

EMANU-EL

CLUNIE BUILDING, CALIFORNIA AND MONTGOMERY STREETS, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

Volume XLVIII—No. 15

AUGUST 15, 1919

Two Dollars per Year

MAXIM GORKI ON ANTI-SEMITISM

An Editorial from His Paper in Petrograd, "The New Life"

Maxim Gorki, the celebrated Russian novelist, man of discernment and one whose word has weight with the "intellectuals" of his own country, made the following editorial comment in his newspaper on the anti-Semitic proclamations by the "Central Committee of the Union of Christian Socialists":

"That they are not Christians and still less Socialists is seen from the very low tone of their proclamation. Here are the introductory sentences:

"Anti-Semites of all countries, of all peoples, of all parties, unite!"

"The Union of Christian Socialists turns to all Russian citizens with the appeal to clear themselves of the Jewish pestilence with which our entire country is contaminated to the very depths of the population. Especially hard hit by this pest are our intellectual classes, which have been educated by the Jewish press, which is preaching the lying doctrines of brotherhood and equality of all nations and races. Every sensible man knows, however, that there is no equality and brotherhood, nor will there be. As a consequence an equal relationship to all men and to all nationalities is impossible."

"Aren't they a fine lot to be the children of the loving Redeemer, who in his own life never made distinction between Jews and Greeks; who, as well as the first apostles, was a Jew and who suffered a martyr's death for men in general, for men of all races and origins! Yes, and what splendid Socialists they must be to speak of the doctrine of equality as 'lying' and a 'Jewish pest.'"

"Further along in this proclamation we read:

"The Aryan race physically as well as in its moral aspect represents a positive type of the highest scale of civilization, the Jewish race represents a negative type. When our intellectuals, the salt of the Russian soil, once perceive this they will make an end to these cheap phrases about the equal worth of the Jew and of the necessity of treating these pariahs of the human race on a basis of equality with other races."

"Let us think a moment: We must not treat them like the other nationalities on a basis of equality! Who are these 'other nationalities.' Perhaps the Germans are meant, these members of the Aryan race who represent a morally positive type, which, however, did not prevent them from shooting great masses of Russian peasants as well as Jews. Or perhaps the mild Slavs are meant, the Russians, who are today killing one another with senseless brutality."

"The seeming ignorance of these 'Christian Socialists' is not convincing; it seems more like a mask."

"The Petrograd proclamation is addressed 'to the workers, soldiers and peasants' and is quite obviously aimed to appeal to the feelings and mode of thinking of the darkest masses."

"In this second proclamation the question is being put:

"Have you seen many Jewish blacksmiths, house mechanics, agriculturists, washerwomen, cooks, servant girls? Have you ever seen the Jews standing in the streets of our cities begging? No!"

"Of course, one has never seen a Jew house mechanic in Petrograd or Moscow, because this calling is under the direct control of the police, and the Jews for quite conceivable reasons were not permitted in such jobs. In Odessa, however, most of the truckmen are Jews. Of the Jews living in the pale 92 per cent are laborers and beggars."

"It is true that outside of the pale there are no

Jewish beggars. This is due to the wonderful organization of the social self-help system among the Jews, as well as to the fact that the police arrest a Jewish beggar on sight. I think, too, that the scarcity of Jewish beggars in such territories is due to the fact that the kindly Greek orthodox Christians give the Jewish beggar a stone, or press a snake into his hand instead of a piece of bread. How the whole thing is woven over with lies, how revolting is the anti-Semitism of these foul jades!"

"When one reads such creeds of hate with all their petty venoms and their base slanders a feeling of shame and of fear seizes one for our Russia, for the land of Tolstoy, who has created the most humane literature the world has ever known."

"I have on several occasions told the anti-Semites that certain Jews have more advantageous and better-paying positions in life, because they know how to work, because they love to be active, and do their work with ecstasy. The Jew is almost always a better workman than the Russian. One must not be disappointed, but one must simply learn from him. This holds true whether in the field of personal endeavor or social endeavor—the Jew does his work with much greater temperament than the talkative Russian. Whatever nonsense the anti-Semites say, the fact remains that all their hatred for the Jew is attributable only to this, that in many ways the Jew is better, smarter, and more industrious than they. Today when we have realized to what a terrifying extent monarchy has left us enervated, sick and spiritually castrated, we must prize all able workers, the men of initiative who are in love with their work. Instead, however, we growl:

"Kill them because they are better than we!"—Maxim Gorki.

"The third proclamation presents an even more foolish invention of some agent provocateur."

"This proclamation is headed:

"Very secret. To the chairmen of the local groups of the Israelite's World Union. The 'chairman' is thereupon urged to exercise the greatest caution. 'We must carry out our aims with perseverance and strength; we must destroy strange altars and thrones.' 'We must bend Russia to her knees.' 'We must do everything for the greater glory of the great Jewish people,' but without haste and with the greatest caution."

"When will all these idiots cease with their stupidities? Had they but carefully thought the matter out they would have seen that such an important round robin message as the one to the chairman of the 'Israelite's World Union' would have been written in the Jewish and not in the Russian language. If they had at least thought to add to their text, 'Translated from the Jewish!'"

"How frightfully stupid!"

"The other proclamations are no less stupid than those quoted."

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"Kill them because they are better than we."

"This is the real ground for all your talk, Messrs. Anti-Semites, no matter how you may try to cover up your motives."

"These anti-Semitic proclamations concern themselves chiefly, of course, with such Jews as the Bolshevik, Zinoviev and Volodarski—Jews who refuse to see that their tactlessness and foolishness supply rich material for an indictment of all Jews. Every family has its cripples. But a people does not consist of cripples only, and there are surely thousands of Jews who hate such persons as Volodarski no less than the anti-Semites hate him. Of course, this is not going to convince the anti-Semites that not all Jews are alike and that the class struggle among the Jews is not less acute than it is among other nations. That will not convince them, because they wish to be convinced of the opposite."

"Perhaps, however, those who, like dogs, are being incited against the Jews (the masses) who are being urged to execute pogroms, perhaps they

(Continued on page 16)

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