

149

# THE PECULIAR PEOPLE,

A CHRISTIAN MONTHLY,

DEVOTED TO JEWISH INTERESTS.

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

EDITOR,

THE REV. WILLIAM C. DALAND,

(Pastor at Westerly, R. I.)

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

Vol. VI.

DECEMBER, 1893.

No. 9.

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

## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS.

THE REV. SYLVESTER S. POWELL, Little Genesee, N. Y.

THE REV. PROF. WILLIAM C. WHITFORD, Alfred Centre, N. Y.

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## OUR VIEW OF MISSION WORK.

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

# THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

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

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*A Christian Monthly devoted to Jewish Interests, Political, Social,  
Literary, and Religious.*

תְּבִיטוּ אֶל-צִוֵּר חֲצַבְתֶּם  
וְאֶל-מִקְבַּת בּוֹר נִקְרַתֶּם  
Isa. 51 : 1.

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"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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Vol. VI. ALFRED CENTRE, N. Y., DEC., 1893. No. 9.

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## JUDÆUS SUM ; JUDAICI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

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FOR both the Synagogue and the Church December is a month of glad festivity. The two festivals which it brings to us, the Feast of Dedication, or Chanucchah, and Christmas, are those to gladden the heart. Both are feasts worthy of the respect and observance of those who love the events commemorated. By human choice both Jews and Gentiles use burning candles as religious symbols, signifying the Light in a spiritual sense with which God enlightens men. Holy Scripture gives no injunction for the observance of these feasts; but we read in the New Testament (John 10 : 22) that it was at the time of this feast of Chanucchah that Jesus had one of His most searching conversations with many of His nation in regard to His Messianic claims. And whether Jesus is pleased with the observance of the day supposed to commemorate His birth or not, it is a festival of the Christian year which brings glad thoughts to the mind of every follower of the Saviour.

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BUT the Christian festival magnifies an event by which a more wonderful Light was shed abroad in the world than that commemorated by the festival which our

Lord honored by His presence at the Temple in Jerusalem. Gladness and light came to Israel when, after the dire distress of the tyranny of their enemies, and the terrible profanation of their altars, the sanctuary was cleansed, and on the 25th day of the month Kislev, B. C. 165, there began an eight days' festival of rejoicing. And Judas Maccabæus, through whose heroism the salvation of Israel was then brought about, together with the whole congregation of Israel, ordained that this feast should be observed year by year. But there is a tyranny more fearful than that of cruel Greeks and Syrians. There is a foe more dreadful than Antiochus Epiphanes, and a profanation more shocking than that of the ancient sanctuary. This enemy of the whole world is sin, and his profanation of the temple of the Holy Ghost is more dreadful in its effects than the pollution of the temple of Israel. Not by the heroism of a noble warrior, not by the force of arms, even with Jehovah of Hosts on the side of His people, is the battle against sin to be won, and salvation and cleansing to be wrought. A greater than Judas came to His own, came to save His people from their sins, came to bring light and life to those dead and darkened. He was the true Light, which coming into the world enlighteneth every man. We do not know the day when He was born, but on the 25th of December we love to think of His birth so lowly. He came to His own, but His own received Him not. The Light shone in the darkness, but the darkness did not comprehend it. So it is to-day. Let us all, whether Jew or Gentiles, keep these feasts in the spirit of willingness, and of a mind and heart ready to receive the Light of Life that is longing to illumine the darkest soul.

#### HOW ARE WE TO MEET ANTI-SEMITISM?

FROM THE GERMAN OF E. E. GEDALIUS.

The expression "Anti-Semitism" has become so popular to-day, that I may well go a little out of my way to say something of its significance. For who does not know this pestilent exhalation, this moral malady, which is ever grasping nations again and again in its mighty arm?

And just now the waves of Anti-Semitism are running especially high. Anti-Semitism is not an acute sickness, which, although it is severe in its attack, yet nevertheless leaves the patient quickly, but rather a chronic difficulty, which is insidious in its approach, but like a cancer increases in wider circles till it embraces the whole organism of society and destroys it.

If we look somewhat nearer at this mocking enemy of all humanity and manly dignity, we shall soon find that the soil on which this bacillus flourishes is in the first place nothing more or less than—envy. Almost continuously, as long as we Jews have been a special nation, both we and our fathers have had to combat this our merciless enemy of Anti-Semitism. To be sure there have been times when this enemy lay conquered on the ground. Yet in our day it has arisen anew with rejuvenated strength, and therefore it is incumbent upon us Jews, according to our best judgment, to battle with this foe with all our might. But first we must make ourselves familiar with its plans and its operations in order to go forward against it with any result. With this object in view, honored readers, I beg you to let a few points from the history of our people be brought to your notice, so far as they may be of importance.

God laid the foundation of our nation about 1972 before our common era. For we are still a nation, in spite of all the objections of perverse modern Jewish minds that seek to deny this. God laid the foundation of our nation when he bade Abraham leave his fatherland, his customs, and his comfortable place in Haran, and go forth to the land of Canaan. Hardly three hundred and sixty years were past after the flood, when the whole earth was filled with idolatry and true and pure faith in God had become rare. Although our forefather Shem was still living, nevertheless, as it appears, only in Abram had this faith unfolded itself to almost complete fullness. By means of his great virtue and piety, as well as by means of his living faith, he was permitted to hold such intercourse with God as up to his time no mortal had been able to enjoy.

He communed with Him as friend with friend; he lived with God and served him with an undivided heart. Hence he must go forth from the idolatrous home of his father. In a distant land he was to perform for God and man priestly service. Abram obeyed the command of God, went to Canaan, and there received a blessing of which till then no mortal had become a partaker. In him and his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed. The first thing that Abram does is to build an altar, to preach to the heathen nations the name of the one God, and to teach them to walk in His commandments. Gladly and willingly, yes, devoutly thankful, for the salvation which he brought them, they follow him. The notion of "Anti-Semitism" is entirely strange to Abram the Semite; he knows no Anti-Semite; on the contrary, he is honored and respected by everyone, and is endowed of God Himself with the new name of honor, "Abraham."

Isaac is to be Abraham's successor. We do not see him walk exactly in the footsteps of his father. The Holy Scriptures tell us rather that he journeyed to the land of the Philistines and went down to Gerar. Although he passed quite a number of years in that place, nothing is said of his building an altar there and preaching the name of the one God to the Philistines. He does not do this, although called of God and morally bound to do so. But the consequences of his sin of omission do not fail. He is silent in regard to true faith in God, and in this respect yields to the Philistines themselves. Indeed, he associates with them, or plays at their idolatrous doings the part of a silent spectator, who is unwilling, on the one living God to make himself ridiculous, or on the other to expose himself to a possible hostility by his exhortation; and therefore he must see how through his conduct *Anti-Semitism was born*. This first instance the Scripture reports with these words: "Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundred fold: and the Lord blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great; for he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great

store of servants: and the Philistines envied him. For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them and filled them with earth. And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we. And Isaac departed thence."

Anti-Semitism comes here before our eyes in the same manner as we observe it to-day. What sort of a ground had the Philistines for banishing Isaac? Had he taken usury, or committed anything against the law of the land? Had he defrauded anyone? Had he enriched himself at another's cost? Or had he even attained his position of greatness and wealth by business speculation? The Holy Scripture tells us of nothing of the kind; it simply says that he reaped a harvest of a hundredfold, and acquired his riches through the blessing of God. That Isaac was richer than the most of the Philistines was an offense to them, and this alone sufficed to determine them to banish him from their land. Still they were surely fair enough to leave him at least his movable goods, and not to deprive him also of them! Apparently he suffered an injustice, but is this really the case? No; he received only what was right. He was to be a priest of God. He was to lead the Philistines to God, who had indeed heard of the one God, but did not reverence Him and love Him as their father, nor did they, like Abraham, keep His commandments, statutes and teachings. Isaac was to teach them these things; but he did not do this, and therefore he had no need to be surprised that the Philistines, who disobeyed God's commandments, were governed by hate and envy. What happened to Isaac is of great importance to us. This same experience has recurred countless times in the history of our people, and we have to live it through anew to-day. And it is the same with us as with our ancestors, with this difference, that, while possibly we stand in Isaac's shoes, he did not sufficiently participate in public life, and despised devoting himself to less thankful mercantile business, but on the contrary sought through agriculture and cattle-raising to become quickly rich in the

easiest and most convenient manner, now the tables are turned against us Jews, and exactly the opposite is demanded of us. Although Abraham did not seek after riches, but rather to do the will of God, he nevertheless possessed possibly more than his son. But while Isaac found scarcely any enjoyment in his life, and was surrounded with enemies, Abraham led a happy and joyous life, having God for his friend and knowing no enemy.

After Jacob, Isaac's son, had laid aside many things which were not right and good in the eyes of God, he soon recognized his calling. Where he could, he built an altar and proclaimed to the peoples the God who had helped him throughout all the calamities of his life and so wonderfully led him. He was also endowed of God with a new name, "Israel," (Contender of God) and was respected and honored by the nations among whom he dwelt. *He* knew no Anti-Semitism; no one envied him, and even the mighty Pharaoh showed him honor. Seventeen years before his death he went to Egypt. Never was he ashamed to confess himself as a servant of God, and when he was led before Pharaoh, he could not refrain from blessing him in the name of his God. Even in the land of Goshen he does not relinquish his priestly calling, and the result was that in connection with his family he led the Egyptian people to true faith in God, and that in such a manner that the Egyptians even adopted circumcision, as Herodotus and Diodorus, and later Origen, testify to having found evidences of it in mummies belonging to Egyptian priests, which reached to a remote antiquity. The two former especially wish of course by the statement to invalidate the claim of a Divine origin for the command, maintaining that Moses took circumcision from the Egyptians. It may be supposed as an excuse for them that they err in this, not knowing the Scripture, for otherwise they must have known that the law of circumcision was given to our father Abraham fully six hundred years before the exodus from Egypt, and has surely been observed by his descend-

ants to the present time, except during their wanderings in the desert.

Jacob died and was buried in his ancestral burying-place in the land of Canaan. Joseph came to Egypt as a youth seventeen years old. He had to pass through many calamities till as a man of thirty years he was elevated by the king to the priestly caste and the highest post of honor in the kingdom. If we seek for the reason of this great change in Joseph's life, we shall find that he not only feared God, and witnessed for the true God at every opportunity that was afforded him, making known His power and goodness, but he also strove to lead a really pure and holy life. Mindful of his hereditary calling from God, and without the Egyptians' observing it, he followed his quiet service as priest, till Pharaoh recognized it, and formally lifted him to the rank of priest and the first prince of Egypt. Indeed, it appears that his son Manasseh was high priest of the land of Egypt. This much is certain, that the children of Israel came to be of the greatest significance for that country, not only in a religious, but also in a social way. For under the eighty years' government of Joseph, the land attained its most flourishing condition. He it was who gave to the people a new condition of things; so that from a land in great part swamp and morass, by the laying out of roads and canals, it became productive more than others, and was the first of the civilized countries of that day. It is probable that a well-known canal in existence to-day, one of the most important on the whole country, "Joseph's canal," as well as many an other interesting spot in Egypt, owes to Joseph its origin.

It will surprise us but little if we find that Joseph gave to the most clever of his relatives, at all events to his sons and grandsons, important positions of state, and that the Hebrew element, by this means, succeeded in preponderating in high positions, which places their descendants held for two hundred years. It may be that their higher intelligence and culture brought the country to a higher esteem. Thereby they attained what could not fail them, both political influence and great riches. But on that account they had quite forgotten their own proper calling, and this circumstance it was that necessarily proved fatal to the whole land.

(To be Continued.)

# The Peculiar People.

חדשות הנעשות—NEWS—במחנה ישראל.

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POLICE Inspector Metzler, of Erfurt, Germany, has been convicted for publicly insulting a Jew by means of an Anti-Semitic expression.

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A JEWISH congregation has been formed in Christiania, Norway, being the first in that country. It is said that the congregation numbers about one hundred members, and possesses its own cemetery.

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THE Hebrew congregation of Berlin, Germany, is said to count 80,000 souls, besides some 20,000 of the orthodox who hold aloof from the others and have an independent organization of their own.

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A BENEVOLENT society has been established in Brooklyn, E. D., N. Y., the object of which is the free interment of all poor Jews who have not been ashamed of the name Israelite, be their religious views what they may. The founder of this society is Mr. G. Perlmutter.

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FROM the statistics of the general immigration to this country, including that which reaches the United States through and from British North America and Mexico, it appears that the decrease in the last year (1892) when compared with the year before was 18.7 per cent. During the present year there has been a slight increase over the year before. During 1891 the proportion of Jewish immigration was 11.3 per cent, and during 1892 it was 6.6 per cent, while during the present year it has still further declined to 6.5 per cent. In other words while general immigration fell off 18.7 per cent, Jewish immigration declined 52 per cent; and while the former has again increased, the latter has fallen off still further. Whatever be the causes

of this proportionate decrease in Jewish immigration, improvement of the condition of affairs in Russia cannot be counted among them. For the rigorous oppression of its Jewish subjects by the Russian Government continues unabated, and famine, typhus and cholera in the great central districts of the empire have aided the government's policy of driving all Jews westward into the so-called Pale of settlement. But even in the Pale they are incessantly subjected to all the harassing persecutions that vicious cunning can devise and official rapacity make use of, the whole wretched hodge-podge of brutality and corruption which is there denominated government being essentially nothing but a system of blackmailing. Scarcely a week passes without some new villany being triced up to masquerade as "law." The so-called laws which forbid Jews to live within a certain distance of any foreign frontier, 50 versts in some places, 30 in others, and always varying according to the whim of the local functionary; the law which prohibits Jews from living in any country town, compelling them to huddle in the cities, and which leaves just enough latitude as regards the distinction of town and city to afford room for bribery and extortion—these and numberless other iniquities of a like nature have recently been further increased by the unearthing of a clause in an edict that had been obsolete for ages, and which is now invoked to render illegal the holding of landed property by the Jews in Poland, even in cases where the land has been held and occupied by them for generations.

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### GLEANINGS FROM THE JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH PRESS.

#### HOW BRETHREN LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

English Judaism, old-fashioned and orthodox as it is, shows yet more liberalism than we can boast of. Not only have reformed rabbis occupied pulpits of their orthodox confreres, but despite the mutual antagonism that has frequently manifested itself, the favor has been reciprocated. Now let American brethren follow suit,—*The Jewish Exponent*.

And yet the Jewish papers often speak as though Christians were the only religious people in the world who have differences which are unfortunate. They delight in calling attention to the differences among the various sects of Christians. Why do they not think of poor human nature which in its weakness suffers such infirmities, and when noticing the differences among Christians take note also of the one great marvel of the divided church of to-day, namely its unity in loyalty to Christ the Saviour. Could any human organization stand for nineteen centuries through all the sad wars and tumults of doctrine and practice and be as united in their faith in the founder of their society? Look at your own differences and quarrels, Jewish friends; read your own papers, and see the fraternal (?) feeling often there expressed; remember it is but human weakness that makes this possible; then take as much pains in trying to see the unity of Christendom in all essentials of faith. Maybe you will see in the Jesus we all love and reverence one who can unite all the nations of the earth, and whose name is to be the centre of the religious faith of the coming Jewish and Christian world.

DOES IT FOLLOW ?

Yom Kippur is of all others held in honor by the Jew, with strict observance and attendance upon the services of the synagogue. We may be sure that when a Jew leaves the synagogue on that day and attends a service in a Christian chapel, in response to an invitation to come and hear about the true atonement and the real sacrifice, it is because he is seriously beginning to ask of Jesus, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" At the last Day of Atonement no less than fifty Jews, male and female, came to the Chapel at Emmanuel House, and were for two hours interested listeners to the Lay Missionary and another earnest Hebrew Christian proving out of Moses and the Prophets that Jesus is the very Christ. —*Gospel of the Circumcision.*

Is the writer of this certain that the presence of the Jews mentioned was for the reason given? It is very pleasant to read such things, but to rejoice the Christian's heart truly they must be certain. If the preaching is sincere and true, it is a good thing that the Jews came to lis-

ten, but there are many reasons which might have induced them to come, and their presence would not at all show that they were seriously asking the question of Jesus' Messiahship. They often leave the Synagogue because they are disgusted with religion and tired of it. If a Socialists' meeting were near, they would drop in at that just as readily as to the Christian service. They go to such meetings very often simply for a pastime, and it may be that not one of the fifty who came, came to hear of Jesus. Of course even if they came only to criticise or to pass an hour in listening to a novelty, one might be touched with the influence of the gospel and reached for his spiritual good. But a piece like the foregoing in a religious paper gives an impression wholly erroneous, and the unsuspecting reader is misled into thinking that Jews in large numbers are anxiously inquiring into the truth of the Gospel. Such statements inspire in the interested Christian a hope which has no certain ground. Thus they do harm rather than good, for when the true state of the case is known, he feels as though he had been in some way imposed upon. Of course the writer of the piece did not mean to mislead anyone, but he himself is misled by his feelings and zeal. It is a misconception that Gentile Christians have, when they think that a Jew who leaves the Synagogue on Yom Kippur is tending toward Christianity. He is likely a thousandfold further away from Christ than are those who are fasting and praying in the Synagogues.

BE CAREFUL IN YOUR WORDS.

For our converted Hebrew friends we have held two weekly Bible-readings. . . . We have not baptized any Jew so far, knowing that many mistakes can be and have been made in this matter, we are very careful. . . . A meeting never to be forgotten was held on the evening of the great day of Atonement. . . . About thirty of our converted Hebrew brethren and one sister had come together.—*A Summer's Work Among the Jewish Masses.*

These words are from a report of a summer's work among the masses of Jews in New York City, by the Rev. A. C. Gaebelien of the Methodist Episcopal Church. We

are pleased that Mr. Gaebelein has not baptized any Jews yet, knowing that many mistakes are made. This shows that missionaries are beginning to learn lessons. But we are very sorry to see the tone of his report, as shown by his reference to converted brethren, and some other things in the report. Is Mr. Gaebelein sure that they are converted? We wish that Mr. Gaebelein's report were written in another tone. Like all the reports it is too sensational and emotional. We regret his Yom Kippur service. To be sure his meetings were doubtless different from the meetings of many others, but it might have been better not to have held the meeting. He says that "about thirty" of the "converted Hebrew brethren" came together. We are afraid Mr. Gaebelein may have to regret having called every one who says he would like to join the mission "converted." Mr. Gaebelein ought to be careful; he has had experience enough.

#### THE STATUS OF MISSION WORK AMONG THE JEWS.

"Dr. Dalman, of the University of Leipzig, and an authority in regard to Gospel work among the Jews, has published a statistical summary of the status of the societies engaged in this work. In England there are 9 Jewish mission societies, in Scotland 6, in Ireland 1, making a total of 16 societies, employing 334 men at 84 stations, with an income of 1,602,100 marks during the last twelve months. Germany has more societies than Great Britain, namely 13, but does much less work. A number of the societies do no work on their own account, but only co-operate with others. As a result the German associations employ only 12 men at 8 stations, and have an income of over 62,475 marks. Switzerland has 1 society, with 1 missionary, but 2 stations, and an income of 10,100 marks. The Netherlands have 3 societies, with 2 missionaries at 1 station, and 17,700 marks income. France has 2 societies, with 3 laborers at 3 stations, and 14,000 marks income. Sweden and Norway have 4 societies, with 11 laborers at 5 stations, and an income of 56,050 marks. Denmark has 1 society, with 1 missionary at 1 station, and 2,700 marks. Protestant Russia reports 4 societies, with 5 men at 4 stations, and an income of 30,400 marks. The United States reports 8 societies with 26 men at 16 stations and an income of 139,800 marks; while Palestine has 2 societies, with 3 men at 2 stations; and Australia 1 society, with 1 man at 1 station.

This makes a grand total of 55 societies, with 399 missionaries at 127 stations, and an income of 1,935,325 marks."—*The Independent*.

*The Jewish Era*, of Chicago, has gone carefully over the ground, and summarizes its conclusions as follows: "From the foregoing it will be seen that there are about 497 workers (98 more than in Dr. Dalman's summary) who give the whole or a portion of their time to Jewish missions. Of these, 415 are supported by the societies of Great Britain, while the United States supports only forty-four. We may hope to see this disproportion greatly lessened in the near future, because the United States is becoming one of the most important Jewish mission fields in all the world, and Christians are rapidly awakening to their responsibility to obey the great command of Israel's Messiah by preaching the Gospel according to the divine order, "to the Jew first."—*Aggressive Methodism*.

So from paper to paper go the lists of the work and the workers, and people are led to exclaim, "How the army of the Lord is advancing!" The foregoing looks like an alarming host of workers, and one may well ask after reading it why it is that we see so little work done. As a matter of fact there is nothing in the world so deceitful as statistics, especially the statistics of religious work. And of all religious statistics those of mission work are the most unreliable. And of all missions the missions to the Jews are the most uncertain in this respect. Then, too, Dr. Dalman has a peculiar way of making statistics. In his grand total of 55 societies, 399 workers and 127 stations, he counts the Seventh-day Baptists with a station in Stanislau, Galicia. But the Seventh-day Baptists have no missionaries to the Jews, and no station in Galicia. Dr. Dalman numbers the teachers of the *Institutum Judaicum* in Leipsic as missionary workers. If Mr. Cohen who teaches Judæo-German in the *Institutum Judaicum* in Leipsic can be called a missionary to the Jews, then we may swell the numbers of the missionaries indefinitely. We doubt also somewhat if Secretaries, etc., can legitimately be enumerated as workers in such a report. The impression is made that all these are engaged directly in missionary work. If we cut off such as these, together with those

that Dr. Dalman put in through mistakes, the number would be much smaller. Still there remains a goodly number, and the question also remains, why do they accomplish so little, and often just the contrary of what they are sent for.

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## JACOB STARMANCOFF.\*

BY BENJ. A. M. SHAPIRO.

### CHAPTER I.

#### *Laban and his Daughters.*

Who among you, beloved readers, has heard of the name of Laban the Rabbi, and of his wonderful wisdom and greatness? No one, I suppose. It gives me great pleasure to know this, because it shows that you have never been in the city "Zchowitz," and he who has never been in that city, has never seen the mother and cradle of ignorance and superstition; therefore, you do not know what a hold ignorance and superstition have upon the people of this city, and to what depths of degradation they have sunk.

Having lived with these people a number of years, and having formerly believed as they *do*, I will give some account of their mode of living and superstitious belief, although now I have forsaken their religion for the one which makes people happy and enlightened.

I cannot say exactly when the city "Zchowitz" was founded; perhaps in the bronze or polished stone age; but it is certain that it is situated in Galicia, near the river N—. Galicia, as you probably know, became a province of Austria when Poland was divided among the kingdoms of Austria, Prussia and Russia, during the eighteenth century. This city is, I verily believe, the dirtiest spot in all Europe; it is composed of about six hundred houses built around a market place, which is the favorite retreat of fowls, swine, and other domestic animals. The market place, overgrown as it is with grass and weeds, furnishes

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\*We print this story because of the view it gives of Jewish life in South-eastern Europe.—ED. P. P.

also a good home and feeding ground for many wandering, homeless goats and fowls. The houses face toward the market place instead of upon streets as in American cities; indeed there is not a street in the whole city. The roofs of the houses are built of thatch and slope down to a very short distance from the ground. Often a goat may be seen demolishing the eaves of a house for his dinner. There is no railroad running through the city, nor indeed is there one for a considerable distance from it; and telegraph poles and wires are not to be seen within its borders. In the place of the wires of the telegraph, we see the wires of the *ireff*,\* and instead of the sound of the locomotive, is to be heard the rapping of the sexton of the synagogue, as he goes around with his wooden hammer, morning and evening, calling the people to prayers.

The great and wise Laban is judge and shepherd of the people of this community. Truly Rabbi Laban is a wise man, as all who have come in contact with him freely acknowledge. He is master of the Talmud, and is able to throw light upon its most difficult passages, some of which have not before been explained since the foundation of the world. He is also wise in all the seven wisdoms.† Perhaps you will ask in what college and university he acquired so much valuable knowledge; whether in Paris, Leipsic, Vienna, or Oxford? Beloved reader, the Lord forbid that Rabbi Laban should step his foot in such an unclean place, and above all that he should learn from Gentile teachers who have themselves been taught by

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\*There is no English word corresponding in meaning to the Hebrew word "*ireff*." The Jews are forbidden to carry anything (even a handkerchief) about with them upon the Jewish Sabbath, except within an enclosure around which a wire has been stretched upon poles, about the same distance from the ground as our telegraph wires, and these wires are called "*ireff*." Of course it has its origin in the superstition of the people. It is according to one of the commands of the Talmud, and evidently has for its object the strict observance of the Sabbath. In the country a single house with its adjacent out buildings will always be surrounded with the *ireff* wires.

†The Jews believe that on every day of creation God created a new wisdom, and that the seven thus created, *viz* : Architecture, Music, Mathematics, the Science of Language, Astronomy, Art and Philosophy, include all the wisdom known to man.

Beelzebub. Rabbi Laban—No! No!! He drew all his wisdom and learning from clean springs (The Talmud and The Law); from them he learned the wisdom of nature and all the seven wisdoms. He has never studied the Hebrew Grammar, for surely it was not necessary for one learning from God to receive instruction from man. The varied knowledge which he has received from the study of the Talmud, he uses with great force in expounding the Law, and as he describes the events therein recorded, as for instance the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, his hearers, listening with rapt attention, seem to see the horses and chariots and the whole Egyptian host sinking like a stone to the bottom of the Red Sea. so great is his command of language and his fine descriptive power.

The Lord blessed Rabbi Laban with good daughters, twelve in number, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel. With sons he was not blessed, but his greatest daughter, Leah, whom his first wife, Sarah, gave him about thirty years ago, was dearer to him than ten sons. We said his greatest daughter, but let not the reader suppose that Leah was great in stature. No! No!!! She was short in stature and slight in form, like her sainted mother, but she was great in wisdom and in good deeds.

In addition to her knowledge of the Talmud and the Law, which was quite extensive, she had a practical wisdom, and a hearty sympathy with those about her, which made her loved by all who knew her; and the poor of the community rose up and called her "Blessed." Full well they remembered how she had nursed them in illness, and carried cheer and comfort to them when they were sad and mournful; how she had made many an article of clothing to render them more comfortable through the winter season; how she had spoken kindly to their little ones, who always ran to follow her whenever she appeared. Her whole life was devoted to the welfare of others; indeed, she could not understand why life should have been given her, unless in order that she might do good to her fellows. Wherever there was need, Leah was there to

supply it; and it mattered not what might be the nature of that need, she always had abundant resources from which to draw whatever was required. In fact, nothing but blessings dropped from her hands and that continually. In a word she was not a butterfly, like so many Gentile girls whom we have watched and have known well. Rabbi Laban always said that if she had been a son, she would have been Rabbi in one of the largest cities of Israel (Zchowitz or Vienna). As she was a woman, Rabbi Laban had no need to worry about her, because she had a long red nose and black teeth;\* for which reason Laban knew that she would make a good mother in Israel.

The youngest of the sisters (Rachel by name), although only about twelve years of age, was much larger and fairer than her oldest sister Leah; and Laban loved Rachel very dearly, because she resembled her mother so closely, his second wife, Hagar. Instead of blessing her with a red nose, the Lord had given her bright red cheeks like the bloom upon the rose; and instead of black teeth, she had sparkling black eyes, the expression and beauty of which can be compared only to the sweetness and grandeur of a mountain spring found in the deep recesses of some vast forest, its waters colored the deepest black by the shadows of neighboring trees. Her countenance was like the rising of the eastern sun in all his splendor and dazzling beauty. It was no wonder that Laban bestowed upon her the choicest affection of his nature, for of all his daughters she was the very one to excite the most tender lavishment of paternal love. Besides being the most beautiful, she was in many respects the most accomplished, and by far the most amiable in disposition of all his daughters. There was a certain air of innocence and grace about her every movement which won its way to the hearts of all her acquaintances. But far above outward beauty of face or form, shone her natural beauty of

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\*A long red nose and black teeth are considered by the maidens of Galicia to be infallible signs that they will be mothers of large families, and that their children will all be sons who will become good and great.

mind added to an extensive education. She was also a girl of spotless character, although she was literary rather than particularly religious like her sister Leah. Wherever she went she carried sunshine and joy, and her very presence was a benediction.

## CHAPTER II.

*Jacob, the Hero of our Story.*

Rabbi Laban was not only a priest and a judge, but also a teacher. He generally had a number of young men at his feet as disciples, to whom he taught the Talmud and the Law.

At the time of the opening of our story, there was among his disciples a young lad by the name of Jacob, but who was commonly called "Starmancoff" by his companions, because he came from a village of that name, situated only a short distance from the city Zchowitz. When Jacob was only seven years old, his father Isaac had brought him to the city and placed him under the tutorship of Gamaliel, where he had received a five years' course in the Mishna and the Gemara, and had thereby become fitted to enter the higher school of Rabbi Laban. Gamaliel was not properly speaking a Rabbi,\* but a teacher, although his disciples called him "Rabbi," meaning simply "master."

When Isaac brought his beloved son Jacob, and gave him into the charge of Gamaliel, we can say without doubt that he looked forward to the time when Jacob should also sit as teacher in one of the congregations of Israel, and should have disciples crowding around his feet as he then sat at the feet of his teacher Gamaliel. This was the highest honor that he had dreamed for his son, even in his wildest speculations. Little did Isaac think that before Jacob should reach his thirteenth year, he would leave the school of Gamaliel, and sit at the feet of the great and wise Rabbi Laban himself, and learn the deeper mysteries and hidden wisdom of the Talmud and the Law, under

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\*A Rabbi is one in charge of a congregation, who may also be a teacher, and in fact generally is; but a teacher is not necessarily a Rabbi.

Laban's skillful teaching; and little did he think that in a short time his son's name would be praised and honored throughout the whole city.

Oh! thou son of man; how short-sighted thou art! Thou art constantly building castles in the air by the power of thine imagination, and strengthening them as with walls of iron and copper, but suddenly destiny carries thee beyond the ruins of thy fondest dreams, and the Lord giveth thee that which thou hast never even hoped for, indeed what had never entered into thy mind to desire. So generously doth our God deal with His children, giving them more than they can ask or even think.

Isaac lived in the village of Starmancoff, and conducted an honest business there according to his knowledge, trading with the peasants of that neighborhood. So engrossed had he become with the affairs of trade, exchanging brandy\* and tobacco for the skins of foxes and squirrels, that he had entirely forgotten his son Jacob, who was working hard in the schools of the city, climbing every day higher and higher until he had become a warrior and chief among the disciples in the battle of the Law. Does any unlearned reader feel surprised as we speak of the battle of the Law, and does any one ask who are the enemies of the Law and who her rivals? Thou askest well. The Law of the Lord of Hosts has no rivals, but those who study it fight one with another; with great power and might do they contend against each other, not to plunder or lay waste, but in order that they may rightly understand the meaning of the Divine Law Giver, and that they may be able to make the truths of the Law applicable to the minds and hearts of those whom they are to instruct; that Israel may know the way in which God would have them walk, and may distinguish divine commands and duties expected by God from mere human in-

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\*In that country it is not considered a sin to manufacture or sell liquor. Many of the best Jews, and even the highest clergy of the Greek Catholic Church, are connected with the sale of intoxicating drinks. Not being educated to see the sin of such a course, they are just as sincere in their business as we Americans who are more enlightened are in selling any manufactured article.

junctions. Very often in the old Jewish Law it is difficult to separate the divine from the human, and questions are continually coming to the minds of the Israelites that the Rabbi must be able to answer. For instance: May an egg laid on the Sabbath be eaten that same day? Which hand should a man wash first in the morning, the right or left? etc., etc. So that the Rabbi must be well versed in the Law of God, and able to tell what is binding upon the people and what is not. This is why Jacob must needs study so diligently in the school of Rabbi Laban.

When Laban perceived that Jacob was diligent in study, and was making such rapid strides in his education he began to watch him very closely, and he soon saw that there was a blessing in him. Consequently he took him into his own house and treated him as his own son, allowing him to eat of his bread, drink from his cup, learn from his books, and in fact keeping nothing in the house from this lad in whom his soul had delight. Even the Rabbi's daughters came to look upon Jacob as a brother, and to feel for him a very affectionate friendship. They ironed his shirts for the Sabbath, made his bed and even mended his garments, and when he returned tired and worn from the battle-field, that is, the synagogue where he fought the "battle of the Law," to the house of Rabbi Laban, the girls would leave their work and entertain him, and by their charming attentions would make him forget his weariness; and they would do this with a perfectness of heart and a right good spirit, just as they would have done had he been their brother in the flesh.

So Jacob spent five happy years, and in this time he had climbed all the towers of the Talmud, and had made progress in all departments of the Law, until he was a wonder among the young men of the city, even among the disciples with whom he studied and with whom he shared the same blessed opportunities. The special cause of his rapid advancement was, that night and day he meditated upon the books of the Law, until he hardly knew anything that happened outside the walls of the synagogue. So absorbed was he in this one work, that he took very little

notice of his surroundings, even the pleasing attention of a dozen attractive young ladies not being sufficiently strong to draw him entirely from his reverie. Had he noticed the things about him with anything like the diligence with which he studied the Talmud, he could not have failed to have noticed that Rachel was watching all his steps, as with a heart full of joy, she saw him steadily rising in knowledge and influence. Her heart beat true to his at all times, and she was constantly showing it in the thousand ways that woman's ingenuity suggests, and that anyone but a blind and thoughtless man would immediately understand. But he paid no more attention to Rachel with her beauty, than to Leah with her long red nose, because he loved Rabbi Laban's daughters all alike, as a man loveth his own good sisters. But in vain is the indifference and fortitude, yea even the stubborn determination of man against the charms of a pure and devoted woman.

How wonderful are the works of Providence and how numerous are her deeds. She manages them with astonishing precision and surrounds them with imperceptible designs. Many times she lets them rest upon seemingly trivial affairs, mere accident as we term them, but great and fearful are the consequences thereof, and we are filled with astonishment when we examine and meditate upon them.

For instance, if Louis the Sixteenth had eaten the soup offered him by the Postmaster of St. Menhulds, Varennes, the world would not be what it is to day. And if Jacob had not found the "Moreh Nebuchim"\* in the

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\*While writing about this wonderful book it may be well to mention its author. Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, generally called Maimonides, lived in the thirteenth century, and was a great man in Israel. The Jews knew him by such names as "Moses the Egyptian," "The Great Eagle," "The Eagle of the Doctors," "The Great Luminary," "The Glory of the East," "The Light of the West," and they believed that "from Moses unto Moses there arose none like unto Moses," which means that from the time of Moses the Law giver, until the time of Moses Mendelssohn the Jewish-German philosopher, there was none like unto Moses Maimonides. He was a good physician to Alfadel Abdel Rachim ben Ali Albasan ruler of Egypt; his knowledge of theology was as great as his knowledge of medicine; he was mas-

house of one of the citizens of the neighboring city to Zchowitz, surely we would not be able to enrich English Literature with this story, and would have no occasion to inflict our thoughts upon the patient, but we hope interested, reader. But as he did find the "Moreh Nebuchim," we are forced to spin the thread of our story further. At the age of seventeen, Providence allowed our hero to find this book, one of the best written by Moses the son of Maimon, and with the help of this guide Jacob began to open his eyes little by little until he saw and understood that although he had long ago filled his mind with the Talmud, etc., his soul was yet empty of knowledge and learning. But where shall poor Jacob find knowledge, and where is the place of understanding, and from whom shall he learn it? From Gamaliel or from Rabbi Laban, who has secured his seven wisdoms from the Talmud and its commentaries? These longings of his soul for true wisdom filled Jacob with unrest by day, and they followed him by night and drove sleep from his eyelids. Poor Jacob! how pitiful his condition must have been. He no longer found pleasure in his studies with Rabbi Laban, as he had found before, because his heart was filled with a desire for another kind of wisdom. This desire became stronger even than his interest in the Talmud and the Law, which formerly had been so all-absorbing.

Then humbly he began to seek among his acquaintances a friend to whom he could pour out his bitter heart, and when he looked into Rachel's face, her spirit witnessed with his spirit that she would take a part in his troubles. From that day, whenever his eyes met her's, both their faces would be covered with blushes.

(To be Continued in Jan. No.)

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ter of a great many languages; very skillful in the arts and sciences; his works were written in Arabic, Chaldee, Greek and Hebrew, for instance "Jad Hazaka" or "The Strong Hand," which is a very useful book to those who would acquire a knowledge of Judaism. This book has been translated into Latin by a converted Jew of Metz. But his most remarkable work is the "Moreh Nebuchim" or "Guide to the Perplexed," from which Jacob received his enlightenment.

## WHAT JEWS CAN LEARN FROM CHRISTIANS.

What then can we learn from them? In what can they serve as guides to us?

1. In their reverence, in their attitude toward their religion, toward their public worship, toward their religious teachers. Reverence is the refinement of the soul. It is the crowning grace and accomplishment of the rarest spirits. It is the opposite of cynicism, it excludes sneers; it means a deep, abiding sympathy with all that is noblest, highest, divinest in man and in the universe. Judaism will never be a power until its official representatives win that personal, moral authority, without which his religious influence will be null and void. Until the minister is revered according to the measures of his own reverence, until his sincerity and truthfulness are valued more than intellectual gifts—until then the Judaism of to-day will not in the true sense of the word be a religion at all. Until little children receive from their parents this reverential attitude by force of example, the rising generation will continue to grow up, increasingly estranged from its ancestral faith.

2. And intellectually, you will note that Christianity means something, stands for something. It has a definite, fixed doctrine whose proclamation with passionate insistence is the mission of the Church, whose repeated emphasis gives unity and purpose to the work of Christendom. It is to advance this Christian idea that the vast organization of the Church is perpetually working. And similarly there should be a Jewish idea, for the prevalence and perpetuation of which Israelites should enthusiastically strive, if the cause they stand for is a reality to them, if to them it represents the truth.

3. And, finally, in the application of these principles to life, in its ethical domain, Christianity has refined and spiritualized its requirements in great purity and serenity of the inner life. It is in this respect that Christianity indeed excels, in cultivating within the believer extreme sensitiveness of consciousness and conscience, so that the

idea of sin is a living and terrible conception for the Christian as it was once for the Jew. And this vividness of moral consciousness and purification of the inner life, leads to a certain humility and spiritual sweetness in earnest Christians that marks them out from all others. It is a culture of the soul that yearns to express itself in loving helpfulness to humanity. This principle of love it is, of humane kindness that gives to Christian ministrations their peculiar sincerity and rarest charm. It is chiefly in women that these noblest attributes of the soul life come to their ripest development. Among us, I thankfully recognize, this tendency is beginning to be manifested, and its evidence in personal sympathy and helpfulness is one of the brightest testimonials to the prospects of our religious future.

Christianity thus illustrates and inculcates the expression of reverence, the necessity of unity and positiveness in belief, and the exquisite spiritual perfectness that may be ripened by the culture of the inner life. It is simply as a living illustration of these needful elements that I have cited that great religious organization. They exist in our own literature, in our mediæval moralists. Yet we gladly pay a tribute to the parallel current of religious development that has run side by side with Judaism throughout the centuries.

May we thus grow into more perfect usefulness and vital strength. May Judaism, like an aged oak, put forth again new shoots of tender foliage, that under the cool shadow of its spreading branches the nations once again may gather, that the heart of man may be filled again with strength and songs, and from Israel may go forth a spirit of divine helpfulness to bless all mankind.—*From a lecture by Rabbi Leon Harrison, entitled, "What Can Judaism Learn from Christianity?"*

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Foreign " " "	50 "
Single copies (Domestic),	3 "
" " (Foreign),	5 "

 Drafts, checks, or money orders should be made payable to John P. Mosher, Agent, Alfred Centre, N. Y., to whom all business correspondence should be addressed. Foreign money orders should be drawn on Hornellsville, N. Y.

All Communications for the Editor should be addressed,  
THE REV. WILLIAM C. DALAND,  
118 Main St., Westerly, R. I.

Agent for England:

THE REV. WM. M. JONES, D. D.,  
13 Park Villas, Newington Turning, Highbury New Park,  
London, N., England.

 The Editor is not responsible for the opinions of contributors.

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