

The RYS Daily 5/14/07 Last Days VII

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It may confidently be assumed that he had a hand in organizing the mass meetings protesting the Russian pogroms of 1881 and 1882, held in London and in Paris, in which leading statesmen, cabinet ministers and clergymen of England and France participated. As is well-known, his committee of communal workers, among whom his son-in-law R. Elijah Eliezer and also R. Elijah Levinsohn especially were in the center of affairs, and together with R. Isaac Elchanan and the other influential rabbis, were instrumental in rousing prominent Jews in all lands to mobilize public opinion against the Russian government, which had instigated the excesses. The committee and rabbis were able to smuggle out reports of the brutal massacres, which gained world-wide publicity. They made contact with Lord Rothschild, Dr. Asher and Herman Adler, Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, and thanks to their influence, mass meetings attended by enormous crowds were held in London, where Archbishops, professors, Lords and Cabinet Ministers were present; and a memorandum protesting the pogroms and signed by the Lord Mayor of London was dispatched to the Czar himself. Through the mediation of Rabbi Dr. Wolf of Copenhagen, they were able to reach the King of Denmark, the Czar's father-in-law, his brother, the Czar's uncle, and request them to intercede and help alleviate the plight of Russian Jewry.<sup>13</sup> They met with French Jewish leaders as well. R. Elijah Levinsohn spent the beginning of 5643 (autumn 1882) in Paris and urged the heads of the Jewish community — Chief Rabbi Zadok Cahn, and the heads of the Alliance Israelite Universelle, Michael Erlanger, Isidor Low and others — to rouse public opinion in France." Through these efforts, stormy meetings were held, and articles written by well-known figures appeared in the French, American and other newspapers. The Jewish condition changed considerably for the better. In addition, large sums of money were collected in all these countries for the relief of the Jewish refugees who had fled Russia. Undoubtedly, R. Israel, who was in Paris all this time, had an important role to play, and together with his trusted colleagues contributed his share to the Russian change of heart.

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