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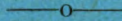
THE PECULIAR PEOPLE,

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A CHRISTIAN MONTHLY,

DEVOTED TO JEWISH INTERESTS.

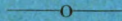
Founded by the late Rev. H. Friedländer and Mr. Ch. Th. Lucky.



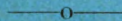
EDITOR,

THE REV. WILLIAM C. DALAND,

Leonardsville, N. Y.



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



Vol. II.

APRIL, 1889.

No. 1.

CONTENTS.

Editorials,	- - - - -	1
? למה זה אנכי?	- - - - -	4
Some Jewish Thoughts on Preaching,	- - - - -	6
What will our Future be?	- - - - -	10
How may the Gospel Reach the Jews?	- - - - -	12
Our Platform,	- - - - -	15
News,	- - - - -	16
Gleanings from the Press,	- - - - -	18
Hakol,	- - - - -	20
Rabbi Johanna,	- - - - -	22
The Harp of Faith,	- - - - -	24

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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.

הביטו אל-צור חצבתם
ואל-מקבת בור-נקרתם
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. II. ALFRED CENTRE, N. Y., APRIL, 1889. No. I.

JUDÆUS SUM ; JUDAICI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

WHEN the editor of THE PECULIAR PEOPLE died, in November last, a blow was given to the cause represented by this paper from which it seemed hardly possible that it could recover. Now, after nearly five months, the paper appears in a somewhat changed form, issued from a different office of publication, under a new editorial supervision, but with a heart which beats with the same warmth of love for Israel.

THE change from a weekly to a monthly has been made from necessity, not from choice. The paper will be issued the first of every month, and will consist of sixteen pages or more.

THAT the editor is by birth a Gentile may be a matter of regret to many of our readers, but he humbly submits that it is not his fault, and he trusts that the difficulties of the Jewish Christian position he desires to occupy, which to his own mind seem well nigh insurmountable, may in a small measure be appreciated by those sons of Israel who read these pages.

WE desire to recall the fact that THE PECULIAR PEOPLE has been mentioned by two of our esteemed contemporaries

as "the latest conversionist paper," and a "new venture of the conversionists." Without a question our paper will be ignored by many Gentiles because it is a "Jewish paper," and at the same time it will be spurned by many Jews as an "organ of the conversionists." Now neither of these expressions conveys the exact truth.

WE hope that THE PECULIAR PEOPLE will always be true to its motto, *Judæus sum*, although its editor henceforth must still further alter the famous line of Terentius, and say, *Judæus non sum, sed Judaici nihil a me alienum puto*. Our paper is Jewish, as we hope, in the truest and best sense. But it is not Jewish in the sense of being opposed to true and genuine Christianity.

ON the other hand THE PECULIAR PEOPLE is not a "conversionist venture," if by that it is meant to convey any partnership in trickery, in the rewarding of converts, in children-robbery, or in any other base methods employed by "conversionists," as is often reported in Jewish papers. We are Christians, however, as well as Jews, and we say: *Audiatur et altera pars*. Let Gentile and Jewish Christians be honest, and let non-Christian Jews be fair. Then will our word of peace be heard. Read "our platform" in another column.

WHILE we are on this point there is a word which must be said, albeit it may seem harsh; but we will endeavor to "speak the truth in love."

THE *Jewish Intelligence*, which is the official organ of the "London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews," says, in referring to the work of a missionary recently deceased, that, four years ago, "1108 Hebrew boys and girls had been received, baptized and educated in the faith of Christ. Many of the boys have been engaged in missionary work, several ordained," etc., etc. This is represented as but a small part of the work done. Reference is also made to the "Operative Jewish Converts' Institution," its success, and the great work it does for the converts.

Now in reference to this work somewhat must needs be said, and it may serve as a lesson to us. In the first place this work in the boys' school is done in, what is to say the least, an underhanded manner. This may sound severe, but it is what Protestant Christians would loudly proclaim an "outrage," if perpetrated by Roman Catholics in a Protestant community.

THE agents of the London Society educate the children in Christianity. That of itself is well, if it be rightly done. But they baptize them and count them as converts before they can come to any decision as to the religion of Jesus. These children are of the poorest and most wretched class. The mission agents tell their parents that the children will be cared for, and the parents, from the pressure of necessity, and with sorrow, give the children up, and sign a paper promising that they will not claim the children till they arrive at the age of fourteen years. In the meanwhile they baptize the children and presto! they are Christians, and it is named in the report as a great "work." But the report fails to tell how the children became baptized, whether there was a conversion of the heart or not, or how the parents regarded the matter.

THESE children grow up—what? Neither Jews nor Christians, but simply Gentilized Jews. They grow up without heart, and either go back to Judaism or drift into skepticism. The Word of God alone can do a real work, and the convert must be one of free will, else incalculable harm, rather than the least good, will be done. For the eyes of the Jews are open. The missionaries save (?) a few children, while they make the prejudices of thousands of Jews stronger and stronger by every effort put forth.

It is time such "work" as this were stopped; it only alienates, and rightly so, the mass of the Jewish people. Inducements and rewards must be utterly repudiated. Of what use is the "Inquirer's Home" and the "Convert's Institution"? There are able-bodied young men who cannot find work, or rather, perhaps, who do not want work. Such

go to the missionary-to-the-Jews, and tell him they wish to inquire into the truths of Christianity and to be baptized, if —*sotto voce*—the loaves and fishes be forthcoming. There is personally known to us a young Jewish convert, an honest, candid man, won in Galicia by the power of the simple truth, not by reward or other inducement. While in London he met a Jew. In conversation each discovered that the other had become a Christian. The first thing the London convert said was, in an undertone, "What did you get, my friend?" The Galician convert was at a loss to comprehend his meaning. "How much did the missionary pay you at your baptism?" Then were the eyes of our young friend opened to the crooked ways of many Christians. May God grant that soon there may be but few such!

JUDGING from the words of one of our Jewish contemporaries, such cases are found even in New York, more's the pity.

OF the statistics of the societies much has before been said in these columns, and we leave them for another time.

למה זה אנכי?

Two great thoughts have struggled within me. The elder is that I am wholly incompetent to the task which is before me in the work of editing this paper. The younger is the thought of the great need of a message of peace to Zion, and no one is ready to bear it. The struggle in my heart is intense, and I cry with Rebekah, "Why am I thus?" But I feel that the elder must serve the younger. While I have always had an absorbing interest in the message this paper was proclaiming, it never took hold of me personally to enter the labor while the Rev. Mr. Friedländer was amongst us. But when the lamented Zebi Israel went from this world, and the place of his labor knew him no more, then the editor of the *Eduth le Israel* besought me to continue his work.

The first thought was, "Who is sufficient for these things? I cannot do it. How can a youth do the deeds of

a giant? How can a Gentile speak to the sons of Abraham?" Then came the other thought; "Though not a child of Abraham after the flesh, I am yet a son of Abraham by the spirit. I love the nation. I would speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and bring a message of peace to Israel." The latter thought has prevailed, and I bring this to the hearts of the readers of THE PECULIAR PEOPLE, both Jew and Gentile.

I would take up this burden as a memorial to the late founder of this paper. The best memorial is to perpetuate his work. This shall be my aim.

There is between the Jews and the Christian nations a misunderstanding centuries old. They have ever mutually hated and despised each other. This must cease. Peace is what I would cry. The causes of this misunderstanding are manifold. They will be mentioned in this paper again and again, that they may be taken away. THE PECULIAR PEOPLE will strive to show the Jews that Christians are not all Jew-haters, that many Christians have a sincere regard and a great care for the true welfare of Israel, that *some* Jews at least have become Christians without bribery or inducements of any kind but the conviction of truth, and that some Jewish Christians are still Jews in the highest, purest sense, and that they in poverty, without pay, and solely for their love to Israel, preach the Messiah, Jesus. THE PECULIAR PEOPLE will strive to show to Gentile Christians that they have totally misconceived the Jewish spirit, that they have undertaken by a wrong method to win the Jewish nation; namely, by Gentilizing the Jews instead of giving them the pure gospel and leaving them to become Christian Jews, that they have therefore won for the most part an unworthy portion of Israel, and that consequently they have a wrong estimate of the Jewish temper.

If these two aims can be followed, and the message of peace shall reach the real heart of Israel and the true part of Gentile Christendom, the heart of the editor will be made glad; and to the question:

למה זה אנכי?

will come the answer:

אשמעה מהידבר האל יהוה כי ידבר שלום אל-עמו ואל-חסידיו.
THE EDITOR.

SOME JEWISH THOUGHTS ON PREACHING.

BY THE REV. H. FRIEDLÆNDER.

The sermon, as part of public worship on Sabbath-days, became the established custom of all Jewish synagogues, not later than the fourth century before Christ, possibly earlier. Philo and Josephus naturally speak of it as a well-known institution. The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles contain numerous references to the customary preaching in Jewish synagogues, and both the Lord Jesus and His Apostles used it as a means of proclaiming the truths of the gospel. It originated at the time when the reading during divine service of the Word of God in Hebrew necessitated a translation into the vernacular, because Hebrew had ceased to be the every-day language of the Jewish people.

After the reading of the original, an interpreter explained the meaning in the vulgar tongue, and these explanations or paraphrases are, to a certain extent, preserved to us in the Chaldee paraphrases, known as "Targumin." From this beginning the institution of the regular sermon—such as the Lord Jesus and His Apostles found in the synagogue, and used for the propagation of the gospel—was gradually evolved by a long process which may be distinctly traced in Jewish literature. These notices, in Talmud and Midrash, comprise not only various laws concerning preaching and manifold experience of success or failure on the part of preachers, but also actual specimens of sermons preached. According to the custom of the Jewish Rabbis, everything referring to this subject is based upon some word of Scripture. Very forced and very fantastical these Scripture explanations often are, but the object being simply to give a kind of Biblical basis to every rabbinical injunction, even the remotest connection with a text is considered sufficient as a warrant.

An example or two may show this :

The very wholesome principles, that those who are to preach ought to have a proper training, and those who possess such training, but do not use their power of teaching, are blameworthy, are read out of (or rather read into) Pro-

verbs 7: 26—"She hath cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men have been slain by her." It matters not that the person here spoken of is the wanton woman; the Rabbis read that "the many wounded she has cast down," are those who have set up as preachers without being competent, and that "the many men who have been slain by her" are the competent preachers who selfishly keep their talent unused. Or, when the Rabbis wish to describe some necessary qualities of the preacher, such as knowledge of the Scripture, modesty of behavior, and the power of interesting the people, they have recourse to the words—"Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb," (Cant. 4: 11), and explain thus: As a bride (or spouse) adorns herself with all the twenty-four pieces of ornament specified in Isaiah 3: 18-23, so the preacher must be familiar with all the twenty-four books of the Old Testament, without exceptions. Or, they inculcate the same lessons by saying—"As a bride (or spouse) must be shy and modest, so the preacher ought to be modest and retiring." Or, they give their injunctions in this garb: "He who preaches sermons on the Word of God which are not as sweet to his hearers as a mixture of milk and honey, had better be silent." Or, again in another form: "He who preaches sermons which do not please his audience, as much as the bride pleases her husband at the hour of her wedding, had better not speak."

Philo tells us concerning the contents of sermons in Jewish synagogues, "They are of two divisions, one referring to God—*i. e.*, piety and holiness; the other to man—*i. e.*, love and righteousness towards our neighbors." But sermons received this form only here and there, and only after generations of trial and struggle. In the first instance, the explanation of difficult passages which had occurred in the weekly portion of the law that had been read, was the object of the sermon. Gradually, the preachers, according to their bent of mind, gave their attention either to the elucidation of strictly legal questions (Halacha), or to the enforcing of moral duties (Hagada), but all their sayings were based upon words of Scripture.

In different places, and in different periods, one or the

other of these two kinds of preaching was the more popular one—in times of prosperity the legal or “halachic” preaching, and in times of adversity the moral or “hagadic” preaching was generally more acceptable. Once, a representative of either of these schools of preaching happened to come to a certain place on the same day, both in order to preach there. Rabbi Chia, the Halachist, or legal preacher, had scarcely any hearers, but Rabbi Abbahu, the hagadic preacher, had a crowded audience. Rabbi Chia was naturally mortified by this experience, and Rabbi Abbahu, wishing to soothe him, told him the following parable: “Two men met in a certain city; one had precious stones and jewels to sell, the other only small fancy articles. All the people rushed to the latter, because there were scarcely any persons who could appreciate the valuable goods of the other.” Rabbi Chia recognized the kind intention of this parable, and rewarded his successful rival by accompanying him on his way home. This old division of Jewish hearers in two classes is still observable where Jewish sermons are still preached in proper Jewish style.

There are those who gladly listen *for hours* to the legal hair-splittings of the halachic preacher, and there are those to whom this kind of preaching is utterly uncongenial, but who gladly sit the greater part of Sabbath afternoons to listen to the lively expositions of a hagadic preacher. Naturally, therefore, the success of Jewish preachers cannot be uniform, for they can but rarely satisfy all tastes alike. When we read that a certain Rabbi experienced the mortification that during his sermon, as a festival, his congregation, one by one, stole away out of the synagogue, we understand that the good man was not in his right place, and if we, perchance, have suffered from similar preachers, we cannot but envy those Jewish hearers who were allowed thus to give their preachers a lesson. But not every preacher was willing to acquiesce in such defeat.

Of another Rabbi we read that when he noticed how his hearers—quite in modern fashion—gently fell asleep, he roused himself to produce some striking remark, in order to wake his sleepers. Why, he asked, was Esther made

queen over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces? Because—and here curiosity had opened the eyes of the drowsy—she was a descendant of Sarah, who lived to the age of 127 years. That the Jewish doctors were alive to the necessity of having as preachers, only men whose word carried weight through their personal worth, we gather from the words addressed to a certain preacher of note: "Thou preachest beautifully, but thou dost not act beautifully." Very sound are the rabbinical directions for preparing a sermon. They know nothing of reading a manuscript sermon, but they insisted on thorough preparations. The preacher was to go over his subject several times, and know well by heart what he would have to say. They find this duty pointed out in Job 28: 27, 28, "Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and he searched it out. And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding."

Moreover, the Midrash says expressly: If any one has to preach to a congregation, let him say I am not clever; when I rise to speak I shall know what to say, but let him prepare everything beforehand. And again: If thou inclinest thine ear to the law, all to whom thou preachest will incline their ears to thee. In the matter of honesty of quotations, the Rabbis were very particular indeed. They classed honest quoting among the forty-eight different qualifications, by which, according to them, a man obtains a thorough knowledge of the law. In their hyperbolical way they express the importance attached to honesty of quotations by saying, Hast thou not learned that he who quotes a saying in the name of Him who has said it brings redemption to the world? For is it not written, "Esther certified the king thereof *in Mordecai's name?*" Esther 2: 22.

In conclusion, one specimen of how a text is aptly illustrated by means of a parable. The preacher's theme is the perishableness of all earthly enjoyments, and the text of Scripture to enforce it is Ecclesiastes 5: 15, "As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand."

The parable is as follows: A fox stood before a vineyard which was enclosed by a wall. The grapes attracted him, and he searched the wall whether there was an aperture through which he might get into this vineyard. He found a hole, but it was far too small to allow of his getting through. He, therefore, determined to fast three days, in order to become thin enough to get through. He succeeded, and could indulge in eating grapes till he was quite strong again. But when the time came for his going out, again he searched for the hole, but he found it impossible to get out. There was nothing for it but to fast again in order to get through. At last he was once more outside, but lean and weak. "O vineyard" he cried, looking up to it, "how beautiful thou, and how good is thy fruit! But what profit have I from it all? As I went in, even so did I come out again."

WHAT WILL OUR FUTURE BE?

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jer. 6: 16.

I am very glad that THE PECULIAR PEOPLE is to be continued, and that thus the noble work begun by its deceased editor is to be carried forward. It affords me great pleasure to speak to my brethren of the household of Israel through these columns.

It is painful to a son of Israel to see his people so divided in belief, and groping as in a labyrinth. "They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in," can be truthfully said of them. Our people are divided into three parts, namely: the Conservatives or Nationalists, Reformed or Cosmopolitans, and the Hebrew Christians.

The first mentioned class clings firmly to its nationality. This class thinks the way in which to preserve the nationality of the Jews is for them to colonize Palestine and till the soil of the Holy Land, the land which is the cradle of Israel's national youth, and thus, by degrees, occupy the whole country. In so doing they see the restoration of the nation, and the uplifting of Zion. To advocate this view a Hebrew weekly, *Happisgah* (The Summit), began to appear

in New York City nearly a year ago. When this paper had been issued only half a year, there came over from Europe a Jew, known through all the Jewish world as a great scholar and reformer, who started the publication of another weekly paper, *Hakol* (The Call), of which four numbers have already been issued.

This paper represents the second mentioned class, who think that we ought to stay in whatever place we happen to be, preserving our nationality by being separated from other nations, not intermarrying nor mingling more than is needful. It seems that this paper is more generally accepted, since the former was obliged to descend from the "summit" and leave the place for the Call.

The last mentioned class entertain the belief that all Israel as a nation must become converted to the faith of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, who was sent from heaven to redeem the world from the bondage of sin. He has established a spiritual kingdom. All Israel, when converted, shall be gathered from the ends of the world, wherever they are dispersed, and thus be restored to the Promised Land. The Hebrew monthly *Eduth le Israel*, and the English PECULIAR PEOPLE represent this class.

All of these parties maintain that the knowledge of the Hebrew language is necessary to bind together our nation, scattered in all parts of the world, since this language is the only chain which can keep us united.

There may also be mentioned two other classes, viz: the Orthodox and the Liberals. The former are very strict in observing the religious customs and ceremonies, and are expecting the Messiah to come in a miraculous way. There are but very few of this class in America. The latter are very advanced in their views, so that they do not care much for religion, nor for nationality. This is the position of our people to-day.

Oh, that the Word of God might be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path! Then we might realize what our future would be. "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it," said the Psalmist. The plan of God to build up the ruins of His people is revealed in

His Word. The restoration of our nation depends on a certain condition made by God, which, after a careful study of His Word, can be easily found. O, my people, let us resort to this source and ascertain what our future will be.

BEN ISRAEL.

HOW MAY THE GOSPEL REACH THE JEWS?

We take real pleasure in printing the following portion of a private letter from the late Rev. H. Friedländer to the editor of the *Eduth le Israel*:

“The central idea from which all my thoughts about Jewish mission-work arise is, that it is our bounden duty to find out how we may commend the gospel to the Jew, with the prospect of its being accepted. But is it not being accepted here and there? Yes, certainly, but in such a way that while one Jew becomes a Christian, scores of Jews, as a consequence, get so utterly prejudiced against the gospel that throughout their lives they will scarcely tolerate its being mentioned.

“Not to speak of others, I will take my own case. My idea, when I became a Christian, was, that those nearest and dearest to me would be influenced by my conversion, would search and find the Lord Jesus. But what happened? I was shut out from the very possibility of commending the gospel to them. It was very sad, but I satisfied myself with the idea that the gospel *must* always meet with opposition. But as years went on, and I saw this process repeated continually (One young man became a Christian, and all the circle of his relatives and friends were more than ever alienated from the gospel), I said to myself: There is something wrong, for if this process goes on it is an impossibility that more than an infinitesimal fraction of the mere fringe of the Jewish nation should be converted to Christ. It is all very well to say, as is always repeated at missionary meetings, ‘We have not in this dispensation to expect the national conversion of the Jew;’ but that is a mere device to cover up the want of success. As long as we believe, with the Apostle Paul, that ‘all Israel shall be saved,’ we have a right to expect great results if we commend the gospel aright.

“Where, then, lies the fault? Simply in our denationalizing the Jew that becomes a Christian convert? The gospel has nothing to do with national status. The Frenchman who becomes a believer is a French Christian; why

should not the Jew who accepts the Lord Jesus be a Jewish Christian? But I am answered, 'Who hinders them from being Jewish Christians? Do we not teach them that the Jew, though he joins this or that church, still remains a Jew?' Yes, that is all true, but one ounce of practice is worth more than a pound of theory. As a matter of fact, every Jewish convert is incorporated into the nation whose church he joins, and the Jews are right in thinking him cut off from the Jewish nation.

"The question is: Can this state of things be changed? I have all along thought it can, and your *Eduth le Israel* has made a practical beginning. If we follow up in action what the *Eduth* does in preaching, we shall, with God's help, remove the stumbling-block out of the way of the Jew. The Jews once thought that the Gentiles could not be saved except they enter through the gate of the Law of Moses. After eighteen centuries the Gentiles now think that the Jews cannot be saved unless they enter through the gate of the historical churches. We know the Jews were wrong, because they could not rise to the conception of the kingdom of God, which the Prophets had preached, and I feel as sure that the Christians are now wrong, because they do not sufficiently realize the way in which the Lord Jesus and the apostles preached the gospel to the Jews.

"The Lord Jesus never preached the abolition of Jewish ceremonies; he pointed out the abuses that had gathered around them, but not with one word did he discourage the Jews from rightly keeping them. And how liberal and large-hearted was the Apostle Paul when speaking of keeping holidays or conforming to the dietary laws! There was to him no difference between the man who kept a feast and him who did not—between the man who ate everything and him who did not.

"But in our day this truly Christian liberty has been narrowed down to the liberty of abolishing feasts and dietary laws, while the liberty of keeping these things is at once stamped as a kind of apostasy—as *Jewish*. It is time we had done with this unscriptural way of dealing with Jews, and I hope we shall, with God's blessing, be able to transform Jewish synagogues into places where the Lord Jesus is acknowledged as Messiah, and Jewish congregations into Jewish Christian worshipers.

"Of course we must expect this work to be uphill and trying in the extreme, for the way in which mission work among the Jews has hitherto been carried on has made it very hard for any Jew to think, when he is invited to accept the gospel, that it means anything but a throwing-

over of his Jewish nationality. We shall have to live persistently among the Jews and not merely go among them as a sort of superior beings. We shall have to preach to them the gospel according to Moses and the Prophets, as did the Lord Jesus and His apostles. And we shall have to wean them from the idea that the Christian Church wants them and will do anything for them to get them (which as you know is the unfortunate conviction produced on the Jew at large by the routine mission work carried on these eighty years among them), and so to commend the gospel to them that they may see it is they who want the gospel, and ought to shrink from no sacrifice in order to lay hold of it."

We must by all means take inspiration from these words of our leader, now gone from amongst us. We must by our best endeavors show to our brethren of Israel that there are indeed many Christians who love Israel, and who deplore every offense that has been given to Israel both in olden times and to-day, who sympathize with the Jews in their political persecutions, and who regret every mistake made ignorantly by Christians who do not understand the Jews, and by every evil-minded "conversionist" who uses any means other than a fair and kind presentation of the truth as we regard it.

THE PECULIAR PEOPLE also, as we have said in "our platform," will endeavor to show that Christian mission work which offends Jews so much do not always aim to offend, for there is much of such labor which comes from loyal Jewish hearts which yearn for the restoration of Israel's glory, and which bleed because of the evil done by her false friends. We would impress this fact, that there are many Jews who have become Christians without reward, except that of a "conscience void of offense," and without inducement except the persuasive influence of the truth. Such are:

באמת בני ישראל אשר אי־בהם רמיה.

We must always keep in view that we shall inevitably fail if we Gentilize the Jew, and thereby make him forever unable to do anything for his own nation; but we must induce him to remain within the bosom of his own nation

and there be to them a great blessing by showing them that he is, though a Christian,

באמת בני ישראל.

OUR PLATFORM.

We herewith present, as appropriate to the beginning of the second volume of THE PECULIAR PEOPLE, essentially the statement of the supplement to the last few numbers of the former volume, as "our platform."

THE PECULIAR PEOPLE is to serve *Jewish national interests* by advocating the adoption, by the Jewish people, of the following:

1. Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah promised to our fathers.
2. Palestine as the country in which to re-establish a Jewish commonwealth.
3. Hebrew as the language to re-unite the different portions of the Jewish people, now estranged from one another through their different tongues.

THE PECULIAR PEOPLE will discuss all current events which bear upon Jewish national interests from a Biblical stand-point. Its contents will, therefore, be of *equal interest to members of the Synagogue as to members of the Church.*

The former—the members of the Synagogue—will have an opportunity of making public, in our columns, their views about the New Testament.

The latter—the members of the Christian churches—will learn what is *the real state of the Jewish mind*, and they will be able to correct many erroneous notions rife on the subject.

We strive fully to realize the difficulties of this Jewish-Christian position we desire to occupy.

In the Synagogue as in the Church, prejudice is very easily aroused against it.

We desire, however, to show to the members of the Synagogue that there are Christians who have a sincere and tender regard for the best interests of Jews. And it is our wish also to show to the members of Christian churches that Jews have been too long misunderstood—if not misrepresented.

Having, after mature deliberation, undertaken the proclamation of this *message of peace*, we appeal confidently to *the thinking members of Synagogue and Church* to help us by their early subscriptions to THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

The Peculiar People.

חרשות הנעשות—NEWS—במחנה ישראל.

JEWISH MISSION HOUSE.

It is the intention of the Hebrew Free School Association and the Y. M. H. A. (Young Men's Hebrew Association) in New York City to use their utmost efforts to interest the community in the erection of a Mission House down town.

A JERUSALEM RAILWAY.

A railway is to be built between Jerusalem and Jaffa. A Jerusalem Jew, Joseph Nabon by name, who is an Ottoman subject, has obtained from the Sultan a charter for this purpose. The charter holds good for seventy-one years. The estimated cost of construction is \$250,000.

THE MAIMONIDES LIBRARY.

The Maimonides Library is one of the institutions of which our Jewish brethren of New York City may justly be proud. It has now upon its shelves over 31,000 volumes, and a yearly circulation of these among 5,000 registered readers. The class of literature circulated is much above the average of what is ordinarily read. During the past year 1,100 new volumes were added by purchase, and 1,000 received from various donors.

THE MONTEFIORE HOME.

In perpetuating the memory of Sir Moses Montefiore, not in marble nor in brass, but in an edifice for the shelter and care of those unhappy ones whom disease has stricken with a fatal hand, the New York Israelites have evinced the practical character of their charity, and at the same time have idealized that charity by associating with it the name of the illustrious philanthropist. The edifice is situ-

ated on 11th Ave., 138th St., Hamilton Ave. and 139th St., and is a model of chaste architecture. The whole property, consisting of fifteen city lots and the building, cost something over \$206,000. Accommodations exist for about one hundred and twenty-five patients. At the dedication of the building the Hon. Carl Schurz and the Hon. Abram S. Hewitt delivered excellent addresses.

JEWISH SCHOOLS IN POLAND.

The Russian government has issued the following directions for the future conduct of Jewish elementary schools in Poland:

The opening of a school requires official consent.

The teacher must obtain the Rabbi's testimonial as to competent knowledge in Hebrew and the Jewish religion, such certificate to be stamped by the government official.

The teacher must prove by documents to be a man of good character, and the school-house must be attested by the government officials as of good sanitary condition.

A BIT OF OLD NEWS.

A manuscript in the British Museum, which has not yet been printed, is devoted to portraying the merits of the famous St. Thomas, the martyr of Canterbury, in the reign of Henry II. The volume contains two curious entries, relating to the early Jews. It states that at a Council held in St. Paul the Jews entered the assembly to look up their debtors. This took place before the massacre at York, in 1190. In another portion of the manuscript it is stated that Henry de London invited a Rabbi ("episcopum Judæorum") to take a seat at the Council, as he was the only Bishop in the kingdom that had not cheated St. Thomas. The name of this Rabbi is unfortunately suppressed.—*Jewish Chronicle*.

A NEW SOCIETY.

A new society, called the "Montefiore and Lady Judith Hebrew Association," is being formed in New York for the benefit of Jewish immigrants in that city. Its object is, we believe, by the advice and co-operation of such men as

are familiar with the language and nature of the immigrants, to Americanize them and provide employment for them. We hope that this society may be so conducted that it may aid in ameliorating the condition of these wanderers from other shores who congregate in New York, which is fast becoming the great center for Jews of all classes. The general condition of the poorer foreign population there is deplorable in the extreme, and if the association now in contemplation shall succeed in improving even in a small degree, their social, moral and intellectual status, it will render a great and much need service. The Secretary of this society is Mr. M. G. Lansberg, 54 Union Square.

GLEANINGS FROM THE JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN PRESS.

THE COST OF MAKING CONVERTS.

In Smalley's "Cost of the Gospel" it is said, after an exhaustive comparison of the religious work done throughout the world by the various Christian sects, that the following table illustrates very closely the actual outlay required to bring into any one of the reformed churches each one of the people named:

An African.....	\$14	A Japanese.....	\$ 80
An Italian.....	42	A Chinese.....	100
A Spaniard.....	55	A Jew.....	2,800
An East Indian.....	60		

This is, of course, based on the statistics of American missionary societies. In England the cost of converting a Jew is very much higher.—*Jewish World*.

Of course many missions, and we know of at least one such, have converts that pay, contributing themselves to the cause. But these are exceptional. Take for example the Lutheran Mission in New York City, whose missionary costs the church \$1,500 a year. In seven years there was one single convert, making one Jewish convert cost \$10,500. Or in the last four years one convert, making the cost \$6,000. We may say, of course, "One soul is worth more than millions," but the question remains yet to be asked: "Where is the wisdom of such work? Why does not God

grant fruit?" etc., etc. To be sure, a few dollars more or less make but little difference; but we ought to seek to ascertain where the fault lies. We must preach the gospel without looking for fruit or doubting our Master, but we must *do it*, and do it *wisely*.

THE CONVERSIONISTS.

We dislike to refer so often to the conversionists. It serves, on the one hand, to advertise them, and on the other, seems to suggest that they are growing formidable indeed. But we must again allude to the subject, although it grieves us to publish more proofs of the unreliable character of these "great gull" societies that compass earth and sea to make a proselyte, clothing and board thrown in. Recent mention was made in our columns of the failure of the Rabbinowitch movement in South Russia, on the testimony of an honest Lutheran clergyman. And now the scholarly Prof. Strack publishes in his mission magazine an essay on the English conversionists which is a confession of failure, despite the extravagant reports to the contrary that are spread by "religious papers" for the purpose of deceiving their public. No statement is too absurd and incredible for their purpose; for it becomes part and parcel of a religious dogmatism that admits neither logic nor common sense.—*Jewish Messenger*.

This is indeed very suggestive. It shows that it would be useless to hide the facts from the eyes of the public, even were we disposed to do so. But we have no wish to conceal the truth. Whatever others may do, we trust that we shall act so that criticism shall be impossible. That many societies virtually plunder the pockets of sympathetic Christians cannot be doubted, though we would not impugn the motives nor conduct of the societies except when they do what is absolutely wrong. This shows at any rate that the Jews have eyes which see.

CANDID ADMISSION.

We take pleasure in quoting the two following sentences without comment from a writer in *Nathanael*; in reference to the mistakes in Jewish mission work in England:

"My intention in writing this sad revelation is not to inform Christians, but rather to show the *Jews* that they

are not the only ones who know our faults, but that a missionary paper is ready to acknowledge these faults. That dulls the points of many arrows."

Also a word from the editor:

"Only by a candid admission of the mistakes can there be effected an improvement in England, and the knowledge of the existing faults will aid the German workers in the field of Jewish missions to be careful lest they fall into the mistakes here condemned."

We follow the example of Dr. Strack's excellent journal, and we would always in like manner be ready to make "candid admissions."

LOOK ON THIS PICTURE AND THEN ON THAT.

Our friends will remember that more than a year ago I was led to visit Chicago, and while there the Lord opened the way for me to establish a branch of our Hebrew Christian Work.—*The Rev. Jacob Freshman, in his Annual Report for 1888.*

It should be added in connection with the origin of our mission, that while the direct occasion of its beginning was a visit of Mr. Freshman to Chicago, and while he has shown his interest by sending us tracts and papers, yet the work here has no connection with his Hebrew Christian Mission in New York.—*Annual Report of the Hebrew Christian Mission in Chicago for 1888.*

Read Amos 3: 3.

A marked copy of the latter report was sent us from Chicago with this written upon the margin: "Mr. F. has nothing whatsoever to do with our mission, has never been here since the first meeting of the committee; we get his little paper, and that is about all."

HAKOL.

With the opening of this year, there appeared in New York City a new Hebrew newspaper, הקול (The Call), edited by Mr. M. L. Rodkinson, a gentleman well known in the Jewish world for his Talmudical scholarship. In commenting upon *Hakol*, and speaking of ignorance and prejudice, the *American Israelite* says :

"We are emancipated; not so, however, the masses of immigrants saturated with notions and habits, customs and habiliments foreign to this country, which keep them strangers also in this country, strangers in their very homes; they need badly just such a man as Mr. Rodkinson and such an organ as the *Hakol* to bring life and motion into that inert mass, to free the Jewish mind from its dim Polish prison. These thousands of immigrants might become valuable and an honor to Judaism in this country, while they might in their hard shells of bigotry become not only a disgrace to American Judaism, but also the cause of rank atheism to their children. This is especially true in New York, where those jargon papers do positively nothing to enlighten the masses, the pious Rabbis are engaged in the slaughter house and kitchen business, jargon comedians perpetuate the lowest kind of taste, Judaism reduces itself to a bundle of outlandish observances and religion to a screaming farce; there, especially, a man like Mr. Rodkinson is in his proper place. He ought to be supported and encouraged. There is, to our knowledge, a large element of emancipated and enlightened men among those immigrants. They should unite and establish a society or congregation, whichever it may be called, and afford Mr. Rodkinson the opportunity to be heard publicly once a week at least, to advocate such reforms as he proposes. He is the man to silence your very learned obscurants, and to bring out gloriously the Jewish mind before the world which now considers you fossils from the Ural Mountains."

The new paper but follows in the steps of the many Jewish reformers. "To assimilate" is their watch-word. Their solution of the Jewish question is that outwardly the Jews shall assimilate with all the Christian (*i. e.*, Gentile) inhabitants of Europe and America. They advocate the abandonment of many Jewish rites and ritual observances, and the employment in the worship of the synagogue of many customs and usages of Christendom. They are not even strongly against intermarriage. This new paper, written in quite good Hebrew, is walking the same path with the *American Israelite*, the *Jewish Tidings*, and other exponents of the extreme reformed type of doctrine. The Jew, according to them, while still a Jew (*sic!*) within, is in externals a Christian, but *without Christ*. The Jews must, they say, remain wherever they can best obtain a livelihood,

and remain a nation *in abstracto* simply. They may as Jews give up whatever of the law, etc., may chance to interfere with success in their worldly life. But of this we will say more at another time.

The *American Israelite* speaks with favor of Mr. Rodkinson's venture. In so far as his paper may prove a civilizing factor in immigrant Jewish society in New York City, we wish him well. But we fear that the civilizing process may cost these poor people their religion. True and vital piety is not induced by casting ridicule upon what the Word of God holds sacred. These simple-minded immigrant people ought to be helped; but it is no efficient aid to cause them to cast away all they have revered, and then to give them nothing in its place but a fund of wit and jollity, with its corollary: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

RABBI JOHANNAN.

We reprint from the *Jewish Intelligence* a poem by Nathaniel W. Carre, A. B., based on a story in the Talmud concerning Rabbi Johannan:

A LEGEND OF THE TALMUD.

Rabbi Johannan on his dying bed
 Uplifted painfully his aching head,
 And tears coursed slowly down his wasted cheek,
 Grieving the souls of his disciples meek.
 And, as they bent the head and beat the breast,
 There questioned him one bolder than the rest:
 "Rabbi, thou light of Israel, whom God
 Is taking from our head, we kiss the rod,
 For we have sinned, and in the dust we bow;
 But light of Israel, why weepest thou?"
 Rabbi Zachai answered, low and still,—
 His accents made the listeners' blood run chill—
 "Hear me, my sons. If in the morn I stood
 Before a mortal king of flesh and blood—
 To-day in pomp upon the gilded throne,
 To-morrow in the sepulchre alone—
 Who, angered, yet his anger might outpend;
 Who binding me, his bondage would have end;
 Whose wrath I might appease with costly bribe,
 Or soothe him by the spokesman of my tribe;

If borne to death at fiat of His word,
 Eternal death waits not on mortal sword,
 Yet then—yet even then—my tears would flow,
 Crushed by the heavy weight of human woe.
 But now they bear me to the King of kings,
 The Lord and Source of all created things,
 Who ever and for ever doth endure,
 Whose throne on timeless ages rests secure. •
 Who, angered, will His anger ne'er outspend;
 Who binding me, His bondage hath no end.
 No gem, no jewel can His justice bribe,
 Nor can I find a Goel of my tribe;
 And if He touch me with the Archangel's breath,
 Eternity is mine of death in death.
 And furthermore two ways are opening out
 Shrouded in darkness of this sickening doubt,
 The downward path that slopes to fire and worm,
 The upward course that leads from tear and storm;
 And knowing not which course they bear my soul,
 Should not, my sons, these tears in anguish roll ?”

[Thus far the 'Talmud; the following stanza is original with the poet.—Ed.]

And neath that awful dread of coming doom,
 The Rabbi's spirit passed into the gloom.
 And horror deep weighed down the orphaned band,
 A cold air smote them, by death angels fanned.
 And then a cry went wailing through the night,
 “Messiah, son of David, bring us light.”

We append the original text with a more literal English prose translation.

רבי יוחנן בן זכאי.

כשחלה רבי יוחנן בן זכאי, נכנסו תלמידיו לבקרו, כיון שראה אותם התחיל
 בוכה. אמרו לו: רבינו, נר ישראל, עמוד הימיני, פטיש החוק, מפני מה
 אתה בוכה? אמר להם: אלו לפני מלך בשר ודם היו מוליכים אותי, שהיים
 כאן ומחר בקבר, אם כעס עלי אין כעסו כעס עולם, ואם אוסרני אין אסורו אסור
 עולם, ואם ממיתני אין מיתתו מיתת עולם, ואני יכול לפייסו בדברים ולשחרו
 בממון, ואף על פי כן הייתי בוכה. ועתה מוליכים אותי לפני מלך מלכי
 המלכים הקדוש, ברוך הוא, שהוא חיוקים לעולמי עולמים, שאם כעס עלי
 כעסו כעס עולם, ואם אוסרני אסורו אסור עולם, ואם ממותני מיתתו מיתת עולם,
 ואין אני יכול לפייסו בדברים ולשחרו בממון, ולא עוד אלא שיש לפני ב' דרכים,
 אחד לגיהנום ואחד לבגן העדן, ואיני יודע באיזה דרך מהן מוליכים אותי ולא אבכה?

—*Babylonian Talmud, Tract Berachoth, p. 28 b.*

RABBI JOHANNAN, THE SON OF ZACHAEUS.

When Rabbi Johannan, the son of Zachaeus, was sick, his disciples came to visit him, and when he saw them he began to weep. They said to him: "Rabbi, light of Israel, pillar of the right hand, strong hammer, why art thou weeping?" He said to them: "If they were bearing me before a king of flesh and blood, who to-day is here, and to-morrow in the grave, who if he were angry with me, his anger would not last forever, and if he were to put me in bondage, his bondage would not be everlasting, and if he were to condemn me to death, that death would not be eternal, and whom I could soothe with words and bribe with riches (mamon), even in these circumstances I should weep. But now they are bearing me before the King of all kings, the Holy One—blessed be He!—who liveth and endureth forever and ever, who if He be angry with me, His anger will last forever, and if He put me in bondage, His bondage will be everlasting, and if He condemn me to death, that death will be eternal, whom I can neither soothe with words nor bribe with riches; and since, further, there are before me two ways, the one leading to Gehenna (Valley of Hinnom), and the other to Paradise (Garden of Eden), and I know not to which they will be bearing me, should I not then weep?"

 THE HARP OF FAITH.

BY REV. ABRAM S. ISAACS, PH. D., EDITOR OF "*The Jewish Messenger*."

At midnight, so the rabbis tell,
 When David slept profound,
 A harp suspended o'er his couch
 Gave forth a trembling sound.

Up sprang the royal bard inspired,
 His fingers touched the chord,
 And with strange gladness in his soul,
 In psalms he praised the Lord.

At midnight when the doubts assail,
 And anxious fears surround,
 O soul of mine, amid the gloom,
 Give forth a joyous sound!

O bid me seize the harp of faith,
 And sing a holy strain,
 Until each day my life and thought
 Resound in glad refrain!

—*New York Independent.*

