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UNITED CHURCH
ARCHIVES

The Jews in Canada.

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BY THE
REV. S. B. ROHOLD.

Published by
The Board of Home Missions,
Presbyterian Church in Canada.

God's Promise.

“I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow up as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.”

Hosea xiv. : 5-6

The Jews in Canada,

by the

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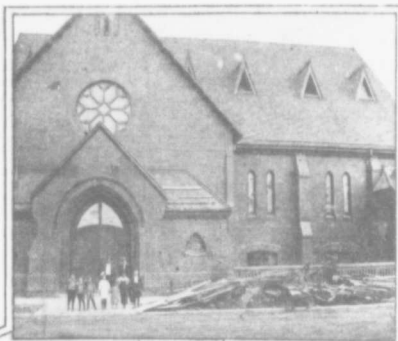
UNITED CHURCH
ARCHIVES

Published by the Board of Home Missions,
Presbyterian Church in Canada.

1912.

Confederation Life Building, Toronto, Canada.

THE ADVANCE OF THE JEWS.



GRACE CHURCH (ANGLICAN), ELM STREET
Now a Dancing Hall

McCAUL ST. METH. CH.
Now a Synagogue

AGNES ST. METH. CH.
Now a Theatre

DISCIPLES' CHURCH, ELM ST.
Now a Synagogue

The Jews in Canada.

THE WANDERING JEW.

UNITED CHURCH
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"Ye of the wandering foot and weary breast,
When will ye flee away, and be at rest?
The wild dove has her nest, the fox his cave,
Mankind their country, Israel but the grave."

The divine decree has destined his unavoidable identity! This ever burning bush, the riddle of history, is with us. He floats like oil on the surface of all peoples. You see him in the East and in the West; in the sweat shop and on the stock exchange; in the ghetto and in the Parliament; in the rag shop and in the Universities; on the farm and on the Magisterial bench. Pressing his way onward and lifting his face to the heavens, he thanks God "that he is not as other men."

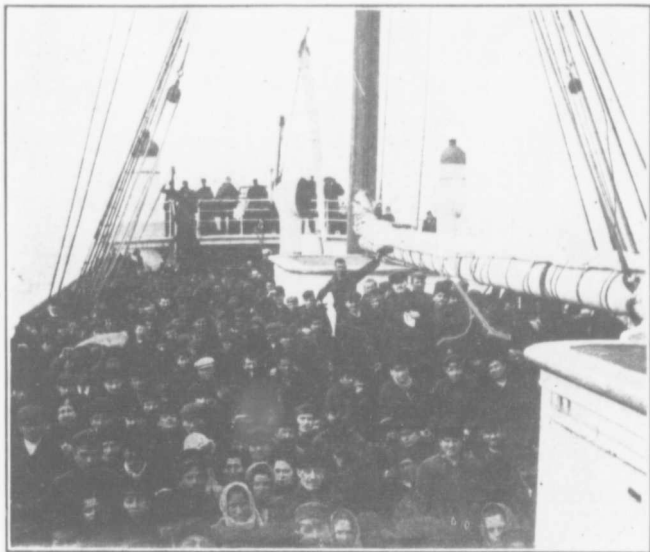
THE DIASPORA.

At all costs we must consider this Dispersion and get a true understanding of our relationship to this people. Besides economic there are moral considerations. Open the story of mankind and his tragedy is unrolled. His history is the darkest and bloodiest in the whole of human history, and unfit to be fully told. He has been most splendidly hated by the whole world, and oh! the irony of it all, the Person most splendidly beloved by the whole world, the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," chose

to be born of a Jewish mother—"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."

Have you ever read of the Jew in England; and how the populace invaded the Jewish quarter in London, giving themselves to murder and robbery? Only Jewish history can find such a tragedy as occurred in York, whither the flames of persecution had spread. The venerable Rabbi told the five hundred Jews who took refuge in the castle, "This day the Lord calls upon us to die for our faith," then parents killed their children and afterwards themselves. In 1290 all the Jews were expelled from England. A century later France followed, two centuries later Spain, and in the fifteenth century Portugal joined in exiling the Jews. They fled to Poland, but when this kingdom was divided, Russia received the lion's share and the Jews found themselves clustered in the paws of the wild Russian Bear. For centuries they have been straining every nerve to keep the Bear in good humor. Every Russian nobleman, every official down to the common policeman, has to be bribed to let them live. The jealousy of the Russian officials is the hardest thing that presses these poor wanderers. Each officer thinks his neighbor is getting more than he, so puts on a little more force to squeeze out a few extra Rubles. It is no fairy tale. To this day every Jew in Russia—and there are six millions of them, whose average possession is under five dollars—has to provide for such emergencies if life is dear to him, for who knows when the Governor, or Chief of Police, will be in need of some cash! This miserable existence continued for years, but he lived and was allowed to reside where he pleased. In 1882, however, under the May Laws, all Jews, with the exception of the very few, who by pay-

ing a large sum, secured the right of residence in the villages and small towns, were compelled to move into the large cities, thus creating fearful ghettos, with conditions impossible to describe. Even here life was very uncertain, because disease, the result of overcrowding, had its share in carrying away many of them to the life



THE ARRIVAL OF IMMIGRANTS.

beyond. So Israel's exodus began anew; running everywhere to save their lives, many lost them in the attempt.

THE JEWS IN CANADA.

The first settlers came from Spain, where they had been wealthy, industrious, peaceful and law-abiding. In

1812 the Spaniards lost a great battle, when fighting the Moors, and it was said that God was angry because the King was in love with a beautiful Jewess. To appease Jehovah's wrath 1,200 Jews were massacred. The Inquisition, with its hideous machinery, was introduced to Christianize the Jew. Then came the days of Ferdinand



STREET SCENE IN JEWISH QUARTER.

and Isabella and the general order of expelling them from the country.

In 1768 descendants of the exiles from Spain and Portugal settled in Montreal, bringing with them the noble, chivalrous inheritance of their forefathers, and, with their usual energy organized the first synagogue,

"Remnant of Israel." Persecution and intolerance, being then no more rare in Germany than at present in the Czar's domain, a large number of German Jewish refugees also settled in Montreal. After the enforcement of the above mentioned "May Laws" in Russia, the Jews who came from that dark country outnumbered both the Spanish and the German. During the last thirty years the number of Jews in our Dominion has increased from 667 to, at least, 100,000, and we learn from leading Jewish papers that the great promoters of the powerful Jewish Colonization Association and the Jewish Territorial Association, are preparing, or have prepared, a scheme for settling some hundreds of thousands of Jews in Canada. They have already spent some millions of dollars in Palestine, Argentine and Texas, all of which met with fair success, but Canada, with its vast, unoccupied territories, resources and favorable conditions, offers by far the best opportunity for the Russian exile. Official statistics show that during the past three years, over 1,000 Jews each year were added to Montreal's population, and over 1,400 Jews to Toronto. Besides this there will be the usual natural increase; thus we have no hesitation in saying that the Jew is becoming a most powerful factor in the making of this great country.

THE JEWISH EMIGRANT.

They have come from Spain, Portugal, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Holland, Galicia, Bohemia, Roumania, Italy, Turkey, Palestine, Poland and Russia. We have also met them from Morocco and Persia. The majority have come here, not merely to seek their fortunes, but to save their very lives. Many arrived in a condi-

tion pitiable in the extreme, yet they have struggled on heroically. Here is a young man who arrived a year ago from South Russia, where he was a Rabbinical student. Everyone honored him, he never did any manual work, yet here he has adapted himself splendidly to the hard



JUST ARRIVED.

labor of an iron foundry and continues his studies. Listen to him as he gives us his reason for escaping from conscription: "Why shall I serve the Russian Bear for a number of years, and when I will finish service, the little Father, the Czar, will tell me that I have

no right of citizenship and will be exiled, so I exiled myself while I am young." Next year he will be twenty-one and will be called for service in the army, so he works very hard and saves three dollars a week from the six he earns, and oh! how happy he is, "You know," he greeted us gleefully, "I have now paid the last three dollars for the two tickets which will bring over my father and mother." When asked why he was in such a hurry, for we knew he was denying himself the very necessities of life, he replied, "If I do not bring my dear people over here before the New Year, the Russian Bear will be after them." "How is that?" we asked. "Soon after the New Year I will be called for service, and as they will not be able to get me, my people must pay six hundred roubles, and as they have not six hundred cents, you well know what awaits them—the fearful, dark walls of the Russian prison." We know mere boys who are laboring day and night to bring over a sister, a brother or mother. Very few Jews on their arrival knew any of the trades in which they are now engaged, but had to pick them up as quickly as possible. Their adaptability is wonderful, only a few weeks seems to be sufficient to fit them for difficult work.

That these emigrants have been of a specially good and law abiding class is proved by the fact that during a period of seven years, during which tens of thousands of Jewish settlers have entered the Dominion, only seventy-two have been deported.

ARE THE JEWISH IMMIGRANTS SUCCESSFUL?

The individual Jew succeeds in Canada, though as a Nation, we agree with Dr. Max Nordau, "they are anything but a success," and with Mr. Israel Zangwill

when he says: "Even if the Jews succeed as individuals, they have miserably failed as a people. . . . Their



THE MOTHERS.

very religion—at once the cause and compensation of their isolation—is lost to them by the impossibility of



THEIR DAUGHTERS.

combining its observance with the necessities of a fiercely competitive civilization." In the business life of Canada they have done fairly well. The clothing trade in Montreal is in their hands, and they are rapidly advancing in all other trades. As farmers, the thirty families at Oxbow, the hundred families in Qu'Appelle and the one hundred and seventy-two in Hirsch Colony have proven themselves a success. The Jewish laborers and capitalists have taken an important part in the opening of Northern Ontario, in railway construction, prospecting, fur-trading and mining. Some of the finest mines in the great silver camp of Cobalt are controlled by Jewish capital, and one of the richest mines ever discovered at the famous Crown Reserve, is managed by a Jew, Mr. S. W. Cohen, M.E.

Perhaps in real estate some have achieved great things. The other day the Toronto Weekly Star, in speaking of Mr. J. Singer, said:—"A man familiar with his investments says that the total number of Mr. Singer's houses will run up to about 700. He also has vacant land in all sections of the city, and owns several apartment houses." Each Jew is striving hard to own his home.

IN THE RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL WORLD.

The Jews in Canada, although coming from all lands, are as a whole orthodox, we only know of one Reformed Congregation, and that is in Montreal, where Rabbi Gordon officiates.

The influence of the Rabbis is less strong than we usually imagine. It is true, the people hold tenaciously together on national grounds. The racial sentiment, ra-

ther than that of religious interest, keeps the Jews united in the new land. Organizations of a socialistic and non-religious character are more flourishing than the Synagogues.

They have done a fair amount of organization work. In Montreal alone, besides the regular Synagogues, we find recorded in the Jewish Year Book, twenty-nine Societies and Institutions connected with the different Synagogues. The "Talmud Torah" plays a great part. Every Jewish boy, after the regular school hours, goes to this school, where he is taught to read Hebrew, thus he has to work very hard, only knowing Yiddish when he enters school. He displays remarkable cleverness in picking up the English, and the very effort expended seems to give him power sometimes to outstrip Canadian pupils. Of the 682 children in the McCaul School, Toronto, 550 are Jewish. In Elizabeth street School, of the 550 children, only 34 are Gentiles. In Montreal the Jews contribute over one-third of the Protestant School Board rates, and their children number one-third of those attending school, so they now demand equal control. We know young men who labor a whole day at pressing coats or at the sewing machine, and when their labor is over, busy themselves at the night school, or with one or more of their favorite Societies.

POLITICALLY AND SOCIALLY.

They have not yet accomplished very much in the political or social world, but are making rapid strides. In Toronto they have now a Jewish Conservative Association, and the other day all the Jewish papers were jubilant, as one of their race was elected a member of the Manitoba Parliament. At the recent Federal Elec-

tion, in no other part in the whole of Canada, was the contest more real and fierce, than amongst the Jews in St. John's Ward. For weeks before the election, night after night all the available meeting places were taxed to the utmost capacity with keen fighters, who took every possible opportunity to gain advantage over their rivals. All kinds of promises were made to the supposed electors, who had votes and who had not. Some of the scenes witnessed defy description. In fact, every man, woman and child in the ward was a politician, and each



POLITICS IN THE WARD.

could give a reason for the faith he or she had in their candidate. There are quite a number of Jewish doctors, lawyers and even King's Councillors, sons of immigrants, perhaps rag pedlars. Whatever the "dirty" rag pedlar (for so the Gentile calls him) may be, he labors hard in order that his children may get the best and highest education.

ARE THE JEWS A MENACE TO THIS COUNTRY?

This people are growing in numbers and in wealth, and thus in strength and influence, and are bound to become an important factor in the moulding of the life and character of Canadians, but they are not a menace to the country or its trade. Contrawise that they are the very life of trade is evidenced by the fact that in the Old World the Jews of the east end of London have done more than any protective tariff could ever have done, in having practically wrested the mantle business from Germany. They excel in all trades, for they are hard-working and painstaking. The misery of the ale-house is unknown to the Jewish home, and as a community they are free from one class of miscreants—that of female drunkards.

WHY IS THE JEWISH WORKING-MAN UNPOPULAR?

Chiefly because his circumstances are unknown to the average Gentile. Arriving from dark Russia, empty handed and without a knowledge of English, he has to work longer hours for smaller wages than Canadians. His heart is in Russia with his starving wife and defenceless children, at the mercy of the devouring Russian Bear. He is continually full of anxiety, at times irritated. His whole meditations are, "How can I find means and a way to bring over my family?" He earns six dollars a week; on three he lives, two dollars he sends to his family (living in Russia is cheaper than here) and one dollar he saves to pay for a ticket. But to save up a hundred dollars from a dollar a week will take two years, which is too long to wait, for a man who lives in

constant anxiety and fear, for the Russian Bear may at any time snatch them away from him and life. With tears he implores the master for night work to take home. "I will make them better and cheaper; remember my family is in constant danger," thus he pleads. And the generous boss, with a growl, bestows his bounty, and Jacob carries home a pack bigger than himself, and works often till midnight. On Saturday he is bodily worn out, but he is happy, for he has received ten dollars, and is he not able to lay aside four dollars towards the ticket? As he goes out with his bounty some of the Gentile working-men meet him at the gate. "Hallo! Jacob, come old Jew, let us have a drink, you have received ten dollars, you only eat bread and onions, all you spend is a dollar a week; what will you do with all your money, you old, dirty, greedy Jew?" In spite of the blood coming into his face, like a man he refuses. Even if he had the money to spend, how could he enter an ale-house and become a drunkard? So he is stamped as a stingy, niggardly, old money-grubbing Jew; even the good foreman smiling approbation of this epitaph on the poor man's reputation, and so he finds his troubles are not at an end. Night after night he goes home, bowed beneath his heavy pack, irritated and heart broken, and he wonders, "Is this really the land of the Brave and the Free?" He begins to doubt, and speculates, "whether it is better to be tortured to death by the continual taunting of civilized Canadians, or to be devoured all at once by the wild, uncouth Russian Bear"—and so his speculations end in bitter tears. The average Gentile Christian, not understanding the Jew, expects from him that which is expected from himself; but how could a Russian Jew, brought up in a narrow, dark

ghetto, with all his national prejudices and upbringing, all at once act and understand things like a born Canadian?

THE JEW AS A PATRIOT (AND THE AVERAGE CANADIAN INFLUENCE)?

We do not suggest that all is well with the Jew. "As is the Gentile, so is the Jew." All the social, economic



BUSINESS IN THE WARD.

and religious problems that confront us, also face them. As new settlers they are naturally weak, and the difficulty to make ends meet makes the struggle harder. Here comes the question, are we leading them on to the safe goal, or otherwise? The Jews of to-day, as in the days of the Prophets, say, "We will be like the nations."

The average Jew tries hard to imitate his Gentile neighbor, generally overestimating this neighbor's superiority because of his own educational defects, so that the Jew is easily led if the thing is not forced on him. When the nations used brutal force against certain of their religious rites, Israel could not be moved, and gladly suffered all kinds of martyrdom for their ideals, but in this land of freedom they voluntarily give up the very rites for which their fathers died. Anything the Gentile does which appeals to his fancy he follows heart and soul, so you can at once see the danger; thus you find him cheering loyally the Toronto team as they win in the ball game, or joining the volunteers, ready to fight for Canada, should that be a necessity. But the general influence of the Gentile, with whom the Jew comes regularly in contact, is not of the very best. Excitement pleaseth the emotional nature of the Jew, so he is led to the theatre, of which he becomes a patron, for there are no half measures with the Jew. In a few weeks he knows the name of each actor and actress, and even the favorite ballet girls. He must make progress, so he is led to the pool room, sometimes to the ale-house and questionable places. All the time he is deluded, for he thinks he is becoming a real Canadian. Yes, this is a true picture and a very sad one too.

WHAT HAS THE CHURCH DONE FOR THESE PEOPLE?

As a Church, what have we done towards leading these wanderers into better ways? What has the church contributed to mould their life and character and make them useful members of society and blessings to this great country of ours? It is rather melancholy to have

to confess our neglect! But the Christian Church had to make this confession two years ago! The great Missionary Conference at Edinburgh, Scotland, declared in their Report of Commission I:—"The attempts to give the Gospel to this people have been altogether inadequate." So we also need not fear to frankly confess our neglect.

THE CHURCH OBLIGATION TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE JEW.

It is the imperative duty of the Church of Christ to preach the Gospel to the Jews, as well as to all other races of mankind. In fact, the Church exists, like her Master, not for herself but for mankind. For the Church to exclude the Jew from her Missionary programme to evangelize the whole world, is to expect the Church to undo herself. "There is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon Him." (Rom. 10: 12).

The Jews have special claims upon the Christian Church, one of them, which must touch the Christian heart is—That the Christians of to-day must make some reparation for the sins of their fore-fathers. To the Christian of to-day belongs the duty of teaching and exemplifying the life of Christ, in every possible manner. The Gospel of Love must be brought home to the Jew, in the best possible and real way.

WHAT THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IS DOING FOR THE JEWS.

There are some ninety-nine Societies laboring amongst the Jews throughout the world, but very few of these are adequately equipped, manned or supported.

As a distinct branch of missionary effort, the Christian Church has not seriously taken work amongst the Jews to heart.

Difficult as the work may be supposed to be, and actually is, especially when we consider what it costs a Jew to become a Christian, progress is made in Jewish evangelization. The true Hebrew Christian knows what it means "to be left alone in the wilderness and be tempted," but the results are most gratifying. During the past century over 224,000 have confessed their faith in Christ by Baptism. In Britain alone there are more than 550 converted Jews, who are ordained ministers of the different Evangelical Churches.

WHAT OUR OWN CHURCH IS DOING.

In obedience to the command of her Lord, "to preach the Gospel to every creature," and to maintain her position as a living Church, she must go to Israel with the message of her Lord. So the General Assembly in 1907 decided to open a Mission to the Jews in Canada, aiming to reach the Hebrew people from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Toronto became its headquarters, with two male and five lady missionaries, and about fifty voluntary workers. A most encouraging, aggressive work of grace has been going on since May, 1908, notwithstanding the handicap of inadequate and unsuitable premises. We are grateful to say that new premises, which, with lot, will cost \$35,000, is now in the course of erection. Here may be formed the first Hebrew Christian Presbyterian Church in Canada.

In April, 1911, a second step was taken to open a Mission to the 13,000 Jews of the City of Winnipeg, with

two missionaries, who assisted by a faithful band of voluntary workers, have done splendid pioneer work.

There is still much work to be accomplished ere we can effectively reach the Jewish people of Canada. This is in the hands of the individual members of our church. The amount of prayer, interest and sympathy they will give, will be what will tell.

HOW TO REACH THE JEWS.

In order to reach the Jewish people with the Message of Love, we must show them the reality of our



SEEKERS AFTER TRUTH.

Message, unconditional, wholehearted, sincere love without interest is demanded. Of all peoples, the Jewish people are suspicious about Christian religion. Centuries of persecution, hatred and gross ignorance of the

true principles of the Christian faith, bitter opposition through prejudiced misunderstanding, has implanted a national mistrust. The Jews therefore seek to find the Christ of God in the lives of the missionaries before He becomes a living reality to them. The character, devotedness and spiritual power of the missionaries is really what a mission represents. The message which has entered their own life and soul, is now entrusted to them, and this they must proclaim and exhibit in their life. At the same time the missionary must continually have before his mind Israel's peculiar position and clamant need. The reconciliation of Israel with Christ, must be the continual, intense longing, and burning desire of the missionary, at the same time remembering that the offence of the Cross will not cease, for the Chief-corner-stone, our Blessed Lord Himself, to us who believe, so precious, is still to the disobedient, a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. There is, however, a possibility for us to so order our habits and activities as to "give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God."

OUR METHODS.

There is no action, good or evil, without lasting consequence. Our faith in the Word, as being quick and powerful and converting the soul, is, with us, an abiding reality, and the only means for delivering wandering and stubborn Israel from her peculiar misery, and for bringing forth her reconciliation with the Christ of God, making her the blessing to the Church of God which she ought to be.

In order to reach effectively the home and life of the whole Jewish family, the following departments have been organized, touching (as we have calculated) the

whole of the family life. Reading Rooms; Night Schools, for men and women; Sewing Classes for women and girls; Sabbath School; Boys' Club and Manual Training; Boy Scouts; Nursery; Tract Distribution; Gospel Services; Bible Classes; Open Air Services; Free Dispensary; Systematic visitation of houses, shops, Hospitals and other institutions; dealing with individuals; en-



SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME.

deavoring to find employment for the unemployed. The missionary is accessible to all.

True, we have had our daily lesson. Varying and perplexing are our many experiences. We labor on in faith, however, knowing that this work is very dear to the heart of our adorable Redeemer, and relates itself most closely to the very life of the church.

We claim to have a message from God, believe with no uncertainty in the effective operation of God's divine Spirit, and we bear testimony to its power. It has changed the hearts of many. Men dead in sin and to all that belongs to their soul's salvation, are now alive in Christ, living lives of purity and holiness. To many all things have become new by the power of His Spirit.

NOW IS THE TIME.

The World Missionary Congress emphatically declared that: "The time to reach the Jews with the Gospel is **now**, when they are rapidly drifting away from the faith of their fathers and are groping for something, they know not what. The Jews are becoming more and more an integral part of Christian cities, strongly influencing and often even dominating them by their enormous and increasing wealth and by their remarkable intellectual ability. However far they may have drifted, there still remains with them that inherent religious instinct, that capacity to appreciate great moral and spiritual truths which has characterized them throughout their history, and which, consecrated to the service of Christ, will enrich and revitalise Christianity itself. 'For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall be the receiving of them, but life from the dead.'"

May we not try to alleviate their condition or help to bring a ray of the true light to illuminate Israel's gross darkness, and thus do our part to liberate the suffering race who produced "the suffering Messiah."

It is ours to give them back the Christ whom they first gave to us, that they too may be able to say with us, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

"God hath not cast away His People."

Rom. XI. 2.

"Israel, arise! shine forth! thy light is come,
The glory of the Lord is risen o'er thee;
And though long banished from thy favour'd home,
Thou'rt still beloved of God: thou shalt be free.

Zion, awake, awake! put on thy strength,
Deck thee in beauty as in days of old;
Thy cup of fury is wrung out at length,
The day of trembling none shall more behold."

והסנה איננו אוכל.

