

נרצא נ"ק **ORT** CHRONICLE
CHRONIQUE **ORT** CHRONIK

IN MEMORIAM

DR. DAVID LVOVITCH

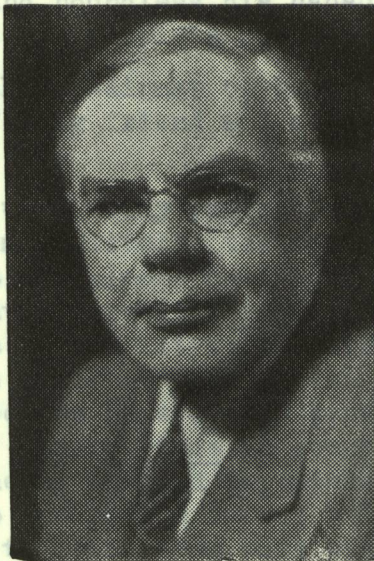
1882 - 1950



GENÈVE, OCTOBRE 1950.

Toda's special issue of the *ORT-Chronicle* is dedicated to the memory of a man who has been one of the great promoters of the *ORT*-idea and builder of the *ORT*-Union.

It was with deepest sorrow that *ORT* friends all over the world heard the news that



Dr. A. Syngalowa
of the death of his lif
stirring words:

Has any one of
passed to be, that the
come to rest? He, who
thousands the embodimen
standstill. It is
a friend, who for me is
like friendship betrays
we speak at his grave.
of life in common had n
would find it easier to
he himself wanted once

DR. DAVID LVOVITCH
1882 - 1950

has passed away in Clermont Ferrant on the 17th of August, 1950.

His death was mourned not only by the *ORT* Movement, but by the widest circles of the Jewish World. Already in his youth, Dr. Lvovitch had stood in the vanguard of the struggle for the regeneration of the Jewish people on a territory of its own.

In the year 1919 he started his work at the *ORT*. He carried the *ORT*-idea beyond the boundaries of Russia and became one of the founders of the *ORT*-Union. For more than thirty years he devoted his extraordinary dynamic powers to tasks of *ORT* and to its organisational development.

After the war he initiated and led with tremendous energy the *ORT* activities on behalf of the DPs in Germany and Austria.

At the Jubilee Conference at Montreux we still saw him tackling the fundamental problems of our Movement with the energy and passion which were so characteristic of his personality.

At the height of its history, fate willed it that our Organisation should suffer its most grievous loss through the death of our Dr. Lvovitch. His memory will remain to us all a constant incentive towards better things, a call which we shall follow as long as we live. He was, perhaps, the most thorough and outspoken critics of the wretched reality of Jewish life. But their criticism did not spring from negation or resignation; it emanated from a deep love and from a profound faith. The critical attitude of the "S.S." was coupled with a boundless passion to create - to change everything and build anew.

THE LAST TRIBUTE.

The funeral took place in the Bagneux Cemetery of Paris on the 21st of August, 1950. Several hundreds of friends and admirers of the deceased were present. The Grand Rabbin de France, Dr. I. Schwartz, conveyed to the bereaved family and to the ORT the condolences of the Paris Community and of French Jewry as a whole. In the course of his moving oration, he said: "It was not only the physical embodiment of Lvovitch that was overwhelming, but great was also the depth of his feelings and boundless his capacity for work. He strove unremittingly to ensure his people's happiness."

Dr. A. Syngalowski, Chairman of the ORT Union Executive, bemoaned the death of his lifelong friend and collaborator in the following stirring words:

Has any one of us already grasped, that DAVID LVOVITCH has ceased to be, that the most lively, the most vivacious of us all has come to rest? He, who for almost half a century was to us and to many thousands the embodiment of creative restlessness, has finally come to a standstill. It is my sad lot to be talking about the passing of a friend, who for me is still so much alive. It is not good, it seems like friendship betrayed, to be standing here, to survive his death and to speak at his grave. Truly, this is something which during 44 years of life in common had never entered our minds. Perhaps, an outsider would find it easier to sum up and survey briefly the story of his life; he himself wanted once to write down this story, but he never had time...

We were not accustomed to celebrate anniversaries, and thus there was no opportunity to evaluate the personality, the unique figure of Lvovitch-"Davidovitch". There was not the time. We always hurried, until in this unceasing haste we have arrived here, and stand before his grave...

Friends! Not only an Organisation, not only countless friends all over the world, have bonds with this man, who is being buried today, but with him is linked an entire and extraordinary epoch, a remarkable chapter in Jewish history. Therefore, his "In Memoriam" should embrace much more than that what he meant to ORT and to his nearest and closest friends.

We met over 40 years ago. It was the Jewish Revolution, the insurrection against the physical and moral distress of our people, the rebellion against its utter passivity which had brought us together. Our bond was a great dream, the dream of a normal life in a Jewish Land. Like seven burning suns shone in our hearts the Ideal of socialist territorialism.

Among the Founders of the "S.S." (Zionist Socialists) Davidovitch was one of the representatives of a very colourful generation. The leaders of the "S.S.", an extraordinary group of extremely talented people were, perhaps, the most thorough and outspoken critics of the wretched reality of Jewish life. But their criticism did not spring from negation or resignation; it emanated from a deep love and from a profound faith. The critical attitude of the "S.S." was coupled with a boundless passion to create - to change everything and build anew.

This great will to create was not in vain. The subsequent doubt concerning territorialism, the opposition of stern reality, could not rock the firm faith of those idealists. Their creative power did not vanish; it found its practical outlet in every field of Jewish National Reconstruction.

Lvovitch came from a foreign environment and from Russianised surroundings. Yet, he shared with the Jewish worker the first glow of national and social passion. Later, when the territorial aim was lost amid the maze of contradictions and in the tragic futility of Jewish existence, Lvovitch remained true to himself. He decided to devote his life to the protection and nursing of Jewish labour, that national force without which no redemption is possible. The principle of the "S.S." "agriculture and industry, instead of shopkeeping" continued to guide him in his endeavours.

Devious are the roads by which our leaders and collaborators have come to ORT. As for Lvovitch there was only one answer to the question: "Meain nachalti et shiri" *) - "From where have I inherited my song". The melody came from the "S.S."

After the fall of Zarism, Lvovitch was chosen by the Jewish Colonists of Southern Ukraine as their representative in the Russian Constituent Assembly. This link with the colonies was later followed by campaigning on their behalf. Thus David Lvovitch, at the initiative of his friends who already then had influence in the democratic ORT, was chosen together with Bramson as delegate to Western Europe and to America. When in the year 1920 this delegation reached Western Europe, it was Lvovitch who immediately set about building an ORT Organisation on a world-wide scale - something which the leaders of the old Petersburg ORT never dreamt of before.

It is not only in the files of this Jewish Organisation - which has meanwhile grown to be much more than a mere organisation - that a record of his thirty years ORT-work may be found. This work continues to live and operate in the great ORT movement, which from humble beginnings in Tsarist Russia has spread over all continents and is now finding its noblest expression in the State of Israel.

David Lvovitch went vigorously through life with big strides, charm and glamour. Since some years he was suffering much physical pain, but till the last hour he never complained, never batted an eyelid.

In addition to all other gifts, nature bestowed on him a rare talent for friendship; fate granted him many friends who loved him even when they did not agree with his views.

I cannot conceive ORT without David Vladimirovitch, but I believe that everything that he sowed and planted will remain. ORT has by far not reached journey's end and our Lvovitch will not be forgotten. I can see Jewish farmers laying on the grave of this fighter and noble knight of Jewish agriculture a wreath of corn and flowers plucked from Jewish fields.

Friends, we shall remain true to him.

(In Russian, turning to widow and son):- Deep sorrow unites us, dear Cornelia Benjaminovna. Can your burden become lighter because it weighs so heavily upon us? I shall see to it that our devotion, our loyalty to his memory shall ease your cruel destiny. And as to you, Harry, may the knowledge that you are not alone lend you strength. Stay with us, and try to be near everything that was so dear to your eminent, unforgettable father.

And one more word from me alone, exclusively from me alone. Since

*) Beginning of a Poem by Bialik.

our early youth we shared a common faith, and dreamt together the dream of our lives. We walked close to each other, we fought and encouraged each other. We suffered and worked together, we lived together... I need not say good bye to you. That I cannot do, for I believe we shall remain together as long as I live. And if the shadows weigh so heavily upon my mind, it is probably because together with someone very close dies also a part of ourselves.

*

Mr. A. Alperine, member of the Executive of the ORT Union, spoke briefly in the name of the French and Moroccan ORT. He described David Lvovitch as a man who had given what was best in himself and his ideas to ORT.

Why to ORT? Because Lvovitch, since his earliest youth, tried to teach the Jewish people to shake off the heavy burden accumulated during centuries of discrimination and persecution. To him work had a two-fold task, it meant the improvement of living conditions of the worker, as well as the raising of his dignity as human being.

Two wars gave rise to entirely new tasks. Lvovitch threw himself into the work of rehabilitation, sacrificing to it everything that he possessed, including his health. The memory of this great heart which has now ceased to beat will never die.

*

Admiral L. Kahn, President of the Interim Committee of the ORT Union, in paying his last respects to David Lvovitch, said:-

"Just as at the end of our Congress, I have the feeling now that Dr. Lvovitch is taking me by my arm, asking: "Would'nt you like to make a few concluding remarks?" Now, at the "conclusion" of his life his family and friends are gathered around him. There are men who bring to mankind misery and enslavement. Lvovitch devoted his life to mankind's liberation and to the happiness of our young people.

The following condolences were received by ORT:

From ORT-Friends, ORT-Leaders and ORT-Collaborators all over the world;

From ORT-Organisations in EUROPE :- Belgium, Denmark, Germany, England, France, as well as the Comité de l'ORT-Français féminin, Greece, Holland, Italy, Austria, and the Austrian ORT-Frauen-Komitee, Sweden, Switzerland,

in AMERICA: - American ORT Fédération, New York; Women's American ORT, New York and several chapters; Canadian ORT Organisation, Montreal; Federacion ORT Sudamericana, Buenos-Aires, and ORT Organisations in Argentina, Brasil, Chile and Uruguay, Asociacion ORT, La Habana.

in AFRICA : - Algier ; Morocco; Tunisia; South-African ORT-CZE, Johannesburg; Women's South African ORT, Johannesburg.

in ASIA : - Israel; ORT Tool Supply Corporation, Tel Aviv; Iran.

From various ORGANISATIONS :- Agence Juive pour la Palestine, Paris; Alliance Israélite Universelle, Paris; American Joint Distribution Committee, Office for France, Paris; Club Union, Curacao, N.W.I.; Committee Publishing the History of Socialist Territorialism, New York; Comunidad Israelita de San Salvador; Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, New York; Conseil Représentatif des Juifs en France, Paris; Confédération Mondiale des Sionistes Généraux, Paris; Consistoire Central

des Israélites de France et d'Algérie, Paris; Fédération Générale des Industriels, Artisans et Fonctionnaires en France, Paris; Fédération Sioniste de France, Paris; Fonds Social Juif Unifié, Paris; Free Land League, New York; Fschalouts-France, Paris; Internationales Komité für jüdische KZler und Flüchtlinge in Oesterreich, Wien; Jewish Colonisation Association, London; Jewish Telegraphic Agency, New York; Merkaz Sherit Hapleita, München; OSE Suisse, Geneva; Organisation Internationale pour les Réfugiés, Délégation pour la France, Paris; South African Jewish Appeal, Johannesburg; Union OSE, Paris, United Service for New Americans, New York.

From various PERSONALITIES:- George Backer, New York; Raffaele Cantoni, Président de l'Union des Communautés Juives de l'Italie, Rom; Edmond Fleg, Paris; A. Gilboa, Consul d'Israel, Paris; Sénateur Justin Godart, Anc. Ministre; William Graetz, Philadelphia; Dr. Georges Guggenheim, Pres. of the Israel. Cultusgemeinde, Zurich; Marc Jarblum, Paris; Jacob Kaplan, Grand Rabbin, Paris; Ing. S. Kaplansky, Director of the Technicum, Haifa; Donald G. Kingsley, General Director of IRO, Geneva; Judge Léon Meiss, President of the Central Administration of the ORT-Union, Paris; Jules Moch, Ministre de la Défense Nationale, Paris; Sénateur Marius Moutet, Anc. Ministre; J. Schneersohn, Paris; David I. Schweitzer, London; Edward M. Warburg and Moses A. Leavitt, on behalf of the Executive of the AJDC, New York; Mark Wischnitzer, New York; Georges Wormser, Président du Consistoire de Paris.

Owing to lack of space, we bring here only a few passages from the many messages received: -

David Dubinsky, President of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, cabled as follows:

"The sad news of the passing of comrade David Lvovitch has brought grief to his many friends in our International Union. His great contribution as leader in the World Movement to retrain and rebuild shattered young lives into free and useful citizenship will forever remain a monument to that courageous idealism which inspired his entire life."

Lord Marley, House of Lords, London:-

"...the ORT has indeed suffered a grievous blow; Dr. Lvovitch was an unselfish and indefatigable worker on behalf of many who had suffered greatly; he never spared himself; he gave generously of his time, energy and wide knowledge; and he was one of the chief architects of the great edifice which the ORT has erected throughout the years. His Monument stands in that work."

Boris Shishkin, Director European Labor Division of the ECA Mission, Paris:-

"...His memory will always live in the hearts of the young people whom his leadership has helped to bring to new life."

W. A. Harriman, Assistant to the President, The White House, Washington:-

"Dr. Lvovitch will be mourned by the countless thousands to whose welfare and freedom he was so selflessly dedicated, and by the many whose privilege it was to know of and share in his humanitarian endeavours."

Prof. Joseph Chamberlain, President of the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service, New York, wrote in the New York Times:-

"Dr. Lvovitch was a great humanitarian and his inspired leadership will be missed by all those who were privileged to work with him."

MEMORIALS.

In addition to all the plans the Executive of the ORT Union and a number of ORT Organisations have for honouring the memory of the deceased, the Committees of the Federacion ORT Sudamericana and the ORT Argentina have decided to call after Dr. D. Lvovitch the Hall in the new ORT School in Buenos Aires.

THE PRESS.

Many papers and periodicals have dedicated special articles to the memory of the late Dr. David Lvovitch. Space permits us to refer only to those written by men whose ties with the deceased were of a personal nature and whose association with him covered a period of many years.

The leading Jewish economist and statistician Jacob Lestschinsky (Jewish Daily Forward, Aug. 22nd) describes Lvovitch as a man who succeeded to preserve the magnificent zest and enthusiasm characteristic of an early generation of Jewish social reformers. A cloud of weariness hangs over many other intellectuals who have embarked upon social activity on the threshold of this century.

Lvovitch came from assimilated surroundings but his approach to the Jewish people was characterised by great warmth and deep emotion. He was the awakener of sleeping souls, the man who calls to action, admonishes and spurs on to ever greater effort. In everything that Lvovitch has done was manifest the poet, the dreamer, the visionary. He nevertheless remained an eminently practical man, a realist with a businesslike approach to the concrete problems facing his people.

As a practical man Lvovitch always realised that rehabilitation must include the fitting of people into the economic structure of the country in which they live or are about to take up abode. No wonder that he turned to ORT as to one of the chief instruments for the normalisation of Jewish life. Whatever the territory - Lvovitch dreamt of a land with compact Jewish masses - it will remain imperative to have as settlers experienced farmers, good artisans, qualified workers.

Lestschinsky says of Lvovitch that he was "a good companion, a trusted friend, a man with a sensitive heart and a sensitive conscience." This emphasis on the "warm and responsive nature" of Lvovitch is found also in the article of Regalski ("Die Yiddische Zaitung", Aug. 22) another friend of long standing. Lvovitch has left a clear message: the heart must indicate the goal of our social endeavours, but it is up to the intellect to direct our steps towards the realisation of the Idea.

He knew how to dream beautiful dreams and see great visions. Still, he was never satisfied with the abstract and the vague; he wanted fulfilment here and now. This was the hidden source of his great impatience, the secret of his energy, the fountain-spring of his untiring drive.

Regalski calls Lvovitch the "Flying Dutchman" of the ORT. He travelled from country to country, from town to town in search of new friends of the ORT idea. Lvovitch was able to win to his Cause many an outstanding personality, because he himself was overflowing with sincerity, idealism and devotion.

It is this passionate belief in ORT that Laieles (Der Tog, Aug. 26th) considers an outstanding trait of his friend Lvovitch. Flattery could not corrupt him, ingratitude could not wound him. He never wavered in his faith in ORT. In his heart was smouldering a passionate fire and in his eyes appeared a sparkle of indignation when some cynic dared to question the purposefulness of ORT.

The hall-mark of true nobility is to make great demands on oneself. Lvovitch asked much of himself and set high targets to his own endeavours. In the last decades of his life, his social passion became one with his untiring effort on behalf of Jewish occupational readjustment.

This complete identification with the ORT Ideal was underlined by Phil. Bloch (Forward, Aug. 29th) in an article permeated with tender memories of life-long association. The life of Lvovitch was rich, colourful, intense and full of meaning. He was in many respects a phenomenon and yet his friends took him for granted. Such is human nature. To honour his memory means to continue building what he has left unfinished.