

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.

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CONTENTS.

Editorial Paragraphs, - - - - -	97
Judaism with a Future, - - - - -	99
The Shepherd of Israel, - - - - -	103
George William Curtis on the Jews, - - - - -	107
The Deceased Wife's Sister, - - - - -	110
Baron De Hirsch on the Prospects of Argentine Colonization, - - - - -	111
News, - - - - -	112
The Covenant of Circumcision, - - - - -	114

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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.

הביטו אל ציור חצבתם
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.

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JUDÆUS SUM; JUDAICI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

"WHITHER"? is the question we may well ask ourselves when we contemplate the condition of the religious thought of the world to-day. Who of us has the prophetic vision to tell? While we may not know, there are many things we may fear, and many for which we can only hope.

WE may fear the triumph of irreligion over true religion. If many of the tendencies we see existing continue, true religion will not be seen after a little. We do not dread reverent Bible criticism, nor yet any of the true benefits wrought out by modern ideas; and still we are doubtful about some things. God, divine worship, old-fashioned virtue, to say nothing of home and country, are nowhere nowadays. In conversation with a young and very intelligent Jew we both talked of God. A slight difference in spiritual accent, to say nothing more, was apparent. To our question, "What is your idea of God?" he replied at once, "Nature!" Prayer, personal responsibility to a personal God, were ideas wholly foreign in his conception of religion. Such a view of these things exists both in the synagogue and in the church to a lamentable extent, and we fear it may signify ruin ahead. With God

dethroned, responsibility removed, religion, love, and patriotism matters for light jesting rather than serious thought and sober feeling, what of the future?

IN the nearer approach of Jews and Gentile Christians we see cause for rejoicing, but not to the extent to which some of our friends do. It is pleasant to have many manners and ways in common. It is agreeable to have Rabbis and Christian ministers exchange pulpits, or at least speak from the same platform at union meetings. But we fear that much of this nearer approach to each other is the approach of each to a common platform of no faith. If a faithful Jew (as Judaism is commonly understood,) becomes a rationalist, and a faithful Christian of some other nationality becomes a rationalist, they are together. But *cui bono?* One has lost his Law, his Messianic hope, and his God; the other has lost his Bible, his hope in Christ, and his God. They have changed from holding things which ought to have been identical, but which while they held them they regarded as antipodal, to holding nothing but the broken reed of infidelity. If many present tendencies persist we fear ruin ahead.

BUT we are not without hope. With a basis of faith, earnest and true, in the hearts of the kernel of God's people, the apparent tendency to irreligion may be simply the evidence of a transition period, so that, when errors and superstitions are swept away a deeper and more earnest type of true religion may prevail. For this we hope. In the near approach of Jew and Gentile there is an opportunity for a better mutual understanding, a clearer comprehension of the forms of their faith. If both escape the maelstrom of rationalism and infidelity, Gentile Christianity may realize the errors into which it has drifted, and taught by Judaism it may resume its former purity and glory. Judaism, too, grown familiar with the essential paths of Christianity, may acknowledge, not only Moses and the Prophets, but Him of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote. Let both Jew and Gentile not seek for

newer fields of doubt and infidelity, but heed the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah: "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." Jer. 6: 16.

JUDAISM WITH A FUTURE.

Judaism is the religion originating from the tribe and kingdom of Judah. The name Judah was given to the founder of the tribe bearing that name in token of thankfulness, and signifies praise. They who are the true representatives of Judaism are living to the true praise of God.

There are many shades of theological belief, each claiming most truly to represent Judaism. That form of religious opinion which adheres most nearly to the interpretations and teachings of the Talmud sways the minds of by far the largest following among the Jewish people, and perhaps possesses more of hope for the future than many another form of belief. But vast masses of the Jewish race have detached themselves from Talmudical Judaism. Since the days of Moses Mendelssohn a pseudo-spirit of reform has passed over the minds of many Jews, especially in Western Europe and America. A reform, however, should properly lead to a return to former purity in the standards of religion and in practice. If the Judaism of former times has degenerated in too many instances into a mere matter of form, consisting too often of principally in the matter of attendance upon synagogue and the repetition of prayers, the meaning of, which has been long ago forgotten, then let the true Christian spirit be infused into the proper forms; but by every consideration that is dear to the Jewish heart, let there not be an advance so far away from the faith of the fathers of biblical times as to imperil religion itself, and lead to a departure from God.

The teachings of the philosophers, which go very far to influence modern reform movements, many of them, are

far from the teachings of our holy Scriptures, and savor more of a heathen original. Profound indeed were many of their investigations; but, brethren of the Jewish faith, perhaps if we understood the Bible far more thoroughly than we do, we would discover that the sacred writers of that holy book gave utterance to thoughts that are profounder. It is not enough that in childhood we have read it in Sabbath-school, or at that time were taught large portions of it so that we can never forget them, but can repeat them word for word in their pure and beautiful Hebrew. Let us be thankful if we are able to do that, but we need to continue the real study of that Book through life, and seek to find out new and delightful beauty in its sacred teachings.

Many are the phases of reform to-day; but these are changing, and really have no future in the days when prophetic Judaism in exactness shall be fulfilled. As an example of the diversity of sentiment prevailing at the present day, take that article of belief respecting the Messiah. One man a generation ago believed in the coming of a personal Messiah. His son, to-day, equally learned, and a great admirer of the mediæval and modern philosophers, believes only in the coming of a Messianic age. We quote from one of the Reformed Jewish creeds: "The so-called time of the Messiah is only that time in which all men will unite in worshipping the One holy God, and live together in brotherly love, peace and harmony."

These all shall one day surely give place to another form of Judaism that is destined to rule the world. It is the only form of Judaism that really has any bright prospects. From the present anomalous condition of Israel it is the true reform, a return to the faith of the fathers as held by the faithful in the kingdom of Judah, and by many of the return long posterior to the Babylonian captivity.

That Judaism is founded on the Law of Moses, derives inspiration from the teachings of the prophets, and hails with gladness the advent of the Messiah, who has already come in the person of Jesus the Nazarene, and who

will as surely come again in ushering in the glories of a future golden age.

We believe that the Law of Moses remains unalterably the same that it has ever been since its promulgation, the fountain of morality and salvation to the human race, and the promise of all that is best for the race reserved for the future. Jewish Christians are bound as much to keep the Law as ever were their fathers in the days of their defection before the birth of Jesus. Gentile Christians are released from certain of the so-called ceremonial laws; that is to say, they are not bound to observe them unless they choose; and yet even they, if they choose to, might keep the whole Law in its simplicity and purity, with a very few exceptions from its requirements, so far as that is now possible, with manifest advantage. But we shall search the New Testament through in vain to find that anywhere the Jew is released from the Law of his fathers if he become a believer in Jesus. Is it not best to follow that holy Law and the teaching of all its ceremonies so far as he may be able; rather than repudiating all divine Law, to adopt ceremonies and laws in any wise connected with that human system, the Roman cultus! Many Jews are claimed as converts to Jesus. Undoubtedly among them there are many earnest men whose hearts God has touched. But what are all these converts doing for the conversion of the Jewish race, or for any great advance in Christianity? Whence comes the paralysis of so many endeavors in the kingdom of our Lord? Is it not because these converts are not keeping their own Law and are missing the blessing that surely comes as the reward of obedience?

The Judaism of the future is founded also upon the ministry of the Prophets. From time to time the voices of these were raised speaking authoritatively for God, interpreting and enforcing the great truths of the Law. Many of them were rejected by their generations, but they wrote imperishable words, and are everywhere acknowledged now where Judaism is loved and lived.

These prophets, because they were in accord with

Moses, announced the coming of a Prophet who would be mightier than them all, a Priest not of the order of Levi, the Scion of David's house, who would rule from His throne on high until the restoration of all things. We believe that all signs infallibly affirm that these announcements have met their fulfillment. Heralds these prophets were. They heralded the approach of their King. He came in splendor, and by the fulfillment of these their predictions, they themselves are proved all the more incontestably to be truly sent of God. The Man of Nazareth, by the spirituality of His teachings and the splendor of His morality, as well as by all the signs that He wrought, whether miracles of healing or reformation, proves Himself to every unprejudiced mind all that His immediate disciples claimed for Him. We cannot see how a representative of David's race can rule in the future unless Jesus be that Ruler. All records of the genealogy of David's family have long since perished. No one living can know that he belongs to that princely house. But Jesus has reigned since the days of the incarnation, over a remnant in Israel, who have remained true to God's Law. We, of THE PECULIAR PEOPLE, seek to be identified with that remnant.

Such, in outline, is a characterization of the Judaism of the future. It is the Judaism that will inherit once more the land of sacred story. All colonization schemes must prove futile until the true Judaism of the future emerges in any degree of strength among God's people. Let all upon whom rests the responsibility for its dissemination prove faithful, and put themselves in line to receive the blessing of God upon all that that they do.

DRUMONT, the irrepressible Jewbaiter of France, being denied permission to publish his calumniations in his native land, will take his paper to Belgium and issue it there; he also hopes to obtain the glamor attaching to exiles. But apparently his fangs are drawn and he is gradually growing to be a harmless crank.—*Jewish Exponent.*

THE SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL.*

"In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the Shephilah,¹ and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem. and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks pass again under the hands of him that tilleth them, saith the Lord." Jer. 33:15.

The picture that Jeremiah paints is a glowing one of the prosperity of the Holy Land in the latter days. If we listen attentively to the voices of the prophets we must believe that it is the divine purpose to restore the elect people back to their original possessions in Palestine. The return predicted in the book of Jeremiah to come about after the expiration of seventy years never exhausted the glowing predictions of that prophet and of all who prophesied concerning the return. Never in any period of the history of the chosen nation were the boundaries ever reached by them which were assigned in the five books of Moses. These boundaries are yet to be occupied, and the land filled with them as millions of them shall go back to the land of their fathers. Multitudes of Jews at the present day have no desire to return to Palestine. They say that the country where they reside is their Palestine, and many there are who deny that the Holy Land is ever to be reoccupied by the Jews as a nation. Such false position among the unbelieving of the chosen people was clearly predicted in the inspired Word, and God has answered it. He has pledged His word to bring about the return; He has entered into covenant with His people for its accomplishment, and He regards that covenant as binding as His covenant of the day and night.

God will surely turn the captivity of His people. The turning of their captivity will be identical with the turning of their hearts to repentance. The Jews will then have become a Christian nation, and God will greatly bless them. The pure worship of God will be restored to

*Adapted from a Sermon preached at Little Genesee, N. Y., by the Rev. S. S. Powell.

1) The Philistine plain.

their land. In all their cities and villages synagogues will abound, in which the name of Jesus will be honored and be supreme. Schools will be maintained everywhere, in which the Bible will be enthroned. Schools of higher education will be established in Jerusalem, and the Bible will be at the basis of the entire educational system. The printing press, unquestionably, at that time will be an important factor in educational concerns and in all missionary operations. Printing presses in Jerusalem will pour forth books, newspapers and pamphlets, executed in the best styles of the printer's art, to go into all the homes of the land, and afar thence into all Gentile lands, bearing the purest spirit of the Bible religion, and breathing, above all else, love for the name of Jesus.

Moreover, ships will plow the Mediterranean on the west, and the Red Sea on the east, bearing missionaries into every land and clime. These, possessing a knowledge of nearly all languages, will permanently influence the civilization of the most highly cultured nations of the earth, chasing away superstitions and disseminating the pure religion of the Bible. They will enter the wilds of Africa, and finally succeed in elevating Africa's barbaric races. They will enter every land of Asia, and the isles of the sea afar off, and chase away all idols from the face of the earth. A large share of the wealth of the world will have been poured out into the hands of God's people, and treasure will then be lavishly bestowed upon the great missionary operations of those days, — operations that will have for their aim no less than the covering of the whole earth with the knowledge of the pure truth of God's Word as the waters cover the great deep. Unquestionably, the tenth will at that time be paid by those who are God's true people, as in the years of ancient times.

At that time great prosperity will exist in the land. Shepherds will cause their flocks to lie down contentedly in their pastures. The special circumstance caught and recorded as by a photographic process in the prophetic passage at the head of this article, is the passing of the flocks under the rod of the shepherd who is counting

them. This the shepherd formerly did for two reasons : he made all the increase of his flocks pass under his rod that he might assign every tenth to the Lord's service; he also caused all his flocks every day to pass under the rod that he might count them and know if any were missing. Should the number ever fall short search would be at once instituted, and the missing brought home.

These words are so rendered in the Targum on Jeremiah as to refer to the Messiah who will be the Shepherd of His people, and in Yalkut ¹ these words are mentioned in connection with the final gathering together of Israel in the Messianic days. Jesus has declared that He is the Good Shepherd. He is the Shepherd of Israel as truly as of the Gentile nations who have believed on Him. He knows all their numbers, and whensoever Israel is willing and obedient will assign His beloved people to a magnificent priestly service in the world. Jesus, the good Shepherd, knows the sorrows of Israel and will care for His people whensoever they entrust themselves to His loving care. He is the good Shepherd fulfilling the exquisite picture of the twenty-third Psalm. He causes us to lie down in green pastures. He leads us by the side of still waters. He conducts us from pasture to pasture, even though His guidance lead between mountain crags, where the deep shadows lie, and where evil beasts lurk. Trust Him implicitly, follow Him fully, listen to His loving voice.

He knows every moment of our danger. He knew when all we like sheep had gone astray. He went to the deserts and to the mountains to find His sheep. Blood drops marked all the way until He had found His banished, and joy was awakened in Heaven over the repentance of sinners. Our Lord Jesus laid down His life in death, and as the Good Shepherd gave up His life for the sheep. Will He not, therefore care for us in perplexity and doubt and disaster?

1) Vol. I., page 105 d.

In the passage of the Targum referred to the words of Jeremiah are rendered, "The people shall yet learn by the hands of the Messiah." Jesus is the only Master in Israel who can truly instruct us in the ever advancing knowledge of God. If we are teachable and apply ourselves to His instruction He will in truth assign to us the gradations of that ever advancing knowledge. It is intended that we should grow. Our souls are athirst. We have intellectual needs, and the heart-cries within impel us to seek satisfaction. Jesus only can truly quench our thirst, minister to our intellectual wants, and stop all heart-cries. Believe Him, trust Him, seek His instruction.

Sometimes it is needful that we learn by passing under the rod of affliction. Sometimes the sheep rush through too fast to be counted. Then the rod must gently urge them back. Fear not the time of passing under the rod of God. When Moses was commanded to lead out his people from Egypt he was directed to deliver them by means of his rod. He waved that rod over Egypt and humbled the pride of a great nation. He waved his rod over the waters of the Red Sea, and they parted asunder and his people passed through on dry land. It had been a great affliction for them that they had been oppressed on the brick fields of Egypt and under Afric's sultry sun; but by means of their sufferings they were disciplined and prepared to pass out triumphantly and enter upon their divinely-given career of serving as the priests of the world. Fear not to pass under the rod. Ofttimes that rod may be changed for us and become a rod of power. Because we have suffered it may be that we shall grasp it and wave it triumphantly for the advancement of God's kingdom.

Let not Israel mourn because of the excessive sufferings that have overtaken the chosen people through all the centuries. Rather let them learn from these and be driven to the feet of Jesus, where only is the source of true life-giving knowledge, and the people of Israel shall again take their high place as priests of the world.

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS ON THE JEWS.

A correspondent in the *American Hebrew* has recently called attention to an old article by George William Curtis, in his admirable Easy Chair department of *Harper's Magazine*, on "What we owe to the Jews." It will be of interest to our readers who may never have seen it in its original place, and who do not read the Jewish weeklies. It may cause some of our Gentile readers to think well if they know that a writer like Mr. Curtis had such a respect for the race:

One beautiful June evening in Paris the Easy Chair strolled with a friend into a cafe upon the Boulevard. They had been to hear *Robert le Diable* at the French Opera, and gayly humming and gossiping they sat upon the broad walk that was still thronged on the still summer night. Presently a dark-haired man came quietly along and seated himself at a table near by. He was alone, and seemed not to care for recognition. He was simply dressed, and was entirely unnoticeable except for the strong Jewish lines of his intellectual face. The Easy Chair's companion whispered, "That is the man to whom we owe the delight of this evening; that is Meyerbeer." After a little while he added, with feeling, "How much we owe to the Jews, and how mean Christendom is!"

It was remarkable how much of the conspicuous work in and influence in the world on that evening was due to the genius of a people whose name is so constantly used as a word of reproach. A few months before, Mendelssohn had been buried in Leipsic, and in Berlin the Easy Chair had heard the memorial concert of his music at the Sing Akademie. Rosini was still living, and Verdi was writing operas, but Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer were the recognized masters of music. The evening before, the Easy Chair had seen the Jewess Rachel in *Phedre*,—the one woman who contests the laurel with Mrs. Siddons, and who was then incomparably the great living actress. Beyond the Channel, Disraeli, the child of Spanish Jews, was just about to kiss hands as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and

to become the political leader of the British Tories. In the vast city in which they were sitting the Easy Chair knew that the Jewish Heine was living, breathing his weird and melancholy song, while in Paris and London, and Frankfort and Vienna the great masters of the main-spring of industrial activity, the capitalists who held peace and war in their hands, and by whose favor kings ruled, were Jews. The philosophy, the art, the industry, the politics, of Christendom, were full of the Jewish genius; the gayety of nations, the delight of scholars, the scepters of princes, the movements of civilization, hung in great degree upon it. It is as true to-day as in that old summer night, and the words of the Easy Chair's friend are still as shamefully true, "How mean Christendom is!"

Recently in New York an estimable and accomplished gentleman was rejected as a member of the Bar Association "for no other reason that can be conceived," indignantly said one of the leading members. "except that he was a Jew." Doubtless a few votes would procure the rejection. But the Association is not a social club, and presumptively a man who is an honorable member of the Bar is a fit member of the Association. The few hostile votes, however, represent the prejudice. It is very odd and very universal. To the audience of to-day there is nothing in Shakespeare more vital and intelligible than the fervent appeal of Shylock to the common humanity of the world around him. The Jew is still separate, and the prejudice which has pursued him for generations is but slightly relaxed. The lines of demarkation are fine. They are often almost invisible. But they are deep, and apparently absolute. It is one of the most common and most tenacious of the objections to "Daniel Deronda" that it deals with Jews and Jewish life and character. The fact is sometimes almost resented as an offense to the mass of readers. Even in "Ivanhoe," although torrents of Christian tears have flowed over the closing pages, where the noble and beautiful Rebecca asks to see the face of the fair Rowena, yet such is the fell and weird outlaw of the Jew from general sympathy, that the catastrophe seems to be an inevitable

fate. There is no doubt that this prejudice is as cruel in its effects as it is unreasonable in its origin. Distrust, alienation, a nameless scorn, or by whatever term the feeling be described, fatally chills and discourages the man or the people upon whom it falls. One of the most intelligent and accomplished colored men in this country was so tortured by the prejudice against his race that he said he would gladly be flayed alive if only he could be made white. A slave-holder, trying to prove to Gerrit Smith the "natural inferiority" of the colored man, said to him that although the white and colored children played pleasantly together in perfect equality, yet when they grew older the difference of inferior and superior became evident. Mr. Smith replied that the change was due not to conscious inferiority, but to the consciousness of the negro of the awful stigma of slavery upon his race. A people is oppressed, and the arts by which it avenges or defends itself are urged as reasons for oppression, or drooping despair of successful resistance is claimed as the justification of tyranny.

The legend of the Wandering Jew has a pathos beyond the usual interpretation. The story is that the Jew, who refused to comfort Christ as He toiled under the weight of the cross, was condemned to tarry until He came, and so wanders around the world until the second coming. But it is the symbol also of the restlessness of the race, roaming through Christendom homeless and rejected. It is the curse, says many a zealous Christian heart, on the people that crucified the Redeemer. This is the common theory of the origin of the traditional antipathy to the Jews, and undoubtedly this is with many persons a vague justification of the feeling with which a Jew is regarded. But should it be nothing to such persons that when, as they believe, the Creator would incarnate Himself, He became a Jew? Or again, do they reflect that if it was in the eternal decrees that the sins of men were to be atoned and condoned by the innocent sacrifice, those who accomplished the sacrifice were but the agents of the divine will? Are all such ingenious speculations

other than devices to explain and justify a mere prejudice of race, such as some African tribes cherish against people of white skins? Those who find in such prejudice a profound significance will continue to plead the feeling as its own sufficient reason. But honorable men will be careful how they heedlessly use the same name of a race to which the religion, the literature, the art, the civilized progress of humanity, are so greatly indebted, as a term of utter derision and scorn.

THE DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

The Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill has again been rejected by the House of Lords, mainly through the instrumentality of the twenty bishops, who converted a minority of eleven into a majority of nine. It was perhaps only to be expected, considering what has usually been the attitude of the church to this question, that the spiritual peers should have voted as they did. The Archbishop of Canterbury, in his decidedly clever speech, was able to appeal to Roman law, early Christian practice, and the canons of the Church of England, in defense of his position. But his claim to invoke the Mosaic Law as one of his authorities is a matter which Jews cannot but call in question. Jewish authorities regard marriage with a deceased wife's sister as perfectly permissible, and even meritorious. In a question of biblical interpretation there can be no more powerful argument than that which is derived from Jewish custom, and history of Jewish thought and practice. The fact, therefore, that Jewish authorities have invariably offered no obstacle to marriage with a deceased wife's sister ought, as once urged by the Rev. G. J. Emanuel, to be conclusive. The passage usually referred to in this discussion is Lev. 18: 18: "Thou shalt not take a woman to her sister, to be a rival wife to her, . . . beside the other in her lifetime." Obviously the meaning of this command is that a man shall not marry two sisters concurrently, so that the one becomes what is known among Arabian peoples as a "rival wife" to the other.

That no objection was contemplated to marrying a deceased wife's sister may be inferred from the Levirate Law, which in certain cases enjoined as a positive duty marriage with a deceased brother's wife; while marriage with a living brother's wife was of course forbidden. It is sometimes contended by those who are opposed to marriage with a deceased wife's sister, that Lev. 18: 18 signifies "Thou shalt not take one woman unto another to be a rival wife unto her," so that it is to be understood as a prohibition of polygamy. The genius of the Hebrew language would, of course, permit of the words having this meaning, but it is absolutely excluded by the consideration that the Mosaic Law does not prohibit polygamy.—*London Jewish Chronicle.*

BARON DE HIRSCH ON THE PROSPECTS OF ARGENTINE COLONIZATION.

Baron de Hirsch has lately given his views to a representative of the *Pester Lloyd* on Jewish colonization in the Argentine. The Baron did not minimize the gigantic difficulties of his undertaking, but he was pleased to be able to state, on the authority of recent tidings from Argentine, that they are sensibly diminishing. The colonists themselves are bravely taking to labor. Old and young are alike eager to work, and a girl who, as the Baron was informed, was a pianist in her native country, is now cheerfully laboring at the plow. The dispersion of the immigrants, which is so desirable from every point of view, is now being better appreciated, and justice is being done to the advantages which this system of agricultural establishments offers when vast tracts of land have to be cultivated. Baron de Hirsch complained of the indifference of the wealthy Jews towards their unfortunate co-religionists who were obliged to emigrate, and he concluded by expressing the hope that authorized representatives of the European press might be sent out to the Argentine to judge for themselves the progress of Jewish colonization and the ardor for work of the colonists.

The Peculiar People.

חדשות הנעשות — NEWS — במחנה ישראל.

THE Central Conference of Reformed Jewish Rabbis met in Atlantic City on the eleventh and twelfth of July. The principal work of the Conference was the revision of the Prayer Book.

THERE are two small Jewish agricultural colonies in California, the first in Orange Vale, opposite Folsom, the other in Porterville, near Fresno. Both have passed the experimental stage, and give every promise of success. Besides these, there are many Russian Jewish farmers in the State, of whom no one ever hears anything, because they are thrifty, self-supporting, and independent, and mind their own business.—*Jewish Progress.*

SEVERAL German and Austrian Jews — rich men, of course—were lately decorated, and among them also the Moravian Rabbi, Dr. Placzek, by Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria, in acknowledgment of the Rabbi's contribution to the literature of the natural sciences. This is certainly a novelty. It seems to have reference to the Rabbi's book on Darwinism in the Talmud, which he wrote some time ago.—*American Israelite.*

THE first group of emigrants who have recently left for the Argentine have presented Baron Hirsch with an address written on parchment in the sacred tongue. Thanking the Baron for the interest he is taking in the fate of the Jews willing to settle in agricultural colonies, the emigrants make the solemn promise to give up all thought of trade, and to dedicate themselves exclusively to the cultivation of the soil. For this group of emigrants numbering about 735 souls, colonies are already being prepared in the Argentine, and of these latter one

will bear the name of the Baroness Hirsch, another the name of the Baron's son, and yet another the name of Mr. Fineberg, the Baron's representative in Russia. Another group of emigrants bound for the Argentine, and numbering 230 souls, left Odessa on board the Italian steamship "Birmania."

THE first prize of the Royal Academy of Arts in Munich, has been gained by a young Jewish sculptor, Henrick Gluckenstein. The artist is also a thorough Talmudical scholar, and a Russian.

JEWISH artists make a brave show this year in the rival Salons at the Champs Elysees and the Champ de Mars. Madame Arsene Darmesteter (Helena Hartog,) is represented at the Champs Elysees by two portraits.

A CITIZEN of Buffalo, one Kizeninski, has been sentenced to the salt mines of Siberia for life. His sole offense appears to be that he is a Pole who left his native land voluntarily, and sought citizenship in the United States. He voted in the State of New York for fifteen years. Kizeninski's wife had remained in Poland, and he resolved to go to see her, doubtless with the intent of bringing her also to this country. On his arrival at Ulrichawek, Poland, he was arrested, and, without trial, was sentenced to the salt mines in Siberia for life. The attention of the State Department has been drawn to the case by citizens of Buffalo, and Secretary Gresham will press the question upon the Russian government. Russia appears to be resolved to insult the United States, and will persist in it until this government makes the Czar realize that we are able to protect our naturalized citizens. The treaty which Russia did everything in its power to effect, expressly stipulated that no discrimination should be made between native and naturalized citizens of the United States, and that all Americans should have the same right of travel, sojourn, and trade, in Russia that Russian subjects have in the United States. Russia cannot afford to sacrifice

her important trade interests with this country in order to gratify race hatred.—*Chicago Evening Post.*

THE Faculty of Laws of Buda-Pesth has nominated Extraordinary Professor Dr. Gustav Schwartz for the vacant Chair of Roman J risprudence. It is expected that Dr. Schwartz will have to content himself with this distinction conferred on him by his colleagues, as hitherto no Jew has been able to obtain an Ordinary Professorship at the University.

A JEWISH Philanthropic Association is about to be founded in Paris. The special feature of the Association will be that it will assist the poor of all creeds.

THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION.

BY JOHN M. GOLDBERG.

The question is often raised regarding converts from Judaism to Christianity, "Whether they are bound to have the rite of circumcision performed upon their issue or not." The question is not a light one, and to maintain the affirmative is to enter upon a field of controversy which will cause considerable criticism from learned men, theologians, doctors and interpreters of scriptural law, who, it appears, all hold the doctrine of "justification by faith," and that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," that "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything," etc. Nevertheless while acknowledging that all these facts are enough for the soul's salvation, I feel bound, perhaps single-handed, to adhere to my theory. In doing so, all I ask is that the reasons here propounded be impartially considered.

"It takes two to make a bargain," is a common phrase, and the principle is as old as heaven and earth, or at least has been true ever since human intelligence made its first appearance upon the stage of this world's theatre. Adam and Eve covenanted to join together their earthly

pilgrimage for better or for worse, and from what is known never annulled that agreement.

The principle of covenant or agreement is one of the most important factors of social life. It has been and is of an every day occurrence in all business transactions. Without it society could not exist. It is a vital part of life. If any covenant or agreement could be annulled at will by either party to the same, it would destroy integrity. A covenant establishes the fact of a mutual understanding of the contracting parties, and binds either. The details thereof are always upheld in law, except in cases of fraud, by all nations and kindreds of civilized, half-civilized, and even non-civilized races.

Jews and Christians believe the records of the Bible to be truth, and the word of God; hence everything therein stands upon its own merits, and must be measured by truth. In that divinely dictated book, wherein God is Himself directly concerned, we find several covenants binding both parties according to their plain wording and meanings. Amongst them are three principal ones, each of them having been long in conception and in negotiation, and all the important facts having been carefully weighed in carrying them out. Each of these three covenants has been signed and sealed with blood marks. They are:

1st. The covenant God made with Abraham;

2d. The covenant God made with the children of Israel on Mount Sinai;

3d. The covenant called the "New Covenant," which God made with the House of Israel, and in which the Gentile world has to participate. The details of the last two covenants need not be mentioned, as they are perfectly understood; it will suffice to notice the first one, the Abrahamic covenant, which is the subject matter now in hand.

According to *Gen. 12: 5*, negotiations were commenced by God concerning a certain tract of land, known on the map of ancient times as Canaan, which He intends to convey to His friend Abram as a homestead under cer-

tain conditions and stipulations. Abram, in furtherance of negotiations, was directed to view the land. Gen. 13: 14, 15. It seems that Abram, after viewing the land, and probably being astonished at the magnitude of the offer of the homestead, especially as it was the "Garden of the Lord," had some misgivings, for we find him putting the question to the Owner, "Lord, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" Gen. 15:8. Abram found, however, that the Owner was in serious earnest about it, since He not only gave the boundaries but also the different tribes by which it was inhabited, and which He intended to drive out at the time Abram's seed should take possession of it.

From that time forth the negotiations presented a firmer aspect; but a side issue made its appearance, which had to be disposed of to avoid subsequent legal complications before the main business could be attended to. Hitherto the grantee was known by the name of Abram, but the Grantor, having it in His power, and desiring everything to be done in His own way, intended that in the covenant, as well as for all time to come, the name was to be "Abraham," differently spelled and interpreted, and changed it from Abram to Abraham. Had this not been done it would indeed have furnished ground for making a test regarding the validity of the whole transaction. Hence the change. Genesis 17: 5-8.

Thus far it does not appear that Abraham, by which name only he is known by all generations, knew what the consideration was to be by which *he and his seed* in all generations to come, were to become the sole and undisputed owners and *everlasting* possessors of the only Real Estate upon the face of this globe. Perhaps Abraham had an idea, perhaps not; it is here immaterial.

When all negotiations concerning the homestead, the "Garden of the Lord," had been completed, and the warrantee deed was to be drawn up to secure the title to Abraham and his seed *forever*, Abraham on his part was ready to carry out the stipulations and conditions demanded of him, the abstract of which reads:

Gen. 17:8. I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan *for an everlasting possession*. . . .

Gen. 17:9. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant, thou, and thy seed after thee, in their generations.

Gen. 17:10. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you and thy seed after thee: Every man child among you shall be circumcised.

Gen. 17:11. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and you.

Gen. 17:12. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations.

Everything being ready and stipulations agreed to by both parties, the warrantee deed was to be drawn up, a verified copy of which is recorded in Holy Scripture, and the original deposited in the archives of heaven :

Be it known by these Presents, that I, Jehovah (Ex. 6:3), Owner of Heaven and Earth (Gen. 1:1), party of the first part, in consideration of certain stipulations, agreed to by Abraham, a citizen of Ur of the Chaldees, residing at Sichem (Gen. 12:6), party of the second part, for himself, his seed and heirs after him throughout all generations (Gen. 17:8; 48:4), do hereby bargain and grant in fee simple, a certain tract of land, called "Canaan," being situated in Asia, and described as follows :

On the north, a line beginning near *Promotorium Album*, in latitude 33 degrees, 10 minutes, trending northward, till near the southern base of Hermon it strikes latitude 33 degrees, 16 minutes, and then runs straight on to the desert; on the east, the Arabian Desert; on the south the parallel of latitude 31 degrees, a little south of Beersheba; 31 degrees, 15 minutes, curving to take in Kadesh; on the west, the Mediterranean Sea, divided by the Jordan River into two nearly equal portions;—with all appurtenances, rights and privileges.

Abraham, in behalf of himself (Gen. 17:26), at once performed his part of the agreement.

The first transfer of the title to "the everlasting homestead" was verified in favor of Isaac as the first legal seed of Abraham by the Grantor, whose consent was necessary, as possession of the grant had not yet been effected. Gen. 26:4. In like manner in the transfer of the domain from Isaac to Jacob, and to make the title perfect, the changed name of Jacob to Israel was also recorded and registered in Chancery. Gen. 32:28; 35:10,13.

After a lapse of four hundred and thirty years, more or less, the seed of Abraham took legal possession of the homestead, and the necessary record was made of it. Josh. 1:4.

A covenant cannot be annulled or invalidated by either party without the consent of the other. It is an established fact which cannot, even on technical grounds,

be denied, that the seed of Abraham throughout all their generations, have on their part always, and do to this day, perform the conditions imposed upon them by the "Grant Covenant," and therefore are still the legal owners of the land in fee simple, although they are not now nor have they for more than eighteen centuries been in actual possession it. Not being in possession does not cancel the title nor the claim. The Turkish government, which now holds possession, is but the *locum tenens*, and will have to relinquish its hold when the prediction of Israel's Greatest Prophet, Jesus of Nazareth, is fulfilled when He said: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Luke 21: 24. And what then? When the Gentile lease is out Jerusalem shall be trodden down no more.

The covenant of God with Abraham stands forever Jesus did not come to annul it; He even, though at the time involuntary, submitted to the stipulation entered into by Abraham. His own law protects the provisions of the covenant. It would be against His own teachings. He came to be the end of the *law of ceremonies*, the types of which He is the perfection. "God is not a man that He should lie, nor the son of man that He should repent." He remembered His covenant (Ex. 2: 24) with Abraham Isaac, and Jacob. The guarantee in the covenant "for ever" would be against Himself.

The fact that Christ could not have been the end of the covenant with Abraham, which was to last forever, is evident from the following:

1st. That it was three times recognized, first by Abraham, then to Isaac, and last to Jacob.

2d. That the seed of Abraham was to carry the blood-mark throughout all their generations as a warrant deed wherever they travel.

3d. That the God-man, Christ, the Jew, bears Himself the blood-mark, and as the seed of Abraham is to sit upon the throne of David.

4th. That Christ, Himself, as the Mediator of the New Covenant, sealed with His blood (while not annull.

ing the Abrahamic covenant,) the "New Covenant" by which only "the law" was to be written in the heart. Jer. 31: 31-33, Ezek. 37: 26.

There is undoubtedly some great mystery connected with circumcision as an equivalent for the law.

Again, if Christ be the end of the Abrahamic covenant of circumcision, then God's covenant with the inhabitants of the earth, by which He would not destroy it again by a flood (which covenant was also *to last forever*, (Gen. 9: 12-14), and for which the mark of the rainbow was established as a witness,) was also annulled, or brought to an end, and yet the witness, or the mark of the covenant, is still in force as an assurance that God still keeps His covenant.

That not all the Jews will allow the Law to be written in their hearts, nor heed the warnings of death to the soul, where circumcision will not act in their favor, nor avail anything, is just what the Apostle Paul argued, and I am of the same opinion. But those who accept their brother Jesus as the Deliverer, probably,—I say probably,—will be regarded by Him with especial favor, not only as the natural seed, but also as the spiritual seed of Abraham. Furthermore, Paul attaches great importance to the circumcision of Jewish converts by himself circumcising Timotheus, not because, as may be argued, he wished to satisfy unbelieving Jews, but because there was the seed of Abraham in him on his mother's side, who was a Jewess. Had Paul not considered it necessary to incorporate him into the Abrahamic covenant he would undoubtedly have established a prerogative of uselessness and a new departure from duty.

Peter's argument concerning circumcision is not applicable to Jewish converts. The "burden" spoken of by him had reference to the circumcision of Gentiles, who entered into the new covenant by grace. "Now, therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear." Acts 15: 10. Peter never bore the distinction of a circumciser; nor do we find that he ever attempted to circumcise.

But what he meant by "the burden" was that when a stranger, one not of the seed of Abraham, became a proselyte to Judaism, it was a law established by the Jews, and which is still practiced by the Jews upon those who embrace the Jewish faith, basing the performance upon the command of God to Abraham, "He that is born in thy house and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised." Gen. 17: 13. There is no command of God to be found that circumcision was to be continued upon strangers. Peter contended, and that correctly, that the strangers in Abraham's house were to be circumcised for the mere purpose that they might be partakers of the temporal blessings with which God blessed Abraham. With their demise the ordinance ceased. We do not even find that, outside of Isaac, the children of Abraham by Keturah (Gen. 25,) were to be partakers of the blessing of the grant of the homestead, Canaan, or "Garden of the Lord." "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." We find also that when Jacob went down to Egypt only seventy persons, "his seed," "all the souls that came out of his loins," were in the Abrahamic covenant of circumcision. Gen. 46: 7, 26.

That the stranger, or Gentile, becoming an Israelite, or more properly speaking, becoming a citizen of the Jewish commonwealth by adopting the Jewish creed, was not to be circumcised, is set forth in the command of God to Moses to tell the *children of Israel*, not the proselytes, "If a woman have conceived seed and borne a man child, then she shall be unclean seven days," (Lev. 12: 2) and her uncleanliness and purifying process was to last only thirty-three days, whereas the purifying process at the birth of a female child was to last three score and six days. Ibid. 5. No command was given to the strange women. The children of Israel, or Abraham's seed, were chosen to be a peculiar people; and all the mystery connected with circumcision is heightened when we consider the importance of circumcision, if we bear in mind that that part which is separated from the body remains on earth; so that Jesus, as circumcised, ascended, leaving that part behind, and entered the Holy of holies above as a circumcised Jew, thereby uniting redeemed earth and heaven; and as a circumcised Redeemer will come again and take His seat upon the throne of David. "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him going into heaven." Acts 1: 11.

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

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2. Palestine as the country in which to re-establish a Jewish commonwealth.
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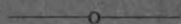
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