



Daniel Jeremy Silver Collection Digitization Project

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

MS-4850: Daniel Jeremy Silver Papers, 1972-1993.

Series II: Subject Files, 1956-1993, undated.

Reel
24

Box
8

Folder
316

Jewish Library Association, correspondence and speeches, 1963.



THE JEWISH LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

THE TEMPLE LIBRARY • UNIVERSITY CIRCLE AND SILVER PARK
CLEVELAND 6, OHIO

PRESIDENT

Miss Miriam Leikind
The Temple Library
University Circle and Silver Park
Cleveland 6, Ohio

First Vice-President

Mr. Herbert C. Zafren
Cincinnati, Ohio

Second Vice-President

Mr. Joseph Yenish
Philadelphia, Pa.

Recording Secretary

Mrs. Rebecca Guth
Philadelphia, Pa.

Corresponding Secretary

Mrs. Helen Levine
Cleveland 18, Ohio

Treasurer

Mrs. Irma Weinstein
391 Russell Street
Vaux Hall, Union, N. J.

Auditor

Mrs. Mae Weine
Camden, N. J.

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Mrs. Elsie Leviton
West Palm Beach, Fla.

Mrs. Reba Lorry
Wynnewood, Pa.

Mr. David Rome
Montreal, Canada

June 13, 1963

Dr. Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
University Circle and Silver Park
Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Dan:

In the name of all the delegates who attended the Second Annual Convention of the Jewish Library Association, we wish to thank you for your address "Reflections on a Literary Avalanche" which was the highpoint of our deliberations. Your talk was thought-provoking and challenging, and many of us gathered in little groups discussing it long after you left. Your suggestions to us as librarians were well taken and we hope to follow through.

Cordially,

Miriam Leikind

Miriam Leikind, President
Jewish Library Association

Address Before The
JEWISH LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Cleveland, Ohio
June 4, 1963

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver

I should like to talk to you about new books on both old and new Jewish themes. The most striking fact of this literature is its sheer mass and its growing volume. Last year alone The Temple received and catalogued 377 adult non-fiction English language titles. Add to this the increasing number of Hebrew language works and those in European tongues, and we are faced with a unique historical phenomenon -- there are more books being published today in the broad field of Judaica than were written during the entire first two thousand years of Jewish history. This production, its quality and its reading audience, are often overlooked by the prophets of doom who make a journalistic living portraying the presumed sterility of Jewish thought. Traditional Jewish learning may not be as widespread as it once was, but today's Jews are at least as learned as a people and Jewish studies each year are being more meaningfully and creatively taken up. An increasing number of men and women are learning to rejoice in the insights and history of their people -- look at the growth of the adult education movement in our congregations.

Mass production is changing the face of Jewish learning as radically and inexorably as mass production is changing the face of our economy. Until recent times our learning and literature clustered about a few signal texts -- the Bible, the Talmud, the Midrash, the Zohar, Maimonides' Guide to the Perplexed, etc. A scholar was a Bakki Be-Shas -- a master of the tractates of the Talmud. Commentary and interpretation were the ordinary forms of literary expression. This entire text-centered approach has disappeared under the avalanche of modern learning. Except in a few old-worldly yeshibahs, Jewish scholarship has taken on a principle of specialization borrowed from the secular university. One no longer studies a Talmud tractate. One now specializes in Jewish history, Jewish education, Jewish sociology, or in community relations, theology, or in any one of a number of even more narrowly described areas -- Alexandrian Jewish philosophy, medieval versification, American Jewish history, pre-Zohar mysticism, etc. As a result, the best of our current scholarship is far more historically accurate and logically consistent than any heretofore written. It prides itself on academic dispassion. Read Professor Graetz' History of the Jews side by side with Dr. Salo Baron's and you will see the degree to which the loaded adjective has been replaced by carefully phrased but often heavy-handed qualification. Our scholarship prides itself on academic dispassion. Much of it is of a high academic virtue. But somehow much of the recent scholarship fails to make clear its relevance to the restlessness of Jewish

life or to give an overall feeling for the integrity of Jewish life. Much of it is of limited interest to the non-specialist. The Harvard University Press recently published a study of R. Abraham b. David of Posquières by Dr. Isadore Twersky. Professor Twersky parses down Rabad's sources and analyzes his writings but never puts them together again. You end up knowing all about this twelfth century Provençal scholar except what made him human and interesting. It is a good and necessary study for the ten men including myself who are devoting themselves to the unfolding of the history of the intriguing and influential medieval Provençal community, but I venture to say that most of our congregations lack even a single member who can read this volume with profit.

Scholars now write first as historians or as sociologists or as experts in cultural anthropology, and only secondly as Jews. This has made for a far greater precision and factual accuracy, but it has tended to destroy any sense of the wonder and the integrity of Jewish survival. Somehow scholarship must be more than an overdue dusting of family heirlooms long since wisely relegated to the attic. To be useful in the kind of libraries you represent, Jewish scholarship must provide information relevant to contemporary Jewish life.

Our writers increasingly see only what they feel themselves qualified to see. Take the field of American Jewish history. In book after book Professor Jacob Marcus has presented a rich tapestry of facts and of dates and of intimate diaries, but in none of his works can one find any sense for the corporate Weltanschauung of American Jewry. Dr. Oscar Handlin of Harvard has described with academic precision the tensions of in-migration and the pressures of assimilation, but one cannot find in his work any echo of the spiritual integrity and the cultural uniqueness of Jewish life. The scholar will appreciate both these approaches. The average user of our libraries will find them of limited value.

What is true of American Jewish history is equally true of other academic specialties. Take the field of halacha -- Jewish law. The Orthodox community continues to research for practical purpose individual principles of law. Rabbi Immanuel Jacobovitz has published a first-class work detailing the response of Jewish law to the fascinating and complicated problems of medical ethics. Yale University is publishing a valuable translation of Maimonides' great law code, the Mishneh Torah. Rabbi Solomon Freehof of Pittsburgh has been wrestling with the problem of making the complicated area of legal responsa meaningful to the average reader. Biographies of medieval rabbis of the quality of Meir of Rothenburg, Solomon ibn Adret, and Nachmanides detail their contribution to the organic development of Jewish law. But I know of only one or two rather awkward books now on our shelves which can be put into the hands of an intelligent layman or of a non-Jewish professor of religion which would permit him to understand the rationale of halacha, its practice, and its horizons -- and I know of not a single book which would teach him to read the Talmud or the Shulhan Aruch with benefit.

In the nineteenth century Zunz pioneered by writing a history of Jewish liturgy. Today Dr. Wallenstein publishes "Some Unpublished Piyyutim from the Cairo Genizah." Now such studies as well as recent works on Falasha liturgy and the Mahzor Vitry are welcome. They provide many a significant detail, but -- and this is my point -- whereas Zunz's work was

broad enough to be appreciated by both leaders and laymen, the laymen will not and can not read profitably Dr. Wallenstein's work. Research is the building block of good history. But much of the scholarship has limited use for the average client of the temple or community library. The Jewish Library Association would perform a unique function if it encouraged each of our scholars to contribute either a source book or a handbook in his particular field of interest. In too many areas our libraries offer rich graduate courses but we have inadequate or no material at the freshman level. The kind of balance that I have in mind can be illustrated in the writings of a man of the quality of Dr. Samuel Sandmel of Hebrew Union College. He has written many a learned monograph on Philo and Hellenistic literature, but he has also turned out a first-rate and useful volume on the Jewish understanding of the New Testament. I commend to you as a model of this popular literature his new volume, The Hebrew Scriptures, An introduction to their literature and religious ideas. In it he covers responsibly all the critical material. He deliberately avoids the scholarly superstructure of learned asides and lengthy footnotes. He provides in the Appendix a few short articles on specific topics of current interest which could not be embodied in the text, and instead of a bibliography he includes an annotated selection of works which may be read profitably by those who wish to continue in the field. Would that we had such a volume on the Talmud and on the Midrash, on Jewish mysticism, and Zionism, etc.

Specialization is here to stay, and one ought not to quarrel with it, for the old text-centered curriculum had many drawbacks; not the least was that it lacked a sense of time. Specialization's great contribution has been a new awareness of the principle of change in Jewish life. We can now trace our wedding customs or our funeral rites through reform after reform as the geography and the cultural environment of Jews changed. Because of our scholarship the changes of our day can be understood as a statement of Jewish vitality rather than as an abrupt discontinuity. As we trace the changing rituals and rites of our people the elemental affirmations, Torah, God, Israel, etc., become more striking and more visibly consistent. I am delighted that a number of thinkers have begun to move away from their professional passion for limited research and for specific facts and dates to search out and highlight that which has been elemental and unique in the Jewish experience. Two recent popular attempts in this direction deserve mention, Rabbi Bernard Bamberger's The Story of Judaism and Rabbi David Polish's The Eternal Dissent. For those who are more deeply versed in religion, Dr. Abba Hillel Silver's Where Judaism Differed brings Judaism's ideational individuality into sharp focus. Men will never fully agree on the broad outlines of Jewish experience any more than they have agreed on the schema of a Spenser, Spengler, or Toynbee. But the search itself is the virtue, and incidentally the answer to the elemental question, "Why should Jews continue to survive?"

Specialization is here to stay, and our libraries are still organized as if they were serving a scholarly community. This is as it should be, but let us recognize that our clients hardly represent a scholarly community. There are perhaps five thousand men and women in America competent to do advanced Jewish research. There are five and a half million Jews. The religious school education of the average adult Jew is something less than two and a half once-a-week years of pre-Bar Mitzvah Hebrew training. Why not separate out in our libraries the books which can be useful to our

congregations from the books which are useful only to thesis writers? Why not a section of basic books? Why not buy more copies of these books? Many libraries buy one of everything. Professor Hugo Mantel's recent and valuable Studies in the History of the Sanhedrin has been charged out, in the year we have had it on our shelves, by one person -- myself. A beautifully illustrated popular companion book to the Bible, Adam to David, has been charged out twenty-five times during the same period. I would like to suggest also that the Jewish Library Association, in conjunction with one or more of our educationally oriented national agencies, sponsor a collection of popular handbooks in those areas which are now empty. Why not encourage Hillel or B'nai B'rith or the U.A.H.C. to add to their list of basic books basic works on the Hebrew language, in Midrash, on Jewish theology? Faced with a similar gap between inadequate school training in the sciences and the needs of a complex technical world, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Rockefeller Foundation, Wesleyan College, as well as other groups and agencies, have produced a significant number of works designed to present the basic facts of our scientific age in a way which can be absorbed easily by the intelligent layman. American Judaism desperately needs such books. And while we are thinking on it, let's discourage their being printed as soft cover paperbacks, which are so easily misplaced, damaged, and lost. In the same vein, we ought to discourage our national magazines and our professional annuals from measuring these popular works against a standard which ought to be reserved only for the scholarly. In popular works away with footnotes! Away with qualifications! Away with bibliographies! Also, why should we discourage our literate laymen from stumbling their way into the garden of Jewish knowledge? For all its facileness, Herman Wouk's This Is My God was read by more people and, I suspect, with greater appreciation than all the recent tomes of our professor-written theologies.

I am not arguing for superficiality. I am arguing for broad horizons and perspective. I am arguing for clarity and for the declarative sentence. Arthur Cohen's The Natural and Supernatural Jew is a perfect example of the terrible disease of jargonese which afflicts our theologies. Cohen's hyphenated vocabulary makes an interesting philosophic thesis absolutely unintelligible to anyone who is not familiar with the entire curriculum of the new School for Social Research. The Bible, possibly the most profound theology ever written, does not contain a single "ism" or hyphenated word. One can be profound without being obscure.

I am not arguing for a party line. A handbook need not be a consensus. It can be, and in many cases it ought to be intensely provocative or personal. Unfortunately, neither our heavy handed but prolific existentialists nor our persistent sociological theologians have developed an understandable vocabulary and so for the degraded laymen it is as if their works had never been written.

The greatest lack in our contemporary literature is in style and lift. When Jewish life was most creative it tended to the poetic. Poetry is the language of the soul. Poetry is a language now sadly neglected. It doesn't help to print half lines down a long page, as so many of our liturgies and special printings do. Pedestrian language remains pedestrian. Even our sermonics have tended to the logical and argumentative. We have here an obvious reflex of the realities of American Jewish life. American Judaism

has been institutionally creative and exceptionally charitable, but liturgically awkward and spiritually tongue-tied. Its purest passion has been in the area of social welfare, international relief, and Zionism. Not surprisingly, ten books are written in this field for each one which touches personal faith. Our people want to know what they can believe and we have been busy telling them what was believed, or arguing with them, as do Dr. Mordecai Kaplan and Rabbi Roland Gittelsohn, that what was believed cannot now be believed. Remember the old song, "Accentuate the Positive"? Our congregations know full well the whole litany of arguments against religion. They want insight and inspiration, a modern parallel to the Psalms, or perhaps more exactly, a Jewish parallel to Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet.

I should like to devote the rest of my few minutes to some random observations on the literature of the past two or three years. In the first place, let us applaud the continued work of translation which makes available the basic materials of our religious heritage. The 'thirties and 'forties saw the translation of the Talmud, the Midrash, and the Zohar. The 'fifties saw the translation of much of Spanish poetry, Midrash Tehillim, the Abot de Rabbi Natan, David Kimhi's Grammar, Israel Salanter's Epistle of Musar, etc. The University of Chicago will soon present us a new translation of the Guide to the Perplexed. Dropsie College continues its retranslation of the Apocrypha, and Yale is bringing out an edition of the Pesikatta. This work is, by and large, being done well and in many cases effective study guides and necessary introductions are being provided in popular editions. A fine example of these are the various philosophic excerpts of Maimonides, Halevi, and Saadya by the East-West Library.

An interesting trend can be seen in a revival of interest in the works of Jewish mysticism. Spurred by the researches of Gershon Scholem (whose Introduction to the Kabbalah will be available soon in English translation) the innate piety of Jewish life is struggling for expression. Professor Abraham Heschel has been the modern spokesman for this movement, and I would not be surprised if he raised up many disciples in all branches of the Jewish polity.

An English translation of the Talmud is almost as useless as its Hebrew-Aramaic original. Give the Talmud to a non-Jewish college student or to a Jew who has not been trained in the yeshibah, and he will stumble over its disorganized structure. He is more likely to be shocked by its stray superstition and cruelty than to appreciate its advanced humanity and respect for due process. Fortunately, a growing number of special studies are available both in book and article form which set out to assess individual doctrines -- man, compassion, exclusiveness and tolerance, sex, martyrdom, etc. A Jewish librarian has the responsibility of suggesting these studies when a request is made for information on Talmudic Judaism, rather than directing the neophyte directly to the original source.

Unfortunately, most of this material appears in article format in scholarly journals or Festschrift volumes. I would like, therefore, to offer this suggestion -- that the Jewish Library Association encourage the Jewish Book Annual once every decade to publish a topical and alphabetical listing of all this monographic material. Outside of New York, Dropsie, Brandeis, and the Hebrew Union College, bibliographical aids are rare, and such that are now available seldom include the individual essays along with the book's

title and editor. The indices of our various scholarly journals appear, if they appear at all, only every twenty-five or fifty years. Your effectiveness in your communities would be greatly enhanced by such a procedure, and if you have not such a book or article it is readily available through interlibrary loans or in photostat.

Let us turn for a moment to Biblical scholarship, always the broadest field of interest. Biblical scholarship has taken a new turn. The 'fifties were the golden age of archeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Imagine the New Yorker printing Edmund Wilson in extenso on these Scrolls. Our laity was excited, and fortunately, a fine array of volumes and handbooks, many gracefully illustrated, have become available. The burden of current Biblical scholarship has an important bearing on our religious tradition, for the coup de grace has now been given to the nineteenth century Graf-Wellhausen Biblical criticism. No one argues that the Bible isn't made up of many parts, but these parts do not fall into the anti-legal frame which was once insisted upon (in defense of Christian antinomianism). The Prophets are now seen not as men in revolt against a primitive Jewish paganism, but as leaders who are recalling a people to the purer monotheism of an earlier day. In this area our libraries ought not to be narrowly Jewish. The Interpreter's Bible, the International Critical Commentary, the Orthodox Bible Atlas, the works of Muhlenberg, Pritchard, Noth, and Father DeVeaux are important and necessary tools. The Bible is a universal heritage. What is unique is each faith's tradition of Biblical interpretation, and as yet far too little has been done to make the norms of such Jewish interpretation explicit.

Archeology has produced for us numerous exciting and well illustrated books and a great deal of sociological understanding of the way ordinary men and women lived during the days of Abraham, David, and Ezra. But too much is being claimed for it. In surprisingly few cases does archeology help us answer the interpretive problems of the Bible, and certainly it offers us neither a blanket endorsement nor disproof of the Bible's historic authenticity. I believe the 'sixties will bring us even greater understanding of our Scriptures. I also believe that this will come largely from Israel. Israel has turned to the Bible with a passion. The Israeli scholar is on the spot where he can breathe the Biblical climate. His language makes him intimate with that of the Bible. I believe every library ought to be encouraging this work by subscribing to the Biblical Encyclopedia currently being published, to the fine Biblical studies being published by the Hebrew University, and by subscribing to the various archeological and linguistic journals there being published.

The 'sixties will see a completion of the new Jewish Publication Society translation of the Bible. I presume before I go on that I must make a comment about its new translation of the Torah. I love Dr. Orlinsky as a man, and I respect him as a scholar. The new translation has a delicate accuracy about it. But its style seems to me to be flat and pedestrian, with the accent of our great midwestern plains. When Mr. Ben Zevin first showed me, several years ago, the typescript of this translation, I suggested that he hire several of our better writers to take this language and to turn it into literature. I repeat this suggestion, especially for the Book of Prophets and for the Psalms.

Few areas command greater interest than that of the continuing dialogue between Christian and Jew. The last few years have seen an impressive number of first-rate books which touch more or less directly on the parting of the ways. One thinks of Tcherikover's Hellenism and the Hellenistic Age, Zeitlin's The Rise and Fall of the Judean State, Finkelstein's enlarged study of the Pharisees, Sandmel's works on the New Testament and Paul, etc. Couple this with some fine non-Jewish studies by Pfeiffer, Enslin, and others, and there is no reason why all our libraries should not have available accurate and worthwhile information for all those who seek out the facts of the time and some understanding of Jewish attitudes towards Christian claims.

The Jewish-Christian dialogue, of course, did not cease in the second century. It is with us today, very much with us, in the areas of public education, censorship, and community relations, etc. An increasing number of our organizations are publishing important materials on the legal and social ramifications of these tensions. These ought not to be left by our librarians in their usual soft covers, but rebound and catalogued. Books by those of other faiths and points of view ought also to be circulated. There can be no understanding until all points of view are at least appreciated.

Along with the question of religious relationships, there has come an increasing interest in the sociology of American Jewish life. Gordon, Will Herberg, Vorspan and Lippman, among others, have presented us with a series of glib generalizations and have popularized a new idiom -- "the gilded ghetto," "five o'clock apartheid." Fortunately, an increasing number of studies in depth are appearing which one associates especially with the work of Morris Sklar and Gerhardt Lensky. These studies are welcome. But I sometimes think that we are far too self-involved. How much is it worth knowing about Jewish gastronomic or golfing habits? I wonder, for instance, what contribution is made by the graph in one of Sklar's works which details "the frequency of mild intoxication (tight more than five times) in veteran and non-veteran (among Jewish students)."

Rivalling and, indeed, surpassing in value this sociological literature has been the material dealing with the European experience under Hitler, Zionism, and the establishment of the State of Israel. This is the contemporary trauma and triumph, and quite rightly has come in for extended treatment. The Herzl Press is doing a fine job in producing historical data on Zionism. Agar's The Saving Remnant is the best of a series of studies on the American contribution to postwar relief. A rash of popular biographies have dealt with Zionist and Israeli leaders. Important specialist works have appeared on immigration, absorption, economic development, military strategy, and, of course, government and foreign affairs. Given the passion of the day, many of these works have a surprising balance about them. Some, of course, are deeply prejudiced or ridden with secret guilt. Of Hannah Arendt's Eichmann in Jerusalem I would only suggest that you would do well to paste into the frontispiece of your copy Judge Musmano's factual point by point refutation of her brief which appeared in the New York Times Book Review Magazine. Lord Russell of Liverpool's description of the trial itself might be suggested as an effective antidote.

Let's sum it up. At no previous time in Jewish history has the problem of selection assumed such proportion. Today's Jewish librarian must be more than a custodian of books. He must know what is in the books and to whom the books can be useful. You cannot expect a card catalogue with its brief titles to do this work for you. Obviously, not all these works can be read. It might be well if various members of your Association made themselves specialists in given areas and reported annually at your conventions on the new and on the worthwhile. It is an exciting time to be working in your field. A new Jewish spirit is slowly being forged, and you will help, through your direction, in the building of this dream.



*Jewish,
Hebrew*

-1-

I should like to talk to you about new books on both old and new Jewish themes. The most striking fact of ^{This} ~~our~~ literature is its sheer mass and its growing volume. Last year alone The Temple received and catalogued 377 adult non-fiction English language titles. Add to this the increasing number of Hebrew language works and those in European tongues, and we are faced with a unique historical phenomenon -- there are more books being published today in the broad field of Judaica than were written during the entire first two thousand years of Jewish history. This production, ~~and~~ its quality and its reading audience, are often overlooked by the prophets of doom who make a journalistic living portraying the presumed sterility of Jewish thought. Traditional Jewish learning may not be as widespread as it once was, but ^{Today's} ~~the~~ Jews are at least as learned ^{as} a people and Jewish studies are each year being more meaningfully and creatively taken up. An increasing number of men and women are learning to rejoice in the insights and history of their people -- look at the growth of the adult education movement in our congregations.

Mass production is changing the face of Jewish learning as radically and inexorably as mass production is changing the face of our economy. Until recent times our learning and literature clustered about a few signal texts -- the Bible, the Talmud, the Midrash, the Zohar, Maimonides' Guide to the Perplexed, etc. A scholar was a hakkei be-shas master of the tractates of the Talmud. Commentary and interpretation were the ordinary forms of literary expression. Under the avalanche of modern learning, this entire text-centered approach has disappeared. Except in a few old-worldly yeshibahs, Jewish scholarship has taken on a principle of specialization borrowed from the secular university. One no longer studies a Talmud tractate. One now specializes in Jewish history, ~~or~~ Jewish education, ~~in~~ Jewish sociology, ^{or} in community relations, ~~in~~ theology, or in any one of a number of even more narrowly described areas -- Alexandrian

Jewish philosophy, medieval versification, American Jewish history, pre-Zohar mysticism, etc. As a result, the best of our current scholarship is far more historically accurate and logically consistent than any heretofore written. It prides itself on academic dispassion. ^{Professor} Read Graetz's ^{of the Jews} History side by side with ^{Dr.} Salo Baron's and you will see ^{The degree to which} how the ^{ADJECTIVE} loaded ^{has been replaced by} ~~adjective~~ ^{but excited} ~~carefully~~ ^{CAREFULLY} ~~a~~ ^{have been replaced by carefully} phrased but often heavy handed ~~handed~~ qualifications. Our scholarship prides itself on its ^{ACADEMIC DISPASSION} ~~ability to relate~~ ^{MUCH OF IT IS OF A HIGH ACADEMIC VIRTUE} Jewish life to the broader environment. But somehow much of the recent scholarship fails to make clear its relevance to the restlessness of Jewish life or to give an overall feeling for the integrity of Jewish life, ^{MUCH OF IT} ~~and so is~~ of limited interest to the non-specialist. The Harvard University Press recently published a study of the ^{R. Abraham b. DAVID OF PASQUENEX} ~~Rabad~~ by Isadore Twersky. Professor Twersky parses down Rabad's sources and analyzes his writings but never puts them together again. You end up knowing all about this twelfth century Provençal scholar except what made him human and interesting. It is a good and necessary study for the ten ^{INCLUDING MYSELF} men who are devoting themselves to the unfolding of the history of the intriguing and influential medieval Provençal community, but I venture to say that most of our congregations lack even a single member who can read this ^{VOLUME} ~~work~~ with profit.

Scholars now write first as historians or as sociologists or as experts in cultural anthropology, and only secondly as Jews. This has made for a far greater precision and factual accuracy, but it has ~~also often led to errors in emphasis and it has~~ tended to destroy any sense of the wonder and the integrity of Jewish survival. Somehow scholarship must be more than an overdue dusting of family heirlooms long since wisely relegated to the attic. To be useful in the kind of libraries you represent, Jewish scholarship must provide information relevant to ^{of} contemporary Jewish life.

Our writers increasingly see only what they feel themselves qualified

to see. Take the field of American Jewish history. In book after book Professor Jacob Marcus has presented a rich tapestry of facts and of dates and of intimate diaries, but in none of his works can one find any sense for the corporate Weltanschauung of American Jewry. Oscar Handlin^{of Harvard} has described with academic precision the tensions of in-migration and the pressures of assimilation, but one cannot find in his work any echo of the spiritual integrity and the cultural uniqueness of Jewish life. The scholar will appreciate both these approaches. The average user of our libraries will find them of limited value.

What is true of American Jewish history is equally true of other academic specialties. Take the field of halacha -- Jewish law. The Orthodox community continues to research for practical purposes ~~in~~ individual principles of law. Rabbi Immanuel Jacobovitz has published a first-class work detailing the response of Jewish law to the fascinating and complicated problems of medical ethics. Yale University is publishing a valuable translation of Maimonides' great law code, the Mishneh Torah. Rabbi Solomon Freehof of Pittsburgh has been wrestling with the problem of making the complicated area of legal responsa meaningful to the average reader. Biographies of medieval rabbis of the quality of Meir of Rothenburg, Solomon ibn Adret, and Nachmanides detail their contribution to the organic development of Jewish law. But I know of only one or two rather awkward books now on our shelves which can be put into the hands of an intelligent layman or of a non-Jewish professor of religion which would permit him to understand the rationale of halacha, its practice, and its horizons -- and I know of not a single book which would teach him to read the Talmud or the Shulhan Aruch with benefit.

~~Critical Jewish scholarship is a relatively recent phenomenon. Its roots~~

roots reach back only to the ~~Central~~ European Wissenschaft of the ~~early~~ nineteenth century. Created in revolutionary fervor by Leopold Zunz, Moritz Steinschneider and a ^{DOZEN} ~~hundred~~ others, its spirit of academic integrity has been gathering momentum. We ~~reap~~ today a rich harvest. In the last 150 years Jewish history has been put into chronological order and its social ~~and~~ political and economic aspects as well as its pilgrimage of faith ~~has been~~ studied. A search was begun for ^{Jewish} ~~its~~ dynamic principles, and that search still continues. In the nineteenth century Zunz pioneered by writing a history of Jewish liturgy. Today ~~a~~ Dr. Wallenstein ~~will~~ publish ^{as} "Some Unpublished Piyyutim ^{From} ~~for~~ the CAIRI GENIZAH." Now such studies as well as recent works on ~~the~~ ^{LITURGY} ~~FAKASHA~~ ^{history} and the ~~MAHZOR~~ ^{litany} are ~~WELCOME~~. They ^{PROVIDE} ~~give us~~ many a significant detail, but -- and this is my point -- whereas Zunz's work was broad enough to be appreciated by ~~both~~ leaders and laymen, the laymen will not and ^{CAN} ~~are~~ not profitably read Dr. Wallenstein's work. Research is the building block of good history. But much of the scholarship has limited use for the average client of the temple or community library. The Jewish Library Association would perform a unique function if it encouraged each of our scholars to contribute either a source book or a handbook in his particular field of interest. In too many areas our libraries offer rich graduate ~~courses~~ but we have inadequate or no material at the freshman level. The kind of balance that I have in mind can be illustrated in the writings of a man of the quality of Dr. Samuel Sandmel of Hebrew Union College. He has written many a learned monograph on Philo and Hellenistic literature, but he has also turned out ^a first-rate and useful volume on the Jewish understanding of the New Testament. And I commend to you as a model of this popular literature his new volume, "The Hebrew Scriptures, An introduction to their literature and religious ideas." In it he covers

responsibly all the critical material. He deliberately avoids the scholarly superstructure of learned asides and lengthy footnotes. He provides in the Appendix a few short articles on specific topics of current interest which could not be embodied in the text, and instead of a bibliography he includes an annotated selection of works which may be read profitably by those who wish to continue in the field. Would that we had such a volume on the Talmud and on the Midrash, on Jewish mysticism, and Zionism *etc.*

Specialization is here to stay, and one ought not to quarrel with it, for the old text-centered curriculum had many drawbacks; not the least was that it lacked a sense of time. Specialization's great contribution has been a new awareness of the principle of change in Jewish life. We can now trace our wedding customs or our funeral rites through reform after reform as the geography and the cultural environment of Jews ~~developed and changed~~. ^{Because of our} The ^{scholarly} changes of our day can be understood ~~now~~ as a statement of Jewish vitality rather than ~~seen~~ as an abrupt discontinuity. As we trace the changing rituals and rites of our people the elemental affirmations, Torah, God, Israel, etc., become more striking and more visibly consistent. I am delighted that a number of thinkers have begun to move away from ~~expansive~~ ^{PROFESSIONAL} their ~~existentialists'~~ passion for limited research and for specific facts and dates to search out and highlight that which has been elemental and unique in the Jewish experience. Two recent popular attempts in this direction deserve mention, Rabbi Bernard Bamberger's The Story of Judaism and Rabbi David Polish's The Eternal Dissent. For those who are more deeply versed in religion, ^{Dr.} Abba Hillel Silver's Where Judaism Differed brings Judaism's ideational individuality into sharp focus. Men will never fully agree on the broad outlines of Jewish experience any more than they have agreed on the schema of a Spenser, Spengler, or Toynbee. But the search itself is the virtue, and incidentally the answer to the elemental question, "Why should Jews continue to survive?"

Specialization is here to stay, ~~and~~^{TV} our libraries are still organized as if they were serving a scholarly community. This is as it should be, but let us recognize that our clients hardly represent a scholarly community. There are perhaps five thousand men and women in America competent to do advanced Jewish research. There are five and a half million Jews. The religious school education of the average adult Jew is something less than two and a half once-a-week years of pre-Bar Mitzvah Hebrew training. Why not separate out in our libraries the books which can be useful to our congregations from the books which are useful only to thesis writers? Why not a section of basic books? Why not buy more copies of these books? Many libraries buy one of everything. Professor Hugo Mantel's recent and ~~valuable~~^{invaluable} Studies in the History of the Sanhedrin has been charged out, in the year we have had it on our shelves, by one person -- myself. A beautifully illustrated popular companion book to the Bible, Adam to David, has been charged out twenty-five times during the same period. I would like to suggest also that the Jewish Library Association, in conjunction with one or more of our educationally oriented national agencies, sponsor a collection of popular handbooks in those areas which are now empty. Why not encourage Hillel or B'nai B'rith or the U.A.H.C. to add to their list of basic books basic works on the Hebrew language, in Midrash, on Jewish theology? Faced with a similar gap between inadequate school training in the sciences and the needs of a complex technical world, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Rockefeller Foundation, Wesleyan College, as well as other groups and agencies, have produced a significant number of works designed to present the basic facts of our scientific age in a way which can be absorbed easily by the intelligent layman. American Judaism desperately needs such books. And while we are thinking on it, let's discourage their being printed as soft cover paperbacks, which are so easily misplaced, damaged, and lost. In the same vein, we ought to discourage our national

magazines and our professional annuals from measuring these popular works against a standard which ought to be reserved only for the scholarly. In popular works away with footnotes! Away with qualifications! Away with bibliographies! Also, why should we discourage our literate laymen from stumbling their way into the garden of Jewish knowledge? For all its facileness, Herman Wouk's This Is My God was read by more people and, I suspect, with greater appreciation than all the recent tomes of our professor-written theologies.

I am not arguing for superficiality. I am arguing for broad horizons and perspective. I am arguing for clarity and for the declarative sentence. Arthur Cohen's The Natural and Supernatural Jew is a perfect example of the terrible ^{DISEASE} ~~rash~~ of jargonese which afflicts our theologies. Cohen's hyphenated vocabulary makes an interesting philosophic thesis absolutely unintelligible to anyone who is not familiar with the entire ~~curriculum~~ of the new School for Social Research. The Bible, possibly the most profound theology ever written, does not contain a single "ism" or hyphenated word. One can be profound without being obscure.

I am not arguing for a party line. A handbook need not be a ~~consensus~~. It can be, and in many cases it ought to be intensely provocative or personal. ~~Unintended~~ Indeed, neither our heavy handed but prolific existentialists nor our ~~PERSISTENT~~ sociological theologians have ^{DEVELOPED AN UNUNDERSTANDABLE VOCABULARY} ~~had the courage to come to grips~~ ~~AND SO FOR THE DEGREE LAYMEN IT IS AS IF THEIR WORKS~~ with the ~~new truly crucial challenge of the day.~~ Is there really a ~~had never been written~~ continuity between our Judaism and the Biblical and sublime faith?

The greatest lack in our contemporary literature is in style and lift. When Jewish life was most creative it tended to the poetic. Poetry is the language of the soul. Poetry is a language now sadly neglected. It doesn't help to print half lines down a long page, as so many of our liturgies and special printings do. Pedestrian language remains pedestrian. Even our sermonics have tended to the logical and argumentative. We have here an obvious reflex of the realities of American Jewish life. American Judaism

has been institutionally creative and exceptionally charitable, but liturgically awkward and spiritually tongue-tied. Its purest passion has been in the area of social welfare, international relief, and Zionism. Not surprisingly, ten books are written in this field for each one which touches personal faith. Our people want to know what they can believe and we have been busy telling them what was believed, or arguing with them, as do ^{Mr.} Mordecai Kaplan and ^{Rabbi} Roland Gittelsohn, that what was believed cannot now be believed. Remember the old song, "Accentuate the Positive"? Our congregations know full well the whole litany of arguments against religion. They want insight and inspiration, a modern parallel to the Psalms, or perhaps more exactly, a Jewish parallel to Kahil Gibran's The Prophet.

I should like to devote the rest of my few minutes to some ~~random~~ observations on the literature of the past two or three years. In the first place, let us applaud the continued work of translation which makes available the basic materials of our religious heritage. The 'thirties and 'forties saw the translation of the Talmud, the Midrash, and the Zohar. The 'fifties saw the translation of much of Spanish poetry, Midrash Tehillim, the Abot de Rabbi Natan, David Kimhi's Grammar, Israel Salantar's Epistle of Musar, etc. The University of Chicago will ~~soon~~ ^{SDSN} ~~this Spring~~ present us a new translation of The Guide to the Perplexed. Dropsie College continues its retranslation of the Apocrypha, and Yale is bringing out an edition of the Pesikatta. This work is, by and large, being done well and in many cases effective study guides and necessary introductions are being provided in popular editions. A fine example of these are the various philosophic excerpts of Maimonides, Halevi, and Saadya by the East-West Library.

An interesting trend can be seen in a revival of interest in the works of Jewish mysticism. Spurred by the researches of Gershon Scholem (whose Introduction to the Kabbalah will be available soon in English translation) the innate piety of Jewish life is struggling for expression.

~~Professor~~ Abraham Heschel has been the modern spokesman for this movement, and I would not be surprised if he raised up many disciples in all branches of the Jewish polity.

An English translation of the Talmud is almost as useless as its Hebrew-Aramaic original. Give the Talmud to a non-Jewish college student or to a Jew who has not been trained in the yeshibah, and he will stumble over its disorganized structure. He is more likely to be shocked by its stray superstition and cruelty than to appreciate its advanced humanity and respect for due process. Fortunately, a growing number of special studies are available both in book and article form which set out to assess individual doctrines -- man, compassion, exclusiveness and tolerance, sex, martyrdom, etc. A Jewish librarian has the responsibility of suggesting these studies when a request is made for information on Talmudic Judaism, rather than directing the neophyte directly to the original source.

Unfortunately, most of this material appears in article format in scholarly journals or Festschrift volumes. I would like, therefore, to offer this suggestion -- that the Jewish Library Association encourage the Jewish Book Annual once every decade to publish a topical and alphabetical listing of all this monographic material. Outside of New York, Dropsie, Brandeis, and the Hebrew Union College, bibliographical aids are rare, and such that are now available seldom include the individual essays along with the book's title and editor. The indices of our various

scholarly journals appear, if they appear at all, only every twenty-five or fifty years. Your effectiveness in your communities would be greatly enhanced by such a procedure, and if you have not such a book or article it is readily available through inter-library loans or in photostat.

Let us turn for a moment to Biblical scholarship, always the broadest field of interest. Biblical scholarship has taken a new turn. The 'fifties were the golden age of archeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls ~~---Solomon Zeitlin against the world.~~ Imagine the New Yorker printing Edmund Wilson in extenso on these Scrolls. Our laity was excited, and fortunately, a fine array of volumes and handbooks, many gracefully illustrated, have become available. The burden of current Biblical scholarship has an important bearing on our religious tradition, for the coup de grace has now been given to the nineteenth century Graf-Wellhausen Biblical criticism. No one argues that the Bible isn't made up of many parts, but these parts do not fall into the anti-legal frame which was once insisted upon (in defense of Christian antinomianism). The Prophets are now seen not as men in revolt against a primitive Jewish paganism, but as leaders who are recalling a people to the purer monotheism of an earlier day. In this area our libraries ought not to be narrowly Jewish. The Interpreter's Bible, the International Critical Commentary, the Orthodox Bible Atlas, the works of Muhlenberg, Pritchard, Noth, and Father DeVeaux are important and necessary tools. The Bible is a universal heritage. What is unique is each faith's tradition of Biblical interpretation, and as yet far too little has been done to make the norms of such Jewish interpretation explicit.

Archeology has produced for us numerous exciting and well illustrated books and a great deal of sociological understanding of the way

ordinary men and women lived during the days of Abraham, David, and Ezra. But too much is being claimed for it. In surprisingly few cases does archeology help us answer the interpretive problems of the Bible, and certainly it offers us neither a blanket endorsement nor disproof of the Bible's historic authenticity. I believe the 'sixties will bring us even greater understanding of our Scriptures. I also believe that this will come largely from Israel. Israel has turned to the Bible with a passion. The Israeli scholar is on the spot where he can breathe the Biblical climate. His language makes him intimate with that of the Bible. I believe every library ought to be encouraging this work by subscribing to the Biblical Encyclopedia currently being published, to the fine Biblical studies being published by the Hebrew University, and by subscribing to the various archeological and linguistic journals there being published.

The 'sixties will see a completion of the new Jewish Publication Society translation of the Bible. I presume before I go on that I must make a comment about its new translation of the Torah. I love Dr. Orlinsky as a man, and I respect him as a scholar. The new translation has a delicate accuracy about it. But its style seems to me to be flat and pedestrian, with the accent of our great midwestern plains. When ^{Mr.} Ben Zevin first showed me, several years ago, the typescript of this translation, I suggested that he hire several of our better writers to take this language and to turn it into literature. I repeat this suggestion, especially for the Book of Prophets and for the Psalms.

Few areas command greater interest than that of the continuing dialogue between Christian and Jew. The last few years have seen an impressive number of first-rate books which touch more or less directly

on the parting of the ways. One thinks of Tcherikover's Hellenism and the Hellenistic Age, Zeitlin's The Rise and Fall of the Judean State, Finkelstein's enlarged study of the Pharisees, Sandmel's works on the New Testament and Paul, etc. Couple this with some fine non-Jewish studies by Pfeiffer, Eenslin, and others, and there is no reason why all our libraries should not have available accurate and worthwhile information for all those who seek out the facts of the time and some understanding of Jewish attitudes towards Christian claims.

~~There is a greater interest than that of the continuing dialogue between Christianity and Jewry. The task of the Jewry is to~~

The Jewish-Christian dialogue, of course, did not cease in the second century. It is with us today, very much with us, in the areas of public education, censorship, and community relations, etc. An increasing number of our organizations are publishing important materials on the legal and social ramifications of these tensions. These ought not to be left by our librarians in their usual soft covers, but rebound and catalogued. Books by those of other faiths and points of view ought also to be circulated. There can be no understanding until all points of view are at least appreciated.

Along with the question of religious relationships, there has come an increasing interest in the sociology of American Jewish life, Gordon, Will Herberg, Vorspan and Lippman, among others, have presented us with a series of glib generalizations and have popularized a new idiom -- "the gilded ghetto," "five o'clock apartheid." Fortunately, an increasing number of studies in depth are appearing which one associates especially with the work of Morris Sklar and Gerhardt Lensky. These studies are welcome. But I sometimes think that we are far too self-

involved. How much is it worth knowing about Jewish gastronomic or golfing habits? I wonder, for instance, what contribution is made by the graph in one of Sklar's works which details "the frequency of mild intoxication (tight more than five times) in veteran and non-veteran (among Jewish students)."

Rivalling and, indeed, surpassing in value this sociological literature has been the material dealing with the European experience under Hitler, Zionism, and the establishment of the State of Israel. This is the contemporary trauma and triumph, and quite rightly has come in for extended treatment. The Herzl Press is doing a fine job in producing historical data on Zionism. Agar's The Saving Remnant is the best of a series of studies on the American contribution to postwar relief. A rash of popular biographies have dealt with Zionist and Israeli leaders. Important specialist works have appeared on immigration, absorption, economic development, military strategy, and, of course, government and foreign affairs. Given the passion of the day, many of these works have a surprising balance about them. Some, of course, are deeply prejudiced or ridden with secret guilt. Of Hannah Arandt's Eichmann in Jerusalem I would only suggest that you would do well to paste into the frontispiece of your copy Judge Musmano's factual point by point refutation of her brief which appeared in the New York Times Book Review Magazine. Lord Russell of Liverpool's description of the trial itself ~~ought to~~^{might} be suggested as an effective antidote.

Let's sum it up. At no previous time in Jewish history has the problem of selection assumed such proportion. Today's Jewish librarian must be more than a custodian of books. He must know what is in the books and to whom the books can be useful. You cannot expect a card

catalogue with its brief titles to do this work for you. Obviously, not all these works can be read. It might be well if various members of your Association made themselves specialists in given areas and reported annually at your conventions on the new and on the worthwhile. It is an exciting time to be working in your field. A new Jewish spirit is slowly being forged, and you will help, through your direction, in the building of this dream.

