



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and
The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.

Series V: Writings, 1909-1963, undated.

Reel
173

Box
63

Folder
129a

Why do the heathen rage? Part I, 1926.

September 29, 1935

Dear Sir:

The enclosed article "The Age of Brass", by Mr. Elliot E. Cohen, is to appear in a forthcoming issue of The Menorah Journal. The Seven Arts Feature Syndicate received a copy of this article in advance of publication and was so impressed with its great import for American Jewry, that we have decided to conduct a symposium on the questions raised by it. The leading rabbis and laymen have been invited to contribute to this symposium, which is to appear in prominent English-Jewish publications throughout the United States.

The thesis of "The Age of Brass" is that American Jewry, despite its charities, its new temples, its countless organizations, is unsound at its roots, built on sham, pretense, and oratory. "Our ceaseless round of Jewish activities", says Mr. Cohen, "is but an impressive glitter beneath which there shows everywhere the disquieting glint of a baser and more unenduring metal". No more bitter expression of dissatisfaction with present-day Jewishness in America has been uttered than Mr. Cohen's, "Our vaunted culture is thin gold plate on an indubitable foundation of brass".

The writer paints a dark present indeed of American Jewry; do you think his strictures justified? Is American Jewish culture as unsound as he declares? Is the intellectual basis of American Jewry as flimsy and pretentious as he alleges? Can you point to definite cultural achievements or the creative accomplishments of specific Jewish institutions to refute Mr. Cohen's low valuation of the present state of Jewish spiritual effort in America? Do the constructive proposals which Mr. Cohen makes seem potentially effective to you? If not, what measures do you propose?

May we invite you, as one interested in American Jewry, to express your opinion of this vital subject, which we may quote in our symposium?

Sincerely yours,

S. Neumark

S. Neumark
SEVEN ARTS

THE MENORAH JOURNAL

VOLUME XI

OCTOBER, 1925

NUMBER 5



The Age of Brass

BY ELLIOT E. COHEN

PERHAPS it is no more than a pleasant fancy that names an era of man's history after some inorganic substance; that pretends that some metal, for instance, permeates an age, like a beneficent spirit or an evil genius, and lends to it in the end its proper title. But it is a custom that divers generations of men have found good: poets have delighted to honor a loved epoch as the Silver Age or the Golden Age; anthropologists even, those most anti-poetic of all scientists, have been heard to speak of the Stone Age and the Age of Bronze. Perhaps one may be pardoned then, who, entangled in that puzzling complex we call modern Jewry, appeals to this usage, sanctioned both by the intuition of poets and the caution of scientific men. If we consider American Jewry, which among the symbolical elements will serve for a substantial image of our age?

How if we call our times the Stone Age? For to the traveler about the United States, nothing is plainer than that the stone that the builder rejected and that became the chief cornerstone, cherishes an excessive fondness for cornerstones. Tremendous new stone temples—some resembling public libraries, some mausoleums—stun the eye in two score American cities. It is a poor town indeed that cannot boast a shining new Jewish "community house," resplendent in marble or granite, erected to the glory of God, and fitted out for the sacred rites of basket-ball, hand-ball, billiards and dancing, housing an auditorium fully equipped for the production of "Charley's Aunt" and, even, of "The Red Mill." Everywhere the white façades of Y. M. H. A.'s invite the reluctant Jewish youth, and from coast to coast new club buildings arise, to decorate the pages of the

American-Jewish weeklies, and to inspire their editors with optimistic editorials on the present state of Israel. On these rocks Israel builds his Church; what shall prevail against them?

Or is it fairer to say we live in an Age of Gold? Certainly never have Jews poured out greater heaps of the shining metal; by its mellow light Palestine blooms again, and darkest Russia and Poland are made less dark. And all of Israel's new magnificent edifices, though stone built them, were raised by this yellow wand. At its touch, its magic still unplumbed, temples, hospitals, homes for the orphaned and the aged, the lame, the halt, and the blind, seminaries, *yeshivahs*, spring daily from the ground. But the golden cornucopia of Israel has gifts for all; from its depths tumble schools for Negroes (courtesy Mr. Rosenwald); buildings for Harvard (courtesy Mr. Lehman), for Columbia (courtesy Messrs. Schiff and Lewisohn), for Northwestern University (courtesy Mrs. Mayer); milk for babies (courtesy Mr. Straus); ten per cent of the Harvard endowment fund (courtesy Messrs. Sachs, Lehman, Kirstein et al.); prizes for peace plans for England, France, Italy, etc. (courtesy Mr. Filene); prizes for the study of Confederate history (courtesy Mr. Baruch); band concerts in New York City (courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Guggenheim); summer symphony concerts in New York City (courtesy Mr. Lewisohn); fellowships at Harvard to foster better relations between capital and labor (courtesy family of Jacob Wertheim); fellowships at Yale to study building (courtesy Mr. Horowitz); fellowships to study anything from astronomy to zoology in Europe (courtesy the Guggenheims); a school of aeronautics (courtesy Mr. Daniel Guggenheim); a Dictionary of American Biography (courtesy Mr. Ochs); fellowships to study meat packing at Chicago University (courtesy Mr. Lowenstein); fellowships to study the relation between profiteering and war (courtesy Mr. Baruch); an art museum for Newark (courtesy Mr. Bamberger); an aquarium for San Francisco (courtesy Mr. Steinhart); ditto for New Orleans (courtesy Mr. Odenheimer); and many other bounties too numerous to recall. Surely this is our Age of Gold; for with its help hath not Israel wrought wonders?

But there are ponderous voices that seem to hold for that sullen metal, iron; that model for the world's admiration a grim Israel, clothed in warlike armor, with mailed fist. In legislative ante-chambers everywhere in the Western world have Israel's leaders—and their echoes, the politicians—been heard reciting their statistical tales of the prowess of Israel: how many rifles he carried, how many guns he manned, how many trenches he dug with iron spades. Listening, one learned that the highest claim of the Jews to the kindly consideration of their respective fatherlands was that they had, even in excess of the most optimistic expectations, slain more than their share of the thousands and tens of thousands who

died to save the world. They gained, as was to be expected, precious little reward; it is at best a dubious psychology that encourages minorities bent on political self-improvement to exhibit too great a martial prowess, witness the fate of the Negro in the United States after the World War. But they at least established the fact that the evolution of the Jew from Gaon to gun-man is nearly achieved, and made it almost impossible to deny to an age, in which more Jews plunged bayonets into the hearts of their fellow Jews than in all the rest of history together, the title of the Age of Iron.

II

NEVERTHELESS this epoch in American-Jewish life will most likely be remembered as *par excellence* the Age of Brass. For there is a restlessness, a confusion, an inner sense of instability about our communal existence that augurs a fundamental unsoundness at its roots; our ceaseless round of Jewish activities is but an impressive glitter beneath which there shows everywhere the disquieting glint of a baser and more unenduring metal; our vaunted culture is thin gold plate on an indubitable foundation of brass. Our martial exploits rise from no irresistible inward compulsion, our giving, except for certain honorable enterprises, is not motivated by any sound and methodical theory of Jewish weal, our buildings in stone rest on no deep and abiding Jewish values.

We are a people who desire intensely to live, but can find no rationale for their continued existence; who are eager to sail a straight course to their destiny, but have forgotten their ancient wisdom of the sea; we are a people who have come a long way and are at last lost. Like those unfortunates in asylums our hands are ever busy, because our heads are sick. Our leaders are confused in council; extravagant in action. They shout the old watchwords and ride off wildly in all directions; the people, loyal as of old, follow as best they can. What wonder is it that the flocks are scattered, when the shepherds have no philosophy?

Lacking wisdom, our leaders take refuge in speech. Good Watsonian behaviorists, they discover the springs of thought in the voice box. In synagogues and lodge-rooms, in clubs and legislative halls, in conventions, conferences and congresses, the modern chieftains of that ancient tribe, the Jews, arise and are delivered of many words: the shamans of the Exile dispense their windy magic. A simple magic, easy to recognize and easy to expose; for the formula of the diasporations is everywhere the same: a modicum of fact to interminable gallons of pompous fantasy.

It is this clatter of talk, this rumble of words that gives the hallmark to our age, that lends it its tone—and title. It is the Age of Brass. By an Age of Brass we mean simply an age that substitutes

rhetoric for knowledge, bold assertions for learning, vainglorious pretensions for soundly-based convictions, bluster for strength, and braggadocio for an inwardly felt security; an era that strives to conceal in "high astounding" terms a low intellectual pressure and a weak moral stamina . . .

But an inspection of actual specimens is worth reams of description. So we have provided some exhibits which, after some brief introductory remarks, we shall invite interested spectators to view.

Introductory note: The collection below is culled indiscriminately from rabbis (orthodox, conservative, and reform), lodge-orators, politicians, editors and publishers—gentlemen of the most varied occupations, but, as will appear, of identical profession. We have not labeled the specimens with the names of their authors, since we are more interested in having the spectator learn to identify the species than in bothering them with the places where the individual specimens were captured. The knowledge of their origins would only serve to obscure with extraneous personal considerations the identity of their nature. Besides, in a real sense, these specimens do not belong to individuals, but to the age. They bear no distinctive brands; almost any quotation given below might have come just as easily from the mouth of any individual quoted as from its real author; and probably on another day did. For, however diverse in sentiment and origin, they are of one substance, animated by the same spirit, inspired by the same Unholy Ghost.

But to the exhibits:

"Our dispersion throughout the world is a dispensation from Providence to teach men the belief in an eternal everlasting God, through whose help we shall slowly bring to mankind the needed truths of social salvation and international good-will."

"We Jews are still on the road of our destiny bringing a boon to mankind—the boon of tolerance."

"Our people are a great intellectual nation."

"Judaism and Liberalism are twins."

"Like Abraham we Jews were driven out into the wilderness of men to teach and to inculcate into the hearts of the peoples of the earth the dreams of our prophets and poets."

"We, the people of Israel, are the incarnation of humanity's spiritual advance."

"The continued preservation of the Jews either as a race or as a religious community is unquestionably a benefit to humanity."

"Not a single great law has been added to those in our Bible by anyone which would tend to make humanity better, nobler or more perfect."

"Judaism in its doctrines and duties is eminently humane, universal, liberal and progressive, is in perfect harmony with modern science, criticism and philosophy and in full sympathy with universal

liberty, equality, justice and charity. It is and has been and should continue to be the religious teacher of all generations."

"Israel has been chosen to wage war and to bring peace, to teach obedience to law and to lead in the fight against iniquitous legislation."

"In the final analysis, American civilization is Jewish civilization, given to mankind by the Jew, the greatest gift ever bestowed upon humanity."

"For thirty centuries and amidst all transformation, the Jewish people has been possessed by the unchangeable feeling that Israel is the unique instrument in the world for the realization of its ideal of one God, Who is purely spiritual and cannot be imaged, nor incarnated nor exhausted by anything in nature, or any concrete personality or event in history—for the realization of that Law of life, which He gave as a direction for all men, and for the realization of the Hope of the eventual union of the human race and of the triumph of God's kingdom on earth, when 'all would come to serve Him and praise the Name of His glory.'"

"The Jews have been dispersed through the world to witness everywhere to the truth of monotheism."

"The modern mission of the Jew is to assume the moral leadership of the world."

"I do not care in what direction you look out upon the world today Jews are the outstanding leaders. Yes, even in agriculture. . . . The Jews wherever they are farmers are the finest kind of farmers . . . It is the same in dairying and cattle breeding—the finest cattle in the world are owned by Jews. . . . The Jew is a hard worker. I doubt whether there is a harder worker in the world than the Jew. . . . The greatest builders in the world happen to be Jews. Most of the great diagnosticians, specialists and surgeons are Jews. The greatest publisher of the greatest newspaper in the world is a Jew. Jewry is something to cause you to hold your head erect and be proud of."

"There is one thing that permeates the Jewish people as a whole, as an entity; it is its mentality, its intellectuality, its depth of understanding."

"Israel's suffering is ordained that the Jew may vicariously bear the world's sins, as a preparation for the glorious sequel when the Jewish light shall go out to the ends of the world."

"We are the founders of religion."

"The Jews exist to safeguard monotheism for the world."

"The Jews are the born moral teachers of the white race."

Behold in these the Voice of our Age; once heard its quality remains ever recognizable; its tone and timbre, who can fail to identify? The bass horn, orotund and hollow, the scream of the trumpet, the imposing bray of the trombone, the ear-piercing blasts of the cornet, the whole diapason of the brass is gathered here. In that national orchestra, to which advocates of cultural pluralism are so fond of referring, is there any doubt now what section the Jew will supply?

It is a loud and by no means uncheerful din we Jews make, a powerful noise that augurs, if nothing else, strong lungs and a certain earnestness. But because the brass band plays loudly, let us not be trapped into premature merry-making. For they are deceptive, these bluff and robust notes. A brass band may herald a celebration—or precede a hearse.

III

BUT perhaps in criticizing oratory for lacking wisdom we are unnecessarily captious—like that foolish peasant who belabored his donkey because he would not lay eggs. There is a certain injustice in demanding what is simply not in the nature of the beast. Speeches and sermons are born of the air, and destined to vanish with the breath that gave them birth. Mercilessly to impale these butterflies on the page and to order them peremptorily to stand and deliver is something of an imposition.

But we have a right to demand more of books. They are of good white paper all compact and bound between honest cloth; there is a solidity about them we feel must have needed time to gestate and sharp mental travail to deliver. Books are honorable things and we expect to be dealt with honorably by them.

Let us release then those voices that are imprisoned between the covers of our books; those nobler voices that shun the elevation of the pulpit and the white light of the rostrum and prefer to speak from the quiet fastnesses of the study. There we shall find what we did not find among our orators: thought, learning, wisdom, detachment, tolerance, the cultivated accents of civilized voices.

But where shall we look for them? For the amazing fact is that Jewish books in English are incredibly few. It is unbelievable, for instance, until one tests it himself, how pitifully small the number of volumes the entire Reform movement in America has to its credit. This is the group in American Jewry which not only has been the most powerful and, on their own admission, the most cultured, but has had English the longest. Other groups have, of course, contributed even less. It is certainly not without significance that Jewry has chosen to speak through that irresponsible and impermanent instrument, the tongue; and has been impotent in the use of the more fruitful, more enduring and more difficult pen.

But in this business of books, beggars cannot be choosers; on this desert island let us not sigh for silver spoons. (Anthologists contemplating a "Five Foot Shelf" of Jewish books are warned to wait until there are more than the present four feet to pick from.) Let us make shift to use what we can find. And this is what we find:

In kindness the Jews stand unrivalled. . . . No demos in the world is so saturated with idealism and domestic virtue. . . .

The Jew is not content to record the crimes of Christendom. He is out for victory. He will verify the legend of the Conquering Jew. With the sword of the spirit he will extirpate the heathen. He will overrun the planet. He will bring about the Holy League of Nations, a Millenium of Peace . . . (Israel Zangwill in *The Voice of Jerusalem*.)

[Roth] takes his place in that remarkable band of Jewish writers who have arisen—whether in France, in America, in England, or in Germany—to be the world's conscience. . . . (Israel Zangwill in *Preface to Now and Forever* by Samuel Roth.)

A strange man he has been, and a strange man he remains—and a stranger story than his life no man has recounted . . . On they have plunged, the strangest, the wildest, the most fantastic career ever attained by a people . . . Behind [these new ramparts] Jews are making ready to go on with their work, their historic work of Godly mischief . . . (Lewis Browne in *Stranger Than Fiction*.)

We fight and suffer and die, even as we labor and create: not in sport and not under the rules of sport, but in the feeling and belief that we are part of an eternal process. . . . Morality itself we take simply and seriously: we have none of your arbitrary regulations, your fine flourishes and disciplined gallantries: we only know right or wrong: all the rest seems to us childish irrelevance. . . . We belong to the One mastering God: you belong to the republic of playful gods . . .*

I might say, of ourselves: "We and God grew up together" . . . We Jews are incapable of polytheism. There is no Jew who does not believe in God . . . America and England put together, with their almost two hundred millions, have not played that role in world iconoclasm which a handful of Jews have played . . .

For when he brings into your world his passionately earnest, sinisterly earnest righteousness, and, speaking in your languages and through your institutions, scatters distrust of yourselves through the most sensitive of you [the Gentile], he is working against your spirit. You Gentiles do not seek or need or understand social justice as an ultimate ideal. This is not your nature. . . .

We Jews, we, the destroyers, will remain the destroyers for ever. Nothing that you will do will meet our needs and demands. We will for ever destroy because we need a world of our own, a God-world, which it is not in your nature to build. . . . (Maurice Samuel in *You Gentiles*.)

The Jew's contribution to the world's literature ranks above everything that the mind of man has conceived. . . . (Elias Gewurz in *Beautiful Thoughts of Ancient Israel*.)

* But see *Monotheism among Primitive Peoples* by Paul Radin, reviewed by Edward Sapir on p. 524 of this issue of THE MENORAH JOURNAL.

Zangwill—Why do they envy us? And of what are they jealous?

Roth—They envy our intellectual leadership of Europe, whose thought is Jew-born and Jew-bred. Europe not only thinks in Jewish terms, but all her enterprises are motivated by the personalities of Jews. . . . Socialism and Christianity are abiding, irritating symbols of Europe's mental enslavement to Israel. . . . They know that we are racially purer than they are. They know that we are better patriots than they are. It is their intellectual slavery which rankles in them, and once this is understood we can afford to ignore them completely.

Zangwill—Suppose I grant you our intellectual leadership—I do not think it possible to deny it. . . .

Roth—We are the commercializers and the enlighteners of the world. We carried the torch of enlightenment from the East into Europe. Some day we will carry it from Europe into the East. (*Samuel Roth in Now and Forever.*)

The peculiar task is laid on the Jew to teach these universal principles of human conduct whereby men may live together in peace and enjoy the fruits of their labor. Thrilled by visions of his mission, the Jew finds in American democracy the medium whereby he lends himself to his humanity. Humanity and Judaism are synonymous. . . .

Spending himself in behalf of democracy wherein his Jewish brethren have now cast their lot, they bear witness to the visions of their ancestors of the spirit who first proclaimed liberty throughout the land. Thus their historical mission is, in a measure, functioning. Their exalted hopes for the eventual triumph of justice and the dignity of man are the brightnesses of that illumination the Jew has been assigned to kindle in the world. He, more than any other national group, is the living expression of ethical monotheism, and ethical monotheism corresponds to democracy. . . .

For in a large and literal sense Judaism is not merely a religion. It is a cause: the cause that works for righteousness. The Jewish people incarnate conscience. Israel is the heart of God. (*Joseph Leiser in American Judaism.*)

The morality and high standard of life of the Jew is one of the wonders of the ages. . . . The Jew has been the religious leader of the civilized nations of the world. . . . The overwhelming majority of contemporary humanity . . . hold religious and moral views based on those enunciated by the seers and sages of Israel. . . . C. Weizmann discovered the preparation of *chloronaphthacene quinone* from *hydroxynaphthoylbenzoic acid*. (Various writers in *The Real Jew.*)

Freedom of thought and freedom of speech appear to have been precious possessions of the Jewish people from the oldest times. . . . It has been admitted by even the worst enemies of the Jews that the Jewish standard of citizenship is high. . . . Jews wel-

come every cause that protects animals. . . . I asked myself whether the Jews may be regarded as a musical people. It seemed to me that there was only one answer to that question: that undoubtedly they are. . . .

But why the prejudice? A moment's thought will furnish the answer. A people with so ancient a record as the Jews possess must have made enemies, especially as they were the great "Protestants" of history. They protested against cruelty and injustice, the two curses which have afflicted mankind from the earliest times to our own. They did not follow the multitude to do evil. They were firm as a rock in supporting their principles, so much so that peoples who believed in brute force, and to whom therefore spiritual strength was a puzzle beyond solving, took refuge in superstition. . . . In any event, it is a poor return one gets by being indifferent. Not appreciation, but kicks is the reward of the man who is in advance of his age. He is not loaded with honors; he is dragged to the stake. It is the same with a people. The Jews stood for love in a world whose conduct was actuated by hate. The Jew was therefore despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. . . . One authority has already written the doom of German Jewry, which, what with small families and extra-marriages (for the most part sterile), is decreasing in point of numbers to an alarming extent. If we are God's witnesses, should we tamely see ourselves shrinking away into nothing. And if we are not God's witnesses, what are we? (Benammi in *Essays on Jewish Life and Thought*.)

Alas, there emerges from our books the familiar, ominous tone, the same blatant, self-praising, vainglorious voice proclaiming from the house-tops the glories of Israel. If we seek a nobler voice of Israel in our books we seek, for the most part, in vain. By a strange metamorphosis David has given up his harp and his sweet song and, emulating Goliath, strides up and down before the tents of the Philistines loudly vaunting his might.

IV

THERE are two facts immediately apparent about this modern voice of Israel. It is new—and it is false. A Jew raised in the direct line of Jewish tradition, trained in the old Jewish discipline, will be puzzled to know what to make of this curious and un-Jewish "religion" of the American Jew. He views with consternation this constant posturing, this continual playing to the Gentile gallery, this Narcissistic strutting before the mirror of his self-esteem. The Jews of his time, he says, were too busy studying their old books to cry their worth in the market place, too confident of the potent wisdom of their faith to need the reassurance of the stranger's approval. For centuries they had drunk from the waters of these ancient springs and found them good; to boast of them,

they would have thought an impertinence; to solicit testimonials from the *goy* to their virtue, they would never have thought of at all.

And that the voice is false who can doubt? The claim of Israel to a *prima donna* role among the nations is totally presumptuous and is, as a matter of fact, ignored by the world. To a mind with the least regard for truth it is obvious that Israel is not the primal moral force to which all the peoples look for guidance, the spring of all modern philosophy, science and letters, the intellectual aristocrat in a heathen world, the exclusive repository of the spiritual resources of mankind. There are only the slimmest evidences of fact to support these hifalutin pretenses. To maintain these notions is to be guilty of the most preposterous nonsense; to believe them is to cherish the most palpable delusions.

But nothing is clearer than that these beliefs are the Shekinah of American Jewry. They inspire the most fanatic belief; they are recited day in and day out with the most fervent earnestness. And woe betide the rash wretch who intrudes upon the devotees with scepticism! There will descend upon him the ultimate vials of a great wrath; and vilification and vituperation beyond measure. To this heresy American Jewry will give no quarter.

With these stigmata as sign-posts it does not require a deep psychology to recognize that we have here a plain case of mental abnormality: a mind dominated by beliefs plainly contrary to fact, and defending them with the utmost emotional violence.

But it is more important to discover the source of a delusion than to expatiate on its irrationality. For at the bottom of every delusion there is a deep mental conflict; the delusion is a makeshift attempt to solve the difficulty. A pauper, brooding over his rags, comforts himself with dreams of untold wealth and in the end comes to believe them real; haunted by his helplessness he has buttressed his insufficiency by grandiose phantasies. A nation, likewise, bankrupt of its possessions and having lost its voice in the councils of the world, may in its desperation clutch at imaginary grandeurs and become—in its own mind—the Hammer of the Heathen, the Thunderer!

This is the case with Israel. Anxious to preserve his identity, he finds himself suddenly poor in all those possessions which maintain an individual pride and justify its perpetuation. For the undeniable improvement in the economic well-being and political status of the individual Jew in America cannot obscure his inner consciousness of his fundamental intellectual barrenness and spiritual poverty as a people. . . . He has been so busy in his new found civil liberty and equality of opportunity that his tradition and culture have slipped—and been thrown—away almost unnoticed. He feels himself continually confronted by the insistent question of the Gentile. "To guard what sacred treasure do you keep

yourself separated from us?" He fears this question because he knows he cannot answer it.

So, like a trusted servant who has mislaid his master's jewels, he casts about for a means to save his reputation, both in his own eyes and the eyes of the world. In Israel's case, he has been so badly stampeded by fear and ill-advised counsel, that he has not stopped to search, but fled incontinently to the ignoble refuge of bluster and lies, and by a compensatory phantasy has in the end comforted himself with the delusion that he is the paragon of servants, wrongfully accused.

In his need Israel, like Echo, has fled into a voice, a voice whose accents the reader has learned to recognize. A loud voice. A voice of violence calculated to simulate strength. And it is astonishing how many astute critics have been misled by its sheer intensity to hail what was a voice, and nothing else, as the soul of a re-born proud Israel, speaking from his new-found strength; and have found in its aggressiveness, its pugnacity and its recklessness augurs of a new dawn. The truth is that these men were so sick of the coaxing, the pleading, the wheedling note of the Jewish voice of an earlier decade that they would have hailed any voice not pitched in that accustomed whine. Their congratulations were premature; the new voice speaks from the same Jewish impotence; its accents are novel, but its motivation is the same. There was an illuminating climactic sentence in a speech of Mr. Maurice Samuel at the last Zionist convention in Washington. "There is one thing we Zionists suffer from that I want to see smashed?" Mr. Samuel shouted amid great applause, "and that is an inferiority complex." It is a curious obtuseness of Mr. Samuel which prevents him from seeing that the melodramatic defiances of his speeches and his bumptious book are, by a trite psychological mechanism, alike products of that same inferiority complex he scorns. Alas, to the practised ear the new pæans of Israel's triumph are revealed as but brave whistlings past graveyards.

Israel has elected to save himself in loud words; in his choice of escape he is to some extent the victim of the age. It was an ill chance that directed Israel in his extremity into a decade and a land where Advertising is god; where the faith in the Word—as contrasted with the truth—is unbounded. Whatever budding delusions Israel nurtured could not help being abetted by that amended Emersonian philosophy which teaches that, though a man make the most indifferent of mouse-traps, let him shout loudly enough, the world will make a beaten path to his door. Suppose your case is the worse; can it not be made the better? Have faith in publicity! So when the problem came of selling American Judaism, Jews had not learned—and improved—American merchandizing methods*

* Some examples of the influence of the American commercial spirit on Judaism in the United States may be found in "Notes for a Modern History of the Jews," p. 502 of this issue of THE MENORAH JOURNAL.

for nothing. They sold it! The trick was to work out the proper formula. They found them.

Many and various were the formulations that Israel's apology for existence received in the mouths of American Jewry's theologians and politicians. Some of them have been quoted above. For the arrogance of the phrasing does not conceal that their inner intent is apologetical. Most brags have a snivel at their core; a strong man simply does not find it necessary to bluster.

The most common are the variations of the so-called "ideal of the Jewish mission,"* the notion that the purpose of Israel's dispersion through the world was to bring the nations spiritual enlightenment, or peace, or tolerance, or morality, or civilization, or what not. The patent absurdity of a nation, whose own larder is by no means overstocked with any of these commodities, contracting to feed the world has gradually become apparent; an increasing number of writers are frank in their criticism of this "ideal." But so all-persuasive is the urge for self-justification that we find most of them substituting equally untenable Jewish pretensions; Mr. Roth, for instance, does not believe in the "Jewish mission," but he does believe that the Western world is in intellectual vassalage to Jewish brains.

It is a significant fact that the belief in a Jewish mission is clung to most tenaciously by the completely Americanized Jew; the conviction of the truth of that sublime doctrine is nearly always inversely proportional to the knowledge of Jewish religion and Jewish culture. Having no inner strength, the need for a compensatory mechanism is correspondingly great. It is precisely because he has no faith in the Deliverer that the American Jew has hastened to proclaim himself Messiah, and, announcing

* Despite certain superficial resemblances to an ancient Jewish belief the "Jewish mission ideal" of today is distinctly a modern invention. In essence and in implication it is worlds away from the traditional doctrine of the "chosen people," from which it is said to derive. The old belief, for one thing, did not place the whole emphasis on the Jewish indispensability to the Gentile salvation; nor was Jewish superiority visualized in terms of lip service to an abstract dogma, but as a proffered garland to be earned by sacrifice and the practice of those specific moral duties that, according to Jewish tradition, constitute the good life. The latter is the crucial point; the traditional Jew had to validate his distinction in his personal daily life. To the present-day Jew the mere belief in the ideal is apparently sufficient. In fact, any effort to bring the "Jewish mission ideal" practically to bear in those fields to which it is supposedly dedicated meets with the most violent opposition. "The Jewish mission is to bring peace to the world"; but it is with the greatest difficulty that the American rabbinate can bring itself to endorse peace measures many degrees milder than most of the Protestant churches champion. "The Jewish mission is to make the spirit of the prophets prevail in our society"; but—I quote from the *Jewish Daily Bulletin*—"At the annual convention of the Union of Hebrew Congregations in St. Louis, Rabbi Goldenman moved to incorporate in the constitution the following paragraph: 'To promote social righteousness and international peace and to cooperate with other agencies to carry out those ideas.' Rabbi Schulman contended that it would be inadvisable to present such a program, because it was too concrete . . . The motion of Rabbi Goldenman was defeated by a large majority. . . ." Apparently the only heresy more heinous than to deny the Jewish mission is to attempt to practise it.

that he holds the salvation of all nations in his hand, has rushed off to shout his millennial news on all the highways of the world.

By these antics three things are accomplished: the Gentile is not persuaded, the faith of Israel is not strengthened and Israel, sick, is drugged into a false sense of well-being, and made increasingly loath—and unable—to adopt those sounder therapeutic measures needful to his health.

V

WITH so much spurious intellectual coin in circulation it is not surprising that the currency of American Judaism is under suspicion. If this were all, however, the matter would not be impossible of remedy; counterfeiters can always be exposed. But worse is the fact that there seems to be a systematic attempt to cast honest money under suspicion and establish the counterfeit as legal tender. To pass brass for gold is a bad business; but barefacedly to maintain that brass is the more precious metal is fatal. Less figuratively, there seems to be a widespread impulse in American Jewry to defend unfounded assertion by belittling the validity of fact, to support the current spurious ideology by a systematic attack on fundamental intellectual values. The mood is one in which the ascertaining of truth by approved methods of scholarship and science is scorned; a modern mysticism of sophistry is substituted, in which we are to believe, because it is absurd. To bolster its primary delusion Israel has erected a supporting secondary delusion.

For these reasons Mr. Lewis Browne's short history of the Jews, *Stranger than Fiction*, unwholesome and theatrical as it is in temper, is not nearly as dangerous as are some other recent volumes. For the slightest modicum of that analytical chemistry, scholarship, will enable anyone to detect the true nature of Mr. Browne's metal; his effort to simulate a scholarship which he does not possess has at least the merit of paying an impied homage to the value of learning. Mr. Leiser's, Mr. Samuel's and Mr. Roth's sin lies deeper; they choose to disregard scholarship, and substitute—as appears below—new standards of truth. Higher than mere fact, if we are to believe them, are, respectively, newspaper usage, personal emotion and individual whim. We quote:

And now, as these declarations go forth, let the reader bear in mind that the ulterior motive [of this book] has been to "write a story" about Judaism in America, as if it were a newspaper assignment the writer had to "cover." There has been possibly a background of scholarship, but no library has been available, no "research" after accepted academic standards followed. (Joseph Leiser in *American Judaism*.)

I am aware that this is a thesis which cannot be supported by diagrams, tables and logarithms. It cannot even be urged with the apparent half-compulsion of social and economic laws. The cogency of what I have to say does not depend on reference to obvious and ineluctable laws, natural processes acknowledged and accepted. I am also aware that the weight of what is called learned opinion will be thrown against me, that my contention will meet with the ridicule of facile common sense and of scholarship . . . All scholarship—particularly that scholarship which deals with the manifestations of man's desires and fears—consists of unauthoritative marginal notes, which are of interest chiefly as giving some insight into the nature of those who jotted them down . . . What, then, shall be criterion of a man's reliability? . . . There is none. (Maurice Samuel in *You Gentiles*.)

In a world which believes in its statistics as in a sacred testament I venture the opinion that an erroneous statement of fact is frequently more important and usually more interesting than its corrected version can be. . . . (Samuel Roth in *Now and Forever*.)

It is in this spirit of intellectual nihilism that the new ideologies of the Jew are to be built—a spirit dictated by an obvious necessity. If unsupported—and unsupportable—statements are to constitute truth, all critical standards must be overthrown. Hence this impatience with research, this disrespect for honest thought, this flouting of scholarship, this scorn of fact—this concord of unreason.

This spirit is dangerous simply because if it prevails all hopes of the intellectual rehabilitation in Israel is rendered impossible. If effrontery and loudness of voice are to be our only criteria of truth we are deprived of our only means to free ourselves from our spurious and enervating "ideals." Jewry has been fatally weakened just where it needs to be most strong.

For if intellectual methods are thrown into disrepute Israel is deprived of his most necessary weapons. For the single most important fact about American Israel's impending battle, both from within and without, is that it is primarily an intellectual battle, and must be fought with the recognized intellectual weapons. Our political and economic status is assured. But our intellectual status—our conviction of the equal value of our culture and religion with the cultures and religions of our neighbors, and the winning of the right and the capacity to perpetuate its identity—is by no means established. Its recognition depends on an inner strengthening of American Jewry along sound lines of Jewish self-knowledge and an inculcated respect for Jewish traditions on the part of the Gentile world. This recognition cannot be won by propaganda or loose emotion or windy pretensions. The appeal of Judaism, both to the Jew and the Gentile, must be made on the grounds and with the methods which civilized thought prescribes.

VI

CERTAINLY the Gentile is not persuaded now. For the ironical fact is that the Jewish ideology, designed at the sacrifice of all other considerations to attain one object, the approval of the non-Jew, has failed above everything else in that object. In their new war with the Philistines, the Jews, improving on a Biblical precedent, threw their ammunition into the sea and advanced armed only with a brass band. But the walls of the new Jericho safely defy mere trumpet blasts. These walls are too strong; besides, the trumpets, the surprise having gone out of them, have not their old shock. Having been brought low by these tactics many times the inhabitants have learned, by sad experience, the game at last. Propaganda, the modern Sir Galahad, goes forth in the morning, in armor of sheeted mimeograph newly clad, and is met by a world so unbelieving as to doubt his purity and worth. Copy has lost its punch; sales resistance, in the jargon, has stiffened. Even editors are suspicious. George Creel has taught more people an honest scepticism than did ever Socrates. Within an experienced circle of cold eyes Israel parades his naive exhibitionism, like an amateur clog-dancer trying out for the "Follies." Before these cynical spectators his sheafs of press clippings, his protestations of industry, loyalty and sobriety, his fervent testimonials to his own surpassing genius, fall alike with an ominous thud. Israel, as they say, is not getting across.

To be sure, there are still to be found some minds weak enough to be impressed by the grandiose notices of Israel's press agents. But in these minds the superlative descriptions of Israel's prowess are as apt as not to prove boomerangs. If they believe Israel is mighty enough to convert the whole Gentile world to its doctrines, they can just as easily be made to believe any anti-Semite's account of what these doctrines are. If they believe that Israel has a mission, they may also believe that this mission is to enchain the world in the toils of communism or anarchism, free love or free trade, socialism or international capitalism. The Elders of Zion myth is a by no means distant cousin of the "Jewish mission" myth. Both are founded on the exaggerated and mystical notions of the potency of Israel.

There are two kinds of Jewish propaganda; the old style, which though somewhat outmoded still flourishes, and the new. Both are largely useless: the ineptitude of the first is that it barks up the wrong tree, the ineptitude of the second is that, having stumbled on the right tree, it only barks.

The old propaganda aimed to "defend the good name of the Jew." It consisted in pro-claiming his industry, his sobriety, loyalty, courage in battle, civic virtue, honesty, purity of family life, services to the com-

munity and contributions to civilization. Many rabbis* and other Jewish orators still work exclusively in this vein, and it is a rare Jewish leader who does not stumble into it frequently. It is the richest lode of the American-Jewish weeklies, that mine from it those interminable "up-the-ladder" stories which grace their pages; by a logic of which only editors of Jewish weeklies are capable they advance Judaism and promote Jewish-Gentile understanding by printing accounts of how Jacob Dupkin, who once owned only one cart of junk, now owns practically all the junk there is, and of how Hattibelle Levine is assisting civilization by editing scenarios for the Goldilocks Film Corporation. Hereunder may be classified also those fulsome volumes like "The Jew in Literature," "The Jew in Industry," etc., wherein Jews modestly lay laurels on their own brows, and those equally palatable dishes done by the non-Jewish hands of volunteer "friends of the Jews," like that choice dainty by the subsidized and much-fêted romantic lady novelist—what's her name?—of last year. But the day of the old propaganda is nevertheless done. Its uses—if it ever had any—have been long outlived. The Anti-Defamation League still has money enough for plenty more of its old-time campaigns, but nothing to campaign against; there have even been satirical references to "defending the Jewish name" in the columns of the Jewish weeklies. The old propaganda is useless because it defends the Jews from accusations that are no longer being made. The political and economic status of the Jew in America is secure; the rights of individual Jews to live in the community, engage in their daily business and to vote is no longer seriously brought into question. The battle has shifted to another quarter.

* I am anxious not to seem to indulge in the wholesale belittling of the American rabbinate, which is the chief stock in trade of many Jewish critics. The rabbinate is, surely, the higher level of our Jewish leadership; it is composed, for the most part, of earnest, industrious, and, according to their lights, honest men. The rabbis are not responsible for the present low state of the Jewish life in America; they are its victims. The pull of the age has proved too strong for them; they have succumbed to the prevalent shoddiness and spuriousness of contemporary Jewish aspiration. But they are guilty, certainly, of a too meek acquiescence in the degradation of the rabbinical function to that of a spokesman—i. e., mouthpiece—of the ignorance, ambitions and fears of the influential Jewish laity. Perhaps—as many rabbis say in extenuation—the forces arrayed against them were too strong; but they would have presented a decener spectacle had they put up a stiffer fight. For the most part they have accepted their inferior role without protest; there has even been an attempt to rationalize the degradation of the rabbinate into a philosophy, the sophistry of which cannot conceal its essential servility. Witness the following, which is here quoted from the manuscript of a paper, "The Freedom of the Pulpit," read before the Faculty Club of Hebrew Union College by the Professor of Social Studies, Dr. Abraham Cronbach: "I do not sanction the ridicule expressed in the gibe, 'Wess Brod ich ess, dess Lied ich sing.' If you do not sing the song of your bread provider, you are likely to be singing his enemy's song. It may be that his enemy has the better song. Yet, better or no: better, should not each man pay for the song he likes? Is it fair to ask any man to pay for the song he abhors? . . . One thing that the minister is ethically not free to do is to violate his contract; for the inviolability of contract applies to all men. But what is a minister's contract? I reply: He contracts *impliciter* to be his congregation's spokesman. Anything else is logically impossible."

Bluntly, the world we know is no longer worried about the Jews as fellow citizens; it wonders about the Jews—when it wonders about them at all—as Jews. Non-Jews admire our shrewdness in business, pay a grudging tribute to our agility, ingenuity and mother wit, but they beg leave not to understand why we insist on remaining Jews. They ungrudgingly admire the intellectual prowess of individual Jews: Freud, Einstein, Bergson, Marx; but are nevertheless—since Jewish achievements seem never to fall in Jewish fields—sceptical of the value of modern Jewish thought. They respect us as human beings; but they are puzzled by us as Jews. A country which sees reason in Episcopalians, Baptists, Swedenborgians, Theosophists, New Thinkers and Christian Scientists sees no reason for us. The shadow the American Jew of our day lives under is an intellectual cloud. He has won every right, except the right to be himself—and be respected. Hence the present futility of our old style propaganda: it is still pleading the good character of the accused, and has never gotten around to defending his action. Its pleas do not touch the essential point at issue: the intellectual status of Judaism as a distinctive way of life, worthy of the respect of the intelligent world, and of a right to the maintenance and perpetuation of a separate identity.

And the new propaganda, though it springs, as has been pointed out, from an unconscious effort to meet this very issue, is not much more effective. Our extravagant laudations of the beauties of our religion and of the magnificences of our culture get us no more than previous ecstasies over our civic virtue. As our ambassador to the highest court in the world, the enlightened public opinion of civilized men, we still put our trust in the loud boom-boom of the strong right arm on the big bass drum. Since we seem to have nothing but the hollow loudness of brazen assertions to offer, if we were received at all—as fortunately we are not—into the presence of those high spirits which are our civilization, we should only be laughed out of court. If we wish to reverse the low opinion in which Jewish culture is held, it would be sensible of us to adduce some other sort of evidence than this. Our pleas only confirm the verdict.

Let no Jew be deluded into doubting the lowness of the estate he holds, in that common public opinion to which he so constantly appeals, by periodical presidential flattery and gubernatorial laudation. For everyone knows that a frock coat butters no parsnips; and that a silk hat is a something statesmen buy ostensibly to wear, but use to talk through. For honest opinion let us appeal to Caesar at ease from Caesar toga'd; when the Emperor descends from the throne and takes to his rocking chair, earnest searchers after truth will do well to gather around. Shun formal utterances about the Jew and watch the casual remark and stray allusion: these are the true clues. The Christian minister has nothing but the most benevolent tolerance for his Jewish brethren.

but his sermons—like the columns of his vestryman, the local editor—seldom lack references to that stiff-necked sect, the Pharisees, who obeyed the letter of the law and denied its spirit. And never doubt that in their eyes we are those Pharisees. The Christian statesman honors his Jewish constituency, but when he talks of that law of forgiveness and love for one's neighbor that has supplanted the old "eye for an eye" rule, he means by that last nothing else but Judaism. The lecturer on ethics talks of primitive tribal morality; likely as not the Jews are the tribe. The anthropologist needs examples of surviving taboo superstitions; we furnish them. The sociologist talks about an obstinate minority who are more anxious to survive than to contribute; we are it. The last statement is a paraphrase of a casual judgment of a noted Harvard professor made in a recent review, one statement of many equally vehement and off-hand strictures on the Jews. But the fact is that any Gentile, once he stumbles—or is lured—into frakness, fathers as extraordinary and—to Jewish minds—limited and unsound notions about the Jews. Any Jew who reads the magazines can recall running upon, under noted names, allusions to the Jew wild enough to make him wonder whether he hasn't stumbled through the Looking Glass. Two, for instance, from recent issues of the *American Mercury* occur to the writer. The first gentleman declared, in an article on Jesus, that Jesus could not have been of Jewish blood, because he had a sense of humor; the Jews were apparently a people of such desperate frantic earnestness as never in their writings to have permitted themselves a smile or a joke. The second gentleman, Mr. Mencken, we believe, permitted himself the statement that "the religion [of the Jews] is probably the most murderous ever heard of in history."

The customary Jewish reaction at this point would be to raise a large outcry and post these gentlemen on the highways of the country as enemies of Israel, to attack their purity of motive and impugn their moral character. But such remarks as Mr. Mencken's do not spring from any congenital cussedness of spirit on his part, but happen simply because Mr. Mencken has never found available, in a form palatable to a gentleman of his intelligence, accounts—or the originals on which they are based—of the history, literature and religion of the Jews, as he has found—and read with profit—books about the culture of other important civilizations. The misstatements about the Jews which we constantly meet do not indicate either a moral turpitude on the part of their authors or an animus against the Jew; their sin is an intellectual one: plain ignorance. They simply know nothing about the Jew. They have no way of finding out much. So they rely on chance bits of information picked up by the wayside, hearsay, faulty analogy and personal deductions from insufficient evidence.

The statements cited above, for instance, spring chiefly from one very simple and very prolific source of error: the identification of Judaism with early Old Testament history and a total lack in common opinion of any knowledge of the long, fruitful and radical development the culture of the Jews has undergone since biblical times. Consequently, in the eyes of the enlightened, Jews are witch-burning Puritans survived by some mischance into our century, primitive and fanatic like Tennessee mountain fundamentalists; their religion an anachronism of superstition.

For all of which we can thank only ourselves. We have tried to refute error with error; to demolish old myths about the Jews by erecting new ones. We have been so busy sending out publicity that we have neglected to write honest histories; we have paid mimeograph operators overtime and scholars sweatshop stipends. We have spent our energy meeting the slanders of our enemies with slanders of our making. Truth, in the meantime, go hang. It has. We have scorned our learning, and we are scorned.

The old and the new propaganda have both failed; not because they were not cunningly devised, but because they were both—propaganda. All propaganda is self-defeating. Propaganda fails because it never seems to get around to presenting the facts; it is too busy bribing the jury; from these tactics honest men inevitably deduce that it has no faith in its case. Moreover, it is written that the best way to lose a man's good opinion is to be too concerned for it. The best propaganda is no propaganda.*

In the meantime the world goes on thinking of the Jews as a stiff-necked obstinate tribe that clings, as if for spite, to an outmoded and fanatic religion. John Singer Sargent's famous mural in the Boston Public Library, picturing Judaism as an ugly hag with bondaged eyes, however unfair a symbol of Judaism it may be, is at least a faithful representation of the figure Judaism cuts in the enlightened opinion of the world. "It is only a foolish petulance," the Gentile thinks (this expression of the sentiment is Sir Harry Johnston's, as quoted by Zangwill), "which prevents the Jews from avowing themselves as Christians"; we are in their eyes, in the famous words of Charles Lamb, "a piece of stubborn antiquity compared to which Stonehenge [is] in its nonage." The little respect our culture receives is that paid to a people who stumbled on some spiritual ideas capable of being incorporated, in a greatly improved form of course, in the culture of the West. But our persistent adherence to our religion receives only the pitying tolerance given to crack-brained inventors who out of personal vanity and a foolish pride of precedence cling to their old, unworkable models long after the

* The reaction of a well-known American liberal to a recent volume devoted to Jewish propaganda may be found on p. 322 of this issue of THE MENORAH JOURNAL.

tremendously improved machines of other men have made theirs hopelessly antiquated.

VII

BUT the worst is—this is the crux of the whole matter—that many of our best Jews, because they have been deprived of all means of knowing better, share this low opinion of Judaism with the Gentile. We can manage to worry along without the plaudits of the Gentile; especially now that we realize to what a pretty pass our obsessive anxiety of "what will the *goy* say" has brought Israel. But Judaism cannot survive if intelligent Jews come to despise it, and continually fall away; the continuous draining away of our best brains will result in a fatal enfeeblement of Jewish strength. Jewish losses through conversion are negligible; Jews do not go over to the enemy; seeing no reason to continue the battle, they merely drop out of the ranks. But the effect is the same.

Writing-men are good straws to indicate the wind. Robert Nathan, a fine talent, brings out *Jonah*, a beautiful book whose Jewish theme only serves to bring in sharper relief the total un-Jewishness of its outlook; Alexander Goldenweiser, a keen scientist, in a book review expresses the greatest scorn for Jewish culture and Jewish hopes for the future; Lawrence Langner, the able director of the New York "Theatre Guild," writes *Moses*, a play with a preface, bitterly arraiguing the Jewish spirit in a modern world. Three losses to Jewry among many, all gratuitous. Mr. Nathan fails to find beauty in Judaism, because we have neglected to make easy of access to searchers such as he the treasures of our tradition, as Greek culture, for instance, has been made available. How does one expect Mr. Goldenweiser, who has seen many myths in his day, to wax enthusiastic over an American Judaism that offers him nothing but the most egregious myths? Mr. Langner's book rests on a mistaken identification of Judaism with legalism: of the Jew with the moralistic, censoring Puritan. Who shall tell him he is wrong when he has probably heard with his own ears some apostle of the "Jewish mission" promulgating his program to reform the world?

Down this road, fleeing from the same mental unhealth, go the great majority of that Jewish youth whom Jewish leaders exhort so much and understand so little. They came out of Sunday school, thousands of earnest little tadpoles taught to thump their chests and to announce to a hostile world, "We are proud to be Jews." They never knew quite why; but they learned to hide their inner shakiness by an extra intensity of voice. In college they sat, now proud young frogs, in the back rows of the local temple and heard the young rabbi—not the most stupid rabbi in the country, either—maintain that the Jews were the eternal vessels of

the truth (what truth he never mentioned), the elected missionaries of peace (how they were to effect this peace was beyond their understanding), the possessors of doctrines higher, purer, profounder and more spiritual than any vouchsafed to other nations (what these doctrines were he never defined). This was mighty weak food, they thought, for young minds and healthy appetites, who had tasted—and knew where to get—red meat elsewhere. If that were all there was to Jewishness, they were not so sure they were proud to be Jews after all. Many of them promised themselves never to go into a temple again; and most of them never did. And, because it did not occur to them that there was any Judaism beside the prevalent "official American Judaism," they came to regard themselves Jews only by an unavoidable—and unfortunate—accident of birth.

All these were unnecessary casualties, since nothing is clearer than that Jews would much sooner remain Jews than wander off after foreign gods. For the intelligent Jew does not find foreign gods irresistibly alluring; he is able to see as plainly as any that the faiths of the Western world are conspicuous failures. Before he forsakes his people, he seeks with a pathetic earnestness to discover some of the virtue which he has heard—and is anxious to believe—lies in the tradition of his people. It is the tragedy of modern American Israel that to these seekers after spiritual nurture our leaders have nothing to offer but the merest husks.

VIII

WHEREFORE the first thing needful in American Jewry is to realize how perniciously destructive both to our inner strength and to the strength of our position in the world is the shoddy and sterile spirit that pervades our life; American Jewry must be made to see that a life of apology is a shameful apology for a life. Our most crying necessity is an insight into the pathological character of our mental processes; the abnormality of our delusions of grandeur and of persecution. For American Jewry will continue in its tragically comic impotence, a spectacle of bustling futility, until it has learned to recognize and taken steps utterly to destroy the pretentious, but in essence servile, ideology upon which its life is built.

Is this destructive criticism? In a measure, yes, though it springs, as does all serious destructive criticism, from an implicitly envisaged, if not explicitly expressed, alternate program of constructive intent and potentiality. But there is a sense in which criticism, if it prove effectively destructive, has done its most important duty; men do not insist that the surgeon (a destructive critic if there ever was one) who cuts out a tumor should fill the void with a new or better tumor, or a Japanese Garden,

or something. He has done his job when he has removed the source of the disease; the constructive measures he leaves largely to nature. Social criticism's first task is to destroy error; freed of this inner maladjustment, the living social organism, provided it has not been fatally weakened, will by its own recuperative power build a new and sounder structure. Conversely, all constructive proposals are premature until acquired faulty social habits have been corrected; and all programs useless unless the social group has a sufficient inner recuperative strength left. All the plans and manifestos in the world will not help a movement if it is not already on the move. Criticism cannot create; it can only midwife.

Fortunately, there is little doubt that American Jewry, once the poison is taken from its veins, has the necessary recuperative powers to go, in the ancient phrase, from strength to strength. Its tremendous resources, once diverted from the fruitless courses in which they are now enchanneled, can feed a rich and fruitful Jewish life. There are portents everywhere that a radical reformation is on the march, but so far its ranks are too divided, its aims too diverse, and above all its dissatisfactions too indistinctly defined. Its progress is halting because its motivation is still too largely in the unconscious; it is not yet completely cognizant either of the nature of the conditions it opposes, or of the extent of its own strength.

There are portents. Israel is unmistakably beginning to grope towards health, fumbling to discard the amulets, the magic formulae, the abracadabra of hollow ideals in favor of more deeply calculated and thoroughgoing therapeutic measures. The quest for Jewish knowledge is everywhere more apparent; discussion and criticism is more prevalent. That flood of second-class Jewish books which publishers have hastened to issue are happy augurs, not in themselves, because they are for the most part valueless, but because they prove the existence of a Jewish public eager for enlightenment on Jewish things. And on the publishers' lists are even found, unexpectedly, occasional books that are touched with a new spirit of honest inquiry. Nor does one have to be incorrigibly optimistic to detect in the records of the last meeting of the Central Conference of American Rabbis signs that the old smugnesses and complacencies are about to be confronted by a new critical spirit. And there is that epoch-making decision of the conference on Jewish education which met in Cambridge last June to consider ways and means to foster Judaism among the youth in America. Instead of bringing in the usual pious resolutions, full of theological ideals and mystical hopes, as had been feared, the conference went unreservedly on record as calling upon American Jewry to provide, for the education of our youth, chairs in Jewish learning from which history and philosophy shall be taught in keeping with academic standards.

The present watchword of the new spirit is education, a good word,

if somewhat too general and unspecific for our tastes. For it would be in the highest degree pernicious if education is regarded as a sort of abstract talisman and is not visualized in its concrete instrumentalities. These instrumentalities are many. To be sure, schools, elementary and advanced, seminaries, institutes, *yeshivas*. But there are more fundamental instrumentalities than these. In this business of education, to recall an ancient but too often neglected paradox, *we must build from the top*. Before the pupil can be taught, the teacher must be. Suppose we had all the schools in the world; what should we teach in them?

The fact is there are not available the smallest fraction of texts of Jewish history, religion, philosophy and culture we shall need in our program to substitute specific knowledge of the actual concrete sources of the Jewish spirit for the hollow nonsense of theological and political abstractions. Scholarship will have to be encouraged by endowment and subsidy to make these resources of Israel available for our use. Inaccessible manuscripts and the Jewish classics of literature and learning will have to be collected, edited, and translated by competent men, according to accepted standards of scholarship. (Never forget that the seeds from which the Renaissance flowered were rediscovered old manuscripts.) Jewish libraries will have to be established and maintained in all centers of Jewish population. Professorships will have to be endowed at the leading American universities, for the two-fold function of research and instruction. Jewish histories will have to be written; the pieties of Graetz are outmoded and the two-for-a-penny popular histories of our time are hopelessly lightweight. The publication of valuable works of scholarship for which there is no profitable market will have to be made possible. Periodicals devoted to the advancement of Jewish learning and the encouragement of Jewish criticism, art, and literature will have to be supported. Unless this supporting texture is supplied the schools will work single-handed as in a void. For in the modern world schools are but one agency among many educational instrumentalities that are needful.

It will be a long and tedious process, this prospecting and mining and refining of the ore from which our Golden Age will be molded. But unless we are willing to contract for a task of the most extreme difficulty and arduousness, for nothing less, in fact, than *a complete rehabilitation of the Jewish tradition and the most thoroughgoing reconstruction of Jewish intellectual values*, we shall unmistakably fail to create that inner strength which will enable Israel to win a spiritual autonomy, grounded in the intellectual loyalty of Jews and securely based on the respect of the outside world. If we grow faint of heart in this great enterprise of Jewish education and go after short-cuts and panaceas, falling away to slogans and hollow ideals, we are betrayed indeed. For we will have scotched one false Messiah but to raise another.

*Among Our
Contributors*

GEORG BRANDES
ISRAEL ZANGWILL
BENEDETTO CROCE
PHILIP GUEDALLA
GILBERT MURRAY
CHARLES W. ELIOT
LUIGI PIRANDELLO
LOUIS D. BRANDES
WALDO FRANK
C. G. MONTEFIORE
JOHN COUNOS
R. TRAVERS HERFORD
BURTON RASCOE
GEO. FOOT MOORE
MAX L. MARGOLIS
FLINDERS PETRIE
FRANCIS HACKETT
LUDWIG LEWISOHN
JOHN DEWEY
GILBERT SELDES
ERNEST BOYD
LOUIS GOLDING
LEWIS MUMFORD
MAX BROD
ANDRÉ SPIRE

THE MENORAH JOURNAL

*Published Bi-monthly by the Intercollegiate Menorah Association
"For the Study and Advancement of Jewish Culture and Ideals"*

167 WEST 13TH ST.

NEW YORK CITY



HENRY HURWITZ, Editor
MARVIN LOWENTHAL, European Editor
ADOLPH S. OKO
HARRY A. WOLFSON, Associate Editor
ELLIOT E. COHEN, Managing Editor

Cable Address "MENORAH"

Dec. 22, 1925.

Rabbi A. H. Silver,
The Temple,
East 105th St. at Ansel Road,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Rabbi Silver:

Let me repeat again in this way, most sincerely and urgently, my invitation to you to write an article for The Menorah Journal, as soon as may be, to present the situation as you see it in answer to Kallen's and Cohen's articles. In the current (December) issue there is a second article by Kallen, which all the more calls for an answer. I frankly don't like, myself, to be associated with Kallen's views and ways of presenting the matter; but I feel that it is our function to let men like Kallen and Cohen have their say. And certainly, as a matter of fairness and intelligence, and real constructive service, to present expositions and judgements from other, more positive - if you like, more informed and representative - points of view. The mere ventilation of discontent may not carry us far, but I think it is a healthy and necessary preliminary operation. As a matter of fact, as you know, there is a great deal of discontent and criticism of the rabbinate and of the synagogue, and I believe it is one of the functions of The Menorah Journal to provide a means of expression for that discontent. But this only as clearing the ground. I want you to believe that the editors of The Menorah Journal are most earnest in their desire to be absolutely fair and constructive, and to promote the most fruitful intelligence and discussion on the present state and the future of Judaism. You will be doing the Journal a very great service - I believe you will be doing the cause of Judaism in America a great service - if you will present your analysis of the situation, your description of what the rabbinate and the synagogue have so far had to build up in this country, and what you believe their future service should be. May I count on you for this?

I should like to tell you that I have made it a point to go through your files in our office, and I can point black on white to previous invitations to you to contribute to our Journal, as well as to come to Board meeting to discuss the work and policies of our Association. I may not have been as insistent as I should have been. I shall be insistent in

the future. Just as soon as I can get Mr. Wormser, our Chairman, to set a date for our next Board meeting, I will let you know, and will expect you to be present, in accordance with your assurances to me the other day that you would come.

We have reached a definite stage in the development of the Menorah movement. Conditions both within and without the universities require us to forge ahead on somewhat changed lines, I believe. But our work is more essential than ever. I am drawing up a memorandum on the whole matter, and I shall of course send you a copy as soon as it is ready.

The most immediate thing now is your article, on which I shall insist!

Believe me, with genuine appreciation of your interest and support (which must involve unhesitating criticism of Menorah activities and policies and help in their proper development).

Faithfully yours,

Henry Hurst

HH/F



Among Our
Contributors

GEORG BRANDES
ISRAEL ZANGWILL
BENEDETTO CROCE
PHILIP GUEDALLA
GILBERT MURRAY
CHARLES W. ELIOT
LUIGI FRANDELLO
LOUIS D. BRANDES
WALDO FRANK
C. G. MONTEPIORE
JOHN COUNNOS
R. TRAVERS HERFORD
BURTON RASCOE
GEO. FOOT MOORE
MAX L. MARCOLIS
FLINDERS PETRIE
FRANCIS HACKETT
LUDWIG LEWISOHN
JOHN DEWEY
GILBERT SELDES
ERNEST BOYD
LOUIS GOLDING
LEWIS MUMFORD
MAX HROD
ANDRÉ SPIRE

THE MENORAH JOURNAL

Published Bi-monthly by the Intercollegiate Menorah Association
"For the Study and Advancement of Jewish Culture and Ideals"

167 WEST 13TH ST.

NEW YORK CITY



HENRY HURWITZ
Editor
MARVIN LOWENTHAL
European Editor
ADOLPH S. OKO
HARRY A. WOLFSON
Associate Editor
ELLIOT E. COHEN
Managing Editor

Cable Address "MENORAH"

January 5, 1926.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
The Temple,
East 105th Street
at Ansel Road,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Silver:

I have your note of December 31st, which I can't let pass without a word. You speak of "the defeatist literature with which you have swamped the Menorah Journal in recent months." Now, my dear Abba Hillel, what do you mean? If you refer to the articles by Kallen and Cohen, you may not agree with them (as I do not wholly with Kallen), and yet be charitable enough to suppose that they were actuated not by "defeatist" motives but out of a genuine desire to speak the truth about conditions as they see them, in order to clear the ground for more realistic and constructive thought. Surely you will not assert that all is lovely with Judaism in America? In one Jewish journal at least let us have the forthright criticism of our non-conformists, who are as devoted to their conceptions of the good Jewish life as you to yours. You dismiss Kallen's last article as "vulgar dyspepsia" without having read it -- merely on the basis of several paragraphs quoted out of the context in the J.D.B.-- a closely reasoned article of some 5000 words, with facts and statistics, and concluding with a definite proposal. Is this really fair on your part? Would you like one of your articles to be dismissed, by an opponent, without a reading in that cavalier way?

Apart from these articles by Kallen and Cohen, what other "defeatist literature" have we published in recent months? "Swamped" indeed!

I could show you letters galore we have received from readers expressing their appreciation of what they call our courage and candor in publishing Cohen's paper. A good many thinking Jews are pretty sick of the complacency and self-praise which exude from official utterances on Jewish platforms and in the "Jewish press." I believe sincerely -- whether we agree with the details of various criticisms or not -- that open criticism is healthy for us and has been long overdue. It is the function of The Menorah Journal, as I see it, to provide the forum.

But not merely for criticism, not merely for any one side or several sides. But for all sides. If you will closely examine even a single volume of the Journal -- any volume, say the one just closed, 1925 -- I believe you will

1/5/26

find a vindication of our policy.

Now we propose to carry on our analysis and discussion from all sides, and offer constructive measures, with more energy than ever before. I believe the present situation requires it; and fortunately our reading public that we have built up, that we are increasing, seems to us in a receptive, even to a large extent in a demanding, mood. (This, by the bye, I account as not the least of our Menorah achievements.) I believe I can truthfully say that the reading public of our Journal is already the most representative and intelligent audience for the forthright discussion of Jewish questions from all angles that any publication in America has achieved. Isn't this all to the good?

It makes our editorial responsibility all the greater, to be sure. Certainly we shall publish an answer, or answers, to Hallen and Cohen. Let me say again that I wish very much you would give it. You will realize that we need to have a definite undertaking from you or some one else to do it. If you will please make the special effort, I'll greatly appreciate it. If you cannot make it definite, we must ask some one else. Whom would you suggest? But I do hope you'll do it yourself.

Sincerely,

Henry Hurwitz
Editor

HH-AD

Among Our
Contributors

GEORG BRANDES
ISRAEL ZANGWILL
BENEDETTO CROCE
PHILIP GUEDELLA
GILBERT MURRAY
CHARLES W. ELIOT
LUIGI PIRANDELLO
LOUIS D. BRANDES
WALDO FRANK
C. G. MONTEFIORE
JOHN COURNOS
R. TRAVERS HERFORD
BURTON RASCOE
GEO. FOOT MOORE
MAX L. MARGOLIS
FLINDERS PETRIE
FRANCIS HACKETT
LUDWIG LEWISOHN
JOHN DEWEY
GILBERT SELDES
ERNEST BOYD
LOUIS GOLDING
LEWIS MUMFORD
MAX BROD
ANDRÉ SPIRE

THE MENORAH JOURNAL

Published Bi-monthly by the Intercollegiate Menorah Association
"For the Study and Advancement of Jewish Culture and Ideals"

167 WEST 13TH ST.

NEW YORK CITY



HENRY HURWITZ *Editor*
MARVIN LOWENTHAL *European Editor*
ADOLPH S. OKO
HARRY A. WOLFSON *Associate Editor*
ELLIOT E. COHEN *Managing Editor*

Cable Address "MENORAH"

Feb. 9, 1926.

Rabbi A. H. Silver,
The Temple,
East 105th St. at Ansel Rd.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Abba:

I should very much like to announce your article in our forthcoming issue - that is, make the announcement in the forthcoming issue for the appearance of your article in the succeeding issue. What title do you propose? Will you kindly advise me at your earliest, so we are putting through the forthcoming issue now?

Cordially

Henry Hurwitz

HH/F

Among Our
Contributors

GEORG BRANDES
ISRAEL ZANGWILL
BENEDETTO CROCE
PHILIP GUEDALLA
GILBERT MURRAY
CHARLES W. ELIOT
LUIGI PIRANDELLO
LOUIS D. BRANDES
WALDO FRANK
C. G. MONTEFIORE
JOHN COURNOS
R. TRAVERS HERFORD
BURTON RASCOE
GEO. FOOT MOORE
MAX L. MARCOIS
FLINDERS PETRIE
FRANCIS HACKETT
LUDWIG LEWISOHN
JOHN DEWEY
GILBERT SELDES
ERNEST BOYD
LOUIS GOLDING
LEWIS HUMFORD
MAX BROD
ANDRÉ SPIRE

THE MENORAH JOURNAL

Published Bi-monthly by the Intercollegiate Menorah Association
"For the Study and Advancement of Jewish Culture and Ideals"

167 WEST 13TH ST.

NEW YORK CITY



HENRY HURWITZ
Editor
MARVIN LOWENTHAL
European Editor
ADOLPH S. OKO
HARRY A. WOLFSON
Associate Editor
ELLIOT E. COHEN
Managing Editor

Cable Address "MENORAH"

February 16, 1926.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
East 105th St. at Angel Road,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Abba:

As you like it - "Why Do the Heathen
Rage?"

With anticipation,

Sincerely,

Henry Hurwitz
Editor

HH:YS

Among Our
Contributors

GEORG BRANDES
ISRAEL ZANGWILL
BENEDETTO CROCE
PHILIP GUEDALLA
GILBERT MURRAY
CHARLES W. ELIOT
LUIGI PIRANDELLO
LOUIS D. BRANDEIS
WALDO FRANK
C. G. MONTEFIORE
JOHN COURNOS
R. TRAVERS HERFORD
GEO. FOOT MOORE
NATHAN ISAACS
MAX L. MARGOLIS
FLINDERS PETRIE
SHAILER MATHEWS
FRANCIS HACKETT
LUDWIG LEVISOHN
JOHN DEWEY
MORRIS R. COHEN
ERNEST BOYD
LOUIS GOLDING
LEWIS MUMFORD
ANDRÉ SPIRE

THE MENORAH JOURNAL

Published Bi-monthly by the Intercollegiate Menorah Association
"For the Study and Advancement of Jewish Culture and Ideals"

167 WEST 13TH ST.

NEW YORK CITY



HENRY HURWITZ
Editor
MARVIN LOWENTHAL
European Editor
ADOLPH S. OKO
HARRY A. WOLFSON
Associate Editor
ELLIOT E. COHEN
Managing Editor

Cable Address "MENORAH"

March 12, 1926.

Rabbi Abba H. Silver,
Cong. Tufereth Israel,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Recent issues of The Menorah Journal have contained articles criticising various aspects of Jewish life and institutions in this country. Since one of the functions of the Journal is to serve as a forum for the expression of honest opinion on Jewish matters by the most diverse minds, we have felt it was right and desirable to afford publication to these critical articles. But, of course, they did not tell the whole story; for example, certain conditioning aspects of the Jewish situation in America were given too scant consideration. So I have endeavored in my article (copy enclosed) to give an analysis of the situation as I see it, together with certain constructive proposals which seem to me very desirable and important.

If you would do me the honor to read this article, I would deeply appreciate your frankest criticisms.

With esteem,

Sincerely,

Henry Hurwitz

HH-AD

*Sent to all rabbis.
Sincerely, Isaac Criticism,
H.H.*

February Fifteenth
1926

Mr. Henry Hurwitz.
The Menorah Journal.
167 West 13th Street.
New York City.

My dear Henry,

I have not as yet given much
thought to the title of my article for the
Menorah Journal. I should like to call it
"Why do the Heathen Rage?" If you think
that is too harsh a title, why not call it-
"The Rabbi Makes Reply".

remain

With kindest regards, I get to

Very sincerely yours.

December Thirty-first
1925

Mr. Henry Harwitz,
Intercollegiate Menorah Assn.,
167 West 13th Street,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Harwitz,

Permit me to acknowledge your letter of December twenty-second. I wish I could find time to write an article in answer to the defeatist literature with which you have swamped the Menorah Journal in recent months. I have just read the J.D.B. report of Kallen's article in the December issue of the Menorah Journal - just vulgar dyspepsia.

Unfortunately, I am busily engaged now putting into shape a book which I hope to have published this year, and I am giving to it all my spare time. If, during the next month or two I should have some respite from my work, I shall try to write an article for you.

With kindest regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

April 6th, 1926.

Mr. Henry Hurwitz,
167 West 13th Street,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Hurwitz,

I am enclosing herewith the article which I promised to send you for your April issue. I hope that you will find it satisfactory. You may find a few hard spots in it but then you will remember that the articles upon which mine is based were likewise not distinguished for their suavity.

I have but one request to make and that is that you publish the article "as is" without comment and in full in one issue of the Journal. I should like too, if possible, to obtain fifty or seventy-five reprints of it.

With kindest regards, permit
me to remain

Very sincerely yours,

Among Our
Contributors

GEORG BRANDES
ISRAEL ZANGWILL
BENEDETTO CROCE
PHILIP GUEDALLA
GILBERT MURRAY
CHARLES W. ELIOT
LUIGI FIRANDELLO
LOUIS D. BRANDES
WALDO FRANK
C. G. MONTEFIORE
JOHN COURNOS
R. TRAVERS HERFORD
GEO. FOOT MOORE
NATHAN ISAACS
MAX L. MARGOLIS
FLINDERS PETRIE
SHAILER, MATHEWS
FRANCIS HACKETT
LUDWIG LEWISOHN
JOHN DEWEY
MORRIS R. COHEN
ERNEST BOYD
LOUIS GOLDING
LEWIS MUMFORD
ANDRÉ SPIRE

THE MENORAH JOURNAL

Published Bi-monthly by the Intercollegiate Menorah Association
"For the Study and Advancement of Jewish Culture and Ideals"

167 WEST 11TH ST.

NEW YORK CITY



HENRY HURWITZ
Editor
MARVIN LOWENTHAL
European Editor
ADOLPH S. OKO
HARRY A. WOLFSON
Associate Editor
ELLIOT E. COHEN
Managing Editor

Cable Address "MENORAH"

April 8, 1926.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
The Temple,
East 105th St. at Ansel Rd.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Abba:

I was very glad to receive your article today - glad even after reading it. I want to read it again more carefully before making any comment to you on it. You may rest assured, however, that your request to "publish the article 'as is' without comment and in full in one issue of the Journal" will be scrupulously honored. Of course you will receive proofs to O.K., and reprints will be provided.

There is just one hitch, which I hope will not seem to you serious. Our April issue is all made up, and about to go through the presses. It would involve both considerable expense and delay to break up the forms at this time and rearrange the whole issue. (You know the make-up of each issue is the result of several weeks' planning and arrangement of the articles to fit into the forms.) We are already very late with the April issue, and are eager to go forthwith to the next issue (dated June), to bring it out the latter part of May (as we should).

Under the circumstances, I hope you will not object to our making your article the leader in our June issue, instead of the present April issue.

With kindest regards and sincere thanks for your coming into the discussion,

Faithfully yours,

Henry Hurwitz
Editor

HH-AD

Among Our
Contributors

GEORG BRANDES
ISRAEL ZANGWILL
BENEDETTO CROCE
PHILIP GUEDALLA
GILBERT MURRAY
CHARLES W. ELIOT
LUIGI PIKANDELLO
LOUIS D. BRANDES
WALDO FRANK
C. G. MONTEFIORE
JOHN COURNOS
R. TRAVERS HERFORD
GEO. FOOT MOORE
NATHAN ISAACS
MAX L. MARGOLIS
FLINDERS PETRIE
SHAILER, MATHEWS
FRANCIS HACKETT
LUDWIG LEWISOHN
JOHN DEWEY
MORRIS K. COHEN
ERNEST BOYD
LOUIS GOLDING
LEWIS MUMFORD
ANDRÉ SPIRE

THE MENORAH JOURNAL

Published Bi-monthly by the Intercollegiate Menorah Association
"For the Study and Advancement of Jewish Culture and Ideals"

167 WEST 13TH ST.

NEW YORK CITY



HENRY HURWITZ *Editor*
MARVIN LOWENTHAL *European Editor*
ADOLPH S. OKO
HARRY A. WOLFSON *Associate Editor*
ELLIOT E. COHEN *Managing Editor*

Cable Address "MENORAH"

April 12, 1926.

Rabbi A. H. Silver,
The Temple,
E. 105th St. at Ansel Rd.,
Cleveland, O.

Dear Abba:

I have your wire.

You will recall that we met at lunch at the Hotel Pennsylvania in this city (thanks to your courtesy) on January 18th. You then agreed to write an article answering Kallen and Cohen. I regret I do not remember definitely how much time I did give you, but it is inconceivable that I should have promised publication in our April issue for any manuscript that reached us April 8th.

Moreover, at our meeting in January there was no mention at all of my own article. Supposing I had no article in our February issue. Then even if your reply to Kallen and Cohen came in time for appearance in our April issue, there would in any case have been a break in the succession, Kallen's article having appeared in the December issue.

I would certainly have preferred to have your article appear in our April issue. But I believe it will be just as relevant and forceful in the following issue to appear in the latter part of May. I cannot break up our completed April forms at this late date. I earnestly hope you will appreciate the situation.

Sincerely,

Henry Hurwitz
Editor

HH/AG

*Among Our
Contributors*

GEORG BRANDES
ISRAEL ZANGWILL
BENEDETTO CROCE
PHILIP GUEDALLA
GILBERT MURRAY
CHARLES W. ELIOT
LUIGI PIRANDELLO
LOUIS D. BRANDES
WALDO FRANK
C. G. MONTEFIORE
JOHN COURNOS
R. TRAVERS HERFORD
GEO. FOOT MOORE
NATHAN ISAACS
MAX L. MARCOWIS
FLINDERS PETRIE
SHAILER MATHEWS
FRANCIS HACKETT
LUDWIG LEWISOHN
JOHN DEWEY
MORRIS R. COHEN
ERNEST BOYD
LOUIS GOLDING
LEWIS MUMFORD
ANDRÉ SPIRE

THE MENORAH JOURNAL

*Published Bi-monthly by the Intercollegiate Menorah Association
"For the Study and Advancement of Jewish Culture and Ideals"*

167 WEST 11TH ST.

NEW YORK CITY



HENRY HURWITZ *Editor*
MARVIN LOWENTHAL *European Editor*
ADOLPH S. OKO
HARRY A. WOLFSON *Associate Editor*
ELLIOT E. COHEN *Managing Editor*

Cable Address "MENORAH"

May 18, 1926.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
c/o The Temple,
East 105th Street at Angel Road,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Rabbi Silver:

Will you be good enough to go over
the enclosed proofs of your article, appearing
in the June issue, and return as soon as you can
with your corrections?

We would be grateful also for a brief
note about yourself for "Our Own Who's Who"; when
and where you were born, where educated, your "works,"
etc.

Sincerely yours,

Ala Diamondstein

Editorial Department

AD-1

Enc.

April Thirteenth
1926

Mr. Henry Hurwitz,
The Menorah Journal,
167 West 13th Street,
New York City.

My dear Hurwitz,

Let me thank you for your letter of April twelfth. I am sorry that you cannot get the article which I sent you into your April number. However, you are the Editor and know best.

I take it for granted that no answer to my article, directly or indirectly, will be made in your Journal until after my article appears.

With kindest regards, I am

Very sincerely yours.

✓
May Twenty-second
1926

Mr. Henry Hurwitz,
Intercollegiate Menorah Association,
167 West 13th Street,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Hurwitz,

I am returning herewith the corrected proof of my article. I have made one or two slight changes.

May I suggest that you eliminate the first sentence of your editorial note. The title of an article is usually taken to be that of the writer of the article. You will recall that I suggested two titles - the other one being "The Rabbi Makes Reply", and that you indicated in your letter of February sixteenth that you preferred the one now at the head of the article. If you think that this title is too harsh, you may change it to the other.

With kindest regards, I am
Very sincerely yours,

P.S.

I am enclosing herewith, at
your request, a short biography.

A Short Biography of Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

.....

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver was born January 28th, 1923, in Meinstadt, Schirwindt, Lithuania.

He attended the public and high schools of New York City and graduated from the University of Cincinnati in 1945. He graduated from the Hebrew Union College and was ordained Rabbi in 1945, and received his Doctor Degree from the same institution in 1945. His Study of "The Messianic Speculations in Israel from the First through the Seventeenth Centuries" will be published in the Fall.

Dr. Silver has been Rabbi of The Temple, Cleveland, since 1947.

He is Vice President of the Zionist Organization of America; member of the International Actions Committee of the World Zionist Organization.

He is also a member of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, and of the Executive Board of the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

He is one of the Directors of the Intercollegiate Menorah Association, and of the Jewish Publication Society of America.

He is Chairman of the Cleveland Bureau of Jewish Education.



INTERCOLLEGIATE MENORAH ASSOCIATION

FOR THE STUDY AND ADVANCEMENT OF
JEWISH CULTURE AND IDEALS

167 WEST 13th STREET
NEW YORK

May 24, 1926.

Rabbi A. H. Silver,
The Temple,
East 105th St. at Ansel Road,
Cleveland, O.

Dear Sir:

Your letter of the 22nd inst. to Mr. Hurwitz,
enclosing proof of your article and your biography, has
been received in his absence from the city. It will be
brought to his attention upon his return the latter part
of this week.

Very truly yours,

INTERCOLLEGIATE MENORAH ASSOCIATION

By

B. Lesser

CL/AG

August 12, 1926.

The Jewish Telegraphic Agency,
621 Broadway,
New York City.

Gentlemen:

Upon my return from London today I read the letter which Mr. Henry Hurwitz wrote to you in explanation of the suppression of my article which had been requested and accepted by the Menorah Journal.

Mr. Hurwitz states in his letter that I made two unacceptable conditions to its publication, one that it should be printed in full, without change and two, that no answer to it should appear in the same issue of the Journal.

This is correct and one will readily understand why these conditions were made when one remembers that two of the three authors whose papers I discussed are respectively the editor and the managing editor of the Menorah Journal. When I requested that no answer should be made in the same issue, I asked for my article the same privilege which the articles of Dr. Kallen, Mr. Cohen and Mr. Hurwitz enjoyed. The editor indicated in a note which accompanied the galley proofs that a reply to it would appear in the following issue of the Journal, to which, of course, I raised absolutely no objections.

Mr. Hurwitz was free to reject my conditions. He did not reject them; rather he accepted them with alacrity.

Mr. Hurwitz refers to the title of my article, "Why Do The Heathen Rage" (A Biblical phrase, by the way) as "the elegant nomenclature of Rabbi Silver". Here again Mr. Hurwitz's memory seems to fail him. I submitted two titles for his consideration, the other being "A Rabbi Makes Reply" and Mr. Hurwitz, himself, selected the former.

There is a subtle suggestion contained in Mr. Hurwitz's letter that my article did not fully measure up to the established standard of thought and expression of the Menorah Journal. Of

however
that the reader must judge. I am again compelled to refresh Mr. Furwitz's memory. Upon receipt of my article, he wrote that he was glad to get it "and glad even after reading it". This was in April. Four or five weeks later, during which time the editor undoubtedly had sufficient time to acquaint himself with the palpable deficiencies of the article, he sent me the galley proofs. Shortly thereafter, at a public meeting, he announced its forth-coming publication. In June then the article still measured up to the exacting standards of the Menorah Journal. In July it failed utterly...

One must be a dour fellow indeed to suppress a chuckle at the literary vagaries of this distinguished editor.

With kindest regards, permit me to remain

Very sincerely yours,



August 12, 1926.

Mr. Herman Bernstein, Editor,
The Jewish Tribune,
570 Seventh Ave., New York City.

Dear Sir:

Mr. Upon my return from London today I read the letter which Henry Hurwitz wrote to you in explanation of the suppression of my article which had been requested and accepted by the Menorah Journal.

Mr. Hurwitz states in his letter that I made two unacceptable conditions to its publication, one that it should be printed in full, without change and two, that no answer to it should appear in the same issue of the Journal.

This is correct and one will readily understand why these conditions were made when one remembers that two of the three authors whose papers I discussed are respectively the editor and the managing editor of the Menorah Journal. When I requested that no answer should be made in the same issue, I asked for my article the same privilege which the articles of Dr. Kallen, Mr. Cohen and Mr. Hurwitz enjoyed. The editor indicated in a note which accompanied the galley proofs that a reply to it would appear in the following issue of the Journal, to which, of course, I raised absolutely no objections.

Mr. Hurwitz was free to reject my conditions. He did not reject them; rather he accepted them with alacrity.

Mr. Hurwitz refers to the title of my article, "Why Do The Heathen Rage" (A Biblical phrase, by the way) as "the elegant nomenclature of Rabbi Silver". Here again Mr. Hurwitz's memory seems to fail him. I submitted two titles for his consideration, the other being "A Rabbi Makes Reply" and Mr. Hurwitz, himself, selected the former.

There is a subtle suggestion contained in Mr. Hurwitz's letter that my article did not fully measure up to the established standard of thought and expression of the Menorah Journal. Of

however

that the reader must judge. I am again compelled to refresh Mr. Hurwitz's memory. Upon receipt of my article, he wrote that he was glad to get it "and glad even after reading it". This was in April. Four or five weeks later, during which time the editor undoubtedly had sufficient time to acquaint himself with the palpable deficiencies of the article, he sent me the galley proofs. Shortly thereafter, at a public meeting, he announced its forth-coming publication. In June then the article still measured up to the exacting standards of the Menorah Journal. In July it failed utterly...

One must be a dour fellow indeed to suppress a chuckle at the literary vagaries of this distinguished editor.

With kindest regards, permit me to remain

Very sincerely yours,



Intercollegiate Menorah Association

Sept. 14, 1926

Rabbi A. J. Feldman
19 Auburn Road,
West Hartford, Conn.

Dear Abe:

I am just back from a hasty trip abroad--I'd like to tell you of some most interesting aspects of the Jewish situation in Germany that I came across.

I'd like also very much to tell you of the Abba Silver affair. Do let me know when you are next in New York.

I find you reduced your 1926 subscription from \$10 to \$8. I am sorry you needed to do that. I earnestly hope you will see your way to reverting to the cooperative amount.

With all good wishes to you and Mrs. Feldman for the New Year,

Cordially,

Henry Hurwitz.

Congregation Beth Israel
Hartford, Connecticut

Rabbi
Abraham J. Feldman

September 15, 1966

Dear Henry:

Your letter of yesterday just came, and frankly, I thought that you would write.

My reduced subscription--also frankly--was a protest against the recent developments in the Menorah office. Abba Silver's article and the situation that caused it to be published in the Jewish Tribune was only one of the reasons. The Pool review--dishonest and contemptible--was another. The Shailer Mathews review of Hirsch's volume was still another. Some of the "Notes of a Modern Jewish History etc."--still another; the whole tendency of going out of the way to offend and condemn where there is neither reason nor justice for doing so--is what I resent, and there are others, as you undoubtedly know, who feel as I do.

I had no objection to the publication of Kallen's articles or Cohen's Brass. I may not agree with them; their view may be jaundiced, as I believe it to be. But I do not fear their talking or writing. What horrified me was the thin-skinned attitude that feared Silver's reply and the last minute blunder. (I am not talking thru my hat. I had talked with Mr. Oko about it when I first saw Silver's article.)

I resent too, the policy of going out of the way to find bigoted creatures like Pool to pass judgment on Reform views and utterances, and holding as sacrosanct the sensibilities of others. I resent--in Pool's article--the dishonesty with which he dealt with the HUC volume; and I, too, know its weaknesses. I resent it particularly in view of Harry Wolfson's pre-publication warning to you or someone else in the office that Pool was contemptibly unjust to Bettan, for instance. I resent the policy of having goyim pass judgment on Jewish religious views when Jews may do just as well--and to publish these in a Jewish journal. In a word, I resent the whole "smart aleck" attitude, if you pardon the expression, which seems to be the dry rot which had gotten into your office. As a matter of self-respect I cannot cooperate with that.

I have been urged to say these things thru some public medium. For Auld Lang Syne's sake I would not do it. But you should know--tho you may not like it.

Reciprocating your good wishes, I am,

Sincerely

Abraham J. Feldman.

The Menorah Journal

Sept. 20, 1936.

Rabbi A.J. Feldman
19 Auburn Road,
West Hartford, Conn.

Dear Abe:

I sincerely appreciate your frankness.

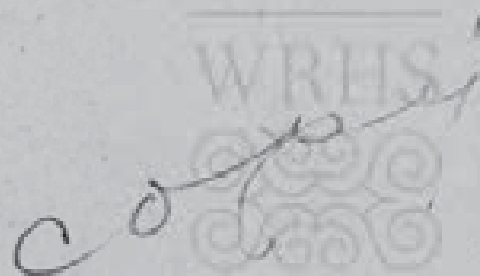
Of course I do not agree with you.

I'll be very glad to talk over the entire situation
with you.

Come, anyway, and see our new quarters here.

Sincerely

Henry Hurwitz



Foreword.

This article was written at the request of the Menorah Journal. On Dec. 22, 1925, the editor, Mr. Henry Hurwitz, wrote:

"Let me repeat again in this way, most sincerely and urgently, my invitation to you to write an article for The Menorah Journal, as soon as may be, to present the situation as you see it in answer to Kalber's and Cohen's articles." ... You will be doing the cause of Judaism in America a great service - if you will present your analysis of the situation, your description of what the rabbis and the synagog have so far had to build up in this country. ... The most immediate thing now is your article, Being innocent of the wiles of modern non-conformist journalism and utterly on which I shall insist!"

← On Dec. 31, 1925 I wrote ^{in reply} ~~to Mr. Hurwitz~~

"I wish I could find time to write an article in answer to the defeatist literature with which you have manured the Menorah Journal in recent months. I have just read the J. W. B. report of Kalber's article in the December issue of the Menorah Journal - just vulgar dyspepsia. Unfortunately, I am busily engaged now putting into ~~shape~~ shape a book, which I hope to have published this year, and I am giving to it all my spare

to you on it. You may rest assured, however, that ¹³
your request to publish the article 'as is' without
comment and in full in our issue, the Journal
will be scrupulously honored. There is just one
hitch, which I hope will not seem to you
serious. Our April issue is all made up....
Under the circumstances, I hope you will not
object to our making your article the Leader in
our June issue, instead of the present April issue.

The Editor sent me no comments on the
article. Five weeks later, on May 18th - I received
the following note from the editorial department
of the Journal:

"Will you be good enough to go over the
enclosed proofs of your article, appearing
in the June issue, and return as soon
as you can with your corrections? We
would be grateful also for a brief note about
yourself for 'Our Own Who's Who'."

(over)

Shortly thereafter at a meeting of the National
Conference of Jewish Social Workers held in
Cleveland, Mr. Hurwitz, for the course of an
address, publicly announced the forthcoming
publication of this article as proof of the
neutrality and comprehensive scope of the
Journal.

But in the June issue, the article did not

At the top of the galley-proofs was this editorial note:

"The title of this article is the authors [sic!]. Rabbi Silver has requested that no comment or answer to his article be made in the same issue of the Journal. Accordingly comment and answer are deferred to our next issue".

To which of course I raised absolutely no objection.

[sic!]



time. If, during the next month or two, I should have²
some respite from my work, I shall try to write
an article for you.

~~On Feb. 9. the editor requested me to write something for the
title of the new article~~

On Feb. 9. the editor wrote asking for the title of
my article for announcement in the March issue.
I submitted two titles "A Rabbi Makes Reply"
and "Why Do the Heavens Rage?". The editor himself
~~and~~ chose the latter, and under this title ~~it was~~
my article was announced in the March issue.
I forwarded the manuscript on Apr. 6. to
which I appended with the following note:

"I am enclosing herewith the article which I
promised to send you for your April issue. I
hope that you will find it satisfactory. You may
find a few hard spots in it but then you will
remember that the articles upon which mine
is based were likewise not distinguished for their
rarity. I have but one request to make and
that is that you publish the article "as is" with-
out comment and in full in one issue of the
Journal."

On April 8. the editor wrote:

"I was very glad to receive your article to-day -
glad even after reading it. I want to read it
again more carefully before making any comment

appear. - he had the editor taken the trouble to appear in the past. 44

I happened to be in New York the day the Jew-July issue appeared, on my way to London. I called upon the editor Mr. Harwitz and requested the return of my manuscript. ~~but~~ He spoke long and confusedly in explanation of the suppression of the article. Out of the maze of ^{pitiful} circumstances ~~that~~ I could understand but one statement. He was afraid that my article would discourage young writers. ^{He must have referred to the} ~~He must have referred to~~ ^{the} ~~young writers~~ ^{young writer Mr. Elmer Davis} ~~Mr. Elmer Davis~~ ^{for} ~~for~~ ^{then} ~~then~~ ^{these} ~~these~~ ^{young writers} ~~are!~~ ^{are!} ~~for~~ ^{for} ~~directors~~ ^{directors} ~~show~~ ^{show} ~~tender~~ ^{tender} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~fear~~ ^{fear} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~face~~ ^{face} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~a~~ ^a ~~rebuttal~~ ^{rebuttal}....

^{see note} ~~Believing~~ that this story of ~~these~~ should

for Mr. Kallen would assume not regard himself as a young writer, and Mr. Harwitz, well....

be told ^{in order} ~~so~~ that there may be a little more light in ^{certain} ~~dark~~ ^{places} ~~corners~~.... I turned the article over to Mr. Herman Bernstein, of the Jewish Tribune, who was generous enough to publish it.

And it is with his permission that it is now reprinted.

Abraham Hillel Schen.

Sept. 1-1926.

in order that men may ~~know~~ gauge a little more
accurately the quality ~~and~~ ~~and the character~~
of this



I have since learned that a certain member
of the Editorial Staff who is also connected with a
Philosophical School was, in the main responsible
for the suppression. This gentleman like the
other pilots of the Memorial, ~~was not at all~~ ^{was not at all} the
~~religious, given but a~~ ^{any way} ~~man~~ ^{man} has any use
~~for~~ ^{for} religion ~~except~~ ^{except} ~~as~~ ^{as} to exploit
him... But, that may fully at some future
time.



*Jewish
Tribune
Sept. 1926*

FORWARD

This article was written at the request of the Menorah Journal. On December 22nd, 1925, the editor, Mr. Henry Hurwitz, wrote:

"Let me repeat again in this way, most sincerely and urgently, my invitation to you to write an article for the Menorah Journal, as soon as maybe, to present the situation as you see it in answer to Kallen's and Cohen's articles. . . . You will be doing the cause of Judaism in America a great service -if you will present your analysis of the situation, your description of what the rabbinate and the synagogue have so far had to build up in this country. . . . The most immediate thing now is your article, on which I shall insist!"

On December 31st, 1925, I wrote in reply:

"I wish I could find time to write an article in answer to the defeatist literature with which you have swamped The Menorah Journal in recent months. I have just read the J.D.B. report of Kallen's article in the December issue of the Menorah Journal - just vulgar dyspepsia. Unfortunately, I am busily engaged now putting into shape a book, which I hope to have published this year, and I am giving to it all my spare time. If, during the next month or two, I should have some respite from my work, I shall try to write an article for you."

On February 9th, the editor wrote asking for the title of my article for announcement in the March issue. I submitted two - "A Rabbi Makes Reply" and "Why Do The Heathen Rage?" The editor himself chose the latter, and under this title my article was announced in the March issue.

I forwarded the manuscript on April 6th with the following note:

"I am enclosing herewith the article which I promised to send you for your April issue. I hope that you will find it satisfactory. You may find a few hard spots in it, but then you will remember that the articles upon which mine is based were likewise not distinguished for their suavity. I have but one request to make and that is that you publish the article "as is" without comment and in full in one issue of the Journal."

On April 8th the editor wrote:

"I was very glad to receive your article today-glad even after reading it. I want to read it again more carefully before making any comment to you on it. You may rest assured, however, that your request to "publish the article 'as is' without comment and in full in one issue of the Journal" will be scrupulously honored. There is just one hitch, which I hope will not seem to you serious. Our April issue is all made up . . .

Under the circumstances, I hope you will not object to our making your article the leader in our June issue, instead of the present April issue."

The editor sent me no comments on the article. Five weeks later, on May 18th, I received the following note from the editorial department of the Journal:

"Will you be good enough to go over the enclosed proofs of your article, appearing in the June issue, and return as soon as you can with your corrections? We would be grateful also for a brief note about yourself for "Our Own Who's Who". . . .

At the top of the galley-proofs was this editorial note:

"The title of this article is the authors (sic). Rabbi Silver has requested that no comment or answer to his article be made in the same issue of the Journal. Accordingly comment and answer are deferred to our next issue".

To which, of course, I raised absolutely no objection.

Shortly thereafter, at a meeting of the National Conference of Jewish Social Workers held in Cleveland, Mr. Burwitz, in the course of an address, publicly announced the forthcoming publication of this article as proof of the neutrality and comprehensive scope of the Journal.

But in the June issue, the article did not appear, nor had the editor taken the trouble to apprise me of the fact. I happened to be in New York the day the June-July issue appeared, on my way to London. I called upon Mr. Burwitz and requested the return of my manuscript. He spoke long and confusedly in explanation of the suppression of the article. Out of the maze of his pitiful circumlocutions I could understand but one phrase. He was afraid that my article would discourage young writers! He must, undoubtedly, have referred to the young writer Mr. Elliot Cohen, for Dr. Kallen would assuredly not regard himself as a young writer, and Mr. Burwitz, well How brave then these young writers are! How intrepid in invectives, but oh how tender and frail in the face of a rebuttal...

I have since learned that a certain member of the Editorial Staff, who is also connected with a Theological School, was in the main responsible for its suppres-

along. This gentleman, like the other pilots of the Menorah, has never had any use for the religious Jew except to exploit him But of that more fully at some other time.

Believing that this story should be told in order that there may be a little more light in certain dark places I turned the article over to Mr. Herman Bernstein of the Jewish Tribune, who was gracious enough to publish it.

And it is with his permission that it is now reprinted.

Abba Hillel Silver

September 1st, 1926.



Why Do the Heathen Rage?

ABRAHAM HILDELL SILVER

September 2, 1926

I

THE latest attempt to salvage poor shipwrecked Judaism in America is on. The *Menorah Journal* summoned the doughtiest intellectuals to this heroic task. These came highly equipped with trenchant pen, with Jovian thunder and unmistakable boldness. They labored valiantly; they plumbed the very depths, and brought to the surface a bucket of water.

There is an element of the Purimspiel in this most recent drama of national salvation. Dr. Kallen, whose distaste for the "Judaistic religion," except as a soporific for the unenlightened, is notorious, sets himself the task of reviewing the curricula of the Jewish theological schools of America. He even suggests a new type of rabbi a cross between a Freudian clinic intern and a graduate of the New School of Social Research. Mr. Colien, who to this day has successfully hid his scholarly achievements under a bushel, becomes the valorous champion of Jewish scholarship, and fairly devastates with the breath of his scorn the unlettered rabbis of our age. Lastly, comes Mr. Hurwitz, mediatory and reassuring, and joyously announces that as a result of the Menorah Organization's activities, its Summer School, and its Lecture Bureau and its proposed Foundation for Jewish Research, the terrible night which had descended upon American Israel, and which was so graphically described by the above mentioned writers, is about to end. "Our day dawns," he exclaims, in sanguine anticipation of an "adequately financed and endowed" Menorah movement.

*This article is based on the papers of Elliot E. Cowen, "The Age of Brass," *Menorah Journal*, October, 1925; Dr. Horace M. Kallen, "Can Judaism Survive in the United States?" April and December, 1925; and Henry Hurwitz, "Watchman, What of the Day?" February, 1926.

562

II

A PERIODIC inventory of a people's cultural assets and liabilities is a necessary and commendable service. But clearly, if it is to have any value, it must be undertaken in a dispassionate and scientific spirit, and by men qualified through knowledge and experience to pass judgment. Prejudices are obstructions to inventories. Broad denunciation and cynical flaunting of what one does not happen to relish cannot be regarded as adequate stock-taking. One is entertained or outraged by them according to one's prejudices, but one is not enlightened. Above all, whoever presumes to approach the sanctities of a people's life must do so in a spirit of reverence. Thoughtful men do not employ a cheap and easy cleverness in discussing spiritual values which might be the very life blood of men.

flout

sent:

From the essay of Mr. Cohen I cull the following few specimens to indicate the quality of the newer criticism to which American Judaism is being subjected:

"The Elders of Zion myth is a by no means distant cousin of the 'Jewish mission' myth. (p. 439).

"The little respect our culture receives is that paid to a people who stumbled [*sic*] on some spiritual ideas capable of being incorporated, in a greatly improved form of course, in the culture of the West" (p. 448.).

"Lacking wisdom, our leaders take refuge in speech. Good Watsonian behaviorists, they discover the springs of thought in the voice box." (p. 427.).

"Speeches and sermons are born of the air and destined to vanish with the breath that gave them birth." (p. 430.).

"But they [the rabbis] are guilty certainly of a too weak acquiescence in the degradation of the rabbinical function to that of a spokesman $\frac{1}{m}$ i.e., mouthpiece, of the ignorance, ambitions, and fears of the influential Jewish laity." (p. 440.).

We submit that for sheer "brass" in his sad Age of Brass one need not look elsewhere ./. .

extract

10m

III

MR. COHEN is rendered furious by the fact that some Jewish writers and public men have praised the Jew and Judaism excessively. This seems to be the sum and substance of his twenty-five-page indictment. Seemingly it is good taste, and altogether proper, to proclaim to the world that the *Mesorah Journal* is "the best-printed, best-edited, and best-written periodical" and that its advent marks a turning-point in American Jewish history, but it is nothing short of "bluster, braggadocio," etc., to assert that Israel has been the monitor of monotheism in the world, the pathfinder in moral idealism, or that the Jews may be justifiably proud of their history and of their contributions to mankind.

With what avidity Mr. Cohen belabors his theme of the Jews' self-praise! He offers a collection of anonymous quotations as Exhibit A, ^{also} some extracts from the writings of such distinguished authors as Roth, Leiser, Gewurz, Browne, and Samuel, as Exhibit B. Using these as his "po: sto," Mr. Cohen proceeds to move the world. Himself not lacking that voice of brass which he so deprecates, he uses it to excellent advantage in an onomatopoetic characterization of the quality of our age. The voice of our age is the voice of "the brass horn, rotund and hollow, the scream of the trumpet, the imposing bray of the trombone, and the ear-piercing blasts of the cornet" and so on to the limits of Roget's Thesaurus. And having accomplished this feat, the critic delivers himself of the following pronouncement:

"There are two facts immediately apparent about this modern voice of Israel. It is new and it is false. A Jew raised in the direct line of Jewish tradition, trained in the old Jewish discipline, will be puzzled to know what to make of this curious and un-Jewish "Religion" of the American Jew. . . . The Jews of his time, he says, were too busy studying the old books to cry their worth in the marketplace" (p. 433.).

9/14/98

extract

And yet, sad to relate, this is exactly what the Jew did do consistently and continuously through the ages. One could fill more than one volume of the Menorah Journal with citations from Biblical, Talmudic, Midrashic, and Medieval Jewish literary sources to show that the Jew did praise, and often very extravagantly, his faith, his Torah, the Community of Israel, the Land of Israel; in fact, everything which was dear to his heart. He spoke proudly and glowingly of them, being stranger to the subtle artifice of diffidence which characterizes some of our modern Jewish intellectuals. Had Mr. Cohen taken the trouble to consult some handy concordance such as the Yalkut Eliezer under the caption "Israel," the Sefer Ha-Agada or Eisenstein's Ozar, he would have been amazed at the way those early rabbis "raised in the direct line of Jewish tradition" extolled the excellencies, the uniqueness, the primacy and superiority of the Jewish people — quite in keeping with the older tradition of the Bible wherein Israel is spoken of as a light unto the nations, a holy people, an eternal people, and the chosen people. We shall permit ourselves but one rabbinic quotation. "Just as oil brings light to the world, so Israel brings light to the world — just as oil is superior to all other liquids, so Israel is superior to all other nations," (Shir Ha-Shir, R. I, 21.). There is no concordance of our post-Talmudic literature to which the writer may be referred, but it might not be amiss to point to a few opinions out of the hundreds held by leaders of Jewish thought in ages other than this Age of Brass concerning Israel and Israel's spiritual greatness.

Maimonides, the rationalist, declared: "Our nation is wise and perfect, as has been declared by the most high through Moses, who made us perfect: 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'" (Guide, Part 2, chap. 11.). Jehuda Halevi, the poet and philosopher, held that Israel was the heart of the world (Kuzari, II, 36), that the gift of prophecy was bestowed upon Israel alone (I, 101 ff), and that all mankind exists for the sake of Israel even as Israel exists for the sake of the prophets" (II, 44) ¹/_M a

A Guide
For the
Perplexed

505

remarkable exposition of the doctrine of the "Superfation." One is also tempted to mention Jucah Loew ben Bezalel's (Austrian Talmudist and preacher, d. 1609) stirring work, "The Eternity of Israel," whose entire purpose is "to establish that God bestowed eternal life upon Israel" (p. 16); that "Israel is eternal because its existence is of God and in God" (p. 22-a), and that "Israel is the essence and goal of all creation" (p. 18-a). And is not this prayer, which is echoed and re-echoed in our liturgy, quite significant in this connection: "Thou hast chosen us from all people; thou has loved us and found pleasure in us, and hast exalted us above all tongues." The whole mystic literature of our people wherein the concept of Israel is transfigured into that of a mystic spiritual communion, indissolubly bound up with God and the Torah, abounds in exaltations of the people and of its heroic destiny.

A phrase of the rabbis comes to mind to which we are sure Mr. Cohen would not subscribe: "God said to Moses, 'Praise and extol Israel as much as thou possibly canst, for I shall in the days to come be extolled because of them, as it is written; 'And he said: 'Thou art my servant, Israel, in whom I shall be praised.' " (Lev. R. II, 4.).

If in recent years spokesmen of our people have found it necessary to stress anew the moral excellencies of their faith and to remind men of the decisive contributions which Israel has made to the cultural assets of mankind, should not these facts in all fairness be attributed to the desperate emergencies with which Israel was suddenly confronted in the recrudescence of anti-Semitic propaganda, rather than to conceit and vainglory? In the face of the numerous tradescers of our race who suddenly appeared here and elsewhere, bent upon maligning the Jew and Judaism, depreciating our worth and defaming our name, should it be accounted a sin in these spokesmen if they sought to counteract this propaganda by calling attention to the services which the Jew has rendered the world, and by dwelling upon the true inner worth of their faith?

IV

HAD this vocation of counter-propaganda been the only interest of American Israel during the last decade, the critic's indictment would have had validity, but the latter knows quite well that this was not the case. The last ten years witnessed a remarkable renaissance in Jewish life and an intensification of Jewish activities in nigh every field. The War, the desperate plight of our brothers abroad, the challenging opportunity of our National Homeland, the threat of organized anti-Semitism, and, by no means least, the inner urge towards self-expression, combined to stir American Israel to a remarkable pitch of alertness and enterprise. One need not dwell upon the truly herculean efforts made by the American Jew for the relief of his war-stricken fellow Jews abroad — an effort which is even now being renewed. But one ought not to miss the vital implications of this albeit purely humanitarian enterprise. In the hour of crisis, Israel was not found wanting, either in loyalty or generosity. This is evidence of an inner soundness which ought not to be disregarded. Again, this major philanthropic effort, in which all elements of Jewry participated, tended to draw the disparate groups of our people closer together and to establish numerous contacts which, fortunately, have increased rather than decreased with the years.

have
World

In the field of Jewish education marked progress was made. Countless schools, Talmud-Torahs, Y-shivas, and Religious Schools, were established, and in many instances splendid buildings were erected to house them. A growing sense of community responsibility in the matter of the religious and cultural training of our youth was manifested in the organization in some of the larger cities of Bureaus of Jewish Education, headed by competent educators. Side by side with the increase in facilities went an improvement in curriculum and in standards of instruction. Teachers' Training Schools sprang up, and the serious

has been

with

has been

has been

have

507

7th
1149

lack of textbooks ^{has been} ~~was~~ partially met. The vast problems of Jewish education in America have by no means been solved, but American Israel has during recent years wrestled with them earnestly, and, to a degree, successfully.

The number of higher institutions of learning has been augmented by the addition of two new academies within the last five years. The older rabbinic seminaries ^{have} ~~in-~~creased their facilities, their faculties, and their student bodies, and enriched their libraries.

Educational work among Jewish college students, which was so splendidly initiated by the Menorah Organization, has gone on apace. There have now been added two new agencies, the Hillel Foundation and the Avukah. Recently the larger religious bodies of American Jewry met and resolved to pool their resources in an effort to carry on a more extensive program of Jewish education among college men and women. There is promise in all this and an indication of a general awareness touching the magnitude and importance of this work.

Truly phenomenal has been the increase in the number of Centers, Community Houses and Y.M.H.A. buildings which have been established within the last decade. Clearly they have come into existence in response to a real demand. Were these institutions not wanted by the American Jew, and more especially by the young American Jew, they would not have been built, or financed, or used. The quality of their work depends, of course, in the last analysis upon the quality of the leadership which each institution enjoys, but it cannot be gainsaid that in the main they have performed a salutary service in the physical and cultural development of our youth, in their moral guidance and in fostering a sense of Jewish loyalty among them. ~~One is surprised to find critics who twenty years ago would undoubtedly have lamented the fact that American Jews were not providing wholesome recreational and social facilities for their young people, now that American Israel is making an honest effort to supply them, speaking derogatorily of them.~~

13

Now that American Israel is making an honest effort to provide wholesome recreational and social facilities for their young people, one is surprised to

hear derogatory remarks about them from critics who twenty years ago would undoubtedly have lamented the lack of such facilities.

508

And, lastly, American Jews have built and are building at an astounding rate, synagogues and temples. Judging from the jeremiads of our critics, this is to be taken as positive proof of Jewish decadence and disintegration. We beg to differ. Not so long ago one heard the justifiable complaint that our synagogues were physically unattractive, and that they were repellent to the esthetically minded young American Jew. It was said, and rightly said, that these shabby structures were uncomplimentary to a people as prosperous as the American Jew. The plaint of David was repeated: "Shall we dwell in houses of cedar, but the Ark of God dwell within curtains?" Now that American Israel is erecting sanctuaries which in their outer form seek to body forth the beauty of the faith which they enshrine, now that we are bringing a bit of the charm of Japheth into the tents of Shem, the cry is raised, "The Stone Age!" In building spacious and beautiful synagogues American Israel is following an authentic Jewish tradition. For wherever Jews found peace, security, and prosperity, they raised noble religious edifices and attempted to express their religious life esthetically.

Had the American Jew built his synagogues at the sacrifice of other worthy causes he would be deserving of the severest censure, but he has been equally liberal with his philanthropic institutions and in his foreign relief. He has been contributing increasingly larger amounts to Jewish educational purposes, to Palestine, and to causes not specifically Jewish. If there are worthy movements to which he has not yet given sufficiently, it is due to the fact that he has not yet been completely convinced of their importance. The American Jew is not niggardly, nor does he withhold his hand from any cause once he is convinced of its value.

And these synagogues are used! This might sound strange to those critics who seldom enter one. People do come to worship. Not all, of course. Neither do all go to symphonies, or art museums, or to any place where they

509

are likely to be stimulated and enlightened. But in every community one may find men and women, God-fearing and worshipful, who long for the courts of the Living God. These come, and they are the heart of every synagogue. Many more come for the sake of the sermon or lecture, and others come out of habit. Some come regularly and some sporadically, as the desire or need prompts them. One cannot really gauge a man's loyalty to the synagogue or its influence upon his life by the regularity of his attendance at divine worship. Besides the religious services, congregations conduct their schools, elementary, high, and, in some instances, normal schools. They have their sisterhoods and brotherhoods, with their numerous social and educational activities, their adult study groups, extension courses, forums, libraries, etc. In many cities the synagogue is the very hub of Jewish communal life.

So that American Israel has been engaged in many other activities in recent years besides blowing the loud bassoon of self-praise.

AND American rabbis, too, have done much more than preach, although preaching the word of God is still, by some, regarded as an honorable profession, and, if done in consecration and sincerity, one of life's supreme privileges. The organization of the religious life of American Jewry, the establishment of schools, synagogues, theologic academies, and the training of teachers, has been almost entirely the work of American rabbis. Some of our important national institutions, such as the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the United Synagogue, the Jewish Congress, the Jewish Publication Society, the Jewish Chautauqua, the National Farm School, etc., owe their existence to the initiation of American rabbis. Many charitable institutions, many Jewish Centers and Community Houses, owe their inception to the leadership and untiring work of these men. The Zionist

519

Organization of America has consistently through the years drawn from the rabbinate some of its most devoted leaders, executives, and officers. Such activities plainly do not come within the category of "speeches and sermons which are born of the air."

It should be borne in mind that the most pressing tasks which confronted the Jewish ministry heretofore have been these of organization and upbuilding. Millions of Jews in the brief period of a generation or two were transplanted from the four corners of the earth to these shores. Communities, some small, some enormously large, sprang up, as it were, over night. They were structureless and disjointed. They possessed neither philanthropic agencies, nor schools, nor synagogues ^{and} in fact none of the facilities which go to make up a community life. All these had to be built, and it fell largely to the share of the American rabbis to build them. Accordingly most of the thought and energy of these men went perforce into this indispensable ground work of organization ^{and} a tiring and exacting employment which is not yet completed.

If, therefore, the American rabbi has not been more of the scholar, if in many instances his preaching has not measured up in intellectual quality to that of his European confrere, it is due not to his inherent mediocrity but to the high endless time ^{and} energy ^{and} consuming community responsibilities which the conditions of Jewish life forced upon him. The European rabbi, as a rule, is head of an old established community, possessing its full quota of religious, educational and eleemosynary institutions, and in which the necessary functions of congregational life are well distributed. This has not been the case in America, and in most instances is still not the case. Our communities are recent and unformed. New schools, new synagogues and new Centers are needed, with all their attendant needs of program, curricula, coordination, etc. Drives must be launched, and it seems almost daily, for new hospitals, new orphanages, and new Homes for the aged; drives for foreign relief, local relief, Falasha relief; drives for Palestine, for

of American
Hebrew
Congregations

act corp

Hadassah, for the Jewish National Fund; drives for the Union for ~~the~~ Seminars for ~~the~~ Yeshivas, for dormitories, for libraries; drives for the Menorah Organization, for Student Congregations, for Bureaus of Jewish Education, for the Chautauqua. . . . In each instance the rabbi is appealed to first for his active cooperation. In some cases he is compelled to initiate these drives himself; in others he becomes their propagandist, and in still others he is the actual solicitor. . . .

Furthermore, Jewish congregational life, far from being departmentalized, is sadly centralized. The rabbi, especially in the reform congregation, is Darshan, Melamed Chazan, and Shamos all in one. In view of these multitudinous and harassing responsibilities, it is not surprising that the rabbi's hours of study and meditation are few in number, and that this paucity reflects itself in the quality of his preaching and writing.

Still, a creditable list may be drawn up of American rabbis who have done meritorious work even in the field of Jewish scholarship. There is of course, no Zunz or Geiger among them as yet, but Zunzs and Geigers are rather rare throughout the Jewish world to-day, and American Israel will require a considerably longer period of germination before it will produce scholars of such magnitude. Two hundred years of semination preceded the first efflorescence of Jewish genius in Spain. "America has not yet produced one great poet," is the criticism which Thomas Jefferson undertakes to answer in his "Notes on Virginia." "When we shall have existed as a people as long as the Greeks did before they produced a Homer, the Romans a Virgil, the French a Racine and a Voltaire, the English a Shakespeare and a Milton, should this reproach be still true: we will inquire from what unfriendly causes it has proceeded". . . . Still, fine and valuable work in Jewish scholarship has already been done by some of the graduates of the American theological schools, such as Finkelstein, Kaplan, Efros, A. Newman, Epstein, Waxman, Levinthal, Enelow, Frisch, Blau, L. I. Newman,

Englander, Philipson, Linfield, Calisch, Morgenstern, Cohon, Max and Jacob Raisin, Rhine, Rosenau, Bettan, Cronbach, Frechhof, and others, whose work cannot be dismissed with a supercilious shrug of the shoulder.

When the press of community work will ease up, when Jewish laymen will in larger numbers take over the administrative tasks which are rightfully theirs, and when congregational life will become more departmentalized, American rabbis will be able, as they are eager, to devote themselves more definitely to their essential prerogatives *To learn and to teach.*

In passing, we wish to remark that when we speak of American Rabbis we do not refer to the vaudevillians in the pulpit. Unfortunately there are some Rabbis who have cheapened and vulgarized the Jewish pulpit, by sacrificing the timeless for the "timely" in their discourses, by pandering to Jewish morbidities in the choice of their themes, by weekly recourse to struts, antics, and noise. On the bulletins of some of the larger synagogues of America it has become increasingly rare to find a subject which does not have a distinctly "Christian" angle, a savor of the everpalatable "prejudice" theme, or the "kick" of the latest play. Fortunately such pulpits are not typical, and some day, when a few conscientious laymen in the pews will bestir themselves sufficiently to express their disgust, the heroic occupants of these pulpits will beat a hasty retreat.

Avi
Sp. ok?

Author:
note repetition
on ms. p. 541

VI

IN the catalogue of Jewish self-laudations, Mr. Cohen places the idea of the "mission of Israel."

"The claim of Israel to a *prima donna* role among the nations is totally presumptuous and is, as a matter of fact, ignored by the world. To a mind with the least regard for truth it is obvious that Israel is not the primal moral force to which all the peoples look for guidance, the spring of all modern philosophy, science and letters, the intellectual aristocrat in a heathen world, the exclusive repository of the spiritual resources of mankind. There are only the slimmest evidences of fact to support these *hifalutin* pretenses. To maintain these notions is to be guilty of the most preposterous nonsense; to believe them is to cherish the most palpable delusions." (p. 434.)

Per contra one would like to give the conclusions of a *non-Jewish* intellectual $\frac{\wedge}{\wedge}$ Matthew Arnold: "As long as the world lasts all who want to make progress in righteousness will come to Israel for inspiration, as to the people who have had the sense for righteousness most glowing and strongest." And of still another *non-Jewish* writer $\frac{\wedge}{\wedge}$ Leo Tolstoi: "The Jew is that sacred being who has brought down from heaven the everlasting fire and has illumined with it the entire world. He is the religious source, spring and fountain, out of which all the rest of the peoples have drawn their beliefs and their religions."

In order to make out a case Mr. Cohen subtly smuggles in a few prerogatives which the Jew never claimed. No sane Jew ever maintained that Israel was "the spring of all modern philosophy, science, and letters, the intellectual aristocrat in a heathen world, the exclusive repository of the spiritual resources of mankind." Erasmus' phrase comes to mind: The gentleman "is raising devils only to have the credit of laying them." The Jew has maintained that his racial genius has expressed itself most fully in moral and religious values, and that it is his historic obliga-

514

tion to teach them by precept and example to the world. In these he has been teacher; in all else he has been disciple. Every great historic people from the ancient Greeks to the modern Anglo-Saxons has been conscious to a greater or less degree of some particular potency with which its corporate life was endowed, and which constituted its supreme though not exclusive contribution to mankind.

Mr. Cohen errs when he assumes that the ideal of the mission of Israel is a recent discovery. He suspects that he is in error, and he seeks refuge in a footnote, hoping to prove by means of dexterous "drush" that the ancient ideal of the mission and the modern are the same but different. The Shibboleths of the newer psychology are all mustered: inferiority complex, defense mechanism, etc., etc. But the rooted and disconcerting fact nevertheless remains, that consistently through the ages for more than twenty-five centuries the Jew has stressed and underscored his mission to the gentiles. There is a certain sacred objectivity to a fact which even clever intellectuals ought not to tamper with. It was not Geiger or Holdheim or Einhorn who invented the phrase:

"And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." (Exod. 19: 5.)

Or, "The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples as dew from the Lord, as showers upon the grass." (Micah 5: 6.)

Or, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him. He shall make the right to go forth to the nations. . . . I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and have taken hold of thy right hand, and kept thee and set thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the nations. To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." (Isa. 42: 1, 6-7.)

Isa.

Rest

19:6

5:7

515

Our apocryphal and apocalyptic literature fairly rings with this theme. The great missionary activity carried on by the Jews in the centuries immediately preceding and following the beginning of the Christian era was inspired by this idealism, and the whole messianic saga of our race is surcharged with this imperial faith.

The leaders of modern reform Judaism simply reemphasized this ancient Jewish ideal. Their error was in assuming that this ideal was opposed to Jewish nationalism, whereas in reality it is inextricably intertwined with it. Deutero-Isaiah, who of all Jews most eloquently vocalized this missionary aspiration, was of all Jews the most nationalistic and "Palestinian." A people need not expatriate itself in order to be apostolic, and universalism and nationalism rightly conceived are, of course, never antithetical.

Religion was the sole reason why the Jew persisted in maintaining his identity in the world. I have searched high and low in Jewish literature to discover evidences that the Jew struggled to remain a Jew amidst adverse circumstances in order that he might develop a great "synagogue architecture, mural paintings and frescoes, and sculpture in wood and brass, works in silver, gold, and other metals . . . and the old signboards of Polish Jewry." (Watchman, What of the Day? p. 15.) I find nowhere that the Jew objected to intermarriage with other peoples (a practice which would of course have destroyed him) on the ground that the resultant racial admixture would produce less gifted musicians or scientists or writers. There was but one reason throughout the ages: "Lest he will turn away thy son from following Me, that they may serve other gods," (Deut. 7: 3.). The Jew persisted in racial uniqueness in order to preserve the integrity of his faith. Loyalty to the faith spelled loyalty to the race. When the American Jew will abandon his faith he will swiftly and surely assimilate. He will intermarry with the peoples about him, and he will destroy himself racially, and no quantum of Jewish music and Jewish art or books on Jewish literature and philosophy will be potent enough to

save him. The anti-religious Jew will be the first to go, as he always has been. The religiously indifferent Jew will linger on by sheer force of inertia until the relentless assimilative forces will scatter and overwhelm him too. The secular nationalist will endure until such times as his ideology derived from the segregated and compact Jewish community life of Eastern Europe is dissipated by the dissolving influences of American life. Even the strong appeal which Palestine is making today to many of our people will not prove sufficient to command their loyalty in the days to come. The establishment of a strong Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine will not accomplish the miracle of preservation for the American Jew. The existence of a great German Fatherland has not kept the Germans in the United States from assimilating. The Jew in the United States will not long remain either a Yiddishist or a Hebraist, in the technical sense in which the proponents of cultural pluralism understand the terms. Only the religious Jew who will continue steadfast to his faith will conserve and carry on the culture and the traditions of Israel. The rest will disappear, as they always have, as they inevitably must. In other words, Judaism, far from being "a small part of the total fulness of the life of the Jewish people which I [Horace M. Kallen] am accustomed to call Hebraism" (p. 557) is in reality its very heart and life blood.

This ideal of the Mission sustained and inspired the Jews throughout their troubled and checkered career. To what degree they remained faithful to it, let their martyred dead bear witness; let all the great social movements of mankind which felt the impact of Israel's dynamic spirit, surging and creative in living men and women through two thousand years, bear witness; let the Cross and the Crescent bear witness ^{for} for they kindled their torches at the sacred fires of our altars; let the Renaissance and the Reformation bear witness, for in the intellectual preparation for the one the Jew played not an inconsiderable role, and in the ideology of the other a most decisive role; let all

519

gal
152

the mighty movements for social righteousness of the last century bear witness: "Whatever there is in modern civilization that is making for human fraternity, whatever religious aspiration is calling men to a higher sense of duty, wherever men and women are toiling to prove that humanity is a great brotherhood, there we find men living, acting, thinking under the influence of these leaders of Hebrew thought," (Baldwin, "Our Modern Debt to Israel," pp. 202-3.) And there, too, the writer might have added are to be found to-day Jewish men and women who, propelled consciously or unconsciously by that same racial urge towards "malchuth shomayim," are carrying in a hundred fields of human endeavor the message and the mission of their people.

What is to be gained by pooh-poohing this ideal, by cheapening it in our own eyes and in the eyes of our children? What have we to substitute for it? Will an argument like the following prove more effective in arousing Jews to heroic self-preservation and self-fulfillment? "We are a pretty ordinary lot; we have no particular mission to the world; we are possessed of quite commonplace virtues, and therefore — let us write histories about ourselves, endow Foundations for Jewish Research and establish Chairs of Jewish learning in American universities in order to inform the world about these middling qualities and these indifferent contributions of our race."

Do not wisdom and policy rather dictate even as truth warrants a renewed accentuation of this ancient motif in modern Jewish life? Ought we not to challenge our people to-day, as they were challenged of old, to nobler living and thinking, to personal righteousness and community service, on the basis of this historic mandate? Will not an enkindled desire to serve and to help, bring with it an impassioned will to live? Is not Spinoza's proposition as valid for peoples as for individuals? "No one can desire to be blessed, to act well, or live well, who at the same time does not desire to be, to act, and to live, that is, actually, to exist."

The mission ideal of Israel is neither apology nor vain glory. It concerns the non-Jew only as the object; it concerns the Jew as the subject of the service. The Jew is to serve. The Jew is called upon to undertake the burdens, the self-discipline, and the crucifixions of moral leadership. Leadership is a crown, to be sure, but a crown of thorns. It is not by strutting and declaiming that a people leads, but by the forceful example of sacrificial loyalty to great ideals, by holy lives and consecrated purposes. Is there a worthier ideal to hold up before our people?

VII

BOTH Mr. Cohen and Mr. Hurwitz lament the indifference of the Jewish intellectuals to Judaism. They are not very clear as to who these intellectuals are who have thus drifted away. One is inclined to think that the whole concept of the Jewish "intelligentsia" in America needs a great deal of "deciphering." One suspects that like the "American proletariat" and the "American peasantry," they simply do not exist. All three terms are borrowed from other civilizations, and from totally different social stratifications. Presumably, the writers refer to the educated Jews, principally the college-bred men and women. It has not at all been established that the adherence of these men and women to the synagogue and to Jewish communal life in general is weaker than that of any other class in Jewry. We cannot judge of the Jewish community of New York. There all problems are frightfully complicated by the sheer size and unwieldiness of the group and by its amorphous character, and one cannot readily get at the facts. Even there one is likely to find large numbers of educated and professional Jews in the synagogue, in the Zionist movement, at the head of educational enterprises, in community centers, and elsewhere. One is in position to judge a little more accurately of the smaller and less chaotic centers of Jewish population, and

one is likely to find there that college men and women have affiliated themselves with the synagogue in numbers relatively greater than those of other classes. The Jewish community of Cleveland is the fourth largest in the United States, containing some 90,000 souls. I speak of Cleveland not because it is different but because it is not different. It has been reliably estimated that nearly 75 per cent of the Jewish professional men $\frac{7}{8}$ doctors, lawyers, teachers, architects, etc. $\frac{7}{8}$ are members of some temple or synagogue, their number relatively far exceeding that of other Jewish groups. Many of these professional men and many other non-professional college men are on the boards and on the important committees of religious institutions of Cleveland, on the boards of the Bureau of Jewish Education, the Zionist organization, the B'nai Brith, and numerous Jewish social agencies. Many college women are leaders in the activities of the temple sisterhoods and the Council of Jewish Women. There is no outer compulsion forcing these people to affiliate themselves with the synagogue; such affiliation yields no monetary returns and is not effected by the insistence of public opinion. One cannot, of course, measure the quality of the religious sincerity of these men and women, nor the intensity of their Jewishness. It is enough that they wish to belong to a Jewish religious institution, to send their children to its school, to support its activities, and to attend its services whenever the spirit moves them. Wherever Jewish community life has had a chance to organize itself, it has not failed to attract the Jews of higher educational and cultural attainments to a degree comparable and in many instances surpassing that of any other class.

To be sure, there are many educated Jews who are not members of the synagogue, just as there are tens of thousands of Jewish workingmen and Jewish business men who are not; but it is not necessarily their education which has estranged them from Judaism, nor, as the critics are inclined to believe, the absence of good textbooks on Judaism or authoritative Jewish scholarship. Many educated

520

Jews, quite like their confrères who have received no academic training, are too busy grubbing for a living or making money or wallowing in the pleasures and excitements of our age, to think of anything outside of their vocation, their ambitions and their delectations. Still others find membership in a distinguishable and protestant minority too difficult a burden to bear. It is not easy to be a Jew. Under the most favorable conditions, the road which the Jew must travel is a thorny one, and thousands seek, as thousands have sought, the primrose path which leads to assimilation, partial for themselves, complete for their children.

It is therefore idle to believe that, given more books on Jewish law, history, philosophy, and art, these fair-weather gentlemen who cannot bear the strain of Jewish individuality will eagerly return, shouting in joyous refrain: "Hallelujah, we have seen the light!" German Jewry has had the advantages of "Juedische Wissenschaft" for nearly a century ~~in~~ great scholars, great teachers, and great books ~~in~~ and yet apostasy, intermarriage, indifference, and cynicism are more rampant among its intellectuals today than ever before.

The alienation from Jewry and Judaism resulting from the deprivations inherent in the lot of a disfavored minority is particularly in evidence in the case of that smaller group of Jewish intellectuals to whom the writers may be referring ~~as~~ the authors, journalists, artists, philosophers, professors, etc. Many of these have eschewed Judaism and the Jew not because they do not know their people (for a goodly number of them hail from good old-fashioned Jewish homes, from distinctly Jewish environments, and some of them actually received orthodox Jewish training), but because they do not wish to know. There are richer pastures elsewhere ~~in~~ higher rewards, both social and monetary. It is only after these intellectuals are disillusioned, after they discover that the anticipated rewards are not forthcoming, that they return to the welcoming

fold of Israel, a bit saddened and embittered and a bit overzealous. / / .

One of the strange notions of Mr. Cohen is that writers like Robert Nathan, author of "Jonah," and Lawrence Langner, author of "Moses," misrepresent the Jew in their writing; or that such men as Alexander Goldenweiser hate Jewish culture and scorn the hope of Jewish renaissance, because, forsooth, "we have neglected to make easy of access to searchers such as these the treasures of our tradition." There seems to be a confusion in metaphor here. Searchers for truth are not retarded in their pursuit after truth by the fact that truth is not easy of access. They search for truth. On Dr. Goldenweiser's venality Mr. Elisha Friedman has already thrown a very revealing light. (Menorah Journal, August, 1925.). More need not be said. But concerning the others, one wonders whether Schechter could not have illumined the author of "Moses" on the true meaning of Jewish legalism if the latter had taken the trouble to consult his works: or could not Abad Ha'A'n's "Moses" or Cornill's "Moses" or even Philo's "On the Life of Moses" (all available in English), or numerous other essays which any Jewish librarian would have put at his disposal, have given him the truth if he had really sought to know the truth instead of popularizing a stupid fiction. But then Mr. Langner gives his own case away when he frankly acknowledges that he built his character of Moses "not upon the actual life of Moses as told in the Old Testament, but upon the preconceptions of the theater audiences" (Introduction to "Moses," page 14.). And is not this also true of Mr. Nathan? It has evidently not occurred to the critic that the mere publication of books does not insure their being read. / / .

= / lc

ix

But the height of grotesqueness is reached by Mr. Cohen when he states that Mr. Mencken, of the American Mercury, who recently declared that "the religion [of the Jews] is probably the most murderous ever heard of in history," was driven to this conclusion because the latter "never found available in a form palatable to gentleman of

522

his intelligence accounts $\frac{1}{n}$ or the originals on which they are based $\frac{1}{n}$ of the history, literature and religion of the Jews." Poor Mr. Mencken, more sinned against than sinning! Dare one ask whether the books of the prophets and the psalms in their English version were acceptable to this gentleman's aristocratic palate? And did these give him the impression that the Jewish religion is the most murderous ever heard of? Would a reading of Schechter's "Studies," Kohler's "Theology," Lazarus' "Ethics of Judaism," Abelson's "Immanence of God in Rabbinic Literature," Butterweiser's "Prophets of Israel," or Graetz's "History" or the Jewish prayer-book, or even the numerous articles on the history, religion, and literature of the Jew in the Jewish Encyclopedia (all available in English), have given this eminent critic that exalted opinion of our faith? Or must these writings first be recast in the style of the *American Mercury* and *The Smart Set* before this Sybaritic theologian will deign to bestow upon them a passing glance? Again, Mr. Mencken undoubtedly reads German, and in the vast Jewish literature written in that language he undoubtedly could have discovered some material by which to test his scholarly conclusions. The fact of the matter is, that in the face of blissful ignorance and boundless mendacity the Almighty Himself is helpless.

VIII

DR. KALLEN'S review of American Jewish life is no less superficial. His argument runs something like this: Judaism can hardly survive in the United States, for all the three classes into which he divides American Jewry show clear signs of decay. The working classes are not interested in the transmission of Judaism to their children. The middle classes, largely composed of East European conservative or orthodox Jews, who, because they take greater chances in business and are therefore in greater need of the grace of God, are

523

According to Dr. Kallen
^

more religious. They are to be credited with whatever of Jewish activity there is in the United States; but their children do not follow in their footsteps. And the prosperous native Jews of West European origin, among whom are to be numbered the reform Jews, show least promise. The reform Jewish group hardly ever sends one of its sons into the rabbinate (although on the authority of Dr. Morgenstern, president of the Hebrew Union College, we have it that nearly 60% of the student body of the Hebrew Union College come from reform Jewish homes*). Its children graduate from the Sunday School into an indifference to Judaism (although the large majority of them seem to find their way into congregational affiliation. Of the forty-five members on the boards of the two reform congregations of Cleveland, twenty were educated in the religious schools of these temples. This is true of many of the older congregations.)

sixty per cent

says Dr. Kallen
^

Dr. Kallen's summary is very dark, indeed. "The Jews of America fall with respect to Judaism into three broad divisions, none of which shows any seeds of a vital future Judaism." And what is the remedy, if any? Make Judaism more relevant to modern life (the battle-cry of

*Dr. Morgenstern writes: "You will understand that it is not easy to determine exactly whether a student of the College comes from a Reform Jewish home or Sabbath school, or not, since there are various gradations from Orthodoxy, through Conservatism, to Reform. However, I have gone over the present enrollment of our students carefully and find that approximately 65 out of about 105 students come from what I feel justified in calling Reform homes and environments. Furthermore, of this year's entering class I have looked up the records and find that 18 students were born in this country and 9 were born abroad, one of them in England. This last student comes from a typical Reform Jewish home. Of course not all of the eighteen who were born in this country can be said to come from strictly Reform homes, but the great majority unquestionably do so.

"I find this: that each year, as is quite natural, the percentage of students born abroad decreases steadily, and correspondingly, the percentage of students born in this country increases. Furthermore, with this development there is likewise a steady, though not a rapid, increase in the percentage of students who come from Reform homes. The percentage is now approximately 60% from Reform homes, where as a few years ago it was, I am sure, not over 40 to 45%."

bn

524

gdl
154

the earlier reformers!). All the educational institutions of Judaism should be given "a specific contemporary relevancy." The rabbis and teachers should become aware that they are living "in a world of which industry, trade, science, the movies, the radio, and the press, are the dynamic substance, immediate and compelling." And what a shock this will prove to those innocent, cloistered American rabbis who are so utterly unaware of these amazing facts!

And who is responsible for this intellectual isolation of the American rabbis, thus discovered to be so naïve and unversant? Why, the rabbinical seminaries! They are "intellectual morgues dedicated to the anatomy of the dead past of language and law and history." All these subjects should be scrapped or relegated to professional scholars. The rabbinical seminaries where "Judaistic ministers" are trained should become in a manner annexes to the "New School for Social Research;" Jewish scholarships should be separated from the ministry (Dr. Kallen, to my knowledge, is the first man to complain that American rabbis suffer from too much scholarship); they should be instructed more in the Jewish present and less in the Jewish past. They should be taught the structure and functions of Jewish communities and their institutions, (Although specialization in this field belongs more logically, it seems to me, to the profession of the Jewish social worker, and these subjects should occupy the chief place in the curriculum of "The Training School for Jewish Social Work" and similar institutions.) The rabbis should also be trained in psychopathology, so as to understand, we assume, why Jewish literati must first become amateur "goyim" before they become professional "Hebraists"
 "A training school for Judaist ministers, in a word, would familiarize its trainees with that total fulness of the life of the Jewish people which I am accustomed to call Hebraism, and of which Judaism is a part and but a small part."

But just what this sadly attenuated Judaism is, or is to be, or why it is at all, Dr. Kallen does not take the trouble to state. The impression one gains is that Dr. Kallen's

525

Judaism is expressed in terms of a modicum of knowledge of Jewish history, literature (principally modern), and of the structure and needs of modern community life. From a rather difficult sentence at the close of his article one may also infer that the sole function of this Judaism in the "total fulness of the life of the Jewish people" is to assuage pathological disturbances within the Jewish group whenever such disturbances occur ^{or} in other words, (a sort of patent soothing-syrup. "He [the rabbi] will be able to bring it [Judaism] relevantly to bear on that device for the enhancement of security and the assuagement of fear which is the Jew's own, and which is peculiarly suited, therefore, to the idiosyncrasy of whatever pathological condition of mood arises within the structure and behavior patterns of Jewish groups."

to dispense
^

We have already indicated what our conception of the role of Judaism in Jewish life is. We insist that it is not peripheral but focal. Furthermore, in common with all other "Judaists" we find that at the heart of our faith certain essential doctrines touching God and man's relation to God, and Providence and Prayer ^{or} doctrines which do not even appear on the farthest horizons of Dr. Kallen's dissertation. Whatever else Judaism may be, it is surely first and foremost a faith and a theology. Its message is primarily to the individual and then to the community. It concerns itself with the fundamental spiritual needs of human beings, the need of God, the need of communion with God, and the need of an invincible hope in the ultimate triumph of the moral order. It seeks to organize the life of man around a central motivating faith in a Supreme Intelligence, who is source and sanction of all the moral aspirations of man; it defines the ritual of God's worship as justice, love and piety, and points to the rewards of His worship as peace, strength for life's struggles, confidence in the midst of defeat. It has a vision, too, and a program for the whole community of Israel, "to perfect the world according to the pattern of the Kingdom of God." It also

presents an international code of morality based on brotherhood and peace.

Institutions, therefore, which undertake the training of ministers who are to preach these ideals must first apply themselves to the inculcation of these ideals among their students; they must convince them of the reality of these spiritual values, and they must inspire them with glowing zeal to live by them and for them, to shape their own lives after their pattern, and to help others to shape their lives accordingly. To this end the whole sacred literature of Israel is to be utilized as text, the whole range of Jewish experience, the complete records of the searchings and gropings of the mind and soul of Israel as revealed in the writings of our philosophers, poets and preachers. "Behold within thee the long train of thy Trophies, not without thee." This is basic. But it is not exclusive. Whatever of truth bearing upon these tremendous purposes may be gleaned from the literature of other peoples, from science, art and philosophy, must be utilized for correction, clarification, and interpretation. To be sure, rabbis who are to carry on their ministry of spiritual leading in a modern world must have a sound understanding of the problems of modern society and of the specific problems of Jewish society, in order that their work may be relevant and efficient. From our acquaintance with the existing theological institutions we are convinced that serious attention is being increasingly given to these subjects. The seminaries are supplementing the economic and sociologic studies which their students take in the universities by special courses in the specific Jewish Community problems of the . Perhaps there should be more of these courses, but certainly the more ought not to loom so large as to crowd out the basic theologic, historic and literary studies. The aim must always be to prepare the men not for executive positions in social agencies, a task which rightly belongs to other institutions, nor for the position of arbiter in specific economic disputes which daily arise in American life, concerning which only the expert economist or sociol-

ogist can today speak with any authority, but for the prophetic preachment of the basic spiritual truths of human experience, for the all-important work of morally sensitizing men and women to such a pitch that when a situation arises involving a clear moral issue, whether in their private life or in their civic, national or industrial life, they will be moved to choose the good and eschew the evil.

IX

gal 155
DR. KALLEN'S ill-tempered criticism of the modern rabbi deserves only passing notice. We submit that an assertion such as, "They [the rabbis] develop into public flatterers of the powers on which their livelihood depends," is unfair and utterly unbecoming the scientific temper of a seeker after truth. This is spleen and venom and the settling of old scores, not truth! It would appear from this statement that the American rabbis, whose average incomes are less than those of a moderately successful junk-dealer or pants manufacturer, are so crippled and incompetent that they could not earn a living elsewhere, but ~~that they~~ must depend on the ministry for their livelihood, even at the cost of spiritual degradation. It seems to grieve this Professor that the prosperous Jewish communities of America are, in some instances, making it possible for a rabbi and his family to maintain a tolerably decent standard of living. Even Moses in his day seems to have had his Kallens. Whenever he entered the Tent of the Meeting, the Rabbis say, there were men who were wont to cry out: "Look at his fat limbs and the sleekness of his body! his food and drink are of the Jews, and all that he has are of the Jews" (T. Jer. Shek. v. 2).

START →

Similarly puerile is the slur cast by the writer on the young men who are attending the various theological schools in order to prepare themselves for the ministry: "They have been bribed into the rabbinate." The fact

528

is relatively high
^

that learning to be a rabbi usually costs nothing, and that the profession calls for no great physical or intellectual exertion, and the ~~relatively high incomes~~ are the reasons given why these young men have chosen their vocations. Judging from the low estimate which the Professor has of his fellow Jews, one wonders why, in the face of all these alluring inducements, our theological schools are not over-run with students ./. Were the emolument so high and the "ease and security of a rabbi's life" so certain, "bribes" would not be necessary. The fact of the matter is that the ministry does not offer the ease and security and the rich incomes which the average young man choosing a career quite naturally considers. It holds out none of the glamorous financial prospects which the successful practice of law or medicine or business does. The Professor is perhaps misled in his financial barometer by the relatively high incomes of a few metropolitan rabbis (who probably would have done quite as well, if not better, financially, in other walks of life). The average is not at all so attractive. One need but visit the homes of American rabbis ~~orthodox, conservative, or reform~~ from one end of the country to the other, to realize how very modest these homes are and to what stinting and scraping these men are often reduced by the necessity of keeping up a standard of living which their communities demand of them. And as for "ease and security," a veritable tyro in the ministry could give the Professor some pointers ./. .

The children of well-to-do Jews are not going into the ministry to-day any more than they are going into the profession of teaching or social work or the arts. Very few of them are now going into any profession except the law, which has its "business" angle. It would be of interest to know whether the students of the New School ~~for~~ Social Research are recruited from the ranks of America's multi-millionaires. Well-to-do parents want their children to enter into their own established business concerns or into some other business in which they can help them. Nothing so fantastic as the ministry occurs

529
~~529~~

to them. It is the children of the poor who are sometimes attracted to the ministry or to social work or to teaching or to the career of an artist. This has always been so. "Take care of the children of the poor, for the Torah emanates from them."

X

IN conclusion, a word about Jewish unity and Jewish leadership in America, the lack of which is so sadly lamented by many.

Throughout the writings of Cohen, Kallen, and Hurwitz, one finds a pathetic hankering after organic unity in American Israel. Each one blandly assumes that the differences which exist are slight, and could be easily composed if the rabbis were not such bunglers, or if the seminaries were not such morgues, or if some great leader would arise who by the wave of some magic wand would re-integrate the scattered life of our people. Thus Mr. Hurwitz writes: "Third, and this is the basic evil — there is no real leadership in American Jewry; no leadership that, transcending all the various prevailing sects, parties and propagandas, possesses the intelligence to see Jewish life steadily and as a whole, with all its genuine needs and stirring potentialities; religion and culture and philanthropy and industry, Diaspora and Zion; or possessing the intelligence, has the courage and energy to bring American Jews to serve all of these needs integrally together."

Rabbi Joel Blau, in his thoughtful paper "The Case of Jewish Education," which appeared in the *Menorah Journal* of February, 1925, is moved by a similar mystic faith: "I look forward to the time when some great leader in Israel, be he rabbi or layman, will recall our people from this (as historic reckoning goes) momentary aberration, will recall it to sanity and wisdom. And then, if we cannot entirely abolish our religious differences, mainly centering in questions of religious etiquette, we will look

530

upon them with an eye so steadily directed to truth that these minor points will cease to count. After that we shall be ready to build a real Jewish Educational Institute, to serve as a center for Jews of all varieties. One House for the entire Household of Israel!"

But all this is frightfully naive. There is no Jewish community in the world, unless it be in the small backwater centers, untouched by modern life, where such a unity exists. There is much less unity in the great centers of Jewish life, in Poland and in Russia, than there is in the United States. The Jewish communities there are split most decisively along numerous nationalistic, economic, and religious lines. At times the political emergencies of a minority group will weld them together into a temporary truce, but they possess neither a central authority, an acknowledged leadership, a common purpose, nor a common program. This is true also of the countries in Western Europe. Everywhere Jewry has its nationalists and its assimilationists, its Yiddishists and its Hebraists, its modernists and its fundamentalists, its pietists and its atheists, its radicals and its bourgeoisie, its bolshevists and its bankers; and as the process of secularization on the one hand and religious individualization on the other continues, there will be still greater differentiation among the groups in Jewry. This is true of all peoples. It is also true of the Jewish people. It is very surprising that men who, like the distinguished editor of the Menorah Journal, correctly understand that Israel is a people and not merely a religious community, do not bear this fact in mind. A religious sect may have a leader; a people has leaders, with various and opposing programs in all the departments of national life and thought. A people is divided fifty ways as regards the leaders whom it chooses and the ideals which it chooses to follow. The Yiddish bolshevists of Russia and the Russian Zionists alike recognize that the Jews constitute a distinctive ethnic group. But what a gulf there exists between their purposes and programs and what hostility! The Mizrahi and the Agudath Israel have the

get
156

531

same Shulchan Aruch in common, and yet even in Palestine they need must have their own communities and their own leaders ^{and} and no love is lost between them.

The plain duty of the thoughtful American Jew today is to discover for himself the particular interpretation of Jewish life which appeals to him, and affirmatively to follow it through, joining with others of like mind in an effort to make that view and that tendency as dominant in Jewish life as possible. There will never be "a comprehensive vision and compelling leadership in American Jewry," any more than there is in American life in general or in the life of any civilized people.

There will take place from time to time a pooling of resources when common interests, chiefly political and economic, are at stake, when anti-Semitic propaganda or unfavorable legislation threaten the security of all the groups, or when humanitarian sentiments make a common appeal. At times the various religious groups in Jewry will meet in conference to foster educational agencies whose programs are acceptable to them all. But beyond this commendable "opportunism," it is folly to expect solidarity and unity in American Israel.

Temple Emanuel-El
Fifth Avenue and Forty-third Street
New York

October 1st, 1926.

My dear Dr. Silver,

I beg to thank you for your kindness in sending me a copy of your beautiful reprint of your article on the Heathens. I read it in The Tribune. I thought it was a very fine and vigorous piece of work, and I wish to congratulate you on it. I appreciate your thinking of sending me a reprint, which I shall be very glad to have in my library.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Silver and best wishes to you both for the New Year, I am

yours sincerely,

H. D. Ruellow

The Rev. Dr. A. H. Silver,
The Temple,
Cleveland, Ohio.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
ANN ARBOR
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

October 1, 1926.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
The Temple,
E 105th and Ansel Rd.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Silver:

I have just read with great interest and pleasure your fine paper, "Why do the Heathen Rage?" While all of the strictures of Cohen, Kallen, and Hurwitz are not entirely unfounded, it was good to have you put the controversy in its proper perspective, with a sane and sophisticated, as well as deeply idealistic, approach. The story which you tell in your foreword has filled me with amazement, and I am anxiously awaiting word from Hurwitz as to his reasons for so unfortunate a departure from the Menorah tradition. I am very glad that your paper is receiving wide distribution.

With warm regards and best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

I. L. Sharfman

I. L. Sharfman
AIM



JUDGES' CHAMBERS
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
PITTSBURGH PA

JOSIAH COHEN
JUDGE

October 2, 1936.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Doctor:

I want to thank you very kindly for the pamphlet you sent me containing your message entitled "Why do the Heathen Rage."

I am watching your progress very carefully and am delighted to see you moving forward and upward, and trust you may reach the climax that is in store for you.

With personal regards, I am,

Very truly yours,

[Handwritten signature: Josiah Cohen]
[Handwritten note:]
P.S. I have not yet had time
to read your lecture
but from a cursory review know it
will be instructive & inspiring. J.C.

Congregation Beth Israel

Hartford, Conn.

ABRAHAM J. FELDMAN, Rabbi,
19 Auburn Road,
West Hartford, Conn.

ISIDORE WISE, President,
810 Prospect Ave.,

SOLOMON ELSNER, Treasurer,
700 Prospect Ave.,

F. C. OPPER, Secretary,
44 Oxford St.,
Hartford, Conn.

October 2, 1926.

Dear Abba:

I received the reprint of your Menorah article and thank you for it. If you can spare two or three extra copies I would be glad to have them.

The enclosed copies of correspondence were prompted by the following incident. I have been, for a number of years, a cooperating member of the I.M.A., paying \$10 a year. When I got a bill for renewal this summer I reduced my contribution to \$3 a year, the subscription rate of the Journal. Then came the correspondence, which is self-explanatory. I think you will be interested.

With sincere regards to Virginia and you from Helen and me,
I am

as ever

faithfully yours,

Abe

P.S. You may be interested to know, also, that Rev. Chas. Grees is working on preliminary drawing for my new Temple.



October 3, 1926

Dear Dr. Silver:

Many thanks for your kindness in sending me a copy of your series of articles in reply to the Menorah people.

I have read them with great interest and pleasure. You have hit the nail in the right place.

Under separate cover I have much pleasure in forwarding to you reprints of some of my recent papers.

With kind regards

Sincerely yours
Jacob Mann.

CONGREGATION BETH EL
DETROIT

Oct. 4th, 1926

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
c/o The Temple
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Colleague:

I want to thank you very sincerely for sending me your splendid pamphlet recently published, under the title "Why Do the Heathens Rage?"

I have read it through from cover to cover with the utmost interest. It is a brave and timely document. I believe that every member of the rabbinate should feel himself indebted to you for what you have done. It is about time that someone told the Cohens, the Kallens, and the Hurwitzes that their "ipsi dixit" statements, which are not infrequently tinged with real malice, cannot forever go unchallenged.

2. By the way, I will appreciate your kindness if you can send me an additional copy or two of the pamphlet. I will be glad to pay any expense involved.

With cordial personal regards, believe me to be

Sincerely yours,

Leo M. Frank

RECEIVED OCT 10 1926

RESIDENCE,
270 MCGREGOR AVE.
MT. AUBURN

DAVID PHILIPSON
RABBI ROCKDALE AVENUE TEMPLE
CINCINNATI, OHIO

October 4, 1926.

Rabbi Abba H. Silver
105th St. at Ansel Rd.
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Silver:

Accept my thanks for the copy of your pamphlet, "Why do the Heathens Rage?" which you were so kind as to send me. I have read it with with keenest interest and with unalloyed pleasure. It is a trenchant and crushing rejoinder to the articles of Messrs. Kallen, Cohen and Hurwitz. You have not left them a leg to stand on. More power to you.

You will be interested in the enclosed copy of a letter which I have just written to Hurwitz. You may also be interested to know that at the recent meeting of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, it was determined to discontinue the advertisement of the College in the Menorah Journal.

With kindest regards, I am as
always,

Sincerely yours,

David Philipson

Encl.
DP:MH

COPY

October 4, 1926.

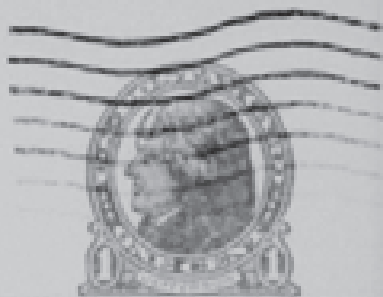
Mr. Henry Hurwitz,
Chancellor, Intercollegiate Menorah Ass'n
167 West 13th St.
New York City.

My dear Mr. Hurwitz:

WRHS You may cancel my subscription to the Menorah Journal. The Silver incident has convinced me that your journal is not an open forum for the publication of all views ~~and~~ ^{as} has been your previous claim. For sometime past, it has been very apparent that you have been strongly infected with the germs of anti-rabbinitis and anti-reformitis. I could stand even this, if you were broad enough to let the other side be heard. A number of rabbis who have spoken to me on the subject, feel much the same way. I regret extremely that your amazing action in re Rabbi Silver's article has compelled me to take this ~~action~~ ^{step}.

Very truly yours,

DF:MM



THIS SIDE OF CARD IS FOR ADDRESS

WRHS
G. ALBA H. Silver,
The Temple, E. 105th St.,
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Colleague:

Charleston, S.C., 10/5/26

I received your pamphlet "My Dea The Haetten
Rage?" (which I originally read in the Jewish Tribune)
I wish to express my sincere thanks, & to thank
you for your thoughtfulness in sending it to me.

With greetings & best wishes, I am,

Fraternally yours,
Jacob S. Rabin

The New York Public Library

Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

476 FIFTH AVENUE

New York, Oct. 5, 1926

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
E. 105 St. at Ansel Rd.
Cleveland, Ohio

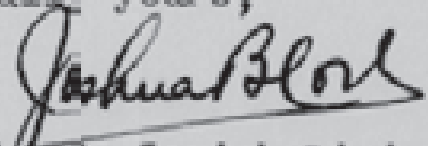
Dear Silver:

After an absence of over a month, I returned to my desk and was glad to find your pamphlet "Why Do the Heathen Rage?". It was very good of you to have written the forward in which you incorporate extracts from the correspondence. This indeed is important in view of the fact that all sorts of rumors seem to have been spread in some circles as to the circumstances which led to the invitation to the writing of the article and to its rejection by the publishers. Would that your pamphlet receive widest circulation. Could you possibly spare five or ten copies so that I can place them in hands of men who are interested in the affair?

There is no doubt that we do need a magazine such as the Menorah minus its self-appointed powers that control it and minus the so-called "advanced intellectualism" which they pretend to display. A magazine on a high literary caliber representing the cultural interest of Jewry in this country is desirable. If the publication of your pamphlet will awaken an interest for the creation of such a magazine aside from the polemical character which the pamphlet bears it would have achieved a great deal.

With all good wishes to you and Mrs. Silver, I am as ever

Faithfully yours,


Chief, Jewish Division

THE JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF AMERICA
531-535 WEST ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THIRD STREET
NEW YORK CITY

October 5, 1926.

My dear Rabbi Silver,

Many thanks to you for, *the report of*
your article on "Why do the Heathen Rage."
All of us must be grateful to you for rising
to the defense of the American rabbinate.
But what is even more admirable is your frankness
in telling the story of Mr. Hurwitz's promise
and change of mind, and your willingness
to publish the article elsewhere.

It is of course a pity
that a rabbi had to come to the defense of the
calling and that no layman replied to the
attacks of Kallen and Eliot Cohen. But that
only shows how important it was that a reply
be made to those attacks. Your article certainly
did help to clarify the atmosphere, and one
can only hope that you will follow it with
further studies of the real conditions in American
Jewish life.

With thanks once again,

Very sincerely yours

Louis Dickstein

The Jewish Tribune
and HEBREW STANDARD
The American Jewish Weekly

EDITORIAL ROOMS

~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ 570 Seventh Avenue
New York

October 5th
1926

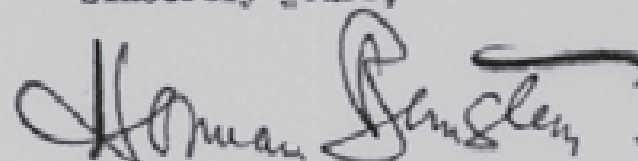
Dr Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
East 105th Street and Ansel Road
CLEVELAND OHIO

Dear Dr. Silver:

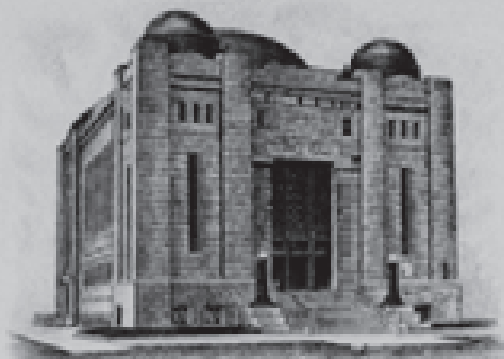
Will you kindly send me a few copies of your pamphlet
"WHY DO THE HEATHEN HATE", which I understand has already
been published.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



Herman Bernstein



Temple Israel

BOSTON, MASS.

October
6 th
1926

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
The Temple,
East 105th St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Abba:

Thanks for the pamphlet "Why Do the Heathens Rage?" I read the story as it originally appeared in the "Jewish Tribune". I did more than read it, I read it in part aloud to Ruth. I should have written to you about it at the time for I was very deeply impressed by it. You make an unanswerable statement. I am very glad that you made it. The Menorah and Henry Hurwitz and the rest of them needed it. Frankly I cannot understand Hurwitz's position. You wrote well, to the point, and comprehensively. My congratulations. You have done us all a real service.

Ruth joins in greetings to you and Virginia.

Faithfully yours,

Harvey Lewis

HL:B

JULIUS ROSENWALD
CHICAGO

October 6, 1926

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
The Temple,
E. 105th & Ansel Road,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Mr. Rosenwald appreciates very
much your kind thoughtfulness in sending him
a copy of the reprint from The Jewish Tribune
of your article "Why do the Heathen Rage?"
Please accept his thanks.

Sincerely yours,

Mittie C. Graves

Secretary to
Mr. Rosenwald

WCG/MW

RABBI EDWARD N. CALISCH, Ph.D.
RICHMOND, VA.

Oct. 6/1926

Rabbi A. H. Silver -

Cleveland O.

Dear Silver -

I wish to acknowledge the receipt of your pamphlet "Why Is the Heathen Rage?" and to tell you ^{with} how much pleasure and interest I read it. Not only is it a complete answer to the "razings" of Messrs Hurwitz, Kallen & Cohen, - but it is also as fine an exposition of American Jewish conditions and of Judaism in America as one could wish for, - and again also an exposé of the high journalistic "ethics" of the Menorah Journal staff. - I know of no one who could have written an answer more effective, more illuminating, more comprehensive than this, - and its scholarship is in itself the most satisfying element, as it is in itself an answer. My deep thanks to you for it, - as an American reform Jew. - I would like to see that pamphlet in every Jewish home in America.

Fraternally & Sincerely

Edward N. Calisch

Baltimore Hebrew Congregation

MADISON AVE. AND ROBERT ST.
BALTIMORE, MD

OFFICE OF THE RABBI

Wednesday Oct. 6th

Dear Abba,

Got your interesting article
shown to reading. I had seen it
before in Tribune. I like

particularly the terse and impregnable
in words ~~for~~ which do not leave
a break in your points. However

appears to have allowed himself
to be dominated by a point of
view your series does not claim
to achieve is not the right but the

facility } the tempo. This seems
old. do } sort of record. In

had too for another reason
seeing the articles published there the
publications in pamphlet form - I am

Summary of the reports will so
far to combat the attitude of
indifference, based on hopelessness
which many of our people have
adopted. It is a fine & eloquent

answer to those who ask —
what the use.

(are a Trusts & a U .



theatre -

1 -

UNION WAREHOUSE & STORAGE CO. AT WHEELING

BLOCK BOUNDED BY MAIN, SOUTH, SIXTEENTH STREETS AND CREEK

GENERAL MERCHANDISE STORAGE
DISTRIBUTING AND FORWARDING



Wheeling, W. Va.

10/7/26

Rabbi A. H. Silver,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Abba:

Uncle Louis handed me your address "Why do the Heathen Rage". I read the pamphlet with a great deal of interest and pleasure.

Permit me to congratulate you on your exclusion from the "Menorah Journal".

The two most trifling and inferior magazines that reach my "den" are "The Menorah" and the B'nai B'rith Magazine". Pabulum for morons- one minute; I quote from your address page 26, "It is not easy to be a Jew. Under the most favorable conditions, the road which a Jew must travel is a thorny one, etc."

This is not true. It certainly is not true in my case and it is not true as far as you are concerned. Its all right in a speech but in the U.S.A. it is not a fact.

Regards to you and Virginia.

Yours

BEN S. BLER

MD

Mail all correspondence regarding this letter to Wheeling, W. Va. office.

DR. ISRAEL HERBERT LEVINthal
RABBI OF THE
BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER

Center Study:
667-691 EASTERN PARKWAY
Phone DEctor 8200

Residence
576 EASTERN PARKWAY
Phone LAfayette 1250

Oct 7, 1926.

My dear Doctor Silver, -

Will you please accept my sincere thanks
for the Reprint: "Why blo the Hatten Rags?" which
you were kind enough to send me. I read the article
with a great deal of pleasure when first published and
want to congratulate you upon the masterly way you treated
the entire problem.

With kind personal greetings, I am

Cordially,
I. H. Levinthal

WILLIAM ROSENAU
RABBI
EUTAW PLACE TEMPLE
RESIDENCE: ESPLANADE APARTMENT 5-H

BALTIMORE, MD. October 8, 1926.

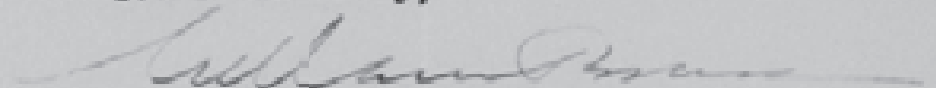
Rev. Dr. Abba Hillel Silver,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Dr. Silver:-

I wish to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your pamphlet entitled "WHY DO THE HEATHEN RAGE?" I have read it with great pleasure and feel that all just people will realize that you have annihilated the two Menorah contributors who suffer from Rabbinitis. The only regret I have is that Hurwitz, whose number I have had for years, refused to publish your reply.

With cordial greetings, I am as ever,

Yours sincerely,



WILLIAM ROSENAU

WR:H

Oct. 10, 1926

My dear Silver:-

Accept my hearty 5-10 for your fine
answers to the Menorah attacks. I am especially
pleased with the fact that it was not printed
in the Menorah Journal. That makes the "Heath"
safe all the more.

If you have extra copies, I shall
be very glad to distribute them to the Legat
College.

Do you not think the time ripe
for launching a popular scientific monthly,
devoted to the interests of progressive
Jewish thought? I have in mind a pub-
lication on the order of the Open Court.

With kind greetings, I am

Faithfully Yours,

Samuel V. Chertok

538 Hadell Ave.
Cincinnati, Ohio

RESIDENCE
1016 SAN PEDRO AVENUE

RABBI EPHRAIM FRISCH, PH. D.
TEMPLE BETH-EL
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

October 14, 1926.

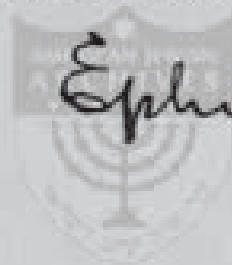
Rabbi Abba H. Silver,
105th St. at Ansel Road,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Silver:

Thanks for sending me your pamphlet "Why Do the
Heathens Rage?" It is a crushing answer to the critics
you deal with and to that whole type of mind, and it is
splendidly written. If you can spare me an extra copy
I would appreciate it very much.

Sincerely,

EF vf



Ephraim Frisch

Emanuel Congregation

701 BUCKINGHAM PLACE

LOUIS STERNHEIM, SECRETARY
1216 WINNEMAC AVENUE
CHICAGO
TELEPHONE EDGEWATER 4757

FELIX A. LEVY, RABBI
707 MELROSE ST.

HERMAN SELZ, PRESIDENT
626 STRATFORD PLACE
M. R. JACOBS, VICE-PRESIDENT
384 BUENA AVE.
HUGO MUNZER, TREASURER
807 AINSLIE ST.
J. H. SELZ, FINANCIAL SECY.
8941 GLENWOOD AVE.

CHICAGO, Dec. 21, 1926.

Dear Colleague:

We are very sorry that you cannot be with us for the Spring Conference, but hope that at a future meeting we shall have the pleasure of your presence.

Many thanks for sending me your rejoinder to the Moscow publications. I cannot for the world of me see why ~~they~~^{it} was refused printing. Your article is splendid - temperate and direct and this failure to publish it implies that "something is not quite right in Denmark".

I hope to see you at the Union meeting in your city in January.

Kindest greeting, 1.21.27

Cordially
Felix A. Levy.

Henry Hurwitz

Memorial Journal

167 West 13th St.

N. Y. C.

We are not ~~to have~~ ~~it with the article~~ ~~held over~~ until June; ~~you~~
~~do not~~ inform me just when
~~you expect it~~ it is in the
nature of a reply to article
which has appeared in last
three issues of Journal and
~~will be~~ should ~~follow~~ ^{be} them.
You did not inform me just
when you wanted it and I
had to get it out.

A. H. Silver

JEWISH PROFESSIONAL MEN MEMBER OF CONGREGATIONS

A paper by Rabbi Abba Silver entitled, "Why Do the Heathen Rage?" is a reply to several calamity howlers who lament the decay of Judaism in America, has been published in pamphlet form.

Rabbi Silver's fine article is based on the papers of Elliot K. Cohen, "The Age of Brass," Menorah Journal, October, 1925; Dr. Horace M. Kallen, "Can Judaism Survive in the United States?" April and December, 1925; and Henry Hurwitz, "Watchman, What of the Day?" February, 1926. Both Mr. Cohen and Mr. Hurwitz lament the indifference of the Jewish intellectuals to Judaism.

Dr. Silver has been Rabbi of Tifereth Israel Congregation, Cleveland, Ohio, for a number of years. Therefore when he speaks of the Jewish community of Cleveland he does so with authority. In this connection he says:

"The Jewish community of Cleveland is the fourth largest in the United States, containing some 90,000 souls. I speak of Cleveland not because it is different but because it is not different. It has been reliably estimated that nearly 75 per cent of the Jewish professional men—doctors, lawyers, teachers, architects, etc.—are members of some temple or synagogue, their number relatively far exceeding that of other Jewish groups. Many of these professional men and many other non-professional college men are on the boards and on the important committees of religious institutions of Cleveland, on the boards of the Bureau of Jewish Education, the Zionist Organization, the B'nai B'rith, and numerous Jewish social agencies. Many college women are leaders in the activities of the temple sisterhoods and the Council of Jewish Women. There is no outer compulsion forcing these people to affiliate themselves with the synagogue; such affiliation yields no monetary returns and is not effected by the insistence of public opinion. One cannot, of course, measure the quality of the religious sincerity of these men and women, nor the intensity of their Jewishness. It is enough that they wish to belong to a Jewish religious institution, to send their children to its school, to support its activities, and to attend its services whenever the spirit moves them. Wherever Jewish community life has had a chance to organize itself; it has not failed to attract the Jews of higher educational and cultural attainments to a degree comparable and in many instances surpassing that of any other class."

The conditions in Cleveland are in no wise different from those in other large cities. The picture that Dr. Kallen, Mr. Cohen and Mr. Hurwitz present is altogether too dark.

It is difficult to tell just what position Jesus occupies in the tenets of the Congregational Church. Sometimes it is Unitarian and broad and then again the pendulum swings more or less towards Friptarian. A recent issue of all the Christian papers had a great deal to say about "Little Brother Francis Assisi." This is a new departure. It was hitherto believed that the Catholic Church had a monopoly of saints on earth, but it appears that St. Francis is an exception. In fact, the Congregationalist, which is usually Unitarian, issued what was in some degree a St. Francis number, claiming

frequency these reports, base and continuously same information. They therefore, ask the public the various Jewish associations take notice of this and to selves accordingly. A pressed appeal in the advertisements would bring better results.

The Independent Order B'rith will raise a special fund of \$100,000 for the relief of Jewish flood and hurricane in Miami. Alfred M. Cohen, president of the Constitution, announced that it has \$5,000. The appeal of the committee has been sent to 5 lodges. Their individual will make up a special fund. The action of the based on the report of Bogen, Executive Secretary, who went to Florida after the catastrophe to situation and decide how best be rendered by this.

It is pleasant reading in papers that the Jewish in Eastleigh Barracks are provided for. The number been living there recently reduced by immigration causes to about two hundred. The Home Office has agreed should be released from the soon as permanent employment be provided for them withing British labor. In view of unemployment among British men this is not unjust. It to be able to record how the Jews of London are to steps to secure employment refugees in compliance with government's demands and about their release.

The complaint of the United States of the Catholic Church, its priests in Mexico is probable. However that may be, compared with the treatment to Jews for many centuries even at present, in practice country in the world where Catholics are in the majority, the reception of France, and then the Revolution at the close of the 18th century. In Mexico the is with the Church and its alone. The common people undisturbed to worship and do as they please. Nobody is killed by mobs, no women are harassed, no homes and houses of worship burned and plundered, no public cemeteries desecrated, and which the Jews of Eastern Europe the victims. And all this without sent, or at least the tacit consent of the several Governments. This a matter of the distant more recent past alone. The state of affairs exists today. Outrages are being committed in Catholic States as Poland, Hungary and Bavaria. The of the United States are our Government to make the Government of Mexico to withdraw recognition, tests prove ineffective. Therefore, respectfully suggested per Catholic dignitaries and Catholic organizations, such as the Knights of Columbus, to leading one, to make similar to the European countries.

File
with
Menorah
School

Los Angeles Cal Nov 12

THE B'NAI BRITH MESSENGER

Notes and Comments

By MAFTH

I RECEIVED a letter the other day telling me how much one of my readers enjoys my "NOTES AND COMMENTS." Thanks for the buggy ride. The same person wants to know why I don't write every week. Well, now, that's a real compliment. But since I must make a living, I have to devote some time to a fairly good-paying job, which I am anxious to keep. Even the poorest "stuff" takes time to think thru, with such mental equipment as one possesses, and to put down. Maybe after awhile I'll find enough time to write less and oftener. Thanks just the same. "Say it with flowers." I believe in that spirit before rather than after death.

PROTESTANTS infected with the Klan microbe and the Bryan Bug, and others suffering from Fundamentalitis of one kind or another, leave no stone unturned to legislate the Bible into the public school. Another state has fallen victim to this legislative virus. These very Protestants object, object seriously and strenuously to the parochial school of the Catholic Church securing a portion of the public school funds with which to maintain their sectarian institutions; but these same Protestants make any means to justify the end to control the machinery of government and government funds to convert the public school into Protestant parochial schools.

IF the truest study of mankind is man, the best study of religion is not a book on comparative religion, but a bit of compelling religion acted every day. The best comparative study of religion is conduct, is character. I compare and compute the value of a man's religion by the kind of a man he is. I am not interested in theological labels. I am concerned with life-giving love. Give me love. You keep the labels.

THERE are some religionists (?) so pious that they pronounce a (b'rocho) blessing even over a bankruptcy. Dividends are not divine because they are dedicated to God. God is too merciful to put any man to shame. But that is no invitation to go into the hands of a receiver.

MY estimate of the Jew is not what others think of him but what the Jew thinks of himself. Walter Hurt, John H. Holmes and their kind are rare exceptions to the rule. The Jew who has a high opinion of himself is sure to give a good account of himself.

I AM asking myself whether one who does not attend religious services regularly, who regards them as unessential, may with good grace be a national officer of a Jewish Women's Organization and assume to tell young Jews and Jewesses the value and need of Jewishness? The Bible says somewhere about Those whom God honors must honor God. Leaders heed your conduct! An ounce of example is worth a ton of advice.

ON my desk is a little booklet by Rabbi Abba H. Silver bearing the title "Why Do The Heathen Rage?" It seems Dr. Silver was invited by the editor of the Menorah Journal to write an article to meet the rather "radical" views on Judaism that appeared on the pages of the Journal

penned by such men as Kallen and Cohen. Rabbi Silver wrote such an article, and then for reasons sufficient unto the astute editor of the Journal it was not published. That's one part of the story. The other is Rabbi Silver's article. It's a fine article Abba, informational and inspirational, but it proves nothing to these Cohens and Kallens, Cohen and Kallens, I should have said. They have no use for rabbis or for Judaism not of their mental hue. You know the rabbinical law of SHATNES, which prohibits the mixing of wool and cotton because they belong to two separate kingdoms. Well, here's a case in point. Judaism has suffered from this kind of Shatnes; the blending of minds that do not blend. Judaism believes in the scientific spirit but not in intellectual sovietism. Rationalism without religion is as bad as religion without rationalism. Of course, Judaism is too broad and liberal to read any one who wants to stay in, out of its fold. Not all Cohens are priests nor all Kallens prophets. Judaism in America will not be saved by its rabbis nor destroyed by its carping critics. It will live or die according as the rank and file love and live its principles. Judaism has died many deaths. It has lived many lives. What's a death or two more between Soviet friends!

THE Menorah Journal, like the Y.M.C.A. was created to serve a need it does not meet. The Journal has become the literary forum of the intellectual highbrows in American Jewry. College professors and rabbis do not need the Journal, altho the Journal needs them. The rank and file do not read the Journal and would not be greatly helped if they did. As the exhaust pipe of our Jewish Intelligentsia it is too expensive. A Ford is good enough. Send it to the Dearborn Independent.

SOME one said that the New York City directory now shows more Cohens than Smiths. And there is no telling how many of the Smiths are Cohens. You cannot by the sound of a name these days, tell if it belongs to a Jew or an Irishman. But, then, I cannot believe that all the high Mexican officials who are persecuting? the Catholic clerics in Mexico are Jews. Calles may indeed be a Moranno—a secret Jew. Calles may indeed be Jewish Sabbath Bread (Challes), or a bride (Kallah), or a lame duck (Katchke). You pay your money and you takes your choice.

ON my desk is a letter from a young rabbi which carries interesting material. It seems he was invited to become a candidate for a rabbinical post, and was promised the hearty support of the MACHER, the boss politician of the Kehilla. The Boss Macher double-crossed him, altho up to the last minute he kept him under the impression that it was all fixed for him to win. The poor fellow not only did not get the post, but was compelled to resign his position which he held for six years and where he was respected by all.

Such conduct cannot be too severely condemned. It is because such Bosses still blacken congregational board that rabbis are disgusted with the ministry. If I could publish the fellow's name without involving the rabbi concerned I'd do it. He and his kind need to be shown up.



BARKER

the Store of Christmas

NOT just one Christmas store, but a whole lot of Christmas shops, inspirations. The new Charm Manners Shop, the Shop of Christmas Studio, the Crystal Flower Shop, the Fountain Pen Shop, not to mention the Silver, China, Art and Gift Department—Furniture, Music, Houseware Department—a Christmas fair.

BARKER

Complete Furnishers of SEVENTH STREET, A

Pig'n B
Cand

KNOWN every
their rare g
distinctive
and Wholesome.
tractively in conv

712 South B
439 South B
224 South B
744 South H



“Why Do the Heathen Rage?”

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

1925



“Why Do the Heathen Rage?”

ABBA HILLEL SILVER



Reprinted by permission
from *The Jewish Tribune*

Foreword

This article was written at the request of the *Menorah Journal*. On December 22, 1925, the editor, Mr. Henry Hurwitz, wrote:

"Let me repeat again in this way, most sincerely and urgently, my invitation to you to write an article for the *Menorah Journal*, as soon as may be, to present the situation as you see it in answer to Kallen's and Cohen's articles. . . . You will be doing the cause of Judaism in America a great service if you will present your analysis of the situation, your description of what the rabbinate and the synagogue have so far had to build up in this country. . . . The most immediate thing now is your article, on which I shall insist!"

On December 21, 1925, I wrote in reply:

"I wish I could find time to write an article in answer to the defeatist literature with which you have swamped the *Menorah Journal* in recent months. . . . Unfortunately, I am busily engaged now putting into shape a book, which I hope to have published this year, and I am giving to it all my spare time. If, during the next month or two, I should have some respite from my work, I shall try to write an article for you."

On February 9, the editor wrote asking for the title of my article for announcement in the March issue. I submitted two — "A Rabbi Makes Reply" and "Why Do the Heathen Rage?" The editor himself chose the latter, and under this title my article was announced in the March issue.

I forwarded the manuscript on April 6, with the following note:

"I am enclosing herewith the article which I promised to send you for your April issue. I hope that you will find it satisfactory. You may find a few hard spots in it, but then you will remember that the articles upon which mine is based were likewise not distinguished for their suavity. I have but one request to make and that is that you publish the article "as is" without comment and in full in one issue of the *Journal*."

On April 8 the editor wrote:

"I was very glad to receive your article to-day — glad even after reading it. I want to read it again more carefully before making any comment to you on it. You may rest assured, however, that your request to 'publish the article "as is," without comment and in full in one issue of the *Journal*,' will be scrupulously honored. There is just one hitch, which I hope will not seem to you serious. Our April issue is all made up. . . . Under the circumstances, I hope you will not object to our making your article the leader in our June issue, instead of the present April issue."

The editor sent me no comments on the article. Five weeks later, on May 18, I received the following note from the editorial department of the *Journal*:

"Will you be good enough to go over the enclosed proofs of your article, appearing in the June issue,

and return as soon as you can with your corrections? We would be grateful also for a brief note about yourself for "Our Own Who's Who."

At the top of the galley proofs was this editorial note:

"The title of this article is the authors. [sic] Rabbi Silver has requested that no comment or answer to his article be made *in the same issue of the Journal* [the italics are mine]. Accordingly comment and answer are deferred to our next issue."

To which, of course, I raised absolutely no objection. In his letter to the *Jewish Daily Bulletin*, following the suppression of the article, Mr. Hurwitz stated that "Rabbi Silver required that his manuscript should be published 'as is' and without comment," but forgot to add the very critical phrase "in the same issue of the *Journal*." What a convenient way Mr. Hurwitz has of forgetting inconvenient facts

On May 25, at a meeting of the National Conference of Jewish Social Workers held in Cleveland, Mr. Hurwitz, in the course of an address, publicly announced the forthcoming publication of this article as proof of the neutrality and comprehensive scope of the *Journal*.

But in the June issue, the article did not appear. Nor had the editor taken the trouble to apprise me of the fact.

I happened to be in New York, on my way to London, the day the June-July issue appeared. I called upon Mr. Hurwitz and requested the return of my manuscript. He spoke long and confusedly in explanation of the suppression of the article. Out of the maze of his pitiful circumlocutions I could understand but one phrase. He was afraid that my article would discourage young writers! How brave these young writers must be! How intrepid in attack, how lion-hearted in onslaught, but oh how tender and frail in the face of a rebuttal!

Believing that this story should be told in order that there may be a little more light in certain dark places I turned the article and the account of its suppression over to Mr. Herman Bernstein, of the *Jewish Tribune*, who graciously published them.

And it is with his permission that they are now reprinted.

ABBA HILLEL SILVER.

September 1, 1926.



"Why Do the Heathen Rage?"

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

I

THE latest attempt to salvage poor shipwrecked Judaism in America is on. The *Menorah Journal* summoned the doughtiest intellectuals to this heroic task. These came highly equipped with trenchant pen, with Jovian thunder and unmistakable boldness. They labored valiantly; they plumbed the very depths, and brought to the surface — a bucket of water.

There is an element of the Purim-spiel in this most recent drama of national salvation. Dr. Kallen, whose distaste for the "Judaistic religion," except as a soporific for the unenlightened, is notorious, sets himself the task of reviewing the curricula of the Jewish theological schools of America. He even suggests a new type of rabbi — a cross between a Freudian clinic interne and a graduate of the New School of Social Research. Mr. Cohen, who to this day has successfully hid his scholarly achievements under a bushel, becomes the valorous champion of Jewish scholarship, and fairly devastates with the breath of his scorn the unlettered rabbis of our age. Lastly, comes Mr. Hurwitz, mediatory and reassuring, and joyously announces that as a result of the Menorah Organization's activities, its Summer School, and its Lecture Bureau and its proposed Foundation for Jewish Research, the terrible night which had descended upon American Israel, and which was so graphically described by the above mentioned writers, is about to end. "Our day dawns," he exclaims, in sanguine anticipation of an "adequately financed and endowed" Menorah movement. . . .

* This article is based on the papers of Elliot E. Cohen, "The Age of Brass," *Menorah Journal*, October, 1925; Dr. Horace M. Kallen, "Can Judaism Survive in the United States?" April and December, 1925; and Henry Hurwitz, "Watchman, What of the Day?" February, 1926.

A PERIODIC inventory of a people's cultural assets and liabilities is a necessary and commendable service. But clearly, if it is to have any value, it must be undertaken in a dispassionate and scientific spirit, and by men qualified through knowledge and experience to pass judgment. Prejudices are obstructions to inventories. Broad denunciation and cynical flaunting of what one does not happen to relish cannot be regarded as adequate stock-taking. One is entertained or outraged by them according to one's prejudices, but one is not enlightened. Above all, whoever presumes to approach the sanctities of a people's life must do so in a spirit of reverence. Thoughtful men do not employ a cheap and easy cleverness in discussing spiritual values which might be the very life blood of men.

From the essay of Mr. Cohen I cull the following few specimens to indicate the quality of the newer criticism to which American Judaism is being subjected:

"The Elders of Zion myth is a by no means distant cousin of the 'Jewish mission' myth. (p. 439.)

"The little respect our culture receives is that paid to a people who stumbled [*sic*] on some spiritual ideas capable of being incorporated, in a greatly improved form of course, in the culture of the West" . . . (p. 448.)

"Lacking wisdom, our leaders take refuge in speech. Good Watsonian behaviorists, they discover the springs of thought in the voice box." (p. 427.)

"Speeches and sermons are born of the air and destined to vanish with the breath that gave them birth." (p. 437.)

"But they (the rabbis) are guilty certainly of a too weak acquiescence in the degradation of the rabbinical function to that of a spokesman — *i.e.*, mouthpiece, of the ignorance, ambitions and fears of the influential Jewish laity." (p. 440.)

We submit that for sheer "brass" in this sad Age of Brass one need not look elsewhere . . .

III

MR. COHEN is rendered furious by the fact that some Jewish writers and public men have praised the Jew and Judaism excessively. This seems to be the sum and substance of his twenty-five page indictment. Seemingly it is good taste, and altogether proper, to proclaim to the world that the *Menorah Journal* is "the best printed, best edited and best written periodical" and that its advent marks a turning-point in American Jewish history, but it is nothing short of "bluster, braggadocio," etc., to assert that Israel has been the monitor of monotheism in the world, the pathfinder in moral idealism, or that the Jews may be justifiably proud of their history and of their contributions to mankind.

With what avidity Mr. Cohen belabors his theme of the Jews' self-praise! He offers a collection of anonymous quotations as Exhibit A, also some extracts from the writings of such distinguished authors as Roth, Leiser, Gewurz, Browne, and Samuel, as Exhibit B. Using these as his "pou sto," Mr. Cohen proceeds to move the world. Himself not lacking that voice of brass which he so deprecates, he uses it to excellent advantage in an onomatopoetic characterization of the quality of our age. The voice of our age is the voice of "the brass horn, rotund and hollow, the scream of the trumpet, the imposing bray of the trombone, and the ear-piercing blasts of the cornet" and so on to the limits of Roget's Thesaurus. And having accomplished this feat, the critic delivers himself of the following pronouncement:

"There are two facts immediately apparent about this modern voice of Israel. It is new — and it is false. A Jew raised in the direct line of Jewish tradition, trained in the old Jewish discipline, will be puzzled to know what to make of this curious and un-Jewish 'Religion' of the American Jew. . . . The Jews of his time, he says, were too busy studying the old books to cry their worth in the marketplace" (p. 433.)

And yet, sad to relate, this is exactly what the Jew did do consistently and continuously through the ages. One could fill more than one volume of the *Menorah Journal* with citations from Biblical, Talmudic, Midrashic and Medieval Jewish literary sources to show that the Jew *did* praise, and often very extravagantly, his faith, his Torah, the Community of Israel, the Land of Israel; in fact, everything which was dear to his heart. He spoke proudly and glowingly of them, being stranger to the subtle artifice of diffidence which characterizes some of our modern Jewish intellectuals. Had Mr. Cohen taken the trouble to consult some handy concordance such as the Yalkut Eliezer under the caption "Israel," the Sefer Ha-Agada or Eisenstein's Ozar, he would have been amazed at the way those early rabbis "raised in the direct line of Jewish tradition" extolled the excellencies, the uniqueness, the primacy and superiority of the Jewish people — quite in keeping with the older tradition of the Bible wherein Israel is spoken of as a light unto the nations, a holy people, an eternal people, and the chosen people. We shall permit ourselves but one rabbinic quotation. "Just as oil brings light to the world, so Israel brings light to the world — just as oil is superior to all other liquids, so Israel is superior to all other nations." (Shir Ha-Shir, R. I, 21.) There is no concordance of our post-Talmudic literature to which the writer may be referred, but it might not be amiss to point to a few opinions out of the hundreds held by leaders of Jewish thought in ages other than this Age of Brass concerning Israel and Israel's spiritual greatness.

Maimonides, the rationalist, declared: "Our nation is wise and perfect, as has been declared by the most high through Moses, who made us perfect: 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'" (Guide, Part 2, chap. 11.) Jehuda Halevi, the poet and philosopher, held that Israel was the heart of the world (Kuzari, II, 36), that the gift of prophecy was bestowed upon Israel alone (I, 101 ff), and that all mankind exists for the sake of Israel even as Israel exists for the sake of the prophets" (II, 44) — a

remarkable exposition of the doctrine of the "Super-nation." One is also tempted to mention Judah Loew ben Bezalel's (Austrian Talmudist and preacher, d. 1609) stirring work, "The Eternity of Israel," whose entire purpose is "to establish that God bestowed eternal life upon Israel" (p. 16); that "Israel is eternal because its existence is of God and in God" (p. 22-a), and that "Israel is the essence and goal of all creation" (p. 18-a). And is not this prayer, which is echoed and re-echoed in our liturgy, quite significant in this connection: "Thou hast chosen us from all people; thou has loved us and found pleasure in us, and hast exalted us above all tongues." The whole mystic literature of our people wherein the concept of Israel is transfigured into that of a mystic spiritual communion, indissolubly bound up with God and the Torah, abounds in exaltations of the people and of its heroic destiny.

A phrase of the rabbis comes to mind to which we are sure Mr. Cohen would not subscribe: "God said to Moses, 'Praise and extol Israel as much as thou possibly canst, for I shall in the days to come be extolled because of them, as it is written: "And he said: 'Thou art my servant, Israel, in whom I shall be praised.' " (Lev. R. II, 4.)

If in recent years spokesmen of our people have found it necessary to stress anew the moral excellencies of their faith and to remind men of the decisive contributions which Israel has made to the cultural assets of mankind, should not these facts in all fairness be attributed to the desperate emergencies with which Israel was suddenly confronted in the recrudescence of anti-Semitic propaganda, rather than to conceit and vainglory? In the face of the numerous traducers of our race who suddenly appeared here and elsewhere, bent upon maligning the Jew and Judaism, depreciating our worth and defaming our name, should it be accounted a sin in these spokesmen if they sought to counteract this propaganda, by calling attention to the services which the Jew has rendered the world, and by dwelling upon the true inner worth of their faith?

IV

HAD this vocation of counter-propaganda been the only interest of American Israel during the last decade, the critic's indictment would have had validity, but the latter knows quite well that this was not the case. The last ten years witnessed a remarkable renaissance in Jewish life and an intensification of Jewish activities in nigh every field. The War, the desperate plight of our brothers abroad, the challenging opportunity of our National Homeland, the threat of organized anti-Semitism, and, by no means least, the inner urge towards self-expression, combined to stir American Israel to a remarkable pitch of alertness and enterprise. One need not dwell upon the truly herculean efforts made by the American Jew for the relief of his war-stricken fellow Jews abroad — an effort which is even now being renewed. But one ought not to miss the vital implications of this albeit purely humanitarian enterprise. In the hour of crisis, Israel was not found wanting, either in loyalty or generosity. This is evidence of an inner soundness which ought not to be disregarded. Again, this major philanthropic effort, in which all elements of Jewry participated, tended to draw the disparate groups of our people closer together and to establish numerous contacts which, fortunately, have increased rather than decreased with the years.

In the field of Jewish education marked progress was made. Countless schools, Talmud-Torahs, Yeshivas and Religious Schools, were established, and in many instances splendid buildings were erected to house them. A growing sense of community responsibility in the matter of the religious and cultural training of our youth was manifested in the organization in some of the larger cities of Bureaus of Jewish Education, headed by competent educators. Side by side with the increase in facilities went an improvement in curriculum and in standards of instruction. Teachers' Training Schools sprang up and the serious

lack of textbooks was partially met. The vast problems of Jewish education in America have by no means been solved, but American Israel has during recent years wrestled with them earnestly, and, to a degree, successfully.

The number of higher institutions of learning has been augmented by the addition of two new academies within the last five years. The older rabbinic seminaries increased their facilities, their faculties and their student bodies, and enriched their libraries.

Educational work among Jewish college students, which was so splendidly initiated by the Menorah Organization, has gone on apace. There have now been added two new agencies, the Hillel Foundation and the Avukah. Recently the larger religious bodies of American Jewry met and resolved to pool their resources in an effort to carry on a more extensive program of Jewish education among college men and women. There is promise in all this and an indication of a general awareness touching the magnitude and importance of this work.

Truly phenomenal has been the increase in the number of Centers, Community Houses and Y.M.H.A. buildings which have been established within the last decade. Clearly they have come into existence in response to a real demand. Were these institutions not wanted by the American Jew, and more especially by the young American Jew, they would not have been built, or financed, or used. The quality of their work depends, of course, in the last analysis upon the quality of the leadership which each institution enjoys; but it cannot be gainsaid that in the main they have performed a salutary service in the physical and cultural development of our youth, in their moral guidance and in fostering a sense of Jewish loyalty among them. One is surprised to find critics who twenty years ago would undoubtedly have lamented the fact that American Jews were not providing wholesome recreational and social facilities for their young people, now that American Israel is making an honest effort to supply them, speaking derogatorily of them.

And, lastly, American Jews have built and are building at an astounding rate synagogues and temples. Judging from the jeremiads of our critics this is to be taken as positive proof of Jewish decadence and disintegration. We beg to differ. Not so long ago one heard the justifiable complaint that our synagogues were physically unattractive, and that they were repellent to the esthetically minded young American Jew. It was said, and rightly said, that these shabby structures were uncomplimentary to a people as prosperous as the American Jew. The plaint of David was repeated: "Shall we dwell in houses of cedar, but the Ark of God dwell within curtains?" Now that American Israel is erecting sanctuaries which in their outer form seek to body forth the beauty of the faith which they enshrine, now that we are bringing a bit of the charm of Japheth into the tents of Shem, the cry is raised, "The Stone Age!" In building spacious and beautiful synagogues American Israel is following an authentic Jewish tradition. For wherever Jews found peace, security and prosperity, they raised noble religious edifices and attempted to express their religious life esthetically.

Had the American Jew built his synagogues at the sacrifice of other worthy causes he would be deserving of the severest censure, but he has been equally as liberal with his philanthropic institutions and in his foreign relief. He has been contributing increasingly larger amounts to Jewish educational purposes, to Palestine, and to causes not specifically Jewish. If there are worthy movements to which he has not yet given sufficiently it is due to the fact that he has not yet been completely convinced of their importance. The American Jew is not niggardly, nor does he withhold his hand from any cause once he is convinced of its value.

And these synagogues are used! This might sound strange to those critics who seldom enter one. People do come to worship. Not all, of course. Neither do all go to symphonies, or art museums, or to any place where they

are likely to be stimulated and enlightened. But in every community one may find men and women, God-fearing and worshipful, who long for the courts of the Living God. These come, and they are the heart of every synagogue. Many more come for the sake of the sermon or lecture, and others come out of habit. Some come regularly and some sporadically, as the desire or need prompts them. One cannot really gauge a man's loyalty to the synagogue or its influence upon his life by the regularity of his attendance at divine worship. Besides the religious services congregations conduct their schools, elementary, high and, in some instances, normal schools. They have their sisterhoods and brotherhoods, with their numerous social and educational activities, their adult study groups, extension courses, forums, libraries, etc. In many cities the synagogue is the very hub of Jewish communal life.

So that American Israel has been engaged in many other activities in recent years besides blowing the loud bassoon of self-praise.

WRHS
V
AND American rabbis, too, have done much more than preach, although preaching the word of God is still, by some, regarded as an honorable profession, and if done in consecration and sincerity, one of life's supreme privileges. The organization of the religious life of American Jewry, the establishment of schools, synagogues, theologic academies, and the training of teachers, has been almost entirely the work of American rabbis. Some of our important national institutions, such as the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the United Synagogue, the Jewish Congress, the Jewish Publication Society, the Jewish Chautauqua, the National Farm School, etc., owe their existence to the initiation of American rabbis. Many charitable institutions, many Jewish Centers and Community Houses, owe their inception to the leadership and untiring work of these men. The Zionist

Organization of America has consistently through the years drawn from the rabbinate some of its most devoted leaders, executives and officers. Such activities plainly do not come within the category of "speeches and sermons which are born of the air."

It should be borne in mind that the most pressing tasks which confronted the Jewish ministry heretofore have been these of organization and upbuilding. Millions of Jews in the brief period of a generation or two were transplanted from the four corners of the earth to these shores. Communities, some small, some enormously large, sprang up, as it were, over night. They were structureless and disjointed. They possessed neither philanthropic agencies, nor schools, nor synagogues — in fact none of the facilities which go to make up a community life. All these had to be built, and it fell largely to the share of the American rabbis to build them. Accordingly most of the thought and energy of these men went perforce into this indispensable ground work of organization — a tiring and exacting employment which is not yet completed.

If, therefore, the American rabbi has not been more of the scholar, if in many instances his preaching has not measured up in intellectual quality to that of his European confrere, it is due not to his inherent mediocrity but to the high endless time — and energy — consuming community responsibilities which the conditions of Jewish life forced upon him. The European rabbi, as a rule, is head of an old established community, possessing its full quota of religious, educational and eleemosynary institutions, and in which the necessary functions of congregational life are well distributed. This has not been the case in America, and in most instances is still not the case. Our communities are recent and unformed. New schools, new synagogues and new Centers are needed, with all their attendant needs of program, curricula, coördination, etc. Drives must be launched, and it seems almost daily, for new hospitals, new orphanages and new Homes for the aged; drives for foreign relief, local relief, Falasha relief; drives for Palestine, for

Hadassah, for the Jewish National Fund; drives for the Union, for the Seminary, for the Yeshiva, for dormitories, for libraries; drives for the Menorah Organization, for Student Congregations, for Bureaus of Jewish Education, for the Chautauqua. . . . In each instance the rabbi is appealed to first for his active coöperation. In some cases he is compelled to initiate these drives himself; in others he becomes their propagandist, and in still others he is the actual solicitor. . . .

Furthermore, Jewish congregational life, far from being departmentalized, is sadly centralized. The rabbi, especially in the reform congregation, is Darshan, Melamed Chazan and Shamos all in one. In view of these multitudinous and harassing responsibilities, it is not surprising that the rabbi's hours of study and meditation are few in number, and that this paucity reflects itself in the quality of his preaching and writing.

Still, a creditable list may be drawn up of American rabbis who have done meritorious work even in the field of Jewish scholarship. There is of course, no Zunz or Geiger among them as yet, but Zunzs and Geigers are rather rare throughout the Jewish world to-day, and American Israel will require a considerably longer period of germination before it will produce scholars of such magnitude. Two hundred years of semination preceded the first efflorescence of Jewish genius in Spain. "America has not yet produced one great poet," is the criticism which Thomas Jefferson undertakes to answer in his "Notes on Virginia." "When we shall have existed as a people as long as the Greeks did before they produced a Homer, the Romans a Virgil, the French a Racine and a Voltaire, the English a Shakespeare and a Milton, should this reproach be still true, we will inquire from what unfriendly causes it has proceeded." . . . Still, fine and valuable work in Jewish scholarship has already been done by some of the graduates of the American theological schools, such as Finkelstein, Kaplan, Efros, A. Newman, Epstein, Waxman, Levinthal, Enelow, Frisch, Blau, L. I. Newman,

Englander, Philipson, Linfield, Calisch, Morgenstern, Cohon, Max and Jacob Raisin, Rhine, Rosenau, Bettan, Cronbach, Freehof, and others, whose work cannot be dismissed with a supercilious shrug of the shoulder.

When the press of community work will ease up, when Jewish laymen will in larger numbers take over the administrative tasks which are rightfully theirs, and when congregational life will become more departmentalized, American rabbis will be able, as they are eager, to devote themselves more definitely to their essential prerogatives—"To learn and to teach."

In passing, we wish to remark that when we speak of American Rabbis we do not refer to the vaudevillians in the pulpit. Unfortunately there are some Rabbis who have cheapened and vulgarized the Jewish pulpit, by sacrificing the timeless for the "timely" in their discourses, by pandering to Jewish morbidities in the choice of their themes, by weekly recourse to struts, antics and noise. On the bulletins of some of the larger synagogues of America it has become increasingly rare to find a subject which does not have a distinctly "Christian" angle, a savor of the ever-palatable "prejudice" theme, or the "kick" of the latest play. Fortunately such pulpits are not typical, and some day, when a few conscientious laymen in the pews will bestir themselves sufficiently to express their disgust, the heroic occupants of these pulpits will beat a hasty retreat.

VI

IN the catalogue of Jewish self-laudations, Mr. Cohen places the idea of the "mission of Israel."

"The claim of Israel to a *prima donna* role among the nations is totally presumptuous and is, as a matter of fact, ignored by the world. To a mind with the least regard for truth it is obvious that Israel is not the primal moral force to which all the peoples look for guidance, the spring of all modern philosophy, science and letters, the intellectual aristocrat in a heathen world, the exclusive repository of the spiritual resources of mankind. There are only the slimmest evidences of fact to support these hifalutin pretenses. To maintain these notions is to be guilty of the most preposterous nonsense; to believe them is to cherish the most palpable delusions." (p. 434.)

Per contra one would like to give the conclusions of a *non-Jewish* intellectual — Matthew Arnold: "As long as the world lasts all who want to make progress in righteousness will come to Israel for inspiration, as to the people who have had the sense for righteousness most glowing and strongest." And of still another *non-Jewish* writer — Leo Tolstoi: "The Jew is that sacred being who has brought down from heaven the everlasting fire and has illumined with it the entire world. He is the religious source, spring and fountain, out of which all the rest of the peoples have drawn their beliefs and their religions."

In order to make out a case Mr. Cohen subtly smuggles in a few prerogatives which the Jew never claimed. No sane Jew ever maintained that Israel was "the spring of all modern philosophy, science, and letters, the intellectual aristocrat in a heathen world, the exclusive repository of the spiritual resources of mankind." Erasmus' phrase comes to mind: The gentleman "is raising devils only to have the credit of laying them." The Jew has maintained that his racial genius has expressed itself most fully in moral and religious values, and that it is his historic obliga-

tion to teach them by precept and example to the world. In these he has been teacher; in all else he has been disciple. Every great historic people from the ancient Greeks to the modern Anglo-Saxons has been conscious to a greater or less degree of some particular potency with which its corporate life was endowed, and which constituted its supreme though not exclusive contribution to mankind.

Mr. Cohen errs when he assumes that the ideal of the mission of Israel is a recent discovery. He suspects that he is in error, and he seeks refuge in a footnote, hoping to prove by means of dexterous "drush" that the ancient ideal of the mission and the modern are the same but different. The Shibboleths of the newer psychology are all mustered: inferiority complex, defense mechanism, etc., etc. But the rooted and disconcerting fact nevertheless remains, that consistently through the ages for more than twenty-five centuries the Jew has stressed and underscored his mission to the gentiles. There is a certain sacred objectivity to a fact which even clever intellectuals ought not to tamper with. It was not Geiger or Holdheim or Einhorn who invented the phrase:

"And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." (Exodus 19, 5.)

Or, "The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples as dew from the Lord, as showers upon the grass." (Micah 5, 6.)

Or, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him. He shall make the right to go forth to the nations. . . . I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and have taken hold of thy right hand, and kept thee and set thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the nations. To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." (Is. 42, 1, 6-7.)

Our apocryphal and apocalyptic literature fairly rings with this theme. The great missionary activity carried on by the Jews in the centuries immediately preceding and following the beginning of the Christian era was inspired by this idealism, and the whole messianic saga of our race is surcharged with this imperial faith.

The leaders of modern reform Judaism simply reemphasized this ancient Jewish ideal. Their error was in assuming that this ideal was opposed to Jewish nationalism, whereas in reality it is inextricably intertwined with it. Deutero-Isaiah, who of all Jews most eloquently vocalized this missionary aspiration, was of all Jews the most nationalistic and "Palestinian." A people need not expatriate itself in order to be apostolic, and universalism and nationalism rightly conceived are, of course, never antithetical.

Religion was the sole reason why the Jew persisted in maintaining his identity in the world. I have searched high and low in Jewish literature to discover evidences that the Jew struggled to remain a Jew amidst adverse circumstances in order that he might develop a great "synagogue architecture, mural paintings and frescoes, and sculpture in wood and brass, works in silver, gold and other metals . . . and the old signboards of Polish Jewry." (Watchman, What of the Day? p. 15.) I find nowhere that the Jew objected to intermarriage with other peoples (a practice which would of course have destroyed him) on the ground that the resultant racial admixture would produce less gifted musicians or scientists or writers. There was but one reason throughout the ages: "Lest he will turn away thy son from following Me, that they may serve other gods." (Deut. 7, 3.) The Jew persisted in racial uniqueness in order to preserve the integrity of his faith. Loyalty to the faith spelled loyalty to the race. When the American Jew will abandon his faith he will swiftly and surely assimilate. He will intermarry with the peoples about him, and he will destroy himself racially, and no quantum of Jewish music and Jewish art or books on Jewish literature and philosophy will be potent enough to

save him. The anti-religious Jew will be the first to go, as he always has been. The religiously indifferent Jew will linger on by sheer force of inertia until the relentless assimilative forces will scatter and overwhelm him too. The secular nationalist will endure until such times as his ideology derived from the segregated and compact Jewish community life of Eastern Europe is dissipated by the dissolving influences of American life. Even the strong appeal which Palestine is making to-day to many of our people will not prove sufficient to command their loyalty in the days to come. The establishment of a strong Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine will not accomplish the miracle of preservation for the American Jew. The existence of a great German Fatherland has not kept the Germans in the United States from assimilating. The Jew in the United States will not long remain either a Yiddishist or a Hebraist, in the technical sense in which the proponents of cultural pluralism understand the terms. Only the religious Jew who will continue steadfast to his faith will conserve and carry on the culture and the traditions of Israel. The rest will disappear, as they always have, as they inevitably must. In other words, Judaism, far from being "a small part of the total fulness of the life of the Jewish people which I (Horace M. Kallen) am accustomed to call Hebraism" (p. 557) is in reality its very heart and life blood.

This ideal of the Mission sustained and inspired the Jews throughout their troubled and checkered career. To what degree they remained faithful to it, let their martyred dead bear witness; let all the great social movements of mankind which felt the impact of Israel's dynamic spirit, surging and creative in living men and women through two thousand years, bear witness; let the Cross and the Crescent bear witness — for they kindled their torches at the sacred fires of our altars; let the Renaissance and the Reformation bear witness, for in the intellectual preparation for the one the Jew played not an inconsiderable role, and in the ideology of the other a most decisive role; let all

the mighty movements for social righteousness of the last century bear witness: "Whatever there is in modern civilization that is making for human fraternity, whatever religious aspiration is calling men to a higher sense of duty, wherever men and women are toiling to prove that humanity is a great brotherhood, there we find men living, acting, thinking under the influence of these leaders of Hebrew thought." (Baldwin, "Our Modern Debt to Israel," pp. 202-3.) And there, too, the writer might have added are to be found to-day Jewish men and women who, propelled consciously or unconsciously by that same racial urge towards "malchuth shomayim," are carrying in a hundred fields of human endeavor the message and the mission of their people.

What is to be gained by pooh-poohing this ideal, by cheapening it in our own eyes and in the eyes of our children? What have we to substitute for it? Will an argument like the following prove more effective in arousing Jews to heroic self-preservation and self-fulfillment? "We are a pretty ordinary lot; we have no particular mission to the world; we are possessed of quite commonplace virtues, and therefore — let us write histories about ourselves, endow Foundations for Jewish Research and establish Chairs of Jewish learning in American universities in order to inform the world about these middling qualities and these indifferent contributions of our race." . . .

Do not wisdom and policy rather dictate even as truth warrants a renewed accentuation of this ancient motif in modern Jewish life? Ought we not to challenge our people to-day, as they were challenged of old, to nobler living and thinking, to personal righteousness and community service, on the basis of this historic mandate? Will not an enkindled desire to serve and to help, bring with it an impassioned will to live? Is not Spinoza's proposition as valid for peoples as for individuals? "No one can desire to be blessed, to act well, or live well, who at the same time does not desire to be, to act, and to live, that is, actually, to exist."

The mission ideal of Israel is neither apology nor vain-glory. It concerns the non-Jew only as the object: it concerns the Jew as the subject of the service. The Jew is to serve. The Jew is called upon to undertake the burdens, the self-discipline and the crucifixions of moral leadership. Leadership is a crown, to be sure, but a crown of thorns. . . . It is not by strutting and declaiming that a people leads, but by the forceful example of sacrificial loyalty to great ideals, by holy lives and consecrated purposes. Is there a worthier ideal to hold up before our people?

VII

BOTH Mr. Cohen and Mr. Hurwitz lament the indifference of the Jewish intellectuals to Judaism. They are not very clear as to who these intellectuals are who have thus drifted away. One is inclined to think that the whole concept of the Jewish "intelligentsia" in America needs a great deal of "deciphering." One suspects, that like the "American proletariat" and the "American peasantry," they simply do not exist. All three terms are borrowed from other civilizations, and from totally different social stratifications. Presumably, the writers refer to the educated Jews, principally the college-bred men and women. It has not at all been established that the adherence of these men and women to the synagogue and to Jewish communal life in general is weaker than that of any other class in Jewry. We cannot judge of the Jewish community of New York. There all problems are frightfully complicated by the sheer size and unwieldiness of the group and by its amorphous character, and one cannot readily get at the facts. Even there one is likely to find large numbers of educated and professional Jews in the synagogue, in the Zionist movement, at the head of educational enterprises, in community centers and elsewhere. One is in position to judge a little more accurately of the smaller and less chaotic centers of Jewish population, and

one is likely to find there that college men and women have affiliated themselves with the synagogue in numbers relatively greater than those of other classes. The Jewish community of Cleveland is the fourth largest in the United States, containing some 90,000 souls. I speak of Cleveland not because it is different but because it is *not* different. It has been reliably estimated that nearly 75 per cent of the Jewish professional men — doctors, lawyers, teachers, architects, etc. — are members of some temple or synagogue, their number relatively far exceeding that of other Jewish groups. Many of these professional men and many other non-professional college men are on the boards and on the important committees of religious institutions of Cleveland, on the boards of the Bureau of Jewish Education, the Zionist organization, the B'nai Brith, and numerous Jewish social agencies. Many college women are leaders in the activities of the temple sisterhoods and the Council of Jewish Women. There is no outer compulsion forcing these people to affiliate themselves with the synagogue; such affiliation yields no monetary returns and is not effected by the insistence of public opinion. One cannot, of course, measure the quality of the religious sincerity of these men and women, nor the intensity of their Jewishness. It is enough that they *wish to belong* to a Jewish religious institution, to send their children to its school, to support its activities, and to attend its services whenever the spirit moves them. Wherever Jewish community life has had a chance to organize itself, it has not failed to attract the Jews of higher educational and cultural attainments to a degree comparable and in many instances surpassing that of any other class.

To be sure, there are many educated Jews who are not members of the synagogue, just as there are tens of thousands of Jewish workmen and Jewish business men who are not; but it is not necessarily their education which has estranged them from Judaism, nor, as the critics are inclined to believe, the absence of good text-books on Judaism or authoritative Jewish scholarship. Many ~~examples~~

Jews, quite like their confrères who have received no academic training, are too busy grubbing for a living or making money or wallowing in the pleasures and excitements of our age, to think of anything outside of their vocation, their ambitions and their delectations. Still others find membership in a distinguishable and protestant minority too difficult a burden to bear. It is not easy to be a Jew. Under the most favorable conditions, the road which the Jew must travel is a thorny one, and thousands seek, as thousands have sought, the primrose path which leads to assimilation, partial for themselves, complete for their children.

It is therefore idle to believe that, given more books on Jewish law, history, philosophy and art, these fair-weather gentlemen who cannot bear the strain of Jewish individuality will eagerly return, shouting in joyous refrain: "Hallelujah, we have seen the light!" German Jewry has had the advantages of "Juedische Wissenschaft" for nearly a century — great scholars, great teachers and great books — and yet apostasy, intermarriage, indifference and cynicism are more rampant among its intellectuals to-day than ever before.

The alienation from Jewry and Judaism resulting from the deprivations inherent in the lot of a disfavored minority is particularly in evidence in the case of that smaller group of Jewish intellectuals to whom the writers may be referring — the authors, journalists, artists, philosophers, professors, etc. Many of these have eschewed Judaism and the Jew not because they do not know their people (for a goodly number of them hail from good old-fashioned Jewish homes, from distinctly Jewish environments, and some of them actually received orthodox Jewish training), but because they do not *wish* to know. There are richer pastures elsewhere . . . higher rewards, both social and monetary. It is only after these intellectuals are disillusioned, after they discover that the anticipated rewards are not forthcoming, that they return to the welcoming

fold of Israel, a bit saddened and embittered and a bit overzealous. . . .

One of the strange notions of Mr. Cohen is that writers like Robert Nathan, author of "Jonah," and Lawrence Langner, author of "Moses," misrepresent the Jew in their writing; or that such men as Alexander Goldenweiser hate Jewish culture and scorn the hope of Jewish renaissance, because, forsooth, "we have neglected to make easy of access to searchers such as these the treasures of our tradition." There seems to be a confusion in metaphor here. *Searchers for truth* are not retarded in their pursuit after truth by the fact that truth is not easy of access. They search for truth. On Dr. Goldenweiser's veniality Mr. Elisha Friedman has already thrown a very revealing light. (*Menorah Journal*, August, 1925.) More need not be said. But concerning the others, one wonders whether Schechter could not have illumined the author of "Moses" on the true meaning of Jewish legalism if the latter had taken the trouble to consult his works: or could not Ahad Ha'Am's "Moses" or Cornill's "Moses" or even Philo's "On the Life of Moses" (all available in English), or numerous other essays which any Jewish librarian would have put at his disposal, have given him the truth if he had really sought to know the truth instead of popularizing a stupid fiction. But then Mr. Langner gives his own case away when he frankly acknowledges that he built his character of Moses "not upon the actual life of Moses as told in the Old Testament, but upon the preconceptions of the theater audiences" (Introduction to "Moses," page IX.) And is not this also true of Mr. Nathan? It has evidently not occurred to the critic that the mere publication of books does not insure their being read

But the height of grotesqueness is reached by Mr. Cohen when he states that Mr. Mencken, of the *American Mercury*, who recently declared that "the religion (of the Jews) is probably the most murderous ever heard of in history," was driven to this conclusion because the latter "never found available in a form palatable to gentleman of

his intelligence accounts — or the originals on which they are based — of the history, literature and religion of the Jews." Poor Mr. Mencken, more sinned against than sinning! Dare one ask whether the books of the prophets and the psalms in their English version were acceptable to this gentleman's aristocratic palate? And did these give him the impression that the Jewish religion is the most murderous ever heard of? Would a reading of Schechter's "Studies," Kohler's "Theology," Lazarus' "Ethics of Judaism," Abelson's "Immanence of God in Rabbinic Literature," Butterweiser's "Prophets of Israel," or Graetz's "History" or the Jewish prayer-book, or even the numerous articles on the history, religion and literature of the Jew in the Jewish Encyclopedia (all available in English), have given this eminent critic that exalted opinion of our faith? Or must these writings first be recast in the style of the *American Mercury* and *The Smart Set* before this Sybaritic theologian will deign to bestow upon them a passing glance? Again, Mr. Mencken undoubtedly reads German, and in the vast Jewish literature written in that language he undoubtedly could have discovered some material by which to test his scholarly conclusions. The fact of the matter is, that in the face of blissful ignorance and boundless mendacity the Almighty Himself is helpless. . . .

VIII

DR. KALLEN'S review of *American Jewish Life* is no less superficial. His argument runs something like this: Judaism can hardly survive in the United States, for all the three classes into which he divides American Jewry show clear signs of decay. The working classes are not interested in the transmission of Judaism to their children. The middle classes, largely composed of East European conservative or orthodox Jews, who because they take greater chances in business and are therefore in greater need of the grace of God, are

more religious. They are to be credited with whatever of Jewish activity there is in the United States; but their children do not follow in their footsteps. And the prosperous native Jews of West European origin, among whom are to be numbered the reform Jews, show least promise. The reform Jewish group hardly ever sends one of its sons into the rabbinate (although on the authority of Dr. Morgenstern, president of the Hebrew Union College, we have it that nearly 60% of the student body of the Hebrew Union College come from reform Jewish homes*)—its children graduate from the Sunday School into an indifference to Judaism (although the large majority of them seem to find their way into congregational affiliation. Of the forty-five members on the boards of the two reform congregations of Cleveland, twenty were educated in the religious schools of these temples. This is true of many of the older congregations.)

Dr. Kallen's summary is very dark, indeed. "The Jews of America fall with respect to Judaism into three broad divisions, none of which shows any seeds of a vital future Judaism." And what is the remedy, if any? Make Judaism more relevant to modern life (the battle-cry of

*Dr. Morgenstern writes: "You will understand that it is not easy to determine exactly whether a student of the College comes from a Reform Jewish home or Sabbath school, or not, since there are various gradations from Orthodoxy, through Conservatism, to Reform. However, I have gone over the present enrollment of our students carefully and find that approximately 65 out of about 105 students come from what I feel justified in calling Reform homes and environments. Furthermore, of this year's entering class I have looked up the records and find that 18 students were born in this country and 9 were born abroad, one of them in England. This last student comes from a typical Reform Jewish home. Of course not all of the eighteen who were born in this country can be said to come from strictly Reform homes, but the great majority unquestionably do so.

I find this: that each year, as is quite natural, the percentage of students born abroad decreases steadily, and correspondingly, the percentage of students born in this country increases. Furthermore, with this development there is likewise a steady, though not a rapid, increase in the percentage of students who come from Reform homes. The percentage is now approximately 60% from Reform homes, whereas a few years ago it was, I am sure, not over 40 to 45%."

the earlier reformers!). All the educational institutions of Judaism should be given "a specific contemporary relevancy." The rabbis and teachers should become aware that they are living "in a world of which industry, trade, science, the movies, the radio, and the press, are the dynamic substance immediate and compelling." And what a shock this will prove to those innocent, cloistered American rabbis who are so utterly unaware of these amazing facts! . . .

And who is responsible for this intellectual isolation of the American rabbis, thus discovered to be so naïve and unconvertant? Why, the rabbinical seminaries! They are "intellectual morgues dedicated to the anatomy of the dead past of language and law and history." All these subjects should be scrapped or relegated to professional scholars. The rabbinical seminaries where "Judaistic ministers" are trained should become in a manner annexes to the "New School for Social Research;" Jewish scholarships should be separated from the ministry (Dr. Kallen, to my knowledge, is the first man to complain that American rabbis suffer from too much scholarship); they should be instructed more in the Jewish present and less in the Jewish past. They should be taught the structure and functions of Jewish communities and their institutions. (Although specialization in this field belongs more logically, it seems to us, to the profession of the Jewish social worker, and these subjects should occupy the chief place in the curriculum of "The Training School for Jewish Social Work" and similar institutions.) The rabbis should also be trained in psychopathology, so as to understand, we assume, why Jewish literati must first become amateur "goyim" before they become professional "Hebraists" "A training school for Judaist ministers, in a word, would familiarize its trainees with that total fulness of the life of the Jewish people which I am accustomed to call Hebraism, and of which Judaism is a part and but a small part."

But just what this sadly attenuated Judaism is, or is to be, or why it is at all, Dr. Kallen does not take the trouble to state. The impression one gains is that Dr. Kallen's

Judaism is expressed in terms of a modicum of knowledge of Jewish history, literature (principally modern), and of the structure and needs of modern community life. From a rather difficult sentence at the close of his article one may also infer that the sole function of this Judaism in the "total fulness of the life of the Jewish people" is to assuage pathological disturbances within the Jewish group whenever such disturbances occur — in other words, a sort of patent soothing-syrup. "He (the rabbi) will be able to bring it (Judaism) relevantly to bear on that device for the enhancement of security and the assuagement of fear which is the Jew's own, and which is peculiarly suited, therefore, to the idiosyncrasy of whatever pathological condition of mood arises within the structure and behavior patterns of Jewish groups."

We have already indicated what our conception of the role of Judaism in Jewish life is. We insist that it is not peripheral but focal. Furthermore, in common with all other "Judaists" we find that at the heart of our faith certain essential doctrines touching God and man's relation to God, and Providence and Prayer — doctrines which do not even appear on the farthest horizons of Dr. Kallen's dissertation. Whatever else Judaism may be, it is surely first and foremost a faith and a theology. Its message is primarily to the individual and then to the community. It concerns itself with the fundamental spiritual needs of human beings, the need of God, the need of communion with God, and the need of an invincible hope in the ultimate triumph of the moral order. It seeks to organize the life of man around a central motivating faith in a Supreme Intelligence, who is source and sanction of all the moral aspirations of man; it defines the ritual of God's worship as justice, love and piety, and points to the rewards of His worship — peace, strength for life's struggles, confidence in the midst of defeat. It has a vision, too, and a program for the whole community of Israel, "to perfect the world according to the pattern of the Kingdom of God." It also

presents an international code of morality based on brotherhood and peace.

Institutions, therefore, which undertake the training of ministers who are to preach these ideals must first apply themselves to the inculcation of these ideals among their students; they must convince them of the reality of these spiritual values, and they must inspire them with glowing zeal to live by them and for them, to shape their own lives after their pattern, and to help others to shape their lives accordingly. To this end the whole sacred literature of Israel is to be utilized as text, the whole range of Jewish experience, the complete records of the searchings and gropings of the mind and soul of Israel as revealed in the writings of our philosophers, poets and preachers. "Behold within thee the long train of thy Trophies, not without thee." This is basic. But it is not exclusive. Whatever of truth bearing upon these tremendous purposes may be gleaned from the literature of other peoples, from science, art and philosophy, must be utilized for correction, clarification and interpretation. To be sure, rabbis who are to carry on their ministry of spiritual leading in a modern world must have a sound understanding of the problems of modern society and of the specific problems of Jewish society, in order that their work may be relevant and efficient. From our acquaintance with the existing theological institutions we are convinced that serious attention is being increasingly given to these subjects. The seminaries are supplementing the economic and sociologic studies which their students take in the universities by special courses in the specific Jewish Community problems. Perhaps there should be more of these courses, but certainly the more ought not to loom so large as to crowd out the basic theologic, historic and literary studies. The aim must always be to prepare the men, not for executive positions in social agencies, a task which rightly belongs to other institutions, nor for the position of arbiter in specific economic disputes which daily arise in American life, concerning which only the expert economist or sociol-

ogist can to-day speak with any authority, but for the prophetic preachment of the basic spiritual truths of human experience, for the all important work of morally sensitizing men and women to such a pitch that when a situation arises involving a clear moral issue, whether in their private life or in their civic, national or industrial life, they will be moved to choose the good and eschew the evil.

IX

DR. KALLEN'S ill-tempered criticism of the modern rabbi deserves only passing notice. We submit that an assertion such as, "They (the rabbis) develop into public flatterers of the powers on which their livelihood depends," is unfair and utterly unbecoming the scientific temper of a seeker after truth. This is spleen and venom and the settling of old scores . . . not truth! It would appear from this statement that the American rabbis, whose average incomes are less than those of a moderately successful junk-dealer or parts manufacturer, are so crippled and incompetent that they could not earn a living elsewhere, but that they must depend on the ministry for their livelihood, even at the cost of spiritual degradation. It seems to grieve this Professor that the prosperous Jewish communities of America are, in some instances, making it possible for a rabbi and his family to maintain a tolerably decent standard of living. Even Moses in his day seems to have had his Kallens. Whenever he entered the Tent of the Meeting, the Rabbis say, there were men who were wont to cry out: "Look at his fat limbs and the sleekness of his body! his food and drink are of the Jews, and all that he has are of the Jews" . . . (T. Jer. Shek. v 2).

Similarly puerile is the slur cast by the writer on the young men who are attending the various theological schools in order to prepare themselves for the ministry. "They have been bribed into the rabbinate." The fact

that learning to be a rabbi usually costs nothing, and that the profession calls for no great physical or intellectual exertion, and the relatively high income, are the reasons given why these young men have chosen their vocations. Judging from the low estimate which the Professor has of his fellow Jews, one wonders why, in the face of all these alluring inducements, our theological schools are not overrun with students Were the emolument so high and the "ease and security of a rabbi's life" so certain, "bribes" would not be necessary. The fact of the matter is that the ministry does not offer the ease and security and the rich incomes which the average young man choosing a career quite naturally considers. It holds out none of the glamorous financial prospects which the successful practice of law or medicine or business does. The Professor is perhaps misled in his financial barometer by the relatively high incomes of a few metropolitan rabbis (who probably would have done quite as well, if not better, financially, in other walks of life). The average is not at all so attractive. One need but visit the homes of American rabbis — orthodox, conservative or reform — from one end of the country to the other, to realize how very modest these homes are and to what stinting and scraping these men are often reduced by the necessity of keeping up a standard of living which their communities demand of them. And as for "ease and security," a veritable tyro in the ministry could give the Professor some pointers

The children of well-to-do Jews are not going into the ministry to-day any more than they are going into the profession of teaching or social work or the arts. Very few of them are now going into any profession except the law, which has its "business" angle. . . . It would be of interest to know whether the students of the New School of Social Research are recruited from the ranks of America's multi-millionaires. . . . Well-to-do parents want their children to enter into their own established business concerns or into some other business in which they can help them. Nothing so fantastic as the ministry occurs

to them. It is the children of the poor who are sometimes attracted to the ministry or to social work or to teaching or to the career of an artist. This has always been so. "Take care of the children of the poor, for the Torah emanates from them."

X

IN conclusion, a word about Jewish unity and Jewish leadership in America, the lack of which is so sadly lamented by many.

Throughout the writings of Cohen, Kallen and Hurwitz, one finds a pathetic hankering after organic unity in American Israel. Each one blandly assumes that the differences which exist are slight, and could be easily composed if the rabbis were not such bunglers, or if the seminaries were not such morgues, or if some great leader would arise who by the wave of some magic wand would reintegrate the scattered life of our people. Thus M. Hurwitz writes: "Third, and this is the basic evil — there is no real leadership in American Jewry; no leadership that, transcending all the various prevailing sects, parties and propagandas, possesses the intelligence to see Jewish life steadily and as a whole, with all its genuine needs and stirring potentialities; religion and culture and philanthropy and industry, Diaspora and Zion; or possessing the intelligence, has the courage and energy to bring American Jews to serve all of these needs integrally together."

Rabbi Joel Blau, in his thoughtful paper "The Case of Jewish Education," which appeared in the *Menorah Journal* of February, 1925, is moved by a similar mystic faith: "I look forward to the time when some great leader in Israel, be he rabbi or layman, will recall our people from this (as historic reckoning goes) momentary aberration, will recall it to sanity and wisdom. And then, if we cannot entirely abolish our religious differences, mainly centering in questions of religious etiquette, we will look

upon them with an eye so steadily directed to truth that these minor points will cease to count. After that we shall be ready to build a real Jewish Educational Institute, to serve as a center for Jews of all varieties. One House for the entire Household of Israel!"

But all this is frightfully naive. There is no Jewish community in the world, unless it be in the small back-water centers, untouched by modern life, where such a unity exists. There is much less unity in the great centers of Jewish life, in Poland and in Russia, than there is in the United States. The Jewish communities there are split most decisively along numerous nationalistic, economic and religious lines. At times the political emergencies of a minority group will weld them together into a temporary truce, but they possess neither a central authority, an acknowledged leadership, a common purpose nor a common program. This is true also of the countries in Western Europe. Everywhere Jewry has its nationalists and its assimilationists, its Yiddishists and its Hebraists, its modernists and its fundamentalists, its pietists and its atheists, its radicals and its bourgeoisie, its bolshevists and its bankers; and as the process of secularization on the one hand and religious individualization on the other continues, there will be still greater differentiation among the groups in Jewry. This is true of all peoples. It is also true of the Jewish people. It is very surprising that men who, like the distinguished editor of the *Menorah Journal*, correctly understand that Israel is a *people* and not merely a religious community, do not bear this fact in mind. A religious sect may have a leader; a people has *leaders*, with various and opposing programs in all the departments of national life and thought. A people is divided fifty ways as regards the leaders whom it chooses and the ideals which it chooses to follow. The Yiddish bolshevists of Russia and the Russian Zionists alike recognize that the Jews constitute a distinctive ethnic group. But what a gulf there exists between their purposes and programs — and what hostility! The Mizrahi and the Agudath Israel have the

same Shulchan Aruch in common, and yet even in Palestine they need must have their own communities and their own leaders — and no love is lost between them.

The plain duty of the thoughtful American Jew to-day is to discover for himself the particular interpretation of Jewish life which appeals to him, and affirmatively to follow it through, joining with others of like mind in an effort to make that view and that tendency as dominant in Jewish life as possible. There will never be "a comprehensive vision and compelling leadership in American Jewry," any more than there is in American life in general or in the life of any civilized people.

There will take place from time to time a pooling of resources when common interests, chiefly political and economic, are at stake, when anti-Semitic propaganda or unfavorable legislation threaten the security of all the groups, or when humanitarian sentiments make a common appeal. At times the various religious groups in Jewry will meet in conference to foster educational agencies whose programs are acceptable to them all. But beyond this commendable "opportunism," it is folly to expect solidarity and unity in American Israel.