

sort of taking refuge behind a fortification of words, lest unforeseen circumstances should arise strong enough to carry us by storm. In early ages especially they were connected with religion, and it would seem that Moses finding the custom existing among the Israelites, while not encouraging it, was not only careful to remove from it all that was mischievous and demoralizing, but raised it up to be in keeping with the high standard of morality he ever sought to inculcate. Mr. Mendes considered certain vows to be "connected with a feeling of supernatural awe or a sense of religion," easily to be understood when the spirit of those days is considered. But in these days, when so few plead guilty to a feeling of supernatural awe, reducing everything with the crucible of science, and where so many have anything but a sense of practical religion we hear but seldom of such vows, but we hear much of vows for which nothing can be found in extenuation save a want of strength of mind on the part of the vower. Mr. Mendes referred to rash vows, and asked, "Who can so guide the atoms of chance that nothing shall ever arise to make us wish we had not vowed? To speak thus is to claim to be at least a supernatural being, for ordinary mortals have no command over eventualities which may arise and necessitate breaking the vow." With energy the preacher Solomon rebukes rash speakers in Ecclesiastes, but in Proverbs he treats them with cutting sarcasm. Nor are the rabbins behindhand. "He who vows," say they, "is as if he built a heathen altar; he who fulfils one, as if he sacrificed thereon an offering; whoever vows," they remark again, "and if he fulfils it, is called a sinner. Say little and do much" is the advice in the ethics of our fathers, echoing the words of the text, itself a phrase replete with wisdom, an echo of the sapience of our royal philosopher, a sparkle from his collection of moral gems. The reverend gentleman then showed a more elevated application of the text, the keeping of promises, and above all the promise made last Rosh ha-shanah and Kipur, without observing which all the lines up on lines, pages upon pages of prayer then read, were but empty verbiage. He reminded them that these holy days, or "awful days" as they are called in Hebrew, are fast approaching, and exhorted them to bear in mind the words of the text, so as, to keep yet their promises of amendment.

Mr. Mendes could not allow this Sabbath to pass without noticing a name called out in their midst, one well known, respected and fragrant with the memories of an old and faithful servant of this congregation, as was their late minister. One year has passed so quickly; but though his form has so long been absent, his memory has been and will be for many a long year as fresh as ever, redolent with the odor of kindly deeds and kindly words that showed a sympathizing heart; a memory which, while making the poor and rich mourn for a lost benefactor and friend, tells all that he has but preceded us to reap the reward of an earnest life spent in holy ministrations.

If men wound you with injuries, meet them with patience; hasty words rankle the wound, soft language dresses it, forgiveness cures it, and oblivion takes away the scar. It is more noble by silence to avoid an injury than by argument to overcome it.—Beaumont.

Retrospect of the Year 5638.

V.

The session of July 4th (protocole No. 12), begins with the following:

Le Président fait mention des pétitions de la liste No. 9 et notamment de la communication adressée au Congrès par M. Ristitch, faisant savoir au Congrès que le Prince Milan l'a autorisé à déclarer que le gouvernement Serbe saisira la première occasion, après la conclusion de la paix, pour abolir par la voie légale la dernière restriction qui existe encore en Serbie relativement à la position des Israélites. S. A. S., sans vouloir entrer dans l'examen de la question, fait remarquer que les mots "la voie légale" semblent une réserve qu'il signale à l'attention de la haute Assemblée. Le Prince de Bismarck croit devoir constater qu'en aucun cas cette réserve ne saurait infirmer l'autorité des décisions du Congrès.

The plenipotentiaries of Turkey having declared, that perfect political equality exists in the empire which they represented, Article No. 21 of the San Stefano treaty of peace was brought on the tapis:

At the session of July 10th the following was enacted:

Le Marquis de Salisbury rappelle qu'avant la séance, il a fait distribuer à ses collègues une proposition tendant à substituer à l'article XXII les dispositions suivantes:

"Tous les habitants de l'Empire Ottoman en Europe, quelle que soit leur religion, jouiront d'une complète égalité de droits. Ils pourront concourir à tous les emplois publics, fonctions et honneurs et seront également admis en témoignage devant les tribunaux.

L'exercice et la pratique extérieure de tous les cultes seront entièrement libres et aucune entrave ne pourra être apportée, soit à l'organisation hiérarchique des différentes communions, soit à leurs rapports avec leurs chefs spirituels.

Les ecclésiastiques, les pèlerins et les moines de toutes les nationalités, voyageant ou séjournant dans la Turquie d'Europe et d'Asie, jouiront d'une entière égalité de droits, avantages et privilèges.

Le droit de protection officielle est reconnu aux Représentants diplomatiques et aux Agents Consulaires des Puissances en Turquie, tant à l'égard des personnes susindiquées que de leurs possessions, établissements religieux, de bienfaisance et autres dans les Lieux Saints et ailleurs.

Les moines du Mont Athos seront maintenus dans leurs possessions et avantages antérieurs et jouiront, sans aucune exception, d'une entière égalité de droits et prérogatives.

Lord Salisbury explique que les deux premiers alinéas de cette proposition représentent l'application à l'Empire Ottoman des principes adoptés par le Congrès, sur la demande de la France, en ce qui concerne la Serbie et la Roumanie; les trois derniers alinéas ont pour but d'étendre aux ecclésiastiques de toutes les nationalités le bénéfice des stipulations de l'article XXII spéciales aux ecclésiastiques russes.

Le Président fait également remarquer que la portée de la proposition anglaise de la chrétienté tout entière à une seule nationalité, et commence la lecture du document par alinéas.

Sur le premier alinéa, Carathéodory Pacha dit que, sans doute, les principes de la proposition sont acceptés par la Turquie, mais S. E. ne voudrait pas qu'ils fussent considérés comme une innovation, et donne lecture, à ce sujet, de la communication suivante qu'il vient de recevoir de son Gouvernement:

"En présence des déclarations faites au sein du Congrès dans différentes circonstances en faveur de la tolérance religieuse, vous êtes autorisé à déclarer, de votre côté, que le sentiment de la Sublime Porte à cet égard s'accorde parfaitement avec le but poursuivi par l'Europe. Ses plus constantes traditions, sa politique séculaire, l'instinct de ses populations, tout l'y pousse. Dans tout l'Empire, les religions les plus différentes sont professées par des millions de sujets du Sultan et personne n'a été gêné dans sa croyance et dans l'exercice de son culte. Le Gouvernement Impérial est décidé à maintenir dans toute sa force ce principe et à lui donner toute l'extension qu'il comporte."

Le Premier Plénipotentiaire de Turquie déclarait, en conséquence, que, si le Congrès, se rallie à la proposition anglaise, il fut, du moins, constaté dans le texte que

les principes dont il s'agit sont conformes à ceux qui dirigent son gouvernement. S. E. ajoute que contrairement à ce qui se passait en Serbie et en Roumanie, il n'existe dans la législation de l'Empire aucune inégalité ou incapacité fondées sur des motifs religieux et demande l'addition de quelques mots indiquant que cette règle a toujours été appliquée dans l'Empire Ottoman non-seulement en Europe, mais en Asie. Le Congrès pourrait, par exemple, ajouter "conformément aux déclarations de la Porte et aux dispositions antérieures qu'elle affirma vouloir maintenir."

Lord Salisbury n'a pas d'objections contre la demande de Carathéodory Pacha, tout en faisant observer que ces dispositions se rencontrent, en effet, dans les déclarations de la Porte, mais n'ont pas toujours été observées dans la pratique. Au surplus, S. E. ne s'oppose point à ce que le comité de rédaction soit invité à insérer l'addition réclamée par les Plénipotentiaires Ottomans.

A la suite d'une discussion sur les mots "en Europe", auxquels Carathéodory Pacha propose de substituer "en Europe et en Asie", le Congrès décide que la désignation spéciale de l'Europe sera supprimée, et que l'alinéa est renvoyé au Comité de rédaction avec la recommandation de tenir compte des déclarations de la Sublime Porte.

Le 5^e article, qui a pour objet l'égalité des droits et la liberté des cultes, a donné lieu à des difficultés de rédaction: cet article, en effet, est commun à la Bulgarie, au Monténégro, à la Serbie, à la Roumanie, et la Commission devait trouver une même formule pour diverses situations: il était particulièrement malaisé d'y comprendre les Israélites de Roumanie dont la situation est indéterminée au point de vue de la nationalité. Le Comte de Launay, dans le but de prévenir tout malentendu, a proposé, au cours de la discussion, l'insertion de la phrase suivante: "les Israélites de Roumanie, pour autant qu'ils n'appartiennent pas à une nationalité étrangère, acquièrent, de plein droit, la nationalité Roumanie."

Le Prince de Bismarck signale les inconvénients qu'il y aurait à modifier les résolutions adoptées par le Congrès et qui ont formé la base des travaux de la Commission de rédaction. Il est nécessaire que le Congrès s'oppose à toute tentative de revenir sur le fond.

M. Desprez ajoute que la commission a maintenu sa rédaction primitive qui lui paraît de nature à concilier tous les intérêts en cause et que M. de Launay s'est borné à demander l'insertion de sa motion au Protocole.

Le Prince Gortchacow rappelle les observations qu'il a présentées, dans une précédente séance, à propos des droits politiques et civils des Israélites en Roumanie. S. A. S. ne veut pas renouveler ses objections, mais tient à déclarer de nouveau, qu'il ne partage pas, sur ce point, l'opinion énoncée dans le traité.

Thus religious liberty was enacted for Bulgaria, Montenegro, Serbia and Roumania. To the energetic action of our French brethren this event is due.

Patriotism of the Russian Jews.

M. Antokolsky, the renowned sculptor, has received the first gold medal for his works which he has sent to the Paris Exposition, and was accorded the title of "Honorary Correspondent" of the French Academy. His works on exhibition are a statue "The Death of Socrates," another one, "Jesus of Nazareth," a *haut relief*, "The Last Moment of Jesus," and a statue, "The Child Wrestling with Death." Antokolsky is proud of being a Jew, and marks all his productions with the Hedrew initials of his name, *ס. ב.* The Russian papers call him "Our Antokolsky," and glory in his achievements.

During the latest war the Russian Jews have shown themselves as great patriots, so that even the *Goloss*, a paper which has always been unkindly disposed toward the Jews, gave expression to the following sentiments: "It would be a great wrong to attribute to the whole Jewish people the faults of a few individuals of their race. This wrong would be greater still in presence of the facts that the Jewish soldiers have shown such great patriotism during the late war, and have so nobly shed

"their blood for 'Holy Russia.' One of the most memorable cases of Jewish bravery happened near Shipka. The regiment of General Panputin having been commanded to open fire on the Turkish fortress by the Mount Nicolai, were driven to retreat. In order to encourage his troops, the General threw himself in front of them, facing the fire of the Turks. The only soldier that ventured to be at his side was a Jewish drummer of small stature. The 'little Jew,' as he was called, without waiting for the command of his General, beat the assault. As soon as the beat was heard, all the Jewish soldiers of the regiment sprang forward with a loud hurrah, and threw themselves on the enemy. The other troops could not help but follow suit, and the fortress was taken. To the little Jewish drummer we are indebted for the victory of the day. His courage and speedy action was a reproach to the troops which had abandoned their posts." Thus are you faithful to your oath! Thus are you faithful to your oath! "His co-religionists were first to heed his admonition. Should we then, in sight of such distinguished deeds, still be prejudiced against the virtues of the Jews, and account to them the wrongs of a few scheming individuals?"

Another one of the Jewish brave warriors was Leibush Feigenbaum, of Neishin (in district Tshernigoff). On the 19th of December last he distinguished himself on the battle-field of Plezna three times in succession, and three times was he decorated with the Legion of St. George. When his townsmen have heard of his distinction they have assembled in the synagogue to offer their thanksgiving to God for the victory of the Russian army, and their rabbin gave a lecture exhorting every Israelite to emulate the good example of Leibush Feigenbaum. But the brave fellow did not long enjoy the honors which he had gained. He died in an engagement a few days afterward.

The following is a highly characteristic sketch of a Jewish patriotic soldier. He was the ensign, or flag-bearer of one of the companies under the Grand Duke Nicolayevitch. In a hot engagement against the Turks, only he, with eight other braves of the company, remained to guard the flag. They fought desperately, and fell, one after another, until the ensign alone remained on his post. At last he was wounded too, but he would not give up his flag. He fought his way until he came up to his commander, the Duke, and handed him the flag which he had saved with his life's blood. The Duke commended his bravery, and wanted to honor him with the Legion of St. George.

"I am a Jew, Your Imperial Highness," the bleeding soldier remonstrated; "I will die of my wounds, and the honor will not follow me into the grave, for it is a cross. Twenty-five rubles would be of more value to me, for I could leave them to my bereaved family."

Smilingly the Duke gave him the required sum instead of the mark of honor. But a few weeks afterward his wounds were healed. He was sorry then that he gave up the mark of honor for the consideration of money. He then sent a petition to the Duke, that since he had become well again, and could take care of his family, he would have his mark of distinction in preference to the twenty-five rubles. The Duke sent him the medal, and commended his sentiments.

Not only on the battle-field, but more even in the hospitals, did Russian Jews distinguish themselves. Hundreds of Jewish students and young ladies have applied to be sent into Caucasia and to the Balkans, to tend to the wounded soldiers. Many of them have been decorated for their efficient services and for the self-denial which they have shown in their respective offices.