I-TELL-YOU

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RODEPH SHALOM RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
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"Before they spring forth, I tell you of them."—Isaiah XIII 9.

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DEDICATED TO OUR 125TH HANNUKAH

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Editorial

One Hundred Twenty-five Hannukahs! Is not that a marvelous achievement? That many years ago our ancestors, the founders of our great Congregation, lit the Hannukah lights just as we do today. But they were not merely lighting lights. They were emblazoning the name of Rodeph Shalom throughout the world. Their lights have shown the path of righteousness, peace and understanding, of which Rodeph Shalom is so proud. So we today, as we light our lights, must show the way for one hundred twenty-five years more. Are you doing it? Are you laying the foundations for an upright, steadfast life? Are you laying the foundations for many more glorious years for Rodeph Shalom? May these Hannukah lights arouse in you the spirit to seek Peace, which is our aim and our Ideal. And thus may we all live to see the coming of a new era of Peace and Brotherhood among men. May "I-Tell-You" become a force in helping us cherish the ideal of Rodeph Shalom. It shall—with your co-operation!

Our Congregation

BOYS AND GIRLS:
During my year with Rodeph Shalom, I have been particularly impressed with the loyalty of your parents to the Congregation. I have rarely met with a group that is so deeply and sincerely proud of its congregational life and history.

And when I seek the cause for their loyalty and their pride, I do not have to look far. Their parents and grandparents have been members of Rodeph Shalom for four, five and even six generations. Some of them occupy seats in the Synagogue that were owned by their grandparents. Of course, we all love that which has been held sacred by our families for many, many years.

But they have even greater reasons than this. In that Synagogue they have said the old prayers of Israel, the prayers which have been woven into our Book for two thousand years; it is the building where your parents learned the Faith which they love; it is the place where they went to religious school; here they heard the Bible read, that great Book which Israel treasures so much, and which has always been the guide of his life, and his comfort in every sorrow; and your parents came to their Synagogue in every experience of life. When they were in joy or in trouble, whenever they wanted to celebrate Sabbath or Holy Days, whenever they wished to meet with their dear ones, or whenever there was a prayer in their heart to God—they came to their Synagogue building.

Just the other day they celebrated the 125th anniversary of the Congregation. That is a remarkable fact. It makes us think of what America was and what Judaism in America was one hundred and twenty-five years ago. The Colonies had just concluded their War of Independence, and had established the Constitution and formed themselves into a Nation. There were probably not over two thousand Jews in all of the thirteen Colonies at that time, and yet there were a few in Philadelphia who were eager to establish a congregation; and they did it humbly, with the help of God.

Read the "History of Rodeph Shalom," and see how it began in a modest way, and how it has grown through all these years. As America grew, so did Rodeph Shalom grow, and great men spoke from its pulpit—men who have gone into the Unseen, but who will be remembered as long as Rodeph Shalom stands. Dr. Marcus Jastrow, Dr. Henry Berkowitz, Rabbi Eli Mayer—these are names that
have been woven unforgettable into the history of Rodeph Shalom, and make not alone us, but our parents, realize for how much we have to be thankful.

And did you notice the way in which your parents celebrated the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Anniversary? Among other things, they had a great banquet, where nearly eight hundred people came together. There they resolved to tear down the present building and erect a modern building, together with the Sunday School and Social Center. No longer will our Sunday School building be removed from the Synagogue. Your parents and your friends testified to their loyalty to Rodeph Shalom by subscribing and pledging large contributions with which to make good their resolutions to build a new building. When they stood up to announce their donations, they made great sacrifices, but they did it because they knew the work and the future of Rodeph Shalom deserved it. They were not happy over the prospect of tearing down their old building, because it has stood at Broad and Mt. Vernon Streets for fifty-eight years, and they have come to love it.

But they are doing all of this for you. If they cannot teach and practice and love their Judaism with the old building, then they mean so to build that the children may come to love their Faith as they do. As their parents and grandparents erected this building, so do they mean to leave you something of which you may be proud, something whereby you will carry forward the Faith with as much love and zeal as they have done throughout their lives.

Greater than our Synagogue is Judaism; greater than Judaism is God; and while buildings may come and buildings may go, our religion—like the Word of God—will go on forever.

We plan a beautiful and majestic Synagogue. It will be worthy of us and of Philadelphia. Every provision will be made for you. We shall have large, light, airy and beautiful Sunday School rooms, and we shall build large enough to take care of a thousand children. We shall have a large auditorium and theatre with a fine stage, where we may have interesting Sunday morning assemblies, where we may produce plays, where we may have lectures and moving pictures, and not alone learn of the great things which the Jew has done for the world in the past, but that we may ourselves do something to make Philadelphia and America a happier and more useful place in which to live. We shall learn, in our new building, how to be a blessing to mankind.

If the old Roman poet was right, that a sound mind always goes with a sound body, then too we shall have a gymnasium where we may develop our physical health and strength. What a happy place it will be where we can play all sorts of games and do wholesome and useful things; where Boy and Girl Scouts may have their regular meetings; where we may have clubs and classes; and yes, too, have dinners and luncheons; where we may meet together, and develop friendships and learn to know one another and work for one another.

With you I look forward to a greater Rodeph Shalom. It has been great in the past, but it will not rest on its past. It will go forward to still greater triumphs. I hope every man, woman and child in Rodeph Shalom will be able to say, after the building is erected, that he did something to make this wonderful new building possible.

RABBI LOUIS WOLSEY.

Impressions of the 125th Anniversary
Reported for "I-Tell-You" by Frank Hahn, Jr., 10-1

We who attended Rodeph Shalom's three-day celebration, had a thrill that comes once in a lifetime.

The ceremonies at the Synagogue were most fitting. The altar was beautifully decorated and the words and thoughts expounded by the Rabbis were still more beautiful.

It was quite a coincidence that Dr. Goldensen once came to Rodeph Shalom to marry a Rabbi and then came again later to eulogize the same Rabbi.

The services seemed more inspiring than ever before, and the music for this occasion was extraordinary. It is a pity that the entire Sunday School was not present, as we are sure that the Services would have proved an unforgettable experience to each child.

* * * * *

The next event, on Sunday evening, was that tremendous success, "From Generation to Generation."