain form of government and peculiar political laws and institutions. We teach and train students for the office of teachers that are loyal and patriotic citizens of our own country and our entire nation among whom we live, and of whom we are an integral element; teachers of the rational, ethical, humane freedom and righteousness loving Judaism, as intelligent and truth loving men find it in Moses and the prophets, without romantic dreams and that miracle desecrating disposition which seeks the supernatural everywhere, and finds it because it seeks it.

If you, students, have come here with this conviction and for this purpose, you like the prophet Isaiah [VI, 8] respond to that inner call which brought you hither: *Hinaini; Schelacheni* [Here am I. Send me!]. . . .²⁴

The President Denounces Zionism 1897

As believers in the Mission of the Jew to the whole world, the College authorities were unhappy when Zionism became an issue in the 1890's. President Wise and his co-workers were unhappy because of the fear that Jews here might be accused of harboring dual loyalties. How could one be a good citizen of this land and at the same time work for the reestablishment of a Jewish state in Palestine? Many Jews of that generation, émigrés from a Germany and Austria which had denied them political rights, were very concerned lest their fellow-citizens question their love for the United States. And because these protestants felt threatened, they denounced Zionism in no uncertain terms. Anti-Zionism was to remain the policy of the College till the late 1940's.

July 6, 1897

. . . . I consider it my duty also, Rev. Colleagues, to call your attention to the political projects engaging now a considerable portion of our co-religionists in Europe and also in our country, especially

²⁴ PUAHC, IV, 3810-13.

in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and other large cities. I refer, of course, to the so-called "Friends of Zion," *Chovaveh Zion*, who revive among certain classes of people the political national sentiment of olden times, and turn the mission of Israel from the province of religion and humanity to the narrow political and national field, where Judaism loses its universal and sanctified ground and its historical signification.

The persecution of the Jews in Russia and Roumania and the anti-Semitic hatred against the Jewish race and religion, as it still exists in Germany, Austria, and partly in France [where the Dreyfus Affair was in progress], roused among the persecuted and outraged persons the hapless feeling of being hated strangers among hostile Gentiles. It was quite natural that this humiliating experience roused in their memory the glory of the past, when Israel was the great nation, the chosen people, and inspired in them the consolation, "we are the great nation yet." So the wronged man revenges himself on his oppressors generally with the pretense, "I am as good and better than you." Generally spoken it is true, the persecuted is always better than his persecutors.

This experience roused in those outraged men and women the old hope of restoration, the reconstruction of the Hebrew nationality, as in days of yore. The first step in this direction was the colonization of Palestine with Jewish agriculturists [supported by philanthropists like Baron Edmond de Rothschild]. This, of course, found favor and support among all good people, not indeed for the sake of Zion, but for the redemption of the persecuted, and with the conviction that these poor and neglected families can be redeemed morally and physically only by making of them honest and industrious tillers of the soil.

Idealists and religious phantasts took hold upon this situation, and made of it a general restoration of the Jews and their returning to the holy land, although the greatest number of Jewish citizens in the countries where they enjoy all civil and political rights loudly disavowed any such beliefs, hopes or wishes; yet the persecuted and expatriated from Russia and such other countries preached their new doctrine loudly and emphatically, and found advocates and friends also among Christians, more so even than among Jews. At last politicians seized the situation, and one of them, called Dr. [Theodor] Herzl, proposed to establish and constitute at once the Jewish State

in Palestine, worked the scheme, and placed it so eloquently before the Jewish communities that the utopian idea of a Jewish state took hold of many minds, and a congress of all "Friends of Zion" was convoked to the city of Munich, to meet there in August next [ultimately meeting in Basel, Switzerland, not Munich].

However, all this agitation on the other side of the ocean concerned us very little. We are perfectly satisfied with our political and social position. It can make no difference to us in what form our fellow citizens worship God, or what particular spot of the earth's surface we occupy. We want freedom, equality, justice and equity to reign and govern the community in which we live. This we possess in such a fullness, that no State whatever could improve on it. That new Messianic movement over the ocean does not concern us at all. But the same expatriated, persecuted and outrageously wronged people came in large numbers also to us, and they, being still imbued with their home ideas, ideals and beliefs, voiced these projects among themselves and their friends so loudly and so vehemently, that the subject was discussed rather passionately in public meetings, and some petty politicians of that class are appointed as delegates, we learn, to the Basle Congress, and in each of those meetings, as reported by the press, so and so many rabbis advocated those political schemes, and compromised in the eyes of the public the whole of American Judaism as the phantastic dupes of a thoughtless Utopia, which is to us a *fata morgana*, a momentary inebriation of morbid minds, and a prostitution of Israel's holy cause to a madman's dance of unsound politicians.

Some of our colleagues—I recollect just now Dr. Gottheil [who subsequently supported Zionism] and Dr. Kohler—gave utterance to our opinions in the New York meeting. But the newspaper world knows no difference of persons and dignitaries; it reported to all the world that so and so many rabbis advocated the scheme, and two opposed it. The honor and position of the American Israel demand imperatively that this conference, which does represent the sentiment of American Judaism *minus* the idiosyncrasies of those late immigrants, do declare officially the American standpoint in this unpleasant episode of our history. . . .²⁵

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²⁵ *Central Conference of American Rabbis Yearbook [CCARYB], VII, x-xii.*

Louis Ginzberg and the Hebrew Union College
1899

Louis Ginzberg (1873–1953), one of the greatest Jewish scholars of the twentieth century, was actually elected a member of the Hebrew Union College faculty in 1899, but apparently at the last moment Wise changed his mind and had the offer withdrawn. When Ginzberg arrived in New York from Europe, he found other work and soon became a professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary which, ultimately, he made a world center for talmudic studies.

The following article, written by Ginzberg's intimate friend, Rabbi Harry H. Mayer of the College class of 1896, explains in some detail how the Cincinnati school lost its chance to welcome Ginzberg as a member of its teaching corps.

Why did Wise see fit to reject Ginzberg? Mayer offers an answer—but what prejudiced Wise against Ginzberg may have been the fact that the European scholar had been presented to the Board as a protégé of David Philipson, with whom at the time, if one judges by Philipson's diary (preserved at the American Jewish Archives), Wise's relations were at the least problematic.

Louis Ginzberg was, beyond all doubt, the greatest Talmudist of our time. . . . In view of all this, the little-known fact that, at the turn of the century, the Hebrew Union College let slip through its fingers the opportunity of adding this man, as much saint as scholar, to its faculty is of more than passing interest. . . .

My connection with the matter under discussion goes back to the spring of 1897, when I was Ginzberg's fellow student at the University of Strasbourg. . . . From his letters during the summer of 1898, I learned that Ginzberg had become unhappy over [anti-Semitic] conditions in a Europe which denied him any immediate prospect of a place on the teaching staff of one or another of the leading universities to which he aspired. I broached to Ginzberg the idea of his becoming a United States citizen in view of America's priceless boon of equal liberty and justice for all before the law, and went on to ask whether Ginzberg could be induced to accept a call from the Hebrew Union College. With Ginzberg's permission, I told him, I would do what I could. I was confident that Ginzberg's name needed only to be suggested and his credentials presented for all to want him. Ginzberg replied that a call from the Cincinnati school to be-

come a member of its faculty would be an honor and that he would be receptive to such an offer. I then got in touch with Rabbi David Philipson, at the time a member of the Hebrew Union College's Board of Governors. Philipson agreed to sponsor the election of Ginzberg, whose appointment as "preceptor" in biblical exegesis at the College followed in due course. Yet while the brilliant young scholar whom I had come to know so well in Europe was en route from his home in Amsterdam to take up his position in Cincinnati, he was notified by order of the College Board that his election had been invalidated.

To my knowledge, the letter of revocation which Ginzberg received on his arrival in New York said nothing to indicate the cause of the Board's reconsideration and withdrawal of Ginzberg's appointment. What prompted this *volte-face* seemed a mystery. Though he was not offended, Ginzberg was duly amazed and mystified.

The courtesy and co-operation of Dr. Jacob R. Marcus, Director of the American Jewish Archives, have enabled me to examine the College Board of Governors' official records for the executive sessions of May 25, June 22, and July 25, 1899, the meetings at which Ginzberg's faculty appointment was considered. According to the Board secretary's minutes for the first of these executive sessions, the Board considered a report from Isaac Mayer Wise, the venerated president of the College, a report in which Wise stated that he had "corresponded with some Doctors of Philosophy in the Shemitic [*sic*] Department with the intention of adding a competent man to our honorable and distinguished corps of teachers" and that he had "succeeded in finding one, whose precedents are quite promising. . . ." This was none other than Louis Ginzberg, of whom Wise had the following to say:

Dr. Ginzberg is a young man. He made his doctorate in Heidelberg but was a favored and prominent student at the University of Strassburg. He came to the University with considerable talmudical learning from Kowno. It seems to me that Dr. Ginzberg would, after some practice, do good work in the Department of Exegesis in this College.

Still, Wise felt constrained to add that he was "not in condition to vouch for him [Ginzberg] with any degree of certainty" and, therefore, proposed Ginzberg's "name to the Board for a probationary election as a teacher for the next scholastic year," Ginzberg's salary not to exceed \$1,000. "After one year's service," said Wise, "we

will be able to judge whether Dr. Ginzberg is the man we want." He, for his part, Wise declared, had "a good deal of confidence in the University of Strassburg and in the reputation of Dr. Ginzberg."

Apparently, then, as is seen above, Wise found something lacking in Ginzberg's credentials. Why else would he have declined to "vouch for him with any degree of certainty"? But what could Wise have deemed questionable in the facts known to him about the talmudic child-prodigy of the Telsh and Kovno *yeshivot*, holder of a doctor of philosophy degree from Heidelberg, favored pupil of Theodor Noeldeke in Arabic and Syriac, and author of the now classic doctoral thesis, *Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern*?

Any doubts which Wise may have had notwithstanding, the official record of the Board of Governors' executive session of June 22, 1899, seemed to indicate that Ginzberg's appointment was assured. That record states:

Agreeable to the suggestion of the President of the College he [Wise] was instructed to issue a call to Dr. Ginzberg to temporarily fill the position of preceptor of the College from Sept[em]b[er], 1899, to June, 1900, as a probationary term at a salary of \$1,000 payable in monthly instalments of \$100 commencing on October 1st.

The Board of Governors' final action relating to Ginzberg's appointment was taken at the executive session of July 25th. At that meeting, the Board considered a report from Wise, in which Wise declared:

. . . in regard to the appointment of Dr. Ginzberg of Amsterdam I received July 9th the enclosed letter of your secretary . . . in which I am informed that I may *issue a call* to the said gentleman, not that you elected him for such time with such salary; and I have no right to elect any teacher or to fix time and salary for any one. Nor could I assume the responsibility of calling one from Europe. Understanding that the candidate was not elected, I issued no call and hereby propose to your honorable body as assistant professor for one year at a salary of one thousand dollars Dr. Heinrich Malter of Berlin, Germany, whose application is hereby placed before you. . . .

Malter, recommended by the popular Berlin journalist Gustav Karpeles, the author of a history of Jewish literature, received the appointment. Karpeles, as Wise said, was "the most competent and reliable man in Berlin" Wise knew, and Wise endorsed his recom-

mendation of Malter. The Board thereupon “reconsidered the resolution authorizing the call to Dr. Ginzberg, annulling the same by unanimous vote, and upon the recommendation of Dr. Wise unanimously elected Dr. Heinrich Malter. . . .” Malter’s credentials indicated, Wise had declared, that he was

a Doctor and a Rabbi, an expert writer in Hebrew, Arabic, German and conversant with the English—exactly what our College ought to have, and he is a considerable Talmudist besides. If a Professorship of Exegesis is to be created, this Dr. Malter seems to be the man to fill such a chair, for he is not (alone) the prominent philologist . . . but is also a *Rabbi, to whom Judaism stands higher than the learning of the Universities* [italics added].

This last statement is highly significant. From a friend, now deceased, but at that time a member of the Board of Governors, I learned that Wise had heard a rumor that Ginzberg accepted the Higher Criticism of the Bible. It was Wise’s surmise, based on rumor and erroneous conjecture, that Ginzberg inclined favorably to the fascinatingly ingenious, superficial cleverness characteristic of the Kuenen-Wellhausen historico-literary interpretation of Hebrew Sacred Scripture. It was on the basis of this surmise, utterly mistaken though it was, that Wise was reluctant to approve unreservedly Ginzberg’s faculty appointment and that he subsequently blocked Ginzberg’s election, inspired the Board of Governors’ astounding last-moment reversal of its decision with regard to Ginzberg, and prompted the Board’s unanimous appointment of Malter. . . .²⁶

* * * *

The College President in a Lighter Mood

1899

Wise was a loyal friend; he was always grateful to those who had stood by him and the College. “Friendship, in my estimation,” he wrote Abram Anspacher, of San Francisco, “is no watch which requires frequent winding. A man whom I have once called my friend is my friend forever.” Wise and Anspacher had known each other for many years; the president was grateful to the California philanthropist—Old Man Benevolent, he was called—for having purchased and sent the school the valuable library of the late Rabbi Henry A.

²⁶ *American Jewish Archives* [AJA], X, 145 ff.

Henry, for many years the spiritual leader of Congregation Sherith Israel in San Francisco.

In September, 1899, just about six months before he died, Wise sent the following letter to his dear friend. (Note Wise's pun on his own name.)

Cincinnati, Sept. 23, 1899

My Dear Friend Anspacher:

It seems that you and I are becoming more foolish as we become older; I, because I am now at work sixteen hours a day, meal-time excepted, which is rank folly; and you because you imagine yourself too old to do much of anything. It does not appear from your letter that you are much enfeebled. Still I think we have a right now to get somewhat foolish, I because I was Wise for eighty years, and you because you have done so much good in eighty-two years to the world, that you may now inflict a little folly upon this world. But I must advise you not to afflict yourself with the imagined frailty and feebleness of old age. Keep sweet your humour, as your heart is benevolent, turn the eighty-two into twenty-eight, and live accordingly with thanks to the Lord who has gifted you with special kindness to be yet A. Anspacher as always heretofore, and expect of Him to prolong the lease up to one hundred, as He can hardly afford to let you go below par. If you want me to do it, I will assist you in negotiating that lease.

Yours as ever,
Isaac M. Wise.²⁷

* * * *

Moses Mielziner Opens the Twenty-Sixth Scholastic Year
of the H. U. C.
1900

After Wise died in March, 1900, the seventy-two-year-old Moses Mielziner was appointed acting-president and served till his death in 1903. Mielziner was a distinguished talmudist and a gentle and kind person who commanded the respect of all who knew him. Like Wise, he was a moderate Reformer.

²⁷ Max B. May, *Isaac Mayer Wise* (N. Y., 1916), pp. 375-77.

The address which follows was delivered when first he welcomed the students as Acting President. Here, too, the message is the man.

In my own behalf as well as in behalf of my friends and colleagues, the members of the Faculty, I welcome you, students, who after your summer vacation are returning to your *Alma Mater* to resume your studies. This welcome is extended also to you newcomers who are about to enter the Hebrew Union College to devote yourselves to the various studies pursued here in this institution. . . .

Let us therefore here briefly consider the question under what conditions can you expect to be successful in your studies at this college? Or with what qualifications must you come here, if your coming is to result in a blessing to yourselves and a blessing to the great cause for which this college has been established.

I

The first condition is Mental Qualification. This College is, in the first place, an institution for the cultivation of knowledge and science in reference to Judaism, its sources and historical development. Hence, the various branches of instruction on our program: the sacred literature of our Bible in its original language and its versions and commentaries of ancient and modern times; the rabbinical literature, embracing the immense literature of the Talmud, its commentaries, annotations and codifications, its Halacha [rabbinic law] and Agada [rabbinic lore]; the religio-philosophical literature that influenced Judaism; further our ethical, liturgical and homiletical literature, and, not to forget the detailed pragmatic history of our glorious, though often tearful, past throughout all centuries from the gray antiquity until our own days. All these studies in addition to your secular education, the classical, philosophical and historical studies which you are required to pursue at the same time, in the High-school and in the University. To master all these studies sufficiently one must be endowed with more than average mental facilities. He whose intellect is but poor, whose comprehension is dull and whose memory weak, cannot expect to be successful in all these studies; he is not fit to be a student in a seat of learning.

Our ancient sages express this in their own emphatic way: "Tears of divine pity are every day shed over him . . . who is unable and unfit to study and still endeavors to study" (Talm. Chagiga 5b).

II

But remember well, students, there are other tears mentioned by our sages in this connection—and I warn you, beware that such tears may never be wept over any one of you—tears of divine anger and grief over him . . . “who is able and does not study,” who has the necessary mental qualifications and all facilities for study, but through indolence and indifference neglects his studies.

Here you have a second condition for success in studies: Diligence, that is, careful attention to the subject of instruction and zealous effort to increase in knowledge. . . .

III

The qualifications mentioned thus far as necessary conditions for success in studies apply, of course, to students of any college. But for a student of the H. U. College [there] are, besides, some other qualifications absolutely necessary. This college has the special purpose of educating Rabbis, religious teachers and leaders for our Jewish congregations. And therefore an additional requirement for a student of this institution is Moral Qualification. Diligence, careful attention and perseverance just spoken of, belong certainly also to moral requirements, but the qualification I now refer to is moral purity. This moral qualification is, of course, required of every man in any position and vocation, but it is required of none more emphatically than of one who intends to become a Rabbi, who is to teach and preach moral purity to others. His inner and outer life must be the purest, must be free of the least spot.

Of Rabbon Gamaliel, the president of the academy in Jamnia, [it] is reported in the Talmud that he strictly insisted upon the rule: . . . “students not pure in their inner and outer lives are not admitted to this college.” His temporary successor thought it not necessary to investigate the moral character of those who wanted to be admitted; but it was soon found that among those who now crowded the college were many who were but vases, ornamental in appearance, but filled with filth and ashes (Talm. Berachoth 28a).

The H. U. College decidedly refuses to tolerate such kind of ornaments among its students!

IV

I have to add yet one condition for the success of your studies in this College. This condition is expressed in that Bible verse which you see emblazoned in large letters on the colored glass panes of all windows here in this College chapel: . . . "The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs I, 7). This is, indeed, a proper motto for students of this institution. As students, preparing for the Jewish ministry, you must pre-eminently be imbued with a religious spirit. . . .

My young friends! You know now under what conditions you may expect to be successful in your studies: mental, moral and spiritual qualifications. If you enter this College, with these qualifications and with the firm resolution to do your duty as students at the H. U. College, then once more: . . . "Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord."

May God bestow on our work in this new scholastic year His divine blessing.

Amen.²⁸

* * * *

Shall Our Theological Schools Unite? 1900

It was a curious coincidence that in 1900 neither of the two Jewish seminaries had a president. Wise passed away in March of that year, while Sabato Morais, the spearhead of the Conservative Jewish Theological Seminary of America, had died in 1897. The Seminary—at the time it was really an Orthodox institution—had been founded by native American Jews who were devoted to tradition and consequently could not accept guidance from the increasingly liberalistic Hebrew Union College. This new theological school of the Orthodox was the answer to the growing ceremonial laxity and theological radicalism of the Reformers. The terefa banquet of 1883 had infuriated the traditional leaders in the East, and their unhappiness was only compounded two years later by the "leftwing" Pittsburgh Platform. Realizing that there could be no union with those who

²⁸ Hebrew Union College Journal [HUCJ], Sept., 1900, pp. 19–22.

denied the binding character of rabbinic law and ritual, the "right-wingers" in 1886 established the Jewish Theological Seminary Association and founded in 1887 a seminary with Sabato Morais as its academic leader. It was never a successful school and by 1900 was moribund.

That year The American Hebrew sent a circular letter to a number of notable Jews, laymen and rabbis, asking, "Shall Our Theological Schools Unite?" Jacob H. Schiff, the banker, Louis Marshall, the lawyer, and Simon Wolf, the lobbyist, said yes. Schiff and Marshall were both brilliant businessmen; they believed that such a united school in New York City catering to the hundreds of thousands of Jews there would be expedient and wise. Most of the respondents, however, vigorously rejected the proposed fusion plan on theological and ideological grounds. You cannot mix oil and water.

Schiff's letter to The American Hebrew, the first selection below, also includes an appeal to one of the outstanding members of the Cincinnati Board of Governors asking him to forget his local pride and help move the school to New York in order to join with the Seminary. The answer of this Cincinnati worthy was almost curt: "Wir haben auch Lokalstolz" (We too have local pride). The second selection below, rejecting the plan of union, was written by Max Heller, a New Orleans Reform rabbi who had graduated from the College in 1884.

Nothing came of this drive to fashion a united school in the East, but about five years later there was talk of moving the Cincinnati seminary to Chicago. No action was taken; the Hebrew Union College would remain in the Queen City of the West.

To The American Hebrew:

I am in receipt of your communication of the 26th inst. [April] in which you ask for an expression of views on my part, whether I favor or oppose the suggestion which has been made, that this is an appropriate time to take into consideration the advisability of forming one strong institution for the training of Rabbis through a union of the Hebrew Union College at Cincinnati and the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York.

At the very moment of the recent home-going of the sainted Rev. Dr. Isaac M. Wise, it occurred to me that the moment had arrived when efforts should be made to unite the two struggling existing insti-

tutions, which, each in its present condition, could not and does not do justice to the great cause which both institutions should serve. It does not appear to me that a seminary for the education of Jewish Rabbis need necessarily to be either under orthodox influence or reform management, especially not in this country, with its constant shifting movements, and where the orthodox Jew of to-day is tomorrow found in the reform camp.

To me it is not a question of whether orthodoxy or reform should be sustained and perpetuated; the question much nearer to me is, how can Judaism be maintained as an active force in the daily life of our people, so that they may not become swamped by materialism and indifference, as is seriously threatened. In a serious effort for this maintenance of Judaism, the orthodox and reform Jews can, should and must join hands, and in no way can they better do this, than by the joining in the creation of a strong institution from which sincere, earnest and capable men shall become graduated—true Jews, who shall be able to be teachers, leaders and missionaries among our people.

Perhaps I can do no better than to quote in full from a letter I have written on this subject, some two weeks ago, to one of the leading men in the management of the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, as follows: . . .

With characteristic and entirely justified promptness those in charge of the Hebrew Union College have, as I learn, taken steps to perpetuate Dr. Wise's memory in a manner in which its becoming a blessing shall be appropriately assured. There cannot be any doubt that Dr. Wise, having lived for the College, would have wished for nothing better and higher than that through his death the future of the College might become assured. And we need a strong Hebrew College so greatly! Not one which vegetates, maintained in a half-way manner, and which, being entirely dependent upon the support of the few, often grudgingly given, cannot expect to create the apparatus and furnish the facilities with which a high seat of learning needs to be equipped, if it is to fulfill the mission of educating and graduating men who shall truly become teachers, ministers and leaders in American Israel.

That the Hebrew Union College has been able to fulfill this mission, I trust you will pardon me for saying, is, in my opinion, not the case. For this the men, who with the late Dr. Wise have actively

guided the fortunes of the College, are indeed not to blame. Indeed their zeal, energy and intelligence [have], under trying conditions, done all and more than could be expected. But the fact remains that in its career of, I believe, more than a quarter of a century the College has, with the exception of a handful, not produced any ministers of real prominence, certainly none the equal of the Rabbis, such as you and I have been wont to look up to as Jewish teachers and leaders [European-born and -educated] men of the stamp of [Adolf] Jellinek, [Samuel] Holdheim, Geiger, [Leopold] Stein, Adler, Einhorn, [Adolph] Huebsch, [Max] Lillienthal, Samuel Hirsch, Wise and others who have passed away during our generation. And at no period perhaps has Israel, and especially American Israel, been more in urgent need of great teachers and influential leaders than at the present time. In this, I believe, you will heartily agree with me, for I am very certain you recognize as fully as I do, without entering into arguments, the grave dangers which threaten the spiritual life of the present and the rising generation of our co-religionists.

And this at once brings to me the purpose which has prompted me to write to you. If the College is to have a greater future it needs to be placed upon an entirely different basis and footing than it now has, but whether this can be efficiently done, in its present surroundings, appears to me rather doubtful. Cincinnati, in the first instance, does not possess, I believe, an academic atmosphere. Its College [i.e., the University of Cincinnati], valuable local importance though it may possess, is hardly recognized among the leading universities and scientific schools of our country, and aside of this, even this local college has, I have been informed, closed its doors to the free admission of the students from the Hebrew Union College, such as is generally granted by the larger universities and colleges throughout the country to students in theological seminaries. Nor is it necessary that I dwell here at length upon the importance and desirability of locating a College where large local resources and wealth can be utilized in its favor, nor emphasize the fact that a seat of learning should be there situated where men of knowledge and science will come for other reasons than alone for the professional emoluments which can be offered them.

I am writing you so unreservedly because I know you to be above small considerations, because I feel assured that in a matter of such grave importance to American Judaism, you will not let local pride

alone influence you. Without therefore wishing to advance the statements made as undoubtedly correct, I should like you to carefully consider for yourself, and with others if you so desire, whether the weal of the Hebrew Union College in the first instance and that of American Judaism in consequence, would not be better promoted if at the present juncture proper ways and means could be devised to remove the College to New York or any place where conditions exist and can be created, destined to secure to it the attainment of the high position it should occupy, if it is to become the seat of Jewish learning from which American Israel shall be able to draw teachers who shall be leaders, and ministers who shall be missionaries in the highest sense of the word. . . .

Jacob H. Schiff²⁹

May 1st, 1900.

* * * *

[To *The American Hebrew*:]

Your proposition to form one strong seminary by consolidating the two struggling institutions now located, respectively, in Cincinnati and New York, has much superficially to commend it to the sympathies of the tolerantly disposed. For my part, I must plead guilty to being probably more susceptible to its fascinations than the average reform rabbi might be. Dr. Wise was my sainted teacher and friend; yet I also sincerely admired Dr. Morais and greatly valued his friendship. I am working heart and soul for the upbuilding of my Alma Mater; yet I gladly availed myself of the opportunity of contributing for the establishment of the Morais chair. All this would not be inconsistent even in one who did not find in himself (as I do) the convictions of a radical, modified by the temperament of a conservative.

Yet I could not endorse such a proposition, after I had contemplated it coolly, in the light of practical experience. In such a consolidation, orthodoxy would make by far the smaller financial contribution and receive enormously the larger benefit. Where orthodoxy and reform dwell together reform is invariably called upon to pay to orthodoxy the deference of hypocrisy or else the—not much better—tribute of silence. We want no seminary in the notorious sense, not, at least, for our reform rabbis; we want no *Zionswächter* [fa-

²⁹ *The American Hebrew* [AH], May 25, 1900, pp. 37–38.

natic] to impose kosher living upon unconvinced students. We need in an American rabbinical college such German *Lehrfreiheit* [freedom of teaching] and *Lernfreiheit* [freedom of learning] as Dr. Wise had accustomed his pupils to. No consistent orthodox would ever support a college for the training of rabbis in which modern Bible criticism was taught scientifically; and it ought to be taught.

A thousand difficulties would arise in teaching orthodox and reform pupils in one class, and surely you would not wish them separated in the same institution? How would Jewish history be taught so as not to wound the susceptibilities of either? How could even Jewish literature be presented, so that the presentation might be neither partisan nor colorless?

Dr. Wise, the most tolerant of all aggressive partisans, had fond visions of orthodox rabbis in the Central Conference, and orthodox pupils studying at the Hebrew Union College. In sporadic instances they were realized. Being aware that he never interfered with any one's cherished principles, he dreamed of a perfect harmony between workers and between students who might respect one another's divergent convictions. A tendency in this direction is certainly noticeable and on the increase; in my own opinion, as convictions will deepen and individualities grow more positive, this tendency is bound to decline again. Tolerance is a good thing; courtesy and respect for personal rights are essential requisites of genuine refinement. Yet in religion, earnestness, consistency, the rich glow of fervid sentiments, the clear outlining of positive convictions, are of far more primary importance.

A hybrid college would, in this age of pallid, anaemic religiousness, be another step in the march towards complete indifference. To constitute it on grounds of economy would be acting in the veriest spirit of blind and gross materialism. The Hebrew Union College will rise to new and unprecedented prosperity on the wings of Dr. Wise's immortal fame; let the orthodox seminary struggle as manfully as its rival did, to that success which *will* come to it in due course of time. Let there be healthy and mutually respectful rivalry—the Hebrew Union College needs it; it cannot do its best without it. Let but our Russian [immigrant] brother come into his share of wealth and culture; he will make your seminary one pole of Jewish enthusiasm and scholarship; while our college in the meantime will grow to vie in fervor and learning with its younger colleague, to

teach it the spirit of freedom itself as warmly loyal to the cause of Judaism.

Max Heller³⁰

* * * *

The College and the Seminary 1901-1913

Well aware of the attempt on the part of the New Yorkers to move the Hebrew Union College to New York, the students in Cincinnati commented on the relationship between the two student bodies. The first selection below is an editorial on the subject which appeared in the College magazine. It was written by an upper classman, Max Raisin, one of America's early protagonists of modern Hebrew literature. Raisin signed his article "M. R. '02," but he was actually not ordained till 1903.

After the College moved from West Sixth Street in 1912 to its suburban campus in Clifton, there was a series of dedicatory ceremonies the following January. Solomon Schechter, who had come to the United States from England to serve as president of the Jewish Theological Seminary, delivered a gracious address on "His Majesty's Opposition," describing the areas where the two groups, Reformers and Conservatives, might well cooperate: in the field of learning and in rousing the conscience of the world against the murder of Moslems and Christians in the war which was being fought in the Balkans and Turkey. As a native Roumanian, Schechter took the horrors of those days very much to heart. These greetings from Schechter and the Seminary constitute the second selection.

We are not at war, no matter what people say, with our sister Seminary of New York, nor are we inimically inclined towards those earnest young men of the Jewish Theological Seminary, even though the light in which they look upon religion in general and Jewish theology in particular be different from ours. . . . "The teachings of both are acceptable to the living God" [Gittin 6b]. We all have the same historic traditions behind us and boast of the same literature. We are all working for one and the same end, share the same aspira-

³⁰ *Ibid.*, June 1, 1900, pp. 69-70.

tions, expectations and hopes. What puts us at variance is nothing more than a label, a mere name; and what's in a name?

We say this expressing thereby the feelings of the Hebrew Union College students, and trust, at the same time, that the students of the other institution entertain as friendly feelings toward us. We honor, and are inclined to love the students of the Jewish Theological Seminary, for no other reason than that we see in them our future colleagues who will have at heart the very same ideals which we are all now cherishing and which we hope to realize when our time comes to leave our alma mater. Even as the Reformed Jew cannot help regarding his Orthodox brother with any other than friendly feelings, even so is it impossible for the Temple Rabbi to look upon his colleague of the Synagogue pulpit in a light other than that of fellowship in the vineyard of Judaism.

We cannot help considering the college-bred Orthodox Rabbi of today as in every way our equal and worthy of the recognition due to a minister of God on earth. The modern Orthodox, or as he styles himself, Conservative, Rabbi is as far removed from his colleague of the 18th century, as is the modern American Jew from his coreligionist of the Russian Pale. And while we do not mean to insinuate that the Conservative Rabbi of today is more progressive than he is allowed to be by the *Shulhan Aruk* [the standard "Orthodox" code], we at the same time admit that, as he is today, his services are highly appreciable, and that he supplies a greatly felt want in the camp of our Orthodox brethren.

Hence it is that we stretch out a warm and fraternal hand to our fellow-students of Jewish literature at the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York. We earnestly feel that, separated as we are by dint of certain dogmatisms and formalisms, we are united by the spirit of interest in everything Jewish which binds us all. And as this spirit is what is going to form the warp and weft of all our future work, the student-bodies of both Rabbinical Seminaries should regard each other as one: one in spirit and one in fellowship.

M. R. '02⁸¹

* * * *

Mr. President, Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, and Friends:

⁸¹ *HUCJ*, Oct., 1906, pp. 40-41.

At the request of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, at the wish of my colleagues, as well as following my own inclination, I have come here to offer you our congratulations on this auspicious occasion, the Dedication of the New Buildings of the Hebrew Union College. . . .

My pleasure is not spoiled by hearing and seeing so much here from which I, of necessity, differ. Indeed, if I were in agreement with you, I would have been deprived of the pleasure of being here today; at least, in the capacity of President of another College pursuing, to a certain extent, different aims and endeavoring to realize them by largely different methods. Least of all, would I, a mere student, without the least forensic ability, have a right to speak in this distinguished gathering, consisting of so many great scholars, as your illustrious President [Kaufmann Kohler] and other Rabbis here who have grown old while in the service of the Synagogue and famous for their gifts of oratory and speech. But there is also another consideration. Probably you all know the way in which some English statesmen speak of their opponents in the Parliament, referring to them as His Majesty's Opposition. This sounds like a paradox, yet it contains a deep truth, implying as it does that both His Majesty's government as well as His Majesty's opposition form one large community, working for the welfare of the country and the prosperity of the nation. The same principle may also be applied to theology, there being, under Providence, room also for the opposition party, which has its purpose and place assigned to it by history. Of course, there are exceptions, but generally there is hardly any phenomenon in Judaism in the way of sect or movement which has not served a certain purpose in the divine economy of our history.

For opposition there must be, owing to the difference of temper and temperament, the difference of training, the difference of surroundings which no process of schooling can entirely obliterate, and the difference of opportunity. Of course, it will always be a question as to which is which: we Conservatives maintaining that we are His Majesty's Government and you His Majesty's Opposition. But this is one of the differences. For, reduce your difference as much as you want, and, indeed, I hope and pray that the difference of aims [is] not so deep as we sometimes think, the fact remains that we are unfortunately divided both in questions of doctrine—at least certain doctrines—and even more in practice. But thank God, there are still

a great many things and aims for which both parties can work in perfect harmony and peace, and unite us. To mention here only two: There is, first, the question of Jewish learning, which concerns us all. This, as has often been pointed out, can only be accomplished by the Jews and for the Jews. No outsider can do it for us even when representing the most liberal point of view. . . .

But there is also the great work which Judaism can do for humanity at large, in which both parties can combine. It is only sufficient to mention here the terrible atrocities perpetrated under the eyes of Europe in the Near East. Men, women and children, all non-combatants, are slaughtered by the thousands every day, their number amounting to half a million already, according to the estimate of the newspapers. And yet, no real moral indignation is seen anywhere. We simply put away our papers and enjoy our breakfast as if nothing had happened. We have become so infatuated with the doctrine of the survival of the fittest that we have lost all sensibility to the great moral catastrophes which are passing before our very eyes. And the more philosophy, the more heartless we become. The world is thus in need of new instruction. . . .

“For my brethren and companions’ sake, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good.”³²

* * * *

In Memory of Gotthard Deutsch 1903

After Mielziner died in 1903, Gotthard Deutsch became Acting President of the College until Kohler took over later in the year. Wise had brought Deutsch over from Austria in 1891 to serve as professor of history and the philosophy of religion, and he remained at his post until his death in 1921.

This Austrian was a remarkable man, a fascinating personality, a bearded, physical giant who sported a huge cape, a man with a fabulous memory and an inexhaustible fund of accurate historical anecdotes. He was possessed of astounding encyclopedic learning, yet was no pedant, for he succeeded in humanizing Clio’s science,

³² S. Schechter, *Seminary Addresses and Other Papers* (Cincinnati, 1915), pp. 239–44.

teaching his disciples that history is not only the record of kings and potentates, but also the touching story of man and his daily intimacies. Late to a faculty meeting because of the erratic schedules of the Cincinnati streetcar system, he stormed in angrily, pounded the table, and yelled out: "To hell with social justice!"

After he passed away, Rabbi Joseph Stolz of Chicago was invited by the College to deliver the memorial eulogy on February 11, 1922. Stolz, of the class of 1884, was one of God's gentlemen, one of the most charming and dedicated graduates of the Cincinnati seminary.

Just about thirty years ago, a colleague returning from Cincinnati said to me enthusiastically. "Oh, you ought to meet Dr. Deutsch! He is a big man with a long beard; he wears a shirt bosom and no necktie; he has an inexhaustible fund of anecdotes; he knows thousands of dates and numberless genealogies by heart; and withal, he is not a pedantic, dry-as-dust German professor, he is as simple and unaffected, as human as an American."

And the first favorable opportunity that offered itself I pilgrimed to the Hebrew Union College, in order that as an alumnus I, too, might welcome so unique a personality to this country. I came betimes to the old building on Sixth Street, and as was his wont to come early, Dr. Wise was already in his office, his door wide open to welcome, without announcement or formality, anyone that cared to enter. I asked him about the new Professor and with a twinkling eye he answered: "Oh, he is a find. He is a master in his department, he has a wonderful memory and a marvelous fund of knowledge, and he is learning English with remarkable facility; and he is such a prolific writer that, if I would let him, he would fill the *Deborah* [Wise's German-language newspaper] every week with the productions of his own pen."

And then we met—and we became friends; and our friendship grew stronger and stronger, like that of Jonathan and David. . . .

Death is, indeed, a great revealer. It turns out some lights. It turns on others. It extinguishes the light of intelligence which shone from the eye. It turns on the light of publicity that concentrates attention upon the character and record of him who has gone.

Now, what may be some of those transfigured ideals, passions, hobbies of Dr. Deutsch that we would see in order that a double portion of his spirit might rest upon us?

Opinions will differ, but I would mention, first of all, his ardent

love of the truth—truth, the essence of character, the foundation of science, the seal of God. . . .

It was his love of truth that made him hungry to impart the truth to others, whether by word of mouth or pen; whether in the classroom, or on the pulpit and platform; or whether it was through his favorite medium, the press. As the professor of history in the Hebrew Union College, he felt himself the teacher of history to all Israel, and it afforded him a genuine pleasure to impart positive information to the masses in a popular style, especially to interpret present-day events in the light of the past; and I know of no Jewish teacher who realized so keenly the duty of correcting the printed errors of others, just for the sake of the truth. Accuracy was his hobby. Even without a signature one could detect his authorship by his punctilious habit of attaching dates and references to every name and every event and quotation. Not even Zunz or [Moritz] Steinschneider or David Kaufmann was more precise than he. And it was not pedantry, or conceit, or vanity, or censoriousness. It was his sacred service at the altar of truth. It was the logical corollary to his conviction that truly to understand an utterance, a character, an event, one must first have the real facts, the exact background. And because our old sources are so very deficient in this respect, was he all the more persistent in his emphasis upon the importance of recording the minutest facts in memoirs, diaries, and reminiscences. Because the old Yeshiba of the ghetto was so uncritical, so woefully unappreciative of the import of historical data and of the necessity of historical accuracy, was Dr. Deutsch, with his training in Gymnasium, University and Seminary under great masters, all the more solicitous that first of all there be a critical sifting of tradition to ascertain the exact facts and the precise quotation, in order to be able to establish their true relation to previous events and to the leading currents of the age. . . .

Another passion was his love of [World] Israel, his sincere love of the Jews of every land, and every party, and every phase of culture, and every shade of opinion and ritual observance. His big heart embraced them all. His open mind tried to understand them all and to be fair to them all, and to bring impartial reports about them all. He was interested in the Oriental as well as the Occidental Jew. He sought out the Karaites, the Hassidim, the Samaritans, the Jews of Algeria, Mexico and Central America and other odd corners of

the world. He was concerned about the Reformer and the Orthodox, the Zionist and the anti-Zionist, the Ritualist and the non-Conformist, the Yiddish and the non-Yiddish-speaking Jew. None so poor and none so humble but that he felt with them and felt for them. In his necrologies he even remembered the Meshummodim [apostates]. His records of passing events in the weekly journals, his contemporaneous history reports before the Conference [of Reform rabbis], his card index embraced all who ever had the remotest Jewish affiliations. I doubt if ever there was a Jew who realized more intensely that all Israel forms one brotherhood, and who was more eager to arouse and cultivate this sentiment in others. Our unfortunate brethren had no sincerer friend than he; and it is astounding how many scholars in various parts of the world he was trying to help, often of his own initiative. I cannot conceive of his intolerance towards any type of Jew, or his unwillingness to learn by personal contact the point of view of any son or daughter of Israel, however divergent their opinions.

He loved his people in spite of all their faults, and he was thrilled by the marvelous story of their preservation. He delighted to tell of their heroism in suffering, and he was their doughty champion against higher and lower anti-Semitism, which he attacked courageously with all the weapons and ammunition he had for many years stored away in his armory.

And still another passion was his love for Torah, in the broadest connotation of this term. Literally, he meditated on it by day and night. He loved his little Hebrew Bible, and he took it with him on his journeys, and he read it on the train. And he found delight in the study of every phase of Jewish literature. He did not select the Rabbinate as his vocation, and yet, like Jeremiah, he seemed fore-ordained to become an expert in Rabbinics. He counted by the name of Deutsch six successive generations of rabbinical scholars back of him. Who knows how many more learned men there were among his ancestors! . . .

Let a double portion of thy spirit rest upon us, until we meet again!³³

* * * *

³³ *HUCM*, Mar., 1922, pp. 125 ff.

Kohler, the Theologian
1903–1921

After the interregna of Mielziner and Deutsch, Kaufmann Kohler (1843–1926) was appointed Wise's successor. Kohler was one of the first great Jewish scholars in America. He came here from his native Bavaria in 1869. His was a most distinguished rabbinical career, for he served important congregations in Detroit, Chicago, and New York City before accepting the Cincinnati post in 1903. While he was president of the school, he wrote his famous Jewish Theology, still the standard text on the subject. Many years before this Theology appeared in German and in English translation, while he was still a rabbi in the New York metropolis, he had already published a Guide for Instruction in Judaism, a work which went through many editions. The excerpt printed below from the Guide epitomizes Kohler's theology, a theology that was accepted by the generation of Classical Reformers who dominated the liberal American Jewish scene from 1885 to 1937.

The second selection below, a true anecdote, reflects Kohler's opinion of those students in his homiletics class who, refusing to prepare carefully, improvised their sermons.

ISRAEL AND MANKIND

. . . . *All men are children of God.* God wrote His laws of righteousness upon every human heart, and planted the hope of future life into every soul. But *Israel*, being the first people that recognized God as Ruler and Father of all, is called *God's first-born son* among the nations, whose mission it is to unite them all into one family. . . .

God deals in righteousness with all men and nations. He rewards them for their good deeds and punishes them for their sins, giving them time to repent and mend their ways. The history of every nation shows that God is the great educator of mankind. He leads them through trial and suffering, from error to truth, from oppression to freedom, and also from vice to virtue. . . .

The inspired prophets and writers of Israel [the Jewish people] first recognized that the world is made and governed by God in accordance with His great purposes, and that in the coming and going of the ages and nations of *history*, the *sublime plan* of Divine Providence is at work. While succeeding one another, they are destined in

the course of time to bring about *the Kingdom of God*, which is the kingdom of *truth and righteousness on earth*. . . .

In order to accomplish this great end of human history, Israel has been entrusted with the *mission* of leading all nations to know God and to worship Him in truth and in justice. For this reason he was *separated* from the rest of the nations as a priestly nation and *scattered* among all the people on earth, in order that he, as God's chosen one, may at the end of all times *unite* them all in *the glorification of God and the love of man*. . . .

This glorious future, when all men and nations shall be made *one* by the divine covenant of love and peace, of justice and truth, is called the *time of the Messiah* or the *Messianic Kingdom*, because many prophets of Judah predicted that a King (or Anointed) from the house of David would establish this reign of peace over the world while residing in Jerusalem as the holy centre.

Note *a*.—*Messiah* is "the anointed," the same as *Christos* (Christ). Here is the main point [at] issue between *Orthodox* and *Progressive Judaism*. Orthodox Judaism expects a restoration of the Jewish State, with its temple and priesthood, and a full re-establishment of all the laws of Moses, including sacrifice and priesthood, believing that only on account of his sinfulness has Israel been driven away from Palestine and dispersed among the nations. Progressive Judaism, on the contrary, considers the sacrificial laws and similar institutions of old to be dead and gone forever, and with these also the holiness of the priests, the sons of Aaron, and the *hope for a personal Messiah*, or *King*, because the mission of the Jewish people is to unite mankind *in spirit* by their monotheistic truth and their work for righteousness and peace. Israel himself is the *Messiah*, "God's anointed" among the nations, destined to bring about the time of universal peace and salvation, *the hope of mankind*. . . .

Note *c*.—*The suffering servant of the Lord* is none else but *Israel*.

Both *Christianity* and *Islamism*, in adopting parts of the Jewish faith and morality, have become God-appointed missionaries of Judaism, destined to spread the truth of the monotheistic religion of Abraham among the Gentile world and prepare the same for the highest form of religion and morality. (*Maimonides and other Jewish philosophers*.)

As teacher and guardian of the pure faith in God and of the hope for a reunited mankind, the Jewish people has also been submitted

ever anew to severe tests and trials to prove its fidelity to God and its sacred mission. Its sins and failings are punished more severely than those of other people, because as the chosen priest of mankind, Israel is to lead an exemplary life of the utmost purity and holiness, one based on the principle of the highest virtue and righteousness. . . .

The *mission* of Israel is, therefore, a *threefold* one: a) to teach and proclaim the *Unity of God* and thus to unite all minds and hearts by a *truth* longed for and felt by all alike.

b) To teach and practise the law of *Righteousness*, which is the foundation of all morality and all human welfare, individual and social.

c) To work both as a religious and as a national body for *unity and peace* among all nations and classes of men and link them into one bond of brotherhood. . . .³⁴

* * * *

Kaufmann Kohler's Bavarian upbringing was quite evident in the way he mixed his B's and P's, D's and T's, so when the class of 1914 finally attained the honor of having him as a Homiletics professor we quickly learned what a "dext" was, how the "Pottle for Judaism" should be fought and that "brebaration" was the *sine qua non* of "breaching."

Dr. Kohler was, in many ways, a saint. Gentle as a lamb at home, he could be a roaring lion in the pulpit. To illustrate the fact that, above all, preparation was the basic ingredient of a good sermon, this saintly man, from whose lips no vulgar or untoward word ever came, told us the following story, actually blushing and giggling in a bit of embarrassment as he related it.

"Gentlemen, as you know, before I became president of the College I lived in New York. Each year Mrs. Kohler and I had our season tickets to the opera which we enjoyed very much. Of all the composers we loved Wagner best, and of all Wagner's operas our favorite was *Die Walküre*. You remember the great dramatic act when the *Walküre* maidens ride onto the stage on white horses and sing the famous refrain. Well, gentlemen, it was the duty of a certain stage-hand to brebare the horses for this act. One night it happens that one of the horses had not been well brebared and in the middle of the great scene, right on the stage, in full view of the audience, the

³⁴ K. Kohler, *Guide for Instruction in Judaism* (5th ed., N. Y., 1924), pp. 38-44.

horse improvised! That, gentlemen, is what I think of poor brebaration.”³⁵

* * * *

The Kohler-Margolis Affaire 1907

*Kohler and the College ran into trouble in 1907 on the issue of Zionism and *Lehrfreiheit*, freedom to teach without let or hindrance. By 1907 four professors had left or had been forced out by Kohler and the Board, ostensibly because they were Zionists. One of the Zionists, Caspar Levias, may have been dropped because he was not a good teacher. Zionism, said the president, must not be taught at the school because political nationalism is at variance with the basic concept of Reform: the Mission of the Jew is not to return to Palestine but to live in the world and be of it, to preach a religio-ethical universalism, and to help usher in the long-awaited Messianic Age. Concerned about freedom of expression, the students threatened to strike; two upper classmen, one a non-Zionist, left. The alumni favored the dissidents, but the Board supported Kohler.*

*The first selection printed below is a letter which Rabbi Judah Leon Magnes (1877–1948) of New York City, a Zionist, addressed to the chairman of the alumni association protesting what he deemed a violation of *Lehrfreiheit*. In later years Magnes moved to Palestine and became one of the chief founders of the Hebrew University. In the second selection, excerpted from a lecture delivered by Kohler in 1898, the distinguished theologian does not fail to point out the positive values that the Zionist ideal has introduced into modern Jewish life. Anti-Zionist though he was, Kohler believed in the Jewish people.*

It is by no means improbable that Zionism was not the basic issue that brought about the resignation of Professors Max Margolis, Max Schloessinger, and Henry (Heinrich) Malter. Margolis, the leader of the anti-Kohler group, was an ambitious man. The underlying cause that brought about the bitter confrontation may well have been the fight for control of the faculty, students, and, ultimately, the College

³⁵ Stanley R. Brav, *Telling Tales Out of School [Tales]* (Cincinnati, 1965), pp. 72–73.

itself. The malcontents were rebelling against the authority of the president; they may have hoped to introduce more "Jewishness," Yiddishkeit, to turn the school to the right and identify it more intimately with the tradition-minded Jewish masses. For the time being, the Classical Reformers won; they were displaced ideologically in the 1940's.

New York, March 21, 1907

Rabbi Chas. Levi,
President Alumnae [*sic*] Association,
Hebrew Union College, Peoria, Ill.

My dear Colleague:

In the *American Israelite* of March 14, 1907, mention is made of the resignation from the faculty of the Hebrew Union College of Prof. Max L. Margolis and Prof. Henry Malter, and of the contemplated resignation of another member of the faculty.

The question at issue appears to be whether or not the teachers at the Hebrew Union College shall have *Lehrfreiheit*.

It seems to me that there can be no question in the matter at the present time. The laws and the traditions of the college, as founded by Isaac M. Wise, allow each teacher freedom of belief and expression. When teachers are brought to the college, no inquisition is made as to their beliefs or practices; nor is any limitation, expressed or implied, placed upon them, except that of teaching their subjects from a Jewish point of view. One of the bases of American Reformed Judaism has been and is a liberalism of spirit which brooks no narrow dogmatism but which on the contrary guarantees dogmatic freedom.

The students of the college, furthermore, are not pledged at their graduation to teach Judaism from one fixed point of view.

The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, finally, which supports the college, is composed of congregations which differ in the number and nature of their ceremonial observances, as also in the doctrines which find expression in their Books of Prayer.

No individual or set of individuals has the right, therefore, to prescribe the point of view from which theological or historical or literary studies shall be taught. It is, to be sure, within the province of the proper authorities officially to construct a body of doctrine, conformity to which shall be a pre-requisite of instruction in the college.

Such a dogmatic basis, however, does not exist at the present time, and until it does exist I beg leave to protest against the rumored infraction of the sacred principle of *Lehrfreiheit* in the Hebrew Union College.

As an alumnus of the college, I would most respectfully ask you to inquire into the attitude of the Alumni toward this question which affects the very principles in which liberal and progressive Judaism is rooted.

I am taking the liberty of sending this letter for publication to *The American Israelite*, *The American Hebrew*, *The Jewish Comment* and *The Jewish Exponent*.

Very cordially yours,
J. L. Magnes³⁸

* * * *

. . . . And yet who knows but, like every revolutionary attempt in history, Zionism is destined to achieve a great deal of good in a way different from the one the projectors of the movement aim at? Divine Providence uses the very errors of man and transforms them into truths. The discovery of America was the result of a geographical error, and in the attempt at finding the philosopher's stone the science of chemistry was born. So may in the council of God the Zionist dream that now fascinates so many lead to a higher solution of the Jewish Question. When Palestine colonization will have reached its limits—and even now the cry for help comes from the colonists to the throne of the Queen of England—when the Jewish ploughman will find that reward awaits his toil in every land and zone, and intelligent cooperation will include Syria and Mesopotamia in the East and South America in the West; nay, more, when once the Russian Jews find it profitable to aid in the colonization of Siberia, which is now gradually opening as a highway leading to Eastern Asia, will, then, not the call of God to Jacob again be heard: "Let thy seed be as the dust of the earth, and spread to the West and to the East, to the North and to the South, and let all families on earth be blessed in thee" [Genesis XXVIII, 14].

Any sane effort made by an organization of representative Jews of all countries toward colonization, whether in Palestine or in any other land, for the purpose of ameliorating the condition of the East-

³⁸ *AH*, Mar. 22, 1907, p. 520.

ern sufferers, and offering relief to the congested Jewish quarters in the old world or in the new, would undoubtedly meet with the general approval and support of their co-religionists, no matter whether they call themselves Orthodox or Reform.

But even now Zionism must be credited with a great achievement. It has become the bugle call to rally the lost. It has stirred up the national sentiment in many a Jew thus long alienated from his race and his faith. It has imbued the timid with new courage and filled the despondent with self-respect. It has reclaimed many indifferent Jews for the common cause and made wounded race-pride work for the higher interests of Judaism. It certainly has roused a sense of manhood in the Jew. . . .³⁷

* * * *

Pat Neumark
1907–1924

Evidence that Zionism was not the final determining factor in forcing Margolis and his friends out of the school is the fact that the very year the three Zionists left, Kohler appointed a Zionist to the faculty—David Neumark (1866–1924), a well-known rabbinical scholar, a Hebrew writer, and a Jewish philosopher, popularly known as “Pat.” He wore a red beard under his chin in the best approved Horace Greeley and Paddy style.

On the centennial of Neumark’s birth, the board of editors of the Hebrew Union College Annual published an evaluation of the career of this beloved faculty member. This is selection one below; selection two recounts the professor’s response to the suggestion that he buy a revolver to protect himself against burglars.

Time is a wonderful teacher. It gives us the perspective to assess the historical significance of men long dead and allows us to see that there are scholars whose works achieve only increasing importance with the passing of the years. The year 1966 marks the centenary of the birth of such a scholar—David Neumark.

David Neumark was born a child prodigy in an obscure Galician town. By the time he was six, he was already “swimming in the sea of the Talmud.” When he grew to manhood, he moved “westward”

³⁷ K. Kohler, *Studies, Addresses, and Personal Papers* (N. Y., 1931), pp. 464–65.

—not only physically, but spiritually and academically as well—westward to Berlin, where he perfected himself in modern disciplines and became a theologian and a philosopher. It was from Berlin that he was called to Cincinnati to serve as professor of Jewish philosophy at the Hebrew Union College.

During the relatively short period that he was fated to live on these shores—a brief seventeen years—Professor Neumark taught rabbinic literature and philosophy and also encouraged the use of Modern Hebrew. Through his *Journal of Jewish Lore and Philosophy*, he became a founder of the present *Hebrew Union College Annual*.

Neumark is historically significant because he symbolizes the transference of rabbinic scholarship to the American frontier. A long generation ago, Jewish life in the United States still lingered on the far periphery of the dominant European Jewish culture. This notable scholar came to America twenty-one years after Zunz's death and scarcely a decade after the passing of Isaac Elhanan Spektor. Steinschneider was still alive in 1907, the year Neumark left Europe for the United States. To this land, destined to shelter a Jewish community which in size, generosity, and secular education would outstrip every other Jewry in history, Neumark brought his wealth of Hebraic tradition, knowledge, and aspiration. He may be said, in many respects, to have helped American Jewry prepare itself for the cultural role in World Jewry—and this, a generation before the European Jewish center was to perish in the German crematoria.

The year 1924, the year of Neumark's death, was the very year that the Johnson-Lodge Immigration Act closed the gates of America to the bearers of European Jewish knowledge and culture. But Neumark had already lived his life and had already influenced dozens of students who would sense the import of rabbinic learning, philosophy, and theology for an American generation about to come into its own. The rise of a new center of Jewish culture here owes much to Neumark's pioneer work. In the history of the synthesis of Hebraism, Judaism, and modern culture, on the western edge of the Atlantic Basin, David Neumark will occupy an honorable place.³⁸

* * * *

Professor David ("Pat") Neumark lived in Avondale on Rockdale Avenue, east of Reading Road. One year we had our class in Bahya

³⁸ *Hebrew Union College Annual [HUCA]* (Cincinnati, 1966), prefatory pages.

ibn Pakudah's *Hobot ha-Lebabot* at Pat's home. One day he confided to us that there had been a recent epidemic of burglaries in the neighborhood.

"Dr. Neumark," we said, "don't you think you should get a revolver?"

"Get a revolver?" he asked incredulously, in his familiar lisp. "The burglar should get his own revolver."³⁹

* * * *

Frank Gavin Studies at the College 1909-1912

During the days that Kohler presided over the destinies of the College in the downtown building, one of the best students was a Christian, Frank Gavin (1890-1938). Taking the regular classes and all the courses, he spent about three years at the school and ultimately received the degree of Bachelor of Hebrew Literature. A good musician, he played the organ in the chapel and participated in the Hebrew-English services. Then he left for the General Theological Seminary in New York City, where he found time not only to prepare for the Episcopal priesthood, but also to tutor a Jewish boy for entrance into the Hebrew Union College.

From 1923 to his death, this competent Hebraist and scholar served as professor of ecclesiastical history at his alma mater. One of his disciples, inspired by his teacher, taught Judaism to a number of Jewish children in a Wisconsin town because there was no rabbi there to provide for their spiritual needs.

Years later, after Gavin's death, Nelson Glueck, president of the Hebrew Union College, established a Department of Graduate Study for Christian Students; it is still flourishing and has conferred Ph.D. degrees on numerous young scholars some of whom are teaching in prestigious Christian theological schools.

Asked by the College authorities to evaluate his experience at the school, Gavin prepared the following statement:

It has always seemed to me that several essential things are rightly demanded of an academic institution: that it instruct as well as in-

³⁹ Brav, *Tales*, p. 100.

spire, that it widen the student's horizon and illuminate his perspective, and that it interpret the past in terms of the present as guidance for the future. The mere purveying of information will never suffice, no matter how coldly accurate, or precisely correct it may be. Human knowledge has to do primarily with men; inspiration is of the very stuff of intellectual progress. And above all, knowledge of what has been must always be connected with what is, and what should—and shall—be. In all three respects the Hebrew Union College has been, to my mind, so preeminently successful as to be unique.

It is extremely difficult for me to set down the many grounds for my abiding appreciation of the College. The more than two years I had the privilege of studying there have meant much to me. There was, first of all, a unique intimacy between faculty and students into which I, a non-Jew, was welcomed. The best of European scholarship—ripe, matured, convincing, broad and tolerant—transplanted to this country, has steadily been giving to America of its very best. Through such personalities as I came to know and love, whom with the years I have known and loved the more, was mediated a living interpretation of Judaism so persuasive and attractive that he who could resist the recognition of its abiding values must be spiritually blind and intellectually obtuse. I owe an enormous debt to the College, where I began to learn to think. I owe to it what I know of scientific method. It trains men not only by precept but by example. While there is no place for idleness and no encouragement to give less than one's best, there is every incentive to release and express personal intellectual capacity. Progressiveness is combined with loyalty to permanently conserved values and to the assured results of critical study. No hampering hand of a dead past palsies the possibility of utilizing new methods or new ideas.

Yet the greatness of the Hebrew Union College lies neither in its past history nor in its present achievement, but in its future possibilities. How completely American Jews appreciate the possibilities of the College I do not know.

Perhaps an outsider—who is yet not completely an outsider—may, without impertinence, set down his own witness to the unique and peculiar opportunities for leadership that are attached to the program of expansion now under way. The perpetuation of the tradition of progressive Judaism in America, the intellectual preparation of Jews as leaders, and the constant and renewed interpretation

of Judaism not only to our time but to the years to come—constitute some of the claims, privileges, and opportunities of the College.

Frank Gavin⁴⁰

* * * *

Adolph S. Oko and the Hebrew Union College Library
ca. 1913

The Hebrew Union College Library is one of the best—in many respects the best—Jewish library in the world. It was built by a bibliothecal genius, Adolph S. Oko (1883–1944), a Russian émigré who described his life odyssey in the following brief sentence: “I was born in Russia, educated in Germany, and made miserable in America.” In other words, he was a fascinating personality.

The first selection below is his description of the beginnings of the Library and the acquisition of the manuscripts of the Chinese Jews in Hunan Province; the other selection, written by Elkan C. Vooranger of the class of 1914, is a characteristic story reflecting beautifully the temperament of this inimitable individual. Through his mordant criticism, Oko exercised a healthy influence on the students and the younger members of the faculty; his overprotective zeal in guarding his precious books was, though understandable, not always helpful. Oko was a dedicated Spinozist and one of the founders of the Spinoza Society.

THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE LIBRARY

The Hebrew Union College Library antedates the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America by more than a decade; and its growth during its first twenty-five or thirty years was more rapid and more steady, if not also more organic.

The Library began with the College, which was founded in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1875. The books which it then contained, however, were so few—130 volumes all told, nearly all of them textbooks—that they hardly constituted a library in the customary sense of the word. Among the earliest donors of books was Sir Moses Montefiore, who sent from London a set of the Warsaw edition of

⁴⁰ Undated typewritten statement in the American Jewish Archives [AJAr].

the Bible *Mikraot Gedolot* (1860–68), with his autograph dedication. During the next six years, however, it grew to 8,000 volumes, 5,000 of which were added during the academic term 1880–81. They were mainly “theological works, while philosophy, history, and the classics are well represented,” the librarian reported. That is to say, it was not an exclusively Jewish library.

At that time no regular appropriations seem to have been made to increase the contents of the Library systematically. A report of 1881 states that the sum of \$50 had been appropriated for books purchased by the president of the College. Questions affecting the administration of the Library evidently arose at an early date. Thus, when a janitor was engaged by the College, it was resolved that “in consideration of services to be rendered by the janitor in arranging the Library, etc., his salary of [an additional] \$10 per month is ordered to be continued during vacation.” Soon another resolution was passed: “That the committee on Course of Study, Text-Books and Library select, if necessary, a competent person to arrange the Library in the new College building [724 West Sixth Street], and also an assistant to the Librarian, and that \$60 be appropriated for that purpose.” The janitor assistant was replaced by a student assistant.

The years 1880–81, as already noted, were a landmark in the progress of the Library. Gifts, large and small, flowed in. San Francisco friends of the College acquired the collection of the Rev. Henry A. Henry (1800–1879) of that city at a cost of about \$2,000, and presented it to the Library. This collection numbered some 2,000 volumes and represented an almost complete bibliography of Hebrew readers, grammars, dictionaries, catechisms and manuals of the Jewish religion—all school books which are difficult to obtain—as well as a number of other valuable books. The Rev. A. S. Bettelheim (1830–1890) was instrumental in securing this collection for the Library.

Another collection numbering several hundred volumes, mainly along the lines of Halakah, came from Dr. Isaac M. Wise. These books had formerly been a part of the extensive Rabbinic collection of his father-in-law, the Rev. Jonas Bondi (1804–1874), of New York. Other early benefactors were Julius Rosenthal, of Chicago, and Judge Moses F. Wilson (a non-Jew), of Cincinnati. . . .

By a strange freak of literary fortune, the Library acquired the

Hebrew manuscripts of the native Chinese Jews, a treasure of extraordinary interest. These manuscripts, 59 in number, were obtained by the College librarian after an extended book-scouting expedition. With the exception of four manuscripts, which were "lost" at the London-Palestine Exhibition in 1907, and several Torah Scrolls,* these manuscripts constitute all the books that have come down from the Chinese Jews. They consist of hymnals, prayer books and sections (*Parashiyyot*) of the Pentateuch. Written on several folds of the thin Chinese paper pasted together into one consistency, some of them are in the form of square or oblong books; others resemble fans or accordions, the oblong pages being folded one upon the other so that they can be pulled out fanwise. Several of the hymnals and prayer books contain Persian glosses in Hebrew characters, thereby indicating, according to the learned, a relationship between the Chinese Jews and those of Persia.

These manuscripts were the property of the synagogue at Kai-Fung-Fu, the capital of the province of Honan in China, and were acquired by the Mission of Inquiry sent out by the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews in the year 1851. Of greatest interest and importance is the Communal Register in genealogical form, comprising hundreds of names of men and women, both in Hebrew and Chinese. This unique manuscript has recently (1942) been published in translation by Bishop William Charles White. It is hailed as a new source for the history of the Chinese Jews. When the manuscripts were brought to the United States, they attracted fresh and wide attention. . . .

Books beget books. A library has been defined as a nest that hatches scholars. It does more—it hands down the records to posterity. So do museums. These records—in printed book and manuscript, in gold and silver, in wood and copper, in silk and linen, in clay and glass, in etching, engraving, wood-cut, bronze and oil—brought together by American institutions—vividly illustrate Jewish life and thought everywhere. They touch the sands of the Arabian

* Mayer Sulzberger possessed one. About 1900, he writes to Marcus N. Adler in London as follows: "If I should live long enough to see the Chinese troubles settled, and a new Synagogue dedicated at Kai-Fung-Fu, it would give me great pleasure to contribute the roll for the edification of the descendants and successors of the original owners." This, also, was characteristic of the man.

desert, the granites of Palestine, the marshes of Spain, the chalky plateaus of Western Europe, the steppes of Russia, and the rivers and prairies of America. They exhibit the loveliest things and the most ancient of our possessions. They are the living memories of the creative competition between the spiritual Zion and the material Tyre.

These collections must grow. They also require tender care, or they will perish.⁴¹

* * * *

Adolph Oko just did not like people in general. He disliked them in about the following order: the Faculty of H. U. C., the student body (with rare exceptions . . .), lady students and social workers, then the rest of the world. He referred to books as broomsticks and hated to see them go out of the Library.

Once upon a time, as the fairy tales go—although this is a true one—a sweet young thing, really a lovely girl, saw some new books displayed on the shelf. Innocently she approached Oko and asked, “Mr. Oko, have you read these new books?” Replied Oko with his best snarl, “When you go into the grocery store do you ask the grocer, ‘Mister, do you eat all the fancy cakes?’ ”

A certain social worker (Oko’s pet hate) once came to him and said, “Mr. Oko, I am doing a paper on a very special subject and need quite a few books. How many books may one take out of the Library?” Said Oko, “Wel-l-l-l, if I like you, maybe ten; if I don’t like you so much, maybe five; if I don’t like you at all, maybe one.” Innocently the social worker asked, “Mr. Oko, how many books may I take out?” Without a blink of the eye, said Oko, “One!”

One of Oko’s great moments was a trip to Cleveland where he delivered a lecture which he described . . . as follows:

“I got an invitation from Abba Hillel Silver to come speak to his literary group. As you know, I am not a writer but a Catalyoger (*sic!*). Well, since I hadn’t had a trip in a long time, I thought this was a good opportunity, so I wrote something and when I read it over I said to myself, ‘Well, Oko, for a foreigner, it’s not too bad.’ So I went to Cleveland, I came to the Temple and—to my surprise—found about 1500 ‘idiyots’ had come to listen to me. So I read my

⁴¹ *American Jewish Yearbook*, 5704 (Phila., 1943), pp. 73–74, 78–79, 95–96.

paper and again as I was reading I said, 'Well, Oko, it's not too bad, but maybe it could have been better.'

"When I sat down, Silver got up from his chair, walked to the pulpit, took off his glasses, looked up and made goo-goo eyes at God, and then he told the audience what I had said, and he did it so well that, by God, I liked it myself!"⁴²

* * * *

College Yells and Songs 1914-1915

What is any college without yells and songs and regulations for putting freshmen in their place? In those prehistoric days before and during World War I, the students at the school hazed the freshmen, cheered for their basketball team in the form of Hebrew paradigms, and assembled at an annual banquet where they lampooned the faculty and consigned them all to Hell.

The selections below, taken from the H. U. C. Songs and Yells, also include the rules prescribing the conduct of freshmen. The drinking song, "We're Marching," ends with the line: "Down with King Alcohol," and at that juncture the spirits are poured down to keep the spirits up.

We're Marching

We're marching, we're marching,
A brave little band.
On the right side of temperance
We'll all take our stand.
We don't use tobacco
And here's what we think,
That such as does use it
Most always does drink.
Down with King Alcohol.

* * * *

⁴² Brav, *Tales*, p. 103.

I've Got a Son

I've got a son
 He's a Rov [Rabbi] to be.
 He goes
 To H. U. C.
 He doesn't
 Drink nor swear;
 He studies
 Talmud there;
 He doesn't
 Smoke nor chew;
 He goes
 To Hebrew U.
 (How in the devil did you get to know)
 He told me so.

* * * *

Adam was the first man. Eve was his wife.
 They lived in a garden and led a happy life.
 But Eve, she ate the apple and so they couldn't remain.
 So they moved into the suburbs and they started raising Cain.

Chorus:

Come one, come all. Come along.
 Come to the Sunday school and hear our song.
 Take out your chewing gum and stick it on the door
 And you'll hear some Bible stories that you never heard before. . . .

Esau was a hunter of the wild and wooly west.
 His father left him half his goods, to brother Jake the rest.
 But Esau didn't keep it for the title wasn't clear
 He had sold it to his brother for two pretzels and a beer.

Chorus.

Daniel was a good lad, a youth of brain and brawn
 Who had a little quarrel with the king of Babylon,
 So Nebby put him in a den with lions underneath
 But Daniel was a dentist so he pulled the lions' teeth.

Chorus.

Jonah was a sailor, he went out for a sail,
 He took a steerage passage in a transatlantic whale.
 He didn't like his quarters altho they were the best,
 So Jonah pushed the button and the whale he did the rest.

Chorus.

And now you must excuse us. At last we have to pause.
 We won't sing any more to you, because, because, because.
 There's more upon the program that might have gone before,
 But the truth about our stopping is we don't know any more.

Chorus.

* * * *

1—All FRESHMEN must use the side entrances on entering the College Building.

2—All FRESHMEN must wear the marks of distinction.

3—All head coverings must be removed, when on the College Campus.

4—Smoking in the loafing room or on the College Campus is strictly prohibited.

5—All FRESHMEN must refrain from speaking to the milder sex at the College (under penalty of the law).

6—All UPPER-CLASSMEN must be addressed by the title "Mister" and must be treated with proper respect.

7—Any FRESHMAN caught cutting chapel on any day whatsoever will be dealt with in a severe manner.

8—All FRESHMEN must learn the Freshman Song by the third week of college.

9—Any FRESHMAN desiring to use the tennis court must obtain special permission from the Chairman of the Tennis Committee.

10—All FRESHMEN must be very quiet in the Library and in the presence of the Faculty and Seniors.

NOTE—These rules must be observed by the FRESHMEN on entering this institution, from the opening day until the day of INITIATION.

(Signed) Initiation Committee.

Adopted, September, 1914.⁴³

* * * *

A Student at War 1918

When, in 1917, America entered World War I, almost a third of the student body rushed into the armed services and their auxiliaries to make the world safe for democracy. As theological students they were, of course, all exempt, but they were moved by patriotic and martial fervor. Among them was Michael Aaronsohn, who enlisted in the First Ohio Infantry and was blinded in France in 1918 after he had gone to the aid of a wounded comrade. He later returned to the College and graduated with the class of 1923.

Another student, Jacob R. Marcus, an upperclassman, also joined the First Ohio and was assigned to the Mounted Scouts or Headquarters Company. Later Marcus transferred to the 145th U. S. Infantry as a wagoner and ended his army career as Acting Company Commander. During the war the young warrior conducted religious services in and out of the lines in France whenever the opportunity offered. In one of his letters written while stationed in a quiet sector in the Vosges Mountains, Marcus, then a regimental supply sergeant, wrote the family in Farmington, West Virginia—population about 800—describing his life in an infantry regiment. Marcus subsequently returned to the College, and in April, 1920, before he graduated with that year's class, was appointed a member of the faculty.

The first selection below summarizes briefly the war activities of the students and the faculty; the second selection is the Marcus letter.

⁴³ H. U. C. *Songs and Yells* (Cincinnati, 1915-1916).

May 21, 1919

The Committee [of the Union] on Hebrew Union College presented the following report, which was adopted:

To the Council of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations:

Your Committee on Hebrew Union College begs leave to report as follows:

The Committee is gratified to learn that this eldest child of the Union is continuing its noble work with unimpaired efficiency and usefulness.

Your Committee notes with special pleasure the splendid patriotism evidenced by the students and faculty of the College during the war, there having been seventeen students enlisted in active service, twelve students in welfare work, and one member of the faculty enrolled as chaplain and in service at the front. When we consider that all of these men were entitled to exemption from service, we may feel that it is a remarkable record and that the percentage of students, over 30%, will compare favorably with the record of any college in the country. Your Committee commends most heartily the spirit of patriotism thus displayed. In this connection your Committee desires also to commend the action of the Board of Governors and faculty of the College in welcoming back one of the students who had been blinded in service at the front—a martyr who lost his sight while rushing to the aid of a comrade who had been wounded. . . .⁴⁴

* * * *

American E[xpeditionary]. F[orce].,
September 9, 1918

Dear Folks:

Now I suppose you know that I have not been negligent in writing. I have always written you regularly but the mail service has not been quite as regular. . . .

Wars are not made in a month nor are they finished in a month. As I have written you before, this is a serious business. This is going to be a long, hard, stern war. But I do hope it doesn't last too long. If it does I am afraid I will not get a pair of trousers to fit me. When I came into the service I weighed about 155 and had a waist mea-

⁴⁴ PUAHC, IX, 8523.

sure of 30½ and now I weigh about 175 or 180 and have a waist measure of about 36. Such is life in Uncle Sam's Army.

Hardships? I worked twice as hard in civil life and worried twice as much. Since I have been in the Army I have forgotten how to worry. I have learned to do my duty and take it easy at the same time. I have learned, as I wrote in my last letter, that the best things in life should not be forgotten, that all is not sorrow or fear, but that there should be laughter and joy in life. We ought to take an example in life from our Gentile neighbors. They don't worry. We worry too much; we take life too serious[ly]. You say only a cow, an animal, does not worry. I don't know. You may have all the troubles in the world and worry won't help a bit. Hard work will, yes. Worry won't. I am determined to go back when this is all over and laugh and smile at everything and consider myself a fortunate man as long as I have my health and a clear conscience. If I had a serious line of that in some of my previous letters, don't mind that. That's the spirit that seizes hold of everyone who first gets over here. They realize that they are now in France and that they are at war and are no longer merely playing soldier. But when you get into the game as I have been for the last 5 weeks you realize that if a man is careful he is relatively safe, and that all is in the hand of Some One Else and that is all there is to it.

There is only one more Jewish boy in our company and he is a card. He is an old-time American, an emigrant from Warsaw. His name is J L He was an independent business man in civil life but had a fight with his brother, his partner, and to spite him he joined the Army. Well, he spited his brother all right; he is now working on a wood pile. He always has a cheerful smile and hale: "Gooda da morning, Sarajant Markoos." Just like an Italian. When the Yomtovim [Jewish holidays] come around he goes into the next biggest city and make a bee line for a certain house or two and has a good time. Very interesting character. He loves beautiful women, etc. And he is about 40 years of age too.

The nearest Jewish congregation is many many miles. I'll tell you how I spent the Yomtovim. The [Christian] Chaplain who has charge of the religious work of the Division came to me and asked me to help him get up services for the men for the Yomtovim. Of course I was tickled to death to do so. We got a car and went to one of the biggest cities near here [Lunéville] and there we met a Jewish Chap-

lain, Joseph Sachs, who has been a Captain and Chaplain in the French Army since August 3, 1913. He and I had a nice long talk. [I found] him to be a cultured . . . gentleman. . . . His father was born in Russia. [He came to] us on Saturday, the first day [of Rosh Hashonah—New Year], and held a real Orthodox service for us. [The assembled men voted for an Orthodox service, rejecting the Reform ritual.] You would have enjoyed it. We went into a synagogue [in Baccarat] that had not been used for four years yet beautiful and imposing despite the ruin that had fallen upon it. [It had been bombed.] At once young Steinberg [a very Orthodox soldier from Pittsburgh] insisted that the Torah was posul [unfit for religious use]. It had not been used for four years. Sure it was posul. We are all posul. Yet as the Mishna says: "When it is time to work for the Lord then disregard the Law."

Well, we had our service; I gave out the Aliyahs [the honors]. I also had mafter [the choice concluding reading] in the Book of Samuel. You would have enjoyed yourself seeing me in my uniform, with my pistol and whole outfit with a talith [prayer shawl] on my shoulders kissing the Torah and davening like an old Orthodox boy. It's a great life, folks. A great life. God forgive me for going up to the Torah with a big pistol and 35 bullets on my waist. I only write this to let you know that I have not forgotten that I am still a Jew, altho young Steinberg does not believe that I am. Yet I have not tasted a piece of hazier [pork] since I have been in the Army. As for young Steinberg I have only seen him twice since I have been across. He is personally a nice fellow but he is too Orthodox for my stomach. He sure is a chip off the old block. [His father was very traditional.]

We are all paid in francs. Today, by the way, is my payday. I drew about 160 francs. Out of this is taken the money for 5 bonds and \$10,000 insurance. I now have one bond paid . . . which will be sent to you and I want you to keep for me. I will have 4 more paid out about February. Starting with the month of August I am having an allotment of \$10. made which I have directed be sent to you and I hope that you will keep for me for such time as I may call for it. . . .

The grub is the same. We get exactly the same food here that we get in the States. It is the garrison ration and not the field ration. For breakfast I had a real fine juicy steak and coffee. For dinner there was roast beef, gravy, potatoes, coffee, bread, and pickles.

For supper there was hamburger, gravy, potatoes and coffee. Meat three times a day. Plenty of soft bread and coffee and fresh potatoes. Hungry. Never been hungry in France and never expect to be. All I am worrying about is my bay window which is getting entirely too prominent to suit me. Mother wants to know if I need money. Does she. Well, tell the dear girl that. . . . I don't chew, drink, smoke or even eat much pastry. At the present time I have in my pocket about 275 francs and I don't know what to do with it. Beside this I have about 75 francs loaned out. Five and [a] half francs just about make a dollar. So you see I have almost 50 [dollars] spending money in my pocket. Too much for a young boy, eh?

I don't hear from any of the college boys for I don't write and if you don't write they won't write to you. See. No opportunities for doing any religious work for the simple reason that we are all so scattered about that it is very hard to get a minion [a prayer quorum]. Well, I have written you two pages. God bless you.

Jake

Censored by
 W. L. Bishop
 2nd Lt. Inf. U. S. A.⁴⁵

* * * *

Stephen S. Wise and the Jewish Institute of Religion
 1922-1950

Stephen Samuel Wise (1874-1949), a native of Hungary who was brought to this country as an infant, was one of the most distinguished rabbis in all the United States—certainly the best known—in the first half of the twentieth century. This Wise—no relative of Isaac M. Wise—was a Zionist leader, a political liberal of national influence, a friend of labor and social justice, and a staunch advocate of free speech in the pulpit. During his heyday there were few orators who were his equal. He was a giant among men.

In 1922 he organized the Jewish Institute of Religion, a seminary and a cultural center to train rabbis for American Jewry without regard to their denominational affiliations. Unlike the older Hebrew

⁴⁵ Jacob R. Marcus, American Expeditionary Force, Indian Village, France, to Dear Folks, Farmington, W. Va. Copy in AJAr.

Union College, the new school was sympathetic to Zionism and was determined to concentrate on the New York community with its million and a half Jews. The Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, it was felt, was too remote from the world's greatest center of Jewish life. Had Wise been given the consideration which he merited and had his demands been more moderate, it is by no means improbable that he would not have founded a rival institution.

The first selection below incorporates his justification for the establishment of a new school. In the second selection, Philip S. Bernstein, rabbi in Rochester, N. Y., for many years and a graduate of the first class of the Institute, characterizes Wise in a delightful anecdote. In a brief but pointed story—selection three—Rabbi Jerome R. Malino of Danbury, Conn., a member of the J. I. R. class of 1935, makes it abundantly clear that Wise was not wont to doff his hat every time he saw his image in a mirror.

In the fourth and final account, Nelson Glueck (1900–1971), the new president of the Hebrew Union College, announced to the Reform rabbis meeting in Kansas City the consummation of a personal union of the College and the Institute. That was in 1948. Many years before his death in 1949 Wise had already known that the Institute could not survive for lack of adequate financial support. He had no large synagogal federation to carry the load. (When Zion College collapsed in 1856, Isaac M. Wise learned the bitter lesson that a school had to have a large body of supporters if it was to stay open; he created the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in order that it might carry the Hebrew Union College.) Stephen Wise and his many friends had opened negotiations with the Union and the College no later than 1940 in the hope that the two schools might unite. That wish was realized in 1948. Beginning with 1950, the two schools were legally joined and their work was coordinated under the glamorous Nelson Glueck.

A PROGRAM FOR A NEW SEMINARY—ca. 1922

. . . . The Jewish Institute of Religion is founded in the conviction that the large Jewish population of America, now more than three and a half millions, requires additional training of men for the Jewish ministry, research and community service. The logical center for this institution is New York City, which today contains approxi-

mately one half of the Jews of the United States and one tenth of the Jews of the world. This large Jewish community, largest in the history of Israel, constitutes an unequalled laboratory for study, training and research. Here men will be able to acquire the necessary learning and may also study at first hand the different groups of which the Jewish community is composed and the various ways in which the Jewish spirit expresses itself.

The Jewish Institute of Religion, liberal in spirit, does not commit its teachers and students to any special interpretation of Judaism. All Jews possess in common the same literature, the same history, the same varied religious experience, and these will be studied scientifically in the classroom. The different interpretations of the literature, history and religion, the different constructions of Judaism and of Jewish life, orthodox, conservative and liberal, radical, Zionist and non-Zionist, will be expounded to the students in courses given by men representing these different points of view. Every member of the teaching staff will be free to seek and state the truth as he sees it, and in the same way every student will be free.

The Jewish Institute of Religion will also make available to the general public constructive knowledge of Judaism, its spiritual and social ideas, its history and outlook, its contribution to the world's progress and store of good. It is believed that there are many, both Jews and non-Jews, who, without devoting themselves to specialized studies in Jewish literature, history and religion, would welcome an opportunity to add to their general culture through an attractive and popular exposition of subjects of Jewish interests. . . .⁴⁶

* * * *

WISE WINS A RECRUIT FOR THE NEW SCHOOL—ca. 1922

At twenty I was a veteran Sunday School teacher in Rochester. One day I learned that Doctor [Julian] Morgenstern, of the Hebrew Union College, was coming for a Sunday morning sermon, and I arranged to meet him. I told him I was thinking of the rabbinate and asked what qualities I needed. He replied, "Saintliness, nobility of character, lofty idealism." I said to myself, "Bernstein, stay in the pants business."

⁴⁶ Alfred Gottschalk, *A Jubilee of the Spirit* (Cincinnati, 1972), pp. 7-8.

A month later I learned from Ben Friedman that Stephen S. Wise was to speak in Syracuse. He was reported to be opening a new rabbinical seminary, and I went down to meet him. After dinner, Gates Thalheimer, president of the congregation, offered me a cigar. Not smoking, I turned it down. Wise grabbed it and said, "When you become a rabbi, always accept cigars offered by rich members of your congregation, and give them to poor members." Said I to myself, "That's the kind of ethics I like. I'll go to *his* school."

Wise's Jewishness, his Zionism, his personal magnetism had won me. There is no way to put into words for those who never knew him what Wise's magnetic personality was like. He was a tallish man with a leonine head. His voice rolled like an organ. His mind flashed and crackled like lightning. His laughter was spontaneous and infectious, and sometimes it had a boyish quality like [Albert] Einstein's. In fact I remember how they both laughed when I came up to them at the dais of some New York dinner years later, and said, "Dr. Wise, you must introduce me to Professor Einstein. Before I left Rochester, I told my congregation that I would preach on the subject, 'I met Einstein.' How can I go back without meeting him?" Einstein asked, "How long have you been a rabbi?" I replied, "About ten years." "Then," he said, "you've probably told your congregation plenty of lies already; tell them another one." The two of them guffawed with delight like a couple of schoolboys full of mischief. . . .⁴⁷

* * * *

WISE AND A FLATTERING STUDENT—*ca.* 1935

We were not a little afraid on Friday mornings at 11:00 when we preached for Dr. Wise. He was so quick to detect sham; so quick to remind us that there was no substitute for thoughtful content in our sermons.

Some of us affected the manner of Wise in our preaching, but Wise would not be bribed. His criticism probed to every weakness in the structure of our presentation.

Wise was always restive when we students compared him to the great leaders of our people's past. One of us, on a Friday morning,

⁴⁷ Brav, *Tales*, p. 119.

concluded his sermon with the phrase, "the great prophetic tradition from Isaiah to Stephen S. Wise." Dr. Wise stood up and, after a moment of expressive silence, said, "Why drag in Isaiah?"⁴⁸

* * * *

THE COMBINED SEMINARIES—June, 1948

Friends and my colleagues of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. . . .

The only thing that I am certain of is, that finally, *Boruch Ha Shem* [Thank God], we are one team, one Conference, one Alumni Association, one great liberal Jewish Theological Seminary, one faculty, one student body, one cause!

A few days ago in New York City, I attended a luncheon of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Summer Institute, at which Dr. Wise presented me to our alumni there, and, as part of the presentation read the statement of purpose which now becomes an integral part of our charter. That statement of purpose, now approved of by the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, the Board of Governors of the Jewish Institute of Religion, and the Executive Board of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, reads as follows:

"The Hebrew Union College and the Jewish Institute of Religion are resolved to unite for the strengthening and advancement of Judaism in America and throughout the world; the right to serve the Jewish people in its entirety (Klal Israel), with freedom for faculty and students alike, is axiomatic. This united institution will continue to maintain schools in Cincinnati and in New York, with Nelson Glueck as the President, and Stephen S. Wise and Julian Morgenstern as Presidents Emeriti."

Upon this union, may I say for us all, we invoke the blessing of God. Amen.

Our greater college will maintain schools in Cincinnati and in New York. What is not contained in this statement of purpose is that it is my avowed purpose to see to it that our program is carried out not only in Cincinnati and in New York, but also eventually, *im yirtzeh hashem* [God willing], in Jerusalem.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

I, for my own person, have no particular difficulty in correlating my loyalties, or in avoiding any confusion as to how they shall be compounded, or wherein they shall not be confounded. I am proudly a son of Cincinnati, and I shall always be passionately a child of Jerusalem. I cannot conceive of the development of Judaism in America and throughout the world without reflecting upon the central place that the Holy Land occupies and must always continue to occupy in our thinking and striving. . . .

We have set our hands to the task of preserving and perpetuating a vital, liberal Judaism. It was recently said to me, that what is good for America is good for the Jews; and I say that what is good for the Jews is good for America.

By the same token I say to you that we must put as much heart and as much passion and as much devotion and as much single-minded concentration upon building up Judaism in America, as many of us have toward helping to build up Israel and everything connected with it. In God's name, let us get on with the task.⁴⁹

* * * *

A Distinguished Rabbi Graduates from the University 1925

Julian Morgenstern, who became acting-president of the College in 1921 and president in 1922, remained at the helm till his retirement in 1947. A native of St. Francisville, Ill., where he was born in 1881, he was the first American and the first graduate to guide the destinies of the growing school. Morgenstern was a very honorable man, and when the University of Cincinnati called upon him to make sure that a student, Maurice N. Eisendrath, fulfilled his gymnasium requirements, the president saw to it that there was no evasion of this sacred obligation.

The selection below describes how this young man satisfied both the University and President Morgenstern. Eisendrath graduated from the seminary with the class of 1926 and was ultimately elected to the presidency of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; he became one of the most prestigious Jews in the United States.

⁴⁹ CCARYB, LVIII, 338-39.

Along with shared memories of ineradicable spiritual awakenings on the H. U. C. campus, there was a curious incident which was exclusively mine.

Because of a severe congenital astigmatism, which nearly ended my rabbinic studies before they began, I was advised by one of the outstanding eye doctors in Cincinnati that I could improve this condition by improving my general health through conscientious physical exercise. On the basis of this recommendation, the H. U. C.'s physician [Dr. J. Victor Greenebaum] allowed me to remain.

My days as a "little league" ballplayer of no perceptible talent had exhausted my slight inclination toward physical activity, and at the University of Cincinnati I "conscientiously" skipped my gym classes to devote full time to my studies. This seemed to me the only important thing. Not so to the University authorities. Two weeks before graduation, Dr. Morgenstern was advised that my degree would be denied because of my delinquency in fulfilling the physical education requirements of the University.

The A. B. degree, however, being a *sine qua non* for ordination at H. U. C. a year later, Dr. Morgenstern, with his great heart and understanding, came to my rescue and assured the University that he would personally see to it that I fulfilled the *entire four years* of my gym requirements in the fortnight remaining.

At a special meeting, the University Faculty accepted Dr. Morgenstern's pledge. It did not for a moment occur to me that the University of Cincinnati, or Dr. Morgenstern, or I, would take the pledge seriously. I have never since been so rudely disillusioned.

Under Dr. Morgenstern's relentless eye, I was deposited on the H. U. C. campus driveway and made to run 'round and 'round and 'round, getting bluer with each lap. Just before I began lapsing into unconsciousness, Dr. Morgenstern would arrange a change of pace: I was set to lifting dumbbells, but my impression then (as now) was that they were in the neighborhood of twelve hundred pounds apiece.

My classmates of that day still recall—with what I can only regard as sadistic amusement—the spectacle of that five foot eleven, 125 pounder, more dead than alive, earning his A. B. degree by falling flat on his face.⁵⁰

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⁵⁰ Brav, *Tales*, p. 23.

Freshman, Why Do You Want To Be a Rabbi?

William B. Silverman
1935

When Bill Silverman, all of twenty-two, entered the College in 1935, he was asked to write an essay on the theme: "Freshman, Why Do You Want To Be a Rabbi?" His answer below reflects the idealism of the youth of that New Deal depression decade when Franklin Delano Roosevelt was charming a generation with his hope of ushering in a Messianic Age of social justice. Silverman graduated with the class of 1941 and became a successful, devoted rabbi and the author of several very useful works on Judaism.

. . . . When asked, "Why do you want to be a Rabbi?" an answer based on sentimental assumptions could easily be attempted. I could say that I love mankind and feel an altruism which prompts me to enter a career designed to develop intrinsic humanitarianism and engender social justice. . . .

Eleven American and five German students desirous of preparing for the rabbinate constitute the entering class of 1935. Most of us are weary of philosophical hair-splitting regarding the nature of aesthetic or religious experience. We want to live God in the concrete, rather than bandy about concepts of God in the abstract.

Speaking in a representative capacity, I want:

To maintain a staunch faith in the moral progress of man by taking cognizance of his finite limitations and meager equipment.

To maintain a compatibility between realism and idealism.

To devote myself to a life of service, a service which results in contentment and personal adjustment.

To avoid the complexities of religious dissension. To enter into sincere fellowship with the Jewish community. To maintain an affinity of mind and understanding with it.

To contribute to a virile, progressive Judaism, drawing from the well-springs of Jewish tradition.

I want to be a Rabbi to eliminate the Rabbinate. The ultimate ideal in view is to strive for a social panacea wherein every semblance of organized religion would be rendered unnecessary. This

is, of course, fanciful and highly improbable. The embryo rabbi is quite safe in the assumption that his job will be secure for many years to come. The concept of an ideal existence when man will actively practice the good, the true and the beautiful without the necessity of symbolism should stimulate the Rabbi to a greater effort in facilitating its realization. Such an ideal obviously implies an eventual elimination of the means that aided in its consummation—the rabbinate.

When I aspire to the rabbinate with the aim of eliminating the Rabbi as a factor in the Jewish world, I do so with sincere conviction. If the Rabbi does not regard this with approval, he is more concerned with maintaining his own petty interests and means of livelihood than with the Messianic concept of the social utopia so often expressed.

Freshman, why do you want to be a Rabbi? Because life is my job. Problems vital to the human heart are my domain. My adventure is a religious adventure fraught with sorrow, disillusionment, and feeble groping for the unattainable—but there is the challenge to fight, and with success or failure—live! Live richly and fully in a project of a reciprocal give and take.

I want to be a Rabbi because I picture the ideal Rabbi as a man best fitted to be of service to the Jewish community. He has the opportunity of being its teacher, advisor, and apologist. He can instruct his congregation in the values of Jewish tradition, beliefs, liturgy and ceremony. Tempering tact and diplomacy with resolute purpose, he can pursue sound and honest convictions. The Rabbi can be an intrepid fighter for the ideals on which he postulates a constructive credo of righteousness. Approachable, congenial, the Rabbi can act as a friend and advisor to his fellow-Jews, share their problems, serve as a mediator with their Christian neighbors, and inspire his congregants by his own example of high-minded and intelligent living.

It may be presumptuous for an inexperienced beginner to offer theoretical comment, while the experienced Rabbi in the field is actually grappling with problems accruing to his profession. However, the persistent question, "Why do you want to be a Rabbi?", apparently prompted by a desire to evaluate the attitudes of the new men entering the Hebrew Union College, may arise out of the mis-

givings of more mature minds who have never answered this question to their own satisfaction. Who can tell?⁶¹

* * * *

Morgenstern and Father Coughlin
1938

In December, 1938, Julian Morgenstern as president of the Hebrew Union College wrote to Bishop Francis Clement Kelley of Oklahoma City and asked him if anything could be done to induce Archbishop Edward Mooney of Detroit to silence Father Charles E. Coughlin of Royal Oak, Michigan.

Coughlin, a priest, was a leader in an anti-New Deal coalition of the 1930's that included Senator Huey P. Long, Francis E. Townsend, and the anti-Jewish Protestant preacher, the Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith. This group, populist in tone, politically aberrant, frightened the Jews, who had no desire to be damned as the scapegoats for the Great Depression. In November, 1938, Coughlin began to attack Jewry more directly in his radio addresses and to exonerate the Nazis for their persecutions of the German Jews. The Detroit clergyman was a powerful radio orator and attracted an audience of many millions who listened to him with rapt attention as he denounced the Jews and held them responsible for many of the ills of society. Jews were the nefarious "international bankers" and Communists, too, conspiring together to rule and ruin the world.

Morgenstern accomplished nothing in his effort to stop Coughlin, who was finally taken off the air when the United States prepared to go to war with Germany and it was believed that he was lending comfort to the enemy through his radio talks.

December 6, 1938

Bishop Francis C. Kelley,
1000 N. Lee Avenue,
Oklahoma City.

My Dear Bishop:

It has been quite some time since we had occasion to exchange letters. I hope earnestly, however, that your recollection of me is

⁶¹ *HUCM*, 1935.

still as lively and animated by sentiments of friendship and good will as is my recollection of you.

I am venturing to write to you today to ask your counsel in a matter so delicate that I am loath to proceed without advice.

A week or ten days ago a good friend of mine, the wife of a very dear friend, who is one of the outstanding professors of Semitic Languages in this country, wrote to me with a request. I should say that this lady is herself a Doctor of Philosophy, and therefore a woman of unusual intelligence and wide knowledge. She is a devout Catholic and of course is raising her four children as Catholics. Her husband, however, is not Catholic, but is a man of very extensive knowledge and of the broadest religious understanding and sympathy.

Both she and her husband have been greatly distressed by the radio utterances of Fr. Coughlin, and his writings in his journal "Social Justice," and particularly by their rabid, dishonest and unfair content and tone. I am sure that I need not go into detail.

She has asked me to write to Archbishop Mooney of Detroit, who is Fr. Coughlin's superior, and to urge him to restrain Fr. Coughlin in some way or other.

You can readily understand why I hesitate to take this very drastic step, even though it be a devout Catholic lady who asks me to do this.

Obviously she thinks that because of my particular position a communication to Archbishop Mooney might seem to have a semi-official character, and might therefore have more influence with him than would a simple communication from her.

Naturally, I realize perhaps better than she the full implication of the procedure which she suggests.

I do not know Archbishop Mooney; nor have I the slightest idea what type of man he may be. I do not know therefore what his probable reaction might be to such a communication from me, no matter how temperately and tactfully I may attempt to word it. I realize perfectly well that in a situation as delicate and strained as exists at present with regard to Fr. Coughlin, and his very obvious and very violent anti-Semitism, a letter which I might write might have repercussions and lead to effects the very antithesis of those which are desired.

Certainly I would not go so far as to suggest to Archbishop Mooney that Fr. Coughlin ought to be silenced completely. In fact,

I do not know whether the Archbishop's authority over Fr. Coughlin is sufficient for this. But manifestly the impression does obtain, as you can see, even on the part of devout Catholics, that Archbishop Mooney has considerable authority in the matter. And if it be granted that he have some authority in this direction, then certainly in popular opinion he likewise has a large measure of responsibility for what Fr. Coughlin says.

Knowing you as I do, I am sure I need not appeal to your sense of fair play and justice and honesty in this matter.

I know too that there is a growing sense of indignation against Fr. Coughlin within the ranks of Catholicism for what he is saying and doing. Several priests have expressed themselves to me in very strong terms with regard to this; and others I know have written upon the subject in very effective manner; notably Fr. Joseph M. Moody, in his little booklet "Why Are Jews Persecuted?"

Furthermore, I am sure that you and the other understanding and far-sighted leaders of the Catholic Church here in America must realize full well what a dangerous thing religious prejudice is, and that once fanned into flame it sweeps on like a forest fire, consuming everything before it. Conditions in Central Europe today illustrate this convincingly and show that the Catholic Church and its adherents are the next in line after the little Jewish unit in the various lands will have been crushed. Here in this country the Catholic Church has experienced more than once the dangers and the sorrows of religious prejudice and persecution when fanned into a burning flame. This shows that even here in America Catholicism is not immune in this direction, and that its danger would be great if the religious fanaticism and hatred which are now working out their fury in Europe should once become strong and active in this country. For that reason I cannot help believing that what Fr. Coughlin is doing is as dangerous for Catholicism as it is for Judaism, and that it seriously threatens the spiritual well being of our American Nation. I venture to imagine that in this respect you will agree with me almost completely.

I cannot help feeling too that Archbishop Mooney understands this likewise.

Now I wonder whether I should communicate with him, or not. Would it, in your opinion, serve any purpose; or would it perhaps merely intensify the situation and cause further difficulty? . . .

May I not hope to hear from you, and that too very promptly?
 I trust that this letter will find you in the best of health and spirits.
 With cordial greetings and all good wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,
 Julian Morgenstern⁵²

* * * *

The Task of the Hebrew Union College

Julian Morgenstern
 1939

In 1939 Morgenstern addressed the Council of the Union which met at Cincinnati in January. The new year was to be a bad year; Hitler was at the height of his power; the German Jewish community, the nursery and hearth of Jewish learning and scientific studies, was about to be totally destroyed. Morgenstern seized this occasion to emphasize the duty of the American Jew and the College to provide for the needs of exiled scholars and to make this country a center for advanced research in the field of Jewish history and literature. His appeal is reprinted below.

. . . . What must be the task of the Hebrew Union College now and in the immediate future, say during the next thirty-six years, until it shall celebrate its centenary? . . .

The task of the Hebrew Union College is obvious. It is to train and develop leaders, leaders not only for Judaism and Jewry here in America, but also for Judaism and Jewry throughout the world, leaders in this new and uncertain existence which is opening up for Judaism and for Jewry everywhere. This means at the very least that the Hebrew Union College must first of all continue faithfully the program which it has pursued diligently and fruitfully thus far. But no matter how diligently and how fruitfully it continue this program, this alone will still fall far short of satisfying Judaism's imperative need of authoritative leadership in this new, confused and difficult era. The College must enlarge its present program

⁵² Julian Morgenstern, Cincinnati, Ohio, to Francis C. Kelley, Oklahoma City, Dec. 6, 1938, Morgenstern Papers, AJAr.

greatly, if it is to render the vastly increased and more complex and responsible service which not only American Jewry but even world-Israel demand of it; and this particularly in one all-important direction. . . .

Reform Judaism in America is entering upon a new era, an era of renewed growth and invigoration, of larger achievement and greater progress. But with this its responsibility to itself, to world-Jewry and world-Judaism, and to mankind at large becomes all the greater. American Reform Judaism is now, along with Palestine, the chief heir of German Judaism, the heir of its spiritual power and of all its spiritual achievements, but also of its spiritual obligations. And among these not the least, both as a proud spiritual achievement and as a compelling spiritual obligation, is the Science of Judaism. It is now the task of American Judaism to safeguard and promote this Science, that thus here in America, its new home, this Science may through its labors, its discoveries, its teaching and influence continue to chart the course which Judaism, world-Judaism, must follow in the years and centuries to come.

In the discharge of this supreme task our first, immediate duty is to physically rescue such Jewish scholars as we can from their present oppression and establish them firmly in our midst and provide for them the opportunity to carry on their work quietly, confidently, and creatively. This task the Hebrew Union College is attempting to perform. But this is far from enough. This must not be the last generation of Jewish scholars; nor may this be merely a step towards providing a gentle, peaceful end for the Science of Judaism. Here in our own land this Science must be made to flourish anew. Here it must come quickly to feel itself completely at home in the midst of an intelligent, cultured, sympathetic Jewish community, which appreciates what it really is and all that it means for the preservation and guidance of Judaism and of Israel and the upbuilding of understanding and efficient Jewish leadership. Here in America we must raise up a new generation of Jewish scholars, and new generations after this, and here in our land and in our midst the Science of Judaism must find literally a rebirth and new life and new creative powers.

Just here lies the enlargement of the task of the Hebrew Union College in the next thirty-six years and in all the years and generations to come, so long as this new era for Judaism in America and

throughout the world shall endure. Even more, and far more, than it has ever been before, the Hebrew Union College now becomes one of the Jewish institutions of utmost significance in the entire world. I mean this in the most literal sense possible. I can not exaggerate its truth in the slightest degree. I beg you to feel and to believe all this with me. The responsibility of the Hebrew Union College now becomes immeasurable, a responsibility which may not be shirked.

The Hebrew Union College must now become one of the great centers of Jewish research and scholarship in all the world, one of the great powerhouses of Jewish learning. In addition to training Rabbis, teachers, social workers and other professional servants of Judaism, it must now train Jewish students and scholars also, train them in number and in range and authority of scholarship as it has never been able to train them before. . . .⁵³

Chaplain Alexander D. Goode
1945

A large number of the College graduates wore the chaplain's uniform during World War II; the Central Conference of American Rabbis made such service mandatory. A generation earlier, in 1917–1918, several of the men had volunteered to work with the troops overseas during World War I. Prior to that, there was no Hebrew Union College army chaplain, although Joseph Krauskopf, a member of the first graduating class, had ministered to Jewish soldiers in the American and Cuban camps during the Spanish-American conflict.

One of the chaplains in World War II was Alex D. Goode of the class of 1937. He was on the S. S. Dorchester, a cargo transport, when it was torpedoed by the Germans and went down in the icy waters of the North Atlantic in February, 1943. A seaman who was rescued reported that as the ship was sinking the four chaplains on board—three Christians and a Jew—gave their life preservers to others. "They were standing on the deck praying when our lifeboat drifted out of sight."

Goode was an excellent student at the College. Interested particu-

⁵³ PUAHC, *Sixty-Fifth Annual Report* (Cincinnati, 1939), pp. 194 ff.

larly in medieval Jewish history, he wrote prize essays while still at school, and after he graduated he commuted from his pulpit in York, Pa., to Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, where he earned a Ph.D. degree. Goode was thirty-two when he was reported missing in action.

The following tribute to the College Chaplains is taken from a brochure published in 1945 on the school's seventieth anniversary.

FOUR MARTYRS IN A BOAT

Not long ago in the city of Washington, close by the Washington monument, there was built, for exhibition, the full-size replica of an Army chapel. Its altar, as are all altars in Army chapels, was convertible. This to to say, it could one hour be an altar for the mass of the Catholics, then for the services of the Protestants; a quick turn of the furniture and it was an altar for the Jews with an Ark of the Law and the sacred scrolls.

One corner of this chapel was made a kind of special shrine by the multitudes who stopped and stood reverently there. They contemplated the portraits of four Army chaplains—two Protestants, a Catholic and a Jew. They read the brief story that stood, like a footnote, beneath the four pictures.

These chaplains had laid down their lives for fellow men. They were on the transport that was sunk in mid-Atlantic early in 1943. They could have saved themselves but each chose to give his life-belt to a soldier who had none. They were seen last in prayer, clasping hands in a final gesture of essential unity—Jew, Catholic, Protestant.

The Jewish chaplain was Rabbi Alex D. Goode of York, Pa. He was one of the rabbinical graduates of the Hebrew Union College who have gone into the Army and Navy as chaplains. They number almost one hundred. Another, Rabbi Samuel Hurwitz, also has died in the service. He had attained the rank of major.

One reads about them occasionally in the public prints. Invariably the story has to do with some blessed gesture of brotherhood:

Story of a rabbi on a Pacific Island who, in the absence of Catholic and Protestant chaplains, goes to conduct Catholic and Protestant services for soldiers on a ship bound for the mysterious destiny of battle.

Story of a rabbi on an Army air transport holding Easter Sunday services for the crew and the military passengers. He himself was flying toward a remote island to preside at a Seder [Passover meal].

Story of a rabbi who, at the Yom Kippur [Atonement Day] service in an Oklahoma camp, has as his guest a Christian chaplain. He accords him the honor of holding the Scroll of the Torah. The Christian frequently has conducted Sabbath services for Jewish soldiers at a distant post where there was no Jewish chaplain.

Story of a rabbi who in Algiers achieves a dazzling act of brotherhood for the gratitude of people who long had suffered Nazi spoliation and Vichy perfidy. He brings together a group of American Jewish soldiers. . . . "For the Christian children of Algiers we shall make a good Christmas," he says, and no impoverished child is without a gift.

All alumni of the Hebrew Union College.

The College, proud of the scholarship of its graduates, is prouder even of their glowing characters. Proud of the riches with which it has stored their minds, it is prouder even that their minds are broad enough to comprehend the brotherhood.

Into the Army and Navy they have gone as Reform rabbis, but they have not stood stiff-necked on their Reform persuasion; they have not been proselytizers for their concepts of Judaism. They have held services in accordance with the Orthodox ritual where soldiers and sailors have desired them. In far-off battle-stations they have served in the place of parents, comforting the troubled, strengthening the weak, offering the help of Jewish faith in the frightening hour of battle.

The full record of the men of the Hebrew Union College in the war is yet to be written. It will be a brave chapter of Jewish Scripture.⁵⁴

* * * *

Thomas Mann Receives a Degree from the College 1945

Celebrating its seventieth anniversary in 1945, the College bestowed the degree of Doctor of Hebrew Letters upon Thomas Mann (1875–1955). Curiously enough, this distinguished writer was also seventy that very year. Mann, a Nobel Prize winner in literature, had

⁵⁴ *After 70 Years* ([Cincinnati] 1945), pp. 18–19.

left Germany and gone into exile because of his contempt for the Nazis who ruled the land of his birth. He came to these shores and continued to write, fighting for the finest traditions associated with two of his favorite words, "liberty" and "humanity."

In thanking Dr. Morgenstern and the College for the degree honoring him, Mann interpreted the award as a symbol of the common goals of all right-thinking people who were struggling to oppose the evil and to advance the good. Mann's letter follows.

1650 San Remo Drive
Pacific Palisades, California
November 27, 1945

Dr. Julian Morgenstern
President of the Hebrew Union College
Cincinnati, Ohio

My dear President Morgenstern:

It is my urgent desire to tell you, the other recipients of your Honorary Degrees and all your guests how much I would have liked to participate in this academic festival. I would have loved to listen to the citation in which I was shown the great honor of being made a Doctor of Hebrew Letters of your College, and to receive the diploma with the hood from your hands. However, the reasons for my not coming to Cincinnati are compelling, and so I have to resign myself. But I eagerly seize this opportunity to express to you and the Hebrew Union College my deep and sincere gratitude.

The distinction you bestow upon me belongs to the strangest and most impressive ones of my life, and will always remain dear to me. It is its meaningful and timely character that so greatly moves and gladdens me. I feel that I don't go wrong in the belief that it is my biblical work, the Joseph saga, which brought me this honor—a work to which I have devoted more than a decade of my life, and which could not have found more competent and gratifying recognition. Although, in my novel, I have placed the old Jewish legends into a universally human light, it is still these sacred stories that form the basis and inspiration for this song of mankind, sung in its darkest hour; and as a seventy-year-old young doctor of Hebrew Letters I look back to the orientalist studies and particularly the intensive Midrash-studies I undertook in preparation of my work and during its taking shape.

I conceived the plan for this work at a time when in my native country those dark tendencies began to gather which, while I was writing it, came to such terrible outbreaks—outbreaks against a people to which occidental civilization owes so much, and that has always been a pillar of the spirit: the Jewish people. The sinister powers that brought such shame upon Germany and such immeasurable suffering upon the whole world are crushed to the ground; but we all know that, unfortunately, the base and perfidious ideas with which these corrupters of people have worked, and with which they tried to undermine liberty and humanity all over the world, have not disappeared with them, but that they continue to exist everywhere, and that it takes indefatigable vigilance and the cooperation of all God-fearing people who believe in right and tolerance to make the masses of the people immune against this poison. You, the most important Hebrew institute of America, have given expression to this solidarity by bestowing upon a gentile your highest academic honor. I see in this fact the super-personal and symbolic meaning of your act.

Once again my warmest thanks and best greetings to your college and its friends.

Yours most sincerely
Thomas Mann⁵⁵

* * * *

With History As Our Guide
Julian Morgenstern
1947

The selection that follows is in a way President Morgenstern's swan song. This Conference Lecture, delivered before the Reform Rabbis meeting at Montreal in June, 1947, was his last public address before retirement. The partition of Palestine was in the making; there would be a new Jewish state for the first time in nearly 2,000 years, a third Jewish commonwealth. What attitude would American Jewry assume toward the new center about to be born in the Holy Land? This was an important question, one that has not yet been

⁵⁵ Thomas Mann, Pacific Palisades, Cal., to Julian Morgenstern, Cincinnati, Nov. 27, 1945. *Liberal Judaism*, Jan., 1946, p. 43. Facsimile copy in AJAr.

*fully answered a generation later, one that may never be answered
—but Morgenstern tackled it.*

Judaism is a historic religion; i.e. it is a religion in which the principle of historic growth, advance, evolution is fundamental, and at least the major stages of its progress through time and circumstance can be readily identified, coordinated and interpreted. Our own American Progressive Judaism we regard as the latest stage in this process of historical unfolding, but by no means the last, the final, stage thereof. The very principle of historic evolution carries with it the corollary of progressive revelation and continuous growth. This faith, that our own expression of Judaism, in this modern age and in the environment of an active, creative America, is not at all the final stage of the progressive evolution of historic Judaism, enjoins the continuity into the distant, and even the ultimate, future of Judaism and the Jewish people. These are axiomatic principles, which can hardly be challenged by any one who calls himself, and is worthy of the name, Jew. . . .

And the realization of the grave and imminent danger of racial nationalism should emphasize for us that Jewish nationalism will be only for that segment of the Jewish people which will be established in Palestine. They will enjoy such measure of self-government and constitute whatever type of state or nation as the eventual determination of the political organization of the whole of Palestine will establish for them. They and they alone will constitute the Jewish nation. But we who dwell outside of Palestine, in the lands of the so-called Diaspora (unfortunate name!), and who, so far as we can see ahead, are minded to dwell there permanently and to be citizens of the nations of our residence, we will not be parts of the Jewish nation nor citizens of the Jewish state, nor will we, by any quibble in terms and any un-American, hair-fine distinctions in the meanings of the two words, nation and nationality, have any political rights or claims whatever on or in Palestine. We will be forever an integral part of the eternal Jewish people; for, as we have learned, the principle of peoplehood is the one and only constant in Jewish history and life. And as an integral part of the Jewish people we will have an indissoluble attachment to our brethren in all the lands of the world and at all times and a constant and deep solicitude for the well-being, progress, achievement and fame of the Jewish nation in Palestine.

But politically we will be unconditionally and completely citizens of those nations in which we dwell, whose privileges have been extended to us generously and in whose destiny we share. To these nations, to each according to our affiliations, will be our duty, our loyalty and our love.

But the concept of [World-] Israel as the eternal people brings home another fundamental truth. It was not nationhood which gave to the Jewish people the quality of eternity, nor can Jewish nationhood guarantee this eternity. It was the consciousness of an eternal reason for existence, an eternal destiny, as the people chosen and disciplined by God for an eternal service, to be eternally His servant and His witness and the living exponent of His way of life, proclaimed by the prophets, and proclaimed, let us remember, when Israel was no longer a nation, which imparted to Israel the conviction and the faith that it is the eternal people. Nations come and go, rise and perish; but a people, and above all the eternal people, lives on and will not die. Israel was a nation once, even twice; and it ceased to be a nation once, even twice. And what happened once may well happen again through the vicissitudes of history. Israel may become a nation for a third time; and for a third time it may cease to be a nation. Eternity for [World-] Israel lies not in the quality nor in the realization of nationhood. Eternity for Israel lies only in the quality and the consciousness of peoplehood, in being a people of destiny, in being a religious people.

Just here we must recognize the unique role and service of Israel in America. For, as history has determined, the Jewish community of America has become the largest and most potent Jewish community of the entire world, and one whose potentialities for tomorrow are greater far than its power and its achievements of the present moment. As an integral part of our great, free, and unique nation Israel in America is destined to play the role and perform the service which Israel in Palestine, the Jewish nation, can never perform, the role and the service which are at least as fundamental and essential in Jewish life and history as Jewish nationhood, the role and service of religion, of being the bearers of Judaism for all of [World-] Israel and for mankind. If we have any destiny at all, we Jews of America, it is this: not to be forever the efficient, generous, magnanimous philanthropists and ministers to our brethren in their distress, though may we always be that too, but to be far more, the custodians and

exemplars of Judaism, that Judaism, too, may live like and with the Jewish people, eternally, and may forever create and bless. Here in America Judaism has found the most congenial and favorable home it has known ever in the course of its entire history. There is a close affinity between the spirit of Judaism and the spirit of America. Here Judaism can grow and achieve as never before and can bless all [World-] Israel, America and mankind. That is our destiny. . . .⁵⁶

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The American Jewish Archives 1947

In 1947, after the American Jewish Archives had been initiated by Professor Jacob R. Marcus, he was called in by the new President, Nelson Glueck, and given carte blanche—without a budget—to expand the Archives into a national institution. With the help of the president and the Board, the Archives, like Topsy, grew luxuriantly. It now houses over 4,000,000 pages of American Jewish historical material, most of it adequately catalogued. The following selection explains briefly why this very sizable depository of American Jewish documents came into being.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES: WHAT AND WHY?

When Nazi Germany destroyed the European centers of Jewish life during the 1940's, only two great Jewish communities remained in the world to assume the burden of Jewish leadership and maintain the continuity of Jewish history. One, the *Yishuv* ["Settlement"] in the Holy Land, was—and remains—compelled to invest the bulk of its energies in self-defense and socio-economic development. The other, American Jewry, was . . . the only Jewish community able to exercise effective and vigorous hegemony on the world Jewish scene. It is the Jews of America who have had to shoulder the formidable and crucial task of preserving, securing, and strengthening the age-old Jewish heritage, one of the most honorable and most significant legacies in human history.

⁵⁶ *CCARYB*, LVII, 257 ff.

That is the *raison d'être* of the American Jewish Archives. That is why the Archives was established in 1947—to help American Jews fulfill their spiritual and intellectual obligations to themselves and to world Jewry. Both the Archives and its patron, the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, are committed to the philosophy that only to the extent that American Jews are familiar with their 300-year-old experience in this country will they be able to carry out successfully the tasks imposed on them by the history of our times. Those who are ignorant of the Jewish past will be ill-equipped to face the Jewish future.

How does the Archives realize its philosophy? It devotes itself systematically to gathering, preserving, and evaluating the records of the American Jewish past—synagogal and societal records, personal papers, diaries, memoirs, governmental documents, newspaper and magazine clippings, photographs, and the like. Whatever illuminates the Jewish experience in the Western Hemisphere is of interest, concern, and value. . . .⁵⁷

* * * *

The selection below describes how the Archives discovered the diary of Sigmund Shlesinger, an Indian fighter.

THE LITTLE JEW WAS THERE

It happened on Monday, September 21, 1868, that a nineteen-year-old Jewish lad . . . “scalpt 3 Indians which were found about 15 feet from my hole concealed in grass.” The next day, our young friend “kilt a Coyote & eat him all up.”

These incidents took place during the Battle of Beecher Island, Colorado, where a band of fifty mounted scouts held off a thousand Cheyenne and Sioux braves for nine days in September, 1868. Sigmund Shlesinger, who was one of the scouts—Gen. James B. Fry wrote of the plucky teen-ager that, when “the bravest souls were tested, the Little Jew was there”—scrawled notes in a diary during those hectic nine days.

Shlesinger's diary later passed into the possession of his daughter, Mrs. Max Frankenberger, of Charleston, West Virginia. For years,

⁵⁷ *The American Jewish Archives* (pamphlet, Cincinnati, no date), p. 3.

its existence remained quite unsuspected by scholars in American history. An article published about Shlesinger by the American Historical Society aroused the interest of Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, Director of the then newly-established American Jewish Archives, and a three-year search for additional material about "the little Jew" ensued. In 1951, one of Shlesinger's distant relatives, Mrs. Horace Hart, of Rochester, New York, directed the Archives to Mrs. Frank- enberger in Charleston. Dr. Marcus followed Mrs. Hart's lead.

Up popped the Shlesinger diary, and out popped Dr. Marcus' eyes. He still recalls it as one of the most exciting finds in the Archives' brief history.⁵⁸

* * * *

The Genius of the Jew 1947

In 1947, Nelson Glueck took office as the fourth president of the Hebrew Union College. This forty-seven-year-old academician was a remarkable person, an accomplished archaeologist who had surveyed thousands of sites in the Holy Land, a charming personality, and a man of iron will determined to extend the reach of his spiritual and cultural domain to all parts of the world. Under his tutelage and responding to his relentless drive, the Board and the Faculty added to the Cincinnati campus schools in New York, Los Angeles, and Jerusalem. He developed and encouraged training programs for cantors and educators; he built a museum and a national archives, finally making the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion one of the greatest Jewish theological institutions in all history.

Excerpts from his brief inaugural address follow.

I am charged to take over as fourth in line of succession the presidency of the Hebrew Union College founded in this very Temple of B'nai Yeshurun in Cincinnati seventy-three years ago by Isaac Mayer Wise. . . .

We of Israel have survived not because of some mysterious freak of fossilization enabling us to defy the disintegrating forces of the centuries, but because our prophets and priests and rabbis, our

⁵⁸ *Bulletin, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Jan., 1959, p. 4.*

philosophers and poets have clung throughout history to the timeless tradition of the Torah, the Moral Law. However warm our regard for the changing wrappings of custom, we have endured not as spiritual mummies but because of our continuous concern for the kindly and compassionate conduct of men with their fellows and for man's relationship to God. The history of Israel is fused with the worship of the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob. It is a diary of discipline and of devotion to the God of History and Humanity.

To the carrying out of His commandments, to the unremitting effort to make the life of America and of [World-] Israel and of the [entire] world instinct with His awe, the Hebrew Union College is committed. To teach the Law of the Lord is the challenge of its charter. Its task is to bring the best of our entire Jewish past and present to bear upon the America we have helped create and to whose development we are contributing. For here we have driven our stake and here we have proved our claim. Here are the homes of our children and here is the haven of our hopes. Through service and sacrifice, we are connected as Jews with the roots and the role of America.

The genius of our American nation of nations and commonwealth of cultures is to emphasize the good of our differences and to encourage the enlargement of our common contributions. Ours is the opportunity and obligation to keep sharp and clean the values of our spiritual inheritance, all of which underscore the American promise. Through the invigorating understanding of our historic personality, we Jews shall be better prepared to participate in the building of the America of the future and to cope with the problems that assail all souls. Here we take our stand with our fellow Americans to help preserve in this country and to restore elsewhere a spiritual climate in which freedom of expression, liberty of conscience, and equality of opportunity shall prevail.

We are given an assignment in education, in the increase of knowledge and understanding, which encompasses our heritage as Jews and our birthright as Americans. Our concern is the survival and advancement of civilization, the preservation and progress of humanity, through the extension of a spiritual Zion over the face of the earth. . . .

The issue that confronts us is vast and urgent and universal. It

involves not only you and me and our children but all of mankind. What is required of us to meet it? What do the imperatives of the Moral Law demand of us? The pioneer gathering together of all persons and peoples to hew out ever larger clearings in the wilderness of life for cultivation and construction, the helping of each other to find beauty and happiness, the opening of hands and hearts for the sustaining of hope, the searching out and healing of grievances and hurts, the exercise of infinite patience with weakness and weariness, the deepening appreciation in our innermost consciousness of the commandments and order of God.

Who can turn aside from such an assignment? I could not. You cannot. We dare not. And I know of no better way to meet it for myself and my son than after the fashion of my fathers to face up to the challenge of my faith. . . .⁵⁹

* * * *

Golda Fish
ca. 1947

Despite the fact that about half of the school's students are married and all are university graduates, they sometimes forget that they are supposed to be sobersides and, on occasion, cut capers like youngsters. It is not improbable that these seminarians, having already endured sixteen years of secular training and now faced with five or six more in a theological school, sometimes try to lighten the burden by enlivening the daily routine. The following anecdote speaks for itself.

Another interesting item is the Yartzeit list which is read every day in chapel. Now the Yartzeit list is the list of the people who are friends of the College, who have passed away, and this is the anniversary of their death.

It just so happens that a few years ago a few of the students kept illegally a fish in their dormitory room. And the fish was a gold fish and its name was Golda. As happens to all good fish, this fish happened to die; and the students were very upset about it and they didn't want the fish to go unremembered or unnamed. So they added to the Yartzeit list a very interesting name and one day in

⁵⁹ *The Inaugural Address of Dr. Nelson Glueck* (Cincinnati, 1948), pp. 1 ff.

chapel as the student was reading the names, he said *zecher tzadik l'vracha* (remembering the righteous is a blessing): Hilda Schwartz, Helda Levy, Myer Levin, Golda Fish. And of course the whole congregation, especially those knowing who Golda Fish was, broke out in amazement. The student and the rabbi on the pulpit had to stop the service and check over and see what was the matter. . . .⁶⁰

* * * *

Integrating the Short Corner 1950's

American Reform Jewry had been interested in social action since 1885, when Emil G. Hirsch, under the influence of the Christians who preached the social gospel, introduced a plank into the Pittsburgh Platform urging Jews to help solve "the problems presented by the contrasts and the evils of the present organization of society." Various resolutions calling for an improvement in the civil and political status of the American Black were passed by the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in the 1930's, particularly under the prodding of Rabbi Edward L. Israel, chairman of the Commission on Social Justice. The Jews of that decade may have become conscious of the need to ameliorate the condition of the Blacks in America because Jews themselves were being persecuted on racial grounds in Nazi Germany.

In the 1950's, the action of the Supreme Court outlawing segregation in education, the heroic stance of the Negroes in the Montgomery Bus Boycott, and the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1957 aroused in the students at the College a determination to secure for Blacks the liberties and immunities to which they were morally entitled.

The following selection describes how the students succeeded in integrating a restaurant near the College.

Around 1950, a group of us on the Cincinnati campus decided one night to drop in at the Busy Bee, down at the "short corner"

⁶⁰ Barbara Waltzer (Mrs. Eugene H.) Levy, "Traditions and Legends from HUC-JIR" (Cincinnati, 1969), copy in AJAr.

(the Clifton-Ludlow corner, nearest the H. U. C. Dormitory) for a few beers. One of our number, a Ph.D. candidate on the Christian Fellow Program, was a Negro. By chance he was the only one in our group who realized what would happen. For the rest of us this started out as a simple social evening.

The evening became complex when we arrived, sat down at a table, and waited for service. No waiter came. We finally inquired and learned that Negroes were not served. At that point, we found a cause.

One of us called the Dormitory and explained the situation. Soon H. U. C. students started drifting in, took tables, gave their orders—and then explained that they belonged to the party with the Negro in it and would not accept the order until he had been served. By now the waiters rushed around putting “Reserved” signs on the empty tables. Anyone resembling an H. U. C. man was told there was no place open.

Another phone call. Result: couples of H. U. C. men and University of Cincinnati girls showed up, were given tables—and joined this early “Sit-in.” The owner came over to us, pleading, “explaining” his position, pointing out this was his big night: the U. C. “Cinderella Ball” was on that night, and he expected a large crowd.

This, of course, was perfect for us. We did not budge. Within an hour after this he capitulated and served our table. The restaurant had been desegregated—permanently, as occasional tests on our side showed. And an impetus had been given to the social justice movement within the Student Body that resulted in the fight for integration throughout the Cincinnati area.⁶¹

* * * *

Abraham Cronbach and the Rosenbergs 1953

Abraham Cronbach (1882–1965), of the class of 1906, was one of the truly great and unique men who graduated from the Hebrew Union College. This native Hoosier was appointed professor of social studies at his alma mater and served it faithfully and self-sacrificially from 1922 till his retirement in 1950. He was a gentle man,

⁶¹ Brav, *Tales*, p. 53.

scholarly in the best sense of the term, a rabbi, chaplain, sociologist, and above all a pacifist who exercised a profound influence on a number of students. His disciples still speak of him with reverence.

On March 29, 1951, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were convicted of treason in a United States Federal Court; the judge and the chief prosecutor were Jews. It was charged that the accused had violated the Espionage Act by transmitting secrets of the atomic bomb to the Russians. On June 19, 1953, the two were electrocuted in Sing Sing Prison.

Cronbach was one of the thousands who interceded for the Rosenbergs. He went to see President Eisenhower, pleaded for executive clemency for the unfortunate couple, and later preached at their funeral. The story of his futile efforts to help them are recited in detail in Cronbach's remarkable autobiography, first published in the American Jewish Archives. There are many who believed—and still believe—that the Rosenberg trial was unfair; there are others who are certain that some of the testimony that convicted them was perjured.

AN INTERVIEW WITH EISENHOWER

On June 16, 1953, the forty-seventh anniversary of my ordination, I conversed with President Dwight D. Eisenhower in the Presidential office of the White House Annex. I had been invited to join three Christian clergymen in beseeching the President for clemency toward Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, sentenced to be executed on June 18th. Toward his visitors the President was affable and gracious. His speech was fluent and forceful. I shall not report everything that was said. I limit myself to my own part in the interview.

I remarked: "Mr. President, all of us are dedicated to the interests of America. All of us are solicitous that America shall suffer no harm. Would not America be adequately safeguarded if, instead of death, the penalty of the Rosenbergs would be imprisonment, no matter how long?"

The President replied in approximately these words: "According to Federal law, there is no such thing as 'imprisonment no matter how long.' State laws provide for long terms of incarceration. With Federal law it is otherwise. According to Federal law, the Rosen-

bergs would be eligible for parole in fifteen years. Besides, there are times when nothing but death is a deterrent. After our invasion of Europe, the inhabitants of a certain area complained bitterly about the misconduct of some American soldiers. The people had to arm themselves with pitchforks and other makeshift weapons to prevent pillage and rape. All of that stopped after I had two of the malefactors publicly hanged. On one occasion some law-defying soldiers were offered the alternative of imprisonment or of service in the front lines. Every one of them chose imprisonment. There are times when death is the only effective penalty."

Sincerely as I respected the President and ardently as I appreciated his exquisite courtesy, I could not but grieve at the gap between his viewpoint and mine. These are the words in which I voiced my sorrow: "Life is full of problems that baffle our intelligence. All of us need the guidance of God. Mr. President, may you have the guidance of God!" The President was touched by that remark. He indicated assent and warm gratitude.

DELIVER THOSE WHO ARE DOOMED TO DIE

Two days previously, on Sunday afternoon, June 14, 1953, I had stood in front of the White House, alongside the mother of Julius Rosenberg and his two children. We were faced by a shouting, gesticulating throng of reporters, radiomen, and photographers. I was asked to offer a brief prayer. I spoke the following translation of Psalm 79:11: "Lord, let the groaning of the prisoner come before Thee. In the greatness of Thy power, do Thou deliver those who are doomed to die." On both sides of us paused the dense, but silent, lines of pickets with their placards imploring mercy. The police counted 6,832, the largest number ever recorded for such a demonstration. Sad and mute, the marchers occupied the blocks not only of the White House, but also of the former State Department Building and of the United States Treasury. Despite a heavy downpour that morning in New York City, two special trains of fifteen coaches each, filled with those demonstrating for clemency, had left Pennsylvania Station. Two extra coaches had to be attached at Philadelphia to accommodate the crowd. I have been assured that each passenger paid his or her own fare and that there was no "Communist" subvention.

Later that afternoon of June 14th, there was convened, on the vast assembly grounds at Ninth and Constitution Avenues, a meeting for prayer. Although the day was cloudy and so chilly that I wore a heavy overcoat, the crowd was enormous. It was estimated at 10,000. Colored persons as well as white persons, Christians as well as Jews participated. There was impressive singing by the talented and beloved Martha Schlamme.

In the course of my remarks as one of the speakers, I said: "In order to suspect others of espionage, one has to have a streak of espionage in one's own soul. We who are here assembled crave clemency for the Rosenbergs because we ourselves are so clean of espionage that we cannot accuse others of espionage. We ourselves are so far from being disloyal that it is incomprehensible to us that others should be disloyal. Precisely because of our devotion to America do we urge a commutation of that sentence."

The following day, June 15th, I spent two hours in the reception room of the United States Senate in order to obtain interviews with Senator John W. Bricker of Ohio and Senator William Langer of North Dakota, chairman of the Judiciary Committee of the Senate. Senator Bricker, though radiantly kind and courteous, expressed himself as averse to leniency for the Rosenbergs. He then hastened to make plain that clemency lay outside of the legislative sphere, in which alone he exercised authority. He deplored his dearth of influence in his attempt to procure an amendment to the Constitution aiming to keep treaties with foreign powers from infringing upon American constitutional guarantees. The interview consisted less in my pleading for the Rosenbergs than in the senator's pleading with me in behalf of his proposed amendment.

Though I did not get to see Senator Langer until two hours after the appointed time, my interview with him lasted barely more than a minute. The senator stated that he was wholeheartedly in favor of clemency and that he needed no persuasion.

Meanwhile I apprehended that untoward experiences were awaiting me at Cincinnati. I had granted interviews to the Washington correspondents of the Cincinnati newspapers. I anticipated that I was going to find myself aspersed as a raving "Communist," intent upon overthrowing the American government "by force and violence," and scheming to bring America under the domination of Russia. I had the relief of discovering, upon my return, that the

newspapers had given a truthful and even a friendly account of my Washington activities. Cincinnati friends, including the president of the Hebrew Union College, commended me for my stand. My wife reported that, during my absence, there had been one scurrilous telephone call, anonymous as usual, but nothing more.

My remarks at the Rosenberg funeral on June 21st attracted favorable comments from many parts of the United States and from abroad. Deprecatory communications were exceedingly few, and these came from both extremes, from those who abhorred the Rosenbergs and, at the other extreme, from those who abhorred the officials through whom the Rosenbergs were brought to their death. I spoke as follows:

The eyes of all the world are on this sorrowful gathering. Millions of people are convinced that Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were innocent. Other millions have held that, even if they were guilty, their punishment was excessive. Still other millions believe that the punishment was just.

To those who maintain that the punishment was just, I should like to say a few words. It is an ancient Jewish maxim that if, after a law has been violated, the violator has been punished, the violation is to be regarded as canceled. The defendant ceases to be a defendant. Matters become as if the violation had never occurred. That Jewish maxim is so noble and so worthy that it ought to be adopted by people everywhere. According to that maxim, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg are now innocent—independent even if judged from the harshest point of view. So much for those who think that the punishment was just.

For the rest of us, this is a day of bitter reverse. We toiled and sacrificed and dared in order to prevent this calamity, but our efforts were in vain. We were defeated. And yet there is a sense in which we were *not* defeated. We were defeated juridically but we were *not* defeated spiritually. We succeeded in being true to our finest selves. We succeeded as regards fidelity to our ideals of mercy, justice, and courage. The able attorney, to whom you have just listened, did not win his case. But he triumphed as regards devotion, industry, and resourcefulness.

Tasks still remain. One of them is that of discovering and publishing the truth. The entire truth about this dreadful happening has not yet been revealed. There are questions which have not been answered. Perhaps when the truth has been discovered, all the world will deem Julius and Ethel Rosenberg to have been guiltless. The truth should be sought and made known.

Another task is that of binding up the wounds—comforting the be-

reaved, succoring the needy. The dead are beyond our reach. But the living must be solaced and aided.

There is yet another task, and this is the most difficult of all. We should avoid hatred, rancor, and retaliation. Well worth heeding are those ancient Jewish words: "Thou shalt take no revenge. Thou shalt bear no grudge. . . . Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart." Though the judges and the executive rendered a verdict which broke our hearts, we must remember that they did the right* as they understood the right. Our own conception of the right was, of course, far different from theirs. Still, we should not hate. We should not be vindictive. Hatred killed Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. Vindictiveness destroyed this young man and woman. We who achieved a spiritual triumph when we struggled to avert this tragedy—let us not now succumb to spiritual defeat.

Finally, we who befriended the Rosenbergs should show the entire world that we are loyal among the loyal in our allegiance to America. Let us give our detractors not a scintilla of an excuse for impugning the caliber of our citizenship. Let us make it unmistakably clear that we can not possibly gain by anything through which America is injured. We gain if America gains. We lose if America loses. Our citizenship should stand beyond reproach.

These things we must do if we would bring about a brighter day for our America and a happier time for all humanity.

As late as the year 1956, three years after they had been executed, my concern about the Rosenbergs again landed me in trouble. In an article which began on the front page of a Cincinnati newspaper, I was defamed. Flamboyantly the paper reported that I had been mentioned in a brochure just issued by the House Committee on Un-American Activities. And, indeed, I was one of 1,074 individuals who, together with 134 organizations and twenty-three publications, had been pilloried by that committee, for having, some years before, sought a mitigation of the Rosenbergs' sentence.

Except for an anonymous vituperative letter which came to me by mail, no untoward consequences ensued. With that one exception, all who broached the matter spoke as my friends, sympathizers, and supporters.

How poignantly the incident corroborated my doctrine of ethical relativity! It showed, beyond cavil, how that which to one person signifies altruism, idealism, and consecration can signify to another

* At this point there occurred, among the listeners, a slight commotion which—it seemed to me—was quickly and firmly repressed by someone in the audience.

person obliquity, subversion, and treason. The corollary follows that, no matter who our opponents are and no matter what the issue, no matter how vicious or how exasperating or how unfair they might be, our opponents are as conscientious and sincere about their convictions as we are about ours. That is a truth hard to absorb, but it is ineluctable. Scant hope exists for the world until this truth is grasped. Such is my comment upon the stigma to which I was subjected by that congressional publication.⁶²

* * * *

What is Reform Judaism? 1955

During the last week in March, 1955, the College celebrated the eightieth anniversary of its founding. The celebration took place on Founder's Day, an annual holiday commemorating the birth and career of Isaac M. Wise. On this particular occasion in 1955, Nelson Glueck delivered an address in which he defined Reform Judaism as he understood it. In simple, lucid English he explained the philosophy which had characterized the school for the last two generations. Extracts of this attractive and appealing exposition are printed below.

. . . . The teachings of American Reform Judaism are particularly conducive, it seems to us, of the way of life which we should follow as Jews and as Americans. Its liberalism and open-mindedness, its firm rootedness in the fundamentals of our religious heritage, its belief in the continuous unfolding of truth and the increase of understanding, afford us a sustaining philosophy of faith rather than a haphazard *code of convenience*. There is no contradiction in Reform Judaism between our affirmations and our actions, between our public confession and our private conduct.

The close association, furthermore, between this philosophy of Reform Judaism and the basic concepts upon which our American commonwealth is built makes it as inseparably a part of ourselves to be as naturally and proudly Jewish as we are natively and happily

⁶² *AJA*, XI, 71-76.

American. It is increasingly important that we be conscious of the primacy of our spiritual heritage. In our religious tradition and training, we can find our surest support and finest goals. As conscious and convinced Jews we can best serve ourselves and our fellows, our America and Israel and mankind. . . .

We believe, furthermore, that the hope for our future as Jews lies in the direction and criteria of Reform Judaism. The determination to select from the past what is still valid and to build with it for the present and the future has been characteristic of Reform Judaism from its very inception. Those who broke with the past completely entered into a spiritual vacuum and were lost both to Judaism and themselves. Those who denied or turned away from the necessity of rootedness and growth in the soil of our tradition were or are destined to find spiritual sterility. It was Reform Judaism, in the courage and balance of its founders, that set the course for Jews of our time. Our innovations, the late Friday night service, the modern religious school and confirmation, to mention a few, have been adopted by all segments of Jewry interested in religious survival. And to that degree, our coreligionists have accepted, however unconsciously and to some degree grudgingly, what is essentially the Reform principle of enlightened progressivism. . . .

The modern rabbi is not only an interpreter and teacher of Judaism, but also a servant of the people and a functionary of the synagogue. It is his task to make relevant for his people the eternal verities of the Judaism of the past. The totality of that past is not all of equal value, nor is it viable for that totality to be transferred. We make the claim for Reform Judaism that it preserves out of the past not only that which is still relevant, but that it also preserves all that which is worthy.

Our ethics remain the traditional Jewish ethics. Our theology, however, in seeking to understand the nature of the universe, has no dogmatic inhibitions against science. There can be, in the Reform scheme of things, no conflict between science and religion. The enlightened thought of modern man is not alien to the mental disposition of Reform.

What is eternal among us is our conviction about God and His unity and the oneness of His moral law. What *is* unchanging is our belief that godliness is inseparable from the totality of life and experience. What *is* fundamental is our assertion with the Psalmist: "I

will not die but live that I may declare the wondrous works of the Lord." . . .⁶⁸

* * * *

A Letter to My Son Who Wants To Be a Rabbi
Janice Yarmove
1959

At the College the faculty knows or thinks it knows the nature of the requirements for the rabbinate. Out in the cold world of reality, of challenge and heartache, the people in the pews have their own ideas about a successful religious leader. It was somewhat disheartening many years ago when a professor of pedagogy at the school demonstrated statistically—to his own satisfaction at least—that there was an inverse ratio between academic achievement in the classes and success in the congregation.

In the following letter a mother writes a fifteen-year-old son who has manifested a strong interest in the rabbinate and tells him what it means to her.

Son, ever since you chirped at the age of four, "I wanna be a rabbi when I grow up" I have been putting off the day when we must talk about it seriously.

Now that you are fifteen, with your avowal still intact and your love of religion quite manifest, may I tell you how I feel about it?

I feel proud. Even though some of our "traditionalist" friends belittle Reform, I know you are a truly religious person and I like the way you answered that man who asked you why you wanted to be a rabbi, "I want to work with God."

The rabbinate is hardly a lucrative profession, so don't expect to become as rich as some of your friends will become.

And you are going to have to work very hard. Today's rabbi does a variety of things, and your life will be most strenuous. In some occupations, you can shut shop at 5:00 P.M. and then live your own life. Not in the rabbinate!

One of your hardest tasks will be to retain your humility. Rabbis receive so much adulation that they have to work to hold on to a sense of perspective and keep themselves from believing all the nice

⁶⁸ *Bulletin*, Apr., 1955, pp. 2 ff.

things they hear about themselves. When you speak to your congregation you will be "above" them physically, but it is better to think of yourself as a servant of your flock than as a "commander."

Remember how your own rabbi begins each Yom Kippur service with a plea for humility. Take that prayer seriously.

True, some cynics have said that humility will keep you from getting one of the larger pulpits. Remember the man who scoffingly said, "Humble rabbis end up in Squeedunk!"

Well, my son, please always strive to measure your success not by the size of your congregation but by the extent to which you minister to your people. The son of a famous Reform rabbi once told me his father had felt that a rabbi's chief function was to be a teacher and not a counselor. I disagree. I'm sure that most congregants estimate the value of a rabbi not by the excellence of his oratory (though that is important), or by his qualities as a teacher (which are also important), but by his warmth and his interest in his people.

And, talking about oratory, I hope you will bear in mind that the most effective talks are frequently brief ones. Put one thought into each address and try to convey it effectively. Avoid the kind of repetitiousness which becomes boring. In these days of television, the unit of listenability has become the half-hour. Far more helpful is the oft-repeated observation that "no souls are saved after the first twenty minutes."

You will become, willy-nilly, a public relations agent. Today's rabbis are the spokesmen for Judaism in the community at large. I do not disparage this important function, but I plead with you to remember that your primary obligation is towards your own people. Remember that the Christian world judges us by the respect we have for our own faith.

It is true that you cannot be all things to all people; there is no perfection in any relationship. However, son, if you maintain a balanced position between idealism and practicalities, you will be in my eyes a "success." You will be a success even if you land in Squeedunk. You will be a success if you are responsible for making your congregation better people and Jews more harmoniously adjusted to their God and their country.

Think carefully about the things I have written and don't rush into this difficult career without giving consideration to all of the other thoughts which occur to you and your friends. And may I repeat the plea to hold on to your humility, which is the real emblem of that

kind of spiritual service which men will hail as "spiritual leadership."
Lovingly,

Your Mother⁶⁴

* * * *

Training Rabbis for World Jewry
1959

A study of the rabbinical roster found at the back of any yearbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis will demonstrate indisputably that Reform Judaism is a worldwide movement. There are Reform rabbis in the Argentine, Australia, Brazil, England, Israel, Japan, the Netherlands, Panama, South Africa, the Virgin Islands, and West Germany. Canada alone has about twenty such rabbis, and practically all of these preachers in all these lands were ordained at the Hebrew Union College. They are exponents of a liberal form of Judaism, one that is in consonance with modern thinking, embodying happily the best in Americanism and in Judaism. The internationalism, the universalism, which Judaism has always expounded is reflected in the work and teachings of these young men who have gathered from the four corners of the world.

The selection printed below describes three young argonauts, natives of Israel and Australia, who came to study at the College.

Genuine international flavor colors campus life at the Cincinnati school this year. A dozen foreign students are enrolled—the largest overseas contingent ever. Dramatic symbols of HUC-JIR's rising responsibility to world Jewry, they represent nine countries of origin: Argentina, Australia, Canada, England, Hungary, India, Israel, Japan and Uruguay. In addition, a Buenos Aires student is enrolled this year at the HUC-JIR School of Sacred Music in New York.

Among these students may be Israel's first home-grown Reform rabbi. Shmuel Kehati, 26, an erudite Yemenite with a warm smile and gentle, impish wit, is the son of an Orthodox family settled in Palestine since 1904. Among friends back home he counts many interested in Reform and he plans to return to them a working rabbi. A graduate of Jerusalem's Teachers' Seminary, he was principal of a boys' high school when chance friendship with an HUC-JIR stu-

⁶⁴ *American Judaism*, Purim-Passover, 1959, p. 4.

dent in Israel led to his serving last year as tutor to HUC-JIR men studying in Israel. He taught them Hebrew; they taught him Reform. His parents are pleased with his rabbinic plans. In the trunk his mother shipped, he recounts smilingly, he found, neatly packed, his *t'fillin* [phylacteries]. An ardent Israeli folk dancer, he is teaching the dances to fellow students.

. . . . Melbourne's first HUC-JIR student is due to be ordained this June and to begin service among Jewry back home. Tall, handsome John Levi, great-grandson of the first Jewish member of Victoria's House of Representatives, has begun his ministry Down Under already as a student. This summer, subventioned by the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, he served a pioneering Liberal group in Auckland which, without a trained leader and despite intense opposition, had established a group of 120 adults and 40 children. He organized a school and choir and led services. While in New Zealand, he helped a Liberal group get started in Wellington, too. Near pandemonium broke out as critics of Reform heckled the organization meeting but the young Australian helped to lay the basis for a permanent congregation, now functioning regularly.

Most of the overseas students come to HUC-JIR on scholarships provided by the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, the National Federation of Temple Youth and a fund established by S. H. Scheuer of New York.

Mordecai Shreiber, 20, comes to HUC-JIR from Montevideo, but, like Kehati, he's a native Israeli *Sabra*, Haifa-born, resident in Uruguay only for three years. Long-limbed, boyish, his childhood coincided with Israel's short, stormy history. His father, a fish dealer, ran guns for the Haganah, loading arms and fish from ships, the fish hiding the guns. Mordecai served on Boy Scout patrols and studied at . . . a military school. A glutton for learning, he followed an eight-hour school day with eight hours' home work and liked it. He enters the College-Institute with impressive advanced credit and a king-sized list of books for free moments. In Uruguay, where he learned Spanish and English and worked towards a university degree in philosophy, he sees no real religious life and no Reform Judaism. His plans are definite. "I intend to prepare for a meaningful life," he says. . . .⁶⁵

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⁶⁵ *Bulletin*, Nov., 1959, unpagged.

Premier Ben-Gurion Comes to Visit 1960

After the Israelis were compelled by the great powers to withdraw from Suez, Sinai, and the Gaza Strip in 1956, David Ben-Gurion, the Israeli prime minister, worked hard to strengthen the bonds tying the new republic to Western Europe and the United States. In pursuit of this goal the Israeli statesman came to this country in 1960 and while in New York City visited some of the Jewish theological schools. On March 16, he was welcomed at the Jewish Institute of Religion, the New York division of the Reform Jewish seminary.

The College authorities rolled out the red carpet for the dynamic Jewish leader. He had been a close coworker of Stephen S. Wise, the founder of the New York college, who had passed away in 1949. Both were Zionist pioneers. The New Yorkers admired Ben-Gurion greatly, for in a way he was a Jewish George Washington, a founding father of a new democratic republic. They loved this indomitable fighter who had led his people to victory in 1948–1949 when Arab armies had poured in on all sides.

The selection below describes the premier's brief visit to the school.

Israel's dynamic Premier, halo-aglow, paid a flying visit to the College-Institute in New York on March 16. To students, faculty, Board of Governors members and friends of the school, with whom he passed a genial, informal, almost in-the-family, hour, it was history in the making. For energetic, ebullient David Ben-Gurion, 73, who crowded visits to New York's three rabbinic seminaries into a one-week U. S. stay bulging with diplomatic missions, it was like a home-coming. It brought him to the school founded by his old friend and co-worker in Zionism, Dr. Stephen Wise, and he was welcomed at the door by President Nelson Glueck, whose archaeological explorations parallel and support his own over-riding interest: reclamation and settlement of Israel's desert region.

Flanking the Premier were Israel Ambassador Avraham Harman, Minister Jacob Herzog, and other top officials, but the starch of formal diplomacy was missing from the visit. At a short faculty-board reception, B-G hugged old friends, made new ones, furiously signed away at autographs; gave rapid fire answers to questions. A

student honor guard escorted him to a crowded, cheering auditorium where President Glueck hailed him as "one who in our day and for all future history to come belongs in the category of the Prophets of Israel," and presented him with a bust of Stephen Wise for transmittal to the Bezael Museum. Accepting the gift, the Premier paid a tribute to Wise as "a dear, great friend, who lived and worked and created for Jewry and for America." Describing himself, he said: "I don't know what section of Judaism I belong to, perhaps to none. I'm just a Jew, a Jew without an adjective."

"... This place awakens in me the memory of my dear and venerable friend Dr. Wise. When I came to this building, I felt a stirring in my heart. I knew I was approaching the place where a dear, great friend had been living and working and creating for Jewry and, although I am a foreigner, I believe, also for America. . . . I am just a Jew, one of many of our people who tried to rebuild our ancient homeland, and I know many people in my country of my age, some a little older and some even younger, who did no less than I have done and I want you to know that what has been done in Israel is not the work of a single man or a single group. It is the collective work of all of three generations of pioneers, but it is more than that. It is the work, consciously or unconsciously, of the entire Jewish people throughout the world, not only the Jews now living, but all generations. . . ." ⁶⁶

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A High Holyday Student at Work 1961

Ever since the College was opened the older students have been shipped out to the surrounding towns and even further to conduct services for the smaller congregations. Because, as a rule, they went out every two weeks, they were termed "biweekly students"; in the Christian Church such a man who filled in was called "a supply." Everyone in the Cincinnati school was happy with this type of arrangement. The congregation had a "rabbi," the student earned a few dollars, and, what was far more important, he learned the business of being a spiritual leader. It was a form of internship.

⁶⁶ *Bulletin*, March, 1960, unpagued.

Years ago younger students, some reportedly as young as fifteen or sixteen, were dispatched to the far corners of the land in the Fall to hold services during the High Holydays. The novice enjoyed a wonderful Ten Penitential Days as he mounted the pulpit and preached the "gospel" to grateful congregants. And when after a service he stood receiving the good wishes of his enthusiastic flock, the teenager flushed with pleasure as a hoary-headed elder said to him: "You done noble, Doctor."

Allen S. Kaplan, one of the younger students, was dispatched to Victoria, Texas, in 1961, to minister to its Jewish community of fewer than 150 souls. It was an older settlement, for the town had already sheltered Jews about a hundred years before his arrival. While he was there in September, a hurricane struck and Allen pitched in to succor the homeless and the distressed. His devoted work elicited the admiration of the local citizenry, as the following newspaper account testifies.

After he graduated from the Cincinnati school in 1965, Rabbi Kaplan accepted a pulpit in the New York City area.

STORM WORKER

Jewish Student Draws Praise

By Carl Hooper

Advocate Staff Writer

The volunteer worker who has made the greatest impression at Red Cross disaster headquarters in the old Post Office Building is Allen S. Kaplan, the Cincinnati rabbinical student who is in Victoria to conduct services at Temple B'Nai Israel during the Jewish Holy Days.

Kaplan volunteered as a receptionist when the Red Cross disaster office opened Wednesday. He worked through Friday. He then quit for the weekend to conduct the Jewish service which had been postponed because of Hurricane Carla.

"Mr. Kaplan has done a tremendous job," a Red Cross official commented Saturday. "He is really cut out for this kind of work. He's a man of compassion, dedication and deep understanding, and his ability to handle people is downright astonishing.

“He volunteered as a receptionist as soon as the disaster office opened across the street from the hotel where he had been staying since the hurricane.

“He has done a terrific job of receiving refugees, answering questions, solving problems and making people understand that somebody cares. He got organized faster than some of our professional people were able to do.”

Kaplan was unavailable for an interview Saturday because he was busy with his religious role in the synagogue at 604 N. Main.

His praises were sung in his absence by fellow workers for the Red Cross.

“Kaplan says this is his first hurricane,” a Red Cross spokesman commented. He told us: ‘When I looked and saw those roofs and trees going end over end, it threw me for a loop too.’

“He weathered the hurricane in the home of Robert Rubinstein, president of the congregation of Temple B’Nai Israel. That’s in Mayfair Subdivision. That area was hard hit. The Rubinstein home escaped with only minor damage, however.

“Kaplan has been tremendously impressed by the hurricane, by the relief operation and by the humanitarian work of the Red Cross. He feels that kind of work falls right in his field. He says it’s almost a religious experience. And he tells us he’s going back home with quite an experience behind him and one that he will long remember.”⁶⁷

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The Israel Campus 1963–1973

The interest of the College in Palestinian Jewry took on a new lease of life with the ascension of Nelson Glueck to the Presidency. He had a passionate love for the Holy Land where he had spent so many years exploring. After the rise of the Republic of Israel and the uneasy truce that followed the War of Liberation, the American School of Oriental Research found itself in Jordan-controlled territory, effectively closed to Jews. Glueck, who had been director of the American School of Oriental Research for many years, then proceeded to encourage scholars, especially Jews, to study archaeology and to dig under the auspices of the College in Israeli territory.

⁶⁷ *The Victoria Advocate*, Sept. 17, 1961, p. 1.

In 1963, he built and dedicated in Jerusalem the Hebrew Union College Biblical and Archaeological School which was to serve as a center of scientific biblical studies for students, scholars, and all interested researchers. It was built and dedicated despite the implacable opposition of the Orthodox rabbinate in the land because the Jerusalem school included a chapel for "heretical" Reform worship.

Some years later, in 1970, Glueck initiated a Year-in-Israel Program, making it mandatory for all students of the three American campuses to spend the initial year of their rabbinical study in the land of their ancestors that they might learn modern Hebrew and identify themselves with the people and the ideals of the Jewish State.

The first selection below summarizes the work of the College in Israel during the decade 1963-1973; the second describes a Saturday morning kiddush, a religious collation, in which Glueck participated at the Israeli "White House" just one week after the end of the Six-Day War in June, 1967; the third selection is a brief account of the Year-in-Israel Program.

THE COLLEGE IN ISRAEL—1963-1973

In Jerusalem on the rise of King David Street overlooking the Old City and its walls stands a complex of buildings forming the Israel center of a great American Jewish institution of higher learning—Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion.

Ten years ago, in 1963, the College-Institute, the University of American Reform Judaism, opened its Jerusalem academic center to strengthen the historical, cultural and intellectual ties between the dynamic Jewries of Israel and America.

A few years later, in the first days of June, 1967, at a time when Israel was in deadly peril, the Board of Governors of the College-Institute in a dramatic declaration of faith in Israel and her future, voted unanimously to use a gift from the late Mrs. Myer Feinstein, of Philadelphia, for enlarging the Jerusalem School. A new Residence Hall was opened to scholars and students in October, 1970.

And now, ten years after its first meeting in the Land of Israel, in the twenty-fifth anniversary year of the Jewish State, the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College has gathered again

in Jerusalem. From February 25th to March 6th, they are meeting with the leaders of Israel to lay plans for the enlargement of the campus into a World Center of Jewish Education. The major events included in the program: the Convocation Address delivered by his Excellency Zalman Shazar, the President of the State of Israel, in response to the award of an honorary degree conferred upon him by the College-Institute, and the Convocation Address given by Mr. Yigal Allon, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, at the dinner at the Knesset commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Jerusalem School. Mr. Abba Eban, Minister for Foreign Affairs, will receive the Members of the Board in his home, and a reception will be held at the School in honor of Mr. Pinchas Sapir, the Minister of Finance.

The Jerusalem School of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion was the long-cherished dream of the late Prof. Nelson Glueck, President of the College-Institute from 1947-1971. An eminent Biblical archaeologist and for many years the Director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, Prof. Glueck had long recognized the need for an American archaeological center in Israel. After the partition of Jerusalem in 1948, when most of the international archaeological schools found themselves in the Jordanian sector of Jerusalem, the urgency to open a similar institution in Israel became even more apparent. Prof. Glueck also felt keenly that Liberal Judaism should have an academic center in Israel with its own synagogue.

Thus, the Jerusalem School of Hebrew Union College began as a post-doctoral research center serving American universities, seminaries, and museums, as a base for advanced Biblical and Archaeological studies in Israel. Providing the resources for such scholarly exchange, it has conducted archaeological excavations at several sites, the most important being at Tel Gezer, and organized each year a Summer Seminar on Near Eastern Civilizations for university teachers. The School also served as a center for faculty members and rabbinical students in Israel, and a meeting place to assemble with Israelis for the creative exchange of ideas.

As the years passed, the program widened. Since the Six-Day War, all rabbinical students of the College-Institute are required to spend their first year of study in Israel in a program which offers a life and learning experience of unique character. Prof. Glueck lived

to see the first group of these students, seventy young men, many of them married, leave for Israel. In homage to him and his vision, one department of the Jerusalem School has been dedicated this week as the Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology. Professor Yigael Yadin delivered the Memorial Lecture entitled, "The Temple Scroll."

The new, dynamic president of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Prof. Alfred Gottschalk, shared the convictions and vision of his late teacher. Immediately upon assuming his office, he turned his energies to perpetuating and enlarging the Israel programs of the College-Institute in order to further strengthen the relations between the Jerusalem School and the three American campuses in Cincinnati, New York and Los Angeles.

Mrs. Golda Meir, the Prime Minister of Israel, has called the Year-In-Israel Program of the College-Institute an "imaginative innovation to forge more strongly the links between Israel and American Jewry. Together with our own youth," she said, "the students of the College will learn the great secret of our being one people wherever we may be." Dr. Gottschalk, in the U. S. and during his frequent stays in Israel, gives special attention to strengthening the School's Israel programs. With the cooperation of Israel educational and social institutions and help from eminent authorities in Israel's government, universities and public life, the College-Institute students are exposed to the rich variety of contemporary Israeli life and culture. Hebrew instruction was intensified so that the student might rapidly master the language, indispensable to his studies and his future calling.

"I believe," Prof. Gottschalk said, "that American Jewry will find continuing spiritual enrichment through our institutional presence in Israel and that through this presence we will also contribute to the cultural and religious life in Israel." It is on the basis of this belief that the plans have been made for further expansion of the Jerusalem School. The Israeli Government has made available to the College twelve dunams of choice land adjacent to the present site of the Jerusalem School. On this land an even greater educational center will be developed within the next few years.

The promise is great. Much has been achieved in the first ten years of the Jerusalem School's existence. It is about to take another giant step in the direction of forging stronger ties and links with Israel. The

future of all the Jews of the world is linked with our people's historic homeland, and we, as Reform Jews, rejoice on the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the State.⁶⁸

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SABBATH COLLATION AT THE WHITE HOUSE—1967

. . . . On Saturday, June 17, [1967] after services in the School's Murstein Chapel, during which Dr. [Ezra] Spicehandler gave a brilliant sermon, in Hebrew of course, he, his wife and daughter, Dick Scheuer and I went to the President's house for *Kiddush* at 12:30 P.M. The entire City Council had been invited to attend, together with the Mayor, Teddy Kollek, and the former Mayor, Mordecai Ish-Shalom. Also present was Dr. Immanuel Jacobovitz [Jakobvits], recently elected to be the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain. I had never met him before and he was exceedingly friendly. President Shazar shook hands with everybody, and then asked various people, including myself, to sit alongside of him while the rest of those present were seated in a large semicircle in front of him. He spoke then at some length, after all of us had been served with liqueurs or soft drinks according to choice, about the miracle of the victory of Israel's armed forces, and how important it was for everybody to pitch in and build anew for peace. Afterwards, he called on various members of the City Council to speak, asking Mayor Kollek first, Mr. Ish-Shalom second and so on. One lady member got up, who had lost a nephew in the battle, and said that world Jewry owed a debt to Israel, which could be paid not through money, but through participation in work in the land by sending hundreds of thousands of their sons and daughters to work here for a year or two, with the hope that many of them would settle permanently. Dr. Jacobovitz spoke about the unity of Israel in times of stress—a unity he said that was reflected in the fact that he and I were there together. Finally, the President called on me, for *maftir* [to make a concluding statement], he said. I spoke for about five minutes, saying how grateful we all were to God for the miracle of salvation that had occurred, and that all of us could say and did say with fullest hearts, Hallelujah. I said that while I was proudly a native American, I have long felt

⁶⁸ *The Jerusalem Post Week-End Magazine*, Mar. 2, 1973.

myself to be passionately a spiritual son of Jerusalem, and that among the things I was most proud of was the fact that I was an honorary citizen of Beersheba and an honorary citizen of Eilat. That even as I considered the Jordan River, although one of the smallest of the famous streams of the world, to be in many ways its most sacred, I felt that Jerusalem represented the center of the heartland of the conscience of mankind; furthermore, I felt the Holy Land to be the center of the physical heartland of the world, and my hope was that this physical and spiritual centrality might be maintained to the blessing of Israel and of all mankind. . . .⁶⁹

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YEAR-IN-ISRAEL PROGRAM—1970

. . . . Opened in 1963 primarily as a post-doctoral archaeological research center, the Jerusalem campus of the College-Institute was recently enlarged for a new additional purpose: it now also serves as headquarters of the School's Year-In-Israel Program. Almost one hundred rabbinical students, many of them married, spend a year of study in Israel. The majority, close to 70 young men, are first-year students at Cincinnati, New York or Los Angeles, the three American campuses of the College-Institute. Before pursuing their studies in America, they are obligated to participate in this new Program which offers them a life and learning experience of unique character.

Israel, the land in its totality, is a school of Jewish Studies. Hebrew is the spoken language. The landscape is the scenario of the Bible. The archaeological sites graphically tell of the beginnings of Jewish religion. The shrines of the past, and even the street signs of today, recollect Jewish history. Most every nook and niche of Israel touches the Jewish past. The chain of Jewish tradition was never broken in Israel. The finest assemblage of courses taught in America cannot reproduce this introduction to Judaism. Intensive Hebrew instruction by the best Hebrew teachers, using the Ulpan method, accelerates the student's grasp of the language which is indispensable to his studies and his future profession. Foundations are laid for the understanding in depth of Bible and Jewish literature from which his later studies will immensely benefit.

Equally, and perhaps even more important, is the fact that the

⁶⁹ *Dateline: Jerusalem, A Diary by Nelson Glueck* (Cincinnati, 1968), pp. 20-21.

future Reform rabbi is exposed to the fullness of contemporary Israeli life and culture and given the opportunity to participate in the creative exchange of ideas between American Reform Jews and Israelis. Special programs take the students on extended tours around the country. Eminent authorities from government, the universities, and public life acquaint them with the current problems and aspects of Israel. The presence of our rabbinical candidates in Israel has greatly enhanced the vitality and prospects of our Movement in the Holy Land. "This Program," says Aharon Yadlin, the Deputy Minister of Education and Culture in Israel, "is a part of the ongoing dialogue which brings future spiritual leaders of American Jewry into live contact with Israel's people and culture and at the same time deepens our own knowledge of the institutions of higher learning of the great American Jewish community."⁷⁰

* * * *

The New President 1971

In 1957, Nelson Glueck sent a new graduate to Los Angeles to take over the branch school which had been founded there in 1954. This stalwart, twenty-seven-year-old sixfooter tackled the job with all the hard-hitting power that had once distinguished him as a semi-pro on a Brooklyn football team. By 1971 he had built schools of rabbinic and graduate studies, schools of education, Jewish communal service, Judaic disciplines, sacred music, an American Jewish history archives, a noteworthy library of Judaica and Hebraica, and the largest Jewish museum on the Pacific Coast.

The young man who accomplished all this against what were at times very difficult odds is Alfred Gottschalk, the president who succeeded Glueck in 1971. Gottschalk had been born in Germany and fled that country as a nine-year-old lad just in time to escape the horrors of the Holocaust.

The following account written by a prominent journalist recounts in detail the career of this man who at the age of forty-one has been called upon to preside over the destinies of one of the world's great Jewish institutions.

⁷⁰ *Year-In-Israel Program* (brochure, Cincinnati, 1972 [?]).

On the terrible night of Nov. 9, 1938, in the picturesque, wine-growing town of Ober Wesel [Oberwesel] in the Rhineland, an indelible scene was etched on the memory of 8-year-old Alfred Gottschalk. For two centuries, his father and forefathers, prosperous hide-grain-wine dealing burghers, had worshipped in the town's synagogue, guarded the sacred scroll of the Torah, and passed on the tradition of their faith.

That night—which lives in infamy as *krystalnacht* [Kristallnacht], when all the glass was broken—Nazi hoodlums gutted and looted all the 600 synagogues in Germany and Austria, including Ober Wesel's. There, also, they smashed the windows, poured tar on the altar and Talmud, stole candlesticks and everything of material value, and tossed the Ark and its sacred scroll into the Rhine. What young Alfred never forgot was the sight of his old grandfather (who would soon be destroyed in Hitler's gas ovens) wading out into the swift, cold river to retrieve such fragments as he could of the Torah, fishing out a saving remnant of a faith as old as man's belief in God.

On Feb. 24, 1972, in Cincinnati's historic Plum Street Temple, Alfred Gottschalk will acquire another indelible memory involving the Torah. He is now 41, grown to international renown as scholar, teacher, philosopher, and as distinctively American as his forebears had been inseparably German. On that day the scroll which has sanctified that Temple since it was built in 1863 [*sic*-1866] will be handed to Alfred Gottschalk to symbolize his inauguration as the fifth president of the 97-year-old Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, which, because of Hitler's holocaust, is now the world's oldest center of Judaic studies.

What sort of man is the new president of the College-Institute?

The first impression one gets is a physical one—the hard-muscled 6 ft. frame of the star guard and tackle he once was, the firmly handsome face that gives off an impression of both dignity and serenity, the wideset, strikingly blue eyes that almost hypnotically compel attention, and convey instantly a feeling of compassion, of total interest in the person before him, of an inner joyousness and natural kindness, yet are also turned inward in a ceaseless and profound contemplation.

The next impression is his natural gentility—instinctive courtesy, consideration for others, attentive listening to what they say, a general graciousness of manner.

The impression which reinforces and deepens the others is that of a remarkably penetrating mentality, whose profundity and lucidity of thought [are] matched by a rare capacity for articulating it with equal clarity, and also with simplicity, with eloquence, with conviction, and with total lack of intellectual arrogance or egotism.

The story of Alfred Gottschalk is an American saga, that equals, in its own way, those of such other humble immigrants as Carnegie, Carl Schurz, and Sarnoff.

At the time of *krystalnacht*, his father, Max, who with his grandfather had run the family business, had already fled to Amsterdam—via an underground escape route—after a non-Nazi town cop had warned him, “Max, the Gestapo plan to arrest you tomorrow.” By 1938’s end, Max had reached New York. There, with the help of relatives, he was able to get his wife and child out also in August, 1939, just before the outbreak of war would have doomed them to the same extermination that eventually overtook Alfred’s grandfathers, aunts and uncles.

“We had never considered ourselves anything but Germans,” Alfred reminisces. “Two of my uncles, identical twins, were both killed in the German Army in World War I. I was named for one of them.”

In Brooklyn, where they arrived with \$10, and found a cramped apartment, their lives were transformed from well-to-do ease to gray poverty. A garment maker, who helped refugees, gave both parents a job, at \$7 a week each. Alfred helped them eke out survival by selling papers and magazines in the afternoon.

At 9, Alfred entered PS 172, still wearing his quaint Rhinelander’s *Lederhosen*, a lonely, bewildered boy who could speak no English and found that if he ventured more than two blocks from his home, he’d get both his eyes blacked.

He tackled the strange new language as if it were some physical demon he would have to subdue. He stayed up until all hours wrestling with it. His powers of concentration, of memory, of rigorous study, his keen ear for nuances of inflection and tone, are suggested by the fact that today he speaks with not a trace of any foreign accent—including, remarkably, Brooklyn’s. His speech betrays no geographical origin. He handles an enormous vocabulary with all the subtle inflections of a Harvard don who had somehow lost his Harvard accent.

He was first drawn to the rabbinate at 13, when a remarkable Brooklyn rabbi, Ralph Silverstein, took an extraordinary interest in young Alfred. His interest and help increased after Alfred's father died of leukemia when Alfred was 16. The rabbi took Alfred many times to Manhattan to hear Rabbi Stephen Samuel Wise preach, and teach, at the Jewish Institute of Religion which he had founded in 1922. Alfred found the great teacher's thoughts and eloquence inspiring. "I felt that I had been spared for a purpose," he says today, "to be of service to my people and their faith."

Alfred, who shot up to 6 ft. and 175 lb., played guard so well on the Brooklyn Boys' School football team that he also played tackle for the semi-pro Bay Ridge Americans, and both Brown and Brandeis offered him a scholarship. But in 1948, having won a \$250 one as Brooklyn's "Outstanding High School Senior" of that year, to stay with his mother he went to Brooklyn College, majoring in philosophy and spending his evenings at Rabbi Wise's Institute studying the Bible, archeology, and Hebrew language, history and literature. While going to two colleges, days and nights, Alfred continued to work afternoons—by spending them teaching in Jewish religious schools in New Jersey and Long Island.

In his senior year at Brooklyn College, 1951, Alfred spent a semester in Israel on a grant from the Jewish Agency, then with a wife (Jeannie Schrag) and a bachelor's degree in philosophy, he went to Cincinnati to enroll at HUC and, like other first-year rabbinical students, soon joined its famed "digger" President Nelson Glueck in his archeological explorations of the Holy Land.

It was an exciting experience. Once when a clumsily-operated bulldozer pushed over a wall at Ashkelon, it proved to have covered the spot where women had once dropped their broken pottery: up came a stele bearing the pronouncement of a Syrian King that he had "conquered Ashkelon and the cities of the sea."

This had a tremendous effect on young Alfred. He suddenly felt personally linked, by experience, with the ancient civilizations that before were only dry studies. "It is one thing to read of Sargon II, the Assyrian tyrant who enslaved the Jews in the 8th Century B. C., but quite another to find proof of his conquest. Relics in a book will put you to sleep, but relics you discover yourself put flesh on history. As the Psalmist says, 'Truth springs from the earth.'"

Nelson Glueck kept an eye on this unusual young man, who had

the build and strength of an athlete, a scholar's thirst for knowledge, and an indefinable air of leadership that seemed to command respect from students and teachers alike. Glueck kept his eye on young Gottschalk during all the next five years it took the tireless scholar to burrow his way through Judaic language, literature and history to his master's degree and ordination as a rabbi. Gottschalk didn't have time to get a degree in the course in clinical psychology he was taking simultaneously at the University of Cincinnati.

Alfred had expected to go out to serve a congregation, but an experience teaching at HUC's Summer Institute in his senior year gave him a thirst for teaching. In 1957, he was no sooner ordained than Glueck asked him to go to Los Angeles as dean of the fledgling new branch the College-Institute had set up three years before on one of the Hollywood Hills atop an almost inaccessible goat trail. It had a handful of students, a smaller handful of teachers, and a total budget of \$37,500 which included Gottschalk's salary (last year the budget was \$750,000).

For all his reverence for tradition, Gottschalk proved completely modern in stirring the interest of students. He jazzed up the liturgy of services, replaced the traditional organ music with guitar, let students deliver their own creative sermons instead of sitting to be preached at. Both interest and enrollment mounted, until two years ago the Los Angeles school began to build a new \$6 million campus adjacent to the University of Southern California in a teeming and changing part of Los Angeles' inner city.

"We must orient an entire generation to the present, contemporary world," Gottschalk says in explaining his moves. "Our emphasis has been on studies of the Jews of the past. Scholars from all over the world came to Cincinnati for this, for archeological insights, for Semitic history and languages.

"We must build on these strengths. But we must recognize also that today needs a somewhat different direction. We have no chair in social ethics, no chair in urban ecology, we are very limited in human relations and education."

Gottschalk had enrolled at USC the first day he arrived, to work toward his Ph. D. in the philosophy and history of religions, which he won in 1964.

At the lovely new school, which opened late last year, he worked out an agreement with USC President Nolan Topping that the Judaic

Museum in Cincinnati will be located in Los Angeles to develop a joint center for Cultural History of the Middle East. The new school was itself an ecumenical outreach to the inner city—at Gottschalk's insistence, no construction fence was built (to prevent vandalism and theft), yet there was not one act of vandalism or major theft, perhaps because, also at his insistence, 60 to 70% of the work crews were either black or Chicanos.

"We are the major graduate center in Judaica, Near Eastern languages, and cultural history. With USC we've developed a joint Ph. D. in social welfare for people who want to devote their lives to serving Jewish communal agencies, a joint Ph. D. in the school of education, and in the school of religion."

He has talked over a similar arrangement with Warren Bennis, president of the University of Cincinnati, and found him enthusiastic for it.

This educational ecumenism works both ways. USC, which gave him his earned Ph. D., added an honorary one in sacred theology in 1968, saying:

"The greatness of the man is clear in the profundity of his thought, in the innovation of his scholarly research, in the brilliance of his writings, in the inspiration of his lectures, in the wisdom of his reason, in the compassion of his counsel, and in the verity of his love for his fellow man."⁷¹

* * * *

The Skirball Museum 1971

There are two large Jewish museums in the United States—one in New York City; the other, the Skirball Museum, in Los Angeles on the California campus of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. The very impressive collection of Jewish art and cult objects once housed in Cincinnati was transferred to Los Angeles when the handsome new home of the California school was dedicated there in November, 1971, by President Gottschalk.

There can be no question that the Skirball Museum will ultimately exert a profound influence culturally on the general community of

⁷¹ *AI*, Jan. 27, 1972, p. 12.

Los Angeles as well as on its Jews, who number today well over 500,000 souls.

This museum and its treasures, made possible through the generosity of Jack H. Skirball, of the class of 1921, and his wife Audrey, was described in a brochure written by its Acting Director, William Ezelle Jones. It is reprinted below.

The Skirball Museum of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion houses one of the outstanding collections of Judaica in the world. The collection provides a unique two-fold history of the Jewish people through ceremonial art and archaeological artifacts.

The ceremonial collection, begun some sixty years ago at the College's Cincinnati campus, reached international prominence in the 1920's, when, through the generosity of Julius Rosenwald, Ben Selling and others, it acquired the Salli Kirschstein Collection from Berlin, then considered "the world's largest and finest collection of Judaica." The collection consisted of some 6,000 objects, including Sabbath lamps, Torah shields and pointers, seder plates and other items for religious use. Then, in the 1950's, under the auspices of the Jewish Restoration Successors Organization, the collection received an additional one hundred ceremonial objects confiscated during World War II by the Nazis.

Augmenting this fine and constantly growing collection of religious objects, the Museum also houses the Joseph Hamburger Numismatic Collection and features the Israel Solomon and the Louis Grossman Collections of engravings and photographs which preserve a visual record of many temples now destroyed.

The Museum's large collection of archaeological artifacts was begun by the late President of the College, Dr. Nelson Glueck. From surveys led by Dr. Glueck in Transjordan and the Negev, as well as subsequent excavations sponsored by the College's Jerusalem Campus, the collection includes objects which span time from the earliest nomadic civilizations with simple flint hand tools of the Acheulian and Tabunian Age of 100,000 B.C.E.; to ceramic examples from the Chalcolithic Age, 4,000 to 3,000 B.C.E.; to the period of Roman occupation.

The Skirball Museum, located at the California School of the Hebrew Union College, envisions galleries at all the College

campuses—Los Angeles, Cincinnati, New York and Jerusalem—with an active program of changing exhibitions and traveling displays reaching out to communities across the country.

The Hebrew Union College is indebted to the Skirball Foundation for its encouragement in the development and growth of the Museum.⁷²

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Rabbi Sally
The First Woman Rabbi
1972

On June 3, 1972, Sally J. Priesand was ordained a rabbi in the historic Isaac M. Wise (Plum Street) Temple in Cincinnati and shortly thereafter began her work as Assistant Rabbi of New York City's Stephen S. Wise Free Synagogue. Asked once why she wanted to be a rabbi, she answered:

I believe basically in four things: in God, in the worth of the individual, in Judaism as a way of life, and that Judaism is worth preserving for the future. Being a rabbi, in my opinion, is the best way I can perpetuate these beliefs.

Did she have any trouble securing the right to be ordained? None whatsoever. The decades that followed World War II with their egalitarian permissiveness smoothed the path for her. In the 1950's—and even earlier, in 1922—the Central Conference of American Rabbis had already gone on record favoring ordination for women, even though the Faculty and the Board of the College—who possessed the right of license—had expressed their unwillingness, somewhat equivocally, to be sure, to grant a rabbinical diploma to a woman.

The College's cavil notwithstanding, the Reform movement had always insisted—at least in theory—on equal religious rights for women. What is interesting and not altogether surprising is that the very month Isaac M. Wise opened the Hebrew Union College he declared quite unequivocally that he was ready and eager to train and ordain women for the rabbinate. And before Wise? For centuries, Orthodoxy, following its sacrosanct traditions, considered the ordination of women unthinkable although it was fully aware that

⁷² William Ezelle Jones, *The Skirball Museum* (Los Angeles, no date).

there were individual women learned in the Law and that on occasion women had even rendered judicial decisions, a prerogative generally reserved to learned men alone.

The following statement on women rabbis was issued as a news release by the American Jewish Archives in February, 1972.

On Saturday, June 3, 1972, the first woman rabbi will be ordained by a theological school, on the Cincinnati campus of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. On that date, Sally J. Priesand, now serving as Student-Rabbi at the Isaac M. Wise Temple in Cincinnati, will be ordained by President Alfred Gottschalk. Is "Rabbi Sally" the first woman ever to study for the rabbinate? When graduated, will she be the first ordained woman rabbi in the United States? In the world? As every historian knows, it is dangerous to postulate "firsts." There is no "first" Jew anywhere; there has always been one before. Is this true of Rabbi Sally?

The Isaac M. Wise Temple is named after the nineteenth-century rabbi who created the basic institutions of American Liberal Judaism. Wise died over seventy years ago. Were he to return to Cincinnati on June 3rd, would he be shocked? Not in the least, for when he first opened his college in October, 1875, and welcomed its . . . freshmen, one of them was a girl, age eleven, in the seventh grade of public school. She should have been playing with jacks instead of juggling Hebrew verbs. There has never been a decade at this school in which there has not been at least one woman student. Some of them stayed on long enough to earn a Bachelor of Hebrew Letters degree, but they never went farther. Often a girl student ended up feeling sorry enough for a boy student to put him out of his misery by marrying him.

Sally is different. She means business—rabbinical business. She is determined to be a rabbi, and by the grace of God and the faculty she will be ordained. She is attractive, but at this juncture she seems not to be interested in marriage. . . .

Will Sally set a precedent for other women? She already has. The New York School of the College-Institute has two female candidates for the rabbinate and two for the cantorate. This is a radical innovation for Jews—though not for Christians. The first female Protestant clergyman finished her theological studies at Oberlin in 1850, but she was not licensed by a Congregational Church till 1853. Her name was Antoinette Louisa Brown Blackwell. Four years earlier, her

sister-in-law to be, Elizabeth Blackwell, had become the first American woman to graduate from a medical school and to receive the degree of Doctor of Medicine.

We still have to answer the question: Will Sally be the first female ordained rabbi in America? In the world? In America, yes; in the world, no. Regina Jonas finished her theological studies at the Berlin Academy for the Science of Judaism in the middle 1930's. Her thesis subject was: *Can a Woman Become a Rabbi?* Of course she set out to prove the affirmative. The faculty accepted her dissertation, but the professor of Talmud, the licensing authority, refused to ordain her. The Rev. Dr. Max Dienemann, of Offenbach, however, did ordain her, and she practiced till 1940, primarily in homes for the aged. The Germans then dispatched her to the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp where she either died of natural causes or was sent to the gas chambers.

Will Rabbi Sally get a job, and will she be successful? There is not the slightest doubt that there will be no trouble in placing her. She is competent and unpretentious, a good speaker and a fine human being. The congregation will admire and respect her; the children will love her.

It is sad to think that American Jewry has had to wait so long for a woman to be ordained a rabbi. The American Republic began with a political, if not a social, revolution. The impact of that revolution throughout the world was tremendous. The generation of 1776 knew that it was ushering in a new world. Look at the back of the dollar bill, at the Latin phrase under the pyramid: "The new order of the ages." Some seventy-five years later there was a religious "break-through": the Protestants ordained a woman. Now, a hundred and nineteen years later, the Reform Jews are about to see Sally Priesand ordained a rabbi. Galileo was right: the earth *does* move—but sometimes it moves very, very slowly.⁷³

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The Yom Kippur War and the Student Body 1973

The four schools of the College-Institute were in the midst of preparations for the school's centenary when the Yom Kippur War

⁷³ Jacob R. Marcus, *The First Woman Rabbi* (AJAr release, Feb., 1972).

broke out in Israel. On October 6, 1973, a Sabbath and the Day of Atonement, the holiest moment in the Jewish year, students on the College's Jerusalem campus found themselves confronted, as was everyone in the Jewish state, with an invasion by the Arab states of Egypt and Syria. A few weeks later, on November 8, President Gottschalk reported to the Board of Governors how the students on each of the four campuses had responded to the Arab attack.

My friends:

This meeting of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College takes place at one of the most significant and trying times in the entire history of the Jewish people. Today we face the world without illusions and without the false hopes which from time to time have tended to nourish us. For several weeks a fierce and brutal war threatened Eretz Israel, the historic homeland of the Jewish people. In a dastardly attack on Yom Kippur day, the combined armies of Syria and Egypt tried to achieve their long sought-after goal of annihilating Israel. They chose as the hour of their attack the most sacred period in the Jewish year, the time the Jew was at prayer, seeking to make peace with himself and with his God.

Of those hours, Professor Ezra Spicehandler, the Dean of our Jerusalem School, wrote: "Like most Israelis, we were at prayer when the news reached us of the outbreak of war. We had a slight indication that something was going to happen because on Friday personal contacts told us that the army was put on alert. Most of us, however, dismissed this news, feeling that it was only because of Yom Kippur. Very few who were 'in the know' had any intimation that this meant war. We were at the service in our College in the midst of reading from the Book of Psalms when the news broke. We immediately turned to those very meaningful chapters of Tehillim, which were written under the duress of war. They received a new and poignant meaning for all of us, especially as they were read under the sound of sirens which announced the beginning of the war and the call-up."

Other accounts indicate that thousands of young Jews left the synagogues for the designated points from which they were carried to their units. None of us who were at worship on that Yom Kippur afternoon will ever forget the dark and foreboding anxiety that once again monumental sacrifices of human life, effort and materiel would be called for and unstintingly offered. Those hours brought home to us the recognition again that to be a Jew means to live on a very

narrow ledge of history, a ledge from which our enemies ever seek to push us into death and oblivion. The effort failed because of Israel's indomitable will to survive. It failed because of the steadfast support of the President and Congress of the United States. It failed because of the monumental response of world Jewry which rose, as in 1967, 1956, and 1948, to stand in inseparable solidarity with the people of Israel. The efforts and sacrifice of those who stood with their people in those historic hours will be recorded in history as among the noblest in our people's fight for survival. I know that each and every one of the members of this Board of Governors shared both the anguish and the hope and did all in their power to help.

Naturally, the faculty, students and staff of our School responded to Israel's need. Many wanted to join the thousands already crowding the airports during the early hours of the war to volunteer their services in Israel. During those hours I was in touch with key persons, both in Israel and in Washington, as to what might be the best course of action for us to take. Unanimously the recommendation was that our greatest service could be rendered here in America, that the College-Institute throw its not inconsiderable manpower resources into the fund-raising mechanisms of the Israel Emergency Fund and into the great educational effort that would be required for Jews and Christians alike. Dr. Spicehandler informed us that our Jerusalem School, which served as a civil defense post during the crisis, was already mobilized. Our maintenance staff and faculty had been called up to active duty and our students were volunteering in needed capacities. Some volunteered for work in the kibbutzim, others filled posts in hospitals, schools and other institutions vacated by those called up for active duty. Some volunteered as gardeners, electricians, guards, bakers' assistants and in other areas to meet the human needs of an Israel at war. From all that I have heard, our students and faculty conducted themselves magnificently. There was no panic; instead, there was resolution and a selfless joining of personal efforts with others in Israel who were trying to maintain her normal civilian life.

In our American Schools our faculty and students behaved in an equally exemplary manner. Our faculties in Cincinnati, New York and Los Angeles, together with our student bodies, joined in common resolution. They declared: "The destiny of Israel, land and historic people, is once again challenged by our enemies. At this time, we, the

President, the Board of Governors, the faculty and students of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, stand side-by-side with our brethren in Israel; their struggle is our struggle.

"In solidarity with our brothers we pledge ourselves to provide whatever services we are able to perform in response to the dire needs of the hour. We are fully prepared, if necessary, to reschedule, postpone or cancel our normal academic endeavors. We join ourselves with Jews throughout the world in a bond of commitment and action. *Am Yisrael Chai!* Israel must live."

Faculty and students made themselves available for placement in their communities and carried on a host of activities geared to the donation of blood, fund-raising and educational effort. In Cincinnati, students who had no biweekly assignments turned the College's pick-up truck into the Israel Action Mobile. They drove to shopping centers, schools, and Fountain Square; they went to rallies and on Sundays to the football games where they distributed informational materials about Israel. A number of people were so impressed with their activities that they gave extra football tickets which could be sold for the benefit of the Israel Emergency Fund.

One of our students telephoned the congregation which he had served on the High Holidays for two years. This congregation, which had not been noted for its pro-Israel sympathies, was reluctant for him to come for a solicitation. They told him, "We already collected all we are going to give." "How much did you raise?" asked the student. "Oh, about a thousand dollars," was the reply. The student sat down and wrote each of the congregation's thirty-five families an airmail, special delivery letter, telling them that he was coming and that they had to confirm their membership in the world's Jewish community and the responsibilities that status entailed. He informed them that he would expect them at a meeting in a few days and they should plan to bring their checkbooks. A week later the student returned with a bulging envelope. It contained not \$1,000 but \$20,000 from the members of that congregation who had responded to his appeal. He had also gone on to Sherman, Texas, where he had made a second appeal and had raised an additional \$10,000.

On the day that the need for solicitors was announced, another student did not wait to be assigned. A little note came from him, "I'm off to my biweekly in Union City, Tennessee. I'll cover the

surrounding territory. See you in about ten days." Off he went to Union City and other tiny towns in Tennessee and western Kentucky, and finally to Cairo, Illinois, all places that might have escaped the attention of professional fund-raisers. He also appeared on television and radio, addressed every Kiwanian and Rotarian within hearing distance, and spoke at the University of Tennessee in Martin. The results of his campaign are still pouring in, but today they exceed \$25,000. And so it is, story after story, depicting an effort by those young men and women of our School who expected neither praise nor thanks for their efforts. In due time we shall present to this Board of Governors and our Movement, as well as our friends in Israel, a chronicle of service rendered by the College-Institute to the Jewish people.

In conclusion of this segment of my report I should like to quote for you a cable received from Professor Ephraim Katzir, President of the State of Israel. "Deeply moved by your expression of Reform Movement's support for Israel. We pray for swift victorious peace to usher in a new era in the Middle East and everdeepening Jewish consciousness in our people everywhere."⁷⁴

* * * *

What HUC-JIR Does 1974

In 1973, or possibly a year or so earlier, the Union and the College published a broadside outlining in the most succinct fashion what the Union and the College had done for American Jewry. The terse summary of the College accomplishments is reprinted here, although one may well question if this epitome, excellent though it be, is adequate.

The College has personality; probably all great institutions have an indefinable something. The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion brings pride, a sense of assurance and security, to hundreds of thousands of American Jews. They may not laud it but they are happy it is there; it is visible; it is permanent; it is an integral part of their intellectual, cultural, and spiritual being.

⁷⁴ The Report of the President to the Board of Governors, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, November 8, 1973, New York, N. Y., pp. 1-5.

It will be interesting to watch and see what happens to this school in the new century to be ushered in on October 3, 1975.

- Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, the world's oldest seminary in existence, maintains schools in Cincinnati, New York, Los Angeles, and Jerusalem. More than 1,150 Reform rabbis graduated from it since it opened in 1875.
- Its Schools of Education train large numbers of Jewish teachers; its Schools of Sacred Music produce a steady flow of cantors and music directors.
- Its Biblical and Archaeological School in Jerusalem, open to scholars of all faiths, is making significant contributions to our knowledge of the beginnings of our history and our faith.
- Its Doctoral Programs are leading Jews and Christians to advanced scholarship in Hebraic and Judaic studies.
- Its libraries, totalling 320,000 volumes, are the largest accumulation of Jewish books anywhere in the world.
- Its American Jewish Archives form the greatest repository of materials on American Jewish history.
- Its Museum sends exhibits across the nation.
- Its book publications and journals spread Jewish knowledge.
- It is, in short, a fountainhead of Jewish learning for all mankind.
- Without Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion there would be no rabbis for our congregations, no teachers and principals to staff our religious schools . . . there would be no Christian scholars who experienced interfaith harmony while studying on a Jewish campus . . . there would be a profound loss of the Jewish spirit which has given Judaism its strength for survival.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ *What UAHC Does . . . What HUC-JIR Does . . .* (broadside, no date).

LOAN EXHIBITS

Sixty-three exhibit items dealing, for the most part, with the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The American Jewish Archives will be pleased to make these exhibit items available on loan, free of charge, for a two week period, to any institution in the United States or Canada. A selection of twenty to thirty items make an adequate exhibit. The only expense involved is the cost of return postage.

Inquiries should be addressed to the Director of the American Jewish Archives, Clifton Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45220.

A NEW POSTER SERIES

The American Jewish Archives has issued three new multi-colored posters depicting the careers of Abigail Minis, Rebecca Gratz, and Henrietta Szold.

These posters, and the earlier series:

Jewish participation in the Civil War (6)

Immigrants from Eastern Europe (3)

Episodes in eighteenth-century American Jewish life (3)

Abba Hillel Silver at the United Nations (1)

Jews and the American Revolution (6)

are available without charge for display by all schools, libraries, congregations, and organizations or agencies interested in American Jewish history.

When properly matted and mounted on heavy cardboard, these posters make an attractive exhibit.

Inquiries should be addressed to the Director of the American Jewish Archives, Clifton Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45220.

The American Jewish Archives

With the *Yishuv* in the Holy Land compelled to invest the bulk of its energies in self-defense and socio-economic development, North American Jewry is the only Jewish community able to exercise effective and vigorous hegemony on the world Jewish scene. It is the Jews of North America who have had to shoulder the formidable and crucial task of preserving, securing, and strengthening the age-old Jewish heritage, one of the most honorable and most significant legacies in human history.

That is why the Archives was established in 1947—to help North American Jews fulfill their spiritual and intellectual obligations to themselves and to world Jewry. Both the Archives and its patron, the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, are committed to the philosophy that only to the extent that North American Jews are familiar with their 300-year-old communal experience on this continent will they be able to carry out successfully the tasks imposed on them by the history of our times. Those who are ignorant of the Jewish past will be ill-equipped to face the Jewish future.

The Archives realizes its philosophy by devoting itself systematically to gathering, preserving, and evaluating the records of the North American Jewish past—synagogal and societal records, personal papers, diaries, memoirs, governmental documents, newspaper and magazine clippings, photographs, and the like. Whatever illuminates the Jewish experience in the Western Hemisphere is of interest, concern, and value. The American Jewish story is a proud and inspiring story. It deserves to be studied and understood. To that end the American Jewish Archives stands ready to employ all the resources at its disposal, but its program cannot be maintained without sufficient funds.

LETTER OF INTENT

The American Jewish Archives:

To help carry forward the programs of the American Jewish Archives

- I have made provision for AJA I will make provision for AJA
- By including in my will a bequest to AJA
- By giving a life insurance policy to AJA
- By establishing a Trust naming AJA as beneficiary

This letter of intent is delivered subject to the understanding that it does not constitute a legal commitment. It may be changed by me from time to time as my circumstances change.

Name _____

Address _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Index

A

- AARON, ISRAEL, 108, 129
AARONSOHN, AARON, 87; MICHAEL, 177
ABENDANA, DAVID, 77
ABRAHAMS, EDMOND H., 77; EDMOND H., JR., 77; MARION, 77
ABRAMOWITZ, HERMAN, 81
Academic freedom, 152, 163-65
Academies, 103, 129, 135, 142, 158, 168; *see also* Rabbinical seminaries, Teachers
Achooza Palestine Land and Development Companies, 94
Adath Israel Congregation, Cincinnati, 85
ADDAMS, JANE, 10
Addresses, 31, 60, 88-91, 94-95, 111, 121, 125-26, 129, 153, 155-56, 163, 165-66, 173, 190, 199-202, 204-6, 212, 214, 217, 225-27, 234, 242; *see also* Sermons
Adjustment, 94, 217
ADLER (family), 92; CHAIM, 82; FELIX, 11; FRANK J., 92; MARCUS N., 172; MORRIS, 29; ROBERT S., 92; SAMUEL, 122, 150
Administration, administrators, 66, 70, 72-73
Adoption, 12-13, 89
Adults, 10, 83, 219
Advisors, 89, 189
"After Twenty-Five Volumes," 3-4
Aged, the, 14, 94
Agriculture, 9, 60, 128, 138
AGUS, ROBERT, 83
Ahavath Ahim Congregation, Seattle, 93
Akron, Ohio, 88
Alabama, 90; Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, 90; *see also* Birmingham
Alaska, 88
Albany, N. Y., 68-69, 121
Algiers, 197; Jews of, 158
Aliyahs, 180
Allegiance, 70, 213
Allies (Second World War), 33, 54
ALLING, PAUL, 61, 64-65
ALLON, YIGAL, 225
Altar, 136, 196, 230
ALTOSE, SOPHIE, 93
Altruism, 188, 213
Alumni, 163-65, 185, 197; Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 86
Amendments, 51, 59; to United States Constitution, 211
America, 4, 7-11, 23, 26, 34-36, 41-46, 48-50, 52-54, 59-61, 63-64, 81-83, 94, 104, 109, 121-22, 129, 135, 139, 160, 165, 167, 169-70, 172-73, 177, 182, 185-86, 188, 192-95, 197, 199-202, 204-5, 207, 209-11, 213-15, 221, 224-28, 230-31, 238, 240; *see also* North America, South America, United States
American Committee for Palestine, 44
American Federation of Labor, 44
American Hebrew (New York), 148-53
American Historical Society, 204
American Israelite (Cincinnati), 117, 121, 125, 164
American Jewish Archives, 3-4, 66, 105, 120, 141, 202-4, 237, 243
American Jewish Committee, 33, 82, 88
American Jewish Conference, 33-35
American Jewish Historical Society, 4, 85
American Jewish Periodical Center, 105
American Jewish Relief Committee, 88
American Jewry, 3-5, 33, 66, 80-84, 88, 94, 120, 129, 135, 139, 147, 149-51, 154, 160, 167, 169, 181, 193-94, 199, 201-3, 207, 226, 229, 238, 242-43
American Judaism, 83, 135, 139, 151, 194; *see also* Conservative, Reform
American Relief Administration, 87
American School of Oriental Research, 223, 225
American Trusteeship plan for Palestine, 46
American University, Beirut, 37
American Zionist Emergency Council (AZEC), 32-34, 39, 54, 57-58, 62
American Zionists, 32, 44, 47, 62; *see also* Zionist Organization of America
Americanism, 3, 105, 135, 218
Americans of Jewish Descent (Stern), 66

- Amsterdam, 66, 68–69, 71–72, 141–42, 231
 Anarchism, 23
And the Hills Shouted for Joy (Postal and Levy), 84
 Andirons, 73, 76
 Animals, 13, 20
 Anshe Amonim Congregation, Pittsfield, Mass., 89
 ANSPACHER, ABRAM, 143–44
 Antebellum period, 80
 Anthologies, 82
 Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 84
 AN TIN, MARY, 82
 Anti-Semitism, 25, 62, 70, 80, 138, 140, 159, 190–91; *see also* Prejudice
 Anti-trust law, 14
 Anti-Zionism, 1, 25, 27, 37, 53, 62, 106, 137, 159, 163
 Apologists, 189
 Appraisements, 72–73
 Aprons, 75
 Arab-Jewish problem, 36–37, 93
 Arab Jewry, 26, 30
 Arab League, 59
 Arabists, 36, 38
 Arabs, 1, 25–26, 31–40, 42–43, 45–48, 52–54, 56, 59–65, 220, 239; Arab Foreign Offices, 48; language, 43, 119, 142–43; *see also* Saudia, Six-Day War
 Arbitration, 67
 Archaeology, 104–5, 119, 204, 220, 223, 225, 228, 232–33, 235
 Archbishops; *see* Bishops
 Archives, 118, 204, 229
 Argentina, 218; *see also* Buenos Aires
 Arkansas; *see* Hot Springs
 Armies, 220, 239; *see also* Egypt, Israel (state), Syria, United States, War
 Arms, 73–75, 219
 ARN SON, CURTIS, 90
 Arrests, 14, 67, 90, 231
 Art, 91, 234–35; collections, 91, 234
Aruch Hashulhan (Epstein), 88
 ASHER, RACHEL, 77
 Ashkelon, 232
 Ashkenazim, 67; *see also* German Jewry
 Asia, 38, 165
 "Asser Levy—A New Look" (Stern), 66–77
 Assimilation, 104
 Associations, 111; *see also* Societies
 Assyria, 232
 Atheism, 132
 Athens, 81
 Atlanta, 89, 95
 Atlantic basin, 4, 167; *see also* North Atlantic
 Atlantic City, 49
 Atomic bomb, 209
 Auckland, New Zealand, 219
 Auctions, 68–69
 Australia, 218–19; *see also* Melbourne, Victoria
 Austria, 7, 89, 137–38, 156, 230; Jews of, 103, 156
 Authorities, 34, 37, 46, 164, 226, 229, 238
 Authority, 127, 164, 192, 195, 211
 Autobiographies, 38, 79, 92, 209
 Autodidacts, 119
 Autographs, 171, 220
 Automobiles, 17
 Autonomy, 46
 AVNI, HAIM, 82
Avodath Hakodesh (Bloch), 88
 Axis (Second World War), 60
 AZEC; *see* American Zionist Emergency Council
 Azilai B'nai Israel; *see* Nobles

B

- Babies, 13; sitters, 20
 Baccarat, France, 180
 BAER (family), 92; HOWARD F., 92
 Baghdad, 43
 Bail, 67
 Bakeries, 116, 240
 Balfour Declaration, 31, 35, 47, 49, 52, 59, 84
 Balkan War, 153
 Baltimore, 85, 120, 128, 196
 BAMBERGER, GABRIEL, 11–12
 Bancroft Library, Berkeley, Cal., 88, 92–93
 Bank of Louisville, Ky., 91
 Banking, 9, 91, 95, 117, 148, 151, 190
 Bankruptcy, 9
 Banquets, 94, 128, 130–31, 147, 174

- Barbados, 76
 BARSIMSON, JACOB, 68
 BARTLETT, HARRY M., 95; WASHINGTON, 92
 Baseball, 116, 124-25, 187
 Basel, 139; Congress, 139
 Basins, 73-74, 76, 116
 Basketball, 174
 Baths, 17, 20, 116
 Battle of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, 87
 Bavaria, 160, 162
 Bay Ridge Americans, Brooklyn, 232
 BAYARD, N., 76
 BAZELON, DAVID L., 93
 Beauty, 206
 Beavers, 68-69, 75
 BECKER, JAMES H., 87-88; MRS. JAMES H., 88
 Beds, 74, 115
 Beecher Island, 203
 BEEKEMAN, WILLIAM, 72
 Beersheba, Israel, 228
 Beggars, 117
 Behavior, 29, 205, 214
 BEIFIELD, MARTIN P., JR., 94
 Beifut, 37, 43
 Belief, 24, 80, 82, 106, 139, 161, 164, 189, 214, 230
 BELLAMY, EDWARD, 88
 Bellevue, Wash., 85
 Bellingham, Wash., 93
 BENDER, DAVID, 85
 Bene Israel Congregation, Cincinnati, 106, 111
 BEN-GURION, DAVID, 220-21
 BENJAMIN, A. L., 92
 BENNIS, WARREN G., 94, 234
 BERKOWITZ, HENRY, 108, 125, 129
 BERLE, ADOLPH A., 40
 Berlin, 135, 142, 167, 235; Academy for the Science of Judaism, 238
 BERNSTEIN, ADELE, 80; DAVID, 80; HERMAN, 80
 BERUL, ZALMAN, 88
 Beth El Emeth Congregation, Philadelphia, 89
 Beth Elohim Congregation, Charleston, S. C., 85
 Beth Israel Congregation, Jackson, Mich., 85-86; Rochester, N. Y., 95
 Beth Shalome Congregation, Richmond, 89
 BETTELHEIM, A. S., 171
 BETTMANN, BERNHARD, 114, 125, 133
 Beverwyck; *see* Albany
Beyond the Melting Pot (Glazer and Moynihan), 81
 Bezalel Museum, 221
Bias of Reflections (Perlmutter), 84
 Bible, 104, 119, 127-28, 137, 145, 147, 156, 159, 171, 210, 213, 215-16, 224-25, 228, 232; commentaries, 145; criticism, 126-27, 143, 152; versions, 145; *see also* Torah
 Biblical and Archaeological School, Hebrew Union College, Jerusalem, 105, 224, 243
 Bibliographies, 80-81, 83-84, 89, 171
 BIKEL, THEODORE, 83
 Bikur Cholim Congregation, Seattle, 93
 BILLIKOFF, JACOB, 88
 Bills, 117; of exchange, 72
 Biltmore Hotel, New York City, 33; Program, 33-34, 84
 Binationalism, 36
 BING, ABRAHAM, 119
 Biography, 6-7, 66, 78, 81, 83, 89-93, 103
 Bipartisanship, 39, 50
 Biran, Israel, 26
 Birmingham, Ala., 90
 Birth, 37, 78-79, 81, 166, 170, 180, 186, 198, 214, 219, 229
 BISHOP, W. L., 181
 Bishops, 172, 190-92
 Biweeklies, 221, 241
 BLACK (LOVEMAN-BLACK) (family), 93
 Blacks, 4, 17, 24-26, 76, 81, 83, 207-8, 211, 234; Nationalism, 23
 BLACKWELL, ANTOINETTE LOUISA BROWN, 237-38; ELIZABETH, 238
 BLAGGE, SAMUELL, 76
 BLANK, SHELDON H., 95
 Blessings, 89, 129
 BLOCH, EDWARD, 117; ERNEST, 88; THERESA, 120
 Bloch Publishing Company, 117
 Blood donations, 241
 BLOOM, JESSIE S. (Mrs. Robert), 88; SOL, 40, 43, 50-51, 54-55

- Bnai Abraham Congregation, Terre Haute, Ind., 86
 B'nai B'rith, 86-87; David Heuman Lodge No. 807, Jackson, Mich., 86; District Grand Lodge No. 2, 86; District No. 2 Orphan Asylum, Cleveland, 87; Hillel Foundations, 86, 89; Jackson City Lodge No. 256, 86; Logan, W. Va., Lodge No. 1236, 87; New York Lodge No. 1, 87
 B'nai El Congregation, Logan, W. Va., 85
 B'nai Yeshurun Congregation, Cincinnati, 5, 86, 108, following p. 139, 204, 230, 236-37
 Board of Delegates of American Israelites, 120
 Board of Governors, Hebrew Union College, 107, 110-15, 118-19, 122-25, 133, 140-43, 148, 163, 178, 185, 202, 204, 220, 224, 236, 239-42
 Boardinghouses, 109, 113-15
 Bohemia, 8; language, 6; Jews of, 103
 Bombings, 180
 BONDI, JONAS, 120-21, 171; SELMA, 120-21
 Bonds, 180; real estate, 19; legal, 67
 Bookkeeping, 20
 Books, 4, 12, 66, 75-76, 80-85, 88, 104, 109, 122-23, 125, 128, 160, 170-73, 188, 219, 243; *see also* Hebrew language, Judaica, Libraries, Writers, Yearbooks
 BORTZ, AARON, 93
 Boston, 90
 Bottles, 73-74
 Boy Scouts, 219
 Boys' School, Brooklyn, 232
 BRAITERMAN, MARVIN, 80
 Brandeis University, 84, 232
 BRAUDE, WILLIAM G., 88
 BRAUNSWIGER, MRS., 15; LESTER, 15-16
 Brazil, 67, 218; *see also* Recife
 Bread, 116
 Breakfasts, 116
 BRENNER, HERBERT, 86
 Breslau, 135
 Bribery, 38-39
 BRICKER, JOHN W., 211
 Briefs, 86, 95
 Britain; *see* British government, Great Britain
 British-American Declaration (Joint Statement, Second World War), 34-35, 37, 40, 42, 46
 British government, 31-32, 34, 45; Foreign Office, 35, 43, 45-46; *see also* Great Britain
 Broadcasts, 43
 Broadsides, 242-43
 Brochures, 196, 213, 235-36
 Brookline, Mass., 85
 Brooklyn, 71, 82, 86, 229, 231-32; Boys' School, 232; Brownsville, 86; College, 232; East New York, 86; Flatbush, 70
 Brotherhood(s), 85, 159, 162, 196-97
 BROWN & LAUFER, Cincinnati, 114
 Brown University, 232
 BROWNSTEIN, MARC, 92
 Brownsville; *see* Brooklyn
 Brownsville and East New York Hospital, Brooklyn, 86
 Budgets, 117, 202, 233
 Buenos Aires, 218
 Buildings, 16-20, 73, 90, 105, 122, 124-25, 155, 157, 224
 Bulletins, 90
 Burghers, 230; right, 68, 72
 Burglary, 14, 166, 168
 Buses, 16; Montgomery Boycott, 207
 BUSH, CECILIA, 77; MATHIAS, 77; NELLY, 77
 Business, 2, 8-9, 14, 37, 72, 76, 90, 94-95, 117, 148, 179, 231; *see also* Department stores, Economic life, Merchants, Storekeepers, Wholesalers
 Butchers, 69, 76

C

- Cabinet (United States), 41
 Cables, 43, 242
 Cairo, 43, 45, 55; Ill., 242
 CALHOUN, JOHN C., 89
 California, 92, 144, 234; Historical Society, 95; State Library, 92; *see also* Hebrew Union College, San Francisco, Santa Cruz
 CALISCH, EDWARD N., 88, 116
 CALVO, SEMA, 93

- Camps, 195, 197
Can a Woman Become a Rabbi? (Jonas), 238
 Canada, 95, 218; Jews of, 81; *see also* Montreal, Toronto
 Canadian Jewish Congress, 95-96
Canadian Jewish Profiles (Figler), 81
 Canasta, 20-21
 Candlesticks, 73, 230
 Cantors, 88, 105, 204, 237, 243
 Capitalism, 25
 Captains, 68, 71, 76
 CARNEGIE, ANDREW, 231
 Carpet-baggers, 9
 Cartoons, 25
 Caryl Court, Chicago, 19-20
 Casuistry, 128
 Catechisms, 171
 Caterers, 128, 130
 "Catholic" (term), 27
 Catholics, 24, 67, 81, 191-92, 196
 Cattle, 18, 69; *see also* Animals
 Celebrations, 214
 Cemeteries, 85
 Censors, 181
 Censure, 64
 Central America, 158
 Central Conference of American Rabbis, 5, 66, 80, 82, 90, 128, 136, 152, 159, 185, 195, 199, 207, 218, 236; Commission on Social Justice, 207; Committee on the Future of the Rabbinate and the Synagogue, 82; Committee on Rabbinic Training, 82; Pittsburgh Conference, 133
 Central Europe, 192; *see also* Europe
 Ceramics, 235
 Ceremonies, 104, 147-48, 153, 158, 164, 180, 189, 197, 205, 235; *see also* Observance
 Certificates, 44
 Change, 24, 26-27, 30, 36, 80, 94; social, 23
 Chapels, 125, 127, 135, 168, 196, 206, 224, 227
 Chaplains, 178-80, 195-97, 209
 Character, 22, 157-58, 183
 Charleston, S. C., 85; W. Va., 203
 Charters, 46, 185, 205
 Chemistry, 165
 Chevra Thilim Congregation, New Orleans, 86
 Cheyenne Indians, 203
 Chicago, 5-7, 9, 11, 13-15, 47, 90-92, 94, 113, 138, 148, 157, 160, 171; Caryl Court, 19-20; Chicago-Winfield Tuberculosis Sanitarium, 18; City Council, 90; Dime Museum, 17; Elmo Hotel, 20; Fairfax Hotel, 21; Federation of Jewish Charities, 17; Girls' Training School, 12, 14, 16; Hull House, 14; Isaiah Temple, 18; Jefferson Market, 17; Jewish Charities, 91-92; Jewish War Relief Committee, 88; Lincoln Park, 16; Maxwell Street, 14, 19; Maxwell Street Settlement House, 14-18; *Tribune*, 14
 Chicanos, 234
Child Called Noah (Greenfeld), 81
 Children, 5-10, 13-14, 16-17, 20, 66-67, 76, 81, 90, 104, 108, 112-13, 117-18, 120, 124, 142, 156, 168, 191, 197, 205-6, 210, 216, 218-19, 227, 231, 238; *see also* Orphans, Teenagers
 CHIN, ROBERT, 80
 China, 34, 172; Jews of, 170, 172; language, 172
 Choir, 135, 219
 Chosen people, 138, 161, 201
 Christian Council for Palestine, 44
 Christianity, 7, 37, 39, 70, 89, 105, 138, 153, 161, 168, 172, 179, 189, 195, 197, 207, 209, 211, 217, 221, 237, 240, 243; *see also* Catholics, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Gentiles, Lutherans, Non-Jews, Protestants
 Christmas, 197
 Chronology, 66-72
 CHURCHILL, WINSTON, 35, 59-62
 CHYET, STANLEY F., 91, 95-96
 Cincinnati, 5, 85-86, 95, 104-7, 112, 117, 120, 124, 128-32, following p. 136, 140-41, 148-51, 153, 157, 160, 167, 170-71, 182, 185-87, 193, 198, 204, 207-8, 211-13, 218, 221-22, 226, 228, 230, 232-37, 240; Bene Israel Congregation, 106, 111; B'nai Yeshurun Congregation (Plum Street) 5, 86, 108, following p.

- 139, 204, 230, 236-37; Busy Bee, 207; Clifton, 104, 153; Clifton Avenue, 125; Clifton-Ludlow "Short Corner," 207-8; College Boarding House, 115; Eighth Street, 107; Fountain Square, 241; Gymnasium, 116; Hebrew Union College, 103-243; Highland House, 130; Jewish Museum, 233-34; Mound Street Temple, 104, 108, following p. 136; Richmond Street, 115; "The Mansion," 115-16; West Sixth Street, 122, 125, 153, 157, 171
- Cities; *see* Urban
- Citizens, citizenship, 8-9, 11, 34, 81, 109, 137-38, 140, 200-201, 213, 222, 228
- City College of New York, 86
- Civil defense, 240
- Civil disobedience, 90
- Civil Rights Act (1957), 207
- Civil War (United States), 9, 83, 87, 92, 103
- Civilians, 179, 240
- Civilization, 83, 199, 205, 225, 232, 235
- Claims, 67, 71
- CLARK, THOMAS D., 80
- Classes, social, 24, 162; *see also* Middle class, Proletariat, Upper middle class, Work, Working class
- Classics, 118-19, 145, 171
- Clemency, 209-11
- Clergy, 120, 190, 209, 237
- Clerks, 66
- Cleveland, 93, 173; Orphan Asylum, 87
- Clothing, 8, 74-76, 81, 93, 113-15
- Clubs, 87; *see also* Organizations, Social life
- Coal, 17; fund, 17
- Codes, religious, 154
- Codifications of the Talmud, 145
- CODRINGTON, THOMAS, 76
- COEN, ABRAHAM, 69
- COHEN, BERNARD, 80; BERNARD M., 86; JACOB MOSES, 92; LAZARUS, 81; LYON, 81; MARX EDWIN, 89
- COHN, EDWARD PAUL, 94; NATHAN, 109; NORMAN, 80
- Collections, 91, 234-36; Israel Solomon, 235; Joseph Hamburger Numismatic, 235; Louis Grossman, 235; of art, 91, 234; of Judaica, 235-36; Salli Kirschstein, 235
- College Boarding House, Cincinnati, 115
- Colleges, 4, 26, 103, 111-12, 120-22, 135, 146, 150, 152, 154, 178, 232; Brooklyn, 232; City College of New York, 86; degrees, 15, 104-5, 141-42, 168, 187, 196-98, 219, 225, 232; McMicken, Cincinnati, 104; preparatory, 105; Oberlin, 237; *see also* Preparatory, Teachers'
- COLMAN (family), 92-93
- Colombia, 39
- Colonization, 40, 48, 66-67, 94-95, 115, 138, 165
- Colorado; *see* Denver, Trinidad
- Columbus, Ohio, 106-7
- Commentaries, 145
- Commonwealth, American, 214; Jewish, 3, 33, 39, 44-45, 47-50, 59, 63, 199
- Communal agencies, 234; life; service, 105, 229; workers, 105
- Communes, 28, 83
- Communication, 103, 212
- Communism, 190, 210-11
- Communities, 46, 49, 83, 139, 236, 241
- Community, 3-4, 15, 80, 91, 217, 234; centers, 14, 28; service, 182
- Competition, 173
- Complaints, 50-51, 64, 210
- Composition, 111
- Compromise, 61
- Concentration camps, 238
- Concessions, 53, 64
- Conference of Rabbis of Southern Congregations, 95
- Conferences, 42, 45-46, 63, 95, 133, 139; American Jewish, 33-35, 133
- Confirmation, 85, 90, 135, 215
- Confiscation, 235
- Conflicts, 80, 93
- Conformity, 164
- Confrontations, 57, 81
- Congregation Aaron, Trinidad, Colo., 90
- Congregationalists (Church), 237
- Congregations, 11, 29, 81-82, 85-86, 88-91, 93-95, 103, 106-7, 117, 120, 122, 129, 133, 135, 144, 146, 160, 164, 179, 184, 189, 204, 216-17, 219, 221-23, 233, 238, 241, 243; union of, 103; *see also* Synagogues, Temples
- Congress (United States), 35, 40, 45, 47-48, 50-51, 54-55, 57, 60, 62, 91,

- 94-95, 240; *see also* House of Representatives, Senate
Congress Bi-Weekly, 84
 Congress of Industrial Organizations, 44
 Congresses, 95, 139; *see also* Conventions
 CONNALLY, TOM, 40-41, 51, 55-56
 Connecticut; *see* Danbury, Hartford, New Haven, West Hartford
 Conquests, 232
 Conscience, 134, 153, 179, 205, 228
 Consecration, 213
 Conservative Judaism, 81, 84, 94, 105, 126, 129-31, 133, 147, 151, 153, 155, 183
 Conservatory of Music, San Francisco, 88
 Constitution (United States), 211
 Constitutions, 86-87; congregational, 85-86
Contemporary Judaic Fellowship (Neusner), 83
 Conventions, 47, 49-50, 86, 129-30; *see also* Congresses, Councils
 Conversion, 89, 104, 159
 Cooking, 18
 COPAL, JAN, 70
 CORE, 24, 27
 Corpus Christi, Tex., 92
 Correspondents, 211
 Cosmopolitanism, 30
 COUGHLIN, CHARLES E., 190-93
 Councils, 91, 129, 131, 133; *see also* Conventions
 Counselors, 217
 Courtesy, 152, 210-11, 230
 Courts, 14, 17, 66-70, 72, 86, 95, 207, 209; Federal, 209; Louisiana Supreme Court, 86; United States Supreme Court, 95, 207
 Covenant, 161
 Crash (of 1929), 19
 Credit, 72
 Creditors, 67, 77
 Crematoria, 167, 230, 238
 Crime, 14, 30, 230, 234; *see also* Murder, Treason
 Criticism, 3, 23, 54, 127, 133-34, 219
 CRONBACH, ABRAHAM, 88, 208-14
 Cuba, 195
 Culture, 3, 27, 29, 81, 104, 128, 135, 152, 158, 167, 181, 183, 194, 204-5, 224, 226, 229, 234, 242; history of, 234
 Curators, 70
 Curricula, 106, 133, 135-36
 Cutlery, 74-75
 Cynics, 121, 217
- ## D
- D'ACOSTA, JOSEPH, 68
 Dairies, 18
 Dallas, Tex., 91
 Damages, 67
 Damascus, 43
 Danbury, Conn., 182
 Dancing, 116, 219; schools, 116
 DAUBER, JACK, 80
 David Heuman Lodge No. 807, B'nai B'rith, Jackson, Mich., 86
 DE LA MOTTA; *see* Motta
 Death, 9-10, 12, 65-66, 72, 87, 91, 95, 103-4, 111, 120, 144, 147-50, 156-57, 167-68, 182, 196, 206, 209-10, 212, 231-32, 238, 240
 Debates, 26, 42
Deborah (Cincinnati), 117, 157
 Debts, debtors, 66-69, 71-72, 77
 Declarations, 63-65
 Decorum, synagogal, 135
 Dedications, institutional, 105, 117, following p. 136, 153, 155, 224, 226, 234
 Deeds, 71
 Defamation, 213
 Defendants, 212
 Degrees, academic, 104-5, 141-42, 168, 187, 196-98, 219, 225, 232-34, 237-38
 Democracy, 26, 32, 40, 47-50, 177, 220
 Democratic Party, 47, 50-52
 Demonstrations, 52, 210
 DENEBEIM, ABRAHAM, 92
 Denmark, 84
 Denver, Colo., 89
 Department stores, 10
 Depositions, 69
 Depressions, 9, 188, 190
 Descendants, 67, 77
 Desegregation, 80, 208
 Deserts, 220
 Destiny, 201, 240
 Detroit, 29, 160, 190-91
 DEUTSCH, GOTTHARD, 79, 104, 156-60
 Development, 134, 202
 DEWEY, THOMAS E., 48-49

Dialogue, 25, 47, 229
 Diaries, 81, 88-89, 92, 140, 158, 203-5
 Diaspora, 161, 200
 Dictionaries, 171
 DIENEMANN, MAX, 238
 Dietary laws; *see* Kashruth, Terefa
 DIETLOFFSON (New York City weigher), 70
 Dime Museum, Chicago, 17
 DINNE, CHRISTOPHER, 67
 Dinners, 44, 95, 116, 130, 184, 225
 DINNERSTEIN, LEONARD, 80
 Diplomacy, diplomats, 34-35, 37, 42-43, 45-47, 52-54, 63, 220
 Diplomas, 236
 Directories, 94
 Disasters, 3, 156, 222-23, 229-30
 Discipline, 109-10, 126, 205
 Diseases, 10, 13, 18, 20-21, 232
 Disloyalty, 211
 Displays, 236
 Disputes, 42
 Dissension, 188
 Dissenters, dissidents, 28, 33, 163
 Dissimulation, 134
 District Grand Lodge No. 2, B'nai B'rith, Cincinnati, 86
 Doctrines, 127, 155, 164
 Documents, 3, 10, 26, 31, 36-37, 39, 41, 46, 54-55, 65, 81, 83, 85, 87, 91, 106, 123, 202-3
 Dogmatism, 154, 164-65, 215
 Donors, 29
Dorchester (ship), 195
 Dormitories, 107, 208
 Dowry, 8
 Dreyfus Affair, 138
 DRIESEN, GEORGE, 84
 Dropsie University, Philadelphia, 78
 DU MAURIER, DAPHNE, 7
 Dual loyalty, 137
 DUNN, JAMES C., 64-65
 Dutch, the, 68-69, 71, 218; Jews, 95, 103; language, 66; *see also* Amsterdam

E

East (United States), 120, 128-31, 147-48
 East New York, 86
 East River, 71

East Side, 84
 East, the, 165-66
 Easter, 196
 Eastern Europe, 80; *see also* Europe
 EBAN, ABBA, 83, 225
 Ecology, 233
 Economic life, 3, 8, 31, 53, 59, 152; *see also* Business
 Economic Research and Action Project (ERAP), 24
 Economists, 9
 Ecumenism, 234
 EDDY, WILLIAM A., 60-61
 Editorials, 153
 Editors, 117, 121
 Education, 7, 11-12, 30, 37, 52, 105, 107, 118-19, 121, 136, 146, 149-50, 164, 168, 170, 204-5, 207, 226, 228-29, 233-34, 240-41; Schools of, Hebrew Union College, 243; *see also* Colleges, Physical, Schools, Secular, Sunday schools, Teachers, Training schools, Universities
 Egalitarianism, 236
 Egotism, 231
 Egypt, 45, 59, 239; *see also* Cairo
 EICHBERG, DAVID, 108
 Eighth Street, Cincinnati, 107
 EILAND, EDWARD, 85, 87
 Eilat, 228
 EINHORN, DAVID, 93, 122, 150
 EINSTEIN, ALBERT, 89, 184
 EISENDRATH, MAURICE N., 186-87
 EISENHOWER, DWIGHT D., 209-10
 EISENSTAT, MICHAEL B., 89
 ELAZAR, DANIEL J., 84
 Electricians, 240
 Electrocutions, 209
 Elmo Hotel, Chicago, 20
 Elocution, 111
Eminent American Jews (Madison), 83
 EMMANUEL, ISAAC S., 95
 Employers, 9, 14
 Employment, 9-10, 14-15, 18-19, 231, 238
 Enclaves, 36
 Endorsements, 117
 England; *see* Great Britain
 English language, 10, 66-67, 119, 143, 157, 160, 168, 219, 231
 Engravings, 235

Enlightenment, 119
 Episcopalians, 168
 EPPINGER, SOLOMON, 108-9, 111-12, 114
 EPSTEIN, ELIAS L., 88; YECHIEL MECHAL,
 88
 Equality, 139, 205, 236; *see also* Rights
 Equity, 139
 Error, 160, 165
 Espionage, 209, 211
 Essays, 80, 83-84, 188, 196
 Establishment, the, 27-28, 30
 Estates, 66-67, 70-73, 76
 Ethical Culture Society, 11, 136
 Ethical wills; *see* Wills
 Ethics, 127, 137, 145, 213, 215; *see also*
 Social ethics
 Ethnicity, 24, 27, 30
 ETTLINGER, JULIA, 108-9
 Eulogies, 90, 95-96, 157-59
 Europe, 12-13, 32, 51, 117, 135, 137,
 140-42, 150, 156, 167, 169, 192, 202,
 210; Jews of, 3, 11, 32, 36, 39, 167; *see*
also Central Europe, Eastern Europe,
 Western Europe
 European Organization, Joint Distribu-
 tion Committee, 87
 EVERTSEN, JAN, 70
 Evian Conference, 94
 Evolution, 133-34, 200
 Excavations, 225, 235
 Execution, 209, 213
 Executives, 213
 Executors, 71
 Exhibitions, 172, 236, 243
 Exiles, 138-39, 193, 198
 Existentialism, 23
 Expenditures, 16
 Experience, 28, 151, 168, 183, 188, 203, 215,
 223, 225, 228, 232
 Explorations, 38, 220, 223, 232
 Extermination, 231
 Extortion, 17
 Extremists, 30
 EZEKIEL, JACOB, 91; MOSES J., 88

F

Factories, 9-10, 112
 Fairfax Hotel, Chicago, 21

FALK; *see* van der Wilden
 FALK, RANDALL M., 93
 Family, 5, 7-8, 10-14, 61, 67, 81, 84, 87-
 88, 90-94, 115, 118, 120-21, 138, 177,
 218, 231, 241; *Chronicle* (Reznikoff), 84
 Fanaticism, 61, 132, 151-52, 192
 Far West (United States), 105
 Fare, 68, 210
 Farmington, W. Va., 177
 Farms; *see* Agriculture
 Fascists, 37
 Fasting, 126
 Fear, 179
 Federal Court (United States), 209
 Federations, 28, 103, 182; of Jewish
 Charities, Chicago, 17; of Jewish Wel-
 fare Agencies, Memphis, 87
 Fees, 17
 FEIBELMAN, JULIAN B., 88
 FEIN, LEONARD J., 80, 83-84; Report, 83
 FEINSTEIN, MRS. MYER, 224
 FELDMAN, EPHRAIM, 124
 Fellowship, 83, 154, 188
 FELSENTHAL, BERNHARD, 88, 122
 Fiction, 29, 39, 81, 83, 198
 Fidelity, 162
 FIGLER, BERNARD, 81
 Finance; *see* Banking
 FINEBERG, SOLOMON ANDHIL, 88-89
 Fines, 70
 First Ohio Infantry (First World War),
 177
 First World War, 3, 177-78, 195, 231
 Fish, 16, 18, 219
 FISHMAN, JOSHUA A., 80
 Flatbush, 70
 Flints, 235
Floradora Girls, 11
 Food, 116, 128, 132, 180-81; *see also*
 Kashruth, Terefa
 Football, 229, 232, 241
 Foreign Office, British, 35, 43, 45-46, 54;
 Arabs, 48
 Foreign relations, 54, 211
 Foreigners, 138, 173, 218, 221, 231
 Formalism, 154
 Fort Laramie, Wyo., 87
 Fort Orange; *see* Albany
 Fortifications, 70
 Forts, 68, 87

- Founder's Day (Hebrew Union College), 214
 Four Freedoms, 49
 France, 87, 119, 138, 177, 179-81; Vichy Regime, 197; *see also* Baccarat, Lunéville, Paris
 FRANK, HENRY, 92; LEO M., 95
 Frank L. Weil Institute, 105
 FRANKEL, ZACHARIAS, 119
 FRANKENBERGER, MRS. MAX, 203-4
 FRANKFORT, ABRAHAM, 77
 FRANKS (family), 67; BEN, 87
 Fraternities, 111
 Free Synagogue, New York City, 236
 Free Universities, 24
 Freedom, 8, 28, 47-50, 104, 134, 137, 139-40, 153, 160, 185, 198; dogmatic, 164; Four Freedoms, 49; of belief, 164; of expression, 163-64, 205; of learning, 152; of speech, 181; of teaching, 152, 163-65; of thought, 134
 FREEHOF, SOLOMON B., 89
 FREIBERG, JULIUS, 125
 Freight, 68
 French Jews, 103
 FREUND, SAMUEL, 119
 FRIDAY, 116, 215
 FRIEDLANDER, SAUL, 82
 FRIEDMAN, BARRY, 86; BEN, 184; MURRAY, 80; WILLIAM S., 116
 FRIEND, HENRY C., 85
 Friendship, 7-9, 11, 14-15, 18-20, 44, 49, 58, 88, 116, 121, 134, 140, 143, 151, 166, 182, 189, 191, 212, 216, 218, 220-21, 242
 Frontier, 167
 FRY, JAMES B., 203
 Functionaries, congregational, 215
 Fund raising, 17, 117, 219, 240-42; *see also* Israel Emergency Fund, Money
 Funerals, 209, 212
 Furniture, 9, 74, 76, 115
 Future, after p. 22, 27, 160, 169, 200, 203, 205, 215, 227, 236
- G**
- Galicia, 166
 GALILEO, 238
 Galleries, 235-36
 Gang warfare, 14
 Gardening, 18, 240
 Garment industry, 10, 84, 231
 Gas ovens; *see* Crematoria
 GAVIN, FRANK, 168-70
 Gaza Strip, 220
 GEIGER, ABRAHAM, 119, 150
 GEIGERMAN (family), 88
 GELFAND, DAVID, 94
 GENAUER, BEN, 93; MOSES, 93
 GENDLER, EVERETT, 84
 Genealogy, 66-67, 92-93, 157, 172
 General Theological Seminary, New York, 168
 Generals, 41, 203
 Gentiles, 24, 138, 161, 179, 199; *see also* Christianity, Non-Jews
 Gentility, 103, 230
 Geography, 165
 Georgia; *see* Atlanta, Warm Springs
 German Jewry, 78, 103, 120, 132, 190, 193-94; *see also* Ashkenazim
 Germany, 7, 10-11, 40, 69, 89, 119, 128, 136-38, 152, 157, 167, 170, 188, 190, 195, 197, 199, 202, 207, 229-30, 238; Army (First World War), 231; language, 6, 15, 113, 143, 157, 160; *see also* Berlin, Breslau, Munich, Nazism, Oberwesel, Offenbach, Schwelm, Stuttgart, West Germany, Westphalia, Wuerzburg
 Gestapo, 231
 Ghettos, 8, 158; Warsaw, 89
 GILBERT, MRS. JOSEPH G., 85, 89, 92
 GINSBERG, ALLEN, 82
 GINZBERG, LOUIS, 140-43
 Girls, 10-12, 104, 108, 116, 121, 208, 237; Training School, Chicago, 12, 14, 16; *see also* Teenagers, Women
 " 'Girls' in Chicago, The," 5-22
 GITELMAN, ZVI, 82
 GLANZ, RUDOLF, 81
 GLASER & WOLFSON, Cincinnati, 114
 GLAZER, NATHAN, 81
 GLICKSTEIN, GARY A., 23-30
 Glossaries, 82
 GLUECK, NELSON, 104-5, following p. 136, 168, 182, 185-86, 202, 204-6, 214, 220-21, 223-29, 232-33, 235; School of Biblical Archaeology, 226
 God, 30, 122, 126-27, 136, 139, 154, 158,

160-62, 185, 188, 199, 201, 205-6, 210,
215-17, 227, 230, 236, 239
Godliness, 215
Gold, 76
GOLD, BERTRAM H., 82
GOLDBERG, M. S., 89; MRS. M. S., 89
GOLDEN, HARRY, 81-82, 84
GOLDFARB, MORDECAI, 95
Goldfish, 206-7
GOLDMAN, MRS. SAMUEL, 87
GOLDSTEIN, SIDNEY I., 80
Golem, 28-29
GOLLANZ, ISRAEL, 92
Good will, 136, 191
GOODE, ALEXANDER D., 195-96
GOODMAN, ABRAM V., 80
GORNBERG, B., 95
Gossips, 126
GOTTHEIL, GUSTAV, 122, 129, 139
GOTTSCALK, ALFRED, 94, 104-5, follow-
ing p. 136, 226, 229-34, 237, 239;
JEANNIE SCHRAG, 232; MAX, 231
Government, 14, 23, 34, 37, 42, 48, 50-51,
54-55, 60, 63-65, 89, 127, 137, 139, 155,
200, 203; *see also* Officials
Governors, 48-49, 76
Graduate schools, 229
Graduates, 12, 104-6, 111-12, 128-29,
134-36, 148-49, 157, 164, 177, 182,
186-88, 195-96, 206, 208, 222, 229, 234,
237-38, 243
Graffiti, 26
Grain, 230
Grammar schools, 107
Grammars, 171
Grandchildren, 108
Grandparents, 8, 10-11, 90-91, 93, 230-31
Grants, 76, 232
Great Britain, 31, 34-35, 37-38, 40, 44, 46,
49, 53-55, 67, 70-71, 136, 153, 155, 165,
218, 227; Jews of, 103; *see also* British
government, London
Great Powers, 46, 220
Greatest Jewish City (Golden), 81
Greece, 127; language, 113; *see also*
Athens
GREEN, ARTHUR, 83
GREENBAUM BROS., Chicago, 19; J.
VICTOR, 187
GREENFELD, JOSH, 81

GREENSTEIN, HARRY, 89
GRESHAM, FOSTER B., 80
GREW, JOSEPH C., 63-64
Groceries, 20
GROSSMAN, LOUIS; *see* Louis Grossman
Collection
Groups, 24-27, 29, 33, 44, 81-83, 116, 128,
183, 190, 219, 221; ethnic, 24
Guarantees, 211
Guards, 240
GUCKENHEIMER, MILDRED LEE, 77
Guide for Instruction in Judaism (Kohler),
160
Guide of Practice, 91
Guitar, 233
GUTHEIM, JAMES K., 122
GUTMANN, JOSEPH, 88
GUYOL, LOUISE HUBERT, 88
Gymnasiums, 17, 112-13, 116, 158, 186-87

H

HACHEN, DAVID S., 89
Hadassah, 129
HAERT, BALTHASAR DE, 71
Haganah, 219
Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern (Ginz-
berg), 142
Haggadah, 145; Passover, 83
Haifa, 219
Halachah, 145, 171
HALLIGAN, P., Cincinnati, 114
HAMBURGER, JOSEPH; *see* Joseph Ham-
burger Numismatic Collection
HAMBURGER, WOLF, 119
Hammersmith, Mo., 92
Hangings, 210
HANSEN, HARRIET, 94
Happiness, 128, 206
Har Sinai Congregation, Baltimore, 85
HARBY (family), 85; ISAAC, 89
HARDY, R. E., 41
HARMAN, AVRAHAM, 220
HART, MRS. HORACE, 204
Hartford, Conn., 85
Hasidim, 82, 158
Hatred, 138, 192, 213
Hattiesburg, Miss., 90
Havurah, 26, 29, 83

- Hazing, 174
 HCFA; *see* House Committee
 Headquarters Company (First World War), 177
 Health, 10, 179
 Hebrew Benevolent Congregation, Atlanta, 95
 Hebrew Christians, 93
 Hebrew language and literature, 5, 66, 109, 113, 116, 118, 135, 143, 145, 153, 159, 166-68, 171-72, 174, 219, 226-29, 232, 243; *see also* Modern Hebrew
 Hebrew teachers; *see* Melamed, Teachers
 Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 11, 88, 94-96, Inside front cover, 103-243; Alumni Association, 86; Annual, 166-67; Biblical and Archaeological School, Jerusalem, 105, 224, 243; Board of Governors, 107, 110-15, 118-19, 122-25, 133, 140-43, 148, 163, 178, 185, 202, 204, 220, 224, 236, 239-42; California School, 233, 235, 243; Christian Fellow Program, 208; Department of Graduate Study for Christian Students, 168; Founder's Day, 214; Jerusalem School, 224-27, 239-40, 243; Journal, 88; Library, 95, following p. 136, 170-73; Museum, 234-36, 243; New York School, 237, 243; Schools of Education, 243; School of Sacred Music, New York, 218; Schools of Sacred Music, 243; Summer Institute, 185, 233; Year-in-Israel Program, 224, 226, 228-29
 Hebrew University, 163
 Heidelberg, 141-42
 HEINSHEIMER, EDWARD L., 108
 Heirs, 66-67
 HELLER (family), 5, 8, 13; ANNA, 7, 10-11; ERNESTINE, 1, 5-7, 10-12, 14-16, facing p. 16, 17-22; JAMES GUTHEIM, 5; LOUISE, 1, 5-7, 11-16, facing p. 17, 17-22; MAXIMILLAN (MAX), 5, 7, 10-11, 148, 151-53; SABINA, 7, 10
 HENDERSON, LOY W., 52-53
 HENKIN, LOUIS, 82
 HENRY, HENRY A., 143-44, 171
 Heritage, Jewish, after p. 22, 202, 205, 214-15
 HERMANS, DERCKE, 68
 HERMIENSE, JAN, 72
 HERO, ALFRED O., JR., 80
 Heroism, 159
 HERSCHER, URI D., 95
 HERZBERG, IRVING I., 82
 Herzl Institute, New York, 31
 HERZL, THEODOR, 138
 HERZOG, JACOB, 220
 HESCHEL, ABRAHAM JOSHUA, 95
 Hide industry, 230
 High Holydays, 221-22, 241
 High schools, 104, 107-8, 111-12, 124-25, 145, 218, 232
 Higher Criticism; *see* Bible
 Highland House, Cincinnati, 130
 Hillel Foundation, B'nai B'rith, 26, 86; Ohio State University, 89
 HILTON, HENRY, 95
 HIRSCH, DAVID EINHORN, 93; EMIL G., 11, 88, 93, 207; JOSEPH, 85; SAMUEL, 122, 150
 Historians, 3-4, 104, 127, 156, 237
 History, 3-5, 39, 66, 85-86, 90, 92-93, 109, 111, 119, 134-35, 138, 142, 145, 152, 155-61, 164-65, 168, 171-72, 183, 193, 196, 200-205, 219, 224, 228-29, 232-33, 235, 239-40, 243; cultural, 234; religious, 233
History of a Lie (Bernstein), 80
 HITLER, ADOLF, 3, 28, 193, 230; *see also* Nazism
 Hobbies, 157
 HODES, BARNET, 90
 HOFFMAN, ABBY, 25; DANIEL, 82
 HOFHEIMER, HENRY, 95
 Hogs, 9, 69, 128
 HOLDHEIM, SAMUEL, 150
 Holidays, 8, 179; *see also* High Holydays, New Year, Passover, Yom Kippur
 Holiness, 161-62
 Holland; *see* Dutch
 HOLLANDER, JOHN, 82
 Holy Land; *see* Palestine, Israel (state)
 Holy places, 36
 Home, 5, 8, 10, 112-13; for the Friendless, Chicago, 13; *see also* Old age
 Homeless, 222
 Homiletics, 145, 160, 162
 Honesty, 136, 192
 Honor, 135
 Hoodlums, 230
 Hoogh Street, Albany, 69-70

HOOPER, CARL, 222-23
 HOOVER, HERBERT, 87
 HOSKINS, HAROLD B., 36-39, 42, 61-62
 Hospitality, 88, 131
 Hospitals, 11-13, 86, 240
 Hot Springs, Ark., 85
 Hotels, 6, 18-22, 33, 95, 223
 House Committee for Foreign Affairs (HCFA), 40, 43, 50-51, 54; on Un-American Activities, 213
 House of Commons (Great Britain), 31
 House of Israel Congregation, Hot Springs, Ark., 85
 House of Representatives (United States), 40, 51, 91; Victoria, Australia, 219; *see also* Congress, Senate
 Housekeepers, 19
 Houses, 8, 69-70, 76; *see also* Shelter houses
 Hovas Hochim Congregation, Vincennes, Ind., 86
How the Other Half Lives (Riis), 84
 HUEBSCH, ADOLPH, 121, 150
 HUEHNER, LEON, 80
 Hughes High School, Cincinnati, 107
 HULL, CORDELL, 34-36, 41, 43, 45, 48, 50
 Hull House, Chicago, 14
 Human relations, 233
 Humanism, 23, 127
 Humanitarianism, 11, 26, 188, 223
 Humanity, 127, 135-36, 138, 156, 198-99, 205, 213, 239
 Humility, 216-17
 Humor, 6, 29, 84, 120
 Hunan Province, China, 170, 172
 Hungary, 181, 218; *see also* Austria
 Hunger, 8
 Hurricanes, 222-23
 HURWITZ, SAMUEL, 196
 HUTMAN, JOSEPH, 89
 HUYSMAN, CHARLES, 71
 Hymns, 94, 172; *see also* Music
 Hypocrisy, 28-29, 134, 136, 151

I

IBN SAUD, 36-38, 43, 54, 59-64
 Idealism, 5, 28, 103, 117, 138-39, 154, 157, 183, 188-89, 212-13, 217, 224
 Identity; *see* Jewishness

Ideology, 23-25, 148, 164, 183, 199, 225, 229
 IGNATOW, DAVID, 82
 Ikrit, Israel, 26
 Illinois, 16; State Board of Charities, 16; *see also* Cairo, Chicago, St. Francisville
 Illiteracy, 134
 Illustrations, 83; Arrival of the first Jews in North America, facing p. 68; Glueck, Nelson, following p. 136; Gottschalk, Alfred, following p. 136; Hebrew Union College, first building—1881-1912, Inside front cover; Hebrew Union College Library, following p. 136; Hebrew Union College student's visit, following p. 136; Heller, Ernestine, the Social Worker, facing p. 16; Heller, Louise, the Nurse, facing p. 17; Isaac M. Wise Temple, Cincinnati, following p. 136; Jewish New Left in Action, facing p. 24; Jewish New Left seeks justice for Soviet Jewry, facing p. 24; Kohler, Kaufmann, following p. 136; Meir, Golda, following p. 136; Morgens-tern, Julian, following p. 136; Mound Street Temple, Cincinnati, following p. 136; Silver, Abba Hillel, facing p. 32; Torah procession in Los Angeles, following p. 136; Wise, Isaac Mayer, following p. 136; Wise, Stephen S., following p. 136
 Immigrants, 7-10, 31, 33, 44, 47, 49, 61, 80-81, 84, 92-93, 95, 103, 112-13, 117, 137, 139, 152-53, 156, 170, 179, 231; Johnson-Lodge Act, 167
 Immunities, 207
 IMWALLE, H., Cincinnati, 114
 Independence, 38, 53; of Israel, 84
 India, 218
 Indiana, 208; *see also* Indianapolis, LaPorte, Terre Haute, Vincennes
 Indianapolis, 88
 Indians, 9, 203; *see also* Cheyenne, Sioux
 Indifference, 149, 152, 166
 Individuals, individualism, 26, 28, 30, 80, 82-83, 152, 162, 164, 170, 213, 236-37
 Industry, 9-10, 15-16
 Ingratitude, 117
 Initiation, 176-77
 Injunctions, 14

Institutes, 199
 Institutions, 3, 13, 18, 28-29, 86-87, 105, 108, 128, 136-37, 147-49, 154, 161, 168, 172, 185, 195, 204, 226, 229, 237, 240; *see also* Organizations, Societies
 Insulin, 20
 Insurance, 180
 Integration, 207-8
 Integrity, 135
 Intellectual life, 23-24, 169, 194, 203, 224, 231, 242
 Interfaith relations, 243
 "International bankers," 190
 International Socialist Congress, Stuttgart, 95
 Internationalism, 46, 52, 56, 82, 218
 Internship, 221
 Interviews, 92-94, 96, 211, 223
 Intolerance, 134, 159
 Intransigence, 61
 Invasions, 239
 Inventories, 66-67, 72-77
 Investments, 18-19
 Invocations, 130
 Invoices, 76
 Iraq, 52-53, 65; *see also* Baghdad
 Irish, the, 14, 81
 Irrationality, 61
 Irrigation, 60
 IRVING, JOHN, 89
 Isaac M. Wise Temple; *see* B'nai Yeshurun
 ISAACS BROTHERS, Cincinnati, 114
 Isaiah Temple, Chicago, 18
 ISH-SHALOM, MORDECAI, 227
 Isolationism, 104
 Israel (people); *see* Jewry
 Israel (state), 3, 24-26, 28, 30, facing p. 32, 38, 53, 62, 84, 93, 96, 138, 161, 186, 199, 218-21, 223-28, 232, 239-42; Knesset, 225; "White House," 224; *see also* Jerusalem, Palestine, Tel Gezer
 Israel Action Mobile, Cincinnati, 241
 ISRAEL, DAVID, 68; EDWARD L., 207
 Israel Emergency Fund, 240-41
 Israel Solomon Collection, 235
Israelite; *see* *American Israelite*
 ISSERMAN, FERDINAND M., 96
 Italy, 81, 119, 127; *see also* Rome
 Itinerants, 117

J

Jackets, 74
 Jackson, Mich., 85-86; B'nai B'rith, 86
 JACOBS GEORGE, 89, 112, 114-15, 122, 129
 JAKOBVITS, IMMANUEL, 227
 Jamaica, 68
 Janitors, 171
 JANS, ANKE, 69
 Japan, 81, 218
 JASTROW, MARCUS, 122
 Jefferson Market, Chicago, 17
 Jefferson Monument (Ezekiel), 88
 Jefferson, Tex., 90
 JELLINEK, ADOLF, 150
 Jerusalem, 43, 81, 105, 136, following p. 136, 161, 185-86, 204, 218, 224-25, 228, 235-36, 239, 243; Biblical and Archaeological School, Hebrew Union College, 105, 224, 243; City Council, 227; Jerusalem School, Hebrew Union College, 224-27, 239-40, 243; Murstein Chapel, Jerusalem School, 227; partition, 225; Teachers' Seminary, 218; *see also* Israel (state), Palestine
 "Jew" (term), 26, 103, 200
Jew and Italian (Glanz), 81
 Jewish Agency for Palestine, 31-33, 35, 37, 232
 Jewish Care and Relief for the Tuberculous, Cincinnati, 86
 Jewish Charities of Chicago, 91-92
 Jewish Chautauqua Society, 136; Summer School, 136
 Jewish community, 26, 30, 60, 81, 86, 94, 129, 132, 167, 182-83, 188-89, 193-94, 201-2, 222, 229; centers, 14, 28
 Jewish Conciliation Board of America, 86-87
 Jewish Defense League (J. D. L.), 30
 Jewish Education Coalition, 29
 Jewish Federations, 29
 Jewish Historical Society of Maryland, 89
 Jewish Institute of Religion, New York City, 89, 95, 105, 181-85, 220, 232; Papers, 90
 Jewish Labor Committee, 33
Jewish Leader (New York), 121

- Jewish Legion, 84
 Jewish life, 80, 105, 163, 167, 172, 182-83, 200-202
 Jewish masses, 164
 Jewish National Home, 31-32, 44-45, 59
 Jewish nationalism, 200-201
 Jewish New Left, 1, 23-24, facing p. 24, 25-30
 Jewish Publication Society of America, 136
 Jewish quarters, 166
 Jewish Question, 165
 Jewish Restoration Successors Organization, 235
 Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York City, 130, 140, 147-48, 153-54, 170; Association, 148
Jewish Theology (Kohler), 160
 Jewish thought, 172
 Jewish War Relief Committee, Chicago, 88
 Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America, 83
Jewish War Veterans Story (Mosesson), 83
 Jewish Welfare Board, Memphis, 87
 Jewish Welfare Federation, San Francisco, 29
 Jewish Welfare Fund, Memphis, 87
 Jewishness, 3, 25, 27, 30, 164, 184, 224, 242
 Jewry, 1, 3-4, 7-8, 13-14, 17, 24-28, 30-32, 34-37, 39-40, 44-46, 48-49, 50-51, 54, 59-63, 65-68, facing p. 68, 70, 77, 80-83, 86, 94-95, 103, 105, 107, 109, 112, 119-21, 127-30, 132-34, 136-38, 148-50, 156, 158-63, 165-69, 172, 179-80, 182-83, 186, 189-90, 192-205, 207, 209, 211, 214-15, 218-24, 226-28, 232-35, 239-43; *see also* Algiers, American Jewry, Arab Jewry, Ashkenazim, Austria, Bavaria, Canada, Central America, China, Dutch, Europe, Israel (state), Los Angeles, Mexico, Montreal, New York City, North America, Oriental Jews, Palestine, Russia, Russian-German Jews, Sephardim, Soviet Jewry
Jews in the South (Dinnerstein and Palsson), 80
 Jidda, Saudia, 43, 59, 61
 JIRO, NOAH, 81
 JOHANNES, MINNE, 71
 John F. Kennedy Library, Waltham, Mass., 93
 Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 196
 JOHNSON, GEORGE E., 83; LYNDON B., 95
 Johnson-Lodge Immigration Act, 167
 Joint Distribution Committee, 87-88
 JONAS, REGINA, 238
 JONES, WILLIAM EZELLE, 235-36
 Jordan, 223, 225; *see also* Transjordan
 Joseph Hamburger Numismatic Collection, 235
Journal of Jewish Lore and Philosophy, 167
 Journalism, 3, 76, 84, 88-89, 120-21, 126, 142, 159, 167, 191, 229, 243; *see also* Newspapers, Periodicals
 Judah L. Magnes Museum, Berkeley, 95
 Judaica, 229-30, 233-36, 243
 Judaism, 11, 26, 28-30, 80, 94, 103, 105, 117, 121-22, 128, 132-33, 135-38, 143, 145, 149, 152, 154-56, 160-61, 164, 166-71, 183, 185-86, 188, 192-95, 197, 200-202, 212, 215, 217-18, 221, 228-29, 236, 243; *see also* American Judaism, Conservative Judaism, Orthodox Judaism, Reconstructionists, Reform Judaism
 Judges, judgments, 67, 171, 209, 213, 237
 Junior Sephardic League, Seattle, 94
 Justice, 139-40, 161, 192, 212
- ## K
- Kabbalists, 128
 Kadima Day School, Buffalo, 78
 KAHN, FLORENCE PRAG, 94; JULIUS, 95
 Kai-Fung-Fu, 172
 KALLEN, HORACE M., 89, 94
 Kansas; *see* Beecher Island, Battle of; Leavenworth
 Kansas City, Mo., 92, 182
 KAPLAN, ALLEN S., 221-23; BENJAMIN, 80; HARRY, 89; MRS. HARRY, 89; MORDECAI M., 80
 Karaites, 158
 KARPELES, GUSTAV, 142
 Kashfuth, 95, 128, 130-32, 152
 KASSOWITZ (family and name), 8

- KATSMAN, LOUIS, 93
 KATZIR, EPHRAIM, 242
 KAUFMANN, DAVID, 158; MRS. JULES, 93
 KAUVAR, CHARLES ELIEZER HILLEL, 89;
 MRS. C. E., 89
 KEHATI, SHMUEL, 218-19
 KELLEY, FRANCIS CLEMENT, 190-93
 KENDALL, MRS. MILTON M., 90
 Keneseth Israel Congregation, Philadel-
 phia, 94
 Kentucky, 242; *see also* Louisville
 Kibbutzim, 28, 240
 Kiddush, 224, 227
 Kindness, 230
 Kingdom of God, 161
 Kings, 36-39, 43, 54, 59-61, 63-64, 161,
 232
 KIP, JACOB, 70
 KIRSCHEN, JERRY, 27-28
 KIRSNER, HARRY, 89
 Kiwanis, 242
 Klal Israel, 185
 KLAYMAN, 93
 KLEIN, GERALD J., 91
 KNIGHT, LUCIAN LAMAR, 80
 Knowledge; *see* Learning
 Knoxville, 94
 KOCH, KENNETH, 82
 KOHLER, KAUFMANN, 104, 122, 129, 133,
 139, following p. 136, 155-56, 160-63,
 165-66, 168; MRS. KOHLER, 162
 KOHN, MRS., Chicago, 15-16
 KOLLEK, TEDDY, 227
 KORN, BERTRAM W., 80, 88
 Kosher; *see* Kashruth
 KOSHLAND, DANIEL E., SR., 93
 KOSTELANETZ, RICHARD, 82
 Kovno, 141-42
 KRAININ (family), 92; HAROLD L., 92;
 JOSEPH, 92
 KRAMER, WILLIAM, 93, 95
 KRANZ, PHILIP N., 93
 KRANZLER, GEORGE, 82
 KRAUS, ADOLF, 86
 KRAUSE, ALLEN, 80; SAMUEL, 114
 KRAUSKOPF, JOSEPH, 94, 108, 125, 129, 195
 Kristallnacht, 230-31
 KROCHMAL, NACHMAN, 119
 KUENEN, ABRAHAM, 143
 KUNITZ, STANLEY, 82
 KUNSTLER, WILLIAM, 25
 Kurland, 113; *see also* Libau
- L
- Labor Party (Great Britain), 31
 Labor unions, 9; *see also* Unions, Work
 Labor Zionist Organization of America, 5
 Laboratories, 183
 Ladies' Educational Aid Societies, 117-18
 Lampoons, 174
 Lamps, 73-74, 115, 235
 Land, 19, 31, 47, 49, 60, 137, 226; *see also*
 Agriculture, Lots, Real estate
 LANDIS, JAMES M., 59
 Landowners, 20, 69
 LANGER, WILLIAM, 211
 Language, 27, 29, 81, 233-34
 LaPorte, Ind., 85
 LASKER, ALBERT D., 17
 Latin, 113, 238
 Latitudinarianism, 136
 LAUFER, CINCINNATI, 114
 Law, 9, 44, 56, 73, 113, 118, 127, 132, 136-
 37, 140, 160, 205, 211, 237; Federal,
 209; rabbinic, 145, 148; state, 209; *see*
also Mosaic Law, Trials
 LAWRENCE, JOHN, 76
 Lawyers, 21, 68, 71, 91, 148, 212
 Laymen, 81, 103, 117, 148
 Leaders, 1, 3, 27-28, 33, 35, 38-39, 45,
 48-49, 57, 61, 81, 90, 92, 105, 122, 133,
 144, 146-47, 149-51, 169, 181, 190,
 192-94, 202, 216, 219-21, 225, 229, 233
 Learning, 103, 122, 128, 134-35, 143, 145-
 46, 150-51, 153, 156-57, 167, 169, 183,
 193, 195, 205, 219, 225, 228-29, 233,
 237, 243; *see also* Education, Freedom,
 Scholars, Secularism, Studies
 Leavenworth, Kans., 92
 Lebanon; *see* Beirut
 LeCLAIR (notary), 69
 Lectures; *see* Addresses, Sermons
 Ledgers, 76, 85
 Left wing, 24-25, 27, 29-30, 94; religious,
 133, 147
 Legends, 198
 LEINWAND, GERALD, 82
 Leisure, 18

- LENHOFF, LILLIE, 89
 LENN, THEODORE I., 82-83; Report, 80, 82-83
 Leopold-Loeb trial, Chicago, 13
 Leopold Street Shule (Beth Israel), Rochester, N. Y., 95
 LERNER, STEPHEN C., 83
Let My People Go: A Haggadah, 83
 "Letter of Intent," facing p. 23
 Letters, 18, 40-43, 48-50, 52, 60, 63, 65, 69, 71, 78-79, 85-92, 117, 120-21, 130, 140-41, 144, 148-53, 163-65, 172, 177-81, 190-93, 198-202, 213, 216-18, 241
 Levant Federation, 36
 LEVI, CHARLES, 164-65; JOHN, 219
 LEVIAS, CASPAR, 163
 LEVINE, ISAAC DON, 88
 LEVINSON, ROBERT E., 87, 93
 Levi's (Cincinnati restaurant), 116
 LEVY (family), 67, 115; ACHILLE, 95; ANSELL SAMUEL, 66-67; ASSER ("Assur" Levy; Asser Levy van Schwelm), 2, 66-77; BENJAMIN, 67; BENJAMIN HIRSCH, 77; B. H., JR., 77; CLIFTON HARBY, 115-17; HENRY W., 84; JOAN, 77; LIPMAN, 118; MIRIAM (MARIA), 66-67, 72; RACHEL, 77; SAMUEL, 77
 LEWI, JOSEPH, 121
 Libau, Kurland, 113
 Liberal Judaism; *see* Reform
 Liberalism, 25-26, 28, 30, 84, 105, 126, 156, 160, 164, 181, 183, 214, 218
 Liberty, 198-99, 207; *see also* Freedom
 Libraries, 95, 104, 135, following p. 139, 143, 170-73, 229, 243
 Libya, 36, 61
 Licenses, 236-38
 Lieutenant colonels, 36-37
 Life, 5, 9, 28, 80, 83, 89, 93, 95, 121, 146, 149, 179, 201, 205-6, 214-15, 219, 225-26, 228-29, 236, 239; *see also* Culture, Economic, Intellectual, Jewish, Public, Social, Spiritual
 Life-belts, 195-96
 LILIENTHAL, MAX, 78-79, 106, 108-9, 150; SAMUEL, 79
 Lincoln Park, Chicago, 16
 LION (family), 93
 LIPSON, NORMAN S., 93
 LISKOFKY, SIDNEY, 82
 Literature, 26, 29, 92, 111, 119, 128, 134-36, 145, 153, 164, 183, 193, 197, 232; Jewish, 80, 119, 142, 152, 154, 159, 228, 233; *see also* Fiction, Hebrew, Rabbinic, Religio-philosophical, Theological, Yiddish
 Litigation, 66
 LITSOE (LITSCO), ANNETKIN (Anna), 74, 76
 Liturgy, 103, 145, 189, 233; *see also* Prayer, Worship
 Livelihood, 11, 189, 221
 LIVINGSTON, M., Cincinnati, 114
 Loans, 68, 70
 Lobbyists, 148
 Lodging, 113-14
 LOEB (Chicago family), 13; DICKIE, 13
 Logan, W. Va., 85, 87
 London, 34, 37, 43, 45, 53-54, 135, 170, 172; Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews, 172; *see also* Great Britain
 London-Palestine Exhibition, 172
 LONG, HUEY P., 190
 Long Island, N. Y., 232
 Los Angeles, 92, 105, following p. 136, 204, 226, 228-29, 233-34, 236, 240, 243; Jews of, 235; Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 233-35, 243; Jewish Museum, 234; Skirball Museum, 234-36
 LOTH, MORITZ, 117-18
 Lots, 69, 73
 Louis Grossman Collection, 235
 Louisiana, 86, 115; *see also* New Orleans
 Louisville, Ky., 91
 Love, 11, 161, 234
 LOVEMAN-BLACK (family), 93
 Lower East Side, 84; *see also* New York City
 LOWI, THEODORE, 80
 Loyalty, 137, 153, 213
 LUCENA, MOSES, 69
 LUMBROSO, MOSES, 68
 Luncheons, 61
 Lunéville, France, 179
 Lutherans, 70
 LUTTWAK, EDWARD, 82
 Luxury, 18

M

- MAAS, J. J., 114
 MACK, WILLIAM J., 87
 MADISON, CHARLES A., 83-84
 Madison Park Hotel, Chicago, 6, 20-21
 MAGNES, JUDAH LEON, 163-65; Museum, Berkeley, 95
 MAGRISH (family), 90; JAMES L., 89-90; Mrs. JAMES L., 90
 Mail, 178, 213, 241
 Maine; *see* Naples
 MAISEL, JAY, 81
 Majority, 33
 Majors, 196
 MALAMUD, BERNARD, 83
 MALINO, JEROME R., 182, 184-85
 MALTER, HENRY (HEINRICH), 142-43, 163-64
 Man, 127, 157, 160-62, 188-89, 194, 198, 201-2, 205-6, 215, 228, 234, 243; *see also* Humanity, Men, Women
 Mandatory Power (Palestine), 31, 59
 MANDEL (family), 90; FRANK, 90
 Manhattan, 232; *see also* New York City
 MANN, THOMAS, 197-99
 Manners, 81
 MANNHEIMER, SIGMUND, 124
 MANNING, JOHN, 71, 76
 "Mansion, The," Richmond Street, Cincinnati, 115-16
 MANTINBAND, CHARLES, 90; Mrs. CHARLES, 90
 Manuals, 171
 Manufacturing, 10
 Manuscripts, 89, 170, 172
 Marches, 88
 MARCUS, JACOB R., 3-4, 88-91, 95, 141, 177-81, 202, 204
 MARCUSON, ISAAC, 122, 124-25
 MARGOLIS, MAX, 163-64, 166
 MARGOSHES, SAMUEL, 88
 MARKOWSKY, MEYER, 87
 MARKS, LOUIS D., 108
 MARKSTEIN, Mrs. JOHN L., 91
 Marriage, 7-8, 11, 13, 66-67, 77, 89, 96, 120-21, 206, 226, 228, 237
 Marshall Field Company, Chicago, 16
 MARSHALL, GEORGE C., 41; JAMES, 90; LOUIS, 95, 148
 Martha's Vineyard, Mass., 13
 Martin, Tenn., 242
 MARX, DAVID, 95
 Maryland; *see* Baltimore, Silver Spring
 MASHBERG, MICHAEL, 94
 Massachusetts; *see* Boston, Brookline, Martha's Vineyard, Pittsfield
 Masses, the, 80, 158; Jewish, 164
 Materialism, 132, 149, 152
 Mathematics, 113
 Maxims, 212
 Maxwell Street, Chicago, 14, 19; Police Station, 14; Settlement House, 14-18
 MAYER, HARRY H., 140-43; MORRIS, 124
 Mayors, 72, 227
 MCCARTHY, JOSEPH R., 21; Army hearings, 21
 MCCLOY, JOHN J., 41-43
 McMicken College, Cincinnati, 104
 Measles, 13
 Medals, 91
 Mediators, 189
 Medical schools, 7, 238
 Meetings, 44, 46, 60
 MEIR, GOLDA, following p. 136, 226
 Melamed (Hebrew teacher), 87
 Melbourne, Australia, 219
 Melting pot, 81
 Memoirs, 5, 92, 158, 203
 Memoranda, 34, 38, 41-42, 50-51, 53-55, 58-60, 64-65, 88
 Memorials, 92, 95, 157
 Memory, 231
 Memphis, 85, 87, 96, 124
 Men, 13, 24, 127, 129-30, 134-38, 149, 156, 162, 169, 172, 182-83, 205, 208, 213, 218-19, 226, 228, 237, 242
 MENDELSSOHN, MOSES, 132
 MENDES, ABRAHAM P., 95
 Merchandise, 10, 67-69, 71-72, 76, 114
 Merchants, 92; *see also* Business, Storekeepers, Wholesalers
 Mercy, 210, 212, 230, 234
 MEROWITZ, MORTON J., 78-79
 Mesopotamia, 165
 Messianism, 126, 137, 139, 161, 163, 188-89
 METTENS, JAN, 68
 Mexico, Jews of, 158
 Michael Reese Hospital, Chicago, 11-13
 MICHAELS (MICHAELSON), ASHER (ASSER) (Asher Michaels de Paul), 66, 72, 77

- Michigan, 5; *see also* Detroit, Jackson, Royal Oak, Saginaw
 Middle Ages, 127, 196
 Middle class, 28, 81
 Middle East, 1, 24, 34, 36-37, 39, 41, 46-48, 52-55, 59, 63-65, 156, 225, 234, 242
 Midrash, 198
Midstream, 84
 MIELZINER, MOSES, 104, 124, 144-47, 156, 160
Mikraot Gedolot, 171
 Militants, 33
 Military, 30, 34, 36, 40-42, 47-49, 59, 89, 196; schools, 219; *see also* Armies, Soldiers, War
 MILLER, ARNOLD H., 92; MRS. EVELYN, 88
 MILLS, C. WRIGHT, 23
 Milwaukee, 85, 87
 Ministers, governmental, 43, 45, 52, 60-61, 220; religious, 118, 120-21, 147, 149-51, 154, 182; *see also* Clergy, Priests, Rabbis
 Minneapolis, 87
 Minorities, 31-33, 82
Minorities All (Leinwand), 82
 Mintsies, 73
 MINTZ, ALAN, 83
 Minyan, 181
 Miracles, 137
 Misconduct, 210
 Mishkan Israel Congregation, New Haven, 86
 Mishnah, 109
 Mission, 127, 137-38, 160-63
 Missionaries, 37, 149, 151, 161
 Mississippi; *see* Hattiesburg, Natchez, Summit
 Missouri; *see* Hammersmith, Kansas City, St. Louis
 Mixed seating (synagogue), 86
 Mobilization, 240
 Moderation, 61
 Modern Hebrew, 167, 224; *see also* Hebrew language
 Modernism, 152, 154, 163, 200, 215, 218, 233
 Money, 8-9, 15-18, 68-71, 75, 117, 119, 180-81, 221, 227, 238
 Monotheism, 161
 Montana, 9
 MONTEFIORE, MOSES, 170-71
 Montevideo, Uruguay, 219
 Montgomery, Ala., 207; Bus Boycott, 207
 Montreal, 199; Jews of, 81
 Monuments, 88, 90, 196
 MOODY, JOSEPH M., 192
 MOONEY, EDWARD, 190-92
Moorpark (Calif.) *Enterprise*, 95
 MORAIS, SABATO, 147-48, 151
 Morality, 28-29, 121-22, 146, 161-62, 188, 205-6, 215
 MORGENSTERN, JULIAN, 96, 104, following p. 136, 183, 186-87, 190-95, 198-202
 MORGENTHAU, HENRY, SR., 88
 MORRIS, ROBERT, 90
 Mortgages, 19, 69
 Mosaic Law, 132-34, 161; *see also* Revelation, Sinai
 MOSCOW, 52-53
 MOSES (lawgiver), 127, 137
 MOSES, ALTAMONT, 92; OCTAVIA COHEN, 92
 MOSESSON, GLORIA R., 83
 Moslems, 39, 60-61, 153, 161
 Motion pictures, 20, 86
 MOTTA, JACOB DE LA, 89
 MOTTHE DE LA (captain), 68
 Mound Street Temple, Cincinnati, 104, 108, following p. 136
 Mounted Scouts (First World War), 177
 MOYNE, LORD, 55
 MOYNIHAN, DANIEL P., 81
 Muckrakers, 84
 Munich, 91, 139
 Murder, 13, 29, 55, 153
 MURRAY, WALLACE, 46-47, 50-54, 58, 64
 Murstein Chapel, Hebrew Union College, Jerusalem, 227
 Museum of the City of New York, 84
 Museums, 29, 84, 95, 105, 172, 204, 221, 225, 229, 233-36, 243
 Music, 27, 92, 168, 229, 233, 243; *see also* Hymns, Songs
 M'vakshe Derek, 91
 MYERS-COHEN, REBECCA, 77; SAMUEL, 77
 Mysticism, 23

N

- NAGLE, JAN., 69
 Naples, Me., 92

- Nashville, 93, 109
 NAST, HELEN E., 90
 Natchez, 92
 NATHAN, GEORGE JEAN, 7; MOSES N., 95;
 WILLIAM M., 86
 Nation (term), 200; American, 205
 National Archives, Washington, D. C., 87
 National Community Relations Advisory
 Council, 87
 National Farm School, 136
 National Federation of Temple Sister-
 hoods, 219; of Temple Youth, 219
National Jewish Monthly, 84
National Review, 84
 Nationalism, 25, 137-38, 163, 166, 200;
 see also Arabs, Blacks, Zionism
 Nationality, 138, 200
 Nations, 25, 38-39, 138, 155, 160-62, 200-
 201
 Native-born, 147, 160, 172, 181, 218-19
 Navy (United States), 196-97
 Nazism, 33, 37, 88, 190, 197-98, 202, 207,
 230, 235; *see also* Hitler
 Near East Division, State Department, 46;
 see also Middle East, Office of Near
 Eastern Affairs
 Negev, 235
 Neighbors, neighborhoods, 14, 16-17, 19-
 20, 179, 189
 Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archae-
 ology, 226
 Netherlands; *see* Dutch
 NETTRE, PEPI, 78
 Neumann Memorial Publication Fund, 2,
 98
 NEUMARK, DAVID, 166-68
 NEUSNER, JACOB, 83
 New Amsterdam, 3, 67, facing p. 68, 70;
 Wall Street, 71
 New Bern, N. C., 85-86
 New Deal, 188, 190
 New England, 71
 New Haven, 86
 New Jersey, 232; *see also* Atlantic City,
 Newark, Roosevelt
 New Left, 1, 23-24, 26-27, 30
 New Orleans, 5, 86, 88, 94, 148
 "New Right," 30
 New World, 166
 New Year, 8, 180
 New York City, 10-11, 31, 33, 69-70, 72-
 73, 81, 84, 87, 92, 96, 105, 120, 129-30,
 138-41, 148, 151, 153-54, 160, 163, 168,
 171, 182, 184-85, 204, 210, 219-20, 222,
 226, 228, 231, 234, 236, 240, 243; B'nai
 B'rith, 87; City College, 86; East Side,
 84; Hebrew Union College-Jewish In-
 stitute of Religion, 237, 243; Jews of, 81;
 Lower East Side, 84; Manhattan, 232;
 Museum, 84; Pearl Street, 71; Pennsyl-
 vania Station, 210; Water gate, 73
*New York Genealogical and Biographical
 Record*, 66
 New York State and Colony, 66, 71, 115;
 Training School for Girls, 90; *see also*
 Albany, Brooklyn, Flatbush, Long
 Island, Manhattan, New Amsterdam,
 New York City, Rochester, Syracuse,
 Williamsburg
New Yorker, 20
 New Zealand, 219; *see also* Auckland,
 Wellington
 Newark, N. J., 95
 NEWMAN, MRS. BLANCHE R., 93
 Newspapers, 14-15, 26, 85-86, 88-90, 95,
 117, 126, 139, 156-57, 203, 211-13,
 222-23, 231; *see also* Journalism, Peri-
 odicals, Press
 Night school, 11-12
 Nobel Prize, 197
 Nobility, 67, 183
 "Nobles of the Children of Israel," 111
 NOELDEKE, THEODOR, 142
 Nomads, 235
 Non-Conformists, 159
 Non-Jews, 44-45, 84, 169, 171, 183; *see
 also* Catholics, Christianity, Gentiles,
 Moslems
 Non-Nazis, 231
 Nonviolence, 90
 Non-Zionists, 33, 163, 183
 NORFOLK, DUCHESS OF, 67
 North (United States), 9
 North Africa, 36, 61
 North America, 66, facing p. 68, 69, 82;
 Jewry, 3
 North Atlantic Ocean, 195-96
 North Carolina; *see* New Bern, Winston-
 Salem
 North Dakota, 211

Notaries, 69
 "Note on the Dating of Dr. Max Lilienthal's Birth" (Merowitz), 78-79
 Notes, 69, 117
 NOVAK, BILL, 83
 Novelists; *see* Fiction
 Novogradok, Russia, 88
 Numismatics, 235
 NUNES, RICKE, 68
 Nurseries, 16
 Nurses, 12-13, 18, 20; training schools, 12

O

Oaths, 70, 72-73
 Oberlin College, 237
 Oberwesel, Germany, 230
 Obituaries, 92, 159
 Observance, 134, 158-59, 164; *see also* Ceremonies,
 Offenbach, Germany, 238
 Office of Near Eastern Affairs (United States), 46
 Officials, congregational and communal, 91, 223; military, 36-37; governmental, 34, 37, 39-41, 43, 45, 47, 52, 57, 212, 220
 Ohabei Shalom Congregation, Brookline, Mass., 85
 Ohio, 107, 129, 211; State University, 89; *see also* Akron, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus
 Oil industry, 53, 64
 Oklahoma, 197; City, 190
 OKO, ADOLPH S., 170-74
 Old age homes, 94, 238
 Old Left, 23
 Old World, 166
 Olympiad (1972), 91
 One Hundred Forty-Fifth U. S. Infantry (First World War), 177
Only in America (Golden), 82
 Opera, 162
 OPPENHEIMER, J. ROBERT, 83
 Opportunity, 205
 Opposition, 155, 214, 219, 224
 Oppression, 26, 83, 138, 160, 194; *see also* Persecutions
 Oratory, 117, 155, 181, 190, 217

Order (synagogue), 135
 Ordinances, 127
 Ordination, 23, 104, 108, 128-30, following p. 136, 153, 187, 218-19, 233, 236-38
 Organ, 135, 168, 233
 Organizations, 17, 24, 27, 30, 81, 85, 90, 128, 165, 213, 235; *see also* Institutions, Societies
 Oriental Jews, 158
 Orientalism, 198
 Orphans, 87, 112-13, 118, 136
 Orthodox Judaism, 11, 105, 126, 130, 147, 149, 151-52, 154, 159, 161, 166, 180, 183, 197, 218, 224, 236; Modern, 154; *see also* Tradition
 OVADIA, ALBERT, 93
 Overcoats, 116
 Overseers, 46
 Ownership of land, 47, 49

P

Pacific Basin, 4, 196
 Pacifism, 23, 209
 Painters, 81
 Palestine, 1, 31-65, 87-88, 94, 105, 137, 139, 161, 163, 165, 173, 186, 194, 199-201, 204, 218, 232; Holy places, 36; Jews of, 223; London-Palestine Exhibition, 172; Mandate, 59; Palestine Resolutions, 43; Palestinian Arabs, 38; partition, 199; *see also* Israel, Jerusalem
 PALSSON, MARY DALE, 80
 Pamphlets, 86, 88, 95
 Panaceas, 188
 Panama, 218
 Panics, 9
 Paper, 172
 Papers, after p. 22, 31-33, 44-46, 76, 86-87, 89-91, 174, 203
 Para-military, 30
 Parents, 6-8, 10-11, 13, 16-18, 37, 81, 90-91, 93, 106-7, 113, 118, 197, 210, 216, 219, 230-32
 Parks, 16
 Parliament, British, 155; Israeli, 225
 Parole, 210
 Particularism, 25, 27
 Parties, political, 47-48, 52, 152, 155, 158

- Partition of Palestine, 199
 Partnerships, 67, 71, 179
 PARZEN, HERBERT, 31-65
 Passengers, 196, 210
 Passover, 16, 83, 196, 235
 Patents, 73, 76
 Patients, 18-19
 Patriotism, 90, 137, 177-78
 Patrols, 219
 Pawning, 8
 Peace, 41, 118, 136, 161-62, 239, 242; conference, 32
 Pearl Street, New York, 71
 Peddling, 10, 92
 Peers, 67
 Pennsylvania; *see* Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, York
 Pentateuch, 127, 172; *see also* Bible, Torah
 People, 25, 27
 Periodicals, 4, 20, after p. 22, 26, 80, 84, 88-89, 95, 121, 123, 125, 148, 153, 164, 203, 231; *see also* Journalism, Newspapers, Press
 Perjury, 209
 PERLMUTTER, NATHAN, 84
 Permissiveness, 236
 Persecutions, 8, 36, 51, 138-39, 190, 192, 207
 Persia, 172
 PETERSON, MAURICE, 46
 PETUCHOWSKI, JAKOB J., 83
 Pews, 216
 Pewter, 73-74, 76
 Philadelphia, 89, 112, 114, 120, 129, 138, 210, 224
 Philanthropy, 3, 9, 16-17, 139, 143, 201; *see also* Relief, Welfare
 PHILBY, ST. JOHN, 38-39
 PHILIPSON, DAVID, 78, 106-9, 126, 128-30, 140-41
 Philistinism, 28
 PHILO, ISIDOR E., 90
 Philology, 119, 143
 Philosopher's stone, 165
 Philosophy, 27, 105, 119, 132, 145, 166-67, 171, 205, 214, 219, 230, 232; of religion, 156, 233; *see also* Thought
 Phylacteries, 219
 Physical education, 187
 Physicians, 11, 114, 187
 Pickets, 210
 Picnics, 16
 PIETERS, 70
 Pillage, 210
 Pioneers, 66, 88, 220-21
 Pittsburgh, 133, 180; Platform, 133, 147, 207; Rabbinical Conference, 133
 Pittsfield, Mass., 89
 PIZITZ (family), 90; LOUIS, 90
 Placement, rabbinical, 117
 Planks, 72, 76, 207
 Platforms, political, 47, 49-50; religious, 133
 PLAUT, W. GUNTHER, 87
 PLAVIER (family), 69
 Pledges, 50-51, 62-63, 65
 Plum Street Temple; *see* B'nai Yeshurun
 Pluralism, 4, 94
 PLUVIER, 70
 PODET, ALLEN H., 85
 PODWAL, MARK, 83
 Poetry, 82, 84, 205
 Pointers, 235
 Poker, 117
 POLACK, ALEXANDER, 69
 Poland, 14, 87-88; Jews of, 103
 POLICAR, HARRY, 93; JACOB, 93; MARCO, 93
 Police, 14, 210, 231; *Gazette*, 126
 Politics, 1, 3, 8, 17, 23, 25-26, 30-31, 35-37, 39-40, 42, 47-52, 54, 56, 58-59, 82, 84, 94, 137-39, 163, 181, 190, 200-201, 238; *see also* Platforms
 POLLAK, OSCAR, 87
 Poor; *see* Poverty
 Population, 17, 33, 60, 81, 94
 Populism, 23, 190
 Portraits, 196
 Positivism, 30
Possibilities of Poetry (Kostelanetz), 82
 Post-Civil War period, 103
 Post-graduates, 136
 Post World War II period, 36, 39, 46, 60, 63, 82, 89, 236
 POSTAL, BERNARD, 84, 86
 POTTER, J. M., Cincinnati, 114
 Pottery, 232
 Poverty, 9, 13-14, 16, 24, 112, 114-115, 118, 231

Power of attorney, 69, 72
 Practicality, 217
 Practice, 155, 164
 Prague, 7-9, 21
 Prairies, 173
 Pranks, 125
 Prayer, 29, 92, 116, 180, 195-96, 210-11, 239; books, 164, 172; *see also* Liturgy, Worship
 Preachers, 136, 146, 190, 207, 209, 218, 222, 232-33
 Prejudice, 192; *see also* Anti-Semitism
 Prep schools, 37
 Preparatory colleges, 105
 Presidents, United States, 1, 31-65, 84, 89, 95, 209-10, 240
 Press, 26, 57, 60, 64, 130, 139, 158; *see also* Journalism, Newspapers, Periodicals
 Pressburg, 135
Press-Courier (Oxnard, Calif.), 95
 Pre-World War II period, 82
 Prices, 10
 Pride, 19, 242
 PRIESAND, SALLY J., 96, 236-38
 Priests, 136, 161, 168, 190, 192, 204
 Prime Ministers, 35, 59-62, 220-21, 226
 PRINCE, MRS. NORMAN H., 87
 Principals, 218, 243
 Prisons, 67-68, 209-10
 Privileges, 201
 Prizes, 196
 Problems, 25-26, 36-37, 42-43, 60-62, 81, 189, 205, 207, 223, 229
 Prodigies, 166
 Professions, 12, 15, 18-20, 136, 195, 216, 223, 228
 Professors, 89, 104, 106, 112, 140, 156-57, 162-63, 166-68, 191, 202, 208, 216, 225-26, 238-39, 242
 Programs, 33, 86, 96, 185, 193, 204, 225-26, 228-29
 Progress, progressivism, 127, 132, 154, 169, 183, 188, 194, 200, 205, 215
 Progressive Judaism, 161, 165, 169; *see also* Reform Judaism
 Proletariat, 25
Promised Land (Antin), 82
 Propaganda, 47
 Property, 71
 Prophets, 127, 134, 137, 160-61, 201, 204

Proprietors, 10, 17
 Prosecutors, 209
 Prosperity, 60, 152, 155
 Prostitution, 7
 "Protestant" (term), 27
 Protestants, 24, 67, 190, 196, 237-38
 Protests, 34-35, 42, 45, 48, 52, 62, 88, 90, 112, 133, 137
 Protocols, 59; *of the Elders of Zion*, 80
 Providence, 155, 160, 165
 Pro-Zionism, 35, 52-53, 61-62, 64-65; *see also* Zionism
 Psalms, 232, 239
 Psychology, 38, 56, 233
 Public life, 117, 226, 229
 Public office, 219
 Public opinion, 32-33, 42, 47, 60, 126
 Public relations, 217
 Public schools, 16, 30, 104, 107, 112, 231, 237; *see also* Education, High schools, Schools
 Public works, 60
 Publishing, 66, 117, 172, 204, 213, 243
 Puerto Rico, 81
 Pulpit, 136, 154, 158, 181, 196, 222; *see also* Congregations, Rabbis, Synagogues, Temples
 Punishment, 162, 212
Punishment Without Crime (Fineberg), 88
 Purity, 28, 162

Q

Quartering, 70
 Quebec Conference, 35, 47
Quincy (ship), 59-60
 Quotas, immigration, 44

R

Rabbi and Synagogue in Reform Judaism (Lenn), 82-83
 Rabbinic literature, 119, 135, 159, 167, 171
 Rabbinical seminaries, 103, 105, 129-30, 135, 147, 149, 152, 154, 158, 181, 184, 220, 229
 Rabbis, 5, 8, 11, 18, 23, 29, 78, 81-83, 88-91, 93, 95-96, 103-8, 112, 117, 119-

- 20, 128-31, 135, 139, following p. 136, 143, 146, 148-52, 154-55, 159-60, 166, 168, 181-84, 188-89, 195-97, 199, 204, 209, 215-19, 222, 225, 227-29, 232-33, 236-38, 243
- Race, 8, 24, 138, 166, 200, 207
- Radicalism, religious, 133, 147, 151, 183
- Radicals, 1, 25, 28, 30; Jewish, 26
- Radio, 43, 190-91, 210, 242
- Railroads, 103
- RAISIN, MAX, 153-54
- Rape, 210
- RAPHAEL (family), 90; HENRY D., 90
- RAPOPORT, SOLOMON, 119
- Ration tickets, 20
- Rationalism, 134, 137, 234
- Reactionaries, 25
- Readers, 171
- Real estate, 19; bonds, 19-20; *see also* Buildings, Land
- Realism, 188
- REAMY, THAD. A., 114
- REARSON, JACOB, 92
- Receptionists, 222-23
- Receptions, 220, 225
- Recife, Brazil, 67-68
- Reclamation, 220
- Reconstructionists, 83
- Records, 16, 66-67, 70, 86-87, 203; congregational, 85
- Red Cross, 222-23
- Redemption, 126, 138
- Refinement, 152
- Reform Is a Verb* (Fein), 80
- Reform Judaism, 11, 80, 82-83, 94, 103-5, 127-30, 132-33, 144, 147-49, 151-54, 159-60, 163-66, 169, 180, 194, 197, 199-200, 207, 214-15, 217-20, 224-27, 229, 234, 236-38, 242-43
- Refugees, 39, 44, 49, 51, 59, 94, 223, 231
- Regents, 65
- Regulations, 123-24, 133, 174, 176-77
- REIS, MRS. THOMAS J., 92
- REISMAN, BERNARD, 80
- REISSMAN, LEONARD, 80
- Relatives, 7, 9, 13, 15, 18-21, 66-67, 72, 77, 79, 81, 89, 108, 117, 204, 231, 238
- Relativity, 213
- Relics, 232
- Relief, 223; *see also* Philanthropy, Welfare
- Religio-ethical, 104, 163
- "Religion" (term), 27-28, 30
- Religion, 1, 3, 27-30, 37, 46, 59, 81, 103-5, 127, 132-33, 138, 146-47, 152-53, 183, 188-89, 200-201, 215, 219, 226, 234-35; history of, 233; *see also* Christianity, Education, Judaism, Moslems, Persecutions, Sunday, Sunday schools, Worship
- "Religion and the Jewish New Left" (Glickstein), 23-30
- Religious rights, 236
- Religious schools, 215, 232, 243
- Remonstrances, 42, 52, 63
- Rent, 19
- Reporters, 126, 210
- Republican Party, 47, 49-50
- Republics, 220, 223, 238
- Research, 66, 105, 182-83, 193, 195, 224-25, 228, 234
- Resettlement, 38-39
- Resolutions, 33, 39-42, 44, 47-52, 54-55, 57-58, 60, 90-91, 207, 240-41
- Resorts, 5
- Responsa, 88
- Restaurants, 116, 207-8
- Restoration to Palestine, 138, 161
- Resurrection, 126
- Retaliation, 213
- Retirement, 18-20
- Reuter report, 63
- Revelation, 126-28, 136, 200
- Revolutionaries, 25-26, 56, 71, 165, 238
- Revolutionary Action Movement, 24
- Reward, 160
- REZNIKOFF, CHARLES, 84
- Rhine River, 230
- Richmond Street, Cincinnati, 115
- Richmond, Va., 89, 91, 95
- RICHTER, KARL, 85
- RICKLES, JULIUS, 93
- Righteousness, 137, 160-62, 189, 199, 213
- Rights, civil and political, 82, 137-38, 200, 207; personal, 152; religious, 236; *see also* Equality
- "Rightwingers" (religious), 148
- RIIS, JACOB A., 84
- RINDER, REUBEN R., 88, 92; ROSE, 92
- Ritual; *see* Ceremonies
- Rivers, 71, 173, 228, 230

ROBERTS, HENRY L., 82
 ROBINSON, SHMUEL, 94
 Rochester, N. Y., 95, 182-83, 204
 Romans, 235
 Romanticism, 28
 Rome, 81
 ROOS; *see* Rose
 ROOSEVELT, ELEANOR, 62; FRANKLIN DELANO, 1, 31-65, 188
 Roosevelt, N. J., 92
 "Roosevelt Palestine Policy" (Parzen), 31-65
 ROSE (ROOS), GARRETT JANSEN (Gerrett Johnse), 71, 73, 76
 ROSEMAN, KENNETH, 85-86
 ROSEN, JEROME, 92
 ROSENAU, WILLIAM, 116, 125
 ROSENBACH, HENRY, 127
 ROSENBERG, ETHEL, 208-9, 211-13; JULIUS, 209-13
 ROSENWAIKE, IRA, 80
 ROSENTHAL, ERICH, 94; JULIUS, 171
 ROSENWALD, AUGUSTA, 90; JULIUS, 235
 Rosh Hashanah; *see* New Year
 ROSTOW, EUGENE V., 82
 Rotary, 242
 ROTHSCHILD, JACOB M., 95; EDMOND DE, 138
 ROTHSTEIN, JAY, 94
 Roumania, 87, 138; Jews of, 153
 ROVERE, RICHARD, 23
 Royal Oak, Mich., 190
 RUBENSTEIN, ISAAC, 114
 RUBIN, JERRY, 25
 RUBINSTEIN, ROBERT, 223
 RUNES, DAVID, 114
 Russia, 26, 34, 53-54, 78, 87, 138, 170, 173, 180, 209, 211; Jews of, 16, 84, 103, 138, 152, 154, 165, 170; *see also* Moscow, Soviet
 Russian-German Jews, 112
 Russische Shul, Chicago, 16
 RUTKAY, PAUL, 83

S

Sabbath-School Union, 136
 Sabras, 219
 SACHS, JOSEPH, 180; MORRIS, 112-13
 Sacrifice, 136, 161, 205
 Sagas, 231
 Sages, 145-46
 Saginaw, Mich., 89
 Sailors, 68, 197
 St. Francisville, Ill., 186
 St. Louis, Mo., 92
Ste. Catherine (ship), 68
 Saintliness, 183
 Salaries, 10-11, 19, 110, 112, 114, 119, 141-42, 171, 180, 231, 233
 Salli Kirschstein Collection, 235
 SALOMON, HAYM, 83, 90
 SALOMONS, ELIAS, 72
 Salt, 76; cellars, 73, 75
 Salvation, 128, 161, 227
 Samaritans, 158
 San Francisco, 29-30, 88, 92, 94-95, 143-44, 171; Conservatory, 88
 SANDERS, MRS. GILBERT, 90-91
 SANDLER, BERNARD I., 94
 SANE, 24
 Sanitariums, 18
Sanson (Minneapolis), 87
 Santa Cruz, Cal., 87
 SAPIR, PINCHAS, 225
 Sarcasm, 131-32, 136
 SARNOFF, DAVID, 231
 Satire, 27-28
 Saturday, 111, 116, 180, 223-24, 227, 237; *see also* Sabbath
 Saudia, 36, 38, 43, 53, 59-61, 64, 172
 Savants, 128
 Savings, 18
 Scandals, 126
 SCFR; *see* Senate
 SCHACHTER, ZALMAN M., 83
 SCHECHTER, SOLOMON, 153-56
 SCHEUER, S. H., 219; DICK, 227
 SCHIFF, JACOB H., 148-51
 SCHINDLER, ALEXANDER M., 95
 SCHLAMME, MARTHA, 211
 SCHLOESSINGER, MAX, 163
 Schnoitzers, 117
 SCHOENTHAL, A., 89
 Scholars, 3-4, 8-9, 38, 66, 88, 103-5, 108, 119, 134-35, 140-41, 152, 155, 159-60,

- 166-69, 172, 193-95, 197, 204, 223-24, 230, 233-34, 243; *see also* Learning
- Scholarships, 11, 113, 219, 232
- Schoolmasters, 119
- Schools, 78, 103, 105, 109, 219, 225, 229, 232, 234, 240-41; of Education, Hebrew Union College, 243; of Sacred Music, Hebrew Union College, 243; *see also* Academies, Colleges, Graduate, Grammar, High schools, Medical schools, Military schools, Night schools, Prep, Preparatory colleges, Rabbinical seminaries, Religious schools, Sabbath schools, Secular, Summer schools, Talmud Torahs, Teachers, Theological, Training schools, Universities
- SCHRAG; *see* Gottschalk
- SCHULMAN, SAMUEL, 125
- SCHURZ, CARL, 231
- SCHWAB, MOSES, 87
- SCHWARTZ, DELMORE, 82
- SCHWARZENBERG (family), 92-93
- Schwelm, Westphalia, 69
- Science, 3, 133-34, 145, 150, 158, 165, 193, 215, 224; of Judaism, 194
- Scotland, 136
- Scouts, 203
- Scrolls; *see* Torah
- SDS, 24
- Sea food, 128, 130
- Seamen, 195
- Seasickness, 8
- Seattle, 93-94
- Second World War, 17, 20, 23, 31-32, 34, 36, 38, 42-44, 46, 50, 88-89, 94, 195, 231, 235
- Secretaries of State, 34-36, 40-41, 45, 49-52, 54, 56-59, 63-64; of War, 34-35, 41, 43, 50
- Secrets, 209
- Secular education, 104, 145, 167, 206
- Secularism, 27-28, 90
- Security, 34, 64, 242
- Seder; *see* Passover
- Segregation, 207
- Self-defense, 207
- Self-expression, 28
- Self-government, 46, 200
- Self-hate, 25
- Self-interest, 28-29
- SELLING, BEN, 235
- Seminaries; *see* Rabbinical, Theological
- Seminars, 225
- Semitic languages, 141, 191, 233
- Senate (United States), 40-42, 49, 55-57, 91, 190, 211; Committee for Foreign Relations (SCFR), 40-41, 43, 51-52, 55-56, 58; Judiciary Committee, 211; *see also* Congress
- Sensationalism, 126, 136
- Sephardim, 93-94
- SERFATTY, JOSHUA, 72
- Sergeants, 177
- Sermons, 90-91, 95, 121, 135, 160, 162, 183-85, 227, 233; *see also* Addresses
- Service, 205, 242; *see also* Worship
- Settlement, 33, 39, 94, 202, 218, 220, 222, 227; houses, 14-18
- Sewing, 10-12
- Sex, 24
- Shaar Hashomayim Congregation, Montreal, 81
- Shaarey Zedek Congregation, Detroit, 29
- SHAPIRO, DAVID, 82; GAVRIEL, 91; HARVEY, 82; JUDITH BETH SILVER, 91
- Sharing, 93
- SHAZAR, ZALMAN, 225, 227
- SHEFTALL, MOSES, 77; PERLA, 77
- Shelter houses, 16-17
- Sherith Israel Congregation, San Francisco, 144
- Sherman Anti-Trust Law, 14
- Sherman, Tex., 241
- Shields, 235
- Ships, 11, 59, 68, 195-96, 219
- SHLESINGER, SIGMUND, 203-4
- Shochothim, 67
- Shoes, 20-21, 74, 114
- SHOLEM, L., Cincinnati, 114
- Shopping centers, 241
- SHREIBER, MORDECAI, 219
- SHUCHAT, WILFRED, 81
- SHUKEN, MRS. SIMON, 93
- Shulhan Aruk*, 154
- SHUSTER, ZACHARIAH, 82
- Siberia, 91, 165
- Sick, the, 20; *see also* Diseases
- SILBERMAN, LOU H., 87
- Silver, 8, 75
- SILVER (family), 93-94; ABBA HILLEL,

- facing p. 32, 44-45, 49, 54-55, 57-58, 173-74; MAX, 94; MRS. MAX, 94
- Silver Spring, Md., 86
- SILVERMAN, CHARLES, 124; MORRIS, 85; WILLIAM B., 188-90
- SILVERSTEIN, RALPH, 232
- SIMON, S., Cincinnati, 114
- Sin, 160-62
- Sinai, 126-27, 220; Congregation, Chicago, 11
- Sing Sing Prison, 209
- Sioux Indians, 203
- Sisterhoods, 18, 85; *see also* National Federation
- "Sit-ins," 208
- Six-Day War (1967), 24-25, 86, 224-25
- Skating, 116
- Skill, 11, 18
- SKIRBALL, JACK H., 235; AUDREY, 235; Museum, Los Angeles, 234-36
- Slaughterhouses, 67, 69, 71, 73, 76, 95
- Slums, 9, 17, 84
- SMITH, EDWARD, 71; GERALD L. K., 190
- SNCC, 24, 27
- SNIDERMAN, STEPHEN LUDWIG, 94
- SNYDER, HERMAN E., 86
- Social action, 207; ethics, 233; gospel, 207; justice, 157, 181, 188, 208; legislation, 9, 14; service, 12-13, 87; welfare, 162, 226, 234
- Social Justice*, 191
- Social life, 23, 29, 81, 84, 89, 131, 136, 139, 183, 189-90, 207, 238; *see also* Clubs, Social ethics, Societies
- Social Science Club, Milwaukee, Wis., 87
- Social studies, 208
- Social work, 15, 173, 195
- Socialism, 23, 26, 95
- Societies, 4, 9, 11, 86-87, 111, 118, 136, 203; *see also* Associations, Institutions, Organizations
- Society of California Pioneers, 92
- Sociocultural Changes in American Jewish Life* (Cohen), 80
- Sociologists, 82, 209
- Soldiers, 40, 70, 87, 92, 180, 195-97, 210; *see also* Military, Russia, United States, War
- Solidarity, 25
- SOLOMON (family), 92; *see also* Israel Solomon Collection
- SOLOMONS, LIZER, 77
- Songs, 11, 174-76, 211; *see also* Music
- SOPHER, MOSES, 119
- Sorrow, 179, 189
- Soul, 160
- South (United States), 9, 80, 95; Jews of, 80
- South Africa, 91, 218; Union for Progressive Judaism, 91
- South America, 39, 165
- South Carolina; *see* Charleston, Sumter
- South Dakota; *see* Wounded Knee
- Soviet Jewry, facing p. 24, 26-28
- Soviet Union, 52-53, 64, 83; *see also* Russia
- Spain, 127, 173; language, 219
- Spanish-American War, 195
- Speakers, 117
- Spectacles, 114
- Speech, 155, 231
- Speeches; *see* Addresses, Sermons
- SPEKTOR, ISAAC ELHANAN, 167
- SPETH, F., Cincinnati, 114
- Spiceboxes, 75
- SPICEHANDLER, EZRA, 96, 227, 239-40
- Spill's (Cincinnati dancing school), 116
- Spinning wheels, 76
- Spinoza Society, 170
- Spiritual life, 150, 168, 183, 192, 194, 199, 203-5, 215, 218, 221, 226, 228-29, 242-43
- SPIRO, HERZL, 80
- SPITZ, MARK ANDREW, 91
- Spokesmen, 217, 223
- Spoons, 73, 75
- Springs, 73
- SPYKER, CORNELIS, 76
- STALIN, JOSEPH, 59, 62
- Stalls, 17
- Stands, 17
- State Board of Charities, Illinois, 16
- State Department (United States), 1, 31, 33-43, 45-48, 51-54, 56-65, 91, 210
- Statesmen, 155, 220
- Statistics, 18, 24, 31, 38, 44, 67, 69-77, 90, 95, 103, 105, 112-14, 125, 135, 141-42, 170-71, 182-83, 202, 210-11, 213, 219, 228, 230-33, 235, 241-43

- STEELMAN, JAN, 70
 STEENWYTH, COWN, 76
 Steerage, 8
 STEIN, LEOPOLD, 150
 STEINBERG (First World War soldier), Pittsburgh, 180
 STEINER, RUTH HELLER (Mrs. Albert), 1, 5-22
 STEINSCHNEIDER, MORITZ, 158, 167
 Steles, 232
 Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, New York City, 96
 STERN (family), 91; MALCOLM H., 66-77, 92; NORTON B., 93
 STETTINIUS, EDWARD R., 41-43, 50-51, 53-59
 STEWART, A. T., 10; AND COMPANY, 95
 STIMSON, HENRY L., 34-35, 40-43, 47, 49-50
 Stock market, 19; Crash, 19
 STOLZ, JOSEPH, 125, 157-59
 Storekeepers, 8, 10, 112; *see also* Business, Department stores, Merchants
 Stoves, 115
 STRASBURGER, FRED, 108
 STRAUS, BENDIT, 90; MIRIAM, 90; S. W., 19; ZILLA, 90
 STRAUSS, BLANCHE MANDEL, 90; ROBERT S., 91
 Streetcars, 157
 STRENG (family), 91; JESSE F., 91
 Strikes, 14, 163
 STRYKER-RODDA, HARRIET, 66
 Students, 4, 12, 25-26, 82, 96, 104-5, 107, 109-16, 118, 122-26, 134-37, following p. 136, 140-41, 145-47, 150, 152-55, 160, 163-64, 167-70, 173-74, 177-78, 183, 185-86, 195, 206-9, 218-26, 228, 232-33, 237, 239-41; *see also* Rabbinical
 Studies, 3, 7-8, 30, 105, 133-36, 145-47, 164, 169, 183, 187, 193, 198, 219, 224-26, 228, 230, 232-33, 237-38, 243; social, 208; theological, 237-38; *see also* Education, Learning
 Stuttgart, 95
 Suburbs, 153
 Subventions, 210, 219
 Subversion, 214
 Success, 66, 146, 152, 189, 216-17, 238
 Suez, 220
 Suffering, 12, 49, 160-61, 166
 Suicide, 19
 Sulamith (pseudonym), 128-30
 SULZBERGER, MAYER, 92, 172
 Summer schools, 136, 185, 233
 Summit, Miss., 90
 Sumter, S. C., 92
 Sunday, 111, 116, 183, 196, 241; schools, 125, 183
 Superintendents, 12, 18-19
 Supernaturalism, 137
 Superstition, 132
 Suppers, 116
 Supreme Court, Louisiana, 86; United States, 95, 207
 Surveying, 204
 Surveys, 36, 235
 Survival, 128, 156, 205, 215, 231, 240, 243
 Sweatshops, 10
 Swedes, 68
 Swimming-pools, 17
 Switzerland; *see* Basel
 Symbolism, 189
 Synagogues, 16, 28, 82, 95-96, 103, 120, 135, 154-55, 172, 180, 182, 203, 215, 223, 225, 230, 236, 239; *see also* Congregations, Temples
 Syracuse, N. Y., 127, 184
 Syria, 37, 165, 232, 239; *see also* Damascus
 Syriac, 119, 142
 SZOLD, BENJAMIN, 129; HENRIETTA, 91, 128-29

T

- TAFT, ROBERT A., 49-50; ROBERT A., JR., 91; *see also* Wagner-Taft
 Tallith, 180
 Talmud, Talmudists, 104, 127, 135-36, 140-42, 143-46, 166, 230, 238; codifications, 145; commentaries, 145
 Talmud Torahs, 9; Minneapolis, 87
 TARO, KARL, 81
 TATES, MURRAY M., 86
 Taxation, 68, 71
 Teachers, 9-12, 78, 83, 87-88, 95, 106, 108-9, 110-12, 114, 118, 121, 125, 134-37, 141-42, 149-51, 158, 162-64, 168,

- 183, 189, 195, 199, 204, 215-17, 225-26, 228, 230, 232-33, 243; colleges, 105
- Teenagers, 111; *see also* Children, Girls, Youth
- TEITELBAUM, RUTH J., 84
- Tel Gezer, 225
- Telegrams, 43, 45, 48, 56-57, 59, 88, 107
- Telegraph, 103
- Telephones, 20, 55, 212, 241
- Television, 21, 217, 242
- Telsh, 142
- Temple, Jerusalem, 136, 161; Cleveland, 173
- Temple B'Nai Israel, Victoria, Tex., 222-23
- Temple Emanu-El, Dallas, 91; New York, 129 San Francisco, 92
- Temple Emanuel, Milwaukee, 85; Temple Emanuel, Winston-Salem, N. C., 86
- Temple Israel, Memphis, 85, 96
- Temple Sinai, Bellevue, Wash., 85; New Orleans, 5
- Temples, 5, 18, 28-29, 80, 85-86, 91-92, 96, 104, 108, 111, 117, 121, 129, following p. 136, 154, 222, 230, 235-37; *see also* Congregations, Synagogues
- Ten Commandments, 126
- Ten Penitential Days, 222
- Tenants, 19
- Tenants* (Malamud), 83
- Tennessee, 87, 242; *see also* Knoxville, Martin, Memphis, Nashville, Union City
- Tercentenary, American Jewish, 3
- Terefa, 128, 130, 132, 147
- Terrapin, 132
- Terre Haute, Ind., 86
- Territory, 36, 46, 59
- Texas; *see* Corpus Christi, Dallas, Jefferson, Sherman, Victoria
- THALHEIMER, GATES, 184
- THALHIMER, MORTON G., 91; WILLIAM, 91
- Theatre, 81, 86, 92, 123, 125
- Theodor Herzl Foundation, 31
- Theologians, 103-4, 119, following p. 136, 147-48, 153, 155, 160, 163-64, 167, 171, 177, 215, 234, 237
- Theological seminaries, 103, 147-48, 150, 168, 185, 204, 220, 225, 237, 243
- Theresienstadt, 238
- Theses, 90, 94, 104, 142, 238
- Third World, 25
- Thought, 215, 231-32, 234; *see also* Philosophy
- Tobacco, 123, 126, 184
- Tolerance, 152, 169, 199
- Tombstones, 66, 79, 85
- TONI, FRAU (governess), 8
- Tools, 60, 235
- TOPPING, NOLAN, 233
- Torah, 126-28, following p. 136, 159, 180, 205, 230; Scrolls, 172, 196-97, 230; shields, 235
- Tories (Great Britain), 31
- Toronto, 87
- TOURO, JUDAH, 88
- Towns, 166, 168, 221-22, 230-31, 242; *see also* Urban
- TOWNSEND, FRANCIS E., 190
- Tradition, 25, 81, 103, 119, 126-28, 132-33, 153, 158, 164, 167, 180, 188-89, 205, 215-16, 228, 230, 233, 236; *see also* Orthodox
- Train bands, 68
- Training, 15, 137, 152, 155, 182-83, 195, 204, 206, 215, 236; schools, 11-12, 243
- Trains, 159, 210
- Tramps, 17
- Trans-Andes, Colombia, 39
- Transcendentalism, 23
- Transjordan, 235; *see also* Jordan
- Translations, 160, 172
- Transportation, 103, 195-96
- Travel, 8, 13, 36, 87, 91, 159, 173
- Treason, 209, 214
- Treasury, United States, 210
- Treaties, 211
- TREBITSCH, NAHUM, 119
- Trenchers, 73-74
- Trespassing, 71
- Trials, 13, 67-68, 70-72, 209
- Tribune* (Chicago), 14
- Trinidad, Colo., 90
- TRUMAN, HARRY S., 63, 84, 95
- Trustees, 37, 39, 46, 71-72
- Trusteeship, 39, 62
- Trusts, 67
- Truth, 128, 137, 158, 160-61, 183, 212, 214

Truth About "The Protocols of Zion"
(Bernstein), 80
TUCHFELD, BARRY S., 94
Tuition, 113
Tulane University, 5
Turkey, 153
Tutors, 168, 219
Tyranny, 49, 232
Tyre, 173

U

UAHC; *see* Union of American Hebrew
Congregations
Ulpan, 228
Unbelievers, 127
Underground, 231
Under-Secretaries of State (United States),
35, 41, 53; for Foreign Affairs (Great
Britain), 46
UNGER, SIDNEY E., 91; MRS. SIDNEY E., 91
Union City, Tenn., 241-42
Union of American Hebrew Congrega-
tions, 80, 83, 91, 94, 103, 110, 117-20,
124, 128-31, 133, 164, 178, 182, 185-86,
193, 207, 242; Long Range Planning
Commission, 80
Union Veterans (Civil War), 83
Unions, 14, 120, 122
Unitarians, 136
United Jewish Appeal (U. J. A.), 5, 28
United Nations (UN), facing p. 32, 34,
36-38, 40, 46-47, 50, 62; Relief and
Rehabilitation Administration, 89
United States, 3, 14, 24, 26, 30, 32, 34-35,
40-41, 43, 47-54, 60, 63, 82, 91, 95, 103,
105, 113, 117, 129-30, 133, 137, 140,
153, 167, 172, 181, 183, 190, 209, 212,
220, 226, 234, 237; Armies, 36-37, 87-
88, 177, 179, 196-97; Cabinet, 41; Com-
mands in Germany and Austria, 89;
Federal Court, 209; Federal govern-
ment, 14; Federal law, 209; General
Staff, 41; McCarthy-Army hearings, 21;
Office of Near Eastern Affairs, 46, 64;
Secretaries of State, 34-36, 40-41, 45,
49-52, 54, 56-59; Secretaries of War,
34-35, 43, 50; State Department, 1, 31,
33-43, 45-48, 51-54, 56-65, 91, 210;

Supreme Court, 95, 207; Treasury, 210;
Under-Secretaries of State, 35, 41; War
Department, 34, 40-42, 47-48; War Pro-
duction Board, 90; *see also* East, Far
West, North, South, Washington, D. C.,
West
Unity, 162, 196, 215, 227
Universalism, 27, 136, 138, 163, 218
Universe, 215
Universities, 4, 26, 29-30, 37, 78, 104, 111,
119, 140-43, 145, 150, 158, 186-87, 196,
206, 208, 225-26, 229, 233-34; Ameri-
can, Beirut, 37; Brandeis, 84, 232;
Brown, 232; California, Los Angeles,
105; Cincinnati, 104, 150, 186-87, 208,
233-34; Dropsie, 78; Hebrew, 163;
Heidelberg, 141-42; Ohio State, 89;
Southern California, Los Angeles, 233-
34; Strasbourg, 140-42; Tennessee, 242;
Toronto, 89; Tulane, 5; Washington,
93-94; Yeshiva, 78
UNTERMYER, SAMUEL, 92
Upper middle class, 24
Urban areas, 8-9, 17, 81, 129, 135, 138,
232-34; *see also* Suburbs, Towns
Uruguay, 218-19; *see also* Montevideo
Utopia, 139, 189
UVAROFF, SERGI, 79

V

Vacations, 5
VALCK; *see* van der Wilden
Valedictorians, 12
VALENTINE, E. L., 15-16; RACHEL [Levy],
67, 72; REBECCA VALENTIJN, 77; SIMON,
66-67, 76-77
Valons, 74
Values, 28, 169, 189, 205
VAN DER WILDEN, VALENTINE (Valentine
Valck) (Valentijn) (Jerachmeel Valck),
66, 72, 77
VAN GELDER, HERMAN, 93
VAN KIRK, JAN, 71
VAN SWELLEM (SCHWELM); *see* Levy
Vandalism, 234
VARON, RALPH, 94
Veterans, 83
Veto, 63

Vice, 160
 Vichy France, 197
 Victoria, Australia, 219; Tex., 222-23
 Vienna Bakery, Cincinnati, 116
 Vietnam, 23; War, 90
 Vincennes, Ind., 86
 VINCENT, ADRIAN, 71
 Violence, 29, 47, 211
 Virgin Islands, 218
 Virginia; *see* Richmond
 Virtue, 160, 162
 Volunteers, 222-23, 240
 VOORSANGER, ELKAN C., 170
 VORSPAN, ALBERT, 80
 Vosges Mountains, 177
 Vote, 94

W

Wages; 231; *see* Salaries
 WAGNER, ROBERT F., 49-50, 55-56
 Wagner-Taft resolution on Palestine, 51
 Wagoners, 177
 Waiters, 116, 130, 208
 WALDMAN, LESTER J., 86; MORRIS D., 33
 Wall Street, 71
 Wampum, 70, 74
 War, 9, 41, 47, 177-79, 190, 239-40; *see also* Balkan, Civil, Six-Day, Spanish-American, Vietnam, War of Liberation, Yom Kippur
 War Department (United States), 34, 40-42, 47-48
War God (Zangwill), 92
 War of Liberation, Israeli, 223
 War Production Board (Second World War), 90
 War Refugee Board, 51
 War veterans; *see* Veterans
 WARBURG (family), 91; EDWARD M.M., 91; FELIX M., 91; art collection, 91
 Warm Springs, Ga., 56-57, 65
 WARNER, HUGO, 17
 Warsaw, 89, 179
 WARSEN, ALLEN A., 95
 WASBURN, MRS. REGANS PHILO, 90
 Washington, D. C., 1, 21, 32, 34-35, 37, 39-40, 42-44, 52, 54, 61, 63, 88, 196, 211-12, 240; Monument, 196; *see also* United States, White House

WASHINGTON, GEORGE, 90
 Washington (State); *see* Bellevue, Bellingham, Seattle
 Watches, 76
 WAX, JAMES A., 96
 Wealth, 24, 71, 112, 150, 152
 Weapons, 210
 Weddings, 91
 Weight, 17, 70
 WEIL, CARRIE, 20-21; SAMUEL, 107
 WEILER, ADAM, 91; MOSES CYRUS, 91
 WEINTRAUB, JOSEF D., 95
 WEIZMANN, CHAIM, 35, 37-38
 WELCH, JOSEPH N., 21
 Welfare, 155, 162, 178; federations, 17, 28, 87, 103, 182
 WELLES, SUMNER, 35-36
 WELLHAUSEN, JULIUS, 143
 Wellington, New Zealand, 219
 WELT, MELVILLE S., 91
 West (United States), 128, 131
 West Germany, 218; *see also* Germany
 West Hartford, Conn., 82
 West, the, 165-67
 West Virginia; *see* Charleston, Farmington, Logan
 WESTCOTT, JOHN, 72
 Western Europe, 173, 220; *see also* Europe
 Western Hemisphere, 52, 136, 203
 Westphalia, Germany, 69
 WHITE, HORACE, 9
 White House, Washington, D. C., 35-36, 38-39, 42, 44, 61-65, 210; Israel, 227; *see also* Washington (D. C.)
 White Papers, 31-33, 44-46
 WHITE, WILLIAM CHARLES, 172
 Whites, 24-25, 211
 Wholesalers, 93
 Widows, 66, 72-73
 WILDE, ASTER, 69
 WILLIAMS, MRS. REUBEN, 93; VIRGINIA, 93
 Williamsburg, New York City, 82
Williamsburg—U. S. A. (Kranzler), 82
 Wills, 87
 WILSON, MOSES F., 171
 WINDMUELLER, FRED W., 91, 95
 Wine industry, 10, 230
 WINOKUR, HARVEY J., 94
 Winston-Salem, N. C., 86
 Wisconsin, 168; *see also* Milwaukee

Wisdom, 128, 234
 WISE, ISAAC MAYER, 103-4, 106-9, 111-13, 115, 117, 119-22, 124-29, 133-44, following p. 136, 148-52, 156-57, 160, 164, 171, 182, 204, 214, 236-37; SELMA, 121; STEPHEN SAMUEL, 44-45, 54-55, 58, 62-64, 89-90, 105, following p. 136, 181-85, 220-21, 232, 236
 WISHNETSKY, RICHARD, 29
 Witnesses, 71-72
 WIZNITZER, ARNOLD, 67
 WOLF, ABRAHAM, 92; SIDNEY, 92
 WOLFSON, Cincinnati, 114
 Women, 5-6, 8, 10, 13, 18, 20-21, 24, 28, 66-68, 71-72, 82, 94, 104, 117-18, 120-21, 128-30, 135, 138, 156, 172-73, 179, 191, 213, 227, 231-32, 235-38, 242; Strike For Peace, 24; *see also* Girls
 Word of God; *see* Revelation, Sinai
 Work, 9, 12-18, 107, 152, 179, 181, 221-22, 227, 232, 234, 240
 Working class, 24, 81
 World, 153, 160, 163, 183, 186, 190, 199-200, 202, 204-5, 213-14, 233, 238-39
 World Center of Jewish Education, 225
World Politics and the Jewish Condition (Henkin), 82
 World Wars; *see* First, Second
 World Zionist Executive, 33
 World Zionist Organization, 33; *see also* Zionism
 WORMSER, LEO FALK, 91-92
 Worship, 29, 86, 95-96, 108, 124, 135-36, 139, 161, 168, 177, 179-80, 196-97, 205, 215, 217, 219, 221-22, 224, 227, 230, 233, 239
 Wounded Knee, S. D., 87
 Writers; 5, 12, 23-24, 78, 80, 83, 127, 142, 157, 160, 166, 188, 191, 197-98, 222, 234
 Wuerzburg, 135
 Wyoming; *see* Fort Laramie

Y

YADIN, YIGAEI, 226
 YADLIN, AHARON, 229

Yahrzeit, 206
 YALES, CARY DAVID, 90
 Yalta Conference, 58-59, 61
 YARMOVE, JANICE, 216-18
 Yearbooks, 85, 87
 Year-in-Israel Program, Hebrew Union College, 224, 226, 228-29
 Yells, 174-75
 Yemenites, 218
 Yeshiva University, New York City, 78
 Yeshivot; *see* Academies
 Yiddish, 15, 119, 159
 Yiddishkeit, 164
Yishuv, after p. 22, 202
 Yom Kippur, 126, 197, 217, 239; War, 238-42
 York, Pa., 196
 YOUNG, JACOB, 71
 Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association, 29
 YOUNKER, CARRIE, 18, 21
 Youth, 14, 28, 82-83, 95, 153, 226; *see also* National Federation, Teenagers

Z

ZANGWILL, ISRAEL, 92
 Zealots, 59
 Zion, 173, 205; *see also* Israel (state), Palestine
 Zion College, 182
 Zionism, 5, 25-26, 28, 31-39, 44-45, 47, 49-50, 52-53, 57-65, 92, 137-39, 151, 159, 163, 165-66, 181-84, 220; *see also* American Zionist Emergency Council, Hadassah, Labor Zionist Organization, World Zionist Organization, Zionist Organization, Zionist Revisionists
 Zionist Organization of America, 5, 31-32, 49
 Zionist Revisionists, 33
 ZIRNDORF, HEINRICH, 125
 ZLAHOVSKY, FANNIE (Mrs. Frank), 89
 ZUKOFSKY, LOUIS, 82
 ZUNZ, LEOPOLD, 119, 158, 167

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