

The Missionary Review of the World

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES*

"YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS"

The spirit of the age, in the influence of young men in national and religious life, has been spreading from the West to the East, so that in practically every country that has been stagnant or backward in civilization we find an increasingly powerful party of young men—young either in age or in energy—who are seeking to establish a new and progressive order of things. There is not only the Young Turk party, but Young Egypt, Young Persia, Young India and Young China. These aspirants to leadership see visions of a transformed nation with the old régime replaced by a new order, in which liberty shall rule and prosperity shall prevail. Too often, however, the young party casts aside the old foundations without securing new. They discard the creed and experience of their predecessors and expect to astonish the world by evidences of their own wisdom. They are also materialistic in their ideals.

The results are not thus far reassuring. In Turkey, the Young Turks are in power, but they have not yet proved their ability to rule. Local courts are still corrupt, and an adequate system of education has not been introduced. Religious liberty is still nominal, and woman is unemancipated. In Egypt the Young party

shows more zeal than discretion, and in Persia they have failed to establish a strong, free or righteous government. In India the British are too strongly entrenched to allow the nationalistic party to show their power or purposes, but the occasional assassinations and riots do not augur well. It is in China, the old, conservative empire, that there seems to be the greatest promise of progress. There is a more sane spirit and an effort less for personal gain and more for the advancement of the country. There are movements toward an adequate system of education, and signs of dissatisfaction with merely secular education. The need for religious training is recognized, and the Bible has even been spoken of as a source of moral and ethical instruction. The young Chinese Christians are also slowly but surely moving toward church unity.

The Chinese are a strong race with a strong national consciousness. The unity of the Chinese people is seen not only in their physical characteristics, but in their mental and spiritual natures. The national spirit is now becoming manifest in the interest in national affairs. Wars with Japan and England have developed patriotism, and comparison with other more progressive nations have led to a de-

* The editors seek to preserve accuracy and to manifest the spirit of Christ in the pages of this REVIEW, but do not acknowledge responsibility for opinions expressed, or positions taken by contributors to these pages.—EDITORS.

and of religious interest to which missionaries testify in almost every mission field, there comes a feeling of awe and wonder, a sobering sense of responsibility that we should be permitted to live and labor during so eventful a period of the world's history. And there come sublime imaginings as to whether in the plan of God this may not be the century in which shall come true that of which the Archbishop of Canterbury spoke a year ago at the opening of the World Missionary Conference, when he said:

"Be quite sure, it is my single thought to-night that the place of mis-

sions in the life of the Church must be the central place, and none other. That is what matters. Let people get hold of that, and it will tell—it is the merest commonplace to say it—it will tell for us at home as it will tell for those afield. Secure for that thought its true place, in our plans, our policy, our prayers, and then—why, then, the issue is His, not ours. But it may well be that if that come true, 'there be some standing here to-night who shall not taste of death till they see'—here on earth, in a way we know not now—'the Kingdom of God come with power.'"

THE EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL JEWISH MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

BY REV. LOUIS MEYER, D.D.

The International Jewish Missionary Conference, which met in Stockholm, Sweden, from June 7th to June 9th, is 40 years old, having assembled for the first time in Berlin in April, 1870, in answer to a call from the Berlin Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews. In the beginning it did not convene at stated intervals, and the second conference was held thirteen years later in Berlin. The third met in Barmen in 1890, the fourth in Leipsic in 1895, the fifth in Cologne in 1900 and the sixth in London in 1903. During the fifth and the sixth conferences steps were taken which, in 1905, led to the organization of the executive committee of the International Jewish Missionary Conference. Its purposes and aims are very much like those of the Continuation Committee of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, being, briefly, the furtherance

of closer and better relations between Jewish missionary societies, the representation of the cause of Jewish missions before the public, the study of new problems arising in the great field of activity of missionaries among the Jews, and the editing of a year-book of Jewish missions. In its membership are represented English, Scottish, Irish, German, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, and American societies, so that it is international and interdenominational in the fullest sense of the word. Of its year-book of Evangelical Missions to Jews the first volume was published in 1906. It is soon to be followed by the second volume. The seventh Conference met in Amsterdam, Holland, in April, 1906, and the eighth convened in Stockholm this year.

The Personnel of the Conference

Stockholm is a little to one side, and quite distant from the centers of



EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL JEWISH MISSIONARY CONFERENCE, STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN, JUNE 7 TO 9, 1911

Front row from left to right: Missionary Schapiro,* Sweden; Missionary Petrie,* Copenhagen; Rev. F. L. Denman (London Jews' Society); Missionary Gordon,* Stockholm; Missionary Wolf,* Russia; Missionary Resnick,* Rumania.

Second Row, Seated, from left to right: Rev. Louis Meyer, D.D.* (Chicago Hebrew Mission); Rev. S. H. Wilkinson (Mildmay Mission, London); Missionary A. Van Os (Netherlands Society for Israel, Amsterdam); Professor Toem (Danish Society for Israel, Copenhagen); Bishop von Scheele, D.D.; Professor Strack, D.D. (President Executive Committee); Regierungsrat W. Nentweg (Berlin Jews' Society); Professor Ihlen (Norwegian Society for Israel, Christiania); Rev. C. T. Lipshytz* (Barbican Mission to Jews, London); Pastor Rev. Lindhagen (Swedish Society for Israel, Stockholm).

Standing, between Bishop von Scheele and Professor Strack, Rev. Marcus Bergmann, the translator of the Bible into Yiddish; behind Professor Ihlen, Missionary Levvertoff,* Warsaw; behind Dr. Meyer, to left, Pastor A. Wiegand, Plan, Germany; to the right of Rev. Bergmann, Pastor Schaeffer, Berlin.*

*Those marked * are Hebrew Christians; those to whose names are added the names of societies are the members of the Executive Committee (permanent) of the International Jewish Missionary Conference. Almost every person in the picture is an active Christian missionary among the Jews.*

Jewish missionary activity, yet the attendance was good, and very representative. Of the leaders of English missions, the great London Jews' Society had sent its excellent and far-sighted secretary, Rev. F. L. Denman, accompanied by two of the ablest missionaries of the society, Rev. L. Zeckhausen and Mr. Levertoff. Rev. S. H. Wilkinson, of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, and Rev. C. T. Lipshytz of the Barbican Mission to the Jews, both in London, had come personally to represent the important work under their care in the general meetings, and in that of the executive committee. The great Berlin Jews' Society had sent its missionary in Berlin and an official representative, a high official of the

government. The Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish societies were officially and well represented, while the writer was the only representative from the United States (for the Chicago Hebrew Mission and the Pittsburgh New Covenant Mission), the representative of the Norwegian Lutheran Jewish Missionary Society in Minneapolis being delayed upon the ocean and reaching Stockholm after the conference had adjourned. The number of active missionaries in attendance was comparatively large, Sweden and Denmark furnishing naturally the largest contingent. There were, however, missionaries from Warsaw, Cracow, Berlin, Amsterdam, London, Hamburg, Odessa, Budapest, Jassy, etc., who contributed by re-

citals of personal experiences, and papers, largely to the success of the meetings.

The meetings were presided over jointly by the honorary president of the eighth conference, Bishop Dr. K. H. Gez. von Scheél, and the president of the executive committee, Professor H. L. Strack, D.D., of the University of Berlin. The latter is well known as a great Hebrew scholar, is highly esteemed by Jews and Christians on account of his relentless fight against prejudice against the Jews, and has been the president of the executive committee since 1905 with fine success and good judgment. He has also edited the first volume of the Year-book of Jewish Missions. Bishop von Scheél, a man of magnificent appearance, in whose blue eyes the Scandinavian kindness is well manifest, and of great eloquence, using with equal facility his native tongue or the English or the German, is perhaps to-day the most prominent churchman of Sweden. In his doctrinal position he is thoroughly evangelical, and all his utterances show his devout regard of the Word of God. Kind, yet decided, impartial, and always trying to avoid offense, Bishop von Schéele led the business of the conference with great adroitness, and was ably assisted by Professor Strack, who is the strictly logical, German professor, but just as kind, and gentle, and impartial as the Bishop.

The Place and the Meetings

The opening meeting was held in the great, stately Storkyrkan (pronounce Store-chyrkan), or cathedral, where professor of theology Ad. Kolmodin, of Upsala University, preached a magnificent sermon, and Professor

Strack and Rev. Denman, of London, made brief addresses. On the evening of the second day a number of simultaneous meetings were held in different churches of Stockholm, and large audiences were addrest in behalf of the evangelization of the Jews, by delegates and visiting missionaries. All other meetings were held in the Messiah Chapel, located within the very well-appointed and large building of the Swedish Jewish Missionary Society, whose able director, Pastor Lindhagen, had made all arrangements for the successful conference, with the aid of a well-working local committee.

The meetings of the conference were well attended throughout, tho its business was transacted in the German and English languages, the former, to our surprize, being more spoken and better understood in the capital of Sweden than the former. The discussions were sometimes prolonged and lively, but always interesting, helpful, to the point, and kind in spirit and utterance. While considerable differences of opinion concerning certain matters and methods prevailed, no personal feeling of the speakers was manifested. Thus, it was a pleasure throughout to be in attendance.

Since all the papers and addresses are to be published in the second volume of the Year-book of Jewish Missions, which is to appear in German and English editions, and not, as the first volume, in one German-English edition, our readers can convince themselves of their excellence and helpfulness, and we can limit ourselves to the naming of the subjects and to a brief review of a few.

The subjects discust and the speak-

ers were: "The Jews and the Second Advent of the Lord," two papers by Rev. Denman and Rev. Wilkinson, both of London; "The Jews of the Old Testament," two papers by Professor H. L. Strack, D.D., and by Pastor Philip Gordon of Stockholm; "The Influence of Christianity Over the Intellectual World, the Culture and the Worship of the Jews," by Rev. Bieling, until recently director of the Berlin Jews' Society; "The Obstacles in the Way of Reception and Acceptance of Christianity by the Jews, and Ways to Overcome Them," joint paper by Messrs. van Os and Korff, of Amsterdam, Holland; "Jewish Missionary Literature," by Rev. A. Lukyn Williams, D.D., of London; "New Problems in Jewish Work in America, Russia, Turkey, and the Balkan Countries," four papers, in the above order, by the writer, Missionary P. Levertoff, of Warsaw, Rev. Weinberger, of Constantinople, and Rev. Adeney, of Bucharest; and "Ebinism in Jewish Missions," two papers, by Pastor Rev. Lindhagen, of Stockholm, and Director C. T. Lipshytz, of London.

All papers were good and helpful, but some were of lasting value and of great importance. That of Rev. A. Lukyn Williams, on "Jewish Missionary Literature," will be enlarged, and a bibliography of the valuable books and tracts having been added, probably be published separately by the executive committee of the conference. Thus, a long-felt need will be satisfied, we hope, soon.

Obstacles and Problems

The paper on "Obstacles in the Way of Reception and Acceptance of Christianity by the Jews" caused

lengthy, spirited, but appreciative discussion, which revealed the multitude and the magnitude of these obstacles. All speakers, however, agreed that only prayer, believing and earnest prayer, for the Jews, and increasing true Christian love to them can overcome these obstacles.

The papers on "New Problems in Jewish Work" called attention to the greatness of the task before the church, and to the wonderful opportunities of the present hour. The writer showed that the new problems in the United States arise from the tremendous influx of Jewish immigrants and their settlement in distinct districts of certain cities, from the amazing increase of Jewish influence and power, and, last, but not least, from the sorrowful decay of religious life among American Jews in general, while increasing influence of liberal theology in the church and resulting indifference of Christians toward the people of the Book are a problem of no small importance to Jewish missions.

Mr. Levertoff, whom we consider one of the ablest Hebrew scholars of the present day, spoke of "New Problems in Jewish Work in Russia," basing his address, and rightly, upon his personal experiences in the great Jewish center, Warsaw, where he labors with much success. He showed the peculiar movement among Russian Jews, especially among students, many of whom ask for baptism, and are later baptized. Primarily, they find only ideals in Christianity, which they fail to discover in Judaism, so that their position toward Christ is not correct and their doctrine is not exact, but they offer a wonderful opportunity for better instruction to

the missionary. Others of these students are full of enthusiasm for Jesus, but are bitterly opposed to any thought of accepting Christianity. They, as well as those applying for baptism, mostly have never been in direct touch with missionaries, but have either read the New Testament and Christian tracts, or have been influenced by Jewish articles in Jewish papers which dealt with Jesus and with Christianity. Such articles are very numerous in the Jewish press of late years, and their publication reveals the remarkable change of the Jewish attitude. Jewish writers have called attention to the danger (*i.e.*, from their point of view), of these articles. The great problem of the day in Russia, as perhaps in all other Jewish missionary fields, is the breaking away of the younger generation from the traditions of the fathers and their turning to Nationalism, to Socialism, or to Freethought. Rev. Weinberger, of Constantinople, in discussing "New Problems in Jewish Missions in Turkey," stated that the recent political changes had been steps in the right direction, and must have good results. He showed that to-day the adherents of the different religions in Turkey, viz., Mohammedanism, Christianity, and Judaism, are on a friendlier footing than before, so that the Jew, who formerly was totally indifferent to the religion of his neighbors, now has begun to investigate it. At the same time, the New Constitution has made the Turkish Jew more independent, while Zionism has awakened Jewish national consciousness to a remarkable degree, so that opposition to missionary effort is perhaps more marked than before.

In the Balkan countries, whose new problems were discust by Rev. Ade-ney, of Bucharest, the old barriers which kept the missionary from reaching the Jews, who are mainly Sephardim, *i.e.*, descendants of the Jews driven out from Spain in 1492, are breaking down, and assimilation has commenced, especially among better classes. Old people still cling tenaciously to the externals of their religion, but almost complete indifference to religion prevails among the younger generation of Jews in Bulgaria, Servia, Rumania, and the Austrian provinces of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Novi-Bazar, and Dalmatia. In Bulgaria the Bulgarian Protestant Church is arising and influencing the Jews somewhat. In Servia, and in all other Balkan countries, Jews are inclined to send their children to the higher school of the State, or to the well-equipped schools of the Roman Catholic propaganda, where they learn the languages necessary for their international trade relations, and are naturally influenced otherwise also. The chief problem, however, is the lack of Christian literature in languages suitable for most of these Jews (Bulgarian, Servian, Croatian), and the great difficulty of reaching them, because only Bulgaria permits religious propaganda freely, and has no censorship of literature, tho Servia permits short missionary trips by non-resident colporteurs and missionaries.

The papers on "Ebionitism in Jewish Missions" referred to the present movement of Hebrew and Gentile Christians toward the reorganization of a Hebrew Christian Church with the continuation of circumcision, of the Jewish Sabbath, of the Jewish feasts, and of the Jewish ceremonial

law, as national signs. A protest had been published before the conference by two Hebrew Christians, the son of a third Hebrew Christian, and twenty-one Gentile Christians, against the application of the name Ebionites to the followers of what is called National Hebrew Christianity. We agree that the name Ebionites is at least misleading, if not wrong altogether, as far as they are concerned, but we do not think it wise to protest against the proceedings of an international conference before its meeting, and against its papers before they are read. The paper by Pastor Lindhagen defended the movement ably, while that of Director Lipshytz took the stand against it in a not less able manner. Lack of time forbade a discussion, but Professor Strack officially, as president, declared, without contradiction, that the conference was not favorable to a Hebrew Christian Church, and the continuation of Jewish feasts and ceremonies, and of the Jewish Sabbath, even as national memorials, by Hebrew Christians. The conferences of 1890, (III), of 1895, (IV), and of 1900 (VI), had dealt with the same subject, and had not been in favor of what is called to-day the Hebrew Christian National Movement.

The Conference and the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh

The Conference spent its closing hour in adopting a resolution of protest against the attitude of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference toward Jewish missions. Its executive committee, already on May 30, 1910, had protested earnestly against the insufficient consideration of the subject of Jewish missions by the program committee of the World

Missionary Conference, and the protest was now endorsed by the members of the conference. The conference then acknowledged that Jewish missions had received fair treatment by Commission I, and that the special meeting in their behalf, held in Synod Hall, had done much good, but it earnestly protested against the oversight of the other eight commissions whose printed reports make no reference to Jewish missions, except that in the bibliography of missions a limited number of books referring to the subject are mentioned.

Most vigorously, however, the conference protested against the leaving out of Modern Judaism from the report of Commission IV, which deals with non-Christian religions. It affirmed that "Modern Judaism, like Mohammedanism, to some extent, may acknowledge through some of its representative teachers that Jesus was a good and great man, a brilliant Jew, whose example should be followed by Jew and Gentile, but as a religion it does not know the Lord Jesus Christ, and in its creed (or creeds), it stands directly opposed to the fundamental principles of true, scriptural Christianity. . . . Modern Judaism should be classed among non-Christian religions, because it denies the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, even tho it may agree with the first article of the Apostles' Creed."

The conference adopted the protest with unanimity and great enthusiasm and applause, and then was closed with a spiritual address by Bishop Schéele. It was a blessing to its members, and visitors, and must bring blessing to the cause of Christ among the Jews.