

PASSOVER GREETINGS

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in Hebrew. On a Sabbath during this period of our history, the Cantor, aware of the timeliness of the passage stressed and repeated the passage — but no one seemed to notice the obvious application of the ancient prayer to the newspaper headlines. As a matter of fact, worshippers could not understand why the Cantor was needlessly prolonging the service.

What's the solution? As a typical American *Am-Ha-aretz*, the writer would like to make a suggestion. Since reading only the English or only the mechanical Hebrew is unsatisfactory, the suggestion is to combine the two languages. Those of us who have studied a foreign language have been taught that the use of an English translation is illegal. Nevertheless, the English

translation of the Prayer Book makes a perfect crib for the Hebrew. With very little effort the average worshipper can work out the meaning of many Hebrew passages. In the first place the English translation follows the word order of the Hebrew almost word for word. Furthermore, most men will recall a few elementary Hebrew words such as, *Ha'aretz* (the land or earth), *Mayim* (water), etc. These are extremely helpful as landmarks in attempting to make out the unfamiliar words in the passage.

For an example a familiar passage from *Un'saneh Tokef* of the liturgy of the High Holy Days (usually sung by the cantor or choir) can be utilized. The Hebrew begins *E-mes ki a-to*, etc. The English translation as given in the *Machzor* is "Verily it is Thou", etc.

One does not need to be a Hebrew scholar to blend the two languages. As this passage is sung, it is easy to find the English equivalents for the Hebrew.

E-mes equals "verily" or "truth", (incidentally, *E-mes* is a good old fashioned Yiddish word.) *ki* equals "it is" *a-to* equals "Thou" *hoo* equals "who are" *da-yon* equals "Judge" *u-mo-chi-ach* equals "and Arbitrator" *v'yo-day-ah* equals "and knowest all" *vo-aid* equals "and art Witness". Or take the passage that is perhaps most familiar of all the *Sidur* and of the Holy Scriptures—the con-

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fession of our faith—and see how here too the Hebrew and the English translation harmoniously blend. *Sh'ma* equals "Hear", *Yis-ro-el* equals "O, Israel", *A-do-noy* equals "The Lord", *E-lo-hai-nu* equals "our God", *A-do-noy* equals "the Lord", *E-chod* equals "is One".

This method of blending the Hebrew and the English translation will give the worshippers with a limited Hebrew background a new

appreciation of the service. Long passages, especially those sung at length by the cantor, will no longer be boring. The slower the better, since the slow motion permits additional time for translation. Of course,

many will experience difficulty when the initial attempts are made. However, as additional vocabulary is acquired, greater success will be achieved.

—Canadian Jewish Chronicle.

Modern Hebrew Literature

Modern Hebrew Literature: Trends and Values, by Simon Malkin. Published by Schocken Books, New York, 1950. Pp. 238, \$3.

REVIEWED BY I. AMIEL

It is no exaggeration to say that the main body of modern Hebrew literature anything like its rightful place as an integral aspect of the Jewish national movement. Generally it has been, and to a large extent still is, regarded as a highly admirable achievement, but scarcely one to be taken seriously; it was

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the province of the intellectual and the dreamer rather than of the 'practical' Zionist immersed in his day-to-day tasks in the political sphere. There is, of course, the unanswerable fact that the overwhelming majority of Zionists lack an ade-

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