

I have used the expression, “Mighty Parnass,” and I claim that it is not an exaggerated term. At that time the parnass was an autocrat in the congregation. He was president, shamash, chazan, rabbi. He ruled the quick and the dead. He was the law and the revelation, the lord and the glory, the majesty and the spiritual guardian of the congregation. He suffered no rival; all were subject to him. **This was an inheritance from olden times, brought to these shores from the small European congregations.**

-- Isaac M. Wise, *Reminiscences* (1874),
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1843

Ordered to be read
At the Hon
& Synagogue

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on the subject in question. I, therefore most respectfully
beg leave, to decline delivering any more Lectures, assuring
you, however, of my undiminished zeal for the promotion
of the moral welfare of my beloved Congregations and my
willingness of resuming my sacred labors, whenever they
should be called for by the general desire of the members
expressed through your honorable Board as their Organ.

I would also beg leave most respectfully
to state to you, that, as I would not willingly do anything
which might in the least displease the Congregation, I
would also, if they should desire it, discontinue delivering
prayers in English, and confine myself to the Hebrew
portions of the service, the performance of which only
devolves on me as Gem Hasan.

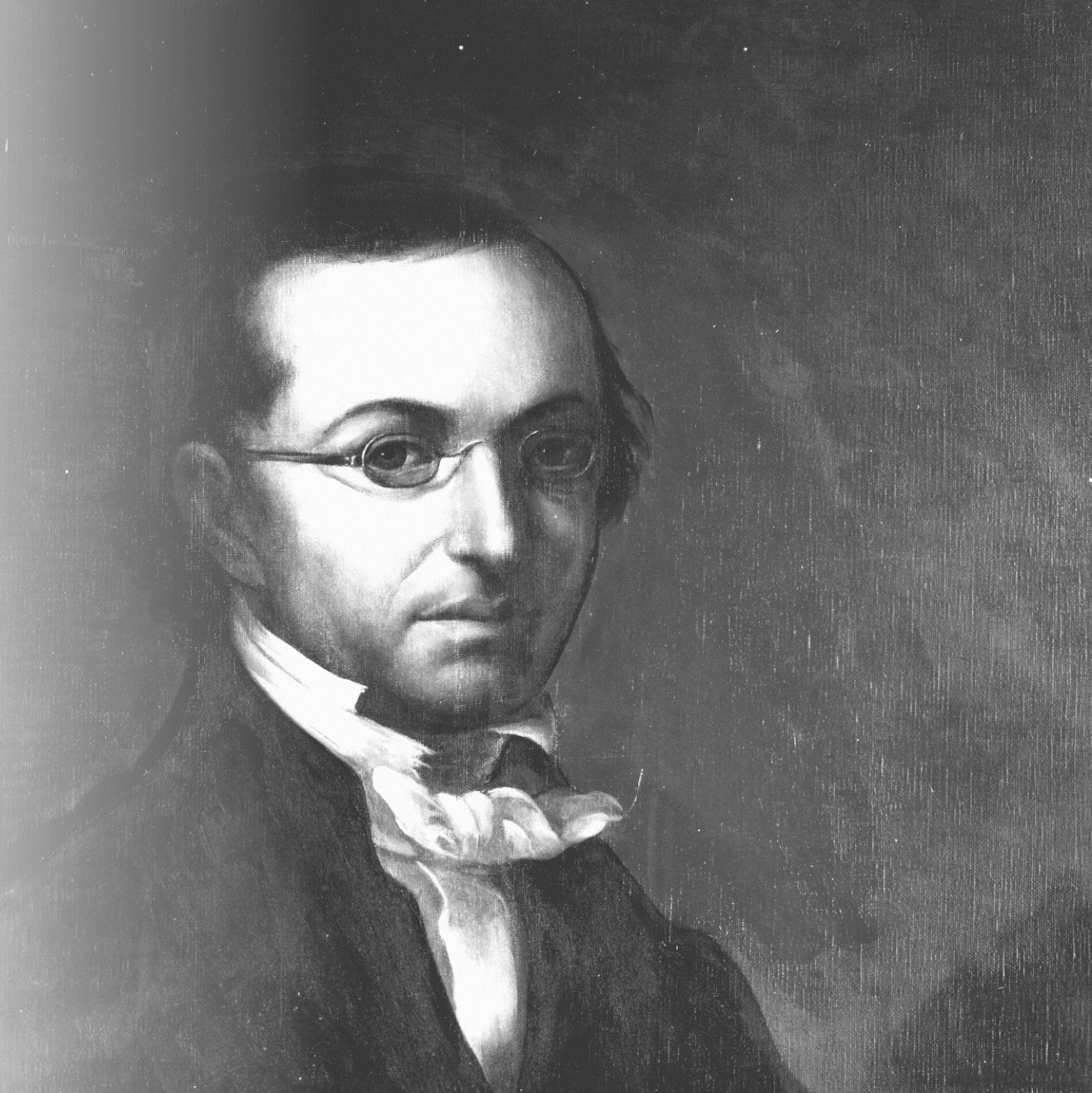
Charleston April 19 1843.

I am Gent. with great
respect
Yours

Sig. S. Pogranth.

After reading the Letter, the following was submitted
Resolved
that the Letter of the Rev. Hasan
Year

The female portion of the Parnass's family were not at Synagogue on Sabbath morning. At the conclusion of the service the just-named functionary asked me, in a somewhat angry tone, why he had not been informed of my intention to speak that day, as his family would then have had the option of attending. **The answer, substantially as given above, failed to satisfy him, and he told me at once that he should be heard from on the subject. A day or two after, a written order from him arrived, directing me to notify him at least one day before I intended to speak thereafter, of course making my doing so the condition on which I could act as preacher. Deeming this procedure a degradation of the ministry, as it would be in effect to render public teaching dependent on the preacher's subserviency to the temporal authorities, and not willing to act without their consent, I refrained from addressing the people until the president revoked his order, when I resumed my lectures at once.** It must be observed that I was engaged as Hazan only during my entire connexion of twenty-one years' duration with the Mikve Israel Synagogue; consequently the president could at any time, if he chose, stop me in my voluntary preachership.



At the time I conversed with you on the subject of your discourses, I merely intended to convince you that you were wrong in not notifying me (if not as a friend) as the president of the congregation. At that time, I had not the least intention of withdrawing my order, however, I have reconsidered the subject, and I think I am not altogether justifiable in depriving the congregation of the benefit of your instruction, because you choose to evince so much obstinacy and & disrespect towards me, which conduct (as minister of the congregation) ought to be the very reverse;—you are also setting an example of which you constantly complain. I have only to say that I withdraw my order—not that I yield in compliance to your wish, nor, that I am convinced that what I asked of you as my right was not my due, but in justice to our congregation who have a claim, and & I trust will not hereafter, be deprived of that instruction which I consider a sin for any individual who is capable of imparting to withhold. I sincerely hope that this may be a termination to all unpleasant feelings on this subject.

,Very respectfully
Your friend
Lewis Allen

-- Lewis Allen to Isaac Leeser, March 22, 1840, The Arnold and Deanne Kaplan Collection of Early American Judaica



**MASONIC HALL,
ST. PAUL STREET.**

SYLLABUS OF
**A Course of Six Popular Lectures
ON THE
POETRY OF THE HEBREWS,**

AS CONTAINED IN THE SACRED SCRIPTURES,
By the **REV. MORRIS J. RAPHAEL, M. A. PH. D.,**
RABBI-PREACHER AT THE SYNAGOGUE, BIRMINGHAM, ENG.

Tuesday **LECTURE I.** *January 29, 1850*
INTRODUCTION. Definition of Poetry; difference between Sacred and Profane Poetry. Genius and poetic superiority of the Hebrew Language. Parallelism. Sacred Poetry identified with the History and Institutions of the Israelites; its progress to be traced through FOUR periods—*First Period*, Fragments of ALEXANDRIAN Poetry. The Patriarchs. Joseph. The blessing of Jacob. The book of JOB; conjectures on the time and place of its composition. Was Job an historical or only an allegorical personage?

Saturday **LECTURE II.** *Feb. 2.*
First Period Continued. The book of JOB. Under what species of poetic composition ought this book to be classed? Proved to be a Dramatic Poem. Its general design—its plot or action—its dramatic personae. Job; his wife; his three friends. Character of the dialogue—its connection and progress.

Wednesday **LECTURE III.** *" 5th*
RETROSPECT OF FIRST LECTURE. *Second Period.* The national poetry of the Hebrews originates with Moses; his writings the standard models of all subsequent Hebrew poets. Means by which he exercises his great and lasting influence on the minds of the Israelites. Moses' Ode on the Red Sea; his last song; his blessing; the 90th Psalm. The book of *Jashar*. Deborah's Ode.

Thursday **LECTURE IV.** *" 7th*
Third Period. Condition of the Israelites prior to the reign of David. His poetical talents early developed; the vicissitudes of his life; their influence on the character of his poems. The collection of *Talim* or Psalms. The authors of that collection. Didactic poetry of the Hebrews. State of the nation at Solomon's death.

Saturday **LECTURE V.** *" 9th*
Fourth Period. Prophetic poetry, only found in the Sacred Scriptures. Balaam, the non-Israelite prophet; his style. "Schools of the Prophets." The meaning of the word *Nabi*, (prophet—nator.) The authority of the prophets; whence derived; its influence. Prophecy; its general design; characteristics of prophetic poetry.

Monday **LECTURE VI.** *" 11th*
Fourth Period continued. Isaiah; his times; character of his compositions; sublimity, Jeremiah; his times; character of his compositions; pathos. Ezekiel; character of his compositions; force. The minor prophets. Captivity in Babylon; its influence on the language and habits of thought of the Israelites. The three last prophets. Close of the Canon of the Old Testament. Concluding remarks.

N. B.—The various translations introduced are original.

Ticket for the Course.....Two Dollars.
Single Ticket.....Fifty Cents.

Tickets for the course may be had at the Book Stores of ISAAC P. COOK, 76 Market street, JOSEPH ROBINSON, 117 Market street, JAMES S. WATERS, 244 Market street, and at the door. Single tickets at the door of the Lecture Room.

Doors open at 7 o'clock. Lectures commence at 7½ o'clock, P. M.

Printed by BELL & TOWLES, 134 Baltimore street.

On Tuesday evening 12th (11 o'clock) I gave a lecture for the 'Aged Women's Home'; about 225 present. probably more tickets were sold — price 50 cts.

Lecture was a Summary



Rev. Dr. Morris J. Raphael

Good news in Albany. My cause against Louis Spanier was decided onתחטחט פרשת בהר שבתחט before the Mayor's court of this City. I have fought the battle of all ministers in this country and the victory is ours ... let the world know, that not I but Louis Spanier created a riot in a Synagogue on the first day ofתחטחט ראש השנהתחט let the world also know, that תחטחט פרנסתחט has no right to do harm to a minister. I have been defiled before the world.

-- Isaac M. Wise to Isaac Leeser,
September 18, 1851, The Arnold and
Deanne Kaplan Collection of Early
American Judaica



Thanking you for your treating the subject in which I am the foremost actor or rather sufferer with your usual boldness; I hasten to give you the outlines of the continuation of the Spanier-comedy. When L[ouis] Spanier saw, that his very pious question in the papers brought no satisfactory answer before the people; he tried the force of money. He paid the dues for those that could not pay themselves; he gave money and promised the more to every body who came to him and so he bought so many votes that his party increased to 45 or 49. He then called a meeting at a time when never a meeting was, when many members were absent, and others had not time to attend; He did not as usual say what business will be transacted at that meeting, so that were altogether indifferent to the whole concern. But when the meeting was organized he brought the very charges against me before that meeting with which he failed at the meeting of the Board.

-- Isaac M. Wise to Isaac Leeser, September 20, 1851,
The Arnold and Deanne Kaplan Collection of Early
American Judaica



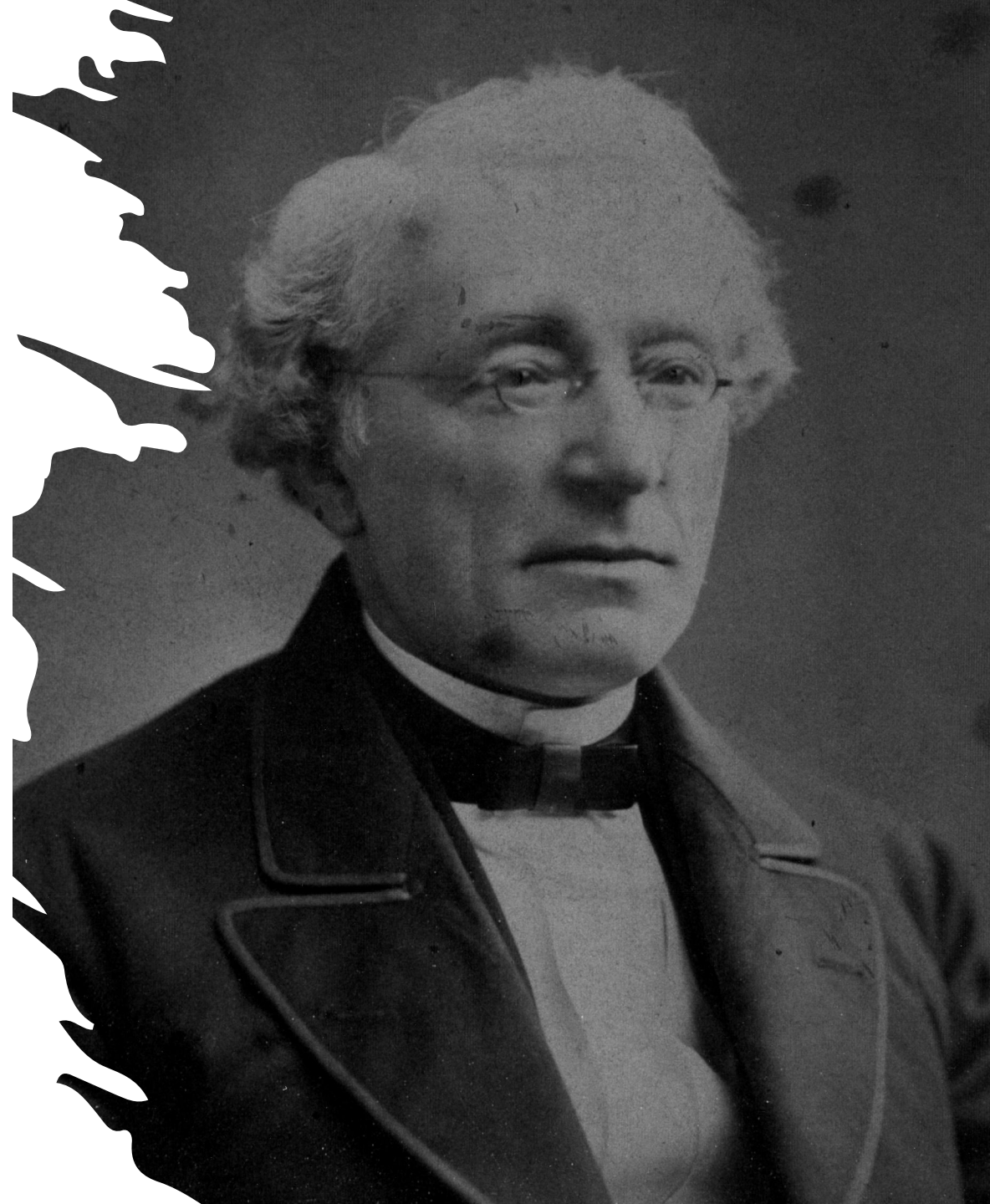
My friends protested against the reading of such charges; but in vain. They proposed to adjourn the meeting; but in vain; he put no motion before the meeting. Finally the majority of the Board declared the meeting adjourned and withdrew together with all my friends. But Spanier with his party continued the meeting, and resolved that the contract between me and them is dissolved and that I am discharged from my office from that very day, September 5. The majority of the Board declared that meeting illegal and ordered me to discharge my duties as ever before, my counsellor [sic] advised me the same. The first day of ה"ר when I went up to התורה L. Spanier went to the ארון הקודש and not merely pushed me, but in a rage of madness stroke me several times. Hundreds commenced at once to hollar [sic]: Throw him out the bankrupt, the run of from Germany, all young men in the Synagogue run against him, and would have paid him, when suddenly the Sherif [sic] came and dissolved the meeting and locked up the Synagogue.

-- Isaac M. Wise to Isaac Leeser, September 20, 1851, The Arnold and Deanne Kaplan Collection of Early American Judaica

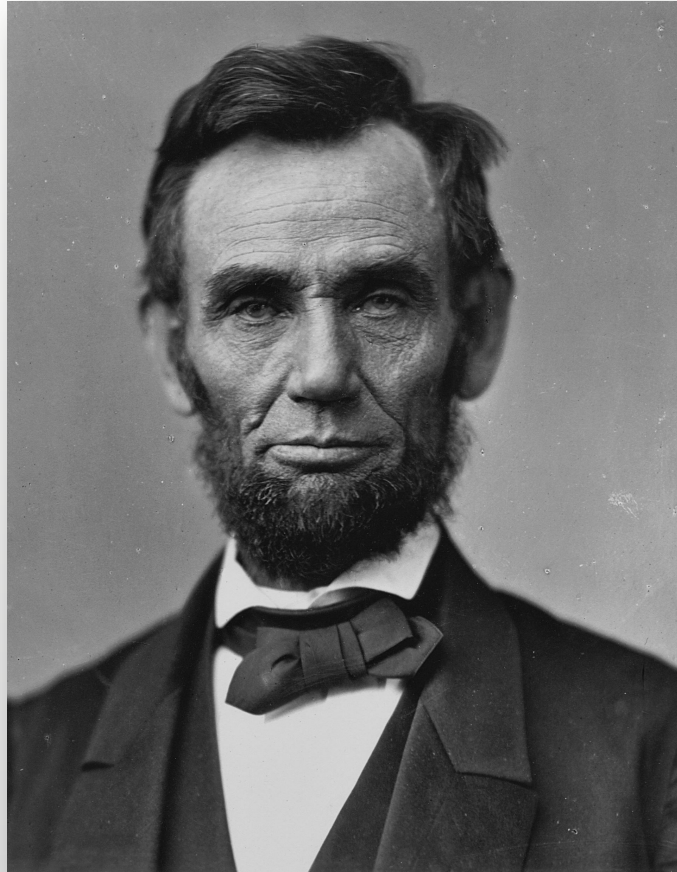
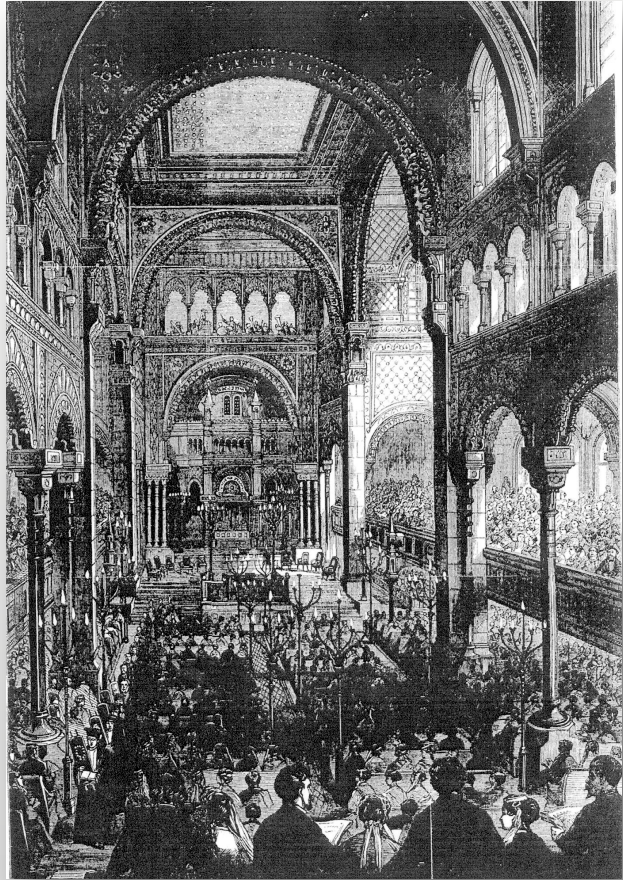


“For life!” That was a new and decisive word twenty five years ago! Thanks, thousand thanks, to your noble congregation, who first uttered this word; thanks to the rabbi, who first insisted on the condition. It was a bad time, twenty-five years ago, for salaried rabbis in this country. Every member who could read but his prayerbook and remembered some customs practiced in his old home across the ocean, considered himself entitled to dictate in his own congregation. The presidents and Boards of Trustees liked to play the part of autocrats, and, like small Presidents of the United States, to display their superior authority. Ministers were elected but for one year, and like politicians, had to flatter and to humble themselves before every ignoramus who had a right to vote at the annual elections. And whenever and wherever a man dared to show his self-respect, his superior knowledge, and the will to maintain the dignity of his clerical office, there arose hydra-like contentions and bitter animosity. We, the elder rabbis of this country, can tell the sad story of our sadder experience.

-- “Celebration in Plum Street Temple,” *American Israelite* (May 2, 1879): 4

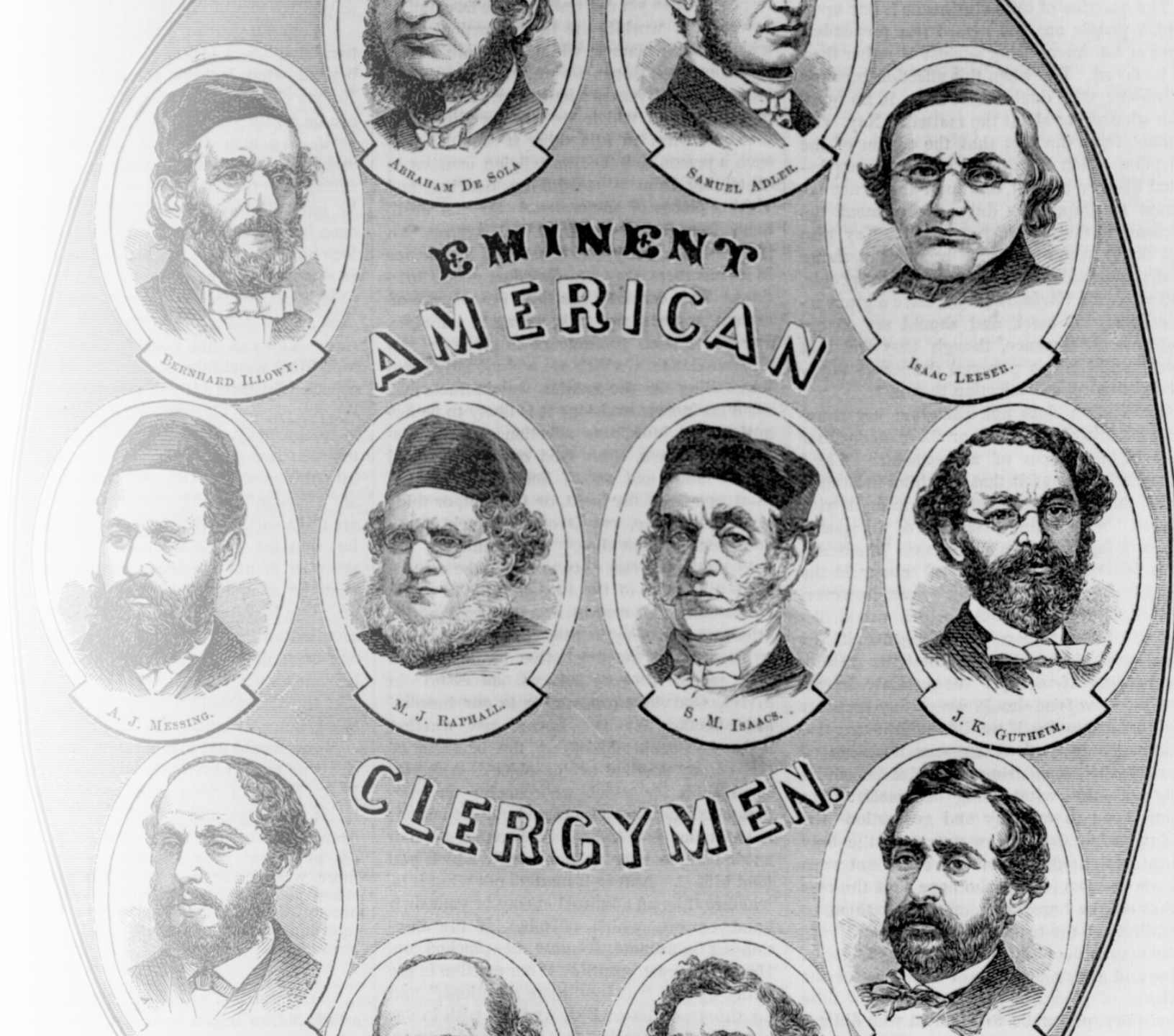






We like to be instructed on subjects with which we sympathize. We prefer to listen to all sermons on Saturdays; but if our rabbis decline to leave the beaten track and cull flowers for us in the open fields, do not blame us for figuring among the Sunday audiences. Besides, many of us young ladies are not long from school—a foreign accent, and occasional breaches of grammar grate upon our ears.

-- Sylvia, "A Hint to Our Preachers," *Jewish Messenger* (March 28, 1877): 5



The student-like, antique face of Dr. [Kaufmann] Kohler, his dry, rattling way of speaking, and the extreme quietness of his restrained manner in the pulpit, are elements that add to the picturesqueness. The service on Sunday is extremely simple. As a rule, there are more persons in the choir than there are in the congregation, and Dr. Kohler has preached many a Sunday to not more than a score of people. The spectacle of this learned rabbi talking scholarly German to empty benches was always suggestive, but never more so than in the present complications.

-- "English and American Reviews," *Daily Inter-Ocean* (June 20, 1879): 4



Time was when a Jew from any quarter of the globe felt at home in a Jewish synagogue, but with Minhag America and Minhag Poland and Minhag Reverend This and Minhag Reverend That, we may call ourselves fortunate if we succeed in become familiar with the ritual and the laws prior to their being changed for some other.

-- "The Need of the Hour,"
American Hebrew
(December 12, 1879): 40

