

# Local News

## LAYING THE CORNERSTONE.

### The Cornerstone of the Tree of Life Synagogue Will Be Laid Next Sunday.

The cornerstone of the Tree of Life Synagogue, in Craft avenue Oakland, will be laid next Sunday morning at 10 o'clock. The exercises will be of the simplest character, owing to the absence of Rabbi Michael Fried, who is ill in the Passavant Hospital. Old documents, the roster of membership, several copies of the "Criterion" and a souvenir booklet of the recent B'nai B'rith outing will be deposited in a box to be placed in the stone. The present issue of the "Criterion" containing the following account of the rise and growth of the congregation will also be deposited:

The inception of public divine service among the Jews of Pittsburg and vicinity commenced in the year 1847. Prior to that time there were not a sufficient number of Jews to organize a service. The following took part in the first religious exercises: Ephraim Wormser, David Strassburger, William Frank, Nathan Gallinger, Jacob Klein, Emanuel Klein, Moritz Kraus, Eise-man Kahn, Reis brothers, Stein brothers, Louis Morganstern, Henry Silverman and Alexander Fink. There were a few others here at that time, but they did not affiliate with the congregation. The services of course were orthodox. They engaged Rabbi Mannheimer as speaker or orator, and the first meeting was held in a room in Penn street (near Walnut), now Thirteenth.

Our people were few in this part of the country, and coming here as strangers in a strange land, without means, it took time and perseverance to establish a permanent place of worship. About 1847 they removed their place of worship to Liberty street, where the Jenkinson cigar store now stands, and changed their Cantor by electing the Rev. Mr. Sulzbacher, who officiated until 1853.

In the meantime there had been added to the membership roll, Isaac and Charles Bierman, Joseph Myers, C. D. Arnsthal, L. Hirschfield, Louis Fleishman, Jacob Silverman, Joseph Morganstern, Michael Streng, Alexander Fink, Benjamin Oppenheimer, and a few others whose names are not accessible.

After the year 1853 another change in place of worship was decided upon, and this time the congregation moved to a hall over the Vigilant engine house in Third avenue. The Rev. Mr. Sulzbacher was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. Marcuson, who presided for two years.

About this time some of the members began to feel the influence of the reform movement, and as a result a split occurred and two congregations were established, the more liberal affiliating with Rodeph Sha-

lom, while those who refused to yield a whit from the extreme orthodox position formed what is now known as the Tree of Life congregation.

The following were the first members of this congregation: C. Graffner, A. Abrahams, Julius Baum, H. Hirschberg, Jacob Abraham, Julius Van Baalen, L. Walter, A. Levy, M. Crone, M. Goldstein, L. W. Miller, S. Levy, Joseph Perles, S. Aronson, S. Zitron and M. Fink. The first president was G. Graffner and Mr. Isaac Wolff was chosen Chasan.

For many years the congregation met in various rooms through the city, the last place being a hall in the Denis block, in Second avenue. In 1882 the congregation purchased its present site, Fourth avenue and Ross street, where they are still worshipping. Owing to the fact that Mr. Alexander Fink took such an active interest in the affairs of the congregation and was instrumental in raising the funds necessary to construct the building, it became known as "Fink's Skule." Mr. Fink was president for many years, being succeeded by Mr. H. H. Livingston, the present presiding officer. Mr. Isaac Jackson is vice president, and Mr. Meyer Fink, secretary. There have been any number of Cantors connected with the congregation, and among its ministers may be mentioned A. Crone, (1874-1881); A. Bernstein, (1881-91); F. Salinger, (1891-97), and Michael Fried, the present incumbent, who is now in his ninth year of service.

The living charter members are Samuel Levin, Meyer Fink and Isaac Gelder.

The present building, which cost \$16,000, was sold for \$87,000, and now the new and more pretentious structure is in course of erection.

## RABBI FRIED WILL RESIGN.

### Head of Tree of Life Synagogue In Poor Health and May Go to California.

Owing to a protracted illness, the Rev. Dr. Michael Fried, rabbi of the Tree of Life Synagogue, Pittsburg, will resign and seek a climate more agreeable to his health. Dr. Fried has been ill for some time with typhoid fever at the Passavant Hospital and was on a fair way to recovery when unexpectedly last Monday a relapse set in.

For a few days his life was despaired of, but his physician thinks he is now out of danger, and he advises that the rabbi leave this section and locate in a climate better adapted to his constitution. It is likely he will settle somewhere in Southern California or in some part of Colorado. Dr. Fried's resignation will not go into effect, however, until April 1 of next year.

Dr. Fried has been rabbi of the congregation for nine years, assuming charge shortly after his graduation from the Jewish Theological Seminary, New York City. During his time as rabbi the congregation has grown considerably. There are at present more than 50 families in-