

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

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

EDITOR,

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

Vol. III.

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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.

הכיטו אל-צור הצבתם
ואל-מקבת כור 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. III.

ALFRED CENTRE, N. Y., JAN., 1891.

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JUDÆUS SUM ; JUDAICI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

THE Jewish nation exists no more, men say. The sons of Israel are scattered to the four winds of heaven. Without a home, they seek in every land a resting place. Individuals and families may find homes, but the Jew as a Jew has none. His fatherland is the home of others. The sons of the stranger inhabit the Holy City. Living in the hope of future restoration, the hearts of millions of loyal Israelites await that glorious day, while multitudes, having given up that hope, have suffered the warm love for the land of Jahveh's promise to grow cold and dull, and it becomes mere reverence of ancient glory now long departed.

AND yet, wherever the Jews may wend their way, how far soever they may be dispersed among other nations, however they may be influenced by the manners and customs of the peoples among whom they dwell, they retain, in a most remarkable manner, their unity as a people, if not as a nation. Three things contribute toward this unity. The first is the attachment of the Jews to the Holy Land, and the hope, based upon the imperishable word of God, of a national restoration and a return to the land of sacred story. Even when the eye of faith has grown dim, and

the fulfillment of God's gracious promises seems to be so long delayed that belief in the truth of prophecy is finally cast aside, the sentiment still remains, a bond of union. Another important element which contributes toward the unity of Israel as a people, is the Hebrew language, which is so dear to every loyal son of Israel as the medium of the revelation of Jahveh to His people, and the expression of the religious thought and feeling of the chosen people in all the ages. The third factor in the unity of the Jewish people, and the most important, is the religion of Israel, the worship of the one true God, the God of Israel.

Just as the Jew has gone everywhere so that there is not a region in the known world where the foot of the Hebrew has not trod, so has the worship of Jahveh, the God of Israel, found a congenial home in every clime and with every tribe of men. The history of the Hebrew race is familiar to nearly every Gentile home in civilized lands. The story of God's dealings with that people is told by every mother to her children, and is a chief means of teaching religious truth in every pulpit. The Saviour, Jesus Christ, who, in His human nature, was born of that noble lineage, has won almost the whole world to His gospel of peace. The land, sacred to the heart of the children of Israel according to the flesh, is dear also to every son of Abraham by faith in Jesus, as being the land hallowed by the feet of Him who spake as never man spake, and who there gave His life that all mankind might, through faith in Him, have life everlasting. So also has the language of the Hebrew Scriptures become of wonderful interest to other nations. Its literature has been studied by other scholars, many of whom have been glad to drink of that well of religious thought. The sons of the stranger have desired to know the speech of Canaan.

In all this we may well rejoice. But it is a cause for sorrow that as the nations have learned from Israel to love the Holy Land for the sake of the holy men of God who there dwelt, and for the Word of God which came

from that region, a large part of the Jewish people have so far lost their faith and trust in that Word of God that they place no hope in the fulfilment of the prophecies relating to themselves and their ultimate restoration as a nation to that ancient possession. And, sad as it is, just as the nations have come to love that history and that land, so many Jews have so far lost their affection for it that they care not if they shall ever take their place among the nations, they care not if their nation, if their people be absorbed in the mingling of the races. If the Jewish people are kept, as we believe, by a mysterious providence, in order that God's gracious purpose may be carried out upon them, let us ardently desire that they may not cease to hope, to pray, and to strive for the "peace of Jerusalem."

BUT if anything is worthy of more than a passing notice, it is the fact that people of other nations have come to know and love the Hebrew language. This language and literature alone would earn the gratitude of all men, even did the world not owe its religion and its Saviour to the Jews. Everywhere now we see zealous and earnest students who are devoting themselves to this department of study with painstaking care. To be sure we are now only on the threshold, as it were, in this matter. At an early age our boys begin the study of Latin, that when they enter college they may pursue the study of the classic authors of the Latin nation, or that they may the better know their own language. Almost as early they commence to learn Greek in order that they may become acquainted with the treasures of Hellenic thought, and gain the discipline which the study of that most rich and exact of tongues can afford. But even our ministers, many of them, think that they can get along with little or no knowledge of Hebrew, and fancy that an acquaintance with its idiom is by no means necessary in order to the interpretation of the sacred Word of God. No boy would be admitted to a college till he had read Cæsar and Virgil, Xenophon and Homer, and yet no knowledge of Hebrew is demanded of those who would enter a theological semi-

nary. Is it so much easier to acquire a familiarity with the Semitic dialects that preliminary study is unnecessary? Is the accurate knowledge of the Bible of so much less importance than that of Greek and Latin literature that the smattering of Hebrew which the average theological student obtains will suffice? But even though interest in the study of Hebrew is not so wide-spread as that in the study of Greek and Latin, it is steadily and rapidly growing among intelligent laymen, so that it will not be long before we shall find our young people as desirous of learning the tongue of Moses and David as that of Plato and Homer. There is no reason why our boys should not begin Hebrew as early as they begin Cæsar, or even earlier. A child finds nothing strange in the Hebrew order of words. It is for him easier and more natural than is Latin. But what is amazing and very sad is that in the face of this growing tendency so many Jewish people are content to forget the holy language. It is not strange that Indo-Europeans should be slow to acquire a love for Hebrew, but it is the greatest of wonders, nay, it is an omen of evil, that sons of Abraham should willingly forget the language of the Law and the Prophets, the language of the holy songs of the "sweet psalmist of Israel." If there is one cord stronger than another,—aside from the worship of Jahveh, which is now no longer peculiar to the Jewish people,—which binds together those who can trace their lineage to him who believed God, and to whom that faith was accounted righteousness, it is this language of highest antiquity, and yet still a living tongue of greatest dignity and richness in poetic expression, which, as used to-day by multitudes of Jews, glorifies the simple and common affairs of even a rude life by words fit to be the vehicle for the thoughts of Heaven itself. Let us urge upon the youths of Israel that they forsake not the sacred tongue. If we have any influence upon them, and if our opinion is worth ought to them, we would beg the teachers of Israel not to cast away this bond of union. We who are eager to learn it know its value, though our tongues stammer in their utterance of the holy words, and our pens halt in their

feeble attempt to write the language which has charmed our hearts. Nay, brethren of the house of Jacob, let not the speech of your fathers languish upon your lips, lest you be scattered farther from one another, and ye put farther from you the day of your redemption.

RIGHTLY is the worship of Jahveh, the one true God, a firm bond uniting the people of Israel as no other nation is united. But the worship of Jahveh is now extended to other people. Christianity has spread the knowledge of God and of His Word over the whole world, and all nations bow down before the God of Israel, who made the heavens and the earth. And just as other nations are learning to know and love Him, so are many of the sons of Israel drifting away from their ancient faith in the God of their fathers as a personal being whose delight was in them to a vague illusive trust in a mere somewhat, nearly everything affirmed of Him in Scripture becoming in their eyes a figure simply. May they return to Jahveh, and may He lead them and love them freely! May they recognize in Jesus of Nazareth the promised Messiah; may they see in Him God manifest in the flesh; and may they be no longer faithless, but believing! Thus will they avoid that disintegration born of skepticism, which if it continue will cause the Jewish nation, in very truth, to be no longer.

ARE THE JEWS REALLY THE CHOSEN PEOPLE?

(From the German of Prof. Franz Delitzsch, D. D., Leipsic.)

BY THE REV. B. PICK, PH. D.

(Continued from page 198.)

We must suppose that in the centuries before the exile there were not wanting pious Jews, who, when coming in contact with heathen, and remembering their call, testified of the God of revelation. The contrary is inconceivable, and yet we have only very few evidences for our supposition. The woman of Zarephath, to whom Elijah was directed, and whom we must think as a Canaanite heathen

is obliged to confess from her experience with him : "Now I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." And the little captive maid, who, as we read in 2 Kings, ch. 5, advises the Syrian captain Naaman to seek healing of Elisha, the prophet that is in Samaria, becomes the means of his conversion; for, having been healed, he confesses: "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel." But in both cases the success goes beyond the intended purpose; for the sending of Elijah to Zarephath has for its object to protect him from starvation, and the advice of the Israelitish maid has for its object to deliver her master from the seemingly incurable disease. The same is the case with the commission given to Elijah to go to Damascus (1 Kings 19: 15), which Elijah executes. Here, too, it concerns a purely worldly object, the kingly succession in Syria. With tears Elisha announces to Hazael that he will become the successor of Ben-hadad, but also the oppressor of Israel. 2 Kings 8: 10-13. To be sure this interference with the inner affairs of the Damascene Syria is in itself enigmatical and entirely incomprehensible if the mission had not the higher object lying beyond the success to show the God of Israel as the Lord of the present and future, as the God of the history of the world and of prophecy,—for Elisha says to Hazael: "The Lord hath showed me that thou shalt be king over Syria,"—but the motive of the mission, which follows by way of inference, remains inexpressed.

But Jonah's mission to Nineveh has an expressed missionary purpose. "Arise," the divine commission says, "go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." He is to go to the great heathen city, not to announce to it the irrevocable judgment, but to preach to it the threatening judgment, that by repentance it might be prevented. In other cases the prophets announce from their home watch-tower their prophecies over distant nations; here, however, the prophet is to take his stand among the heathen and to cry against them, *i. e.*, to call them to repentance by way of

threat and warning. Thus Jonah himself understood the commission, for he goes to Joppa and hires a ship going to Tarshish; he was to go north-east and sails south-west, which shows the diametrical opposition between God's command and his heart's disposition. That he should preach repentance to the heathen and thus regard the heathen as standing with Israel on the same line entitling them to salvation,—this thought he cannot bear.

How is this consistent with the fact that in the Psalms and elsewhere love rooting in faith and winged by hope tries to draw the heathen to the communion of like possession of the salvation with Israel? Jonah's psalm shows how well acquainted he was with the Davidic hymn-book. That he nevertheless sought to avoid the divine commission can only be explained that it absolutely required of him to preach repentance, thus offering salvation which they, by coming to Israel, should seek. Were he commissioned to preach unto Nineveh that it should turn to the God of Israel and the people of this God, he would not have fled. He pouts also, after having been miraculously preserved for his mission by God, because, on account of his preaching, the Ninevites believe in God and repent, and thus turn aside the judgment. Even then he is still angry, and this because it so happens as he anticipated, that God will take back his threat and make mercy take the place of justice. Thus he confesses himself (Jonah 4: 2); but the real sting to his Israelitish consciousness consists in this, that it now becomes evident that nothing but faith and repentance is required of the heathen, and thus it comes out that the way to grace does not necessarily lead through submitting to the national law of Israel. His indignation is nearly related to that amazement which, according to Acts 10:45, took hold of the believers of the circumcision when the gift of the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and his own. He foreboded that the salvation will be lost for Israel in the measure as it bursts the bounds of nationality. In the reception of the heathen the loss of Israel's adoption comes before his prophetic vision, and this is the last ground of his bitter displeasure.

With the repentance of the king and the people of Nineveh, the conduct of the heathen sailors in the beginning of the book corresponds. By this, too, the susceptibility of the heathen to salvation is brought under the eyes of the nationally restricted prophet. For after Jonah had made himself known to them they not only made every effort to save the prophet of Jahveh, but are also seized with the fear of Jahveh, commence to pray to Him, offer sacrifices and make vows. It is the same idea which in the first and third part of the book (ch. 1. 3, and 4,) comes to an historical representation, and is brought to the consciousness of the prophet in the Kikajon, *i. e.*, in the quickly grown and quickly withered gourd: "Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night and perished in a night: and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" Thus—this word of God means to say—the heathen are an object of divine labor and care, providence and education; and not even the cattle, still less are men, excluded from the merciful care of God.

The middle, or second part of the book, is also of essential significance to the idea of the book. As the prophet must experience in the first and third part that the attestation of the Lord and the preaching of His word to the Gentiles is by no means an intuitive thing, so the middle part narrates how the prophet, seemingly lost for his vocation, is yet preserved for it by God's wondrous interference. His way to the heathen goes through the grave in the belly of the fish. A marvel to himself and to the Ninevites he goes preaching through the Gentile city. He is a type of Jesus, whose way to the Hellenes goes through the grave in the heart of the earth; but with this difference, that the Old Testament prophet was buried by his own restricted Judaism, and his antitype by the restricted Judaism of the Pharisees and the fanaticized people.

This little book, which is in such real earnest as to the

universality of the divine grace, is in the Old Testament like a jewel which has fallen down from heaven. It is a self-justification of the God of Israel against the misconception that he is the exclusive national God of the Jews. It brings to the ground the heathenish conception of Israel's God, and with it the modern rationalistic conception. It is a divine vindication of the heathen against Jewish arrogance and pride of nationality. This book of Jonah, whose name means the Dove, is like a dove sent forth from Israel to bring to the Gentiles the olive-branch of peace.

In wonderful soberness it is silent about the effect which the divine remedy had upon the prophet. But if it did not have the intended effect the book would not have been written at all. But though we cannot ascertain the effect of the directing guidance of God upon Jonah himself, yet after-effects of the wonderful book can be pointed out in the literature of the following time.

(To be Continued.)

EXTRACT

FROM AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE "MILDMAY CONFERENCE," LONDON, JUNE, 1890.

BY MR. DAVID BARON.

I had the opportunity last year, at this Conference, of speaking about Jews in the West; this year my subject is Jews in the East.

And first, let me say, it is very well for you to hear something about Jewish Missions, but the danger is that in the enthusiasm felt at what has been done—and God has done great things—you should be carried away with the idea, which some do entertain, that the Jewish nation is now thoroughly evangelized, and has heard of Jesus Christ. I have a very different impression—based on actual personal experience and observation—and it is that there are still hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of Jews who have never yet heard the precious name of Jesus,

or seen a copy of the New Testament, or even know there is such a book in existence as the New Testament.

If this be so, and I am persuaded it is so, the question is, How are they to be reached, seeing the time is short? Now permanent missions are very useful, and we pray for more of them; living missionaries not ashamed of the name of Christ are valuable, and many more are needed; but these will not suffice. This widely scattered people require wandering men to reach them. It is impossible to evangelize them generally by means of established missions. It is impossible, as it is not necessary, because they are so scattered that scarcely a town, or even a village, in the world is without a Jew in it. Therefore we must get back to the old thought of Jesus Christ, and follow His example by sending forth men, two and two, to go everywhere from city to city, and village to village, proclaiming to the daughter of Zion, 'The Saviour cometh; the Saviour has come. I am aware that it is not always pleasant work; that it is attended by many difficulties, and even dangers; yet it seems to me, the work of these last days is to go from place to place, declaring, whether the Jews will hear or will forbear, that Jesus of Nazareth, of whom they know nothing.

Now let me begin at once with Egypt and give you a few facts about the Jews in that land. Reaching Alexandria we stayed there six days, and visiting a few towns—Tanta, Talka, and Mansourah—we found this, and it is a remarkable fact, that in that land, whence God brought them out long ages ago, there are now about 250,000 Jews. Do you remember that wonderful passage in Deut. 28; "And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again, with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again; and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy *you*"? And so it was; for Josephus tells us that large numbers, after the destruction of Jerusalem, were taken in ships to Egypt and sold there as slaves.

There are now three distinct communities of Jews in Egypt. The native Oriental Jews number about half the

Jewish population. These are descendants of those who were in Egypt before the advent of Jesus Christ; many of them before the destruction of the second temple. They are true Jews, but speak Arabic, and are thoroughly Oriental.

Then there is a large section of what we would call foreign Jews; that is, Jews of all nationalities and lands and languages, who have gone to Egypt on business as emigrants or refugees. Many of these are from Russia and Galicia, as well as Spain. In the Jewish quarter you can hear the jargon, as in Wilna, and the Spanish. These are scattered all over Lower Egypt, perhaps 10,000 in Alexandria, 20,000 in Cairo, and large communities in other towns. What is being done amongst these? Except in Alexandria, where a mission has been established by the Church of Scotland—not to Jews exclusively, but working among Jews—there is nothing whatever being done. This is a very sad fact, seeing how readily they listen, how freely they heard us, and followed us from place to place, shop to shop, and house to house. Everywhere they received us hospitably, and listened with great eagerness to what we had to tell them.

Then the third section are found in Cairo only—a small but most interesting portion. They must be called Protestants among the Jews. They are the Karaites, many of whom may also be found in Jerusalem, Constantinople, and the Crimea; but in Cairo is one of their largest communities in the world. They have never accepted the Talmud or any Rabbinical traditions of men. They have the Word of God; that is, the books of Moses and the prophets. They are intensely Messianic in expectation. They are a noble class of Jews, and much more accepted and liked by their Gentile neighbors than the other Jews. We had the great pleasure of meeting the Rabbi of this important community by appointment, and speaking about Jesus as the Messiah. When I asked this noble old patriarch, "What is the need of the Jewish people?" he replied, "The coming of the Son of David." "We believe," I said, "and thousands of Jews believe, that the Son of David has come; that he

came as foretold in the second temple, and that it is Jesus of Nazareth." He was silent for a time, and thoughtful. Then he said, "I know the Protestants believe that, but our eyes have not yet seen the salvation of God." It was a very touching answer. I pressed on him the claims of Christ. He took my hand and said, "A New Testament was given me twenty years ago in Constantinople. I have not read, but I will read it now." I was thankful for that promise, and I ask you to pray that this noble old man may, as he reads, find the Spirit of God making the word of Jesus Christ spirit and life to him.

Now about Egypt generally. Everywhere we had great access for the preaching of the gospel although some difficulty, both in Egypt, Palestine, and the Levant, in distributing the Hebrew New Testament, simply because of the great ignorance of the Hebrew. This is a sad and significant fact to us, because in losing hold of their sacred language they are losing hold of religion altogether. It is usually so, because the prayers and exercises are all in the Hebrew tongue. However, the large majority of these did not know Hebrew sufficiently well to read the New Testament understandingly. We have, of course, distributed the New Testament in Judeo-Spanish, and other languages, wherever possible to obtain them from Bible depots. But in Egypt these depots are few, and on a tour of discovery like this we could not know beforehand the languages likely to be wanted. Thus amongst hundreds of Jews we would find only one who could read Hebrew well enough to justify us in giving him a copy. In the Levant we were provided by the agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society with copies of the New Testament in Judeo-Spanish at half the selling price, and we used many of these.

But another difficulty arose from the fact that we could not persuade the people that we were giving the books freely to them; the idea was so strange to them. In the East the way to get something is to give. If you give a man a present you expect something in return, more and better. Hence the Jews were suspicious, thinking we would come afterward and demand a return in money, produce,

goods, or hospitality. Many would say, "Why do you do this? What do you expect for these books?" One Rabbi said, "Do you do it for God's sake?" "Yes," we said, "we do it for the sake of God our Father, and for the sake of Jesus Christ, whom God hath exalted with His right hand a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel." We told him also that Christians in England, loving God and loving His people, had sent these books about God to them freely. When they fairly grasped the idea that the gifts were really free, a change came over them; they were surprised and astonished that Christians should have sent them books about God for nothing. They knew nothing of the contents of the New Testament, but seeing it in the sacred language took it that it was about God. Of course we had to explain that the books were about the Messiah of Israel promised by God to our fathers.

Having spent about three weeks in Egypt we sailed to Jaffa, spending a little while in the place of blessed memories. I cannot tell you what it was to me to visit the land of my fathers and the Holy City. Now I want to tell you a little of what we saw to show you how God is working, preparing the way for the return of Israel to Palestine. There is need for intense earnestness in this great work for the Jews, because the time is now evidently very short. Everything seems to point to the near return of our people to the land of their fathers. So I may put before you a few facts and notes with regard to the present state of things.

One interesting fact is the great facilities now existing for visiting the East, as compared, for example, with what our revered friend, Dr. Bonar, found when visiting the land with McCheyne. He has told us how, when he was about to go there, two women of his congregation were conversing about his journey. "How will he get there?" said one. "He is going to Egypt," replied the other, "and he will make his way from Egypt to Palestine." "Then he won't be coming back for forty years," exclaimed the first, evidently thinking of Israel's forty years' wandering in the wilderness. Well, now one can get to Palestine in eight or nine days. Moreover, the land is wonderfully

opening in all directions. There are now beautiful roads from Jaffa to Jerusalem, Jerusalem to Hebron, and so on. Nablous, Nazareth, Tiberias, all these places are easily accessible. They are making good roads everywhere, and at last, in April, they have begun work on the long-rumored railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem, which will transform the land.

Then the Holy City is undergoing a wonderful transformation. Jerusalem is rising from the dust and ashes of centuries. Formerly visitors had to pick their way through mud and dust, now fine streets are being made. In a very short time, probably, all the streets will be as well paved as the London streets.

Further, there has been of late a great increase in the Jewish population of Palestine. I used to think the accounts I heard must be exaggerated, but they were not. You have no idea of the great stream of emigration setting towards Palestine within the last few years. According to Mr. Moor, the British Consul, the increase in three years has been 20,000 Jews in Jerusalem; more than two-thirds of the population are now Jews. There are seventy or eighty thousand Jews in the land. There is this important and significant fact about Jerusalem: The Mohammedans are decreasing from year to year, while the Jews are increasing rapidly.

Then the Jewish colonies are a great fact. There are seven between Jaffa and Jerusalem purely Jewish. Now, as you know, there are two great factors wanted to make Palestine, as of old, the garden of the Lord. These are population and rain. The two are returning at the same time. There has been a most remarkable increase in the rainfall in Palestine of late years. Formerly it averaged only twelve inches per annum; then it rose to sixteen inches; within the last eight years I have been told on good authority that it has reached twenty-five inches—that is about equal to the rainfall in England, while two years ago it reached thirty-seven inches. There have been water famines, but not because of the lack of rain, but because there are no proper means for storage, and because

of the immense quantity used in building, and so on. This has called attention in Jerusalem and elsewhere to the need of a permanent water supply.

There are also among significant facts the great increase in the value of land, the establishment of Jewish colonies, as I have said, little towns rising up here and there. I spent an interesting day in one of these colonies—the Rischon-le-Zion colony, about ten miles from Jaffa. There are seven large Jewish colonies between Jaffa and Jerusalem, but Rischon-le-Zion is the first, as its name implies. It was founded by Baron Edmond Rothschild in 1882, at the time of the persecutions in Russia, and he still helps it on. There are about fifty well-built stone houses, inhabited by about a hundred Jewish souls. The chief produce is wine, although they grow other things. There are nice boys' and girls' schools, and a hospital and synagogue are in progress of completion. To me it was something touching to see a small Jewish town and a large tract of land, which but a few years ago was a wilderness, now cultivated by Jewish hands, and this in the land of their fathers, from which they have been so long absent. It is not yet quite self-supporting, but the colonists hope that it will be soon. The lessons of the children in the schools are all in the Hebrew language, and the settlers are bent on the patriotic attempt to establish Hebrew as the spoken language of the colony.

These, I believe, are signs that the way is now being prepared, that God is about to arise and have mercy on Zion, and that the long-suffering and scattering of the nation is near its close.

RABBI SIMEON BEN ELEAZER said, Attempt not to pacify your neighbor in the moment of his anger; nor console him while his dead lieth before him; inquire not of him in the moment of his vowing; nor be desirous of seeing him in the time of his calamity.

The Peculiar People.

חֲרִשׁוֹת הַנְּעֻשׂוֹת—NEWS—בְּמַחֲנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל.

THE ANTI-SEMITISM OF TO-DAY.

A word of apology is necessary in the presentation of this subject for the liberty I have taken in restricting it somewhat. Anti-Semitism is a broad word—it would cover hatred of Semitic people other than the Jews—it would demand an examination of the laws and history of many nations in all times. Such an extended inquiry I was unable to make. But even anti-Semitism of to-day is too broad a theme for a short paper. While there are doubtless elements in common in that spirit which is termed anti-Semitism in Germany, France, Austria, America, Russia, the problem of the causes and the inquiry into plans for its suppression by law, discussion, or any other means, is entirely different in each of these countries.

In France, for instance, Boulangism and anti-Semitism are closely united, and as the French people have crushed out the former so will they crush out what remains of the latter. In Germany the trouble is closely connected with politics, though a spirit of envy and jealousy no doubt helps to stir up the reactionary feelings that linger in the breasts of many people there. In Austria, social and business competition helps to inflame the passions. In America, this land of freedom and liberty, anti-Semitism shows itself chiefly in the social sphere. Everywhere, however, a feeling born of tradition and training prevails among a greater or smaller number of men of all classes of society that the Jew is a member of a nation of his own, that he stands apart from the rest of the community, that he is a stranger. This feeling, where it exists, generally produces a result little in accordance with a true Christian spirit of hospitality. Nowhere does this feeling exist to a greater extent, and nowhere do the laws of the country so recognize it as in my native land, Russia, where the Jew is

not even a citizen, and never was, though Russia has been his home for centuries. To Russia, then, as presenting some of the most interesting phases of anti-Semitism, and those with which I am best acquainted, I shall confine my remarks.

The real cause of the persecution of the Jews in Russia is to be sought, not in the prejudices and the hatred of the Russian people against the Jews, but in the arbitrariness and the arrogance of the men who stand at the head of affairs in that country. They care more to enforce their own views and inclinations than to follow the sentiments and to seek the welfare of the people at large. Had the Russian people had their own way in regard to their Jewish countrymen, the condition of the latter would be almost an enviable one. By nature the Russian people are hospitable and tolerant, and wherever there is no interference or proscription on the part of the government the social and commercial relations between the people and the Jews are friendly and peaceable.

The reign of Alexander II. gave abundant evidence of this. Under that humane sovereign the exceptional laws against the Jews began, to a great extent, to be forgotten or overlooked. These laws, which bear the stamp of the barbarity of the middle ages, were transferred, like an inheritable disease, from generation to generation, since the time of Ivan Grosni (John the Cruel), and were in the current of time extended, altered, and mutilated by Jew-haters who attained legislative or executive authority, so that they now form a labyrinth without system and full of contradictions, through which even the most subtle legal talent cannot find its way. The admission of the Jews to the high schools and universities, and the founding of two so-called rabbinical seminaries, with a high school course, in the center of Jewish population, which took place under the late emperor, had an effect like the abolition of a huge dyke which has long withstood the natural current of a mighty river.

There was no so-called liberal perversion, there was no branch of science or of art to which thousands of Jewish

young men had not devoted themselves with great success. They found recognition everywhere. At the expiration of ten or fifteen years the most friendly, yea brotherly, relations existed between Jew and Christian in the scientific and literary classes. When about twenty years ago a Russian journalist took the liberty of using the term "Shid" (corresponding with "Jew," or "Sheeny"), there appeared in a day or two throughout the press of the whole country a most bitter protest, signed by one hundred and fifteen of the best known journalists and authors of the day, against the revival of these untimely prejudices. The Russian and Jewish youth studied, wrote, and associated socially together; they fought together for the ideals of civilization and liberty, while the Jewish parents, with head-shaking and uncertainty, looked at the doings of their children and wondered much how the Chinese wall, which had so long separated their sons from the natives, so quickly disappeared.

Under the blissful influences of the predominant liberal spirit which marked the time from the conclusion of the Crimean war until the accession of Alexander III. to the throne, even the executive power treated with leniency and indulgence the trespasses against the exceptional and Jewish laws which were still in force. As ex-soldiers, as mechanics, as merchants of the first, second, or third guild, and later on as privileged through higher education and merit, the Jews, one by one, but in the aggregate in great numbers, left the over-crowded provinces to which they were restricted by law, and advanced to the interior of the country, where they found a much broader and more profitable field of activity.

There, too, they were cordially received as welcome guests, and the most friendly relations were soon established between Jews and Christians. The only Jew-hating class in those interior provinces was that of the Russian merchants who found a dangerous competitor in the thrifty, steady, and industrious Jew; but just these Russian merchants were at that time very unpopular among the poorer classes on account of their extortions and rapacity, and their at-

tempts to grow rich at the expense of the common people. All their insinuations against the new comers availed them not—nay, it even helped the Jews to gain a firm foothold in these interior provinces.

At that time there were rumors of the admission of the Jews to citizenship, which would doubtless have been carried into effect had not Alexander II. been cut short in his emancipating career by that horrible death nine years ago. A terrible reaction followed his death. The Chauvinistic, pan-Slavistic, or Know-nothing party, came into power, and everything liberal in State as well as in Church was stamped out. The persecution of the Jews followed as the natural effect of the general reaction, a phenomenon observable in every country in Europe.

“When Menzel again joins the reactionary party,” said the brilliant Heine, “he again abuses the Jews.” The same thing happened in Russia, although the name of that reactionary gentleman was not Menzel but Ivan. The Jews are everywhere identified with the liberal movements, and suffer the most at their failures. So it was here. What little freedom the Jews had begun to enjoy during the late regime died as did the thousands of noble souls exiled to the mines of cold, far-away Siberia. The government, led by Ignatiew, seemed to be bent upon making it impossible for the Jews to earn a livelihood. To effect this it was only necessary to adhere to the old exceptional laws against the Jews, and to see that they were rigidly enforced. And this was done since then in the most cruel way. All reactionary elements now emerged and became conspicuous in the bureaucracy and the departments of the government as well as in the journalistic world. The hatred of the Jews became a fad adopted almost universally in Russia.

The Jewish population is the scapegoat to whom all social and economical evils are ascribed; the Jew is responsible for everything which ought not to have come. This is what the Chauvinistic press wants to impress upon the minds of the Russian people. The pillages and riots from nine to ten years ago are to be ascribed to these

insinuations rather than the hatred of the people. The exceptional laws and the barbarous treatment of the Jews on the part of the government helped very much to impress upon the masses a perverted opinion of the Jews in general. The pillages and riots of the ignorant crowds whose lowest passions and savage animosities were excited through the above mentioned influence of the evil spirits forming a part of the so-called higher classes are hardly worth mentioning in comparison with the terrible effects resulting from the strict enforcement of the restrictive laws known as the regulations of May, 1883. The restriction of the three principal rights of man, that of freely choosing his place of residence and his occupation and the right to a higher education, which are now denied to the Jews in Russia, places the majority of them in such a desperate situation that there is no escape except, possibly, by emigration.

The Jewish population of Russia, which forms nearly half of the entire Jewish population of Europe and America combined, is crowded together in about twenty-one western and south-western provinces of the empire, which are, even without them, thickly settled. Even there they are allowed to reside only in cities and towns. The privileges of Jewish mechanics to reside anywhere in the empire is reduced to a minimum by the arbitrary interpretation of the exceptional laws, which are in themselves contradictory and perplexed, and allow the widest scope to the malignity of the Jew-hating executive power.

The Jews are not allowed to engage in agriculture. Almost all the Jewish agricultural colonies which existed in the western provinces, have been dissolved in consequence of the May regulations, and the colonists have been compelled to leave their farms and villages, and go to the only places assigned them for residences, the cities and towns. In every department of manual labor which was within their reach there is an overflow. Nearly all the carpenters, joiners, tailors, and shoemakers, are Jews. They now control about all the commerce and the industry of these provinces, but the cities are so overcrowded with them that it is impossible for all of them to find em-

ployment in productive work, hence the general poverty among them. This is the answer to the reproach of the advocates of even more restrictive measures against them, that they abstain from productive work.

The activity in trade and commerce, and the industries in general, is, because of the diligence and sobriety of the Jews, greater in the western provinces, Lithuania, Poland, and Russia-minor, than in any other part of the empire. On the other hand the Christian population of these provinces lacks the culture and strength of character to combat with the lively, pushing, and energetic Jews, who, by long-suffering and persecution became hardened and skillful in the social, economical struggle. And yet even this Christian population is at peace with the Jewish neighbors.

The restriction to certain districts has another injurious effect upon them. It keeps the masses in their old, in many instances, absurd mode of living and traditions, which in no wise agrees with the requirements of the present times. It was not long ago that the Jewish young men cheerfully entered the ranks of the Russian army, knowing that when their time of service would be over they would be allowed to settle in any part of the empire. Parents did their utmost, and feared no sacrifice in order to send their children to high schools and colleges, and the young students suffered many privations and humiliations in order that they might complete their course of study.

All this is of no avail now. The Jewish soldier, after he is discharged, is compelled to go back to the provinces allotted for the settlement of the Jews, and is accorded no more rights and privileges than his unfortunate brethren. The student must await his term to be admitted to the university, and a long wait it is at times, as the Jews are allowed to form only 5 per cent of the whole body of students.

The irregularities and absurdities in the administration of justice are very characteristic of the perplexity and entanglements which predominate in Russian legis-

lation in respect to the Jews, of which the following will offer a typical example : Siberia, as is well known, lies beyond the scope of the Jewish settlement. Should a Jew dare to settle in that country without the permission of the government, which is granted only under certain circumstances, and of course not without considerable expense, the first policeman who comes across him will arrest him, and with no consideration for his age or standard he will be sent back chained together with the worst criminals to his native province. Should he, however, commit a crime which is punishable with exile to Siberia, he then enjoys the right of residing there.

The fair sex is not excepted from all the regulations against the Jews, but a Jewish woman who abandons herself to dishonor and prostitution is allowed to reside in any part of the empire.

Korobka is the name of a special tax on meat imposed upon the Jews only in Southern Russia and Lithuania, which raises the price of that indispensable article about one-third. This tax was first imposed upon the Jews in the first half of the present century, and was intended to create a fund for the then newly founded rabbinical seminaries, and other Jewish institutions. These rabbinical seminaries were wiped out of existence by the government long ago. The korobka still exists, and it is hardly necessary to mention that this tax presses heavily upon the impoverished masses. The revenue of the korobka, millions of roubles, is treasured up under the control of the Secretary of the Interior, doing no good to anybody, and it is with the utmost difficulty that the Jews can, like beggars, obtain large sums for the maintenance of their charitable institutions.

It is difficult for an American to draw a comparison between the Russian Jew living in America and the Russian Jew at home without committing some grave errors. The immigrants are perhaps not inferior to thousands of their brethren in the small towns of Southern Russia and Lithuania. But there, where they, together with the more intelligent, wealthy elements of the Jewish population, form a single community, the general character of the Jewish population, as a whole, is very different from that in American cities where chiefly the poorer classes of various provinces, differing in manners, dialects, and customs, are crowded together with a comparatively small percentage of intelligent men among them.

As is the case wherever the Jews reside, so, too, in Russia, their benevolence and charity are recognized even by their enemies. Besides the many charitable institutions founded by individual Jews there are to be found almost everywhere charitable institutions and societies, but the restrictions and persecutions mentioned above, and thousand others, bring about not only the impoverishment but also the demoralization of the bulk of the Jewish population. Whatever is useful for the common good and for the welfare of the community is apt to be neglected in the struggle for existence which is aggregated by the hundred-fold for the Jew in Russia. The longer this state of affairs continues to exist, the more dangerous becomes the condition and the feelings of the Jews. What, then, can rescue those unfortunate five millions of Jews from this desperate condition? Only the moral pressure of the whole civilized world which must be brought to bear upon the Russian government. Till that moral pressure comes from all lands, from all people, from all sects, we cannot hope that the autocratic Pan-Slavists will harken to words of wisdom from western lips. But the Jew is a sanguine creature. In the darkest periods of his history he never despaired that the God of his fathers would open the eyes of all men to the cruelty of religious intolerance, by pouring out the flood of universal love and brotherhood. That time has not yet come. We of the nineteenth century prove the fallacy of the school-book fashion of dividing history into distinct periods as if they were entirely separate, one from the other.

The revival of learning did not end the dark ages completely. Much light came; but around the edges still lingered the dark shades of religious intolerance. To the glory of humanity the shades are now of lighter hue than ever before, but a union of all the liberal elements, be their belief what it may, is necessary to clear out the last dark roots, to advance humanity to a feeling of profound respect for the views, religious and otherwise, of our fellow-men. That the time is approaching such conferences as our present one indicates; but hopeful and sanguine as we Jews are, we realize that the field of work is broad, and that an enthusiastic spirit, as well as a generous heart, is necessary to unite all men under the glorious banner of love in God and love for man. Then will all the reactionary spirit, all tyranny and oppression cease. Then will the anti-Semitism disappear from off the face of the earth.—*By an Israelite. Read by Rabbi Stolz at the Chicago Conference on "Israel," Nov. 25, 1890.*

THE CHICAGO CONFERENCE.

One of the most remarkable signs of our times is the Conference of Israelites and Christians concerning their mutual relations and welfare, held in Chicago, Ill., Nov. 24 and 25, 1890.

In this unique meeting Jews and Gentiles alike took part. Christian ministers and Jewish rabbis spoke and prayed. The utterances of Jewish speakers were applauded by Christians, and the words of Christian speakers were similarly greeted by Jews. The whole atmosphere breathed the grace of peace, and the effect of the meeting can but be most excellent. The utmost freedom of speech was allowed; no one was asked or expected to do violence to his convictions: the only request made was that all should speak in a kind spirit, remembering the meekness of Moses and the tenderness of Jesus.

The sessions continued for two days, and the addresses were as follows: "The Attitude of Nations and of Christian People toward the Jews," by the Rev. E. P. Goodwin, D. D.; "Why Israelites do not accept Jesus as their Messiah," by the Rev. Dr. B. Felsenthal, Rabbi; "The Religious Condition of the Jews to-day, and their Attitude toward Christianity," by the Rev. Dr. E. G. Hirsch, Rabbi; "Israel as an Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion," by the Rev. J. H. Barrows, D. D.; "The Post-Biblical History of Israel," by the Rev. Joseph Stolz, Rabbi; "Jerusalem and Palestine as they are to-day, and the Restoration of Israel," by the Rev. J. M. Caldwell, D. D.; "Israel's Messiah," by Prof. David C. Marquis, D. D.; "The Anti-Semitism of to-day," by an Israelite; "Israelites and Christians,—their mutual relations and welfare, or Lessons of the Conference," by Prof. H. M. Scott, D. D.

The chairman of the meeting was Mr. Wm. E. Blackstone. It was his hope, as expressed in his introductory remarks, that just as Christians of differing creeds ought to unite in those elements of Christian life which are of the heart, so on a broader basis Jews and Christians ought to meet together in a spirit of mutual helpfulness and welfare.

We hope to be able to reprint portions of these addresses in our next issue.

