

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.

הַכִּיטוֹ אֶל-צִוֵּר חֲצַבְתֶּם •
Isa. 51: 1. וְאֶל-מִקְבַּת כּוֹר נִקְרַתֶּם

- "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.

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JUDÆUS SUM; JUDAICI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

ONE testimony it is our wish to bring before both our Jewish and Gentile brethren, and that is with regard to the Word of God, that it is the supreme guide to our religious life. It is a fundamental need in the religious world to-day that to the Holy Scriptures should be accorded their proper place. This we maintain not in respect of the progress of modern rationalistic criticism; for while much has been said by scholars and religious teachers which could lead unthinking and uninformed souls astray, still on the whole the reverent criticism of the Bible has wrought and will in the end work good and not evil. Destructive critics may be enemies of the Bible, but not they alone are hostile to it. Many who are loudest in their denunciation of the critical schools, and who love to pose as defenders of the Scriptures, are nevertheless guilty of grievous wrong toward the Word of God.

In our Lord's day there were those who He declared had made void the Word of God by their traditions, and even long before the days of Jesus Isaiah proclaimed that the people of God offered Him heartless worship taught by human precepts rather than in accord with God's own Word. But who were these? Not the skeptics and un-

believers, not the avowed enemies of God and righteousness, but the most orthodox believers and those who professed the most extreme reverence for the Scriptures. And thus to-day it may be also found that even those who confess the greatest veneration for Scripture, even the stoutest champions of orthodoxy, are making void the Scriptures by their tradition, and teach for truth human precepts which utterly contravene God's Word. This tendency, appearing among Jews and Gentiles alike, may well be thought to be a trait of our sinful human nature and neither a specially Jewish or Gentile characteristic.

IN the Jewish nation the great body of tradition in the course of time became embodied in that wonderful collection or compilation known as the Talmud. In the first instance the traditions of the oral law were regarded as supplementary and explanatory, but in no respect superior to the Scriptures or in any way subversive of their teachings. But such is the peculiar demon of the commentator that what is intended to be a helpful means often becomes a delusive end, and what is at first subordinate and explanatory comes to occupy the supreme place, even utterly destructive of what with the best will in the world it is designed to explain. Thus after many years the oral law was even thought to be superior to the written law, while in turn the commentaries on the oral law came to be considered to be superior to the oral law itself! Doubtless this was at first meant simply in the sense that it was better so for the student. But this is dangerous. The pernicious effects of this apparently innocent beginning are seen in the development of Rabbinical Judaism with all its extravagances. Though these are now rejected by sensible Jews, the hurtful effect still remains. For Jews are now inclined to regard Scripture not as the means to a certain knowledge of God's will, but as something to be twisted and turned

about by subtle artifice to suit the pleasure of those engaged in theological discussions. Indeed they too often feel that it is useless to seek in God's Word for a sure guide. Thus they lose their faith. Another hurtful effect is seen in the feeling Jews have that their authorized expositions of Scripture are the only true ones, and that it is presumption on the part of Gentiles to attempt to interpret Scripture or to teach it, save as their rabbis have explained it. The progress of rationalism will in time counteract these evil effects, but it is to be feared that the result will not leave much to prefer. Whether doubt or superstition, indifference or bigotry is the better is perhaps an open question.

WITH Gentile Christians the case is hardly better. A great body of tradition grew up during the early centuries which by and by became the teaching of the "Church;" and while the Church was simply considered the one authorized expositor of the Word of God, nevertheless it was declared the Bible could not be properly understood except as the Church explained it. In time therefore the natural corollary of this was seen to be that if we have in the Church an infallible expositor of the Word, why study the Bible itself at all? The teaching of the Church in her creeds, her catechism and her ritual are thought to be better, because in following these there would be no confusion, no differences, no disgraceful controversies. Now sensible Christians have recovered from this, but the evil effects still abide. The Bible in many of its teachings, particularly in its supposed treatment of matters ecclesiastical and its attitude toward Judaism and things Jewish, is interpreted in accord with these human traditions and not according to its evident and natural sense. In other words, instead of a theology or a religious system dependent upon what the Scriptures teach, we have an explanation of Scripture dependent upon our theological systems. And the popes and councils, synods and

assemblies maintain that their understanding of Scripture is the only true one. We have thus a Christian Talmud, and even when this is cast aside, the evil effects of it still remain, exactly parallel to those in Judaism.

AND as the Jews have had their false Messiahs, their inspired enthusiasts, so we find among Christians those who, repudiating equally tradition and a reasonable understanding of the Bible, are sure that they have the direct teaching of the Holy Spirit. While others *believe* they are led by the Spirit, such *know* they are directly taught of God. Now God is not the Author of confusion, but of concord. The Spirit who revealed the truth in God's Word must agree with the Spirit who now illumines either the minds of His people or those same sacred pages for their enlightenment; for these Spirits are but One Spirit. So whatever special light may come to us, we must judge of its Divine origin by its agreement with the teachings of Scripture, and submit our reasonable souls only when it is clear that it is the Spirit of God and not another Spirit. The one certain norm is the revealed Word of God. Against the slavery of tradition on the one hand and against the vagaries of enthusiasm on the other stands the Word of our God. The Talmud-bound Jew we point to the pure Word of God; the Jew who in casting away his Rabbinism has cast away all restraint and is following some *ignis fatuus* into the uncertain miasms of unsatisfactory theories we point to the same Word of God. To the Christian likewise, Jew or Gentile, whether still in the bondage of tradition or led here and there by delusive gleams of seeming inspiration, we bring the same living Word, which abideth forever.

THE place of the inspired Word is unique amid all the writings of men. Whilst others may be inspired to a greater or less extent, these writings which we denominate *par excellence* the Word are inspired in a way superior to

all others, so that we may know that in them we have a message from the Holy and the Eternal One. What the chart is to the mariner, what sealed orders are to the commanders of great military squadrons, what the clew is to the mazes of the labyrinth, these and more the Word of God is to man.

CAUSES OF THE WIDE DIFFUSION OF CHRISTIANITY.

Jewish people very readily concede that Christianity is performing a great service to humanity in that it has brought and is bringing many heathen nations out of polytheism into a purer and more exalted faith than they had ever known. When we compare the condition of the heathen world with that of the nations which have been more or less powerfully influenced by Christianity, we must acknowledge that the religion of Jesus is performing a great and a good work for mankind. Great success has attended the proclamation of the truths of Christianity so that any fair and unprejudiced mind must concede that all signs indicate that this religion bids fair to become a world-religion. Attempts have been made to infuse new life into the effete religions of the East, but the acknowledgment is made on the highest authority even by the votaries of these Eastern religions themselves that Christianity alone displays an undiminished vigor and promises to carry all before it. Judaism is strikingly different from Christianity in this vigor of missionary conquest. No effort is made, in the main, for the acquisition of converts to Judaism. Consequently it is a religion which, for many centuries, has remained stationary in respect to the number of its adherents. With so much in common between the two, the one the daughter of the other, the enquiry naturally arises as to the causes of this contrast between Christianity and Judaism. Why has the one outstripped the other in missionary propaganda and bids fair to be-

come the world-religion of the future, while the other, judging from its past, makes no such promise?

No attempt will be made in this article to answer the question fully. Only a few, but the most potent of all the causes will be given which have produced and are producing the marvelous successes of Christianity in bringing the nations of this earth under the sway of the influence and rule of Jesus.

In the first place, it needs to be said that the message which Christianity proclaims is strictly monotheistic, as much so as is the message of Judaism. It proclaims no other god but One. The one true and living God, the Maker of Heaven and Earth is being preached by Christian heralds throughout all the earth. In regard to this the Jewish people have an erroneous notion. They readily acknowledge that Christianity is performing a great service in bringing so many from among the heathen to the knowledge of a purer faith; but that faith they regard as inferior to their own, in that, as they claim, it is not strictly monotheistic. But this opinion of theirs we know to be erroneous. One of our chief weapons of attack against the heathen systems is the declaration that the gods of the heathen are only deified creatures or human conceptions; while against these false and degrading notions we are able to oppose in the sublimity and purity of His majesty the one true and holy God.

The proclamation of this great truth is one of the causes of the success of Christianity. That there is a God we must admit. In vain do the atheist and epicurean affirm the contrary. Human reason cannot be satisfied without at least arriving at the cause of all causes and recognizing in Him, the intelligent and personal cause, the source of all created things. Marvelous are the works of some great worker, and reason can only be satisfied when we identify that worker with an infinite and intelligent and perfect Being. The world without the existence of God would be but a blind aggregation of material things,

and history without God could be but the chance jostling together of occurrences having no special meaning in themselves or in relation to any other circumstances. History would then be but a string of meaningless annals. The very existence of such a science as the philosophy of history proclaims in the fullest manner the wisdom and power of the supreme and Holy One. True it is that "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork."

Joyfully every year many among the Jewish people, having finished the reading of the Pentateuch, take it up afresh from the beginning. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," that is the message given at the threshold of the inspired Word. We never tire as we read the wonderful account of the building of the earth and the expanse of the heavens. We think of God as the Creator of all the hosts of the heavens as well as of all things that are in the earth. But we mistake greatly if we think of Him in such unity as to exclude Him who became manifest in human flesh and whom we know by the historical name of Jesus. "He who hath seen me," said Jesus Himself, "hath seen the Father," so that when we read in the Haphtarah corresponding to the first section in Genesis, "Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth bread unto the people upon it and spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles,"¹ when we read these words we are to understand that the august Person addressed therein is no less than divine Himself, one with the Father in unity of being in such manner as cannot exist anywhere among creatures, for the Son is uncreated no less than the Father, and partici-

¹ Isa. 42 : 5, 6.

pated to the fullest extent in the mighty work of creation.

The chief reason for the successes of Christianity among men is the proclamation of the glory and the work of the Son, for in a true sense we may say that the Christ is himself Christianity.

It is the Christ who has been appointed a covenant for the people. Much has been made of the covenant idea in all of Jewish thought and teaching; and rightly so, for the Jews are the covenant people of God. For any person to be within the provisions of the covenant of God is to be within the scope of infinite protection and in the sure prospect of never ending felicity in the ages to come. The setting up of His covenant upon the earth was the proclamation of infinite mercy and kindness. The covenant makes sure to all who are within its provisions the fulfilment of the promises of Him whose word can never prove false. Epictetus, the Stoic philosopher, one of the noblest of the ancient heathen teachers, calls attention to the conception which men had of the fixed character of Zeus, the name which they gave to their supreme deity, and introduces as befitting that character the well-known line from Homer:

Irrevocable is my word and shall not fail.¹

It is not at all wonderful that the noblest even among the heathen had such thoughts of God who is supreme and above all, for He has never left Himself without witness even amid the darkness of self-appointed illusion. Irrevocable indeed is the word of God and cannot fail. They only know the complete fulfilment of His words of promise who are securely established within the conditions of the covenant. The covenant is a bond of connection between all who are the true children of God of whatever name or creed. Above all, it is a bond of connection between them and Himself so that they are secured as with golden chains of love to His throne, and there never ceases to

¹ Iliad 1, 526.

bloom within their hearts the happy fruitage of hope. Such high and blessed privileges never could have been secured for men were it not that Jesus lived and died, arose from the dead and ascended up on high. His blood shed upon the cross was the seal of the covenant; His perfect obedience, in life as well as in death, by the representative Man and for all mankind, secured eternally the validity of the covenant, the conditions of which were otherwise hopelessly broken; and thus, as the God-man, He opened the portal of faith to all believers.

We do not wonder that the prophet, in the haphtarah already quoted, adds that the Christ is also the "light of the Gentiles." The proclamation of such good news as is contained in the teaching concerning the covenant is certainly enough to bring great joy to all nations and to prepare the way for the highest successes of Christianity. It lights up with great gladness the hearts of the darkened and the enthralled of earth and puts them in proper condition for the reception of all truth, for it secures welcome fully accorded to Him who only is the Light of the World.

A striking example of the power of Christianity's message is to be found on the pages of the Acts of the Apostles. On the high table-lands of the interior of Asia Minor large and flourishing Jewish communities had been established. Into these communities came Paul of Tarsus bearing the tidings of the Gospel. The Jews in these regions were planted in the midst of the intense darkness of heathenism. First, Paul preached to the Jews. Then, when his message was not received, he turned to the Gentiles. His success was always great among the heathen. In one place, indeed in one of these interior cities, Paul and his companion Barnabas were scarce able to restrain the populace from tendering to them divine honors. Then was afforded an excellent opportunity, which was quickly recognized, of proclaiming the sublime truth of the unity of God. Quickly after this the fickle throng was ready to

stone God's faithful messengers. Nevertheless great successes attended the Word among the heathen. In the city of Antioch, on these interior table-lands, so successful was the word that the whole city was moved. Sad indeed is the spectacle presented to us on this page of apostolic history! The Jewish community arrayed itself against the preaching of Paul, so that when he departed from Antioch, in accordance with the injunction of our divine Lord, he shook the dust off from his feet. Is it not true that this sad story is still repeated in the attitude of many Jewish hearts towards Jesus? While others receive the full benefits of His light and saving grace they yet count themselves unworthy of eternal life.

The successes of the Gospel in all lands come through the lives of the messengers as well as from the power of their message, men in whom Christ is again incarnated in all holiness and fidelity of living. No more splendid deeds of heroism are anywhere to be found than all along in the records of Christian missionary endeavor. No more glorious deeds are written down in any records than concerning the heroes of modern missions. Missionary literature of the present day is rich with biographical volumes of the highest interest, detailing incidents of thrilling import and revealing a great array of men and women who have exhibited the most complete self-denial, love for their work and consecration to duty, men and women who have not even counted their lives as dear to them, if by any means they could bring the darkened of earth to the shining of the great light of the Sun of Righteousness.

Judaism has much to say about the glories of a distant future, but its adherents are doing very little to bring the inhabitants of earth to share in those glories. Judaism cannot, because that which is most essential is lacking in it, while Christianity manifestly displays that vigor of life which makes it certain, perhaps at no distant day, to become everywhere the one true and lasting world-religion.

S. S. P.

THE TALMUD.

BY THE REV. W. C. DALAND, D. D.

In these days, when the study of Semitic subjects has received such an impetus through the criticism of the Old Testament, it is hardly necessary to make a plea for the study of the Old Testament in its original tongue. Every well-informed person now knows the value of such a study. No student who is preparing himself to expound the Sacred Scriptures feels any longer that he can afford to neglect the study of Hebrew. Of course there will always be those who will or must content themselves with the study of the Bible in the vernacular tongue. But such are now thoroughly aware that they must depend for their understanding of the Scriptures upon others. Nevertheless, while the study of Hebrew is much more widely extended than formerly, there is a need that a plea be made in its behalf in respect of Jewish literature outside the Bible itself.

Students of Greek study Greek literature and pagan history, poetry, mythology, drama and philosophy, and rightly consider that such a study fits them for properly understanding the Greek New Testament. Many who have thought sufficiently upon the subject see, too, that the study of Hebrew is necessary for the adequate understanding of New Testament Greek. If, then, all this is known to be of advantage and even necessary to the understanding of the language of the New Testament, why is it that students so uniformly neglect the study of Jewish literature? Can it be that there is no benefit to be derived from the study of the literature of the Hebrew people, their treasures of thought, expressed in their language and showing the progress of their traditional interpretations, which may be of assistance in understanding the Old Testament? It would seem reasonable, in view of the length of time spent in schools on the literature of the two greatest Gentile nations in antiquity, that at least a modicum of time ought to be spent on the literature of the

Jewish people. A plea for the study of the Talmud by Christians, then, does not seem wholly absurd or out of place. Why should it be a part of an educated man's alphabet to know what Socrates taught and what Plato wrote, while he is absolutely ignorant in regard to the teachings of Hillel and Shammai, and does not know Judah Hanassi from Johanan ben Zaccai? Some one will say, The study of the Talmud is too difficult. That is a confession of weakness. Another will say, It is not worth the trouble. That is an expression of ignorance. However, granting these two propositions in regard to a careful study of even any considerable portion of Jewish literature in its original language, a plea may be made that Christians at least learn a little more about the Talmud and understand something of what Jewish thought and teaching have been during the centuries. It is surely possible to learn a little of this, and the knowledge cannot be without benefit. It is hoped in this series of articles to help those who wish to know a little about this subject and to stimulate the interest of those who know enough of Hebrew, so that they may be inclined to study it for themselves.

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS.

The study of the Talmud is a good thing because of the vast amount of ignorance there is in regard to it, even among otherwise well-informed people. A few, who have happened to see the books in some library, know that it is a very large work in twelve large folio volumes, like a great encyclopedia in size. Some know it is mainly on the Jewish religion, but what it is about more than that, they cannot tell. Some think it is a kind of anti-Christian work, while others believe it to be of some occult nature, about magic or other superstitious subject, so that the very name suggests mediæval darkness and nothing more. Some have read Disraeli's well known words, in which he describes it as containing "a prodigious mass of contradictory opinions, an infinite number of casuistical cases, a

logic of scholastic theology, some recondite wisdom and much rambling dotage, many puerile tales and Oriental fancies, ethics and sophisms, reasonings and unreasonings, subtle solutions, and maxims and riddles." But what its origin has been, when it was written or compiled, and by whom, and what it really is or purports to be, few if any among ordinary people have the least conception. The reader of this, who may himself know all about it, can put this to a test, if he doubts it, by asking his chance acquaintances in a casual way some time, "What is the Talmud anyway?" The information he will thus receive will somewhat astonish him. Now, if for no other reason, a little study of the Talmud is good to dispel this ignorance.

Then, too, the study of the Talmud is of advantage in helping one put a right estimate upon it when he hears it discussed. For no work of the human intellect has been more over-estimated on the one hand or decried on the other, none has been more highly praised or more roundly abused. Because unknown it has been supposed to contain more wonderful wisdom than any other work and for the same reason it has been supposed to be of no value whatever, or even the source of all the wickedness in the world. It is the favorite bugbear with which the Anti-Semites try to show that the Jews are the most dangerous element in modern society, it being asserted that the Talmud enjoins as virtues the most terrible crimes, and inasmuch as the Jews follow the Talmud they can be counted upon to perpetrate them at any moment! As though one Jew out of four in our modern society knows a thousandth part of its teachings, much less regulates his life by it. On the other hand it has been maintained that Christianity itself has taken the teachings of the Talmud as the basis of its own and has "carried those golden germs, hidden in the schools, and among the silent community of the learned, into the market of humanity." Now, with all this one hardly knows whether the Talmud is good or

bad, to be sought or shunned, to be respected or despised. The thoughtful man, however, would say that the truth doubtless lies somewhere in the middle of all this, and that where there is so much asserted with positiveness the true Talmud can at least be no mean or unworthy subject of study. Where you find a book or a man, now lauded and now condemned by some, cordially hated and by others devotedly loved, wisdom says there must be something in such a book or such a man. They cannot be unworthy of investigation and study.

Then again the study of the Talmud is a help to the understanding of the Jewish mind. For it is that study which has been formative of the Jewish intellects of the past. It is the teaching of the Talmud which has made the conservative force in Judaism since the Christian era, and it is only in the most recent times that thoughtful Jews have been emancipated from its sway. Its influence has therefore been great, and to study it is to learn what has to a remarkable extent shaped the Jewish intellect and modes of thought. To read it is to put one's self in the possession of the greatest treasures of their past outside of the Bible, and it enables one to look at the present from their point of view. Therefore all Christian lovers of Israel ought to study the Talmud, however little. Any little is better than nothing.

As a means to the proper interpretation of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, there is probably none greater than the study of the Talmud. Not that one should follow the rabbis in their explanations of Old Testament passages! But the light thrown by the Talmud on the manners and customs of the Jews in ancient times, and on the manner of thought of the people, especially on religious subjects, is of incomparable value, particularly in understanding the New Testament. The knowledge also of the language of the Talmud, to those who are able to acquire it, is a splendid balance wheel for those who by a little knowledge of Hebrew are led to follow into ex-

tremes of error the destructive critics of the Old Testament. There is no means so well adapted as a careful study of the Talmud to show the scholar how that good servant, the Higher Criticism, may easily become a bad master. It is one of the best preparations for a rational as over against a rationalistic criticism of Scripture on the one hand or a superstitious distrust of legitimate criticism on the other.

These considerations, it would seem, constitute a sufficient justification of a plea for the study of the Talmud on the part of those students who may be able to take it up and also of a plea that all readers of sacred literature in general should inform themselves as far as possible upon this neglected treasury of the thought and feeling of a wonderful nation, which like the people of that nation themselves has been held up as at once the best and worst, the most estimable and the most despicable in all the world.

(To be continued.)

DR. SOLOMON SCHECHTER AT THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY.

Under the above title we present an article from *The Jewish Era* written by its editor, Mrs. T. C. Rounds, followed by an interesting report by Israel Zangwill, in *The Sunday School Times*, of the finding of some letters of Maimonides:

Much interest is centering around this wonderful scholar as he sits day by day examining the valuable collection of manuscripts which he brought back from the Genizah of Old Cairo with the consent of the heads of the Jewish community. Among the more noteworthy treasures which this collection contains are fragments of the Book of Ecclesiasticus in Hebrew and certain palimpsests of which the underwriting is Greek and which preserve to us unique fragments of the Hexapla and of Aquila's version of the Old Testament. There are moreover about

twenty large boxes of fragments which contain matter of much interest to Semitic scholars, *e. g.*, Biblical fragments in an early Hebrew hand, presenting in some instances the superlinear punctuation; liturgical fragments and portions of the Talmud and of commentaries thereon; historical documents (wills, etc.); fragments in Arabic, mostly written in Hebrew letters, and a few fragments in Syriac.

"The process," as Mr. Schechter explains himself, "of examining such a collection is necessarily a very slow one. In the ordinary course of cataloguing manuscripts, you have to deal with entire volumes where the study of a single leaf tells you at once the tale of hundreds and hundreds of its neighbors and kindred. This collection consists not of volumes, but of separate loose sheets, each of them with a history of its own, which can only be learned by subjecting it to examination by itself. * * * All have to be arranged 'after their kind' whilst as specimens of writing they have to be sorted in some kind of chronological order. * * * The Genizah furnishes us with the oldest known manuscripts of any part of the Bible even older than the Pentateuch manuscript of the British Museum (oriental 4445) described as dating 'probably' from the ninth century."

Dr. Schechter goes on to say in description of the find published in the *Jewish Chronicle* of April 1st: "Of great variety again are the fragments in which all the words (except those at the beginning of the verses), are represented by initials only, as for instance, 'In the beginning, G. c. the h. a. the e. . . .' (Gen. 1: 1.) That such abbreviations should be employed even in copies of holy writ was only natural in an age when the chisel and the pen were the only means of making thought visible. On the strength of the few they met with in Bible manuscripts, Kennicott and other scholars tried to account for certain misreadings of the Septuagint. Just take Webster's Dictionary and look up how hundreds of words be-

gin, for instance, with the letter *B*, and think on the other hand, that in the sentence before you there is only room for *one B-headed* word, and some idea may be formed of what a dangerous pitfall lay in every initial for the Greek translator, or even for the Jewish scribe. The Genizah has for the first time supplied us with samples proving that the abbreviation system was not limited to certain isolated words, but extended to the whole contents of the Bible. This particular system seems to have been known to the old Rabbis under the name of 'Trellis-writing.' These Bibles were undoubtedly intended for the use of the grown-up scholar."

Dr. Taylor, Master of St. John's College and Dr. Schechter, the reader in Talmudic, have offered to the university on certain conditions this valuable collection—one of which is that these MSS. be kept in the university library as a separate collection and be called by some such name as the "Taylor-Schechter collections from the Genizah of old Cairo," and that the university undertake to make such provision as is possible to bind, or preserve the MSS. and have them sorted and catalogued within ten years from the acceptance of the collection. It is supposed that the cost of this will be about £500. The collection was gratefully accepted by the university.

Dr. Schechter is about fifty years of age—is a native of Roumania. His youth was spent exclusively in the study of Hebrew literature. In the year 1882 he came to England as a tutor in rabbinic studies to Mr. Claud G. Montefiore. In 1890 he was elected Lecturer in Talmudic at the University of Cambridge. On the 13th of May, 1896, he discovered the first leaf of the original Hebrew of Ecclesiasticus, and in 1897 he was sent to Egypt and Palestine for further investigation. He returned laden with treasures which were noticed by the press everywhere. On Feb. 3, 1898, the degree of Doctor of Literature was conferred upon him by Cambridge—which is only given if "The committee be of opinion that the ori-

ginal contributions (of the candidate) constitute *prima facie* a qualification for a degree."

Several letters of Maimonides unearthed by Dr. Schechter among the tattered treasure-trove he has brought back from the Cairo Genizah have lent a fresh touch of interest to that illustrious medieval figure, of whose autography we have hitherto possessed only a solitary signature. It was in old Cairo (Fostat), amid those quaint courts and bazaars, under that deep blue sky, that the philosopher and physician spent his best years, though he was born in Cordova. Connected with an ancient synagogue you may still see his alleged consulting-room, and the oblong subterranean chamber, a few steps below, in which he is said to have died, and where an oil lamp perpetually burns in mourning for him. Should you attempt to walk across the matting, instead of merely peering into the gloom, you will shock your guides; for, after seven hundred years, the room, authentic or not, is still holy ground.

With Maimonides, indeed, the intellectual center of Jewry shifted to Egypt. For, in that measureless no-kingdom which is Israel's, the metropolis changes with the royal residence. Now Thought holds its court at Jerusalem, now at Babylon, now in Spain. When, in the earlier half of the twelfth century, Jehudah Halevi was singing his songs of Zion in choice Hebrew, it seemed as if the Peninsula would almost wean its Jews of their yearning for Palestine. Their position was honorable. They were active in every department of the national life. Under the tolerant rule of the cultured caliphs they had escaped that degrading contempt which shadowed the Jew elsewhere; had escaped, too, that physical conformation, that shuffle and stoop, which subtly registered spiritual humiliation. "From Moses to Moses there was none like Moses," runs the Hebrew proverb; but Moses Maimonides, the second of the great spiritual trio to whom the saying has been applied, was not burdened with that de-

generate ghetto-born physique which made the third, Moses Mendelssohn, a hunch-back. We may assume, rather, that he was of that noble Jewish type which Spain produced, and of which Meredith writes: "The noble Jew is grave in age, but in his youth he is the arrow to the bow of his fiery Eastern blood, and in his manhood he is a figure of easy and superb preponderance, whose fire has mounted to inspirit and be tempered by his intellect." His very name has, in its Arabic fulness, the stately port of a blue-blooded Don,—Abu-Amram Musa ben Maimun Obaid Allah.

FROM JAFFA TO JERUSALEM.

We give our readers the following interesting account from *Our Hope*, by Rev. E. F. Stroeter, of his recent visit to an important colony near Jaffa and his journey to Jerusalem:

"At Rishon le Zion we are in a Jewish colony proper. Here are, in a beautiful location, on high ground, over a hundred substantial stone houses, the homes of the colonists. The streets are wide and well kept. The houses look cheerful and homelike. Everything bears a pleasant aspect. We are in a Jewish farming village. There are beautiful gardens and orchards, and, covering the hillsides all around the colony, are myriads of grapevines just beginning to show multitudes of buds for the coming grapes. All the vintage is pressed and prepared for the market in a large and well-appointed cellary. There are vast vaults underground; the necessary ice is manufactured on the spot. Everything is done on scientific principles to furnish an excellent wine. Attention is paid likewise to the raising of oranges, lemons, figs, pomegranites and other fruits; also to cereals. We fully intended to repeat our visit to both these places in our return from Jerusalem, but, greatly to our disappointment, were prevented from doing so.

"The colonies of the German Templars at Jaffa (as well as those in Haifa which we saw later), together with

those of the Jews already mentioned, furnish abundant evidence that the soil of the Holy Land is as fertile and productive as ever, and that with proper cultivation the land can be changed from a desert into a garden.

“It was a pleasure to meet the representative of the Church Missionary Society to the Jews at Jaffa, the Rev. J. E. Hanauer, whom we found very genial and well informed. During a very interesting discussion of Zionism he told us a capital story illustrating the powerful hold this movement is taking of the Jewish mind. One hundred years ago, at Wilna in Russia, a Jewish rabbi died. He left a last will, written in Hebrew, which was to be kept sealed for a century, and then to be sent to Jerusalem to be opened and read by the Chief Rabbi. His wish was complied with, and at the expiration of time the document was duly forwarded to the great Rabbi at Jerusalem. In the presence of many elders and scholars his testament was read. It spoke in earnest, glowing, hopeful words of Israel’s approaching deliverance. All was plain and intelligible. Only one passage puzzled the learned rabbis exceedingly. There were three letters, evidently abbreviations. And they occurred just in connection with the coming restoration of Israel. The letters were (in Hebrew order) daleth, teth, hey, or, D. T. H. What could they mean? They must be prophetic, but of what? At length it was agreed that they stood for *Doctor Theodor Herzl*, the Moses of the Zionist movement! An endorsement of no mean significance for Zionism, even if we have to smile at the ingenious and naive interpretation.

“But we must hasten on. By rail to Jerusalem! One almost regrets that the iron horse was ever permitted to snort across the beautiful plain of Sharon and to thunder along its tortuous way up the rocky *wady* toward the Holy City. We do not wonder that the camels along the road stop grazing and look with astonishment at the Western intruder and rival. If they could only express the contempt they must feel for the puffy, shrieking loco-

motive with its rattling train of cars! - Three hours' interesting ride, and we are landed amid a howling, jostling, polyglot crowd of human vultures at the station, all ready to pounce upon the unwary traveler and his baggage as legitimate prey. Not the most cheerful or edifying welcome to the Holy City."

THE DREYFUS CASE AGAIN.

All France is suddenly thrown into a ferment of excitement by startling developments in the famous Dreyfus affair.

About two months ago (July 7) M. Cavaignac, the Minister of War, made a speech in the Chamber of Deputies, in which he reaffirmed the guilt of Dreyfus as the betrayer of French military secrets. The guilt of this man, he declared, was conclusively established by "irrefutable evidence" contained in documents which he proceeded to read. These were, first, two notes, dated in March and April, 1894, respectively, which were used in the trial of Dreyfus, and were, in connection with an alleged confession by the prisoner, the main reliance of the prosecution in securing his conviction. But it seems that, with the curious conception of judicial fairness current in France, the contents of these important documents were not made known to Dreyfus's counsel, who first learned of their existence from the lips of the Minister of War, four years after the trial!

The second proof of Dreyfus's guilt produced by M. Cavaignac was a document written, the Minister declared, on the same paper and with the same blue pencil as the other two, and in it, for the first time, he is mentioned by name. The document is as follows:

"I have read that a Deputy is going to make an interpellation on Dreyfus. If [here an illegible phrase occurred.] I shall say that never have I had any relations with this Jew. That is understood. If you are asked, say the same, for nobody must ever know what has occurred with him."

On this statement of the Minister of War the Chamber voted, by a majority of 572 to 2, that the speech should be placarded in each of the 36,000 communes of France. This was equivalent to a vote of confidence in the Brisson Ministry.

But it so happened that, in the course of a re-examination of the case—at the request, it is reported, of the Emperor of Germany, one of whose military officers is accused of complicity with Dreyfus—it was discovered that the paper on which the third document was written was not identical with that of the other two. Thereupon Colonel Henry, who had sat on the court-martial of Dreyfus, and was chiefly instrumental in securing his conviction, was summoned before M. Cavaignac, and directly accused of forging the paper. At first he denied the charge, but when M. Cavaignac said to him, “On your honor as a soldier, did you or did you not write that letter?” he replied, “Since you appeal to my soldierly honor, it was I who wrote it.” He was then arrested, confined in the fortress at Mont Valerien, and the same evening committed suicide by cutting his throat with a razor. He was, it appears, the son of a peasant, a brave soldier and strict disciplinarian, but illiterate, and with, it should seem, very remarkable ideas on the subject of “honor.”

And with this sinister light so unexpectedly thrown upon the tragedy, France is convulsed with the inquiry, Shall there be a reopening of the Dreyfus case? To the Anglo-Saxon mind only one answer would be possible. It is reported that M. Cavaignac's belief in the culpability of Dreyfus is not changed by the discovery of the forgery. But several of the leading journals of Paris, hitherto bitterly opposed to Dreyfus, now insist that he shall have a new trial. The final acquittal of Dreyfus would be a terrible humiliation to the *amour propre* of France; but better humiliation than injustice.—*The Examiner*.

HE is not rich who is not contented.—*Praeco Latinus*.

WHAT TO DO WITH THE RUSSIAN JEWS.

In the *Contemporary Review* for May, Mr. E. N. Adler, in an article entitled a "Bird's-Eye View of the Transcaspian," puts the suggestion that the ultimate solution of the Russian Jewish question may be found in the Jewish colonization of the steps of central Asia. Mr. Adler last year made a hurried visit to central Asia and his article gives a very vivid account of the change which the Russians have wrought in Turkestan. Although there is much that is very interesting and up to date in his account of his railroad journey to Krasnovodsk, the only novelty in his paper is his suggestion of the re peopling of the Asiatic steppes as the solution of the Jewish question. Mr. Adler found the cotton trade flourishing on Transcaspia. He also found that "the greater part of the trade was in the hands of my co-religionists, and although the Transcaspian was outside the pale of Jewish settlement and *de jure* tabooed to the Jew, the government welcomed them *de facto* as bringing money, business and prosperity to their new possessions. Technically, the Pan Slavist would rather have Turkestan and Siberia peopled by Slavs. The Jews, though they be Russian, are not Slavs; they are therefore outside the sympathies of the soi-disant Russian patriot. But he has learned by the experience of at least one generation that the Slavonic race is difficult to acclimatize in the burning sands of Turkestan or the icy plains of Siberia. So he finds himself compelled to welcome the more adaptable Hebrew. And herein, I venture to assert, lies the true solution of the Russo-Jewish question. No millionaire, no cohort of millionaires, no government however strong, can tempt or command a population of millions to cross the seas. Only in Russia itself can the question be solved. And Russia is great enough to suffice for all its inhabitants, even for its Jews. The resources of Siberia and central Asia are gigantic beyond the dreams of avarice. The world is only now beginning to realize them. It is a matter of history how Jews helped

to develop the trade of America, India, Australia and Africa. Let Russia open the gates of the pale and she will find that her Jewish children will be of the makers of her Eastern empire. "And the stone which the builders had refused will become the headstone of the corner."

THE JEWS OF ITALY.

In Florence the Jews were probably bound by law to live in the Ghetto, an unhealthy resort, which was in existence till 1890, though the Jews no longer resided there, but they enjoy the same regime of liberty as their brethren in Leghorn.

In Ancona the Jews occupied an excellent position in the world of commerce, and the trustees of the synagogue were allowed to raise taxes upon Jewish merchants' goods in order to provide for the annual tribute they were required to pay the Pope for permission to settle at that seaport town.

Venice granted many rights to Jews like other nationalities. They had there a special market-place and were busily engaged in trade. Sometimes measures of expulsion were decided upon, especially after the famous battle of Lepanto, when as a thanksgiving for the victory, the Senate resolved to clear the capital of the enemies of the Saviour, but the step was not enforced, and soon Venetian people remembered their motto: "Veneziani poi Christiani," and let Israelites live in peace on the shores of the North Adriatic.—*Jewish World*.

THE appointment of Mr. Oscar S. Straus as Minister to Turkey is one that is peculiarly pleasing to all classes regardless of religious affiliation. As Minister to Turkey under the administration of President Cleveland, Mr. Straus proved to be a staunch defender of American interests in the Orient, and there was much need of it at the time. Mohammedan, Jew and Christian vied to do him honor when he resigned his office; and, we doubt not, although Mr. Angell has proven a most efficient representative, that Mr. and Mrs. Straus will meet with a cordial welcome on their return to Constantinople.—*The American Hebrew*.

OUR VIEW OF MISSION WORK.

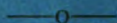
Missions to the Jews rest upon the same ground as missions to any other people. A "mission" is a "sending out." Missionaries are men sent out to preach to people the glad tidings of salvation which God has provided for mankind. Missionaries to the Jews are men sent out to preach this good news to Jewish people. If men are sent out to do anything else, they are not properly Christian missionaries. We should send missionaries to the Jews because it is in our nature, if we possess any idea we think of value, to desire that every one should accept it. Especially is this so if we think we have in view a lofty and excellent ideal. If we do not this, it is a confession that we have no proper ideal worth the name. Another reason why we should send our missionaries to the Jews is that we have charity and love towards them. We believe that the one sure and certain way to enter the kingdom of God is through Christ. We are not disposed to say what may be the lot of those who have lived godly lives and who have not worshiped Jesus Christ. We are not disposed to limit the operations of divine grace. But we believe that Christ is Life Eternal. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We are sad when God's children are astray and do not accept the safe and sure way. A third reason why we should send missionaries to the Jews is our Lord's great command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Our Leader and Master has bidden us. The loyal follower of Christ considers no alternative. "If a man love me he will keep my words," says our Master. As disciples of that Master, as servants of that Lord, what can we do but send forth those to proclaim these glad tidings "to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile?" Jesus asks us to do no wrong—to cheat, to deceive, or to bribe,—but to teach, to make known His message, to declare His counsel in love, to speak what we believe to be the truth.

SOLEMN QUESTIONS

Addressed to Hebrews of Culture,

BY PROF. FRANZ DELITZSCH,

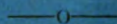
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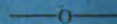
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