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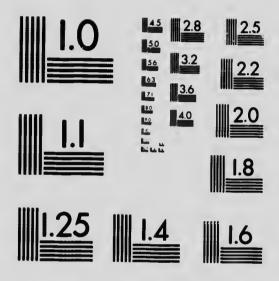
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Are Missions to the Jew a Failure?

A Study of Official Judaism and Christian Missions.

BY THE

REV. S. B. ROHOLD, F.R.G.S.



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INTRODUCTION.

There are still found Christians who do not believe in conducting missions to the Jews. Some even deny that these descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob can be soundly converted to Christ. Comparatively few know anything of the great work that is being done among these "Chosen People" of God or the remarkable results. The following pages convincingly answer the arguments against the work put forward by intelligent Hebrews and not by a few uninformed Christians. It would be well if this most interesting and stimulating leaflet could be distributed by thousands among Christians everywhere, and also among educated Hebrews. will open the eyes of many to the opportunities and fruitfulness of Christian missions to the Jews.

The Rev. Sabeti B. Rohold, the author of these pages, is a Hebrew, born and educated in Jerusalem and converted to Christianity some years ago. After laboring for his people in Scotland he was called to Toronto, Canada, where he is now superintendent of the excellent mission carried on by the Presbyterian Church of Canada in the "Christian Synagogue." Mr. Rohold is president of the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America, and is associated in the editorial work of the "Missionary Review of the World," in which magazine this paper first appeared.

DELAVAN L. PIERSON, Editor, The Missionary Review of the World.

New York, Dec. 29, 1914.

Official Judaism and Christian Missions.

Rev. S. B. Rohold, F.R.G.S.

What pathos and touching solemnity fill our soul, as we behold Israel with her tragic Day of Atonement; with her overburdened ritual of a fearful quest after peace with God - hole nation making a superlu-.. time we gaze upon over four hundred thousand of the race girded for war: for an internecine contest—as far as they are concerned. Jew is engaged in mortal combat with Jew. What an inhuman tragedy is being enacted before our very eyes! Jewry is driven into mutual enmity imposed by the warring nationalities. Terrible events are adding a grim page to Israel's already tragic history.

Although this pathetic, continuously moving panorama of Israel's bitter condition is a living reality to us, and although we appreciate Israel's peculiar, bitter and helpless temporal condition, yet we believe that Israel's spiritual needs are the greater, by far, and of vaster importance to the Church of God. We therefore, lay aside all other considerations and call the attention of the "watchmen upon the walls of Zion," to the attitude of official Judaism

towards Christian Missions, that our minds should be clear on this important subject, in order we may be guided to act in enlightened obedience to the will of our blessed Lord, the Christ of God.

THE JEWISH OPPOSITION.

The past year was an especially hostile year. Not that its bitterness had any vital effect on active Gospel work amongst the Jews, but rather contrary; as far visible results are concerned, it has been a year of reaping, full of blessing and encouragements. But the Rabbinical opposition, in sheer desperation—which proves its weakness—was carried into the public secular press, taking the form of protests, appearing simultaneously in different parts of the world -in London, England, New York, the Eastern and Western States and in Canada. We carefully gather together practically all these protests and correspondence on the subject, from Jew and Gentile, and it proved a most interesting study. The impartial, studious reader would at once realize where the weakness lies. Of all these epistolary protests, undoubtedly the most important one, and one that was carried on with vigor and vim, was that of the learned Rabbi Meldola de Sola of Montreal. He made a gloveless attack on the Lord Bishop of Montreal, who appealed on behalf of the local Mission to the Jews. The extended correspondence, in which other Jewish and Christian divines took part, appeared in the "Montreal Gazette," and the arguments can be well summed up in their own words:—

1. "We Jews do not want the Gospel."

2. "Why don't you send missionaries to the better class?"

3. "Jewish Missions are a failure."

The spiritual discerner would at once observe that none of them meditated on the spiritual significance of the Christian religion, nor do they at all appreciate the demand upon, and the duty of, the follower of the Christ of God. Let us examine their contentions.

I. "WE JEWS DO NOT WANT THE GOSPEL."

Do any Rabbis in: gine that the Church was deceiving itself? Christ Himself declared nineteen hundred years ago to His followers that the natural heart is hard and that the world loves darkness? The Church, obedient to the command of her Lord "to preach the Gospel to every creature," and "to the Jew first and also to the Gentile," cannot possibly be expected to stoop down and fail in her imperative duty, simply because it is not at once appreciated by those for whom the Gospel is so specially designated for their salvation. In fact, the Church exists, like

her Master, not for herself, but for mankind. To expect Christian people to exclude the Jew from their missionary program to evangelize the whole world, is to expect the Church to undo herself. It is to ask the Christian people to do what to them is an impossibility. The duty of the Christian is to proclaim peace through Christ. We cannot neglect our duty in relation to the Jews, especially when we consider the issue between Judaism and Christianity. It is of vital importance, it is great and infinite-yea, we cannot possibly close our eyes to the peril of a complacent acquiescence in all the assailment that is being levelled against the Christ of God and Christianity by the modern and liberal The claims of "liberality and charitableness," made by the modern Jews, all go to the wind when we look at their mutilated liturgy. They still preserve the intercessory prayer to Almighty God, that "Minim," i.e., sectarians, Christians, and especially converted Jews, "should have no hope." To the Jew in general Christ is an impostor, at best, who claimed for Himself the attributes of God. Renan in his "Vie de Jesus," influenced modern Jews to assume an apparent friendly attitude towards Christianity. He taught them to claim Jesus as their own great teacher, as their own inheritance. This was a subtle attempt to destroy the doctrine of Christianity be levelling it down to the position of a mere ethical religion like Judaism. It Judaism, in its attitude 'owards Christianity, is like a combatant who draws close to his opponent, and ther cecoils in order to give him a more severe blow. Hence, let us not be mistaken; when we see Jewish Rabbis, and other prominent non-Christian writers, however highly they speak of the person of Jesus, they are strenuously endeavoring to deny His absolute Messiahship and His undoubted Deity.

In view of this, for the Christic. Church at such a time to neglect the absolute command of her Lord to preach the Gospel to the Jew, would be a crime against her very conscience, and which could have only one possible ending—the undoing of herself.

II. "WHY NOT SEND THE MISSION-ARIES TO THE BETTER CLASS?"

The implication would naturally be that the wealthy and highly educated classes are neglected by the missionary agencies, and thus a proof of the inadequacy of its methods and the failure of its enterprise. Let us at once dispel this illusion! And if anyone's mind is thus befogged, we would humbly suggest to such to come out into the sunshine, and their doubts will all evaporate.

If the wealthy and highly educated have not accepted the Christian message, that is certainly not a proof of the inadequacy of the message, nor against its saving power; we venture to suggest that the failure is in themselves. In this respect the rich and highly educated Jew is not in a different position from the Gentile of the same calibre.

Look at the plain facts. Here is a missionary who is absolutely saturated with Gospel truth, an expert in dealing with individuals. What hope has he of gaining an entrance into the home of the Jewish barrister, the stockbroker and the rich merchant and the railroad magnate, with a view to winning them for Christ? In this class nationality is no factor. It is well known that the missionary who ventures on such enterprises is at once shown to the door, or dismissed with scant ceremony.

Once we look thoroughly into the question, it is not only adequately answered, but the injustice of it is made bare. The Jewish Mission should bear this blame just as little as the Home Mission should be held responsible for the fact that so many of the wealthy and educated Christians, who have turned their backs on religion, are not won by missionary efforts. There are cultured circles which are not accessible to a mission in the usual sense.

Rabbi de Sola, in one of his letters, evidently thought he was scoring and hitting hard in making his attack personal, so he puts this pointed question: "If Bishop Farthing considers conversion to Christianity essential for our salvation; if he

really believes that an infinitely benevolent God will consign us to hell five unless we see eye to eye with him, how is it that be has never made an attempt to convert me and my fellow Rabbis? Are our souls of no value? Are we such hardened sinners that we are unworthy of redemption?" Spiritual shortsightedness and the old spirit of arrogance prompts such a question. The duty of the missionary is to enlighten those who are in darkness, and to bring the message to those who have no opportunity of knowing it. The learned Rabbi and the aristocratic Jew, by his upbringing, by the schooling which he has enjoyed, by his extensive social relations, by his membership and admission into all kinds of literary functions, come in contact daily with true Christianity. All these splendid opportunities are denied to their poorer brethren. Their horizon is so much wider and should be clearer. The poor Jew is restricted to the members of his own class and race. His education, at its best, was in a Jewish school, in an obscure town in dark Russia. which has hardly led him beyond the Old Testament, restricted to the interpretations of the Rabbis in the light of the Tahmud, and even that from a limited viewpoint. But the cultured Jew had all the great problems and questions of life brought before him during the school days which he spent in a Christian college. The Christian church year, which he passed through as a matter of course with his fellow scholars, early brought to his consciousness the problems of the two Biblical religions. Later in life, the question of the true religion cannot remain hidden from him. a lover of music, or as a so-called "man of culture," he hears the mighty passion of Bach, the "Messiah" and the "Elijah," and the rest of the passionate Christian music. As a "inodern man" he pursues the discussion, which agitates wide circles, of such questions as "Did Jesus Live?" "Who was Jesus?" "What Would Jesus Do?" He has access to all the latest books and manuals, he has the languages to read the New Testament and faculties to understand it.

We fully agree with Dr. Mahl, the generalization that the Gospel is not presented to the better class Jews, is far too sweeping. Of course it is admitted that the wealthy Jews-and in that respect, the wealthy Gentiles as well-stand outside the radius of the missionary activities, but this does not admit reflection on the missionary or his agency. Unfortunately, the aristocratic Jew is like many educated Christians; to read the classics of all nations, to be acquainted with the latest novel, is a mark of good breeding; but where the New Testament is concerned, a man may confess he has never read it through, without deficiency in his education being greeted with a compassionate Finally, the better situated Jew may nearly always go to any evangelical minister, who would welcome him with open arms in order to converse with him as to his doubts. All this, almost without exception, is denied to the poorer and uneducated Jew.

No, the missionaries have an absolute right to throw back the reproach that the mission does nothing for the cultured among the Jews. If there is any blame, it rests with themselves. But we hope also to show that this fallacy that the educated Jew is not reached with the Gospel, is certainly not correct, as he is reached with the Gospel. Yea, as we hope to prove from their own writers, they are even more susceptible to the truth than their poorer and less educated brethren. The missionary in general who possesses the true love for Christ, and compassion for winning men to Him, is always only too happy to meet with such, and to help them into a better understanding of salvation and a close relationship with Christ. As long as everything goes well with a man, and he is sufficient unto himself, he will not seek after God. But over against these socalled better class Jews, stand thousands of Jews who struggle with the misery within and without, and to whom quest after God is a living reality. For these the Christian missionary has a living message which indeed suits all men, but which is best understood by them. God opens their heartsthey bring with them their need, a longing for deliverance, for comfort and true freedom, and Christ enters in and makes them free. On this account the Jewish missionary activities are more feasible and effectual among the less fortunate, but it does not mean that the success is less among the better class.

III. "JEWISH MISSIONS ARE A FAILURE."

This baseless accusation is usually accompanied by a three-fold charge:

(a) "It costs \$5,000 to convert a Jew."

(b) "Jewish converts belong to the lowest strata of society."

(c) "Bad Jews become worse Chris-

tians."

These plausible charges are so continuously and persistently indulged in, that many have come to believe that there is some truth in them. It is therefore amazing to find that all these assertions are effectively contradicted by their own Jewish leaders. The sadness of the whole situation is this, that the minds of these accusers are so befogged by the bitterness of their onslaught, that all reason is ignored, and they never even halt to consider their own contradictory statements.

Let us look impartially into these accusations and see what are the facts. It is rather too late in the day to insimuate that Jews who become Christians, do so from interested motives. The old theory that it cost \$5,000 to convert a Jew, has long ago

been exploded by Jewish authorities themselves in their estimate of the number of converts. But, suppose that a Jewish Mission has existed for a year, and has est. say, \$5,000, and that only one Jew has been converted, dare we even ask: "Is this result commensurate with the labor and cost?" Shall we compare \$5,000, or all the gold on earth, or all the material universe of God, with the vaine of one human soul. formed in the image of God, and capable of union and communion with Him? look at the facts. While the Rabbis are so anxiously lamenting "the waste of good Christian money," one of their eminent leaders, Professor G. Dentsch, the great anthority on Jewish history and bitter opponent of all Jewish missionary efforts, tells us in the "American Israelite" of March 10th, 1914:

"The total number of apostasies from Judaism in Vienna during the year 1909 was 616, and the number of desertious for the last ten years has remained stationary. In a community that numbers about 180,000 souls, this proportion of apostasies is not considered very great, although it is by no means insignificant. The former pretext that in this number there are included many outsiders who come to Vienna for the sake of conversion, in order to avoid notoriety at home, will not hold good any more, since the names of the apostates are published by the Jewish Press. One would think that it might be rather the reverse. The lists show that losses are found at both ends-amougst the most prominent ... d amongst the lowest strata of society. We find laborers and seamstresses by the side of lawyers and actresses and the representatives of high finance."

The "Jewish Chronicle," London, England, the most prominent of Jewish papers, and which never loses an opportunity of attacking Jewish Missions, forgot itself and published the following remarkable statement:

"Dr. Balu has examined the records of the Berlin Jewish community for information concerning Jewish apostasy. From this information it is possible to deduce a clear idea of the secession inovement throughout the whole of Germany. . . . In the period of 1873 to 1906, 1,874 persons (1,395 males and 479 females) in Berlin seceded from Judaism. . . . Besides the moral damage which the Jewish community sustains by these conversions it has also suffered considerable material loss, through diminution of its tax-paying members. The seceders, as a rule, belong to the well-to-do classes, and pay high contributions. The annual loss to the Jewish community through the secession period, 1887 to 1906, was about 80,000 marks."

From these statements one can appreciate the material loss to the synagogue and the alarm of the Rabbis, but where does the lamenting for "good Christian money" come in?

Look a little closer and see the inconsistency of their baseless imputations. The "Jewish Year Book," published in London, edited by Rabbi Isidor Harris, M.A., and used by all Rabbis, mentions the names of 500 Jewish celebrities, amongst whom are included 85 Jewish converts to Christianity.

Shall we say that these great, famous men financiers, astonomers, scholars in Sanskrit, in Greek and Roman classics, in modern languages and literature, as well Arabie, Chaldaic, Syriae and Hebrew, historians, poets, mathematicians, jurists, architects, explorers, musicians, actors, critics, journalists and writers of all kinds -are hypocrites? If so, why does the editor of the orthodox Jewish Year Book glory in them? Yet we understand that the Jewish synagogue could not afford to brush aside, as of no account, a body of men which embraces persons like the three Herschels, the eminent astronomers; Jacobi, the mathematician; Sir F. C. Palgrave, the traveller and historian; I. I. Ricardo, the economist; F. Ganz, the jurist; Prof. F. Jaffe, the historian; Mendelssohn, Sir Julius Benedict and Sir M. Costa, the musicians; Sir Moses Salvador, H. Vemberg, the Halevevs: not to mention Dr. Neander, the great Church historian; Dr. Alexander, first Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem: saints like Dr. Saphir, Dr. Edersheim, Dr. Joseph Woolf, Bishop Hellmuth, or Bishop Schershewsky. But the protesting Rabbis, in the bitterness of their attack, shut their eves to reason and truth, and would have us believe that these men were lazy, fools or hypocrites who sold their souls for what they could get, and were a burden to the church; and to our own shame and sorrow we find that some Gentile Christians have been led so far astray as to join in this awful calımıny. Nav, these men have not only helped to add histre to the church, but by their lives, works and writings, have monlded the lives and character of thonsands within the church. These, and these only are the men of whom the Jewish neonle can honorably be proud; for they are the men of Israel, who, having canght the true vision of God, as revealed in Christ, followed Him to the very Garden of Gethsemane, losing all, forsaken, hated by their dearest and best, left alone in the wilderness and tempted by the devil; yet, they emerged through the fire and came out more than conquerors, rejoicing in their Lord. Of such the nation ought justly to be prond.

DAMAGING EVIDENCE.

But perhaps the most damaging evidence of all against the unworthy assertions of enemies of Missions to the Jews, has come to light through a dissension among their eminent leaders. The Chief Rabbi of London, England, delivered a remarkable address on Saturday, April 25th, 1914, on the subject, "Does Reform Lead to Apostasy?" and in making his bitter attack on Reform Judaism, he stated: "No wonder that a number of such 'Rabbis' have in the course of one generation publicly renounced Judaism, or gone over to Christianity—an unheard of thing in all the preceding thirty-

three centuries of our chequered history." After mentioning names of certain leaders who have renounced Judaism, cludes: "To deal fully with the apostusies among I. M. Wise's (Principal and founder of the Reformed Jewish College, Cincinatti) friends and pupils would require a monograph." This, of course, woke the indignation of Prof. Dr. Gotthard Dentsch, who made a most powerful onslaught on the Chief Rabbi in the "Jewish Chronicle" of June 26th, 1914, and in his retaliation be gave a wonderful list of orthodox Rabbis. and particularly sons of these Rabbisamongst those whom he mentions, the offspring of one of his predecessors in the office of Chief Rabbi of Britain-who have renounced Judaism in favor of Protestant Christianity. The knowledge of Dr. Deutsch on the subject is simply marvellous. The only regret is that his article is so exhaustive that we cannot give it in full, vet we think it would be helpful to have it reprinted on some future occasion. Dr. Deutsch has unconsciously done eminent service to Christianity by giving us a list of converts which we never had before; he also provoked Professor Daiches to champion the cause of orthodox Judaism, and in his defence he gave us a list of the Reformed Rabbis and their offspring who have renounced Judaism for Christianity.

Thus, by the dissensions of these champions of Judaism, we have received new light on the subject, and damaging evidence

to all their baseless charges. What we marvel at is that these Jewish leaders are so short-sighted and still persist in their unfounded accusations.

The result of this correspondence could be well summed up by the query put by Mr. Louis Kletz, in the "Jewish Chronicle"

of July 3rd, 1914:

"The controversy between the Chief Rabbi and Dr. Gotthard Deutsch, whilst interesting from an academic point of view, is unsatisfying in the sense that it does not seem to lead anywhere in particular. Dr. Hertz condemns 'Reform' as a natural road to apostasy, and in proof of his contention, cites the case of certain Reform Rabbis who have been converted to Christianity. Thereupon Dr. Deutsch comes along with a series of facts and figures which tend to show that, in so far as it affects Rabbis, apostasy is just as frequent in orthodox Jewry, until the man in the street is left to wonder whether Rabbis are not especially susceptible to the allurements of conversion."

On our part, we are bound to say that in our experience, no one is more susceptible to Christianity than the Rabbis; if we could only bring them seriously to consider the claims of Christ, then Christianity is theirs.

The bitterness and inconsistency of the "Jewish Chronicle" has no bounds. A few months ago this paper of official Judaism published a full page photograph of the Right Honorable Rufus Isaacs, who was promoted to be Lord Chief Justice of Great Britain, the highest office in the

power of the Crown, as well as being raised to the peerage. In full ecstasy of glorification, they told of the deeds of this heroic Jew, and pointed out how one could be such a loyal Jew and yet receive the highest honor of state. But in the "Jewish Chronicle" of October 2nd, 1914, we read of an extraordinary event. The Hon. Gerald Isaacs, the son and heir of this very Lord Chief Justice, married the daughter of another well-known Jew, Sir Alfred Mond, Baronet, P.C., M.P., and both accepted Protestant Christianity, and were married at the Holy Trinity Church, London, England! Of course the "Jewish Chronicle" makes a bitter attack on both these children of Israel. "Why do they not stamp this couple as 'bad Jews becoming worse Christians?' "

The same "Jewish Chronicle" of January 2nd, 1914, in congratulating the Right Honorable Lord Burnham, the chief proprietor of the "Daily Telegraph," upon the attainment of his eightieth birthday, after fully eulogising the greatre of this remarkable man, comments thus we as conversion to the Christian faith: "As a newspaper, the "Jewish Chronicle" offers fraternal greetings to Lord Burnham. As a Jewish newspaper it cannot forget that his Lordship found himself unable to remain in the community in which his family This is a recollection—and was cradled. we say it frankly-which is a regrettable one, for we do not produce so many men and women of commanding calibre that we can afford to lose one so distinguished as Lord Burnham." Evidently Lord Burnham does not come under the category of a "bad Jew becoming a worse Christian."

In conversing with a leading Rabbi about this vexed question of venomous hate, and after straining himself to give an adequate reason, we ventured to quote to him the oft repeated classic verse:

"I do not like you, Dr. Fell,
The reason why, I cannot tell;
But this I know, and know full well,
I do not like you, Dr. Fell."

There is one more important line evidence that proves rather refreshing, seeing that we find modern Jewry has at last produced some who dare to speak honestly on this very subject. It was a pleasant surprise to find the eminent representative of official Zionism, Dr. Arthur Rupin of Palestine, venturing to publish a remarkable book, entitled "The Jews of To-day." For frankness we must style him a new "asset" to the modern Jewry. He flatly contradicts the popular sing-song that Christianity has failed to reach the Jews. After an analysis of Jewish baptisms in different countries throughout the world, and in speaking of missionary estimates of adult baptisms, he says:

[&]quot;It is quite conceivable that in his approximate calculation of 204,500 Jewish baptisms in

the 19th century, he not only does not exceed the actual number, but may perhaps fall slightly short of it. It must be noticed that this figure included neither Jewish converts to dissenting ereeds, nor baptisms of children of mixed marriages. . . . The estimate of 10,000 Jews being baptized every year falls far short from actual fact.''

Dr. Rupin's unconscions testimony that the ascendancy of Christianity has superseded Judaism, should make every Jew panse awhile. Let the Christian also take note of his remarkable statement:

Ohn the first centuries before and after Christ, Judaism was, indeed, a great attractive force with the heathen, and there was a very considerable number of Jewish proselytes. But this spread of Jewish faith ceased almost entirely at the end of the first century, A.D. Paul's propaganda, and the growing strength of Christianity, took the wind out of its sails. From that time onward the Jewish mission was rejected in favor of Christianity.

Furthermore, he unconsciously gives an effective reply to the two familiar Rabbinical accusations against the Christian church, viz.:

1st. "That converts are only of the poor-

est and lowest strata of society."

2nd. "That the Church is afraid to go

to the rich and the educated.''

He divides the Jewish community into four classes. The fourth he classifies as the best and noblest, and says: "In the fourth class, which includes rich Jews of

the capitals and Jews of university training, baptism, for the children at least, has

almost become the rule."

As to the second accusation, he says for the cultured, rich and educated, there is no need for a missionary—they themselves drift into Christianity, as the result of coming in contact with Christian influence, education and environment. But the strongest asset of Christianity is intermarriage. If a Jew is baptized a Christian in the ordinary way he is ostracized, but when one marries outside the faith he is naturally looked upon with complacency. Dr. Rupin concludes his arguments with the following declaration:

"The economical progress of the Jews, and the growing culture of their surroundings, make it clear that the answer must be that an increase in baptisms is all that can be expected."

In the face of all these evidences from their own sources, we ask, "Are Missions

to the Jews really a failure?"

There is a remarkable answer given in the "Jewish World" of September 13th, 1913, to the query, Why do Jews hate those who have accepted Christianity? viz., "The answer is to be found in the zeal of those men so often displayed against the rock from which they were hewn." This proves their short-sightedness, because here is their own evidence of the zeal of the converted Jews to win their brethren for Christ.

The whole condition of the Jewry is so lamentable, that we cannot do better than quote from the orthodox Jewish Year Book, the 'He 'Atid,' which in reviewing the Jewish condition, in agonizing language cries out:

"Despair has overtaken us, for we no more believe in a purpose, neither in that which the former simple faith had invented, nor in that recently invented by the exilic Judaism. We no longer see any meaning in our miserable existence. . . . Where is the way, and where the way out, and where is salvation? Neither Zionism, nor the indifferent national aspirations satisfy our souls, which thirst after a new spiritual and moral life."

THE OUTLOOK.

Those of us who are standing upon the walls of Zion and watching Israel's peculiar condition, do not despair in the least. There has never been a time in the Jewish history when the Jews have been more honestly endeavoring to find the trnth and learn about Jesus Christ, than at the present time. There has never been a time when the Jews have so entirely overcome all fear of the Rabbis and leaders, and are openly attending Missions as to-day, and as soon as they are convinced they take a definite stand. This has been not only our own experience, but the experience of the missionaries in the differ-

ent parts of the world. All feel that there has been a point of contact established between the Jews and Christianity with which no Rabbinical anathemas can possibly interfere. The year 1914 must be recognized by all laborers amongst Israel as a year of progress and fruitage. There are extraordinary opportunities before the Church of Christ, and the whole situation is so momentons—the position so tremendons and crucial, that the Church cannot afford to halt for a moment.



