

HYMAN G. ENELOW
RABBI, SCHOLAR, AND PREACHER
A PORTRAIT OF AN AMERICAN RABBI

by

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FOREWORD

In the niches of the rotunda of New York University are the busts of the great Americans of history. The men thus represented and honored in marble comprise what is known as the "Hall of Fame". Almost every field of human achievement finds recognition there; statesman and scientist, poet and architect, musician and philanthropist stand side by side. But one proviso is made for entrance into the Hall of Fame that even our late President, great and deserving as he was, cannot fulfill at the present time. For at least a quarter of a century must pass after the death of a candidate before he is eligible to keep company with the distinguished Americans that the university wishes to honor. Only with the passage of time, the directors believe, can we truly and objectively evaluate the stature of those who walked among us. Too often has history found it necessary to reject contemporary opinion and exalt to new heights men whose contemporaries assigned to oblivion, and often too, would history reverse the procedure the other way.

Little more than ten years have passed since American Israel was left bereaved by the sudden death of Hyman G. Enelow. Too soon for anyone to venture a sound

estimate of the measure of the man. But the beginning of an evaluation must be made sooner or later. A year after Enelow's death, in 1935, Dr. Felix A. Levy wrote a biographical sketch in the form of a Memoir to the Selected Works of Hyman G. Enelow, a four volume edition privately printed to honor the memory of the departed. Acting in the capacity of editor, Dr. Levy selected the lectures, sermons, and scientific work that comprise the sources of this essay. While Dr. Levy could write of Enelow as friend and colleague, this essay can deal with the subject almost exclusively on the basis of the written word — the writings of Enelow himself. Indebted to the Memoir, this writer must nevertheless rely on the sermons and lectures for his portrait. It will not pretend, therefore, to be a complete portrait. A canvas in full color must be left to a later time. A psychologist may then write with more accuracy as to Enelow's personality, a scholar who is Enelow's peer might be found to pass final judgment on his scholarship. But the limits of this essay will be confined to a short study of Enelow as rabbi, scholar, and preacher.

At the suggestion of Dr. Israel Bettan it will be Enelow the preacher that will receive the most emphasis in this essay. First, because Enelow was above all a

preacher, his sermons being models of the homilician's art. And secondly, because the sources best lend themselves to such a treatment. If it is true that we can know a part of a man by what he says, then it is the hope of the writer to recapture for his reader that part of Enelow. The picture present may be uneven, with lights and shadows. But so are all men dynamic rather than static. The utterances cover a period of over thirty-five years, years of constant change, growth, and development. Yet the writer was handicapped because few of the discourses are dated, and only on occasion is it possible to glean the time of delivery by a reference in the text. For the most part, therefore, the writer looks at Enelow as a whole. And throughout, the attempt is made to let Enelow speak for himself.

Not alone for his suggestion to emphasize Enelow as preacher is the writer indebted to Dr. Bettan, but also for the architectural structure of this paper and other valuable hints. As Professor of Homiletics and his teacher, he has also taught the writer standards of classical preaching, has furnished him with a yardstick to measure success and failure, has furnished him, in short, with the tools without which it were impossible to attempt his task. In gratitude and respect, therefore,

the writer dedicate to his advisor and teacher this
essay on Hyman G. Enelow, Rabbi, Scholar, and Preacher.

CHAPTER I

ENELOW AS RABBI

The life and death of Hyman G. Enelow had all the elements of dramatic tragedy. It is a story of an immigrant boy, gifted with brilliant intellect and blessed with high and noble ideals. It is the story of this boy's dedication of himself to the service of his people and his God through his ministry in the rabbinate. It is a tale of a meteoric rise to fame from obscurity to the largest and most influential pulpit in America. And finally it is a record of disappointment and disillusion, of untimely death from a cardiac condition which can mean nothing less, in view of the circumstances, than death from a broken heart. Too many of his own people could discern no great leader and teacher in their midst. And so his life was even as Hamlet described: "The play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general."

Hyman G. Enelow was born in Kovno^W on October 26, in 1877. He spent his early life in Libau where his family moved while he was yet a small child and grew up in the traditional environment of Eastern European Jewry until he came to America in 1893. His father was a tea broker and tobacco merchant, active in Zionism, in the labor movement and interested in other Jewish activities.

But the chief influence in his life was his mother who fired him with the ambition to become a rabbi. Between mother and son a tender relation ever existed until her death in 1926.

Like all Jewish boys of Eastern Europe, young Enelow probably received his early training in Cheder and Yeshiva. At an early age his keen mind was apparent for he contributed in prose and poetry to Hebrew periodicals when he arrived in this country. He must have almost literally devoured books as his writings always testify to his gigantic erudition. Perhaps surreptitiously he acquainted himself with non-sacred subjects and was always at home with not only Bible but rabbinic and modern Hebrew writings as well. At sixteen, when he was ready to enter Heidelberg, his father persuaded him to come to America where he had previously established residence in Chicago. There the family soon came, but tragedy awaited young Enelow. His parents were divorced and when his father repudiated all family responsibilities, Enelow was confronted with struggle, hardship, and poverty.

In Chicago, however, Enelow astounded its two leading rabbis, Emil G. Hirsch and Joseph Stolz by his unusual gifts of intellect. A scholarship was secured for him to the University of Chicago from which institution

he was graduated with distinction, taking special honors in English. In 1895 he came to the Hebrew Union College where he was affectionately received by Isaac M. Wise. He became a disciple of "the founder" as Wise was known, and carried his influence with him as a source of inspiration throughout his life. After three years of study and active participation at the College, he was ordained in 1898. Teachers and colleagues alike already recognized that a new star was born to illumine the life of American Israel.

After graduation from the Hebrew Union College, Enelow assumed the pulpit of Temple Israel in Paducah, Kentucky but in 1901 in March, he answered the call to Louisville to assist Dr. Adolph Moses of Congregation Adath Israel in the capacity of Junior Rabbi. For a year, a beautiful relationship like father and son existed between the two men, and with a heavy heart Enelow succeeded his master in 1902 when Moses died. On various anniversaries of the death of Dr. Moses, Enelow delivered the memorial addresses which not only paid tribute but revealed the genuine affection that existed between these two noble spirits. Together with Wise as with Geiger and Kohler, Moses was ever an inspiration to Enelow.

Never neglecting his rabbinical chores, Enelow upheld the scholarly tradition of the rabbinate from the very beginning. At school he contributed to student publications, while at Paducah and Louisville he wrote his thesis for the degree Doctor of Divinity from the Hebrew Union College on the subject, "The Jewish Synod: A Study in the History of An Institution." So brilliant was this judged in the opinion of Dr. Phillipson that as President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, he invited Enelow to prepare a paper for that body. This was a great honor for one so young, and needless to say, the confidence placed in his ability was well warranted.¹ Enelow's paper entitled, "The Synod in the Past and Its Feasibility in the Present" produced a profound impression and resulted in a committee appointed under his chairmanship to discuss the probem. After a six-year battle, Enelow lost the day when a majority were finally convinced that the Synod was too much invested with the possibility of ecclesiastical tyranny.

Enelow met with more success in Louisville. At his instigation and initiative, the congregation constructed a new temple that was a source of pride not only to its members but to the general community as well.

The new edifice was dedicated in 1906. In Louisville, also, Enelow organized the Federation of Jewish Charities. By 1911, he had become one of the city's outstanding citizens and was elected that year as President of the State Federation of Charities in addition to the many positions of honor with which he had previously been invested. At the same time as he carried on his duties of rabbi, his scholarly research, and his civic labors, he found time to edit "The Temple," a local Anglo-Jewish weekly. Other literary activities took him to the columns of the American Israelite and his sermons were often quoted in the Louisville press.

After rejecting an offer from Claude G. Montefiore to organize a liberal Jewish synagogue in London, he left Louisville in September of 1912 to become rabbi of the largest and most influential congregation of Jews in the world, Emanu-El in New York City. In the same year, at the apex of his fame, he was invited to give the baccalaureate address at the Hebrew Union College. He chose as his subject, "The Jewish Leader of Today," a splendid oration in which he pleaded for scholarship and leadership inspired by religion.²

At Emanu-El, Enelow's activities were never-ending. His sermons had now reached the heights of full

maturity. All his discourses were outlined with meticulous pains and for each and every one he devoted hours of lavish preparation. In actual delivery he used neither notes nor manuscript. In Emanu-El he inaugurated adult study classes, personally supervised the Religious School, and organized the Junior Society which still carries on by the virtue of the impetus his personality gave it.

Enelow's passion was learning, and while in New York he would often study at the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary and perhaps in recognition of the gratitude he owed it, he left this school his magnificent library upon his death, rather than his Alma Mater. Enelow's love of learning made him not only a scholar himself, but also a patron of scholars. Through his influence, his dear friend Lucius N. Littauer endowed a chair on Jewish literature and philosophy at Harvard University. Directly or indirectly, Enelow supported more scholars in their labor than did any man of his times. One of the recipients of his bounty told Dr. Levy he had received tens of thousands of dollars from his benefactor and patron. Enelow published his own scientific writings at his own expense, the cost of which so depleted his funds that he left little at his death

except a small bequest to his secretary, Miss Toplou, for her years of devotion and faithful service to him. It was under his guidance that Littauer donated the sum of five thousand dollars to the Central Conference of American Rabbis. When in order to celebrate Enelow's birthday another dear friend placed at his disposal a fund to be used for printing a volume of his sermons, he declined the offer, saying that his work could wait, and persuaded the kind-hearted patron to divert the gift to financing the publication of an important scholarly work by some one else, which he felt was far more worthy of seeing the light of day than his "mere pulpit talks."

In 1927 and until 1929, he held the distinguished office as President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the highest award his colleagues could confer upon him. But his life at Emanu-El was not a happy one. During these days, he seemed morose and testy, even harsh at times. While some attributed these eruptions of spirit as weakness in his character, the more charitable who knew him better realized the sense of frustration that was his. The idealist in the big city lost confidence in men's integrity. Around him he often saw sanctimonious hypocrisy that repelled his soul. He saw those who used the Torah "as a spade to dig with," who exploited the Jewish

community or Judaism to gratify personal aims or desire for power. His bitterness was more a righteous indignation at seeing a great and noble cause prostituted to ignoble ends.

At the end of the first world war, he left New York for France as representative of the Jewish Welfare Board. He returned to Emanu-El but found the situation not improved. Finally he was retired against his will, and contrary, as he believed, to the promises made him. While enroute to Italy to continue his scholarly pursuits, he died suddenly of a heart ailment on February 15, 1934. With simple rites, he was buried in Rosehill Cemetery, Chicago, near his mother and sister, to whom he was so deeply attached and devoted, and who had preceded him by but a few years. The American Rabbinate mourned the passing of one of its most learned and honored adornments.

Thus speaks Dr. Felix Levy in his closing lines of the Memoir of his friend and colleague. And what shall we say today of Enelow as rabbi? Perhaps Enelow can write his own epitaph for us, or at least give us the cues to write one for him. Let us attempt to weave together then some of the threads he himself spun.

In his early years, on the second anniversary of the death of Adolph Moses he delivered a sermon entitled, "Champions of Reform Judaism." In that sermon he flays "... the riff-raff who claim to be Jews (who)... like the mixed multitude that went up from Egypt, fell into the ranks of Reform Judaism, and like the others, they have proven an impediment to our progress." He then turns the fury of his wrath from the laymen to the rabbis and points an accusing finger at those who are not steeped in learning but are ignorant and indifferent.³ In countless other instances he berates his colleagues who introduce the new-fangled ideas in economics and sociology into their sermons. In both instances, in his attack and vituperative denunciation of laymen and rabbis he fails to take into account the conditions that brought about such sorry circumstances. Weak men did not measure up to his high standards, and so he chastises them for their shortcomings. A more sympathetic nature might probe more deeply into the causes of the conditions he decries, but this Enelow apparently could not do. To his credit, however, let it be said again that when he finds a rabbi "good" such as his ideals like Wise, Einhorn, Moses, Geiger, Kohler and others, his admiration knows no bounds, and even those men with whom he finds himself in

disagreement but whose integrity he respects receive fair and gracious treatment at his hands. Enemy of political Zionism that he was, he yet speaks with profound respect of Herzl and Ahad Ha-Am, while he lavishes praise befitting the worthy on Zachariah Frankel whom he refers to as "the Apostle of the so-called middle party, the positive, historic school of Judaism."⁴

In the field of poetry there are two schools of thought on criticism. The one school claims that the right of the critic extends to an evaluation that disregards the poet's aim or intention. They say that the critic's duty is to pass judgment not only on the work itself, but have the privilege to decide whether it was worth the doing in the first place. The other school adheres to the principle that the critic's first and only duty is to judge the poet according to his own intention, his own aim, and his own standard. We might take issue with the latter viewpoint on principle, but at least it is the more charitable and the more sympathetic. For that reason alone we might apply it in this case. For Enelow himself sets down his ideal standards for a modern rabbi. Rather than engage in the controversy where the former viewpoint would lead us, let us then not question whether those standards are themselves the only or the

best standards, but rather let us discover what they were and whether Enelow succeeded in living up to them, and achieved them in his own ministry. In his sermon entitled "Adolph Jellinek, or the Ideal of a Modern Rabbi," he sets down his standards. The first aim of the rabbi, Enelow tells us, is to open up the buried treasures of Judaism and to enfold them in the new era; to do this because in the past, these teachings produced not only beauty but also the noblest of ethics and spiritual results. The second qualification of a modern rabbi must be a love of Jewish learning and a desire to diffuse this learning among men. The concept of the rabbi as "my teacher," as the name implies must never be neglected or permitted to fall into disuse. The traditional emphasis on scholarship must be maintained for we do not need "sociologists" on the pulpits. But learning has more than academic value. It brings to the Jewish leader a sense of self-respect, it nourishes his spiritual and ethical well-being, and it provides him with a proper appreciation of his heritage. A third aim of the modern rabbi must be to gain for Judaism the proper understanding and appreciation of the non-Jewish world. The ideal rabbi must be a preacher of freedom and toleration, never failing to bring to the foreground the universal outlook

of Judaism.⁵

Measured by his own standards, Enelow was an ideal rabbi. Throughout his career he more than accomplished the three aims he considered essential to the rabbinate. He loved Judaism with an intense devotion and he proved his love by untiring labors in the fields of scholarship and in his affairs with men. Perhaps the final tribute he paid to Jellinek might be equally applicable to him. "We need," he concludes, "his influence today. Today, also, we need a new realization of the adequacy of Judaism. Today, also, we need more knowledge of Judaism. Today, also, we need a better understanding between Jew and non-Jew. Let us, therefore, try to emulate the work and perpetuate the ideal of Adolf Jellinek."⁶

To the author of the Memoir, Dr. Felix Levy, this writer of Enelow's biography is deeply indebted. In addition to the data contained therein, the writer has used the other sources — the sermons of Enelow — as referred to in the occasional notes. In addition it was impossible, too, to leave the writings of the man without an impression and this, too, must have left its mark on the previous pages. And yet the picture of Enelow as Rabbi cannot pretend to stand alone. As he

was not three men but one, so the unity is not complete until we examine more closely the aspects of his scholarship and preaching. These the next two sections of the essay will attempt to do. In conclusion, however, it seems only fitting that the last word should come from Dr. Levy himself, from rabbi to rabbi the tribute is greater and more adequate than any words of mine: "The keynote of his life was Kawwana, devotion in every sense of the term. Daily conduct, preaching, even his magma⁷ opera reveal a religious consecration, a devoutly rapturous soul, high-minded, pure, unsophisticated and almost unworldly. He endured much because he could not understand and others would not. Our Talmud tells us that 'the Torah shall be named after those who suffer for her'; surely Enelow has earned this finest of epitaphs, and will ever be known as a 'disciple of the wise,' whose earthly labor we pray, is now continued in the Academy on High."⁷

CHAPTER II

ENELOW AS SCHOLAR

In modern times men have come to make synonymous the terms scholar and recluse. That this unhappy association has come about is unfortunate indeed. True, the scholar needs hours of solitude for research and contemplation, but there is not nor has there ever been a dichotomy between scholarship and living. Turn over the pages of history and one finds again and again that the scholar is very much a part of the world. Professor Winspeare of the University of Wisconsin has showed us in a recent work that the great Plato, associated with the realm of thought par excellence, made life his real library. His interest in the affairs and struggles of his day find echoes in all his writings when they are carefully and accurately read. Marx, we are told, pored over many a musty volume in the libraries of London but also organized workingmen's circles and who would deny that he ever separated his analysis of society from his desire to change it. True, scholars for the most part are not recluses but practical men who mingle freely with men, who have no fear of the contaminating touch of things material but who rather invest the commonplace with an aura of spirituality. Enelow, too, belongs to this company of men. Profound a student as he was, he was equally

eloquent as a preacher and teacher, as a capable organizer and administrator, as a pastor of a considerable flock, and as a rabbi whose strenuous career was characterized by his zeal for Torah and his passion to serve as spiritual guide of his people. Enelow's scholarship was not a mere end in itself, but rather a foundation upon which he built his temple of learning. Scholarship to him were as tools to the carpenter with which he could build and create, without which he was useless to himself and his profession. But it was the depth and profundity, the varied range of interest and the tremendous capacity of his intellectual and searching mind that ^{was} stand Enelow as a scholar above the head and shoulders of most men in the rabbinate, even though they too would profess his aims.

Enelow had an encyclopedic acquaintance, as all his writings testify, with all of Jewish literature. Equally evident are his wide readings in English, French, and German. He loved the Midrash and used it extensively, and he was capable of drawing from its vast storehouse of treasures with compelling effectiveness. Let us look for a moment at a few samples and judge his wares for ourselves.

His early sermons are replete with "book learning." He has not yet learned the secret of sifting and of drawing with discretion from the vast storehouse of his knowledge, and he is more lavish with his erudition in the beginning than he is at a later date when he uses his stories with more telling effect. In his early sermon, "Dust and Stars", he quotes the rabbis in short sentences, one upon the other as if he were calling them up as witnesses to support his theme, in this instance, the eternity of Israel.¹ In another sermon called "The Divine Ladder," Enelow tries his hand at the creation of his own "midrash" by interpreting the giving of one-tenth to God, as meaning God's creatures or one's fellow-man.² In the sermon entitled "Our Modern Unrest", he tells us that the rabbis said that the Book of Numbers was written to teach men courage and illustrates his point with a Midrash on the subject of courage. He is comparing our present social unrest in the industrial world to the wanderings of Israel in the wilderness. Once upon a time, he tells us, the Romans issued a cruel decree against the scholars of Sepphoris. One of the more timid of the rabbis counseled flight. But God's voice came to them saying: "Is it the want of the world's greatest men to flee from their

foes? All those forty years that you wandered in the wilderness, I suffered you not to flee, but caused your enemies to fall before you, wherever I was with you -- even though fiery serpents and scorpions were round about you, which I allowed not to do you any hurt!" Thus the afflicted scholars were taught the paramount lesson of courage.³

Indeed, hardly a sermon passes by without some evidence of his love of the midrashim and his maturing ability to use them effectively. But this must wait upon another chapter, as must his erudition along non-secular lines. Yet, not out of place, however, under the heading of scholarship would be but a passing reference to his literary acquaintances whose quotations stud the pages of his sermons. In one sermon alone, Shelley and Tennyson are quoted while references are made to Browning, Sordello, Augustine, Plato, Dante, Goethe, and Stephen Phillips.⁴ In other discourses one meets William Penn, Maeterlinck, Erasmus, Kant, Rousseau, the Duke of Tully, Diderot, and Mathew Arnold to mention just a few. We mention these here not always because they are used to best advantage from the point of view of the listener, but rather to show Enelow's vast knowledge of all general culture. His love of learning knew no national or

religious boundaries. It was indeed a hunger and thirst that "grew by what it fed on."

For original scholarship, Enelow was well equipped. His knowledge was vast and extensive. He possessed a passionate affection for his subject. And nature graciously endowed him with a critical faculty that was unerring, an ability to synthesize disparate facts and data, and a capacity for relevant generalization. These features may be observed in all his scientific works to which we soon shall turn. Armed with such weapons, who could but fight the battles of the Lord? No wonder then that he pioneered in certain areas of Jewish scholarship and that he increased the store of Jewish learning with his original contributions. His biographer finally characterized study for Enelow as true worship — of God and truth, or of God who is truth.⁵

Among his scientific papers, none is more charming, none makes better reading or holds the reader's interest more than the essay entitled "The Significance of the Agada."⁶ Here erudition and a slavish adherence to facts do not intrude on the pleasures one may derive from a reading of it. This essay is a rather comprehensive study of Jewish teaching and preaching. Here Enelow agrees with Heine when he called the Agada a garden of

poetry and fancy in which the Talmudic student sought refuge and refreshment from the battle-fields of the Halacha. His concluding words on the Agada bear repetition: "Moreover, the Agada has not only been a unique product of the Jewish genius, but also one of perennial popularity. It is a flower that has ever bloomed afresh in the Garden of Israel. It has enriched the life, the literature, and the liturgy of the Jew. It has throughout the ages given force and flavor to the Jewish sermon.... After periods of neglect, it did not fail to recover the heed and heart of the people. And at the present moment there are many signs, as I said at the outset, of a widespread revival of interest in it."⁷

In view of Enelow's personal interest and advocacy of the Synod in Judaism already mentioned in the first chapter, it would seem pertinent to dwell for a moment on his paper now found in the CCAR yearbook of 1900 called "The Synod in the Past and its Feasibility in the Present."⁸ In this essay he argues that although the word is of Greek derivation, the Synod or meeting of elders which runs from Moses to Ezra is indeed as old as Judaism itself and always intimately linked up with it. The Great Synod during the Restoration was a second stage in its development, the purpose of which was educational

and executive: the setting up of an efficient administrative order and the intellectual improvement of the people in general. Continuing with the history he points out two salient features to remember: that "the Great Synod was called into existence by an apparent necessity and the need of a central organ of administration at a most critical juncture of Jewish history."⁹ He then describes the rise and decline of the Synedrion which resulted finally, after the Babylonian period, into the decentralization of Jewish life with the authority passing from an assembly to individuals like the ordinances of R. Gershom which were issued even while the light of Sura was flaring its last. The attempt and failure of Jacob Berab (1464) to create a Synedrion, Enelow continues, led his pupil Joseph Karo to succeed in achieving the same purpose -- the unification of Israel -- in another fashion. For he wrote and produced the Shulhan Arukh, a written Synedrion.¹⁰ Enelow continues his study with the development of the Polish Synods and the "notorious French Synedrion", the least Jewish chapter in the history of this institution because it reflected the megalomania of Napoleon and did not correspond to any real demand of the people. Though not Synods in the real sense of the term, he dwells on

the Reform rabbinical conferences as offshoots of the same idea and the same need. Enelow attempts to show that the Synod has formed "the warp and a good part of the woof" of our religious history by simply following the course of events and discovering a Synod at every notable historic juncture. He does not wonder that Isaac M. Wise championed a Synod for the unification of Israel in America, and makes his final appeal in these words: "Both the rabbinical and congregational unions are manifestations of the synodal idea; they are two fragments of the idea which Wise never ceased to nourish and which possibly yet await complete realization; the continuance of the Jewish religion in the New World through the medium of that time-honored Jewish institution, the Synod."¹¹

We have dealt with the essay on the Synod not alone because it is good and readable, but because it offers another illustration of the type of Enelow's scholarship. Erudite as it was, Enelow meant it to serve as more than "learning for the sake of learning." As related previously, Enelow waged an active struggle for the establishment of the Synod and the idea was defeated after a controversy lasting a number of years when a majority finally became convinced that the Synod was a threat of authority abused and not feasible for modern or liberal

Judaism. Yet Enelow's arguments are still provocative and his paper is good illustration of the scholar who has not lost his moorings but utilizes the product of his research to strengthen the life of his people.

Enelow's scientific papers are as varied as his many interests. In an excellent series of five essays he deals with the Book of Ecclesiastes.¹² In great detail he discusses its date and authorship, its literary charm, its place in Jewish literature, the various struggles for an interpretation of the book, and the present-day interest in The Preacher. Many of the contradictions found in Ecclesiastes may also be discovered in the nature of Enelow himself and this series proves to be another small revelation of his own personality, fused as it was with high idealism and wisdom, combating cynicism and despair and loss of faith, not in his ideals but in men's fulfillment of them. As a true scholar, Enelow never neglects to emphasize the importance of education for others. He would share his love of learning with his fellows and would inspire them to drink deeply from the fountain of living waters. And so he advocates the Torah for study by Reform Judaism in his essay "On Adult Education in Religion."¹³ He pleads that Reform should not drift away from the educational ideal of Judaism and advocates study of Torah

for the sake of Reform Judaism and for its own sake.

Among the many themes of his scientific papers are such a variety as "The Modern Reconstruction of the Pharisees," and "The Influence of Judaism in the South." In the former essay he defends the Pharisees against the charges brought against them in the New Testament and repeated in our dictionaries where the synonym of "hypocrite" is usually given in much the same manner as R. Travers Hereford and their other scholarly defenders.¹⁴ In the latter essay he discusses the rôle of the Jew in the south of the United States, in the struggle for religious liberty, in southern industrial development, in the liberal professions, the arts and the sciences, and in the field of philanthropy in the South.¹⁵ Two divergent papers indeed for one scholar, but Enelow felt as much at home in delving into the history of Israel before the Christian era as he did with exploring the south of a new homeland some two thousand years later.

In his early years Enelow dabbled in Hebrew poetry and though not having special gifts for this particular field of work, his interest and love of Hebrew poetry never slackened. Both of these features are prominently displayed in his essay entitled, "The Hebrew Lyric."¹⁶ He discusses first the primitive poetry as

reflected in the Song of Lamech and the epic in the early poem of Deborah. There follows a full discussion of the Song of the Sea which he believes to be one of the choral odes sung antiphonally at the services in the Temple.¹⁷ Great appreciation is coupled with poetic understanding in his analysis of Psalms as well as in the Lament by David over Saul and Jonathan, which William Watson called "the most beautiful elegy in literature." Lamentations, Landscape Poetry, The Song of Songs, Job and Proverbs are all within the scope of this essay. Enelow is impressed with the great versatility of the Hebrew lyric in its expression of all possible subjects — love, praise, riddle, warning and wisdom. He finds the secret of its unobeying influence in the simple spontaneity that graces the lyrics of the Bible. As a general theme he recognizes the one of man's relation to God and nature, while its universal classic character he ascribes to its sublimity and sincerity concluding with the thought that "the Hebrew lyric ... is music which lights up with its golden flame of hope and harmony the hidden realms of the future."¹⁸

If his early interest in poetry never waned but probably led him to research that resulted in the essay, *The Hebrew Lyric*," it is not surprising that Reform Judaism, whose representative he was, would also send him into

fields of scholarship from which he would return with harvests of plenty. Indeed, many of his scholarly essays deal with the subject but none with more cogency than his paper on "The Theoretical Foundations of Reform Judaism."¹⁹

This essay is a spirited defense of Reform by an ardent champion and scholarly defender. Enelow first shows that Reform has its theoretical roots in Judaism, that every movement needs a theory as a basis for and foundation to action. In the course of the essay he refutes Martin Buber and calls true orthodoxy a case of either-or, all or nothing. He shows how closely Reform is related to the best phases of Pharisaism and establishes the sincerity of its founders. But the crux of the matter rests with his three paramount principles of Reform Judaism. The first of these principles is the dynamic character of Reform. Liberal Judaism, he says, is mobile rather than a fixed form of religious life. A second principle is the belief that the permanent and essential part of Judaism is found in certain ethical and spiritual affirmations rather than in fixed ceremonial observances. The third principle is that by nature and destiny, Judaism is a universal religion and not a national or local one. These are the convictions which Enelow claims to have formed the theoretical foundations of Reform Judaism and upon this foundation, he concludes, it

has sought to build.

Among Enelow's scholarly contributions must be placed a small booklet he issued in 1920 called "A Jewish View of Jesus."²⁰ This will merit discussion in another chapter of this essay but since it was an original work, mention of it may at least be made here. To Enelow, Jesus was a Jew with a Jewish religious outlook, with a willingness to sacrifice and be sacrificed, who labors under the odds of his misunderstanding, and who has a message for his generation and for the world which it would not hear. Dr. Levy in the Memoir asks then if this is not a confession of Enelow's own aims? The question will remain unanswered by the writer but there are indications when one is tempted to believe that something akin to a "Messiah-complex" got the better of Enelow and was possibly responsible, in part at least, for some of the disappointment and disillusionment which overcame him.

Enelow's book on Jesus became very popular, especially among non-Jews, but "it was Enelow's love for our devotional literature that led him to do his greatest work, for which he will ever be held in lasting remembrance."²¹ During his early days in the ministry, while at Paducah, he tells us in the Preface to Part One of the four volumes of the Menorat Ha-Meor by R. Israel Ibu Al-Nakawa, he

became interested in this distant scribe because of "the resemblance between some parts of Al-Nakawa copied by Di Vidas." In 1925 he visited the Bodleian Library at Oxford and his suspicions were confirmed at this time when he examined the only manuscript extant of Al-Nakawa's work. After a close scrutiny of the six hundred sixty-five hand-written folio pages he came to the conclusion that the younger Aboab practically copied the older Nakawa. He then wrote an article two years later in 1927 called the "Midrash Hashkem Quotations in Al-Nakawa's Menorat Ha-Maor." (H.V.C. Annual, Vol. IV, 1927). In this article Enelow states and gives proof of his partial conviction of this borrowing.

In his Introduction, Enelow discusses the dependence of Aboab on Al-Nakawa. The historical background, the data about the authors, the literature on the subject, the problems and difficulties involved are lucidly and logically discussed so that the Introduction becomes a perfect gem of its kind.²² It is a model of scientific presentation that proves on the circumstantial evidence gathered from many and different sources, that the "Menorat Ha-Maor," the most popular volume of Jewish devotional literature was not written by Aboab, but by the fourteenth century Toledan. Each of the three succeeding volumes begins with

a similar introduction to the material found in the Hebrew section, of which the whole work is a critical edition. "In these forewords," says Dr. Levy, "the high level reached in the first volume is maintained and the whole English material might well serve as a reference book of piety and poetry, literature and law, chronicle and custom of the medieval Jewry of the period. This stupendous achievement made secure the author's reputation as a scholar of the first rank."²³

In no wise secondary was Enelow's last venture into the realm of Jewish scholarship with "The Mishneh of R. Eliezer" or the Midrash of the Thirty-Two Hermeneutic Rules (1933). This Midrash had never been printed before and its publication was due to the work that had been done on Al-Nakawa which prepared Enelow to recognize this old work when he came upon an old manuscript which was bought for him through a friend's generosity. Enelow set to work and collected all the extant material, piecing the parts together from documents as well as from quotations in other sources. The result was another Enelow contribution to enrich Jewish scholarship — a pre-Talmudic collection of Agada.

As a final example of Enelow's scholarship we select the essay that best expresses the author's approach

to Judaism as a mode of religious living, the essay entitled "Kawwana."²⁴ This term implies the concept that there can be no true religiosity without direction to God and self-surrender to Him. It is a term used by mystics and indicates the first step to be taken by the pious on the road that leads to union with the divine, which is always the supreme yearning of the devout soul. Enelow believes that Reform Judaism must incorporate this inwardness — this spirit of Kawwana if it is to function as a faith in the lives of its adherents. As one who always was embarking on the quest for the godly, he easily recognizes those kindred spirits who embarked on the same venture. So he stops his fellow-wayfarers of the past, asks them the question of the road, is interested in their lives and thoughts, and recounts to us what he has learned: "Deep calls unto Deep."

Little remains to be said of Enelow as scholar. All his scientific work is heavily annotated and thoroughly and painstakingly documented. And all of it reflects in one degree or another something of his own personality. His patronage of other scholars, already discussed in our first chapter, not only reveal the man at his generous best, but show us also that his love of learning transcended thoughts of self. As a scholar, Enelow made

significant contributions to the field of Jewish wisdom, but as a preacher he will be seen in the full stature of his glory. For the complete man we must turn our attention to Enelow as preacher.

Enelow as preacher

CHAPTER III

ENELOW AS PREACHER

A. THE FORMS OF THE SERMONS

1. Introduction and Theory

Actually a more accurate title to this chapter would be "Enelow as Teacher". For Enelow, true to the traditions of Jewish homiletics lived up to that which is implied by the term "rabbi" (my teacher) and was less an exhorter than a teacher, his sermons having far more of an intellectual quality than an emotional appeal. But the particular type of education that Enelow offered from the pulpit is cast into that artistic form of pedagogy called the sermon and the use of that form of classic expression makes it permissible to call Enelow a preacher. Indeed, we would not fall far short of the mark if we called Enelow a preacher par excellence. For preaching seemed to be a divine gift with which he had been endowed from his earliest years. His very first sermons strike the reader with his ripeness and maturity. He speaks at twenty with the wisdom and maturity of an elder. He practically emerges from the seminary as an almost fully developed homilist. This is not to say that Enelow left no room for development. Remarkable as his early sermons are, one can still find evidence of youth. He indulges himself in over-stylization and succumbs to

the temptation to display his book learning all too frequently to please the listener or the reader. He is tempted, too, to play the pedant which results in a certain stiffness of expression that comes from an unwise choice of unusual words and phrases. Sentences are occasionally too long or involved in complicated thought. But despite these pardonable defects, none can fail to appreciate the over-all excellence of even his earliest sermons. For each displays the most meticulous care — every word is well chosen, every reference apposite, every paragraph in place and altogether carrying the burden of thought to an inevitable climax. The texts are appropriate, and the development correct and natural. That his sermons were satisfactory to his listeners must be deduced by his rapid rise to fame. He overcame the most difficult of all foreign handicaps, a foreign accent, and became — we are told — a master of exquisite diction, a capable and forceful preacher. Only the most fastidious ear would suspect that it was listening to a foreigner, rather than one who was native-born, and who learned the language comparatively late in life.¹

Despite the didacticism of his pulpit labors, he was not a dry pedagogue. For he raised pedagogy to the level of an art and became one of the most splendid

homilists in the American rabbinate. A student of preaching will still find much to admire in the form and content of his discourses. He nearly always used a Biblical or rabbinic text, often startlingly appropriate, and developed the thought it contained. He had a feeling for the striking and the dramatic, as witnessed by such titles as "The Tears of Things," "The God of the Mountains," "Dust and Stars," "The Monotony of Life," His preaching was Jewish in form and Jewish in content. All his sermons — indeed, all his writings, — have a distinctly Jewish flavor, wafted from Israel's history, literature, and religious expression. The poet within him made him turn to the Midrash over and over again for its luxurious revelling in the imagination appealed to his artistic soul. He loved the folk-lore and the theology of his people. To say that nothing Jewish was foreign to him would not be entirely accurate, for it would be but a half-truth. Indeed, nothing human was foreign to him. The variety of his themes attest to his many-sidedness, his interests ranging from King Arthur to Reform Judaism, from Jewish theology to pragmatic philosophy, from the literature of the Bible and the poetic expressions of the Midrash to the modern masterpieces of Shaw and Maeterlinck, from Jewish scholarship

to the southern American poets and dramatists.

Of his theory of preaching, he says nothing directly, but from his own practice we can infer a great deal. In one sermon, where he gives a discourse on the ideal of a modern rabbi, he sets down three aims from which his own life and preaching never depart: To open up the unburied treasures of Judaism and to enfold them in the new era because in the past these teachings produced such noble ethical and spiritual results. To diffuse Jewish learning so that the Jew will have a proper appreciation of his own heritage to the end that his self-respect will be increased and his spiritual and ethical well-being will be promoted. And finally, to gain for Judaism the proper understanding and appreciation of the non-Jewish world.² All of Enelow's sermons speak his theory and noble purpose that has been characteristic of the best in Jewish preaching throughout the ages: not only to inform but to train toward exalted ends, not merely to guide the thought, but to develop the mind of the listener toward creative expression.

We are now ready to move from theory and to practice -- to examine more closely the sermons of Enelow as to organization, style, favorite theme and their treatment, etc. In attempting this task, the writer had to

make selections as to arrangement, classification, and illustrations. In so doing, he has not always chosen only the best in Enelow, but has attempted samples of all his work to give what he anticipates will be the fairest portrait of Enelow as preacher. Unfortunately, few of the sermons are dated and so it becomes impossible to trace the growth of his development in chronological fashion. Wherever possible, however, this attempt is made. In general it is obvious that his sermons in Kentucky, his earlier products, have defects which he leaves behind when he comes to New York. In form, the sermons delivered at Emanu-El have less pedantry and more art, less drawing of inspiration from books and more from life. In content they are less abstract and more concrete, less literary-wise and more worldly-wise. And his later sermons have overtones of bitterness and disillusionment with the great city and with the men who use the Torah "as a spade to dig with." But in spite of the natural change and development there is an amazing uniformity that characterize all his pulpit talks. From beginning to end they give evidence of the master preacher, of beauty of expression blended with exalted thought, of fidelity to ideals that never swerve from their chosen path of loyalty to God and service to Israel and mankind.

2. Organization and Form

The sermons of Enelow are characterized by their classical form: Exordium, text, development of the text leading to a proposition and followed by three divisions, a recapitulation and an appeal. This is not to say that he slavishly adheres to his outline in all his pulpit lectures. But rather that this form is at the basis of all his sermons. In his early sermons, the mechanics of this form are more obvious — in some one can even watch the machinery as it labors to build the finished product. In his more developed sermons, the machinery is nicely concealed, though it ever remains the power that drives the form onward. Having said that Enelow adheres to the classical form in general, let us now turn to the sermons specifically.

The great majority of his sermons begin with the text itself. This is always a verse (sometimes verses) from the Torah on the Haftarah and less frequently from the rabbinic writings. Sometimes a sermon is based on an entire psalm or an entire chapter, as when he uses the second chapter of Isaiah as the text of the sermon called "A Jew's Christmas Sentiments,"³ while the fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah is used as a text to the sermon, "Have the Jews Failed in Their Mission?"⁴

Some sermons have no text but one on "Gratitude" for instance, uses the entire chapter of Genesis 40 and tells the story of the ingratitude of Pharaoh's butler within the sermon itself.⁵ But for the most part a particular text introduces the sermon with an exordium built around it that comments upon or explains the text. One is impressed by the fact that little "higher criticism" is used either in explaining the text itself or throughout the sermon and the temptation to shock the listener or startle him is never indulged in. The exordiums are interesting without being cheap or spectacular. On occasion, the writer departs from the exordium that surrounds a text and begins one sermon called "Things and Ideas" with some remarks about Shaw's Candida which was then playing in "our city."⁶ Thus he utilizes the interest in the current drama to capture the interest of his audience and then he leads them gracefully to his text. But in all cases the text is characteristic of the writer in general. Whether the sermon is "Zionism and Anti-Zionism" or "The Modern Disparagement of Theology," or "The Things We Miss," Enelow has the ability to choose texts that are startlingly appropriate and to develop them skilfully. Let us take as an illustration the text of Exodus 3:3 in the sermon on "The Element of Wonder of

Life" and watch how skilfully Enelow develops it:

"No one will deny that Moses was one of the greatest men that ever lived and that his life and work were of greatest moment to civilization. It is not often, however, that we pause to consider the special trait in his character that led to his remarkable career, that as a matter of fact, made his career possible. This characteristic we find indicated in the simple and everlastingly beautiful story of the burning bush. Moses, we are told, beheld a bush, from the midst of which issued a flame, but though the bush was burning it was not consumed. Straightway Moses began to marvel. He was overcome with wonder. 'Let me turn aside,' he said, 'and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.' It is not the burning bush that interests me most, but the eagerness of Moses to grasp its meaning, to fathom its mystery, to inquire into the wondrous nature of the great sight that arose before him. When the Lord saw that Moses turned aside to see, the story goes on to tell us, God called to him out of the midst of the bush and said, Moses, Moses, and he said, Here am I."⁷

Surely it were difficult to find a more perfect introduction to a sermon. Here is Enelow at his best but though all his works do not reach this artistic height, the remarkable fact is that he does achieve it so often. Sometimes one text will flow into another and then to a third. But in all events the text develops gracefully and naturally to the proposition and body of the sermon, usually in the classic pattern of the three divisions, though occasionally the reader will discern

only two or if the occasion warrants it, as in the sermon called "The Great Discovery," there may be four divisions.⁸ An example of a sermon of two divisions is one called "The Old Ideal of Universal Peace" with a text from Micah and the thought that (1) Individual righteousness and (2) human fellowship will establish peace.⁹ But for the most part the classical three divisions are maintained throughout. A good example of this form is the High Holy Day sermon called "The Mountain of Moriah."¹⁰ Using as its text Genesis 22:2 the sermon begins with the story of the Akeda which leads into the text and from there into the question of what God demands from Abraham and Isaac (the proposition) and answered by three divisions, namely, Idealism, Sacrifice, and Faith. A conclusion and an appeal round out this model of classical organization.

Another good example, typical of Enelow's form and organization though in this instance without a text is the sermon called "Culture Without Religion."¹¹ This sermon may be outlined as follows: Exordium: It is generally admitted that the basis of civilization is Hellenic and Hebraic, that culture came from Athens and religion from Zion. It is also incorrectly assumed that these are two antagonistic forces.

Proposition: The blending of the two ideals, culture and religion, is the highest form of human achievement.

Division 1: Culture without religion leaves the world without hope and guidance. Culture is the best that has been thought and known by men, but it is purely aesthetic and intellectual.

Division 2: But religion is needed to guide human action and exalt human motives, for religion is needed to determine what shall be called "the best." How can we know the best when tastes change and aesthetic judgments change.

Division 3: Religion not only serves as a guide to the best with its unchanging principles, but adds the ingredient of the heart to that of the intellect. The most cultured nations fall into depravity (Germany since Enelow!). Religion is needed to bring humility and a heart and a soul.

The summary and appeal to couple religion with culture follow.

"The Keeper of the Light" is still another example of the classical sermon in three divisions.¹²

Using Isaiah 49:6 as his text with a proposition that Israel is the keeper of the light his divisions are light to itself, bringing light to brothers of the House of Israel, and finally to the world at large. A Passover sermon called "Ye Shall Live" explains the Haggada in three divisions in terms of God, duty, and hope.¹³

In summary then it can be said that Enelow uses the classical form of the sermon for the most part and uses it well. His organization is sound and logical and his sense of balance and symmetry almost perfect. And he adheres to three divisions wherever possible. Other examples are his sermon called "Emanu-El" delivered upon the occasion of his installation there and divided into idealism, service, and self-sacrifice.¹⁴ He follows the classical form too in the series of four sermons called "Religion and Life." Each of these have a Biblical text and three divisions,¹⁵ as do his series of six sermons on "The Jewish Life" written in 1915.¹⁶ The following year, at Emanu-El he delivered another series of nine lectures on the Synagogue which do not deviate from the pattern.¹⁷ But he departs slightly from the pattern in the seven sermons on "The Adequacy of Judaism" delivered in 1920 when he uses no introduction but plunges in media res in the discussion of his problem.¹⁸ Without multiplying

further illustrations we can see that Enelow was no radical innovator as regards the form or organization of the sermon. He used the tried and accepted presentation but flavored it with his own talent. If the form begets a monotony at times and we wish for something with variety or more vigor, we might remember that these advantages are often bought at the expense of clarity or logic. Moreover, the form of Enelow's sermon was well-suited to his language and his contents, and it is to the first of these qualities that we now turn our attention.

3. Literary Qualities

The style of Enelow's sermons is hard to define. It has so much good in it, coupled with some major atrocities on the English language, especially in his earlier work. It is a tribute to the development of the man that one who was in the beginning enamoured with cliches, with awkward phrases and archaic words like "mayhap", "fein", and "yeah" could eventually achieve the beauty and simplicity of such a paragraph on the burning bush as was referred to in the previous section.¹⁹

But even his early sermons as his later ones have the good and the bad standing side by side. At best his style is elegant — he can turn a pretty phrase and it becomes an exalted thought. At times he achieves real classic beauty of expression. At other times his style is too elegant, too rich, and even pretentious. First let us examine some examples that would better be forgotten.

We chose the following at random, from a great number of his sermons: In "Dust and Stars" we have the phrase "yeah, ashes cling about our most exalted luminaries" and then, "ere it is pure," and finally "attain it nevermore." In the sermon called "Gratitude" we find an insufferable sentence of over sixty words that surprises the reader by

ending up as a question.²⁰ In "The Alloy of Life" we have the ever popular "O would that etc." and in "Religion in Solitude" we meet another favorite, "Fein would he have..." Finally we have a touch of melodrama in the sentence, "Coward, he who would shrink from such little sacrifices...."²¹ And there are other faults beside sentence structure, words and phrases that sometimes mar the quality of his literary style. His too frequent use of literary references overwhelms the reader as it must the speaker and instead of emphasizing the thought as it is obviously intended to results, has the effect of losing it instead. This said, the worse about Enelow as a stylist is over and more than outweighed by the meritorious qualities of his prose.

In one sermon he uses the short sentence which has become increasingly popular since his time with good dramatic effect: "It was a peculiar setting for so momentous an achievement. Night. A desert. Stones underhead. The stars above. And a dream. But when he awoke...."²² In the sermon on "Multitudes" he succeeds in combining intellectual content with an emotional punch when in vigorous language he denounces the philosophy that the voice of the people is the voice of God.²³ Indeed, it seems that wherever he argues or becomes vehement, as in the sermon,

"Zionism and Anti-Zionism" he achieves a more simple and direct form of expression and still has room for such a phrase as "the byways of misery and the crooked lanes of corruption." In some sermons as in the one called "A Jew's Christmas' Sentiments" he employs an essay style with ease and classical grace and formality that remind one of Addison or other contemporary British prose writers. An illustration may not be out of place from the sermon called "The Power of Books:"

"A magic power there is in a book, and it makes naught of space and time. It opens to us the labyrinths of many lands, the archives of antiquity. What naught else has been able to preserve, what no edifice or statue or picture has handed down to us, a good book has: the intimate knowledge of remote ancestors. What the nature of the Hebrew was, what the Greeks deemed best, what a Babylonian king coveted, how the Romans lived, how Socrates and Marcus Aurelius meditated -- behold, books reveal it all. Whenever I choose I can hail Cicero and Jeremiah and Goethe and Shakespeare and hold quiet converse with their mighty spirits, thanks to the volumes that honor my shelves. There are no snobs in my library and no melancholy cranks; all my authors, even the greatest, always are at my service and speak to me without exception as well as they can, as if I were the best among men."²⁴

Enelow's preference for florid rhetoric can be discerned in the above illustration. In New York he, however, leaves much of this behind him -- he writes more directly with less flourish though occasionally he cannot

resist the appeal that is so characteristic of him: "Oh, let us emulate their example...."²⁵ In general, this writer finds Enelow at his best in his pulpit discourse on personalities. In the scholarly essay on "Kaufman Kohler," Enelow handles his literary references with the greatest skill and achieves a style that is direct and forthright, one that contains a spirit of reverence for his subject, reads with ease, and rings with sincerity. Then too, in his sermon on King Alfred, he achieves a charm and intimacy that must have made for fascinating preaching as evidenced by the following quotation: "I for one admit without blush that I am a hero-worshipper; but I pick my heroes. Alfred is one of my heroes. I love to house his likeness in my mental gallery. His name is like a lantern hanging high in the fog and dark of the middle ages."²⁶ But Enelow has another qualification, which despite his defects, permit him to be regarded as a good stylist; he has the ability to say a great deal in a few words, as when he sums up the contributions of Maimonides:

"Maimonides' great desire was not to create something new, not to break a new path, but to systematize the old traditions and laws and to clarify the old ideas, and to make them a genuine and vital force in the new life of the people. He was not a sower; he was a harvester....he was like a great architect who will

take a mass of old bricks and stones, and put them together in the form of a noble and beautiful and useful structure."²⁷

There are other times when as a stylist Enelow falls short of the above illustrations, but in his booklet, "A Jewish View of Jesus," he sustains a style that has charm and simplicity and achieves, nevertheless, the quality of dignity that befits his subject. On the subject matter of this essay, which will be discussed elsewhere, there is room but difference of opinion, but it is easy to understand the popularity when one samples its literary quality. I quote but a line from his conclusion: "In him is combined what is best and most mysterious and most enchanting in Israel, the eternal people whose child he was."²⁸ Considering Enelow's works in their entirety, then, it is comparatively easy to overlook his flaws and have high regard for his literary attainments. No preacher would stand comparison with leading figures of the literary world for this would be a comparison of unequal things, but in his class, Enelow must rank high indeed as a stylist of decided merit.

* * * * *

Closely connected with style, and surely under the heading of Literary Qualities of Enelow's sermons is his use of secular and non-secular literature and references, both evidence of his wide range of interest, his tremendous reading, and his ability to utilize all in the service of preaching.

In this category, first and foremost must come Enelow's use of the Midrashim. Hardly a sermon or a lecture is without one of these treasures to illustrate or drive home a point to the reader. In other instances he merely refers to the Midrash; and the reader is disappointed knowing what might have been expected at his hands. No less expertly, of course, does he use other rabbinic material from the legend and lore of our people. In his sermon on "Hillel: The Ideal of Talmudic Judaism," for instance, he narrates both the legend of Hillel's entrance into the school and the one how Hillel was called to the high office of President of the Sanhedrin.²⁹ In the sermon on "The Diverse Elements of Religion," already mentioned in another section of this essay, he illustrates the mystical element in religion by the Midrash that asks: "Why did it take forty days to prepare the tablets of the Law, while it took only six days for the

creation of the world? To which the rabbis reply: to show how much more difficult it is to create something spiritual than to create something material."³⁰ In general do the sermons abound in midrashic and rabbinic tales. There are legends of Rabbi Yohanan, anecdotes about ben Zakkar from the Talmud and stories of Rabbi Eleazar and Rabbi Yohanan, quotations from ben Sira and quotations and expressions in paraphrase from a multiplicity of rabbis and teachers that seem to be without end.

Just as prolific as Enelow is in use of Jewish material, to a like extent do his sermons abound with allusions, references, and quotations borrowed from the culture of the non-Jewish world. The literary outpouring is so great that one wonders where he found the absorptive capacity to take in so much from the literary productivity of the world. A list of some of the names quoted or referred to will give some idea as to the wealth and variety of his reading: William Penn, Dr. Johnson, and Xenophon, Tolstoy, Grillparzer, Taine, and Maeterlinck, Goethe, Romney, Tennyson, Plutarch, Jeremy Taylor, Franz Delitzsch, Moore and Erasmus and the Duke of Tully, Kant, Rousseau, Diderot and Concorcet, Shakespeare, Lowell, and Crabbe, Browning and the paintings of

Watts. The list could be expanded ad infinitum. At times the reference made is merely a passing one, sometimes a story is told, and often a poem may conclude the sermon. In all cases the literary references are apt and well chosen. His earlier sermons have too many of them but he uses keener discrimination as he progresses and thus aids his style rather than hampers or obstructs it from flowing smoothly. If there be any question as to the degree that Enelow understands literature, such doubts are dispelled by his treatment of some of the writers and poets in his sermons on personalities. Here enough evidence has been brought forward to establish Enelow as a stylist of first rank in the art of homiletics with the ability to utilize to advantage the great wealth of learning he accumulated from the culture of Israel and the culture of the world.

B. THE CONTENTS OF THE SERMONS

The variety of themes in the sermons of Enelow are rich beyond all description. They include every aspect of the spiritual life. They enter domains where only the preacher may not fear to tread. They speak of gratitude, of finding God, on universal peace, on solitude and prayer, on life and death, on fear and pessimism, and destiny and hope. Some themes occur over and over again in various shapes and forms, but Enelow is never repetitious. For each theme is so broad in its scope, so embracing in its implications, so universal in its appeal that in the hands of a master-preacher they remain, in whatever their form, fresh and original. In this section of our essay, we have arranged the themes under various headings in order that the favorite topics of discussion can be seen at a glance. The manner in which Enelow treats of these will help complete our sketch of Enelow as preacher and continue to shed light on the nature of his character and thought.

* * * * *

1. Judaism - especially Reform.

It is only natural that chief among the themes found in the sermons of Enelow, a Jewish preacher, is Judaism itself. And it also follows that as a Reform Jew and champion of a liberal interpretation of Judaism, especially Reform, should play a leading role in his discourse. Enelow deals with Reform in terms of the Mission of Judaism, in contrast to orthodoxy, through its own principles, and through its leading personalities. To all of these we now turn our attention.

Everything Enelow touches has the Jewish, and more particularly, the Reform Jewish point of view. That is not to say that an orthodox rabbi of Enelow's capabilities might not have written and delivered a great number of his sermons. But in general, his is the liberal Jewish approach to all problems and even in the selection of that which he wishes to emphasize, it is the Reform Jewish viewpoint that dictates his choice. This becomes clear when we consider how often he stresses the idea of the Mission of Judaism. In the sermons "Dust and Stars," "Zionism and Anti-Zionism," "Has the Jew a Future?", "Have the Jews Failed in Their Mission?", and "The Keeper of the Flame," he discusses the idea of the Mission of Israel. He advances

the argument that Israel is an eternal people because of its religion, that Israel's supreme gift to the world was and still is the purest form of ethical monotheism, that Jews are persecuted for this ideal and they must continue and will continue to survive until the completion of their mission as a light to the nations.¹ But Enelow does not stop here for he takes the idea of the Mission seriously. In the sermon on "The Missionary Ideal of Judaism" he argues that we can actively as well as passively engage in bringing about the fulfillment of our mission. He refutes the theory that Judaism is a national religion and proves it to be a universal one. He shows from history that Jews did missionize until forbidden to do so any longer by the Church in the beginning of the Middle Ages, and now he advocates that Jews once again develop a missionary zeal. The advantages, as Enelow sees them, are threefold. It will give pride to Jews to know that others want to join their faith. It will compensate for the losses we sustain through active assimilation. It will show the world that ours is indeed a universal faith.² Thus we see that Enelow is not content with preaching the mission but indeed advocates the practice of it and so carries the idea to its logical conclusion.

It has been the custom during these past years of tragedy and suffering endured by our people in Europe to re-evaluate the nineteenth century, or the era of liberalism as it is sometimes called, and find it wanting. A few years ago the historian Cecil Roth, writing in the bitterness over the European tragedy, wrote an article in which he looked back to the ghetto and segregation of the Middle Ages as "the good old days." Perhaps Enelow goes to the other extreme when he eulogizes the nineteenth century in such glowing terms as "the democratic age" in his sermon "Two Great Reformers," but of the two approaches, I believe that history will lean its judgment more toward Enelow's outlook than the viewpoint of the historian, Cecil Roth.³ Regardless of what went awry in the twentieth century, the nineteenth was a century of emancipation for the Jew and the world. It was the century that marked the birth of liberal religions — Reform Judaism among them. In the sermon just mentioned, Enelow deals with Reform in terms of the nineteenth century through the contribution of Wise and Sulzer, the latter as the regenerator of the music of the Synagogue. But he discusses the origins of Reform in more detail in a Memorial Sermon on Adolph Moses called "Champions of Reform." "Reform Judaism," says Enelow, "was not made by the rabbis. It sprang not from

the heads of a few professional sages and teachers... great religious movements are not made to order; they issue from the hearts and wants of the people, they respond to the needs of the times."⁴ There is criticism here, too, of both rabbis and lay members who attach themselves to Reform but are an impediment to its progress. Sharply does he rebuke the rabbis for indifference and ignorance, for not steeping themselves in learning. He then enunciates what he considers the three things that Reform must stand for. These are: belief in God, the preservation of the Jewish community, and the universality of all men. The pursuit after these ideals makes liberal Judaism "the oldest, the purest, the sweetest, and the broadest faith."⁵

Despite his passionate love of Reform, Enelow viewed with charity other interpretations of Judaism. In one sermon he has the highest praise for Orthodox Jews and refers to those who uphold the Mosaic tradition as "a bundle of benedictions."⁶ In another instance when he discusses orthodoxy he claims only respect and the highest admiration for those whose convictions are sincerely orthodox but has nothing but contempt for those who abuse orthodoxy by making it an excuse for irreligion.⁷ In this connection he defends Reform against the

charge of abandoning the devotional element in Judaism. "It is not Reform," says Enelow, "that is responsible for any absence of devotion that we may have cause to deplore. Rather it is the failure on our part to live up to the requirements of Reform."⁸

Rarely does Enelow have occasion to mention the Conservative movement in Judaism but on one occasion he pays it high tribute in the form of a beautiful and sincere sermon about its founder, Zechariah Frankel. He tells us of the leading role in the contemporary political as well as intellectual emancipation of the Jews played by Frankel and says that only his profound emotional attachment to old Judaism and his prudent conservatism, kept him from the ranks of the radical reformers, rendered him the bitter opponent of Geiger and Holdheim, and made him "the Apostle of the so-called middle-party, the positive, historic school of Judaism."⁹

This is indeed an amazing statement for Enelow to make if we remember that Geiger and Holdheim were among his models and Reform the religion he always chose and championed so vigorously. Enelow's open mind, however, was large enough to appreciate and understand other minds who differed with him and he could still pay Frankel even this further tribute: "Zachariah Frankel

was the most formidable opponent Reform Judaism ... had at its nativity. And even for that opposition we should be thankful, for it was a child of honest conviction and deep love, and an undoubted blessing to an age when destruction of the old was a universal shibboleth, and when for construction of the new there were but numbered workers."¹⁰ With equal fairness he can evaluate the work of Bernard Felsenthal in another sermon and tribute and find criticism in this pioneer of Reform who, as he explains, was but a product of his age.¹¹

The tributes he pays to the great men of liberal Judaism are indeed too numerous to mention. Isaac M. Wise was a favorite theme, as was Abraham Geiger. In a sermon on the latter, he uses the opportunity to expound on the evolution of Judaism. After Mendelsohn, Enelow tells us, there arose the problem of the new Jews' attitude toward the faith of his fathers. Mendelsohn gave an affirmative answer to the question of faithfulness that arose, but kept culture and faith apart. But the next generation was not content with the segregation of religion and modern thought. Mendelsohn possessed no critical faculty, and so the next generation chose between arch-orthodoxy and arch-

assimilation. Into this picture stepped Geiger to show the new way — of development and of progressive revelation. Here Enelow goes back to the Pharisees and Saduccees, developing an excellent sermon on the theory of Reform and concludes with the following remarks on Geiger: "In all of Jewish history we do not find a man surpassing him in erudition and loyalty, as writer and teacher ... withal his character was consistent with his teaching ... he will forever remain in Jewish history its unforgettable teacher and leader."¹²

Among the many personalities Enelow discusses in the course of his sermons and lectures, mention must be made of one of the greatest influences in his life — the memory of the eminent theologian, Kaufman Kohler. Many times does he refer to Kohler but Enelow is at his best in the lecture he delivered in nine parts that bears the teacher's name. It is both a biography of Kohler, a record of his achievements and contributions, an historical treatise on Reform and a tribute to liberal Judaism in general. It is a scholarly essay that displays Enelow's own appreciation of theology, written in a spirit of sincerity and reverence.¹³

Enelow's treatment of Judaism, embracing as it does Reform and other interpretations, often in lectures

on personalities like those mentioned above, also includes a series of nine sermons on the Synagogue. Every aspect of the Synagogue comes under his scrutiny as he pleads for a renewed appreciation of its past, its necessity for the present, and its potentialities for the future. Thus we can see again that the Jewish religion is Enelow's chief love and major theme throughout all his writings. To some minor ones we now turn our attention.

2. Zionism and Anti-Zionism

As might be expected from a champion of early Reform Judaism, Hyman Enelow was an anti-Zionist. Of course, Zionism has many definitions but if we use the one commonly accepted — an advocate of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine, then definitely Enelow falls not only without this category but in direct opposition to it. As has been shown previously, Enelow upheld the "traditional" view toward Reform Judaism. He held that the Jews were a religious people, bound together by the Jewish religion and destined for a mission to mankind. In the sermon in which he poses the question, "Has the Jew a Future?" he answers with the affirmative but states that the future is religion and not nationalism.¹⁴ Elsewhere he argues that all Jews are spiritual Zionists or cultural Zionists because these are forms of isolationism and nationalism contrary to the universal point of view. Another argument he advances is that Palestine cannot be entrusted to the caprice of European powers. And still a third reason for his opposition is his belief that the best in Judaism was produced outside of Palestine. Indeed, he goes so far as to state that the real destroyers of Palestine were the prophets who were willing to

sacrifice the state to their ideals. He clinches his arguments with the sentence that "Israel is not so old and decrepit it must limp home."¹⁵ Some of Enelow's arguments are open to question, but rather than engage in controversy, we will continue to note them without comment. For in the scheme of Enelow's religious philosophy they have both logic and consistency. Only the latter argument in which he denies Jewish productivity in Palestine and his remarks on the prophets baffle this writer. In another sermon where he argues against Zionism, he quotes the French poet and patriot, Peguy, to support him: "The whole ^{mystery} mystic of Israel is that Israel pursues in the world his tenacious and sorrowful mission." To which statement Enelow makes the following comment: "I prefer to take my stand with Peguy than with the Jewish politicians and atheists."¹⁶

Toward cultural Zionism, though unalterably opposed, he can approach with more toleration than the political variety. Among his sermons is one entitled, "What Can We Learn from Ahad Ha-Am?" From this question he draws three answers. The first is a love of Hebrew as a language and the Jewish cultural heritage. The second and third answers are both directed against political Zionism as is apparent from the context. The

second is the supremacy of the spiritual element in Jewish life (against the nationalist-material) while the third is the love of truth (against the falsehood of political Zionism). Although Enelow does not agree with Ahad Ha-Am, he pardons his attack on the Reform movement, and hails him for his cultural contributions.¹⁷

One more sermon may shed whatever light may yet be needed to demonstrate Enelow's attitude toward Zionism. In 1918 he delivered a sermon called "Palestine and the Jews", the opening line of which sets the scene: "One could not read without a thrill the news of the recent advance of the British Army into Palestine."¹⁸ He then professes his deep love for Palestine but decries the political emphasis of the Zionists and the anti-religious attitude of some of their leaders. "But Palestine," he continues, "needs a population and there can be no doubt that none would be so fitting as Jews eager to go there and restore the sacred soil. It is in this light that we ought to view Mr. Balfour's recent declaration."¹⁹ Enelow states that if the Jews can live there in peace and security many will want to go there and work there in an effort to transform the land into one of milk and honey. He then pleads for the end of the controversy between Zionist and anti-Zionist, especially those carried

on in the name of Reform. Reform is not the issue in the struggle between these factions, says the writer. He wants no controversy with Zionism, "only whenever necessary, we must maintain against them these three essential propositions: that we dare not mortgage the Jewish future to a Jewish state in Palestine; that there is no such thing possible as a Jewish people without Judaism; that it is wrong to assume Judaism cannot flourish outside of Palestine."²⁰ He concludes by saying that all this has nothing to do with the restoration of Palestine and making it a center for Israel and humanity. Thus does Enelow sum up his own attitude toward Zionism and take his stand against it.

3. Jesus, Christianity, and Anti-Semitism

On a number of occasions, Enelow has cause to discuss the religion of Christianity. We may recall that one of his aims for Reform Judaism was to make for more sympathy, better understanding, and mutual appreciation on the part of these two great world religions. Perhaps to this end did he write his popular series of lectures on "A Jewish View of Jesus."²¹ Enelow begins by acknowledging the great importance of Jesus to the world and says that as a Jew, Jesus cannot but have great interest to the Jewish people. In discussing the teachings of Jesus, he places him in the category of the prophetic teachers of Israel. But Jesus, in his opinion, gave a fresh interpretation to the laws governing spiritual life, a fresh message concerning the meaning and purpose of religion and in this he was original since "supreme personality is the greatest originality."²² The heritage of Jesus was the Bible and the Apocrypha, Pseudo-Epigrapha, rabbinic writings, and perhaps the philosophy of Philo. A little further on he states again that Jesus made religion a personal matter and therein lay his great originality, and — "It is thus that Jesus through his own personality interpreted,

transmitted, and transfused his Jewish heritage."²³ He discusses the background of Jesus in Galilee where the people lived amongst Arabs, Phoenicians, Greeks and Syrians, and were the most loved nature and preferred the Agada to the Halakha. He refers to Jesus as the great dreamer, the spokesman of the spiritual ideal and compares his indignation with the Temple and the city of Jerusalem to the reaction of the prophet Amos at the Temple of Bethel or Elijah at the court of Ahab. Jesus was conscious of his Judaism, we are told, conscious of his birth and descent. Jesus realized the spiritual distinction of Israel and regarded himself as sent to teach and help his people. Like the other prophets he rebuked the people for their spiritual shortcomings, seeking to correct them, but at the same time having love and pity for them. Jesus demanded from the people the fulfillment of the Law, but a spiritual fulfillment rather than a mechanical one. Like the prophets he preached in part a message of doom, but unlike them he emphasized the personal element, placing himself in the center of his teachings and not merely using personal experiences as illustrations. Jesus, moreover, made a special appeal to the poor and humble. He mingled freely with "sinners" and showed his love for them in his

personal contacts.²⁴ Enelow further discusses the messianic concept of the times and how even his own disciples betrayed him when they could not comprehend his highly exalted point of view. If his own friends had difficulty in appreciating him, Rome surely had no fine taste for spiritual analysis. He was executed by order of Pilate when the authorities turned him over for fear the whole people would be charged with rebellion. "Thus," says Enelow, "Jesus lost his life in the messianic maelstrom of his age."²⁵

There is no official attitude on the part of Judaism towards Jesus, says the writer but there is need for enlightenment on both sides. Judaism denies his divinity or his super-natural claims to the role of Messiah, yet appreciates his ethical power and the spiritual beauty of his teachings. "Therefore," Enelow concludes, "Jesus takes his place among the noble teachers of Israel ... he has become the most fascinating figure in history ... in him is combined what is best and most mysterious and most enchanting in Israel, the eternal people whose child he was."²⁶ The closing words of the writer express the hope that Jesus may yet serve as a bond of union between Christian and Jew once his teaching is better known.

Occasionally Enelow utilized the Christmas season to discuss Christianity and Judaism. In one of these sermons Enelow contends that the content of Christmas is spiritual, its forms are ephemeral. While not advocating the religion of Christ, he says the Jews should, nevertheless, understand and appreciate the religion of Jesus.²⁷ In another sermon of this type, he asserts the superiority of Judaism as a religion for the Jews over the religion of Christ or Paulian Christianity.²⁸ Elsewhere he reminds Christianity of its origins and the debt it owes Judaism in producing the Bible, the institution of the Synagogue which became the basis and model of the Church, and for its ideas on ethical monotheism.²⁹ In a Christmas day sermon in 1921 he asks the question, "Is Jesus the Light of the World?" Unfortunately, no, replies Enelow, for the world pays homage to him, but not to his teachings which are essentially the teachings of Judaism and the prophets.³⁰ These statements, however, seem in contradiction to the role he assigns to Jesus in the longer work discussed above. A more critical evaluation of Jesus also appears in a review of Montefiore's "Rabbinic Literature and Gospel Teachings."³¹ Despite his love and admiration for Jesus, he says that he cannot find a hint in all the Gospels when Jesus acted with charity or love toward his rabbinic opponents. Such an

act, Enelow claims, would be worth the whole Sermon on the Mount.³² Enelow also defends the Pharisees and rabbinic viewpoint against Montefiore's contentions, and says that Montefiore omits some vicious verses in the mouth of Jesus about Retribution when he wrongly accuses the rabbis of upholding that principle. Yet, all in all, he calls Jesus once again a sublime character and teacher and refers to Montefiore's work as "lofty idealism by a lover of truth combined with learning and industry, and above all, the impress of a most engaging spiritual personality."³³

In other sermons on various occasions, Enelow defends Judaism above all other faiths. To the question he raises "Need Jews Become Christian?" he answers in the negative saying that Christianity blended Judaism with paganism and is now shuffling off the coils of the latter and advancing toward the purer and original form of its origins.³⁴ Enelow asserts the superiority of Judaism over Christian Science. While acknowledging some merit in the latter it is an escapist philosophy because it denies the existence of evil in the world.³⁵ Some were asking the question why Jews didn't become Unitarians because the latter form of Protestant Christianity is so similar to Judaism. It would have to be first proven,

says Enelow, that Unitarianism is superior to Judaism for the Jews to accept it. While Unitarianism denies the divinity of Jesus, it places Jesus in the center of the religion and in the role of leader. This factor made it impossible for Ralph Waldo Emerson to remain in the Unitarian ministry so how then can we expect its adoption by Jews?

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Besides the themes of Jesus and the religion of Christianity, Enelow deals also with the problem of Anti-Semitism. In one sermon he more or less defines what Anti-Semitism is not, and pays tribute to a great Catholic, Ernest Renan. It would be foolish, says Enelow, for any religion or people to regard itself as free from blemish or imperfection and so sincere criticism from a friend is always welcome. It is only vicious and immoral when false accusations and all evils are attributed to one group by another which seeks a scapegoat for its own shortcomings. As an example of friendly criticism he quotes the following from Renan: "There is no such thing as an immaculate history. The history of the Jewish people is one of the most beautiful in existence, and I do not regret having consecrated my life to it. But I am far from pretending that it is a history free from all blemish; if so, it were a history beyond the bounds of

humanity."³⁷

Enelow deals with Anti-Semitism in another sermon with the very bad title, "Is the Jew a Menace to Civilization?" Here he refutes an attack on the Jews and Judaism by Mr. Stanton Coit of London, then leader of the Ethical Culture movement in England who used as the basis of his arguments a book that was destined to become in later years the beloved Bible of Hitler and the Nazis, "The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century," by Houston Stuart Chamberlain. The approach he uses is apologetic. He sums up Jewish contributions to the world under the three headings of the intellectual, the ethical, and the practical. Under the first of these he says that the Jews emancipated religion from mythology and superstition. Secondly, the Jew made morality the basis of religion. Thirdly, the Jew gave the Bible, Sabbath, Church, and treasures of the Spirit.³⁸

In a sermon on Luther, Enelow points out Luther's debt to the Jews. He explains Luther's anti-semitism that came late in life as due to frustration at not being able to convert the Jews and to lack of knowledge and pleads here for tolerance and better understanding.³⁹ In two lectures on "The Jew of Malta" and "The Merchant of Venice" he believes that both Marlowe and

Shakespeare were using the Jew as a romantic character, and in the fashion of the Middle Ages as he was conjured up in the popular imagination. The Jews had been expelled from England centuries before so neither author could have known the Jews. Neither character is a Jewish type in any particular, but whatever the purpose of the author, Enelow observes, alas the results of these two literary works.⁴⁰

Upon his return from Germany one summer, Enelow reviews ^{ed} the famous Oberammergau Passion Play. His observations are charitable as will be seen from the following quotation: "Though the village of Oberammergau has netted some \$400,000 from the last performance, I for one do not believe that the motive has yet lost its pristine purity and nobleness." Admitting that the play is written and presented in an anti-semitic spirit throughout, that it uses the Gospel of John as its basis but goes even further in its attack against the Jews, he still feels that "the Jewish spectator must bring with him the quality of mercy, where he can forgive its trespasses, overlook its faults, and appreciate its many charms and beauties."⁴¹

By far, Enelow's best treatment of anti-semitism is found in his brilliant review of the book by

Hilaire Belloc called "The Jews." This book is an actual anti-semitic attack that reverts to the Dark Ages and advocates segregation of the Jews from the world. Enelow skillfully compares Belloc with Balak in the Bible, but where the latter character frankly curses the Jews, the former writer insidiously pretends to be a friend. Belloc himself admits his hatred of all liberalism, of science, and of the Protestant tradition in Christianity. He hurls at the Jews the old discredited charges of secrecy, lack of patriotism, international conspiracy and the like. Enelow treats this book with real understanding and wit. Instead of refuting Belloc, he exposes him for what he is by letting him speak ^{for} himself. Enelow's last paragraph in the essay, which will serve as a conclusion to this section, is worth quoting:

"It is hard to review such a book seriously. To do so would mean to give a running commentary, pointing out inaccuracies and illogics on every page. The marvel is that such a thing should have secured reputable publishers. Few are likely to read it through, or to benefit by doing so. As for the Jews, having survived Balak, they are sure to survive Belloc."⁴²

4. Theology

When Kaufman Kohler died in 1926, the Alumni Association of the Hebrew Union College honored his memory by publishing his writings. It was only natural that Enelow became chairman of the committee which was entrusted with this task. For Enelow not only shared Kohler's point of view, but was himself fully equipped, by reason of his studies, to do the necessary job of revising and selection. Enelow delivered a course of lectures on Jewish Theology at the Hebrew Union College to the faculty and students,⁴³ and his sermons are shot through with theological doctrine. A reading of his works show his erudition in this realm of thought as in so many others. He read the works of modern Christian thinkers, he was acquainted with Otto, Frazer, Wobberman, and the fields of comparative religion, anthropology and philosophy. The title of one of his discourses, "Is Theology Necessary?" receives an affirmative reply not only in that lecture but in his sermons and writings. The pronouncements of Jewish humanism, he declared, were not aspects of true Judaism. To define Judaism as a culture or civilization would be to base Judaism on a Godless Torah. Enelow's opposition to Zionism was a

direct outgrowth of his strong theological convictions. For Zionism was primarily a national movement in Judaism and not a religious one. He was willing to go along with the building of Palestine and with a revival of Hebrew literature as he tells us in his essay on *Ahad Ha-Am*.⁴⁴ But he was unalterably opposed to political Zionism as a contradiction to his view that Reform Judaism, as we mentioned previously in that section of the essay, is by nature and destiny universal, and not national or local. A good insight into Enelow's thinking on theology can be gleaned from the following remarks taken from his presidential message read to the Conference in 1928:

"Turn whither we may — I say, it matters not what product of the Jewish mind or soul throughout the ages we may pause to examine, always we shall find the theme of theology running through it."

"— we can have no doubt as to what Jewish culture always has been; it has formed the quest and the service of God."

"Nor can we rest content with the theological efforts and achievements of Reform Judaism. [The Pioneers] were true to the needs and shared the methods of the nineteenth century. We need to construct a new theology... [in which].... Science is destined to play an important part. We cannot hope to save Religion by such a new policy of ghostly ghettoism or mental monasticism. One reason why the Jewish philosophers of the Middle Ages played so dominant a part in the interpretation of Judaism was that they were familiar with the science of those days."⁴⁵

Enelow's Judaism revolves around God. In his sermon on "The Great Discovery" he shows how Jacob discovered God and how men in every generation must discover Him anew for themselves. He tells us that it is God-consciousness that makes life sacred and introduces morality into life, and that what is needed is self-isolation or soul-isolation, as he calls it, to make the great discovery.⁴⁶ He blames the modern disparagement of Theology on arrogance and indifference, and in the same sermon quotes Geiger to prove that although theology has often made the error of claiming infallibility for itself, Jewish theology has been always free from dogmatism in a clerical sense.⁴⁷ He abhorred the attempts of some of his colleagues and some laymen to interpret Judaism in a way that contradicted his own point of view, and regarded all attempts as aberrations of Judaism in much the same way as his more orthodox brethren must have regarded Enelow. He was fond of referring to these various interpretations as secular nationalism, cultural, agricultural, single-tax or "social justice" Judaism. Enelow would never admit opposition to these as such, but only as they threatened to empty Judaism of its God-content.

Enelow had no respect for what he termed "magical" Judaism, a Jewish version of Christian Science that, like its model, preached salvation through faith alone. In a number of his sermons he chastises the weak Jews who leave the Synagogue for "magical cures" of their bodily aches and ailments. In his note on "Spiritual Healing in the Jewish tradition" he makes some valuable suggestions.⁴⁸ He distinguishes between magic and religion. Once again he quotes Whitehead. Another example of his familiarity with the present-day philosophic-religious writings, and mentions the latter's phrase that "in religion we induce, in magic we compel."⁴⁹ He explores the Bible, the rabbinic, and medieval literature of Judaism to prove that Judaism has always been opposed to magical cures, which are in effect, an element of paganism that threaten all genuine religion.

Enelow has many sermons on religion in general, and these like the ones mentioned above only enlarge upon his general attitude. Theology so pervades all his writings that if any element could be called dominant in his personality, then it must be the theological. That Enelow was well learned in this field no one could readily deny who has even perused his works and sermons. The question of sincerity, too, must be placed beyond the

shadow of a doubt. Not sharing in Spinoza's point of view with other aspects of his philosophy, he surely shared with him his God-intoxication. It is both difficult and painful, in view of these circumstances, to offer criticism of such an individual. But try as he may to sympathize with Enelow's theology, this writer can not do so. Not that he opposes in any form or manner the exalted God-idea of Enelow. Criticism is only brought to bear upon Enelow's use of this idea. For Enelow talks of the love of God almost constantly but never once does he attempt to bring this down to earth. Though he claims not to be against social justice as such, he abuses the latter idea by making it seem in contradiction with the God concept which should be both its source and ultimate goal. And never once does Enelow, in the name of his God, define love, justice, or righteousness in terms of the social, economic, or political issues of his day. The League of Nations has just been formed — with the support of America it might maintain world peace for years to come — surely this is a Jewish ideal. But Enelow seems content to pray for peace and not to work for it — on the League of Nations we find only a passing reference.⁵⁰ Elsewhere Enelow states that to be true to themselves, Jews must be associated with all causes that combat

paganism and bright light to the world,⁵¹ but nowhere does he define either paganism or "all causes" and nowhere does he himself associate himself with one. Enelow's attitude toward social justice is a hostile one because he claims that it often empties Judaism of its God-content. He says that the working class need not look outside of Judaism for social justice because this is contained within Judaism.⁵² But one looks in vain for a sermon of understanding on the problem of the working people or on the Negro problem in America. To the cynic it might seem that the theologian is using the idea of the supernatural to cover up the real ethical problems of men in their relation to society, nature, and the universe. But against Enelow no one could make such an accusation. The worst that can be said is that his spiritual nature was so compelling a force within him that it charged him on, giving him the ability to express great truths in universal terms, and leaving it for lesser minds to go to the particulars — to translate them in meaningful terms to the masses of people. Perhaps here is a clue to the reason of the gulf that existed between Enelow on the one hand and great numbers of people on the other. Neither seemed to be able to build a bridge to one another, though a meeting half-way might have been profitable to both.

5. Summary

The contents of Enelow's sermons are so vast and the fields they cover so many, that like the writing of books, one could go on endlessly finding classifications for them. Thus far we have grouped numerous themes under several general headings, because we believed that it were possible to draw a clearer picture of the man in this fashion than in any other. We have dealt with Enelow's theory of the sermon, the organization and forms he employs and his literary qualities. Under contents we have sketched some of his thoughts on Judaism, Zionism, Christianity, Jesus, Anti-Semitism, Theology, Social Justice, etc. And yet, so much more can always be explored. Before concluding, let us merely attempt to touch upon some themes not previously mentioned.

Enelow has something of interest to tell us in a sermon called "Times and Forms of Prayer." He explains the necessity for a fixed time and form as a religious discipline and a bulwark against anarchy. He shows us how we can learn from the experience of the past but warns that only prayers offered sincerely can have meaning and will be heard.⁵³ Enelow loves the liturgy of Judaism and finds occasion time and time again to explain it to the people

and make it an influence for good in their lives. Thus he explains the Kaddish in terms of its spiritual worth and value as "a chant of praise, of hope, of prayer in time of adversity, misfortune, and sorrow, a chant which transfuses our own sorrow into a song of universal hope."⁵⁴ Besides the liturgy, Enelow talks also of ceremonies in Judaism. He explains them in terms of a three-fold purpose -- as an outward expression to religious emotions such as gratitude and humility, to keep up memories of the past, and finally, to stimulate the ethical and spiritual life of the people. Enelow advocates the use of ceremonies that are full of meaning and significance and points out the Confirmation as an outstanding example of one introduced by Reform Judaism. He calls those who would destroy the ceremonies as such "iconoclasts or spiritual vandals sailing under the banner of Reform," and concludes with the hope that we -- "preserve both the ideas of our religion and the forms designed to express them. Thus, our lives shall be filled with beauty and strength."⁵⁵

There is also an element of mysticism in Enelow as his sermons show, as does his preoccupation with Jesus and Christianity. He believes that the mystical element in religion consists of three parts. The first of these is the personal experience and he illustrates this with Moses

and the burning bush, with Isaiah's vision in the Temple, with St. Francis, and with Rabbi Isaac Lurya.⁵⁶ The second of these parts of mysticism is contemplation which begets the personal experience, and the third element of mysticism must be service. The true mystic, as Moses was, is not a recluse but one who renders service to men. This, Enelow finds, is the mystic element in Judaism. He finally advocates contemplation, the method of the mystic, for all men.⁵⁷

Enelow is fond of dealing with personalities. Besides those already mentioned under the theme of Judaism, his lectures include subjects as Maimonides, Philo, Spinoza, Hillel, Saadya, and Mendelsohn among a host of others. With these an attempt is made and successfully consummated to present their contributions in popular terms. Light is thus shed not alone on these illustrious figures but on the meaning of Judaism as well. Enelow deals also with non-Jewish personalities. Among these are Alfred the Great, Matthew Arnold, Emerson, Pasteur, Milton, Cromwell, Longfellow, Tolstoy and Lincoln. His aim is never merely to discuss literature or politics but to draw lessons from the lives of these men, as their own lives reflected human strength and weakness. His portraits then are not literary, but essentially religious.

Enelow loved the United States of America. As an immigrant boy from Europe, he could appreciate perhaps even better than the native born the blessing of liberty offered in this land. His gratitude finds echoes in his sermons over and over again. As he so often utilized Christmas and Easter to preach on Jesus and Christianity, so he never neglected to preach on Lincoln and Washington on the occasion of their birthdays. Enelow never failed to observe Thanksgiving Day. On these occasions he would be accustomed to preach on gratitude to God for permitting us as Jews and Americans to enjoy the freedom and liberties of our country.

We have not, to be sure, exhausted the many themes on which Enelow preached. We have but selected the more important ones, those which appear over and over again, to draw Enelow's portrait. We have portrayed lights and shadows, have concealed nothing, have been equally free and frank with praise and criticism. But when all is weighed in the balance, Enelow emerges as a truly great preacher and teacher of liberal Judaism, one who must ever serve as an inspiration to his colleagues and his people.

CONCLUSION

Some day Hyman G. Enelow may receive the appreciation that was denied him in life. Some day he may find a niche in the Hall of Fame of Judaism with his name carved thereon as one of the immortals of his people. Whether this exalted position is rightly his, posterity will sooner or later decide. Our evaluation of him at this time will be more modest. As a human being he was not without blemish nor can we entertain sympathy for all his ideas. But he was a fine scholar, a good rabbi, and a splendid preacher. His character was pure and saintly as befits a truly religious spirit. And whether or not he ever achieves spectacular fame in the annals of his people, he must ever be recognized as one in the true succession of the pious and self-effacing teachers in Israel.

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1. Vol. IV, pp. 41-77.
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6. Vol. III, p. 296.
7. Vol. I, p. 49.

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7. Vol. IV, p. 329.
8. Vol. IV, pp. 41-77 (See note 1, chapter I).
9. Vol. IV, pp. 59-60.
10. Vol. IV, p. 65.
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17. Vol. IV, p. 188.
18. Vol. IV, p. 243.
19. Vol. IV, pp. 393-414.
20. Vol. III, pp. 409-509.
21. Vol. I, p. 47.
22. Ibid.
23. Vol. I, p. 48.
24. Vol. IV, p. 252.

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3. Vol. I, p. 169.
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