

## THE ZIONIST CONGRESS.

THE three closing days of August saw a congress at Basle concerning the significance of which friends and foes alike seem already pretty well agreed. It was the Congress of Zionists. Zionists! Until then that word was almost unknown to the public at large. Zionism virtually made its bow to the Gentile world at Basle, and disclosed for the first time what its aims and its needs were.

It requires only a superficial acquaintance with public life to know that every champion of a political idea is inevitably doomed to misunderstanding, to accusation, and to calumny. Let the subject only be one of general interest, and every one will feel himself called upon to pronounce his final and indisputable opinion concerning it. Nor will the inability to grasp its ultimate significance prove in any way a deterrent; on the contrary, the opinion will be volunteered with all the more readiness and positiveness. For the dispassionate observer of mundane things, truly a source of ever fresh diversion!

In undertaking the solution of a great problem, it is necessary, above all things, to allow your opponents the utmost freedom of opinion and expression. In that way their most strenuous efforts, their most mischievous strivings, will be robbed of their sting, and prove, to say the least, refreshing. I can only say that since the moment when I took up the gauntlet on behalf of my poor brethren, and rubbed shoulders with much suffering—with more, alas! than I had at first guessed—the very bitterest opposition of my foes has provided the only source of relaxation for me. That was the humour of it.

Otherwise the situation is sad enough. Our movement is assuredly born of necessity—of the necessity of the Jews throughout the world. But, before I go further, it shall be my task to define the nature of

this Zionism, for the benefit of the reader who is unacquainted with its elementary principles.

It was in my work, "The Jewish State," which appeared a year and a half ago, that I first formulated what the Congress at Basle virtually adopted as an axiom. In the terms of that definition: "Zionism has for its object the creation of a home, secured by public rights, for those Jews who either cannot or will not be assimilated in the country of their adoption." When I glance at that familiar passage, which I have uttered over and over again and as often defended, and recall the bitter struggles which it has given rise to within the ranks of the Jews themselves—when I see how, as it issues from out the pale of the Ghetto, it is pounced upon, worried, and even dragged through the gutter—I wonder at the blindness of human passion. One can scarcely believe that a demand so modest, which threatens or endangers the rights of no man, could arouse such a wild storm of feeling. But the fact is there all the same, and I know only one adequate explanation of it: the Jewish question is still the same living force in the mind of man as it was of old. In this year of grace humanity is just as little able to view the matter through the calm, dispassionate glass of reason as it was throughout the whole of the eighteen centuries following upon the Captivity, when our conquered forefathers were scattered over the face of the earth. And yet there are many who venture to assert that a Jewish question does not exist. Ah! would that it were so. The Jewish question is a living reality, and those to whom that question has come home morally or physically will look in vain for freedom from their pain. That is the position of most Jews to-day, albeit it is just as remote from my intention now as ever it was to raise a feeling of false sentiment on behalf of my persecuted brethren. I wish simply to establish the fact that we suffer. Max Nordau gave utterance to that truth at the Congress in words, the lofty anguish and sonorous force of which it would be difficult to match. He said: "This is the moral Jewish misery, which is more bitter than the physical, because it befalls men who are differently situated, prouder, and possessed of finer feelings."

It is candidly admitted that we Jews hold the moral sufferings of our people as paramount, although in many countries our brethren are the victims of bloody persecution and maltreatment, and find themselves robbed of the common right to earn or to claim security for their property. But there are other racial minorities and individuals throughout the world who have to endure cruelty and hardship of every kind, for we are still far from that ideal condition of things when the right of every human being to pass his earthly life in peace and happiness shall be respected. We do not ask that the Jews' lot shall be better than that of other races. We simply

want to see removed that odious privilege which forces us to fill an exceptional position in the world because of the accident of birth. "Each according to his works," is a motto which actuates the Jew equally with the Gentile. To us there are no other means to obtain that legitimate end than the creation of a lasting home for the Jewish race based on the solid foundation of legal rights.

But is this not apparently begging the question, which is: Does a Jewish nation still exist? Those to whom a nation means nothing more nor less than an accumulated mass of humanity living together in territorial unity, have naturally answered that question in the negative. These sagacious thinkers have overlooked the necessity of considering the term "nationality" from a purely abstract point of view. Also they have entirely forgotten that an exception must be made of the special case of the Jews. I consider the nation to be a historical group of human beings of evident kinship held together by their common enemy. Look at the history of nations and tell me, has there ever been an exception to this rule? Accepting this historical definition of a nation as our standard, then it will be difficult to deny to the Jew his right to national consideration. It is not too much to say that the Jews are a race of quite exceptional tenacity of existence. Eighteen long centuries have flown by and wrought no change in their aspirations; eighteen centuries of unexampled suffering. But they have outlived it all and preserved intact the consciousness of state and the sense of territorial possession.

That is the position which I took up when I wrote my "Jewish State." To-day such a method of reasoning is no longer necessary. In the place of logical inference and historical proof, we have a new and living fact of very special force and significance—the Basle Congress. At that Congress, the Jews demonstrated in word and deed their unshakeable nationality. Naturally, even that will be disputed. Everything that we do or say will be disputed. Facts so obvious have perhaps seldom been denied with such vehemence as in our case. Black is called white and straight crooked, yes is no. Whoever has had to endure that sort of thing for any length of time must inevitably find himself in that happy pachydermatous state of the senses when contradiction has no longer any effect upon him, especially when he has to do with opponents who do not even remain true to their own assertions.

The Gentile has never yet disputed our nationality. It is true that, while admitting this fact, he does not act consistently with his view. No unbiased critic, however, has as yet had anything to say against the facts. That rôle has been reserved for the Jew. The Jew it is who has gone head down against the cause. And why? We have to deal here with a state of nervous apprehension. He is

filled with a mistaken fear, and under the influence of that fear he goes too far. It might perhaps be better if our opponents were to content themselves with declaring that they personally no longer belong to the Jewish nation, whenever such a declaration appears to be necessary in a particular case. A confession of that kind would win respect for the confessor whose character was deserving of it, and whose motives, like Cæsar's wife, were above suspicion. But to deny a whole nation's existence, to blot it out utterly from the world, because one does not wish to belong to it, is an excess of caution, nay, it is more; it is, to say the least, an immodesty in argument. Mr. A. or Mrs. B. is not a Jew. Excellent! (In certain cases very excellent for us.) But there can still be a Jewish nation in spite of that.

But this does not by any means exhaust the list of curious freaks which the Jewish opponents of the Jewish national idea have treated us to. And here I am reminded of an anecdote from the Ghetto, one of those anecdotes which Heinrich Heine found so diverting. Two Jews appear before the magistrate. The plaintiff demands compensation for a pot which, having been lent to the defendant, was returned by the latter broken. The defendant submitted three points for his defence: "Firstly, he did not lend me any pot at all; secondly, the pot was already broken when he gave it to me; and, thirdly, I have returned it to him whole." The comparison is odious, not to say burlesque. But we have the spirit of burlesque developed to a far higher degree when we hear individual Jews say: Firstly, the Jews do not form a community; secondly, Judaism has a mission to fulfil in the world; thirdly, they alone are patriots who only think of the country of their birth."

Firstly: The Jews do not form a community. Good. Then in that case the denier has no right to put up his own individual opinion as a standard for others. It can have just as little or as much authority over the rest as the speaker himself.

Secondly: Judaism has a mission. Then a community does in reality exist; for Judaism, whose *diaspora* is here expressly admitted, can only be contained in the persons of those who proclaim it. But Judaism in its essence is independent of its supporters; it has long since formed an inseparable unit of the ethical principles and the imperishable records of human culture. To say that therefore the Jews have felt themselves called upon to play the schoolmaster to the world is to go from facts. The Jew who would presume to take that standpoint would be guilty of the grossest and most ridiculous coxcombry. There may be individuals actuated by this conceit; the great mass of the Jews are free from it. What we want and what we strive for is to go shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the nations in the realisation of a millennium of peace and happiness for the whole world. That dream is great enough.

Thirdly: The patriotic objection. We Jews have the firm conviction that in drawing off in a legitimate manner a superfluous and unhappy population from the countries where their presence has aroused much discontent, we are doing our mother-country a great and lasting service. In many countries it would mean nothing more nor less than the establishment of peace among the citizens. Shall we call that unpatriotic? And who are the occasionally very impetuous champions of this view? The chief defender of the patriotic idea for England is the chief Rabbi, Herr Adler, a German. As to Prussian patriotism, we have as our leading light the Rabbi, Dr. Maybaum of Berlin, a Hungarian; while lately a voice has joined the chorus of protest in Belgium—the Rabbi, M. Bloch, who, to judge from his name, is neither a Fleming nor a Walloon.

For some countries Zionism will have a preventive value. To-day there are two oases in the anti-Semitic world, England and Hungary. In Hungary, however, the question of prohibiting further emigration of poor Galician and Russian Jews into the country has been under lively discussion. And who knows whether to-morrow England will not be anti-Semitic—should the influx of unhappy Russian Jews into the East-end continue, and the Jewish palaces around Hyde Park go on simultaneously increasing in the same striking degree? The necessity for drawing off the pauper elements from England and Hungary cannot be gainsaid. Doubtless many, perhaps all, who feel their position secure, are one with us in our proposals to “channel and drain” the great masses of the proletariat. Not a word, however, must be breathed of a “State secured by public rights”—it would be such a reflection upon the patriotism of those who would willingly remain behind! *Allons donc!* Who in all reason could ever find anything mischievous in the demand for a guarantee of public rights when such mighty issues are at stake? To-day countless numbers of human beings are consistent and unconditional supporters of the Zionist movement, but only under the one condition that this fundamental law of our national existence shall not be yielded up. Let that fundamental law once be lost sight of, and for the time being at least, the leaders would sacrifice all authority, while the masses in whom the sense of national consciousness has been aroused would in a twinkling be scattered into countless atoms again. Nothing was more instructive at the Basle Congress than the vigour—I might almost say violence—with which the representatives of the great Jewish strata of population resisted any attempt to limit the guarantees for a State based on public rights. The executive appointed to draw up a programme had proposed “a legally secured home.” The delegates, however, were not satisfied, and clamoured for an alteration to “secured on the basis of international rights.” It was only by adopting the intermediary expression “public rights” that an

agreement was arrived at. The significance of this logomachy is, that what the Jews desire is not to acquire more tracts of land, but a country for the Jewish people, and to emphasise that desire in terms as plain as possible without wounding certain legitimate and sovereign susceptibilities. We can acquire land any day in our private right everywhere. But that is not the point with Zionists. In our case we have nothing to do with private rights. That will come later—as well as the land speculators—once our movement has achieved success. What the Zionists are alone directing their attention to is the “public rights” idea. In that they hope to find a remedy for the old evil. Were I to express myself paradoxically, I should say that a country belonging to the Jews on the basis of public rights, even though down to the very last parcel it was the legally secured property of non-Jews, would mean the final solution of the Jewish question.

On the other hand, the increase in Jewish possessions based on private right has given rise to anti-Semitism everywhere. Therein lies the kernel of the whole question. It has been often asserted that the Zionism which I represent is nothing more than what Baron Hirsch and others have already attempted—viz., to transform the Jewish proletariat into agriculturists. I venture, notwithstanding, to think that they are not identical. Hirsch and the “Lovers of Zion” took up the question from the standpoint of private rights. We, the political Zionists, on the contrary, wish to attack the question from the “public right” standpoint. That is the difference.

If I am not greatly deceived, there is just as little of the element of exaggerated self-importance in our movement as there is of illegal intention. It is simply an attempt to do adequate justice to a great question, and our public proceedings have shown already that we intend to do nothing against established right and morality. We have held a gathering at Basle before the whole world, and there we saw the national consciousness and the popular will break forth, at times like a convulsive upheaval. To Basle came Jews of all countries, of all tongues, of all parties, and of all forms of religious confession. There were more than 200 representatives of the Jewish people—most of them delegates for hundred and thousands. Men from Roumania alone brought over 50,000 signatures of those who had sent them there. There surely was never such a motley assembly of opinions in such a narrow space before. On the other hand, there would certainly have been more conflict of opinion in any other deliberative assembly than there was in this. We saw people brought together who were the direct antipodes of each other in their philosophic and religious views and in their political and economical professions, and who, knowing that, did not attempt to hide the fact. In short, they formed the parties which are to be found in every nation, and which promote, rather than hinder, the welfare of a people. But in Basle all differences

were set aside, as if an arrangement had been entered into by which in the great moment that the nation arose, no one should any longer be Socialist, Liberal or Conservative, Freethinker or Orthodox, but simply a Jew. All of us who went to Basle to consult as to the solution of the Jewish question were surprised, nay, overpowered, when we saw, as it were, a thing spring into being over our heads with a fulness and power we had little guessed—unanimity in Judaism. We were far too deeply moved to be able at the time to do full justice to it. The Basle Rabbi, who was not a member of the Congress, but who attended as an onlooker, asked leave to speak during the closing meeting, in order to confess solemnly that he had been a decided opponent of Zionism, but that he had become a convert. This honest, single-minded man, whom we respected even as an opponent, has since shown himself to be an apostle of our movement. Even the calm listeners, the strangers and also the onlookers, who had come there with the intention to mock, were, as we learned later, deeply moved by this particular incident. And what was it for us; what did we feel and experience in the moment when the new-born nation first saw the light of day? Aged men, with white beards, sobbed freely, and to the eyes of youth came the light of a new earnestness.

But I will not speak here of our feelings. A Jewish gentleman has seen fit to publish in the *Times* a few premature remarks concerning the Basle Congress. Had he been in Basle, he might probably have spared himself these foolish observations. Among other things he contended that the Congress was not a real national assembly, owing to the fact that certain benevolent corporations and boards of deputies were not represented on it. They were not there? We did not invite them. What have we to do with boards of deputies, benevolent institutions, and the hundred and one Jewish Pickwick clubs? Our good friend of the *Times'* columns has simply failed to understand our movement. He does not know what the resurrection of the nation is. He has not seen that we have already begun to place Judaism upon a new basis without sending round the hat, and without any banquets. This is not the place to speak of Jewish corporate life and its excrescences. The fooleries, the inflated conceit, the grotesque abuses which it furnishes, have no claim to consideration in this article. Much of it appears absurd or odious, if we forget to view it with that pity and consideration which the peculiar historical evolution of the Jewish communities calls for. The rôle of the rich in the lives of the communities, the moral pliancy of many priests, the efforts of amphibious-minded men to combine ancient tradition with an exaggerated imitation of national customs, the audacious mendacity of the economically weak—for all these foibles the intelligent mind will not fail to find some amount of indulgence. But even if we are not exactly displeased with these communities, we are

certainly far from allowing ourselves to be influenced by them. Zionism has in view another kind of community for Judaism, a new and greater one, and a single one. Also another system of representation.

There is a certain form of West European superciliousness which is dearly fond of treating the Jews of other countries as backward creatures indeed. He is always a barbarian who does not happen to be understood. *Barbarus hic ego sum quia non intelligit illis.* Thus we have people representing the East European Jew as a sort of Caliban. What a mistake! For my part I am bound to confess that the presence of the Jews from Russia was the greatest event of the Congress. For some time I had been in correspondence with many Russian Jews and had received some visits which had proved interesting. Notwithstanding this I did not venture to draw my conclusions as to the condition of the masses from these specimens of modern culture. I accepted alone as truth the reports concerning the physical efficiency and love of work of the lower Jewish strata in Russia. It was, in fact, impossible to do otherwise, as sufficient evidence appeared to be forthcoming—the reports being confirmed by every witness who had seen the Jewish mechanics and agricultural labourers at work in the “Colonies,” or philanthropic experimental stations, as they are called. The efficiency of these mechanics and unskilled labourers forms one of the bases of our plan. They will have the task of introducing the first work of civilisation into a waste land. They are selected to make the land arable, and they will do so, although we have never conceived of any other arrangement than that they should have our intellectual help and guidance. In that Congress at Basle we saw a Russian Judaism arise, having a degree of culture that we had not anticipated. It was not Caliban but Prospero. From Russia they were nearly seventy strong, and we can say without fear of contradiction that they represented the views and feelings of the five million Jews of Russia. Truly a humiliation for us who had believed that in culture we were superior to them! All these professors, medical men, lawyers, engineers, manufacturers and business men, have attained a level of education which is certainly not inferior to that of Western Europe. They speak, on the average, two or three modern languages, and that all must possess ability in their calling can be easily guessed from the bitterness of the struggle for existence in Russia. They intentionally held themselves somewhat in the background of discussion at the Congress, because the purposes and aims of Zionism are not sufficiently known throughout the world. It is possible for the mistake to arise, or to be disseminated by malicious enemies, that there was a tendency at the Basle Congress to break through the existing order of things. The Jews from Russia, therefore, felt themselves called upon to observe a certain reserve, for



reasons easy to comprehend, until all uncertainty in this respect had been removed. Every speaker, no matter from what country, grasped the situation and made allowance for it. We may fairly assume that to-day Government and public opinion in Russia alike are perfectly clear as to the aims of Zionism. The Russian papers have, as a fact, treated the Congress with consideration.

But if our Russian Zionists only took a modest part in the discussion, we certainly learned to know and respect them in private conversation. To express in one word the deep impression they made, I would say that they possess that internal unity which has long since been lost among most of the European Jews. They feel themselves to be national Jews, but free from the narrow and intolerant national conceit which, in view of the present condition of the Jews, would indeed be difficult to comprehend. They are troubled by no thought of assimilation; their existence is simple and unbroken. It is the force of their whole being that they bring as an answer to the point which some pitiful cavillers have seen fit to raise—whether national Judaism will not have as its inevitable result the severance of a people from modern culture? No! These people are on the right track, without the need of much reasoning and, perhaps, without having noticed the slightest obstacle in the way. They assimilate with no other nation, but they endeavour to learn and acquire everything that is good in other peoples. In that way their work will be complete—it will be sincere and genuine. And they are Ghetto Jews beyond doubt—the only Ghetto Jews that our time can show. It is in studying them that we have understood the strength and the spirit of endurance of our forefathers in the time of their greatest trial. Our history came before us in these human figures with a fulness and vividness all its own. I could not but recall how, in the initial stages of the movement, I was frequently told: You will only win the Russian Jews for the cause. Were any one to say that to me to-day, I would reply: That is sufficient!

It is in no sense of the word a mere East-European movement. Zionism has its followers throughout the world, and, as the Biblical expression has it, “they came from all the four ends of the earth.”

And now let us ask ourselves, What have we accomplished in this assembly of the scattered? Did we only come together to weep, to hold speeches, to listen? I believe that in Basle we have also done something else.

Perhaps, in the course of time, when mankind shall be able to view our movement through the vista of history, unbiased by the passions and the mockery attending its inception—perhaps then men will admit the logic of our action. Our only course was to make our nationality apparent, if we would secure a home based on international rights. Let a nation only be there, and it will create for itself the

plot of ground which it requires. I believe that whenever a group of human beings in the past has been compelled to find a settlement for itself the process has been the same. We do the same, but in the mould of the present; therein lies the whole difference. We adapt our movement to the economic exigencies and the methods of communication of our time. We never lose sight of the fact that, though our idea be an old and simple one, we can and must carry it out in a modern form. The news of our movement is no longer spread through the medium of wandering shepherds or storm-tossed fishermen; it flashes across the seas and the continents along the electric wire, and rustles through the thousand and one leaves of the world's press. Reports of assemblies, interviews, chats and caricatures scatter our ideas broadcast. And so it will be, as soon as we have passed the stage of counsel and reached the time for action. On the day that we have gained the land which we want, we shall, as it were in a moment, provide it with culture, with railroads, telegraphs, telephones, factories, machines, and, above all, with those social reforms for which to-day every civilised being clamours with the same hot eagerness as he does for rapidity of communication, for the cultivation of the arts and sciences, and for the comforts of life. Properly speaking, only very naïve minds require an explanation of that kind. It explains itself in all reason by the very nature of its conditions. Let only human beings be there, and everything else will be there. The task is to set these beings in motion. Up to the present our movement has shown this vital force, and it will continue to show it more and more. The acquired velocity must increase, and with the added force of attraction of the collective masses.

There are times when I have wished myself out of the movement, not only because of the worries which others have caused me, but from reasons of curiosity; for I have the idea that our movement, viewed from outside, must present a remarkable spectacle. I imagine it must be of exceptional interest to modern students of constitutional law. Whether it succeed or not, it is a modern experiment, a contribution to an insufficiently explored field—the psychology of the masses—and shows the evolution of the popular will in the direction of law and order. Is it not one of those moments affording compensation for care and toil in the lively enjoyment of human stupidity, when our movement, impregnated as it is with a longing for legal rights, is mistaken for a revolutionary one? Is it not grotesque when people confound us with the Social Democrats because we are not blind to the needs of the present day?

We have to deal with enormous difficulties, and many of our activities will naturally arise as these difficulties are faced. This is not the time when everything can be determined. The Mont Cenis Tunnel was bored from both sides, and until the last moment, when

light met light, there was always a doubt whether here and there the same level had been maintained. But we shall remain undaunted. The public opinion of the whole world must assist us in the settlement of our difficulties. We open up a new thoroughfare for human well-being.

The diplomatic difficulties are manifold. In the first place, it must be recognised that we shall solve a portion of the Eastern Question when we make a treaty with his Majesty the Sultan with the consent of the Powers. The appearance of the European civilised Jews in the Orient would undoubtedly provide a protection for the Christians settling, or about to settle, there, just as it would signify an improvement in all the conditions prevailing in the Ottoman Empire. What! many will exclaim—shall we strengthen a *régime* under which the unforgotten cruelties of late years could be renewed? Whoever raises such an objection does not, I take it, know the Turks. They are characterised by an inborn indolence and good nature which, it is true, often degenerate into violent excesses. Country and people are becoming more and more impoverished, and that which one might consider as an outbreak of fanaticism may be traceable, perhaps, when viewed more clearly, to a wild expression of rage at their own rotten internal situation. In fact, it is just the Mussulmans—at least, those now in Turkey—who are very tolerant towards the religious confessions of others. I know that these words will clash with many prejudices in England. But I have taken my statement from my own observations, made during my Eastern tour, and from many trustworthy reports. Turkey has fallen upon bad times, and with the *naïveté* of children the Turks would sooner make others responsible than themselves. Help this simple people to a higher well-being; bring them under the disciplinary influences of modern life; help them in a peaceful way, and introduce reform into their hopeless administration, and one would see a future free from any such excesses.

It would therefore appear to be to the interest of Turkey to come to an arrangement with the Jews. But what are the interests which other Governments would have in assisting the realisation of a legally guaranteed Jewish home? The interest would vary with each country, but it is present in some form or other everywhere. It would mean the drawing off of an unhappy and detested element of population which is reduced more and more to a condition of despair, and which, scattered over the face of the earth, and in a state of unrest, must perforce identify itself with the most extreme parties everywhere. Governments and all friends of the existing order of things cannot bring themselves to believe that, by helping us in the solution we propose, they could give peace to an element which has been driven to revolution and rendered dangerous through its dispersion. That a highly conservative people, like the Jews, have always been

driven into the ranks of revolutionists is the most lamentable feature in the tragedy of our race. Zionism would mean an end to all that. We should see results accrue for the general condition of mankind, the full benefits of which we cannot even guess.

There are, of course, a great number of existing political difficulties to be overcome, but these, given the necessary goodwill, might be surmounted. The question of the holy shrines is in itself serious enough. Roman reports, circulated in the press after the Basle Congress, asserted that his Holiness the Pope had the intention of opposing Zionism. The great statesman who now sits in St. Peter's chair is probably as yet imperfectly instructed with regard to the facts of our movement. When have Zionists had the remotest thought or even spoken of gaining possession of places rendered sacred by the faiths of the whole of monotheistic humanity? In the same sense that the Roman law conceived of a state of things *extra commercium*, we are of opinion that these shrines have lost for all time the quality belonging to any one earthly Power. Under no consideration whatever would the mad attempt be made to alter anything in the present conditions, which after all may not be very satisfactory to Christian feeling, without the united consent of Christendom.

The Zionist movement has above all—and here we have to thank the Basle Congress—won for itself the most complete publicity. What we say and do is under the control of, and subject to, discussion by public opinion. We do not shirk daylight, we invite it. Should there be anything unjust in our intention, there will be the eyes of Argus to see it and a thousand arms to prevent it.

In a recent article in a Prussian paper, the tone of which was not exactly friendly, the belief was expressed that Jesus Christ could only arise from the midst of a weak people like the Jews, because His super-human figure would have given to any other race to which He might have belonged a preponderance over the whole of humanity. One might ponder for days and days over a thought so remarkable. But that would lead us too far away from our present purpose. It might not, however, be inappropriate to add another thought to it. The possession of the places where He once trod would also raise any other people than the Jews to such an exceptional position in Christendom that one cannot really comprehend how the remaining nations could ever give their sanction.

How would it be, however, if in spite of all—if after public opinion has been fully set right, the Powers have been won for our side, and important advantages have been assured to Turkey—the Government of the Sultan should refuse to come to terms? The answer is simple. We must await the end of the latent crisis in the Orient. A people can wait. It outlasts men and governments. And things have reached such a point in the East that the coming hour of disintegration

can be calculated watch in hand. Fortunate wars change nothing. It was not necessary to prove the bravery of the Mohammedans. But they are no longer allowed to make conquests. Looked at in that light the Greco-Turkish war was remarkably instructive. The Caliph finds it impossible any longer to bring into his service fresh elements of culture by the might of arms, and in peaceful competition with the nations the inefficiency of the otherwise able Turks is demonstrated. In the present state of insecurity an augmentation by other national forces is not very probable. Should, however, foreign emigrants themselves come under consular protection, the Turkish Government would be compelled to offer strenuous opposition, because the growth of consular influence must naturally mean the unavoidable crumbling away of the inner authority.

As matters are at present, however, the Jews have not the slightest interest in sending even a single colonist to Palestine. Those already there may remain. There are Jewish beggars enough in the Holy Land, who can and must be turned into mechanics and peasants. They are certain of the good-will of the Turkish Government—the more so as we have declared with no uncertain voice that under the present conditions we do not wish to see further immigration. The Basle Congress gave expression to the desirability of retaining the existing Jewish agricultural colonies, which have yielded such excellent results, but declared that no fresh settlement should be created until adequate legal guarantees were secured. We will not found any unprotected colonies, which may increase the value of the land without any political equivalent, and at the same time place them at the mercy of any change in Government policy or any revolution in the present friendly attitude of the population. Let Turkey be willing, and she will be helped. Large funds for the purpose are already there. On some points it may be that the administrators of this fund will hold another opinion than mine—that has just as little to do with them as with me. They are, for the rest, men whom I respect. They will be called upon to collaborate when the time for action comes. The possibility of their refusal need not be taken into serious consideration. They are of tried excellence and philanthropy, and besides they would have to fear every ragged Jew who came to them with haggard eyes. We have now given the matter such a turn, however, that it is no longer subject to the favour or the disfavour of philanthropists. The nation has the power of self-help when only the will is awakened.

Many and various were the proposals at the Basle Congress concerning the national fund and other financial schemes. The proposal of Professor Schapira of Heidelberg University to form a national fund was accepted. Subscriptions were announced then and there. The very first duty, however, of the Bureau established by the Congress

will be to work out a scheme for forming a public administration and accountant's department, for no one intends to risk his reputation in any secret money transaction. The various bank and financial projects were treated with the same caution and public reference to them was under no consideration permitted. For practical reasons, we shall give all due encouragement to enterprise, but only to those private undertakings for which we may safely answer to the Jewish people, and concerning which we can presume with some certainty that they will promote the people's cause. We know too well how our opponents are lying in wait to see a vulnerable point in this respect. In the initial stages of the movement, when the idea was considered as one impossible of execution, we were called fools. The more its practicability becomes apparent, all the more will they suspect us of being business men. The men at the head of the movement have never been in business, neither are they, nor have been, professional politicians. We appeal to our peers, the artists and philosophers, to save us from such suspicions. They are able to read the inner meaning of our words and will stand bail for our opinions.

From the desk of our study we have risen, as the tumult around the Jews became too harsh. We went out to our people because it is in distress, and without guidance cannot help itself. But when we, who above all love the moulding of dreams and the contemplation of the course of earthly events, are compelled in meetings to say always the same, always the same; when we feel that the truths which are dearest of all to us are reduced to commonplaces in our own mouths; there arises in us the longing for that more peaceful world. The task is now to go on to the end. And when we shall have succeeded in bringing our nation to the goal for which we strive, we shall once more put to shame the base imaginings of our foes. What may be our intentions there concerning ourselves? The future will see our people governing itself as best it can and will. I doubt not there will be speculators and politicians there—certainly not less, I trust not more, than elsewhere. And we ourselves have only the one wish: to return whence we came—to the desk.

THEODOR HERZL.