

Jewish Religious Leadership In Winnipeg 1900 to 1963¹

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Résumé

Dans cet article Harvey H. Herstein décrit le rôle joué par plusieurs rabbins dans le développement de la communauté juive de Winnipeg.

L'auteur commence d'abord par Rabin Israel Isaac Kahanovitch. D'origine polonaise, il avait étudié à Grodno et Slobodka et il avait été ordonné rabin à vingt ans. Après un bref séjour en Angleterre, il alla aux États Unis et en 1907 il accepta de venir à Winnipeg et de devenir le Rabin de la congrégation Beth Jacob.

Il organisa bientôt un "kashruth" qui engendra de l'hostilité de la part de certains bouchers juifs qui demandèrent l'aide de leur propre Rabin. En 1915 la communauté juive accepta les deux Rabbins et se déclara en faveur de leur payer un salaire régulier. Rabin Kahanovitch était considéré comme le chef spirituel de la communauté juive de Fort William à Victoria. Tous semblaient accepter son autorité sauf un groupe de jeunes radicaux de tendance socialiste.

Il fonda une école juive qui fut complétée en 1913 et en 1915 il commença le travail pour créer le "Congrès Juif" qui cependant vit le jour à Montreal en 1919. Les trois Rabbins de Winnipeg furent élus et Rabin Kahanovitch était le principal représentant.

Il fut un des premiers à se déclarer en faveur du mouvement zioniste et il incita les juifs à travailler pour leur communauté. Quoi qu'il fût un des représentants de la vieille école orthodoxe il faut admettre qu'il avait aussi une grande connaissance de son nouveau milieu et de son temps.

Depuis 1913 la Congrégation Shaarey Zedek était connue comme le bastion d'un judaïsme moins orthodoxe. Les rabbins jouaient un rôle différent de ceux d'autres petites synagogues qui, elles, restaient fidèles à la vieille interprétation de la religion juive. Ces rabbins devinrent entre autre des agents de relations publiques, parce qu'ils se dédièrent à dissoudre l'impression que les juifs, à cause de leurs convictions religieuses, n'étaient pas de bons canadiens.

Un de ces rabbins étaient Rabin Herbert J. Samuel. Après avoir servi la

congrégation juive de Swansea dans le Galles de 1906 à 1914, il accepta de faire partie de la congrégation Shaarey Zedek de Winnipeg. Ce Rabin fut très actif dans plusieurs domaines. Avec Rabin Kahanovitch il siégeait sur le Congrès juif.

Rabin Samuel fut remplacé par Rabin Solomon Frank qui s'occupa de la congrégation jusqu'à 1947. Rabin Frank devint bientôt le vrai porte-parole de la communauté juive. Ce Rabin apporta plusieurs innovations à sa communauté juive et il appuya surtout la construction d'une nouvelle synagogue. Il quitta Winnipeg en 1947 pour devenir Rabin à Montreal. Il fut remplacé par Rabin Milton Aron qui avait fait ses études aux États Unis où en 1950 il recut son Doctorat de l'Université d'Indiana. Ce Rabin continua le travail entrepris par ses prédécesseurs et en 1959 la congrégation put obtenir une école régulière qui comprenait aussi une maternelle. Certains cours étaient donnés le jour et autres le soir. Les enseignants venaient d'Israel.

En 1952 Rabin Arthur Chiel devint le chef spirituel de Rosh Pina Synagogue sur l'avenue Matheson. Ce Rabin avait un fort intérêt pour l'histoire juive et en 1955 il publia son premier livre *Jewish Experience in Early Manitoba* et en 1961 il publia son deuxième livre *The Jews in Manitoba*.

Rabin Abraham Kravetz a aussi joué un rôle très important dans le développement de la communauté juive de Winnipeg. Un de ses buts principaux était de promouvoir l'éducation juive.

En guise de conclusion on peut dire que ces rabbins ont été non seulement des chefs spirituels mais qu'ils ont joué aussi un rôle très important comme administrateurs et comme promoteurs de la cause juive.

Any study of Jewish religious leadership in Winnipeg, indeed in all of Western Canada, cannot be contemplated without considerable space being devoted to the spiritual leadership of Rabbi Israel Isaac Kahanovitch. Born in Grodno, Poland, on October 8, 1872, he studied in the *yeshiva* at Grodno and Slobodka, and was ordained as rabbi in his twentieth year. He settled in Suwalk, and soon became rabbi in one of the synagogues. In 1896 he married Rachel Kleiman. In Suwalk he took part in communal affairs, and was particularly active in the Zionist movement at a time when orthodox Jews had not fully accepted that idea.

After the Kishinev pogrom, he went to England and then in 1906, came

as rabbi to Scranton, Pennsylvania. In 1907, he moved to Winnipeg which offered him the pioneering spirit that was lacking in Scranton.

At the time, the Jewish community in Winnipeg numbered 5,000. In the North End - north of the CPR main line tracks - several small orthodox synagogues had been established. None had a spiritual leader and the need for an ordained rabbi was apparent. The situation was brought to a head by the laxity in *kashruth*, and a move was made to hire a rabbi. Several came and stayed a few weeks, but none seemed to satisfy the various cliques in the split community. It was at this point that Beth Jacob Congregation, the largest in the North End, brought in Rabbi Kahanovitch.²

In the summer of 1907, he delivered his first sermon, at the Shaarey Zedek Synagogue, before a very critical audience. He made a deep impression upon his listeners; indeed, so great was the impact, that to his second sermon, also at Shaarey Zedek, came those who would never have gone to a synagogue. Representatives of six congregations unanimously decided to hire him as rabbi.

He soon organized the *kashruth* which had been in a chaotic condition. A *Vaad Haschita* was founded, consisting of prominent Jews in the community. The *Vaad* looked after the *schochtim* and paid their salaries, rather than individual butchers controlling their own *shochet*. A *mashgiach* was hired to check on the butcher shops.

The efforts of the rabbi were not welcome in all quarters. The butchers resented rabbinical control.³ The consumers grumbled about the high cost of *kosher* meat. Some were dissatisfied with the inadequacy of the supervision of *kashruth*. The conflict led to a price war, and the *Vaad Hashchita* was openly defied. The butchers brought in their own rabbi, Rabbi Jacob Gorodski, in 1912,⁴ and the rivalry intensified in the religious community.

Peace on the rabbinical front came in September, 1915. The community was to recognize both rabbis and to guarantee a minimum salary to both, though more to Rabbi Kahanovitch. Also, since Gorodski was the younger one, he was to go to Rabbi Kahanovitch's house as an expression of peace. This he did on September 16, 1915.⁵

But the peace proved to be only an armistice; the *kashruth* conflict flared up sporadically in later years. As late as 1932, a group of dissident butchers brought in its own rabbi and formed the Congregation Beth Yehuda.⁶ It was not till 1946 that the Jewish Welfare Fund of Winnipeg took over the supervision of *kosher* meat.⁷

There was no doubt that Rabbi Kahanovitch gained the stature of chief

rabbi, and on April 6, 1914, the idea of such recognition was welcomed by all congregations. He was recognized as chief rabbi by almost all Jews in Winnipeg and in the widely dispersed settlements in Western Canada; indeed, as head of Jewish life from Fort William to Victoria. Concerned with problems in the Jewish communities, he visited many of these on numerous occasions.

He became the clearing house for rabbis, *shochtim* and teachers for the smaller communities in the West. In truth, he made the post of the rabbinat, as it had been in the past, one of leadership in the community. His house was a place for the unfortunate and the troubled - he was almost a "guidance clinic" where many found advice, aid and encouragement.

Of course, not all in the community were religious or submitted to Rabbi Kahanovitch's spiritual leadership. The young radical socialist groups, the non-religious and the anti-religious elements carried on their activities,⁴ many of which were frowned upon by the chief rabbi. The best example of this was the hostility displayed by the religious element and the rabbis, including Rabbi Kahanovitch, towards the Jewish Radical school - the forerunner of the I.L. Peretz School - when it was founded in 1914.⁹ Veiled threats of excommunication and open advice to parents not to send their children to the "godless" school were heard in the Winnipeg Jewish community. As the years went by, however, Rabbi Kahanovitch became worldly enough to feel at home with all factions. "Live and let live" seemed to have become his motto.

Aside from the regular duties of a spiritual leader, Rabbi Kahanovitch was involved in a multitude of communal, cultural and educational activities. He was instrumental in the creation of the Talmud Torah as an important educational institution in the Winnipeg community. It was because of his efforts that the B'nai Zion Hebrew School¹⁰ evolved into the Talmud Torah.

It was not too long after his arrival in Winnipeg that he saw the opportunity of creating a Hebrew educational institution. Because of his efforts and his driving force he was able to enlist the aid of almost all factions of the community in supporting the erection of a new building to house a large Talmud Torah. This was in 1911,¹¹ and after considerable difficulties the building was finally completed in the spring of 1913, at the corner of Flora Avenue and Charles Street. It was a spacious two-storey building with classrooms, two meeting halls and an auditorium which also served as a place of worship. The Talmud Torah¹² became the heart of the Win-

Winnipeg Jewish community.

The rabbi saw to it that collection boxes were placed in Jewish homes to help pay teachers' salaries!

Another sphere of activity in which he immersed himself was the creation of the Canadian Jewish Congress. The initial movement in Winnipeg began with a meeting on September 5, 1915. It was a disappointing affair - only a few turned out. The three rabbis, Sandheim, Gorodski and Kahanovitch, were on the committee. A unanimous resolution was passed favouring the calling together of a "Jewish Congress" by democratic means.

At a subsequent meeting, 2,000 people packed the Talmud Torah hall. Rabbi Kahanovitch made an impassioned speech and called upon Winnipeg Jews to take an important part in the historical Congress movement.¹³

Although the Congress did not come into being until March 19, 1919, at a meeting in Montreal, the seeds were sown in Winnipeg, and Rabbi Kahanovitch was one of the initiators and a constant worker.

In the election of delegates to the Congress, held on March 2, 1919, the three Winnipeg rabbis were elected. Rabbi Kahanovitch topped the list, receiving the highest number of votes.¹⁴ Reports of the Congress meeting in Montreal, state: "Rabbi Kahanovitch drew great attention through his progressive speech."¹⁵ Also, "Rabbi Kahanovitch enthused the radicals and confused the orthodox."¹⁶

His Zionist activities went back to his early years in Suwalk, Poland, when he embraced Zionism long before most orthodox Jews. In Winnipeg, he found among the early pioneers *Bilu* men ("O House of Jacob, come and let us go"), forerunners of Zionists, who never managed to get to Palestine. He worked with them in the cause of Zionism, to build a community in the diaspora to be spiritually linked with Palestine, and to help in the building of Palestine as a national home for Jews.

It was Zionism that aroused his interest in the B'nai Zion Hebrew School - operated by Zionists - to develop it into a modern Talmud Torah where Mizrahi Zionism (religious Zionism) has been the orientation ever since.

Thumbing through the pages of Winnipeg's Yiddish press, Rabbi Kahanovitch's name appears very often in conjunction with Zionist activities. At the 12th Zionist convention, held in Ottawa in 1912, he was elected Vice President of the Zionist Federation.¹⁷ At a circumcision ceremony at the house of a prominent Zionist in 1911, the Rabbi appealed

for donations to the Jewish National Fund.¹⁸ A good sum was collected. It was here that the idea of a Jewish National Fund Golden Book for Winnipeg, to record donations on similar occasions, was born. The Golden Book was also to be the chronicle of activities in the Winnipeg Jewish community. This project was entrusted to a special committee, with Rabbi Kahanovitch as chairman.

Rabbi Kahanovitch was deeply involved in many communal activities. In his fiery speeches he urged his listeners to also plunge themselves into communal work. At a time when Winnipeg Jewish institutions and causes were financed with nickels and dimes donated by local Jews, he could be seen on Sunday morning going on house-to-house collections for all causes.

Because of his reputation, an item appeared on Sept. 6, 1912, and was repeated later on:

Dr. Herbert M. Rosenberg asked to announce that he is willing to treat the poor free of charge if they present to him a note from Rabbi Kahanovitch . . .¹⁹

The offer was gladly accepted.

When, during World War I, Winnipeg Jewry were helping their oppressed brethren in Europe, it was felt that the South End Jews, the wealthier element in the Jewish community, generally did not participate in this work.²⁰ After many appeals in the Yiddish press had failed to influence the South Enders, a committee of prominent Jews, including the Chief Rabbi, went directly to the South End to solicit funds.²¹ Eventually, by 1916, all sections of the population shouldered the burden of relief for the European Jews. The prestige of Rabbi Kahanovitch no doubt helped greatly in bringing about this unity of effort.

He was very active in the founding of the Old Folks Home and the Jewish Orphanage. On the occasion of laying the corner stone of the Orphanage on August 10, 1919, the Rabbi addressed the gathering:

Brothers and sisters. The orphans have no fathers or mothers. All of you are their fathers and mothers. You must see to it that they have a home. You must see to it that they have enough to eat. You must see to it that they have the things they need because they all are your children. Give as much as you can, because this institution which is being built will serve not only our own orphans but also those unfortunate orphans who are overseas.²²

These words, the paper reported, moved many to tears.

In 1921, when the teachers of the Talmud Torah were in dispute with

the administration, in either a strike or a lockout, Rabbi Kahanovitch intervened to bring peace between the teachers and the administration. Due to his efforts a settlement was arrived at.²³

Mrs. Sophie Helman, one of Rabbi Kahanovitch's daughters wrote of her father: "Our home was the scene of many an arbitration between people in business or in other fields and he always acted wisely and justly."²⁴

Relative to what Mrs. Helman wrote, I wish to mention an episode in which my late father was involved. His friend (we will call him Mr. C), an anarchist, was in financial dispute with his business partner, and a court action seemed the only solution. But the case never reached the court. Instead the dispute was submitted for a *din Torah* (rabbinical decision) by Rabbi Kahanovitch. The business quarrel was resolved, to the mutual satisfaction of both parties, through arbitration at the dining room table in the Rabbi's house. My father was Mr. C's adviser in the arbitration proceedings. I remember my father's remarks to my mother: "A klieger durchgetribener Yid is der Rov" (The Rabbi is a clever astute Jew").

The significance of this episode is the fact that an anti-religious anarchist, who regarded rabbis as "parasites" and "tools of the capitalists", had such high regard for Rabbi Kahanovitch's wisdom that he was anxious to submit the dispute to the Rabbi and to accept his verdict. It is indeed an appropriate commentary upon the Rabbi's stature in the Winnipeg Jewish community.

Another episode in which a member of my family was concerned was related to me by my uncle, Mr. Philip (Fishel) Herstein, the first principal of the Calgary I.L. Peretz School and now a resident of Philadelphia:

When we founded the I.L. Peretz School in Calgary in August 1928, it seemed as we had invaded the local Jewish community. Children were enrolled by parents who were dissatisfied with the education offered by the local Talmud Torah. The Talmud Torah leaders, with their religious leader, Rabbi Smolensky, became fearful lest their prestige was sagging. A struggle against us unfolded. They could find no fault with us since the children liked the Peretz School from the first day they enrolled. The Talmud Torah people accused us of breaking the unity and harmony of the Calgary Jewish community.

At the time, Rabbi Kahanovitch was passing through Calgary. The Talmud Torah leaders used this opportunity to have a *mishpot* judgement . . . with the Peretz School. In our circle we joked that they were going to ask for a judgement upon the "kashruth" of the Yiddishist Peretz School!

One afternoon, a good number of Jews came to the synagogue. It promised to be very interesting; the "destroyers" of unity were to face their accusers. It is noteworthy to mention that in the invitation to the Peretz School it was specified that I, the principal, was not to attend the hearing. The Peretz School rejected this, and I was allowed to attend but not to take part in the discussion.

The Talmud Torah representatives levelled their charges against us. We presented our case. The climax came when Rabbi Kahanovitch began to deliver his judgement. He adjusted his skull-cap, stroked his flowing beard and spoke slowly, like one of the sages of old:

"You have objections to the content taught in the Peretz School? You are mistaken. In the Winnipeg Peretz School the children are educated in the Jewish spirit. In Winnipeg, the Peretz School and Talmud Torah are on the verge of union. Do not hinder the Peretz School; they are doing good work."

In this manner spoke the Rabbi, citing scriptures, admonishing and asking for a cessation of accusations. He called for an end to the warfare carried on against the Peretz School.

The Talmud Torah representatives were dismayed. They expected the Rabbi to condemn the Peretz School. Instead of this, Rabbi Kahanovitch praised the Yiddish school.

A prominent leader of the Peretz School later asked me if I was aware of an impending union of the Peretz School and the Talmud Torah in Winnipeg. There is no doubt that there was no foundation to this. In his intervention in the dispute in Calgary, the Rabbi followed Jewish ethics, namely, that for the sake of peace, especially within a community, it is permissible to bend the truth somewhat! It seems to me that the wise Rabbi was guided by this precept.²⁵

In summing up Rabbi Kahanovitch's role in Jewish religious life in western Canada, it may be said that for almost forty years he was a vital factor in local and national Jewish life. He was a representative of the old established orthodox Judaism, but he also had a deep understanding of the spirit of the time. He attained the stature of chief rabbi and was accepted as such in western Canada. He lived through turbulent times in the Jewish community and he tried to steer a course which would avoid deep schisms within the various segments of Jewish life. Although he was only partially successful, he did his utmost to bring peace to the Jewish community.

Now to consider the spiritual leaders of progressive Judaism in Winnipeg, who conducted services in English and stressed a different decorum within the synagogue. Beginning in the South End,²⁶ their rabbis were graduates from rabbinical seminaries, and the congregations were traditional. Later, with the founding of the new Rosh Pina Congregation,²⁷ Jews in the North End followed this modern trend.

The Shaarey Zedek, ever since 1913, had been the bastion of this trend in Judaism. Their rabbis, it seemed, served a different function that did the rabbis of the smaller orthodox synagogues in the North End. These modern rabbis became public relations men to present a different image of the Winnipeg Jews in the community at large. They deliberately attempted to dispel the gentile's pre-conceived notion of a "typical" Jew, by trying to convince them that, although they were committed Jews they nevertheless behaved like and felt like other Canadians. It should be stressed that it was perhaps a necessary function that they performed in their day. They were instrumental in bringing about the realization that Jews were capable of being full-fledged Canadians. The Shaarey Zedeks incidentally, catered to their own youth, born and raised in Canada, who were alienated from their parents' Eastern European way of life.

We find Rabbi Sandheim (he later changed his name to Samuel) speaking in the Central Congregational Church, in 1915,²⁸ to acquaint non-Jews with Russian oppression of Jews even during the war, in spite of the fact that tens of thousands of Russian Jews were fighting for their fatherland. In retrospect, it must be stated that Rabbi Samuel's address made many non-Jews, who were perhaps unaware of Russian persecution of Jews, conscious of the excesses committed.

Rabbi Herbert J. Samuel (formerly Sandheim) was born in Glasgow, Scotland, on October 13, 1882. He was educated in England and was minister to the Hebrew Congregation at Swansea, Wales, from 1906 to 1914, when he came to the Shaarey Zedek in March of that year. He was a member of the Winnipeg Ministerial Association, and in 1924 was elected chaplain of the Canadian Club.

Rabbi Samuel was active in relief work for Jewish war sufferers during World War I. Together with Rabbi Kahanovitch, he was one of the initiators of the Congress movement.²⁹ He was also very active in the B'nai Brith and for a time was its President. During his term as spiritual leader of the Shaarey Zedek, from 1914 to 1926, he introduced several innovations; such as Friday evening services, and in 1915 a Sunday School where Sunday morning Bible classes were conducted in English for the

children of its members. The Sunday School was an instantaneous success, and in 1918 closing exercises were held for 150 children.³⁰

Rabbi Solomon Frank came to Winnipeg in 1926 and served the Shaarey Zedek Congregation till 1947.³¹ He was born in New York in 1900. He took degrees in Science and Law, and then was ordained at Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati. Prior to his call to the Shaarey Zedek, he served at Beth Zion and Beth David synagogues in Buffalo, New York.

There is no doubt that he became a very notable spokesman for the Winnipeg Jewish community. On numerous occasions he addressed Christian gathering and congregations. He was an eloquent speaker, and his widespread activities in many organizations marked him as the spokesman of local Jewry. At one time he was president of the League of Nations Society in Winnipeg, and this position further enhanced his reputation in the non-Jewish community.

His activities in Jewish organizations were numerous indeed. To mention but a few; he was vice-president of the Canadian Jewish Congress, an active member of the Zionist organization, president of the B'nai Brith and chaplain of the General Monash Branch of the Canadian Legion. In his congregation he widened the educational activities of the Sunday school, organized a choir for the synagogue and was involved in the building committee to relocate the Shaarey Zedek from Dagmar Street to its present location on Wellington Crescent. A new building was necessary to serve the increasing membership which was concentrated in the South End.³² Because of World War II, the plans for the building were postponed, and when the new building was erected,³³ Rabbi Frank had already left the Shaarey Zedek to accept a call to the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue in Montreal, in 1947.

In 1947, Rabbi Milton Aron became the spiritual leader of the Shaarey Zedek.³⁴ He was born in Trenton, New Jersey on April 18, 1917. He was a graduate from the University of Chicago (BA, 1935), and ordained as a rabbi at Hebrew Theological College, Chicago, in 1940. In 1950 he received his Doctor of Divinity degree from the University of Indiana. In World War II he served in the U.S. Air Force as chaplain.

During his stay in Winnipeg, the new Shaarey Zedek synagogue was completed. Basically, he continued the work of his predecessors. He too was active in many communal organizations and was considered an ambassador of goodwill to the Christian community.

In the new synagogue, evening classes were held three times a week. Later, the Sunday School was abandoned in favour of a new type of

Jewish education.³⁵ Increased student enrolment led to the construction of a school building, separate from the synagogue.³⁶ The school, later named Ramah School, inaugurated a day school program in 1959. Israeli teachers were recruited³⁷ to teach conversational Hebrew. Enrolment increased and the school operated a nursery school, kindergarten, a day school and evening school.

Together with Rabbi Abraham Kravetz, Rabbi Aron was instrumental in founding Maimonides College, planned as an institute of higher learning. He left Winnipeg in 1966.

In 1952, Rabbi Arthur Chiel became the spiritual leader of Winnipeg's newly erected Rosh Pina Synagogue on Matheson Avenue, on the location of the former Jewish Orphanage. In addition to his work as rabbi of his congregation, he immersed himself in activities similar to those of the rabbis of the Shaarey Zedek. During his tenure of office, the Rosh Pina Hebrew School was started and grew into an institution comprised of a nursery school, kindergarten and evening school.

Rabbi Chiel's contribution while in Winnipeg, has been summarized by his successor, Rabbi Shalom Rappaport, as follows:

Rabbi Chiel resided in Winnipeg from 1949 to 1957 and during that period of time he made a vital and tremendous contribution to the development of several aspects of Jewish community life in this city . . . He came here first to become the Director of B'nai Brith Hillel Foundation at the University of Manitoba. Within his first year he was quite instrumental in launching a successful effort which led to the establishment of the department of Judaic Studies at the University where he was named as assistant professor. In 1952 he helped to bring back to life in Winnipeg the name of Rosh Pina Congregation. Rabbi Chiel served here as the spiritual leader . . . until 1957. (Rabbi Chiel is now spiritual leader of Congregation B'nai Jacob in Woodbridge, Connecticut).

During this period he developed an active interest in Canadian Jewish history and particularly in the history of the Jews in . . . Manitoba. In 1955 he published his first book, *Jewish Experience in Early Manitoba*, and in 1961 the University of Toronto Press published his second volume, *The Jews in Manitoba*, a social history. For this book he received the H.M. Caiserman Award from Canadian Jewish Congress.³⁸

This paper would be incomplete if it did not deal with the contributions of an eminent personality, Rabbi Abraham Kravetz.³⁹ He was born in

Kinishin, near Bialystok, Poland, in 1914 and studied at the *yeshiva* at Grodno. He served in the Polish army as chaplain, and at the end of World War II was assistant Chief Rabbi of Poland. It was his fate to live through the Hitler era, often hiding in Christian homes, thus able to survive the holocaust. Between 1944 and 1946 he was Chief Rabbi in Lodz, Poland.

It is significant that Rabbi Kravetz came to Winnipeg in 1949 as principal of the Talmud Torah, because it was in the field of education that he made his greatest impact. It was only a year later that he was recognized as Chief Rabbi in Winnipeg.

He played a decisive role in the physical expansion of the Talmud Torah⁴⁰ and in the extension of Hebrew education to high school and university levels. It was he who attracted a group of devoted workers who put forth great efforts for the Talmud Torah. It was they who injected into the Talmud Torah a vitality that had been lacking for many years. They plunged themselves into fund raising, instituting improved methods of instruction, elevating Hebrew to a position of a spoken language and placing it at the heart of the school curriculum. In all these activities, Rabbi Kravetz's guiding hand was evident. He drew in a younger element, many of them graduates of the Talmud Torah, who had previously not associated themselves with the school. Under his guidance, they assumed responsibilities and went forward to many achievements.

Rabbi Kravetz spearheaded the establishment, in the South End, of the River Heights branch of the Talmud Torah - the Herzlia Academy. It was through his efforts that the Joseph Wolinsky Collegiate was founded - a day school offering regular public school classes from grades seven to twelve as well as Jewish studies. Through his indefatigable effort as well, Maimonides College, an institution of advanced Jewish studies, was established in 1950.

At the time of his death in 1962, at the early age of forty-eight, he was Chief Rabbi of Winnipeg, spiritual leader of the Talmud Torah and Ashkenazi synagogues, principal of the Joseph Wolinsky Collegiate and president of Maimonides College. He was also in the midst of planning a secular liberal arts Jewish community-sponsored college at the University of Manitoba - a project that, as yet, had not gone beyond this stage.

Of Rabbi Kravetz it may be said that he was energetic; he attracted suitable people, especially younger people, to the many activities around the Talmud Torah. He demanded much but he also offered much. In tribute to him, this was written:

The advancement of Jewish education was his overriding aim in life. He dreamed of creating in Winnipeg a Hebrew, religious and scholarly centre to replace at least one of those destroyed in Europe.⁴¹

Maimonides College, he hoped, would evolve into a sectarian affiliate of the University of Manitoba, and this college was to be one of those centres.

Summarizing the activities of the modern rabbis, it may be stated that they served a new type of Jewish religion, different from that brought over by the early pioneers from Eastern Europe. These rabbis tended to serve the social needs of their congregations; they were directors of their synagogues, social organizers, preachers and at times teachers in their schools. It was expected of these rabbis to be eloquent speakers - in fact, their rhetorical ability was often the measure of their success. To some, these functions seemed to be irrelevant to the position of rabbi. But in all fairness it should be stated that these modern rabbis adapted to the changing Judaism in North America. It seems that they offered their congregations what they wanted - leadership.

Whatever their religious philosophy, liberal or orthodox, all rabbis discussed in this paper, aside from serving their congregations, devoted much of their talent, energy and effort to Jewish education. They all regarded that aspect of Jewish life as the necessary foundation and cohesive force that would insure the existence of a flourishing Jewish Community in Winnipeg.

FOOTNOTES

1. This article is based on a paper presented by Mr. Herstein to the Jewish Historical Society of Western Canada in Winnipeg on February 10, 1971. Much of the information in this paper came from the bound volumes of the *Israelite Press*, Winnipeg's Yiddish newspaper. These volumes were made available by Mr. Harold Margolis of Kromar Printing Ltd., Winnipeg, and are now available at the Winnipeg Jewish Public Library.
2. A.D. Hart (ed.), *The Jew in Canada* (Toronto: Jewish Publications Ltd., 1926), p. 154; also, Arthur A. Chiel, *The Jew in Manitoba* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), p. 86.
3. A. Osovsky, The Year 1911 in *The Israelite*, August 1, 1912, pp. 4-5.
4. *The Israelite*, Oct. 10, 1912, p. 8.
5. *The Israelite Press*, Sept. 17, 1915.
6. Harvey H. Herstein, *The Growth of the Winnipeg Jewish Community and the Evolution of its Educational Institutions* (unpublished master's thesis, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, 1964) p. 31.
7. A.A. Chiel, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
8. I. Gurevitch, "Yiddishe Yugend and Education," *The Canadian Israelite*, July 25, 1912. This article expressed the views of the Yiddisher Yugend Farein, a literary and

- cultural club organized in 1911 with the main objective to establish a Yiddish school.
9. For the curriculum and objectives of the I.L. Peretz School: Survey Committee on Jewish Education, *A Study of Jewish Education in Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: Jewish Welfare Fund of Winnipeg, 1963), pp. 23-25.
 - For the history and development of this school: Harvey H. Herstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-122.
 10. A Zionist oriented school which found itself financially incapable of catering to the educational needs of the growing Jewish school population. Chiel, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
 11. H. E. Wilder, *The One Hundreth Anniversary Souvenir of Jewish Emancipation in Canada* (Winnipeg: The Israelite Press, 1932), p. 31. At a public meeting on April 9, 1911, it was decided to build a school immediately.
 12. For the curriculum and objectives of the Talmud Torah: *Survey Committee on Jewish Education*, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.
 - For the history and development of this school: Herstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-88.
 13. *The Israelite Press* reports about the Sept. 19, 1915 meeting. Speakers represented all shades of opinions: Rev. Sandheim of the Shaarey Zedek, the chairman, and Rabbis Kahanovitch and Gorodski, the religious; M. Abramson, the school trustee, the socialists; I. Pearlman, the National Labour Committee, a Zionist-socialist group; Marcus Hyman, who spoke in English, labour groups.
 14. *Ibid.*, March 4, 1919. Rabbi Kahanovitch obtained 2673 votes.
 15. *Ibid.*, March 21, 1919.
 16. *Ibid.*, April 11, 1919. A report by H. E. Wilder.
 17. *The Israelite*, July 4, 1912.
 18. A. Osovsky, "A New Union" *The Israelite*, August 8, 1912, p. 5.
 19. *The Canadian Israelite*, Sept. 6, 1912.
 20. I. Hestrin, "Passing by" ("Dedicated to those with thick pocket books and narrow hearts"), *The Israelite*, Oct. 29, 1914.
 21. *Ibid.*, Nov. 9, 1914.
 22. *The Israelite Press*, Aug. 12, 1919.
 23. Herstein, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
 24. Sophie Helman, "The Rabbi at Home and in Western Canada," *The Western Jewish News*, Centennial edition, Winnipeg, 1970, p. 16.
 25. This account was sent to the author by his uncle and was written in Yiddish. The translation was done by the author.
 26. In the first three decades of this century, South End Jews lived in an area now considered central Winnipeg. More recently, the term South End has been used to refer to the part of Winnipeg south of the Assiniboine River, known as River Heights.
 27. *Winnipeg Rosh Pina Congregation, 1892-1952*, Dedication Volume. In 1952, the new synagogue was completed on Matheson Avenue. The new congregation took over the partial assets of the old Rosh Pina and perpetuated the name of the older congregation.
 28. *The Israelite*, Oct. 7, 1915.
 29. See footnote 13.
 30. *The Israelite Press*, June 27, 1918.
 31. *Shaarey Zedek Synagogue: Years of Service 1889-1959* (Winnipeg .1959..).
 32. For the location of the South End refer to footnote 26.
 33. The edifice was completed in 1950, on Wellington Crescent and Academy Road.
 34. Shaarey Zedek Synagogue, *op. cit.*
 35. For the curriculum and objectives of the Shaarey Zedek school: Survey Committee on Jewish Education, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26.
 - For the history and development of this school: Herstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-138.

36. The building was completed in 1956, at the corner of Lanark Avenue and Grant Street.
37. The *Ivrit B'Ivrit* method was used, patterned after the model school of the Hebrew University of Beth Karen in Jerusalem. *The Israelite Press*, Aug. 7, 1959.
38. Jewish Historical Society of Western Canada, *Second Annual Publication (A Selection of Papers Presented in 1969-70)*, Winnipeg, April, 1972.
39. Eli Gottesman (ed.), *Who's Who in Canadian Jewry* (Montreal: Jewish Institute of Higher Research, Central Rabbinical Seminary, 1964) p. 91. Also in *Talmud Torah Golden Jubilee Journal; 1907-1957* (Winnipeg: 1957).
40. A new building was completed in 1952 at Matheson Avenue and Power Street. In 1954, an addition was erected to accommodate the increased enrolment.
41. Survey Committee on Jewish Education, *op. cit.*, p. 7.