Voices of the Western Sephardic Tradition in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century America

View PDF

Rabbi Marc D. Angel is Founder and Director of the Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals, and Editor of its journal, Conversations. This article appears in issue 29 of Conversations.

Rabbi Dr. Sabato Morais

Rabbi Dr. Sabato Morais (April 13, 1823–November 11, 1897) was described by a New York Yiddish newspaper as "without doubt…the greatest of all Orthodox rabbis in the United States." This encomium was written several years after the death of Morais, when a full picture of his life and accomplishments could be written with historical perspective.

Few today remember this remarkable religious leader; even fewer see him as a model of enlightened Orthodox Judaism whose example might be followed by modern-day Jews. Yet, Sabato Morais was a personality who deserves our attention—and our profound respect.

Born in Livorno, of Portuguese-Jewish background, he was raised in the Sephardic traditions of his community. As a young rabbi, he became the Director of the Orphan's School of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation of London, where he served for five years. In 1851, he began serving as rabbi of Congregation Mikveh Israel, the historic Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue of Philadelphia. He remained with Mikveh Israel for nearly five decades, until his death toward the end of 1897.

Rabbi Dr. Alan Corre, who served as rabbi of Mikveh Israel from 1955 to 1963, wrote an appreciation of his early predecessor. He noted that "in everything he [Morais] writes and does, he comes across as a warm, loving, eminently humane individual, with self-respect, yet remarkably free of egotism for a man in public life who was the recipient of much honor, including an honorary degree from the University of Pennsylvania." Rabbi Morais sought "to live as a Jew without qualifiers, one who revered and loved the Jewish tradition and desired greatly to perpetuate it."

Dr. Corre has pointed out that Rabbi Morais is somewhat of an enigma to many, in the sense that he cannot be easily classified according to the ideologies and styles of the major branches of American Jewish life today:

Orthodox as he was in practice, he does not fulfill the role model of the Talmudic sage, and has about him a somewhat assimilated air at which the strictly Orthodox might well look askance. For the Conservative, he is insufficiently innovative, too unwilling to take religious risks. And of Reform, he was a life-long opponent.

Rabbi Morais was a fine representative of the Western Sephardic rabbinic tradition of his time. Western Sephardim valued general culture, refinement, orderliness, and social responsibility. They fostered a Judaism that was loyal to traditional ritual, while at the same time being worldly and intellectually open. Personal piety was to be humble, not ostentatious.

Rabbi Morais wrote: “True worship resides in the heart, and truly it is by purifying our hearts that we best worship God; still, the ordinances which we are enjoined to perform aim at this object: to sanctify our immortal soul, to make it worthy of its sublime origin.”

He laid great stress on ethical behavior, on compassion, on concern for others. He worked not only on behalf of the Jewish community, but showed concern for society as a whole. He was a vocal opponent of slavery and an avid admirer of President Abraham Lincoln. He supported the cause of American Indians; he spoke against the Chinese Exclusion Acts during the 1880s. He cried out against the persecution of Armenians in 1895. Working together with Jewish and non-Jewish clergy, he fostered an ecumenical outlook that called for all people to respect each other and to work for shared goals to improve the quality of life for everyone. In all of his work, Rabbi Morais did not seek glory or public recognition. He was compassionate, graceful, and idealistic. Perhaps it was his self-effacing style that won him so much admiration and respect from so many. They saw him as an authentic religious personality, not as one who was serving his own ego.

Arthur Kiron, in a fascinating article that appeared in *American Jewish History*, September 1996, observed that “those who knew and loved Morais repeatedly referred to him in their memorial tributes in idealized terms, as a religious role model, a prophet like Jeremiah, a man of constancy, duty, absolute sincerity, piety, and humility.”

One of Morais’s eulogizers described him as follows:

For the critical eye of man [Morais] has left behind no visible monuments of great achievements, but to the eye of God he has reared a monument far greater than any of those famed by man. That greatness was his goodness, which in point of intrinsic merit will compare with the greatest wonders of genius. Were it possible for man to measure the amount of good he dispensed among the sorrowing and afflicted…the historian would not hesitate to enroll his name among the world’s truest and noblest immortals….To do good was the first duty of his creed, to do it in silence always, and in secrecy wherever possible, was his second.

Rabbi Morais and his New York colleague Rabbi Henry Pereira Mendes were co-founders of the Jewish Theological Seminary. They had hoped that this institution would train American-born Orthodox rabbis to lead congregations throughout America. These two rabbis of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregations of Philadelphia and New York worked closely on other communal projects, always in a spirit of devotion to God and community. They both sought to promote a Judaism loyal to tradition, committed to social justice, marked by dignity and gravitas.

Orthodoxy of today is often characterized by increasing narrowness, obscurantism, authoritarianism, and xenophobia. Orthodox rabbis of the ilk of Rabbi Morais are a vanishing breed. The classic Western

Sephardic religious worldview is on the verge of extinction. What a phenomenal loss this is for Judaism and the Jewish People!

Yet, as we remember the life of Rabbi Sabato Morais, we know that the memory of the righteous is a blessing. It continues to influence and inspire. The stature and vision of Rabbi Morais will emerge to guide new generations in an Orthodox Judaism that is faithful to tradition, cultured, refined, genuinely pious, humane, and humble. “Happy the man who has found wisdom, the man who has obtained understanding.”

The following is excerpted from Marc D. Angel, *Remnant of Israel: A Portrait of America’s First Jewish Congregation—Shearith Israel*, Riverside Books, New York, 2004.)

The 1880s ushered in a period of mass immigration, with many hundreds of thousands of Jews among those seeking a new life in America. Some immigrants were fleeing oppression, and some were simply seeking a better life for themselves and their families. The image of America as a promised land with streets paved of gold attracted the poor and downtrodden of Europe. Between 1880 and 1900, the U.S. population surged 50 percent, from 50 million to 75 million.

Among the throngs of Jewish immigrants were many who were fleeing the pogroms and persecutions in Tsarist Russia. Most entered the country though the port of New York, and a large majority remained in New York City and environs. To Americanized Jews, their incoming coreligionists posed new challenges. The newcomers, for the most part, were poor, unfamiliar with English, and unskilled by American standards. They were very much “old country” in their garb, language, religious outlook, and manners. They needed places to live, jobs, schools for their children, and medical care. In short, they needed help in adapting to American life.

The Jewish immigrants crowded into tenements on the Lower East Side of New York, eventually also spreading out to other neighborhoods in uptown Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. The native American Jewish community established agencies to help the immigrants, and expended considerable energy and resources to assist them. Certainly, there were sometimes tensions between them culturally, economically, and socially. Yet, to the credit of the New York Jewish community in particular—and American Jewry in general—much good work was done to assist in the absorption of the immigrants into American life.

Emma Lazarus

Emma Lazarus (1849–1887), a descendant of old and distinguished Shearith Israel families, became an ardent spokesperson on behalf of these immigrants. She spent time with Russian-Jewish families in their tenement homes and sought ways to alleviate their misery. A noted poet in her day, she expressed her empathy with the plight of immigrants and gave voice to American idealism at its finest. Her poem, “The New Colossus” was inscribed on a plaque and affixed to the Statue of Liberty in 1903. In it, she wrote her now famous words:

Give me your tired, your poor

Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,

The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,

I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

Among the millions of Jews who arrived in the United States between 1880 and 1924 were 30,000 to 40,000 Sephardim who were mostly from Turkey, the Balkan countries, Greece, and Syria. The existing Jewish agencies that helped immigrants were geared for Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazic Jews like themselves. They did not easily recognize the Sephardim as Jews because the Sephardim did not have what they thought of as typical "Jewish" names and because they did not speak Yiddish.

The Sisterhood [of Shearith Israel] established an "Oriental Committee," whose sole task was to work with newly arrived Sephardim. The Sisterhood operated settlement houses on the Lower East Side specifically for the Sephardim. The one at 86 Orchard Street opened in 1913, and a larger one at 133 Eldridge Street opened in 1918. These settlement houses provide social services, advice, meeting places, youth programs, a Hebrew School, and even a synagogue.

Shearith Israel's spiritual leader, Dr. Henry Pereira Mendes, was very interested in the welfare of the immigrant Sephardim. His assistant, Rabbi Dr. David de Sola Pool, worked most actively with the Sisterhood's "Oriental Committee" and with the Sephardic immigrants themselves. He represented Sephardic interests at meetings of Jewish social workers and charity agencies, and wrote articles explaining their background and needs to the Jewish community at large.

Shearith Israel's commitment to the Sephardic immigrants entailed a remarkable expenditure of time, effort, and money. Had Shearith Israel performed no other public service at the time, the congregation would still have reason for pride in its social action work. However, the social conscience of the congregation found expression in other causes as well. Several members of Shearith Israel made particularly notable contributions to the improvement of life in New York City—and well beyond.

Maud Nathan

Maud Nathan (1862–1946) was a social activist and a strong advocate of women's rights. She was a leader in the women's suffrage movement and was appointed by Theodore Roosevelt as the head of the women's suffrage committee in his National Progressive Party. She became an international figure in the women's rights movement, addressing conferences on the topic in such places as London, Lucerne, Stockholm, Budapest, The Hague, Canton, and Peking.

Maud Nathan was once confronted by an opponent of women's rights. The critic asked her derisively: "Would you want your cook to vote?" She answered calmly: "He does!"

A member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Maud Nathan had deep roots in American life. A member of Shearith Israel, she was imbued with a commitment to public service. She was a founder, and the first President, of Shearith Israel's Sisterhood, established in 1896.

Throughout the nineteenth century, almost all charity and social action work in New York was conducted on a denominational basis. Protestants, Catholics, and Jews each had their own separate institutions and agencies to meet the needs of their communities.

By the end of the nineteenth century, individuals from the different religious groups began working together. Maud Nathan was one of the first Jewish women in American to be involved on the highest levels in a social action cause that crossed denominational lines.

Josephine Shaw Lowell, a prominent personality in the New York social service world, invited Maud Nathan to become involved in the work of the Consumers' League of New York, which was founded in 1891. Maud Nathan not only joined this group, but went on to serve as its President from 1897 to 1917. She also served as Vice-President of the National Consumers' League that developed on the model of the New York Consumers' League.

In her work for the Consumers' League, she and her colleagues addressed the terrible working conditions of young women clerks in New York's department stores and shops. The basic insight of the Consumers' League was that the problem was caused not just by the callousness of employers but by the thoughtlessness of consumers. If shoppers would demand proper conditions for store workers, the employers would be forced to comply. The Consumers' League printed a "white list" naming the stores that met at least the minimum standards required by the League. At first, only a few stores earned the right to be included on the list. It soon became clear, though, that consumers were becoming sympathetic to the cause. More and more shoppers were patronizing "white list" stores and many were refusing to shop in stores that exploited their workers.

Through persistent hard work and ongoing negotiations with employers, the Consumers' League brought about a revolution in working conditions for the store clerks. The success was so monumental that other cities and states copied the New York model, which won adherents internationally as well. Maud Nathan described the history of the Consumers' League in a book she wrote called *The Story of an Epoch-Making Movement*.

Through her work for the women's suffrage movement and in the Consumers' League, Maud Nathan left an imprint on American history. In eulogizing her at her funeral on December 15, 1946, Rabbi David de Sola Pool referred to "her strong spiritual insight." She is noteworthy for having been able to translate her spiritual insight and idealism into practical action that helped her fellow human beings.

Maud Nathan was outspoken in her criticism of anti-Semitism and racial prejudice. She felt that group hatred and bigotry were increasing in New York during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. In her autobiography, *Once Upon a Time and Today*, she reminded her readers:

Prejudice produces humiliation which is not easy to bear. And the sad part is that the nature becomes warped and the spirit of kindliness and friendliness is changed into bitterness and resentment. To live in peace, there must be mutual confidence, trust, cooperation, no antagonism. How often, instead of mutual respect for differing spiritual values, there is suspicion, intolerance. Does not this intolerance find its final expression in the un-American principles of the Ku Klux Klan?

She saw herself as a victim of discrimination, both as a woman and as a Jew. Still, she took pride in the fact that he had "been able to make her protest count, because she persisted." She devoted her life to advocating the American—and Jewish—ideals of freedom, mutual respect, and social justice.

Alice Davis Menken

A remarkable contemporary of Maud Nathan, also an active leader within the Shearith Israel community, was Alice Davis Menken (1870–1936). She, too, descended from early Shearith Israel families who had served in the American Revolution. Her husband, Mortimer Menken, was a successful New York attorney, and served as Parnas of Shearith Israel from 1922 to 1926. Alice Menken was President of Shearith Israel's Sisterhood from 1900 to 1929.

Alice Menken's interest in helping shape a better society went further [than the Sisterhood's operation of settlement houses on the Lower East Side]. She was troubled by evidence of delinquency and vice among poor young Jewish immigrants. These young people often grew up in horrendous conditions, and it is no wonder that some of them fell into anti-social behavior. Alice Menken believed that the way to deal with such individuals was through genuine, kind assistance and not through punishment. The goal was to rehabilitate them, not to harden them. In 1907, she was a prime mover in founding the Jewish Board of Guardians, which created a system of volunteers to look after wayward young people. Volunteers were given responsibility for supervising Jewish youth who had been placed on court-ordered probation.

In 1908, she organized a group of women from the Shearith Israel Sisterhood to work with the probation department of the Women's Night Court of New York City. The Sisterhood group took responsibility for delinquent women so that they would not have to be incarcerated. In 1911, she helped found the Jewish Big Sister Association, through which women would "adopt" young women who were at risk of leading anti-social lives. Through one-to-one relationships, the "big sisters" could help guide the "little sisters" to constructive and fulfilling lives.

Alice Menken set a personal example for service. In the period from 1919 to 1922, in cooperation with the probation department, 346 probationers were under her own supervision—for as long a period as required by each of them. The average age of these women was 20, and 197 of them were foreign-born. Alice Menken spent time getting to know the young women, and assessing their needs and wants. She sought to find ways of helping them to help themselves. Almost all of the women for whom she took responsibility went on to live better lives—returning home, finding jobs, establishing families of their own. In at least one case, Alice Menken took a probationer home to live in her own house, making her part of her own family for several years! The young woman went on to live a good life, and was ever appreciative of this incredible generosity of spirit.

In 1920, Governor Alfred E. Smith appointed Alice Menken to serve as a member of the Board of Managers of the Reformatory. In this capacity, she strove to improve prison conditions and to eliminate solitary confinement. She believed that prisoners needed an environment that offered them the possibility of rehabilitation.

In 1933, she published a book entitled *On the Side of Mercy*, in which she discussed her philosophy (and her actions) relating to problems in social readjustment. She wrote:

> We must seek a balanced philosophy of life. We must live to make the world worth living in, with new ideals, less suffering, and more joy….And when the cry of distress is heard from those overtaken by moral disability, organizations and individuals whose creeds are different, but whose ideals are one, respond in full measure. In this way the new generation, maturing during these years of depression, will be cheered to action and taught something of human and spiritual values.

The Religious Vision of Rev. Dr. Henry Pereira Mendes

(This is an article by Rabbi Marc D. Angel that originally appeared in a book he edited, *From Strength to Strength,* Sepher-Hermon Press, New York, 1998, pp. 21–28.)

Dr. Mendes served as Minister of Congregation Shearith Israel from 1877 through 1920. He continued to be associated with the Congregation as Minister Emeritus until his death in 1937. During the course of these 60 years, Dr. Mendes established himself as a remarkable communal leader, scholar, and author.

Born in Birmingham, England, Henry Pereira Mendes grew up in a family well-known for its history of producing religious leaders. Indeed, his father Abraham was Minister of the Jewish congregation in Birmingham. H. P. Mendes received his early religious education and inspiration from his parents and as a young man served as Hazan and Minister of the Sephardic congregation in Manchester. While in New York, he studied and graduated from the medical school of New York University. In 1890, he was married to Rosalie Rebecca Piza.

Dr. Mendes was proud to be the religious leader of the oldest Jewish congregation in North America. From this base, he promoted numerous communal and social ideals and causes.

He was one of the leading Orthodox rabbis in the United States. Although he was Sephardic, he won the good will of the entire Orthodox community, including the Yiddish-speaking immigrants. He was a founder and the first president of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America (1898). He was also one of the founders of the Jewish Theological Seminary (1887), which he and his collaborators intended to be an institution that would produce English-speaking Orthodox rabbis.

While staunchly Orthodox, he worked with all Jews for the betterment of the community. He was among the founders of the New York Board of Rabbis and was one of the early presidents of the organization. In 1885, he helped organize a branch of the Alliance Israelite Universelle in New York. He also was instrumental in the founding of the YWHA in New York, as well as Montefiore Hospital and the Lexington School for the Deaf.

Dr. Mendes was proud of the fact that Theodor Herzl asked his cooperation in organizing the Zionist movement in the United States. Dr. Mendes was elected vice-president of the Federation of American Zionists and a member of the actions committee of the World Zionist Organization. He advocated “Bible Zionism” or “spiritual Zionism”—an idea of establishing a Jewish State founded upon the principles and ideals of the Jewish religious tradition.

A prolific author, Dr. Mendes wrote essays and editorials, children’s stories, textbooks, sermons, prayers, dramatic works, poetry, and commentaries. His writings were imbued with the love of the Bible.

Rabbi Bernard Drachman, a colleague of Dr. Mendes, described him as “an ideal representative of Orthodox Judaism.” He praised Mendes’ “absolute freedom…from anything approaching narrowness or sectarian bias within the Jewish community.”

Dr. Mendes served Shearith Israel with outstanding devotion. He was a champion of the synagogue’s traditions. At a time when reform and change were the popular catchwords, Dr. Mendes was an eloquent voice for tradition.

The religious vision of Dr. Mendes is reflected in the titles of his main books: *Jewish History Ethically Presented* (1895), *The Jewish Religion Ethically Presented* (1895), and *Jewish Life Ethically Presented* (1917). In 1934, he prepared a little volume of prayers and meditations for home use “to promote and facilitate the habit of prayer.”

Dr. Mendes' religious outlook was deeply steeped in the Hebrew Bible. The verses of Scripture served as the basis of an ethical and compassionate way of life. In *The Jewish Religion Ethically Presented,* he demonstrated his method of thought. He began each section with a citation from the Bible, and then provided the traditional lessons that were derived from the text. He then added his own elaboration of moral lessons that could be rooted in the biblical text. And then he offered a series of biblical quotations to close each section.

For example, in dealing with the third of the Ten Commandments (Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain), Dr. Mendes provided the traditional explanations of this commandment. It is forbidden to use God's name in a disrespectful way, for a false oath, or for any wrong purpose. Likewise, this commandment is violated whenever one says prayers without concentration and reverent devotion. Dr. Mendes added the ethical component: "We take His name in vain, or to no purpose, if we speak of God being good, just, merciful, etc., without trying ourselves to be good, just, merciful, etc." We must be loving, merciful and forgiving, in emulation of God's ways.

Dr. Mendes then offered a number of extensions to this commandment:

We are children of God. We are called by His name. When we do wrong, we disgrace or profane His name. Hence a disgraceful act is called *Chilul Hashem,* a profanation of the Name. And just as all the members of a family feel any disgrace that any one of them incurs, so when any Hebrew does wrong, the disgrace is felt by all Jews. We are known as the people of God. We assume His name in vain unless we obey His Laws….We take or assume His name in vain when we call ourselves by His name and say we are His children or His people, while for our convenience or ease we neglect religious duties which He has commanded us. (*The Jewish Religion Ethically Presented,* revised edition, 1912, pp. 59–60)

In elaborating on the commandment to honor one's parents, Dr. Mendes stated:

To honor parents, ministers of religion, the aged, the learned, our teachers and authorities is a sign of the highest type of true manliness and of true womanliness. Respect for parents is essential to the welfare of society…..Anarchy or the absence of respect for authority, always brings ruin. Respect for all the authorities is insisted upon in the Bible. (p. 64)

In discussing the commandment prohibiting murder, Dr. Mendes noted that "we may not kill a man's good name or reputation, nor attack his honor. We do so when we act as a tale-bearer or slanderer." He goes on to say that "we may not kill a man's business….Respect for human life carries with it respect for anyone's livelihood. We may not make it hard for others to live by reason of our own greed" (pp. 65–66).

Dr. Mendes constantly emphasized the need for religion to be a steady and constant force in one's life. True religion is expressed not merely in ceremonials, but in our conduct in all aspects of our daily life. In his *Jewish Daily Life Ethically Presented* (1917), he taught that

our religion thus requires threefold work from us: we must work for our own happiness, we must work for the happiness of the world we live in, and we must work for the glory of God. Our dietary laws

mean healthy bodies and healthy minds to be able to do this threefold work. (p. 57)

He argued that the laws of kashruth, by governing everything we eat, add a spiritual and ethical dimension to this basic human need.

Dr. Mendes wrote.

Our daily work, no matter how important or how menial, if we perform it conscientiously, becomes equivalent to an act of worship. It therefore means setting God before us as the One we desire to please by the faithful discharge of our daily duties. This kind of recognition of good faith, honesty and honor means religion. Conscientiousness is religion. We must therefore do our work conscientiously. We should derive spiritual happiness out of labor by recognizing that God consecrates labor. (p. 59)

Dr. Mendes often expressed his philosophy in witty epigrams. A number of these were collected by Dr. David de Sola Pool in his biography of Dr. Mendes. The following are some examples of Dr. Mendes' wit and wisdom.

- In too many homes religion is a farce, not a force.
- I plead, let every man and woman privately commune with God to place his or her heart-needs before Him.
- I plead for Sabbath observance.
- The three greats R's: Reverence, Righteousness, and Responsibility.
- Democracy is the ideal form of government, but it needs ideal citizens.
- Music helps us find God.
- Let us have less fault-finding and more fault-mending.
- Speak to the young; but first to the old.
- To be accorded all of little Palestine is not too great a reward for having given the world the Bible.
- Peace for the world at last and the realization of reverence for God by all men. These are the essentials for human happiness. Zionism stands for them.

Dr. Mendes was an avid Zionist; the focus of his Zionism was the religious and spiritual revival of the Jewish people, so that a Jewish state would become a spiritual inspiration to the entire world. He felt that the goals of Zionism could not be accomplished unless the Jews themselves were faithful to their religious traditions. Moreover, he believed it was necessary to win the support and respect of the non-Jewish world. "That respect we can have only if we respect ourselves by respecting our religion. Here is true work for Zionists: to keep Hebrews true to Jewish life, Jewish law, Jewish sentiment" (letter of Dr. Mendes to Haham Gaster, July 21, 1903, published in *Tradition*, Fall 1995, p. 70).

In spite of his tireless efforts and his eloquent expositions, Dr. Mendes realized that many Jews were turning away from the Jewish religious traditions. Compromises in religious observance were being made for reasons of convenience or ideology. The level of serious Jewish learning was declining. He struggled with singular devotion to raise the Jewish people to a higher level of knowledge and observance, a deep-felt spirituality, a God-inspired ethical worldview.

In 1911, he delivered a sermon at Shearith Israel, after he had recovered from a serious illness. He reminisced about past challenges that he and the Congregation had faced together.

In looking over the years that have sped, there are times when I think that I have failed to bring religion's holy teachings into the hearts of all this Congregation, and therefore I have failed to do His will….I do know that I have failed to bring into the lives of all the members of the Congregation that spirituality which alone can make us all sons and daughters of God in the highest sense, that spirituality of life which makes us willing, eager, anxious to do His will….It is true, and I thank God for it, that many of you are working hard to bring religion into actual life. You strive to have your children as loyal as you are, and as your parents before you were; you strive to bring sunshine into the lives of others; your communal and congregational activities are splendid….But I repeat, I confess to failure in influencing the lives of those of this Congregation who rarely or never set foot in this holy building; who hold aloof from congregational and communal work; in whose homes Sabbath is forgotten, from whose homes all Jewish characteristics are banished; who forget that constant absence from Sabbath worship, gradually, insidiously, but invariably disintegrates the Jewishness of the home and of all its inmates, and invariably precedes that desertion from our religion which we understand by the expression "he or she has married out."… Let us both try to prove our gratitude to God by doing His will. Then, come sorrow, come trial, come defeat, come death itself, the God who alone knows the human heart, who alone can read the inmost soul, shall judge whether you and I have labored in vain, whether you and I have spent our strength for naught, and in vain—for surely our judgement shall be with the Lord and our work shall be before our God.

In his 60 years of association with Shearith Israel, Dr. Mendes faced many challenges and had many accomplishments. He was proud, yet modest; forceful, yet gentle; spiritual, yet practical. His memory has continued to influence and inspire the generations which have followed.

Bibliography

Angel, Marc, "Mendes, Henry Pereira," in *Jewish-American History and Culture: An Encyclopedia,* edited by J. Fischel and S. Pinsker, New York and London, 1992, pp. 386–387.

Markovitz, Eugene, "Henry Pereira Mendes: Architect of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* Vol. 55 (1965), pp. 364–384. See also the doctoral dissertation of Eugene Markovitz, *H. P. Mendes: Builder of Traditional Judaism in America,* Yeshiva University, 1961.

Pool, David and Tamar, *An Old Faith in the New World,* New York, 1955, pp. 192–201.

Pool, David de Sola, *H. P. Mendes: A Biography,* New York, 1938.