

Reviews of Books

DAVIS, MOSHE, Edited by. *Israel: Its Role in Civilization*. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1956. xvii, 338 pp. \$4.00

Secular Zionism has long been benefiting by the emotional response which its religio-historical terminology can evoke in the hearts of the pious. We have witnessed the irony inherent in a Jewish claim to Palestine, based on the Bible, and voiced by atheists to whom the Bible is no more than the national literature of ancient Israel. But the claim was calculated to impress particularly those to whom the Bible has never ceased to be the Word of God. Whether or not, therefore, one believes that Israel is the "covenant people" of God, whether or not one even believes in a God who made the promise which went into the making of the "Promised Land," it pays, in terms of sympathy and moral support enlisted from the outside, to represent the modern Zionist endeavor as but a latter-day installment of biblical *Heilsgeschichte*, and to demonstrate the historic continuity of Jewish settlement and achievement in the Holy Land. The very name which was chosen for the new state, "Israel," is indicative of this frame of mind. (It may be said, in passing, that the indiscriminate application of this name to the land of Palestine in *all* periods of Jewish history tends to be confusing. Surely, it would help to distinguish between Canaan, the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel, Judea, Palestine, *eretz yisrael*, and the modern State of Israel. Yet it is precisely such a distinction which would run counter to Zionist propagandist aims, and to the intention of the kind of book which is reviewed here.)

Israel: Its Role in Civilization is a collection of lectures and addresses given under the auspices of the Seminary Israel Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. The contents range from a discussion of the Dead Sea Scrolls and their bearing on the Masoretic Text, contributed by H. Louis Ginsberg, to an attempt by Carl J. Friedrich at fitting the existence of the State of Israel into a kind of Hegelian philosophy of history; from Morton Smith's interesting historical insights into the sectarian divisions of first-century Judaism, and Saul Lieberman's scholarly, but eminently readable, study of "Jewish Life in Eretz Yisrael as Reflected in the Palestinian Talmud," to David Ben Gurion's frankly propagandist piece on "The Spirit of the New Israel," and the thread which keeps the book together is the fact of Israel's physical existence, the pinpointing of



Courtesy of Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, Philadelphia

SIDNEY NEUMANN

1872-1956

(see p. 139)



Courtesy of The Valentine Museum, Richmond

BETH SHALOME

The First Synagogue in Richmond, Va.

(see p. 141)

the territory in which all these things have happened, are happening, and are expected to happen in the future.

William F. Albright, drawing analogies from a previous Restoration, speaks in terms of "prophecy fulfilled." Salo W. Baron is careful to point out the differences between the Second and the Third Commonwealths, in addition to their more obvious parallels. Yehuda Leo Kohn writes about "The Emerging Constitution of Israel," describing the conditions responsible for Israel's preference for a gradually emerging, rather than an *a priori*, constitution. And speaking of constitution, we have to single out the late Hayim Greenberg's very topical and earnest plea for the separation of Church and State. Greenberg's study is informed by a profound spirit of piety, and by a clear perception of the limitations of the state's power *vis-à-vis* the individual. Conscious as one is of what has happened in this sphere of late, one is painfully aware of what the loss of Hayim Greenberg means both to the Zionist movement and to the forces of liberal religion. We can only hope that his memory, so movingly kept fresh by Rose L. Halprin's "Dedicatory Preface" to this volume, will continue to be a source of blessing to those who consider themselves Greenberg's followers and co-workers.

With all the criticism which can be leveled against the current relationship between Church and State in Israel, one may yet agree with Jacob Robinson, who, on the basis of a thorough investigation of the political situation among Israel's Arab neighbors, comes to the conclusion that Israel is "A Democracy in an Autocratic World." Martin Buber, in "Character Change and Social Experiment in Israel," sets much store by the newly evolved Jewish type of the *halutz*. Perhaps it is because of Buber's desire to pit the "utopian socialism" of Jerusalem against the compulsory socialism of Moscow that he tends to overlook the fact that much of the "idealism" of *halutzith* was merely a case of making a virtue out of a necessity. Now, with its primary purpose achieved in the creation of the state, it is gradually losing the aura originally associated with it.

Milton Katims, the conductor of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, describes the musical enthusiasm of the people in the new state, and he ventures the interesting psychological observation that some of this enthusiasm might be attributed to the pride which the Israeli Jew feels in being able to act as "host" to the classical music of those countries in which he but recently was a guest. Mordecai Narkiss, of the Bezalel Museum in Jerusalem, discusses "Trends in Israeli Art," and warns that "everybody who expects a special Judaism in the art of Israel will be disappointed."

Professor Selig Adler offers us both wealth of detail and an understanding of general trends in his discussion of the "Backgrounds of American Policy toward Zion." Beginning with the biblical outlook of the Puritans, he shows how, later on, there developed an opposite trend in the universalism of Tom Paine, Thomas Jefferson, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. But though the Christian theological "Zionism" ultimately gave way to more practical and mundane considerations, the persecution of Jews in Russia, at the end of the nineteenth century, "pricked the American conscience," and a climate of opinion came into being which was favorable, on the whole, to the development of American Zionism. (The reader can find the practical results of this, as applied to Jews, in Alexander Bein's study on "American Settlement in Israel.") Adler discusses the policies of Woodrow Wilson and of Harry S. Truman, and he shows how the latter's sympathy with the Zionist cause made him leave "the diplomats holding the bag," and ignore the spokesmen for the oil companies, and those members of the State Department personnel who made anti-Zionism part of their "careers." It would be interesting to see how Adler interprets the subsequent history of American policy toward Zion.

In view of the fact that the Christian love of the Bible is repeatedly brought into the discussion as a contributing factor to America's sympathy with Zionist aspirations, we understand why two separate articles dealing with this aspect are included in this volume. Howard Mumford Jones writes on "The Land of Israel in the Anglo-Saxon Tradition," and demonstrates how "throughout literary history Palestine has been regarded by Britons and Americans as a land set apart, a land where anything might happen, whether in the way of wonder or in the way of terror . . . Wonder and heroism, romance and a certain macabre quality, are parts of the shifting image." We may add that this trend is paralleled in Jewish life and literature, in a manner which only accidentally ties in with modern Zionist doctrine. We find it exemplified from the barren Jewish women who, throughout the centuries, went to Palestine in order to bear children, to such modern novels as Burla's *Aliloth Akavya* and Viertel's *The Last Temptation*, where the Holy Land serves as the *mise en scène* against which the solution of personal problems is unfolded, right down to the young American Jews and Jewesses who take their personal problems to the State of Israel in the hope of finding "adjustment" there. Naturally, political Zionism is able to "cash in" on this *mystique* of the Holy Land, just as it understands how to harness the "Anglo-Saxon tradition" to its own purposes.

The religious implications of this Anglo-Saxon tradition are spelled

out in greater detail in the study entitled "Zion in American Christian Movements," contributed by Robert T. Handy. He concludes by saying that the background which he has traced in this study "should not be neglected in the consideration of Christian attitudes toward Jewish settlement in the Holy Land in the twentieth century." But one wonders if the editor has realized that what emerges from this study is not at all grist for the Zionist mills. True enough, the Puritans and other American Protestants have a great love for Zion. But just as there is a modern school in biblical exegesis which wants to "demythologize" the Bible, so we find the American Protestant movements engaged for generations in the process of "delocalizing" Zion and Jerusalem. The Zion of which they dream and pray is not the geographical Zion located by the Eastern shore of the Mediterranean. Zion is the Church. It is the Kingdom of God. The "Promised Land" is the kind of society which the visionaries and pioneers would like to establish in the New World. It is all a case *mutatis mutandis* of Blake's building "Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land."

For obvious historical reasons, Jews will never be able to "delocalize" Zion so completely. But the "portable fatherland," which has sustained Jewish life for the last two thousand years, has gone a long way towards making Judaism self-sustaining even in the absence of a physical Zion. When Gustavus Poznanski declared, in Charleston, S. C., a century ago, that Charleston was our Jerusalem and America our Zion, he may have somewhat overshot the mark, but not more so than have those Zionists who maintain, in the face of all the evidence to the contrary, that a real Jewish life is possible only in the physical and localized Zion.

There is, therefore, an unwelcome, and completely unnecessary, note of self-abasement in Louis Finkelstein's address, "The State of Israel as a Spiritual Force," when he says: "We at the Seminary regard ourselves and American Jewry neither as one of the foci of a great ellipse of Judaism nor the center of a circle, with only mystic connections with a similar circle surrounding Jerusalem. We recognize that we stand on the periphery of Jewish inspiration Yet always we turn to Zion not only in prayer but also in the hope of instruction. We gladly assume the role of amanuensis to our brethren who have been given the superior privilege of serving God and studying Torah in the land in which both were uniquely revealed."

Of course, we can understand why Finkelstein speaks the way he does. He himself claims in his address that Conservative Judaism is "the first-born child of the marriage of Zionism and Americanism." While the men who helped finance the Jewish Theological Seminary, and brought Solomon Schechter to this country, may not have seen it in this light, Finkelstein is

right in as far as it is true that the same kind of Jewish nationalism which has gone into the making of the Israeli State has also provided much of the *raison d'être* of Conservative Judaism, lacking as the latter has been in a *theological* formulation of American Jewish existence. But this humble yielding of Jewish spiritual leadership to our brethren in the State of Israel can only, in the long run, sound the death knell of American Conservatism, on the one hand, and lead to the resurgence of Gustavus Poznanski's "delocalized" Zion, on the other.

Again, Ambassador Abba S. Eban, in "Nationalism and Internationalism in Our Day," may make fun of the Reform belief in the Mission of Israel. But Professor Allan Nevins, in "The Future of Israel," can get quite apprehensive about the concentration of Jewish talent in the State of Israel. "This fact in itself cannot but reduce the exemplary cosmopolitanism so characteristic of the people. Vienna may never again have a Freud, nor Berlin an Einstein." Even in Israel itself, the hard practical work of political and economic pioneering may play havoc with the spiritual potential. "The danger is that men who follow Mr. Ben Gurion and such cultivated associates as Moshe Sharett will have no interest whatever in Spinoza, the Greek classics, and the values they represent. This is the greatest problem that Israel faces, and many in that country agreed with me that the solution is dubious."

We are confident that a solution will ultimately be found. But in the light of present-day realities we are dubious as to Dr. Finkelstein's wisdom in abdicating in favor of the Israeli State, just as we doubt the advisability of seeing the State of Israel — in spite of all the wonderful and "miraculous" things that have happened there — in terms of Messianic fulfillment, and just as we refuse to construe the course of Jewish history in the unilateral way which, at least by implication, is the underlying *motif* of the volume under discussion.

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GANNES, ABRAHAM P. *Central Community Agencies for Jewish Education.*
Philadelphia: The Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning.
1954. xiv, 242 pp. \$5.00

The literature on Jewish education has been considerably enriched by Dr. Abraham P. Gannes' study: *Central Community Agencies for Jewish*

Education. This volume is the first attempt at an evaluation of the objectives and functions of central agencies and is an important contribution to our understanding of the complex pattern of American Jewish education.

Central community agencies for Jewish education have been on the American scene for almost fifty years. During this half century American Jewry became increasingly aware that Jewish education is a community responsibility, that there are Jewish educational problems which cannot be solved by any single agency, but need the coordinated, cooperative efforts of all elements in the community. The first central agency, the Bureau of Jewish Education of New York, was launched in 1910 under the professional leadership of the late Dr. Samson Benderly. Since that time central agencies have been set up in forty communities, sixteen prior to 1930 and the remainder after that date.

Dr. Gannes traces the role which central agencies for Jewish education have played in the setting up of higher educational standards, the development of curricula, and the improvement of courses of study. The publication of texts, and the preparation of audio-visual aids, as well as other educational materials, have become an important function of the large central agencies. They have had a large share in stimulating teacher-growth, improving the status of the teacher, and making provisions for teacher education.

The development and expansion of the concept of "unity in diversity" traced by Dr. Gannes was first enunciated in 1926 by the late Dr. Leo L. Honor in his Omaha survey. According to this concept, Jewish life is diversified and divergent, and these diversities are represented in the organized school groupings. The central agency must serve all elements in the community which have a positive attitude to Jewish life. Each element must be helped to maintain its educational program on the highest possible plane, and should be encouraged to maintain its distinctive interpretation of Judaism and Jewish life. The "unity in diversity" concept holds that unity is essential and that uniformity is undesirable.

The writer affirms that in the foreseeable future elementary education will be mainly synagogal in sponsorship and character. The Talmud Torah will continue to lose ground, while the synagogue will recognize its communal responsibility and admit children of non-members. The all-day school will, in all likelihood, increase in numbers and grow in influence in the area of intensive education, but it will serve only a small minority of the Jewish child population.

"The central educational agency will be charged, in the main, with the responsibility of providing general supervision, administrative and educa-

tional services. In addition, it will be functional in the areas of secondary education, adult education, parent education, educational camps and teacher education (particularly in those communities where there are no teacher training institutions).

"Thus, taking into consideration current trends in Jewish life and community organization, as well as those in Jewish education, the writer proposes a community system of Jewish education consisting of two inter-related parts: experimentation and educational services. This in turn may be subdivided into administrative, financial and educational activities."

The chapter headings of the book give a fairly clear outline of its contents. The first chapter deals with the forces which led to the establishment of the central educational agency. The changing concept and pattern of the central educational agency are dealt with in the second chapter, while the third discusses activities and achievements. Chapter Four details the structure and organization, affiliation and finances. The concluding chapter outlines the author's conception of a program for a community system of Jewish education. To those seeking to establish a central communal system and to those wishing to evaluate what they now have, this chapter should be especially useful.

Copious notes at the end of each chapter, an exhaustive bibliography, and the thirteen appendices containing historical materials are assembled from many sources, published and unpublished, and add immeasurably to the value of this volume.

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NATHAN BRILLIANT

HERBERG, WILL. *Protestant-Catholic-Jew — An Essay in American Religious Sociology*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc. 1955.
320 pp. \$4.00

This book of Will Herberg's deals with sociology.

Several of Herberg's previous publications which I have read dealt with theology. With two of them I have become very well acquainted. I have a greater regard for the earnestness of Herberg's theological intent than for his achievement. To put it plainly, I cannot take him seriously as a theologian. Too many gaps appear in his knowledge; he picks up and parrots phrases without persuading me that he understands correctly or fully that which he has picked up or that which often he reproduces.

In the present work, however, I find him on quite solid ground, and his

style easier, and his ideas very lucid. He has here written a useful and perceptive book.

He sets himself the task of confronting the current wave of religiosity in the United States and of explaining its character and its context. Herberg's main thesis is that the present generation of Americans is "third generation"; and in accordance with "Hansen's Law," "what the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember." By applying this thesis to a sociological survey of Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism in America, Herberg sets forth some of the reasons which account for the simultaneous growth in our day both of religion and of "secularism," since both "cherish the same basic values and organize their lives on the same fundamental assumptions — values and assumptions defined by the American Way of Life."

The portion of his thesis which deals with "third generation interest" seems to me completely valid for Judaism. I have personally had little adult contact with Roman Catholics, but having lived in New Haven for about four years, I believe that I can recognize some of the aptness of Herberg's argumentation as it would relate to Catholics of Italian, Polish, and Hungarian origins, that is, Catholics of relatively recent American residence. But my experience on the faculty of an interdenominational Protestant divinity school (Vanderbilt) makes me think that Herberg fails to distinguish between recent immigrant groups who are Protestant and the bulk of American Protestantism. I have the feeling that a broader scrutiny of Protestantism would lead to the need of modifying, or of rejecting, his main thesis.

Yet it is not of great moment whether Herberg's thesis is right or, as I believe, only partly right; it does not matter even if his thesis is totally wrong. In presenting the case for this thesis he says very many illuminating things about religion in the United States with clarity and with insight, and with a fine sense of balance. Some of his observations are quite naturally those that others, too, might make; yet often there is in his discerning analysis a special character which reveals the thoughtful and searching nature of his examination. This is especially true in his depiction of the suppositions about the inherent American character of Judaism in the eyes of American Jews. Therefore, this study is a welcome and admirable contribution to the understanding of the religious situation in the United States. The future historian will find Herberg's book a useful source for present-day religious movements.

Having begun with a derogation of Herberg's theological writings, I am loath to revert to them, but one more point needs to be made. His *Judaism*

and Modern Man was written, in my judgment, turgidly and heavily-handedly. This book, on the other hand, is vivid, and segments are often even exceptionally well-handled. In the former book, I had the sense of reading an author who was trying desperately to convey that which still eluded his grasp; here, however, I sensed that the author had well-understood and well-distilled material completely in his control.

Did his book need a particular thesis? Does not the thesis act as a Procrustean bed? Would it not have been an even more forceful book by simply being an exposition and an explanation?

I look forward with pleasant expectation to further such studies from Herberg.

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SAMUEL SANDMEL

Brief Notices

ALPER, MICHAEL. *Reconstructing Jewish Education*. New York: The Reconstructionist Press. 1957. xii, 156 pp. \$3.00

This work on Jewish education, published posthumously, deals with the principles of Reconstructionism as applied to Jewish education. Rabbi Alper was Instructor in Education at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York.

BADT-STRAUSS, BERTHA. *White Fire — The Life and Works of Jessie Sampter*. New York: The Reconstructionist Press. 1956. 191 pp. \$3.50

A biography of this American Zionist and poetess, who finally settled in Palestine.

BAND, BENJAMIN. *Portland Jewry: Its Growth and Development*. Portland, Maine: Jewish Historical Society. 1955. x, 117 pp.

This study deals with the various aspects of Jewish life in the metropolis of Portland since its founding in the 1860's.

BELKIN, SAMUEL. *Essays in Traditional Jewish Thought*. New York: Philosophical Library. 1956. 191 pp. \$3.50

These selected essays by the president of Yeshiva University reflect

the point of view of a distinguished protagonist of traditional Judaism. One study is devoted to Orthodoxy in America.

CHIEL, ARTHUR. *Jewish Experiences in Early Manitoba*. Winnipeg: Manitoba Jewish Publications. 1955. xiii, 125 pp.

The material in this book is not exhausted by its title. There is an additional chapter dealing with American Jewish life as seen through the eyes of the correspondents of the European Hebrew newspaper, *Hamelitz*.

The Essex Story. Newark, N. J.: Jewish Education Association of Essex County. 1955. 76 pp.

A brief history of the Jews and their institutions in the metropolitan area of Newark.

FOLKMAN, JEROME D. *The Cup of Life — A Jewish Marriage Manual*. New York: The Jonathan David Co. 1955. iii, 48 pp. \$1.75

This manual contains five essays by the rabbi of Temple Israel, of Columbus, Ohio, who has devoted years of study to the subject of marriage counselling. It is intended as a gift book to newly married couples.

FORSTER, ARNOLD, and BENJAMIN R. EPSTEIN. *Cross-Currents*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc. 1956. 382 pp. \$4.00

A study in anti-Semitism in the United States and in Europe for the period 1951 to 1955. It deals in some detail with the Fort Monmouth scandal and the Abraham Chasanow story. The authors are associated with the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith.

FRIEDMAN, THEODORE, and ROBERT GORDIS, Edited by. *Jewish Life in America*. New York: Horizon Press. 1955. 352 pp. \$4.00

This is a composite work dealing with the religious, cultural, and communal life of the American Jew. The authors of these essays are well-known scholars, competent in their fields. Although there is no chapter dealing with the American economic life, the Jewish labor movement is described in two separate studies. This is one of the better works published as a result of the renewed interest in American Jewish history during the period of the Tercentennial Celebration.

GREENBERG, MRS. DAVID J. *Through the Years*. Richmond, Va.: Richmond Jewish Community Council. 1955. iii, 60 pp.

A brief history of Richmond Jewry, which, in the opinion of the author, had its beginnings in the seventeenth century.

HUEBENER, THEODORE, and CARL HERMANN VOSS. *This is Israel — Palestine: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*. New York: Philosophical Library. 1956. x, 166 pp. \$3.75

A study of the Jews in Palestine since the days of the Patriarchs. The primary emphasis, however, is on Zionism and the rise of the new Jewish state, Israel. There is a section on Henrietta Szold, the American Zionist.

The Jewish Quarterly Review. Philadelphia: Dropsie College. April, 1955. 332 pp. \$1.50

This issue is composed of a series of essays dealing with many aspects of American Jewish life. Most of the authors of the various chapters are distinguished scholars. Historians of the American Jewish scene will find these studies useful in their work.

LEHRMAN, IRVING, and JOSEPH RAPPAPORT. *The Jewish Community of Miami Beach*. New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America. 1955. 31 pp.

A brief survey of the present-day Jewish community of Miami Beach, Fla.

LIPSKY, LOUIS. *A Gallery of Zionist Profiles*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy. 1956. xvi, 226 pp. \$3.75

This collection of brief biographies of distinguished Zionists includes some of the best-known Americans: Henrietta Szold, Stephen S. Wise, Louis D. Brandeis, Jacob De Haas, Judah L. Magnes, Solomon Schechter, Hirsch Masliansky, Abraham Goldberg, Joseph Seff, and Cyrus Adler.

POLIER, JUSTINE WISE, and JAMES WATERMAN WISE, Edited by. *The Personal Letters of Stephen Wise*. Boston: The Beacon Press. 1956. xii, 289 pp. \$4.50

These extracts from the personal letters of the distinguished American Jewish leader cover the period from 1899 to 1949. They throw a great deal of light on this religious and political liberal who played an important role on the Eastern Seaboard during the first half of the twentieth century.

ROY, RALPH LORD. *Apostles of Discord*. Boston: The Beacon Press. 1953. xii, 437 pp. \$3.75

This study deals, in part, with organized bigotry and anti-Semitism in the United States.

SAMUELS, CHARLES and LOUISE. *Night Fell on Georgia*. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc. 1956. 222 pp. 25¢

The story of Leo M. Frank, the Jew who was lynched in Georgia in 1915. This paper-bound book throws a great deal of light on the religious and racial hatreds in the South that made this crime possible.

SHINEDLING, ABRAHAM I., and MANUEL PICKUS. *History of the Beckley Jewish Community*. Beckley, W. Va.: Biggs-Johnston-Withrow. 1955. xiii, 205 pp. \$5.00

Rabbi Abraham I. Shinedling, who is associated with the American Jewish Archives, has painstakingly assembled the material that went into the writing of the history of the Beckley Jewish community. A work of this type is useful because it reflects the variegated types of activity which occur in the smallest of Jewish communities today.

SIMONHOFF, HARRY. *Jewish Notables in America — 1776-1865*. New York: Greenberg. 1956. xiv, 402 pp. \$5.00

This book contains a series of biographies of Jews who have played some part in the development of America. Converts to Christianity are included. The material is arranged chronologically, ending in 1865 with the story of Edwin De Leon, the Confederate agent.

SOLOMON, BARBARA MILLER. *Pioneers in Service*. Boston: Court Square Press, Inc. 1956. xiii, 197 pp. \$3.00

This very interesting and useful study of the Federated Jewish Charities in Boston is preceded by two chapters dealing with the history of the Jewish philanthropies in Boston since 1840.

WEITZ, MARTIN M. *Year Without Fear*. New York: Bloch Publishing Company. 1955. 159 pp. \$3.00

Brief extracts from articles, essays, sermons, and poems written by the well-known rabbi of Atlantic City. Some of the material, such as "Chassidim" in Colorado, is of interest for the American Jewish historian.

WHITE, NATHAN I. *Harry Dexter White — Loyal American*. Boston: Independent Press, Inc. 1956. 415 pp.

This work is a defense of Harry Dexter White, who died of a heart attack three days after he testified before the House Un-American Activities Committee on August 13, 1948. It touches on Whitaker Chambers, America's attitude toward China, and other matters.