

The RYS Daily 3/30/07 Public and Political Action XIV

From The Mussar Movement, Volume 1, Part 1, pages 288 - 289.

The entire Russo-Jewish press was open to the Maskilim: Hamelitz, Hamaggid, etc. These periodicals opened their columns to articles mocking and reviling the rabbis, using every expression of contempt, and denigrating them and the Torah as well. Some writers openly advocated reforms in religion," and the like. Several of the Torah authorities contemptuously dismissed their antagonists with a sweep of the hand, and saw no point in refuting, or entering into debate with them. R. Israel did not agree. He held the view that one must remain constantly on the alert, and use all modern means and methods to fight back. Traditional Jewry had to produce its own literary expression which would answer the fools according to their folly and carry the war into enemy territory.

The only journal to which the rabbis had access was Halevanon, published in Paris. R. Israel accordingly approached Dr. Marcus Lehmann of Mainz, editor of Der Israelit to produce a Hebrew periodical. The latter made the securing of 1,000 pre-publication subscribers a precondition. R. Israel hesitated to accept such a responsibility. Other hindrances arose as well, and the scheme never materialized. Later, however, an agreement was reached through the influence and support of R. Israel and R. Elijah Levinsohn that Halevanon be edited by Dr. Lehmann and appear as a supplement to Der Israelit. From then onwards the journal became the mouthpiece of the rabbis and the faithful followers of Torah-true Judaism against the Maskilim and the destructive influences of all kinds. For twenty years, it stood guard over the interests of Torah-true Jewry.

Earlier issues of The RYS Daily are at <http://www.stevens.edu/golem/llevine/salanter/>