

# THE JEWISH ERA

Vol. 13.

CHICAGO, APRIL 15, 1904

No. 2

*"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 as Second-Class Matter April 12, 1896, under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

MRS. T. C. ROUNDS, EDITOR.

## THE JEW.

BY REV. A. W. PITZER, D. D., LL. D.

For four thousand years the Jew has been an important factor, if not the most important, in all human history. He has touched and influenced all lands and peoples, from Egypt forty centuries ago, to the mighty empire of Russia of our day and generation. In and through him all nations have in turn oppressed and persecuted him.

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This is the most widely dispersed race of all the peoples on earth: for the Jew is found everywhere. Their sacred Scriptures have been more widely circulated among the nations than the writings of any other race, for they have gone out to the ends of the earth in more than four hundred languages and dialects, and today are read in all parts of the habitable earth.

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This is the most persistent and enduring of all races. After centuries of captivities, bondage and persecutions, the Jew is as virile and unconquered as he was three thousand years ago. The records of the Hebrew historians and prophets are the most persistent and enduring of all writings among men; they have survived the

ravages of time, and the fury and fires of their captors and enemies.

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The sons and daughters of the American Revolution pride themselves on their pedigree, and the heroic deeds of their ancestors more than a hundred years ago. Nearly all Americans have heard of the Mayflower, Jamestown and "F. F. V's." And yet the nobility of Europe, with pedigrees of a thousand years, look with something of contempt on our youth and verdancy, and point to ivy covered castles and ruins that date back to the Roman invasion.

Ben Hur, a descendant of the companion of Moses, scorns with loathing the proudest and most honored names of the city and empire of the Romans. His race had a settled constitution and civilization centuries before Rome was founded. The Jew has a continuous story for four thousand years; in the wandering, in the bondage, in the exode, in the theocracy, in the monarchy, in the captivity, in the dispersion. Compared with the reliable history of this race, all other races are but as of yesterday and their records but as myths and legends.

The tribe of Jacob began its national career in that wondrous land fertilized by the ever-flowing waters of the Victoria Lake of equatorial Africa—and the life of

or an alms that the owner might offer or not as he pleased, but a divine claim, the withholding of which was regarded by God as dishonesty.

It may further be noted, concerning this first tithe, that the Levites to whom it was given by God, were required by him to offer a tenth of what they received as a heave offering to Jehovah, and to give it to Aaron, the priest. "When ye take of the children of Israel the tithe which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up a heave offering of it for the Lord, a tithe of the tithe. And your heave offering shall be reckoned unto you, as though it were the corn of the threshing-floor, and as the fulness of the winepress. Thus ye shall also offer a heave offering unto the Lord of all your tithes, which ye receive of the children of Israel; and thereof ye shall give the Lord's heave offering to Aaron the priest."

So much then for the first tithe. We shall proceed next to the second or festival tithe.

*Morden College, Blackheath, S.E.*

#### ZIONIST SETTLEMENT IN UGANDA.

London, April 14.—A private telegram received by a leading Zionist of London today from an English member of the Zionist action committee at Vienna says: "Everything arranged satisfactorily." This refers to the question of a Zionist settlement in Uganda, East Africa.

At the opening of the sixth Zionist Congress at Basel, August 23 last, the presiding officer, Dr. Herzl, of Vienna, referring to the failure of the plan to establish the Jews on the Sinai Peninsula, announced that Great Britain had offered the Zionists a large tract of territory in East Africa for colonization by the Jews, who would have an autonomous government under British suzerainty. The congress referred the question to a committee.—*New York Tribune, April 15th.*

#### SAMUEL WEYLER.

BY REV. LOUIS MEYER.

Samuel Weyler was born in Kreslau, Russia, on July 3, 1863, as the son of poor but strictly orthodox Jewish parents. When four years old he was sent to the Talmudical school, where he soon acquired a superficial knowledge of the Hebrew language. At the age of five he had committed to memory the whole book of Leviticus in Hebrew, and when only eight years old he was taught to read the rabbinical commentaries. A strong and deep conviction of the truth of the divine law, both oral (the Talmud) and written (the Bible), was inculcated upon him and the boy became a very orthodox Jew. At the age of thirteen he was confirmed, and from that time on he carefully observed the innumerable ceremonies of Judaism. He was a Pharisee, blindly believing and following the teachings of rabbis and parents.

On account of the poverty of his parents Samuel was obliged to give up his plan to acquire a high education, and he became a clerk in one of the stores of his native town soon after his confirmation. Up to this time the young Jew had known nothing of the principles of Christianity and had not heard of the existence of Christian missionaries to the Jews. But now his attention was forcibly directed to the system which he despised as idolatrous and cruel. His older brother Rudolf had gone to Kischineff, where he soon became acquainted with Pastor Faltin. The word of God, faithfully and prayerfully proclaimed, took root in the young Jew's heart. He found his Messiah, and decided to make a public profession of his

faith in Christ. Thus one day the surprising news reached Samuel Weyler that his brother Rudolf had been baptized. Angry at what he considered a false step, Samuel reproached his brother, asking him for reasons for such desertion of the faith of his fathers. Rudolf answered, inviting the younger brother to a careful and impartial investigation of the claims of Jesus. This Samuel refused to do, saying that he preferred to believe the teaching of his parents. There the correspondence stopped, for Rudolf Weyler left Russia for the Asylum for Jewish Inquirers and Converts in Neckargroeningen, Wurtemberg, whence, in 1878, he went to the United States.

Samuel Weyler continued to earn his living as a clerk until the end of the year 1880. High-spirited as he was, he was chafing under the cruelty and oppressions which the Jews were suffering from the Russian government and people, and he decided to flee from the country. Without a passport, traveling on foot and constantly exposed to arrest, he reached Germany after much suffering. But the Russian Jew was not wanted in that country, and after some difficulties caused through his lack of a passport, he sailed for the United States soon after his eighteenth birthday.

On his arrival in New York Samuel Weyler found that his brother Rudolf, upon whose help he had counted, was not in a position to render him any assistance. He knew very little English and his means were very limited, but he pluckily took up the fight. Like so many of the Jews, he became a peddler and went to Georgia, the Carolinas, Mississippi and Missouri, where he made an honest but scanty living. Conscious of his insufficient knowledge of the

English language and of the barbarous pronunciation of the little English he knew, the Jewish peddler looked for means to remedy these defects. The thought came to him that the easiest way would be to listen to good public speakers and to imitate their enunciation. This naturally led him to the consideration of the fact that every Christian church service offered an opportunity to hear good public speaking. A short struggle ensued, whether or not it would be right to enter the churches of the idolatrous and cruel system, and he decided to learn English by attending regularly the services of the churches in the different places which he visited.

Up to this time Samuel Weyler had carefully observed those ceremonies of Judaism which he could observe while surrounded by Gentiles, but he gradually and insensibly drifted away from Judaism. At the same time he began to learn more of the principles of Christianity, although he was listening to the sermons only for the purpose of learning the language. He was astonished to see the difference between the Protestants whom he now met and the Greek Catholics among whom he had suffered frequent persecution. Frequently he heard expressions of love for the Jews from the lips of pastors and members, yet none took interest enough in him to talk to him of his Messiah.

More than two years passed thus by, when Samuel Weyler became sick with chills and fever in a small town in the state of Missouri. It was so ordered that he found himself in the home of good Christian people. The sick stranger was made welcome and was well taken care of. Soon his health began to improve and he asked for some-

thing to read. The Bible was the book which the good woman brought the stranger, whom she had not recognized as a Jew. He did not want to offend his kind hostess, so accepted the book and began to read. The New Testament for the first time in his life interested him. He began to read more carefully. Then he began to compare Scripture with Scripture. Gradually the light dawned. He resisted with all his strength, but the truth conquered him. One morning he sent for the pastor of the Congregational church in the little town. To him he confessed his faith in Jesus and declared himself ready to make a public profession of his faith. Thus Samuel Weyler was baptized in a small church in Missouri in 1884. Immediately after his baptism he wrote the glorious news to his brother Rudolf, who by this time had entered the Chicago Theological Seminary. The older brother urged the young disciple to go to school and after finishing his education to consecrate himself to the service of the Master.

Samuel Weyler pondered long and deeply over the counsel of the more experienced brother and finally, when other friends joined in the counsel, decided to go to school again. Knox College, Galesburg, Ill., was chosen, and Samuel Weyler entered it in 1885. It was a difficult task for one who had been out of school for nine years, but God gave him grace and at the same time found friends for the young Hebrew-Christian. For some time he was a member of the family of Prof. T. R. Willard, dean of the faculty, who, writing of him, says, "Mr. Weyler was a man of great learning for one so young, of great originality and of a delightful Christian spirit in every respect." He earned his way

while a student and completed his course a year sooner than others who started with him.

Graduating from Knox College in 1888, Samuel Weyler decided to consecrate himself to the preaching of the Gospel, and he entered Yale Divinity School in the fall of the same year.

Soon the young Jew had numerous friends, among whom was Prof. George E. Day, who still speaks of him with great praise in the following words taken from a letter of December 5, 1902: "Samuel Weyler had one peculiarity, viz., a fixed determination to accept no financial aid whether from individuals or benevolent endowments, which I so much respected that I proposed to him to act as a missionary laborer among the Jews in New Haven, with proper compensation for his labor. This proposition he accepted and returned to me every month a careful and interesting report of his work and experiences. I also employed him to make out a catalogue of the Trowbridge Reference Library of 3,000 volumes, which he did with his usual thoroughness, and which catalogue still remains in use as a monument of his labor. He was an exceptionally able man and was regarded by his classmates as standing at their head and as the most promising and worthy candidate for the highest prize fellowship had he remained to the close of his seminary course."

But prize fellowships and earthly honor could not keep Weyler any longer from his life work. In 1890 he started West and preached the Gospel at Pueblo, Colo., until in 1892 he was called to Buffalo, Wyoming. Having received his B. D. from Yale in 1891, he was ordained a minister of the Congregational Church in Denver March 1, 1892, before he started for

Wyoming. Four years he ministered to the congregation in Buffalo. He made many warm friends during the years and led many sinners to Christ, so that his congregation and his friends saw him follow the call of the congregation at Bernicia, Solano County, California, in 1896 with sorrowful hearts.

A short time only was Samuel Weyler permitted to minister to his new congregation, but it was a time of blessed labor and activity. He not only preached regularly and performed all the various duties of a faithful pastor, but, seeing the need of a good school in Bernicia, founded a classical academy in which he taught five days in the week, and which has now become the High School of Bernicia. But he quickly overworked himself, broke down, and was obliged to take a short vacation—as he thought—in Saratoga, Santa Clara County. Suddenly, swiftly, death came to him at Saratoga, February 8, 1898.

The Bernicia New Era, a few days after his death, said, "Our city mourns; death silences the voice of a beloved pastor." And Rev. Theo. F. Burnham, pastor of the Presbyterian church in Vallejo, Cal., described the funeral, etc., of Samuel Weyler thus in a letter of August 8, 1902: "The burial service was a most pathetic scene. This true son of Israel, without kindred in the land of his refuge, whose aged mother still abode in Russia, was buried amid tears, sobs and flowers by a large assembly who felt a personal loss in his removal. He was a most industrious worker, a patient, sweet-tempered Christian, a lover of the young, a wise counselor, a devoted pastor and a scholar of no ordinary attainments. His sermons were upbuilding, his addresses at conferences, conven-

tions, etc., were marked by thoroughness, thoughtfulness and modesty.—At his burial, the Methodist, the Presbyterian and the Episcopal ministers joined with the Congregationalists in loving tribute to his character and work. Every participant was greatly moved by a sense of personal loss, and at times the speakers were compelled to pause to regain control of their feelings.—We laid his body to rest on a sunlit hillside overlooking the town of his consecrated labors and on the following Sabbath many turned to the place of his rest as they thought of a life well spent on earth, to be enriched and beautified in a better land, under the guidance of the Messiah who found him, and whom he found to his infinite joy."

In his short life Samuel Weyler found not much time for writing, so that an article in the *Andover Review* of January, 1892, "Paul's Rabbinic Education," is all that was published by him.

While we may feel that Samuel Weyler was removed, alas! too early, and when he gave much promise of ripe fruit, yet we know that his work was ended, that, in the words of Leighton, he got home betimes in his youth, and had a quick voyage, having lived much in a little time and having glorified God.

*Hopkinton, Iowa.*

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#### PALESTINE.

The exportation of oranges from Jaffa is assuming large proportions. 280,000 boxes have been sent to Trieste, Odessa, Liverpool, London, Manchester and Hamburg. A society named Pardess, composed of Jewish proprietors of orange plantations, is managing successfully the export of this important Palestinean produce.

It is stated that a branch line of the Jerusalem-Jaffa Railway from Ramle to Rishon le Zion is to be built. The large transport of wine from Rishon le Zion to Jaffa would be greatly benefited.