



THE JEWISH CRITERION

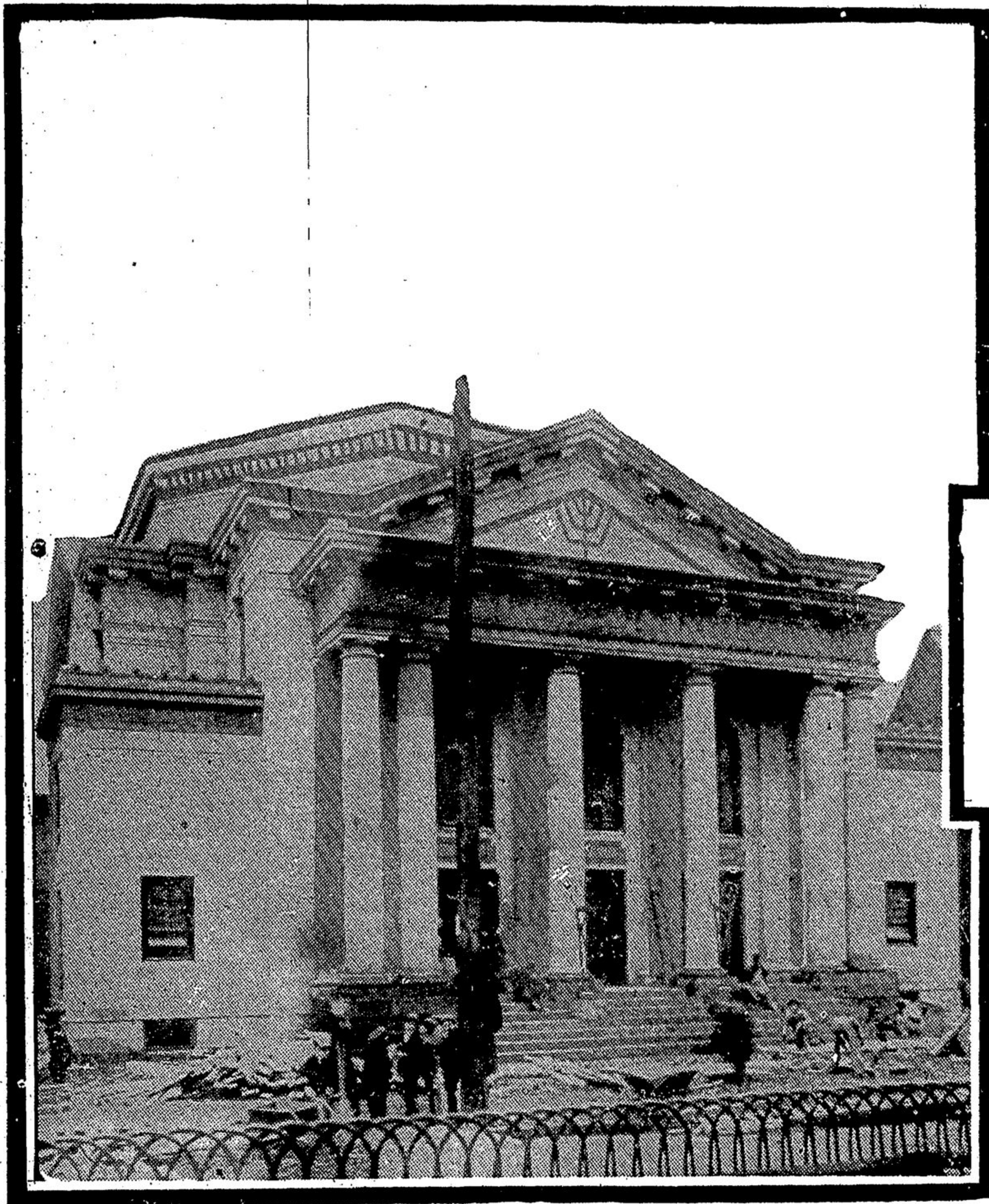


Vol. XXIV

Pittsburg, March Twenty-ninth, 1907

No. 16

Dedication of Tree of Life Synagogue



The New Tree of Life Synagogue

Which was Dedicated Last Sunday, March 24th

[Courtesy Pittsburg Leader]

The Jewish Criterion

VOL. XXIV

PITTSBURG, PA., MARCH TWENTY-NINTH, 1907

No. 17

DEDICATION OF TREE OF LIFE SYNAGOGUE.

**An Impressive Occasion.—Exercises on an Elaborate Scale.
Large Crowd Present.**

The dedication proper of the Tree of Life Synagogue took place last Sunday afternoon before a congregation which taxed the capacity of the

marked the beginning of a new order of things, in keeping with the spirit of the times. It was with mingled emotions that many of the old guard, who had stood faithful and loyal to the congregation in the days gone by, witnessed the consecration of the new edifice. It brought back scenes of earlier years; yes, it took some way back to the time when there first came a division in the congregation, and Rodeph Shalom, rep-



Rabbi Rudolf J. Coffee.



Samuel Levin. Meyer Fink.



Isaac Gelder.

new building to its fullest. It has a seating capacity of about 750 and over a thousand persons were in attendance, thus even putting standing room at a premium. The event is one long to be remembered. A new epoch in the religious life of this community was established. It

resenting the advanced, or reformed element, was brought into existence. It brought home to others the thought that a new Tree of Life Congregation has been born. While conservatism will undoubtedly be the corner stone of the congregation, yet it will hardly ever hark back to

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the extreme forms that once were in vogue. Many were present who once belonged to this congregation, but whose religious convictions have undergone a change. To these the services and the occasion were of unusual interest.

Good-Bye to Old Synagogue.

The dedicatory services proper began Friday afternoon at 4 o'clock when Rabbi Coffee delivered a farewell address in the old building. It was a feeling tribute to the devotion of the little band who formed the congregation back in the sixties, to their steadfastness of purpose, their courage, their helpful kindness one to another in hours of adversity. He recalled the fact that it was 25 years ago that the outbreak against the Jews began in Russia and of the fugitives who at that time fled from the country, 14 families were allotted to Pittsburg. Today every one of these families are prosperous and with their offspring are a credit to their race and to the city which welcomed them and gave them a chance to worship God as their consciences dictated, and to earn an honest living under the protection of the law. Such, he pointed out, is the character of the Jew. With the slightest chance, he quickly becomes self-supporting, and a law-abiding citizen, charitable, public spirited and patriotic. Twenty-five years ago, he said, a little band of earnest and religious men were struggling against heavy odds to maintain the building in which they were assembled, as a house of God. Of that little band he said there were but three remaining, and to them he paid a feeling tribute.

The rabbi alluded to the three original charter members, who assisted in the organization of the Tree of

Life congregation and to these three was delegated the honor of bearing the scrolls to the new synagogue at the close of the sermon of farewell.

The three scroll bearers were Samuel Levin, Meyer Fink and Isaac Gelder. They were taken in carriages from the old synagogue to the new, where they were received by a band of school children reciting from the Psalms of David.



MR. HENRY JACKSON,
Chairman of Building Committee.

The exercises were participated in by Mayor Guthrie and Rev. Dr. E. R. Donehoo, who had delivered an address when the congregation took charge of the property at Fourth avenue and Ross street 25 years ago. Both the mayor and Rev. Dr. Donehoo attested to the faithfulness of the congregation and the pleasant relations existing between it and churches representing other faiths.

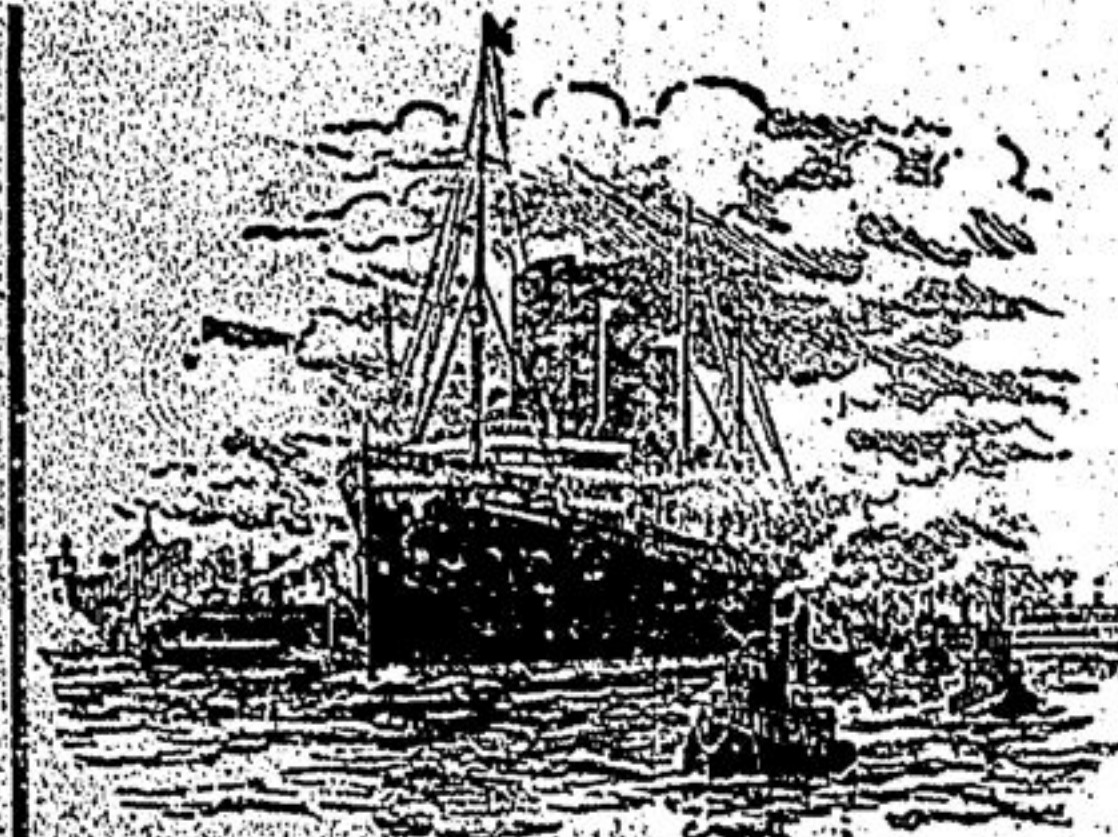
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Former Pastor Takes Part.

After singing by the boys' choir of 30 voices, led by Cantor S. Levy, the scrolls were placed in their proper place in the new synagogue. Prayers were offered by Rabbi Coffee and Rabbi M. Fried, former pastor of the congregation.

Mayor Gutnrie delivered a brief address on "Religious Liberty." He referred to the persecution of the Jews down through ages and at the present time and also spoke of their saving and cherishing the Ten Commandments from century to century. These, he said, constitute the corner stone of the law today.

Rabbi Coffee declared the building officially dedicated for public worship and to the service of God, after which Rev. Dr. E. R. Donohoo delivered a brief address. Other addresses were delivered by Rabbi Fried and Rabbi Coffee.

Services were held in the vestry rooms of the new synagogue both Friday evening and Saturday morning. Rabbi Coffee spoke on "Dedication and Character," urging his hearers that unless they dedicated their characters to the service of God, the dedication of their synagogue was but a hollow and empty ceremonial. Rabbi Fried closed the service with prayer.

Sunday Afternoon

At 3 o'clock the audience filed through the assembly room into the auditorium, where the services were opened by a prayer by Rabbi A. M. Ashinsky of Beth Hamedrosh Hagodol synagogue. Three scrolls of the law were carried in by Samuel Levin, Meyer Fink and Isaac Gelder, the only three surviving charter members of this congregation, and a fourth by Marks Browarsky, who had donated this very Sefer some years ago. They were deposited in the tabernacle, while the Pittsburgh string quartet played "The Processional March," by Wagner. The three charter members brought the scrolls from the old synagogue at Ross street and Fourth avenue on Friday afternoon.

Child Unlocks Massive Doors.

The services proper began when little Pauline Gordon, the 7-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Gordon of 1712 Locust street, unlocked the massive outer doors of

the synagogue and slowly walked up the aisle showing not the slightest bit of stage fright, although the eyes of the large audience were upon her, and handed the key to the president of the congregation, H. H. Livingston.

Rabbi Rudolph I. Coffee read several verses from the first chapter of Genesis, and as he reached the

Before Rabbi Coffee introduced Prof. Joshua A. Joffe, teacher of the Talmud and Rabbinics in the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York, he praised the congregation and rabbi for their efforts in building such a splendid synagogue.

In introducing Prof. John A. Brashear, Rabbi Coffee paid this compliment: "When I was in college our president said: 'I don't envy



REV. MICHAEL FRIED
Former Rabbi of Tree of Life Synagogue

words, "Let there be light," the "Ner Tamid" of "the perpetual light," was lighted by Mrs. L. S. Levin, who presented it to the congregation. This light is the symbol of the perpetual light of the Hebrew religion, and will burn as long as the synagogue is occupied. Simultaneously with the lighting of the "Ner Tamid" the current for the large electric lights of the auditorium was turned on for the first time above the tabernacle.

Pittsburgh its wealth, nor its iron, neither its wonderful factories or its wealth, but I do envy Pittsburgh Brashear." Prof. Brashear congratulated the rabbi and the congregation and paid several glowing tributes to Jewish people.

At the conclusion of the reading of "The Mincha" by the Rev. J. Levin, Rabbi Michael Fried, who was minister of the congregation for nine years, said he had traveled 1,000 miles in order to be present, but he

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gladly would have traveled farther. The Hon. Josiah Cohen, who was present at the first dedicatory services of this congregation, in the course of his address, said, "Are you satisfied to sit quietly there enjoying freedom while your brethren in Armenia are being hounded by the persecution that has followed the Jews through all generations. Let us bend the knee to American liberty which gives us the right to worship as we desire; let us bend the knee to our great national government which gives us the right according to the doctrine of Moses. You

ing of the "Coronation March - Kretchmar."

The present officers of the congregation are H. H. Livingston, president; L. Jackson, vice president; M. Fink, secretary, and C. Spandau, treasurer. The building committee and the committee on arrangements included Henry Jackson, chairman; H. Braun, Samuel Levin, M. Bro-warsky, Joseph Levy, S. Davis, A. L. Levin, M. Fink, A. Lippard, I. Gross, H. H. Livingston, I. Jackson, B. Marks and C. Spandau. M. Hirsch, chief usher, and his assistants, handled the big throng admirably.

Three Veterans Yet Remain.

Of the original eleven members of this congregation there are three yet remaining: Meyer Fink, a son of Alexander Fink, first president of the Tree of Life; Isaac Gelder, for many years a prominent merchant on Wyle's avenue, and Samuel Levin, the venerable father of L. S. Levin, city editor.

In 1882 the congregation removed from Third avenue to the building at the corner of Fourth avenue and Ross street, which had been purchased from the Baptist congregation, which had occupied it, for \$10,-

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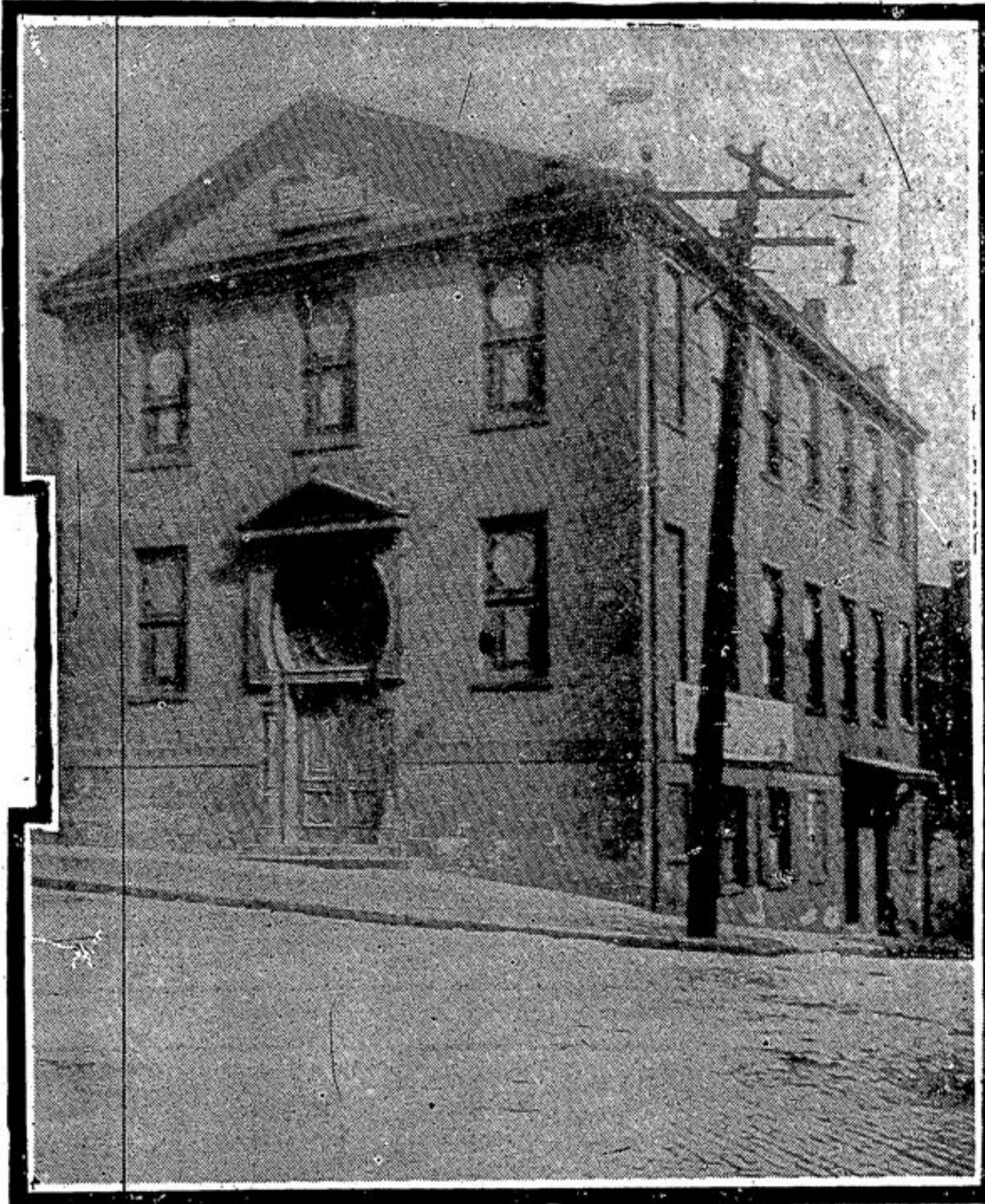
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Rabbi Levy Makes Address.

The Rev. Dr. J. Leonard Levy, who made the dedicatory address, said: "Although the Jews have been cursed and reviled through the ages, they are the one great Protestant or protesting people. Their belief has withstood the onslaughts of the Egyptian, Babylonian, Syrian, Greek and Roman nations, and eventually it will be recognized as the one great, right religion."

After a closing prayer by Rabbi David H. Wittenberg, the dedication services were closed by the play-

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATION.

The Tree of Life congregation was started in 1865 with eleven charter members. Alexander Fink was president, and Morris Arnfeld, vice president of the society, and M. Wolff, cantor. Rev. Sellinger, now of Chicago, was the first English-speaking minister, several years later. At first the little congregation rented a small room on Second avenue for a place of worship, and here they remained for five years, when they removed to Third avenue, where a lodge room had been rented and fitted up for a place of worship.

000. The little band could only pay a part of the price, and were compelled to place a mortgage upon the property of \$6,000. They spent \$4,000 in improvements, and have continued to worship there ever since, until last Friday afternoon. Incidentally this same piece of property was sold last spring by the congregation for \$87,000 to a real estate firm, the congregation reserving the right to worship there until the completion of the new synagogue.

Since its organization the congregation has adhered rigidly to its original orthodoxy, with the exception that a few years ago, in 1894, to be exact, the ancient custom of separat-

ing the men and women while at worship was abolished and family pews established.

In 1898 Rev. Michael Fried, a student of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, was installed as rabbi. He labored with the congregation until his failing health last summer forced him to present his resignation. Rev. Levine, who was engaged as cantor and choir leader in 1900, still holds that position, and A. Goldstein, the present sexton, has filled that place for 22 years.

Excellent Auxiliary Formed.

During Rabbi Fried's administration an excellent organization was formed, the Ladies' Auxiliary Society, which, since it started in 1900, has been most helpful in congregational work. Mrs. Henry Jackson was the first president and Mrs. M. Haas secretary. When Mrs. Jackson resigned Mrs. Haas was made the head of the auxiliary and has since carried on the work with credit to herself and the congregation. Associated with Mrs. Haas is Mrs. J. Goodman, vice president, Mrs. L. Amschel, secretary, and Mrs. S. Davis, treasurer. The verdict of the congregation is that the work accomplished by these ladies cannot be overestimated.

The present success of the society is largely due to the efficiency of its officers and they are now paying a high tribute to its founder, Rabbi Fried, by bringing him here from San Francisco, where he is located, to attend the dedicatory exercises.

The sickness of Rabbi Fried last summer compelled the congregation to look about for his successor, and acting upon the suggestion of the minister they invited Rabbi Rudolph I. Coffee to preach over the holidays.

The New Guiding Hand.

Rabbi Rudolph I. Coffee was born in Oakland, Cal., July 24, 1878, and after passing through the grammar and high schools of his native city came east in 1896 and entered the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York as a freshman. In college he made an enviable record, graduating in 1900 with the degree of A. B. and being awarded the highest honors in philosophy. In addition to this he received an appointment as assistant in education in the Teachers' College, Columbia University, which position he filled for three years. In May, 1903, he was called to the superintendency of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum of New York. The acceptance of this offer to become the head of an institution containing over 1,000 children before he was 25 years of age was an extremely delicate one for the young man, but the splendid record he made and the warm praise which he received from Superintendent W. H. Maxwell, of the public schools of New York, proved that he was highly competent to fill the position.

In 1905 Rabbi Coffee resigned from his position in the asylum to prepare himself for the ministry, by taking an extra year as a post-graduate student in Columbia University. The call to Pittsburgh, while it came totally unsolicited and un-

expectedly to the young minister, was so attractive that it was gladly accepted.

Affairs Progress Under Him.

Since his ministry in the Tree of Life congregation its affairs have progressed in a way most satisfactory to both pastor and people. The membership has increased and the spirit of congregational fellowship and fraternal endeavor for the advancement of all things spiritual is most manifest and pleasing.

The Pastor's Aid Society.

This organization, which is as yet nameless, includes in its membership Misses Ida Aronson, Eva Browarsky, Birdie Browarsky, Daisy Cohen, Nettie DeHaan, Anna Friedland, Nettie Moses, Rebecca Klaytor, Etta Markowitz, Sadie Rosenthal, Yetta Wise, Estelle Marks.

These members of the pastor's aid society, as they have been called, have already become an important adjunct to the work of the synagogue, carrying out the ideas of the Ladies' Auxiliary and plans of that body of influential women in a way most satisfactory to all concerned.

When the old synagogue was sold last spring the congregation purchased a lot on Craft avenue near Forbes street, 100 by 150 feet. A building committee was appointed with Henry Jackson as chairman and H. Braun, H. Bowarsky, S. Davis, N. Fink, C. Spandau, I. Jackson, A. Lippert, H. Livingston, Dr. A. Lewin, B. Marks, S. Levin, J. Levy and I. Gross.

The present congregation of the Tree of Life numbers 85, but with the new pew holders the number is considerably more than that.

RABBI FRIED'S SERMON.

Delivered at the Dedication of Tree of Life Synagogue.

My Friends:

We read in the Holy Bible that King David had made preparations to build an imposing structure as a temple, to be dedicated to the service of the "Holy One, blessed be He." He assembled the children of Israel at Jerusalem and said: "Hear me my brethren and my people! I had in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the foot-stool of our God, and I had made preparations to build; but God said unto me, 'Thou shalt not build a house unto my name, Solomon thy son it is that shall build my house and my courts.'" (I. Chron. 28:2-6.)

My friends, this narrative of the Bible, I think may very fittingly apply in some respects to the circumstances under which I am now privileged to participate in these impressive dedication exercises. Of all the ministers present here today, there is no one so intimately acquainted with the past history of this congregation as I am. For nine years have I labored for the welfare of this congregation, and have made preparations for the erection of this house of God. From the very beginning of my com-

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ng to this congregation, nine years ago, as its minister, I started the movement of building a new synagogue and all my efforts have been aimed towards that end. I have been successful to awaken the individual consciousness of the members. I have watched the congregation make steady progress during the past nine years. I have observed them grow "from strength to strength." I have seen all preparations made, when the will of God was manifested to me, telling me that not I shall finish the house of God, but my worthy and able successor. I am thankful to our Heavenly Father, that He has spared my life and permitted me to witness his dedication today. "This is indeed a day to rejoice and to be glad thereon."

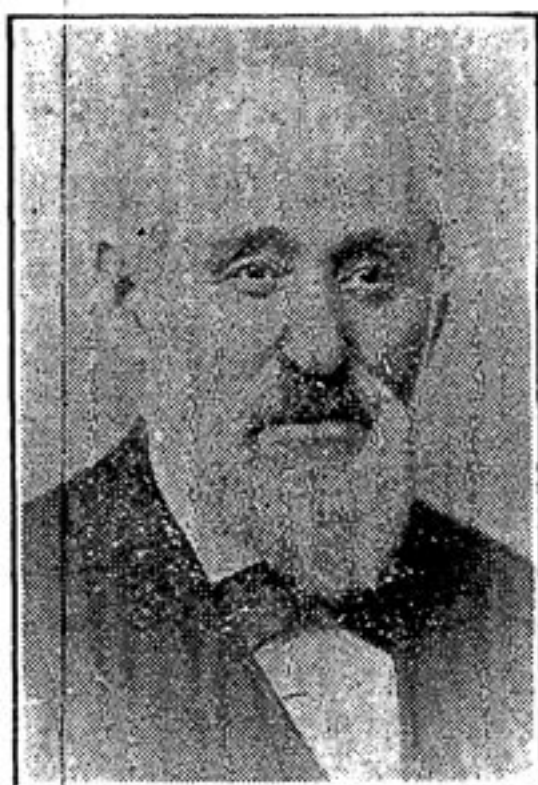
I am addressing you under peculiar conditions. Very often a minister who is invited to speak before a congregation, not his own, is in a predicament as to what he should speak about or what he should say to the congregation, for as a rule he does not know well enough, the people he is addressing. Again a minister in his own congregation, may often not dare tell his congregation what he would like to say, for fear of the consequences, at least to himself. My presence here today is an anomaly. I may say that I am at present your minister and yet I am not your minister. I am your minister because my original term as minister of this congregation did not terminate until next April, and therefore I could have been the official minister at this dedication. And yet, I am not your minister, because circumstances beyond human control and my resignation severed my ministerial relations with you. I am now ministering to a congregation 3,000 miles distant from here. But as your minister for nine years and having spent some of the best years of my life in your midst, I ought to understand you well, and, yet as not your minister, I ought not to be reluctant to speak to you frankly and openly.

Let me say, right at the beginning that I am not going to criticize you in any way, for I have no cause or justification in doing so. At such a time as this, it is but natural that we should experience a feeling of exaltation, and far be it from me to sound a discordant note upon so joyous an occasion. I honor and respect all of you. I thank you once more for all the kindness you have shown me while in your midst. I keenly appreciate the honor of your invitation to come back and participate in this dedication, and I should be very sorry to give utterance to a word which might seem out of harmony with the festivities of the day. I have traveled thousands of miles, and gladly would have traveled much farther to have the pleasure of seeing you, my good people, once more.

It is an inspiring and uplifting scene, to behold so many faithful adherents to our religion, to have assembled here today to witness the dedication of this house to a threefold purpose. 1. To God. 2. To country. 3. To humanity. This threefold dedication corresponds to the

idea of the Rabbis in the Talmud, who say that the place of worship from very early times was designated among the Israelites by three names.

"Abraham called the synagogue a mountain; Isaac called the synagogue a field; Jacob called the synagogue a house." Let us see what meaning this precious saying of the Talmud has for us. First: God's house or the synagogue should be a mountain. Is it not true that when one stands on the top of a high mountain, he is elevated above the dusty and smoky atmosphere of the dale, valley and plains; the lobes of his lungs expand. Again he who stands on the top of a mountain has a deep, silent and earnest rest about himself, for the noise and bustle of the city do not reach him. Again he who stands on a high mountain stands much nearer to Heaven, and he feels himself drawn nearer to God, and more closely related to Him. Likewise, my friends, such a mountain should our synagogue be. We should dedicate this synagogue as a mountain of God. It should be a place where the pure religious atmosphere should exist, where he who is humble and sick in heart can



THE LATE ALEXANDER FINK,
One of the Founders of the Tree of Life Congregation

be strengthened. The synagogue should be a place where we must feel that we are nearer and more closely related to God. The synagogue should be a high mountain where we do not hear the noise and tumult of the business life of the city.

"The synagogue," says the Talmud, "must be higher than all the other houses of the city." That is to say, spiritually it must be loftier, it must be more esteemed and honored than any other house of the city. In this manner and in this spirit should we dedicate this synagogue to God.

The house of God is called, secondly, a "field." What does that mean? On the field we scatter seed, which after some time brings us rich harvest. When we sow the seed, we hope that our eyes will behold and our hearts will be gladdened by the rich harvest which these seeds will bring forth at some future time. When we enjoy the fruits of our labor, we are repaid for the work

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and toil spent upon the field. Likewise, my dear friends, we should dedicate this synagogue to the service of our country in which prayers will be offered for the peace and welfare of our glorious country of liberty, as American citizens surrounded by all the guarantees of unrestricted freedom of conscience. Our synagogue should be a field, where we sow the seed of prayers, the fruits we hope to enjoy in the future, as the divine Psalmist says:

"Planted in the house of the Lord, in the courts of our God shall they flourish."

Thirdly, our father Jacob called the house of God a "house," and, thirdly, we should dedicate this synagogue to the service of humanity. "House" is the most beautiful name to be applied to a synagogue. In every house, as a rule, there lives a family, consisting of a father, mother, sons and daughters, and the syna-

(Continued on page 15)

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RABBI FRIED'S SERMON.

(Continued from page 7)

gogue should be a similar house where our loving Heavenly Father dwells in the midst of His children, and because all these children descend from the same good Father, they should be all brothers and sisters. This place should be holy in the true sense of the word. In this place we should forget the artificial distinctions of caste, the false barriers between man and man, and be of one family. It is true, that we human beings are everywhere, even outside the synagogue, brothers and sisters, for we all enjoy the tender heart of a mother, this mother being nature; we have all been created by one Father, this Father being God; we have all been brought up in the same house, this house being the earth; we all have one home, this home being the earth; we all have one home, this home being heaven; yet in life and in the world without, there are always some causes which separate man from man and heart from heart, but the synagogue should be a house of the great family, "the house of gathering" and the house of union. Here, where the rich and the poor, young and old, sit side by side, here we feel that, after all, we have one Father and that we are all His children.

Friends! I want to say right here, that I am exceedingly glad and happy to know that the Jewish hospital of this city is soon to have its cornerstone laid, and thus the long wish of those faithful workers who worked for its welfare, will soon be fulfilled, and hope, in fact I have no doubt that the liberal Pittsburg community will support it, as they so liberally support all other noble institutions of this great and prosperous city.

Thus, my friends, when a congregation is inspired with such lofty thoughts and ideals, when they enter the house of worship, then can we truly say the Divine Presence rests in the synagogue. May we in this spirit dedicate this synagogue to the service of God, country and humanity, which constitute true Judaism, and Judaism is eternal as the hills, yea! it is even more eternal than the hills and dales. I come now from the golden State of California, most favored by nature by the effusion of beauty which has been lavishly showered upon it by God, the source of all grace and beauty, and yet, friends, there are evidences there everywhere; where the human eye turns, of an awful havoc wrought by nature, God's messenger, for some purpose which is as mysterious as the sight is overawing. Hills have been removed, yea! with the Royal Psalmist we may say: "The foundations of the hills tremble." In other words, the phenomena of nature, firm as they seem, crumble at the magic and mysterious touch of time, but here, friends, is Judaism, the same glorious Judaism of the patriarchs and prophets, unshaken and unmoved as the very heavens which Moses called as the witnesses of the Eternal God.

Friends, the work which you have done, as manifested in the erection of this imposing edifice may perhaps, some day vanish as all things material do, but the principle to which this sacred place of worship is being dedicated will abide forever and it is in the perpetuity of Judaism that your work will find perennial lodgment, a spiritual monument to your zeal and your loyalty. The most sacred Temple in our history was the one in the capitol of the ancient Jewish commonwealth. It was called "Beth Hamikdosh," par excellence, as though only that one was worthy of the noble epithet of holiness, but that Temple, too, vanished, but the principle for which it stood was and is indestructible. We build synagogues, not simply impelled by craven fear, or from slavish adherence to custom, but we build out of the fullest conviction of our hearts, and as an evidence that our fathers' faith is yet a living faith. Israel today, as throughout the thousand years of its past, stands for an ideal yet unrealized, and for hopes that are still vital and essential to mankind. There is a very beautiful story in the Jewish ancient folklore, which is as inspiring as it is suggestive. When the Temple was set ablaze by the unholy hands of the ancient foes of Israel, the high priest at the risk of his life made his way into the interior, snatched the golden key of the gates, locked the sacred portals and standing on the threshold with his eyes uplifted heavenward, he threw up the key, imploring Providence to take it under His protection. A mysterious hand caught the golden key and deposited it among the Heavenly treasures. My dear friends, it is related in our sacred tradition that our ancient Temple was an imitation of some model, which God showed unto Moses. So is every Temple a representation of the sacred Tabernacle above, and so, dear friends, is every key of every Jewish place of worship, yea, the key which was handed today to the worthy president of this congregation, "Tree of Life," the counterpart of that golden key which is in God's sacred treasury. May this key unlock for us the golden treasures of spiritual truth, so that our eyes may behold the glory of God, the majesty of His presence, so beautifully and significantly represented by the noble word "Shekinah," and may it shine in all its splendor upon you, your children and your children's children for all time. Amen.

Address by Prof. Joshua A. Joffe.

Ladies and Gentlemen: For almost a decade I have been in spirit with Congregation Tree of Life in Pittsburg. For nearly nine years my beloved friend, Rabbi Michael Fried, here with us today, has faithfully discharged his duties as its gardner, nourishing you and your children with fruit he had been gathering for five long years from among the trees of that orchard in which I had the honor to be employed as watchman—the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York.

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It pays to advertise in The Jewish Criterion. Just glance at our list of advertisers—people and firms who are after RESULTS.

Of late you have thought fit to transplant your "Tree of Life," to make its form a delight to the eye, and as steward of the spiritual fruit thereof you have elected Rabbi Rudolph Coffee. It is he more than any of the half hundred disciples occupying pulpits, who has for close to ten years most diligently imbibed my views on "Spirit and Form of Judaism." You thought it becoming on the occasion of the dedication of this beautiful edifice that I should be with you in form as well as in spirit. I have accepted your kind invitation with pleasure. Not the information that one more fine synagogue has been added to the large number of temples, devoted to the preservation of Jewish traditions and Jewish institutions, was it that afforded me such a satisfaction. Nor, indeed, would the fact that one of my dearest friends in life is going to preside over it, have justified the undertaking of such a long journey, inasmuch, as I am fully aware, that my presence here at this hour to be of no consequence, either to flock or to shepherd. What, however, made me come to enjoy the pleasure of this hour is this:

A feeling that seldom deceives, pervades me that under the able guidance of its rabbi, Congregation Tree of Life of Pittsburgh is destined to take an active part in the turning of a new leaf, the desire for which is just now being felt through all modern Israel. I have the feeling that under his leadership this congregation will become a moral power helping the production of a new chapter in Jewish history, the superscription of which shall be engraven with fiery words, radiating warmth and life! "It is a Tree of Life to those who keep fast hold of it."

It will in due time be able to bear witness that prosperity does not necessarily depend upon the generosity of any individual (who, to the harm of the very cause he means to further, might turn dictator) nor upon the power of speechmaking that is intended for amusement, whereas happiness is bound to follow the footsteps of that institution whose affairs are conducted in the "Spirit of Judaism" in its Pristine purity, making for the three elements of civilization: Absolute truth, uncompromising justice and unruffled peace.

Only two generations ago—one is apt to call it yesterday—the spiritual tree of the world's civilization, called "Rabbinical Judaism," stood in such bloom and beauty that, had the English-speaking prophets of the nineteenth century cast a more than superficial glance at its trunk, they would have declared it to represent the moral Garden of Eden, the soul of humanity should yearn after. The British prophet, Thomas Carlyle, for one, would have found many and many a hero he was vainly in search for through all the British possessions. As to the American, Ralph Waldo Emerson, he, too, might with difficulties, have described more than one "blessed Jew" as an illustration of what Jesus of Nazareth looked like, explaining the better how he

was acting to benefit civilization and science.

And today?—yellow leaves innumerable; many a branch cut off; many more, because of thoughtlessness, waxing dry, and the entire bulk exposed to a scorching sun. This is the real state of Israel's "Tree of Life." Those who have tears to shed let them now weep.

However, "wenn die Not ist amhodisten, da ist Got am nachsten." (When the need is greatest then God is nigh at hand.)

See, look yonder! there appears a strip of cloud on the horizon pregnant with gentle rain. And, wonder upon wonder! those very branches that were first smitten by the drought, gratefully receive the first drops, yearningly panting after rejuvenation!

To the everlasting credit of our German-American philanthropists be it stated and recorded, that it was they, who three weeks ago this day, through the silvery tongue of their great orator, Edward Lauterbach, proclaimed their heart-felt desire to give more scope to the heart and soul and less to the form and cant.

O, that all congregations were to follow suit! And O, that a congregation like this would set one more example and bring about a still more needed reform. And it is this: Not to measure the merit of the minister by how many visits he made during the week, or by how many speeches he delivered, but, O congregation of Israel, I beseech you, honor your leaders according to the dozen of hours they spend during the week in the study of the Hebrew Bible. Or better still, according to their ability to draw inspiration from Jewish history and philosophy.

I. O. B. B. NOTES.

The B'nai B'rith lodge in Cincinnati has prospered greatly since the consolidation of the five lodges. At the last meeting of the lodge, which was largely attended, a contribution to the Jewish settlement of \$1.50 for each member of the lodge was voted for the year 1907, thus disposing of the largest part of its income in philanthropic endeavor, the Cleveland Orphan Asylum, Denver Hospital and the local settlement being the chief beneficiaries. At the last meeting 29 candidates were accepted and these, with an additional class, will be initiated at the next meeting on March 25th, and the ceremony will be the first initiation conducted under the auspices of the new lodge. Arrangements have been made for an elaborate luncheon to follow the meeting.

A largely attended meeting was held at Chattanooga, Tenn., on March 10th, on which occasion Rabbi T. E. Joseph delivered an address, in the course of which he spoke of the representative fraternal institutions of this country and especially of the I. O. B. B. and of its work, and appealed to the audience to join its ranks and to affiliate with the existing lodge in that city. As a result of the meeting, 23 candidates have signified their willingness to join the