AMERICAN
JEWISH
YEAR BOOK
American Jewish Year Book

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IN COMMEMORATION of the 300th anniversary of Jewish settlement in the United States the two previous volumes of the AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK (1955 and 1956) featured a series of articles on various aspects of the history of the American Jewish community. The present volume also celebrates a tercentenary—that of the resettlement of Jews in England in 1656. The author of “Three Centuries of Jewish Life in England, 1656–1956,” Sefton D. Temkin, is a former secretary of the Anglo-Jewish Association of Great Britain; his intimate knowledge of the English Jewish community has resulted in an article that the editors of the YEAR BOOK are confident will receive the same high regard as have the previous articles on American Jewry by Oscar Handlin, Nathan Glazer, Joseph Blau, and Herman D. Stein. We trust that these extended surveys of the two sister communities in America and Britain will contribute to mutual appreciation of each other's history, traditions, and distinctive characteristics.

The preparation of the bulk of the volume, consisting of summaries of events of concern to Jewish communities all over the world, met with special difficulties during 1956. The grave international crises that developed in the Middle East and Eastern Europe during October and November 1956 required a postponement for certain of the countries concerned of the usual cut-off date for the period under review from June 30, 1956, to November 30. The coverage in the present volume of the turbulent and rapidly shifting events of this critical period cannot help but be sketchy. It is anticipated that the next volume of the AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, to appear in the winter of 1958, will report on the current developments from a longer perspective and in greater detail.

Joseph Gordon, a member of the research staff of the Library of Jewish Information of the American Jewish Committee, and for six years the principal contributor to the section on Eastern Europe in the YEAR BOOK, died suddenly on May 9, 1956. Mr. Gordon was one of the country's outstanding authorities on the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. His contributions, based on careful documentary research as well as first-hand knowledge, have helped make the YEAR BOOK an invaluable repository of reliable information of Soviet policy in regards to Jews and Jewish issues, and on the status of Jewish life in the Soviet Union and its satellites. Mr. Gordon's death was a serious blow to the editors, both professionally and personally.

The sections reviewing developments in the United States during 1955–56 include several noteworthy features. The article on Jewish population prepared by Alvin Chenkin, director of the statistical unit of the Council of
Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, summarizes data secured in surveys of the Jewish communities of New Orleans, La., Pittsburgh, Pa., and Lynn, Mass. The article on civil rights by Theodore Leskes, of the staff of the American Jewish Committee, merits attention for its comprehensive review of school desegregation in the South as of the beginning of the school year in September 1956.

The editors are happy to offer an appreciation of the life and achievements of Albert Einstein by Jacob Bronowski, British scientist and author, as a lucid and understanding portrait of a great human being.

This volume will come off the press on the eve of the American Jewish Committee's celebration of its fiftieth anniversary. The committee is the copublisher of the Year Book and the organization responsible for editing this series since 1907. To commemorate the occasion the Year Book has initiated the preparation of a special article, "A History of the American Jewish Committee." This article, together with the committee's fiftieth annual report, is scheduled to appear in volume 59.

Certain staff changes should be recorded. Miss Dora Cohen, who had served as an extremely conscientious and able Year Book assistant since 1949, retired in July 1956. She was replaced by Mrs. Esta Marshall. The editors take this opportunity to welcome Mrs. Marshall to the Year Book staff, and to acknowledge her assistance in the preparation of this volume.

The editors also wish to thank Mrs. Stella Ettlinger of the Year Book staff for her technical assistance. Thanks are also due to Maurice J. Goldbloom, who helped in the editing of some of the manuscripts, to Dr. Moses Jung, who prepared the Hebrew calendars, to Mrs. Freda Imrey, who did the proofreading, and to Miss Martha Beckerman, who rendered special typing assistance.

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