

THE JEWISH ERA

Vol. 13.

CHICAGO, JANUARY 15, 1904

No. 1

"A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel."

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY, PRICE OF SUBSCRIPTION, 25 CENTS PER YEAR

Subscription in Europe or other foreign parts, 8 cents extra for postage

ENTERED AT THE CHICAGO POST OFFICE

MRS. T. C. ROUNDS, EDITOR.

THE BOOK, AND THE PEOPLE.*

BY RT. REV. BISHOP INGHAM.

"We are drawing to the close of what I conceive is going to prove a most important Conference. Sometimes I think that congresses and conferences do not altogether justify their existence. This one is going to do so. If I was able to observe at all correctly this morning, there was seed-sowing and reaping in very close connection with each other. I saw a keenness, which has never struck me so much in any other conference, to reap on the spot some of the results of the seed sown, and if that characteristic marks the Conference throughout, it means a new departure in usefulness and enterprise for our Jewish Missions. We are going to discuss this afternoon a most interesting movement. It is my place as Chairman not to anticipate the carefully prepared papers that will be presented to you; but rather to say a general word of preface. It is

A NOBLE MEDIATION

which this Society occupies midway, if I may say so, between the Christian churches and the Church of the Old-Testament time, and I believe that God is with us.

*Address made as Chairman at the International Jewish Conference held Oct. 22, 1903, at the Church House, Westminster, S. W., London, England.

I believe that it is our earnest desire to interpret the very Christ of God to the people from whose stock, according to the flesh, He originally came. And as we are now looking out upon this movement, we shall not do so, I venture to say, merely from the point of view of the philanthropist. It is not for us a question of an interesting people without a land and of an interesting land without a people. It is not for us the fact merely that these people are in some parts of the world persecuted and tried to an extraordinary extent. It is not thus that we come to this study; philanthropy is not our first thought. The other day, I took up my paper and I saw how that at some great meeting, the Lord Mayor, who is a Jew, is reported to have said, and said in the presence of a London Bishop, that if money were wanted for some philanthropic matter—I cannot remember what it was—he knew where some £50,000 per annum was to be got, and would be very much better spent than it is being spent by missions to the Jews. I want 'us to make such men see—and I believe the highest amongst them will come to see—that there is one great question that overshadows all others: Has God spoken to us all? We want them to know that we feel that they are bound up with Revelation in a way from which they can never extricate themselves and

ought to talk a great deal more about the prejudice of the members of the Christian Church. One other word. We have seen and we have read of the

WITHERED FIG TREE,

and we have shuddered over all that it has meant for these people down through the centuries. To-day we see what some of us think is the budding fig-tree—the budding fig-tree of national feeling, and of a sense of being a people, that is finding expression on an unprecedented scale, and we are standing in the foreview of we know not what developments. It is a happy thing for us reverently to sit this afternoon in this Conference and listen to those who are able to tell us what they think this movement means, and what they feel our attitude towards it should be.”

ISRAEL'S DISTRESS.

MRS. E. M. EXTON.

“And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people, I know their sorrows.” Exodus 3:7.

Gracious Lord! We know Thou see'st,
As Thou didst in olden time,
The affliction of Thy people,
In another land and clime.

Thou hast heard their bitter wailing,
It hath entered in Thine ear!
Witnessed too the dreadful horror
Of fresh cruelties they fear!

Well Thou knowest all their sorrow,
All their burden and their pain;
All the harsh inhuman treatment
Which so long has been their bane.

Harder than Egyptian bondage
Is the obloquy they feel
Now in many towns and countries,
As beneath their tasks they reel.

Where the laws do not protect them,
Robbed, and cursed on every side;
While the powers look on approving,
Or with cruel jest deride.

Suffering 'neath false accusation,
Not permitted to refute:

They endure the loss of all things,
Bowed beneath oppression—mute.

Lord, how long shall this Thine Israel
Suffer such indignity?
Or the so-called Christian Nations
Practice such barbarity?

How can we expect to win them
To Immanuel's pierced side,
If such cruelties are practised
In His Name—The Crucified?

Oh, Thou Rock of their Salvation,
To them now Thyself reveal
As their own, their true Messiah,
Who can sympathize and feel.

Bring, oh bring them through the furnace!
Purge their tin and dross away!
To Thy blindest harassed people
Give deliverance we pray!

Help them in their pain and anguish
To lift up their hearts to Thee!
Who in Israel's troubled crises
Art the "Only Remedy."

Fairbury, Neb.

DANIEL LANDSMANN.*

BY REV. LOUIS MEYER.

Daniel Landsmann was born in Karolin, province of Minsk, in Russia, one of eighteen children, of a strictly orthodox Jewish couple. His education was that of the Talmudical Jews, and by it was implanted in the heart of the little boy a very strong desire to see Jerusalem and the holy land of his forefathers with his own eyes. When thirteen years of age Daniel, according to Jewish custom, became a Bar Mitzvah (son of the covenant), and his legal majority was thus declared. Immediately after the ceremony a family festival was celebrated, and during it the parents notified the youthful son that they had chosen a wife for him. The demand of the parents that the marriage be

*Freund Israels, Basel, 1874; Saat auf Hoffnung, 1875; De le Roi III. 200 etc.; Freund Israels, Baltimore, 1896, August; The Christian Israelite, 1896, August; Zenge der Wahrheit, June, 1896; The Workman, June, 1896.

soon celebrated Daniel opposed by pointing out that he was not only too young, but was not able to provide for a wife. The parents of his chosen bride and his own parents then solemnly guaranteed six years' support to the youthful couple, and all objections of the youth having been met, Daniel Landsmann was married when only a little more than thirteen years of age.

The young husband and wife lived in the house of the wife's parents, and since these provided very liberally for all their needs, Daniel Landsmann spent all his time in the study of the Talmud. Thus he gained that wonderful knowledge of the traditions of the fathers which later proved so helpful to the Jewish missionary.

But this time of leisure and study was violently interrupted, first by the death of Daniel's parents, and then by a sickness which kept him almost two years upon a bed of intense suffering. During this time the pious sufferer vowed that, if the Lord would restore his health and strength, he would sell all and emigrate to Jerusalem. Finally the disease yielded to the employed means, and Daniel Landsmann resolved immediately to pay his vow, although he could move only by the help of crutches. He met with unexpected violent opposition from his wife, and, after a struggle, he decided to start alone. Before he started, however, he handed his wife a Jewish letter of divorce, with the understanding that she should use it, if he did not return to her within two years.

His pilgrimage proved successful and he made his home in the holy city until the two years were almost past. Then he returned to Russia to his wife, became reconciled to her, and finally succeeded

in persuading her to accompany him to Jerusalem. Thus Daniel Landsmann, his wife and his sister (the only survivor of his seventeen brothers and sisters) settled in Jerusalem.

Daniel eked out a miserable living as a tailor, but never complained, since he rather bore hardship than leave again the beloved Holy City. One day he found upon the street a leaf torn from a Hebrew book. Lifting it up he began to read it, and soon became intensely interested in its wonderful sayings. It was a part of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, but Landsmann had never read of that nor seen a New Testament. Thus, although his curiosity was aroused and he would have liked to know the author of the fascinating passage, he made no further inquiry after the truth.

A short time after this, Landsmann came in touch with the missionaries of the London Jews' Society, especially with the Scripture Reader Paulus H. Stern, but the Jewish tailor was not yet ready to accept Christ. He was self-righteous and proud of being a child of Abraham in the flesh. To save him, God led him through much tribulation and sorrow. His customers gradually became less, his income decreased, until at last he was in sore need and his children were crying for bread. Some of his friends told him that the missionary Stern had never refused help to a poor Jew, and he was counseled to visit Stern. But he refused, since he considered it a sin to ask a Meshummad (a convert from Judaism to Christianity) for help.

A few days after this refusal, Stern met Landsmann upon the street, and, as his custom was, spoke to him at once of Jesus Christ the Messiah. Landsmann

answered not and rudely struck the missionary. He gloried in this righteous (as it seemed to him) act, and listened with delight to the praising recommendations of his Jewish brethren.

When Stern met him again, he never referred to Landsmann's action, but simply asked him, "Do you want to be saved?" Landsmann answered, "I am saved;" and he immediately commenced to count up his good works and deeds. An argument between the Hebrew follower of Christ and the self-righteous Jew followed, which stopped the latter's mouth. He did not strike the missionary again, and gained such confidence in him that he told him all about his financial situation. The Christ-like manner of Stern made a great impression upon the unbelieving Jew, for Stern not only gave him work, but also forwarded him money, in spite of the fact that only a short time before the same Jew had maltreated him.

Landsmann became most intimate with Stern. He soon began to study the New Testament, and to his astonishment found in it the page which he had found upon the street and which had given him so much pleasure. The truth that Jesus is the Messiah dawned upon him, and after a long struggle he decided to tell his wife and friends that he believed in Jesus.

A storm of persecution broke over him immediately. His wife bitterly opposed him. His friends forsook him. The rabbis anathematized him. One day the fanatical Jews took hold of him. "We have to do to you what others did to your God," they cried. He was stretched out, and the spikes were already driven through his hands, when his wife commenced to cry and scream so pitiously that he was released. It

took a long time to heal the penetrated hands.

Another time he was to be brought before a Jewish court, but two Turkish soldiers saved him from the dreadful scourging that awaited him.

The ever-increasing persecutions forced Landsmann finally to forsake wife and children. He sought refuge in the Inquirers' Home. Already on the next day the enraged Jews stormed the Home, bound him and carried him back to his wife. The English consul interferred, and Landsmann returned again to the Home. Two weeks after his return two of his children died suddenly; the third followed soon after. This sudden sorrow caused doubt. The tears of his wife were added, and Landsmann softened and returned to his wife. He recanted and took the bath of purification which is to be taken by repentant sinners. The Jews welcomed the returned sheep and did all they could to make him satisfied.

But Daniel Landsmann could find no peace. His fourth, and youngest child died, and after a struggle of nine months his wife left him. Then he gave her a letter of divorce and left for good the Jewish camp. In April, 1863, Daniel Landsmann was baptized.

The persecutions commenced at once again. At the feast of Purim (Esther) his pious aunt invited him. She had planned to kill him with poisoned cake and coffee. But somehow Landsmann became suspicious and handed some cake to his cousin. The quickness with which the cake was snatched from the boy proved the plot.

At another time Landsmann and some friends were walking outside the gates of the Holy City. Suddenly a crowd of Jews approached and seized Landsmann. He was

to be buried alive, and was almost buried when his friends returned with help and saved him. Amidst these persecutions Landsmann remained steadfast, and he grew in grace so that he finally entered the service of the London Jews' Society. He did faithful and blessed work, until in 1873 he followed Tomoe's invitation to become the colporteur of the Free Church of Scotland Mission to the Jews in Constantinople. Here he was instrumental in the conversion of Eliezer Bassin, whose history has been named one of the most touching of the present time.

In July, 1883, the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other States, decided to enter upon the founding of a Mission to the Jews in New York. Daniel Landsmann was unanimously chosen as the missionary, and, gladly following the call into a field of greater activity, he went immediately from Constantinople to New York and entered upon the work. It was an exceedingly difficult task which awaited the Jewish missionary among the rapidly multiplying Jewish population of the great American metropolis. The many efforts to bring the Gospel to the Jews in New York which had been made during the '50's and '60's had ceased; the large number of enthusiastic Hebrew and Gentile Christian workers had been scattered or become discouraged, and the Church Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, though enjoying outward prosperity, was by no means reaching the Jewish masses. Jacob Freshman, who had come to New York only two years before, was endeavoring to rally the scattered friends of Israel again to the support of an interdenominational mission. And the American Tract Society, as

well as the New York City Mission and Tract Society, were making but futile efforts to reach the thousands of Russian Jews which were escaping from Russian bondage to the land of liberty.

Landsmann bravely faced the difficulties and soon succeeded in gaining the full confidence and support of the members of that church which had called him to his difficult post. When this had been done he tried to gain the confidence of his Jewish brethren. At first he met scorn and persecution, but soon the story of that which he had suffered for his Saviour's sake, from the hands of his fanatical Jewish brethren became known, and the Jews began to watch him and to listen to his public address and to his conversations in private homes, stores, offices, and restaurants. His wealth of Talmudical learning greatly impressed them, but still more influence he gained over them by his humble spirit. He, whose body bore the marks of brutal beatings and tortures which he had endured for Jesus' sake, had been purified by the fire of persecution. His faith was sublime and became only stronger with the ever-increasing difficulties and discouragements. His humility was true and his love to his Saviour and his Jewish brethren was exceedingly great. Thus, Daniel Landsmann lived Christ before his enemies, and such a life naturally influenced them. The hatred ceased, the persecutions were lessened, and a wide door of entrance was opened to the glad tidings of salvation, which the consecrated missionary brought.

The number of Jews who found their Saviour through the instrumentality of Landsmann during those years of hard labor in New York, was not very large, though about as large as that of any other

faithful missionary to the Jews, but it soon became apparent that nearly all of them remained faithful and entered into honorable employment.

Almost thirteen years of hard and incessant work had gone by, when Landsmann was suddenly called to his eternal reward. For some time he had been ailing and so feeble that he could scarcely attend the services for the Jews and the church meetings where he was invited to present the Jewish cause to Christians. But in the second week of May, 1896, he was suddenly prostrated with violent pains. It was peritonitis, and Landsmann soon recognized that the end of his earthly career was near. Amid the excruciating tortures of the dreadful disease from which he was suffering, he faced death in triumphant faith. His departure was like the heroic life which he had lived. With composure he awaited the end, avowing again and again his faith in Jesus Christ.

As he grew more feeble he asked for his Hebrew Bible and with a scarcely audible voice began to read the one hundred and sixteenth psalm. But the beloved book proved too heavy and his pastor had to finish the reading. Then he arranged all the details of his funeral, and having bidden a touching farewell to wife and child, he said, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," and a little later he added, "I am not afraid to die." These were his last words, and quietly and peacefully he departed this life on May 13, 1896. The funeral services were impressive and soul-stirring, and proved the great esteem and love in which the humble Hebrew Christian missionary had been held by Jews, as well as by Christians.

Daniel Landsmann was an Israelite indeed, and it can be truly

said of him that "he being dead, yet speaketh." For the numerous Hebrew and Yiddish tracts which he wrote and which have been published by the American Tract Society, are still bringing the message of salvation to those orthodox Jews into whose hands they are put.

Hopkinton, Iowa.

ZION'S TEARFUL HOPE.

BY REV. J. H. SAMMIS.

O Zion, the Beloved,
Our hearts e'er turn to thee,
From many an alien country,
O'er many an alien sea,
Through all the countless morrows,
The hopes of barren years,
We eat the bread of sorrows,
And drink the cup of tears.

Jehovah, God of Jacob,
Wilt thou be wroth for aye?
The fierceness of Thine anger
When wilt thou turn away?
When from Thy glorious mountain
Shall pass the clouds of wrath?
When shall the living fountain
Pursue its fruitful path?

Pity, O Lord, Thy people,
Scattered, and spoiled, and peeled.
Is there no balm in Gilead?
Why is our hurt unhealed?
Groping in ancient blindness
We stumble in the day;
Restore Thy loving kindness,
And turn us in the way.

* * * * *

Ho! watchmen, on the mountains,
What signs of coming cheer?
"The morning light is breaking,
Its herald rays appear."

Come, Wanderer, it behooveth
To take thy staff in hand,
The cloudy pillar moveth
On to Thy fatherland.

St. Paul, Minn.

"O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God: for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips." Hos. 14:1, 2.