

OBITUARY

NOTED ORTHODOX RABBI IS DEAD

ABRAHAM C. LEVINSON MEMORIZED BIBLE AND TALMUD.

FOUGHT REFORMED JUDAISM

Firm Believer in the Fundamental Tenets of Faith of His Fathers, He Became a National Defender of His Religion--Author of Valuable Treatises on Scriptural Interpretations--Rivalry Over His Place of Burial.

Chief Rabbi Abraham C. Levinson, of the Jewish orthodox synagogues of Baltimore, a talmudist of international reputation and a staunch fighter for everything connected with the ancient Hebrew faith, died in his home, 21 North Broadway, early yesterday morning, after a lingering illness. The rabbi was in his sixtieth year and although he was stricken with apoplexy last October, appeared to be getting better daily. He continued his active services as spiritual adviser of the B'nai Israel synagogue, and also directed the movements of the other orthodox synagogues in the same vigorous manner that characterized his activities years ago.

who mastered medicine, law, surgery and theology with an ease that astounded even deep students of the Talmud. Rabbi Levinson was a much revered man. A prolific writer of essays and talmudic works, his fame increased from year to year and although many larger cities than Baltimore offered him big financial inducements, he refused to leave this city. In his younger days Rabbi Levinson had congregations in various cities of New York and Pennsylvania.

The members of the congregation of B'nai Israel were deeply shocked during the services yesterday morning when the announcement was made that Rabbi Levinson had passed away. Immediately prayers were offered and many of the worshippers remained in the synagogue the entire day, where touching eulogies were made by prominent Hebrews.

Rabbi Levinson died while surrounded by nearly all the members of his family. Others at the bedside were Prof. C. W. McElfresh, of the University of Maryland, Dr. Samuel Wolman, of the Johns Hopkin University, and Dr. J. C. Josephson. Efforts were made by the physicians to prolong his life, but in vain. The rabbi remained conscious to the last and recited his Sabbath prayers.

Rabbi Levinson for many years has been a picturesque figure in the Jewish orthodox communities in the country. He has always been an uncompromising foe to reformed Judaism, and to fight that modern form of religion helped to found the Central Conference of Orthodox Rabbis. With pen and mouth he preached against the new doctrines promulgated by the late Rabbi Wise, of Cincinnati, and advised its followers to remain true to the tenets of orthodox Judaism.

MEMORIZED BIBLE AND TALMUD.

Rabbi Levinson was said to be the only man in the United States who knew the Bible and the 31 big volumes of the Talmud by memory. Distinguished writers and theologians of various creeds came to see him and receive his opinion of certain abstruse ideas and expressions of the Holy Book. His knowledge of French, German, Polish, Russian and other European languages made him a favorite with foreign students.

It was his modest, retiring disposition that kept the public from knowing anything about the life and deeds of the late rabbi. He stoutly maintained that churchmen should spend their hours in study and not in proclaiming their deeds before the public. It was these particular ideas that impelled him to refrain from signing his name to his writings, which he frequently distributed throughout the Jewish colony. Only once in his lifetime has he had his picture taken and he consented then only at the urgent request of his congregation and family.

Rabbi Levinson's funeral, which will take place this afternoon from his home, will probably be the most imposing cortege that ever took place in the Jewish community of East Baltimore. Distinguished orthodox rabbis from New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Boston, Cleveland and other large cities will be present. It is expected that more than 15,000 orthodox Jews will escort the funeral party to the cemetery. In the evening eulogistic sermons concerning the life of the late rabbi will be delivered in all of the orthodox synagogues by the visiting rabbis, who will be pallbearers, as the body of orthodox rabbi cannot be handled by laymen. Only rabbis of the highest order can touch the body or coffin and great care is exercised that laymen do not get too close to them.

RIVALRY OVER BURIAL PLACE.

Where Rabbi Levinson will be laid to rest is a question that has already caused great agitation. A number of the synagogues have laid claim to his body. Among orthodox Jews the body of a distinguished rabbi produces a hallowed reverence

in a burial ground and on memorial days thousands of people flock to his grave to offer prayers. For this reason there is much rivalry among the various synagogues, although the members of the B'nai Israel congregation are demanding that the burial take place in their cemetery, on the Belair road. They claim that he was their spiritual adviser and that they are, therefore, entitled to his body. The question will be threshed out by a conference of rabbis some time this morning.

Rabbi Levinson's children are all interested in charitable and philanthropic work. One of his sons, M. Albert Levinson, is magistrate of the Southern police district. He is survived by his widow (Mrs. Jennie Levinson), and the following children. Anna Levinson, Charles W. Levinson, Florence Levinson, a school-teacher in the public schools of Baltimore, Judge Levinson, Dr. Frank Levinson, of New Jersey, Mrs. Pauline Rabanowitz, of Indianapolis, and Mrs. J. Meyer of Philadelphia. Nine grandchildren also survive.