



Jewish Publication Society of America

REPORT OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH YEAR

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(as of July 1, 1956)

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¹ Term expires in 1957.² Term expires in 1958.³ Term expires in 1959.

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THE SIXTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING

THE SIXTY-EIGHTH annual meeting of The Jewish Publication Society of America was held on April 22, 1956, at the Drake Hotel, 15th and Spruce Streets, Philadelphia, Pa., in connection with a dinner commencing at seven o'clock in the evening. Edwin Wolf, 2nd, President of the Society, served as chairman, and Chief Justice Horace Stern, Vice-President of the Society, served as toastmaster.

Dr. Jacob R. Marcus of Cincinnati delivered the invocation.

Report of the Publication Committee

Dr. Solomon Grayzel, Editor of the Society, read the report of the Publication Committee for Judge Louis E. Levinthal, Chairman, who was attending the World Zionist Congress in Israel. He reported as follows:

It is with sincere regret that I find it will not be possible for me to attend the annual meeting of the Jewish Publication Society. When the meeting is held in Philadelphia on April 22nd, I shall, please God, be in Jerusalem. As this will be the first time in more than a quarter century that I shall not have the privilege of participating in our annual gatherings, may I take this means of conveying my cordial greetings and of submitting my report as Chairman of the Publication Committee to the members and friends of our Society.

During the past year, the Board of Trustees added to the members of the Committee two gentlemen who measure up in every respect to the scholarly reputation and cultural interests of the rest of the Committee. They are Dr. Samuel Dinin, Director of Jewish Education in Los Angeles and member of the Faculty of the University of Judaism, and Professor Oscar Janowsky, of the City College of New York.

On the whole the Publication Committee has functioned as usual during the course of the past year. I reported at our last annual meeting that fewer manuscripts have been submitted to us, despite the fact that so many more books of Jewish interest are being published, not only by our Society but by commercial publishers as well. Although a total of about sixty manuscripts reached the Editor's office, hardly more than a dozen were worthy of transmission to the members of the Committee for reading and advice. All this is evidence of the fact that men of real literary ability and scholarly knowledge encounter less difficulty than previously in finding a publisher for their work. This is a development we should welcome with genuine satisfaction.

Fortunately, however, there are distinguished authors and scholars who value highly the imprint of the JPS on the title pages of their works, and who therefore submit their manuscripts to us in preference to prominent commercial publishing houses that would be proud to publish them. Our policy of co-publication with commercial publishers has generally proved to be mutually advantageous to our authors and to the members of our Society.

I think we are justified in continuing to publish a balanced list of books, not all of them scholarly in character, not all of them popular in their appeal. No important scholarly work should be rejected by us, even if only a minority of our membership may find it of interest. There is more than a little truth in this observation by Henry Brooks Adams: "The difference is slight to the influence of an author, whether he be read by five hundred readers or by five hundred thousand readers; if he can select the five hundred, he reaches the five hundred thousand." Our Society's membership, though quantitatively far from what it should be, does unquestionably include the intellectual and cultural aristocracy of the American Jewish community. An author of a truly valuable and important volume of scholarly merit, published by our Society and read by the rabbis, the teachers and the cultured and educated laymen who are among our members, will ultimately reach and influence the rank and file of American Jewry.

A special effort should be made by our Committee to initiate the publication of valuable scholarly works which would probably not be undertaken unless we encourage, or even commission authors to write them. Furthermore, we should strive to expedite the Committee's decisions concerning manuscripts when submitted. For both purposes it is respectfully recommended that a representative and active subcommittee of the Publication Committee be empowered to consider scholarly projects and manuscripts, in much the same way as our subcommittee on American History and Biography has been operating so effectively since the Society received the Jacob R. Schiff Fund. All recommendations of the subcommittee will, of course, be subject to the approval of our entire Committee.

We must also consider the more popular needs of our membership. One area in which the Society has been quite weak, except for the brilliant works of Israel Zangwill, is that of fiction. Fortunately, many novels of Jewish interest have seen the light of day recently. Some may legitimately question whether there ought to be specifically Jewish works of fiction. In view of the fact that the Jew in the United States plays his role as an integral member of the wider community, works of fiction which are illustrative of American Jewish life can be made specifically Jewish only by narrowing the area of the characters' activity and thus making the story to some extent unreal. Nevertheless, there unquestionably are certain types of novels or belles-lettres which we have published and should continue to publish. These are such books as *Awakened*, by Margaret Abrams, which we published in 1955; and such translations as Solomon Simon's *My Jewish Roots* and

Jacob Picard's *The Marked One*, which are on our list for 1956. (I have had the pleasure of reading *My Jewish Roots* while on this delightful voyage to Israel on the *SS Zion*, and I was extremely proud to pass the book to a fellow passenger, Professor Alexander Dushkin, of the Hebrew University, who found it as charming as I did.) I believe we shall do well to concentrate on similar translations from the Yiddish, Hebrew or German in the field of fiction.

There is a strong likelihood that our juvenile program will be increased and intensified in the future. During the first half of the life of the Jewish Publication Society, it was practically the only Jewish publisher producing juvenile literature. The field has grown tremendously since then and there is a bright prospect that we shall re-enter it vigorously in the years to come.

In closing, I wish to thank all my co-workers on the Committee, for their dedicated service on behalf of the Society. They deserve the gratitude of the American Jewish community as a whole. And as our Committee completes the sixty-eighth year and commences the sixty-ninth of continuous activity, permit me to salute you and to admonish myself as well, with the traditional exhortation: *Chazak, Chazak, Ve'Nischazek!* Be strong, be strong, and let us strengthen one another!

Treasurer's Report

Myer Feinstein, Treasurer of the Society, reported as follows:

Last year, at this time, I reported to the annual meeting that the year 1954 had shown a substantial increase in the Society's income from the distribution of books and Bibles and that our financial position had been improved. It is my pleasure to make a similar report for the year 1955.

In 1954, total income amounted to \$282,725.00. For 1955, the total was increased to \$324,008.00. Expenditures showed a corresponding increase. In 1954, these amounted to \$280,033.00. In 1955, the total was \$322,993.00. The difference between 1955 income and expenditure amounted to \$1,015.00, which amount was transferred to the surplus account.

Our total income of \$324,008.00 consisted of \$40,462.00 from allocations and contributions, \$88,268.00 from sales of Bibles, \$95,047.00 from sales of other books, \$93,475.00 from membership dues, and \$5,756.00 from miscellaneous sources. Total expenditures of \$322,993.00 consisted of \$199,189.00 for costs of book and Bible production, and \$123,804.00 for costs of distribution and administration.

May I point out that the Society derived 87.5 per cent of its 1955 income from membership dues and the sale of books and Bibles. This is an unusually high proportion for a communal organization to earn by its own efforts. However, the remaining 12.5 per cent received as contributions and allocations is the vital factor which keeps the Society alive. Without it, we could not sustain our contribution to the cultural life of American Jewry. As this portion of our income increases, particularly through inclusion in the campaigns of additional communities, we shall be able to do even more by completing many important projects which have been deferred because of a lack of funds.

The Society continues to be troubled by a lack of working capital, but our credit is good and we hope that coming years will permit us to improve this situation. In recent months, we paid off our bank loan. Also, during early 1956, we made the final payment on our mortgage, so that our only borrowings at the moment are from various funds which were depleted during the past decade. These must be repaid, and I am hopeful that we shall be able to do so within the next few years.

Executive Secretary's Report

Lesser Zussman, Executive Secretary of the Society, reported as follows:

At this season of the year, I am reminded of the host who asked his guests at the Seder whether they had come for the Haggadah or the *knaidlach*. By the same

token, we can ask ourselves whether we are here tonight to celebrate sixty-eight years of important history, or the achievements of the year 1955.

Actually, an alert organization must constantly review the past, analyze the present, and evaluate the future. Since "epilogue is prologue" and since the Jewish Publication Society is now performing a service which is quite different from that rendered in its earlier days, it is obvious that we have changed with the times. Instead of being concerned with providing good literature in the new language of the immigrant, we are today concerned with providing a link in the chain which anchors the American Jew to his religion.

Today, with such intense competition for leisure-time activity, it is not enough for the Society to merely publish good books. We must also promote and merchandise our books in competition with less important distractions. This means that an ever increasing proportion of our available funds must go into promotional activities and improvements in the physical appearance of our books. The editorial quality of our publications has always been high and will never be compromised, so that the difficult problem is that of making this high quality as attractive and widely known as possible, then getting it into the hands of readers.

It is my privilege to travel across the country and meet many cultured persons who are interested in Jewish books. I meet rabbis who tell me what they want for their congregants; teachers who tell me what they want for their students; book-sellers who tell me what people want to give as gifts. Rarely do I meet the gem who tells me what he wants for himself. Here is the basic problem with which every member can help. Talk to your friends about the Society's books. Stimulate them to read good books of Jewish interest. Encourage everyone to become a member of the Society and support our efforts.

As you have already heard and will hear further, 1955 was a year of achievement and a year of promise. Let us hope that future years will continue to show a sustained improvement in the Society's contribution to the cultural life of American Jewry.

In closing, may I express sincere thanks to the officers and members of the Board and Publication Committee for their many considerations, and to the members of our staff for their devotion and interest. Finally, may I express the hope that we all meet again at our seventieth Anniversary dinner in a world at peace.

Report of the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee takes pleasure in presenting this report.

We unanimously recommend the following as officers, honorary officers, and trustees of the Society—the officers and honorary officers for terms of one year, and trustees for terms as indicated.

OFFICERS

EDWIN WOLF, 2ND, *President* (3rd term)

CHIEF JUSTICE HORACE STERN, *1st Vice President* (45th term)

SOL SATINSKY, *2nd Vice President* (4th term)

DR. JACOB R. MARCUS, *3rd Vice President* (3rd term)

MYER FEINSTEIN, *Treasurer* (4th term)

LESSER ZUSSMAN, *Secretary & Executive Secretary* (7th term)

JUDGE LOUIS E. LEVINTHAL, *Chairman, Publication Committee* (13th term)

DR. SOLOMON GRAYZEL, *Editor* (18th term)

HONORARY PRESIDENT

J. SOLIS-COHEN, JR.

HONORARY VICE PRESIDENTS

SAMUEL BRONFMAN, Montreal
 LEE M. FRIEDMAN, Boston
 JAMES MARSHALL, New York
 SAMUEL I. ROSENMAN, New York
 PHILIP SLOMOVITZ, Detroit
 MICHAEL A. STAVITSKY, Newark
 LEWIS L. STRAUSS, New York

TRUSTEES

The following trustees have completed their terms of office and are recommended for re-election to three-year terms:

HARRY W. BAUMGARTEN, New York
 SAMUEL H. DAROFF, Philadelphia
 BENJAMIN FINE, New York
 JOSEPH FIRST, Philadelphia
 BERNARD G. SEGAL, Philadelphia
 HARRY STARR, New York
 DEWEY D. STONE, Boston
 ROGER W. STRAUS, JR., New York

For election as trustees for a one-year term, we recommend:

HERBERT D. COHEN, York
 ABRAHAM L. FREEDMAN, Philadelphia
 JEROME J. SHESTACK, Philadelphia
 LEONARD N. SIMONS, Detroit
 BEN D. ZEVIN, Cleveland

Respectfully submitted,
 JOSEPH FIRST, *Chairman*
 ROBERT D. ABRAHAMS
 BERNARD L. FRANKEL
 SOL SATINSKY
 HARRY STARR

The report of the Nominating Committee was approved unanimously.

Mr. Edwin Wolf, 2nd, President, submitted his annual report (as printed on pp. 523-28).

Mrs. Harry K. Cohen, co-chairman of the Women's Committee, led an impressive ceremony during which the Society burned the mortgage previously held on its building.

Mr. Maxwell Whiteman, assistant to the Director of the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati, read an interesting paper on "Isaac Leeser—the Moulder of American Jewish Life" in honor of Leeser's 150th birthday anniversary.

The membership meeting was adjourned at ten o'clock in the evening.

Respectfully submitted,
 LESSER ZUSSMAN, *Secretary*

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT FOR THE YEAR 1955

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

This is the sixty-eighth annual meeting of the Jewish Publication Society. We are one of the oldest national Jewish organizations still in existence. We have behind us a rich and varied corporate career, a career which has seen the rise, the change, and the unfolding of modern American Jewish life. Like a man arrived at the full development of his maturity, we have knowledge gained through suffering and confidence based upon success. And, as we face the problems, challenges, and disappointments of today, we can bring to them a recollection of past difficulties overcome, of projects planned and realized, of ideals both unfulfilled and attained.

The most critical difficulty of the past five or six years, a financial one, has been overcome. Symbolically, we shall burn a mortgage tonight. But not only have we paid off the mortgage on our building on North Fifteenth Street, but we have, in the past year, paid off a bank loan which carried us through some very trying weeks and months and years. For the first time in our more recent history we are free of external debt.

This present sound financial position enables us to devote our energies to something more imaginative and more creative than scrimping to meet bills. As announced at our last meeting, we have begun the most dramatic religio-cultural project of our generation, a new translation of the Bible from the original Hebrew into English. The editorial committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Harry Orlinsky has been working hard, and it promises to have Genesis completed for us by the fall. Hereafter the speed of the project should increase, for our editors have now evolved rules for their scholarly battles; their skirmishes have become more orderly; there is much less word-shed.

The few who have so far seen the results of these men's labors are excited by the number of corrections they have been able to make, by the clarity with which formerly difficult and obscure passages and phrases have been reworded, and by their preservation of the resonant rhythm of what we were all brought up to cherish as a biblical style. In his recently republished essay "On First Reading Genesis," Edmund Wilson speaks at length of the difficulties of capturing the rhythm, the emphasis, and the humor of the Bible in any language other than Hebrew. And, with a deal of fatherly pride, I should like to give one example of the kind of small but important improvement which will be found in our new translation. In the original there are a great number of plays upon words. The word Eve is a play upon *havvah* meaning life; there was not much that could be done about that beyond a footnote. But, after Eve had given birth to Cain, she said—in our older version—"I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord"; and this too involves word-play, for the Hebrew word translated as "gotten" is *kanah*, you see, Cain-kanah. When I was reading over the suggested new translation, I felt that some English word might be found to retain the wordplay, but I could not think of one, and, thinking out loud in the presence of my daughter, I got a quick suggestion. "Why not 'gain'; Cain-gain." I am pleased to be able to say that when this was passed on to the learned scholars, they were delighted. My daughter Ellen will have made a contribution to a great work. This is only one word, to be sure, and there are countless instances where Dr. Orlinsky and his colleagues have made changes which are closer to the Hebrew in feeling, more accurate renderings of the literal meaning of the original, and more easily understandable at the same time to the modern reader. The new translation will not only meet the needs of the

layman who finds Shakespearean English sometimes unintelligible, but it will be at the same time the most scholarly translation ever made in English.

This is quite a job, and it will take a long time and cost a great deal of money before the completed Bible rolls off the press. We estimate that it will cost upwards of \$150,000, but we feel it is not only the obligation of our generation, but the pride of our generation, to see that it is done. Our 1917 translation was made possible largely through the generosity of one man, Jacob H. Schiff; we believe that our new translation should be made possible by the American Jewish community on a broader basis. Consequently, we are seeking pledges from a thousand individuals throughout the country to contribute twenty-five dollars a year for six years, so that it can be said that the new JPS translation was given to the world by the largest Jewish community in the world.

We went out to Detroit to explain our project and ask that great community for its help. We sought one hundred Bible pledges. Through the dedicated and enthusiastic leadership of Mr. Leonard N. Simons and Philip Slomovitz, we have already received one hundred and twenty-seven pledges. From New York, in a very brief time, we have received fifty-five more. In the coming year we shall extend the effort to other cities and are sure that they will not fail us. There is no single project that should stir the hearts of the People of the Book more deeply than a new Jewish version of that Book.

Now let us look at our accomplishments during 1955 and plans for 1956.

Publication Program

For 1955:

The first title, published in January, was *Jewish Ceremonial Art*, edited by Stephen S. Kayser. A total of 6,003 volumes were printed, of which 5,933 were distributed during the year.

The second title, published in May, was *The Third Pillar*, by Soma Morgenstern, co-published with Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy. Our printing was 2,945 volumes, of which 2,054 were distributed during the year.

The third title, published in June, was *Memoirs of American Jews, Volume I*, by Jacob R. Marcus. Of the 3,880 volumes printed, 2,332 were distributed during the year.

Volume II of the same work, published in August as the fourth title of the year, was printed in 3,954 volumes, of which 2,191 were distributed during the year.

The fifth title, published in October, was *Synagogue Architecture in the United States*, by Rachel Wischnitzer. 3,500 volumes were printed, of which 1,784 were distributed before the end of the year. (This book received a high award in the 1956 Philadelphia Book Show.)

The sixth title, published in December, was *Stories of King Solomon*, by Lillian S. Freehof. 5,000 volumes were printed, of which 2,243 were distributed during the month.

The seventh title, published in January, 1956, was *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism*, by Abraham J. Heschel, co-published with Farrar, Straus and Cudahy. Our printing was 5,680 volumes, of which 3,006 were distributed upon publication.

The eighth title, published in February, 1956, was the AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1956 (Vol. 57), edited by Morris Fine, co-published with the American Jewish Committee. Our printing was 3,250 volumes, of which 2,289 were distributed upon publication.

The ninth title, published in July, 1956, was *Three Years in America*, in two volumes, by Benjamin II, with an introduction by Oscar Handlin. 2,000 sets were printed, of which 970 sets were distributed upon publication.

For 1956:

Our list for the current year is varied and in it all our members should find books that they will want to have and to read. Most unusual modesty prevents me

from dilating at length on at least one of the book treasures which the JPS is offering its members in the coming months. You will notice that an innovation has been introduced; for the first time in its history the President of the Society will make his debut as one of the Society's authors. Whether this is a good innovation we shall let critical reviews and sales decide. At any rate, Max Whiteman did a first-class piece of work, and if any of you felt you have already read *The History of the Jews of Philadelphia*, do not be misled by a briefer, imperfect work by two fellows named Wolf and Whiteman which appeared in the *Philadelphia* JEWISH EXPONENT.

Of the ten titles scheduled for publication, two are in the field of Americana and will be subventioned by the Jacob R. Schiff Fund for addition to the Jacob R. Schiff Library of Jewish Contributions to American Democracy.

The two titles in the field of Americana are the following:

Memoirs of American Jews, Volume III, by Jacob R. Marcus, which completes the set of autobiographical statements by Jewish men and women who lived during the middle period of American Jewish history.

The History of the Jews of Philadelphia, from Colonial Times to the Age of Jackson, by Edwin Wolf, 2nd, in collaboration with Maxwell Whiteman, presents a vast mass of historical material—new and old—in a flowing narrative which combines human touches with sound history.

In addition, the following eight titles covering many areas of interest are scheduled for publication during 1956:

The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text in a new edition including the same text as the 1917 translation, but in a new and more attractive format with larger type and beautiful binding. New material includes notes to indicate the *haftarot*.

Legends of the Bible, by Louis Ginzberg, will include in a single volume the text, somewhat reduced, of the first four volumes of *Legends of the Jews*, which ranks as the most distinguished work of Jewish scholarship thus far published in the United States. Simon and Schuster will cooperate with the Society in publishing this important title.

Hebrew: The Eternal Language, by William Chomsky, will present a non-technical study of the Hebrew language as it has developed through a recorded history of almost four thousand years of continuous use.

My Jewish Roots, by Solomon Simon, is a personal narrative of the author's childhood in a little town in Lithuania during the first decade of this century.

The Marked One and Other Stories, by Jacob Picard, contains twelve short stories which describe the folklore and traditions of the Jews who lived in the small towns and villages of Germany during the last centuries. Edited with an introduction by Ludwig Lewisohn.

The Silver Fish and Other Stories of Adventure, by Eleazar Freed, will interest eleven and twelve-year-old children. The exciting stories penetrate the surface of recorded events in the Jewish past and present.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1957 (Vol. 58), edited by Morris Fine and co-published with the American Jewish Committee, will contain the feature and reference material which have given distinction to this annual publication for many years.

Reprints

During the year 1955, we reprinted ten titles as follows: 57,789 volumes of the Bible, making a total of 638,789 in print; 10,250 volumes of *Pathways Through the Bible*, by Mortimer J. Cohen, making a total of 95,750 in print; 2,000 volumes of *Hanukkah: The Feast of Lights*, by Emily Solis-Cohen, Jr., making a total of 9,500 in print; 4,200 volumes of *A History of the Jews*, by Solomon Grayzel, making a total of 33,950 in print; 555 volumes of *Judaism and Modern Man*, by Will Her-

berg, making a total of 4,296 in print; 1,600 volumes of *Legends of the Jews, Volume V*, by Louis Ginzberg, making a total of 19,600 in print; 2,000 volumes of *Sabbath: The Day of Delight*, by Abraham E. Millgram, making a total of 12,800 in print; and 4,400 volumes of *What the Moon Brought*, by Sadie R. Weilerstein, making a total of 28,100 in print.

Publication Distribution

The year 1955 showed a very encouraging increase in the distribution of Bibles and other books. The total amounted to 114,064 volumes, of which 37,805 were selected by members; 72,873 were sold to members and the trade; and 3,386 were distributed as free books. This compares with a total of 95,316 volumes in 1954, of which 35,134 were selected by members, 56,881 sold, and 3,301 distributed free.

Bible sales showed a substantial increase, with 41,271 sold in 1955, compared with 35,421 in 1954 and 26,430 in 1953. *Pathways Through the Bible* also showed a fine increase, with 12,347 sold in 1955, compared with 10,788 in 1954 and 9,606 in 1953.

Membership Statistics

Our membership in 1955 showed a significant increase for the first time in several years. We enrolled a total of 8,874, as compared with 8,386 in 1954. Of the total enrolled, 1,809 were new members and 7,065 were renewals. As to classification of membership, 4,829 were enrolled at \$5.00; 3,119 at \$11.25; 455 at \$22.50; and 471 at \$25.00 and over.

It is our hope that this breakthrough of the former static condition of the Society's membership enrollment will continue, and that our membership will grow in numbers and strength.

JPS Bookmark

The *JPS Bookmark* is now in its third year, with four issues in 1955. In this short period, it has become established as a valuable membership service and has been commented upon very favorably in letters received from members and libraries. We shall welcome further comment and constructive criticism from readers of the *Bookmark* in the hope that we can continue to improve this valuable publication. At this point, I should like to extend our appreciation to Mr. Milton Roseman for his services in helping edit and expedite production of the *Bookmark*.

Community Welfare Funds

The Society is still a long way from achieving its goal of inclusion in every welfare fund and federation in the United States and Canada, but encouraging progress was made in 1955. We are now included in sixty-eight communities which allocated \$9,575.90, as compared with fifty-three communities which allocated \$8,521.50 in 1954. We are continuing our efforts in the remaining communities, and hope that every member will constitute himself "a committee of one" for the purpose of encouraging his local welfare fund or federation to include the Society in its campaign.

Necrology

It is my sad duty to report the tragic loss of a number of our valuable co-workers during the past year. Two members of our Publication Committee, both men of

outstanding literary and scholarly attainments, passed on to their eternal reward. Mr. Samuel Charney, who wrote under the pen name of Sh. Niger, served as a member of the Publication Committee for a decade. His death is a grievous blow to the world of Jewish letters.

The Rev. Dr. Samuel Schulman joined the Committee in 1905. Moreover, between 1908 and 1916, he was an active member of the Bible Translation Committee. His loyalty to our Society was always exemplary. Even in his extreme old age, he read manuscripts for us and attended meetings of our Committee held in New York.

Ludwig Lewisohn, gifted author, translator, and critic, although not a member of our Committee, was a constant supporter and ardent champion of the Society. He was ever ready to cooperate with us, and he never failed to urge American Jewry to join our ranks.

Dr. Mark Wischnitzer, author of our volume *To Dwell in Safety*, which is an authoritative presentation of Jewish migration during the past century, departed this life several months ago.

Sidney Neumann was a member of the Board of Trustees from 1947 to his death in 1956. A generous friend of many philanthropic institutions, he was also interested in Jewish culture. He subventioned the publication of *Pathways Through the Bible* and remembered the Society in his will.

Zichronom Librachah. The memory of each of these true friends of the Jewish Publication Society shall inspire us, their survivors, to give increased devotion to the cause they so nobly served.

I looked back to the annual report fifty years ago to see how our present situation might appear from that perspective. The Jewish population of the United States then was not quite a million and a half. There were 4,657 members of the JPS. In 1905 the Society published four books, one merely a pamphlet. My grandfather, then President, announced that the translation of the Bible was under way and should shortly be finished. He appealed for \$50,000 to publish it. Parenthetically, he continued to promise the publication of the Bible, and ask for the money to do it with, every year as long as he was President, and his successor's reports carried the same refrain. May I be spared such heartbreaking repetitiveness.

But I found particularly disturbing the report of a Committee, headed by Mr. David Werner Amram, which noted nothing remarkable in the past year, except the loss of 773 members. "This shows," the Committee commented in a spirit of gloom, "that the Society is essentially unpopular, and in the nature of things must remain so until a broader interest in Jewish literature is established." "Our Society," the report continued, "is not a corporation for profit. It has always given its constituents what it thought they ought to have, and not what they wanted, if, indeed, it may be said that they ever want anything in the line of goods we purvey."

Perhaps we should echo that statement, but I rather believe it is not true today. I believe that we are publishing what our members want; at least, that is our purpose. All of our books, by their varied nature, will not please all our members all of the time, but some of them should please all of them most of the time. Our greatest handicap is not that people would not read our books if they bought them, but that the builders of apartment houses in the cities and ranch houses in suburbia have kept prices down by not providing any space for books, and hence people do not buy books because they have no place to put them. My father has suggested that we ought to go into the furniture business: first sell bookcases, and then books to fill them.

I do not think we have to be practical to that extent, but membership, not so much in terms of dollars, as in terms of people who read Jewish books, is still our main problem. Jews throughout the country seem to be more sympathetic to our aims and our accomplishments—everybody loves us—but the number who join the Society is pitifully small. Our attitude cannot be that of fifty years ago: Publish good books and solace yourselves with your own righteousness. We shall continue to

publish good books, and shall try to educate the Jews of this country to want to read them. It is an uphill fight, but it is really what we were founded for, and it must be our main purpose.

I want to close this report with what strikes me as one of the most obvious differences between American Jewry and any other Jewry in the history of our people. The Publication Society just issued a wonderfully warm account of a Jewish childhood in a village near the Minsk swamps, of the kind of life which is no more. There a little boy, crippled as a child, lived with his shoemaker father, his baker mother, and seven siblings. Since he could move but with difficulty, everything fed his terrors. The whistlings of a shunting freight engine at dawn, an engine which he had never seen, was to him the devil, and he feared it. When the fear became so overwhelming, he whimpered and his mother came to reassure him. "Ours is a Jewish home," she told him, "with mezuzahs on the doors and a full shelf of sacred books." How many Jewish homes, giving equal security to children—not perhaps from the devil, but from the terrors of an atomic age—are there in this country?

Respectfully submitted,
EDWIN WOLF, 2nd, *President*