

A READING ROOM FOR JEWS.

Prof. W. O. Carver, Th.D.

About three years ago a Presbyterian lady of Louisville called a meeting of ladies from various churches whom she knew to be interested in the Jews and questions relating to them. They decided to organize a society for the study of the Jews, their history, present condition, their literature, customs and other aspects of their life and character. Frankly, at bottom their chiefest interest was in the Jew as a subject of Christian evangelization. The ladies included among themselves some who were informed about Jewish questions and they were able also to enlist the services of a number of ministers and others who had given special study to such matters. So it was that in their monthly meetings they were able to develop their knowledge and interest in the subject.

Last winter there was in Louisville a Jewish Christian of unusual ability as a speaker and in personality. Naturally the ladies found him out. His presence proved the occasion for inaugurating some practical test of the feasibility of friendly work in behalf of the Jews. It was decided to open a reading room where would be provided books, papers and magazines, both religious and of a general interest. The work was to be undenominational, under the auspices of the Ladies' Society, which provided the room and its furnishings. They were at considerable expense getting it started, but that was met and a regular subscription among the members provides for the rent.

The Jewish minister, Mr. A. A. Holzer, was willing to conduct the work without cost for his services till the first of June, when he was leaving the Seminary. It then became necessary to provide in some way for conducting the work through the summer. When the seminaries open in the fall it will be possible for the room to be under the conduct of students from the Baptist and Presbyterian seminaries if that shall seem advisable.

The ladies asked Dr. W. O. Carver to act as financial agent and treasurer of the work.

A splendid superintendent has been secured, a man of experience and gifts for the work, who speaks and writes English, German and Yiddish.

The purpose of the promoters is to acquaint the Jews with the facts of Christianity, to express a genuine sympathy and fellowship with them, and to afford opportunity for reading and intellectual recreation for such of them as are too poor to find it for themselves, or who for other reasons will take advantage of such a room conveniently located in their midst.

The superintendent devotes time to personal interviews at the reading room and to visitation in the homes and business places of the Jewish people.

It is to be hoped that many Christian people will take advantage of the opportunity to show a practical interest in this work and will send contributions for it.

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