

The Jewish Problem Re-stated

By a Gentile

A DISTINGUISHED article entitled "The Cry of the Modern Pharisee," by the Rev. Joel Blau, of Temple Peni-El, New York City, which recently appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, posed the Jewish problem in new dimensions. In America, where this problem is growing acute, wide interest was aroused. I quote a few passages which are characteristic.

"It is depressing to see the Jewish problem discussed, even by Jews, from without and not from within, as if its inner aspect did not matter; at all events, as if this were something in which the world at large need take no interest, it being the concern of a few Jewish zealots only. Over against this mistaken position these very Jewish zealots, who are far from obsolete, claim that the only way to solve the Jewish problem is from within. Find the right solution for the internal problem of the Jew, and the external problem, created by the persistence of anti-Semitism, will solve itself."

"... he [the Pharisee] would rather lose the whole world than lose aught of the riches of his soul."

"... As for pride, he admits it, yet holds himself guiltless. For pride is no sin, except when one will not live up to it."

"It [pride] is compounded of a clear knowledge of one's place, a consciousness of both powers and limitations, and a desire to participate wholeheartedly in the passionate business of living. This pride is the child of reverence, the last summing-up of the sanctities of Individuality."

"Its presence is the distinguishing sign of divinely stubborn men, 'terribly meek,' who inherit the earth—and heaven, too."

"Of peoples too, even as of persons, the same holds true; modesty is a sin in any people. The chief duty that a people owes both itself and the world is reverence for its own soul, the mystic centre of its being...."

"Personality spells the mystery of mysteries—the last word of life for which all the worlds and all the ages are in ceaseless travail."

"The Jew must be led back to the Discovery of the Jewish Soul."

Despite these utterances, we find elsewhere in the essay that the only practical solution in view is repatriation. A physical Zion is contemplated, and this proposal implies the very materialism which the learned Rabbi deplures as the mark of the modern Sadducee. Now the division between Jew and Gentile dates only from Abraham. The children of uncircumcision no less than those of the Covenant are of the seed of Adam, of mankind. It was