

The Missionary Review of the World

Published by Funk and Wagnalls Company (Isaac K. Funk, Pres., A. W. Wagnalls, Vice-Pres., Robert J. Cuddihy, Treas., Robert Scott, Sec'y),
44-60 E. 23d St., New York

VOL. XXXIV. No. 12
Old Series

DECEMBER, 1911

VOL. XXIV. No. 12
New Series

SIGNS OF THE TIMES*

THE CHINESE CALDRON

The rebellion in China has become a revolution with astonishing success and rapid progress for the anti-Manchu faction. This uprising is radically different from the Boxer riots eleven years ago. Those were anti-foreign and reactionary. The leaders were uneducated, superstitious fanatics. This rebellion is anti-Manchu and progressive. Protection is promised to foreigners, and the aim is to throw off the Manchu yoke, which the Chinese have been wearing for nearly three hundred years, and to establish a modern representative government—some say to be modeled after that of the United States. The rebellion has been skillfully planned and financed, and proves that the Chinese have awakened and desire progress. The leaders are educated and capable and are carrying the masses of the people with them.

The uprising first showed itself in Cheng-tu, the capital of the far-western province of Sz-chuan. It gained strength as it advanced down the Yangtse Valley, driving the government troops before it or inducing them to desert to the rebel standard. The capture of Hankow and the neighboring cities was the signal for other uprisings in various provinces, until Fuchau, Nanking, Canton and other

large centers came into rebel hands. The alarm of the Government and the inability of the officials to control the situation has led to the suggestion of a compromise with the revolutionary leaders, including the appointment of progressive ministers and viceroys, the immediate institution of a national elective parliament (perchance even with woman-suffrage) and other progressive reforms. Yuan Shih Kai, who has been in disgrace, and is a Chinese, not a Manchu, has been called to take charge of the government forces, and appears to be in sympathy with the revolutionary ideals. Word comes by cable that a constitution has been granted for immediate operation, and that other sweeping reforms will be immediately instituted.

It is too early as yet to definitely predict the outcome, but China is a force to be reckoned with more than ever in the future of world politics. Missionary work has been temporarily interfered with during the disturbances, but the missionaries and Christians have not been molested. There is no indication that a success of the revolutionary party will be detrimental to the progress of Christianity; in fact, except in so far as materialism increases, there is reason to expect in-

* The editors seek to preserve accuracy and to manifest the spirit of Christ in the pages of this REVIEW, but do not acknowledge responsibility for opinions expressed, or positions taken by contributors to these pages.—EDITORS.

JEWISH IMMIGRANTS IN AMERICA

BY REV. LOUIS MEYER, D.D., NEW YORK CITY.

I. Whence Do They Come?

The question of the home-country of all our immigrants is of the utmost importance, because their character can not be understood until we know from what surroundings they severed themselves that they might seek a more or less permanent home in this country. In regard to almost all races or peoples which send representatives to our shores among the multitude of immigrants, the question, "Whence do they come?" is easily answered, their names being expressive of their home-country in the majority of cases; but this is not the case with regard to the Jews. The answer which we received from the Commissioner-General of Immigration to our question, "What is the meaning of the word 'Hebrew' as used in the reports of the Bureau of Immigration?" shows the difficulty of an explicit answer, for it states, "The word 'Hebrew' means the people of Hebrew birth regardless of the country from which they came or the language they speak." Thus, a Jewish immigrant may come from almost any part of the wide earth, because Jews are found everywhere.

Reliable statistics concerning the origin of our Jewish immigration can not be had except for the port of New York, but since 78.17 per cent. of all immigrants of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1907, and 74.72 per cent. of all immigrants of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1908, landed in New York, the statistics for that port may well be taken as representative of the whole Jewish immigration. From them we learn that in the 18 months from January 1, 1908, to June 30, 1909, 69,912 Jews landed in New

York. Of these 50,750, or 72.6 per cent., were classified as Russian Jews by the Jewish experts; 4,222, or 6.04 per cent., as Hungarian; 9,710, or 13.88 per cent., as Austrian; 2,633, or 3.77 per cent., as Rumanian; 1,245, or 1.78 per cent., as English; 703, or 1 per cent., as Turkish, while the rest, a little less than 1 per cent., was made up of Jews from Sweden 11, Italy 4, Bulgaria 2, Denmark 7, Switzerland 1, France 49, Spain 6, Belgium 11, Holland 24, Greece 1, Finland 1, and increasing numbers of Jews from South Africa and South America, especially Argentina, who were probably emigrating immigrants to those countries, while a few came from India and Australia. Thus, the answer to our question, "Whence do our Jewish immigrants come?" might well be, "The vast majority of them come from Russia and Poland, while tributary streams come from Austria (Galicia), Hungary, and Rumania, and little attention need be paid to the remaining 3 per cent.

II. How Many Jews Come Annually

According to government statistics, there came to the United States in 1899 (the year ends on June 30) 37,415 Jews; in 1903, 76,203; in 1904, 106,236; in 1905, 129,910; in 1906, 153,748; in 1907, 149,182; in 1908, 103,387; in 1909, 57,551; in 1910, 84,260; and from July 1, 1910, to June 30, 1911, 91,223. During the ten years ending on June 30, 1910, 976,263 Jewish immigrants landed in the United States, almost 8 per cent. of the Jews in all lands (11,530,848 according to American Jewish Year Book 1909-10). In the 6 years from July 1, 1902, to June 30, 1898, 718,666 Jewish immi-

grants arrived. In 1907, 8.6 per cent. of the total immigration, comprising more than 40 peoples or races, were Jewish; in 1908, 13.2 per cent.; in 1909, 7.65 per cent., in 1910, 8.09 per cent., and in 1911, 10.38 per cent.

The height of Jewish immigration was reached in 1906, the direct fruit of the cruel and inhuman persecutions of the Russian and Rumanian Jews by the nominal Christian rulers and inhabitants of those countries. When the total immigration decreased 39 per cent., in 1908, on account of the great financial crisis, Italian immigration decreased 55 per cent., Austrian-Hungarian 50, Greek 41, but Jewish only 31 per cent. Out of the 392,073 emigrant aliens who departed from this country on account of the panic of 1907-8, 7,702, or less than 2 per cent., were Jews, while in November, 1907, when the panic was at its height, only 1 per cent., of the departing aliens was Jewish.

In 1907, 127 Jews were deported, more than of any other race except the Japanese, and 64 of these were insane. In 1908, 181 were deported, and 87 on account of insanity. In 1907, 1,257 Jews were debarred, or 9.6 per cent. of the total debarred, and in 1908, 679, or 6.2 per cent. of total debarred; in 1909, 614, or 5.9 per cent. of total; and in 1910, 1,954, or 8.05 per cent. of total. The reason for debarring being extreme poverty in the majority of cases during these years. We would draw special atten-

tion to the fact that in 1907, the Jewish immigrants furnished a little more than their proportion (8.6 per cent.) to those debarred, that in 1908, they did not furnish quite one-half of their proportion (13.2 per cent) of those debarred, and that in 1909 and 1910 they furnished a little less than their proportion, (7.65 per cent., resp. 8.09 per cent.)

III. The Occupations of Jewish Immigrants

The Jew, it is supposed, is a born business man, and the general impression prevails that very few skilled laborers and no professional men whatever are found among our Jewish immigrants. In the following table, which is based upon the official statistics of our government for 1907, 1908 and 1909, we compare the Jewish immigrants with the Italian, because the poverty and lack of advantages of the Jews of eastern Europe are well comparable to those of the Italians, who furnished 294,061 immigrants in 1907, 135,247 in 1908, 190,398 in 1909, 223,453 in 1910, and 189,950 in 1911.

Two important lessons concerning the Jewish immigrant should be learned from the table below.

1. The Jew brings wife and children with him or sends for them as soon as he is able to pay their fare, in the majority of cases.

2. The Jew is represented in every trade, with no exception in the list.

OCCUPATIONS OF IMMIGRATION	Jewish per cent.			Italian per cent.		
	1907	1908	1909	1907	1908	1909
1. Professional (lawyers, doctors, etc.).....	.7	.7	.8	.4	.6	.2
2. Skilled (including almost every trade).....	37.0	35.0	31.6	11.7	12.3	7.1
3. Miscellaneous (including farm laborers and servants)...	16.0	19.1	17.0	66.3	54.5	69.6
4. No occupation (including women and children).....	46.3	45.2	50.6	21.6	32.6	23.1

This can not be said of any other race, except the English, so that the oft-repeated calumny that the Jew is found in a few trades only should cease. The Jewish representation in each trade is never below the average, but the English is, according to immigration statistics.

IV. Where These Jewish Immigrants Settle

In a general way the question might be answered: "They settle in our large cities, almost always in distinct, circumscribed quarters," but the majority gives as its final destination, Greater New York. Of all the immigrants admitted to this country in 1908, 32 per cent. claimed the State of New York as their ultimate destination, but of the Jews admitted in 1907, 62.9 per cent.; in 1908, 66 per cent., in 1909, 60.2 per cent. (or 34,633), and in 1910, 62.8 per cent. (or 51,971), reported the State of New York as their goal when they arrived. Earnest efforts are now being made by Jewish leaders to deflect the stream of Jewish immigration from New York and the great commercial centers, to the South and West of our great country, but hitherto with comparatively little success.

The number of Jewish inhabitants in our States and cities are mere estimates, and therefore not reliable, but we do not hesitate to say that our observations cause us to consider the statistics in the American Jewish Year Book as far too low. A careful investigation of the Presbyterian Home Mission Board's trained and careful field-investigator in Newark, N. J., for instance, revealed almost as many Jewish inhabitants in that one city as the Jewish Year Book reports for the State of New Jersey. Any observer

in Chicago knows that the great city contains many more Jews than the Jewish Year Book reports for the whole State of Illinois (110,000).

We will not add new estimates of Jewish inhabitants of our great cities to the already too numerous ones, but we simply point out that more than fifty per cent. of the two millions and one-half of Jews who are thought to be in the United States live within twenty miles of New York's Post Office; and that, according to their own declarations on landing, about three-fifths of the recent Jewish immigrants are to be found in that city (about 580,000 out of the total Jewish immigration from 1899 to October 1, 1909).

V. Why Do These Immigrants Settle in the Cities of Their Choice?

Wherever these Jewish immigrants settle in extensive numbers they establish distinct Jewish quarters called Ghettos, cities within the cities, which are just as separate from the surrounding Gentile quarters as if they were enclosed by walls with gates securely fastened every evening, as in the Ghetto of the Middle Ages in Europe. Racial and religious considerations, and, to some extent perhaps, the custom of the old world, lead to the continuance of the Jewish Ghetto even in the liberty of the new world, and in the Ghetto, curious old-world ways and customs continue to prevail tho the younger generation try hard to be freed from them. The signs are mostly in Yiddish, the language spoken by almost all these newcomers, which is nothing but the corrupt German of the Middle Ages with an admixture of Hebrew, Polish, Russian, and English words, written with Hebrew letters.

In Greater New York there are four distinct Jewish quarters. The oldest and largest one (larger than any other in the world) extends from the East River to the Bowery, from Catharine to Houston Street, and is thought to contain 450,000 Jewish men, women and children. It is the most densely populated part of the earth, having 625 people to the acre. Some of its blocks are said to have between 1,500 and 1,700 inhabitants.

The uptown Jewish quarter extends from Eighty-sixth to 125th Street, from Fifth Avenue to the East River, and has about 200,000 inhabitants. The Williamsburg Jewish quarter contains 150,000, and the Brownsville Jewish quarter 75,000 people. But there are large masses of Jews north of Houston Street up to East Sixth Street; in the Bronx, and also in the Lenox Avenue part of Manhattan, while it can be said that to-day there are few parts of Greater New York where no scattered Jewish colonies small or large can be found.

Philadelphia and Chicago also have large Ghettos, while Boston, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, St. Louis and practically all our large commercial cities have smaller ones.

The housing question in these Jewish quarters, especially in those of New York, is a very serious one and lies at the bottom of many of the social and moral problems which challenge the religious workers among the people.

VI. Some Characteristics of Jewish Immigrants

The vast majority of these people come from eastern Europe, where educational advantages are lacking. Thus, we need not wonder that of the

56,277 Jewish men who landed in 1908, 9,455, or 16.8 per cent., could neither read nor write, while of the 47,110 women 13,762, or 29.21 per cent., could neither read nor write. This does not agree with the common notion that every Jew is a learned man. In 1909, 12,372, or 21.5 per cent., Jewish immigrants were illiterate (4,944 male and 7,428 female). In 1910, 17,963, or 21.3 per cent., Jewish immigrants were illiterate (7,593 male and 10,370 female). Most of these people are also wretchedly poor, which is sufficiently shown by the fact that the 103,387 Jews admitted in 1908 brought with them only \$1,242,755, only 4,790 being able to show \$50 or over, while the passage of 63,492 was paid by relatives. But in regard to money brought we call attention to the fact that it includes only money shown by arriving Jewish immigrants, while undoubtedly much carried was not shown, and that it can not be determined what portion of the amounts shown was sent to these immigrants by relatives or friends already in this country, or was borrowed from friends in the country from which they came.

It is often said, and we have heard it stated by Jewish leaders, that Jewish immigrants frequently do not come up to our standard of cleanliness. We do not intend to make a denial of the fact, but why should we apply to any immigrant any other standard than that of the country from which he comes? These Jews lacked social and educational advantages in their poverty-stricken European homes. Little opportunity for improvement is granted them within the pale of settlement, where Russian tyranny and cruel oppression keeps them almost prisoners. Much that seems queer to us, or even

bad in the newly arrived Jew or Gentile, is simply a custom of the old world, of which nothing is thought there, and which we have no right to condemn unconditionally. But, after all, it is well established that our Jewish immigrants, instead of being less clean than others who come from the same surroundings and conditions, are at least as clean as their fellow immigrants.

We consider the desire of the Jewish immigrants to "Americanize" themselves one of their chief characteristics. Frequent attention has been called to the large numbers of Russian Jewish immigrants who "Americanize" their name. Many simply translate their names, so that Lichtenstein now becomes Lightstone; Weiss, White; and Grün, Green. Others have imbibed such hatred for Russia on account of the cruel persecutions to which they and their kindred were subjected, that they desire to shake off all that reminds them of that country. Thus, they drop the *ski*, the *witz*, the *witch*, at the end of their names, and Michaelowitz becomes Michaels; Grafinsky, Graf; Shidlowisky, Sheldon. Others have names almost unpronounceable to any one but a Russian, or names which, if pronounced after the English manner, take on an evil meaning, like that of the shoemaker on the lower East Side in New York, who was astonished to see the street arabs gather and repeat the name in lusty chorus, when he had it painted upon his window in beautiful, yellow color; it read, "A. Damchick." But others of these immigrants, and their number seems to be on the increase, want to be known as Americans by their very names, sometimes for business reasons, sometimes on account

of a desire to escape the common petty persecutions from which they continue to suffer from Gentile neighbors, even in our great free country.

But the desire of these immigrants to Americanize themselves is best expressed in their eager desire to take advantage of the educational institutions. Very soon after their arrival many of their children are found in the admirably managed Jewish institutions, like the great building of the Educational Alliance on East Broadway, New York. As soon as possible the children are sent to the public schools, and the night schools are crowded with men and women, old and young, who are eager to learn the language of their new home.

VI. The Success of These Immigrants

In the public schools the young children of Jewish immigrants rise quickly to the top, not because they are more talented than their Gentile classmates, tho almost every school-teacher acknowledges that generally they are quick-witted and alert, but on account of that inherited perseverance which causes them to wrestle with their assigned task until it is accomplished. The rapidity with which they acquire the English language is amazing, altho it takes them many years to overcome their peculiar pronunciation. We have never seen a more interesting performance than the one which we witnessed in November, 1909, in the hall of the Educational Alliance in New York, the foremost Jewish institution for immigrants. The Central Conference of American Rabbis was holding its annual meeting in New York, and its members were invited to inspect the work of the Alliance. The pupils of different stages of development were intro-

duced, and gave proof of the rapidity with which they acquire the use of the English language, some of them declaiming long pieces of poetry with excellent pronunciation, and in a manner which proved that they understood what they were saying, tho they had been in this country at best a few weeks. Jewish children are more quickly Americanized than the children of any other immigrating people. This has certainly great advantages for the success of the people, but it has also its great disadvantages. Of these we shall speak later.

From the public schools a large number of these children proceed to the high schools, normal schools, and colleges, where a surprizingly large percentage of them carry off honors and rewards. So numerous are those who devote themselves to the profession of teaching, that the College of the City of New York, and the Normal College of New York contain between 75 and 80 per cent. of Jewish pupils, almost all of whom are the children of recent immigrants, or immigrants themselves, and from these two schools comes the majority of the new teachers of Greater New York. A goodly percentage of these children pass through college, some through the universities, making an exceedingly fine showing as far as scholarship and honors are concerned, and more and more of them are now appearing among the acknowledged leaders of science and learning in the United States. A large percentage select the profession of the lawyer, or that of the physician, and are comparatively successful.

The main success of this younger generation is found whenever its members take part in competitive ex-

aminations for public service. There they outrank all their competitors, and were it possible to take a racial census of those who pass through competitive examinations into public positions of trust, the public would be furnished with a convincing illustration of the remarkable success achieved by the younger generation of our Jewish immigrants.

But our Jewish immigrants, considered as a whole, enter every trade and send representatives into every occupation, many of them not being willing or able to take up the trade or profession which yielded them a living in the old country. They are found among cigar-makers, tailors, makers of surgical instruments, of lamps, cut-glass articles, and fancy ironware, makers of patent-medicines, upholsterers and makers of leather articles, contractors and builders, clothing manufacturers, makers of caps and hats, and so on through the whole list of trades.

It is generally supposed that every Jew is a born business man and very successful, as such, but investigations clearly prove that he is the inferior of the Yankee, the Scotchman, the Greek, and the Armenian in commercial shrewdness, and that the Jewish immigrants very largely join the laboring class. The great majority of them remain wretchedly poor, and the lavish charity of their Jewish brethren has lately been proved unable to cope with the misery that prevails. Thousands and tens of thousands of them are barely existing on starvation diets utterly incomprehensible to the American laboring man, altho they are thrifty, industrious, and sober. Yet, after all, a larger percentage of Jews than of almost any other immigrating

race succeed in emerging from the poverty and want. Their economic powers are paralleled by that of no other people, and their perseverance and tenacity, aided by a keen intellect and an unfaltering industry, lead many of them to the coveted goal. The peddler develops into the storekeeper, thence into the merchant. The janitor of the tenement house in the course of a few years oftentimes becomes the lessee of the very building, to finally blossom out into the owner of one or more of these "dumb-bell double-deckers" in which his less fortunate co-immigrants are herded.

The progress of the Jewish immigrant from eastern Europe can be best seen along Broadway or along Fifth Avenue from Fourteenth to Twenty-third Streets, in New York. The former German Jewish names are fast disappearing, and Russian Jewish names are taking their place. But, after all, among the fifty richest men of this country not one is a Jew and of the countless trusts not more than two are apparently in Jewish hands. Yet the published statement has never been challenged, that "in the section (of New York) from Sixtieth to Ninetieth Streets, between Lexington and Park Avenues, live 500 Russian Jews worth \$100,000 to \$1,000,000 each." As far as we have been able to ascertain from published and available accounts, none of these men came to this country before 1876, while the majority reached this land of freedom after the persecution in Russia began to be harsh in May, 1882.

Of their success in the sphere of journalism we need not speak, for it is too well known. They are found as a most important element in the musical and theatrical profession,

while they also are not strangers to the gambling-house and to the race-track.

In general, however, it may be said that of our Jewish immigrants a surprisingly large proportion prove a "commercial success" in the land of their choice.

VIII. Religious and Moral Condition

We do not mean so much the religions and moral condition in which they arrive, as the conditions which develop sooner or later after their arrival.

The majority of our Jewish immigrants belong to the so-called orthodox Jews, who, on account of their reverence for the traditions of the rabbis contained in the Talmud, are often called Talmudical Jews. Many of these disintegrate religiously soon after their arrival. While large numbers continue to adhere at least outwardly to the ceremonies and rites of talmudism, in a general way the busy life of the new country is not favorable to the quiet development of Jewish orthodoxy and only a small percentage of our Jewish immigrants continue to adhere as strictly to the rites and ceremonies as it was their custom in eastern Europe. The Jewish Sabbath can not be as strictly adhered to as was possible across the ocean. Crowded into tenements, overworked in sweat-shops, underfed, in a strange land, breathing the alien air of unwonted freedom, signs of religious disintegration are visible everywhere in the Jewish quarters.

Many of the younger generation, especially the young men, break with the religion of their fathers in the old country and some become materialists, some rationalists, some socialists, and some even atheists and anarchists. In

the new country the number of Jewish young people to whom the religion of their parents becomes ridiculous and contemptible, rapidly increases, because in the rush of the busy life Jewish family life becomes utterly disorganized. The father is no more the priest, but he is the money-getter; the mother now is only the housekeeper, and the children have pleasure and comfort as their watchword. The father is the head only because he supplies the means of living. There is little or no time for the religious training of the children, who as soon as possible must contribute their share to the earnings of the family in many, many cases. Thus, the younger generation rapidly drifts away from all religion.

Many of this younger generation are drifting into evil habits and into sin. A Jewish rabbi wrote in *The American Israelite*, June 4, 1908, "There is drinking among Jewish young men, incontinence of Jewish young men, petty crimes among the young Jews, gambling among the young men, and, finally, the growth of prostitution among the Jewish young girls." Another rabbi said, in *The Chicago Israelite*, March 7, 1908, "There is a constantly increasing number of Jews becoming inmates of our penal and correctional institutions." It is true, we must confess it to our sorrow, that vice and crime are increasing among recent Jewish immigrants, but we would emphasize the well-established fact that, after all, a far smaller ratio of Jews is found among criminals than of their Gentile fellow immigrants from countries with similar or like advantages as Russia, and that native-born criminals outrank the foreign-born criminals by far.

The answer to the question, "What is the religious and moral condition of our Jewish immigrants in their new home?" must be: "There is much danger of their demoralization in religion, and therefore also in morality as they come into contact with the new conditions prevailing here."

IX. The Duty of Americans to These Jews

The Central Conference of American Rabbis (Reform) decided that it is the duty of the hour to approach these masses of religiously disintegrating Jewish immigrants with tracts and statements of American Reform Judaism. The Union of Orthodox Rabbis is casting about to find a way of leading back into the fold the wandering sheep.

The American Christians believe that they owe a twofold duty to these Jewish immigrants: First to welcome them as they come to these shores, having escaped tyranny and persecution by so-called Christians in Europe and elsewhere. They must be assured of freedom from persecution in this land of liberty and must experience Christian love without prejudice or ill-feeling; second, if these Jewish immigrants are to be favorably impressed with Christianity the Gospel must be presented in a friendly, tactful and brotherly way that will prove it to be a priceless possession.

God is bringing multitudes of Jews to our shores. What is the purpose? We doubt not that it is His purpose to give us the opportunity and privilege of offering unto them the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.