

Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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

Series V: Writings, 1909-1963, undated.

Reel Box Folder 174 64 242

Recreation in the light of leisure and unemployment, 1930.

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ADDRESS BY

RABBI ABBA HILEEL SILVER

OF

CLEVELAND, OHIO

Before the public dinner and meeting of the Oglebay Institute

Scottish Rite Cathedral - Dec. 9th, 1930.

I am very grateful to the chairman for his graceful introduction.

I am happy to come back to Wheeling. It was my first home, after my college years, and I owe a debt of gratitude to the city for the encouragement which it gave me in those first two or three formative years of after-college life. There is another and greater debt of gratitude which I owe to your city, a debt of which I have a daily reminder in my own home.

In the last two or three years I have seen the changes of progress here. There are new and finer buildings, new residences, new highways and thorough-fares and above all, a new civic spirit - a civic spirit of which Oglebay Park and your Institute are the product and the symbol.

I look upon a city as something far more than an aggregate of people or an economic unit. A city is an organism, a living being which manifests itself in economic, spiritual and cultural efforts. A city reflects the soul of its people. A city IS the soul of its people.

A city where law enforcement is lax, whose courts are corrupt, where a general moral laxity prevails and where politics is predatory, is a city whose political life is immature.

A city whose schools are inadequate, poorly manned and poorly administered, is a city whose intellectual life is immature.

A city whose churches are inadequately manned, poorly attended, and generally inefficient is a city whose spiritual life is immature.

A city without art, without music, without drama is a city whose aesthetic life is immature.

A city without facilities for recreation is not alert to the full requirements of character building and body building required of the modern city life.

A citizen of a city which HAS all these things can proudly proclaim as did the men of the beautiful cities of antiquity, "I am a citizen of no mean city."

We may have lost something which the ancients possessed. In their day there were no large countries. There were city states, the principal community of which was the mother city and the suburban communities the daughter cities. Then, a man belonged not to Greece, but to Athens or to Corinth. A man was first and foremost a citizen of his community. As a consequence these city states were filled with marvels of art, beauty and culture.

In our day patriotism is extensive rather than intensive. We are citizens of vast political units. We often forget our own home cities. We lack the civic pride of the ancients. Patriotism should begin at home. If we make our communities great our nation will be great. We enrich all when we enrich one.

I think the Oglebay Park movement, - for it is a movement - gives evidence of your community's intention to reawaken local patriotism. I know few movements so full of promise. Few cities are as ambitious.

The generosity of Colonel Oglebay has placed this community in a position of a pioneer. You needed this movement and every industrial city needs

it. As an industrial community you have in your midst people from all parts of the world. You have the ruggedness, the sturdiness and the harshness which are characteristics of all industrial communities.

In common with many cities your cultural development has not kept pace with your business development. You have now begun to feel a hunger for cultural things, for the zest of living, for the beautiful. Your Oglebay movement expresses your desire to satisfy this hunger.

Culture is impossible without leisure. A people which desires to cultivate the intellectual and aesthetic sides of life must have a measure of leisure. We will have more and more leisure in years to come as the machine frees us from toil. Many industries now employ men only five days a week.

Soon the time will be shortened to four days a week.

What will we do with this vast amount of leisure time? It is the most serious problem of the day, because unoccupied time may be a deadly thing. It may make for vice, indolence and moral laxity. 'Killing time' may become a most dangerous pursuit.

The time is coming when we shall have to train men for leisure, for avocations as well as for vocations. We shall have to educate men to become creative amateurs. That much misused word 'amateur' means a person who pursues something for the sheer love of it. It is the economically, unremunerative, but spiritually satisfying pursuit of men which brings beauty and romance and the color of life into their existence.

The average American businessman is keen, alert, 'on his toes,' when he is engaged in his job. His leisure-time personality is all too often dull, drab and uninteresting. We hear men say that they intend to work ten, twenty or thirty years and then they will retire to enjoy the fruits of their work.

There is a better way of living. It is well that man should work for success. Poverty or failure is no virtue. Make no mistake about it. It is just as hard for a poor man as for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. But a wise man will preempt time and energy for the pursuit of other things, for spiritual questing. He will not starve his life to one job, He will enrich his life along a hundred channels of interest.

A man is free only after his routine work-a-day is finished. He is not free when he is on the job even if he is head of his concern. He is caught up then in the prescriptive demands and limitations of his job. He is free only after he has closed his desk. It is then that he can be an adventurer, a seeker, a non-conformist. It is then that he can read what he really wants, choose the friends he really wants instead of those who will merely help him in a business way and enjoy in activities which his deep-most being craves.

The machine has made it less and less possible for us to be free men.

The more we conform to it, the better the machine works. If you wish to be yourself it can be accomplished only in your leisure time.

Build your life solely on material success and you may less all. Build many worlds. I often think of something which an ancient Rabbi once said: "In the future God will grant to the righteous three hundred worlds in which to live."

An exaggeration, a figure of speech, but filled with profound thought.

God didn't create us for jobs. He made us men in His image! He placed within us a spiritual hunger in our intellectual curiosity, a desire to adventure into undiscovered continents of truth, goodness and beauty. Our lives should be full, rich, abundant, not starved into one narrow interest.

Your institute has some such goal for men. First of all it would take you outdoors and reveal God's world to you. It wants to open your eyes to see nature, and nature's beauty. It would teach you the sacred lore of forest and field, the voice of the wind, the birds, the trees and the flowers.

something left us when the machine took hold of our life. Do not misunderstand me. The machine has given us comforts and conveniences which we would not willingly despense with. But it has also robbed us of the joy of craftsmanship. The thrill of making things with our hands, of creating with our own hands and brain some well-fashioned thing. Your Institute would revive this in you. It would teach you how to use the skill of your hand and mind in creative work.

Your Institute aims to take you into the worlds of music and drama. In Europe every city of size boasts of its musical organizations, its music, its drama and its art. It subsidizes them. Here we find good music and drama only in the large metropolitan centers. These and these alone have facilities to satisfy these essential human needs. Your Institute aims to supply them for you in your community.

You have in your midst an agency which will open the windows of your minds and souls upon the good life. It is an agency which will enrich your lives by bringing into them beauty. Oglebay Institute is deserving of your finest enthusiasm.

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Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
of Cleveland, Ohio.

Before the public dinner and meeting of the Oglebay Institute Scottish Rite Cathedral - December 9, 1930.

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I think the Oglebay Park movement, for it is a movement, gives evidence of your community's intention to reawaken local patriotism. I know few movements so full of promise. Few cities are as ambitious. The products of this movement will be to serve and better mind and body, to serve beauty and utility.

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FIFTH INSTITUTE ON YOUTH

THE GIRLS' CONFERENCE

PITTSBURGH FEDERATION
OF SOCIAL AGENCIES



HOTEL SCHENLEY

MONDAY and TUESDAY

April Twenty Seventh and Twenty Eighth nineteen-hundred-thirty-one

MONDAY PROGRAM

TUESDAY PROGRAM

INFORMATION

THE INSTITUTE THEME

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COMMUNITY TO YOUTH

ROUND TABLES

TWO O'CLOCK

Presiding: Mr. Martin Chworowsky
THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENT
Mrs. Bertha Scharff Sadler

Pittsburgh

Presiding: Dr. Ben G. Graham

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL FROM
THE VISITING TEACHER POINT OF VIEW
Dr. Howard Nudd

Public Education Association, New York City

THREE-THIRTY O'CLOCK

Presiding: Dr. Edward Rynearson
THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL FROM
THE VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE POINT OF VIEW
Miss Helen Woodward
Young Women's Christian Association, Pittsburgh

Presiding: Dr. Laurance F. Shaffer
THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS AND
COLLEGES FROM THE MENTAL
HYGIENE POINT OF VIEW
Dr. Margaret Gerard
University of Chicago

DINNER MEETING

SIX-THIRTY O'CLOCK

Presiding: Mrs. Ralph W. Harbison
Introduction: Dr. Cora H. Coolidge

UNGUESSED GIFTS
Dr. Hughes Mearns
New York University

ROUND TABLES

TEN O'CLOCK

Presiding: Mrs. William Watson Smith
THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH
Dr. Hugh Thomson Kerr
Shadyside Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh

Presiding: Judge Sarah M. Soffel
THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COURT
Mr. A. L. Wills
Allegheny County Juvenile Detention Home

Presiding: Mrs. Ambrose N. Diehl
THE RESPONSIBILITY OF COMMERCIALIZED
RECREATION
Mr. Wilton A. Barrett

Mr. Wilton A. Barrett National Board of Review of Motion Pictures, New York City

Presiding: Miss Mary Louise Succop
THE RESPONSIBILITY OF YOUTH FOR
MAINTAINING WORLD PEACE
Mr. Brent Dow Allinson
Board of Education, Cleveland

LUNCHEON MEETING

TWELVE NOON

Presiding: Mrs. Ralph W. Harbison
Introduction: Miss Mabel L. Gillespie
RECREATION IN THE LIGHT OF LEISURE AND
UNEMPLOYMENT
Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple, Cleveland

TWO O'CLOCK
SUMMARY AND FINDINGS OF THE INSTITUTE
Professor Henry M. Busch
Cleveland College

REGISTRATION

All persons are urged to register at the Registration Desk in the lobby.

ROUND TABLES

Admission to the Monday afternoon round tables by payment of fifty cents or by presentation of dinner ticket.

Admission to the Tuesday morning round tables by payment of fifty cents or by presentation of luncheon ticket.

EXHIBIT

Miss Helen Meyer is in charge of a periodical and book display provided through the courtesy of The Survey.

INSTITUTE COMMITTEE

Miss Esther M. Hawes, Chairman Miss Julia E. Branson Miss Dora M. Einert Miss Eleanor J. Flynn Miss Fredericka Hays Mrs. Francis deLacy Hyde Mrs. Raymond M. Kaufmann Miss Isabel P. Kennedy Mrs. Richard Perry Cooperating Organizations Miss Wilhemina Balken Accommodations Miss Mary M. McClung Registration Miss Louise Schleiter Aides Mrs. Edgar L. Thomssen Publicity Miss Helen Meyer

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Mrs. William Watson Smith

Mrs. Marcus W. Stoner

Mrs. George E. Tener

Mrs. William Thaw, Jr.

Rev. E. J. Van Etten, D. D.

THE GIRLS' CONFERENCE

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Girls Conference on Youth

PITTSBURGH FEDERATION OF SOCIAL AGENCIES

Fifth Institute

MONDAY and TUESDAY April 27th aud 28th, 1931

HOTEL SCHENLEY Pittsburgh, Pa.

GIRLS' CONFERENCE INSTITUTE

Theme

"THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COMMUNITY TO YOUTH"
Hotel Schenley, Monday, April 27th, and
Tuesday, April 28th

MONDAY, APRIL 27th 2:00 P. M.

Round Table Discussion
"THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENT"
Mrs. Harry Sadler, Pittsburgh, Pa.

"THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL FROM THE VISITING TEACHER POINT OF VIEW"

Dr. Howard Nudd, Public Education Association, New York City

3:30 P. M.

"THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL FROM THE VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE POINT OF VIEW"

Speaker to be announced

"THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES FROM THE MENTAL HYGIENE POINT OF VIEW"

> Dr. Margaret Gerard, Juvenile Research Bureau, Chicago, Ill.

> > 6:30 P. M.

Dinner Meeting

"Unguessed Gifts"

Dr. Hughes Mearns, New York University

Author and Lecturer

TUESDAY, APRIL 28th

10.00 A. M.

Round Table Discussion

Dr. Hugh Thomson Kerr, Shadyside Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.

"THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COURT"

Mr. A. L. Wills,

Juvenile Court Detention Home, Pittsburgh, Pa.

"THE RESPONSIBILITY OF COMMERCIALIZED RECREATION"
Mr. Wilton A. Barrett,
National Board of Motion Picture Review

"THE MENACE OF WAR AS A CHALLENGE TO YOUTH"

Speaker to Be Announced

12:15 P. M.

Luncheon Meeting

"RECREATION IN THE LIGHT OF LEISURE AND UNEMPLOYMENT"

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
The Temple, Cleveland, Ohio

2:00 P. M.

Summary and Findings of the Institute
Professor Henry M. Busch,
Cleveland College

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN TO THE GIRLS' CONFERENCE, 726 WABASH BUILDING

Hotel Schenley
Monday, April 27th, and Tuesday, April 28th
Dinner Meeting Please reserve
Luncheon Meeting
Please reserve
Round Tables—Monday, April 27th Admission to Monday afternoon round tables by payment of 50 cents or by presentation of dinner ticket.
2:00 P. M.
Choose two:
"The Responsibility of the Parent."
or
☐ "The Responsibility of the School from the Visiting Teacher Point of View."
3:30 P. M.
☐ "The Responsibility of the School from the Vocational Guidance Point of View."
or
☐ "The Responsibility of Schools and Colleges from the Mental Hygiene Point of View."

(OVER)

Round Tables-Tuesday, April 28th

Admission to Tuesday morning round tables by payment of 50 cents or by presentation of luncheon ticket.

10.00 A. M.

10.00 A. M.
Choose one:
"The Responsibility of the Church."
"The Responsibility of the Court."
☐ "The Responsibility of Commercialized Recreation."
☐ "The Menace of War as a Challenge to Youth."
WRHS WWW
Make checks payable to the Girls' Conference, 726 Waash Building.
Tickets will be mailed upon receipt of check.

Signed) NAME
ADDRESS
ORGANIZATION
TELEPHONE