



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
187

Box
70

Folder
1025

Tribute to Sylvester W. Flesheim, 1961.

Tribute
to
Sylvester W. Fleisher
~~Spoken by~~ *By*
Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

Mine is the pleasant duty to transmit tonight your tribute to a man whom you have chosen to honor. I presume that I have been given this privilege because the recipient of the honor has long been a member of my flock, even though he is only infrequently to be found in the green pastures of Temple attendance and is not too often comforted by the rod and staff of ~~any~~ *my* ^{distasteful} ~~my~~ ^{shepherding}. As I look over the audience, I am persuaded that this phenomenon is not at all ~~unusual~~ ^{peculiar to him}. It is more likely, however, that my selection is to be attributed to the very warm friendship which has existed between our families over these many years. ^{TP} Any man upon whom a community institution bestows a mark of high distinction receives an heirloom worthy of a king.

This is particularly true when the honoring institution is a hospital, an agency which is so vital and indispensable to the health and well-being of our citizens.

civilization at its finest flowering. It is
The modern hospital is evidence not only of the remarkable advances which science has made in our day, but of the noblest humanitarian principles which are at work in our communities. Here the mind and soul of our civilization ^{not in contest} meet in concord, and cooperate for the benefit of man. Everyone knows that the besetting fear of our age is that the things of the mind may out-run the things of the spirit and so bring our world to the edge of calamity and disaster. ^{the wilderness of} The modern hospital, where meticulous research and the most advanced scientific techniques are placed at the service of man, to alleviate his suffering, to prolong his life and generally to increase his well-being, is the supreme *Testament* ~~testimonial~~ to what science, when it is guided not only by the love of abstract truth but by love of humanity, can do for the security and enrichment of human life and the progress of society.

*when one sees so much of the sadness, ^{but}
as well as ~~new life and~~ reborn before*

The hospital has always made an especial appeal to men of true religion who revered science, and to the spiritually-minded scientists. One understands why a man like Albert Schweitzer, for example, a pastor, the principal of a theological college, ^{and} an author of important ~~religious~~ ^{on religion} works, decided at the age of thirty to begin the study of medicine and to qualify himself as a surgeon, so that he could ^{then} go to Central Africa, and there build a hospital to tend to the needs of helpless natives and to fight leprosy and the sleeping sickness in the tropics. From time immemorial, the sick were cared for at shrines and temples, and throughout the ages, religious bodies, whether of the church or the synagogue, ministered to the sick, especially the poor and indigent.

Among our people -- ^{Bikur Cholim} ~~WRETS~~ ^{AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES} solicitude for the sick, was regarded as a supreme virtue whose fruits a man enjoys in this world, while the capital remains for him in the world to come. It is quite likely that the Jewish people were the ^{very} first to build hospitals.

This evening a great institution of healing in our community wishes to pay honor to a man who has served it faithfully through the years, and by his devotion and vision has notably contributed to its growth and expansion. I speak, of course, of Mr. Sylvester Flesheim, who tonight relinquishes the office of president of the Board of Trustees of Mt. Sinai Hospital which he has held since 1959. Prior to that time, beginning in 1951, he was vice-president of the Board. In 1952, he was named chairman of its Building Committee, and in 1953, chairman of the Mount Sinai Hospital Planning Commission. In these capacities, Mr. Flesheim was intimately associated with the large-scale development program which has so markedly modernized and expanded the

- a distinguished citizen of our city, a force for good

*in our
community*

*as a layman,
carefully prepared acquainted
himself with the intricate problems
of the hospital and*

facilities of Mount Sinai and placed it among the front-rank hospitals of our state. Mr. Flesheim gave ~~of himself~~, of his time and energy to ~~this~~ *its unfolding* program and followed with rare dedication its realization, through the period of construction, step by step.

There is an old proverb: "The hand that gives, gathers, and he gives nothing who does not give himself". Mr. Flesheim gave himself. He not only supported Mount Sinai generously, *as others have done, he* but contributed his *alert* ~~vital~~ interests, ~~and affection~~, the gifts of his trained, effective mind, his wide experience, *strong* ~~a strong sense of responsibility and~~ *and firmness of purpose to it.* unflagging attentiveness. Sometimes there *an element of* is vanity in mere giving, but not when one gives himself totally and eagerly to a good cause as Mr. Flesheim has.

In deep appreciation of his years of faithful service so loyally rendered, the Board of Trustees of Mount Sinai Hospital has commissioned a portrait of Mr. Flesheim to be painted which will be hung in the hospital. It is presenting to him also the following certificate of honor:

~~(read)~~.

June 14, 1961

THE MOUNT SINAI HOSPITAL OF CLEVELAND

Certificate of Honor

Sylvester W. Flesheim

We the Trustees of The Mount Sinai Hospital of Cleveland award this Certificate of Honor to Sylvester W. Flesheim in recognition of his distinguished leadership as President of the Board of Trustees, 1959-1961.

His tenure as president has climaxed twelve years of dedicated and outstanding service during which time he has also served with distinction as Chairman of the Mount Sinai Planning Commission, Chairman of the Building Committee, and Vice President of the Board of Trustees.

He bore a major share of the responsibility for the Mount Sinai Development Program from its inception, and the excellence of that program owes much to his knowledge, his integrity, his leadership, and his high ideals of humanitarian service.

In making this award to him, we wish to express our very great admiration and our most profound appreciation of the brilliant contribution which he has personally made to the advancement of the hospital and to the well-being of our community.

The Board of Trustees
Mount Sinai Hospital of Cleveland

June 14, 1961

TRIBUTE
to
SYLVESTER W. FLESHEIM
Spoken by
RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER

*Mt Sinai Hospital Board
June 14, 1961 (61-11)
at Oakwood Club*

Mine is the pleasant duty to transmit tonight your tribute to a man whom you have chosen to honor. I presume that I have been given this privilege because the recipient of the honor has long been a member of my flock, even though he is only infrequently to be found in the green pastures of Temple attendance and is not too often comforted by the rod and staff of my shepherding. As I look over this distinguished audience, I am persuaded that this phenomenon is not at all peculiar to him. It is more likely, however, that my selection is to be attributed to the very warm friendship which has existed between our families over these many years.

Any man upon whom a community institution bestows a mark of high distinction receives an heirloom worthy of a king. This is particularly true when the honoring institution is a hospital, an agency which is so vital and indispensable to the health and well-being of our citizens.

The modern hospital is civilization at its finest flowering. It is evidence not only of the remarkable advances which science has made in our day, but of the noblest humanitarian principles which are at work in our communities. Here the mind and soul of our civilization meet in concord, not in contest, and cooperate for the benefit of man. Everyone knows that the besetting fear of our age is that the things of the mind may out-run the things of the spirit and so bring our world to the edge of the wilderness of calamity and disaster. The modern hospital, where meticulous research and the most advanced scientific techniques are placed at the service of man, to alleviate his suffering, to prolong his life and generally to increase his well-being, is the supreme testament to what science, when it is guided not only by the love of abstract

truth but by love of humanity, can do for the security and enrichment of human life and the progress of society.

The hospital, where one sees so much of the sadness of life as well as its re-born hopes, has always made an especial appeal to men of true religion who revered science, and to the spiritually-minded scientists. One understands why a man like Albert Schweitzer, for example, a pastor, the principal of a theological college and an author of important works on religion, decided at the age of thirty to begin the study of medicine and to qualify himself as a surgeon, so that he could then go to Central Africa, and there build a hospital to tend to the needs of helpless natives and to fight leprosy and the sleeping sickness in the tropics. From time immemorial, the sick were cared for at shrines and temples, and throughout the ages, religious bodies, whether of the church or the synagogue, ministered to the sick, especially the poor and indigent.

Among our people -- Bikur Cholim -- solicitude for the sick, was regarded as a supreme virtue who fruits a man enjoys in this world, while the capital remains for him in the world to come. It is quite likely that the Jewish people were the very first to build hospitals.

This evening a great institution of healing in our community wishes to pay honor to a man -- a distinguished citizen of our city, a force for good in our community, who has served it faithfully through the years, and by his devotion and vision has notably contributed to its growth and expansion. I speak, of course, of Mr. Sylvester Flesheim, who tonight relinquishes the office of president of the Board of Trustees of Mt. Sinai Hospital which he has held since 1959. Prior to that time, beginning in 1951, he was vice-president of the Board. In 1952, he was named chairman of its Building

Committee, and in 1953, chairman of the Mount Sinai Hospital Planning Commission. In these capacities, Mr. Flesheim was intimately associated with the large-scale development program which has so markedly modernized and expanded the facilities of Mount Sinai and placed it among the front-rank hospitals of our state. Mr. Flesheim, as a lay-man, carefully acquainted himself with the intricate problems of the hospital and gave of his time and energy to its unfolding program and followed with rare dedication its realization, through the period of construction, step by step.

There is an old proverb: "The hand that gives, gathers, and he gives nothing who does not give himself." Mr. Flesheim gave himself. He not only supported Mount Sinai generously, as others have done, but he contributed his alert interests, the gifts of his trained, effective mind, his wide experience, strong responsibility, un-flagging attentiveness and firmness of purpose to it. Sometimes there is an element of vanity in mere giving, but not when one gives himself totally and eagerly to a good cause as Mr. Flesheim has.

In deep appreciation of his years of faithful service so loyally rendered, the Board of Trustees of Mount Sinai Hospital has commissioned a portrait of Mr. Flesheim to be painted which will be hung in the hospital. It is presenting to him also the following certificate of honor: