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THE PECULIAR PEOPLE,
A CHRISTIAN MONTHLY,
DEVOTED TO JEWISH INTERESTS.

Founded by the late Rev. H. Friedlander and the Rev. Ch. Th. Lucky.

EDITOR,

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"The Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself."
Deut. 14:2.

Vol. IV.

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THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

"The Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself."—Deut. 14 : 2.

*A Christian Monthly devoted to Jewish Interests, Political, Social,
Literary, and Religious.*

הַכִּיֹּסוּ אֶל־צִיר הַצַּבֹּתָם
וְאֶל־מִקְבַּת בּוֹר נִקְרָתָם
Isa. 51 : 1.

"For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good."—Psa. 122 : 8, 9.

Vol. IV. ALFRED CENTRE, N. Y., APRIL, 1891. No. I.

JUDÆUS SUM ; JUDAICI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

THE OAKS OF LA RONDE.

Hark! hark! a soft and gentle sound,
Is heard above us and around;
It is the echo of her prayer,
Who, oft beneath these oak trees fair,
Implored the Saviour's tenderest grace,
For Israel's loved, long exiled race.

These dedicated trees proclaim,
To men of every land and name,
That Jacob's sons, from land and king,
In sorrow still are wandering;
And make our hearts within us burn
With fervent prayers for their return.

Stir their green leaves, oh summer breeze,
And wake in us sweet memories,
Of that blest hour, when on the cross,
Their King and ours retrieved our loss!
And may they, vanquished by his love,
Soon walk with us to light above!

For when God's Israel lifts her head,
And rises up as from the dead,
Bright gospel light shall beam afar,
And shine as doth the morning star,
And our Redeemer, Israel's King,
His many sons to glory bring.

—*The Everlasting Nation.*

IN beginning the fourth volume of THE PECULIAR PEOPLE,—the third under the present editorial management as a monthly,—we desire particularly to remind our read-

ers of one object for which this magazine is conducted, namely, to afford a free opportunity for all classes of people interested in Israel to be heard on the questions we represent. Especially are we desirous of thus serving believing Israelites.

In this we intend to be free, so far as may be possible, from all prejudice or partiality. Jew and Gentile shall be treated by us with no discrimination. If thereby we shall fall at times under the condemnation, now of the Jew, and again of the Gentile, we shall simply pass through what we must naturally expect. The Jewish-Christian position we occupy may appear to many somewhat anomalous, but it is a position we think the church of Christ needs to assume ere any impression is made upon the Jewish people, as a people, for Christ. It is the position of the apostles, and in standing with them we are content.

It is plain that the Christian world stands as yet in a position none too enviable as to its relations with the Jewish people. In this month, when they celebrate the Passover and their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and many Christians the deliverance from the bondage of sin, it will be well for us to remember that in far-off Russia they are in bondage to a Pharaoh as heartless and as contemptuous as Rameses. We already know that the daily severities practiced against the families of unoffending men, women, and children, are incredible and wanton. And when the respectful petition of the Lord Mayor of London was presented to the Czar, the reply consisted of secret circulars ordering Russian officials to administer rigorously the anti-Semitic laws, and to supply the legal deficiency by their own decisions in harmony with the intolerant spirit of the government. This in a land professing a Christian nation!

THE indestructible monument of the truly pious is their good deeds.

THE JEWISH MISSION QUESTION.

ACCORDING TO THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

Examined by E. E. G.

[Translated from the German.]

"Spsak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished." Isa. 40:2.

"Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness!" Rom. 11:12.

How are we carrying on missions to the Jews?

It is not my intention to raise the question whether missions to the Jews are of importance or not. Every Christian must answer that for himself. Furthermore he thereby proves what Christ is to him. There is not simply one ground upon which our work for Israel rests; there are many. The child of God must say: "This nation has given me its dearest and holiest possession, its holy Scripture, its God and Redeemer. Counting their own life as nothing, and out of love to the Lord, and to the heathen who sit in darkness, the first preachers of the gospel have proclaimed that salvation in Christ in which I rejoice." These men were of the people of Israel, and every child of God must make good to that people what has hitherto been committed against them, at least on his own part.

But that is not enough. His heart must be full of deep sympathy and compassion when he sees how the chosen people, the peculiar people, the people named priests of the Most High, go about in the mire of sin, and instead of performing priestly service for the world they give occasion for its scorn and derision; how they have no reverence for the costly treasures which they carry within themselves; and how they not only have no understanding for the Word of God, but are almost wholly unacquainted with the word of the living God, which, to the Christian heart, is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.

That poor people whose fall shall be the riches of the world (Rom. 11:12) lies on the ground, given over to spiritual poverty, spiritual death. The fate of this people must truly cause the heart of every true believer to bleed. Alas! whence is their help? "Is there no balm in Gilead?

is there no physician there?" God be praised, there is. "for unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isa. 9:6. To be sure, now for almost nineteen hundred years the joyful news of salvation in Christ has been proclaimed to the world, but why, in all this long time, "is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" Jer. 8:22. That question the Lord now asks again of His own,—why not? All Israel especially has come to faith and blessedness. Dan. 12:7, Rom. 11:25, 26. Either Jesus was not the Messiah or we do not understand yet how to bring this Jesus to that people in the right way. The former possibility must be cast aside at once, and therefore the latter alone remains, which we desire to consider in the following, but of course only briefly. We must now note what we have to say to the Jews. It is not much, but of great importance.

The Jew of to-day must first be pointed to the law. "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law" (Rom. 2:12), and "by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20. Not only is the law his school-master to lead him to Christ, but it is also to the chosen people a God-given proof of His love to them. In spite of this that people reject the love of their God, and tread His law again and again beneath their feet. Justly does the sinful worm of the dust deserve God's anger and punishment, but God the Lord is God, not man. His love and mercy are greater than His religious justice, and therefore He left His throne (John 1:14, Phil. 2:7,) and appears to us as a man and as the Son of God in Jesus of Nazareth, and we see Him suffer and bleed on the cross for our sins, and because He thus suffered for our sins they are blotted out forever, and we, through the blood of Christ, are reconciled with God.

It is surely enough to point in love to the merit of Christ, and to leave the rest to the Spirit of God. Practically, however, in missions to the Jews the custom has been hitherto very different from this. Even though it is hard

for me to say anything against this, because almost every one of my readers would feel hurt thereby—which I would gladly avoid—yet I can do nothing less than indicate these mistakes.

Ordinarily the Jew who wishes to be baptized receives instruction from the preacher or missionary for several weeks in the catechism, and when he has learned his lesson by rote he is ready to be baptized; whether he is really converted or not is a matter of indifference. I may grant that this may have an ecclesiastical justification, but it is in no respect biblical. We see that the men of God lay stress simply and solely upon repentance, faith, and conversion. *Matt. 3: 7, 8, Acts 2: 38; 8: 36, 37.* When these conditions are fulfilled, and only then, may baptism be administered to the convert. It is a matter of indifference whether he can say the whole catechism or more by rote.

The second mistake is that we, in the present time, deal with the Jews just as those believing Jews in the apostles' time who were not enlightened with the Spirit of God did with the heathen who were converted. "And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved," says *Acts 15: 1.* Surely to these "certain men" it was more important to magnify the Jewish state than to lead from darkness to light the unhappy heathen who were living deep in unbelief and superstition. But what do the Christians to-day do with the Jews? Exactly the same, only in a different way. They demanded adherence to the law; we demand the giving up of the law, as though either the observance of the law, or, as to-day, the rejection of the law, were a means of salvation, and not Christ alone. On what ground do we ask of the Jews such a sacrifice? Did Jesus ever teach anything of the sort? On the other hand, does He not say expressly: "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least

commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."¹ Matt. 5:17-20.

Nor do we find in the words of the apostles any such doctrine in opposition to the law in respect to the Jews.²

The law came from heaven, that the strict Jew knows; he understands that he ought to reverence it as such, and he must therefore turn with disdain from any one who wishes to impugn its sanctity. It is to him no burden; it is rather a need and a joy for him to keep it as well as he can. He takes delight in his Sabbath and his feasts. He is happy because he has the law which forbids this and that, and in following which he is kept from many an evil. He rejoices that by the divine command he is accustomed not to eat the flesh of swine, of horses, of dogs, and other food of that sort, while the one who rejects the law, upon whom he looks down with compassion and even with contempt, falls a prey to his desire and must eat all these. Every Saturday there is made publicly by as many as eleven Israelites in the synagogue the following prayer: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, and greatly to be praised, that Thou hast chosen us from all nations and hast given to us Thy law, the law of truth for our life, happiness, and welfare. Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, the Giver of the law."

(To be Continued.)

The place honors, not the man; it is the man who gives honor to the place.

1) Matt. 15: 11 does not refer to food, but to the washing of hands. More particularly see my "Kirche und Judentum," Church and Jewdaism.

2) It was the Gentile Christians (Galatians, etc.) whom Paul forbade to hold to the law, and he had good reason for this, because these wanted to earn their salvation thereby. On the contrary, he was careful not to teach apostasy from the law to the Jews or Jewish Christians who dwelt among the Gentiles. Acts 21: 20-26.

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

This is a question which has occupied all sincere Christians all through the ages, and also the pious and godly Jews, though in different terms of expression.

Under the above heading Rabbi L. Weiss is demonstrating in the *Jewish Voice* that "this is not a question that agitates the Jewish mind, neither is it of such vital importance as Christian divines of later periods—not of primitive Christianity—have made it to be." To support fully this assertion he argues that there is a distinct difference between *to be saved*, which means a temporal salvation from calamity, and *to inherit eternal life*, which means the life of the hereafter. Viewing this from the Jewish stand-point he says:

To be saved, thus, and to inherit eternal life, were two different expectations as implanted in the breast of Israel; one evoked hope of material or temporal existence, the other of celestial or eternal existence. We read in Judges 3:9 that "the Lord *raised up a deliverer [saviour]* to the children of Israel" in the person of Othniel—he saved them from calamity. In 2 Kings 13:5 we find again that the Lord *gave Israel a saviour* in the person of Jehoahaz. Nehemiah (9:27) says: "Thou gavest them [Israel] *saviours* who saved them," etc. And so could we cite passages showing that "a saviour" and "be saved" was understood by the Israelites, and so spoken of in the scriptures, as a temporal salvation.

Then, viewing from the Christian stand-point, he says:

When they [the apostles, whom he said before were Jews, with Jewish thoughts,] wrote of the saving of the soul, they invariably expressed it as "*eternal life*", like other Jews. When Jesus was asked (Matt. 19:16, Mark 10:17, Luke 18:18), "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (not to be saved,) he did not reply "Believe in me," but he said, "Keep the commandments." At another place (Luke 10:27) he replied to the same question: "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor," etc. Suffice it to say that throughout all the New Testament (the instances are too numerous to mention,) there is a difference between

to be saved and inherit eternal life. When Jesus healed a sick woman (Luke 7:50), and at another time a blind man (Luke 18:42), he said to each: "Thy faith hath saved thee." Saved to what? From sickness to health; and thus was the saving understood throughout.

In this article Rabbi Weiss betrays either ignorance of both rabbinical views and New Testament teachings about salvation, or an intentional concealing of their views so as to blind the ignorant reader. In short, he is building a weak structure on a rotten foundation.

To refute his assertions I will first say that it is stated in the Talmud countless times that spiritual things are said in the Scriptures in human forms of expression. "*Dib-roh Thorah kileshon benei adam.*" "The law (Scriptures) spoke in the language of the children of man." This accounts for the use of a word for a spiritual Saviour which sometimes expresses a temporal saviour. It would be superfluous to argue from the Scriptures that by salvation was not meant temporal redemption from calamity and distress alone but also in sundry places saving from sin in a spiritual meaning. Rabbi Weiss, forgetting himself, to support his argument, admits it. "If, on the other hand," he goes on to say, "it should have meant what our Christian friends believe, a soul-saviour and saving of the soul, surely Israel had the manifold assurances that God and none else was their Saviour." "'I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no saviour.' Isa. 43: 11. 'A just God, and a Saviour; there is none besides me.' Isa. 45: 21. 'All flesh shall know that I [the Lord] am thy Saviour,' etc. Isa. 49: 26. 'Thou shalt know that I [the Lord] am thy Saviour,' etc. Isa. 60: 16. 'For there is no saviour besides me.' Hosea 13: 4. When Isaiah (45: 22), therefore says: 'Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth,' either of the two interpretations is against the man-God Saviour, as it gives salvation to all unconditionally and without vicarious atonement." Here he is ready to admit *it meant a soul-saviour*, but "that God and none else" was intended.

Now let us consider the rabbinical understanding of salvation and the mission of the Saviour. There is a grad-

ual development in their opinions. The more the rabbins searched the Word of God the brighter they saw the spiritual bearing of the spiritual truth contained therein. The whole Old Testament becomes the perspective in which the figure of the Messiah stands out. Thus the whole part was symbolic and typical of the future; the Old Testament was the glass through which the universal blessing of the latter days was seen. It is in this sense that we understand the two sayings of the Talmud: "All the prophets prophesied only of the days of the Messiah" (Sanh. 99 a), and "The world was created only for the Messiah." Sanh. 98 b. There is indeed in the rabbinical writings frequent reference to the sufferings and even the death of the Messiah, and these are brought into connection with our sins; for how could it be otherwise in view of Isaiah 53, and other passages? And in one most remarkable comment (Yalkut on Isa. 60:1) the Messiah is represented as willingly taking upon Himself all these sufferings on condition that all Israel—the living, the dead, and those yet unborn—should be saved; and that, in consequence of His work, God and Israel should be reconciled, and Satan cast into hell. The Messiah is mentioned in the Midrash on Prov. 8:9, among the things created before the world. This proves the Messiah to be elevated above the ordinary conditions of humanity. The name of *Jehovah* is expressly attributed to the Messiah. Pesiqta 148 a. The Levitical sacrifices were only a type of the Messiah; the law was, so to say, a school-master to bring the people to the comprehension of a Redeemer—the just for the unjust. In commanding the sacrifices God said: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your *souls*; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Lev. 17:11. In accord with this is the expression of the Talmud: "*Ein kaparah belo dam.*" "*There is no atonement without blood.*" But this was to end with the coming of the Messiah. In Midrash on Psa. 56:7 and 31:3 we read as follows: "Rabbi Pinshas says in the name of R. Levi, and R. Johanan in the name of R. Menahan Galilæus, All the sacrifices but the thank-offering will

cease in the future age (*leathid labho*,—which expression is always used synonymously with '*yemoth hamosheach*,' the days or times of the Messiah), as it is written: 'so stood the two companies of them that gave thanks in the house of God.' Neh. 12: 40. The *Shenei luchos haberith* (ש"ל"ה) says in regard to the Messiah: "He will deliver his soul (life) and give it freely to death, and his blood shall atone for the people of God." This Messiah, which was expected to atone for the people of God, was prophesied to be man-God. Isaiah, prophesying of Him, says: "And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Isa. 9: 6. This is expressly applied to the Messiah in the Targum. Again, the Targum on Jer. 23: 5, 6 says: "And I will raise up David, the Messiah, the Just." This is one of the passages from which, according to the rabbinic views, one of the names of the Messiah is derived, *viz.*, *Jehovah*, our Righteousness (Babba Bathra 75 b), and in Midrash in sundry places. Accordingly Jehova and the Messiah are one, thus perfectly understood when God says: "There is no God else besides me." The *chaye olam habo*, or *eternal life*, is considered by the rabbis as that perfect future life after the resurrection by the Messiah, to whom God gave "the key of the resurrection of the dead." Sanh. 113 a. To that life will be ushered in by the Messiah all the righteous ones. For that life all the pious Jews, through all the ages, have been longing. Rabbi Jacob says (Pirque Abboth 4): "This world may be likened to a court-yard in comparison with the future world. Therefore prepare thyself in the ante-chamber that thou mayest enter into the dining-room."

We are told in the Talmud (Berachoth 28 b) that when the great rabbinic authority of the first century,—Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai, "The light of Israel, the right hand pillar, the mighty hammer,"—lay weeping on his death-bed he accounted for his tears by the fear as to his fate in judgment. This illustrates by contrast the danger from punishment by an earthly king, "whose bonds are not eternal bonds, nor his death eternal death,"

and the punishment by the judgment of God, who, "if He is angry His wrath is an eternal wrath, if He binds me in fetters His fetters are eternal fetters, and if He kills me His death is an eternal death." In the same direction is the saying of another great rabbi of the first century, Eliezer (Shabb. 152 b), to the effect that "the souls of the righteous are hidden under the throne of glory," while those of the wicked were to be bound and in unrest. There are multitudes of such passages where the rabbis show their anxiety for the salvation of their souls to eternal life. It is clearly seen from what I have quoted that to inherit *chayeh olam habo*, or the *eternal life*, meant, in the rabbinical writings, the *salvation of the soul*, or *to be saved*, although not directly expressed by this term. Also that the Saviour or Messiah is to be man-God, who is to redeem Israel by a vicarious atonement.

Rabbi Weiss' assertion about the difference between *to be saved* and *to inherit eternal life* in the New Testament puzzles me very much indeed. These two expressions are used in the New Testament synonymously. In the quotations from the three Gospels concerning the question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" after the rich man went away sorrowful and Jesus explained to His disciples the impossibility of a rich man's entering the kingdom of heaven, the disciples, exceedingly amazed, asked: "Who, then, can *be saved*?" Matt. 19:25, Mark 10:26, Luke 18:26. *To be saved* here comes as a repetition of the rich man's question concerning what to do *to inherit eternal life*. Thus the question of the rich man is similar to that of the prison-keeper who asked Paul and Silas (Acts 16:30) "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Christ's answer, "Keep the commandments," is the same as to say, "Follow me." In fact we find in the same interview that Jesus said to the rich man, "Come, and follow me." Matt. 19:21, Mark 10:21, Luke 18:22. There is another place in the New Testament where *to be saved* and *to inherit eternal life* are used synonymously: "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life," "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that

the world through him might be saved." John 3: 15, 17. In other places where *to be saved* means saved from sickness to health, it shows that the sickness came only as an admonition from God to repent from sin. A man sick of the palsy Jesus healed by saying, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." Matt. 9: 2, Mark 2: 5, Luke 5: 20, 23. The woman Rabbi Weiss mentioned as having been healed by Jesus of sickness was not so; she was a "woman which was a sinner." Luke 7: 37. To her Jesus said: "Thy faith hath saved thee." Saved from what? From a sinful condition. Similar to this we find in the Talmud that affliction worketh to salvation.¹

After all my arguments I want it to be understood that there is a marked distinction between the rabbinic expectations of the Saviour and that of the teachings of the New Testament. According to the rabbinic writings there is a difference between the period of the reign of the Messiah, generally expressed by *leathid labho*, the "coming age," or *yemoth hamosheach*, the "times of the Messiah,"—and the *olam habo*, or the "world to come." By the first is meant that the Messiah would reign over all the world, after He had subdued all the nations, in a temporal and supernatural kingdom for an indefinite period of time. Pes. 98 a, and Sanh. 91 b, Shab. 63 a. The sacred city would be wholly rebuilt and again inhabited. But how different from the old! It would be lifted up to a height of some nine miles; it would reach up to the throne of God. The Messiah would give a new law (Midrash on Canticles 2: 13) according to Jer. 31: 31. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." The "sublime doctrines, excellent laws, and beautiful precepts" of the Jews, which Rabbi Weiss thinks were sufficient to make good people, would be changed. This period would end with the *olam habo*, the "world to come." This was also the understanding of the disciples of Christ when, after His resurrection they asked Him: "Lord, wilt thou at this time

1) סירין ממרקין עונותיו של אדם. Afflictions scour the sins of men. Berach. 5 a

restore again the kingdom to Israel." Acts 1:6. The disciples also were early impressed with the idea of a temporal kingdom; but this idea was rectified afterwards.

In conclusion I am safe in saying that the Word of God and history support the Messiahship of Jesus Christ. In the Scriptures we read: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." Dan. 9:24. According to this passage the rabbis understood that the coming of the Messiah was to be at the time of the second temple (Naz. 32 b), at which time *Christ* came. But since they did not accept Christ as the promised One, there sprang up a disbelief in the coming of a Messiah. Such were reprov'd as follows: "Let the bones of those be broken who calculate the end, because they say, the end has come, and the Messiah has not come, therefore He will not come at all. But still expect Him, as it is said (Hab. 2:3), 'Though it tarry, wait for it.'" Sanh. 99 b.

History proves that Christ is the promised Messiah, and that *now* is the "*yemoth hamosheach*," the "days of the Messiah." He is reigning over many nations, and is in process of subduing all the world. But his kingdom is a spiritual one at the right hand of God. This was also found in Midrash on Psa. 110:1: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand," was prophesied for the Messiah. In the fullness of time, when all shall see His glory, Christ, the Messiah will usher all the righteous into that happy *chayeh olam habo*, eternal life. For this end God created the world that He might be glorified in eternity. To be good and upright men and women, never doing to others what would displease one if others did it to him, is a step forward toward reaching and deserving eternal life. Now there is only one general answer to those good and pious Jews who are anxious for the salvation of their souls in the hereafter.—as they manifest in repeating in their creeds in every morning prayer, "I believe with a perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah. Though He tarries yet I await every day His coming;" and in the grace after meals, "May He, who is most merciful, make us worthy to behold the day of the Messiah, and eternal life in the future state,"—and to those Christians who sincerely ask, "What must I do to be saved?" and that is the answer which was given to the prison-keeper—*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.*

BEN ISRAEL. •

THE JEWS IN ITALY.

We clip the following from an old paper which has fallen in our way :

If the reader will accompany me into the Ghetto of Ancona (says a late traveler in Italy), and take a glance at the condition of the inhabitants, he will find great cause for surprise at discovering in the middle of the nineteenth century, so many remains of the oppression and tyranny under which the Hebrew race once universally groaned. The Jewish community in Ancona comprehends upwards of three thousand persons—a large proportion where the entire population does not exceed thirty thousand—and these are by law restricted to a small and densely crowded part of the town in which the streets are so narrow that two people cannot literally walk abreast, and the marvel is how the process of construction could ever have been carried on, or such massive buildings erected, in such extraordinary proximity. The want of cleanliness, of light, of air, in this miserable region, is indescribable; yet great as are these evils they seem mere trifles in comparison to the contempt and vexatious enactments and privations by which its occupants are perpetually harassed. They cannot carry out their dead for interment in the wild desolate burying-ground beyond the gates by day, as they would be inevitably exposed to the taunts and hisses of the populace, who have been known to throw stones at the coffin as it passed. It is under favor of the dusk alone that the Hebrews venture forth to consign their departed brethren to the grave. Their lives are embittered by continual fear and distrust of any Christian who approaches them—fanatical individuals having been known to sprinkle a little water and pronounce the formula of baptism upon any Jewish children they came in contact with, and then revealing the act to their confessors, to have given a right to the ecclesiastical authorities to wrest them from their parents as converts to the church! This is no exaggeration.

Not very many years ago a Jewish merchant and his wife, being childless, had adopted a niece, who grew up beautiful, affectionate, and the delight of their old age. Like many other children of the community she had been sent in her infancy to be nursed by a peasant woman in the country, whose extreme poverty alone induced her to stoop to what is considered the degradation of rearing a Jewish child. This woman dying when the girl was about eighteen divulged to the priest who attended her death-bed that she had baptized her nursling, then an infant of only a few months old, but had ever since kept the secret shut up in her own heart, where it gnawed and preyed

upon her. The confessor applauded her for her zeal, declaring that by her instrumentality a soul had been rescued from perdition, and scarcely had she breathed her last when he hastened to the Inquisition in Ancona and announced the discovery which he had made. Without a moment's delay a body of Dominican monks, the implacable enemies of the Jews, accompanied by the requisite officials of police, repaired to the merchant's house and peremptorily demanded that his niece, as a Christian convert, baptized in infancy by her nurse, should be given up to them. The most frantic remonstrance proved unavailing; she was torn from her adopted parents and placed in a convent, as well for the purpose of religious instruction as to secure her from all intercourse with her family.

Meantime the poor uncle took the most energetic measures for her liberation, and secretly wrote, exhorting her to hold firm, with the promise of ten thousand dollars for her dowry if she succeeded in returning to him. The letter was intercepted and fell into the hands of the priests, who did not, however, bring it forward until their plans were matured. He was kept for some months in suspense, being in total ignorance of his niece's proceedings, and denied all correspondence with her, when it was at length intimated to him that she had readily imbibed the tenets of her religion, and was happy at her miraculous deliverance, and willing to receive a husband at the hands of her spiritual directors, in furtherance of which desirable end the sum of money he had proffered in the event of her restoration to him was now claimed as her marriage portion. Inexpressibly mortified and indignant, he yet had no alternative but to submit, and the dowry was made over to the ecclesiastical authorities. From the day on which she had been borne shrieking from their home the merchant and his wife never again set eyes on their child, never learned whether old affections yet stirred within her, and never knew whether she ever became really satisfied with her lot. The youth to whom she had been united, was an obscure *impiegato* in some little town of the interior, where I believe she still lives. The aunt, quite heart-broken, quitted the scene of so many agonizing recollections, and removed to Tuscany, where greater religious liberty was at that time enjoyed; while the old man divided his time between his wife in Florence and his business in Ancona, to which he still clung with characteristic eagerness; but the charm of his life was gone, and he moved about his accustomed haunts a changed and sorrow-stricken man.—*The Sabbath Recorder, Feb. 9, 1854.*

The Peculiar People.

חדשות הנעשות—NEWS—במחנה ישראל.

THE BLACKSTONE MEMORIAL.

Early in March Mr. William E. Blackstone, chairman of the recent conference of Jews and Christians in Chicago, presented a memorial to President Harrison and Secretary Blaine, requesting them to use their good offices with the governments of Europe to the end that an international conference be held to consider the possibility of securing Palestine for the Jews.

The following are some of the opinions expressed by the Jewish press :

The Chicago *Tribune's* suggestion that the United States government take the initiative in opening Palestine to the return of the Jews so that they may once more become a nation, has attracted more or less serious comment. Not that the scheme is a new one, but the persecutions in Russia are giving it current interest. A Methodist missionary, the Rev. Mr. Blackstone, who has been agitating the subject, states that the project meets the approval of clergymen and laymen of all denominations, and that it will probably be brought to the attention of our government; but just what the government can do in the premises is not stated. The fact of the matter is that the United States can do nothing, and even if it could, in conjunction with the governments of Western Europe, the whole project would prove impracticable. As a matter of fact very few Jews really desire to return to the Holy Land; the more intelligent and advanced certainly do not; and with the orthodox the prayers and hopes to that end are idealities. Practically, not one Jew in a hundred thousand living in a civilized land, under a tolerant form of government, wishes to or would leave. As to the Russian Jews, the idea of colonizing them anywhere, *en masse*, even were it possible, would be a stupid blunder. These people, through many centuries of oppression, have become incapable of self-government, and possess none of the qualities essential for the founding of a new State. To colonize them in a body would result in anarchy; but locate them in small bodies amidst an autonomous people, and they would soon develop into good citizens. This country, the Central and South American States, or Canada, should be the objective points for those desiring to assist Russian emigration.

Palestine, with its half million of ignorant and abjectly poor inhabitants, will not support a large influx of helpless and incapable emigrants; it would take generations to redeem its barren soil and make it fertile. Why should the millions of rich acres of the New World be passed by to redeem a desert? What is to become of the half million of present Moslem and other inhabitants? Will the orthodox Russian Jew dwell with them in unity, or does the project involve their deportation? What form of government is to be established for this new Jewish nation? (The old Mosaic in its purity, or, as the orthodox Russian will probably desire, a Talmudic modification? Are the old ceremonial laws to be observed as in the days of David and Solomon? Will there be burnt-offerings again, and will the Sabbath-breaker be stoned? Do the missionaries and clergymen for a moment suppose that a people animated by a sufficiently burning spirit of religion to return to Jerusalem will permit, if they predominate in power, the continued existence of the various Protestant, Roman, and Greek Catholic missions? The tomb of Christ and the numerous spots held sacred by Christian and Moslem would be looked upon and wiped out as abominations by those whose religious enthusiasm invited their return to Palestine.

The Jewish nation was a theocracy, not merely a union of Church and State; the religion was the State, and the latter could have no existence without the former. Under such conditions toleration could have been very limited. The Kingdom of God was for the Jews only, and dreams for its re-establishment had no other end in view.

The proletarians of two thousand years ago existed under different conditions from the present, and even the most oppressed laborer, mechanic, or agriculturist of today would not submit to the conditions of existence which made Palestine to "flow with milk and honey," and much less to make it again do so. Nations are not made in the manner suggested by the *Tribune*, or the Rev. Mr. Blackstone; there is nothing in history to justify such a hope for the Jews. They looked for a political Messiah just as other nations have done under similar conditions. That the enlightened missionaries and clergymen of various Christian denominations sympathize with the persecuted Jews there is no reason to doubt, and to that extent we owe them thanks; but that their desire for Jewish nationalization is anything more than a piece of sentimentality we are not prepared to believe. Even if by a combination of wealth and power the Jews were all restored to Palestine,

and a Jewish nation were re-created, it would not make the prophecies more true or less chimerical than they were before, and it is this desire to demonstrate the literal inspiration of the Bible, which is, with many, at the bottom of this project. Would these same gentlemen be satisfied with a nation of Jews? We wot not. A whole nation, denying the divinity of Christ and not accepting the thirty-seven articles, would scarcely come up to their ideas of fulfilling the prophecies according to their interpretations. As before said, the vast majority of the Jews are satisfied to live under a free and tolerant form of government, and the Russian Jews are not fit to govern themselves. They have the right to live in Russia where they were born and have lived for centuries; it is there where they wish and should have the privilege of working out their own salvation; but if this cannot be, let those who are able and willing to help them do so in a practicable manner, and not waste energy and money on a barren ideality.—*The American Israelite, March 5, 1891.*

The memorial presented to President Harrison and Secretary Blaine by Wm. E. Blackstone, the chairman of the joint convention of the Christians and Jews that recently met in Chicago, looking to an international conference that shall restore Palestine to the Jews, is one of the most extraordinary that has been conceived in recent times. Its magnitude is calculated to arouse the scorn of the skeptical; but when closely examined there is nothing preposterous or impossible in its realization. Bulgaria, as the memorial states, was wrested by the Berlin Conference from Turkey and given to the Bulgarians; the same is true of Servia. The most pronounced political movement of our century has been the reorganization of nations according to the natural composition of their inhabitants.

This movement has created the German Empire for the German people, and Italy for the Italians. Why, then, should not Palestine be restored to the Jews?

The Russian persecution would furnish the Promised Land with an immediate supply of the Chosen People. There they could rest in safety under their own government; that would furnish protection to them, and in which even their bitterest enemies could not charge them with being aliens.

Nor would the establishment of an Israelitish government affect the status of Jews unfavorably elsewhere throughout the world. Those who so chose would remain loyal citizens of the countries in which they lived, owing no more political allegiance to Palestine government than

the German-Americans do to Germany, yet regarding it favorably as the home of their co-religionists, as the centre whence the principles of their faith might find their fullest expression and development.

The memorial is a great conception, one worthy of exciting the enthusiasm of the greatest Christian and Jewish minds—certainly not a proposition to be met with derision and scorn.—*The Jewish Exponent, March 6, 1891.*

The Jew apparently has a double persecution to undergo, from his friends as well as his enemies.

The delicate attentions which he has received from enemies, from the days of Haman down to those of Hilton, Corbin, Stoecker, and the Czar of Russia, have been rather trying, it is true, but he has survived them. If it had not been for his persecutors the Jew might not have preserved his stamina; he might have yielded to luxury and the blandishments of good fortune. But the sharp storms through which he has passed have wonderfully developed his growth and given him a vitality that defies age and circumstance. Can the Jew be so grateful to his friends? The latest one is Mr. Blackstone, of Chicago, a kindly gentleman, a pious Christian, a man full of love and admiration for the Jew. And yet his memorial, presented to President Harrison last week, is one of those unfortunate acts of friendship which may work a vast amount of mischief.

Mr. William E. Blackstone, who was instrumental in calling the recent Christian-Jewish Conference in Chicago, which produced a pleasant breeze of interdenominational courtesy and liberality, has been zealously at work of late in arranging a memorial, signed by representative Americans of all creeds and professions, petitioning the President and Secretary Blaine to urge their offices to hold an international conference, whose main purpose would be to secure Palestine to the Jews as their "national home."

We regret the Blackstone memorial for many reasons; two only need be stated here. First, it revives the old reproach of the anti-Semites that the Jews cannot be patriots if Palestine is their national home to-day. Second, it makes the Jews again a subject for newspaper comment, when such publicity and notoriety work more harm than good.

Waiving for the present the Palestine question, the memorial blunders in restricting the discussion to the Jews. We favor any international action that shall promote civil and religious liberty in Russia for the oppressed of all confessions. The five million Lutherans are as much the "children of suffering" as the five million of Jews.

Russia's aim is to nationalize all dissenting creeds; if they resist, as do the Lutheran and the Jew, restrictive laws and the machinery of persecution are the natural result.

We beg to remind Mr. Blackstone that the Jew has ceased to be a Palestinian, for better or for worse. We feel that it is for the better. God's plans and purposes are wider than soil and script. It may be necessary for the pious Christian to urge the restoration of the Jews to Palestine as the necessary condition of their conversion to Christianity, but the true history of Judaism, its broader scope and more spiritual mission, would never have dawned unless God's providence had cast them adrift on a world-pilgrimage to unlearn priestly formalism and forget ecclesiastical tyranny, which had stunted the Jewish idea on Palestine's soil. God's laws never go backwards. If the Jew has lost a land, he has gained a mission to the world.

The remedy proposed by Mr. Blackstone is worse than the disease. The Jewish problem will be solved in Russia by Russia and Russian enlightened public opinion. The swing of the pendulum is inevitable; the reaction must come. We deprecate artificial pressure; the Jew, to be emancipated, must emancipate himself. The wealthy Jew must do more than secure immunity by official bribery. The world will applaud courageous, manly action.—*The Jewish Messenger, March 13, 1891.*

The exodus of the Jews from Russia that has been proceeding during the last decade, as the result of the terrible persecutions by the riots of 1881, and latterly of the repressive measures formulated by the government, has received a very strong impulse towards the Holy Land.

We have, from time to time, noted the formation of the numerous agricultural colonies, composed of our coreligionists, which have, within recent years, met such signal success as to attract a very large following. This voluntary emigration still continues.

The industrial element has, in fact, gradually reduced to insignificance the element that subsisted on the charity that flowed in from foreign countries for the support in idleness, not always dignified, of a large class of our brethren who betook themselves to the land of our fathers, or who dwelt there, in pursuance of a sentiment that was creditable to their national patriotism, but would have been more gracious if combined with a willingness to labor for existence.

The Jews in Palestine to-day form a body of laborers who devote their lives to the development of the material prosperity of the country, and who may be regarded

as the pioneers of a new industrial epoch in a land long given over to the haphazard conditions of nomadic existence.

The new conditions could not but create fond hopes in the breasts of those who saw in the Holy Land the most desirable refuge for those fleeing from persecution. As if by magic, societies have sprung up all over the world, for the encouragement and assistance of the settlement of the Jews in Palestine.

Finally, in this country a petition has been addressed to President Harrison and Secretary Blaine, to use their good offices and influence with the European governments to the end that an international conference may be held to consider the condition of the Israelites and their claims to Palestine as their ancient home.

The petition has been signed by some of the most eminent public men, clergymen, journalists, and others in the United States, and contains such a number of signatures of influential persons as to command respect, and perhaps secure definitive action.

There are two alternative courses open to such a conference. One would be simply to secure for Palestine such forms of local government as to ensure adequate provision for safety to life and property; proper, speedy, and impartial judiciary; and suitable scope for improvement in roads, means of transportation, waterways, harbors, and other accessories to active industrial and commercial life.

The other course would be more radical, and would invest Palestine with territorial independence. An analogous case, in many particulars, would be that of Belgium, which, in 1830, was constituted an independent monarchy by the Great Powers assembled in the London Congress. The essential features were that Holland secured an indemnity for Belgium's share of the national debt, and, more important, the neutrality of Belgium was secured, and confirmed in 1839 and again in 1870.

Whatever is done or contemplated, the debt of gratitude which the Jews owe to Turkey must not be lost sight of for one moment, or by any single action ever be ignored. The Turkish government has manifested the most gracious liberality and tolerance in the treatment of the Jews; and whatever is sought to be done for the Jews by the Great Powers should be done in the spirit which will conduce to the dignity, prosperity, and satisfaction of the country which has so generously opened its doors as an entrance to a haven for the hapless refugees from the hate and intolerance of another country. — *The American Hebrew*, March 13, 1891.

MESSIAH'S TRUMPET.¹

[Translated from the Hebrew, *Hapigkoh*, March, 13, 1891.]

If we consider the national movement which is still young, and if we show ourselves attentive to the idea of colonizing Palestine, which only lately found its paths in the hearts of Israel, if we consider this child in its swaddling clothes, which was born to us in the lap of outrageous decrees and persecutions, we notice that it has already done remarkably great things, and we feel bound to exclaim: "It is the finger of God." But if we still see that also great men from amongst the Christians, men of culture and uprightness, stand up as intercessors for our righteous cause, with a voice glorious in power, which divides flames of fire, to restore unto us the land of our fathers, we feel bound to say that we at length hear the voice of Messiah's trumpet.

Indeed, like the blast of that great trumpet, the sound of which goes from one end of the world to the other, so the news that prominent Christians from all the United States of America have petitioned to the President that he might propose to all the European powers to send their delegates to convene at a certain place in order to find a way how to restore to Israel their land, moved our heart with great joy. Even if the President should not lend an attentive ear to their request, or if he should not succeed in bringing this plan into reality, even then we shall not fall in despair. "The wheel is in motion and it is bound to move." The idea and recognition that Palestine belongs to Israel has long since taken root in the hearts of the Christians, and if it is not realized to-day it will be to-morrow.

America first became pregnant with this recognition, and her cradle, an iron cradle, stands in Great Britain, and her seat is set up in France, because France, although she has kept silent until now in the face of all the horrible decrees and persecutions, and did not utter a word that she might not lose the friendship of Russia, the last one of all her former friends, she is willing now to stand

1) In the Talmud (Rosh Ha-shanah 11 b), and in different places in the rabbinical writings, the passage in Isaiah (27:13), to which the editor of *Hapigkoh* refers in this article, is connected with the coming of the Messiah, at whose coming a great blast of a trumpet will be heard from one end of the world to the other. On this is based one of the most important of the eighteen blessings, שְׁמוֹנֵה עָשָׂר, "O sound the great cornet תִּקַּע בְּשִׁפְרֵי גִּרְוֹל as a signal for our freedom; hoist the banner to collect our captives so that we may all be gathered together from the four corners of the earth. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who hath gathered together the outcasts of thy people Israel."—*The Translator*.

at the right hand of Israel, as she does not need to provoke Russia. "And it shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown." What is that great trumpet? That is the recognition that comes to us and to the nations that there is nothing better for us and them than the restoration of Zion. Yet a while and the prophet's words will be fulfilled. Also the words of the prophet, "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their dove-cotes?" are likewise in a process of fulfillment. The railroad which is now building in Palestine will be to us like a cloud upon which we shall fly like doves to our cotes.

Those that preach for us amalgamation may laugh at us, but we, or our children after us, shall see who will laugh last. Let those comfortably sit at their places "because a mixed multitude (עִרְכָּב) is pernicious to Israel like a plague of leprosy." Such ones troubled us since we went out from Egypt.

* * * * *

Zion shall be redeemed by judgment. Since the glory has departed from Israel, when his oppressor and enemy rose up against him to rob his inheritance and to separate him by violence from his holy land, the inheritance of his fathers, we have not yet heard such good news in whose power it was to breathe a breath of life into the dry bones of our nation, and to encourage its hopes, as this we have heard this week from Washington. Mr. Blackstone, a pious Christian, has handed to President Harrison a petition, sanctioned by the signatures of prominent men, that he should correspond with the powers of Europe in regard to the solution of the "Jewish Question" by redeeming Palestine from Turkish government, and restoring it to the Jews as their property which the Roman power robbed from them.

Such good tidings as this, that the Christians recognize the Jews as the owners of the land of beauty after they have been separated from it so many years, we have not heard till to-day. There is a great power in this news to breathe the breath of life into the bodies of the faint-hearted who have given up hope, and to help them upon their feet, for this news is based upon judgment and justice. For, for what should the lovers of Zion hope if not for judgment and justice? For only by judgment and justice shall Zion, the land of our fathers, be redeemed, that is, that the nations of the earth should recognize the claim of the Jews and their title to the land of Zion, and then it is ours. Not by might nor by power, not by sword

nor by lance, neither by bloodshed and fire, shall we redeem Zion from the hands of the Turks; for the portion of Jacob is not in this, but only in judgment and justice. Judgment and justice we always asked from our Gentile neighbors, but they did not conceive the meaning of these words. Judgment and justice we always requested in the land of our dispersion; we have proven to the nations of Europe that the Jews were faithful sons to their native land, precious sons who have shed their blood like water for the welfare and prosperity of the country. Even the thing dearest to us we did not withhold from the rulers of the countries, only two things we asked from them in return for our faithfulness, *viz.*, judgment and justice, that they should not judge our ideas, and that they should allow us to live according to the feelings of our hearts; but we had no listener. Now we ask also from Russia judgment and justice, but her ear is shut and she knows no judgment, and it is no wonder that there was no listener to us till now, because the nations did not conceive before what judgment was; but there is hope that redemption will be ours also, as the small nations have been redeemed from the yoke of Turkey when the nations came to a thorough understanding of the words "judgment and justice," so our salvation is near and our justice soon to be revealed.

As far as I am concerned I fail to see the end of the wonders. I do not believe that President Harrison will call a conference of delegates of the powers to act in the Jewish question, and if he should there is a great distance yet from us to the land of our fathers, because there are many preventives in the way.

* * * * *

What do the Amalgamators [Jewish reformers], who desire the annihilation of the Jewish nationality, say now? Indeed, Mr. Blackstone did not ask them whether they desire the restoration of the nation; also Cardinal Gibbons' signing the petition did not inquire whether there were in America Jews who long since have dug a grave for the Jewish nationality. Even if they had known that there were such amongst our nation it would not have prevented them from their good plan, because their aim is only to help the oppressed Jews of Russia, and to bring them to the rest in the land of their fathers. I trust that the Russian Jews will feel grateful to the upright Christians who know how to estimate the value of our prophets' promises more than the circumcised anti-Semites, and that the time will approach when Zion shall be redeemed by judgment and her returning ones by justice.

BAR-ABI.


NOTICE!

The Editor desires to obtain, if possible, a complete file of "The Peculiar People," Vol. I, published in New York City as a weekly. There were 16 numbers in all, August to November, 1888. He lacks for this purpose Nos. 3 and 9. Any person who has either of these numbers will confer a favor upon the editor by sending the same to him.

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