

CONFERENCE OF JEWISH PREACHERS

*OPENING ADDRESS*

BY

THE CHIEF RABBI

(DR. J. H. HERTZ)

26 TAMMUZ 5683—10 JULY 1923

HUMPHREY MILFORD

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

London Edinburgh Glasgow Copenhagen  
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*With the Chief Rabbi's Compliments*



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(DR. J. H. HERTZ)

ברוך ה' בישם ה'. 'BLESSED be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.'

In these words of Scripture I would extend a hearty greeting to every one who has responded, whether from far or from near, to my invitation to attend this Conference of Jewish Preachers. שלום שלום לרחוק ולקרוב

## I.

What is it that has impelled us to desire and arrange such a Conference? This question is asked by many in our community. I can best indicate the origin and meaning of this assembly to the larger public by a few sentences from the letter which the preachers of the various Synagogues in Great Britain addressed to me at the beginning of this year:—

'We have long been seriously exercised concerning questions of the deepest significance affecting our pulpit duty and our personal opportunities as Ministers. These questions cover a wide range of subjects upon which interchange of opinion has become a pressing need, and declaration of principle a just demand. Upon many of these subjects, concerted action has become a matter of the greatest consequence for the presentation of religion to our own people, for the declaration of Jewish opinion to the world, and for the efficacy of our work as teachers of Judaism.

'We are agreed that not only is conference upon such questions an urgent present necessity, but that some

Convocation should be called into being to make such an institution a regularly recurring opportunity for serious deliberation and for the expression upon all great questions, as they arise, of the thought and feeling of the Jewish pulpit.

‘We therefore, with respect, beg to ask you to call us together for the discussion of questions of this character at an early date which meets your convenience.’

A sincere and courteous communication of this sort could not lightly be set aside. I have on various occasions called together and consulted rabbonim and teachers and communal leaders on different ecclesiastical, educational, or general matters, affecting the welfare of Israel. I could not but welcome this request on the part of the exponents of our Holy Faith, anxious to ponder together on the perplexing problems that beset the Jewish religious guide at the present day. And though I never had the naïve belief of even a generation ago that either Conference or Synod could by itself prove the panacea for all our ills, here was something quite distinct from the well-worn shibboleths Reconstruction, or a New Heaven and a New Earth in Religion, that were so common during the War and in the early days of the Peace. This proposed assembly, I felt, was for patient thought, serious deliberation, and concerted action on the part of men who were anxious to build up some of the things that the generations immediately before us had neglected.

‘To build up things which those before us had neglected!’ It is an old and well-known metaphor in Rabbinic thought that speaks of the teacher or scholar as a ‘builder’. Now, building is not merely a blind piling of brick upon brick and stone upon stone. The Almighty, in the mystic language of the Midrash, had architects’ plans before Him in the construction of the

universe. And all true, creative, lasting building requires not merely vision, but mutual understanding and co-operation. Tower-builders, even when such are labouring for the greater glory of God, must understand one another. Confusion of tongues can wreck any scheme. Our Rabbis say: 'The wise sharpen one another's spirits in Halacha.' תלמידי חכמים מחדרין זה את זה בהלכה. Now, Halacha means the determination of strict law, but may also be taken to mean 'the way of life'. The wise sharpen one another as to the way they should go, the course they should strive for, the path in which they are to persevere on life's journey to the end. And a Conference of the 'disciples of the wise' in Anglo-Jewry, would, I felt, help us to see things as they are in our religious and communal life, and also to see things as they ought to be. My answer to the request of the preachers was, therefore, as follows:

'I fully endorse the view as to the necessity of interchange of opinion on pressing religious questions, and of serious deliberation upon them in regularly recurring conference or convocation. Recent events, furthermore, emphasize the urgent need for the expression of corporate opinion on the part of the Jewish ministry on the perplexing religious, educational, and organizational problems that now confront Anglo-Jewry. I am therefore taking the first steps for the holding of such a Conference at a date not later, if possible, than some time in July next.'

## II.

Nearly a decade has passed since there was a Conference of Jewish Ministers in this country. That decade has been to Israel a period both of woe and disaster, as well as of consolation and hope, such as no other decade has been since the Dispersion. We met



the last time in June 1914. The face of the world has changed since then. An unparalleled war with its deluge of death and its veritable ocean of suffering washing the shores of all lands, is behind us. The Jew was no passive spectator in that great tragedy of the nations. He fought and bled and died in every theatre of war. And when the victorious end came with its collapse of empires and kingdoms and the passing of an entire world-order, he cherished the fond hope that the day of wars and alarms and national hatreds was finally and irrevocably closed; and that what the Prophets saw in visions and proclaimed in similitudes—a brotherhood of peoples, and righteousness as an irresistible force—would henceforth for evermore shape the destinies of men and of nations. But the victors, as it seems, had forgotten that only on mercy could the universe be safely builded *עולם חסר יבנה*; that without the solid foundation of justice, there could be no lasting peace; that mercy and justice alone could bring near the Redemption not only of Israel, but also of mankind. A general disillusionment has taken possession of the nations. In such times of disillusionment as ours is, when a world nearly destroyed by hate is seeking to save itself by hate, primitive human nature comes to the fore, and there is an eclipse of reason in human affairs. Some scapegoat is sought, and found, upon whose devoted head all the ills that mankind reaps from the disregard of mercy and justice may be devolved. And the most plausible and convenient of all scapegoats has at all times and in all lands been the Jew. And so it is in our own day. I have on another occasion shown that wherever the World War ended in disaster, defeat, or disillusion (and where has it not ended in one of these things?) the tendency asserted itself, if not to butcher

the Jew, at least to blame him for all the crimes, stupidities, and misfortunes of present-day humanity.

I shall confine myself to the martyrdom of Israel in old Russia, in that Russia which until very recently was the home of one-half of the world's Jewish population. During the period under review, anti-Semitism in that land resulted in volcanic eruptions of hatred and devastating tornadoes of human malice, rarely surpassed in history. No less than 400,000 Jews fought under the banner of the Czar. And yet, very soon after the great Conflict began, all the forces of Russian reaction combined in what was nothing less than a war within the War against Israel. Time will permit me to refer only to two cataclysms, both of them veritable furnaces of suffering unto our people, both of them engraved for all time in letters of blood on the pages of Jewish history. In consequence of shameless calumnies and craziest hallucinations of suspicion, the entire Jewish population of the Russian western war zone was brutally expelled to the interior of Russia; the *entire* population, the old men and the infants, the sick, the dying, and the insane, driven forth often at only twelve hours' notice. And this summary evacuation of a million and a half human beings, with the incalculable suffering it entailed, did not remain the worst calamity that befell Russian Jewry in the War. The second cataclysm, when the 3,000,000 Jews of the Ukraine were handed over, helpless and hopeless, to murder and dishonour, immeasurably transcends it in horror. Historians have for centuries dwelt on the tragedy and inhumanity of the expulsion of the 150,000 Jews of Spain. But throughout 1919 and 1920 we have had in the Ukraine not merely the expulsion of a similar number of human beings, but their extermination by the wild hordes of Denikin, Petlura,

Grigorief, Makhno, and other bandits, raging like wild beasts amid the defenceless Jewries of South Russia. 'The massacres of the Jews in the Ukraine can find, for thoroughness and extent, no parallel except in the massacres of the Armenians', is the verdict of Sir Horace Rumbold, H.M. Minister at Warsaw, in a Report to the Foreign Office that was widely circulated at the time. Wholesale slaughter and violation, drownings and burnings and burials alive, became not merely commonplaces, but the order of the day. There were pogroms that lasted a week; and in several towns the diabolic torture and outrage and carnage were continued for a month. In many populous Jewish communities, there were no Jewish survivors left to bury the dead, and thousands of Jewish wounded and killed were eaten by dogs; in others, the Synagogues were turned into charnel houses by the pitiless butchery of those who sought refuge in them. If we add to the figures mentioned above, the number of the indirect victims who, in consequence of the robbery and destruction that accompanied these massacres, were swept away by famine, disease, exposure, and all manner of privations—the dread total will be very near half a million human beings.<sup>1</sup>

Ten years ago the late Professor Dickey wrote: 'Shall despotism, combined with persecution, not meet with the solemn protest of Englishmen? England has the right to denounce a new outbreak of persecution, just as she would have the right to protest against the renewal in any European country of judicial torture.' And yet, and yet, all this persecution, torture, extermination, were continued for nearly two years without any protest by the civilized Powers, with hardly any

<sup>1</sup> See Note A, p. 24.

notice being taken of it in the English Press. And if you even consult the latest volumes of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and turn to the article 'Ukraine', you will not find the slightest reference, not by a single word, to this blackest page in all the dark and blood-stained annals of Europe.<sup>1</sup> This conspiracy of silence has been but too successful. I have on various occasions attempted to rouse the conscience of the general, as of the Jewish, public on this matter. I have been met with surprised incredulity on the part of great ecclesiastics, statesmen, philanthropists, and even leaders of our own community. It is for this reason that I repeat this hideous tale of human bestiality to the Conference of Jewish Preachers. I deem this part of my address as outweighing in importance anything I might conceivably have to say this morning. Would to God that the facts adduced by me might wake men of light and leading to their moral responsibility. But whatever others do or fail to do, *our* path is clear. As teachers of Judaism, we ponder over the story of the Destruction of Jerusalem, and sing songs of lamentation and bitter weeping on the Ninth of Ab. We shall have been false to our duty as men, as Jews, as teachers in Israel, if we were to hide ourselves from our own flesh at the present day. Read *The Slaughter of the Jews in the Ukraine*, by Heifetz, or *The Ukraine Terror and the Jewish Peril*, issued by the London Federation of Ukrainian Jews; peruse the accounts by eyewitnesses that appeared in the last volumes of *Haschiloach*, entitled 'From the Ukrainian Inferno', *מהנהיגותם האוקרינית על פי עירי ראיה*; and see especially the third volume of the Annual *רשומות* edited by Byalik and others—and I shall not have to urge you to acquaint the men and women

<sup>1</sup> See Note B, p. 25.

under your charge with the latest חורבן of Israel. Let him who will jeer at me for so often dwelling on these ghastly happenings. I envy not the man who is not impelled to exclaim with the Prophet: 'For the hurt of the daughter of my people I am seized with anguish. I am a mourner, appalment hath taken hold on me. Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears; that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!' (Jer. viii. 21, 23.)

And as if the measure of woe was not yet sufficiently full for Russian Jewry, there began in 1922 a unique persecution of all religion in Soviet Russia. Jewish outcasts have, alas, taken a zealous and sinister part in the bitter proscription of all Jewish religious teaching—whether in Chedorim, Yeshivahs, or even in private homes—and in the desecration of everything that Jews hold most holy. They are attempting nothing less than the strangulation of the Jewish soul in Russia. But wonderful are the ways of the spirit: even Jews cannot destroy Judaism. As in the days of the Maccabees, these latter-day Hellenists have called forth among our faithful remnant a new fervour, a deeper yearning, and a self-sacrificing love for Judaism. And there is another reason why this deliberate attempt to ruin institutional religion in that unfortunate land need not distress us overmuch. This Bolshevik madness of aggressive atheism is a temporary aberration of the human spirit. It will pass away as similar mad assaults on religion passed away in the days of the French Revolution.

An infinite danger, however, still hovers over the four million Jews of Soviet Russia—the possibility of a Monarchist return. The partisans of this movement, many of them being the men who annihilated the Ukrainian Jewries during the Denikin régime, have

in recent years on every occasion openly proclaimed from the platform and in their press, that if they once regained power *they would not leave a single Jew alive*. Even in England, the organ of the reactionaries and the militarists has spoken approvingly of the 'comprehensive revenge' that is being prepared against Russian Jewry. There is little doubt, alas, that should the Monarchists return they would endeavour to be true to their word.<sup>1</sup> In European history there have been horrible outbreaks of murderous fanaticism, such as the Sicilian Vespers and St. Bartholomew's Night. But their *recurrence*, especially in our own day, is altogether unthinkable. Jewish massacres alone—a leading publicist reminds us—remain unchanged by the lapse of time, nay, they increase in volume and in murderous fury. The single pogrom of Kishinef in 1903, with its scores of victims, was succeeded by a wave of pogroms in 1905, with thousands of victims; and this in its turn was followed by the whole cycle of mass massacres of 1919 and 1920 and 1921. Would to Heaven that these remained the last. May God in His mercy have pity on His sorely afflicted people!

### III.

Having said so much of the woes and disasters of the last decade, of the darkness that enveloped so large a portion of Israel, historical truth and justice demand that I call attention to the stars of hope and promise that have arisen on those black skies, viz. the Minority Treaties and the British Mandate over Palestine. As to the Treaties, let us remember that Providence

<sup>1</sup> See Note C, page 27.

works through human agents; and that, humanly speaking, safety and salvation may yet arise unto Israel, and unto all the smaller nationalities, through that Jewish dream of a United Humanity and that realized vision of the Hebrew Prophets which men call the League of Nations. The latter represents the moral solidarity and the collective conscience of the peoples who are the present constituent members of the League; and its most sacred aim is the setting up of effective machinery for the protection of racial and religious minorities wheresoever such may require protection. Unfortunately, the achievements of the League so far are infinitesimal when compared to the hopes it has inspired; and it can, moreover, only flourish and grow from strength to strength on the soil of a civilized and instructed public opinion. A new heart and a new spirit are required, and all the moral forces of life must be mobilized to hasten the creation of that new heart and that new spirit. Needless to say, our heartfelt prayers are with this noble ideal of a Brotherhood of Peoples. An American rabbi has crudely, but tersely, put it: 'Where Poincaré and Mussolini and Lenin may fail, Isaiah and Micah and Amos may yet triumph.'

As to the light that has arisen in the East, the star of a resurrected *Eretz Yisroel*, I need but make mention of the Balfour Declaration and the undertaking by Great Britain to establish a Jewish National Home in Palestine. It is true that in 1917 this announcement had for millions of poor, and hundreds of thousands of prosperous, Jews the serene sound of a long-expected Messianic message. Later events have considerably dimmed the hope of an early and complete realization of all that was originally read into that historic Declaration. But whatever the political, cultural, or religious conno-

tation that the words, 'British Mandate for the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine' have for you, they represent events which can nevermore be blotted out from the world's history. To place my own position on this all-important matter beyond the peradventure of a doubt, I need but repeat the words I spoke six years ago:—

'A land focuses a people; and calls forth, as nothing else can, its spiritual potentialities. The resurrection of the Jewish nation on its own soil will re-open its sacred fountains of creative energy. Remember the days of old. After the proclamation issued by Cyrus, the mass of the Jewish people still remained in Babylon. All told, only 42,000 men, women, and children took advantage of the king's proclamation and followed Ezra back to Zion, the land of their fathers. But compare the contribution to civilization made by these men with that of their brethren who remained in the Dispersion. The handful of "Zionists" and their descendants, because living on their own soil, changed the entire future of mankind. They edited and collected the Prophets, wrote some of the fairest portions of the Scriptures, formed the canon of the Bible, and gave the world its monotheistic religions. As in the days of Cyrus, the overwhelming majority of Jews of to-day will continue to live where they now are, praying and working in absolute loyalty for the land of their birth or adoption, and ever beholding their peace in its welfare. Only a remnant shall return. But it is the national rejuvenation of that remnant that will open a new chapter in the annals of the human spirit.'

#### IV.

When we turn from the political aspect of the Jewish position to conditions in the inner life of our community, reverence bids us first of all remember the scholars and leaders in Israel who passed away



during the last decade. We can, of course, make mention only of the outstanding figures in contemporary Jewry—of scholars, like Wilhelm Bacher and Solomon Schechter, David Hoffmann and Abraham Berliner; Harkavy, Epstein, Brann, and Poznanski; Eliezer Ben Yehuda and our own Joseph Jacobs. World Jewry is the loser through the death of a great religious philosopher like Hermann Cohen, and a historian of Jewish philosophy like Jakob Guttmann; of Jewish leaders like Max Nordau, David Wolffsohn, and Mayer Sulzberger; of rabbonim like Reines of Lida, Rabinowitz of Liverpool, and Soloveyitchik of Brisk; of philanthropists like Nathaniel, first Lord Rothschild, his brother Leopold, and Jacob H. Schiff; of interpreters of the Jewish masses like Peretz, Shalom Alechem, and Morris Rosenfeld; and of martyrs in their service like Israel Friedlander and Bernard Cantor. As members of the Conference of Jewish Preachers, we mournfully recall the men in our own ranks who have gone to their eternal reward—G. J. Emanuel, the venerable Chairman of the 1909 Conference; Maier Jung and Moses Abrahams, both of them tireless in their devotion to Israel's heritage; David Wasserzug, the single-hearted and the scholarly; Jacob Furst, of Edinburgh, and A. C. Jacobs, of Brighton, faithful and life-long pastors of their flocks. We remember our departed fellow-workers Overseas—Meldola de Sola, of Montreal, the zealous servant of God, and his colleague, Solomon Jacobs, of Toronto; Jacob Lenzer, of East Melbourne, and Abraham Tobias Boas, of Adelaide, who so steadily held aloft the lamp of Judaism in their communities. Teachers, shepherds and lovers of their people, sincerely we mourn them all. They were faithful to the charge with which Providence entrusted them. May others

emulate their example and take up the tasks left unfinished by their home-going.

חבל על ראב"ן. It is always difficult to find the Joshuas who are to take the place of the Masters whose life-work is done. This becomes a grave problem in the ranks of the ministry, and graver still in the case of the colonial clergy. For the difficulties that confront the teacher of Judaism in those distant lands are far greater than those confronting the minister at home. Think of your colleagues in Perth, Auckland, Kimberley, or Shanghai, for example, all of them so far removed from the spiritual currents of Judaism, and yet each called upon to maintain, alone and unaided, the Jewish consciousness and the Jewish life in his congregation. Need I say to you that they will follow the work of this Conference, as they follow all your doings and efforts and struggles, with the deepest possible interest? It is a source of gratification to me, when I consider that the recent accessions to their ranks—Rabbi Brodie and the Rev. S. Mestel, both of them signatories to the letter calling for this Conference—will worthily continue the best Colonial traditions of loyal and loving service to Judaism. Mine was the privilege of a unique undertaking in the history of the Chief Rabbinate, a Pastoral Visit to the Congregations in the Dominions Overseas. It has been given to me not only to seek the welfare of my brethren from afar, but to go out to them and see where and how they were pasturing. I came face to face with their leaders and teachers; saw the institutions they have called into existence; and felt the pulse-beat of their religious endeavours. And I cannot emphasize the fact too strongly that the spiritual needs of our Overseas brethren are our needs; their ideals, our ideals; their dangers, our dangers.

In regard to one of these dangers common to the Home as well as to the Overseas section of British Jewry, that of intermarriage, I found it necessary to issue some years ago a special Pastoral Letter to the congregations of the Empire. Intermarriage was alarmingly prevalent a generation ago in our Overseas congregations. It is now diminishing, thanks to the determined attitude of the laity against indiscriminate proselytization. In the opinion of earnest observers with whom I am considering the situation, the time has now come to restrict in the Mother Country as well, the limits within which 'matrimonial' conversions shall be permitted. I am well aware, however, and I have more than once proclaimed it, that I do not so much lament the consequences as the *antecedents* of intermarriage in modern Jewish life—the materialism and the prayerlessness in so many homes, the ignorance of Sacred Language and Holy Writ, the indifference to the call of Duty and of Brotherhood. For this, there is only one solution that goes to the root of the evil, and that is, education—at once the pledge for the rejuvenation of Israel and the only guarantee for the survival of Judaism. You will recall that at my suggestion the last Conference of Ministers, that of 1914, was entirely devoted to the discussion of Jewish religious education, elementary and higher, in all its bearings and aspects. I am glad to state that the situation has materially changed for the better since that date. Only a few weeks ago I showed by facts and figures that Anglo-Jewry had every reason to thank God for the solid progress achieved in this important field. Several schemes that ten years ago were nothing more than pious wishes have successfully been carried into effect. To point to only one of several signs of greatest promise: the Central Committee for

Jewish Education of the Jewish War Memorial has done much in the few years since its foundation, and will do even more in the future. There was no greater want in the organization of our religious educational work than a peripatetic examiner. We now have that, and much more, in our Director of Education. When the day dawns on which I shall have a similarly qualified Director of Education in each of the Dominions, I shall fervently pronounce the *שחרית* benediction. But there is no rest for the righteous, say the Rabbis; and there is no finality in Jewish educational theory or practice. New problems are constantly arising and clamouring with louder and louder voice to be seriously faced and grappled with. One of these is the many-sided question of Jewish pupils in denominational public schools, now under investigation by a special committee; another is dealt with in a paper to which we shall listen to-morrow on 'Religious Work among Adolescents'. But here again, as regards the adolescent and his religion, I feel the safest rule to be: It is never too *early* to mend. Much can be done in that direction if the minister and parents were but to realize the possibilities of the religious training and instruction preparatory to the recently instituted Consecration of Girls. Correlative with it must go, of course, a deepening and spiritualization of the Bar Mitzvah ceremony—a matter convincingly advocated at the 1909 Conference of Jewish Ministers. This question also will be dealt with in a paper on the concluding day of our Conference.

And Jewish education does not, as you know, stop with the Bar Mitzvah, or with school age. I have so often, and under the aegis of so many different organizations, explained the need of the *diffusion* of Jewish knowledge and of the *dissemination* of Jewish books, that you

are sufficiently acquainted with my views on this subject. You also know that the first and foremost book that it is for us to place within reach of our men and women is a Jewish Bible commentary. Thanks to the idealism and Jewish enthusiasm of Australian co-religionists, Mr. A. Blashki and his brothers, I have been enabled to begin the work of producing this commentary. Four members of this Conference have already rendered lasting service in its production, and I look forward to the whole-hearted co-operation of the other members, as well as of our Overseas colleagues, in the equally important part of its distribution. When we are no longer forced to send our children to non-Jewish or anti-Jewish commentaries of our Scriptures, a deep reproach will have been rolled away from us as a religious community. It will be another step in the emancipation of English-speaking Jewry from the spiritual slavery of ignorance, indifference, and assimilation.

Now, spiritual freedom in Jewry is based on one thing—Jewish learning. But with us scholarship is neglected; witness the fact that great Hebrew libraries are permitted to leave England, never to return. כל באיה לא ישבון can be said of any literary treasure that once crosses the Atlantic. Jews' College is still starved and beggared and without bursaries. Seventy years ago, Filipowski and his Antiquarian Society published model editions of classical Hebrew works; and thirty years later, the Society for Hebrew Literature gave us a number of scholarly and yet popular books that have been well described as '*meisterhaft und musterhaft*'. What has once been done in Anglo-Jewry may yet again be done.

Most unfortunately, the Anglo-Jewish minister does not possess the leisure of Continental rabbis nor the long annual holidays of his American colleagues, for un-

interrupted scholarly work. Yet scholarship is the very mind and soul of the ministry. Without it, the minister can never hope to meet the religious perplexities that agitate both pastor and people in a time of religious and social unrest as the present. Without it, he cannot hold the young, the adolescents, the grown men and women under his charge. Only scholarship will enable him to save them from straying into that German-American mutation of Judaism, which is a strange compound of dry rationalism, irreverent criticism, and empty universalism. Ours is the Anglo-Jewish position in theology, and our ideals are the ideals of the fathers of Anglo-Jewry—Manasseh ben Israel, Moses Montefiore, and Nathan Adler. Happy are we; how goodly is our portion; how beautiful is our heritage! But only scholarship will enable us to justify our progressive conservatism—the synthesis of the best citizenship and broadest humanitarianism, with the warmth and colour, the depth and discipline of the olden Jewish life—in the eyes of our people; and convince them that, in the long run, there will be no other Judaism but traditional Judaism, that all who sever themselves from traditional Judaism become a sect, and doom themselves to spiritual sterility and death.

#### V.

I have left to the last some reflections on the position of the Jewish minister in modern Jewish life. Many may consider this portion of my address as particularly superfluous, seeing that never was a period in Anglo-Jewry when so much was spoken of 'the status of the ministry' as in the decade under review. You need not be reminded of the plans put forth for securing a fresh and adequate supply to the ranks of the ministry by the

creation of posts of prominence and responsibility—alas! with no result. The only endowed ministerial post in this country—that of the Oxford Hebrew Congregation—goes back to the days before the War and is due to a few private individuals. Likewise, the cry that was repeated from so many platforms in recent years that the scandal of a miserably underpaid ministry must cease has remained a cry. The meetings that were held in connexion with the alleviation of this scandal have dispersed; the speeches have been forgotten; and the scandal continues. It is now for the ministers as a class to help themselves. Every member of this Conference should be a missionary to strengthen by every means in his power the Provincial Ministers' Fund—the only agency which in the past has done, and is now doing, anything for the Synagogue officials of the poorer Jewish provincial congregations.

Dissatisfaction in the ministry, however, is not confined to smaller congregations in England. Quite the contrary is the case. The strongest arraignment of present-day congregational conditions as they adversely affect the position of the minister that I have ever read, was by a liberal Chicago rabbi, a fearless and popular preacher, who was in receipt of a fabulous salary. Equally strong indictments of the attitude of communal administrations towards the rabbinate have been furnished me by a renowned Continental Oberrabbiner, by Russian rabbonim, and a leading Overseas minister. They one and all speak bitterly of the constant wounding of self-respect and honour which constitutes the lot of many a man who is devoting his very life-blood to Judaism. In some communities, the minister seems to have no rights which the laymen feel bound to respect. Even matters explicitly set down in legal

agreements and contracts are cynically broken by them, full well knowing that a self-respecting minister would long hesitate before seeking protection in the law-courts. An American rabbinic scholar has given us an even more disconcerting diagnosis of the situation: 'We, the rabbis and the preachers, are constantly made to feel that we are superfluous. We minister to people who fully believe that they are wiser than we, better than we, who are certainly richer than we are. They are sure that they could very well do without us. From the more important counsels of the larger community we are studiously kept away, except when it is a matter of collecting funds. The ultra-pious tolerate us; and the indifferent, well, they are quite indifferent to us.' In many a community, the demagogues have recently discovered that the rabbinate is 'un-Jewish'; and they insistently clamour for Jewish ecclesiastical matters to be administered and decided by soviets. Similar catchwords reverberate even in London. This is not to be wondered at, if we recollect, what James Martineau somewhere remarks, that in matters intellectual the English are sometimes apt to act as the younger brothers of the Germans, and put on the cast-off garments which their elder brothers have left off wearing years ago. This is certainly so with the present hostility to the rabbinate and all it stands for in Jewry. The arguments brought forward against it are the exploded platitudes that were heard in Berlin one hundred years ago, from the lips of the semi-apostates like David Friedländer and his friends, whose deliberate purpose it was to destroy all authority, organization, and discipline in Judaism. As is well known, this policy was embodied by the Prussian Government in its law of 1812, because it believed that by encouraging anarchy



and schism in Judaism it would see its desire fulfilled, viz. the eventual annihilation of all the Jews without shedding any blood (*alle Juden blutlos totsuschlagen*). This anti-rabbinic attitude, this failure to surround the preacher's and teacher's office with dignity, are passing phenomena and will disappear, just as David Friedländer and his Circle have disappeared. The great danger of these unedifying conditions, and of the ethical necessity of our publicly calling attention to them, is that they discourage many of those who are standing on the threshold of the ministry from entering the sacred calling and consecrating their powers to God, the Torah, and Israel. To them I would repeat the appeal of Garibaldi to the young men of his day: 'Young men of Italy, if you love your country, follow me. I have nothing to offer you but rags and hunger, the prison and death; but if you love your country, follow me.' A similar call to the Wars of the Lord comes to every *born* Jewish minister. If he loves Israel, he will follow that call. He will never have to endure what awaited the Italian patriots, who, because they loved Italy, flocked to Italy's banner.

On the other hand, it is well to remember that even as some ministers find fault with their congregations, there are some congregations that have ample reason to find fault with their ministers. As the late Simeon Singer wonderfully put it, Divines are so human. The Rabbinic parable of body and soul on the Judgement Day will be found to be most helpful in this connexion. When the body and soul stand before the Heavenly Judge, the body pleads exemption from all punishment, and shifts the blame on the soul, the divine spark which should have restrained the body, illumined it, and taught it to aspire after

heavenly things. The soul, on the other hand, declares that it, an emanation from on High, ever loathed sin; but the body's gross clay dragged it down into the mire of animality. The Almighty causes the soul to re-enter the body, and judgement is meted out to them both for their combined transgressions during their earthly career. Often there are similar bootless recriminations between pastor and flock. By combined endeavour and united striving alone can we escape falling short of the achievable, and the consequent condemnatory verdict of posterity and the Judgement Day. By united endeavour and combined striving alone can we attain to a truer proclamation of Judaism and a manlier testifying to our faith by our lives, a sweeter communion with our Maker, and a nobler fellowship with all Israel and all humanity.

My friends, only one word more would I say in conclusion. חכמים הזהרו בדבריכם 'Ye wise, be ye guarded in your words'. Like my predecessor ז"ל at the opening of the Conference of 1909, I would beg of each speaker to bear in mind that, in a sense, we are all of us, during these three days, on our trial. May we all be duly heedful in all we say or do. May no stumbling-block arise at our hands. May we not declare the pure impure, nor the impure pure. May Heaven bless our deliberations so that all our words and doings tend towards the increase of amity and fellowship, and the strengthening of our Holy Faith. Amen.

## NOTE A

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON THE UKRAINE  
POGROMS

According to a recent estimate, there were no less than 891 pogroms, of which 430 were carried out by various robber bands (Grigorief, Makhno, Struck, &c.), 170 by the Denikin Army, 192 by the Petlurists, and the remaining 99 by Polish and Red bands. The depositions of survivors, the testimony of officials and witnesses, and the reports of Red Cross commissioners are now in course of publication under the editorship of the eminent Russo-Jewish historian, Prof. Dubnow. Descriptions of some of the principal pogroms are found in the books mentioned on p. 9, *supra*.

Proskourof and Fastov may be taken as typical pogroms. The holocaust at Proskourof (Podolia) was arranged by the Petlurist hetman Simossenko. The number of killed was 1,754, and the Jews of Proskourof were only saved from complete destruction by the active intervention of the city administration, which succeeded in stopping mass-slaughter after three days, 15-18 February 1919. Simossenko authorized 'his lads to amuse themselves for a few days'. The massacres started at one o'clock in the afternoon and finished towards six, when the Cossacks returned to the barracks to the sound of music, only to begin again the butchery the next day. They spared neither old men, nor women, not even nursing babies. They mocked the victims before killing them, putting them to all kinds of torture. Some bodies bore on them thirty-six wounds, others were *torn* in pieces.

The pogrom of Fastov was organized by detachments of Denikin's army immediately on their occupation of the town at the end of September 1919. One thousand Jews were slaughtered, and a great number of women and girls were violated. It was with truly bestial fury that the soldiers threw themselves on young girls before the very eyes of their helpless parents. Particularly revolting scenes took place in the court of the Synagogue where the Jews had sought refuge. The whole court was strewn with bodies of old men, women and children, and violated girls. Many people went mad. Sixty Jews sought shelter in the Church, but the soldiers surrounded it and killed the Jews in it, and then burned all the Jewish houses in the town.

Human language is too weak adequately to characterize the fiendish cruelty displayed in these, as in all the other pogroms of 1919-21.

‘ Besides physical torture, the victims were subjected to mental torture of a kind for which there is no parallel in history. Jews were compelled to dance and to sing in the presence of their executioners ; they had to dig their own graves and to commit shameful acts for the amusement of their murderers. These wretched people were forced to look on at the dishonouring of their daughters and of their wives, and children were compelled to hang their fathers.

The terrible sufferings which all the population of this country is enduring through famine and epidemics cannot be compared to the hell in which the Ukrainian Jews have been plunged for a year and a half. Dante's *Inferno* pales besides the realities of everyday life in the Ukraine.’ (N. Sokolow and L. Motzkin, *Memorandum on the Massacre of the Jews in the Ukraine*, submitted to the League of Nations on behalf of the Committee of Jewish Delegations, December 1920.)

## NOTE B

### WESTERN OPINION AND THE MASSACRES

On the Continent, French intellectuals issued an *Appeal to Humanity*--signed among others by Anatole France, Emile Combes, Gustave Herve, Pastor Monod, Albert Thomas, and Abbe Violet--which, in part, reads :

‘ In the name of human conscience, in the name of the moral responsibility which every man bears towards his fellow men : the undersigned appeal to all the peoples of the world and more especially to the French people.

‘ The Jews who, for centuries, have been settled in Eastern Europe, have become the innocent and pitiful victims of struggles, national, political, and social.

‘ The rival ambitions of peoples, governments, and parties, and all the folly of civil war satiate themselves to-day upon the unhappy Jewish minority with criminal cruelty. . . .

‘ In more than a hundred towns of the Ukraine, frightful

pogroms have taken place and tens of thousands of victims have perished. The most terrible days of the Inquisition have returned, for the massacres have been accompanied by the most cruel tortures, and the most terrible moral and physical torments.

'In the very midst of civilized Europe, at the dawn of the new era for which the world awaits its charter of liberty and justice, the existence of a whole population is threatened. Such crimes dishonour not only the people that commit them, but outrage human reason and conscience.

'Let the voices of the peoples' representatives in all the parliaments of the world be raised against these heinous iniquities. The duty is incumbent upon free peoples and responsible governments to put an end to this monstrous violation of the rights of man.'

This was the protest of a few eminent individuals. Governments and Parliaments, however, were everywhere silent. Truly, but vainly, did the authors of the *Memorandum on the Massacre of the Jews in the Ukraine* plead with the League of Nations :

'It is a matter of urgent importance that the civilized peoples should make themselves heard. To keep silence is to become the accomplice of these murderers.

'It is our opinion that, if at any moment during the course of this criminal butchery at which the world has passively looked on, the public opinion of the civilized world and the Governments had expressed strongly the firm determination to put a stop to this state of things, the massacres would, in spite of all, have ceased.'

Various circumstances account for the apathy of such public men in England as were not unaware of these horrors :

(1) In 1919 the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* appeared, and the minds of many were for a time perturbed by this impudent forgery. And there *were* Jews among the leaders of the Bolsheviks. This circumstance became a veritable obsession with some people.

(2) Every one at first accepted at their face value the deliberately misleading assurances spread broadcast by the agents and representatives of the Denikin Government, that Gen. Denikin was 'protecting' the Jewish population; whereas, in truth, the 140 pogroms for which the officers of the Volunteer Army were responsible were especially distinguished by insatiable bloodthirstiness.

(3) In large measure, also, this silence was due to patriotic considerations. The Press—with a few honourable exceptions—chose

to look upon Denikin, Petlura, Grigorief, Makhno, &c., either as allies, or as men who were attacking Soviet Russia—and who, therefore, could do no wrong. 'Patriotism' of this sort, which welcomes any allies and condones all their deeds, has for all time been pilloried by Chatham in one of the noblest protests in our language. The Government of his day was employing Red Indians to fight the American colonists then in revolt against the British Crown, and defended the measure in the House of Lords on the plea that it was justifiable to use 'all the means that God and Nature put into our hands'. Chatham indignantly retorted:

'Who is the man that has dared to associate to our armies the tomahawk and scalping knife of the savage? I call upon the right reverend bench, those holy ministers of the Gospel, to vindicate the religion of their God. I call upon the learned judges to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your Lordships to reverence the dignity of your ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country to vindicate the national character.' . . .

'To turn forth into our settlements the merciless cannibal, thirsty for the blood of man, woman, and child—to send forth the infidel savage to desolate their dwellings, and extirpate their race and name with the horrible hell-hounds of savage war!' . . .

'My Lords, I am old and weak, and at present unable to say more; but I could not have slept this night in my bed, without giving this vent to my eternal abhorrence of such preposterous and enormous principles.'

The diabolic atrocities in the Ukraine of 1919 and 1920 exceed a hundredfold the savageries perpetrated by Red Indians in 1777. But there is no Chatham to-day.

## NOTE C

### 'RÈVE DES POGROMS'

Though even a reactionary like the late Admiral Koltchak had the fairness to admit: 'If the Jewish people are to be made responsible for the deeds of Trotzky, Joffe, &c., then the whole Russian people must answer for the activity of Lenin, Krilenko, and Lunacharsky' (*Le Temps*, 14 December 1919)—this is no longer the view of the mass of Russian refugees to-day. Thus the Paris *La Tribune Juive* of May 25, 1923, reviews under the above title a

book, *Un Rayon de Lumière*, by Col. Vinberg, a champion of the White Terror and spokesman of an important section of the Grand Duke Cyril's party. The author of the book foreshadows the course of events that would follow the fall of Moscow and the overthrow of the Soviet power:—

‘Le gouvernement proclame une amnistie générale, mais le lendemain on trouve dans la rue un individu de type non-russe, gisant, la gorge coupée, dans une mare de sang. “Mort aux Juifs !” s’écrient des milliers de voix . . . ‘On les tue sur place, dans les rues, dans les maisons ; on massacre avec une cruauté inouïe leurs femmes et leurs enfants, on met le feu à la synagogue . . . Aucune supplication n’est entendue . . . La vague de pogroms déferle sur le bassin de la Volga . . . &c.’

Such is the Monarchist solution of the Jewish question in Russia.