

WORLD DOMINION

The World Dominion Movement advocates Informed Continuous Co-ordinated Evangelism to reach everyone at home and abroad. Its basis is belief in the Deity and Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ, the World's Only Saviour, and in the Final Authority of Holy Scripture.

Editor: THOMAS COCHRANE.

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

- MR. KENNETH G. GRUBB, a member of the World Dominion Movement, is a delegate to the Madras Conference.
- MR. R. W. WOODS, M.A., is the Missionary Secretary of the Student Christian Movement.
- THE REV. G. A. F. KNIGHT, M.A., is a missionary of the Church of Scotland, working among Jews in Budapest.
- THE REV. W. W. SIMPSON, M.A., is a Methodist minister who is making a special study of the Jewish problem. He is the Honorary Secretary of the Youth Council on Jewish and Christian Relationships, and is the author of 'Youth and Anti-Semitism.'
- DR. NICHOLAS ZERNOV is the Secretary of the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius, Golders Green.
- MR. E. S. ALPHONSE is a Christian of African descent who has been working among the Valiente Indians of Panama since 1918, supported by the Methodist Church of Jamaica.
- THE REV. T. WILKINSON RIDDLE, F.R.S.L., D.D., is engaged in a widespread ministry throughout the British Isles, and in literary work.
- MR. RAMON TAIBO SIENES is an evangelical school-teacher and journalist.
- THE REV. ALEXANDER McLEISH, Survey Editor of the World Dominion Press, was for many years a missionary of the Church of Scotland in India.
- MR. GEORGE RINVOLD is a member of the Norwegian Mission in China.
- MR. HUGH MILLER has had nearly forty years' experience as a missionary in Korea, where, until his retirement this year, he was Secretary to the British and Foreign Bible Society.
- THE REV. S. M. ZWEMER, D.D., Editor of *The Moslem World*, and until recently Professor at Princeton University, was one of the pioneer missionaries of the Arabian Mission of the Dutch Reformed Church.
- THE REV. G. D. MELLISH is the only remaining missionary of the Canadian Regular Baptist Mission in the Grand Bassa country, Liberia.
- DR. P. BRATSIOTIS is a Professor at Athens University.

The Refugee Problem

THE refugee problem has raised considerable discussion in recent months, and *World Dominion* has often drawn attention to the plight of non-Aryan Christian, and Jewish, refugees. The following brief notes may serve to place the subject in a correct perspective.

The post-War settlement involved a considerable refugee problem. A million Greeks from Turkey were successfully brought into Greece and 750,000 were settled on the land; while 2-300,000 Bulgarians were brought back into Bulgaria. These movements are now completed, but every year some 30,000 Turks from Roumania move into Turkey. The Turks themselves undertake their settlement, and in some ten years' time the whole Moslem population of Roumania will have been thus transferred. It will be noted that these refugees were nationals of the receiving countries, and that four conditions were present which are essential to planned refugee immigrations: preparation, ample finance, adequate supervision, and provision of amenities in the receiving country.

Not all refugees are 'Stateless'; many possess passports and have not been deprived of their nationality. Their difficulties are, however, always great, and actually there are 250-300,000 Stateless persons to-day who are not protected by the League of Nations.

The refugees of to-day can be classified into three groups:

i. The *Russians, Armenians, Assyrians* of Iraq, *Saarlanders* and other small groups, are granted Nansen passports, that is, documents giving a status which is recognized by fifty-three Governments. The *Russian* refugees are found to-day mostly in Germany, France, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Sinkiang, Manchuria and China. In 1922 there were 750,000 of them in Europe; in 1930, 511,000; and in 1936-7, 362,000. There are 100,000 in the Far East, including 30,000 in Harbin and 33,000 in China, and their position is now one of special difficulty.

THE REFUGEE PROBLEM

Most of the Russian refugees live in great poverty. The problem is gradually and tragically eliminating itself through death.

It is reckoned that in the pre-War massacres about a million *Armenians* were killed and some 200,000 converted to Islam. There are 212,000 Armenian refugees to-day, of whom 100,000 are in Syria and Lebanon, 63,000 in France, and 25,000 in Greece. In Lebanon the Christian population is in a slight majority, but in Syria Christians are only 1 in 10. There is much apprehension, therefore, as to what may happen to the Christian population of Syria when France relinquishes the Mandate in 1940.

The *Assyrians* of Iraq, 9,000 in number, are now living on the river Kibur in French territory. The *Saarlanders* are mostly in France.

2. The *Jewish* (about 150,000 from Germany alone) and *Non-Aryan* Christian refugees are the subject of the article which follows.

3. There are to-day some 25,000 *Spanish* adult refugees, and 10,000 children. All these are cared for in France. There are also small refugee communities of Portuguese and Italian origin. France, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia have all been exceptionally generous to refugees, particularly France. The wealth and industry which have come to a country through its hospitality to refugees, as, for example, in the case of the French Huguenots in England, are well known. Even to-day there are some 3,000 Belgians in Belgium who are employed by refugees, while in Holland 12,000 Dutchmen are in the employ of 3,000 refugees.

While it is generally agreed that the problem is of a magnitude that requires and justifies action by Governments, it ought also to be obvious that the Christians bear a special responsibility in the matter, particularly towards those fellow-members of Christ's Church, and those who are suffering for confessional or racial reasons.

' From the time that the prophet Jeremiah urged his exiled brethren to pray for the welfare of the country in which they temporarily sojourned, to the famous saying of Rabbi Hanninah in the *Talmud*,—to say nothing of the devotion and loyalty of Jews even to countries that persecuted them—Judaism has always taught patriotism as a virtue.—*Unity*.

Plight of the Jew in Eastern Europe

G. A. F. KNIGHT.

FEW people in the West realize from a reading of their newspapers in what peril the Church in Eastern Europe has been placed since the *Anschluss*. The latter has by no means only affected Austria. It has been a truly frightening experience to watch how the ordinary, decent, thoughtful people in Hungary and Yugo-slavia have been swept off their feet since the month of March by Nazi propoganda and ideas. The climax was reached within eight weeks of that political event, when, in Budapest, for example, the situation was rapidly becoming out of hand. The tide has distinctly turned, a new Cabinet having been formed at the end of May, and already (July) it seems that the students and the middle classes are tired of the new fad of Nazism. But how much harm has been done to the Church time alone will tell.

In the late spring the Reformed Church leaders in Hungary were preparing themselves steadfastly and courageously for the then by no means improbable possibility of the concentration camp, if a Nazi Government should come into power. Their great fear was that if a Confessional Church had to be formed in Hungary it would consist only of the best of the Church leaders along with the faithful few, while the mass of the people would become 'Magyar Christians.' Every Monday morning the city ministers would receive threatening letters from Nazis. One of the most frequent questions was, 'How much did the Jews pay you to say that?'

It is an extraordinary commentary on the situation that when the Church takes up what we believe to be the fully Christian position, that position is thought to be inspired by Jews. The Jewish and the Christian question are one in the eyes of the totalitarian State. One of the reasons that moved certain Church leaders to support the Budapest Scottish Mission in its work for Jewish refugees, was, as one said himself, 'The day may not be far distant

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when we ministers will be applying for your relief fund too.'

The plight of the Jewish refugees is perhaps borne home to us more forcibly in the light of the foregoing statement. They are educated men, for the most part, who 'kill time' in our refugees' club. 'Kill time' it is. Some have been wandering for five years now, each country's welcome to them being like the words of the policeman to the vagrant: 'Keep moving.' They may stay only a limited period in any one land, but, as they have no papers, to move to the next country is a punishable offence and they must cross the frontier *schwartz*, secretly, under cover of darkness. My colleague in Prague, for example, gets my refugees when it grows too hot for them in Budapest, and I get his in return. During the past winter the Budapest Mission alone handled some two hundred such refugees. Unfortunately the 'emigrant' is involved in the vicious circle of not being allowed to stay and at the same time of not being allowed to go on. An opera singer friend of mine once stood for four hours, with his hands in his pockets, between the Austrian and the Hungarian frontiers, neither party allowing him to take a step into their country.

It is almost impossible, for political reasons, for the native Churches to give a penny to a refugee, and as he is forbidden to earn money, it is left to missions of foreign Churches and to the Hebrew Christian Alliance to undertake all the care of Hebrew Christians and others. Even the State recognizes the unique position of the 'foreign' mission; political detectives on more than one occasion have brought a handcuffed refugee to my door, and, before the eyes of the police, I have handed the unfortunate man clothes or money, asking the detective to note that the latter is a gift, and has not been earned. Only because it is 'foreign' money do the police allow the small degree of relief I can give. The first thing a refugee asks on entering a new city is: 'Is there a mission here?'

It is not only the *refugee* Jew who claims the help of the mission. Hungary, for example, in the month of April, announced the introduction of a Bill, since become Law,

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to introduce a *numerus clausus* in business and industry, a particularly vicious decision in a country where the Gentiles are, as a whole, agriculturally rather than business minded. The law declares to be Jews all Hebrew Christians baptized after 1st August, 1919. This clause alone affects some 10,000 in the city of Budapest, where a great spiritual movement towards Christianity has been taking place. For weeks after the Bill was made public I received callers who waited in queues to be interviewed; people literally trembling with fear and anxiety, and to whom I could only speak of the comfort there is to be found in God. The children of those 10,000 brought up as Christians have no future before them, as they will not be allowed to settle on the land.

The Churches, though denouncing this law as un-Christian and uneconomic, have had to acquiesce in it, believing its passing to be a kind of safety valve to the popular temper, and a sop to the Nazi party, to prevent their demanding more. Feeling has been running very high in Hungary, even the theological students and some of the ministers being carried away by the prevailing hatred, so that it has been a most unpopular thing to have any dealings with Jews at all. The Budapest Mission was frequently attacked in the press, fictitious libels being produced against it, and things made generally unpleasant for its workers. But the Jew has recognized gratefully that the Christian Mission suffers to-day because of its steady insistence on friendship with him despite the unpopularity thereby incurred.

A Jewish father, saying goodbye to his son, who was leaving Vienna for ever, to start life afresh in America, looking through the compartment window to where I was, asked in a whisper I was not supposed to hear, 'What kind of a travelling companion have you?' 'Oh, I am very lucky,' was the reply, 'he is a professing Christian!' And that same lad, with tears in his eyes, bade me farewell, after leaving Germany, saying that it had made the parting from his native land much easier for him since he had gone out with 'a friend.'

PLIGHT OF THE JEW

It is truly the providence of God that the various 'Missions' in Central Europe are the 'Embassies' (as the original Latin has it) of foreign Churches. Not only do the police give them greater freedom than could be afforded under present circumstances to any such native institutions but the foreigner, because of passport and money restrictions, is much more mobile than the native of the country. No minister or school teacher in Eastern Europe may leave his own land, since, because of his position of influence, he may prove to be dangerous; I, with my British passport, can travel freely, but it is saddening to say goodbye to friends at every frontier, none of whom may follow me. By using pounds sterling I can circumvent the restrictions on the export of most currencies. Dr. Erwin Reisner, European Secretary of the International Missionary Council on the Christian Approach to the Jews Committee, an Austrian, who was appointed last year by that body with Europe as his field, although not a minister, has had his passport taken from him, because he 'deals with Jews', and this despite the fact that he was once an army officer, a member of the old Iron Guard, and, therefore, a person to be greatly respected by the powers that be.

A native of his country, even in lands still officially not Anti-Semitic, in face of such restrictions and the temper of his Church, finds it increasingly difficult to have any dealings with Jews whatsoever, and is a suspect if he does. On the other hand the Britisher, the Swede, the Hollander, still can, and does, receive a respectful hearing from all parties in Eastern Europe when speaking on the Jewish question. But how long it will be possible for the 'foreigner' to work in freedom before the same restrictions are imposed on him as on the native worker, is a question the answer to which is vital to the distressed Hebrew Christians, and the Jewish communities in general.

The writer of the following article says: 'Mr. Knight's article offers a very practical suggestion of the kind of service to which our Missions to Jews might be put in Europe to-day. If we could really get this across to the conscience of the Churches and raise sufficient money for the enterprise, these centres might well be used as hostels for refugees, where they might undergo some form of training and be assisted with language study, while efforts were being made to arrange for their permanent settlement in some other country if necessary.'