

# THE PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS IN RUSSIA.

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WITH

APPENDIX CONTAINING A SUMMARY OF  
SPECIAL AND RESTRICTIVE LAWS,

ALSO A

*Map of Russia, showing the Pale of Jewish Settlement,*

A

*Letter reprinted from "The Times" of 5th November, 1890,*

A

REPORT OF THE GUILDHALL MEETING

HELD ON 10TH DECEMBER, 1890,

AND THE TEXT OF THE

MEMORIAL TO THE CZAR,

*With its accompanying Letter from the Lord Mayor.*

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ISSUED BY THE

RUSSO-JEWISH COMMITTEE  
FOR GRATUITOUS CIRCULATION.

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1891.

REPORT  
OF A  
MEETING IN THE GUILDHALL, LONDON,  
ON THE SUBJECT OF  
THE JEWS IN RUSSIA.

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A MEETING was held on the 10th December, 1890, in the Guildhall, to express public opinion upon the sufferings to which millions of the Jewish race are subjected in Russia under severe and exceptional edicts and disabilities. The meeting was called in pursuance of a requisition signed by the following :—The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Duke of Argyll, the Duke of Westminster, the Duke of Abercorn, the Duke of Newcastle, the Marquis of Ripon, the Marquis of Abergavenny, Earl Spencer, the Earl of Meath, the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, Lord Tennyson, Lord Bramwell, Lord Rowton, Lord Brassey, Lord Addington, Mr. Stansfeld, M.P., Mr. Mundella, M.P., Mr. G. O. Morgan, M.P., Sir J. Lubbock, M.P., Sir H. James, M.P., Sir C. Russell, M.P., Sir G. Stokes, M.P., Sir J. Pease, M.P., Sir W. Barttelot, M.P., Sir J. Whittaker Ellis, M.P., Sir R. Fowler, M.P., Sir James Paget, Sir William Jenner, Sir Andrew Clark, Sir Frederic Leighton, Admiral Sir E. Inglefield, Lieut.-Gen. Sir Andrew Clarke, Lieut.-Gen. Sir G. Graham, Sir John Coode, Sir J. Puleston, M.P., Sir A. Rollit, M.P., Sir G. Grove, Mr. E. Ashley, Mr. G. Curzon, M.P., Professor Huxley, Mr. A. R. Wallace, Mr. Stuart, M.P., Mr. J. A. Bright, M.P., Mr. J. Bright, M.P., Mr. H. Vincent, M.P., Mr. Illingsworth, M.P., Mr. Dillwyn, M.P., Mr. Burt, M.P., Mr. Biddulph, M.P., Mr. Oldroyd, M.P., Mr. J. Cowen, Dr. A. C. Mackenzie, Mr. Walter Besant, Col. Prendergast, Mr. Maclure, M.P., Mr. Laurie, M.P., Mr. White, M.P., Cardinal Manning, the Bishop of London, the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, the Bishop of Manchester, the Bishop of Ripon, the Bishop of Wakefield, the Bishop of St. Albans, the Dean of Westminster.

the Dean of Christ Church, Dr. Butler, the Rev. Dr. J. Martineau, Professor Jowett, Professor Ince, Archdeacon Farrar, Canon Scott Holland, the Rev. E. Carr Glyn, the Rev. J. Kempe, the Rev. Daniel Moore, the Rev. W. Barker, the Rev. H. L. Paget, the Rev. W. P. Roberts, the Rev. H. R. Haweis, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, Dr. Allon, and the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes.

The meeting began at three o'clock, by which time the Guildhall was completely filled, more than 2,000 persons being present. Amongst those on the platform were the Duke and Duchess of Westminster, the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, the Bishop of Ripon, Sir R. Fowler, Lord Denman, Sir G. Stokes, M.P., the Earl of Meath, Sir H. Hoare, Mr. Gainsford Bruce, M.P., Sir J. Colomb, M.P., Mr. Cohen, Q.C., Sir J. Kennaway, M.P., Sir Saul Samuel, Col. Prendergast, Mr. A. M'Arthur, M.P., Mr. De Lisle, M.P., Sir J. Goldsmid, M.P., Sir J. Pease, M.P., Sir A. Rollit, M.P., Sir P. Magnus, Sir J. Simon, the Dean of Westminster, the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, Mr. Sheriff Harris, etc.

The LORD MAYOR, in opening the proceedings, said:—In response to a very numerous signed requisition, I had no hesitation whatever in lending this great hall for the purpose of our gathering this afternoon. For centuries the citizens of London have been always ready to take a leading part in advancing the cause of religious and civil liberty. (Hear, hear.) But I venture to think that on no previous occasion has this noble hall been used for a more urgent purpose than that which has called us together to-day, when we desire to show our sympathy and commiseration with the Jews in Russia who are now suffering under grievous and oppressive legislation. I earnestly hope that no word other than of the most respectful nature may be uttered at this meeting with reference to his Majesty the Emperor. (Cheers.) As I hear, the Emperor of Russia is a good husband and a tender father, and I cannot but think that such a man must necessarily be kindly disposed to all his subjects. On his Majesty the Emperor of Russia the hopes of the Russian Jews are at the present moment fixed. He can by one stroke of his pen

annul those laws which now press so grievously upon them, and he can thus give happy life to those Jewish subjects of his who now can hardly be said to live at all. He has repeatedly and graciously intimated that the interests of his Jewish subjects are as near to his heart as the interests of the most Orthodox Russians. He cannot desire to have another class of serfs created in his kingdom, and the condition of the Jews in Russia is now rapidly approaching that of serfs; indeed, it may be said to be almost worse than that of the serfs; for they, at all events, had masters who were responsible for their well-being, whilst the Russian Jews are at the mercy of the Russian police. (Hear, hear.) Alexander II. gained an imperishable crown by granting emancipation to the Russian serfs. Let Alexander III. be encouraged to hand his name down to posterity as the emancipator of the Russian Jews. (Cheers.)

Before I sit down I will read some extracts from letters I have received from distinguished men who are unfortunately unable to be present.

The following telegram has been received from his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose absence is due to his recent domestic bereavement:—

"I trust that an influential Resolution may convey to the Government of Russia the earnest prayer for immediate reconsideration of regulations which accumulate extreme distress upon its Jewish subjects." (Cheers.)

The following letter has been received from Cardinal Manning:—

"DEAR SIR JOHN SIMON,—To you and to your son, in 1882, I owed the knowledge which impelled me to take part in the meeting at the Mansion House in behalf of the Jews then suffering cruel oppression in Russia; and to you and to your son, again, I owe now the ample and certain information which made me promise that I would move the second Resolution at the Meeting of the 10th inst., at Guild-hall. To you, therefore, I must first write to say that I have now no words to express my deep regret that I am unable to keep that promise. For two months I have been kept to the house by a bad cold caught in September, and I am afraid of its return at the beginning of winter. Sorely against my will

I am, therefore, unable to take part in the meeting of the 10th st. For this reason I am compelled to say in writing what I wish I could have said in words.

"The second Resolution seems to me well and wisely drawn. It assumes that the Czar of all the Russias has no share by will, or by knowledge, in the cruel acts of his distant Provincial Governors. The oppression of Proconsuls has always been a stain on the history of great Empires. The personal and domestic virtues of the Czar are, indeed, a sure pledge that he is incapable of harshness to the least of his subjects; and the illustrious Lady who shares his throne, like her Royal sister, to whom all Englishmen are chivalrously devoted, is a supreme guarantee of the Imperial justice and clemency. We, therefore, humbly petition his Imperial Majesty to order an inquiry to be made into the sufferings of the Jewish race, and the laws that affect them, both within the Pale where they are compelled to reside, and wheresoever they may be found within the dominions of Russia.

"I can hear some of our politicians asking with heat, why we assume to ourselves the freedom of intruding upon the domestic legislation of a friendly State, and even of a great Empire? In answer, I say at once, we refuse to accept the modern theory of non-intervention, which had its first expression in the question, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' We willingly acknowledge that intervention, even such as we exercise at the Guildhall, demands a justifying cause; and we contend that such a cause exists.

"It exists manifestly in the fact that what afflicts the Jewish race in Russia afflicts the Jewish race in England, and in every civilized State. The people of Israel, in their dispersion, are like the nerves of sensation in which we are enveloped; wounded in one spot they suffer in all.

"Six millions of men in Russia are so hemmed in and hedged about by penal laws as to residence, and food, and education, and property, and trade, and military service, and domiciliary visits, and police inspection, as to justify the words, that 'no Jew can earn a livelihood;' and that 'they are watched as criminals.' The narratives before us may be highly coloured, they may be overcharged; but, all deductions made, they show both a violent and a refined injustice, which is perpetually as 'iron entering the soul.'

"And, further, when the cry of such a multitude of suffering is wafted through the commonwealth of Europe, it is surely a part of the comity of nations that we should, with all due respect, make known what we have heard, in the confidence that, if things be so, the first to seek out and to treat

such evils would be the supreme authority of the Realm from whence those wailing voices come.

"We show no disrespect in believing that what reaches our ears may not have reached the ears of those who are most highly exalted. Knowledge travels more readily on lower levels, and often does not ascend to the highest regions; the highest are, as a rule, the last to know the excesses and malpractices of their local authorities. We, therefore, with all due reverence, petition the Imperial Ruler of all the Russias to take account of all the Governors of the Jewish Pale; and even this we should not venture to do, if the sufferings alleged were not of such a kind and of such an extent as to violate the great and primary laws of human society. On this broad and solid base of natural law the jurisprudence of European civilisation rests. The public moral sense of all nations is created and sustained by participation in this universal common law; when this is anywhere broken, or wounded, it is not only sympathy but civilisation that has the privilege of respectful remonstrance.

"I am well aware of the counter allegations, not only of the anti-Semitic press, but of guarded and responsible adversaries; nevertheless, it is certain that races are as they are treated. How can citizens, who are denied the rights of naturalisation, be patriotic? How can men, who are only allowed to breathe the air, but not to own the soil under their feet, to eat only a food that is doubly taxed, to be slain in war, but never to command—how shall such a homeless and exiled race live of the life of the people among whom they are despised, or love the land which disowns them?

"It would seem to me that if such were the sufferings of any nation, even in Central Africa, we should be not only justified, but called on, to intervene. How much more, then, in behalf of a race who, in their past and their present and their future, demand of us an exceptional reverence; a race with a sacred history of nearly four thousand years; a present without a parallel; dispersed in all lands, with an imperishable personal identity, isolated and changeless, greatly afflicted, without home or fatherland; visibly reserved for a future of signal mercy.

"Into this I will not enter further than to say that any man who does not believe in their future must be a careless reader, not only of the old Jewish Scriptures, but even of our own. It is not our duty to add to their afflictions, nor to look on unmoved, and to keep the garments when others stone them.

"If we know the mind of our Master who prayed for them in His last hour, we owe to them both the justice of the Old Law and the charity of the New.

"Believe me, always yours faithfully,

"HENRY EDWARD, Cardinal-Archbishop."

The following letter has been received from the Bishop of London:—

"I have had some hope that, in spite of the pressure of other duties, I should nevertheless be able to attend the meeting on Wednesday, and join my voice with those who will there plead for the suffering Jews in Russia; but I now find it impossible, and I can only write to say how warmly I sympathise with the purpose of the meeting and how earnestly I pray that its influence may have a great success. I cannot believe that the Emperor, who has often shown his readiness to further Christian undertakings, is really aware of the cruelties inflicted upon the Jewish portion of his subjects by those who administer his laws. Such cruelties inflicted in the name of Christianity are a disgrace to all religion, but, above all, to the Christian; and it is the duty of Englishmen, but especially of those Englishmen who call themselves Christians, to do their very best to reach the ears of the Russian Sovereign and implore him to remove this blot from the Christian name."

In expressing his regret that, owing to indisposition, he is unable to be present, the Duke of Argyll writes:—

"There can be but one feeling among all parties and among all Churches in these islands against every form of persecution on account of religious belief. It is a barbarism unworthy of our age, and one that cannot be too loudly condemned by the voice of civilisation. There is no pretence of disloyalty or of lawlessness against the Jews in any country in which they are dispersed, and any persecution of them must be on account of religion alone, or on account of the very excellency of their industry and thrift."

The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon writes:—

"I am indignant that the Seed of Israel should be oppressed by those who bear the name of Christian, but are utter strangers to the mind and spirit of Christ." (Cheers.)

Sir Andrew Clark writes:—

"No one with any pretension to the higher feelings of our common humanity can regard without horror the persecution to which the Jews were subjected in Russia."

Sir J. Lubbock, M.P., writes :—

“My sympathies are warmly with you.”

Communications have also been received from the Duke of Somerset, the Duke of Abercorn, the Earl of Portsmouth, the Earl of Aberdeen, Earl Waldegrave, the Earl of Dartmouth, the Rev. Dr. Ince, Mr. G. Meredith, Mrs. Fawcett, Mr. Burdett-Coutts, M.P., Mr. Stuart, M.P., and many others.

The Duke of WESTMINSTER, who rose to propose the first resolution, said :—My Lord Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have the great honour of submitting for your acceptance the first Resolution, and I desire to say, in the first place, that I take it for granted that we, as a nation, entertain the most friendly sentiments towards the Russians—certainly I have that feeling myself ; and I may say that at the time of the last Russo-Turkish War I was a member of a committee for sending succour to the Russian wounded during its continuance, that we were enabled to effect this object to a certain extent, and that we received the thanks of the Russian authorities for the services which we gladly gave on that occasion. (Hear, hear.) If any exception has been taken to our meeting here this day—as it has been in one notorious quarter, at all events—it can only have been from ignorance of the ways of Englishmen, who have a time-honoured custom of their own to meet and talk over any public matter, whatever it may be, such as the delinquencies of our own Government, the praiseworthy actions (or the reverse) of an individual, or of any body of men ; to help a cause that may need assistance ; to protest against a wrong that may need resistance, whether in the case of Bulgaria in 1876, of Russia in 1882, of Central Africa a year or two ago, and of Russia in this year of 1890 ; and may I add, in a spirit of some sort of national self-laudation, that we often meet to sympathise with the oppressed, and often to give practical effect to that sympathy by sending very substantial help to those who may be suffering from whatever cause in many lands ? Therefore, I hold that we need make no apology, no explanation, or excuse for the course we are following this afternoon. We have precedents without end for our action,



and, indeed, we require none, considering the reason that forces us to crowd into this hall, my Lord Mayor, under your auspices this afternoon, namely, "To raise a humble and respectful, but strong protest against a state of things which has happily no parallel in Europe or in America, and perhaps hardly in Asia." I beg to read the Resolution, which is as follows :—

"That in the opinion of this meeting the renewed sufferings of the Jews in Russia from the operation of severe and exceptional edicts and disabilities are deeply to be deplored, and that in this last decade of the nineteenth century religious liberty is a principle which should be recognised by every Christian community as among the natural human rights."

(Cheers.) It will be in the recollection of many who are here to-day that events occurred in Russia soon after the accession of the present Emperor of so lamentable and deplorable a character as to shock the sense of civilised opinion in Europe and in America. The feelings of hatred and of jealousy entertained by many Russians against the Jews in that country, culminated, in the years 1881-2, in a series of unspeakable enormities upon the latter persecuted race. The voice of England found indignant and sympathetic expression on that occasion in this City of London, and the complaint found a responsive echo throughout the country and far beyond its shores. The circumstances surrounding the case are at this time different. There have been no such sensational atrocities to rouse our indignation and disgust, but we have only too much reason and proof for the assertion that wrongs are being quietly perpetrated under laws as cruel, more calculated to oppress, more ruinous and crushing in their effect than even the outbreak to which I have alluded, and which, horrible as it was, was transient in its duration, and affected a far less number of individuals. For here a population exceeding that of the whole of Scotland is concerned. (Hear, hear.) The inhuman laws, superadded to others of terrible severity of older date, of May, 1882, heaping oppression on oppression, remain still on the Statute-book, a lasting monument, until repealed, to the infamy of their inventor Count Ignatieff; and

although these laws were for a time in abeyance, I would beg you to mark that something is now added year by year in the direction of their enforcement and in the way of administering them with increasing severity, and instance after instance of incredible injustice and of oppression in an increasing ratio can be given, and is given in this little book, "The Persecution of the Jews in Russia," on unquestionable authority. Time and your patience will not allow me to enter into any details as to the rigour of the older laws. You are aware that the Russian Jews, with some exceptions of a limited character, are not allowed to leave certain districts. There is what is called "a Pale of Settlement," where all Jews must reside. Under these precious May Laws, a Pale within the Pale is created, for Jews living in villages are being expelled from them and are being crowded up within the towns already overcrowded, and where they have great and increasing difficulty in finding employment. A Jew is debarred from acquiring land either by purchase or by lease. (Hear, hear.) The object of these restrictive laws was declared to be to complete the gradual withdrawal of the Jews from the country-side. With this view, families not residing in villages before 1882 are expelled, while those settled there before that year are allowed to remain, but are not permitted to leave their village. Artisans were allowed to reside beyond the Pale, but the authorities have lately decreed that Jewish bakers, butchers, glaziers, compositors, and others, were no longer to be considered as artisans at all, and were driven back into the Pale. Take the case of the town of Tchernilgov, to show the result; the Jewish population has recently risen, in consequence of all these expulsions, from 5,000 to 20,000 souls. In the matter of education the Jews have been renowned, like the Scotch, for their zeal for the education of their children, and when too poor themselves to pay the whole cost, they have been assisted by their friends and relations to raise the necessary funds. (Cheers.) Three years ago a rescript was issued limiting the percentage of Jewish scholars at universities and at the gymnasia to 10 per cent.

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in the Pale, where, of course, they most abound; to 5 per cent. outside it; and to 3 per cent. in St. Petersburg and in Moscow. This works hardly on them, especially where the population of the towns is largely composed of Jews, as, for instance, in Odessa University, where 5 per cent. only may enter, and where the Jewish population consists of no less than 106,000 out of 400,000. At Vinitza, a technical school was founded by the munificence of one Mr. Weinstein, a Jew. Into this, only eight scholars are allowed to enter, the Jewish population amounting to 10,000 out of 25,000. No Jew can be an Army doctor; no Jew can be a veterinary surgeon; Jews are excluded from all Government offices. Ten Jews, who for fifteen years were clerks in Government offices in Novo Alexandrovsk, were suddenly dismissed, and their families are now absolutely without means, and reduced to beggary. If, when qualified, the Jews are allowed to study law, they are no longer allowed to be called to the Bar. A Jewish engineer is not allowed to act in a public official capacity. The excessive cooping up in towns is producing the natural results, and is beginning to tell severely on the health and vitality of the race; and sad as is the physical degeneration, still sadder is the moral degradation consequent upon it. As none of the more honourable careers are open to them, they are forced to overcrowd the petty industries, and to undersell one another. I have not alluded to the older laws which cramp, harass, and crush the race to a degree that we, who live in freer air, cannot imagine. I have merely given a sketch of a part of the fringe of the wrong-doing, because it is impossible to go to any detail at such a meeting as this. And all this is done in spite of reports of commissions and of recommendations from governors of provinces for more lenient treatment, and in spite of the known sentiments of the late Emperor, as expressed in an interview with Sir Moses Montefiore, which gave just grounds for the hope that the emancipation of the Jews was near at hand as that of the serfs had been accomplished by him. The present Emperor is described as a humane man. Is it possible that he can know, and that, if knowing, he can

realise, the state in which so large a portion of his subjects exist, for they can hardly be said to live? Can the Czarina know, and, knowing, can she, too, realise the state in which the Jewish women and children eke out their too often very miserable lives? (Cheers.) This ancient Jewish race is remarkable for its intelligence and distinguished by many great qualities, and we know that, if only allowed a free hand, it has a way of making its way to the front by painstaking and by honourable methods—no need to speak of the numerous examples in this or in other communities. Surely it would be the interest, as it should be the greatest privilege, of any Russian ruler to take steps to raise and maintain the Jews in an honourable equality with the various other races that go to make up the Empire. (Cheers.) The persecution and expulsion of the Huguenots not only did no good to France, but it was a tangible loss to that country. It is said that the Jews in Russia are bad citizens. I would venture to say this to the Russian Government: "If you continue to crush by your laws, and, by crushing, demoralise a whole people, who, though large in number, are yet in a minority and cannot rise, you have no right to complain of them when so reduced, so stricken, and so demoralised, and to say that they are bad citizens, and, therefore, persecute them in consequence more and more. The Jews are just what your laws make them. If your laws oppress them, you must not be surprised if they seek to evade them." I must confess that I am greatly cast down when I remember how little the great protest of 1882 has effected. We are taught that the "Hearts of Kings are in God's rule and governance," and we read in the history of the Jewish race that "God hardened the heart of Pharaoh so that he would not let the people of Israel go"; but deliverance came at last by the hand of Moses, and we may still possess the hope that as freedom has come to the Jews in all other countries, so here in Russia the night of sorrow will, in God's good time, give place to the dawning of a brighter and happier day. (Loud cheers.) I beg to move the Resolution which I have read to the meeting.

The Bishop of RYON, who was received with cheers, said—

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My Lord Mayor, my Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, I think I may take up the words which fell from the Duke of Westminster's lips and say that there is, and there can be, no need of an apology for this meeting. I have heard it said, indeed that this meeting is got up under the auspices of a kind of philanthropic hysteria, and certainly I hope that it will be one of the sure rules and principles laid down to everyone who addresses this meeting, and also to all who have been present, that we will have, if possible, nothing to do with hysterics—(hear, hear)—and I think if they glance over the list of those who have signed the requisition to the Lord Mayor, asking that this meeting be convened, English people will be astonished if they find any approach to hysterical tendency, such as is said to belong to this meeting. I will not weary you with an enumeration of their names, but certainly I did not know that a distinguished lawyer in London was to be considered "hysterical"—(laughter)—I do not think Lord Bramwell was ever accused of it before; and I put it to the many City people here whether Sir John Lubbock was ever entitled to the epithet. (Cheers and laughter.) But I would also ask whether amongst the many who have signed the petition there is not one that has put us on our guard against hysteria; who has warned us against the blind hysterics of other races, and has reminded us that we belong to the great country England, where

Freedom broadens slowly down  
From precedent to precedent.

(Cheers.) There is no hysteria in English legislation. It is the result of calm, deliberate thought, and it is the caution of Lord Tennyson, our poet laureate, who puts us on our guard against the hysterical tendencies of other lands, and from Lord Tennyson I have a telegram, which it is my privilege now to read to you, and he is one of those who must be brought under the indictment of hysterical tendency. He sends this:—"I, of course, loathe every kind of persecution, and sympathise with your suffering countrymen, and wish that some international arrangement might be come to about them." (Loud cheers.) Now, I think that when we have the

gentlemen whose names I have mentioned, and others joining together in a solemn requisition to the first magistrate of the first city of the first empire in the world, it is an unworthy thing, and I think an unjust thing, to describe them as "hysterical." But, at all events, I speak for myself, and I think for everyone who will follow me, "Let the spirit of hysteria be far from our minds." (Hear, hear.) There are objections, as the Duke of Westminster has reminded us, which might be made against the holding of such a meeting as this. Will you bear with me a moment while I say that I think there are only three conceivable objections to such a course. The Duke of Westminster has told us, and I am thankful that he has reminded us of it, that it is the wont and usage of Englishmen, when any question occurs which stirs their intellectual interest, and still more their moral earnestness, to meet and to discuss it. (Hear, hear.) And why is it natural to them to meet and discuss it? Because there is nothing which Englishmen abhor more than this—communings in secret. (Cheers.) We want openness in all our dealings. (Renewed cheers.) We ask to try it by the light of truth, and, therefore, we naturally discuss everything in broad daylight. Well, there are only three conceivable objections to our following our present course—a course which, as I say, is natural to the English heart and habit. Either the allegations which have been made are without ground; or there is no duty laid upon us to take cognisance of them; or the subject is of such a nature that it is inexpedient that it should be dealt with in this fashion. Will you allow me to speak of those three things? Now, upon the first, if indeed the allegations which were made were entirely groundless, it would be a fair and legitimate indictment of those who have summoned this meeting, that they had called together people whose time was of value and importance for a matter having no truth and no ground. But we are in a position to say, hearing what we have heard, reading what we have read, thinking as we have the opportunity of thinking, that there is every ground for the allegations that have been made. I am not here to speak one word

concerning the details which might be brought of individual cases of ill-treatment. I am not a favourer of that method which tries to stir the enthusiasm of people by the recapitulation of pathetic, but perhaps isolated, cases. (Cheers.) It would be an unworthy thing, because until you know the whole circumstances of each individual case, I do not think it would be consonant with the dignity of a great people, or the judgment of a great people, to pronounce judgment upon them. (Hear, hear.) But, laying aside detail, we think there is a fair and reasonable ground for the discussion of this subject, and to look at this question, and to say, as the Resolution to which I have to speak has said, that we are asking the thought and the consideration of the civilised world to the edicts and the laws which exist. Here are things which are tangible and definite. Whatever doubt there may be respecting individual cases, there can on the whole be little doubt concerning the spirit and the direction of these laws, which strike me as at any rate giving fair ground for our consideration and discussion of them to-day. The first is that the conditions of civilised life, as we know to our cost, are not getting easier for the poor. (Hear, hear.) The crowding in great cities is deprecated constantly by the philanthropists of the day. We are all alive to this; and the great stir and enthusiasm made by a recent book is a proof that we are alive to the dangers of what we call the congested districts, overcrowded cities. But the operation of those laws is to drive crowds still more into the midst of cities. (Hear, hear.) The Duke of Westminster has told you of a case in which the Jewish population, through the operation of these laws, which drive them into the towns, was increased from 5,000 to 20,000. Now, I speak under correction, but I put it to you, remembering that the Jews are carrying on their work in that particular centre—Is it easier for a man who has been one of five thousand to win his bread if some 15,000 others are added to compete for it with him? If you increase the competition four-fold, you intensify the difficulties of human life to those who have to bear their part in the competition. (Hear, hear.) But here is another point. Law is the ex-

pression of common sense and the justice of nations. it is the expression of what they believe to be needful in order to maintain the equipoise of relationship between man and man, and to secure a man in the freedom of his toil and of his work. (Cheers.) But one of the first conditions of all law should be this, that to those whom it governs it should be at least intelligible, and not uncertain—(cheers)—and we plead here to-day that one of the greatest hardships to which the Jewish community in Russia is exposed is precisely the incertitude of these laws. A law which is hard but which is understandable can at any rate be conformed to; but a law which is ambiguous, which depends for its interpretation on the caprice of an individual, is like a machine, that can be twisted up to a greater tension every day, and leaves, therefore, the victims of those who live under it the victims of what is worse than hardship—the victims of the cruelty of suspense and of uncertainty. (Cheers.) Now, I do not speak without book when I say that uncertainty prevails. You know that one of those laws provides that the Jews, settled since 1882, shall not live in the villages, and they must live in and are driven into the towns. But here comes a curious case. What do you mean by “a village?” Why, my Lord Mayor, I come from Yorkshire, and I know that there are places there which are called villages, but which people in the south would assuredly call towns. Therefore I want a definition of a village; and here is a case where the Jewish population lived in security, believing they were within the terms of the law. But, suddenly, the authorities awaken to the fact, that where they are living is not a town but a village, and the whole of the Jewish population is driven out and forced into the towns. Again, the uncertainty is evidenced by another thing. What is the definition given concerning those who may live outside the Pale in the towns? It is, the man who is called a “skilled artisan.” But “skilled artisan” becomes an ambiguous term; and a case is before us of twenty-five in the City of Moscow, who were compositors, when the authorities suddenly discovered that a compositor was not a skilled artisan. Printing,



pression of common sense and the justice of nations. It is the expression of what they believe to be needful in order to maintain the equipoise of relationship between man and man, and to secure a man in the freedom of his toil and of his work. (Cheers.) But one of the first conditions of all law should be this, that to those whom it governs it should be at least intelligible, and not uncertain—(cheers)—and we plead here to-day that one of the greatest hardships to which the Jewish community in Russia is exposed is precisely the incertitude of these laws. A law which is hard but which is understandable can at any rate be conformed to; but a law which is ambiguous, which depends for its interpretation on the caprice of an individual, is like a machine, that can be twisted up to a greater tension every day, and leaves, therefore, the victims of those who live under it the victims of what is worse than hardship—the victims of the cruelty of suspense and of uncertainty. (Cheers.) Now, I do not speak without book when I say that uncertainty prevails. You know that one of those laws provides that the Jews, settled since 1882, shall not live in the villages, and they must live in and are driven into the towns. But here comes a curious case. What do you mean by “a village?” Why, my Lord Mayor, I come from Yorkshire, and I know that there are places there which are called villages, but which people in the south would assuredly call towns. Therefore I want a definition of a village; and here is a case where the Jewish population lived in security, believing they were within the terms of the law. But, suddenly, the authorities awaken to the fact, that where they are living is not a town but a village, and the whole of the Jewish population is driven out and forced into the towns. Again, the uncertainty is evidenced by another thing. What is the definition given concerning those who may live outside the Pale in the towns? It is, the man who is called a “skilled artisan.” But “skilled artisan” becomes an ambiguous term; and a case is before us of twenty-five in the City of Moscow, who were compositors, when the authorities suddenly discovered that a compositor was not a skilled artisan. Printing,

they did, is 'an art craft, and, therefore, a compositor is not an artisan, and so these men had to leave Moscow and lose their employment. These are illustrations of the incertitude attaching to the law; and incertitude of law means unkindness and cruelty to those who are governed by that law. But I go a step farther, and say that under the present state of things you do not give a fair and adequate opportunity to those who are preparing for the struggle of life to exercise their calling after they had been trained to it. If you wish to deal hardly—severely—by a population, make what laws you please; but when you give them the opportunity of being trained for a vocation, I say it follows, as a kind of moral consequence, that you should throw the vocation for which they had been trained freely open to them. (Cheers.) These are cases of what I may call the hardship of the pressure of the law; and standing on these, and on these alone, I say there is ground, at any rate, for a free, fair, and open inquiry. There cannot—for we know how easily the law may be manipulated—there cannot be a doubt but that where laws like these exist, unless the administrators of them are men who are possessed of a larger admixture of mercy and pity than I think belong to the average, cases of hardship must almost inevitably follow. Therefore, to the objection that the allegations are inadequate, I say that the answer stands in the written laws and the uncertainty of those laws; and that there is abundant reason for our taking our present course of action. (Cheers.) But, again, we are not here to-day to judge or condemn. As I understand the spirit and purpose of this meeting, there is not a man or a woman present who desires to say an unkind thing, or an untrue thing, or even to anticipate the judgment of mankind upon the laws that are in operation. We ask for consideration, and in approaching the Emperor of Russia we approach him on this ground—that these things are said, that these things seem to us to have a foundation in the very modes of the law—so we ask your Imperial Majesty, and will not wrong you by refusing to ask, that these things be looked into. (Cheers.) I say to you, if that is an insult to any Sovereign or nation,

then God grant that none of us may have the other insult cast at us, in which men shall say, "The grievances seem to be great, but it is hopeless to appeal to you." This, I say, where manhood speaks, would be a greater insult still. (Cheers.) Surely the ground of our appeal—the fact of our appeal—is the expression of our confidence that he who rules all Russia does desire the welfare of every one whom Providence has committed to his care. (Cheers.) The other objection which might be made to the meeting is this, that our methods are inexpedient. Now, my Lord Mayor, I will not say a word that should entitle me to be called the enemy of expediency. On the contrary, I can quite well conceive that there might be cases in which a demonstration concerning matters that affect a foreign country might be exceedingly unwise. I think it is one of the principles which we may fairly lay down, that, other things being equal, each nation is free to govern itself in the way it will. (Hear, hear.) I myself, therefore, am averse to needless fussy intervention between land and land; and I can imagine that it might be one of the methods which would add difficulty to diplomacy, and make hesitating statesmanship find its path beset by deeper difficulties than before, if any action on our part should stir up animosities, and make happy and friendly intercourse between this country and Russia more difficult than hitherto. (Cheers.) But we are not the friends of that rash inexpediency which jeopardises peace for no reason other than fussiness and indiscretion. For when the objection is raised in connection with our meeting to-day, it is only a method of confusing the real issue. The real issue is not the method of intervention. All we are asking is this—that the Emperor and Ruler of all the Russias shall use—What? The constitutional and legitimate means in his power, to right what seems to us to be a great wrong. (Cheers.) If this is inexpedient, I cannot understand at what point we are ever to deal fairly by our brother man. Surely we may fairly say when we only ask him to make use of such power as he possesses, when we go simply, unarmed by anything but our desire to know the truth, to deal justly between man and man, when, with all respect we approach that Sovereign, and

admitting his power, and believing in his desire to do right approach him with an appeal such as that which will go from this meeting to-day—I say we are not guilty for a moment of jeopardising in any way, the pleasant, the friendly relationship which exists between our land and his. (Cheers.) But again, What is our force? What is behind our back? For what do we appeal? With what in our hands do we approach his throne? We go simply with an appeal from the public opinion of this country to the thoughtful consideration of him who rules another. (Cheers.) We have no power in our hands, except that which is, in one sense, the weakest thing in the world—public opinion, but a power which, in the long run, will mould and shape the destinies of peoples, and which will lead up to the glorious dawn of free and happier days—(cheers)—a public opinion which is not the wild hysteria of a few, but the mature judgment of the many; which is the product of the experience of past ages; which is built up in the experience of the bitterness of human outrage; which, when it speaks on behalf of mercy, is as the voice of God speaking amongst men; which, when it speaks on behalf of right, is the expression of the opinion of the collective conscience of humanity appealing to the conscience of the one. (Cheers.) It is with that we are armed; and, armed with no other weapon, and believing that it will find a response in his, with all respect deprecating the rashness of inexpediency, we make our appeal to the one who has the power to remedy this wrong. (Renewed cheers.) The only other objection to our action is, that we are exceeding the limits of our duty; it is not our affair. The Resolution has laid it down in a single word. I take that for my text, and with it I am content. We are not here to interfere with the national legislation, or with the politics of a great people. We are here to affirm principles—principles which have found acceptance in the civilised world, and which we think ought to find acceptance over the whole of God's great earth. (Cheers.) And I want to know why we are for a moment to say that the affirmation of great principles is an insult to any people? I have yet to learn that we are to be so tongue-

tied in our attempts to advance the cause of humanity that we are not to be free to give expression to those principles which we believe have built up the healthy freedom of our own land, and which is consecrated to us as a legacy. (Cheers.) It is the power of principle that we are relying upon to-day, the principle of religious equality, the principle of the natural rights of man. (Cheers.) And because we are to believe that these principles are jeopardised by the laws of which we are speaking, therefore we are constrained to see whether this wrong has been done, or whether there is a chance of this wrong being done; therefore it is our duty, seeing that God has given us the light, to let the light of our conviction shine across the sea to others. (Cheers.) We feel that these principles may be violated by the laws of which I have spoken. These laws may be oppressive from their uncertainty; but if they interfere with the sanctity of a man's religious life, when they operate so that they cause exquisite moral agony and spiritual pain to any, then those laws violate the very principles of religious freedom. (Cheers.) And, pardon me, is it not so in the operation of those laws? May I give you two or three illustrations? The Sabbath is dear to the Jew. One of the noblest facts in the life of that people is the strength and tenacity with which they have maintained, in spite of commercial and trade disadvantages, their reverence and respect for their day of devotion. (Cheers.) Now, a skilled artisan, being a Jew, will rest on his Sabbath day. Being a skilled artisan within the meaning of the laws, he is free to live outside the Pale. But the police inspector pays him a visit on the Jewish Sabbath. He finds the man is not at work, and he says—This is a proof that you are not a skilled artisan, and therefore you must leave the place. (Cries of "Shame," and some hisses.) I say that if that is a true picture of what may take place—I do not say that it does take place, but if it is a picture of what does take place—then it is a violation of religious equality, and a deviation from the spirit of religious freedom. (Cheers.) Again, if you make the religious instincts of people the ground for making life more bitter to them, if because of their

religious instincts you make life harder for them, if you confine them within limits too narrow for them, you are not showing that breadth of view which I imagine to be included in the phrase of "religious toleration." For if these things be so, they seem to us to be hostile—I will not say to the modern spirit, I have no reverence for the modern spirit, because I have a reverence for the Eternal Spirit, and I say these things are hostile, not to the modern spirit, but to that Spirit which is ancient and modern, that Spirit who laid down the rule—Do unto others as ye would have them do unto you. (Cheers.) I have this further to say. The objection which is made by some is that we are dealing with those whose condition of life makes them more difficult to deal with than with people of ordinary race. I do not think there is a Jew present who will be at all likely to demur at any rate to one interpretation of that statement; but what I think is needful to remember is surely this. Is it fair to cite cases of bad Jews, and then say these are the ordinary types of the whole race? (Cheers.) I will ask Mr. Simon, I will ask every member of the Jewish community present, are there not bad Jews? Unquestionably, and are there not bad Christians also? When you speak of Greece, the modern Greek does not rise up in your mind, but you think of, at any rate, Pericles, Aristides, Socrates. When you speak of England you do not think necessarily of the controversy about the rear-guard, but you think of Frobisher and Drake, and John Howard, and General Gordon. And when we speak of the Jews we do not dwell upon the Shylocks and Fagins of fiction, but we think of the descendants of David and Judas Maccabæus, or as represented by those modern Jews like Sir Moses Montefiore—(cheers)—whose munificence has blessed the world, and of those whose public spirit has brought them forward in the day of a nation's dismay and a city's impending disaster to rescue it from its peril. (Cheers.) If it be said there are bad Jews, survey history and ask whether or not the consciences of the Christians do not accuse them. If it be said the Jews are thus and thus, it must also be said that Christians have had a hand in making them

thus. Who was it in the early ages of the country's history who robbed the Jews of all opportunities of trade? And was it not true that our City Guilds 500, 600, 700, and 800 years ago placed disabilities in the way of the race, and were partly the means of their becoming usurers? The English were forbidden by canon law to lend money at usury, but they gained the advantage of loans by letting the Jews do for them what their own laws would not let them do for themselves. If it be said that the Jews are bad, we must stand shame-faced, for we do not come here with clean hands. In those days when we were full of what we believed to be zeal for the cause of Christianity, we grasped and grasped with bloody hands an empty sepulchre, grasped at the outside forgetting the spirit within, and striving to be possessed of the letter of Christianity without seeking the Spirit. Far from the Cross becoming the symbol of our readiness to sacrifice ourselves for others, it became the symbol of a determination to sacrifice all the world to ourselves. But that is all changed now. Your presence here in this hall proves it. It is evidence that the red cross which gleamed upon the breast of the Crusader, who went sword in hand to win an empty grave, now gleams upon the breast of those who follow the ambulance waggon, seeking for the sick and wounded in life's war. (Cheers.) It is in accordance with this principle of Christianity, this principle of humanity, that we meet here to-day. With internal national politics we have nothing to do, and trade considerations and commercial interests concern us not. These belong to the politics of a nation, but the amelioration of the misery and oppression of humanity belongs to the politics of the world. (Cheers.) Therefore, we have a right to take our share in speaking of those politics, for, if I am not mistaken, the spirit and principle which animates us to-day is one for which we shall have to struggle bitterly before the battle is won. Slowly there grow across the ages the silent tokens of love and sympathy between man and man. Questions are started, and the question which rises foremost to the lips of men is this, "Is the Law of Christ the working Law of the world?" Are we to banish the preaching of Christ as we have

attempted to do into the regions of academic discussion, or are we to believe that it is an actual law of life, and endeavour to put it into practice? Under whatever form that question is put before us, God send that the people of this country shall with one voice speak on the side of the actual, practical power of the working out of the Law of Christ. He has given us this law not to dream about but to live with, not to talk about but to act by, and it is because the first principle of this law seems to be enshrined in fewer breasts in Russia, that I for one find a pleasure in standing and speaking before you. All over the world the great harvest-time may come upon us sooner than we know. The pure grain—those living by the vitality of the Law of Christ—will be accepted, but the chaff will be swept from the earth as the chaff is swept from the threshing-floor. (Loud cheers.)

The Rev. HUGH PRICE HUGHES, in supporting the Resolution, said:—The Resolution before this historic gathering has been moved by one whose metropolitan title and metropolitan popularity eminently justifies him in appearing on behalf of the citizens of great London, and in the lamentable absence of the Archbishop of Canterbury it has been seconded by one of the most eminent of living prelates, who has carried us completely away by his eloquence. (Cheers.) I have now the great honour and happiness in saying that the sentiments to which we have listened in this great hall with so much satisfaction are endorsed by the unanimous convictions of the Nonconformist churches of Great Britain. (Renewed cheers.) I have attended a great many remarkable meetings in this great city, but never one so remarkable as this. No predecessor of your Lordship in that historic chair has, I venture to say, ever received a requisition more representatively signed than that which has brought us together to-day. We are positively all here. Every grade of society, every phase of public opinion, every section of the Christian Church presents itself here, and therefore this meeting may legitimately regard itself as the voice of England. (Cheers.) This meeting has, moreover, a spontaneity and unanimity of enthusiasm and sympathy. Her Majesty's Government



is not represented here, but it is not because the Government do not sympathise with us. The absence is accounted for out of courtesy to the great Power with which we wish to cultivate friendly relations, and in order to divest this national gathering of the least trace of political complexion. But in the absence of a representative of the Government, the strong supporters and the strong opponents of the existing administration are united on the ground of our common Christianity. We offer no menace to Russia, we are animated by no sinister motive, we represent no political object, but in the name of all that is most Christian in England we respectfully but energetically protest against the persecutions to which the Russian Jews are now subjected. Let me recall this great meeting to the facts of the case. Between five and six millions of Jews, the largest Jewish community in the world, are living together in the South-West of Russia. The Jews there are more numerous than the inhabitants of Scotland, and as numerous as the inhabitants of Ireland, and they are, with certain exceptions, confined to a certain Jewish Pale in South-West Russia. As we have been reminded, the evil there is augmented by the fact that the people are forced from the villages into the towns, and there they are huddled together in an indescribable manner. There are thousands of Jews in South-West Russia who, consequent on the want induced by these crowded conditions, never have more than one meal a day, and they live in such a condition as is not reproduced anywhere else. In connection with my own work in Soho there are a great many families who have to occupy one room. Many of you will remember the thrill of indignation which ran through the country, when some years ago John Bright called the attention of the people to the social condition of a great mass of our countrymen; but the state of things in South-West Russia is far worse, and as many as twelve families herd together in two or three rooms. Think of three or four households compelled to live together, and we are told there is actually no space between the sleepers. At the very time this state of things

exists there are vast regions in that gigantic Empire of Russia which are crying out for labour, and corn is actually worth nothing for want of someone to cut it and carry it away. Yet, the Jews are penned up in one small corner. Talk about overcrowding in London or the congested districts of Ireland, it is nothing to what prevails in South-West Russia, and the culminating fact is that this great social evil and so much misery is brought about by the deliberate action of the law and the authorities. These Jews are penned together and treated as outcasts and aliens. Outcasts and aliens! Why they were in the country before the Russians were there; yet at this very time they are compelled to bear the burdens of citizenship without having any of the rights, and they have to pay the taxes, in some cases double taxes; they are compelled to enter the Russian Army beyond their fair proportion, and the laws yet treat them as aliens. With regard to the Jews of Russia the laws of most civilised countries are reversed. In other countries it is assumed that what the law does not forbid the citizens have a right to do, but in Russia the Jews cannot do anything but what the law expressly permits. Some of us may remember that some years ago Dr. Richardson, one of the most distinguished of our medical men, called attention to the extraordinary healthiness of the Jewish race, and he attributed this to the manner in which they regarded the marriage institution, and the care they pay, when they have the opportunity, to food and clothing. In all civilised countries the rate of mortality amongst the Jews is less than anywhere else; yet in South-Western Russia, in consequence of the circumstances described to-day, it is greatly in excess of that of the so-called Christian population. I need scarcely say that the laws against the Jews are not so much in consequence of any great decrease in, or depression of, trade, but the real reason of their persecution lies in their religion, and we come here to-day to protest against their treatment, in the name of our outraged faith. (Cheers.) Russia has a most distinguished representative in this country, Madame Novikoff. She practically admitted all the facts, but she

sneers at Judaism, and gives us some intimation that she had reason to doubt Jewish morality. It is obvious she knows very little of what she is talking about. One indisputable and fundamental reason why these unhappy men and women are persecuted, is because their forefathers are reported to have crucified our Saviour. Why, my Lord Mayor, in the most ancient creed of the Christian Church, repeated by the Greek Church, we read that Christ was crucified under Pontius Pilate. Was Pontius Pilate a Jew? I should like to appeal from Madame Novikoff to St. Peter, for we have not forgotten what St. Peter said in that very City of Jerusalem a few days after the tragedy on Calvary. "And now, brethren, I wot that in ignorance ye did it." If the true representative of Christianity was willing a few days after to put down that deed to ignorance, who are we that 2,000 years afterwards we should fasten it upon their remote descendants, who are as innocent as ourselves? (Cheers.) And afterwards, at gatherings of the primitive Christians, it was recognised that the Gentiles were as much to blame as the Jews. We are here to-day to protest against any such idea that the Jews were alone answerable for the death of Christ. But, as someone has already reminded us, Madame Novikoff tells us to mind our own business. Did she tell the Duke of Westminster to mind his own business when he took the chair in St. James's Hall to protest against the Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria? (Cheers.) In fact she then thanked the noble duke very much. If we had a right to protest against atrocities committed by Turks, who profess another faith than ours, how much greater right have we to protest against the actions of the Russians in the name of our common Christianity? (Cheers.) We all desire to have a cordial understanding with Russia, but nothing will do more to prevent goodwill than the evidence of such persecution and hardships as those to which the Russian Jews are subjected. Any one who has watched the recent proceedings of the Sweating Committee, must be aware that one of the direct results of that persecution has been to drive over to England, and especially to London, a great number of Jews, to

take the bread out of our citizens' mouths. The very great interest, among other things, taken in General Booth's book, indicates how deeply we feel in this country the social misery of the people, and how anxious we are to do what we can to place the mass of the people in a more favourable social condition; but even if it were not so, I hope at any rate in this nineteenth century we have done for ever with that most abominable of all public iniquities, religious persecution. (Cheers.) Madame Novikoff 'I am sorry to say' has attacked us before, and she has now repeated in the *Times* the statement that a great military power, having 2,000,000 soldiers, which no European nation dare attack single-handed, will not listen to the arguments of a meeting like this. That really barbarous statement indicates that Madame Novikoff has not yet put on a sufficient veneer of civilisation. I cannot believe that in that statement she is representing the sentiments of the Czar. I have a very much higher opinion of the Czar of Russia. For my own part I am willing to believe that the Czar of Russia knows nothing about these persecutions. (Cheers.) The Czar is closely related to our own Royal family, and it would surely be unwise of him to despise that public opinion to which the Bishop of Ripon called attention. My only fear is that the Czar will never have a faithful report of our proceedings; and yet I can conceive no act more treasonable than to conceal from that august potentate what has really taken place in the Guildhall of London to-day. (Cheers.) The representative of Russia in this country at any rate must know the great significance of an assembly like this. I hope our fellow-countrymen in all parts of this kingdom will assist us by calling similar gatherings everywhere. There can be no doubt that on this question the people of England are unanimous; and even the commander of two millions of armed men cannot afford to despise a national sentiment of that sort. I admit that England would be greatly benefited by the friendship of Russia, but Russia also needs and would benefit by the friendship of England. Madame Novikoff does not seem to have pursued her geographical studies to such an extent as to be aware that the British Empire is as extensive

as the Russian Empire, and touches the Russian Empire at a dozen points. It is of immense importance to these great Empires, and indeed to the entire human race, that the most cordial relations should exist between them. Nothing could do more to prevent that cordial understanding between England and Russia than such persecutions as we have lamented to-day. On the other hand, nothing would do so much at this moment to promote that cordial understanding between Russia and England as that one word of the Czar which would abolish the miseries of the Russian Jews for ever.

The Resolution was then carried amid loud cheers.

The Earl of MEATH said:—My Lord Mayor, my Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, I now beg to move:—

“That a suitable memorial be addressed to His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, respectfully praying His Majesty to repeal all the exceptional and restrictive laws and disabilities which afflict his Jewish subjects; and begging His Majesty to confer upon them equal rights with those enjoyed by the rest of His Majesty’s subjects; and that the said memorial be signed by the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor, in the name of the citizens of London, and be transmitted by His Lordship to His Majesty.”

In proposing that a memorial be forwarded to His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of all the Russias, I decline to assume that the Czar is cognisant of all the sufferings to which his Jewish subjects are exposed; for I do not believe that he is fully aware of the attempts which have been made to intensify the action of the old laws against the Jews, and to extend the action of the May Laws of 1882. (Hear, hear.) It was said at the time that these were framed, that the Grand Duke Michael strongly objected to their being put in force, and it was even reported that the Emperor himself was very much opposed to this system of persecuting his Jewish subjects. We have to-day heard many of the details of these persecutions of the Jews, but one important point has not been touched on, and that is the distinctly religious persecution to which the race is exposed in Russia. It may not be known to all of you that the instant that a Jew professes to be converted to the Greek Orthodox Church, he is relieved from all these disabilities, and there cannot in my

mi be a greater proof than this that the persecution is purely a religious one. (Hear, hear.) The Jew who confesses to be a convert to the Greek Church can claim a divorce from his wife, but the wife cannot marry again. He receives a money payment as a reward for his conversion. Jewish children above the age of fourteen can be converted to the Christian faith without the consent of their parents. Many are the privileges offered as an inducement to profess to be a convert. But with regard to the Jew who continues in the faith of his fathers, the Government keeps him under all kinds of religious disabilities. He is not allowed to have a Synagogue unless there are eighty houses in the district inhabited by Jews, nor join in erecting a house of prayer unless there are thirty families residing near him, nor can he be allowed to hold divine service in his own house. You have been already told by the noble Duke how the Jew is cramped within a limited space, how his commercial energies are thwarted, under what disabilities the Jew is with regard to education—how he is cut off from employment in the higher professions, how all cultivated walks in life are closed to him, and how little is open to him but to become an usurer or money lender, and then forsooth he is accused of being ‘usurer’ and ‘money lender’—terms of reproach for the occupations into which he has been forced, as there was so very little else for him to do. (Hear, hear.) And now in respect of this resolution, we have to consider how we are to approach the Czar. In what manner is this to be done? We must somehow let our sentiments penetrate to the ear of the Czar, and this meeting, I take it, hopes this day that we shall succeed in doing so—(cheers)—and moreover we believe that we shall meet with a courteous response. We know that previous monarchs of Russia have listened to deputations, and to appeals which have been addressed to them, and we know moreover that the late Sir Moses Montefiore was received by the Emperor Nicholas in the most friendly manner. (Hear, hear.) I say that a deputation should be sent again. I say that the subject should not be allowed to end here, but be taken

up throughout the length and breadth of the land, and be mentioned in every Christian Church, and if it be so mentioned not only in England but in America, then it is impossible that this subject should not reach the ears of the Czar. (Hear, hear.) As Christians we should leave no stone unturned to wipe out this terrible disgrace. (Cheers.) Weighty words have fallen from this platform this day as to the position of the Jew. Was not our Lord himself a Jew? If it had not been for this race Christianity would have been unknown. We owe the Bible to the Jews, both the Old and the New Testament; they kept alive the knowledge of the one true God, when the world was sunk in evil, and delighted in wickedness; and our Saviour himself, what did He say? He said when persecuted, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." This is too sacred and too terrible a subject to pursue; but we Christians know that there are other passages which might easily be quoted to show that the Founder of our religion would have been the very one to say—"Christianity! This is no Christianity of mine." (Cheers.) I am not going to detain you with details which would raise a sensational feeling among you. There are details that could be dealt with, but as has been said by a previous speaker, it would be unfair to fix on a whole nation the acts of individuals. In 1846, when Sir Moses Montefiore went over to Russia to see the Czar Nicholas, he saw Count Ouvaroff, the Minister of Public Instruction, who said that the Government were anxious to remove popular prejudices in the country against the Jews, that if the Jews had higher education, the prejudice against them would die out, but that, of course, would require time. How, then, is the Russian Government of to-day assisting the cause of education? As you have heard, by limiting the number of Jewish students to ten per cent. of the students within the Pale, and to five per cent. outside of the Pale, and three per cent. in St. Petersburg and Moscow. The father of the Czar was, as we have heard, friendly to the Jews, and when Sir Moses Montefiore saw him twenty-six years after his first visit to Russia, he was able to write in his diary, "Looking back to what was the

condition of our co-religionists twenty-six years ago, and having regard to their present condition, . . . . I have reason to cherish grateful feelings towards the Czar." That was Alexander II., and I do not believe that Alexander III. is less humane than Alexander II. I would ask, What good has come to Russia by the denial of equal rights to one-twentieth of her subjects? It is unseemly of Russia to lag behind the Turk, and yet the Moslem Turk grants freedom where Christian Russia forbids it. (Cheers.) The remedies which we hope to bring about by our appeal are—that Jews may be allowed to reside anywhere in Russia; that they may have as much freedom of movement as their Christian fellow-subjects; that education shall be freely open to all Jews; that honourable courses for obtaining a livelihood shall be thrown open to them; and that there shall be equal taxation and equal punishment for offences; in a word, that they shall be equal with other Russians in the eye of the law, and that all special laws against them shall be abolished for ever. (Hear, hear.) The Emperor has intimated that the interests of all his Jewish subjects are as dear to him as are the interests of the most orthodox Russians; and we believe him. (Hear, hear.) We are sure that he himself is ignorant of what is going on in his dominions, and that his Jewish subjects have been maligned to him. We are told that they are "Socialists"; we are told all manner of evil things against them, but we can reply "those few who were Socialists, and those few who attempted the lives of the late Emperor and of the present Emperor, were not Jews, but converted Jews; Jews who had deserted their Religion and who were consequently the offspring of the legislation of the Government itself." (Hear, hear.) We are convinced that when the true facts are brought under the notice of the Emperor he will not lose a moment in sifting the charge made against his subjects to the bottom, and by his subsequent acts place the seal of truth upon his work. The name of his father is rendered imperishable in history by the emancipation of the serfs throughout his dominions, and it cannot be that it is the idea of the son to create a new order of serfs in the room of those



emancipated. It cannot be the Emperor's intention to do that. No, we refuse to give credence to any such statement; on the contrary, we believe that Alexander III. and his gracious Consort are animated by the desire to do justice to their Jewish subjects, that they are as dear to him as the most orthodox Russians, and that he will advance one step further than his father, and make for himself a name imperishable in history as the Emancipator of the Russian Jews. (Loud applause.)

Sir ROBERT FOWLER said:—At this late hour I will not detain you for more than a few minutes. But, as an old citizen of London, I should be very glad if I could say one word which could reach the ear of the Emperor of Russia. Every citizen of London will agree with me when I say that we owe a deep debt of gratitude to the Jewish population in London. (Cheers.) In former days the Jews were persecuted in this country as they are now in Russia. Happily of late a different course has been taken. The Jews have been welcomed, and we have found amongst them some of our best and most useful citizens. (Cheers.) It is very much owing to this Jewish energy that this city is the first commercial city in the world—(hear, hear)—and anyone who is acquainted with the charities of London, knows how very largely those charities are indebted to the princely generosity of the Jews. (Hear, hear.) Therefore I say that we in London owe a deep debt of gratitude to the Jews; and if the Russians were wise they would place the Jews in the same position, because then Russia would be indebted to them in the same way as England is. (Cheers.) I know it may be said that some of the Jews who are persecuted are very unpopular among the Russian people. Well, we know they are a hardworking, industrious and thrifty people, and no doubt their competition is unfavourable to a large class of Russian workpeople. That, however, I say is to their credit. (Cheers.) But still it may be said that some of the Jews do not act fairly in their business transactions with the Russians. Well, if you degrade a people as the Russians degrade the Jews, no doubt some of them show a heroism which does them much honour, but nevertheless there are

others who, under persecution, will become degraded and will sink in the social scale. But you ought not to blame them for this. You ought rather to blame those who persecute them. (Cheers.) I cannot illustrate this better than quote some eloquent words from a speech of Sir Robert Peel in the House of Commons some forty-five years ago. He was speaking of the Jews of the Middle Ages, and he said that if the iron had entered their soul, "Can you blame them for their degradation? Could you wonder that they should sit down by the waters of a strange land, and that they should weep when they remembered Zion." (Cheers.) I wish then to point out this. I wish to say how much England, and more especially London, is indebted to the Jewish race; and to urge upon the Russian Government and the Russian people that if they act towards the Jews in the same way as we have acted, they will have their reward in finding among them an industrious, contented, and thriving people, who are of the greatest benefit to the country in which they are placed. (Cheers.)

The motion was then put to the meeting, and carried amid cheers, and without a single dissentient voice.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE, rising amid cheers, said:—I have been asked to perform a very pleasing duty, and one in which I know I shall have your most hearty concurrence. But before I put formally to you a vote of thanks to the Lord Mayor for his conduct in the chair—(cheers)—perhaps you will allow me one minute to say how heartily I have sympathised with what has passed in this meeting, and the object which we all have had in coming together to-day. (Cheers.) Belonging, as I do, to one of the smaller sections of the Christian Church, the Society of Friends—(cheers)—I believe I have been put forward to-day because that body, 200 years ago, lifted up the standard of religious liberty—a standard which they held with a firm grasp, and which did not perish when 3,000 of them were in the jails alone of this country. Has persecution indeed ever carried out the object which the persecutor had in view? (Cries of "No.") Why, the city in which we stand owes a great deal of its prosperity to the persecutions in France which

followed the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The industrious inhabitants, with their arts, were driven into this country, where they were welcomed and sympathised with. When John Wesley and others were pelted out of towns and villages, did that put down Methodism? (Cheers.) And so, I might go on from stage to stage in history, in order to show that persecution will not destroy the Jews in Russia. But we have met here to-day as citizens of a great and free country, a country that has felt the benefit of religious liberty, to go forward as a Christian people asking for these men that which we consider to be the inalienable right of all people—the power to worship God according to their consciences. (Cheers.) I have read the book which has been put into all our hands at this meeting, and I think it is quite clear from it that this is a religious persecution, and as a religious persecution we have a right to go forward and appeal to the Emperor of Russia to set these people free. (Cheers.) With regard to the motion of thanks to the Lord Mayor, I will only add this word to say that he, as well as I, spring from a persecuted stock, and that I am glad to see one of that stock this year in the chief chair of this city. (Loud cheers.)

Sir JOHN COLOMB, who was received with cheers, said:—Sir, in seconding this Resolution I feel that it is unnecessary for me to add anything to what has fallen from my friend in order to commend it to your hearty acceptance. I think it is a gratification to all of us to know that the Lord Mayor himself has called this meeting; and that, as first Magistrate of the first City of the first Empire in the world, he presides to-day at a meeting called for the special purpose of praying the Emperor in his clemency to repeal those laws that oppress the Jews for their religious opinions, and to give them the blessing of equality. (Cheers.)

The motion was adopted with acclamation.

The LORD MAYOR, on rising to acknowledge the vote, was loudly cheered. He said:—I can assure you that I feel deeply grateful for the vote of thanks which you have so kindly accorded to me, and that I have felt it to be a peculiar pride and pleasure to occupy this chair on this most

interesting and memorable occasion. I believe that never in this great hall has there been held a meeting more expressive of general sympathy, and more enthusiastically entered into. (Cheers.) Reference has been made by previous speakers to the persecutions which occurred in former times; and as a descendant myself of the Huguenots who left France at a time of persecution, and gave up their property and all they had for the sake of their religion, I have felt it not inappropriate that it has fallen to my lot to preside on this occasion. (Cheers.) I only hope that the eloquent words to which we have listened, and the unanimous voice of the citizens of this City, may reach the Czar of Russia, and may convince him that we are in earnest in the cause which we have advocated. (Cheers.)

The proceedings then terminated.

## THE MEMORIAL TO THE CZAR.

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*The following is the full text of the Memorial to the Czar, voted at the Guildhall Meeting of the 10th December, 1890:—*

TO HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY, ALEXANDER III.,  
EMPEROR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS.

*The Memorial of the Citizens of London, in Guildhall assembled, on behalf of the Russian Jews.*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR IMPERIAL MAJESTY!

We, the Citizens of London, respectfully approach your Majesty, and humbly beg your gracious leave to plead the cause of the afflicted.

Cries of distress have reached us from thousands of suffering Israelites in your vast Empire; and we Englishmen, with pity in our souls for all who suffer, turn to your Majesty to implore for them your Sovereign aid and clemency.

Five millions of your Majesty's subjects groan beneath the yoke of exceptional and restrictive laws. Remnants of a race whence all religion sprang—ours and yours, and every creed on earth that owns one God—men who cling with all devotion to their ancient faith and forms of worship, these Hebrews are in your Empire subject to such laws that under them they cannot live and thrive.

Those laws, built up in bygone times when intolerance was the rule in almost every State, have been intensified by later ordinances, and weigh as grievous burdens on the Hebrew subjects of your Majesty, raising a barrier between them and their Christian fellow-subjects, making them a pariah caste, degraded and despised as if an accursed race.

Pent up in narrow bounds within your Majesty's wide Empire, and even within those bounds forced to reside chiefly in towns that reek and overflow with every form of poverty

and wretchedness; forbidden all free movement; hedged in every enterprise by restrictive laws; forbidden tenure of land, or all concern in land, their means of livelihood have become so cramped as to render life for them well-nigh impossible.

Nor are they cramped alone in space and action. The higher education is denied them, except in limits far below the due proportion of their needs and aspirations. They may not freely exercise professions, like other subjects of your Majesty, nor may they gain promotion in the Army, however great their merit and their valour.

No wonder if, struggling against such disabilities in the fierce fight for life, their faults and failings should come uppermost, obscuring their many virtues.

For they have virtues. These Israelites, declared aliens by the laws, are patriots still. They serve in the Imperial Army beyond their due proportion; they fight with zeal and valour in Russia's battles, and shed their life-blood for their country's cause. Ever loyal to your Majesty, they strive to obey the law, though its yoke be heavy, and true to the dictates of their Ancient Book, they pray in their Synagogues for the welfare of your Throne and Home.

Sire! we who have learnt to tolerate all creeds, deeming it a part of true religion to permit religious liberty, we beseech your Majesty to repeal those laws that afflict these Israelites. Give them the blessing of equality! In every land where Jews have equal rights, the nation prospers. We pray you, then, annul those special laws and disabilities that crush and cow your Hebrew subjects.

And, mighty Sire! permit the sunshine of your Imperial Grace to brighten their dark homes, and let them feel the warmth of your paternal favour. As every passing year your Majesty's vast Empire widens and grows, so enter a new sphere of conquest, proclaimed by this emancipation Emperor of five million hearts swelling with gratitude.

Sire! your Royal Sister, our Empress Queen (whom God preserve!) bases her throne upon her people's love, making their happiness her own. So may your Majesty gain from

your subjects' love all strength and happiness, making your mighty Empire mightier still, rendering your Throne firm and impregnable, reaping new blessings for your House and Home.

Signed on behalf of the Citizens of London,

(Signed) JOSEPH SAVORY,  
Lord Mayor.

10th December, 1890.

*The Memorial was ornamentally engrossed on Vellum, and transmitted by the Lord Mayor to St. Petersburg, with the following Letter :—*

MANSION HOUSE, LONDON, E.C.,  
December 24th, 1890.

To His Excellency, LIEUT.-GEN. DE RICHTER, Aide-de-camp of H.M. the Emperor, for the reception of petitions.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

As Chairman of a Public Meeting held in the Guildhall of the City of London, on the 10th December inst., I have the honour to enclose herewith to your Excellency the respectful Memorial of the Citizens of London to His Imperial Majesty the Emperor, on the subject of the condition of the Jews in Russia.

I beg that your Excellency will do me the honour of laying this Memorial at the feet of His Imperial Majesty, and of kindly acknowledging its receipt.

Your Excellency will observe that the Memorial is expressive of the great esteem and regard entertained by the Citizens of London for His Imperial Majesty and his Throne, and entreats the gracious sympathy and clemency of His Majesty in those humanitarian efforts which are being made for the improvement of the condition of his Jewish subjects.

אני ציון דינור  
I need hardly assure your Excellency that the Memorial is not addressed to His Majesty from any political or religious considerations, but solely in the feeling that an expression of friendly interest in the welfare of the Jews in Russia by the City of London will have that gracious and generous reception by His Majesty, that his well-known affection for all classes of the subjects of his vast Empire will prompt.

Begging that your Excellency will receive the sincere assurance of my high esteem and consideration,

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) JOSEPH SAVORY,  
*Lord Mayor of the City of London.*