

man and of the genesis and development of the convictions in his soul which resulted in the origin and organization of this new congregation of believers. The account is deeply interesting and instructive, and shows once again that Providence is a decisive factor in the lives of men and nations.

Joseph Rabinowitch was born September 23, 1837, in the village of Resina, in the province of Bessarabia. His father, David, son of Ephraim, was the son of Rabbi Wolf, of Orgejew, and a descendant of the famous Zaddik Rabbi Ephraim, and of the equally famous Jewish teacher, Rabbi Isaac Eisik. Rabinowitch's mother was also the daughter of a family that was connected with famous Talmudic teachers. Having lost his mother when he was yet a child, his education was entrusted to his grandfather, Nathan Neta, of Resina. The latter was deeply versed in Jewish lore and an earnest adherent of the Chasidim party among the Jews, *i. e.*, the pietistic party, which finds in the strict observance of all the minutiae of the Rabbinical law the sum and substance of religious duty. Therefore the grandfather made it the aim of his grandson's education to have him deeply versed in the law of Moses and in the Talmuds. When only seven years old Rabinowitch, on the Feast of the Tabernacles, recited from memory the whole Mishna tract *Sukkoth*. Every day he learned by heart one chapter in the Hebrew Bible, and at the same time he studied intently the commentaries of the Rabbis. His whole education was such that, under ordinary circumstances, he would have become a Pharisee of the Pharisees, a teacher of the traditional law and a firm believer in its high mission.

Matters did not improve in this regard at first, when, in 1848, on entering his tenth year, Rabinowitch was sent to the city of Orgejew to finish his education. Here he was placed under one of the greatest Talmudic teachers of Eastern Europe, Rabbi Pinchas, a devoted adherent of the Chasidim party. Day and night the young student sought to penetrate the mysteries of the Talmuds, the Rabbinical commentaries, the Shulchan Aruch, the Kabbalistic Book of Sohar, and other works which inculcate the principles of a petrified formalism and a mechanical religionism. The whole character of his religious and mental development was such that the spiritual element was entirely wanting. In tendency, spirit and animus, the Chasidim theology and religion is a worthy modern representative of the Pharisaic system in vogue among the contemporaries of Christ, and surface indications were that Rabinowitch would some day become an able exponent of this school of traditionalism.

But such was not to be the case. It is noteworthy, however, that the first impulse that gave his mind and soul a new direction for thought and action came not from the teachings of Christianity. Rabinowitch was a wide-awake young man, and all his Talmudic studies had not succeeded in suppressing his power of thinking. He was ambitious of knowledge and research. Of his own account he had already com-