

## THE CHURCH AND THE SOCIAL PROBLEM

Rabbi Emanuel Sternheim

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In an address by Rabbi Emanuel Sternheim of Baton Rouge, La., before the Eighth Purity Congress, Kansas City, November 5th to 9th, he said, in part:

"It has been the glory of the faith to which I have the honor to belong, and it is a glory, I believe, conceded by a great number of earnest Christians, that in its survival through the ages it has been so moulded that it has served the moral and spiritual needs of age after age, differing in complexion and complexity. We are called upon today, Jew and Christian alike, to face the social emergency, as it has aptly been called by a modern writer. Our religion will stand or fall by our ability to subserve in 1914, as our religion has stood by our ability to serve in 1814, 1714, 1614 and so on. The question of the moment in 1914 is this social emergency, upon which religion speaks in no uncertain voice, if it does not act the ostrich and bow its head before the shibboleth of a false sentiment on the one hand, and the sway of the evil doer and the licentious on the other. In my opinion, the church should lead in the sphere of sexual education. It should with united voice teach the single standard, and then it may co-operate with every wise and reasoned and logical scheme for legislative enactments and attempts at legislative betterment.

"I make no apology for using again as an ending to this paper the same ending as I used when addressing another conference on the social mission of the church to city life. In my humble opinion the attitude which I have outlined of the church to the social problem would subserve the giving of practical expression to the viewpoint expressed by Dr. Henry Vandyke in his soul-inspiring and exquisite book on 'The Spirit of America,' when he speaks in language noble and with thought sublime as follows: 'If there is to be an American aristocracy, it shall not be composed of the rich, nor of those whose only pride is in their ancestors name, but of those who have done most to keep the

spirit of America awake and eager to solve the problems of the common order, of those who have spoken to her most clearly and steadily by words and deeds reminding her that

"By the soul

Only, the nation shall be great and free."

"The question of the social problem is the great emergency of our time; even before the cataclysm across the seas, where it seems that a civilization is again passing, we bow our heads in submission to the God on high, who has so ordained. Let us not forget that in the right and proper conception of the immensity of the social evil we do not pass by such messages as are contained in books such as 'Rome and America,' by Professor Lewis, and 'The Old World and the New,' by Ferrero, and of their somewhat pessimistic analogies between Rome in the period of its decadence with America in 1914, then shall we cease to gloat over our commercial supremacy and endeavor to instill into the minds of our youth a nobler and higher conception of life that shall rise above a materialistic panoply, that shall be lifted beyond the finding of material pleasure in the lustful satisfaction of the appetites. If we would do this for posterity, it is not Congress who will do it, but it will be the teacher in the school, and the preacher in the pulpit who will raise the generation that will say with united voice to the Congress that is to come: 'These things shall not be, for we know that they are wrong.' When the people know that these things are wrong they will go; otherwise all the building upon the fundamental verity of democracy is a building upon sand. Because I believe, however, that the verity of democracy is in deed eternal, therefore do I believe that it should have the sanction of religion, and therefore do I believe that a generation may be raised who shall realize that their democratic institutions must be swayed by the love and fear of God in the realization 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it.'"

## EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

CONDUCTED BY BERTRAM BENEDICT

At last accounts there were nine Jewish people in the United States who were not discussing the recent resignation or dismissal (the choice of noun depends on your position as pro-Sadie or anti-Sadie) of Miss Sadie American from the position of executive secretary of the National Council of Jewish Women. None of these nine persons was a female, none had a wife or sisters, and each was dumb. The American Civil War in the Council broke out in open conflict some years ago, and resulted in the withdrawal of some seven or eight local sections from the national body. No one questions Miss American's remarkable ability in accomplishing results, or in organization work, but her opponents claim that she is temperamentally unable to work in harmony with her officers and with her board, no matter who the latter might be. Indeed, after Miss American had announced her—well, withdrawal, a resolution was unanimously passed in appreciation of her telling efforts for the Council, especially in the sheltering and protection of immigrant girls. Every well-wisher of Judaism in this country cannot but hope that Miss American will find a new field in which her ability may bring forth harvest.

Miss American's successor is Mrs. Ernestine B. Dreyfus of Kansas City, Mo. Mrs. Dreyfus is a past president of the Kansas City Council of Jewish Women, and is at present secretary of the Federated Jewish Charities of her home town.

In foreign warfare conditions so far as concerns the Jews can hardly be said to be improving. The terrors of war in Eastern Prussia and Western Russia are becoming more terrifying, if such a thing were possible. Russia's promises to her "well beloved Jews" seem to be typically Russian promises. Indeed, a recent report declares that Jews have been definitely banished from Petrograd. The Petrograd office of the Jewish Colonization Association reports to the American Jewish Committee that a conservative estimate would place 2,000,000

Jews as homeless in Russian Poland alone. Due to the lack of any national representative organization binding together all the Jews of this country, the methods of the course to be pursued by American Jews in relief of their brethren are being perfected very slowly. In Jerusalem affairs are going from the worst to the very worst, and the \$50,000 which recently arrived at Jaffa from America is but a drop in a bucket, which has innumerable holes. It is pleasing to note, however, that this sum was distributed through Ambassador Morgenthau according to the most recent scientific methods, and that each penny of it seems to have gone where it was needed, and needed badly. I have heard some reports of one-cent stamps to be sold, similar to the Red Cross Christmas seals, though conceivably without the picture of Santa Claus and without the cross upon them; but so far I have but heard and not seen. Turkey, which must rank with Russia as the most enlightened nation in the war today (for she at least preaches what she practices), has expressed a willingness not to molest any relief expedition sent to Jerusalem.

At a recent meeting of the Eastern Council of Liberal Rabbis (which seems to have conquered the threatening diseases of babyhood), Rabbi Joseph Silverman proposed that the Council establish a Jewish school of philanthropy. The plan was unanimously approved, and it was referred for action to the Executive Committee. If the Council were one of the older Jewish organizations the referendum, of course, would be equal to interment; but the writer of these lines sees much of youngsters and he knows that it is impossible to tell what a youngster will do.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Relief Committee was held on December 13th. At this meeting the sum of \$100,000 was appropriated for the relief of Jews in foreign lands who are suffering as a result of the war. Of

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