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- REFERENCES: The HAHAM, Mr. Malda Yale, W. Rev. MORRIS JOSEPH, II, Gloucester Terrace, W. Rev. PREBENDARY WOOD, D.D., M.V.O., late Head Master of Harrow.

PROSPECTUS ON APPLICATION. Next Term will begin Tuesday, January 16th.

WAS PHILO A JEW?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "JEWISH CHRONICLE." SIR,—I do not intend to follow the Rev. Gerald Friedlander's argumentum ad personam.

As long as he does not contradict the statement about Philo as quoted by me in my last letter, which Mr. Friedlander had made in his last lecture it cannot matter to him whence I obtained my knowledge. The question: Was Philo a Jew? is not likely to confuse the points at issue, for it is understood that we do not discuss Philo's physiology or his anatomy, but only his mentality.

It was the Rabbis. But nevertheless Mr. Friedlander accepts Maimonides as a Jewish philosopher. "Philo has not been accepted as a Jewish teacher" is Mr. Friedlander's second argument. Will Mr. Friedlander tell me which of our Jewish religious philosophers has ever been accepted as a teacher?

Mr. Friedlander's list of arguments is rather a long one—and life is short. I cannot afford myself the pleasure of investigating his arguments one after the other in order to show their absolute untenability. But there is one argument to which I might call your special attention. It reads as follows:—"He (Philo) would not have been able to subscribe to the Thirteen Creeds of Maimonides."

But apart from this consideration, it is wrong to proclaim Maimonides the Jewish philosopher on account of his thirteen creeds which by the by derived their form from the categories of Aristotelian logic. Also, for instance—who is no less an "accepted" teacher than Maimonides, reduced Judaism to three creeds. If Philo should be rejected as a Jewish teacher because he would not be able to subscribe to the Thirteen Creeds of Maimonides, we should have to reject Rabbi Jehudah ben Halévy, Albo and many others who have contributed luminously to Jewish thought.

It is strange, for instance, that while Dr. Steiner, Professor of Hebrew literature at the Sorbonne, maintains in his history of Jewish literature, that Krochmal had the greatest influence on Jewish thought in the nineteenth century, Mr. Friedlander tells us that Krochmal has not left any permanent effect on Jewish

imaginative metaphysics have nothing whatsoever to do with Judaism. There is neither a Jewish nor an un-Jewish philosophy. Judaism, a system of culture, is not amassed theological teachings, mysteries and dogmas, but an uninterrupted continuation of mental movement which, of course, is limited in relation to basic Jewish law. The law is a law of civilisation, but not of theology. I even maintain that the idea of God in a theological shape is of little importance to the complete conception of Judaism. My authority for the truth of this statement is the Talmud itself.

Yours obediently, S. M. MELAMED. Moriah, The Ridgway, Golders Green, N.W.

OUR "ABANDONED" CHILDREN.

EAST END MEETING DISCUSSES THE SITUATION

A Conference of East End Jewish parents was held on Saturday evening at the Montague Hall, Stepney Green, for the purpose of considering the best steps that should be taken to provide a Hebrew and religious education for the "abandoned" children in East London. The Rev. D. WASSERZUG presided.

THE CHAIRMAN said that his reasons for attending were, first, that he had felt he had no option but to be present at a meeting for considering the needs of those of the children who were growing up without religious teaching; and, secondly, his friend Mr. Isaac Goldstein, who was to have presided, had asked him, owing to his own inability to attend, to take the Chair. He need hardly remind such a meeting of Jewish men who had been brought up in a strictly Jewish atmosphere, of the immense importance of the question under discussion. There was the teaching of the Hebrew language but for which Judaism would not have lived till to-day. The two—the religion and the language—were bound up as body and soul, and they were told that there were 10,000 Jewish children who were not receiving the slightest instruction in either. He knew that there were some critics who thought the figures resulting from the Rev. S. Levy's investigations were a gross exaggeration. He himself was inclined to think them a moderate estimate and believed there was a larger number of Jewish children whose religious education was being neglected. It was certain in any case that the number was very large and the fact ought to strike consideration into the hearts of all Jews, for they were faced with a situation under which Jewish boys and girls were growing up not better but worse than pagans. He deplored the accusation he had heard levelled against Mr. Levy, who had drawn up his figures with great ability for the benefit of the community, that he had been indirectly attacking the Jewish Religious Education Board. Such a thing had certainly never entered his mind. It was for the community as a whole to realise what was going on around them and then to deal with the grave state of affairs.

The Rev. S. LEVY pointed out that there was an *Olam Egoz* in this world, and as one generation went and another came it was necessary to see that Judaism remained, and the Hebrew language was not forgotten. In regard to the number of religiously abandoned children, which his investigations had led him to believe was correct, it did not matter whether there were quite so many thousands. Should they trouble themselves as to whether the number was 9999 or 10001? No one who knew anything about the subject would deny that there were thousands of sons and daughters in Israel who were not receiving that training in their religion and language which was their rightful heritage. They might well ask what about the parents? But it was not always in the power of the parents to give the necessary education, and the provision of means was a duty that devolved upon the entire community. As Jews they must believe that religion was a great influence in life, and particularly the Jewish religion—in their own lives. They refused to deal with the question of religion as it affected their sons and daughters, and they refused to deal with the question of religion as it affected their own lives. They might as well say that they were not interested in religion, or that others would take it upon themselves to bring the children up in the faith.

Rabbi VICTOR SCHONFELD thought the question was really a financial one, as he understood from Mr. Levy that the children would certainly attend if only classes were provided for them. As far as the education to be provided went, he believed that nothing new was required. They must agree as once for all that every man who belonged to a Jewish congregation should be expected to do his duty, and he would not refuse. He would be glad himself to assist by appealing to the members of his own congregation.

After some remarks on the seriousness of the question by Mr. FORMAN and Mr. WOLMARK, the Rev. S. LEVY, replying to a protest against the expectation that the East End should provide the money, said it was not their intention to appeal to the East End alone. They desired to show the leaders of the community by that and other means that the people in the neighbourhoods where the evil existed were bent on its being faced. Accordingly he suggested they should pass the following resolution:—

That this meeting of Jewish parents in the East End, deplores the fact that thousands of Jewish children are not receiving any instruction in Hebrew and religion, and urges the leaders of the community to find the necessary means to solve this grave problem which seriously threatens the good name and welfare of the entire community.

That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Lord Rothschild, the President of the United Synagogue, Lord Swaythling, the President of the Federation of Synagogues, Mr. Arthur E. Franklin, the President of the Jewish Religious Education Board, and to the Talmud Torah Trust.

Mr. STOKES complained that the Federation of Synagogues neglected the young generation upon whom the future of their faith so largely depended. Mr. MICHAEL LEVY defended the Federation, which, he said, had founded the Talmud Torah Trust.

The Rev. A. HYMAN and B. HOFFMAN (who was responsible for the arrangement of the Conference) also spoke, and the resolution was unanimously passed. Thanks were accorded the Chairman and the Rev. S. Levy, the initiator of the movement.

An Alien "Yomtov": Jews and Christian Ideals.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "JEWISH CHRONICLE." SIR,—I would like, through the medium of your paper, to answer the questions with which your correspondent, Mr. L. A. Jougues, replied to my letter printed in your issue of December 29th.

I would tell him that I am fully aware—though he seems to doubt it—of the spirit of anti-Semitism, and of the atrocities and injustices committed in Russia and elsewhere against the Jews, but would, in turn, ask this question: Is the knowledge that anti-Semitism, ill-will and hatred prevail in one country a reasonable justification for the refusal to recognise a more humane spirit at work in a more enlightened land? Is England to be judged from the standpoint of Russia's acts?

We Jews who have benefited so largely by the tolerant attitude of England—all the more sharply defined by contrast with the anti-Semitism of Russia and Roumania—should be the first generally to admit the spirit of goodwill which England and should certainly not deride or undervalue this spirit as Mr. Jougues does, saying that the idea of goodwill on earth, and especially goodwill to all mankind are still to be found in the Christian gospel, whether, be it so, we uniformly think that they are accepted by the majority of Christians?

I do, and Mr. Jougues and I and other Jews would soon realize the difference. If the spirit of goodwill should cease to prevail. And I would further answer Mr. Jougues. Pray do not let us Jews seek to raise the standard of Judaism by denigrating that of another religion. Can we deny to our fellow-Christian the sincerity of his ideals, and expect in return that he will give us credit for all that is most fine in the principles of our own faith? Can such an attitude on our part promote harmony between Jew and Christian?

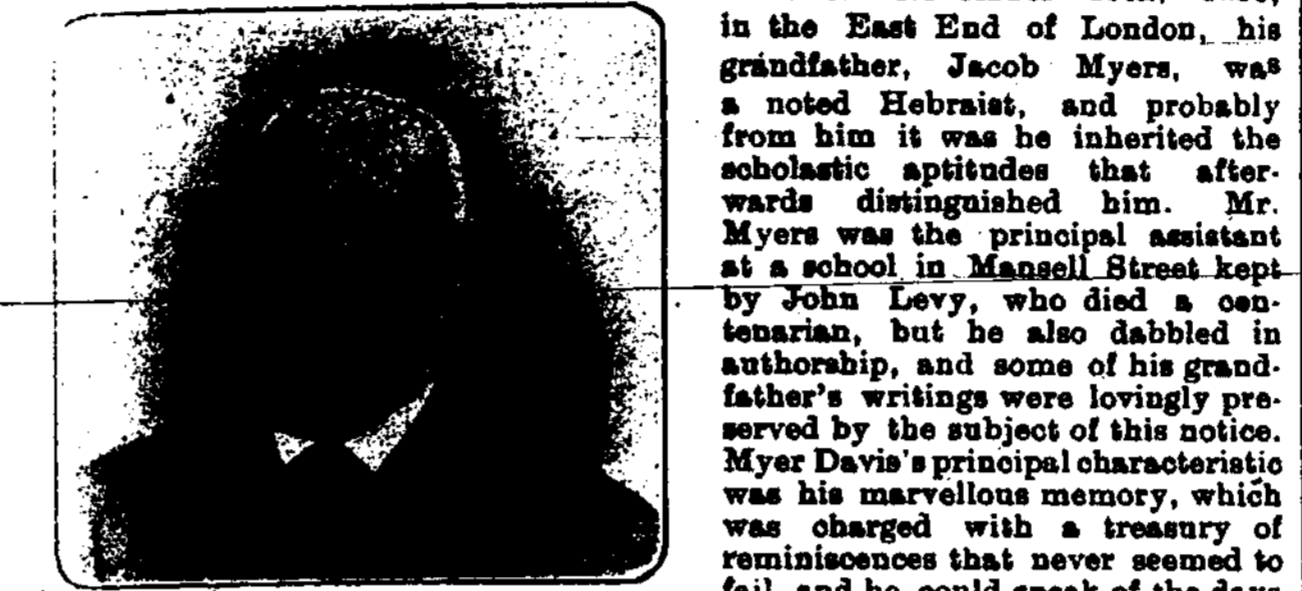
DEATH OF MR. MYER DAVIS.

ANGLO-JEWISH HISTORIAN.

MEMOIR.

We regret to announce the death, which took place early last Friday, of Mr. Myer Davis, who for some weeks past had been in a critical state.

The death of Myer Davis removes from Anglo-Jewry one who during a couple of generations has exercised no small influence on the community.



Mr. Myer Davis.

Born on November 19th, 1830, in the East End of London, his grandfather, Jacob Myers, was a noted Hebraist, and probably from him it was he inherited the scholastic aptitudes that afterwards distinguished him. Mr. Myers was the principal assistant at a school in Mansell Street kept by John Levy, who died a centenarian, but he also dabbled in authorship, and some of his grandfather's writings were lovingly preserved by the subject of this notice. Myer Davis's principal characteristic was his marvellous memory, which was charged with a treasury of reminiscences that never seemed to fail, and he could speak of the days of his early boyhood with the same clearness of vision and accuracy of detail as when recounting the events of yesteryear. When he was seven years of age he came under the notice of the Rev. Henry A. Henry, Headmaster of the Jews' Free School, whom he recalled as being a most kind-hearted man. Sometimes, Mr. Davis was wont to relate, Mr. Henry was called away from his duties, and his place would be taken by his buxom wife, who used to walk about the school, cane in hand, though she seldom used that instrument of authority. Once only Mr. Davis remembered her applying it to a lad who had used language which could not be considered polite even for Bell Lane. Mr. Davis was a pupil of the Talmud Torah section of the school, of which it formed a distinct department with separate teachers and class-room and separate entrance. During Mr. Davis's attendance at the Talmud Torah he received tuition in Hebrew from the Rev. Moses Myers, second Reader of the Great Synagogue. Mr. Myers was a genial figure, and when his scholars proved unruly he would remind them that "D'Z' NITZ" ("And the hands of Moses were heavy"). The English master was Mr. Looka. He was succeeded by Moses Angel afterwards to be the ruler of the entire institution. The Talmud Torah boys, who were worked very hard, received an excellent elementary education besides a very thorough grounding in Hebrew and religion. They also received many little privileges, to which Mr. Davis looked back with tender recollection.

Myer Davis showed a disposition for study, and he attracted the attention of Mr. Lyon Moses, of Finsbury Circus, who devoted a considerable portion of his means to the furtherance of education and general philanthropy. Mr. Moses paid for Davis's further instruction, and he studied Latin, French and mathematics privately under Mr. Angel, and Talmud and Rabbinical literature under the Rev. Mier Rintel, of Carter Street. His instruction often commenced as early as six o'clock in the morning. He thus acquired a large amount of Hebrew lore which he was subsequently able to turn to advantage as a public and private teacher. He used to attend minyan at Mr. Moses's house and took his Sabbath meals there. He thus had the opportunity of meeting many eminent scholars such as Mr. Zedner, Dr. Schiller, Dr. Benisch, Dr. Kalisch and Dr. Braun. The latter became his mentor when he was in his teens. Another man he met at this intellectual centre was Jacob Franklin, editor of the *Voice of Jacob*, to whom he was indebted for many practical admonitions. After a time he went back to his alma mater as master of the Talmud Torah class, which had been merged into the general institution, and he also taught Hebrew in other classes of the school. After many years' service at the Free School, Mr. Davis became Head-Master of the Shaare Tikvah Schools (of which Mr. Elias de Pass then was, as he is still, President), and when the Committee resolved to transfer the secular education of the boys to Board Schools, Mr. Davis fully concurred in the wisdom of this step, although he knew it would deprive him of his livelihood.

Mr. Davis, while still at the Free School, had begun to take an interest in Anglo-Jewish history, in the modern study of which he may be said to have been the pioneer. He attributes that interest to having picked up on a stall a copy of Tovey's "Anglo-Judaica," that quaint medley of fact and fiction which helped to petrify many a stupid legend concerning the English Jews. Mr. Davis had made the acquaintance of Dean Stanley, who allowed him to take home for the purposes of study valuable *Shtetoth* belonging to Westminster Abbey. At times Mr. Davis had as many as a hundred in his custody, and was always in mortal fear lest any harm should come to such precious documents. Mr. Davis corresponded with the Dean on Jewish subjects, but had to seek the assistance of an official at the Record Office to decipher Stanley's handwriting which he described as "wretched." Mr. Davis also corresponded with the Rev. J. T. Fowler, the Curator of Durham Cathedral Library, who placed in his hands certain documents of the year 1230, or thereabouts, relating to the Jews of York and the neighbourhood. The Rev. William Hudson, of Norwich, also gave him much valuable information regarding the ancient Jewish quarter of that city. In 1899 Mr. Davis published his "Shtetoth—Hebrew Deeds of English Jews." The volume was the second of the publications of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition and was issued from the office of this journal. The late Mr. Asher F. Myers (a close friend of Mr. Davis) having taken the keenest interest in the work of the Exhibition, to which Mr. Davis himself had given powerful stimulus. As will be seen from statements above, Mr. Davis had devoted a number of years with indefatigable industry to the study of these documents, almost all of which emanated from three institutions, the Record Office, the British Museum and the Chapter House, Westminster Abbey, the last contributing the large majority. *Shtetoth* is the plural form of the Hebrew word *Shet* meaning "contract." Many of the deeds examined by Mr. Davis are title-deeds of houses or lands, and to this fact they probably owed their preservation from destruction. Others relate to transfers, debts, quittances to debtors, deposits of security, betrothal deeds and marriage settlements also occur among them. They cast a very interesting light on the character of pre-expulsion Jewry and our early Anglo-Jewish social structure. Mr. Davis's work paved the way for that of other investigators, notably Mr. J. M. Rigg, who has edited the Exchequer rolls. Mr. Davis displayed great ingenuity and resource in deciphering the documents, many of which are liberally abbreviated, and his volume gave an impetus to Anglo-Jewish studies for which his memory will always be deservedly honoured.

Mr. Davis was already advanced in years when his *magnus opus* saw the light, and the close study of sometimes almost illegible documents had told their tale. His eyesight began to fail, and his general health and that of his wife were not of the best. Mr. Davis had married in 1858 Miss Woodson, who was head-mistress of the Westminster Jews' School. She is a niece of the late Moses Ansell, Secretary of the Great Synagogue. In 1900 a number of Mr. Davis's

form of an illuminated address and a house, in which Mr. and Mrs. Davis have since resided. Mr. Elias de Pass was chiefly instrumental in arranging the testimonial. The presentation, which took place at the Vestry Room of the Lauderdale Road Synagogue, was made by Mr. Claude Montefiore, who eloquently described Mr. Davis's powers as teacher and historian.

In retirement Mr. Davis continued to "mint" the valuable coin he had laid up in his earlier years, and till quite recently our columns have, from time to time, contained interesting notes from his pen on various matters of Anglo-Jewish interest.

The funeral took place last Sunday at Willesden Cemetery.

Farewell! the word is idle, not in vain. He lived his righteous life, he must farewell. Who lived for others' good. What man may tell The rich fruits of his toil, in sun and rain? What sheaves were garnered from the sacred grain Sown by his gracious lips, ere on their spell The lasting silence lingering slowly fell. Down, like a wall between us? Yet again, Good night! good-bye! There is a time to weep For us, till the morn-break and the shadows fly. Which long stretched out across the evening creep Hour after hour until the cock's first cry: O! holy herald of the day spring's, leap Out of the dying dark, good night, good-bye.

ISAAC LAZAROWICH.

SOME TRIBUTES.

FROM THE REV. D. WASSERZUG.

It is now some eleven years ago since it was my privilege to come within the orbit of Mr. Davis's magnetic personality, and to find oneself in that situation was to submit resignedly to a rare and inspiring influence. Mr. Davis was not only himself thoroughly imbued with an unquenchable ardour for his own line of study, but he had the gift—almost unconscious, though none the less irresistible—of imparting his ardour. As an Anglo-Jewish historian he was essentially a pioneer, not so much in the subject which he selected for his investigations, but in the methods he employed in building up the fabric of his selected era. Perhaps no science has undergone so radical a change in the mode of its treatment as the science of historical research. By such men as Mommsen and Froude, history was conceived in the light of a literary pastime, which sought by a series of brilliant and life-like pictures to convey an impression of the social and political life of a given age. The fault and defects of this method were only too patent. Truth was frequently sacrificed to brilliance; to bring them into harmony with a preconceived idea, facts had sometimes either to be distorted out of shape or invented. To present a true and incontestible picture of a given period, it was felt that all the facts had in the first place to be gleaned from all possible sources, and after being sifted and analysed with the most painstaking care, to be grouped and marshalled in clear orderly sequence, so as to produce the cumulative effect of a grand and striking landscape. This was the homopatheic as opposed to alopatheic method in historical science. In this method Myer Davis was a pioneer in this country. His history of the pre-expulsion period was laboriously built up out of the most minute and wearisome details. In private Myer Davis was a most genial and entertaining companion, and a mine of information, not only on pre-expulsion but on communal history of the last three or four generations. Many of our leading families now in the full tide of social prosperity were known to him in their small beginnings, but for all he had a kind and appreciative word to say. The success of no man hurt him, for no one was more free from petty jealousy or envy. He has gone from us, but he has left behind him records that the community will not willingly suffer to fall into oblivion. D. W.

FROM MR. ALBERT M. HYAMSON.

As one who of late years had many opportunities of contact with the late Myer Davis, the veritable father of Anglo-Jewish history, I desire to pay a tribute of esteem and of affection to his memory. Myer Davis, in addition to the sentiments of admiration for himself and his work which he inspired, had the happy gift of acquiring and holding the affection of the many friends—all of course younger than himself—whom he gathered round him in his old age. To identify the different elements which resulted in this affection is of course impossible, yet prominent among them must have been the all-embracing sympathy, the interest in all human affairs great and small, which were so characteristic of Myer Davis. He had a genius for making friendships. There was no stiffness, even temporary, between him and the newcomer who crossed his path. Myer Davis's knowledge of the community and its personnel was unique, and, aided by his extraordinarily keen memory, this knowledge remained with him until the end. The consequence was that if he did not know the young admirer who came reverently and modestly to gaze upon the face of the mentor of Anglo-Jewish scholarship, he certainly knew his grandfather or his father or some other relative of a past generation. Thus to Myer Davis these new acquaintances were but renewals of past ones, and he immediately welcomed his visitors as if they were old and fast friends. Myer Davis was fond of having these younger representatives of his own generation, living reminiscences of his own youth around him; but there was another class which was also always welcome at his fireside. All who found an interest in the science of Anglo-Jewish history knew that in him they had an inexhaustible source of information, and never was he more happy than when he had around him one of these younger students to whom he could, with a generosity that knew no bounds, give of his wealth.

Myer Davis's memory was prodigious. He used to lie in bed, when his sight and hearing had failed, of late years and reconstruct Jewish life in Pre-Expulsion England, weaving narratives that would send him to his immortal note-books, indicating some young or old man who would call him to his immortal note-books, indicating the exact book and page and line on which every incident and turn in his narrative could be verified. Some of the readers of the JEWISH CHRONICLE may remember a contribution from his pen, entitled "Pre-Expulsion Anglo-Jewry," published in these columns a little more than a year ago. Probably the present writer is the only one who knows that that fascinating sketch was dictated practically in the form in which it was published, entirely from memory, years after the author had been prevented by failing eyesight from consulting his books, and that the references when checked, and Myer Davis drawing upon his remarkable memory knew exactly where to find them, were found to agree in the slightest detail.

To those who had the joy and happiness of knowing Myer Davis he stood out for his remarkable memory and knowledge, for his single-minded devotion to the science which he had created and in which he had no rival, and for his selfless success. For his abounding encouragement for all who essayed to follow him on the road which he had traversed, no matter how they faltered or wandered by the way, and for his wide sympathy which knew little of neither age nor class. The death of Myer Davis has left a gap in many a life which it will take many years to fill. A. M. H.

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