

THE PECULIAR PEOPLE,

A CHRISTIAN MONTHLY,

DEVOTED TO JEWISH INTERESTS.

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

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

Vol. VI.

JANUARY, 1894.

No. 10.

CONTENTS.

Editorial Paragraphs, - - - - -	217
The Eighteen Benedictions, - - - - -	219
Sanitation as Taught by the Mosaic Law, - - - - -	222
News, - - - - -	224
How are we to meet Anti-Semitism? - - - - -	225
Jacob Starmancoff, - - - - -	228
Book Reviews, - - - - -	237
Early Civilization in Palestine, - - - - -	240

PUBLISHED BY
THE AMERICAN SABBATH TRACT SOCIETY,
ALFRED CENTRE, N. Y.

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OUR VIEW OF MISSION WORK.

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

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.

הביטי אל-ציר הצבתם
ואל-מקבת בור נקרתם
Isa. 51: 1.

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

Vol. VI. ALFRED CENTRE, N. Y., JAN., 1893. No. 10.

JUDÆUS SUM; JUDAICI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

A SUGGESTION or two in regard to the prevention of Anti-Semitism may not be amiss from the point of view of THE PECULIAR PEOPLE. We are glad that Jewish papers are occasionally considering the subject from their position. Light from any source is a good thing. So we venture a word.

We advise the Jews to be just. They often produce hatred and prejudice against themselves by being unjust. They misrepresent the good-will of every Gentile whose kind words or methods are not to their taste. They misrepresent those who try by just and right means to promote Christianity among them. To be sure they cannot see the necessity for such a promulgation of the Gospel. It is not to be expected. But they at least ought to examine the motives that prompt this and not allow the misrepresentations of a few zealots to blind their judgment. If they would look into the motives of Gentile Christians who are very kindly disposed towards Jews, they would be able to see more clearly by what principles these are guided, and perhaps then they could give them advice or make suggestions that might enable the Gentile Christians

to get a far different and a truer insight into the way such things strike the Jewish mind. They ought to hush down such men as Mr. Benjamin; they ought to cut off their fingers before they write such accusations as to say that Christians claim that Jews "murdered their God," or that the "children in the schools are taught to hate the Jews because they crucified the Saviour." They ought also to be cautious in making sport of what is sacred to Gentile Christians. Every one's religious faith is sacred. To speak in papers in a sarcastic manner of Jesus is not gentlemanly or worthy of true sons of Israel. Of course they have a right to their opinions; but is it fitting to do such things? If the Jews in Germany had been more cautious and more just, Anti-Semitism might have been born, but it would not have grown to the proportions it has assumed. If Jews would be more just, they would prevent much evil.

THEN they ought not to be so sensitive as they are. Why should they make an ado about nothing? They have had and still have many just grievances; but every trifle that they magnify makes it more difficult for the real grievances to be justly measured by Gentiles. If they take notice of every little thing that can possibly be construed into a slight or a thrust at a Jew, they make themselves ridiculous in the eyes of the world. A Gentile cannot use the word Jew in speaking of a Jew with disapproval, but that all the newspapers say that the disapproval was on account of the fact that he was a Jew, and that the word was used offensively. If a low class of people are spoken of as being Irish, Italian, or Hungarian, nobody considers it an insult to Ireland, Italy, or any other nation. But if the word Jew is mentioned, it becomes Anti Semitism at once. Is this not childish? An uninformed Gentile Christian, seeking to find out the exact justice of the matter, if he were to notice these things, would conclude that when real grievances are spoken of they, too, are no more worthy of regard than these trifles. Would it not be better in quietness and in kindness to show the errors of

Gentiles in regard to Jews, and not move heaven and earth every time some ignorant Gentile is unjust towards the Jews? If the Jews would learn not to be so thin-skinned, they would prevent many an evil judgment and their real complaints would have a much wider hearing, and thus much harm would be prevented.

Then, too, Jews ought to discriminate between the necessary and inevitable results of what are certainly Jewish peculiarities and those things which are of evil. The former they ought to bear with a contented mind and consider it a burden they have to bear for the sake of the honor of their faith and their nation, just as the Christian ought to bear reproach meekly for Christ's sake. That their Jewish manner of life and of thought entails some disabilities they must realize. This others do not put upon them, nor do they exactly bring it upon themselves; it is something they have to bear, if they are determined to cling to all things that mark them as a separate people. It will develop their own character more symmetrically and it will be the very best lesson they can give the Gentiles, if they can make this just discrimination. We forbear to particularize in illustration of this, lest we be misunderstood; but *Verbum sat sapienti*.

THE EIGHTEEN BENEDICTIONS.

Many parts of the prayer book commonly employed in the synagogues have come down from a remote antiquity. Perhaps the oldest of the uninspired portions are the so-called eighteen benedictions. These are short prayers frequently recurring in the prayer book. They are among the most beautiful of uninspired words, and constitute in themselves an expression of the whole range of genuine religion. The first three and the last three are perhaps the oldest of them, and were used, we may believe with great confidence, in the worship of the synagogues in the times of Jesus. Indeed that they were perhaps pronounced by Him invests them with a peculiarly tender and impres-

sive interest. The first three are these: "Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, and the God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the great, the mighty and the wonderful God; the Most High God, performing mercies and kindness, and possessing all things, and remembering the gracious promises to the fathers and bringing a Redeemer to their children's children for His name's sake in love. O thou King, Helper, Saviour, and Shield! Blessed art thou, the Shield of Abraham."

"Thou art great forever, O Lord, thou who bringest the dead to life, mighty to save. Thou sustainest the living in mercy, thou revivest the dead, in great compassions thou raisest up those who fall, and healest the sick, and loosest those who are bound, and keepest faith with those who sleep in the dust. Who is like unto thee, Lord of might, and who can be compared unto thee, thou King who killest and who makest alive, and who causest salvation to spring forth? And faithful art thou to revive the dead. Blessed art thou who causest the dead to live!"

'Thou art holy and thy name is holy, and the holy ones every day praise thee. Selah. Blessed art thou, O Lord, the holy God.'

When we reflect that these prayers may have been used by our Lord Jesus in the worship of the synagogue, we are vividly impressed with the truth that He Himself is the fulfillment of many of their petitions. The promises made to the fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, expressive of God's tender mercies to His chosen people, find in Jesus their supreme fulfillment. He is the Redeemer brought to "children's children for His name's sake in love." He is Saviour and King, the Lord of life and death, mighty to save. Through His own resurrection He has proved that He is King of the day of judgment, when the dead shall rise, and when He will keep faith with those who sleep in the dust. He is the Branch, and is even now causing his salvation to shoot forth in the

hearts of His believing and faithful followers. Jesus is the גואל חוק גואל ישראל⁽¹⁾.

The benediction concerning the great trumpet is characteristic of the Talmud and beautifully expressive of desire for the prevalence of the Gospel of Jesus. It is as follows: "Blow with a great trumpet for our liberty and set a standard to assemble our exiles and gather us together from the four wings of the earth. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who gatherest the outcasts of thy people Israel." This is a prayer particularly appropriate to Israel's exile days, and will be answered when Israel as a nation accepts the Gospel of Jesus. The heralding of His spiritual salvation is the blast of the greatest trumpet ever blown. It is destined to be heard from one end of the earth to the other. It is a call to liberty far more stirring and significant than even the call of Moses from Egyptian bondage. The standard of Israel's regal tribe bearing the emblem, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, is set for the gathering together of all earth's outcast exiles. The lion of that roval tribe arose once, in the person of David, from his lurking places in the fastnesses of Judæa and took the kingdom. The throne of his kingdom is forever established. Jesus is his Son, and to the standard of Jesus all the tribes of Israel shall yet gather. "To the twelve tribes of the Diaspora" writes James in the New Testament. The first epistle of Peter also is similarly inscribed, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus," etc. 1 Pet. 1 : 1. On occasion of the restoration of Lazarus to life on the part of Jesus, and in fear of the many converts whom Jesus would make in consequence, the Sanhedrin immediately assembled in Jerusalem, and expressed the fear that in view of the multiplication of converts to Jesus the Romans would come and take away the Temple and destroy the nationality of the people as re established in Palestine since the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. Thereupon Caiaphas, the high priest that year,

(1) Strong Deliverer, Redeemer of Israel.

(2) A term applied to Israel's condition as scattered abroad.

all unconscious that he was being used of God as a prophet, said, "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." Concerning this unconscious prophecy of the high priest, the evangelist John makes comment:

נבא כרישוע ימית בעד העם: ולא יבעד העם לבר כי אבילקבגם את בני האלחים המפורים והיי לאחרים: 1

Not only shall Israel one day be redeemed from his world-wide captivity; but first of all they in company with all God's spiritual children from among the nations must be gathered together in one as the loving and faithful disciples of Jesus. May God speed the day and help us all that we may hear the blast of His great trumpet in the Gospel of His dear Son !

SANITATION AS TAUGHT BY THE MOSAIC LAW.

Dr. Adler, in a paper read before the Church of England Sanitary Association, on November 1, 1893, explained how various Jewish customs directly derived from the Pentateuch exercise an important sanitary influence on the community; and pointed out that prevention was substituted for the old curative system in dealing with disease. He applied the old principles adopted by the Jews in the treatment of leprosy to specific diseases, such as variola, scarlet fever, and typhus, and insisted that if they were as rigorously carried out, these diseases would either disappear or become very rare. In dealing with house sanitation, the Chief Rabbi recommended the destruction of rotten tenements as one means of preventing the spread of disease, a recommendation which is strongly supported by recent investigations with regard to tuberculous infection from the walls of rooms formerly inhabited by phthisical patients. In view of the advances that have been made of late with regard to food sanitation, one of

(1) " He prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." John 11 : 51, 52.

THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

the most important parts of the paper was that which dealt with the dietary laws. It was observed that the animals pronounced unclean among quadrupeds were those particularly liable to parasites, and among birds, the scavengers of garbage and carrion. 'The whole question of Shechita' was dwelt on at considerable length, and the advantage of obtaining the flesh as free from blood as possible was held to be a sanitary basis for the custom. The fact that micro-organisms of disease are often present in the blood, while the tissues of the organs through which the infected blood circulates are free from them, was, with reason, made a strong point in favor of the Jewish method of slaughter. We are, however, obliged to take exception to the suggestion that apart from disease possibly some of the qualities of the animal may be communicated to us by means of its blood. Attention was called to the great care with which the carcasses of the animals are searched for signs of disease, and the recommendation that the same care should be taken in all slaughter-houses is one which we cannot too strongly support. If, as is probable, the Jewish race owes its immunity from the tuberculous diathesis of phthisis to this measure, this fact alone is an overwhelming argument in favor of the custom. Happily the results of recent researches have left little doubt in the minds of those most competent to judge, that many diseases common to the lower animals and man are capable of propagation by means of infected meat, and the importance of the careful inspection of meat before it is allowed for human consumption is becoming more and more recognized. If Dr. Adler's able and comprehensive paper succeeds in giving further impetus to this point in sanitation alone among the many he has discussed, the community at large will have every reason to be grateful to him.—*British Medical Journal*.

1) Slaughtering.

The Peculiar People.

חדשות. הנעשות—NEWS—במחנה ישראל.

NINE new colonies for Russian refugees are to be established in Argentina. This appears to indicate that the experiment is a success.

MR. A. M. SIMON, American Vice-Consul at Hanover, Germany, and a prominent banker of that city, has purchased some seventy-five acres of land near Hanover, on which the necessary buildings have been erected so that sixty boys can be accommodated, with the object of teaching agriculture, gardening and fruit culture in all their branches. Carpentering, locksmithing, shoemaking, baking and other trades will be taught.

DURING November 444 Jewish immigrants arrived at the port of Philadelphia. Of this number 335 came from Russia and Poland, 62 from Austria and Galicia, five from Hungary, one from Roumania, one from England and one from Ireland. Many followed different trades or professions. Of the total number 265 went to New York, 29 to Baltimore, and others, except 61 who remained in that city, to different parts of the United States, as far west as Lincoln, Nebraska.

THE elections for the Prussian Diet are over, and the Liberal Party has unfortunately sustained severe losses, whilst the Conservatives have gained several seats. It is a source of great satisfaction that besides Stoecker, not one of the real anti-Semites has been elected in the Diet, in spite of all their great exertions. Ahlwardt was unsuccessful in gaining a majority of votes in Friedberg. Ahlwardt and his friend, Dr. Forster, shared the same fate in Neustettin. In Hesse-Cassel, the hot-bed of anti-Semitism, none of the anti-Semites was elected. Pleased as the Jews

are with these results, their gratification is still not quite unalloyed, owing to the increase of the Conservatives, who are more or less anti-Semites in a milder form. Much cannot be expected from the new Diet, and doubtless many unpleasant debates will arise on Jewish matters. Ahlwardt's pamphlets, "Judenfinten," have been confiscated by the police, and over 50,000 copies have been destroyed.

HOW ARE WE TO MEET ANTI-SEMITISM?

FROM THE GERMAN OF E. E. GEDALIUS.

(Continued from page 199.)

Once having ventured upon the waters of materialism, the course of the Hebrew people was directed towards the amassing of wealth, even though they might in one day lose all that they with such pains had gathered together, and so become beggars. Instead of being teachers and preachers to the Egyptians, they preferred to become their capitalists and their oppressors! What wonder, then, if the Egyptians were moved with envy and, with the king at their head, formed a current of opposition directed against the Hebrews, which finally was to free the land from the foreign rule? So, we see, the Pharaoh Rameses, about 1450 B. C., oppressed the whole people of Israel, took from them all their rights, confiscated all their property, even to their cattle, and at last made slaves of them. In this situation they now performed menial service for the country in which they had occupied so exalted a position, and all because they had withheld from it their priestly service. With the greatest severity they were held under the lash and made to perform the hardest tasks, rendering possible to Pharaoh the proud inscription which to-day may be read upon a gigantic structure, "Upon this no native wrought!" From Holy Scripture we know that they not only denied them the necessary material for their work, but they went further and even destroyed their children. Almost two hundred years did they undergo this

oppression, till it came up at last before God, who led them forth from Egypt by His servant Moses.

In spite of their sin, God had not wholly cast them from His face. He had never altered His purpose of grace, and that people, as God said to Abraham, was yet to bless humanity little by little with the pure and true knowledge of God. This, as we have seen, had through their own guilt almost entirely forsaken the poor people, who had become estranged from their God. Hence the Lord must anew draw his people to their high calling. So He next leads them into the wilderness, where for forty years they had to learn to know His wonders, His love, goodness and mercy ; but also His sternness, His anger, and His punishments. But not this alone ; they received from Him laws, more magnificent and wonderful than could be thought of to-day after the lapse of 3,500 years, in spite of the advancing knowledge of our time ; and these were written down for an everlasting memorial graven upon tables of stone.

Rich in their experience of the Divine miracles, furnished with this wonderful law, ennobled as a people, as the choice possession of the Most High God, they went forth, into the land of Canaan, to plant there the banner of the Thrice Holy One. But here unfortunately we see them lead a too changeful life. Now they serve their God and are blessed and happy ; now they take on heathen customs which debase them and oppress them. As often as through Judges or Kings they are freed from the heathen yoke, so often they lapse again into idolatry. So long they provoked the Lord, till at last the kingdom was overthrown and finally the Jewish nation was destroyed by the Romans, and the people were scattered into all the surrounding regions. The greater part of the Jews who were made captive came to Rome, where some were massacred, some were employed as gladiators, who were obliged to encounter each other in mortal combat, or were thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheatre. The rest were sold as slaves. These later received again their freedom and some were even made Roman citizens. In time we see

how they, having been made wiser by the lessons they received, inwardly clung fast to the religion inherited from their fathers, while outwardly they advanced and occupied higher and greater positions of state in the nations among whom they found themselves.

Spain and Portugal were above all others the countries which seem to have offered to the Jews a new home. Here at least they thought they had a firm foothold.*

Although already dwelling in these countries at the time of the Roman dominion, the Jews were nevertheless continually oppressed and treated as aliens, especially in the regions which had been snatched away from the Moors, or which had not yet been conquered by them, till under the reign of the Carlovingian kings some of their earlier rights and privileges were restored to them. Pepin the Short was especially interested in them, and about the year 760 gave them rights of citizenship and the privilege of acquiring ownership in land, both in the cities and the country. They quickly worked their way, and even though they were again oppressed under Charles the Simple in the year 916, when their goods were taken possession of by the State and many of them were slain, nevertheless, not long afterward in Spain they were again numbered by millions.

Again they longed for position, built beautiful synagogues and displayed a magnificent splendor. Especially was this the case with the capitalists of Grenada and Seville. They owned mines and factories, founded the most renowned schools and universities, and their physicians, esteemed throughout all Europe, were to be found in every court. Jews were also numbered among the most important philosophers and mathematicians, who before all others laid the foundation stone of modern sciences, and without question at that time they were among the most learned of all nations. Throughout several centuries we see the Jews holding the most influential positions, and it was not strange for a Jew to become a prime minister.

*Graetz. *History of the Jews*. v. Note 9, etc.

JACOB STARMANCOFF.

BY BENJ. A. M. SHAPIRO.

CHAPTER III.

The Engagement.

There came a day when Isaac was called to the city on business, and while there he called at the house of Rabbi Laban to thank him for the mercies and kindness which he had shown Jacob, and also to offer him a present of butter, cheese, wheat flour and potatoes, as was the custom of the village people when they went to see the face of their Rabbi.

When Isaac came into the room where Rabbi Laban and his disciples were seated, deep in meditation upon the hidden thought in the book of the Law, which lay open before them, he had not the courage to disturb the deep quiet which rested upon them. "Wonder of wonders," speaks Rabbi Laban to himself: "Seventy faces has the Law, and of every face seventy explanations could be made, but I cannot even see one of them." The disciples looked at each other with astonishment, for never before had they known Rabbi Laban to falter or hesitate in translating any passage from the Talmud or the Law, and they could not understand why he should stop now.

Rabbi Laban was sitting with closed eyes looking like a man whose soul had departed from his body, but suddenly he began to shake his head and comb his beard with his fingers, and in a few minutes he opened his eyes and joyfully said: "I have worked hard, but I have gained that for which I labored. How favored are we, and how blessed is our lot! There is no end to the wisdom of Israel. All the wisdoms and inventions which have been known since the days of Adam are known to me. In the great cities men have used their wisdom to invent methods of travel without horses, and ways of sending letters and messages, but believe ye me, all these inventions are not to be compared with one word, nor indeed even with one letter in our holy Talmud. Now boys listen, and I will tell you wonderful things."

With his own mouth he spoke and with his own hand he fulfilled. He took Jacob, who was sitting by his right hand, and shook him to rouse him from his meditations (he was thinking of Rachel), and then explained the Talmud to them.

Isaac stood at that time in one corner of the room, and with eyes full of happiness and satisfaction he saw what great blessings were being bestowed upon his son Jacob, and what wonderful advantages he was enjoying. As he listened to Rabbi Laban's explanation of the Talmud, he realized, more than ever, that he would not be able to convey an adequate return or compensation to Laban. But after the battle of the Law came to a close, he came forward and said to Rabbi Laban, "I am very grateful that thou hast taken my son under thy wings, but I am poor and unable to reward thee for the great things that thou hast done for him." "Is this Isaac Starmancoff?" asked the Rabbi, extending his hand to him. "Oh, yes, this is Isaac himself, peace be to thee." "To you be peace," answered the man respectfully, touching only the ends of the Rabbi's fingers. "I am Isaac from Starmancoff, the father of Jacob, for whom you have done so much, and to whom you have shown so many favors from his youth till now."

"Yes, I know, I know," answered Laban, not letting the man finish his thanks, then turning to his disciples, he said: "Go ye to the synagogue and ponder over again what you have learned to-day, for I have revealed wonderful things to you this day. And thou, Jacob, go to thy room and rest thyself, thou lookest pale to-day, and thou will look ill to thy father, who hath not seen thee for a long time.

The pupils departed one by one, Jacob going with them. Then said Laban to Isaac, "Sit near me, my friend, for I have to tell in thine ears a great thing to-day. My friend, the Lord hath blessed thee with a dear good son, wise and intellectual, well versed in our holy law, upon which he meditates day and night. Of course, thou knowest well that through me he has received this wisdom and

instruction. I have planted the child in the valleys of the Talmud and the Law and I must reap the fruit."

"That is true," said Isaac, "though I am from a village."*

Laban did not let Isaac finish, but continued, "From me the Lord held back a son, but a gift have I in my house, and her name is Leah. She is better to me than ten wise and good sons; if thou, my friend, desirest her, I will give her to Jacob for a wife, and will take him for a son-in-law; in my house shall he live, and from my table shall he eat all his life, and after an hundred and twenty years† he shall inherit the chair of the Rabbinate. Dost thou understand my words, Isaac?" "Did I hear aright?" said Isaac, with trembling lips; "every word that came from the mouth of my master I have heard with open ears, but after hearing all this I do not believe that I have heard aright with these ears of mine."

"And why?" asked Rabbi Laban.

"I think I heard," answered Isaac, "my lord say that he will give his daughter to my son Jacob for a wife. If I do not speak with my master in a dream this time, it cannot be otherwise but that he is making fun of me because I am a village man, poor and lacking knowledge and wisdom. How can I begin to believe that I should be the father-in-law of the daughter of a great Rabbi in Israel?"

"Oh! no! Isaac. Thou speakest not with me in dreams, and the Lord forbid that I should make sport of one of the house of Israel, but if this be from the Lord, I will soon show thee that I speak with truth and righteousness, and in the same night we will rejoice in the feast of betrothal." So it was in the same evening the congregation came to take part in the joy of their Rabbi. Who can tell the honor that Isaac received then. At the right of the host sat Isaac, and all the citizens wished him good

*The Jews consider it to be a disgrace to live in a village.

†The Jews are afraid to say, "after my death;" so they express it, "after an hundred and twenty years," because Moses, the man of God, died at that age.

THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

luck, even the elder himself spoke with his mouth to mouth, saying, "blessed art thou, Isaac, to have for a daughter-in-law a daughter of a great prince in Israel, the prince of learning."

After this the engagement letter was read, but when they came to the words "the most noble youth Jacob will take, in an hour of good luck and happiness, Leah, the daughter of Rabbi Laban, under the chuppah* according to the law of Moses and Israel." Jacob's face grew pale as death, and his head fell on his breast. Those who saw it thought it was because of the good treasure which he was to get in the land of the living; of course, no one knew of the trouble of poor Jacob's heart. After finishing reading the engagement letter, they shouted with joy, "Good luck! Good luck!" and threw the dishes and plates on the ground to break them according to the custom.*

But little did they think that two hearts (the hearts of Jacob and Rachel) were also broken to pieces in the self-same hour.

CHAPTER IV.

"Perfect Love Casteth out all Fear."

When the morning star arose, when the coming dawn sent its grey messenger before it, the guests left the engagement feast and turned wearily homeward. The household of Laban, fatigued by this unaccustomed festivity, retired to sleep a few hours before the day with its new round of duties should dawn.

Jacob was not among those who sought their couches. Though he had just celebrated his betrothal to the daughter of the wise Laban, he was far from happy over this

*A chuppah is four poles covered with finely embroidered silk, under which a Jewish couple stand when they are married.

*The Jews believe that a man should never forget the day of death which will surely come. It is a sin to laugh. But, of course, when there is a feast or some joyous occasion, they cannot help being glad and happy, so they break dishes to remind them that the time will come when they will be broken and blotted from existence as they now destroy the dishes.

unexpected turn of affairs. He sat alone in the grey light of the dawn, his head buried in his hands, sighing and moaning as if his heart would break. He cried: "I am undone! Woe is me! I am the poorest and most miserable of the sons of men. Hell and Satan and the princes of hell have made sport of me to-day. They have driven hope from my bosom as far as the East is from the West. Prince of the law!" (referring to Laban), he murmured, growing more desperate. "Prince of the law! no! a prince of hell is he," he fairly shouted in his desperation. "The veil has been removed. I see clearly I have been the victim of a designing parent. Leah I have never viewed in any other light than that of sister; now I hold her in the greatest contempt. To be bound to such a fate for life, God forbid! It would be the burial of every hope which my heart holds dear. The best of my days, instead of being given to knowledge and wisdom, would be frittered away in the house of Laban. But is there no remedy?" he cried, after a few moments silence. "Must I go patiently to my fate, as the lamb to the slaughter? Is there a power in the world that can force me to marry a woman I detest? Must I spend my days within the borders of this rude village? The world is open to me. Is there not room enough for me? Are the chains that bind me here unbreakable? I will break them. I will give up all. I will flee from this village with its hateful associations. There is nothing to detain me a moment longer.' He ceased his soliloquy. An unaccountable feeling came over him. He kept murmuring, "There is nothing! there is nothing!" But his heart whispered, "There is Rachel, there is Rachel." The hot blood rushed to his face. "Be-gone, the thought." His will power failed him. His heart still whispered, "There is Rachel." It never seemed possible to Jacob that he who despised the thought of love, he who hated Leah with a bitter hatred, could have any feeling stronger than a purely brotherly one towards Rachel. The secret that his heart had treasured was exposed. He felt guilty and surprised. "Love! A youth brought up on the Holy Talmud could never sink to the

level of loving a girl. In love I can never lift up my head before my companions. Why, Schmeryl, Moses, Zadok, Gimpel, and Tarel the short, married wives and begat children. Did they love their wives? Did any of them ever know what love was? Why should I fall so deep in sin as to love a maid? Thou demon of iniquity! Thou Satan born thought! get behind me! I swear, by my father's beard, I will never love; I will die rather than love."

Love which is as strong as death and no respecter of persons reigned despite Jacob's oath. Cupid has little regard for vows and oaths. Jacob, the more he fought the thought of love the more he found himself on fire with love. The more he sought to destroy it root and branch the stronger it became.

"I will not love," concluded Jacob, "and to-day I leave this village and the house of Laban, never to return. Whither shall I go? To whom can I turn? I am a mere child in knowledge of the world and its ways, yet I must go!" Involuntarily he muttered: "Rachel! Rachel!" Jacob opened his window and looked out. The sun had risen and covered the fields with a flood of light. He felt an irresistible longing to escape from these thoughts which were driving him mad. He opened the door; he stood upon the threshold gazing upon the scene spread before him, when a shadow fell across his vision. Rachel, the object of his thoughts, stood before him. A musical voice fell upon his ears: "Didst thou call me, Jacob?" she asked. "Call thee?" cried Jacob with astonishment. "When?" "I thought I heard thy voice calling me from the window," answered Rachel with trembling lips. "I have been mistaken so I will go."

"Go in peace!" Jacob desired to say, but against his will his tongue spake something far different. With stammering lips, as if in a dream: "Yes, I c-c-called thee, Rachel, I called thee. Though my eyes have not beheld thee for long hours thy image has been before me. With all the love of my heart I called thee. Thou shouldst behold my heart; it is rent in pieces by contending emotions. I must confess against my judgment, against my wish, I

love thee. I am consumed by a terrible fire which rages within me. Come apart into this room, I will lay bare my heart before thee." He drew Rachel, who was trembling like a startled fawn, into the room. "Rachel!" he began, "life up thine eyes; look upon me with favor; have mercy upon one soon to be despised of men, an outcast and a wanderer. Hear me, I beseech thee, ere I depart never to return." A cloud comes over her face and lifting her finger, "Never to return!" cried Rachel with terror. "Ah! Jacob, my heart has not deceived me, I know all. Thou desirest to leave this village with its humble inhabitants. Thou art anxious to be even greater than all the house of my father. What wishest thou from me? And thou sayest thou lovest me! What can I do?"

"Rachel, though thy words have a sharpness and a sting like the cold air of winter, yet they hast comforted me. Thou hast rightly read my heart. Thou who knowest all of my meditations hast in thy keeping the remedy for my pain. Answer, answer, Rachel! Dost thou love me! Dost thy heart answer to my heart as the echo answers to the voice? Wilt thy feet place themselves in my footsteps? With thy love I shall forget the world, for I shall possess that which is more than the Canaan of my fathers. I shall be strong with a strength surpassing the strength of Samson, who slew the Philistines. A bright light shall guide my footsteps through the mazes of the Talmud and the Torah.* Rachel, hear me! Rachel, answer! Dost thou love me?"

"But Leah, my sister!" exclaimed Rachel, tears meanwhile running down her cheeks, which were red with shame.

"Leah, thy sister, shall be also my sister," cried Jacob excitedly, wiping the tears from her eyes. "But thou, my dove of Carmel, thou wilt be my beloved wife."

"Is that thy wish," whispered Rachel, nestling close to him. "Thou knowest my heart. The Lord chose not Leah for me. I would commit a sin in taking her as my

*The Law.

wife, to cast away my happiness and hers in one day," said Jacob, in stalwart tones. Taking her hand in his, lifting his right hand toward heaven, he repeated solemnly, "There is no stranger with us, but the Lord is our witness, and by Him, who knows all secrets, I swear that thy image shall not depart from my heart so long as He sustains my life."

"While I live," whispered Rachel, "I will live for thee. Since I first saw thy face my heart has held a warm spot for thee."

Now growing calmer, they seated themselves to talk of this new bliss which had come into their lives, and to plan for the future. What they said each to the other we know not.

At the first sound of stirring in the house, Rachel started to leave her lover, saying, "Jacob, I will wait even to the end of days, I will wait." Jacob did not allow her to complete the sentence, but kissing her, said: "In a few years I will betroth thee with truth in the presence of all the people. I hope the time of waiting will not be so long as that of one father Jacob for another Rachel."

"Yes," said Rachel, "Thou speakest of going and of coming back, but where wilt thou go and what wilt thou do for support?"

"A moment," cried Jacob, detaining her, "as we have been talking, there comes into my mind what I have heard travelers tell of their adventures in strange lands. In my heart I have the conviction and the assurance that if a young man is honest, frank and true to the teachings of our fathers, he will have success in any undertaking. I know no fear, for any danger I may have to meet is already robbed of its terrors. The bitterest days will be sweetened by the thought of thee. In distant lands thine image will still be before me, and in spirit I shall spend many hours in the house of Laban, the Rabbi."

"I have confidence in thee," said Rachel, "Apply the same energy which thou hast already shown to any task and success will surely come to thee. Thou hast judged people by thy own purity of heart, but thou wilt

find many that will persecute thee and oppose thee in every way, though they wear the face of religion and claim to worship the same God. Keep thyself unspotted from the world and I know that thou wilt return the Jacob I love." She bade him adieu and left the room.

Jacob seemed as if possessed of superhuman energy. He rushed into the chamber occupied by Rabbi Laban and told him of his sudden resolve to leave the village and to go to a distant land there to labor for himself. "What land," cried the Rabbi. "America," answered Jacob. "I have heard wanderers speak of a land far to the West, across the great deep, in which the leviathan sports. In this land there are peculiar customs and privileges. A man can wear any garb he desires. He can worship God as he sees fit. All occupations are open to honesty and enterprise. The opportunities for acquiring wealth are numerous. The people are kind and cultured. The spirit of persecution, dies before it reaches those distant shores. Thither, I intend to go, Rabbi Laban."

At the end of a week a curious sight might have greeted the eye of a traveler in these parts. A young man with a pack upon his back, containing his earthly belongings, and an iron shod staff in his hand, stood on the brow of the hill overlooking the village. A crowd of villagers surrounded him. They had come out to bless Jacob as he began his journey. His father-in law, Rabbi Laban, and his daughters were there. "God bless thee," cried they all, "God bless thee," cries the Rabbi, "a thousand fold, may He watch over thee in the lands of the Gentiles. May He direct thy footsteps. Love the law. Love thy God." The last farewells were said, the sad company watched the adventurous youth disappear below the next hill.

One of the company lingers with her eyes fastened on the west, the direction which Jacob had taken. When the last lingering villager had returned to his house, Jacob might have been seen returning to the spot where Rachel stood. "Rachel!" "Jacob!" they are in each other's arms. "I must have the last look at thy face." "I must see my Rachel once more." Then they bid each other a

long, sad adieu At last Jacob tears himself away. Not daring to look back, he pushes his way towards the West, that land of hope. Rachel tearfully wends her way homeward. There her father is comforting the father of Jacob by narrating the story of his many triumphs in the study of the law, his commendable modesty, which forbade his remaining in the same house with his betrothed, Leah, his earnestness and determination to secure a competency in a distant country, the sure success that awaited him. The assembled company ask God to guide the wanderer's steps, and thank Him that Jacob is not numbered among the ease-loving, pleasure-loving young men of their acquaintance.

(To be continued.)

BOOK REVIEWS.

JUDAISM OR CHRISTIANITY — WHICH? By Meyer Lerman:
Translated by M. Green. New York: Church Society,
68 E. 7th Street: 1893.

We are glad to notice this as an evidence that there is an increasing interest in writing tracts for Jews in Judæo-German. It is good that this sort of literature is increasing. We are pleased with this attempt of Mr. Lerman, who evidently wrote a tract in English, and had it first published in Judæo-German. It shows that the writer has a desire to make his brethren according to the flesh see the good there is in becoming a Christian. But in some cases the author does not exactly indicate the true teaching of non-Christian Jews, and would certainly fail to obtain a favorable hearing from them by this as well as by his attempt to dispose of the Talmud in one or two lines. The tract as a whole is most excellent, and unless those things we have mentioned make it unacceptable to some Jewish readers it cannot fail to be pleasant and profitable reading for them. The translation is, so far as we can judge, an able one. But we could wish he could write *thun* and not *thon*, *hiten* and not *hitten*. Also it does not seem to be correct to use *geboren* as an infinitive;

gebühren would be better. But we do not mean to criticise. May the Lord use this and further efforts in this line to His honor and glory, and for the salvation of souls.

THE JEWS OF ANGEVIN ENGLAND. Documents and Records from Latin and Hebrew sources, printed and manuscript, for the first time collected and translated. By Joseph Jacobs. New York and London. G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1893.

This is one of the most interesting books that we have had the pleasure to peruse for many a day. It is made up, as the title states, of translations from original documents, Latin and Hebrew, from the Norman Conquest of England to 1206. These are copious and full, especially relating to financial transactions and to the peculiar position of the Jews under mediæval law. The author's essays are to be found in the introduction, and in twenty brief appendices. This is an excellent way to write history: for it puts the reader in possession of the original sources of the history, rendered into English, and in a form to be easily understood, at the same time making the reader feel that somehow he is a sort of partner in the work of the historian.

In this volume is clearly shown the relation of the Jews in mediæval England to the Church. The Church, by a misinterpretation of Luke 6:35, declared against capitalism of any kind, branding it as usury. As thus the lending of money at interest was forbidden to Christians, the Jew had an opportunity of performing an important function in the England of the 12th century, which was just passing economically from the rude age of barter. Capital was needed for many purposes, especially by the smaller barons, and by monasteries. The State enforced the Church prohibition against the taking of interest by confiscating the estate of a "usurer," applying the provision impartially to Jew or Gentile. Thus the State, as represented by the King, became the universal legatee of every Jewish capitalist who let his money to others, and so the King was in a sort of sleeping partnership with Jewish usury. The estate of a Jew was therefore

potentially the property of the crown, and could be dealt with by the King as if it were his own. Yet it was not the King's interest to keep the Jews' wealth in his own hands, for he, the king, as a good Christian, could not get interest for it, while the Jew could very soon double and treble it, since the absence of competition enabled him to fix the rate of interest very high, rarely less than forty per cent, often as much as eighty. As the Jew might die before the debt was due, and the King be then content to take a much smaller sum as a composition for the debt, it was often the debtor's interest to keep the debt standing. The usury was in the nature of a bet against the Jew's life. The only useful function the Jew could perform towards both king and people was to be as rich as possible, just as the larger the capital of a bank the more valuable part it plays in the world of commerce. No wonder the expression, "rich as a Jew," passed into a proverb: as applied to the English Jew of the 12th century, it was tantamount to saying "rich as a bank." The king reaped the benefit of these riches in several ways. One of his main functions and main source of income was selling justice, and Jews were among his best customers. Then he claimed from them, as from other subjects, fines and amerciaments for all the events of life. The Pipe Rolls contain entries of fines paid by Jews to marry, not to marry, to become divorced, to go a journey across the sea, to become partners with other Jews, in short, for all the decisive events of life.

The author finds that there were no Jews in England before the Norman Conquest, but there are indications of many very soon after that time. The earliest mention of the London Jewry is about 1115. He gives an interesting fac-simile of a Jews' receipt, or *Shetar*. The author follows Blackstone in thinking that the Court of the Star Chamber derived its name from its being held in the room where the old Jewish "Starrs" or *Shetars* were deposited. This is a possible etymology, but in mediæval English and Latin it was rather called the "sterred chamber," or *camera stellata*, which suggests the more popular explanation. Still the account which the author gives of the old writings of Jews and the manner of keeping the records is fascinatingly interesting. The list of English Jews of the 12th century is a very valuable table. One could well wish that the book were longer, although it may be that similar documents of a later day would not have that interest of antiquity and the quaint mediæval charm. We have no hesitation in saying that

this is one of the most valuable contributions to English History that has recently appeared, and it sheds light upon an obscure subject, and one of intense interest.

EARLY CIVILIZATION IN PALESTINE.

We have become possessed of certain very important indications as to the early civilization of Palestine by means of clay tablets. Not that the knowledge so attained is altogether new or that it conflicts with that which has been deduced from yet earlier Egyptian records. It is well known to scholars that Thothmes III., when he defeated the league of Hittites and Phœnicians at Megiddo, in 1600 B. C. (a century before Amenophis III. acceded), reaped a spoil which indicates the advanced civilization of Syria, including not only the precious metals and chariots painted and plated, but also objects of art having a high æsthetic value, and that he found corn, wine, and oil, abundant in the country, and many hundred walled towns, in which there were already temples of the gods.

Such evidence has, however, been slighted by those who regard the early Hebrews as savages, and who think that, though placed in the very center of the ancient civilized world, between the Egyptians and Assyrians, they were, nevertheless, unacquainted with any arts and uninfluenced by surrounding culture. The new discoveries insist on quite another understanding of the ancient history.

It is surely a lesson of humility that the modern student should learn from such discoveries. Voltaire was no doubt a writer of great originality and acumen, though, from our present stand-point, wonderfully ignorant of antiquity. He finds it hard to believe that Homer's poems could have been written down before 500 B. C., and asserts that papyrus had not been invented in Egypt in the time of Moses, though we now possess in the maxims of Ptah-hotep a manuscript as old as the pyramids.

We find, on the contrary, that not only in Egypt or in Mesopotamia was the art of writing known in the time of Moses, but that the inhabitants of Palestine also could pen a brick epistle, which, in the space of a few inches, contained as much information as can now be condensed into a sheet of note paper. Such letters were neither heavy nor bulky, and could be carried in the turban or in the folds of the shirt bosom just as easily as paper letters are now so carried, with the advantage that they were imperishable, as is witnessed by the fact that they are now being read, 3,400 years after they were written.—*Edinburgh Review*.

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Entered at the Post-office in Alfred Centre, N. Y., April 5, 1889, as second-class matter.