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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

FOOLISH MISSIONARY PRAYERS

In Lucas's "Empire of Christ" one paragraph indicates the danger and folly of many of our prayers for missions:

We have the remarkable spectacle of the establishment of prayer unions beseeching God for more success, side by side with the recognition of our utter inability to provide for the success He has already granted. . . . We send up a prayer to heaven for more work, and we send out a message to the field announcing a reduction of grants. We should be dumbfounded if we received a request from the field asking us to reduce our prayers, on the ground that they were quite unequal to provide for the answers already granted.

Prayer is indispensable for any missionary advance, but its main objective just now must be the Church and not heathendom.—H. P. BEACH.

CALLS TO PRAYER

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THE ORIENT AND THE OCCIDENT

These are ceasing to be distinctive as of old. Witness the vast numbers of Chinese and Japanese that are coming to America. If the exclusion laws permit, there will presently be a large influx of Chinese students into

the United States, and the freedom of intercourse between the two hemispheres is increasing. By an agreement, recently entered into between Minister Rockhill and the Chinese Government, the Boxer indemnity is to be used for sending 2,000 students to this country to be educated. One hundred are to be sent annually for four years, and fifty annually during the time of the indemnity. Eighty per cent. of these students are to be trained in the manual arts, and the others in law and government; and a Chinese Educational Commissioner, with five assistants, is to have charge of the work. A similar commission, operating at Peking, will determine the schools to which the students are to be sent. These students will vary in age from twelve to twenty years. Such measures will not only do much for China, but will help to correct misunderstandings between Oriental and Western peoples. The indemnity is surely to be put to a good use.

RECENT SIGNS IN CHINA—COMMERCIAL AND POLITICAL

Some figures published lately by the Chinese Postmaster-General show the stupendous progress of the great heathen empire during the past years. Five years ago there were only 446 post-offices in the whole empire, which handled 20 million pieces of mail. In

with conflicting tides, have met and dashed against one another. Mormonism in the Salt Lake Valley, paganism, socialism and anarchism, with all other accompanying sons of Anak, have their strongholds even yet on the Western slopes. Suspicion, ignorance, immorality and idolatry are still rampant beyond the Mississippi, and it is owing to such a man as Sheldon Jackson that the strongholds of these Anakim have been captured and occupied for God.

What we need now is for men of like spirit to follow up this courageous and devoted pioneer and build,

upon the foundations he has laid, the gold, silver and precious stones of a consecrated, acceptable service. The pioneer stage has not yet passed, for there is plenty of work to be done in the ever-increasing and extending territories of the West, but there is much work also to be carried on on the basis of what has already been done, and God is looking to His Church, in these days, to embrace the great opportunity—which is at once a field for home missionary and foreign missionary effort—home missionary in its location and often largely foreign missionary in its population.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF MISSIONARY WORK AMONG THE JEWS

THE CENTENARY OF THE LONDON JEWS' SOCIETY

BY REV. LOUIS MEYER

With a number of great gatherings in London from February 8 to 15, the centenary year of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews (or London Jews' Society, as it is commonly called), will come to its close. The greatest of all the missionary societies, organized for the specific purpose of preaching the Gospel to the Jews, now looks back upon a century of earnest, faithful, fruitful service for the Master. The history of its work is a means of strengthening of our faith and incites us to an increase of our efforts in the Master's work for the Jews throughout the world.

The close of the eighteenth century found the great Lutheran Jewish missionary work in Germany, the Institutum Judaicum in Halle, founded in 1728 by the pious Professor Callenberg, abandoned on account of the ra-

tionalistic tendencies of the times. All other efforts to bring the Gospel to the Jews, which were insignificant at best, were practically at a standstill. A few faithful ministers of Christ in Germany and England remembered the Jews, who were living in their parishes, and preached special sermons to them, which in some instances were printed and distributed by them as tracts to other Jews outside their parishes. But it might well be said that no organized efforts to bring the Gospel to the Jews were in existence as the nineteenth century commenced its eventful career. But the Lord was already preparing the instrument which He intended to use in the organization of that great Jewish missionary society which, by His blessing, was to become the mother of all modern missionary effort among the Jews.

On May 8, 1798, a young Bavarian



THE LONDON JEWS' SOCIETY GIRLS SCHOOL IN TUNIS, NORTH AFRICA

Jew, Joseph Samuel Levy, acknowledged his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in public baptism in the large Lutheran church at New Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, and received, according to the common practice, three additional names, so that he was henceforth known as Joseph Samuel Christian Frederick Frey. The providence of God led him into the company of deeply spiritual men, and as he grew in years, the earnest desire to become a missionary to the heathen took hold of him, so that he entered the missionary seminary of Jänike in Berlin. Having been rejected by Dr. Knap of Halle as a candidate for the work of the Danish Missionary Society "on account of his having been a Jew," Frey, together with Palm and Ulbricht, was sent to London in September, 1801, that the three might enter the service of the London Missionary Society and go to the assistance of Dr. Van der Kemp in Africa.

On September 15, 1801, while waiting in Gravesend to go up to London,

Frey had a most remarkable dream, which he thus describes:

I read in a newspaper that the two brethren, Palm and Ulbricht, as well as myself, were to preach in London; that the Jews in particular were (in a most affectionate manner) invited to the discourse which I was to deliver. The appointed day approached; an immense crowd collected, and I was enabled to preach to them with great freedom and to lift up my voice like a trumpet. I thought that the effect of this discourse was, that I was afterward desired to stay in London to preach both to Jews and Gentiles; to which I replied, that I could not possibly part with my dear brethren, Palm and Ulbricht, and let them go alone, but, that if the directors would send for another missionary to accompany those brethren, I would consent; and with which the directors having complied, I resolved to remain in England.

That remarkable dream became true, for five months later, the directors of the London Missionary Society, having learned that Frey was a Jew and had shown great interest in his Jewish brethren in London, asked him if he would like to stay in

the city and preach to the Jews. Frey consented, but asked that he be permitted to prepare himself for the work at the famous Gosport Missionary Seminary. In May, 1805, he commenced his regular labors as a missionary of the London Missionary Society among the Jews in London, and three Jews, the first fruits of his labors, were publicly baptized in September, 1806. Soon, however, difficulties arose in regard to the question of temporal relief for Jews, and a society was formed on August 4, 1808, for the purposes of visiting and relieving the sick and distressed, especially Jews, of which Frey became president. This undenominational society was renamed "The London Society for the Promotion of Christianity Amongst the Jews" (subsequently modified into "for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews"), on February 15, 1809, and Frey severed his connection with the London Missionary Society and became the lecturer of the new society. He began a course of lectures in the French-Protestant church which attracted large congregations, among whom were from two to three hundred Jews. A considerable number of Jews publicly confessed Christ in baptism.

But soon internal discord and theological differences arose among the members of the undenominational society, for churchmen and dissenters were unable to agree. The foundation-stone of "Palestine Place," the famous chapel of the Society in Bethnal Green, had been laid by the Duke of Kent in April, 1813, and the church had been solemnly dedicated on July 16, 1814, but non-conformists could not officiate in it. An attempt to solve the difficulties by resolving that "the

spiritual concerns of the Society connected with the chapels, the schools, and the education of missionaries be henceforth separately conducted by the churchmen and dissenters respectively," proved a failure. The raising of funds became more and more difficult, so that the Society was \$70,000 in debt at the beginning of the year 1815. Then the dissenters decided to withdraw in favor of their brethren of the Established Church, and on March 14, 1815, the Society was declared to be exclusively a Church of England institution. Churchmen have been the sole managers of the Society since then.

Sir Thomas Baring became president; Lewis Way paid \$50,000 of the Society's debt from a bequest left to him, and friends quickly paid the remaining debt of \$20,000, so that the London Jews' Society entered upon its existence as an institution conducted in strict conformity to the liturgy and formularies of the Church of England unencumbered and free from debt. Frey had to step out, receiving an annuity of \$500 for the first year and \$250 for the next ten years. He went to the United States, where he became intimately connected with missionary work among the Jews scattered throughout the East and South, and died as pastor of the Baptist Church in Pontiac, Mich., on January 5, 1850.

The business of the reconstructed Society is managed by a committee composed of from eighteen to twenty-four lay members of the Established Church of England or of the Church of Ireland, the patron, the vice-patrons, the president, vice-presidents, trustees, treasurer, secretaries, and of all such clergymen as shall have been five years members of the Society. At

present the patron of the Society is the Archbishop of Canterbury, while the great majority of archbishops and bishops of the Church of England in Great Britain and its colonies, and a few Lords (among them the Earl of Aberdeen, who is an elder of the Church of Scotland, we believe), are its vice-patrons. Its president is Sir John H. Kennaway, and its secretaries are the Rev. W. T. Gidney and the Rev. F. L. Denman.

Immediately after the reconstruction in the year 1815, famous churchmen came to the aid of the Society, and among its most active helpers were found the great Charles Simeon, the famous Legh Richmond, the eloquent W. Marsh, and many others. The auxiliaries, founded in the different parts of the kingdom between 1810 and 1815, were reorganized upon a church basis, and the support from church people gradually increased, so that within five years after the reorganization the annual income rose to more than \$50,000. The enthusiastic Lewis Way, who had led so magnanimously in the paying of the debt, traveled at his own expense through the countries of the Continent and Palestine in the interest of the work. In Berlin the British minister, Sir George Rose, took a lively interest and a local mission, with the great Professor Tholuck as the Society's representative, was established a few years later. In Russia the Czar, Alexander I, granted him an interview, and received him so graciously that on July 20, 1817, the committee decided to establish a mission among the Jews of Russian Poland; but Warsaw, the first station, was not occupied until 1821. It was Lewis Way who appeared before the gathering of

emperors, kings, and princes at Aix-la-Chapelle, and asked that equal civil rights be granted to the Jews everywhere. In 1821 he placed at the Society's disposal Aldsworth House, Stanstead, in Sussex, where the seminary for the training of missionaries was located, and in 1829 he presented his valuable library of Hebrew and other Jewish books to the seminary. Lewis Way died on January 23, 1840, "the best earthly friend, out of many good friends, whom Almighty God has vouchsafed to the Society during its hundred years." "The providential circumstances under which Lewis Way was led to take an interest in the Society were of a strange and romantic character, and the following account of them was furnished by a member of his family. Two friends, himself and another, were riding one day, in the winter of 1811, from Exmouth to Exeter, when their attention was called to a group of oaks. They were told that a Miss Jane Parminter, who had lately died, was so deeply interested in the welfare of the Jews that she left a clause in her will that those trees should not be cut down until the Jews had returned to their own land. This striking story about the "Oaks of à la Ronde," as they were called, so impressed Way that an interest and spiritual concern for the salvation of Israel at once sprang up in his heart. He made inquiries whether any Christians had ever done anything in this direction, heard of the London Jews' Society, which was then struggling along, and at once came to its rescue in the princely way already recorded. The fact which transpired many years later (in 1882), that no such clause as that to which Way's notice was called existed

in Jane Parminter's will, does not invalidate the other fact, that his love for the Jews was the result of what he heard, even tho it was but a pious fiction." *

We have no space to follow the missionaries of the Society as they occupy or traverse the different countries where Jews are found, and simply give the names of some places and the year in which the work there was begun: Holland, India, Palestine, and Germany, 1820; Russian Poland, 1821; Prussian Poland and Hamburg, 1825; Asia Minor, 1829; Algiers, 1832; Austrian Poland, 1833; Tunis, 1834; Turkey in Europe, 1835; Bagdad, 1844; Rumania, 1846; Egypt, 1847; Persia, 1851; Abyssinia, 1859; France, 1869; Italy, 1870; Austria, 1871; Montreal, 1902. To-day the London Jews' Society has 46 stations in Great Britain, Germany, Holland, Austria-Hungary, France, Italy, Russia, Turkey, Asia Minor, Palestine, Syria, Persia, Abyssinia, Egypt, Morocco, Tunis, and Canada. It employs a staff of 222 missionary workers of all kinds, and the aggregate income from all sources amounted to more than \$246,000 in 1907.

Of all the stations the most important and best equipped is London. Palestine Place, in Bethnal Green, whose foundation-stone had been laid by the Duke of Kent in 1813, remained the center of activity until 1895, when its ninety-nine years' lease was relinquished. It contained a group of institutions; namely, the Missionary College, the Operative Jewish Converts' Institution, the famous Jews' Chapel, the Boys' and the

Girls' schools, and several residences. In the Jews' Chapel, which was dedicated on July 16, 1814, 1,765 persons of the Jewish race were baptized in the eighty-one years of its use. It had seen the formation of the first exclusively Hebrew Christian Association, "The Children of Abraham," on September 9, 1813. It had been the spiritual home of the converts of the Society, the boys and girls of the missionary schools, the students of the Missionary College, and the inmates of the Operative Jewish Converts' Institution (a kind of industrial school for converts founded in 1829). Almost every Lord's day afternoon and on all the great Jewish feasts a service in Hebrew, followed by a sermon in German, had been held in it. In the schools multitudes of Jewish boys and girls had received Christian instruction. Yet the cause of Christ among the Jews in London was served best by its surrender before the lease expired in 1910, and thus Palestine Place is only a memory of the past. No new Jews' chapel has been erected, but the missionary schools have found a beautiful and comfortable home on Streatham Common, London, S. W., while the Operative Jewish Converts' Institution is no longer subsidized by the Society since 1893, and has found a permanent home in Bodney Road, Hackney. Since 1895 the mission hall in Whitechapel is the center of the work in London, while six parochial missions, in Spitalfields, Whitechapel, Stepney, and Canonbury, are trying to reach those Jews in London who can not be reached from the mission hall. The total number of workers now employed in London is twenty-eight, and eleven Jews were baptized in 1907.

* Gidney, "History of the London Jews' Society," p. 151.

Next in importance is the work of the London Jews' Society in Palestine, especially in Jerusalem. In Jerusalem are thirty missionary agents employed in the Boys' and Girls' Boarding Schools, the House of Industry, the Inquirers' Home, the Medical Mission and Hospital, and the preaching of the Gospel. The sta-

and is really the father of the whole work; while Stern came in 1859, and persuaded Flad to become connected with the London Jews' Society. In 1862 the first twenty-two Falashas were baptized, among them the famous Debtera Beru. Then some difficulties arose. The Queen of England failed to answer a letter of King



A LONDON JEWS' SOCIETY MEETING IN THE MISSION HALL, ROTTERDAM

tions outside Jerusalem are Siloam, Safed, Haifa, and Jaffa.

The most romantic field of the Society is Abyssinia, where its missionaries took over the work of the Chrischona Brethren (commenced in 1855), among the Falashas, the black Jews of Abyssinia, in 1859. The names of Martin Flad, the pioneer missionary, and Herman A. Stern, the martyr of Abyssinia, are closely connected with it. Flad reached Abyssinia in 1855,

Theodore of Abyssinia, while Napoleon's answer gave great offense, so that the King was angry with all Europeans. Stern, in his book, "Wanderings Among the Falashas in Abyssinia," spoke of Theodore's humble origin and aroused the anger of the monarch still more. Soon after, in 1863, Stern was received by the King, and he ordered Stern's servants flogged, because their mode of interpreting was obnoxious to him. Stern

became nervous and bit his finger, unaware that such a gesture in Abyssinia meant revenge. The King became incensed. Stern was struck down, bound hand and foot, and consigned to prison. Four years and a half he was to suffer heartrending and heartbreaking martyrdom. Soon he was joined by his helper Rosenthal and his wife, the English consul, Mr. and Mrs. Flad, and a number of others. Flad was released and sent to the Queen of England. Days, months, years of suffering and peril of life went by, until at last an English army under Sir Robert Napier arrived. Then Theodore released the prisoners. A decisive defeat of the husky monarch followed; Magdala, the stronghold, was stormed and captured, and Theodore took his own life. The missionaries returned to Europe, and Flad settled in Canstatt, Germany, watching for an opportunity to return to the Falashas, but faithful Debtera Beru carried on the work among his brethren in the meantime. The time for the return of the European missionaries to Abyssinia has not yet come, neither King John nor King Menelek being willing to grant permission for it, yet faithful Falasha Christians have carried on the work with much zeal and success. Mr. Flad still keeps in touch with his spiritual children in Abyssinia by letter, and in spite of opposition, and even persecution, the Gospel has prospered among the Falashas, of whom 1,513 have been baptized in the Abyssinian Church, indirect fruits of the work of Flad and Stern.

The London Jews' Society has al-

ways emphasized the necessity of good missionary literature, tho it has not done much free distribution of it. In 1817 the first issue of the Hebrew New Testament appeared (revised in 1838), while the translation of the Old Testament into Judæo-Polish was published in 1830. "The Pilgrim's Progress" was printed in Hebrew in 1844. Many tracts for Talmudical Jews, and lately some for modern Jews, have been published, and the Yiddish missionary publication *Kol M-bhasser*, edited by Rev. A. Bernstein in London, is greatly appreciated by Jews everywhere.

The results of the hundred years' work of the London Jews' Society can not be given in figures. The number of Jews baptized by its faithful missionaries or as a fruit of their consecrated efforts can not be ascertained. But among its converts we find Hebrew Christians whose names are known the world over, among them Bishops Alexander, Hellmuth, and Schereschewsky, Moses Margoliouth, and many others. Among its missionaries we find the great McCaul, author of the "Old Paths," a book that has not been answered by the Jewish rabbis; Ewald, Guinsburg, Bruehl, Eppstein, and a galaxy of other noble, consecrated Jews and Gentiles whose love to Christ has forced them to preach His riches to the Jews throughout the world. The results of their labors upon the Jewish hearts none can even estimate.

Our prayer at this centenary is that the Lord will abundantly increase the usefulness and strength of the Society to the salvation of Israel.