

RITUAL FOR JEWISH WORSHIP

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Ritual for Jewish worship by Max Landsberg

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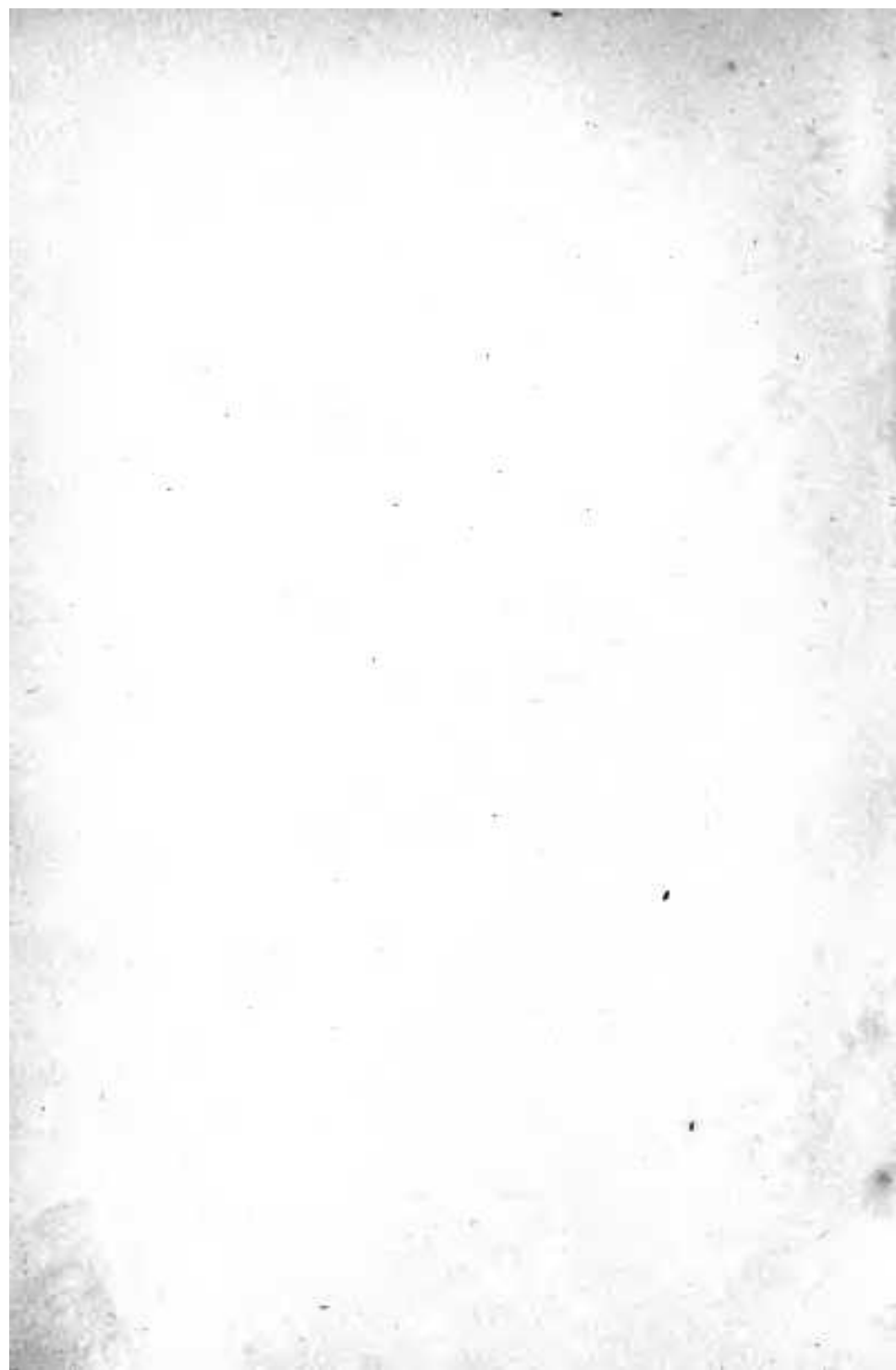
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MAX LANDSBERG

**RITUAL FOR
JEWISH WORSHIP**



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Jews History and sites

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

RITUAL

FOR

JEWISH WORSHIP.

ROCHESTER, N. Y.:
CHARLES MANN, 102 MEIGS STREET.

1885.

BM 665
1885

TO THE
LIBRARY OF THE
MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOOLOGY

Copyright, 1884,
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Vorsänger

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PREFACE.

In handing to the members of my congregation the Ritual prepared at their request, I deem it expedient to recall to their minds the history of the ritualistic development in our midst.

Over fifteen years ago the necessity had been recognized of changing the old order of worship so as to make it conform to the sentiments of the living generation, and to render it intelligible and attractive to the young. But definite action was postponed by common consent, until the services of a competent Rabbi should have been secured, by whose decision all declared themselves willing to abide.

A short time after I had entered into my present position, in the spring of 1871, I was sent by the congregation to New York, to attend the services at the leading temples, and to select such Ritual for introduction as would seem to me most appropriate for the

wants of our people. I did not hesitate then to recommend that of Dr. Einhorn as the only one strictly adhering to the principles of progressive Judaism, and for the most part composed in a language understood by the people.

The only reason why the book was not introduced was that it was in German, unintelligible to some of the members of our congregation and to the majority of the young people. When, one year later, Dr. Einhorn's book was translated into English, its introduction was resolved upon by the congregation; but owing to the little satisfaction this translation gave, the action was soon reconsidered, and, after many struggles, as a compromise measure, the book used at Temple Emanuel in New York was introduced in 1874.

Like most compromises, this one failed to give satisfaction to either party. The only effect of the innovation was that the services were shortened, while they were made neither more intelligible nor more attractive to the young than they had been before. Through a number

of years I was urged to make a prayer-book for the congregation; but being well aware how grave and difficult such a task is, I resisted the demand as long as I could conscientiously do so. For a Ritual for permanent use ought not to be made by one person, but by a commission of competent men working in an harmonious spirit, under the direction of one editor.

But as the years rolled by and the younger element in our midst became more and more predominant, the want of a Ritual in the vernacular became so crying that it was evidently in the interest of the religious life in our congregation to take some decisive step.

At the request of our Board of Trustees I reluctantly prepared a Ritual for temporary and tentative use. It was used the first time on December 14, 1883, and through six consecutive weeks, on trial, and on January 20, 1884, the congregation resolved to introduce an English Ritual permanently.

Before placing it in the present shape in the hands of the people, I deemed it advisable to

continue its use in the imperfect form in which it had first appeared, and to submit it to a number of Jewish Rabbis in our country. Many have kindly given valuable advice and made welcome criticism, which are hereby thankfully acknowledged. Every suggestion has been taken into careful consideration, and many of them, together with the experience gathered during ten months' use, have been very helpful in making the book more perfect.

It is in the very nature of a Jewish Ritual that it should contain as much old and familiar material as possible. Therefore it has not been attempted to change the frame-work of the ancient liturgy, and besides a liberal advantage has been taken of all the Rituals that were accessible to me. The object was not to create something new—which would be a decided mistake—but to furnish a liturgy which, by suggesting everywhere reminiscences of what is familiarly known, would prove most satisfactory to the congregation.