



LIBRARY COPYRIGHT NOTICE

www.huc.edu/libraries

Regulated Warning

See Code of Federal Regulations, Title 37, Volume 1, Section 201.14:

The copyright law of the United States (title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be “used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.” If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

U

Statement by Referee of Master's Thesis

The M.H.L. dissertation entitled:

"Kaufmann Kohler as Reformer"

written by Robert J. Marx
(name of student)

- 1) may (with revisions) be considered for
publication (X)
cannot be considered for publication ()
- 2) may, on request, be loaned by the Library (X)
may not be loaned by the Library ()

Samuel S. Cohon
(signature of referee)

Samuel S. Cohon
(referee)

February 19, 1951
(date)

KAUFMANN KOHLER AS REFORMER

by

ROBERT J. MARX

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for
the Master of Hebrew Letters
Degree and Ordination.

Hebrew Union College-
Jewish Institute of Religion
Cincinnati, Ohio
January, 1951

Referee:
Professor Cohon

Microfilmed 5/69

Summary of Thesis
"Kaufmann Kohler as Reformer"

Born and raised in an atmosphere of strictest Orthodoxy, Kaufmann Kohler was deeply influenced by his Orthodox teachers and especially by Samson Raphael Hirsch, whose idealism and love of Judaism Kohler emulated. Through his studies at various Universities, however, Kohler came into contact with the ideas of Reform Judaism. In writing his doctoral thesis, Der Segen Jacob's, he utilized the principles of Bible Criticism and came to the realization that Judaism, far from being a static religion, revealed a continuous process of development.

When it became clear that no Rabbinical position would be available to Kohler in Germany, he turned to America, and with the endorsement of Abraham Geiger, he was offered a rabbinical position in Detroit. David Einhorn who met Kohler upon his arrival in this country, was to become not only Kohler's father-in-law, but his spiritual father as well. Admiring Einhorn's ardor and devotion to the cause of Reform Judaism, Kohler referred to him as the "Theologian par excellence among the Reform pioneers."

As Rabbi in Detroit, in Chicago and in New York, Kohler championed the cause of progressive Judaism. In the spirit of radicalism and in an effort to stem the tide of "apostacy and indifference," Dr. Kohler introduced the Sunday service. He later admitted, however, that his views toward the Sunday service had changed, and he emphasized the importance of maintaining Israel's historic Sabbath. Though he often inveighed against

"Orientalism" and "blind letter worship," Kohler respected sincere Orthodoxy. It was actually the spirit of irreverence and irreligion which he opposed. For this reason, he objected to Zionism, regarding it as a national rather than a religious movement.

It was in 1885, during his ministry at Temple Beth El in New York that Dr. Kohler defended Reform Judaism in a public controversy with Dr. Alexander Kohut, who represented a conservative point of view. In the same year, in an effort to clarify the principles upon which Reform Judaism was based, Dr. Kohler convened the Pittsburg Conference. The Platform which this conference issued has come to be regarded as a most important statement of the principles of Reform Judaism. Kohler's conviction that the position of Judaism must be clarified, guided him in editing the philosophy and theology sections of the Jewish Encyclopedia and in writing his historic and systematic study of Jewish Theology.

Though Dr. Kohler had never completely agreed with Isaac Mayer Wise, it soon became apparent that he was the most suitable man to succeed Wise as the President of the Hebrew Union College. Accepting the position in 1903, Dr. Kohler endeavored to instill a deeper religious spirit into the College. Though he was opposed by several members of the faculty, his position was sustained, and he succeeded in creating a theological seminary which stood for "definite principles". Dr. Kohler ever advocated a Judaism which would emphasize spirituality, honesty and moral integrity. To these ideals he devoted his life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction.....	1
I. THE PATHWAY TO REFORM	
A. Education and Bible Criticism.....	1
B. Reform and Reformers.....	11
C. Philadelphia Conference, Chicago and the Sunday Sabbath.....	27
II. TEMPLE BETH EL	
A. Orthodoxy and the Pittsburg Conference.....	36
B. Sunday Services.....	62
C. The Function of Ceremonies.....	81
III. THE THEOLOGIAN OF REFORM JUDAISM	
A. Zionism and the Mission of Israel..	94
B. Jewish Education and <u>Jewish</u> <u>Theology</u>	99
IV. THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE	
A. Kohler and Wise.....	112
B. A Reform Theological Seminary.....	121
C. Later Years.....	134

INTRODUCTION

The last decades of the nineteenth century were crucial ones in the history of Reform Judaism. In Germany, the creative energy of Geiger, Holdheim, Samuel Hirsch and of the other giants of reform was spending itself and the spirit of enthusiasm and of idealism which characterized the activities of these early reformers was on the decline. Instead a spirit of iconoclasm and pessimism which led to assimilation and conversion seemed to hold sway over the enlightened Jews of Germany. German Reform Judaism came to be regarded by many as merely a stepping stone to Christianity.

The reasons for the failure of the Reform movement in Germany are numerous and complicated. Surely one of these reasons is the lack of vision which characterized the later German Reformers. Reform in Germany assumed a self-critical, negative attitude. Many of its adherents carried Holdheim's radicalism to its extreme and endeavored to bring Judaism to the point where it could hardly be distinguished from Christianity. The effort to transfer the Sabbath to Sunday was merely one aspect of this attitude.

A more important reason, however, for the failure of Reform Judaism in Europe, is to be found in the very nature of the reform movement. Born of the same spirit which produced the French Revolution, Reform Judaism breathes the spirit of freedom. The cry of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity which swept through Europe as a result of the Revolution and as a

result of Napoleon's conquests, could not fail to stir Judaism as well. It could not fail to reawaken the ancient longing for freedom. In Germany especially, leaders arose who were anxious to free Judaism from the chains of authority and to transform it into a living force with a vital message. Under the impetus of their new found freedom and equality, the leaders of reform were able to make Reform Judaism a powerful force upon the religious scene. But in Germany the promises of freedom and equality for the Jew soon became a fleeting dream. It was soon realized that only assimilation, only conversion to Christianity could bring a semblance of real freedom. And so the hope of Reform Judaism was frustrated.

Disappointed in Germany, the men of vision who could not desert their ideas turned their energies elsewhere--to the free soil of the United States. One by one they deserted the bigotry and the medievalism of European oppression, and wended their way to America and freedom. This was the path of Isaac Mayer Wise, of David Einhorn and Samuel Hirsch, and of Kaufmann Kohler. These men brought with them the living spirit of Judaism, and in free America they transformed Reform Judaism into a meaningful and powerful force. These men realized that only in a free country could Reform Judaism hope to attain its full stature. Kohler expressed this very idea when he wrote:

"The generation which groaned under the yoke of Egyptian bondage were not permitted nor qualified to see the light and liberty of the land of promise. Neither does the generation brought up in the social and spiritual subjection of the Ghetto

realize today what mighty world-redeeming forces and what glorious opportunities for the future a truly free and universalistic Judaism, as the world's unconquered conqueror, will have." (1)

As much as any other single man, Kaufmann Kohler determined the destiny of the Reform movement in America. The present study shall attempt to analyze Kohler as a reformer, and to determine the nature and the quality of his reforms. For the purpose of this study the details of Kohler's life are not of primary importance. It is impossible, however, to fully understand Kohler's activities as a Reformer without also understanding the conditions and the events which influenced his life.

The sources which present a picture of Kohler as a Reformer cover a wide range of material. Invaluable as a source of information are the published volumes of Kohler's studies and addresses. These include: The Hebrew Union College and other Addresses, a collection of sermons and addresses which was published while Kohler was president of the Hebrew Union College;

(1) The Reform Movement and Russian Intellectuals," American Jewish Chronicle, Vol. I, No. 4, June 2, 1916, p. 103. See also Kohler's article "American Reform Judaism" which was printed in the January 19, 1923 issue of the American Hebrew: "Alas the anticipated religious reawakening of the people in the fatherland of Reform did not take place. The reaction which set in from above and from within checked the movement, and the masses fell back into religious lethargy and indifference. America, the land of promise and of unimpeded freedom and progress, was to offer the congenial soil for the Reform movement." p. 342.

Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, a collection which was published after Kohler's death by the Alumni Association of the Hebrew Union College; and finally, A Living Faith, sermons and addresses edited by Dr. Samuel S. Cohon. The library of the Hebrew Union College possesses many of Kohler's published sermons and addresses. In addition to these volumes of addresses and studies, Kohler's doctoral thesis, entitled Der Segen Jacob's and his Jewish Theology complete the list of published volumes which are indispensable to an understanding of Kohler as a Reformer. Not to be forgotten, however, are the numerous articles written by Kohler which appear in the Jewish Encyclopedia, and which are helpful in understanding how Kohler's scholarly studies influenced his attitude toward Reform.

In understanding Kohler as a personality, this author referred to H.G. Enelow's "A Biographical Essay" which appears in the introduction to Kohler's work, The Origin of Synagogue and Church as well as in the American Jewish Yearbook for 5687 (1926-7). Another insight into the life and ideas of Kohler is provided by David Philipson in his biographical essay, "Kaufmann Kohler" which appeared originally in the Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society in 1928. Dr. Cohon's sermon, Dr. Kaufmann Kohler, Theologian of Reform Judaism, which was delivered in the chapel of the Hebrew Union College on May 10, 1943 in commemoration of the centenary of the birth of Kohler, was also of much help in understanding Kohler as a personality. Wherever possible, works which dealt with Kohler as a

Reformer and as a theologian, were consulted. In this connection Philipson's autobiography, My Life as an American Jew, as well as the articles written by Philipson, Max Kohler, and David Neumark which appeared in Kohler's Festschrift entitled Studies in Jewish Literature, were very useful. This latter work which was published in honor of Dr. Kohler's Seventieth birthday, contains articles which deal with Kohler the man, the reformer and the theologian. Numerous periodicals, such as the Reform Advocate, the American Hebrew, the Jewish Times, and The American Israelite reflect the influence of Kohler. Even more important are the periodicals The Jewish Reformer and the Sabbath Visitor which are full of sermons and articles by Kohler and whose pages reveal Kohler's editorial influence. Of special interest were the Yearbooks of the Central Conference of American Rabbis between 1890 and 1926, for the pages of these yearbooks give us a picture of Kohler as he championed the cause of Reform Judaism.

One of the most important sources of information for this study was found in the material which the American Jewish Archives so graciously placed at my disposal. This material includes unpublished sermons and addresses by Kohler as well as some of his manuscripts and letters. In addition, the Archives possess several letters written by Abraham Geiger with reference to Kohler, and most important of all, photostats of the Minutes of the Board of Temple Beth El in New York. Finally we must mention the minutes of the Board of Governors of the

Hebrew Union College which illumine the period during which Kohler served as president of the College.

To Mrs. Ernst Lauter of the American Jewish Archives and to Mr. Maxwell Lyons of the Hebrew Union College, I owe a special debt of gratitude. Their helpfulness placed at my disposal materials which otherwise would have been inaccessible. My deepest appreciation is offered to Professor Samuel S. Cohon, without whose inspiration and guidance this study could never have been undertaken.

THE PATHWAY TO REFORM

A. Education and Bible Criticism

On the 10th of May, 1843, in the Bavarian city of Furth, no one would have dreamed that the son of Moritz and Babette Kohler, who was born that day, would someday become one of Reform Judaism's greatest leaders. Kaufmann Kohler was born and raised in an atmosphere of strictest Orthodoxy. Not only was Furth the seat of a great Yeshibah and a strong center of Orthodoxy, but also Kohler's ancestors were numbered among the (1) leaders of Orthodoxy. Kohler tells of how his father would study after the morning service in the Synagogue as well as at (2) home in the evening. Kohler's mother, too, was steeped in the orthodox tradition, and she could trace her ancestry back to (3) a long line of rabbis.

The religious education of Kohler, too, seemed to point toward Orthodoxy. By the age of five he had been introduced to the study of Chumesh, and a year later he had begun the study of Talmud at the Jewish Orphan Asylum under the tutelage (4) of Simon Bamberger. Kohler's father was one of the directors there and so he paid for his son's instruction, though most of (5) the pupils were indigent Jewish orphans. Other teachers of the

(1) Cf. Kaufmann Kohler, "Personal Reminiscences of My Early Life," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, pp. 469-70. See also H.G. Enelow, "A Biographical Essay" in Kohler's, The Origin of Synagogue and Church, p. vii. This essay is also to be found in the American Jewish Yearbook for 5687 (1926-7).

(2). Kohler, op.cit.

(4) Ibid.

(3). Ibid.

(5) Max Kohler, "Biographical Sketch of Dr. K. Kohler" in Studies in Jewish Literature, p. 1

young Kohler included Dr. Marcus Lehman, the head of a yeshi-
bah at Mayence, R. Jacob Ettlinger of Altona, and, most impor-
tant of all, Samson Raphael Hirsch of Frankfort.⁽¹⁾

Of Samson Raphael Hirsch, Kohler wrote: "The man who ex-
erted the greatest influence upon my young life and imbued me
with the divine ardor of true idealism was none other than the
representative of what was called Neo-orthodoxy, Samson Raphael
Hirsch..."⁽²⁾ It is important that we do not underestimate the
tremendous influence which Hirsch's strong personality had
upon young Kohler. It was he who instilled Kohler with the
love of Judaism which was to remain with him even after he
left the ranks of the Orthodox. "Samson Raphael Hirsch", he
wrote, "liberated me from the thralldom of blind authority
worship, and led me imperceptibly away from the old mode of
thinking, into the realm of free reason and research... The
spirit of his teachings electrified me and became a life long
influence to me."⁽³⁾ Even when in later years, Kohler was forced
to struggle with the problems presented by reform, he was able
to write: "Still, while wrestling with my God and my own past,
I never lost hold upon my ancestral faith, nor did I for a mo-
ment become a skeptic."⁽⁴⁾

(1) K. Kohler, op.cit. pp. 473-5; Enelow, op.cit. p. viii

(2) K. Kohler, op.cit. p. 475

(3) Yearbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis,
Vol. XVIII, 1908, pp. 210-214

(4) K. Kohler, op.cit. p. 478

But at the same time, Kohler was beginning to come into contact with the forces which were to turn him from Orthodoxy to Reform. While studying under Hirsch at Frankfort, Kohler also attended the Gymnasium of Frankfort where he met the two sons of Abraham Geiger. Still, however, Kohler remained loyal to his Orthodox teacher and refused to have anything to do with reform. "Not for the world," he wrote, "would I ever approach them (i.e. the sons of Geiger) with the view of being introduced to their renowned father, the Reform leader. Nor did I ever enter any of the Reform temples either in Frankfort or Mayence, having been taught to regard them as a Tiflah -- a per-⁽¹⁾version of a house of worship."

Finishing his studies in Frankfort, Kohler entered the University at Munich where he studied, among other courses, Arabic, under the tutelage of Professor Mueller. It was this course under Professor Mueller which started him on the pathway toward reform. "My Arabic studies under Prof. Mueller in Munich," he writes, "at once undermined the exegetical system of S.R. Hirsch, built upon the assumption that Hebrew was the original language, and the philosophical and historical lectures I attended knocked the bottom out of his whole theol-⁽²⁾ogy." Deeply disturbed by the new ideas which seemed to crowd into his mind, Kohler turned to Frankfort to his old teacher, Samson Raphael Hirsch, for reassurance. But instead

(1) Ibid. p. 475

(2) Ibid. p. 476

of helping him solve his doubts, Hirsch announced: "My dear Kohler, he who wants to journey around the world must also pass the torrid zone; proceed and you will come back safely."⁽¹⁾ Kohler proceeded, but it soon became clear that he could never return to the point from which he had started.⁽²⁾

At Munich, at Berlin and at Erlangen, Kohler continued his studies, and drew further and further from Orthodoxy. Kohler soon came under the influence of Professor Hayim Steinthal of whom he wrote: "It was Prof. Steinthal's mythological, philosophical and historical studies which exerted the profoundest influence upon my whole thinking and feeling."⁽³⁾ Under the influence of Steinthal, Kohler wrote his doctoral thesis, Der Segen Jacob's. This thesis, which created a comparative sensation when it appeared, marked Kohler's complete break with Orthodoxy. Using the critical method, Kohler dealt with the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis, the Blessing of Jacob, and sought to discover the period in which the Blessing of Jacob was probably written. He also tried to analyze the conditions which the Blessing reflected. To some his conclusions were startling, for he was able to prove that the Blessing of Jacob as well as the entire Pentateuch reflected a process of historical evolution, that the concept of the Mosaic origin of

(1) Ibid. p. 476

(2) Ibid. See also Samuel S. Cohon, Dr. Kaufmann Kohler, Theologian of Reform Judaism, pp. 6-7

(3) K. Kohler, op.cit. p. 477

the law was no longer tenable. Most interesting of all, however, was his theory that the prophetic element was not limited to one period of Jewish history, but that its influence formed part of the continuous evolution of Jewish history.

One of the most interesting and controversial aspects of the Segen Jacob's was its introduction. Here Kohler pointed to the shortcomings of a religion which has become enmeshed in its past. In moving words, Kohler pleaded for a living religion, one which would adapt the past to the needs of the present, not one which would shackle the minds of men.

"In the name of religion everything that is old and traditional is called holy, while all that is new is as such condemned, as well as all progress. In the name of religion, men are not allowed to think, to gain spiritual independence and maturity. That foolish principle has served to transplant crass ignorance and pollution to Jewish soil, also; a principle, the harshness of which is felt in its full force by him only who, through love of truth and in the service of faith and by a sense of deep union with Judaism has struggled for freedom of thought and has had to pay for it dearly step by step." (2)

Freedom of thought, in religion as in all matters, Kohler argued, is indispensable to a meaningful religion. "Is it not imperative", he asks, "that children be taught nothing in the name of religion which, the next hour, would be contradicted or nullified by the teacher of the natural sciences?" (3) Shall we make religion ridiculous, or shall we make it vital and meaningful? (4) -- This is the question which confronts all re-

(1) Ibid, p. 478

(2) Der Segen Jacob's, p. IV; translated by Enelow, op.cit. p. xi

(3) Ibid, p. V; Enelow, p. xi

(4) Ibid, p. V. "Oder soll - und das ist der weniger ausgesprochene als gehegte Plan des Indifferentismus und des materialis -

ligious leaders. Only by combining the truths of the past with the needs of the present and the ideals of the future, he said, can Judaism remain a living religion.

"And what are the ideals of the future of mankind, if not those which Judaism, or to speak more generally, Prophetism, put forth more than twenty-five hundred years ago, namely, that the time would come when men, united by a love of peace and truth, would regard and love one another as the children of God?" (1)

The prophetic element, in religion, Kohler maintained, has ever fought for a higher concept of religion and for a more
(2)
pure worship of God.

It is important that we do not underestimate the importance of the Segen Jacob's for Kohler's thinking. Beginning with a critical approach to the Pentateuch, Kohler was led inescapably to the conclusion that Judaism, instead of being a static religion was an ever growing and evolving one. The concept of evolution, in turn, led him to a formulation of Israel's mission as a people. The interpretation of Israel's mission, too, is anything but a static concept; it may vary

(4) (con't.): tischen Nihilismus -- die Religion zur Lächerlichkeit und der Auflösung entgegengeführt werden?"

(1) Ibid., p. VI; Enelow, p. xi.

(2) Ibid., p. VI. "Der Prophetismus ist nichts anderes als ein steter Fortschritt der Ideen, ein mit immer wirksamerem Erfolg fortgesetzter Kampf der Wahrheit gegen den Unverstand, der Idee gegen die rohe Sinnlichkeit, der reinen sittlichen Gottesverehrung gegen den menschenentwürdigenden Götterdienst."

in the different periods of Jewish history. But just as Judaism evolves and grows, so too must the concept of its mission grow.

Needless to say, the concept of an evolutionary process working within Judaism was to have a tremendous influence upon Kohler throughout his entire life. Years later, in a paper delivered before the Central Conference of American Rabbis, dealing with the origin of ceremonies in Judaism, Kohler was able to show that the entire sacrificial cult was the result of the same process of evolution and assimilation that characterized later periods of Jewish history. A study of Phoenician, Babylonian and other sources as well as the Mosaic code itself, he pointed out, provides convincing proof that the authors of the sacrificial law, simply adopted the rules of "priestly practice prevalent for ages," eliminated objectionable elements, and in general "gave the whole service a higher and more spiritual
(1)
meaning and purpose." Thus Kohler is able to see in all religious ceremonies, and, for that matter, in all religion, a constant process of growth and development, and a constant search
(2)
for nobler forms of expression and religious ideas.

Some of the problems which Kohler touched upon in Der Segen Jacob's we must discuss in greater detail later, when we have more information before us. Suffice it to say that

(1) Yearbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, Vol. XVII, 1907, pp. 210-211.

(2) Ibid., p. 210, p. 222.

the ideas which Kohler first introduced in his doctoral thesis were to have a tremendous influence upon his thinking as a reformer and as a theologian. Kohler himself regarded his study as the first analysis of the prophetic element in the Pentateuch.⁽¹⁾ "Some of my main arguments," Kohler reports, "were adopted by the well-known Dutch critic Abraham Kuenen in his History of the Religion of Israel without even the mention of my name except when he differed with me as to detail."⁽²⁾

The principles of Biblical criticism which Kohler utilized in his Segen Jacob's formed the very basis of his activities as a reformer. Throughout his entire life Kohler remained a staunch defender of Biblical Criticism. The Bible, he maintained, "must be read in the light of its own history. Its characters, its laws, its legends, its poetry, and history must be judged by the standard of their age, not by ours, which, owing to the Bible's influence is a far higher one."⁽³⁾ If one will only examine the Bible thoroughly, he cannot escape the conclusion that far from being the product of one revelation or of one period in history, the Bible is a product of many periods and it reflects many stages of thought.⁽⁴⁾ Even the forms of worship and the laws prescribed in the Bible are not uniform throughout.

(1) Kohler, op.cit., p. 478. Also Enelow, op.cit. p. xii.

(2) Ibid.

(3) "The Bible in the Light of Modern Research", Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 180.

(4) See Kohler, Jewish Theology , p. 12.

"They are changing, shifting and constantly improving, thus showing that all rites and ceremonies must change."⁽¹⁾ Certain ceremonies and laws may be acceptable for one age, and in another those same laws may be no longer tenable. Thus, for Kohler, Biblical Criticism is the very basis of Reform Judaism. "I maintain," he said, "that only this liberal view of the Bible offers the broad and solid foundation to that religion of humanity of which Reform Judaism is the exponent."⁽²⁾ Just as the Bible reveals a process of growth and evolution, so must religion in order to remain vital, be in a constant state of progress and evolution.⁽³⁾

For the Conservative scholars who maintain that the Mosaic Law and its Rabbinical interpretation were given to Moses on Mount Sinai, Kohler had little patience. "They would rather impute to the sacred writers all kinds of deficiencies in logic and grammar in oratory and common sense, than allow the intact state of the Holy writings to be questioned!"⁽⁴⁾ Kohler, however, was convinced that the scholar in his search for truth can not overlook the fact that the Bible which we possess has certainly undergone changes since its writing. "A careful study of the text of the twenty-four books," he wrote, "has convinced me that few chapters have escaped corruptions by mistake of writers,

(1) "The Bible in the Light of Modern Research", Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 180 .

(2) Ibid., p. 179.

(3) Ibid., p. 180.

(4) "Emendations of the Hebrew Text of Isaiah," Reprinted from Hebraica, Vol. II, No. 1, October 1885, p. 39.

as well as alterations and interpolations at the hands of the
 scribes."⁽¹⁾

But Kohler always insisted that Biblical criticism had its time and place. Discussions of the Priestly Code or the Deuteronomic Code, or of the late origin of the Day of Atonement and the belief in Immortality, have no place in the pulpit. They are all right for the lecture hall, or for the class room, but they do not belong in a religious service. "You can not inspire the people with reverence for the scroll of the law which you hold up as Israel's banner of truth through the ages and at the same time dissect this very book, as the botanist does the beautiful flower when endeavoring to show its component parts."⁽²⁾

When Der Segen Jacob's appeared in 1867, it was greeted by a mixed reaction. Geiger greeted Kohler as a friend and praised his contribution to Biblical research.⁽³⁾ On the other hand, Kohler's former teacher, Dr. Marcus Lehmann, pronounced an anathema against the work and against Kohler himself.⁽⁴⁾ Dr. Loewi, who had planned to make Kohler rabbi of the congregation of Neurenberg, greeted the work by asking: "Must a man tell all he knows to people who will hardly understand him?"⁽⁵⁾ In reply to this

(1) Ibid.

(2) "The Scholar and the Preacher," A Living Faith, p. 142.

(3) "Personal Reminiscences of My Early Life," Studies, Addresses, and Personal Papers, p. 478.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Ibid.

criticism Kohler remarked: "He did not realize that there was in me something of that fire of which the prophet Jeremiah says, that it cannot be quenched. I went indeed through the pangs of of Jeremiah when I saw my parents who had built such great hopes upon my future, exposed to fanatical animosity and reproach for not disowning me." ⁽¹⁾ Yes, a fire was burning within Kohler, a fire which no criticism, no reproach, was strong enough to quench.

B. Reform and Reformers

It soon became apparent that a Rabbinical career in Europe was out of the question for young Kohler. As a man of action, a man who had a spiritual message to convey, he found little satisfaction in looking forward to a purely literary career. "Altogether," he writes, "my heart was not in mere literary enterprises, and Dr. Geiger pointed to America as the land of promise for progressive Judaism..." ⁽²⁾ Nor was Kohler completely satisfied with the direction which the reform movement had taken in Europe. In his Reminiscences he reports that he attended the Synod at Leipzig in 1869, but was disappointed in what he saw there. Surely meeting the great leaders of reform could not but have impressed the young idealist, but Kohler could not help criticizing the "half measures agreed upon in the spirit of com-

(1) Ibid., 478-9.

(2) Ibid., p. 479.

(1)
promise."

Despite his disappointment in the synod at Leipzig, Kohler was becoming increasingly strong in his conviction that reform Judaism represented the only correct interpretation of historical Judaism. In an article written in Germany, but which appeared in the Jewish Times of New York, (2) Kohler emphasized the idea of development within Judaism. Clearly showing the influence of Geiger, Kohler tried to show that Reform is necessary to the concept of (3) an ever developing and growing Judaism.

On behalf of his young friend, Geiger wrote letters of recommendation to the leaders of the American reform movement, to Einhorn and Adler, to Felsenthal and Lilienthal. (4) "I want him to sow his seeds in America's receptive soil", wrote Geiger, "and I will always be interested in his future." (5) It was to America,

(1) Ibid.

(2) "Das Judentum und seine Reformfähigkeit" ("Judaism and its Capacity for Reform") Jewish Times, Vol. 1, June and July, 1869. Nos. 16, 17, 19, 20.

(3) Ibid. See also David Philipson, "Kaufmann Kohler as a Reformer."

(4) "Personal Reminiscences of My Early Life", Studies, Addresses, and Personal Papers, p. 479.

(5) Letter from Geiger to Dr. Adler, dated April 4, 1869, which is in the possession of the American Jewish Archives. This letter reads in part: "So sei er Ihnen denn aufs Waermste und Nachdruecklichste empfohlen, moege er dort, wo doch die Menschheit und das Judentum sich ihre Zukunft gruenden werden, auf dem empfaenglichen Boden seine Saaten ausstreuen! Ich sehe mit vollster Theilnahme seiner Laufbahn, entgegen und werde einem Jeden von Herzen dankbar seine, der sie ihm eroeffnet und ebnet; ernstlich sie zu durchschreiten wird er schon selbst verstehen."

then, that Kohler turned his attention and when an invitation came, through Dr. Lilienthal, to accept the pulpit of Congregation Beth El in Detroit, Kohler readily accepted. On August 28, 1869, he arrived at New York, where he was greeted by Dr. Einhorn with whom he had been in correspondence for some time. The warm reception accorded by Einhorn was to be even more significant than Kohler at first suspected, for one year to the day after his arrival, he married Einhorn's daughter, Johanna.⁽¹⁾

The influence which David Einhorn had upon young Kohler is not to be underestimated. In Kohler's beautiful tribute to his father-in-law delivered before the Central Conference of American Rabbis, on the 100th anniversary of Einhorn's birth, the respect and affection which Kohler felt for Einhorn becomes apparent.⁽²⁾ The relationship that developed between the two men was more than that between a father and his son-in-law. There was also a deep intellectual bond that drew the two men close to one another. "In this intrepid Reformer," Professor Cohon points out, "Dr. Kohler found a kindred spirit. Throughout his career he reverently cherished the character and teaching of this passionate lover of truth and righteousness and acclaimed him as the 'theologian par excellence among the Reform pioneers.'⁽³⁾" He was convinced that

(1) Enelow, op.cit. p. xiv.

(2) "David Einhorn, The Uncompromising Champion of Reform Judaism", Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XIX, 1909, p. 215 ff.

(3) Cohon, op.cit., pp. 7-8. See also Kohler's, "A Pioneer of Reform Judaism--David Einhorn and His Place in American Jewish Life", Studies, Addresses, and Personal Papers, p. 522.

Einhorn was an important counterpart of Isaac M. Wise in the history of the reform movement. "While the great master-builder of American Judaism, Isaac M. Wise, followed the maxim of the German state-builder: 'First Unity and then Liberty,' Einhorn stood unyieldingly by the principle: 'First Truth and then Peace,' and thus became the master mind of Reform theology."⁽¹⁾

Kohler, too, understood the limitations of his father-in-law; he remained German in speech and mode of thought -- and regretted most deeply that Einhorn had not been more clearly understood.⁽²⁾

"He stood on top holding aloft the staff of Reform, and the masses understood him not."⁽³⁾ Nevertheless, it was due to Einhorn's energy and personality, to the "irresistable force of his arguments" and above all to his "ingenious model prayer-book, that Jewish reform became a vital movement upon the American religious scene."⁽⁴⁾

An analysis of Kohler's relationship to Einhorn provides us with an excellent point of departure for discussing his attitude toward other reformers. Of all the German reformers, Kohler could agree most completely with Einhorn. He felt that Einhorn's interpretation of reform was the correct interpretation; he admired

(1) "David Einhorn and Samuel Adler", Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 71.

(2) Ibid. See also, "David Einhorn, The Uncompromising Champion of Reform Judaism", Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XIX, 1909, p.252.

(3) Ibid.

(4) "Moses Mendelssohn", Studies, Addresses, and Personal Papers, p. 381.

(1)

Einhorn's fiery spirit that could brook no compromise. In reading Kohler's accounts of the other reformers, one can not escape the feeling that he is always comparing them to Einhorn; one feels that Einhorn has combined all of their virtues while avoiding most of their faults.

Surely there were other German reformers besides Einhorn who deserve admiration and respect. Had not Mendelssohn made a tremendous contribution to the enlightenment of European Jewry? His translation of the Bible into German and his magnificent work, Jerusalem, forms the very basis of the Reform movement. But Kohler could never accept Mendelssohn's unhistorical approach, nor his view that Judaism is an immutable religion. Such a view, Kohler felt, was too shallow to meet the demands of the present critical age. Mendelssohn's life was regulated by the Orthodox system, and he was of too conservative a spirit to participate in the necessary overthrow of antiquated customs and beliefs.

Especially disappointed was Kohler in Leopold Zurs, that brilliant scholar who cut a path through the forest of three thousand years of Jewish literature. As the founder of Jewish learning

(1) "David Einhorn and Samuel Adler," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 71.

(2) Cf. "Moses Mendelssohn and Modern Judaism", Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, pp. 364-382.

(3) Ibid., p. 379. See also, "Abraham Geiger--The Master Builder of Modern Judaism", Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 86.

(4) "Moses Mendelssohn or the Dawn of the New Era," The American Hebrew, Vol. 2, No. 9, April 16, 1880, p. 101. See also, "Moses Mendelssohn and Modern Judaism", Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 373.

as a science, Reform Judaism cannot but see in Zunz the "god-
 father who stood at the cradle."⁽¹⁾ But, while admiring his stu-
 pendous learning, Kohler regretted that Zunz's efforts were lost
 in a dry-as-dust erudition, and that he became an embittered op-
 ponent of Reform.⁽²⁾ "Embittered by disappointment in his own career,
 buried under the dust of books of past ages, and heart-hardened
 by incessant study of the tragic fate of his people, Zunz himself
 lost faith in the progress of Judaism, and turning backwards, he
 became as it were, a pillar of salt, a misanthropic pessimist..."⁽³⁾

We have already pointed out the tremendous debt which Kohler
 owed to his teacher and friend, Abraham Geiger. It was Geiger who
 introduced Kohler to the concept of development within Judaism. It
 was Geiger also who regenerated modern Judaism, separating the
 precious from the worthless, the kernel from the shell, in order
 to bring into greater potency Israel's eternal truth.⁽⁴⁾ With Geiger

(5) "Abraham Geiger, the Master Builder of Modern Judaism", Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 87. See also "Leopold Zunz", Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 387.

(1) "Leopold Zunz", The Jewish Reformer, Vol. I, No. 13, March 26, 1886, p. 8.

(2) "Abraham Geiger, the Master Builder of Modern Judaism", op.cit. p. 88.

(3) "Leopold Zunz," The Jewish Reformer, Vol I., No. 13, March 26, 1886, p. 8.

(4) "Abraham Geiger, The Master Builder of Modern Judaism," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 93.

the scholar and vitalizer of Judaism, Kohler could find no fault; but with Geiger the practical reformer, he was not satisfied.

Readily, would he admit that Geiger's brilliant grasp of Jewish history, his fertility and richness of mind could find no equal. ⁽¹⁾

Gladly did he hail him as the man who gave the reform movement its scientific basis and its historical foundation. ⁽²⁾ But despite his

indebtedness to Geiger, and his personal friendship with him, Kohler could not accept Geiger's conservative attitude toward practice, toward and ceremony. ⁽³⁾

Like Zechariah Frankel, that champion of Conservative Judaism, who "drew a line beyond which he would not push his historical research nor practical reform," ⁽⁴⁾ and Leopold Zunz who "fell short of the expectations he had aroused," because, "he was concerned more with dead formulas and tombstone inscriptions than with the living faith," ⁽⁵⁾ so too did Geiger fail to attain the promise which he earlier had shown. Afraid of carrying his theories to their logical conclusion, Geiger became more and more "conservative in practice and indefinite in his positive views and ideas, instead of reconciling both, as he had intended." ⁽⁶⁾

(1) Ibid., p. 96.

(2) Ibid., p. 83.

(3) "Moses Mendelssohn and Modern Judaism", Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 380. See also Cohon, op.cit., p.9.

(4) "Zechariah Frankel", A Living Faith, p. 225.

(5) "Abraham Geiger--The Master Builder of Modern Judaism", Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 88.

(6) "Moses Mendelssohn," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p.380.

Kohler now turned to Holdheim, the most radical of all the reformers, as his ideal. Holdheim's very radicalism, his advocacy of the transfer of the Sabbath to Sunday and his desire for other ceremonial reforms, appealed to Kohler⁽¹⁾. But Holdheim's chief virtue also became, in the eyes of Kohler, his chief fault. As the years passed, it became apparent to Kohler that Holdheim was too radical in his thinking, too iconoclastic in his approach to the ceremonies of Judaism. "History," wrote Kohler years later,⁽²⁾ "has given its verdict in disfavor of such radical measures."

Nor could Kohler accept the views of Samuel Hirsch, that other radical, who, like Einhorn, had been a leader of Reform in both Germany and the United States. While approving of Hirsch's "intellectual honesty and independence" which enabled him, with the help of Einhorn to emancipate American Judaism from "the thralldom of ritualistic hypocrisy and deceit,"⁽³⁾ Kohler could not accept Hirsch's effort to reinterpret Judaism along Hegelian philosophical lines. Though Kohler, too, emphasized the rational side of Judaism, he could never conceive of Judaism as a philosophical system, nor⁽⁴⁾ could he accept Divine revelation as an act of reason.

(1) See Cohon, op.cit., p. 9.

(2) "Moses Mendelssohn or the Dawn of the New Era", Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 380.

(3) "Samuel Hirsch," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 79.

(4) See "Samuel Hirsch--A Historical Study," A Living Faith, p. 232ff. See also Cohon, op.cit. p. 10.

In the last analysis, then, it was David Einhorn whom Kohler respected and admired more than any other. Kohler saw in this titan of the pulpit a combination of qualities that he could emulate. He possessed the firmness of character of Luther, the idealism of Schiller and the clear vision of Darwin.⁽¹⁾ But it was Einhorn's sincere devotion to the cause of Reform Judaism, more than any other characteristic, which won Kohler's admiration and affection. "His was the ardor of an Elijah," he wrote, "and the lofty eloquence of an Isaiah."⁽²⁾ Surely that meeting in New York, when Einhorn welcomed Kohler to America and to a new life was a happy occasion and an important one for both men.

Kohler's first sermon at Beth El, preached in German, dealt with the theme, The Qualities of a God-called Leader of Israel.⁽³⁾ Analyzing the personality of Moses, Kohler described that great prophetic figure as having two spiritual qualities--humility and compassion. In addition, Kohler discerned in Moses two mental qualities, qualities which are indispensable to the successful reformer--an historical sense for the past, and an understanding of the needs of the present and future.⁽⁴⁾

(1) "A Pioneer of Reform Judaism--David Einhorn and his Place in American Jewish Life," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 522.

(2) Ibid.

(3) "Die Eigenschaften eines gottberufenen Fuhrers der Gemeinde Israels," Jewish Times, Vol. I, No. 30, Sept. 24, 1869, p. 10 and No. 31, Oct. 1, 1869, pp. 10-11. See also Enelow, op.cit., p. xiv.

(4) Ibid.

Immediately the strong, uncompromising personality of Kohler the reformer was felt in Detroit. "I abolished the second day of yom tov, and the wearing of the Tallith," he wrote years later.⁽¹⁾ But this was surely not the most important of his activities as a reformer. Of his ministry in Detroit it has been said that "under his able guidance the congregation progressed with rapid stride.⁽²⁾ He was much beloved by all..." Even prior to his arrival in Detroit, Kohler had written two articles dealing with the meaning of Reform which had appeared in The Jewish Times of New York and soon after his arrival other articles appeared dealing with the need for reform.⁽³⁾ Just what was Kohler's concept of Reform? In both his Innaugural sermon at Temple Beth El in Detroit and, as we have seen, in his early articles for The Jewish Times, Kohler developed a concept of Reform Judaism which was to remain as a vital part of his outlook upon Judaism throughout his entire life. Over and over again Kohler enunciated the principle that he stated in his earliest articles and in his first innaugural address as well as in his last utterances: A living Judaism implies constant change and adjustment to the conditions of the time. In his innaugural address he expressed this idea by pleading for an interpretation of Judaism in terms of the needs of the present as well

(1) Kohler, "My Reminiscences of Temple Beth El, Detroit, Michigan." Delivered on the 75th Anniversary of Temple Beth El. American Jewish Archives.

(2) M. Kohler, op.cit. p. 5 quoting Rabbi Leo M. Franklin's statement in The History of Congregation Beth El, Detroit, Michigan, pp. 34-36.

(3) Enelow, op.cit. p. xv.

(1)
 as in terms of the historical past. This idea reaches its fullest development in Kohler's later writings: "In my opinion the Jewish religion has never been static, fixed for all time by an ecclesiastical authority, but has ever been and still is the result of a dynamic process of growth and development." (2) The very pattern of Kohler's Jewish Theology to which these words served as an introduction, reveals this doctrine in action. Jewish theology is an historical process, and Kohler treats it from an historical point of view. Judaism as a religion is still developing and will continue to develop and grow as long as Judaism is a vital religion.

In the concept of an ever developing and growing Judaism, possibly more than anywhere else, is the tremendous debt which Kohler owes to Geiger apparent. It was Geiger who had emphasized the idea of Judaism as a constantly growing and changing religion, and it was this very principle of development, he felt, that justified the Reform movement. (3) To understand Kohler, too, one must first realize the tremendous influence which the concept of development and growth had upon his religious thinking.

In an interesting article dealing with Kohler's interpretation of Judaism, the American Hebrew analyzed Kohler's historical approach to Judaism. "Dr. Kohler adopts the historical method,"

(1) See above.

(2) Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. viii.

(3) Kohler, "A Revaluation of Reform Judaism", Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XXXIV, 1924, p. 223. For a discussion of the influence of Geiger upon Kohler, see Philipson, "Kaufmann Kohler as Reformer" in Studies in Jewish Literature, pp. 12-13.

reads this editorial, "presenting with equal impartiality and force the old views, next the modifying influences, and lastly the resulting views... So impartially has each of these been portrayed, that it often happens that adherents of the old often quote Dr. Kohler's exposition of their views omitting the equally clear and most convincing statement of the transition from the old to the new.⁽¹⁾"

Surely Kohler had a profound regard for the lessons of the past. The very greatness of our age, he wrote, is to be found in its "searching for the causes underlying the past in its disclosure of all the hidden treasures of the old."⁽²⁾ The great task confronting the present is to reinterpret those lessons of the past, and to give them renewed meaning for our own age.⁽³⁾

Jewish history has always had meaning in terms of its own age. For example, Kohler points to many of the Mosaic and Rabbinical laws which had as their purpose the guarding of the Jewish people from the snare of idolatry. In almost every age Jews have had to protect themselves from the danger of assimilation; consequently laws which had as their purpose the guarding of Jewish identity became a necessity. Over a period of centuries a wall of Jewish separation was built up. But, argues Kohler, this wall of separation was kept up long after the cause had disappeared.⁽⁴⁾ Far from

(1) "The History of the Beth El Congregation," The American Hebrew, Vol. 48, No. 7, September 18, 1891, p. 160.

(2) "The Old and the New". Sermon Delivered at Temple Beth El, January 1, 1888, p. 7.

(3) Ibid.

(4) "The Faith of Reform Judaism," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 331.

being something that is harmful per se, the Jewish capacity to assimilate and to adapt itself to the cultures around it accounted for Judaism's very greatness.

"...what made the Jew's wondrous vigor and freshness of mind and spirit possible, but the very faculty of assimilation? In assimilating the cultural elements of Babylonia and Persia, of Hellas and Rome, of Arabia and Spain, of Italy, Germany and France, he went ever anew through the process of regeneration. In adopting the forms of life from the civilizations surrounding him, and utilizing them for his intellectual and spiritual life, he not only found the fountain of regeneration for himself, but he became a vital and vitalizing factor for the culture and world-view of the people in whose midst he lived." (1)

Reform Judaism is not a break with the past, it is not a schism, but it is rather an historical interpretation of Judaism. This interpretation is not a whim on the part of Reformers who wished to create a new religion, but it is an historical necessity, a response to the demands of the time, just as were Mosaic and Rabbinic Judaism in their time. (2) "We must do as Maimonides did, -- as Jews have always done, -- point out anew the really fundamental doctrines, and discard those which have lost their hold upon the modern Jew, or which conflict directly with his religious consciousness." (3)

Nor is Reform Judaism itself to be considered a completed process. Progressive Judaism implies not only growth up to the present

(1) Ibid.

(2) Ibid., p. 326.

(3) Jewish Theology, p. 27.

time, but also growth in the future. "It is a mistake," Kohler said, "to spell it Reformed Judaism, as in the Reformation of Luther and Calvin. What we claim is that Judaism has been and is a continuous evolutionary process of growth and reform."⁽¹⁾ Kohler admitted that there were many who were misled by the fact that Reform Judaism originated in Germany, the home of the Reformation. These people refer to it as Reformed Judaism "as if it were a system of thought or creed fixed and finished by a rabbinical body who broke with the past."⁽²⁾ It is possible that Kohler was not even satisfied with the name Reform Judaism. Much more to his liking was the designation Progressive. "Historical Judaism means progressive Judaism, and this is the name I claim for our principle of faith. Reform is no principle in itself; progress is."⁽³⁾

From the time that he preached his first sermon in this country until his death, Kohler was convinced that only Reform Judaism provided the key to Israel's future. Reform rejected obsolete views and meaningless forms of ancient times, or as he stated in his address at the fiftieth anniversary of Temple Beth El in New York, "Reform endeavored to breathe the spirit of a new life into the dry bones of formalism to save our religion from stagnation and decay."⁽⁴⁾ Kohler's plea was ever for a Living Faith, for a -----

(1) "Israel's Solidarity, American Reform Judaism and the Hebrew Union College," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 320. See also "A Revaluation of Reform Judaism," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R. Vol. XXXIV, 1924, p. 223.

(2) "The Faith of Reform Judaism," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 327/.

(3) "A United Israel," A Living Faith, p. 15.

(4) "Address at the Fiftieth Anniversary of Temple Beth El", A Living Faith, p. 301.

(1)
 "Living God". When he spoke of the need for a living God and a
 (2)
 living creed, Kohler was not speaking in platitudes, nor was he
 pleading for the formulation of a Jewish dogma. For Kohler the
 Living God was a revealing God. If one believes in a living creed
 he believes in a continuous revelation; he cannot accept Judaism
 as a completed process, but as a living continuous process. "Just
 as the great Creator is ever at work in the cosmic world, so does
 the work of divine Revelation continue to move the spirit of men.
 Religion, in order to be a life force must ever create new adequate
 forms, to embody its ever advancing ideas and ideals."⁽³⁾

Contrary to most religious thinkers, Kohler did not believe
 that the new doctrine of evolution constituted a threat to Judaism.
 The very doctrine of scientific evolution, he felt, proves the his-
 torical accuracy of reform. Have not Darwin and the other scien-
 tists proved the evolutionary process in history? Is religion a-
 lone, then, to be excluded from the evolutionary process? On the
 contrary, said Kohler, religion and science are partners; the more
 one learns of the workings of nature, the deeper becomes his reli-
 gious faith. "I think, evolution offers us a religion of hope,
 of life grander than any other system...Instead of alienating us
 from God it brings us right face to face with God."⁽⁴⁾ In the doc-

(1) "The Need of a Living Creed", A Living Faith, p.4.

(2) Ibid., p.3.

(3) "The Faith of Reform Judaism," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 329.

(4) "Evolution and Morality", Sermon Delivered at Temple Beth El,
 December 4, 1887, pp. 4-6.

Surely it leads unerringly to the "establishment of Israel's truth in the heart of the thinking world."⁽¹⁾

Kohler had no patience for those who attacked Reform as a
(2)
religion of convenience. "It was neither levity and irreverence,"
he said, "nor catering to social and political recognition," which
created the Reform movement, but rather it was an earnest "seeking
(3)
after truth;" it was the search for the living God. Yes, admitted
Kohler, Reform has created dissension in the household of Judaism,
and there are many who argue that Reform should come as a messen-
ger of peace rather than discord. But Judaism's God is a God of
truth, and Judaism is a religion of truth. Reform, therefore, must
never give up its struggle for its ideals and for its beliefs .
(4)
Truth first and then unity -- this was his motto.

We have before us now what might be called a preliminary picture of Kohler's conception of Reform Judaism. It is a picture of a religion which is ever growing and ever evolving, responding to the needs and conditions of the time. It is the pic-

(1) "A Day of Precious Memories and Bright Hopes," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 36.

(2) "Inaugural Address--What A Jewish Institution of Learning Shall Be," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 19. See also "David Einhorn and Samuel Adler," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 68, and "The Reform Movement and Russian Intellectuals" in The American Jewish Chronicle, Vol. I, No. 4, June 2, 1916, p. 103.

(3) "Israel's Solidarity, American Reform Judaism, and the Hebrew Union College," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 319.

(4) "David Einhorn and Samuel Adler," Hebrew Union College and
Other Addresses, p. 71.

ture of a religion, which, though based upon tradition and upon the past is geared to fit the present and is directed toward the future. For Kohler, Judaism was a living religion; its God was a living God--living not only in the pages of the Bible and Rabbinic literature, but in the hearts of living men as well. Above all, for Kohler Judaism was a religion of truth, willing to sacrifice all so that its truths may be established for all mankind. With these ideas in mind, we may seek to analyze Kohler's conception of Reform Judaism in its fuller implications.

C. Philadelphia Conference, Chicago and the Sunday Sabbath

Only a few months after his arrival in this country, Kohler attended the important Rabbinical Conference held at Philadelphia. The Conference which convened on November 3, 1869, brought together two rival forces on the scene of American Reform: David Einhorn and Samuel Hirsch led the so called Eastern Radical reformers who opposed what they felt was a compromising attitude represented by Isaac M. Wise and his followers. The very complexion of the Philadelphia Conference, the very presence of leaders of both groups, seemed to indicate that peace would at last be restored within the ranks of the reformers, and indeed, for a while it did appear that the deliberators had discovered grounds for mutual understanding. (1)

(1) Philipson, "Kaufmann Kohler," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XXXVI, 1926, p. 174. See also, Philipson, "History of the Hebrew Union College 1875-1925," Hebrew Union College Jubilee Volume, pp. 11-12.

But soon the dissension broke out all over again, and in the bitter struggle which was waged during the '70's of the 19th century, Kohler became a strong ally of his father-in-law and of the Eastern reformers.⁽¹⁾

Surprisingly enough, Kohler, despite the fact that he had been in the country less than three months, became an active participant in the deliberations of the Philadelphia Conference. Besides taking part in the general discussions of the conference, Kohler submitted several statements dealing with the problems of the conference. In one of these statements he discussed means of achieving an appropriate observance of the Sabbath and he urged the reading of prayers in the vernacular. Certain specified prayers,⁽²⁾ however, should be retained in the Hebrew. Another statement suggested the establishment of a society for the printing of a new translation of the Bible and other Jewish literature into

(1) Philipson, "Kaufmann Kohler," Yearbook of the C.A.A.R., Vol. XXXVI, 1926, p. 174. The strong antagonism between the Eastern Reformers and those led by Wise is reflected in an editorial of The Jewish Times, the organ of the Eastern Reformers: "The Philadelphia Conference has, in a great measure, been the work of The Jewish Times, the extinguishment of the Cincinnati and Cleveland Conferences has been certainly our work; and we are proud to say that in spite of every exertion the leaders of the un-holy Western clique stand isolated." Vol. VIII, No. 1. March 3, 1876. p. 8. See also Kohler, "David Einhorn, The Uncompromising Champion of Reform Judaism," Yearbook of the CCAAR, Vol. XIX, 1909, pp. 250, 252f., 264.

(2) Max Kohler, op.cit., p. 6. For a resume of the proceedings of the Philadelphia Conference see The Jewish Times, Vol. I, No. 36, Nov. 5, 1869, pp. 7-10; also Vol. I, No. 37, Nov. 12, 1869, pp. 497.

German and English. Kohler urged the adoption of a suitable Biblical reader for Sabbath schools. This idea later found expression in the establishment of the Jewish Publication Society.

Returning to Detroit from the Philadelphia Conference, Kohler served his congregation faithfully for over two years. Despite the fact that "the Congregation at once showed great attachment and kindness" to both Kohler and his wife, it seems to have been more conservatively inclined than Kohler could have wished. Consequently, when a call came from the more radical Sinai congregation in Chicago, Kohler accepted the invitation and on November 11, 1871, he preached his inaugural sermon in Chicago. Reaching that city soon after the terrible fire of 1871, Kohler, in his inaugural sermon, preached a message of comfort. Taking as his text the consoling words of the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah: "To give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the mantle of praise for the spirit of heaviness," Dr. Kohler developed a message of hope for the saddened Congregation and predicted a bright future for the desolate city. His beautiful prayer for

(1) The Jewish Times, Vol. I, No. 37, Nov. 12, 1869, p. 7.

(2) Kohler, "My Reminiscences of Temple Beth El, Detroit, Michigan." Delivered on the 75th Anniversary of Temple Beth El. American Jewish Archives.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid. See also Enelow, op.cit. p. xv.

(5) Enelow, op. cit. p. xv. See "Antrittsrede," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, pp. 497-508.

the future, seemed to epitomize the tone of the service.

"Segne, o Herr, diese Stadt und lass sie neu
aus den Ruinen erblühen und wie Silber das von
den Schlacken gereinigt und wie Gold das im
Schmelztiegel gelautert wird, schöner aus dem
Feuer erstehen!...

Segne die Genossenschaft Israels, Dein heil-
iges Erbe, segne diese Gemeinde mit allen
ihren Schwestergemeinden ihren Beamten und
Führern! " (1)

Sinai congregation was one of the more liberal congregations
in the country, having been the first congregation in the West
to adopt the Einhorn prayer book. In January of the year 1874,
Dr. Kohler induced the congregation to take another "radical"
(2)
step, to introduce Sunday Services. Much of a confusing nature
has been written about Kohler's attitude toward Sunday services
while he was the Rabbi of Sinai. Most of the writers who have
dealt with this issue have felt that Kohler merely introduced
the Sunday service as an additional service, to give those who
were unable to attend on Sabbath an opportunity to attend ser-
vices on Sunday. These writers feel that Kohler "started a ser-
vice on Sunday mornings because that seemed a good time to assem-
ble the people, in view of the decay of synagogal attendance on
the Sabbath, but neither then nor later on did he waver in his ad-
(3)
hesion to the sanctity of the historic Sabbath." Even the American
Hebrew, which certainly represented anything but a liberal point
of view, points out that when Kohler was in Chicago he "labored

(1) "Antrittsrede," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 508.

(2) Max Kohler, op.cit., p. 6.

(3) Enelow, op.cit. p.xvi.

to prevent" the sunday services from superseding the regular Sabbath service. (1) These statements, however, do not correctly represent Kohler's attitude toward the historic Sabbath during the period he was in Chicago. The confusion, it seems, was caused by Kohler himself, whose attitude toward Sunday services (2) as we shall see, changed greatly as the years progressed.

The key to an understanding of Kohler's attitude in Chicago toward the Sunday service is an understanding of Kohler's attitude toward Samuel Holdheim, the original advocate of Sunday services. We have already noted that as the years passed Kohler became more and more dissatisfied with Holdheim's radicalism. (3) Kohler, however, when he was in Chicago, had not yet rejected the radical theories which Holdheim espoused. Dr. Cohon accurately describes Kohler's attitude toward Holdheim at this period of his life when he says:

"Though he recognized that Holdheim's radical measures, such as the transfer of the Sabbath to Sunday and intermarriage, met with disfavor, he admired them in the belief that they stemmed the tide of apostacy and of licentiousness among the upper classes." (4)

And so it was in the radical spirit of Holdheim that Kohler introduced the Sunday service in Chicago. Kohler himself, in later

(1) The American Hebrew, Vol. 48, No. 7, Sept. 18, 1891, p. 160.

(2) Cf. A Living Faith, pp. 31-32.

(3) See above, p. 18.

(4) Cohon, op.cit., p. 9. See also "Moses Mendelssohn," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 380.

years admitted: "I am not unaware of the fact that I was a radical in my younger days. We all who love progress start forth as iconoclasts..."⁽¹⁾

In Chicago, Kohler not only introduced the Sunday service, but he also advocated as a necessity the transfer of the Sabbath to Sunday. His arguments in behalf of the Sunday Sabbath, he expressed in a series of two sermons preached in the summer of 1873. These sermons were abstracted and reprinted under the interesting title: "Jewish Reform, Movement to the Abandonment of the Mosaic Sabbath; Eloquent Plea in its behalf by Rabbi Kohler of Chicago."⁽²⁾

In these sermons, Kohler pictured the glory of the Jewish Sabbath. It was a day of communion with God; a day of recreation for the body and of elevation for the mind. It was an inexhaustible blessing to the Jewish house, a messenger of hope and comfort.⁽³⁾ But, says Kohler, the Sabbath has lost its old glory.

"Alas for the Jewish day of Sabbath! Its brightness and splendor are gone; its blossoms withered. It is no day of holy rest any more, no day of recreation and elevation and sanctification, but a day of noise of labor and business...You cannot realize the idea of this being a holy day."⁽⁴⁾

No longer can Jews observe their historic Sabbath as they could in the days when they were shut up in a Ghetto and separated from

(1) "Is Reform Judaism on the Decline?" Sermon preached at Keneseth Israel, Philadelphia, Sunday, March 28, 1903, p.1.

(2) Reprinted from the Inter-Ocean, August 22, 1873.

(3) Ibid., p. 3.

(4) Ibid., p. 4.

their Christian neighbors. Nor is there any advantage from a religious point of view in maintaining a separate Sabbath "... for the Jewish mission is to unite mankind, to do away with all the social and religious barriers, and make the name of God one and mankind one--one God, one mankind, and one day of communion with the Heavenly Father, a common Sabbath--this is our Messianic hope."⁽¹⁾

The Jewish Sabbath, Kohler points out, has actually become the public Sabbath day, for Jews rest from business on Sunday together with their Christian neighbors.⁽²⁾ Now, Kohler asks, does this mean that the Jewish Sabbath, with all of its remembrances, is lost forever? To this question Kohler answers emphatically, "No." "The Jewish day, the letter of the law, is lost, but the Jewish idea of the Sabbath, the true and genuine Jewish spirit of the Sabbath law, will not be lost."⁽³⁾

The Jewish idea of Sabbath will never be lost. The Jewish search for harmony with God on the Sabbath, the Jewish idea of happiness and spiritual regeneration will ever remain characteristic of the Jewish Sabbath:

"...our notions and habits, we will preserve and propagate even when we shall, in a time not very far off, adopt the Sunday as our Sabbath. We transfer all the blessings, and all the rich seed of moral and spiritual elevation, all our dear remembrances from the old historical Sab-

(1) Ibid., p.5.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid.

bath day to the public Sabbath, which we are in fact already celebrating, with our young, with our employees, with our fellow citizens." (1)

One can just imagine the reaction which Kohler's sermons in
(2)
favor of the Sunday service evoked from Orthodox circles. In his first Sunday sermon, preached on January 18, 1874, and entitled "Das Neue Wissen und der alte Glaube", Kohler reiterated his conviction that modern science presented no threat to Judaism. He stressed the harmony rather than the discord that can exist between religion and science. One's very knowledge of science leads him to a deeper religious conviction. "We let the science of the new age quicken our spirit anew and declare before the world the works of God and the goal of mankind."
(3)

An interesting parallel to this sermon preached at the first Sunday service, was the sermon which Kohler preached two years later at the dedication of the Temple of Sinai Congregation. His theme remained the same: science and Judaism are not born enemies, but can work together to produce a more glorious mankind. Science can help, but never replace religion.

"Nor will the Jewish pulpit of modern times be shaken in its faith, or even silenced by science. Judaism fears not, but challenges free inquiry and gladly adopts its sound results every trying to harmonize the revelations of the sensual world with those of the spirit." (4)

(1) Ibid., p. 8.

(2) Cf. Max Kohler, op.cit., p. 6.

(3) Enelow, op.cit. pp. xvi-xix.

(4) "Dedication of New Sinai Congregation," The Jewish Times, Vol. VIII, No. 7, April 14, 1876, pp. 105.

For eight years Kohler served his German speaking congregation in Chicago. Besides dedicating a new Temple and instituting Sunday services, Kohler won many faithful adherents to the cause of progressive Judaism. Emil Hirsch seems to have expressed the feeling of the congregation when he said: "To Kohler we owe our enthusiasm for new knowledge and our devotion withal to the old faith. How both may be reconciled he showed us then. We have been humble disciples of his ever since."⁽²⁾

But it was not in Chicago that Kohler was destined to achieve his full stature. Despite the fact that he had been in the country only a few years, Kohler's reputation as a preacher and as an interpreter of Judaism had spread across the entire nation. American Jewry thirsted for a vital religion with a living God, and to many Americans Kohler's dynamic personality and his lifelong search for truth represented the answer to their hopes. Especially in New York, the center of American Jewish activity, had Kohler's reputation become an enviable one. And so, in 1879, when David Einhorn retired, it was no surprise when Dr. Kohler was asked to succeed him as rabbi of Temple Beth El in New York.⁽³⁾ A new and glorious chapter was opening in the life of Reform Judaism's most illustrious champion, but the path ahead was not an easy one.

(1) "The History of the Beth El Congregation," The American Hebrew, Vol. 48, No. 7, Sept. 18, 1891, p. 160.

(2) "Sinai's Half Century" reprinted in The Reform Advocate, May 6, 1911, p. 451.

(3) Enelow, op.cit. p. xx.

II. TEMPLE BETH EL

A. Orthodoxy and the Pittsburg Conference

On June 6th, 1879, almost four months to the day before David Einhorn passed away, the board of Temple Beth El invited Kaufmann Kohler to become the rabbi of that congregation. Kohler's salary was set at \$4,000 a year, and his duties included preaching on each Sabbath or holiday in either German or English and supervising the religious school.⁽¹⁾

In New York, Kohler continued the advocacy of the cause of Reform which had characterized his ministry in Detroit and Chicago. His inaugural sermon, "The Principles and Purpose of Reform Judaism," preached on September 6, 1879, re-emphasized the importance of the concept of development for Judaism.⁽²⁾ Only Reform Judaism, he asserted, has given to mankind the consciousness of a mission, and only the concept of an evolving religion leads to the realization of that mission:

"Der Gedanke des fortschrittlichen Judenthums allein hat uns das Bewusstsein einer erhabenen Mission, die Siegeszuversicht und Anwartschaft auf eine unvergleichlich grosse Zukunft gegeben, die uns keine Kulturströmungen und keine Modephilosophie der Zeit mehr rauben kann. Das Judenthum ist die Religion der Zukunft!" (3)

(1) Minutes of Temple Beth El, 1874-1910. Meeting of June 6, 1879, p. 56.

(2) Enelow, op. cit., p. xx.

(3) "Die Prinzipien und Ziele des Reform-Judenthums," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 511.

What Kohler referred to as "Modephilosophie der Zeit" must surely have been the Ethical Culture movement, which was at the time, enjoying much popularity in New York. Kohler was a consistent opponent of the Ethical Culture movement founded by Felix Adler, though, in his opposition, he seldom mentioned either the movement or Adler by name. In a brilliant address delivered before the Young Men's Hebrew Association in 1886, Kohler analyzed the tremendous popularity which the so-called Ethical movement had made upon Judaism. His contention, ⁽¹⁾ was that Ethics had ever been at the very basis of Judaism, that Judaism alone made "the moral up-building and perfection of man, the ethical structure of society, its starting point and its end." ⁽²⁾ The Ethical Culture movement, too, emphasizes the idea of man's ethical striving, ⁽³⁾ but it is the symptom of a disease rather than a cure. The dame of fashion, its cry is for a humanitarian ethics, an ethics without a God. ⁽⁴⁾ Jewish ethics, on the other hand, is deeply rooted in the Jewish belief in God; it leads "up to God as the highest ideal and the only source of truth, justice, love and holiness." ⁽⁵⁾ Jewish ethics, then, far from being a thing of the past, points toward the future, a future which will see the dignity of man as a child of God realized.

(1) "The Ethical Basis of Judaism," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 143 ff.

(2) Ibid., p. 148.

(3) Ibid., p. 147. Cf. also "A Chapter on Ethics," The Reform Advocate, May 6, 1911. "The cry for a pure ethical system is, and ever was, a symptom of religious anemia." p. 469.

(4) Ibid., pp. 143-4.

(5) Ibid., p. 158.

The same suspicion which Kohler felt toward the Ethical Culture movement marked his attitude ^{YEARS LATER} toward the other "fashionable" philosophies which seemed to have so much attraction for New York's Jews. "What a confusion of reason," he said, "do we find among the thousands that follow the New Thought which feeds the hungry souls on the husks of faith, denying the existence of evil, sickness and death, and raving in the realms of spirit divorced from the body." ⁽¹⁾ What a shame that so many of these confused souls must seek escape from pain and sorrow by turning to Christian Science, instead of holding fast to their own vigorous Judaism which teaches man how to overcome the forces of evil and suffering and turn them to good. ⁽²⁾

*Belong to
civil form*

Especially strong was Kohler in his opposition to Unitarianism. Even though Unitarianism abandoned the Christian belief in the divinity of Jesus, it surely was no substitute for Judaism:

"A mere fusion of Jewish and Unitarian intellect into theism, a mere ethical makeshift with no root in the past and no life-giving hope and light for the future, will never make the world one, never heal humanity's woes and wounds, never respond to the soul's deepest cry." ⁽³⁾

Unitarianism, if it is true to itself, must still worship Jesus. Not in Unitarianism, therefore, is the Jewish mission to be achieved, ⁽⁴⁾ but in remaining true to itself.

(1) "The Need of a Great Unifying Power," A Living Faith, p. 171.

(2) Ibid., pp. 171-2.

(3) "The Jewish Question or Neo-Mosaism, Unitarianism and Judaism," The American Hebrew, Vol. LIV, No. 24, April 13, 1894, p. 720.

(4) Ibid.

Not only did Kohler criticize those Jews who turned to the "fashionable" religious philosophies, but he also criticized many aspects of Jewish life itself. As a proponent of Radical Reform he frequently attacked those elements of Jewish life which he felt did not serve the best interests of Judaism. He was especially opposed to what he termed "Orientalism," "Shulchan Aruchism," and "blind letter-worship."⁽¹⁾ But while criticizing these aspects of Orthodoxy, Kohler, as we shall see, was ever cognizant that some of the main shortcomings which he found in Orthodoxy were also to be found in Reform. Nevertheless, any criticism of Orthodoxy by so ardent a proponent of Reform as was Kohler was bound to meet with repercussions. The man whom David Philipson, in 1885, described as the "fighting champion of the Reform Movement,"⁽²⁾ was certain to win many friends to the cause which he espoused, but he was equally certain to create bitter enemies among those who disagreed with him.

Quite suddenly the antagonism between Kohler and his Orthodox adversaries seemed to come to a boiling point. While preaching and teaching the doctrine of progressive Judaism in New York, Dr. Kohler was confronted with a situation which was to have a profound influence upon his life as a Reformer. The year was 1885, the spring of the year, and Dr. Alexander Kohut, a Conservative Rabbi, arrived in America. He had been called to New York to take the pulpit of Dr. Heubsch, who had but recently passed away. No sooner had Dr. Kohut arrived

(1) "Backward or Forward," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, pp. 207, 217, 232. See also "The Origin and Function of Ceremonies," Yearbook of the CCAR, XVII, 1907, p. 226ff.

(2) David Philipson, My Life as an American Jew, p. 48.

in this country than he began to attack the principles of Reform Judaism. He who disowns the ordinances and statutes of Rabbinic⁽¹⁾ and Mosaic Judaism, he declared, forfeits the name of Jew.

Not only did Kohut's arrival create a sensation among New York circles, but it also stimulated a general attack from both pulpit and press upon Reform Judaism and the Reformers. "Others," reports the Jewish Reformer, "who had long and fondly hoped to be leaders, thought their time for unmasking their batteries had come."⁽²⁾ But Kohut's challenge was quickly taken up; his attacks from the pulpit were not to go unanswered. Though it was late in the season, and most of the members of his congregation had disbanded for the summer, Dr. Kohler decided that Kohut's attacks upon Reform must be combatted. And so in June and July Dr. Kohler preached a series of five sermons which sought to answer Dr. Kohut. These sermons preached in German, were subsequently translated by Beth El and published under the title of the first of the series, "Backward or Forward."

In these sermons Dr. Kohler re-emphasized the need for a progressive Judaism. "Must we," he asked, "after having dropped the obsolete observances of by-gone days, after having worked for thirty-five years in this country for emancipation from the yoke of Mosaic-Talmudical Judaism, again bend our neck to wear it in order to be complete Jews in the sense of orthodoxy, or may we

(1) Cf. Enelow, op.cit., p. xxi.

(2) The Jewish Reformer, Vol. I., No. 22, May 28, 1886, p.7.

persist in claiming, as we did thus far, to stand on a far higher ground, whilst discarding a great many of the ceremonial law of the Bible and tradition, and placing ourselves on the standpoint of prophetic Judaism with the Messianic aim as its world-embracing goal?"⁽¹⁾ Not only that, but Orthodoxy has crushed the true spirit of Judaism. Look at what it has done with the beautiful institutions of Judaism. The Sabbath has become a burden and a heavy yoke. The positive side of the Sabbath has been crushed under a mass of prohibitions.⁽²⁾ Or look at the Passover Festival. The important ideas of freedom and dedication to God have become obscured by a mass of dietary prohibitions. "The sweet reminiscences, the beautiful symbols have almost lost their intrinsic charms beneath the terrors of death facing him who dares to taste a bit of bread or broth that has the flavor of yeast."⁽³⁾

Orthodoxy, Kohler remarked, looks backward. It does not have the courage to stand on its own feet. "It subsists on the merits of our forefathers."⁽⁴⁾ Reform, on the other hand, looks forward. "Its golden era lies not behind but before us."⁽⁵⁾ Does Orthodoxy really expect us to believe exactly as our ancestors believed? Must we observe all of the meaningless practices of the past? Or should we not replace them by doctrines that are in keeping with the spirit of our age? Is Judaism to

(1) "Backward or Forward," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 202.

(2) Ibid., p. 221.

(5) Ibid., p. 203.

(3) Ibid., p. 222.

(4) Ibid., p. 202.

be only a sacred mummy, or a fountain of life?"⁽¹⁾ These are the questions which Judaism has to answer.

Intellectual honesty will no longer permit us to accept the Mosaic-Rabbinical law in its entirety. A code of laws directed to fit the needs of one age must surely be modified and adjusted if they are to fit the needs of a later age. "Just as the infant requires a different kind of nourishment than the grown man, so the Bible, as the revelation offered to an uncouth and uncivilized age contains another pabulum for the soul than what is demanded by a cultured age."⁽²⁾

Kohler, too, objected to the presence of Orientalism in our western civilization. We admit, he said, that the sun of truth rose in the East. "But did civilization in its Westward march not advance to higher planes and higher standards of life?"⁽³⁾ Orthodoxy refuses to recognize this fact, and it still adheres to the customs and practices of the Orient. "Orientalism characterizes its divine service and still shapes its marriage and divorce laws, its whole legal attitude to woman. Reform Judaism, on the other hand, insists on the recognition of the demands of Occidental culture."⁽⁴⁾

In his series of lectures, Kohler often indicated his resentment of Kohut's charge that because the Reformers refused to accept in its entirety the Mosaic-Rabbinical law, they were not

(1) Ibid., p. 204.

(2) Ibid.

(3) "The Faith of Reform Judaism," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 332.

(4) Ibid.

faithful Jews. Shall we, he asks, be driven away from Judaism because "we cannot accept and recognize its Mosaic Rabbinical tenets as our own? No. We are honest enough to confess that we do not believe in the authority of the letter and of tradition, and yet claim to be as true, as sincere, as fervent and whole-souled Jews as any, nay, we claim to hold the ground on which our great seers stood when predicting the triumph of Israel's truth."⁽¹⁾

The appearance of Kohut in New York in 1885 and his public controversy with Kohler acted as a stimulant upon American Jewry. "New York is agog with a new sensation," reported the American Israelite,⁽²⁾ and the huge crowds which assembled at Congregation Ahawath Chesed and Temple Beth El testified to the interest which these two men had stirred up. As usual, the Jewish press opposed Kohler and misinterpreted what he had to say. "While praising Kohut for his manliness, applauding him for his attack, going so far even as to deny the name Jew to all who on principle deny the obligatory character of Talmudism...the self-same press objects when Dr. Kohler attacks conservatism and shows its inconsistencies."⁽³⁾ Even the New York reporter for the American Israelite was led to report that "Dr. Kohler erred sadly when he publicly announced, 'I plead for pork and oysters.' It was a very injudicious remark

(1) "Backward or Forward," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 207.

(2) Vol. 32, No. 1, July 3, 1885, p. 2.

(3) Ibid., p. 2.

(1)

to say the least.

The reaction of the Jewish press galvanized Kohler into action. "I am afraid," he wrote to David Philipson, "the state of affairs has been greatly affected by Dr. Kohut's attitude and the press that fawns him. And I think it is for the good. Reform requires consolidation. We cannot afford to be constantly maligned and anathematized for every reform measure, or liberal view expressed." Kohler was beginning to realize that his struggle with Dr. Kohut held more than local interest. He realized that it represented something much more important than a mere clash of personalities, that it represented the irrepressible conflict between the forces of Conservatism and the forces fighting for the right of Reform.

(1) Vol. 32, No. 3, July 17, 1885, p. 5. Although I have no proof, I feel certain that Dr. Kohler never would have made such a statement. The accusation that Kohler had urged the eating of pork and oysters was probably a distortion of the following statement: "...In the name of all those who are honest enough to say: 'I avoid everything unclean, but I do not think that to eat oysters or pork is a sin that can in any way compare with lying or cheating'....I claim the name of Jew for all..." "Backward or Forward," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 210. See also p. 223. "No Reform Rabbi ever told his audience to violate the Dietary laws."

(2) David Philipson Letters, American Jewish Archives.
Letter dated July 30, 1885.

And in September he wrote again to Philipson: "We need consolidation of Reform. We must unite on principles! We want work, action and concerted action! I have just this moment written a letter to Dr. Wise and Dr. Felsenthal and Sonneschein and others, proposing a Reform Conference either at Baltimore or at Pittsburg for the second week of October."⁽¹⁾

Anxious to lend prestige to the conference and to have it represent a united Reform, Kohler wrote to Isaac Mayer Wise and induced him to accept the chairmanship of the proposed Conference. Wise accepted Kohler's offer, though it appears that, fearful of stirring up old animosities between East and West, he was not anxious to take too active a part in the work of the Conference.⁽²⁾

With Wise willing to cooperate, practical plans for a conference could now be made, and on October 19, 1885, Kohler again wrote to Philipson telling him that he had decided to propose Pittsburg as the meeting place.⁽³⁾ Then on November 1st, the general call for the Conference went out:

"Having consulted with several friends and colleagues among whom I will mention as seniors the Rev. Drs. I. M. Wise and S. Hirsch, and received encouraging responses, I herewith take the liberty of inviting all such American rabbis as advocate reform and progress and are in favor of united action in all matters pertaining to the welfare of American Judaism to meet in conference on November 16th and 17th in the city of Pittsburg, for the purpose of discussing the present state of American Judaism, its pending issues and

(1) Ibid., Letter dated September 21, 1885.

(2) The American Israelite, Vol. 39, No. 9, August 26, 1887, p. 4.

(3) David Philipson Letters, American Jewish Archives. Letter dated October 19, 1885.

its requirements, and of uniting upon such plans and practical measures as seem demanded by the hour. Sincerely trusting that this simple suggestive call will be favorably received, and even at some sacrifice, heartily responded to by all friends and supporters of the cause of reform, I am,

Fraternally yours,
Dr. K. Kohler." (1)

No one who examines the proceedings of the Pittsburgh Platform which were published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis in honor of Dr. Kohler's 80th birthday, can fail to be impressed by the tremendous creative energy displayed by Dr. Kohler in Pittsburgh. It was he who delivered the Conference paper, setting forth the purpose and the aim of the Conference. It was he who formulated the conference platform, and it was he who insured the unanimous passage of the platform.

In his Conference Paper, Dr. Kohler stressed the need for principles, for constructive action. "Every one," he said, "who has watched the condition of affairs of Judaism in general and in our country in particular, must have been impressed with the urgent need of decisive action in view of the appalling indifference which has taken hold of the masses, and of the materialistic tendency of the age which, owing to the precipitous transition from the oppressive ghetto-life of today's untrammelled liberty, has done great havoc in our midst." Too long, he pointed out, has Reform been looked upon by both its adherents and the outside world, as merely an iconoclastic force. "To many, Reform appeared the

(1) Proceedings of the Pittsburgh Rabbinical Conference, p. 6.

(2) Ibid., p. 6.

name for deserting the old camp and standard, while others behold
 in it only anarchy and arbitrariness.⁽¹⁾ Now, said Kohler, we must
 consolidate. Instead of destroying, we must build.⁽²⁾

In this spirit, Kohler presented ten suggestions to the conference, which he hoped would form the basis of the conference thinking. We need not list each of these suggestions; we need only to understand principles at which Kohler was driving. In the first place, Kohler wanted a platform of principles, "a platform broad, comprehensive, enlightened and liberal enough to impress and win all hearts, and also firm and positive enough to dispel suspicion and reproach of agnostic tendencies, or of discontinuing the historical thread of the past."⁽³⁾

Judaism, he felt, must become conscious of its mission. The conference should "organize a Jewish mission to work with the entire Jewish camp, make propaganda² for our liberal and enlightened Jewish doctrines."⁽⁴⁾ Surely part of that mission can be accomplished through the Jewish literature and the Jewish press, through better religious schools and through better religious instruction.⁽⁵⁾ The Conference, he felt, should also be concerned with the need for Revision of the Bible, and for the dissemination of knowledge about the Bible and about Judaism. "It must be a matter of great concern to all of us," said Kohler, "to find that it is pristine pride and privilege of the

(1) Ibid., p. 7

(2) Ibid., p. 8

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid., p. 9

(5) Ibid., pp. 11-12

Jew, his learning and his sound judgment based on familiarity with the sources of his religion, is failing and dying out to make room for arrogant hollowness and shallowness of thought in religious matters."⁽¹⁾ Parts of the Bible, Kohler urged, should be read aloud in⁽²⁾ both the Synagogue and the Sabbath school.

Another problem which Kohler felt the Conference must consider was that of the admission of proselytes into Judaism. No longer should circumcision be considered as an initiation rite into Judaism.

"I do not for a moment hesitate to say it right here and in the face of the entire Jewish world that to have a grown man who from conviction has with all his heart and soul become a Jew, in order to be admitted, undergo the act of circumcision, is a barbarous cruelty which disfigures and disgraces our ancestral heirloom and our holy mission as priests among mankind. The rite is a national remnant of savage African life, and has no bearing upon the religion preached by Isaiah, Jeremiah and the great Deuteronomic law-giver. It certainly has no sacramental character."⁽³⁾

Finally Kohler pleaded for a rekindling of the lamp of religious devotion in the home. Reform, he pointed out, had devoted all of its attention to the worship of the Synagogue, and not enough attention to the home. Now is the time to hallow the Jewish home anew and to make it again the source of pleasant reminiscences and⁽⁴⁾ cheering faith.

(1) Ibid., p. 15.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., p. 16.

(4) Ibid., pp. 17-18.

Not only did Kohler deliver the conference lecture but he also suggested the platform which became the basis for the "most succinct expression of the theology of the reform movement that had ever been published to the world."⁽¹⁾ In eight statements the Pittsburgh Platform provides the basis upon which Reform Judaism stands.

Proclaiming the Jewish belief in God the first statement asserts:

"We recognize in every religion an attempt to grasp the Infinite One, and in every mode, source or book of revelation held sacred in any religious system the consciousness of the indwelling of God in man. We hold that Judaism presents the highest conception of the God-idea as taught in our holy Scriptures and developed and spiritualized by the Jewish teachers in accordance with the moral and philosophical progress of their respective ages. We maintain that Judaism preserved and defended amid continual struggles and trials and under enforced isolation this God-idea as the central religious truth for the human race."

The second statement of the Pittsburgh Platform acknowledged the role of the Bible throughout Jewish history, and emphasizes the compatibility of the Bible with modern science.

"We recognize in the Bible the record of the consecration of the Jewish people to its mission as priest of the One God, and value it as the most potent instrument of religious and moral instruction. We hold that the modern discoveries of scientific researches in the domains of nature and history are not antagonistic to the doctrines of Judaism, the Bible reflecting the primitive ideas of its own age and at times clothing its conception of divine providence and justice dealing with man in miraculous narratives."

The role of the Mosaic and Rabbinical legislation is the subject of the third and fourth principles of the Platform.

(1) David Philipson, The Reform Movement in Judaism, p. 491.

"We recognize in the Mosaic legislation a system of training the Jewish people for its mission during its national life in Palestine, and today we accept as binding only the moral laws and maintain only such ceremonies as elevate and sanctify our lives, but reject all such as are not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization."

"We hold that all such Mosaic and Rabbinical laws as regulate diet, priestly purity and dress originated in ages and under the influence of ideas altogether foreign to our present mental and spiritual state. They fail to impress the modern Jew with a spirit of priestly holiness; their observance in our day is apt rather to obstruct than to further modern spiritual elevation."

The fifth statement asserts the religious, as opposed to the national, character of Israel.

"We recognize in the modern era of universal culture of heart and intellect the approach of the realization of Israel's great Messianic hope for the establishment of the Kingdom of truth, justice and peace among all men. We consider ourselves no longer a nation but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine nor a sacrificial worship under the administration of the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state."

Asserting the Reform conception of Judaism as a progressive religion the Sixth principle states:

"We recognize in Judaism a progressive religion, ever striving to be in accord with the postulates of reason. We are convinced of the utmost necessity of preserving the historical identity with our great past. Christianity and Islam being daughter-religions of Judaism, we appreciate their mission to aid in the spreading of monotheistic and moral truth. We acknowledge that the spirit of broad humanity of our age is our ally in the fulfilment of our mission, and therefore we extend the hand of fellowship to all who co-operate with us in the establishment of the reign of truth and righteousness among men."

The Seventh statement of the Pittsburg Platform asserts the belief of Reform in Immortality of the Soul as opposed to Bodily Resurrection.

"We reassert the doctrine of Judaism, that the soul of man is immortal, grounding this belief on the divine nature of the human spirit, which forever finds bliss in righteousness and misery in wickedness. We reject as ideas not rooted in Judaism the belief both in bodily resurrection and in Gehenna and Eden (hell and paradise), as abodes for everlasting punishment or reward."

And the final statement, ^{framed by EMIL G. HIRSCH,} pledges Israel to work for the amelioration of social evils.

" In full accordance with the spirit of Mosaic legislation which strives to regulate the relation between rich and poor, we deem it our duty to participate in the great task of modern times, to solve on the basis of justice and righteousness the problems presented by the contrasts and evils of the present organization of society." (1)

Dr. Kohler's work at the Pittsburg Conference must not be underestimated. The task which he had accomplished was no small one. He had succeeded in uniting American Reform Judaism. Through his personal efforts he had brought together the various forces on the Reform scene; he had fashioned a clear, cogent statement of principles, a statement that apparently was acceptable to all of the delegates who were present. When we recall the bickering and the jealousy that had existed between Eastern and Western Reformers, we must admit that the Pittsburg Conference accomplished no small task.

Again, the Jewish press criticized Kohler and everything that
(2)
the Pittsburg Conference had accomplished. In a letter to Philipson he wrote: "My Congregation and the liberal element throughout

(1) Ibid., pp. 24-25.

(2) Cf. David Philipson, "The Principles and Achievements of the Central Conference of American Rabbis," Centenary Papers and Others, p. 199.

the city are in full sympathy with the results, but all the more do the papers clamor and rage. Still let once our Reform organ appear, and I have great hope I shall be able to start one here, as the Israelite will never do for us in the East!--, and they will become terror stricken."⁽¹⁾

The "Reform organ" to which Kohler referred was the Jewish Reformer⁽²⁾ which he had planned in conjunction with Moritz Ellinger. Kohler had long felt the need of some journal to represent the Reform point of view, and he hoped that the Jewish Reformer would satisfy that need. On January 1st, 1886, the first issue of the Jewish Reformer appeared bearing the following statement of principles:

"Aiming at consolidation of Reform Judaism upon the principles adopted at the Pittsburg Conference, we shall:

Try to enlighten our people upon the origin, the growth and the value of all conceptions and forms of the past, while emphasizing all that is essential, vital and immutable in religion.

Wide awake to the progress and requirements of the hour, we shall discuss all the pending issues and problems of the age from our standpoint." (3)

Immediately the Jewish Reformer set out to protect the Pittsburg Platform from the attacks of its opponents. Picking up a statement by H. P. Mendes that had appeared in the Orthodox press that "a chief rabbi is needed as to render a Pittsburg an impossibility," the Jewish Reformer mockingly added: "The chief Rabbi -----

(1) David Philipson Letters, American Jewish Archives, Letter dated November 28, 1885.

(2) Cf. "In Memoriam--Moritz Ellinger," A Living Faith, p. 269.

(3) Vol. 1, No. 1, Jan. 1, 1886, p. 9.

shall have a torture chamber adjoining his residence to be supplied with thumb screws, iron boots, iron shirts and other instruments for inculcating Orthodox belief.⁽¹⁾"

Though the Jewish Reformer was forced to cease publication after an existence of only six months, it had fulfilled its purpose. Acting as a voice in the wilderness, it had publicized the Pittsburg Conference and given to American Jewry a clear picture of the controversy between Reform and Orthodoxy.

Were we to close our discussion of Kohler's attitude toward Orthodoxy with his activities at the Pittsburg Conference and as editor of the Jewish Reformer we should have presented an incomplete picture indeed. Though Kohler refused to accept the authority of Mosaico-Rabbinical law as binding, he must not be considered an enemy of the Talmud. On the contrary, he felt that there was a wealth of spiritual and ethical thought buried in the Talmud. But this wealth must be "turned into power."⁽²⁾ In his conviction that the Talmud could be vitalized, Kohler wrote a series of articles in 1893-94 for the American Hebrew, entitled "The Ethics of the Talmud." In this series, he set out to prove what he had long contended: that "Rabbinism was once Reform, too."⁽³⁾ No more brilliant defense of the Talmud can be found than in this series of articles in which Kohler shows that the Talmud is criticized too much by people who do not understand it, and similarly, it is loved too ardently by its devotees who do not see or who do not wish to see its faults.⁽⁴⁾ Attempt-

(1) The Jewish Reformer, Vol. I, No. 5, January 29, 1896, p. 1.

(2) Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 17.

(3) Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 216.

(4) The American Hebrew, Vol. LIV, No. 4, Nov. 24, 1893, p. 136a.

ting to refute the anti-Semitic charge that the Talmud was inhuman, Kohler pointed out that for its time the Talmud had a⁽¹⁾ very lofty conception of humanity. The only trouble is that the Talmudic laws have outlived their usefulness. It is not the Talmud, but rather modern Orthodoxy that is at fault, for⁽²⁾ preserving laws which are no longer timely or useful.

In discussing Kohler's attitude toward Orthodox Judaism, it is important that we do not misunderstand Kohler. It was not Orthodoxy that he opposed, but the spirit of "blind authority-belief" and "mere legality."⁽³⁾ He feared that in Orthodoxy the element of worship and of devotion to God had been replaced by a lifeless devotion to legality and formalism. For this reason he ever pleaded for the concept of a living God." Judaism," he said, "is a living faith, not a religion confined to dead letters, to a scarcely readable parchment scroll, but one which forms the vital spark of all moral action and conduct, which prompts us to worship and perceive God, not in dead forms, in rites of by-gone ages, in signs hardly intelligible, but in⁽⁴⁾ living truths and forms, expressive of life and truth." In this spirit, he often stated that the issue is no longer between Reform and Orthodoxy, but between a world with God and a world⁽⁵⁾ without God.

(1) Ibid., pp. 136a,b,c. See also The American Hebrew, Vol. LIV, No. 5, December 1, 1893, pp. 159-62.

(2) Ibid., p. 136b.

(3) "Backward or Forward", Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 20.

(4) Ibid., p. 210.

Kohler ever emphasized the importance of worship and of devotion to God for Judaism, and in this spirit he opposed all efforts to belittle the spiritual aspect of Judaism. This does not mean that Kohler did not appreciate the rational nature of Judaism. On the contrary, he often asserted that Judaism never represented itself as "blind belief", nor did he underestimate the need for a (1) "religious view in direct harmony with reason." But the rationality of religion must be deepened by spirituality. Religion, he maintained, is always rooted in the soul; it is a matter of sentiment and emotion. "God appeals to the heart before he appeals to the mind." (2) Nor is spirituality a thing to be taught or imparted by study. "It must be felt as the innermost power of the soul, as the glow of a heart touched by God, as the impelling force leading to life's consecration to the service of God and the highest ideals of man." (3) Often Kohler expressed his conviction that no man had a right to become a Rabbi or to appear in the pulpit unless he possessed a spiritual qualification.

(5) Cf. "Priest, Prophet and Preacher," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 118. See also "A Revaluation of Reform Judaism," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XXXIV, 1924, p. 227 and "A Jewish Institution of Learning," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 18.

(1) "Judaism's Four Characteristic Traits," A Living Faith, pp. 159-160.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., p. 160.

"The man in the pulpit, whether liberal or conservative, must, like the prophet of old, be imbued with the spirit of God, making religion the all-encompassing factor of life, himself embodying what is best and holiest in Judaism and humanity." (1)

It was the spiritual aspect, too, of the writings and teachings of Professor Moritz Lazarus that captivated Kohler. He quotes with approval Professor Lazarus' statement that "religion is not creed and ceremony, but ideality, the spirit that lifts man up towards the highest ideal." (2) Again, in discussing Lazarus, Kohler was able to write: "The principle, soul and substance of Jewish ethics, say Prof. Lazarus (and this view I always insisted on most emphatically) is holiness, and this comprises the whole of life, leaving no room for 'other worldliness.'" (3) For Kohler spirituality did not imply "other worldliness", nor even saintliness. "We want no saints," he said, "who live apart from the people whom they are to win for the cause of God and goodness. We want lives permeated by the spirit that brings God nigh to me." (4)

Though Kohler could not accept any formulation of Judaism which was based upon superstitions or upon miracles, he felt that if interpreted properly, miracles could occupy an important role in Judaism. "Miracles," he said, "do not create, but illustrate faith." (5) They are the poetry of religion; they serve to beautifully illustrate the truths which religion teaches. The rational-

(1) "The Requirements of a True Religious Leader," The Hebrew Union College Monthly, Vol. IX, No. 1, November, 1922, p. 12.

(2) "Professor Moritz Lazarus," A Living Faith, p. 207.

(3) "Lazarus' Ethics of Judaism," A Living Faith, p. 220.

(4) "Judaism's Four Characteristic Traits," A Living Faith, p. 160.

ists who reduce the Biblical miracles to natural occurrences lack this sense for the beautiful. They maintain, for instance, that Israel's passage through the Red Sea and the drowning of Pharaoh's armies was "due to a temporary ebb and flood which Moses had taken into account but not Pharaoh...In order to save the literal truth, (1) they kill the very spirit of faith." In this sense, miracles occupy an important function in Judaism. They emphasize the role of faith in religion. For after all, asks Kohler, is not ^{faith} stronger than cold reflection. "Behind all reason, all knowledge and skill, lies the power of faith which moves mountains, which performs wonders.... (2) There is a saving power in faith at which all miracles hint."

Dr. Kohler's emphasis upon the spiritual aspect of Judaism was not only something which he confined to sermons preached from the pulpit. Those who knew him could not help being impressed by the deep spiritual nature of the man himself. "The underlying idea of the Reform movement, in his view," comments Dr. Cohon, "was to bring the Godhead, believed to be enthroned only in heaven above, down to the hearts of men on earth. If he fought blind Orthodoxy it was because he strove to free the spirit of Judaism from the shackles of dry formalism and 'to restore the faith in God and in man in all its prophetic grandeur.'" (3) Of a similar nature is a

(5) "Miracles of the Bible," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 257.

(1) Ibid., p. 258.

(2) Ibid., p. 265.

(3) Cohon, op.cit., p. 15.

statement made by Dr. Philipson:

"No one who ever listened to his fervent prayers but felt here was a soul in tune with the Lord of the spirits of all flesh. The doubtings and questions of his critical faculty never invaded the domain of his trustful faith. Here he was a little child. There indeed seemed to be two souls in Kohler's make-up, the one that expressed itself in his intellectual aspirations and achievements, and the other strikingly indicative of that beautiful conception of the rabbis the neshamah yetherah, the mystic over-soul which is the plus quality of every highly endowed religious nature." (1)

Even in his attacks upon Orthodoxy in his lectures, Backward or Forward, Dr. Kohler was fair enough to admit that the very spirituality, the lack of which he criticized in Orthodoxy, was lacking also in Reform. Reform, too, has its faults, he admitted. It has failed to realize many of its expectations. Its most important fault is that it has neglected domestic devotion; it has appealed constantly to reason instead of cultivating emotion. "Reform abolished the old regular services, the Hebrew daily prayers, but did not train our children to communicate with their God in fervent devotion at the beginning and close of each day. It did away with old formulas of praise and benediction, but failed to imbue every step or enjoyment of the Jew with religious life. It allowed the old fires of self-consecration, of sanctification of human life at its various solemn epochs to cool down." (2)

Despite his criticism of Orthodoxy, Dr. Kohler never forgot the tremendous debt which he owed to his own Orthodox background.

(1) Philipson, op.cit., p. 326.

(2) "Backward or Forward," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, pp. 212-213.

"I am far from extolling Reform," he said, "at the expense of sincere Orthodoxy, which I revere as the memory of my own sainted father and mother. In fact, I owe the best I have and am to those venerable Orthodox teachers of mine..."⁽¹⁾ Kohler's attitude toward his Orthodox colleagues, too, show the great respect that he had for their sincerity. Though he fought bitterly with Dr. Kohut, he ever admired his zeal and his genuine love of Judaism. What a beautiful tribute to the spirit of friendly rivalry it was when Kohler was invited to speak at the memorial service for Dr. Kohut. "Dr. Kohut's arrival in this country," he said at that service, "lent American Judaism not only new lustre, but also a new impetus and incentive to rabbinical study and research."⁽²⁾

There were other friendly opponents from the Orthodox camp. Surely one of the leading Orthodox rabbis of his day and one of the bitterest opponents of the principles of progressive Judaism was Sabato Morais. Of him Kohler wrote: "He was the strongest and most formidable opponent of Reform." But at the same time one could not help admiring him as "the very soul of devotion and loyalty to truth."⁽³⁾ One can feel the sympathy which Kohler felt for this devout leaders of Orthodoxy:

"He himself was a sort of Jeremiah, wailing and weeping over the decline of Orthodox Judaism, and his voice often grew pathetic as he saw the

(1) "The Requirements of a True Religious Leader," Hebrew Union College Monthly, Vol. IX, No. 1, November, 1922, pp. 10-11.

(2) "Dr. Alexander Kohut," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 542.

(3) "Sabato Morais," A Living Faith, p. 251.

numbers of his followers become even smaller. And yet he had an abiding faith in God. He was full of hope and of energy to the last." (1)

Another man with whom Kohler disagreed in principle, but whom he admired in spirit was Solomon Schechter. The cordial relationship that existed between these two men was evidenced when Kohler accepted an invitation from Schechter to deliver a course of lectures at the Jewish Theological Seminary, on "Jewish Apocryphal Literature."⁽²⁾ Again, Kohler was invited to participate in the dedication of the Jewish Theological Seminary, and in reciprocation Schechter was an honored guest at the dedication of the new Hebrew Union College building in 1911.⁽³⁾

As the years passed Kohler became more and more convinced of the need for both a conservative and a progressive force within Judaism.⁽⁴⁾ Judaism, he felt, has always had and will always need its two opposing forces. "Just as the stars in heaven are carried along by a centripetal and centrifugal power to keep them on the right track,"⁽⁵⁾ so will Judaism always consist of both conservative and progressive elements. It was in this spirit that Dr. Kohler opposed any attempt at formulating a Jewish creed for one section of Judaism only. The formulation of any code which excludes Orthodoxy is a dangerous procedure," as it tends to create a schism in -----

(1) Ibid., p. 252.

(2) Max Kohler, op. cit., p. 9.

(3) Cf. "The Purpose and Mission of the Hebrew Union College," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 40.

(4) Ibid.

(5) "Solomon Schechter," Memorial Address, Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 335.

(1)
antagonism to the spirit and tradition of Judaism."

An interesting sidelight on Kohler's attitude toward Orthodoxy, is the lecture which he delivered before the Central Conference of American Rabbis in the year 1898. The title of the lecture, A United Israel, indicated Kohler's theme. "Let all bickering between Reform and Orthodoxy, between East and West, in pulpit and press cease once for all! Let us stand as one man
(2)
for undivided Judaism." In order to successfully unite all Israel, Kohler suggested that the emphasis upon Reform give way to an emphasis upon Judaism. "Today, not Reform, but Judaism must be the sole object of our solicitude."
(3)
Proposing a union of Jewish congregations irrespective of religious differences, Kohler suggested: "Such a union will not only help in elevating Jew and Judaism everywhere, socially, intellectually and morally, but secure to us also an authoritative public
(4)
representation whenever required."

Let us, however, not be deceived by Kohler's appeal to the Central Conference. If he favored unity, he favored unity without compromise. Though he may have respected sincere Orthodoxy, Kohler was not willing to sacrifice his ideals for the sake of a united Israel. Though he pleaded for an end to all strife, he emphasized his conviction that it is the Orthodox "who divide the
(5)
camp of Israel, not we." Thus, he implied, it is Orthodoxy that must compromise, not Reform.

(1) Yearbook of the CCAR, Vol. XV, 1905, p. 83.

(2) "A United Israel," "A Living Faith, p. 8.

(3) Ibid., p. 16.

(4) Ibid., p. 17.

(5) Ibid., p. 9. For an interesting contrast to the attitude expressed in "A United Israel," see Kohler's statement in Views on the Synod (Compiled by the C.C.A.R., 1905), p. 74f. See also Yearbook of the CCAR, 1905, p. 121, where Kohler opposes any effort to establish a synod representing a united Israel.

B. Sunday Services

In New York, as in Chicago, Dr. Kohler was deeply disturbed by the indifference which characterized the Jewish community, and especially the Jewish youth. His attacks upon Ethical Culture, Christian Science and Unitarianism were but reflections of his deeper antagonism toward the Jewish spirit of indifference and assimilation which seemed to have seized the Jewish population of New York.

It was in an effort to combat this very indifference that Kohler had seen fit to introduce Sunday Services in Chicago and to advocate the transfer of the Sabbath to Sunday. In the same spirit, Kohler, in the year 1880, introduced Sunday services at Temple Beth El. Nowhere is a visible change in Kohler's attitude toward one issue more apparent than in reference to the Sunday services. We have already noted that in Chicago, Kohler actually⁽¹⁾ advocated a transfer of the Sabbath to Sunday. By the year 1870, when Kohler first suggested Sunday services to Congregation Beth El, his attitude toward these services had already been modified and, as we shall see shortly, his attitude was to become even more conservative with the passage of years.

In a sermon entitled "Sabbath Observance and Sunday Lectures," preached on December 27, 1879, Dr. Kohler first suggested to his congregation that a service should be held on Sunday for those who found it impossible to attend the regular Sabbath Service. Most of our young people, Kohler pointed out, are unable

(1) See above, p. 32.

to attend services on the Sabbath. Why should we not have a lecture, or better yet, a service on Sunday so that all may attend?

"Blind, stubborn orthodoxy says: 'Rather let the young men, and all those prevented by material necessities from attending divine service on Sabbath, spiritually starve than that the bread of heaven should be offered them on Sunday!' We say: 'No! A thousand times better they hear the inspiring lessons of religion on Sunday; their actual day of rest than not at all.'" (1)

No longer, however, did Kohler advocate the actual transfer of the Sabbath to Sunday. Recognizing that all of the beautiful and inspiring influences of the Sabbath are the work of long historical growth, Kohler came to the conclusion that the Sabbath day can never be transferred from one day to another. "Hence a Jewish Sunday Sabbath is for any sober-minded, conscientious advocate of reform out of the question today."⁽²⁾

Far from advocating an abandonment of the Sabbath, Kohler advocated a renewal of its lost glory and prestige. The large Jewish community of New York, he pointed out, can certainly lead a movement to restore the Jewish Sabbath in America.⁽³⁾ Kohler even expressed the wish that he could prevail upon the members of his congregation to join the recently established Sabbath Observance Association. But a real movement to restore the prestige of the Sabbath must begin in the home. The Jewish home must revive the

(1) "Sabbath Observance and Sunday Lectures," p. 4.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., p. 8.

beauty and the sweetness of the Sabbath. The family reunion of Friday evening and the joy and song of the Sabbath must be restored, he felt, as a means of cultivating greater piety and deeper devotion.⁽¹⁾

While pleading for a more devout observance of the Jewish Sabbath, Kohler deplored those who had amassed large fortunes by violating the Sabbath, and who now could proudly claim to be pious men because they can afford to close their stores in observance of the Sabbath.⁽²⁾ As long as there are people who are unable to attend Sabbath services, declared Kohler, we will feel it a duty to conduct services on the Sunday.

"As long as there is no release given from work to every Jewish clerk from morning to night, as long as no opportunity is offered to each Jewish laborer and business-man of keeping this day holy, as a season of bodily and spiritual recreation and elevation, I, in the name of God, the Redeemer of Israel, claim the day of public rest as a temporary expedient. And all attempts at denouncing our Sunday lectures, or Sunday services, particularly when held only every fortnight, as unlawful characterize themselves as prompted by hypocrisy rather than by true piety, by poor policy rather than by sincere religious earnestness." (3)

As one might expect, Kohler's proposal in favor of Sunday Services brought a violent protest from Orthodox circles.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Ibid.

(2) Ibid., p. 7.

(3) Ibid., pp. 7-8.

(4) Cf. The American Hebrew, Vol. 2, No. 2, Feb. 27, 1880. In this and subsequent issues the American Hebrew criticized the entire effort to institute Sunday services. "Freedom of thought is man's highest prerogative...But he impeaches his own sincerity and loses every claim to respect if he continues to draw pay from a Jewish congregation while maintaining and practicing convictions diametrically opposed to every principle of Judaism." P. 14.

pite these protests, Sunday services were instituted in the year 1880 and were continued for two years. Evidently the Sunday services did not create the interest that Kohler had desired, and by the summer of 1882, they were abandoned. ⁽¹⁾

Neither Kohler nor the Board Members of Congregation Beth El, however, gave up the hope of establishing the Sunday service as a successful venture. It is at this point that we must analyze an interesting episode in the life of Dr. Kohler, one which almost had drastic results.

When Kohler's first five year contract with Temple Beth El had expired in 1884, his contract was promptly renewed, his salary was raised to the then large sum of \$6000 a year, and no one seemed able to express the gratitude of the congregation to Kohler for the excellent job that he had done. ⁽²⁾ "We are unable to enumerate all of Dr. Kohler's wonderful qualifications," said one member of the board, and this sentiment seemed to be shared by most of the members of the congregation. ⁽³⁾ To all outward appearances, Kohler's life in New York was a happy one. Evidently Temple Beth El was pleased with their Rabbi, and Kohler in turn, must have enjoyed ^{the} congenial atmosphere of cosmopolitan New York.

In the spring of the year 1886, however, a series of events transpired which threatened to destroy the pleasant relationship

(1) Ibid., Vol. 48, No. 7, September 18, 1891, p.160.

(2) Minutes of Temple Beth El, 1874-1910., p. 96.

(3) Ibid., p. 95.

which existed between Kohler and his congregation. Reading the minutes of Temple Beth El, one detects a feeling of dissatisfaction on the part of the members of the board with the spiritual status of the congregation. "Appeals have been made again and again," reported the president of the board, "to unite on a common observance of our Sabbath by attending divine service, but have met with no response--the few members who do attend cannot even prevail upon their sons to follow their parent's example, and if the further decrease in the non-attendance at the Saturday service is to be regulated by the course of nature it will be merely a question of time when our beautiful Temple will be deserted."⁽¹⁾

The only solution to the lack of interest, the president reported,⁽²⁾ was to institute a course of Sunday lectures.

It would appear that both Kohler and his congregation were working toward a common goal, the spiritual strengthening of Temple Beth El through the re-institution of Sunday services. The president, however, concluded his report with these words:

"To make this course a success, it will, however, be necessary for that purpose to engage a good English speaker and I hardly doubt that the Rev. Dr. Kohler...will gladly endorse the plan which should be carried out under his guidance."⁽³⁾

The board of Temple Beth El heartily approved of the president's proposal, and strongly recommended the engagement of "a lecturer,

(1) Ibid., March 16, 1886, Report of the President, J.H. Fleisch, p. 109

(2) Ibid., p. 110.

(3) Ibid., p. 110.

who by his eminence, popularity, eloquence and ability combines the power to attract our members and others to attend our meetings." ⁽¹⁾

Certainly Kohler, who long had cherished the hope of conducting Sunday services, could not help feeling slighted at this implied criticism of his preaching ability. ⁽²⁾ The very composition of the membership of Temple Beth El must have made the position of the rabbi even more difficult than might normally be expected. ⁽³⁾ Again we turn to the minutes of the Congregation in order to understand the situation which confronted Kohler:

"...it must be acknowledged at the outset that the congregation is composed of various elements widely divergent in their views on religious matters, -- many members faithfully adhering to the traditional observances of our faith, others are so-called moderate conservatives ready to accept changes which have the sanction of acknowledged authority and

(1) Ibid., p. 86.

(2) A year later the president reported to the Board as follows: "The resolution itself, empowering your Board of Trustees to engage an Assistant Minister, was unfortunately the cause of some misunderstanding at the time between the Board and our honored Rabbi, the Rev. Dr. Kohler, originating, as I claim in the doubtful conception of our respective rights and privileges." Ibid., Meeting of April 11, 1887, p. 117.

(3) Temple Beth El was originally known as Congregation Adath Jeshurun. In 1874 the Congregation had merged with the older and more Conservative Congregation Anshe Chesed to form Temple Beth El. Cf. Kohler, "David Einhorn, The Uncompromising Champion of Reform Judaism," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XIX, 1909, pp. 260, 262. See also M. Kohler, op.cit., p. 7.

again others hold the most advanced radical opinions. To unite these divergent elements on one common ground has so far been found impossible to achieve.

In view of this complexion of our membership, it is but just to say that our spiritual leader Rev. Dr. Kohler occupies a rather difficult position in our congregation. When his views please one element, they are apt to be unfavorably criticized by another and treated with indifference by a third, until perhaps mildly retracing what he previously advocated, when of course he will please nobody." (1)

Even under the most favorable conditions, a clash between rabbi and congregations would not be difficult to predict. But in this particular case, where the Rabbi was so ardent a champion of the cause of Reform, such a clash seemed unavoidable.

In June of 1886, the match that set off the explosion was lit. For several months Dr. Kohler had been making plans to attend a conference of Rabbis which was to convene in the summer in Cincinnati. (2) The congregation, rather indiscreetly, sent a communication to Dr. Kohler, demanding to know the course of action that he proposed to follow at the forthcoming conference. (3) Kohler evidently felt that the combination of insults from the congregation could no longer be ignored, and so he promptly submitted his resignation to the Board and to the congregation. (4)

(1) Ibid., report of Pres. J.H. Fleisch, March 16, 1886., p. 109.

(2) The Conference was, for various reasons, subsequently postponed. See the American Hebrew, June 25, 1886, p. 97. Also see The American Israelite, Vol. 32., No. 52, June 25, 1886, p. 4.

(3) Ibid., Vol. 27, No. 5, June 11, 1886.

(4) Minutes of Temple Beth El, 1874-1910. Meeting of June 6, 1886, p. 114.

The newspaper accounts of Kohler's resignation supply us with few details. "On Sabbath last," reports the American Hebrew, Rev. Dr. Kohler spoke of the differences existing between himself and the congregation because of criticisms expressed and implied, upon his ministrations; and as he declined to be hampered in what he deemed his duty as spiritual head of the congregation, he stated that he had tendered his resignation.⁽¹⁾

As in most disputes of this nature the immediate causes for Kohler's resignation were of a complex nature to say the least. The complex nature of the congregation which he served, the intense feelings which his dispute with Kohut must have aroused on the part of those members of Beth El who were conservatively inclined and, above all, the reluctance of the Congregation to ratify the results of the Pittsburg Conference, must have influenced Kohler's decision to resign. Although the Minutes of the Board of Temple Beth El give us little insight into the causes for Kohler's resignation, the June 11th issue of the American Hebrew suggested several reasons for the resignation. "A peculiarity connected with this resignation," writes the editor, "deserves more than passing mention. It seems that the Trustees of the Congregation, having at heart the interests of their Congregation, which, because of its composite character, requires delicate treatment, addressed Dr. Kohler a communication requesting information as to his proposed course at the coming

(1) The American Hebrew, June 4, 1886. Vol. 27, No. 4, p. 56.

adjourned conference at Cincinnati. This communication together with the action of the Congregation in deciding to elect an assistant minister to speak in English and their failure to formally endorse and accept the results of the Pittsburgh Conference, has not pleased Dr. Kohler, hence his resignation.⁽¹⁾"

As soon as it received Kohler's resignation, the Congregation realized the seriousness of the situation, and a committee was immediately appointed to see if Dr. Kohler would not reconsider and withdraw his resignation. Within a short time, Kohler was induced to remain with the congregation and the incident was soon forgotten.⁽²⁾ This episode, however, provides us with a valuable insight into the personality of Kohler. As a Champion of Reform he would brook no opposition. He also insisted upon the authority of his position as Rabbi of the congregation. In announcing that he would remain with the congregation Kohler stated his position clearly. "It is to be understood that the lectures at the Temple will continue, as heretofore, under my supervision, and in the event of any appointment of an assistant minister, such a step will come under my jurisdiction. As to the Cincinnati convention, the Board of Trustees has decided not in any way to interfere with me."⁽³⁾

(1) June 11, 1886. Vol. 27, No. 5, p. 66.

Ever fighting for the cause of Reform and for what he believed to be right, Kohler was not an easy opponent to vanquish, nor was he one to give up his ideals for the sake of harmony. His congregation, he felt, should be a Reform congregation, Reform in principle and in conduct, and he would rather resign his position than feel that he was compromising his ideals.

Despite the unpleasant incident with the Board of Temple Beth El, Kohler continued to urge the adoption of Sunday lectures. Through the editorial pages of the Jewish Reformer,⁽¹⁾ he continued to fight for the cause which he cherished, and by the fall of 1887 his efforts met with success. Under the auspices of the Young Men's Association of the Congregation,⁽²⁾ Kohler instituted a series of Sunday lectures. Soon the success of these lectures attracted the attention of the Board of the Congregation itself, and in April of 1887, the Board decided that the entire Congregation should benefit from the⁽³⁾ Sunday lectures.

(2) Minutes of Temple Beth El, 1874-1910, p. 115.

(3) The American Israelite, Vol. 32, No. 51, June 18, 1886, p. 6.

(1) Cf. The Jewish Reformer, Vol. I, No. 17, April 23, 1886, p. 1.

(2) Minutes of Temple Beth El, April 4, 1887, p. 117.

(3) Ibid., pp. 117 and 123.

Quite a contrast to reports of the previous years was the President's report to the Board of Temple Beth El in 1888:

"The many years of earnest advocacy of a regular Sunday service under favorable auspices has at last found realization in the inauguration last October of a lecture course, which I venture to say, has met with universal commendation. The versatile character of the discourses by our honored Dr. Kohler, interspersed by lectures of eminent divines of foreign congregations, have been of such a high degree of excellence, and evinced such great erudition in philosophy and modern science, no less than in theology, that they could not fail to be of great intellectual benefit to their hearers. It is particularly gratifying to note the warm interest taken, and zeal displayed by the young element of our congregation in the success of this movement..." (1)

At last harmony seems to have been completely restored between Kohler and his congregation. But new critics in the general community had already arisen to challenge the ideals for which Kohler stood. Again the criticism was directed against Sunday lectures, and Kohler felt that he had no choice but to answer his opponents. (2)

In his lecture entitled Are Sunday Lectures Treason to Judaism, Kohler tried to answer those critics who claimed that services on Sunday represented a break with Judaism. Referring to a letter of his written to the Jewish Exponent in Philadelphia, Kohler went right to the heart of the problem. The question is, he said, whether it is better to let the majority of Jews die

(1) Minutes of Temple Beth El, 1874-1910, April 1, 1888. Report of the President.

(2) Cf. "Are Sunday Lectures Treason to Judaism?" A Living Faith, pp. 19-20.

from spiritual starvation because they cannot attend services on the Sabbath, or to allow a substitute day of worship for the Sabbath.⁽¹⁾

"Or, to use a familiar expression of mine, whether that congregation shows the right religious (or conservative) spirit which, like the one of the two women before King Solomon says, 'Let the child die rather than that the Sunday should have it'; or, the one that, like the true mother speaks, 'By all means let my child live, and if Sunday is the only day when it can be fed and nurtured, take the Sunday rather than allow it to perish altogether.'" (2)

Emphasizing again the impossibility in modern times of a correct observance of the Sabbath, Kohler pointed out that no longer does the Jewish Sabbath bring rest from the toil and the struggle of the week. Certainly it is easy for the Rabbi or for the man of great wealth to insist upon observance of the historical Sabbath, but is such an observance possible for the ordinary? Any realistic approach to the problem convinces one of the practical difficulties confronting the average Jew who desires to observe the Sabbath. "He must either retire from business altogether or violate the historical Sabbath."⁽³⁾ In answer to those who would accuse him of having no regard for Israel's past, Kohler pointed out that no one could "love the precious reminiscences of Sabbath joy and cheerfulness" more dearly than he. If only those memories could live again in

(1) Ibid., p. 20.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., p. 22-23.

our present observance of the Sabbath! But alas, the pure Sabbath observance of old has been replaced by crass materialism;⁽¹⁾ the Sabbath has become a sham.

The question confronting Judaism today is: "How can the Jewish people be roused from their awful lethargy and again made conscious and proud of their divine calling?"⁽²⁾ How can their dead religious fervor be revived? How can their love for their history and their faith be restored? These are the questions which Kohler asked before and was to ask again, ever searching for the right solution. His answer: "Institute Sunday lectures!" Utilize the only day of rest the Jews have; create attentive centers of religious instruction and inspiration for the rising generation!"⁽³⁾

"Does blind, stubborn orthodoxy protest loudly declaring: 'Rather let the young, or all those who do not attend the regular Sabbath service spiritually starve than that the bread of heaven should be offered to them on Sunday!'"⁽⁴⁾ Such an attitude he said, would be cruel and heartless. No, the issue is no longer between Saturday and Sunday, but "between Judaism saved and Judaism lost."⁽⁵⁾ Surely these are powerful words from a powerful preacher.

(1) Ibid., p. 24.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., p. 25.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Ibid., p. 25.

There is nothing wrong, Kohler added, in assembling in the House of God for prayer on any day of the week. Why then should there be so much opposition to the idea of holding services on Sunday? ⁽¹⁾ "Most assuredly you cannot believe that God has a Sabbath day. You can no longer make even your children at school believe that God began the work of Creation on Sunday and finished it on Friday to rest on Saturday." ⁽²⁾

But to the idea of transferring the Sabbath to Sunday, Kohler was opposed. The name of the seventh day, he said, may be applied to any day of the week, but the holy and elevating reminiscences cannot be suddenly changed from the historical Sabbath to another. ⁽³⁾ No, not a transfer, but an addition is what we require, an addition of an extra day of worship to win back to the fold of Judaism those who have lost respect for their religion. ⁽⁴⁾ "Only through regular Sunday services can the forces of Judaism, now scattered and inefficient throughout the year, ⁽⁵⁾ be reunited into a mighty power..."

We have already noticed a transition in Kohler's thinking in regard to the historical Sabbath. In Chicago he had favored a transfer of the Sabbath to Sunday. In New York, however, his views were modified to the point where, though favoring Sunday lectures and Sunday services, he was opposed to the idea of any

(1) Ibid.

(2) Ibid., pp. 26-7.

(3) Ibid., p. 28.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Ibid., p. 29.

actual transfer of the Sabbath. His views were to undergo one further modification, and in the year 1891, he expressed his thoughts on the subject in a sermon preached at Beth El, entitled "The Sabbath Day of the Jew."

The time has come, he began, to re-consider the Sabbath question. In the spirit of intellectual honesty that characterized his entire ministry, Kohler admitted that he had changed his views in regard to the Sabbath question. No one can deny, he pointed out, that the radical reformers who were led to introduce Sunday service for those who were prevented from the Sabbath service, did so with sincere intentions, but much to their chagrin, the Sunday became the death knell of the Sabbath.

Then, by way of justification, Kohler pointed to his own experiences in behalf of the Sunday services. "Surely," he admitted, "I advocated the Sunday services while I was in Chicago." But, "at the same time the maintenance of the regular Sabbath service was made the condition of the innovation, and the document containing the signatures of the members to this pledge is still in our possession."

After clarifying his own position in the past in regard to the Sunday services, Kohler proceeded to explain the reasons for his changed attitude. Did the Sunday services, he asks, strengthen Judaism? On the contrary, there is something in the very air of

(1) "The Sabbath Day of the Jew," A Living Faith, p. 31.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., pp. 33-34.

(4) Ibid., p. 34.

the Sunday service that chills the heart. Reason alone, cold, proud reason dictates the words. The soul is not there.⁽¹⁾ No-
 where has the ^{SUNDAY SERVICE}~~Sabbath~~ deepened the Jewish faith.⁽²⁾

There were other considerations, Kohler added, which made him change his attitude toward the Sunday service. "It is THE CHANGED ATTITUDE OF THE WORLD TOWARDS THE JEW AND THE PRINCIPLES HE REPRESENTS."⁽³⁾ The Reform movement, he pointed out, thrived in the spirit of freedom which was proclaimed by the French Revolution. The principles of liberty, equality and fraternity captivated Europe's enlightened Jewry, and filled the Jew with the conviction that if he destroyed Jewish separatism, he could "unite all men and races upon the common ground of a pure faith in God."⁽⁴⁾ What difference did it make, then, whether the day on which God is worshipped, is termed Sunday or Saturday? But now, said Kohler, all of our illusions have been shattered. Anti-Semitism and a revival of medieval barbarism have destroyed the hopes which we once cherished.⁽⁵⁾

"Dare we," asked Kohler, "in the face of such great disappointments, recognize the predominance of Christian culture by accepting the Christian Sunday as our day of rest, in place of the ancient Jewish Sabbath?"⁽⁶⁾ "No, and a thousand times no!"

(1) Ibid., p. 35. Cf. also "A United Israel", Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., 1898, p. 85-86.

(2) Ibid., p. 36.

(3) Ibid.

(5) Ibid., pp. 37-38.

(4) Ibid., pp. 36-37.

(6) Ibid., p. 38.

is his answer. "Our duty is to maintain our Jewish identity and to preserve our Jewish institutions without faltering, without yielding. We must, with united forces, rally around our sacred
 (1)
Sabbath."

In answer to his old objection that the necessities of earning a living, made it impossible to correctly observe the Sabbath, Kohler asks: Does not Yom Kippur, the Sabbath of Sabbaths stop the wheels of business? Why should the Jews not be able to do
 (2)
 the same on the weekly Sabbath? Now is not the time to weaken the Sabbath, he pleaded, but to strengthen it; now is the time
 (3)
 "to reconquer the lost Sabbath of the Jew."

With a stirring plea for a renewal of Sabbath sanctity and beauty, Kohler closed this important sermon. The Jew, he said, must choose between a Sabbath which has ever stood for persecution and slander, and one which has ever symbolized the divinity of God and the dignity of man. "Which Sabbath will then obtain the victory?...We leave that to God to decide, and in the mean-
 (4)
 time we wait and hope."

One can just imagine the joy with which the conservative press greeted Kohler's sermon, "The Sabbath Day of the Jew." "We are glad alone for this," wrote the editor of The American Hebrew, "that the Jewish Sabbath has secured another and a most

(1) Ibid., p. 39.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid., p. 41.

valiant champion, whose accession to the cause is as honorable and as much a source of pride as it is the hope of efficient effort in its behalf, and the promise of earnest maintenance of its dignity."⁽¹⁾ Two weeks later, the same journal was able to announce that Dr. Kohler had "become convinced" that the cause of the Jewish Sabbath might be fostered "by a course of Friday evening lectures...The Congregation will therefore, try the experiment of Friday evening lectures during the next year."⁽²⁾

Thus, the entire development of Kohler's attitude toward the Sabbath lies before us. At first, advocating the transferral of the Sabbath to Sunday, he became more conservative with the passage of years, until he became an ardent defender of the historical Jewish Sabbath. At each stage in this development, Kohler sincerely believed that he was acting in the best interests of the religion he loved. Though he introduced the Friday evening service at Temple Beth El in the year 1891, he was never fully convinced of the effectiveness of such an innovation, and he often expressed his doubt as to the value of the late Friday evening service.⁽³⁾ Nevertheless, his conviction that Israel must observe its historic Sabbath grew stronger with the passage of

(1) Vo. 48, No. 5, Sept. 4, 1891. p. 82.

(2) Vol. 48, No. 7, Sept. 18, 1891. p. 160.

(3) Cf. Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XV, 1905. "I wish to inform you that the late Friday evening services are altogether an innovation, an innovation of a dubious character, insofar as they make those who attend it feel that they have done their duty toward the Sabbath." P. 62.

years. He expressed this conviction in his Jewish Theology:

"...the conviction has become well established that the continuity with our great past must be upheld, and the general feeling is that the historical Sabbath should under no condition be entirely given up. It is inseparably connected with the election of Israel as a priest-people while the Christian 'Lord's Day' represents views and tendencies opposed to those of Judaism, whether considered in its original meaning or in that given it by the Church." (1)

Perhaps we have dwelt too long upon the Sabbath issue. If so, it is because we are convinced that Kohler's attitude toward the Sabbath reflects his attitude toward other Jewish issues. Kohler felt that indifference was driving people away from the Synagogue. In an effort to restore the dignity and the vitality of the Synagogue, he was led to introduce Sunday services. Changed conditions, however, made him realize that Judaism could be best served by strengthening rather than weakening the historic Sabbath, and so he gladly admitted the error of his former position. Here we have a picture of a true giant among spiritual leaders. As long as he was convinced that he was right, Kohler would fight tirelessly and fearlessly for his ideals. He was not, however, the type of man to shut his mind to new ideas and to changing conditions.

One further illustration of Dr. Kohler's attitude toward the Sabbath will bring our analysis of this problem to an end. One of the graduates of the Hebrew Union College who was a student when Dr. Kohler was president of the College, tells of how,

(1) Jewish Theology, p. 459.

in his student days, one of the professors gave a written examination to his class on a Sabbath afternoon. This student requested to be excused from writing on the Sabbath and was given permission to leave the class-room. As he stepped into the hall of the building, Dr. Kohler happened to meet him. Kohler asked the student why he was not in class, and when the student, anxious to prevent any trouble, demurred from answering the question, Kohler entered the class-room to discover what had happened. When he realized that the professor was giving a written examination on the Sabbath, he became very angry and expressed his shock at this violation of the Sabbath sanctity.

Such was Dr. Kohler's attitude toward the Jewish Sabbath. For him it was a holy day, a day dedicated to God and to worship. Even in the early days when he had favored a Sunday Sabbath, he had fought for these same ideas. Make the Sabbath a day of rest, of spiritual inspiration and of blessing--this was his constant goal.

G. The Function of Ceremonies

The same development which marked Kohler's attitude toward the observance of the Sabbath marked his attitude toward ceremonies. As the years passed he became more and more convinced of the necessity of meaningful ceremonial practices. Though he ever stressed the principle that ceremonies must add to the religious significance of our life, and that those ceremonies which no longer have any meaning must be discarded, Kohler became increasingly aware of the need for ceremonies which would "surround

Judaism with impressive and attractive forms."⁽¹⁾

Kohler, as we have already noted, was deeply disturbed by the lack of self-respect and by the disinterest which marked the attitude of so many Jews toward their religion. Reform Judaism, he felt, must brush off the dust of the ages, and discover anew the real meaning of Jewish life and of Jewish ceremonies, thereby investing Judaism with new dignity and self-respect.⁽²⁾

Though, for many years Kohler tended to minimize the importance of religious ceremony,⁽³⁾ he never abandoned the hope that all ceremonies that Judaism retained would be meaningful ones and as the years passed he emphasized more and more the need for ceremony to brighten up the religious life. Too often, he said, our reformers "labor under the great shortcoming that they were not brought up in an atmosphere of religious life which derived sanctity from its many rites and ceremonies, and so they are callous, inclined to a rationalism which chills the heart and blunts the finer tendrils of the soul."⁽⁴⁾

The finest expression of Kohler's attitude toward ceremonies is to be found in his paper presented before the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1909, dealing with the Origin and Function of Ceremonies in Judaism. In his paper, Kohler analyzed

(1) "Hanukkah, A Festival of Light," A Living Faith, p. 95.

(2) Ibid., pp. 89, 95.

(3) Cf. "Priest, Prophet and Preacher," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 116.

(4) "Inaugural Address. What a Jewish Institution of Learning Should Be," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 27.

the historical development of Jewish ceremonies, emphasizing the evolutionary nature of the Mosaic law. "The significance of ceremony in the religious life of the Jew," he began, "forms one of the main points at issue between Orthodoxy and Reform." (1) While Orthodoxy has insisted upon the immutability of Sinaitic law, Reform, accepting the principles of evolution, feels that certain ceremonies may be valid for one age, while unacceptable to another.

"We, who behold in religion an ever-progressive force working through the inner consciousness of man, first collectively and afterwards individually, must ascertain the origin and purpose of each and every ceremony in order to find out whether by appealing to our minds and hearts it fulfills a religious function or whether it has become an empty shell with the kernel gone." (2)

In this comprehensive and scholarly paper, Kohler traced the origin of each ceremony, showing how each was influenced by external conditions. It is not the historic treatment of Kohler's paper, however, with which we are primarily concerned here, but rather we are interested in the section dealing with the ceremonies of modern Judaism. "There can be no question," he pointed out, "as to the need of ceremonial practices in our age." (3) A religion which emphasizes doctrine alone is cold. It does not "stir the soul and bring it in touch with the great Fountain-

(1) "The Origin and Function of Ceremonies in Judaism," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XVII, 1907, p. 205.

(2) Ibid., p. 210.

(3) Ibid., p. 223.

head of Holiness and Love. Religious practices do."⁽¹⁾ The question is, adds Kohler, to what extent do religious practices fulfill this object? Surely no one will deny the effectiveness of the Sabbath and the festival days; they tend to revive the dormant soul of the Jew.⁽²⁾ But to what extent are the ceremonies and symbols connected with the Sabbath and the Festivals real symbols of the truths which they attempt to convey. This is the question which Reform must attempt to answer. It must endeavor to "render the old ceremonial attractive, suggestive and impressive for the new generation."⁽³⁾ But merely making old forms and ceremonies attractive is not enough. The Reformer must do much more-- he must also introduce new and appropriate ceremonies where the old ones have lost their significance.⁽⁴⁾ Reform Judaism must replace the dead rites of the past with new and beautiful forms suitable for our time. "We dwelt too long upon the rubbish of the past, neglecting to build attractive quarters for the rising generation."⁽⁵⁾

The task confronting Reform Judaism is not an easy one. In matters of religion, where the role of reverence is so important, the ancient ceremonial institutions must be treated with reverence as long as they remain useful. We must be careful never to cast

(1) Ibid., pp. 223-4.

(2) Ibid., p. 224.

(3) Ibid., p. 225.

(4) Ibid.

(5) "Backward or Forward," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 219.

(1)
off the old before the new has grown strong.

"Break the barrel but let not one drop of the precious wine flow out!" This is the way the rabbis characterize a seemingly impossible task. Such is the problem Reform has to solve. Under the influence of time the old forms crumble and fall. We must see to it that the fragrance, the spirit of the old, be not lost, as we pass on to the new." (2)

What were the new ceremonies which Kohler would introduce to Judaism? For one thing, he pleaded for a more meaningful observance of Sukkoth and Simhath Torah. Kohler felt that, because they occurred so close to the High Holy Days many people erroneously regarded Succoth and Simhath Torah as anti-climactic. (3) Certainly the lethargy which greeted Succoth year after year was to be deplored, and Kohler felt that unless this holiday attained a new significance it would soon become a mockery, devoid of any real meaning. Although he realized that building the Sukka, as a reminder of Israel's glorious history, was a sincere effort on the part of many congregations to lend beauty and meaning to this festival, he could not help feeling that a mere reminiscence of the past was not enough. Sukkoth, he said, must be invested with a vital purpose, with a soul-stirring meaning for our young. (4) For this reason he favored the procession of young children on Sukkoth carrying various plants. (5)

(1) "The Origin and Functions of Ceremonies in Judaism," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XVII, 1907, p. 225.

(2) Ibid., p. 229.

(3) "Israel's Rejoicing in the Law," A Living Faith, p. 76.

(4) "Sukkoth Sermon," A Living Faith, p. 71.

(5) "A Revaluation of Reform Judaism," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R. Vol. XXXIV, 1924, p. 228.

How can Sukkoth be made more meaningful? The answer suggested in one Sukkoth sermon is to make the old symbols stand for new ideas, ideas which satisfy the needs of our age. Sukkoth tells of the wandering of the Jew throughout the ages. Our age, too, has its Jews who have been forced to wander over the face of the earth. Every year, thousands of Jews flee to this country from Europe. How, asks Kohler, shall these new-comers be made a blessing to our land and not a hindrance. Let the Succoth provide the answer:

"Do all you can to turn your immigrants into farmers! Nay, encourage some of your own sons to follow agricultural pursuits, because all the trades and all the professions are overcrowded and will soon fail to support the general multitudes...We need Jewish Sukkoth or farmer tents in the remotest parts of the globe, and for this project of Jewish colonization we must work everywhere. Of this the Sukkot should be a reminder." (1)

Surely this is an unusual statement, and yet it represents a sincere effort on the part of Kohler to restore the faded glory of the Sukkoth.

There are other ideas, however, that are suggested by Sukkoth. Historically this festival has symbolized the prophetic hope that all nations will come to the Temple in Jerusalem to worship. (2) Let Sukkoth, then, speak a message of universalism to the modern Jew. Let it remind him of the broad humanitarian character of Judaism. Let it prepare him for the kingdom of God, (3) for the time when all nations and all men will be united in worship.

(1) "Sukkoth Sermon," A Living Faith, p.71.

(2) Ibid., p. 73.

(3) Ibid., p. 74.

Of a much more realistic nature were Kohler's suggestions regarding a more meaningful observance of Simhath Torah. These suggestions are most beautifully expressed in Kohler's sermon "Israel's Rejoicing in the Law," preached in 1901 at Temple Beth El, though many of the ideas expressed in this sermon were voiced earlier. Referring to the Sukkoth sermon which we have just discussed, Kohler admitted: "Back to the Soil! is a timely call and a very laudable intention. But I am afraid this cannot change the attitude of the Jew nor lend our feast without an underlying purpose a deeper spiritual meaning."⁽¹⁾

As early as 1885 Kohler expressed his disappointment that the early reformers had deprived the synagogue of "its annual Feast of Rejoicing in the Law,"⁽²⁾ At this time Kohler suggested that Simhath Torah should be revived as a festival inaugurating the school year.⁽³⁾ These very sentiments Kohler expressed in his sermon "Israel's Rejoicing in the Law," Pointing with satisfaction to the Shabuoth festival which was saved from falling into abeyance by the Confirmation, he suggested that a similar procedure could be used in treating Simhath Torah.

"So could the Feast of Rejoicing in the Law again be rendered one of the most impressive festival days of the Synagogue, if as a Children's Festival, in connection with the annual re-opening of the Religious School, it would rally old and young around Israel's banner of

(1) "Israel's Rejoicing in the Law," A Living Faith, p.75.

(2) "The Feast of Rejoicing in the Law, A Plea for a Children's Feast," The Sabbath Visitor, Vol. 13, p. 150.

(3) Ibid., p. 150.

Law and fill the hearts of our little ones with joy and pride at the privilege of being God's chosen banner-bearers of the world's Truth." (1)

Kohler closed this sermon with a beautiful statement of his general attitude toward ceremonies. "There are a great many rites and customs," he said, "that need only refashioning and they will again give our matter-of-fact age some of the lost poetry, some of the lost brightness and cheerfulness. Simhath Torah as a Children's Festival at the beginning of School life can be made (2) a fount of rejuvenation for the Synagogue."

In the same spirit which characterized his efforts toward revitalizing the first day of Succoth and Simhath Torah, Kohler endeavored to lend beauty to other Jewish festivals. In an effort to make the observance of Hanukkah more meaningful, he introduced a special service held on the Friday evening of the hol- (3) iday week. The Jewish Reformers, he said, have done a magnificent job in reviving the ceremony of kindling the Hanukkah lights in "homes where the Christmas tree threatened to captivate the young hearts and lessen their pride in their ancestral faith." (4) Make Hanukkah brighter and more beautiful--this was his plea:

(1) "Israel's Rejoicing in the Law," A Living Faith, p. 76. See also "A Revaluation of Reform Judaism," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R. Vol. XXXIV, 1924, p. 228.

(2) "Israel's Rejoicing in the Law," A Living Faith, pp. 80-81.

(3) "The History of the Beth El Congregation," The American Hebrew, Vol. 48, No. 7, Sept. 18, 1891, p. 161.

(4) "The Origin and Function of Ceremonies in Judaism," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XVII, 1907, p. 225.

"the feast of Maccabees ought to enter the Jewish household every year like a queen of beauty, wrapped in a robe of light and glory, by far eclipsing the charm and lustre of the Christmas tree, and by its wondrous memory of Jewish heroism and fortitude kindle in every Jewish heart anew the flame of religious enthusiasm and zeal." (1)

Kohler ever deplored the indifferent spirit which allowed Christmas trees to replace Hanukkah lights in Jewish homes. Can we, he asked, can we afford to allow the 25th of Kislev to be replaced by the 25th of December? "Can we allow the anniversary of the rise of a race of Jewish heroes, martyrs, and sages to be eclipsed by the mythical birthday of one single Jew...?" No, the 25th of Kislev points to a higher ideal, a higher monotheism; it must never succumb to the ideals represented by Christmas. But then, the Hanukkah festival must become more radiant, more beautiful. "It must have not less, but more of philanthropic deeds...Some great object of philanthropic, educational and charitable interest ought every year to render the Hanukkah lights bright and sweet with love." Light and love as symbolized by the Hanukkah candles and by contributions to charity--these were two aspects of Hanukkah which he continually emphasized.

(1) "Chanuka and Christmas," The Menorah, Vol. IX, No. 6, December, 1890, p. 305.

(2) "Hanukkah, A Festival of Light," A Living Faith, pp. 93-94.

(3) Ibid., p. 94.

(4) Ibid., p. 95. See also "Chanuka and Christmas," The Menorah, Vol. IX, No. 6, December, 1890, p. 314.

Reform, however, must not be confined to the Synagogue.

"Reform has beautified our houses of worship, filling them with new light, and life and song. It has now to offer us new attractive forms of domestic devotion, too."⁽¹⁾ These words, spoken only a few months after he arrived at Temple Beth El, were to be repeated often by Kohler in his constant effort to restore religious dignity to the Jewish home. The observance of the Sabbath, he felt, must be reinstituted in the Jewish home. For this reason he pleaded for the kindling of the Sabbath candles.⁽²⁾ He also suggested the introduction of a blessing by one of the parents at each family reunion on Sabbath and holiday evenings, and he approved of the Sabbath Evening Kiddush initiated by Dr. Berkowitz.⁽³⁾

But if the home is to become a center of piety and devotion, it is the Jewish mother who must make it so. "She must again teach her child to recite its morning and evening prayers and say the grace at every meal."⁽⁴⁾ Dr. Kohler was a strong champion of the cause of women's equality in both the home and the synagogue, and he often deplored the conditions which prevented women from achieving full equality. "The education she received is still greatly at fault. The old fashioned view still prevails which

(1) "Sabbath Observance and Sunday lectures," Preached at Temple Beth El, Dec. 27, 1879, p.8.

(2) "Woman's Influence on Judaism," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 295.

(3) "The Origin and Function of Ceremonies in Judaism," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XVII, 1907, p. 225. See also, "The Sabbath Day of the Jew," A Living Faith, p. 40.

prepares and trains, I had almost said, dresses the young woman⁽¹⁾ for the marriage market." "Ceremonies which assign to women an inferior rank," he said, "are out of place with us. Reform Judaism recognizes woman as man's equal and sees in her deeper emotional nature, which is more responsive to the promptings of the spirit, the real inspiring influence for religious life in the household."⁽²⁾

The paper which Dr. Kohler wrote for the Central Conference of American Rabbis dealing with the Harmonization of the Jewish and Civil Laws of Marriage and Divorce, mirrors his attitude toward woman's equality.⁽³⁾ In this exhaustive paper, Kohler traced the development of Jewish marriage and divorce laws, and showed how they were in conflict with the civil laws. He also discussed the status of women under Jewish law and pointed to the steps⁽⁴⁾ that Reform Judaism had made to raise the legal status of women. At the end of his paper, Dr. Kohler listed nine recommendations aimed at harmonizing the conflicting Jewish laws with the civil law. The first two of these recommendations are of special interest to us:

(4) "A Revaluation of Reform Judaism," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XXXIV, 1924, p.229.

(1) "Esther or the Jewish Woman," Publications of Temple Beth El, February 26, 1888, p. 7.

(2) "The Origin and Function of Ceremonies in Judaism," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XVII, 1907, p. 226.

(3) "The Harmonization of Marriage and Divorce Laws," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XXV, 1915, p. 335ff.

(4) Ibid., p. 342ff.

"1. The Central Conference of American Rabbis should declare that the Jewish woman be regarded religiously as the equal of man, and, therefore, if she so desires, be considered a full member of the congregation with every right and privilege connected therewith; that she may serve as witness to any legal act and that her signature under the marriage certificate be considered as valid in the eyes of Judaism today as is that of man; furthermore, that the bride at the marriage ceremony hand a ring to the bridegroom while reciting the marriage formula after the bridegroom has given her the ring with the accompanying marriage formula.

2. The Marriage Formula should bear the distinctively Jewish character as hallowed by tradition and recited by both bride and bridegroom while they give the ring to each other in the words: Be consecrated unto me as wife (husband) according to the law of God and the faith of Israel.."(1)

It was also in the spirit of the religious equality of women that Dr. Kohler was opposed to the ceremony of Bar Mitzvah. The original significance of Bar Mitzvah, he pointed out, was to signify the admission of the Jewish youth into the membership of the congregation. Today the original significance of Bar Mitzvah has been forgotten, and consequently it is meaningless to continue this ceremony.⁽²⁾ Much more significant and beautiful, Kohler felt, was the ceremony of Confirmation which admits of no religious distinction between men and women. "The moment the Oriental notion of the superiority of man over woman in religious life was abandoned, a form of consecration for the young of both sexes was instituted in its place, and the beautiful rite of confirmation was adopted."⁽³⁾

(1) Ibid., p. 376f.

(2) "The Origin and Function of Ceremonies in Judaism," Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XVII, 1907, p. 226.

(3) Ibid.

Kohler regarded the Confirmation ceremony as an extremely important religious event, important not only for the confirmants, but for their parents and for the members of the congregation as well. "Who can witness the Confirmation ceremony but feels the ancient fire of Sinai blaze up anew in his heart?...Thus the children's Confirmation becomes the confirmation of the time-honored faith by the parents, and the consecration vow of the confirmands consecrates the whole congregation of Israel..."⁽¹⁾ Because of its deep significance, Kohler favored postponing Confirmation until the confirmant had reached an age when he would fully appreciate the significance of the event.⁽²⁾ To Kohler, Confirmation is meaningless unless it involves a deep awareness and acceptance of responsibility. Accordingly, in his charges to the Confirmants, he would often emphasize the need for greater consecration, for renewed loyalty and for deeper⁽³⁾ devotion.

(1) "A Glorious Patrimony and a Perennial Pledge," A Living Faith, p. 128.

(2) The Board of Trustees of Temple Beth El, however, proved not amenable to such a proposal. "We regret we cannot give our assent to the recommendation of Dr. Kohler that the prescribed age for confirmation be 16, as in our opinion it would be a difficult matter to detain the children in the Sunday school until they reach that age, would materially diminish our number of confirmants, and might ultimately injuriously affect the Sunday school itself." Minutes of the Board of Temple Beth El, 1874-1910. Report of Special Committee of the Board. Date Uncertain.

(3) "A Glorious Patrimony and a Perennial Pledge," A Living Faith, p. 129.

III. THE THEOLOGIAN OF REFORM JUDAISM

A. Zionism and the Mission of Israel

No Jewish thinker or religious leader expressed the spirit of universalism more beautifully than did Kaufmann Kohler. Convinced that all men could live together in brotherhood and peace, Kohler conceived of Israel's mission as that of bringing all mankind to God's holy mountain. So closely was Kohler associated with the concept of universalism that he could see in the nationalism which characterized the latter years of the 19th century nothing but a threat to what he regarded as the true spirit of Judaism. For this reason he consistently opposed Jewish nationalism as it expressed itself in political Zionism. Thus, at the Pittsburg Conference, Kohler emphasized the religious as opposed (1) to the national character of Israel, and in his later sermons and addresses as well, he fought against the goals of the Jewish nationalists. For Kohler, Israel's mission was not a national or cultural mission, but a religious one.

Nowhere was Kohler more eloquent, nowhere was he more of an idealist than when he discussed the idea of the Mission of Israel. Convinced that in a free America opportunities for the fulfillment of the Mission were greater than anywhere else, Kohler summoned the modern Jew to again "mount the watchtower of prophecy" and "unfold (2) the banner of the highest idealism." No religion, he felt, can rival Israel in the ability to "send forth the genius that will write the law of God anew upon the heart of man and win all souls by the nobility of truth and the simplicity of

(1) Cf. p. 50. See also Proceedings of the Pittsburg Rabbinical Conference, p. 25.

(2) Cf. "The Mission of Israel," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 200.

(1)
doctrine offered."

The Mission of Israel then, consists in winning all men to its God and to its doctrine of truth. At this point an interesting problem arises. If Kohler conceived of the Mission of Israel to consist of winning all mankind to One God and to one law of truth, then would not the merger of Israel with Christianity be one means of attaining this goal? One might point to several statements of Kohler's which seem to indicate that he held this view. "Why should the Jew by his religion," he said, "not endeavor to merge Christian and Jew into the great brotherhood of man?"⁽²⁾ It is important that we do not misunderstand Kohler. Though he ever advocated a concept of the Mission of Israel which aimed at winning all men to Israel's law of truth, Kohler never favored the sacrificing of Jewish identity as a means to this end. On the contrary, the very mission of Israel implies the distinctness of the Jewish people. Illustrative of this attitude, is Kohler's opposition to intermarriage. Quoting David Einhorn with approval, he writes: "Indeed I cannot understand how any one who attributes to the Jews a great historical mission, a mission which can only be ascribed to them as a separate people, can approve of intermarriage without sacrificing the very idea of the Jew's mission...To offer a hand to consecrating intermarriage is according to my firm opinion, furnishing a nail for the coffin of the small Jewish race with its lofty mission."⁽³⁾

(1) "Judaism's Four Characteristic Traits," A Living Faith, p. 159.

(2) "The Jew's Share in Occidental Civilization," The Jewish Reformer, Vol. I, No. 15, April 9, 1886, p. 8.

(3) "Did the Napoleonic Sanhedrin Allow Intermarriage?" The American Hebrew, Vol. LIV, No. 23, April 6, 1894, p. 684. Cf. also Yearbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, Vol. XIX, 1909, pp. 89-90.

Kohler does not deny that other people have much to teach the world. Greece, with her art and philosophy, and Rome with her jurisprudence and statesmanship have both added to the civilization of mankind. There is a difference between the fulfillment of their mission, however, and that of Israel. "For in vain do we look for a vision or an intuition on the part of any of these that they have actually received such a life task or mission from on high... Only the Jewish people set out with a special call from heaven to go forth as a priest people and as God's holy nation to win the world about for its truth; and the revelation they received on Sinai became a charge, a truth entrusted to their care for all generations to come."⁽¹⁾

The idea of the Mission of Israel is closely associated with the concept of the Messianic age. While Orthodoxy waits for the realization of the Messianic age in a supernatural way, through the coming of the Messiah, Reform sees "the Messianic age approaching in every forward stride of human knowledge and skill, in every triumph of right over wrong, of truth over falsehood, of love over hatred, of peace over strife, of humanity over inhumanity."⁽²⁾ Reform then, believes that through the accomplishment of its mission, it can achieve the Messianic age.

This, too, is the significance of Israel as a Chosen People. For what was Israel chosen? For power? For wealth? for glory? No.

 (1) "Israel's Mission in the World," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, pp. 162-3.

(2) "Israel's Perennial Spring," A Living Faith, p. 106-107. See also "American Reform Judaism," The American Hebrew, January 19, 1923, p. 342.

It was chosen to be a holy nation, "to do service for God and mankind whether as priest and prophet or as a teacher and leader of nations."⁽¹⁾ Israel's very choice implies the necessity of a mission, for Israel has a great message to deliver to the world, "the message of the God of holiness, of the God of truth and justice who rules the life of all men and nations, the message of the kingdom of God on earth."⁽²⁾

In view of the concept of the Mission of Israel, Kohler felt that no loyal Jew could be a Zionist. Zionism, he felt, is part of the same nationalistic spirit which divides the world. True Judaism stands for "a religion broader than sect and for a humanity wider than nation."⁽³⁾ To this concept of the cosmopolitan mission of the Jew, the Zionist "purposely shuts his eye."⁽⁴⁾

In his emphasis upon the conception of Judaism as a religion, Kohler emphatically denies Israel is a nation in a political sense. "Judaism," he says, "is a religious truth entrusted to a nation destined to interlink all nations and sects, classes and races of men."⁽⁵⁾ It is an historical mission, not a national life." Therefore, said Kohler, "we behold in Jerusalem's overthrow, not a fall, but a rise to higher glory." The very dispersion of Israel throughout the world gives greater opportunity for fulfilling Israel's historic mission.

(1) "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord," A Living Faith, p. 62.

(2) Ibid., p. 63.

(3) "Three Discourses on Jewish Ethics," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 250.

(4) Ibid.

(5) "Zionism," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 458.

(6) "Backward or Forward," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 230.

Believing the Mission of Israel to be of a universal nature, Kohler maintained that Jews must work for the fulfillment of that mission in every country in which they live. For this reason he opposed any attempt to regard Jews as aliens in the countries in which they lived. "As far as we are concerned," he declared in an address to the Judeans, "who believe in progressive Judaism, we, Occidental Jews, protest as one man against the very idea of a return to Judea, as if that were our land and we but foreigners, aliens and exiles in the country in which we live."⁽¹⁾ American Jewry, he was convinced, no longer yearned for a return to Palestine. For this reason he violently opposed the entire Zionist effort.

"Under the caption of Nationalism, that ominous word which has plunged the whole civilized world into the most horrible of all wars in history, they want to turn to us, who are happy and proud of our American citizenship, into a political nation and thus make us aliens in the land that has given us liberty and equal opportunity with all our fellow citizens."⁽²⁾

Nor could Kohler agree with the assertion made by Nordau and others that anti-Semitism was incurable and that only by fleeing to Palestine could the Jew overcome it.⁽³⁾ Surely we are plagued by anti-Semitism, Kohler admits. Not by leaving our homes and countries however, can it be overcome, but only by battling for truth and for right. "To retreat before the anti-Semite, and leave the field to the foe, as the Zionist advises us to do, is nothing less than cowardice."⁽⁴⁾

(1) "Zionism," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 457.

(2) "Israel's Mission in the World," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 161.

(3) "Zionism," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 460.

(4) Ibid.

Although Kohler was opposed to Zionism as a political movement, he, on occasion, expressed approval of some of the accomplishments of the Zionists. For one thing, he commended the efforts of the Zionists to stimulate agricultural life, and he even voiced his opinion that "the transformation of the Jew into a peaceloving and productive farmer, is the only healthy and valuable element in the Zionist movement." But as anti-Semitism in Europe and Russia became more and more violent, Kohler realized that the effort to colonize Jews in Palestine was another healthy element of the Zionist movement. Even though Kohler felt that Zionism was no answer to the problem of anti-Semitism, he did not oppose the efforts to turn Palestine again into a center of Jewish culture and a refuge for the homeless. Nor did he oppose the accomplishment of the Zionist movement in rallying back to the fold those who had been lost to Judaism. But Kohler did oppose any effort to replace Judaism with Zionism. Reform Judaism, he said, "denounces as treason the attempt of those who want to sell our birthright, our 4000 year-old spiritual inheritance for a mess of pottage, for temporary and material consideration,"

(1) Ibid., p. 463.

(2) "Sukkoth Sermon," A Living Faith, p. 72.

(3) Cf. "Zionism," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, pp. 464-5.

(4) Ibid., p. 460.

(5) "The Mission of Israel," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 198. See also "The Good of History and the Religion of History," A Living Faith, p. 165.

(6) "Zionism," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 465.

(1)
and their American citizenship for a land in the clouds."In this spirit he often asserted that Israel's place was "not among the (2)
League of Nations, but among the League of Religions."

Here we come to the crux of Kohler's opposition to Zionism. As a national movement, Zionism is not religious, it is not Judaism. It is a movement, felt Kohler, "without God and religion, one devoid of the Torah and the Synagogue, and particularly of the mission (3)
assigned to Israel on Sinai..." Irreligion, he was convinced, created (4)
and stimulated the entire movement.

In this spirit, Kohler objected to both the Cultural Zionism of Ahad Ha-Am and the political Zionism of Nordau and Herzl. All of the Zionists fail to realize that the true, the genuine product (5)
of Israel's genius is its religion. In this connection it is interesting to note that Kohler was more lenient toward Schechter than toward any of the other Zionists. "Schechter's Zionism," said Kohler, "aimed at nothing but the full unfolding of the religious soul of Jew and Judaism, whereas a Zionism without religion and without God, the so-called Nationalism is most vehemently denounced by him as (6)
un-Jewish."

(1) "The Faith of Reform Judaism," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 334. See also "American Reform Judaism," The American Hebrew, Jan. 19, 1923, p. 316.

(2) "The Mission of Israel," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 199.

(3) "What the Hebrew Union College Stands For," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 441.

(4) Ibid. See also "In the Beginning," Hebrew Union College Monthly, Vol. X, No. 1, Nov. 1923, p.5. Also "The Reform Movement and Russian Intellectuals," The American Jewish Chronicle, Vol. I, No. 4, June 2, 1916, p. 103.

(5) Cf. "American Reform Judaism," The American Hebrew, Jan. 19, 1923, p. 316. See also "The Mission of Israel," Studies, Addresses and

It was in defence of the religious character of Judaism, then, that Kohler opposed Zionism. The concept of the mission of Israel, he felt, was in no way fulfilled by Zionism. Though he realized that the Zionists made a strong appeal to the masses of Jews he could in no way accept as Jewish the national character of their movement, nor could he foresee through Zionism, the fulfillment of the Messianic hope of Israel.

"The Zion to which, according to the prophetic words, the nations will pilgrimage to find God and go in His ways, will be on the top of the mountains,--that is, as the rabbis say, one mount of revelation, one height of ideals will be piled upon the other, so that the ideal of all ideals will be attained. This ideal Zion of humanity, not built by human hands, a spiritual Zion for all mankind, is the goal, the aim of Reform Judaism." (1)

B. Jewish Education and Jewish Theology

In convening the Pittsburg Conference, Dr. Kohler had sought to crystallize opinion upon the problems which confronted Reform Judaism. But by no means did Kohler consider his task accomplished with the adoption of a Platform in the year 1885. Throughout his entire life, as preacher, as teacher, as encyclopedist and as theologian, Kohler maintained the conviction that only through Jewish education and Jewish scholarship will Judaism survive. Believing that one of the chief tasks confronting Reform was "to kindle the -----
(5),(con't.) Personal Papers, p. 178 and "Zionism," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 457.
(6) "Solomon Schechter," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 334.

(1) "The Faith of Reform Judaism," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 334.

(1)
lamps of learning," he regarded the education of the young as one of his main responsibilities. Though he was often discouraged, bemoaning the fact that "the⁽²⁾ thirst after the deeper fountains of Jewish knowledge is sadly on the decrease," he never abandoned the conviction that enlightenment can come only through education.

It was in this spirit that Dr. Kohler accepted in 1884 the editorship of the Sabbath Visitor, a journal directed toward youthful audiences. For two years Dr. Kohler edited the Sabbath Visitor, and its pages reflect his strong influence. Kohler did not believe that Reform Judaism was a movement which only adults could understand. Young people, too, he felt, must be made to understand the principles for which Reform was striving. And so through the Sabbath Visitor, he presented these ideas couched in terms that would appeal to the youthful readers. At times he would explain Reform as a process of historical evolution, showing that Judaism is a continual evolution of ideas.⁽³⁾ At other times, his appeal was more direct as in his articles advocating a more meaningful observance of the Jewish festivals. At Sukkoth, for example, he pleaded directly to the young people to instill in this festival a deeper sig-

(1) "The Threefold Purpose of the Synagogue," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 140.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Cf. "Chapters on folk-lore and popular customs," The Sabbath Visitor, Vol. 13, 1884, pp. 81-82, 97-98, 305-306. See also The Sabbath Visitor, Vol. 14, 1885, pp. 53-54, 127-128. See also Kohler's articles "Lessons in Biblical History," in The Sabbath Visitor.

nificance: "The Sukkoth festival," he wrote, "ought to be revived. The Simchat Torah ought to be revived. We should have it rendered an impressive children's festival, an inaugural Sabbath-school festivity."⁽¹⁾

It was through the pages of the Sabbath Visitor, also, that Dr. Kohler advocated another innovation. The young people of each congregation, he suggested, should "form a sort of congregation of their own."⁽²⁾ Here their own talents and religious, as well as intellectual interests would find greater opportunity for expression.

"On the very day of their confirmation they should enroll themselves as members of this Junior Congregation there to remain until they have, either at the time of marriage or at the age of thirty, joined the older members of the main congregation. By thus becoming active workers, contributing parts of a working machinery which grants full play to the inclinations and talents of each individuality, the young would soon feel a lively interest in the progress and welfare of the Jewish community and take pride in their ancestral faith and in a name which bears the stamp of a higher nobility than can be claimed by any royal house today."⁽³⁾

Again, in the volumes which he published for his religious school, Kohler emphasized the idea that Reform Judaism was not something that must be reserved only for adults. Even our children must be taught the meaning of Reform, and to this end Kohler published in 1877 a Jewish Reader for Sabbath Schools and in 1898, a Guide for Instruction in Judaism. Even more important, however, for an understanding of Kohler the Reformer, is his Manual of Religious

***-----
(1) "The Feast of Rejoicing in the Law, A Plea for a Children's Feast," The Sabbath Visitor, Vol. 13, 1884, p. 150.

(2) "Young Israel," The Sabbath Visitor, Vol. 14, May 1, 1885, p. 206.

(3) Ibid., p. 207.

Instruction. In this concise thirty-five page volume Kohler outlined the religious ideas which he believed should be taught in the religious school. Certainly these ideas reflect Kohler's attitude as a Reformer. Under the section entitled the Jewish religion, for example, Kohler emphasized his conviction that Judaism is a universal religion. "The Jewish religion," he wrote, "is intended to be the religion of the whole human race."⁽¹⁾

Nor did Kohler believe that children were incapable of understanding the evolutionary concept of Judaism. They too, must be made to realize that certain ceremonies have been "copied from the priestly practices of the heathen nations of antiquity, and have lost their meaning for our times."⁽²⁾

Keenly feeling the need for an organized system of Jewish education, Kohler suggested before the Jewish Minister's Association of New York that all congregations unite in "the formation of an American Jewish Sabbath School Union."⁽³⁾ Such a Union, he urged, should be organized neither on strictly Orthodox or Reform lines, but "on the broadest possible basis."⁽⁴⁾ Outlining the need for such an organization, Kohler pointed out that its functions would be to help Congregations too poor to provide for the proper education of their children, to ensure a more adequate moral instruction of children and to improve the techniques used in teaching."⁽⁵⁾

(1) Manual of Religious Instruction, p. 11.

(2) Ibid., p. 26.

(3) The Jewish Reformer, Vol. I, No. 19, May 7, 1886, p. 4.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Ibid., pp. 4-6. In his report to the Jewish Minister's Association, Kohler suggested that the Sabbath School Union should cooperate with the Sabbath School Union of the West and South, which, in conjunction with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, was planning on meeting in Cincinnati in June, 1886. The more Conservative members of the Minister's Association opposed Kohler's plan as a "Reform scheme." p. 4.

Kohler's efforts as an educator, however, were not confined to young people alone. In almost three hundred articles which he wrote for the Jewish Encyclopedia, and in countless other articles which he wrote for the Jewish Quarterly Review, the Jewish Reformer, the Menorah and other periodicals, Dr. Kohler presented the results of his life as a scholar and Reformer. These articles mirror Kohler's interest in comparative folk-lore, apocryphal and Hellenistic literature, Jewish ethics and a variety of other subjects. His interest in comparative religion found expression in his volume, The Origins of Synagogue and Church which was published posthumously by the Alumni Association of the Hebrew Union College.

Typical of these scholarly studies, is his article on the Origin of Kol Nidre. Tracing the development of the Kol Nidre Vow and of its hauntingly beautiful melody, Dr. Kohler discusses the significance of this "peculiar piece of Synagogal liturgy" (1) in the various periods of Jewish history. But what concerns Kohler most is the modern, the spiritual meaning of the Kol Nidre. "The Kol Nidre told in every land and clime, with ever renewed thrills of awe and imperishable faith and hope in Israel's God, the tragic story of the martyr hero, trustingly and confidently waiting for the redemption, not of the nation merely, but of the world." (2)

It was as editor of the Philosophy and Theology sections of The Jewish Encyclopedia and as author of his Jewish Theology, how-

(1) "The Origin of Kol Nidre," The American Hebrew, Vol. 112, No. 4 December 8, 1922, p. 147.

(2) Ibid.

ever, that Dr. Kohler made his most important contributions to the field of Jewish scholarship and Jewish theology. In speaking of Dr. Kohler as a theologian, Professor Cohon has pointed out:

"He was virtually the first Reformer who entered the Holy of Holies of Judaism and presented a complete survey of Jewish theology both historically and systematically. He set himself to the task of vindicating the rightfulness of this phase of academic study within Judaism." (1)

Kohler himself referred to the need of a Jewish theology. "Closer acquaintance with the religious and philosophical systems of modern times has created a new demand for a Jewish theology by which the Jew can comprehend his own religious truths in the light of modern thought, and at the same time defend them against the aggressive attitude of the ruling religious sects." (2) This was his object, Dr. Cohon points out in convening the Pittsburg Conference, in editing the departments of Theology and Philosophy of the Jewish Encyclopedia, and in writing his Jewish Theology. (3)

With this introduction to Kohler as a systematic theologian, we can proceed to analyze his theological writings. We must bear in mind, however, that as a theologian, Kohler was influenced by the same convictions that had led him to the conclusion that Progressive Judaism was the only historically correct interpretation of Judaism. "In my opinion," he wrote in the introduction to his Jewish Theology, "the Jewish religion has never been static...but

(1) Cohon, op. cit., p. 12.

(2) Jewish Theology, p. 3.

(3) Cohon, op. cit.,

has ever been and still is the result of a dynamic process of
 (1)
 growth and development."

As early as 1897, Dr. Gotthard Deutsch of the Hebrew Union College had contacted Kohler asking him to serve on the committee soon to be named to work out a plan for a Jewish Encyclopedia. Kohler's letter of acceptance to Dr. Deutsch is of interest because it reveals the active role which he played as an editor of the Encyclopedia and it also provides us with an interesting sidelight into Kohler's relationship with Isaac M. Wise. Referring to the Committee which was being organized, Kohler wrote: "Dr. Wise has suggested
 (2)
 some names for the committee which do not belong on the list." In addition he noted that the names of Drs. Felsenthal and Jastrow were missing. The Encyclopedia Committee, Kohler felt, should be composed of internationally renowned scholars, scholars who would
 (3)
 "guarantee the scientific character of the venture."

One need only look at a few of Kohler's articles in the Encyclopedia to appreciate their scholarly nature. But it is from the viewpoint of Kohler the Reformer, that his work in behalf of the Encyclopedia chiefly interests us. As a Reformer and as a scholar both, Kohler is able to point to the historical process of evolution and growth within Judaism. Let us look for example, at his article on the Pharisees, a subject in which he was particularly interested. The Pharisees, he points out, represented

(1) Jewish Theology, p. viii.

(2) Letter to Dr. Deutsch, October 15, 1897. Translated from the German. American Jewish Archives.

(3) Ibid.

"the principle of progress; they were less rigid in the execution of justice..."⁽¹⁾ Surely the Pharisees reveal a process of evolution at work within Jewish history. "The whole history of Judaism was reconstructed from the Pharisaic point of view, and a new aspect was given to the Sanhedrin of the past." True, he admits, Pharisaism gave Judaism a legalistic tendency and made "separatism" its chief characteristic, "yet only thus were the pure monotheistic faith, the ethical ideal, and the intellectual and spiritual character of the Jew preserved in the midst of the downfall of the old world and the deluge of barbarism which swept over the medieval world."⁽²⁾

Kohler the Reformer could not be divorced from Kohler the Encyclopedist. His articles, though reflecting genuine scholarship, bear the indelible impression of a writer devoted to the cause of Reform Judaism. In his article on Ceremonies, for example, he again points out that "the law of evolution (which rules religion as well as other domains of Life) exerts its power also in regard to ceremonies."⁽³⁾ All religious rites have undergone transformations and, with the passage of time, assume new meanings. But is evolution incompatible with revelation? This is the question which the theologian must answer.

"Consequently, the question of ceremonial observance, becomes for the theologian part of the larger problem,

(1) "Pharisees," The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. IX, p. 662.

(2) Ibid., p. 666.

(3) "Ceremonies," The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. III, p. 656.

how far the principle of evolution is admissable and reconcilable with the belief in revelation and the divine character of the Law, and how far every age has power and authority to change and modify the Law and the forms of religion." (1)

To deal with even a small percentage of the articles which Kohler wrote for the Jewish Encyclopedia would be a tremendous task. One need only look at his article on Ethics or on the Chosen People, on Immortality or on Revelation, on Jesus or on the Essenes, or on any one of countless other subjects, to realize the breadth and the depth of Kohler's scholarly interests and attainments. In all of these articles the influence of Kaufmann Kohler the Reformer is clearly perceptible.

It is probably as the author of Jewish Theology more than for any other single accomplishment that Dr. Kohler is remembered to-day. There can be no doubt that his exposition of Judaism supplied a long felt need for a systematic and historical exposition of Judaism. Dr. Kohler, himself, pointed to this need in the introduction to his work:

"It may seem rather strange that no such work has hitherto been written by any of the leading Jewish scholars of either the conservative or the progressive schools. This can only be accounted for by the fact that up to modern times the Rabbinical and philosophical literature of the Middle Ages sufficed for the needs of the student, and a systematic exposition of the Jewish faith seemed to be unnecessary." (2)

(1) Ibid.

(2) Jewish Theology, p. vii.

In order to satisfy the need for a Jewish Theology, Kohler accepted an invitation from Dr. Gustav Karpéles, President of the Society for the Promotion of the Science of Judaism in Berlin, to write a compendium of Systematic Jewish Theology which appeared as volume four in a series entitled of Grundriss der Gesamtwissenschaft des Judenthums.⁽¹⁾ "I accepted the task," wrote Kohler, "only with the understanding that it should be written from the view-point of historical research, instead of a mere dogmatic or doctrinal system."⁽²⁾ The German version of the Jewish Theology appeared in 1910 and an English translation was published in 1918.

The plan of presentation, as Dr. Neumark points out, is based upon the idea of Philo,⁽³⁾ of the two doctrines of God and Man and a third section on Israel. As we are concerned with Kohler the Reformer, we need not concern ourselves with the details of Kohler's systematic presentation of Judaism. It is important, however, to observe the ^affect of his attitude as a Reformer upon his theology. As we have already noted, Kohler presented Jewish ~~theology~~ from an historical, evolutionary point of view. In dealing with each topic, he begins with the Biblical idea, then shows the development in Talmud, Hellenistic and medieval times, and finally deals with the problem from a modern point of view. Kohler himself described to the Central Conference the procedure which he followed in pre-

(1) Ibid., p. viii.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Cf. "Dr. Kohler's Systematic Theology," Studies in Jewish Literature, p. 31.

paring his Theology:

"I treat each subject in paragraphs, beginning with Biblical times, coming then to the Talmudic, and proceeding to our own era. In conclusion I state our beliefs. I wish to state this, that at no time in my book will it be said that such and such is the absolute creed. I give the historical development of every doctrine." (1)

In line with our interest in Kohler as a Reformer, we may scan the pages of the Jewish Theology and see how Kohler's interpretation of Reform Judaism finds expression in his Theology. In the first place, Kohler attempts to define what he means by Theology and what he means by Judaism. Emphasizing that his study is a theological and not a philosophical one, Kohler points out that theology deals exclusively with a specific religion, in this case Judaism. "Judaism," he says, "is a religion of historical growth which, far from claiming to be the final truth, is ever regenerated anew at each turning point of history." (2) Similarly, Revelation is not a single act, but a process of development. The stages of Revelation correspond to the degrees of the culture of the people. (3) (4)

Judaism he defines as a religious system, "the vital element which united the Jewish people, preserving it and regenerating it ever anew." (5) In view of Kohler's opposition to Zionism, Kohler emphasizes this religious nature of Judaism. "Judaism, accordingly, does not denote the Jewish nationality, with its political and cultural achievements and aspirations, as those who have lost faith

(1) Yearbook of the C.C.A.R., Vol. XVIII, 1908, p. 112. Cf. also Jewish Theology, p. 5.

(2) Jewish Theology, p. 1f.

(3) Ibid., p. 4.

(4) Ibid., p. 36.

(5) Ibid., p. 7.

in the religious mission of Israel would have it." ⁽¹⁾ Devoting a whole section to the Mission of Israel, Kohler points out that "the central point of Jewish theology and the key to an understanding of the nature of Judaism is the doctrine 'God chose Israel as His people.'" Only because it has kept itself distinct as a priest people, Kohler points out, has Israel been able to carry out its task in history; and only if it remains conscious to its priestly calling ⁽²⁾ can it hope to fulfill its mission. Modern, Progressive Judaism, ⁽³⁾ he felt must re-emphasize Israel's world-mission. Though the concept of the mission of Israel aims at uniting all nations and classes of men under God, ⁽⁴⁾ a correct interpretation of Israel's mission implies that the Jewish people must continue its separateness, not ⁽⁵⁾ as a nation, but as a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation." Because it misinterprets the concept of the mission, and because it disregards the religious nature of Judaism, Zionism has no place ⁽⁶⁾ in Jewish Theology.

In reference to the worship of the Synagogue, Kohler points out that Reform Judaism, recognizing the results of Biblical research, has adopted the prophetic view of the sacrifices. Accordingly, the sacrificial cult has no significance for Reform Judaism and ⁽⁷⁾ all reference to it has been deleted from the prayer book. Similarly, the wearing of such distinguishing symbols as the phylacteries and

(1) Ibid., p. 8.

(2) Ibid., p. 352f.

(3) Ibid., p. 6, 51.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Ibid., pp. 365, 445-446.

(6) Ibid., p. 390.

(7) Ibid., p. 269.

the tallith now seems superfluous, and they have become "meaning-
less forms."⁽¹⁾

Dealing with the Immortality of the soul, Kohler shows that the concept of Immortality and not of the Resurrection of the dead is most in consonance with Jewish theology. He who sees God's greatness working through miracles will believe in resurrection, but "he who recognizes the unchangeable will of an all-wise, all-ruling God in the immutable laws of nature must find it impossible to praise God according to the traditional formula as the 'Reviver of the dead,' but will avail himself instead of the expression used in the Union Prayer Book after the pattern of Einhorn, 'He who has implanted within us immortal life.'⁽²⁾"

If Dr. Kohler's Jewish Theology lacks the fervor that characterize his sermons and lectures, the fault is an excusable one. As a systematic theologian, he had to present all shades and all opinions, attempting to be as fair as possible to all branches of Judaism. As a proponent of Reform Judaism, as a lecturer and a pulpiteer, he could give vent to his feelings and expression to the stirrings of his heart, but as a theologian he felt that he represented not only Reform, but all of Judaism as well.

(1) Ibid., p. 455.

(2) Ibid. p. 297. Cf. also "Immortality," Sermon Preached at Temple Beth El, March 25, 1888, p. 6.

IV. THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE

A. Kohler and Wise

In the year 1903, Dr. Moses Mielziner was serving as ad interim⁽¹⁾ president of the Hebrew Union College. Because of failing health, he appointed Dr. Gotthard Deutsch to act for him, and when Dr. Mielziner died on February 18, 1903, Dr. Deutsch continued to serve as acting president until the end of the academic year.⁽²⁾

In the meantime, the Board of Governors had, for some time, been making plans to select a new president of the College. On January 20, 1903, Dr. Berkowitz, a member of the Board, suggested that two men be selected to fill the vacancy, one to serve as a dean of the College, the other to serve as its executive. Dr. Berkowitz further suggested that Kaufmann Kohler be elected to serve as dean and the "some one like Dr. Cyrus Adler might be chosen as executive head."⁽³⁾ The Board, however, decided against the suggestion of Dr. Berkowitz. Instead, it sent a letter to Dr. Kohler asking him to accept the presidency of the College at a salary of \$6,000 a year in addition to \$1,500 which the Board voted for traveling expenses.⁽⁴⁾ Kohler's letter of acceptance to the offer of the Board was not long in arriving:

"Deeply conscious of the confidence placed in me by this choice, I do not hesitate to say that the field of activity thereby opened to me would be most congenial to my taste, and in harmony with my highest

(1) Samuel S. Cohon, "The History of the Hebrew Union College," Reprinted from the Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, No. XL, part 1, September, 1950, p. 38.

(2) Ibid.

(3) "Minutes of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, Jan. 1895-October, 1904." Meeting of January 20, 1903, p. 28.

(4) Ibid., Meeting of February 29, 1903, p. 31.

aims and aspirations; in fact I would consider the opportunity given me to devote all my energies to the task of educating and equipping young men for the sacred profession of rabbis and teachers in American Israel, as the crowning work of my life." (1)

It was with Dr. Kohler as its president that the College opened the academic year of 1903.

But the selection of Dr. Kohler as president of the Hebrew Union College was not a matter of simply selecting the most able and scholarly rabbi upon the Reform Jewish scene. Surely the selection of Kohler came as a surprise to many, and there were many who even opposed his election to that high office. We have already pointed out that in the conflict between Eastern and Western Reformers, which broke out following the Philadelphia Conference in 1869, Kohler aligned himself with his father-in-law, David Einhorn, and the other Eastern Reformers⁽²⁾ in opposition to Wise and the Western Reformers. By aligning himself with Einhorn, Kohler appeared not only as an opponent of Wise, but as an opponent of the Hebrew Union College as well. As early as 1869, Einhorn had formulated plans for establishing a Hebrew College, and, though disagreements over financial matters forced the abandonment of the plan, Einhorn never gave up the hope of establishing a theological seminary, and in the 1870's he was instrumental in founding the Temple Emanu-El Theological

(1) Ibid., p. 34.

(2) See above, pp. 27-28.

(1)
 Association. Though Wise hoped that the founding of the Hebrew Union College would bring peace between Eastern and Western Reformers, his hope was not to be realized. "Even after the Hebrew Union College was opened," Dr. Philipson tells us, "the Eastern opposition continued active. In February, 1876, an invitation was issued by the presidents of a number of New York Congregations in the East and elsewhere to send delegates to a convention to establish a Hebrew Union College. This meeting was held in New York City in May 1876." To this meeting were sent delegates from Sinai Congregation in Chicago - Dr. Kohler's congregation.

Not only did Kohler and Wise disagree in regard to the College, but there was also a great deal of personal animosity between the two men. As if to make matters worse, the pages of the American Israelite, on June 18, 1875 had contained a bitter denunciation of Kohler, accusing^{him} of stealing sermons from Holdheim and delivering them as his own.

By 1883, however, peace seems to have been restored to the American Reform scene. To symbolize that peace, Kohler was appointed as one of the examiners of the first graduating class of the Hebrew Union College and Gustav Gottheil of Temple Emanuel in New York was invited to deliver the address to the graduating class. "This was symbolical," reports Philipson, "of the peace that had come to the house of Reform Judaism. Gottheil and Kohler, the leading Reform rabbis of the Eastern part of the country, who had not always seen eye to eye with Isaac M. Wise, had now joined in the acclaim to the founder of

(1) Cf. Kohler, "David Einhorn, the Uncompromising Champion of Reform Judaism," CCAR Yearbook, Vol. XIX, 1909, p. 261. See also "David Einhorn and Samuel Adler," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, pp. 71-72.

(2) Philipson, "History of the Hebrew Union College," in Hebrew Union College Jubilee Volume, p. 12. (3) Ibid.

(4) Vol. XXIV, No. 1100, p. 6.

(1)
the Hebrew Union College."

Though opposition to the Hebrew Union College seemed to have ceased, Kohler and Wise were to differ on many other issues. Although Kohler had persuaded Wise to act as chairman of the Pittsburgh Conference in 1885, it appears certain that Wise was not at all satisfied with the results of the Conference. (2) Not only was he disturbed by the radical decisions of the Conference, but he also felt that the Conference had made no sincere effort to create peace on the Reform scene. Another issue which separated the two men was the adoption of a Union Prayerbook by the Central Conference of American Rabbis. At its first meeting in 1890, the Conference had voted to prepare a uniform prayerbook that (3) would be acceptable to all Reform Congregations. Wise naturally hoped that his own Minhag America would be adopted as the basis for such an undertaking. Kohler, on the other hand, urged the adoption of an English translation of David Einhorn's Olath Tamid. The prayerbook which appeared in 1893 showed the strong influence of Einhorn's ideas, but it also corrupted many of those ideas, and evidently it was satisfactory to very few of the rabbis. Kohler himself, in a statement which he issued in conjunction with Emil G. Hirsch, denounced the work:

(1) Philipson, My Life as an American Jew, p. 21.

(2) David Philipson and Louis Grossman, Selected Writings of Isaac M. Wise, p. 75f. See also The American Israelite, Vol. 39, No. 9., August 26, 1887, p. 4.

(3) Yearbook of the CCAR, 1890, p. 26ff.

"All the Reform prayer-books that have made their appearance since Dr. Einhorn wrote his monumental work have more or less extensively drawn on this treasury of true inspiration and devotion which is the only work of the kind that was not written with scissors in hand and with copying ink. The prayer-book issued by the Central Conference of Rabbis has borrowed so largely from Dr. Einhorn's Prayer-Book without authorization, that it is simply a question of right or wrong whether rabbis and congregations may commit or sanction literary piracy for religious purposes. Besides, it is a dilution of the original, lacking its unity and force." (1)

Kohler had long been an admirer of Einhorn's Prayerbook, and in his beautiful tribute to the memory of Dr. Einhorn, delivered before the Central Conference of American Rabbis he pointed out that, in many ways, the question of which prayerbook to adopt symbolized the conflict between Einhorn and Wise. As the leader of the masses, Wise wanted to "make haste slowly in his Reform work," and hence his Minhag America is merely a revision of older prayerbooks. David Einhorn, on the other hand, would give up not one of his Reform principles, no matter how small the number of his followers might be. Hence his prayerbook is "made of one piece, all conceived and written in the spirit of reform...." For Kohler, as for Einhorn, "a Reform prayerbook must, in clear, unmistakable accents, give utterance to what the Jew in our advanced state of thought really believes and fervently feels." (2) (3) (4)

(1) The American Hebrew, Vol. LII, No. 20, March 17, 1893, p. 649.

(2) "David Einhorn, the Uncompromising Champion of Reform Judaism," Yearbook of the CCAAR, Vol. XIX, 1909, pp. 252-3.

(3) Ibid., p. 253

(4) Ibid.

Again Wise was forced to assume the role of passive compromiser. In the preparation of prayerbooks for both the Sabbaths and Festivals and for the High Holidays, he yielded to Kohler and allowed the ideas of Einhorn to prevail. But to preserve unity and peace in his house Wise was willing to
(1)
yield. In discussing Wise's attitude toward the Prayerbook controversy, Kohler wrote:

"And still greater generosity of mind Dr. Wise displayed when the liturgy for the New Year and Atonement Day, prepared by me on the basis of Dr. Einhorn's Prayerbook, was submitted by the Committee on the Union Prayerbook at the Atlantic City Convention, and he declared his willingness, in the interest of common spiritual welfare and progress to give up his own beloved child, the 'Minhag America,' the object of the most bitter strife for so many years, in favor of the Union Prayerbook, to be then introduced." (2)

Though Kohler championed Einhorn's prayerbook, and fought for its translation and adoption by the Central Conference of American Rabbis, he realized that certain changes had to be made before it could be accepted. Far from advocating the adoption in toto of Einhorn's work, he realized the need for a prayerbook, which, though based upon Einhorn's ideas, would represent an original piece of work. As early as 1885, he had written to Dr. Philipson, expressing his views on the compilation

(1) Cf. David Philipson, "Isaac Mayer Wise," in Centenary Papers and Others, pp. 26-27. See also Yearbook of the CCAR, 1894, p. 89f, 95.

(2) "Isaac Mayer Wise, Founder and First President of the Conference, 1889-1900," Reprinted from the Yearbook of the CCAR, Vol. XXVI, 1916, p. 7. See also Yearbook of the CCAR, 1894. "Dr. Kohler set forth the guiding principles of the Part II of the Union Prayer-Book, saying among other things that this day was an auspicious one for United Israel and Judaism of America. That the Union Prayer-Book shall be the means of uniting Jews of positive religious convictions, that in the new Ritual Einhorn and Wise dwell together in the historical past and the living present." p. 87. See also Yearbook of the CCAR, Vol. XXIV, 1924, p. 226.

of a Prayerbook:

"I...take pleasure," he wrote, "in informing you that during the stay of Dr. E.G. Hirsch, my brother-in-law and Dr. Mayer of Pittsburgh in this city we have with the consent of my mother-in-law, come to the conclusion to take the revision of the English Prayerbook into our hands. Our plan to issue a call to all the prominent ministers of Reform Congregations who are likely and willing to take part in the work of preparing an English Prayerbook on the basis of Dr. Einhorn's and under the old title, and to have several important changes introduced with the right of having:

1. the Hebrew printed on one page and the English on the other.
2. the Psalms and other Biblical passages divided in a manner to enable the congregation to recite the latter half of each verse as responses (as it was formerly done in the synagogue).
3. New Psalms and additional prayers inserted in order to render our Sabbath ritual less stereotyped and monotonous.
4. to expurgate the Ritual from ever vestige of old prejudice and hatred.
5. to issue alongside with the Sabbath Ritual a Ritual of Domestic Devotion for public and private use on special occasions of joy or sorrow.
6. The whole work is to be submitted to a Revision Committee which is to include laymen, experts in music and in church rituals." (1)

Is it correct to say that Kohler was no more than a translator putting into clear English the thoughts of his father in law? On the contrary, he not only expressed the thoughts of Einhorn, but he gave them new and beautiful form. Certainly Dr. Kohler was, in many ways, the father of the Union Prayerbook. His prayers, as Dr. Cohon has pointed out, are

(1) David Philipson Letters, American Jewish Archives. Letter from Kohler to Philipson dated June 17, 1885.

(1)

among the finest in the entire prayerbook.

Because he was willing to concede to Kohler on the vital issue of the prayerbook, Dr. Wise was successful in creating peace within the ranks of the Reform Jewish leaders. But the friends and the family of Wise were not quick to forget the animosity which had existed between the two men. And so, in 1903, when it became necessary to elect a new president of the Hebrew Union College, there was much opposition to the selection of Kohler. In his autobiography, David Philipson recalls this opposition:

"Kohler was without any question the most learned among the Reform rabbis of the country. But there was strong opposition to placing him at the head of the institution, notably by the family of Isaac M. Wise. They claimed that he had been among the so-called Eastern opponents of Wise, headed by his father-in-law, Dr. David Einhorn. When the matter was discussed in the meeting of the Board of Governors, I urged strongly that the position be offered to Kohler: 'Let bygones be bygones,' I said. The only question to be decided was the best man for the position and without doubt Kohler, if not an altogether ideal man for the place, was, in scholarship and reputation, the best man available. The majority of the members agreeing with me, the position was tendered to this ripe scholar..." (2)

At the age of sixty, Dr. Kohler submitted his resignation to the Board of Temple Beth El, and prepared to begin a new

(1) Cohon, "Dr. Kaufmann Kohler, Theologian of Reform Judaism," p. 10.

(2) My Life as an American Jew, p. 156.

life and a new career. In submitting his resignation, Kohler expressed the sadness which he felt at the thought of leaving Temple Beth El, "but the field of work opened to me as the head of a great institution of Jewish learning, devoted to the purpose of educating and training American Rabbis is so congenial to my taste and aspirations, and the opportunity of devoting all my labors and energies to the promotion of the cause of Reform Judaism in America on a larger scale in conformity with my highest wish, is so great that I feel I ought to follow the honorable call...⁽¹⁾"

In order to express its appreciation to Dr. Kohler for the twenty four years which he had devoted to serving his congregation, the Board of Temple Beth El voted to make Kohler its honorary Rabbi and to continue paying the premiums on Kohler's life insurance policy. In addition the Board voted a gift for Kohler of \$7,500.⁽²⁾

In addressing his Congregation, Kohler tried to give expression to his feelings. "I gave to each of you," he said, "more than words. I gave you the best of myself, my heart, and I am proud and happy to feel that I departed with the knowledge that the covenant of friendship I concluded with Temple Beth El twenty four years ago has not been broken and will not be severed by my going..."⁽³⁾ With these words, of farewell, Dr. Kohler turned

(1) "Minutes of Temple Beth El, 1893-1906." Feb. 26, 1903, p.137.

(2) Ibid. March 3, 1903, p. 213f.

(3) "The Priestly Blessing," A Living Faith, p. 288.

toward the west--and toward a new life.

B. A Reform Theological Seminary

When Kaufmann Kohler accepted the Presidency of the Hebrew Union College he made it quite clear that he would accept the appointment only on the condition that the College maintain certain standards. "It is mutually understood and agreed that the Hebrew Union College, in addition to being a permanent seat of Jewish learning in all its branches, shall forever continue to be the exponent of American Reform Judaism as taught and expounded by Isaac M. Wise and his illustrious co-workers.⁽¹⁾" Kohler also insisted that the Hebrew Union College train Rabbis and teachers "who shall expound the principles of American Reform Judaism.⁽²⁾"

The responsibility which Kohler had accepted when he came to the College soon became clear. At the Ceremonies at the installation of Dr. Kohler, the president of the Board of Governors, Bernhard Bettman, emphasized that responsibility:

"Dr. Kaufmann Kohler, Dear and Honored Sir: In your letter of acceptance you agreed with us that the Hebrew Union College should for all time to come continue to be a seat of Jewish learning and science, a stronghold of American Reform Judaism on the principles laid down by its immortal founder, and that as such its separate independent existence was an absolute necessity." (3)

(1) Minutes of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, January, 1895-October, 1904. Meeting of February 29, 1903, p. 36.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ceremonies at the Installation of Rev. Dr. Kaufmann Kohler as President of the Hebrew Union College, pp. 11-12.

Kohler himself, in his inaugural address, emphasized the principles which he felt the Hebrew Union College must ever represent. Not only must it be a seat of learning, he said, but it must ever emphasize spirituality, honesty and moral integrity. The Hebrew Union College, he emphasized, "must give us not merely wise and intelligent leaders who understand the requirements of the time and supply the needs of the congregation, but men of unbending strength of character and truthfulness, God-fearing men who hate sin and show their inner calling by true self-denial, as well as by dignity and comity.⁽¹⁾" It was upon these principles then, that Kohler assumed the presidency of the Hebrew Union College.

It soon became apparent that the task of clarifying the religious position of the College was not to be an easy one. As Dr. Cohon has pointed out, Dr. Kohler had little knowledge of academic procedure and administration. "Only his flaming zeal and enthusiasm enabled him to weather the storms that awaited him in his new office."⁽²⁾ During his presidency Kohler ever insisted that a Reform theological seminary must ever stand for a deeper spirituality and a stronger emphasis upon moral integrity. These goals, however, were not to be attained easily.

(1) Ibid., p. 33.

(2) "The History of the Hebrew Union College," Reprinted from Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, No. XL, Part 1, September, 1950.

In May of the year 1904, less than a year after Kohler had become President of the College, he reported to the Board that he was dissatisfied with the religious condition of the College. (1) "Long before I came here," he said, "it was felt that the right spirit of religiosity was sorely lacking. My own observations and experiences have convinced me that the evil can only be remedied by a surgical operation in which you must assist me." (2) Kohler's "surgical operation" was to remove two members of the faculty whom, he felt, had not manifested the proper religious spirit. Professors Feldman and Levias, he urged, must be replaced. The former, especially, "has not a spark of religion in his soul." (3) In their place, Kohler suggested the appointment of Dr. Max Margolis, a man who had taught at the College from 1892 until 1897 when he was called to the University of California. (4) In urging the Board of Governors to appoint Dr. Margolis as a professor of the College, Kohler could not recommend him highly enough. Professor Margolis, he said, "is a man of high aims and ideals, thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Reform Judaism, no Zionist, not a one sided man, and his coming here will be hailed with joy by every student and alumnus of the college." (5)

(1) Minutes of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, November, 1904-December, 1910. Meeting of May 3, 1905, p. 8.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid., p. 9.

(5) Ibid., p. 9.

Another effort of Kohler's to improve the religious spirit of the College induced him in 1905 to urge the Board of Governors to pass a resolution "that every teacher and pupil should attend divine services at some house of worship on Sabbaths and holidays and at every service at the College chapel."⁽¹⁾ Interestingly enough, the move created strong opposition from both students and faculty, and every member of the faculty with the exception of Drs. Philipson and Grossman protested to the Board.⁽²⁾

But if the motion concerning chapel attendance caused trouble, then the appointment of Dr. Margolis to the faculty of the College as professor of Bible exegesis stirred up a tornado. It soon became apparent that the attitude of Dr. Margolis toward Reform Judaism had undergone a radical change. Margolis began writing articles for the Jewish periodicals, stating his opposition to the very ideas that Kohler was laboring so diligently to infuse into the College. Not only did Margolis attack the ideology of Reform Judaism, but he also publicly criticized Kohler.⁽³⁾ In addition the spirit of insubordination fostered by Margolis seemed to be spreading and Drs. Max Scholessinger and Henry Malter joined forces with Margolis. The dark storm-clouds gathered slowly. A spirit of unrest and dissatisfaction on the part of many of the students seemed an evil forecast. In May of the year 1906, four of the Students wrote to the Faculty of the College

(1) Minutes of the Executive Meetings of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College. Meeting of Feb. 28, 1905, pp. 3-4.

(2) Ibid. Meeting of March 28, 1905, p. 5.

(3) Ibid. Meeting of Feb. 26, 1907, pp. 24-25. Cf. also Cohon, op.cit. pp. 41-42.

complaining of the spirit of irreligion which seemed to permeate the faculty. "The most discouraging factor," they wrote, "is the almost utter lack of sympathy towards Reform Judaism and the Rab-⁽¹⁾binate on the part of the professors." Nor was the situation helped when one of these students withdrew from the College because^{or} "the opposition" on the part of these faculty members "to the President and the administration, the insults addressed to the students in class and the ungentlemanly aspersions cast upon Reform Judaism and the Rabbis."⁽²⁾

As if the discontented students had mentioned them by name, Professors Margolis, Malter and Schloessinger indignantly went over the head of Dr. Kohler and wrote to the Board of Governors⁽³⁾ protesting the insult to their integrity. Kohler himself could not help feeling that the action of these three professors in reporting this incident to the board, was an act of insubordination.

"The faculty felt that it was my prerogative as President," he reported to the Board, "to inform you of the contents of the letter in question; the action of the three gentlemen who, to use the political expression, bolted, shows, to say the least, a spirit of rancor and insubordination...If the three gentlemen at the meeting afterwards, felt particularly hurt by the complaints made and regarded them as charges, they exposed a sore spot in their own attitude. Rumors regarding their contemptuous treatment of Reform Judaism and the Rabbi in general had reached me before...What

(1) Ibid., Meeting of May 15, 1906, p. 21a.

(2) Minutes of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, November, 1904 - October, 1907. Meeting of Feb. 26, 1907, p. 144.

(3) Minutes of the Executive Meetings of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College. Meeting of May 15, 1906, p. 20.

they find fault with in me is that I never cease emphasizing that of far greater importance than all learning is the religious spirit which alone makes the Rabbi an inspiring and guiding force in the community." (1)

To our understanding of Kaufmann Kohler the Reformer, the fate of Professors Margolis, Schloessinger and Malter are unimportant. What is important is the position taken by Kohler during this crisis. We pause only to point out that each of these men submitted his resignation, evidently hoping that he would be asked to withdraw it. In each case, however, the Board of Governors supported Dr. Kohler and accepted the resignation. The first to resign was Dr. Malter, ostensibly because (2) a promised salary increase was not forthcoming. Dr. Schloessinger was the next to resign. He had asked permission from Kohler to leave his classes at the College for a few days to attend a banquet in New York in honor of the Zionist leader Shemaryah (3) Levin. When Dr. Kohler refused to give that permission, Schloessinger went anyway and even delivered a toast on the subject (4) "Zionism in the West." Kohler's charges of insubordination against Schloessinger occasioned his resignation, which by a vote of eight to two was accepted by the Executive Committee of the (5) Board of Governors.

(1) Ibid. Meeting of May 31, 1906, pp. 22-23.

(2) Minutes of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College. Meeting of January 29, 1907, pp. 133-34.

(3) Minutes of the Executive Meetings of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, November, 1904-December 1910. Meeting of February 26, 1907, p. 34.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Ibid. Meeting of March 3, 1907, p. 36. See also Minutes of the Board of Governors, Meeting of April 9, 1907, p. 150.

The final and most celebrated of the resignations was that of Professor Max Margolis. He had most actively opposed the policies of Dr. Kohler and had taught his courses in Bible so as to emphasize a Zionist point of view. When Kohler approached him and informed him that he could no longer "entrust him with the important task of teaching the Prophets and parts of the Pentateuch,"⁽¹⁾ Margolis submitted his resignation.

*Margolis's
sermon in Hill
chapel*

Here, more than elsewhere, is the position of Kohler made clear. Though he felt that Margolis had a right to his own point of view, he objected to infusing "ideas subversive of the very fundamental principles of American Reform Judaism" in his Biblical teachings,⁽²⁾ without characterizing them as Zionist. Referring to such a procedure, Kohler pointed out:

"this is by far more pernicious than if he would openly speak as a Zionist. It is the poison instilled in sugar-coated pills that is much more harmful than the one labeled as such...We learn to deal with Zionism by hearing all its arguments and then refuting its premises by pointing out that it is un-Jewish, irreligious and un-American. But if it is taught under the guise of exegetical science, then it works insidiously, undermining the very foundations of Reform Judaism. And this Prof. Margolis has done as his published articles show." (3)

In answer to Margolis' argument that students should choose between Zionism and anti-Zionism, Kohler staunchly defended his

(1) Minutes of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, November, 1904-October, 1907. Meeting of April 9, 1907, p. 153.

(2) Ibid. Meeting of April 30, 1907, p. 173.

(3) Ibid., pp. 173-174.

view that "a Rabbinical school must stand for a positive view and a firm principle, and the choice cannot be left to immature undergraduates."⁽¹⁾

Not only had Margolis preached a doctrine of Zionism, but he had also spoken against Reform Judaism from the chapel of the Hebrew Union College.⁽²⁾ Kohler could not help feeling that this man was undermining the very program that he was fighting to achieve. For example, in his effort to infuse a greater spirituality into the students of the College, Dr. Kohler had instituted the custom of reciting prayers at the beginning of each class. Even this procedure was criticized by Margolis who "remonstrated against them in private conversation, as 'unacademic' as soon as he came here."⁽³⁾ After hearing both sides of the controversy, the Board of Governors voted to accept the resignation of Margolis.⁽⁴⁾

The resignation of Professors Margolis, Malter and Schloessinger caused wide-spread comment. "The case became a cause celebre,"⁽⁵⁾ reports Dr. Philipson. The Zionists raised a great hue and cry to the effect that the three men had lost their places because of their advocacy of the Zionist position.⁽⁶⁾ That this was not entirely true was demonstrated by the appointment of

(1) Ibid. Meeting of April 9, 1907, p. 154.

(2) Ibid. Meeting of April 30, 1907, p. 175.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid., p. 177. Cf. also Philipson, My Life as an American Jew, pp. 156-7.

(5) Philipson, My Life as an American Jew, p. 157.

(6) Ibid.

a Zionist, Dr. David Neumark to fill the position of professor of philosophy, vacated by the resignation of Malter. In addition (1) it was suggested by friends of Margolis that "there may be mixed in a strong personal element, a Machloketh shelo leshelem shamayim." (2) Finally, it was suggested that the resignations involved the question of Lehrfreiheit, and that the men who had resigned were not allowed the proper academic freedom to which men in (3) their position are entitled.

Surely all of these factors in the resignations were present, but the real source of the conflict lies much deeper than any one of these side issues. The real source of the trouble was that Dr. Kohler was trying to establish the Hebrew Union College as a Reform theological seminary. The men who resigned were not in sympathy with either Reform Judaism or with Kohler. Time after time during this controversy Kohler emphasized this, so that the issue would be clear to all. "In matters of principle I do not believe in yielding," he said. "I stand and ever stood for the principles of Reform Judaism and when accepting the Presidency of the Hebrew Union College at the hands of the Board of Governors, I was pledged to uphold the principles of Judaism in the administration of the College, it accorded ex-

(1) Cf. Cohon, op. cit., p. 43.

(2) Nathan T. Isaacs, "The Zionist Heresy," in The Maccabean, Vol. XII, No. 4, April, 1907, pp. 154-156. Cf. also Cohon, The History of the Hebrew Union College, Reprinted from the Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, No. XL, Part 1, September, 1950, pp. 41-42.

(3) Cf. Minutes of the Board of Governors of Hebrew Union College, November, 1904-October, 1907. Meeting of April 9, 1907, p. 150. Cf. also, Philipson, op. cit., p. 157.

actly with my views on the subject." (1) On another occasion Kohler insisted:

"...it is in the interest of the College and in conformity with the promise made to me by the honored President of your Board and your entire body on previous occasions to sustain me in my endeavor to make the College stand for the principles of Reform Judaism and not for irreligious Zionism or Nationalism and Jewish literature without religion, and to give to American Israel Rab-
bis for whom God and Judaism are vital truths to which they willingly and eagerly consecrate their lives, and in which they behold the revelation of all the great problems of life in our age and in all ages." (2)

Drs. Margolis, Malter and Schloessinger were opposed to everything that Kohler stood for, and for this reason there was
(3)
no other course for them to follow, but to resign. We maintain that this incident, that this, crisis, far from being a Machlo-
keth shelo leshem shamayim, was an event of profound signifi-
cance. Not only was it a brilliant victory for an uncompromising champion of Reform Judaism, but it marked a turning point in the history of the Hebrew Union College. No longer was the College a Jewish theological seminary; it had become a Reform Jewish theological seminary. Kohler was convinced that such a theo-
logical seminary should not represent varying points of view; but should represent definite principles. In this spirit, years later, he opposed the establishment of a Jewish Institute of

(1) Ibid., p. 154.

(2) Minutes of the Executive Meetings of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, November, 1904-December, 1910. Meeting of May, 31, 1906, p. 24.

(3) Minutes of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union Col-
lege. Meeting of April 30, 1907, p. 176. Cf. Philipson, op. cit.
pp. 190-191.

Religion.

"All the more deplorable is the attempt made in certain quarters today to split the power, the unity and the authority of the Hebrew Union College, by the proposed creation of a Jewish Institute of Religion, which would be just colorless and nondescript enough to suit certain classes of men in a Free Synagogue, or of a Hochschule of the university type, which would be so broad and all-inclusive as to give equal place to all religious realms and shades of thought, and whose professors should represent all possible views, however, diametrically opposed to each other. And out of such an institute or Hochschule, Rabbis, preachers and teachers are to emanate who are to mould character and inspire reverence for God and things godly." (1)

But the resignation of the three professors in 1907 did not mark an end to opposition to Dr. Kohler and to the principles which he advocated. Particularly over his attitude toward Zionism did Kohler meet opposition. And so we hear that in 1906, when Dr. Shemaryah Levin addressed the student body, Dr. Kohler "felt called upon to correct some statements he made from his
(2)
Zionistic point of view." Again in 1915, the question of Zionism occasioned charges of insubordination to be brought by Kohler against four students of the College. These four students who were pro-Zionist in their thinking, violated not only the wishes of Dr. Kohler, but also apparently of the entire student body by writing to Horace Kallen, a Zionist, apologizing for the "rude"
(1)
treatment he had received. Kallen represented an avowedly athe-
(1) "Israel's Solidarity, American Reform Judaism, and the Hebrew Union College," Studies, Address and Personal Papers, p.323.
(2) Minutes of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College. Meeting of December 27, 1906. See also Philipson, op.cit., p. 191.
(3) Ibid. January, 1915-December, 1917. Meeting of January 6, 1915.

istic point of view, and for this reason Kohler had asked the student body of the College to withdraw its invitation to Kallen to address them in the College chapel. The four students in question, however, wrote to Kallen telling him they were not pleased with the attitude which the College administration had assumed. In repudiation of this unauthorized act, the rest of the student body wrote to Dr. Kohler: "We resolve that we consider the action of these four men to be an act of disloyalty to Dr. Kohler; and we take this opportunity of expressing our loyalty to Dr. Kohler personally and to the College authorities."⁽¹⁾

In the same year the question arose as to whether a student should be allowed to preach a Zionist sermon in the College chapel.⁽²⁾ At a Board meeting where the problem was discussed Dr. Kohler agreed that he had no objection to a Zionistic address being delivered anywhere outside of the chapel. He also agreed that the students "may preach on Zionism or refer to the subject in their chapel sermons provided the sermons are religious in tone and otherwise unobjectionable to him."⁽³⁾ No, it was not Zionism that Kohler opposed but irreligion in any form.

(1) Ibid. See also Meeting of March 23, 1915, p. 14.

(2) Interesting in this connection is an incident involving one of the students whose father, a leading figure in the Reform Rabbinate, wrote to Dr. Kohler complaining that when his son had submitted a sermon in favor of Zionism, Kohler had forbade its delivery, "without having read it." To this letter which was brought to the attention of the Board of Governors, Kohler answered that "the matter could not have been correctly presented." The text of the sermon, he pointed out, was Nahamu, Nahamu Ami, the text for the 9th of Ab. "It was not a question of Zionism, but one of submitting to the rules laid down for students who are to preach the sermon, according to which they

Thus far we have emphasized the struggles and the controversies which occurred during Dr. Kohler's presidency. Surely, there were many moments of satisfaction which crowded out the unpleasant moments. One need merely read over Kohler's opening day addresses and his ordination sermons to realize the great satisfaction that he must have received from his work as President of the Hebrew Union College. But Kohler was never satisfied with the status quo. He ever pleaded for a deeper spirituality, for sincerity and for a loftier idealism. An idealist himself, Kohler never allowed himself to lose faith in God and in humanity. This same faith he urged upon the students of the College.

/"Unless you are imbued with true faith in God and Israel's priest mission; unless you are possessed by the spirit of devotion which readily foregoes the consideration of gain, of comfort, and pleasure, in order to become a consecrated instrument of spiritual blessing for all the families of men; unless you have attuned your heart to the highest aims and aspirations of life to be a worthy messenger of the Lord of hosts, your learning is of no avail, and sooner or later you will turn out to be a failure." (1)

(2), con't: are to work out the sermon upon a text taken from a weekly portion of the traditional Haftarah of the same Sabbath." When Kohler's explanation was received, the objection to his action was immediately withdrawn. (Minutes of the Board of Governors, January, 1915-December, 1917. Meeting of March 23, 1915, pp. 16-17.)

(3) Ibid., Meeting of February 23, 1915, p. 9.

(1) "Men of Valor," A Living Faith, p. 179.

Kohler did not wish to produce failures. He wished to create men of vision and men of God. This effort characterized his presidency of the Hebrew Union College.

C. Later Years

Soon after he came to the College Dr. Kohler suggested a number of academic changes. For one thing he did not approve of the arrangement whereby students were forced to divide their time between studies at the University of Cincinnati and the Hebrew Union College. To overcome this evil, Kohler suggested⁽¹⁾ that the College become a post-graduate institution. Even though it soon became apparent that such a plan was impractical, Kohler succeeded in adding a fifth year to the Collegiate department of the College. During this fifth year the students would be free from University work and could devote complete attention⁽²⁾ to the work of the College.

Kohler also broadened the curriculum of the College, introducing courses which had been neglected in the past. Among these were courses in Bible criticism, Theology, Jewish Ethics⁽³⁾ and Applied Sociology. Dr. Kohler also deplored the lack of Jewish interest in the field of Hellenistic Apocalyptic and⁽⁴⁾ Pseudepigraphic literature. The neglect of this field, he felt,

(1) Proceedings of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Vol. VI, 1903-1907, p. 4998. See also Ceremonies at the Installation of Rev. Dr. Kaufmann Kohler, pp. 34-35.

(2) Ibid., p. 5320. See also Cohon, op. cit., pp. 39-40/

(3) Cf. Cohon, op. cit., p. 40.

(4) Cf. "The Hebrew Union College Yesterday and Today," Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 560.

had led to a misunderstanding of Judaism's spiritual contribution before her daughter religion. To correct this situation, Kohler introduced and himself taught courses in this (1) field.

Another academic change which Kohler insisted upon was the substitution of Midrashic literature for modern Hebrew. Kohler's distaste for modern Hebrew must not be misunderstood. Certainly it was not Hebrew to which he objected, but rather the non-religious use of Hebrew. In this sense, his opposition to Modern Hebrew was similar to his opposition to Zionism. Both, he felt, represented nationalistic and not religious ideas.

During his presidency, Dr. Kohler received a letter from a member of a Southern Congregation asking him for a statement on the importance of Hebrew for Reform Judaism. "Will it strengthen us in our religious beliefs and practices?" the writer asked. "Or is it merely a Zionist movement that will do little good and should not be encouraged?" Kohler's answer to this letter is of interest because it reflects his attitude toward manifestations of the national spirit. His letter, which also emphasizes his insistence upon the religious interpretation of Judaism, reads as follows:

"Hebrew is taught in our Religious Schools and should be taught as long as we have Hebrew portions in our Prayer-book. And inasmuch as we are in duty bound to recite certain formulas of our liturgy in

(1) Cf. Henry Englander, "Kaufmann Kohler." Hebrew Union College Monthly, Vol. IX, No. 7, June, 1923. p. 8.

the Hebrew original in order to preserve them as common watchwords for the Jew all over the world, no matter what language he speaks, we ought to retain them in the Synagogue as well as in the Sabbath School.

On the other hand, we cannot expect, nor indeed should we even endeavor to make our children, unless they are especially eager and qualified to study the Hebrew literature for the pursuit of the Rabbinical or the teacher's career, or in exceptional cases, to 'write, compose and converse in Hebrew,' as we want them to be Americans and not Palestinians. We want them to learn how to prize the religious truths of Judaism in the modern spirit and in accordance with the genius of the English language and the English-speaking world, and not in the spirit of a by-gone world and in a dead language now to be resurrected. As a matter of fact, the Hebrew of our Hebraizers, who want to nationalize the Jew, is as impure and unsound as is their religious truth. It is a mongrel Hebrew they speak..... they vulgarize the sacred language. They consider the ability to say: 'Open the window,' or 'Take a parlor chair on your train,' or similar common-place sentences of as much importance as the recital of the 'Shema Yisroel.' No, in my opinion Hebraism in place of Judaism is a blight not a blessing for the Jewish faith." (1)

Let us not misunderstand Kohler. He does not say "Hebraism is a blight." He does say "Hebraism in place of Judaism is a blight, not a blessing for the Jewish faith."

When Dr. Kohler came to the College there were many people who expected him to lay less stress on the teaching of courses in the field of Rabbinic literature. It was also felt that the Bible would be taught only from a critical point

(1) Undated letter in the possession of the American Jewish Archives.

(1)
of view. In answer to these speculations, Kohler felt it necessary to make his position clear, and in his report to the Board of Governors in January of 1905, he put an end to all doubt as to his attitude toward these courses. "Instead of lessening the studies of either the Talmud or the Bible," he suggested, "my plan leads towards increasing and enhancing the love and interest in them, and it is only the Talmudical dialectics and the artificial Bible herm^eaneutics which I wish to see eliminated as much as possible from our course of instruction."⁽²⁾

Dr. Kohler's interest in Biblical studies never abated. Though he advocated the teaching of courses in Biblical criticism, he always distinguished between the Bible that was used in the classroom and the Bible of the people, and he insisted that only the more mature students, the students in the upper classes of the College, be allowed to take courses in Bible criticism.⁽³⁾ In the interest of a Bible for the people, Dr. Kohler agreed to serve on the Board of Bible Editors which translated the Bible into English for the Jewish Publication Society.⁽⁴⁾ When the completed translation ^{was} appeared in 1914,

(1) Minutes of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College. Meeting of January 31, 1905, p. 9.

(2) Ibid., pp. 9-10.

(3) Ibid., November, 1907-October, 1910, p. 256f.

(4) Philipson, My Life as an American Jew, p. 197. Dr. Philipson points out that, at his suggestion, Dr. Max L. Margolis was appointed chief editor of the Board of Bible Editors. The first meeting of this Board, bringing together Dr. Kohler and his former antagonist was looked forward to with trepidation. Happily, however, "the session passed off peaceably and the great work was successfully launched."

Kohler utilized the banquet in honor of the editors to again express his conviction that Bible Criticism must have its limitations.

"Many a student, even among the conservatives, keeps in his closet a Bible edition interleaved, noting his emendations of the text, which are greatly at variance with those of his fellow-workers. Now over against these varieties of the Bible text or its translations, which disfigure the sacred Scripture by lacunae, asterisks or interrogation points, and occasionally by the transposition of entire verses and chapters, however legitimate in themselves, or sanctioned by ancient practice, the Bible for the People must leave the Masoretic text intact, in order to manifest profound regard for the venerable authority of the Book of Books....." (1)

For eighteen years, Kaufmann Kohler served as President of the Hebrew Union College. Under his administration the College had grown in both size and vitality. The dedication of the new buildings of the College in 1913 seemed to signify the strength which the College had attained under its
(2)
venerable President. In the same year, in honor of his seventieth birthday, Dr. Kohler was presented with a Festschrift of Studies in Jewish Literature, edited by Drs. Philipson, Neumark and Morgenstern. He was also honored at a special service in the College chapel and by the student body of the College who tendered a banquet in honor of Dr. Kohler's birthday. "Tears were in the eyes of the aged educator," report the newspapers, "as he responded to the greetings of his

(1) "The New Bible Translation," Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses, p. 269.

(2) Cf. Cohon, "The History of the Hebrew Union College," Reprinted from Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, September, 1950, pp. 44-45.

(1)
students." Eight years later in the year 1921, Dr. Kohler's task as president of the College came to an end. At the age of seventy-eight he said farewell to the College and returned to New York, where he remained until his death in 1926. But even in retirement, Kohler did not lose interest in scholarly work, nor did he lose the spirit of idealism which had characterized his entire life. In one of his last published works, Heaven and Hell in Comparative Religion, he expressed his faith in the future of humanity.

"We must be reborn to a new faith in God and man. We need a new inspiration, a new interpretation of the ancient truths, a powerful vision which points not to a realm beyond the grave, but beckons us, as did the prophets of yore, forward to a life of duty and service, and makes us all, be it through the Church or the Mosque, the Pagoda or the Synagogue, partakers of the Kingdom of God, the kingdom of divine justice and love." (2)

Dr. Kohler's life was drawing to a close. It had been a full life, an active life and a satisfying one. As a preacher, as a theologian and as a teacher of rabbis he had sincerely championed the cause of Reform Judaism. He had trained a generation of Rabbis who could not help being influenced by his ideas and his ideals. As one graduate of the College has pointed out, "for a large number of graduates of the Hebrew Union College Dr. Kohler was during his life and - through his writings - continues to be the voice of inspiration. He

(1) The Cincinnati Enquirer, May 12, 1913.

(2) Heaven and Hell in Comparative Religion, pp. 157-8.

disclosed to us the meaning of God and the significance of the Torah, and charted out the way of our religious thinking and living.⁽¹⁾ Perhaps the best summary of Dr. Kohler's life are the words which he himself delivered in one of his last sermons to the students of the College.

"Make Reform Judaism in America a light-house of Israel's truth, a power house of righteousness, a tree of life, planted in the deep soil of the heart, so that amid the salubrious air of freedom it may arise to the lofty heights of the ideal, and spread its branches wide to impart its rich fruitage to a large world around. But above all, nurture in yourselves and others the spirit of earnestness and holiness, of faith and religiosity, and your crowning success will be Peace without and within." (2)

Dr. Kohler's life was in many ways the fulfillment of these ideals. As a man of courage, of vision and of faith, he enriched the soil of American Reform Judaism and planted the seeds of a religious conviction which live today and which will continue to live in the future.

(1) Cohon, Dr. Kaufmann Kohler Theologian of Reform Judaism, p. 3.

(2) "Israel's Solidarity, American Reform Judaism, and the Hebrew Union College." Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers, p. 324.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(For a complete list of Kaufmann Kohler's writings see the Bibliography prepared by A.S. Oko in Studies in Jewish Literature, and also the Supplemental Bibliography prepared by Max J. Kohler in Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers).

American Hebrew. New York, 1886-1923.

American Israelite. Cincinnati, 1880-1926.

Ceremonies at the Installation of Rev. Dr. Kaufmann Kohler as President of the Hebrew Union College. Cincinnati, May & Kreidler, 1903.

Cohon, Samuel S. "The History of the Hebrew Union College" (Reprinted from Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, September, 1950).

_____ Dr. Kaufmann Kohler, Theologian of Reform Judaism. Cincinnati, 1943.

Enelow, H.G. "A Biographical Essay" (Kohler, The Origins of Synagogue and Church). New York, 1929.

Englander, Henry. "Kaufmann Kohler" (Hebrew Union College Monthly, June, 1923). Cincinnati.

Jewish Encyclopedia. (12 Volumes) New York, Funk and Wagnalls, 1901-06.

Jewish Reformer. New York, 1886.

Jewish Times. New York, 1869-76.

Kohler, Kaufmann. "American Reform Judaism" (American Hebrew, January 19, 1923). New York.

_____ "Chanukah and Christmas" (The Menorah, December, 1890). New York.

_____ "A Chapter on Ethics" (Reform Advocate, May 6, 1911). Chicago.

_____ "David Einhorn, The Uncompromising Champion of Reform Judaism" (Yearbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, Vol. XIX). 1909.

- Kohler, Kaufmann. "Did the Napoleonic Sanhedrin Allow Intermarriage?" (American Hebrew, April 6, 1894). New York.
- _____ "Emendations of the Hebrew Text of Isaiah" (Hebraica, October, 1885).
- _____ "The Feast of Rejoicing in the Law" (Sabbath Visitor, Vol. 13). Cincinnati, 1884.
- _____ Guide for Instruction in Judaism. New York, Philip Cowen, 1898.
- _____ Heaven and Hell in Comparative Religion. New York, Macmillan, 1923.
- _____ Hebrew Union College and Other Addresses. Cincinnati, Ark Publishing Company, 1916.
- _____ "In the Beginning" (Hebrew Union College Monthly, November, 1923). Cincinnati.
- _____ "Israel and His Foe" (American Hebrew, December 30, 1892). New York.
- _____ "The Jewish Nationality" (American Hebrew, May 14, 1880). New York.
- _____ "The Jewish New Year's Day in the Light of History" (The Menorah, October, 1897). New York.
- _____ "The Jewish Question or Neo Mosaism, Unitarianism and Judaism" (American Hebrew, April 13, 1894). New York.
- _____ "Jewish Reform" (Reprinted from the Inter-Ocean, August 22, 1873). Chicago.
- _____ "The Jew's Share in Occidental Civilization (Jewish Reformer, April 9, 1886). New York
- _____ Jewish Theology, Systematically and Historically Considered. New York, Macmillan, 1918.
- _____ "Isaac Mayer Wise, Founder and First President of the Conference, 1889-1900" (Yearbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, Vol. XXIV). 1914.
- _____ Is Reform Judaism on the Decline? Philadelphia, S.W. Goodman, 1903.
- _____ Judaism and Reform. New York, 1895.

Kohler, Kaufmann. "Leopold Zunz" (Jewish Reformer, March 26, 1886). New York.

_____ A Living Faith, Selected Sermons and Addresses from the Literary Remains of Dr. Kaufmann Kohler (edited by Samuel S. Cohon). Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College Press, 1948.

_____ Manual of Religious Instruction. New York, Philip Cowen, 1887.

_____ "Moses Mendelssohn or the Dawn of the New Era" (American Hebrew, April 10, 1880). New York.

_____ "The Old Testament" (Unity, November 15, 1878). Chicago.

_____ "The New Testament from the Point of View of Jewish Research" (Hebrew Union College Monthly, December and January, 1919-20). Cincinnati.

_____ "The Origin and Function of Ceremonies in Judaism" (Yearbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, Vol. XVII). 1907.

_____ "Ordination Address" (Hebrew Union College Monthly, June, 1914).

_____ "The Origin of Kol Nidre (American Hebrew, December 8, 1922). New York.

_____ The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church. New York, Macmillan, 1929.

_____ Palestine and Israel's World Mission. Pittsburg, Rodef Shalom Congregation, March 31, 1918.

_____ "The Rabbi's Gift - Ordination Address" (Hebrew Union College Monthly, May-June, 1920). Cincinnati.

_____ "The Reform Movement and Russian Intellectuals" (American Jewish Chronicle, June 2, 1916).

_____ "Religion's Infancy and Stage of Maturity" (Jewish Reformer, April 30, 1886). New York.

_____ "Requirements of a True Religious Leader" (Hebrew Union College Monthly, November, 1922). Cincinnati.

Kohler, Kaufmann. "A Revaluation of Reform Judaism" (Year-book of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, Vol. XXXIV). 1924.

_____ Sabbath Observance and Sunday Lectures. New York, Temple Beth El, 1880.

_____ Der Segen Jacob's. Berlin, Julius Benzian, 1867.

_____ Studies, Addresses and Personal Papers. New York, Alumni Association of the Hebrew Union College, 1931.

_____ Temple Beth El Sunday Lectures. New York, Temple Beth El, 1887-88.

_____ "The Views and Principles of American Reform Judaism" (Hebrew Union College Monthly, November, 1915). Cincinnati.

_____ "The Vanguard" (Hebrew Union College Monthly, June, 1923). Cincinnati.

_____ "Young Israel" (The Sabbath Visitor, Vol. 14). Cincinnati, 1885.

_____ "What Do the Old Testament and Judaism Stand For?" (Jewish Exponent, January, 1896). Philadelphia.

Kohler, Max J. "Biographical Sketch of Dr. K. Kohler" (Studies in Jewish Literature). Berlin, 1913.

Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Temple Beth El, New York. 1874-1910.

Minutes of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College. Cincinnati, 1895-1921.

Minutes of the Executive Meetings of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, November 1904-December, 1910. Cincinnati.

Neumark, David. "Dr. Kohler's Systematic Theology" (Studies in Jewish Literature). Berlin, 1913.

Oko, A.S. "Homage to Dr. Kaufmann Kohler" (Contemporary Jewish Record, August, 1943).

Philipson, David. Centenary Papers and Others. Cincinnati, Ark Publishing Company, 1919.

Philipson, David. "History of the Hebrew Union College"
(Hebrew Union College Jubilee Volume). Cincinnati,
1925.

_____ "Kaufmann Kohler" (Reprinted from Publications of
the American Jewish Historical Society, No. 31). 1928.

_____ "Kaufmann Kohler" (Yearbook of the Central Conference
of American Rabbis, Vol. XXXVI). 1926.

_____ "Kaufmann Kohler as Reformer" (Studies in Jewish
Literature). Berlin, 1913.

_____ My Life as an American Jew. Cincinnati, John G.
Kidd & Son, 1941.

_____ The Reform Movement in Judaism. London, Macmillan,
1907.

_____ and Grossman, Louis, Selected Writings of Isaac M.
Wise. Cincinnati, Robert Clarke, 1900.

Proceedings of the Pittsburg Rabbinical Conference. Central
Conference of American Rabbis, 1923.

Reform Advocate. Chicago, May 6, 1911.

Sabbath Visitor. Cincinnati, 1894-95.

Yearbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. 1890-
1926, 1943.