

## The RYS Daily 9/5/06 Truth and Legend IX

In 1848, when the first rabbinical conference was convened in Petersburg, it is said Uvarov asked Rabbi Isaac Volozhiner to urge Rabbi Israel to attend. Rabbi Isaac tried to convince Rabbi Israel that his obstinacy contravened the ruling to "a law of the government is a law." To this, Rabbi Israel is said to have replied - so I have it from someone who was there - "Rabbi Isaac, you are in error, not I. This is not a governmental law, but a governmental persecution. Nor is it the kind of persecution we are accustomed to, rather it is intended to convert us. The government of Nicholas I does not seek our welfare, but simply wants to convert our children. The applicable ruling in this case is `to be killed but not to transgress.'" After this, Rabbi Israel felt he could no longer remain in Vilna. He moved to Kovno.

There he continued his lifework, teaching ethics and morals to the young men studying for the rabbinate.