

❖ Lag In Jewish Education ❖ For High School Students

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This past Tuesday, at the convention of the National Council for Jewish Education in Atlantic City, Professor Abrams outlined the results of "A Ten Year Survey of the Jewish Child Population in Pittsburgh."

Through special arrangement, The OUTLOOK publishes this information.

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See editorial: " 'We Are the People of the Book.' What Book?" this same page.

IN SEPTEMBER, 1924, the Hebrew Institute of Pittsburgh began to make a census of the Jewish children registered in the public schools of the city. The purpose of the census was:

- 1.—To ascertain the number of Jewish children of school age;
- 2.—to determine the shifting of the Jewish population in different neighborhoods;
- 3.—to find out the number of Jewish children who are not receiving any Jewish education by comparing the total number of Jewish children of school age with the number who are receiving Jewish education;
- 4.—to estimate the Jewish population by comparing the ratio of Jewish child population with the general child population of the city.

Public Schools Co-operate

THE METHOD USED WAS through a census of all children absent from the public schools on the Day of Atonement. With the co-operation of the late Dr. W. Davidson, Superintendent of Schools in 1924 and of Dr. Ben Graham, present Superintendent of Schools, each report teacher in the Pittsburgh school system was requested to ascertain the names and addresses of Jewish children among those in her report class and to hand in a list of those absent on Yom Kippur 1924-1934.

This report covers these ten years and includes the elementary and Junior high schools through the eighth grade in one unit and the Junior high and Senior high schools from the ninth grade through the twelfth grade in a second group.

By comparing the following figures we can easily judge the changes taking place in the neighborhoods of the city: Pittsburgh is divided into four main districts and several outlying districts, of which the Hill, East End, Oakland, and Squirrel Hill are the main ones.

In 1924, the Hill District was considered the center of the Jewish population and the enrollment of the Jewish children in the elementary schools was as follows:

	1924	1934
Hill District	4119	1648
East End District	550	905
Oakland District	508	715
Squirrel Hill District	1011	2214
Outlying Districts	613	601

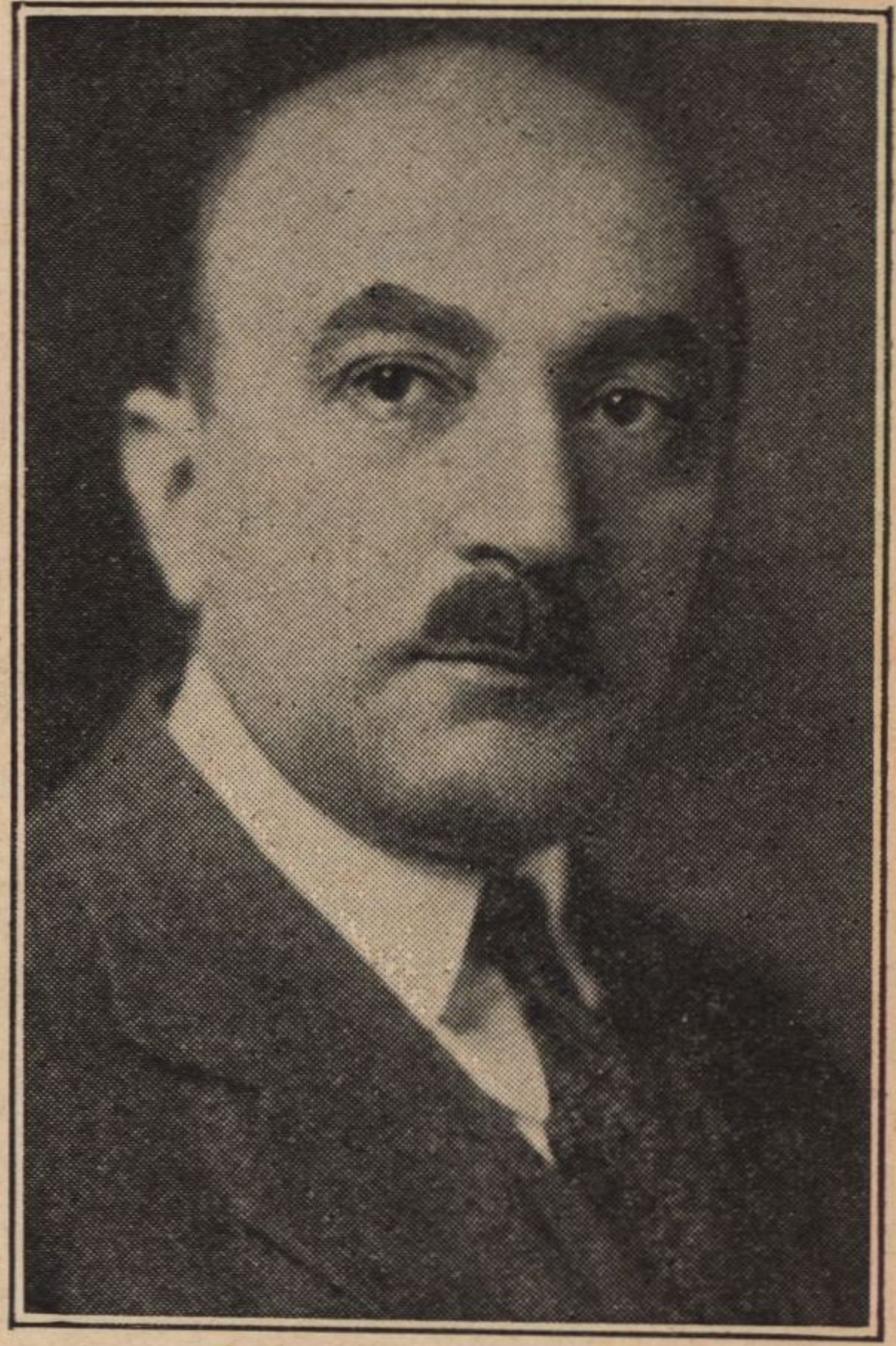
From the records of the past ten years we learn that the Hill District has been losing at the rate of 250 children per year and that gradually the center of Jewish population is shifting to the Squirrel Hill Section. As to the general survey we note this registration of Jewish children in the elementary and High Schools:

	1924	1926	1928	1930	1932	1934
Elementary	6901	6639	6449	6327	6431	6083
High School	2304	2284	2529	2417	2687	2760
Total	9205	8923	8978	8744	9118	8843

Elementary Students Decline

FROM THESE FIGURES WE CAN plainly see that during the past ten years there has been a steady decline in the number of Jewish children registered in the elementary schools with the exception of 1932, the year when the depression was at its worst. During the year many of the families who lived in the country towns around Pittsburgh moved into the city and doubled up with their friends and relatives and therefore we note the increase in Jewish child population. The decrease during the ten years from 6901 to 6083 or a loss of 818 children.

In the high schools, on the other hand, we notice that the registration increased steadily with the exception of the year following the Wall Street Crash, when there was a decrease of over 100 children, due to the fact that some of the students had to drop out to look for work. But



PROF. ABRAMS

" . . . He finds out . . . "

in general, in the ten years the Jewish students in the high schools have increased from 2304 to 2760 or an increase of 456.

The survey also revealed the high percentage of Jewish students registered in the high schools. Taking the 1934 census as the basis we find that of the 8,843 children enrolled in the schools, 2760 were in the high schools or almost 31.21 percent. At the same time, we find that of the general child population of 92,000 students only 13,200 are in the high schools or approximately 14.45 percent; and out of the Catholic registration in the parochial schools of 43,000 only 3,200 or 7.4 percent are in the Parochial High Schools.

400 Out of 2,760

WHILE THESE FIGURES PROVE the great zeal and devotion of the Jewish children and parents to study, it also calls to our attention our own shortcomings when we learn that out of the whole high school group of 2,760, not more than 400 are registered in all of our Jewish educational institutions. While Pittsburgh has a high record of providing Jewish education for almost 44.3 percent of the Jewish children registered in the elementary schools, it is greatly backward in its efforts as regards the high school Jewish student.

By taking the ratio of the Jewish child population to the general child population of 8843 to 135,000 we find that 6½ percent of the children are Jewish. We may estimate that the ratio of the Jewish population to the general population would be the same; accordingly since the estimated population of Pittsburgh in 1934 was 682,000, the Jewish population of Pittsburgh would be 44,671.

CURRENT COMMENTS

(Concluded from Page 1)

—the salvation of Israel and restoration of its ancient patrimony . . . We are mindful of the complex and difficult task faced by His Majesty's government in Palestine . . . We . . . feel that the right solution calls for a definite policy, which should, once and for all, make clear to the turbulent element in Palestine that His Majesty's government, as mandatory power, will carry out its trust to help transform Palestine into a Jewish homeland . . . The restoration of the Land of Israel to the Children of Israel is the guiding star in this great struggle for a better world and a better humanity."