

SYNAGOGUE MORTGAGE BURNED WITH FITTING CEREMONIES SUNDAY

Jewish Congregation in Bath With Many From Out of Town Attend Exercises

Asking the Jewish people to look with reverence upon the ancient Jews whose mental, spiritual and moral lives were so perfect that when the Christian world wanted a person to be symbolic of God they chose from among the Jews, Hon. Max Pinansky, former judge of the municipal court of Portland, who as chief speaker, addressed 200 Jewish persons gathered in the Beth Israel synagogue in this city on Sunday in observance of its Bar Mitzvah which it celebrated after 13 years of arduous work with afternoon speakers and a dinner for members and friends.

Persons from Bath, Brunswick, Lewiston, Auburn, Rockland, Rumford, Gardiner, Portland, Boston and other cities thronged the synagogue on the joyful occasion. The Bar Mitzvah is the symbolic ceremony which ushers a young boy, after completing certain spiritual learnings, into manhood; the synagogue on this auspicious occasion burned its mortgage and is now free of all debts. When one considers how few Jews this community numbers, the feat seems more than remarkable.

Fittingly introduced by Louis M. Silverman of this city, whom Abraham Miller, president of the congregation, had invited to become master of ceremonies, as the outstanding Jew of the State of Maine, a man admired by the Christians and revered by the Jews, Judge Pinansky held the interest of all who heard him by the genuine sincerity of his words, felt by both old and young.

The afternoon exercises were opened by President Miller, who invited Mr. Silverman to become master of ceremonies. After a gracious acceptance Mr. Silverman introduced Rabbi Charles Arik of Laconia, N. H., rabbi of the Bath congregation when the project of the synagogue was undertaken, who gave the opening prayer. Speaking inspiringly and beautifully, Mr. Arik urged the young people always to consider the synagogue a light, even as their forefathers have in generations past. Mr. Arik also spoke in praise of the work done, mostly by the women.

After his introduction to the persons before him, Judge Pinansky, who has spoken in this city on other occasions and whose presence is always awaited for the inspiration he brings, greeted his hearers, to whom he spoke feelingly of the Mitzvah (honor) given him on Sunday. He said he felt he had done many worthy deeds of a religious type before but this was the first time he had occasion to speak on such a joyful simcha (complete realization of a hope).

Mr. Pinansky is what he wants people to think him: a sincere, honest, conscious-feeling Jew. This was the theme of his speech on Sunday. A Jew, he said, is a real citizen. Denouncing in good, simple English the hypocrites who lie, steal and accept graft during the week and who flock to a house of worship to gain God's good will on the Sabbath, he applied his denunciation to any religious creed.

He spoke in genuine disgust of the people who laugh at other people's religion, ceremonies and customs and said that as a rule only ignorant people did this, although a great many misinformed people laughed who should know better.

Mr. Pinansky spoke reverently, sincerely and beautifully of the ancient Hebrew prophets and the work they have handed down to us. He said the Jews truly have something to be proud of, speaking of the Christian world's choice of a Jew as a person symbolic of God.

He warned young people that the Ten Commandments are the greatest law in the world and should be followed. He stated that this law has been copied by every modern religion and accepted by many older ones.

Judge Pinansky told these young persons that it was not enough to be a Jew, but that he must have a Jewish conscience, which means he must follow all the true spiritual teachings as set down by his forefathers and the prophets. The ceremonials are not enough, he said. The Jew has the most beautiful religion in the world; he must study it and know it to love it. He ended by quoting ancient Rabbi Akiba, who said in words not different from those quoted 1000 years later, "Live in peace, in harmony and in love; and when your enemy strikes at thee, turn the other cheek."

The ceremony of burning the mortgage was completed after grace had been said before a chicken dinner was served in the vestry after the speeches had been delivered. Tables were attractively appointed. The dinner was prepared by the Aid of the synagogue and served by some of the younger folks of the city.

The remainder of the evening was purely social and much pleasure was afforded all in meeting of friends, some of whom had lived in Bath at one time.