

HON. MYER S. ISAACS, *late President of Board of Trustees Baron de Hirsch Fund, President of Hebrew Free School Association, 1881 to 1892, Vice-President of Educational Alliance, 1890-1895.*

The life-long experience in educational and charitable work and the various positions he held in the several New York institutions of this character, naturally led to the selection of Judge Isaacs as President of the Board of Trustees of the Baron de Hirsch Fund. That he has fulfilled the expectations of his associates goes without saying. While the duties of this office have required time, labor, thought and study, he has given all this cheerfully, thankful that the means were thus placed at his command to assist in solving the great problem of Jewish immigration, by providing for the education and advancement of the vast number of Jewish immigrants who annually arrive at the port of New York that this and other communities should not be unduly burdened with them. The immense work accomplished during the past few years in this direction is an evidence of the wisdom and good judgment of the man at the head of its affairs as well as the confidence reposed in him by his associates.

For considerably over a quarter of a century Judge Isaacs has been a leader in most of the great charitable and educational enterprises that have been undertaken in New York. His important field of operations was on the East Side in connection with the Hebrew Free School Association. He not only felt a personal interest in the institution, which he helped to found, but he had a personal pride in carrying forward the work in which his father was so deeply interested, and of which he was the principal founder. Judge Isaacs watched its growth from year to year with earnest solicitude and introduced many new features for the advancement and improvement of the children. He was its Secretary at the beginning and Director and President for nearly thirty years. Many changes in its manage-

ment took place during these years, but Judge Isaac remained steadfastly in the work he had undertaken, and so continued until the Hebrew Free School Association merged into the Educational Alliance. As Vice-President of the latter he contributed materially to its success, and his interest in the Hebrew children has in no wise abated. Many of those to whom he lent a helping hand years ago have been successful in the various occupations they have chosen, and cherish tender grateful recollections of their benefactors.

Not many men in his profession could afford to devote so much time to gratuitous work. To him, however, it was both a duty and a pleasure. The satisfaction of knowing that he was promoting the happiness of thousands of his fellow men and constantly improving their condition was sufficient reward for him. The pleasure of giving one's time and talents by a work of this kind far exceeds that of the religious devotee who from a sense of duty gives his "tithes and offerings" to the service of God.

Mr. Isaacs was Secretary of the Congregation Shaary Tifila, 1858-1870; Secretary of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, 1859-1876; President of same, 1877-1880; President of Hebrew Free School Association, 1881-1892; Vice-President Educational Alliance, 1891-1895; President of Baron de Hirsch Fund, 1890-1903. In 1873 he took the initiative in organizing the United Hebrew Charities. He was also prominent in the organization of the Montefiore Home for the Aged and Infirm, the Hebrew Technical Institute and the Purim Association, of which he was the first President. He called the meeting in December, 1881, to consider the condition of the emigrants fleeing from Russia and was one of the committee of the Aid Society, which founded and assisted colonies in Kansas, Dakota and New Jersey, and he was Chairman of the committee in charge of the Crimieux Memorial of 1881, and took part in the obsequies of Larker and in the Montefiore memorial services.

Hon. Myer S. Isaacs is the son of Rev. Samuel Myer and Jane (Symonds) Isaacs. He was born in New York City May 8, 1841. He received from his parents an exceptional home training. He attended Forests' Collegiate School, and, in 1856, entered the New York University, where he was

awarded all the prizes of Freshmen and Sophomore years and graduated in 1859. In 1862 he graduated from the New York University Law School and was admitted to the Bar of New York the same day he reached his majority. He adopted as his particular department of practice real estate law, wills and trusts, in which he acquired an extensive practice and has for years been recognized as a leading authority in this line. He lectured for some years before the classes of the law school of the New York University on the Examination of Titles to Real Estate and kindred subjects, and received from that college the degrees A. M. and L. L. M.

Judge Isaacs has been constantly interested in real estate movements; was for several years a Director and Vice-President of the Real Estate Exchange and has, since its organization been on the Committee of Council of the Lawyers' Title Insurance Co., and a Director of the Lawyers' Mortgage Insurance Co. He has borne an active part in legislation simplifying titles to real property.

Judge Isaacs has had a large experience in literary and journalistic work. He was associated with his father and brothers in editing and publishing the *Jewish Messenger* for more than twenty years. He has also contributed to other publications. The title "Judge" came to him in 1880, when he was appointed by Governor Cornell judge of the Marine Court of the City of New York. He was one of the originators of Sound Money Clubs in 1896, and active in the national campaign of 1900. He was a member of the Committee of Fifty-three on Reform Legislation, New York, 1884, co-operating with the Roosevelt, Republican Club Committee proposing amendments to State Constitution, 1894; Commissioner appointed by Mayor Strong, 1897, as to Small Parks and Play Grounds; as Commissioner Outdoor Recreation League assisted in establishing Seward Park, on East Broadway and Canal Street, and Roof Playgrounds of Hebrew Institute; he co-operated in the movement for improved dwellings for the poor and other civic movements, etc.

As President of the Baron de Hirsch Fund and Woodbine Land and Improvement Company he took an active part in the building up of the settlement, industrial and agricultural, at Woodbine, Cape May County, N. J., beginning in 1891 with about sixty families of Russian immigrants, and now

a borough of two thousand inhabitants. In 1893 he suggested the establishment of an Agricultural School at Woodbine, and in 1903 this school had over 100 students and has graduated many bright young men who are now engaged in agricultural pursuits and some of them have held positions of trust in this and other agricultural institutes.

Judge Isaacs has taken a prominent part in all the great political reform movements during the past few years. He assisted in the reorganization of the Republican party in New York City in 1892; in the organization of the Citizens' Union in 1897, and whenever and wherever any public movement has been made to improve the moral and political condition of his native city he has been found working shoulder to shoulder with the best class of citizens regardless of party affiliations. He is a member of the New York City, State and American Bar Associations, Civil Service Reform Association, Academy of Political Science, American Academy of Science, City Club, Republican Club, Phi Beta Kappa Society, etc. He was a candidate for judge of the New York Supreme Court on the Citizens and Republican ticket in 1898, and, though defeated, he ran several thousand ahead of his ticket.

The busy strenuous life led by Judge Isaacs has in no way impaired his energies, either mental or physical and advancing years have set lightly on his shoulders. The elastic step and quick movements indicate only early middle life. He is courteous and pleasing in his manner, showing the natural development of those noble family traits for which his father was noted. He represents the highest qualities of the American citizen combined with the best and noblest traits of his race.

Judge Isaacs is the author of the following publications: *Jewish Persecution of the Jews in Roumania* (1895), *Jewish Question in Russia* (1882), *American Israelite* (1886), *Final Report of Board of Delegates* (1887), *Sampson Sunson* (1902) and of many contributions to the press.

Judge Isaac married, February 10, 1869, Maria Soloman, daughter of Barnet L. and Julia (Hart) Soloman, who died in 1889. The result of this marriage is

Grace Aguilar, deceased 1880.

PROGRESSIVE, PATRIOTIC AND PHILANTHROPIC HEBREWS OF THE NEW WORLD.

Minnie Hart Isaacs, Secretary of Women's Council, New York.

Alice Maria Isaacs, tutor in Botany Normal College.

Estelle M. Isaacs, A. B. Normal College, teacher in United Hebrew Charities Religious School.

Julian Myer Isaacs, B. S. New York University, 1893. L.L. B., 1896.

Louis Montifiore Isaacs, A. B. N. Y. University, 1897. L.L. B., Columbia, 1900.

Stanley Meyer Isaacs, Columbia. 1903.