

**SEMINARY
ADDRESSES AND
OTHER PAPERS**

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Seminary addresses and other papers by S. Schechter

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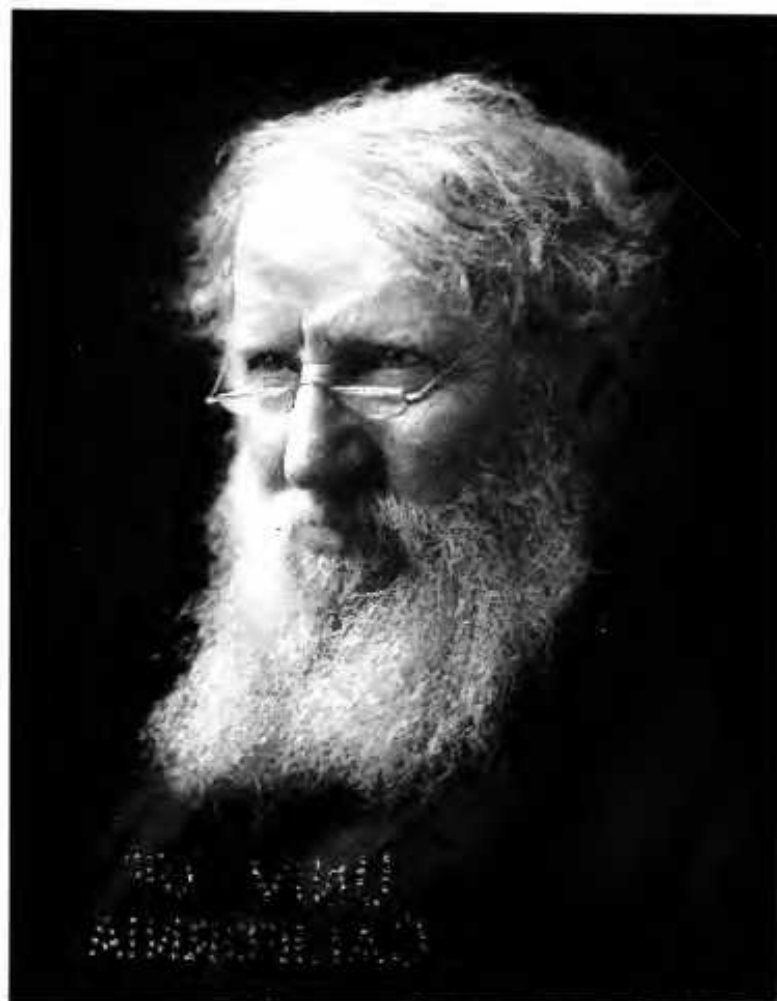
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S. SCHECHTER

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ADDRESSES AND
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Samuel Johnson

SEMINARY ADDRESSES AND OTHER PAPERS

BY

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OF AMERICA



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TO VINDI
AMPHILAO

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TO
DOCTOR CYRUS ADLER
PRESIDENT OF THE DROPSIE COLLEGE
COLLRAGUE AND FRIEND

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PREFACE.

The following pages, representing a selection of Papers and Addresses delivered on various occasions, were intended to appear in the form of a volume some three years ago in commemoration of the Tenth Anniversary of the re-organization of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Illness and other untoward circumstances prevented me from giving my attention to their publication until lately. But it is this delay which made it possible to include the last five papers.

These papers lay no claim to the attainments of rhetoric, which are unfortunately beyond my powers, nor will the reader find in them any indulgence in abstruse learning, which, even if it were within my reach, would be out of place in popular Addresses like these. The references to Rabbinic literature were mostly omitted for the same reason. All I endeavored to do was to express my thoughts in plain and direct language, in which I hope I did not entirely fail.

Generally speaking, the burden of these Addresses, mostly delivered on Commencement and other fête days of the Seminary, may be described as a plea for traditional Judaism, which it is the mission of the Seminary to teach and preach in this country.

They protest against the "shock-tactics" of Higher Bible criticism; they plead for a better appreciation of Israel's past and a closer connection between this past and the present and the future; they demand a more thorough study of Jewish thought and Jewish life as deposited in our great literature; they insist on the development of Jewish science which would enable us to compete with other institutions of higher learning; they also advocate a deeper devotion to the laws distinctly characteristic of the Jewish conception of holiness, leading to a more strict observance of the precepts of the Torah, and endeavor to make us sensible of the danger of incessant innovations which must in the end touch the very vital organism of Judaism.

At the same time, however, these Addresses often revert to the desirability of adopting in our studies all the methods which distinguish modern research from the mere erudition of olden times. They also set forth the necessity of the future Rabbi's receiving a proper training in secular subjects, as guaranteed by the degree of B. A. obtained in some College of standing, before wholly devoting himself to Jewish learning. The greater part of a rather lengthy lecture is devoted to proving that not only was the application of scientific methods to Jewish studies not incompatible with the spirit of conservative Judaism, but that it was largely con-