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The Peculiar People,

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A CHRISTIAN MONTHLY,

DEVOTED TO JEWISH INTERESTS.

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*Founded by the late Rev. H. Friedländer and the Rev. Ch. Th. Lueky.*

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

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## OUR PLATFORM.

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

1. Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah promised to our fathers.

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

3. Hebrew as the language to re-unite the different portions of the Jewish people, now estranged from one another through their different tongues.

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

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

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

# 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.*

הַבִּיטוּ אֶל-צִוֵּר חֲצַבְתֶּם

Isa. 51: 1. וְאֶל-מִקְבַּח בֵּינֵי נִקְרָתֶם

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

VOL. VIII.

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No. 1.

JUDÆUS SUM; JUDAICI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

THE attitude of the modern world toward religion is very strange. Religion and religious questions seem to have a weird fascination for people. Every question raised by men touches religion at some point or other. Newspapers, magazines, reviews, works of fiction,—all literature has some bearing or other upon matters of religion. And yet practically the thoughts and real attention of people are more removed from religion than ever before. Our eyes and our hearts are all for earth while we are speculating more and more about heaven. We are like the fabled bird Merops, of which Lessing tells us, which wished to fly to the sun and which blindly made its course tail foremost, because it could not withdraw its gaze from the earth. Amid all the changes of front in religious and theological matters, that which gives us the greatest anxiety is the indifference of people to fundamental truths. These people do not deny, but with serene indifference simply ignore. We retain the external shell of religion, while we let the kernel drop from our hands. We occupy a strange and appalling situation. We are not like the infidel schools of the century that is gone, nor like the heroes of faith who opposed them. In the words

of M. Giavi to the Jews of France, "We are no longer believers and we have not yet become atheists."

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THIS condition of things, common to us all, is especially marked with the Jewish people. Jews of culture have cast aside the older forms of their religion, and with varying degrees of boldness avow a disbelief in what once was believed. Some retain, because of love for ancestral relics, ceremonies and customs that seem out of touch with our age and with our western civilization. A great need is felt, but it is not clearly known what is to supply the need, and so there is a sad want of agreement as to what should be retained of form or of faith. In the meanwhile things of time and sense are here. The world of business, of science, art, and literature is tangible and forces itself upon mind and heart, and so the bulk of the Jewish people go on, spasmodically attending service once in a while on the Sabbath, when the synagogues are too often deserted, going anyway on Yom Kippur or Rosh Hashanah because of old associations or a kind of superstition, or perhaps giving up the Sabbath entirely and then having a freer worship externally more like a Christian service on Sunday, holding thereby a larger number and entertaining them with ethical discourses which might be equally in place in a "liberal" Christian church, a free-thinking club, or in a heathen philosophical school. According to the strength of feeling for antiquity or the amount of recklessness they possess, they vary the form and fervor of their worship. So filled are they with the things of this world that they have no clear conceptions of just what their religion is. This is seen in the matter of their families as they grow up. They do not know what to teach their children, and so they grow up often without instruction. They acquire many ideas from what they happen to read or hear, a mixture of ill-digested Christian notions, infidel ideas, fragments of historic Jewish allusion and biblical and Talmudic lore, none very clearly defined in their

minds. There is a kind of blind trust in God back of it all, which no doubt appeals to the mercy and love of our Heavenly Father, who keeps them from ruin.

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WE said this is not peculiar to Judaism; the same tendencies are, alas! too prevalent among Christians. Nor have we singled out Jewish uncertainty and indifference with any intent but the kindest. These modern Jews perceive the force of the principle enunciated by St. Paul, that "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." They have entered upon the liberty of Christianity without having Christ as the Rock-foundation of their faith. Therefore they are uncertain in their attitude and unformed in their system. They are the typical church errant; they have cut loose from the old moorings of Judaism and spurn the anchor of Jesus and His Messianic work. They point to Christians and say, in answer to our words, "You're another!" and with sorrow the Christian world must admit the charge as too true. There is too much worldliness, indifference, doubt and superficiality also in the ranks of Christians. Conservative Christianity is also too often a varying amount of superstition and prejudice. Liberal Christianity is frequently the mere casting away of a galling yoke and the rejection of ideas that seem repugnant to reason, with the reception of nothing sure and stable to take their place. But the God of mercy looks down upon His erring children. He will keep His recreant church also from ruin, preserving her for His glory, and He is preserving His people Israel. But Jesus Christ is the salvation of His people. As long as we all rally about Him, and are true to our belief and trust in Him, there is hope. Belief in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ is the sheet anchor of every Christian soul, the one bond of union which holds together the divided church, the one ground of our liberty before God. Judaism seeks to become free from the law, free from the historic past, without a sure ground. It be-

comes at best what Delitzsch so aptly termed, "Christianity without Christ." Without Christ it will end in doubt and despair, whither also will Christianity itself tend if it pursue a similar course of indifference and the worship of the god of this world. Our faith in Christ must be more than a word-faith, if we are to be a guide to Israel. If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

#### A JEWISH POINT OF VIEW.

"Outlines of Jewish History," by Lady Magnus, is a delightful book to read. It is entertaining and abundant in information relative to Jewish historical, biographical and literary subjects. The style is equally delightful as the subject matter presented. It is picturesque and everywhere discloses the enthusiasm of a soul deeply in love with her subject.

In her treatment of the beginnings of Christianity Lady Magnus gives utterance to views which one commonly hears from Jewish sources now-a-days, but which, unfortunately, will not stand the test of scientific and critical examination. Tributes paid to the purity and excellence of the life and teachings of Jesus are often made on the part of Jews; but such tributes, if followed out to their legitimate conclusions, would lead to loving and loyal faith in Him. Lady Magnus readily admits that Jesus was good and virtuous, and by implication says that He was true and honest. Nevertheless, other statements of hers are self-contradictory, and based on insufficient information. She has quite missed apprehension of the teachings of Jesus relative to the Messianic kingdom.

When Judæa had sunken into a Roman province, and when Rome was using every opportunity to tighten her iron grasp on her Jewish subjects, the people were in just the mood to follow any great leader who would lead them to victory against the Romans. "If such a hero had arisen," to employ the words of our authoress, "and had dealt with the Romans as Judas Maccabeus had dealt

with the Syrians, he would assuredly have been hailed by the Jews as the Messiah, the anointed of the Lord." In these words are set forth the popular ideas current at the time of the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth, and at the same time her own erroneous conception of what the Messiah ought to have done. He came to be King of truth, to elucidate with clearness of vision the holy Scriptures and to apply their teachings to the hearts and consciences of men. He was Himself the Truth, and came to save the souls of men by death and by the power of an endless life. That He will reign at Jerusalem at His second coming and fulfill the glowing predictions of the prophets to their minutest detail we may not doubt. In the meantime, however, these predictions are already fulfilled in the reign of Jesus as Prince of Truth in the hearts of men. Prophecy does not exhaust itself in one generation or as applied to one age.

Lady Magnus speaks truly of the times in which Jesus lived: "The very stones seemed crying out for a Redeemer and Deliverer to come unto Zion. Under the circumstances a Messiah was almost bound to appear." Under the circumstances the Messiah did appear. At no other time in the providence of God could He have appeared. Then, and then only, could the prophecies regarding His first coming have found their fulfillment.

When Lady Magnus asserts that wholesale and indiscriminate denunciations are put into the mouth of Jesus in the New Testament against the Pharisees, she betrays that surely she could not have been really familiar with all that Jesus did say about Pharisees. She herself had already fittingly characterized the fraternity in her treatment of the Maccabean age: "For a large party had grown up among the Jews who were 'zealous for the law' in a very complete sense. They loved it devotedly, if sometimes, perhaps, just a little ostentatiously. These men were called Chasidim, Saints; and occasionally, it may be, they took on themselves the pretensions as well

as the equalities attaching to the name." If such a characterization is just as applying to the early Chasidim, how much more must a large part of the Pharisees have deserved the censure implied in the words in the time of Jesus! But the denunciations of Jesus were not wholesale and indiscriminate. Undoubtedly a large party of the Pharisees at that time deserved the praise of the Talmud (1) that they "did the will of their Father which is in heaven, because they loved Him." The denunciations of Jesus reveal to what a fearful extent hypocrisy and pride and lust for power had spread among them, but Jesus also said that "the scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat." Lady Magnus says truly that Jesus never denounced Judaism.

The treatment accorded the New Testament documents by Lady Magnus is unscientific. Assertions prove nothing. To say that of Jesus Himself very little that is trustworthy is known is to set aside very unceremoniously the Gospel records. To make such declarations is too late in the day in the light of modern scientific research. Intellectual and critical influences were set in motion by Spinoza, whom she herself defends against the harsh treatment he received at the hands of his co-religionists, that in these later days are applying the most searching literary tests available to the whole range of Scriptures, both Greek and Hebrew. At present the battle rages the hottest around the Pentateuch. But there was a time, not very long gone by, when the battle was equally pressing around every document of the New Testament. Many theories were advanced and assertions made, supported by a wide array of learning, which called forth on the other side out of the abundant resources of Christian scholarship the most complete vindication of all the Christian documents. From that time to this the guns of true scholarship have been silenced first and last so far as the

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(1) Berachoth 9, 5.

records of the evangelists and other New Testament writings are concerned. To repeat the theories of Strauss and Baur at this time of the day is to display a sublime ignorance of the work that has been done once for all by the world's best scholarship.

That the Jews regard the morality which Jesus preached "as identical with the morality which forms the basis of Judaism" is according to strict truth. That they "trace the text of the Law, which declared he 'came not to destroy' in all the discourses of Jesus," that they "find the influence of the prophets in his parables," and that they "read Hillel between the lines of the famous Sermon on the Mount" is in the main to apprehend rightly. Such a Jewish conception of the teachings of Jesus is correctly to discern the very genius of true Christianity as over against a spurious and pagan-born Christianity.

When Lady Magnus affirms that Paul of Tarsus was the real founder of Christianity she again betrays unfamiliarity with the genuine teachings of the New Testament. And that Christianity was a new religion in opposition to Judaism is not true. False Christianity has arrayed itself against Judaism, but the Judaism of Jesus and Paul manifested no such antagonism against Moses and the Prophets. Neither did Paul proclaim the abolition of the Mosaic code of laws. It is the old misunderstanding for which Paul came near losing his life at the hands of the turbulent Jews of his day. Paul directly affirms that his teachings "establish the Law." It is the use of the Law in a slavish observance as a means of salvation which Paul would abolish. Moses himself would have given assent with his whole soul to all that Paul really taught.

True it is that what Jesus preached was not a new religion. It is the Judaism of the elder days illuminated and clearly revealed. Christianity ought never to have been thought of as a religion separate from Judaism. Such never would have occurred if the Jews as a whole

had accepted Jesus. Neither did Paul teach a Christianity distinct from that of Jesus or antagonistic to Moses.

S. S. P.

### THE MISSION OF ISRAEL TO THE WORLD.\*

(Continued from page 287.)

How, and under what circumstances, did this mighty movement begin? This is not a question of prophetic interpretation, which may admit of various and conflicting answers, but one of indisputable fact. As we look back to its beginning, what do we see? Hardly perceptible in its origin, and struggling with overwhelming difficulties, the rivulet of Christianity, as it rises amid the barren rocks of Judæa, expands and increases in volume the further it advances in its resistless course, bursting every barrier, sweeping away every impediment, and never more determined in its onward march than when it is, to all appearances, effectually checked by opposing forces. The conflict rages on, with few intermissions for centuries; but the issue is as astounding as it is certain. The church's enemies succumb one after another, whole creeds deeply rooted and intertwined with the social life of nations vanish before her, and her dominion is established in the hearts of countless millions of the most enlightened of the human race. Is it possible not to see in this the finger of God?

A glance at the nature of the field presented for their cultivation and the reception of their message, will still more heighten our astonishment at the success achieved by the Galilean fishermen. Arduous beyond conception must have been their labors among their own countrymen, to say nothing of the utter insecurity of their lives, which they were ever ready to lay down in the discharge of their mission. Despised by the bulk of their nation as men of low degree, who, like the Master whom they proclaimed, had never sat at the feet of the authoritative expounders

\* By the Rev. M. Wolkenberg, in *Jews and Christians*.

of the law, how could they expect to persuade it to receive that Master as the promised and ardently-expected Redeemer? The Nazarene, the Redeemer! He who had just died a shameful death upon the cross, inflicted by those very Romans, whose dominion He was destined to destroy. Besides, to admit His Messianic claim, brought consequences almost equally appalling to the Hebrew mind. It meant the removal of the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile; it showed the superfluity of the Law, in the face of the all-constraining love of Christ, to which the Jews were yet strangers; and it implied the inutility of circumcision, so opening up the not-distant prospect of their absorption among the Gentiles, and the national extinction of the Jewish people. In a word, it meant the self-sacrifice of the nation for the benefit of their hateful and hated oppressors. Acts 22: 22. Was it likely, humanly speaking, that Jews would listen to such suicidal proposals?

Nor was the prospect of success among the Gentiles much brighter, though, or rather because, their need of moral regeneration was much greater than that of the Jews. "For what were the Gentiles before the light of Christianity rose upon them?" asked the late Dr. Schiller Sziessy, Rabbinic reader at Cambridge, and formerly Rabbi of one of the Manchester synagogues, in his exposition of Isaiah 53. "Chaste lips cannot repeat what their own great authors write of them and their immorality. No one can read without a burning cheek what Seneca (*De Beneficiis* III. 16) says of their married women; what Juvenal (Sat. 2) says of their men; what Tacitus (*Ann. passim*) says of their emperors; and what our and your Saint Paul, the Jew and the Christian, says of the moral degradation of the Roman converts previous (Rom. 1: 24, 26, 27) to their conversion to moral and glorious Christianity." Left to themselves, they would have bequeathed to future generations a terrible legacy of festering corruption and moral depravity, increasing in

malignity, till it involved mankind in irretrievable ruin, both of body and soul.

From this catastrophe the world was saved, by the self-sacrificing labors of a noble band of Jews. Submitting readily to the greatest hardships which it is possible for human nature to endure, and many of them ultimately pouring out their life-blood in the prosecution of their task, these Jewish witnesses for God traversed the length and breadth of the then known world, and, holding aloft the banner of the Cross, proclaimed everywhere, to Jew and Gentile alike, the realization of Israel's hope in the advent of Jesus, and in the renewing power of His grace. And ere long it was felt that a new life was being infused into the barren waste of the pagan world. Everywhere there sprang up bright oases, living centers of light and rejuvenating energy. For wherever Christians went heathen temples were deserted, the altars overthrown, and hands and hearts were lifted up in holy worship to the God of Israel, ever fresh converts going forth in their turn to impart to others the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free.

All this, we repeat, was effected through the agency of a believing remnant of poor despised Jews, who had absolutely nothing to back them in their arduous enterprise. They had no political prestige, no social influence, and no literary advantages. All these forces were sternly and resolutely arrayed against them. Nothing, moreover, could appear more unlikely and chimerical than that the Greek and Roman world would, at the preaching of a few Galilean Jews, bend the knee before the name of One who had but lately died the death of a malefactor at the instigation of His own countrymen. Yet these obstacles vanished before the breath of their mouth, and the world was laid a willing trophy at the feet of Jesus, the Redeemer of Israel. With these facts before us can we doubt that Israel's Mission centers in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and that His Jewish disciples were the instruments used by

God for its realization, in the moral and spiritual elevation of the human race?

What is it really that the Jewish people expect? In the *Religious Review of Reviews* for January, 1894, the Chief Rabbi is reported to have said that orthodox Judaism still looks forward to the coming of the Messiah. This is no doubt true, and will be so, as long as, in the language of the twelfth article of their Creed, the Jews continue to declare solemnly every morning, "I believe with perfect faith (אני מאמין באמונה שלמה) in the advent of the Messiah; and though He tarry yet will I wait every day for His coming." So far the declaration is clear and precise. But what do the Jews consider the object of His coming? What will He do on His manifestation to the world? We know what Jesus and His Hebrew disciples did, and what is still being done in His name. But what will that Messiah do whom the Jews expect? In a tone of deep sadness, a writer in the *Jewish Chronicle*, of August 4, 1893, contrasted the thousands of worshipers crowding the churches and chapels, with the comparatively deserted synagogues. "That love for the sanctuary," continued he, "which burned in Jewish breasts in times of yore, that passionate yearning for God's courts which inspired the Jewish Psalter and Prayer-book is extinguished, or, at least, burns fearfully low. To see the Metropolitan Tabernacle congregation rising as one man to join in the hymns, and to listen to the mighty volume of sound pealing forth from six thousand throats, is an experience which cannot but make a very deep impression upon a visitor. One feels that this is, indeed, praise and thanksgiving such as the Psalmist of Israel would have loved to join in."

Now, this is one of the thousands of houses of worship scattered all over the world, wheresimilar gatherings may be seen of every race of men under heaven, who, rescued from debasing superstitions, listen reverently to the reading of the Jewish Scriptures, and pour out their hearts

to the God of Israel in the prayers of the Hebrew Psalmist. So that it is far more true now than it ever has been since the days of Malachi (1: 11) that "from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same God's name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense is offered unto His name, and a pure offering; for his name is great among the heathen." Why, then, look for another Messiah to do what has already been accomplished in such a wonderful manner? With the sun's noonday splendor shining out of a cloudless sky, what need is there to search for another light? There may have been some excuse for its rejection by those who witnessed the rise of Christianity. They had no such overwhelming demonstration of the Messiahship of Jesus as we have. They saw only His deep humiliation; we, His unparalleled exaltation. They saw the tiny, and, to all appearance, unpromising seed of the Gospel buried forever in His tomb; we see the mighty tree that has sprung out of it, whose spreading branches overshadow the earth. We see actually before us what was shown to the ruler of Babylon in a vision of the night, the stone cut out without hands, which, after grinding to dust the polytheistic empires of the ancient world, has established an indestructible kingdom in the hearts of men, and is gradually filling and taking possession of the whole earth. With these facts before us, we ask again, can there be any rational doubt as to the Christian realization of God's purposes in the election of Israel? No, there is none. For even among the Jews there is not a cultivated man or woman but admits, and admires, the noble victories achieved in the world in the name and by the power and might of that Jesus who, down to the end of last century, continued to be an object of utter detestation to them. That cloak of blind unreasoning fanaticism which the stormy blasts of persecution only made the Jewish people wrap more tightly around them, is now being loosened and thrown off spontaneously, through the warm rays of common cit-

izenship and the kindly treatment accorded to them. But the palm of victory is not yielded without a struggle; and efforts, absolutely vain and futile, are still being made to represent Jesus as the expounder of the Rabbinism of His day, and Christianity as the direct ethical offspring of the Synagogue, only vitiated in its doctrinal aspect. "Why not," exclaimed Rabbi Felix Adler to the Jewish Literary Association, that has assumed the designation of "the Maccabeans," "why not enroll Jesus and Paul among the greatest Jewish benefactors of the human race; and, of course, claim its gratitude for the Jewish people?" Others, unable wholly to close their eyes to the vast superiority of doctrinal Christianity as an incentive to the highest moral action, and deeply conscious that the Jews themselves are indirectly largely indebted to Christian culture for their own superiority over their less favored brethren, go so far as to deny that religion has anything to do with social and intellectual progress. It is merely the racial peculiarity of the Teutonic stock, they tell us, which places Germans and Englishmen in the van of civilization, and they would have been there had they professed any other creed or no creed at all. "Religion," exclaimed a Jewish leader in a burst of enthusiasm, "does not depend upon a book." Every one then may form what conception he pleases of it; and, far from influencing, it is itself developed and perfected by the culture of the day. In the final account, if there ever should be one, the question asked will not be, what one has believed, but how he has lived; and though as a guide to morals the Church occupies exactly the same position as the Synagogue, still Judaism has a mission to fulfill, not actively, but passively. For everywhere among the nations of the world, it stands forth in its corporate capacity as an organized negation of the Christian conception of the Godhead, and as a witness to absolute monotheism.

Yet this purely speculative and subjective, this cold and lifeless idea of monotheism, is thought to be all that

was designed in the divine election of Israel, if indeed, the election is not purely imaginary; and it is to account for the marvelous preservation of that people. This idea is then to hold the scale against the Christian conception of the mission entrusted to Israel, a conception which has rolled away the clouds of ignorance and depravity hovering like a black pall over the pagan world, and has enabled the nations to behold their God; which has bridged over the abyss separating sinful humanity from a God of infinite holiness; which has raised up the highest conceivable standard of moral obligation towards all created beings; which teaches and inspires love to enemies, and at the same time supplies the most powerful motives for the habitual practice of self-denial and self-sacrifice, a conception which has cheered the hearts and lighted the path of countless millions on their way to eternity! It is little short of reckless presumption even to think of setting up the Jewish against the Christian conception of Israel's mission. The direct, and indeed the acknowledged, consequence of the Jewish, as well as of many other purely speculative forms of monotheism, is the repudiation of doctrines, or dogmas, and the separation of morals from all supernatural sanctions—a separation which leads directly to agnosticism or indifference among the cultured classes, and to downright atheism and anarchism among the masses. For it is only when the clear voice of God is heard in His holy temple that all the earth keeps silence before Him; and that the weak moral sense is enabled to repel the fierce assaults of human lust and passion. Trifle with that voice, reduce it to the level of man's ever-shifting and conflicting conceptions of truth, and every hold upon the human heart and mind is gone. Once more the perplexing question is asked: "What is truth?" and the answer given is on the one hand, "None can tell," and on the other, "There is none."

It may, however, be objected that if the evangelization of the Gentile world by Hebrew agency was the end de-

signed in the election of Israel, then that people's mission closed with the establishment of Christianity; and that, therefore, the nation should have long since disappeared. How, then, it may be asked, do we account for their continued existence to the present day? It is no doubt the fact that Israelites are everywhere contributing their share to the sum total of human activity, and are reaping distinction in every field of mental and manual labor. But is it possible for a nation as such to protract its existence for centuries without a purpose? A tree that has ceased to be productive, or useful in any other way, is not allowed to cumber the ground, but is made to serve some purpose by its destruction. And, as we have already said, there is no more room in the moral than in the material creation for anything that exists only for itself. Apart, therefore, from the Scriptural solution of this remarkable problem, we are driven to the conclusion that Israel's national mission is not yet fulfilled, and that some great and active part is yet reserved for them in the completion of the world's moral and spiritual emancipation.

What that part will be it would not be difficult to conjecture, even if it were not clearly intimated in the Scriptures. Jews, in the person of Jesus and His disciples, laid the foundation of the kingdom of heaven, and their voice still re-echoes over the habitable globe the glorious message of man's reconciliation with God, and Jews will yet crown the edifice, and convert into realities the glowing visions of the prophets. "As when the wine is found in a cluster of grapes, and some one says, 'Destroy it not for a blessing is in it; so will I do for my servants' sake, that I may not destroy them all.'" Isa. 65: 8. "For a remnant of Jacob shall be among many nations, as the dew that comes from God, as the showers upon the grass, which tarries not for man, nor waits for the children of men." Micah 5: 7. It is as the depository of such ultimate blessing to the world at large that the Jewish people has been preserved.

But if we have to reckon with and solve the puzzling problem of Israel's actual existence as a distinct race, and their probable continuance as such for an indefinite time to come, what shall we say to the prophet's foretelling their endless duration in language as clear and distinct as if it had been written in blazing letters across the firmament? As we look back to the age of Jeremiah, we can find no elements of national vitality in the Jewish people. Every tie by which a nation is held together was gone. Ten of the tribes were already exiles in Assyria, and the remaining two were on the point of being transported to Babylon, if not there already; so that the closest bond of a nation existed no more—they had no common country. Their religion which, if faithfully kept, would have acted as a preservative, was abandoned for that of the idolatrous nations around them. Their very literature seemed powerless, for they forgot its language within a century from their expatriation. Here, then, was an utter absence of all the elements of national vitality, in the face of disintegrating forces all around them. Yet Jeremiah ventures to foretell the complete annihilation of all the nations among whom Israel had been scattered, and to affirm that that people shall then only cease to be a nation, when the appointed order of the sun, the moon, and the stars shall have disappeared forever, or when the boundless space of the skies can be measured above and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath. Jer. 30: 2; 31: 34-36.

Now there must be an adequate object answering to this startling prediction, and to its still more astounding fulfillment. Where can this be found apart from the establishment of Christ's kingdom in the Gentile world, and the final removal by Jewish agents of every barrier to its progress, until "the earth is full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea?" Yet how sad is the attitude of Judaism. A glory surpassing all human conception is within the grasp of the Jewish people, and they

heed it not. They allow their splendid inheritance to be appropriated by Italian popes and cardinals, and look on unconcerned, whilst Rome, the city of fire and blood, takes the place of Jerusalem, the yet destined habitation of the Most High. The glorious edifice reared by Hebrew prophets and apostles, and cemented with Jewish blood, is assailed on every side, and, tacitly or openly, they make common cause with the foe. They drift away ever farther and farther from their scriptural moorings, detaching themselves from the Divine anchor of their national and individual hope, only to lose themselves in a limitless ocean of doubt and perplexity. But thus, in substance, has it ever been. For it is the hidden core which imparts whatever of life and vigor there is in the enclosing mass. It is the small minority that has ever proved the salt of the people, though not always strong enough to overcome the dissolving forces which are constantly at work. "Great," says the prophet Isaiah (6: 12, 13), "shall be the desertion within the land, and when there shall be a tenth part (of the people) in it, it shall be purged again. As in the terebinth and the oak tree, there is the stem left when the leaves are cast; so shall her stem be a holy seed." What was said of one particular time is equally true of the entire history of Israel. It is for the sake of the remnant that the nation is preserved distinct, and shall be so preserved until that remnant grows and spreads, and at last itself becomes the whole nation.

The mission of Israel is being accomplished by the faithful remnant which, accepting Jesus of Nazareth, has filled the world with their doctrine, and will be completed when, becoming the whole nation, it proclaims with united voice among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

HE who seldom thinks of heaven is not likely to get there; the way to hit a mark is to keep the eye fixed on it.

## THE JEW A WITNESS FOR CHRIST.

It is related that one day, in a conversation on the subject of religion, Frederick the Great challenged Ziethen to give him in a few words a cogent proof of the truth of Christianity. The pious general unhesitatingly answered, "The Jew," and the king in his abrupt manner, but thoughtfully, rejoined, "Not bad."

Persons familiar with the character of these two great men will not deem it impossible that this story embodies the record of a true fact. It seems, indeed, quite natural that a man like Ziethen, who in the din of battle and at the table of the king never forgot he was a servant of the Lord of hosts, should often have contemplated the people whom God has formed that they should show forth His praise. Isa. 43: 21. Nor is it at all unlikely that a man of the keen intellect of Frederick of Prussia should have been impressed with the testimony which the Jews bear both to the goodness and severity of God. Rom. 11: 22.

But as I pronounce these words, as I say, "The Jews are witnesses for the gospel," I seem to hear the objection strongly raised, "What, the Jews witnesses to Christianity! Have they not for these eighteen centuries persisted in rejecting its founder?" This is a truism which none of us will ever think of denying. We know full well that the Jews as a nation have rejected Christ for these last eighteen hundred years, and yet we affirm that they witness for Him; they are witnesses for Christ in spite of themselves; they deny Him with their mouths, but witness for Him by their destiny.

The destiny of the Jews is so peculiar that no thinking man can pass by this people with indifference. Their history is quite unique. I need not detain you long with its early beginnings. You are familiar with the call of Abraham, and his and his son's and grandson's wanderings in Canaan and the adjoining countries. It will be in your recollection how Jacob and his family were saved from

perishing through famine by one of their brethren whom they had treated in a most unbrotherly manner; how this handful of wanderers increased in a short time to such an extent as to alarm the nation that had first received them hospitably; how when they were again in great distress they were again delivered by one of their stock whose life they had put in jeopardy. You will remember how this very man, who on their account had to leave home and be for years a fugitive in a foreign country, came back to rescue them from bondage and lead them into the land God had promised to their forefathers. You will further remember how from the position of slaves, which had been assigned to them by the Pharaohs of Egypt, they advanced to the position of a free nation with a commonwealth of their own, honored and respected by the surrounding nations. In this prosperous state they continued as long as they were faithful to the covenant God made with them in Horeb; but when they broke it and served strange gods God forsook them, and from a free nation they became the subjects of a foreign power. They were carried away captives into a strange land, the kingdom of Israel first and the kingdom of Judah about one hundred and fifty years later. After seventy years' captivity the latter repented and were reinstated in God's favor. They were permitted to return to Canaan, to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem, and to remain there till they filled again the measure of their sin against God. Then their temple was again destroyed, their land taken absolute possession of by the foreigner, and they themselves again made captives. This happened in the year 70 of our present era, and in our own days we still see Palestine in the hands of a strange people and the Jews scattered all over the world.

Now I would invite your attention to the vast difference between the first and this last captivity. We know that the Babylonian captivity lasted seventy years, whereas the present one has lasted more than eighteen

hundred years. We know that the indignities and cruelties which the poor Jews had to endure ever since they were conquered by the Romans were much more severe than those they suffered at the hands of the Babylonians. We know, too, that God is just and that He would not inflict a heavier punishment for a lighter sin. We know further that before the Babylonian captivity the Israelites were guilty of the abominable sin of idolatry, the very sin which Moses warned them would entail banishment from their country (Deut. 4: 25, 26), whereas ever since their return from Babylon they never transgressed the first and second commandments in the way they had done before. We must, therefore, conclude that the sin for which they had been suffering for these last eighteen hundred years must have been more heinous in the sight of God than idolatry. Now what is this particular sin?

If we put this question to a pious Israelite who is acquainted with his own Scriptures and versed in rabbinical lore, he will in most cases quote the passage from the Talmud, *לֹא נִחְרַבָּה יְרוּשָׁלַם אֶלָּא מִפְּנֵי שְׂנֵאָה הַנֶּה*, *i. e.*, Jerusalem was destroyed because of the sin of hatred without a cause. But if we further ask against whom his nation has more particularly committed this sin, he will be at a loss to tell us, and if we tell him it is Jesus of Nazareth against whom his nation is guilty of the sin of hatred without a cause, and that all its sufferings since the destruction of the second temple are God's just punishment for it, he will, for want of better argument, perhaps, get angry with us and protest that he never will believe it. And yet is there any other solution of this great problem? Is there any other answer to the most important question, "Shall not the judge of the whole earth do right?" Gen. 18: 25. Leave out the conduct of the Jews toward Christ, and you cannot possibly understand why this captivity should drag on so long, why there should be no end to Israel's suffering; but think of the Jew in his relation to Christ, and God's dealing with the nation is quite clear.

Instead of humbling themselves under the mighty hand of God; instead of confessing their sin and craving God's pardon, that He might renew their days as of old, they sought to regain their independence by their own strength, and so failed signally. We know the consequences of the insurrection of the Jews under the Emperors Trajan and Hadrian, especially under the latter. It was then that their revolt against the Roman power assumed very large dimensions under the leadership of a man called Bar-Kochba. This man gave himself out to be the Messiah and assumed the name of Bar-Kochba, which means "Son of a Star," in allusion to the prophecy of Balaam (Num. 24: 17): "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth." If any man possessed the spirit of bravery and patriotism, Bar-Kochba surely possessed it. In a short time he fortified no fewer than fifty places, and gathered an army of some hundreds of thousands. No wonder that the debris of the Jewish nation rallied round him in the hope that he would deliver them from the yoke of the Romans; but they were bitterly disappointed. Over a million of them perished in this rebellion, among whom was Bar-Kochba himself. Those who survived were made to feel the iron yoke of the Romans more painfully. In addition to the many indignities inflicted on them, they were strictly forbidden to approach the place where the temple stood or even enter Judea. The only consolation the poor Jews had was to change the name of the man who had brought this misfortune on them into Bar-Kosba, which means the Son of a Lie, thus unconsciously testifying to the truth of the apostolic word, "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." 2 Thess. 2: 10, 11.

This time the effort of the Jews to repossess their land and rebuild their temple failed because of the opposition

of Caesar. It is well known that Julian the Apostate did all he possibly could to eradicate Christianity. Probably from fear of resistance, as the Christians were already numerous in his reign, he did not dare to persecute them with the sword; but he employed sharper weapons. He ridiculed the Christian religion in the most poignant satires, and encouraged other heathen philosophers to write in the same strain; he rebuilt the heathen temples, reintroduced heathen worship, and acted himself as Pontifex Maximus. He confiscated the property of the Church, dismissed all Christians from the service of the State and forbade them to teach in the public schools, to make the people believe that they were ignorant men; and, in order to strike the hardest possible blow at the very root of Christianity, he gave the Jews permission to rebuild their temple at Jerusalem, that he might render void the prophecy of Christ, (Matt. 23: 38), "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." But even Julian was compelled to acknowledge that He against whom he wanted to fight was stronger than any earthly potentate. History informs us that many of the men whom he set to work to dig the foundations of the temple perished by an earthquake and volcanic eruptions, and that the rest were frightened by the fate of their companions. Julian himself fell shortly afterwards in battle against the Persians, uttering with his dying breath, if the ancient legend may be taken literally, these bitter words, "So thou hast, after all, conquered, O Galilean." Then the word of the Psalmist (76: 10) was fully verified—"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."

Since that time the Church has had rest from persecution; but poor Israel has found no rest for the sole of her feet. The history of the Israelites from the destruction of Jerusalem to our own days may well be summed up in the words of their ancestor whose name they bear: "Few and evil have the days of my life been." Gen. 47: 9.

Our time will not permit us to adduce many instances of their sufferings in the middle ages. It is, alas! too well known that wherever they went persecution followed on their heels; and if they had a little breathing time, it seemed only to have been allowed them that they might gather some strength for the endurance of some new calamity.

The edict of Ferdinand at the close of the fifteenth century, banishing all Jews from Spain, must have struck the poor unfortunates the heavier, as just in that country they had for some time enjoyed a good proportion of liberty, some of them having been even promoted to the highest offices in the State. Just imagine a man of the culture and refinement of Abarbanel, who boasted of his descent from the royal family of David, a man who had spent the best years of his life in the service of his adopted country, to be told that he must leave in four months, and not to know where to go. And yet he was only one of 300,000 exiles who were struck by the same thunderbolt of that royal command. Many of these poor people perished miserably on their long wanderings. Nor did it fare much better with their brethren who escaped to other parts of Europe. They had all to suffer much from the nobles and from the people, were often expelled from the country in which they had taken refuge, and very frequently tortured and massacred in large numbers.

About the middle of the present century a new era seemed to dawn upon a large portion of the Jewish people. They were by degrees emancipated by most of the European governments; and as the progress of education continued its march, many of the Jews thought that now persecution of their race would be impossible. This was especially the belief of the Jews in Germany. I remember their confident talk when I was a young man. "What!" they used to say, "What! in this highly civilized country, persecution? Impossible!" Alas! that many of them

went so far as to call this emancipation their Messiah! Now, as if to show them they leaned on a broken reed, God permitted anti-Semitism to begin in Germany. Austria and Russia soon took the contagion, and there it affected mostly the orthodox Jews, as if God wanted to show them that His judgments cannot be averted by an outward observance of His law and strict adherence to the precepts of men.

I fear I have already detained you longer than I ought. So I will close with one or two remarks by way of summing up.

I. The justice of God compels us to the conclusion that the long continuance of the present captivity, and the many and fearful calamities which have befallen the Jews in the course of it, are the consequence of even a greater sin than idolatry, the punishment of which was the Babylonian captivity, which only lasted seventy years.

II. The fact that God has visited the Jews with His judgments just in the way Christ predicted, proves beyond a doubt that they suffer for the sin of rejecting Him.

III. Therefore the Jews ever since the dissolution of their polity by the Romans have been witnessing for Christ in spite of themselves.

May I, in conclusion, express the hope that the glimpse we have been now permitted to catch of God's dealing with the Jews in the past and present will confirm our faith in the Lord Jesus as the only Saviour, and strengthen our belief in their restoration to God's favor when the cause of their present rejection is removed? When they recognize Jesus as their Messiah, when, as their own Prophet (Zech. 12: 9 to 13: 1) bids them, they look upon Him whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, then His blood, which by their imprecation called for God's vengeance on them, will become manifest even to them in its full and real power, *i. e.*, as the "fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness." Then "all Israel shall be saved."—*From a Lecture delivered in Birmingham, England, by the Rev. J. Lotka.*

## OUR VIEW OF MISSION WORK.

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