

The Eastern Jewish communities present an altogether different field of labor. Especially in Northern and Eastern Austria and Southern Russia there are entire districts almost altogether inhabited by Jews, and these are the traditional Jews—the modern representatives of the Pharisees of Christ's day. For them the history of the past eighteen hundred years is practically a blank ; it has passed by them without influencing them in a particle except to make them more determined in their formalism and stereotyped Talmudism. All contact and touch with Western thought or culture is avoided as they avoid the pest. While they all speak a jargon—i.e., a German dialect, or, rather, a middle high German dialect interlarded with Hebrew and other words by the hundreds, the only literary language used among them is the Hebrew. Their newspapers—the *Ham-meliz* and others—are all written in classical or jargon Hebrew, and the average schoolboy learns how to write a Hebrew modelled entirely after that of an Isaiah or the Psalmist. It is for this reason that the worker among them must be a fine Hebrew scholar, and that, too, not only in the biblical idiom, but must also be thoroughly at home in post-biblical Hebrew—in the Talmuds, the Midrashim, and other literature of this kind—for it is in them that the Eastern Jew lives and moves and has his being. From this it appears that the equipment of the gospel workers in Israel has preparatory work to go through of which his brother laboring in a heathen land has no idea. The Talmuds are a labyrinth the intricacies of which only the greatest of industry can master even relatively.

Only recently the courts of Austro-Hungary brought to public notice a state of affairs characteristic of the thought and life of Oriental Judaism. It was a suit tried for the purpose of collecting back taxes from the so-called miracle-working rabbi at Sadagura, a short distance from Czernowitz, the seat of a new university. There, in a grand palace, surrounded by guards and courtiers of his own, revelling in wealth, the gift of the faithful, sits enthroned the "Jewish Pope of the East," the highest authority among the Chasidim, or Pious party of Oriental Judaism. The dignity is hereditary in one family, and the rabbi has the reputation of having superhuman power and wisdom. As a consequence, his intercession and help is sought on all occasions by confiding thousands, to whom, in mysterious form and words, he renders answers, but only for cash. Practically he is the spiritual head of Jews as much as the Pope is of the Roman Catholics. His "cherem," or curse, or excommunication, which always brings with it an absolute boycott, socially and commercially, by all the Jews, is feared even by the State officials. Recently he almost ruined Baron von Mustaza, the leading Christian at Sadagura ; and the fear of his spiritual power has prevented the government officials from claiming taxes due them, until recently patience had ceased to be a virtue.

While it is true that the Pope of Sadagura is not recognized by all the Eastern Jews, the blind and fanatical adherence rendered him is typical and representative of the spiritual condition of the Jews of the East as a