

# The Peculiar People,

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.

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

הביטו אל-ציר חצבתם

Isa. 51: 1. ואל-מקבת כיר נקרתם

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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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JUDÆUS SUM; JUDAICI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

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SINCE the PECULIAR PEOPLE was first issued it has been often misunderstood. This was inevitable from the difficulty and delicacy of the Jewish-Christian position we have always tried to maintain. We have been misunderstood by Jews, who have thought they discerned beneath the clear presentation of our views upon Jewish subjects the cloven-foot of "the wily missionary," and they have not believed us sincere in our belief that the Jew in becoming a follower of Christ may remain in all respects a Jew—that we do not think he must be Gentilized in becoming Christian. Gentile Christians have misunderstood us and have thought all manner of queer things about us.

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THE latest misunderstanding, which has amounted in fact to a misrepresentation—although we believe it may have been unintentional—is to be found in an article in *The Forum* for the month of February, in which an attack was made upon the Christian denomination to which the editor belongs. We very seldom refer to denominations, as we hope and pray to be delivered from the narrowness of sectarianism, and we do not recall that we have ever spoken of the Seventh-day Baptists except in the most incidental way. But it becomes almost neces-

sary to do so, since in the article to which we refer Seventh-day Baptists are held up as typical Protestants, and as such un-Christian. The writer of the article in question inquires "whether the sect of Seventh-day Baptists, affiliating with Judaism, does not reveal itself as a lapse from the religion of Jesus." In order to prove that this grave charge is true, the writer as a crowning argument uses the opinions of the editor of the PECULIAR PEOPLE, only one individual, be it said, of the denomination mentioned. These opinions he voices as follows: "He [the editor of the PECULIAR PEOPLE] . . . over and over again, in every form, and with every emphasis, declares that Christianity is a Jewish creed, expresses the hope that no Jew will join a Christian church, and exhorts Christians to turn from their errors to the purer faith of Judaism." This way of putting our views is clearly with the endeavor to show that we are not Christian but Jewish, and, in connection with other statements about Seventh-day Baptists in the same article, implies that we deny Christ.

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THERE is an amusing and pitiable side to such misunderstandings. It is amusing to have Jews regard us as trying in a seductive and deceitful manner to entrap them into that evil thing, Christianity; and at the same time to have Christians regard us as reverting to that horrible thing, Judaism! Oh, the prejudice of the human heart! What is so dreadful about Christianity? What is so wicked about Judaism? We verily believe that Jesus Himself would occupy an anomalous position were He to come to earth in the flesh. He would hardly answer the requirements of admission to any Christian denomination, and surely by His own people, the Jews, He would be regarded as an apostate. Of course many non-Christian Jews and many Gentile Christians would indignantly repudiate these statements of ours. But in general such would be the case. We presume it will be necessary for us to put forth a creed in order that the world may know what we

are! But the PECULIAR PEOPLE is not a church. It is "A Christian Monthly devoted to Jewish interests." We are Christian through and through. Our loyalty is first, last, and always to Jesus Christ, our Saviour. The writer of the *Forum* article must have read our pages to little purpose if he gained from them the idea he has received. It may be that the trouble is with our definitions. He may use words in a sense different from that in which we employ them. He is an Episcopalian, and hence may use the term "church" and possibly the word "Christian" in a narrower sense than the world in general. But in any case his representations of our position are far from correct. We will examine them now in detail.

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WE DECLARE that "Christianity is a Jewish creed!" Well, there is a sense in which this is true, although a cursory review of our editorial statements does not reveal to us such a statement. Our Saviour himself said that "salvation is of the Jews." His coming was foretold by Jewish prophets. He was of the House of Israel, of the tribe of Judah. His disciples were Jews. He came first to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." Christianity is, as we have often said, the fruit and flower of Judaism. But if by "Jewish" is meant any limitation of Christianity to a race or people, or if that epithet is used with the view of giving to the religion of Christ any specially national quality, we resent the imputation. Nor is Christianity, according to our view, a "creed" at all; Christianity is a life, not a creed. It is the new life, "life eternal," through faith in Christ, and by the operation of the Holy Ghost. We suppose that what has caused the misunderstanding is our constant insistence of the fact that true Judaism and true Christianity are, or ought to be, identical. If Jews, who accept Moses and the Prophets, would go on and accept Jesus as the Messiah, of whom "Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write," their faith would be Christianity. Judaism is an incomplete pyramid. But let

Jesus, the crowning feature, be added and Judaism completed will stand, the perfect religion. That Judaism has its excrescences, its false growths, is true; but Christianity has its abnormal developments as well. Both need to cast these aside. Neither can afford to despise the other for such errors.

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WE ARE said to "hope that no Jew will join a Christian Church!" This is surprising. If some of our Jewish friends could be brought to believe this, they would not look upon us as the scheming missionary organ! But we do not remember expressing such a hope. We do tell our Jewish friends that they need not cease to be Jews in order to become Christians. We say that the words Jew and Christian are not opposed or correlative terms. A Jew is a Jew; he may or may not be a Christian. We do say to the Jew that, if he wishes to retain his national and racial manners and customs, if he desires to maintain those elements of worship and religion which are so endeared to him, there is no reason why he should not do so. It is not necessary that he join any existing denomination in order to salvation. Let a synagogue incorporate the teachings of Jesus, believe on Him, and do His bidding, and it becomes a Christian Church. We have said and do say that the Jews as a whole will not readily be brought to Christ by the ordinary way. It is such a wrenching of every tie for a Jew to forsake everything dear to him and join a Gentile congregation. It is not necessary. But for us to say that we "hope no Jew will join a Christian Church," if that means that we prefer that they remain as they are, without Christ and outside the true Church of Christ, God forbid! Far be it from us to utter such a thing. We welcome Jews to our churches. A Jew is free to worship with us in any respect. If he becomes a believer on Jesus, we are rejoiced indeed. We are glad if he joins any body of believers in Christ.

WE EXHORT "Christians to turn from their errors to the purer faith of Judaism!" This is another ambiguous charge. Of course we exhort Christians to turn from their errors. The writer of the article would do the same. To be sure he and we have different opinions as to what are errors. But we conceive that both he and we are at one in what we consider the essential features of Christianity. He, not we, has opposed Christianity to Judaism. It is he who calls Judaism the "purer faith." If Judaism be purer than Christianity, or in so far as Judaism as such is purer than any of the current forms of Christianity, the charge is true. But if it is meant that Judaism without Christ is preferable to Christianity, however laden with minor forms of error, far be it! We have never expressed such a view. We do think that if Christians were to lay aside the errors of ecclesiasticism and superstition, and hold to primitive apostolic Christianity, their faith would not only be more readily acceptable to Jews, but it would become the salt of genuinely pungent savor, to preserve the world for God. We think that if simple faith in Jesus Christ, and the acceptance of the New Testament and our Saviour's teachings, together with His ordinances in their primitive form, unencumbered with elaborate ritual or mediæval significance, were added to the faith already possessed by Jews, that the result in any synagogue would be nearer the ideal Christian church than are the majority of Christian churches in the world to-day. But our critic leaves out of account the important matter of faith in Christ and acceptance of His teachings, and would have the world believe that we are enamored of Judaism as over against the religion of our Lord and Saviour. Judaism is sadly incomplete, having rejected its greatest treasure. Much of Christianity is hoary error. Let us cast error aside, not for the purer faith of what is called Judaism, but for the purer faith of Jesus.

## A GLIMPSE INTO THE SECOND TEMPLE.

On the twentieth day of Adar, corresponding this year to the sixteenth of March, in addition to the regular Sabbath sections from the Law and the Prophets, sections are read in the synagogues, the one from Numbers and the other from Ezekiel, bearing on the ceremony of the burning of the red cow. They are Num. 19: 1-22, and Ezek. 36: 16-38.

This, one of the most interesting of the Temple ceremonies, was of course kept up to the last. In the place of leading the red cow "without the camp" into the wilderness, as in the days of the desert wanderings, the High Priest led her without the Temple enclosure to the Mt. of Olives and there the ceremony of the burning took place.

A delightful glimpse of this ceremony is afforded us in the opening of the Talmudical tractate, Middoth. That tractate is exceedingly valuable, giving as it does measurements and descriptions of the Temple which Herod built, the information having been handed down from rabbis who had been eye-witnesses of its glories. "Five gates were to the Mountain of the House"—a name given to the Temple enclosure—begins the third *mishna* of the first *perek*. The Eastern Gate is described as having upon it a representation of the capital city Shushan, or Susa, the city that had been one of the capitals of the Persian Empire. That pictured representation served to remind of the eastern dispersion. "Through it"—referring to the gate—the description goes on to say, "the cow and all who assisted went out to the Mt. of Olives." In a general description of the Temple in the fourth *mishna* of the second *perek* it is said, "All the walls that were there were high, except the eastern wall, so that the priest who burned the cow, standing on the top of the Mt. of Olives, and directing himself to look, saw through the gateway of the Sanctuary, at the time when he sprinkled the blood."

The words vividly reveal the scene: The High Priest

standing upon the summit of Olivet, Kedron below and spanned by a bridge for the use of the priests only, the Orient Gate with doors of flashing gold, the High Priest's attendants, and by his side a slain cow completely red. He had just sprinkled with his finger the blood of that slain victim seven times toward the Sanctuary, and now he stands gazing, looking; for he is in such position that he can look over the eastern wall, made lower than the other walls for this express purpose, through the gates of the Temple into the place where sacrifices are offered. As he stands there gazing into the innermost court of that splendid edifice we reflect that in that House God especially dwelt. He who had dwelt in the bush and revealed Himself to Moses dwelt also in that House ready to reveal Himself to and bless every worshiper who approached with a true heart. The Sanctuary of that House was like Heaven, the place where God was enthroned. The Temple was built after the pattern of things in heavenly places.

Immediately upon the killing of the cow and the sprinkling of her blood, the whole of the animal was burned. While the burning was in process the High Priest took a piece of cedar wood and hyssop and a scarlet string and cast them into the burning. Subsequently the ashes of all were gathered and preserved to be mingled with water of sprinkling to be used for purification in case of contact with the dead or other ceremonial defilements.

The prophet Ezekiel makes reference to this water of sprinkling when he says that God will sprinkle clean water upon His people. Ezekiel, from the banks of Chebar, had witnessed the first overthrow of the city of Jerusalem. In his day the land had been defiled by the shedding of innocent blood and by service to idols afterwards most vehemently abhorred. For these causes God had scattered His people among the nations; and there, in the lands of their captivity, they added yet another sin, חלל השם, blasphemy of the Name, Ezek. 36: 20. Then

it was that God, because of jealousy for His holy Name, not for their sakes,—for His own sake only—would gather them to their own land once more and sprinkle clean water upon them in the same manner as the water of sprinkling was used for purpose of purification. At last they would be purified of their defilements.

“I believe with a perfect faith, that all the words of the Prophets are true,” it is said in the sixth article in the creed of Maimonides. These are the days of the fulfillment of prophecy as truly as at any time formerly. Long ago Jerusalem was destroyed for the second time. Once more God poured out His wrath upon the Holy City, and for ages His people have been scattered among the nations. Even the peerless Temple, the pride and glory of the whole nation of the Jews, was destroyed so that one stone was not left upon another. Whence was Jerusalem so completely overthrown, and whence the scattering of the nation? This is no intellectual question fit only for the speculation of schools. It must be evident to all careful readers of the Scriptures that the punishment of captivity was to be inflicted for national sins. Moses, who in the creed of Maimonides is called a father to all the Prophets, is behind none of them in plain declarations concerning it. Some of the most terrible words anywhere to be found in all prophecy were written by him on this burning subject. The cause of captivity at the second overthrow of Jerusalem must have been the sins plainly indicated in the Prophets. Indeed, terrible as the charge may appear, we are perfectly safe in saying that the cause was the *shedding of innocent blood*. No more were the people guilty of the charge of idol-worship. That had come to be an abhorrence to them. But the blood which they unjustly shed cried to Heaven for vengeance. It is vain for Jews to say that their forefathers did not crucify Jesus. Pilate, the Roman governor, never would have committed that crime if he had not been urged to do it by the Jewish authorities. The power of life and death was no longer

in the hands of the Sanhedrim, and the only way by which the Jewish authorities could bring about their fixed purpose of the slaying of Jesus was by delivering Him over to the Romans and by bringing a strong pressure to bear upon the governor.

The gravity of their crime is greatly aggravated in the fact that they were guilty also of *blasphemy against the Name* in their rejection of Jesus. This was the crime which they charged against Him. But what if His claims were true and He were indeed the Son of God? Then did He bear as no other mortal man the Divine Name, and to reject were the sin of blasphemy itself.

In *Middoth 2: 2*, it is said, "All who entered the Mountain of the House entered by the right," *i. e.*, they entered by the gate called "Kipponos" on the west and situated near the south-west corner. Thus facing the western wall they would enter towards the right-hand corner. The narrative continues, "and turned and went out by the right, except those whom something had befallen, who turned to the left. 'What hath befallen thee that thou turnest to the left?' 'Because I am a mourner.' 'He that dwelleth in this House comfort thee.' 'Because I am under the ban,' מנייה. 'He that dwelleth in this House put it in their hearts, that they restore thee!' The words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Jose said to him, 'This would make it, as if they had transgressed against him in judgment; but rather: "He that dwelleth in this House put it in thy heart, that thou hearken to the words of thy brethren, ותשמע לדברי חבריך, and they restore thee."'" The word used in this extract of him who was under the ban is identical with one used to Cain who was made a fugitive and a wanderer. Cain was of the Wicked One and slew his brother. Is it not equally true that the deed of the rejection of Jesus was actuated by the Wicked One, and as a consequence the curse of Cain has been upon them who committed the deed? From the time of the overthrow of Jerusalem until now they have been wanderers in all the earth.

It is not possible that the curse resting upon Israel can ever be removed until he takes his position as an אבל, mourner, and mourns for Him whom he has pierced. Then in truth will He who dwelt in His holy House in Jerusalem comfort him. Never will the ban resting on Israel depart until he hearken to the words of his brethren חכריי, the wise men of Galilee who wrote concerning their divine Master and whose words are preserved in the New Testament, הברית החדשה. Jehudah the Prince, who wrote down the words of the Mishna, lived in Tiberias on the lake of Galilee. On the shore of that lake had lived also Matthew and Peter and John, whose words have been written down and their testimony sealed concerning Him whom they knew with positive certainty that He was the Son of God. These men, beloved Jewish readers, are your brethren. In nothing are they foreign to the Jewish faith or customs, and to hear them is not to depart from love for the Mishna as well. Nay, more: loving obedience to Jesus will light up with the radiance of a brighter glory all the words of the Mishna.

Although the guilt of the slaying of Jesus was great, nevertheless, God in His allwise counsel made the shedding of His blood the means for the purification of all Israel's sins and for those of all men who will believe on Him. From the very Mt. of Olives on which the High Priest stood when he had slain the red cow and looked into the innermost courts of the Temple, Jesus ascended into the Heavens, whither we ourselves shall follow if His blood has been sprinkled upon us. It is a principle of true religion as immutable as the unchanging counsel of God that "without shedding of blood is no remission."<sup>1</sup> Heb. 9: 22.

"And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will remove the heart of stone out of your body, and I will give you a heart of flesh." Ezek. 36: 26.

NISRE.

(1) אין כפרה בלי שפיכת דם.

# THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

חדשות הנעשות—NEWS—במחנה ישראל.

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Jews in London are, it is said, much exercised over the question of introducing the organ into the synagogue.

BARON EDMUND ROTHSCHILD, of Paris, has joined the society "Choveve Zion" (Lovers of Zion). He has invested to quite an extent in property in Palestine.

It is stated that there are 75,000 Jews in Persia, and that they are openly listening to the gospel, one of their Rabbis allowing a Protestant clergyman to preach in his synagogue.

ACCORDING to the census returns, 15,268 Jews inhabited the Australian colonies in 1891. There were in New South Wales, 5,484; in Victoria, 6,459; in South Australia, 840; in Queensland, 809; and in Western Australia, 129. Tasmania has a Jewish population numbering 84 individuals, and New Zealand, 1,463, whilst in Fiji resided some 50 Jews. The increase of the Jewish population during the decade ending 1891 was equal to 47 per cent. The educational attainments of Jewish youths are said to stand higher than that amongst other denominations.

THE Rev. Bernhard Angel, of Chicago, who has for seven years had charge of the Chicago Hebrew Mission, has accepted a call to the Hebrew Christian Mission in New York City with which Mr. Hermann Warszaviak has been connected. Mr. Warszaviak's connection with the Mission was severed a short time ago. He is now working independently. He has resumed the publication of his paper under a somewhat altered title, "The Jewish Christian." From what is published in this, it appears that there is not yet a committee appointed to take charge of Mr. Warszaviak's work. It is reported that the reason for Mr. Warszaviak's severing his connection with the N. Y. Mission was a difference of opinion in regard to financial methods.

## THE INFLUENCE OF PHILO UPON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

The Academy of Moral and Political Sciences in Paris named the subject for the Victor Cousin prize of 4,000 francs for the year 1896, "Exposition and examination of Philo the Jew, and the Jewish school of Alexandria." We consider this an anti-Christian move on the part of the Academy. For those learned gentlemen must know full well that an honest and fair exposition of Philo's works and the Jewish School of Alexandria proves beyond a doubt that the fourth Gospel and the entire scheme of trinitarian Christianity grew out of the Alexandrian School, hence were no revelation and there is nothing divine about them. They are the natural offspring of Philo's erroneous symbolism and his peculiar terminology to make Greeks understand Jewish ideas. *American Israelite. Jan. 24, 1895.*

Is investigation, then, anti-Christian in this last decade of the nineteenth century? There may be indeed, those who prefer that the records of the past should not be brought to light; but they who serve God in sincerity will not withhold their approval from any honest examination of the origins of their beliefs, nor will they shrink even from an investigation of the origin of the words which the New Testament writers used. The Bible and Christianity have stood all the tests to which they have been subjected by friends or foes.

The Bible remains to-day just as valuable as if it had never been questioned. It is the guide for the man who would live rightly in this present world and inherit the eternal life of the world to come. The conclusions to which we are brought by criticism do not detract from the value of the Book.

Since Christianity has but proved itself the stronger when the foundations have been thoroughly examined, whether by friendly or unfriendly hands, not only in recent years, but through the centuries, who is disposed to call a halt, or cry out with alarm when a scientific association offers a prize for an exposition of the writings and theories of a man who is supposed

to have furnished a word for the vocabularies of one of the writers of the New Testament? The learned men of the Academy above mentioned do not "know full well" what is attributed to them; but they are not afraid of the truth. Let Philo be called up, and his evidence demanded. Is Christianity based upon the metaphysical speculations of a Jew who tried to harmonize the Law of Moses with the philosophy of Plato? We do not fear the answer of honest investigation.

The writers of the New Testament had many new ideas to express. It is not to be supposed that they could make a new word for every such idea. As a matter of fact they took the words which were ready at hand in the Greek language of their day and made them to carry new meaning. It is beyond question that the *δικαιοσυνη*<sup>1</sup> of Paul's writings means a great deal more than the same word in earlier authors, nor is it exactly equivalent when found in the Septuagint. We may take this as one example of many, that similarity is not identity, especially in the matter of words.

No one is disposed to deny that there is a similarity between Philo and John in the use of the word *λογος*.<sup>2</sup> Indeed it is this circumstance that has made an Alexandrian Jew of the first century famous. It has not yet been proved that the similarity is anything more than accidental. Even if the proposed investigation shall establish that hypothesis that John was acquainted with the theories of Philo, it will still remain to be proven that the *λογος* of John has any more connection with the *λογος* of Philo, than the *δικαιοσυνη* of Paul with the *δικαιοσυνη* of classical writers. The *λογος* of John is nothing if it is not explicitly and definitely personal, while the *λογος* of Philo is merely equivalent to the *מִטְרָא* of the Targums, personified it may be at sometimes, but really designating an influence only. It was the word used to avoid the unpronounceable tetragrammaton (*יהוה*) and to present

1. Righteousness. 2. Word.

an intermediary agency between God and the contaminating material universe, in the passages which represent God as acting directly.

Even if it is proved that Philo influenced the Apostle's introduction to the Gospel, there is no trace of his influence beyond the introduction. The foundation principles of Christianity are not in danger. Let no one fear this anti-Christianity movement. The investigation may proceed.

W. C. W.

### FAITH IN CHRIST.

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

Christ sheds delight around the Jewish heart,  
That daily drifts in sympathies apart  
From friends long-loved and kindred ever dear,  
Because it has in simple faith drawn near  
Unto His love, which Prophets long foretold  
Enriches more than priceless mines of gold;  
For His self-sacrifice in truth and grace  
The crimson stains of sinfulness efface.  
He is the source whence love's pure fountains flow,  
The great first cause of all true joy below;  
And, though unseen, is ever near to bless  
All who believe in child-like artlessness.  
An inspired pen alone can fully tell  
Of grace and truth that in Messiah dwell;  
Faith in the Christ makes war on roots of wrong  
As in His power our purposes grow strong;  
And sheds abroad affection's warmest rays  
To woo the weary into restful ways.  
It prayerfully upon the sea of life  
Goes forth amid the fiercest gales of strife  
To rescue those who sink 'neath waves of care,  
Or drift towards the vortex of despair.  
Faith purifies the motives of the mind,  
Leaves worldliness forever far behind,  
Reveals humility's supreme repose,  
Withholds revenge when enemies oppose,  
Restores the penitent to peace and joy  
In all the patience meekness should employ,  
Bids charity a lifelong course pursue,  
And tinges hope with radiance ever new,  
Illumes the path wherein our steps are led,  
Trusts God the Father for our daily bread,  
Believes that God the spirit from above  
Has come to comfort with the light of love,  
Proclaims that Jesus' blood will cleanse from sin,  
And rout the devil from the heart within,  
Sees Jew and Gentile in pure worship one  
And universal Brotherhood begun.

—Mark Levy.

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

It is a trite saying, that nothing in creation exists without a purpose. From the lowliest blade of grass that is trodden beneath our feet, and the animalculæ that swarm in the tiniest drop of water, to the mighty spheres which Divine power has launched into limitless space, each and all have a special task assigned to them in Nature's laboratory, the performance of which constitutes an irrefragable law of their existence. In other words, each has a mission to fulfill, and that mission is its *raison d'être*. It may be difficult, and even impossible, with the knowledge we now possess, to discover and point out in every single instance the discharge of useful functions, or, indeed, the performance of any other but destructive operations. Yet the conviction is general, that each created thing has a share in the production and maintenance of the harmony of Nature, whether we can discern it or not.

This is no less true in the moral than in the material creation. "The Lord has made all things for His own ends," says the wise king, "yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov. 16: 4. And to the devout and reflecting mind nothing is more evident than that nations, as well as individuals, exist only for the accomplishment of God's purposes. A mission is committed to each of them, and, willingly or not, consciously or unconsciously, they one and all carry out the designs of "the Most High, who ruleth in the kingdom of men."

This is more clearly discernible in the life of nations than of individuals, and in the remote past rather than in the present. The reason is obvious. It is easier to take a comprehensive view of an object at a distance, where it can be surveyed in its entirety, than in close proximity, where only a part can be seen. And, unlike that of individuals, whose mundane life is but the prelude to a state of existence lying beyond our ken, and whose record does

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

not close on this side of the grave, the destiny of nations, especially of those who have passed away, lies completed and unfolded before us on the page of history, and we are enabled to trace some, at least, of the purposes they were made to serve, and how they were accomplished.

If, for instance, we take the Jewish people as the central agency designed by God for moral and spiritual elevation of mankind, we see at once how necessary was the task assigned to the Egyptians in the formation and the earliest development of that agency. For what else could have so indelibly impressed upon the hearts and minds of the Jewish people God's special claim upon them as "His purchased possession," (סגילה), to be used for the realization of His purposes, as God's direct visible and startling interposition for their deliverance from the fiery furnace of affliction? Babylon, too, was the rod of God's anger for the chastisement of backsliding Israel, and the place of their moral regeneration, and Persia the instrument employed for their political rehabilitation. Greece, by the spread of mental culture, sharpened the reasoning faculties of mankind, and thus prepared the way for the apprehension of the deeper moral and spiritual conception of the Hebrews; whilst Rome facilitated their circulation by the union of all nations under her tolerant rule.

Such, at least, are some of the parts which these nations contributed, in one way or another, (for the most part unconsciously, and even against their will), towards the realization of God's purposes. But when the tasks assigned to them were fulfilled, and they had nothing more to do, when, like Pharaoh of old, they said in the pride of their hearts, "Who is the Lord that we should obey His voice?" or "What is the Almighty that we should serve Him?" they were swept away from the face of the earth, and nothing but crumbling ruins and literary remains are left to tell of their former greatness and magnificence.

Israel alone has survived the wreck of the ancient world. He saw their manhood, their senile decrepitude,

and their final disappearance from the stage of the world. Oppressed and ground down by each in turn, he saw them play like so many bubbles on the stream of time, and vanish to appear no more. The fierce waves of adversity and the raging billows of persecution have threatened, again and again, to engulf him. But the Jewish people are probably as numerous and as full of vital force and energy to-day as ever they were in the days of David and Solomon.

Here, then, is a miracle actually performed before our eyes, and one which, though in the ordinary sequence of Nature, is scarcely less stupendous than any of those recorded in the Scriptures. But can we recognize an adequate purpose for it? What was the object designed by God in the marvelous preservation of the Hebrew race? What destiny had they to fulfill? What has been the influence exerted by them upon the world at large?

The answer given by the prophet, as God's representative, is, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord;" "this people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise." Isa. 43: 10, 22. Whilst all other nations were made to serve God's purposes for a time, and with perhaps the exception of Persia against their will, Israel alone was chosen, according to a solemnly stipulated covenant, to testify for Him to the nations of the world. "For the whole earth is mine," was the message delivered to them at the foot of Mount Sinai; "but ye shall be unto a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." They were to be the willing instruments in God's hands for the diffusion of the knowledge of His name among the heathen, and for the illumination of the dark places of idolatry, cruelty and pollution. This done, says the prophet (Isa. 61: 6), "ye shall be named the priests of the Lord, men shall call you the ministers of our God."

Can anything more glorious be conceived than such a destiny? What is there in the history of any other nation, ancient or modern, to compare with the dazzling brightness of the task allotted to the people of Israel? By the

side of Israel's mission those of all other nations dwindle into insignificance. And it is this ultimate design in the election of Israel which enables us to understand and appreciate the startling manifestations which attended the declaration and confirmation of that election in the covenant made to that effect on Mount Sinai. The signs and wonders of the Exodus, culminating in the proclamation of the Law from the top of a burning mountain, amid roaring thunders and flashing lightnings, were, so to say, the birth-throes which ushered in the formation of the Jewish Church and its preparation for the work it was destined to accomplish.

But has Israel fulfilled his destiny? Have the effects been commensurate with the cause assigned to them? We see in Nature that great results spring from what are, after all, insignificant causes. What, then, have been the results of the exertion of supernatural power recorded in the long Biblical history of the Jewish people? What effect has it produced upon the world at large, and even among the Jews themselves? These questions, be it observed, are asked from the Jewish standpoint, which regards the Christian religion as an aberration from Judaism, and an unwarranted and unwarrantable deification of a man, and gross idolatry. If that is so, then the whole world is still sunk in the deepest spiritual darkness; and, as far as the Gentiles are concerned, the Divine Manifestation on Mount Sinai has answered no purpose.

As if in reply to such questions, it is often urged in the Jewish press and pulpit that Christendom is indebted to the Decalogue for its moral elevation compared with that of paganism. But this is a baseless assertion. For the Jews have never preached the Ten Commandments to the Gentiles, and the Apostles proclaimed, not the Decalogue, but Christ crucified, as the only effectual means of purifying the stream of human action at its fountain head, and of writing the Law, not with the finger of God upon tables of stone, but by the spirit of God upon the heart of man.

But assuming even, for argument's sake, that the Decalogue has been the cause of the high moral standard, reached by the Christians, that very elevation must tend only to the lower depth of their spiritual degradation through their habitual transgression of the First Commandment. We leave it to our Jewish brethren to explain the extraordinary phenomenon thus presented to us, of moral purity combined with the grossest impurity of worship; of the most exalted virtue and the exhibition of habitual self-sacrifice for the good of others, produced by the worship of Jesus, and a burning love. This is but one of the minor difficulties which those have to grapple with who reject the Gospel. What we now wish to urge is, that so far from benefiting the Gentiles, the infinite condescension of God in revealing Himself to them through Israel has, so far, according to Judaism, logically considered, resulted only in their increasing spiritual blindness.

And what of the Jews themselves? Has there ever been anything in their temporal and spiritual condition to warrant the belief in God's interference on their behalf? Has their knowledge of God raised them, morally and spiritually, above all other nations? Had it done so, the immediate effects of the enjoyment of such a privileged position must have shown themselves in an irrepressible desire to impart the blessings accruing from it to all other races who were not so favored whose enlightenment they were bound to promote as the "priests of the Lord" and "the ministers of our God." But have the Jews done anything for the subversion of idolatry, and the spread of the knowledge of God among the heathen? Can they point to a single nation, except, perhaps, to the small kingdom of the Chazars, that they have induced to cast away their idols and worship the living God only? Is there a single spot on the face of the globe that has been reclaimed from moral and physical debasement by their efforts? Is it not a fact that, so far from conferring any benefit to the Gentile world, the vast majority of the Jewish people residing

in semi-civilized countries are left far behind in the race for social improvement and mental enlightenment? Even the British Jews,—of whom the Emperor Nicholas is reported to have said he would gladly take a dozen in exchange for all his Jewish subjects,—even they are indebted for the proud superiority they enjoy over their less favored brethren in Russia and other eastern lands to their residence in this Protestant country, where they share in the blessings of a Christian civilization. More than this, we dare to ask, Is there a single Jew who lives in the personal assurance of a happy existence beyond this mortal life? But if every creed that throws no light on our own eternal destiny stands to-day as self-condemned, we ask, How is it with Judaism? Can it, viewed in this light, maintain its ground as a Divine institution?

With striking unanimity both Rabbinic and reformed Jews glory in the admission that Gentiles may hope for the enjoyment of happiness beyond this life, in spite of what they designate—and justly so from the Jewish standpoint—as their idolatrous worship. And with thoughtless complacency they contrast what they call Christian exclusiveness with their own liberality in throwing open the gates of heaven to all outside the pale of Judaism. Just as if, with equal generosity, some one who were to assure the starving population of London that Rothschild's bank was freely open for their relief whenever they should apply for it, provided only they could show satisfactory testimonials of their generally blameless lives. But how does this liberality tally with the professed belief in God's fiery descent and thundering proclamation of the Law upon Mount Sinai? If eternal happiness can be secured without, or even in spite of, revelation, why did He rend the heavens and come down? What useful object had He in view? Why could not the Jewish people be left to find the way to happiness beyond this life, as the other nations have found it, who have received no such favours?

Let us once more view closely the nature of the Mis-

sion entrusted to the Jewish people shortly before the giving of the Law. "For the whole earth is mine," is the message sent to them by the God of their fathers, "but ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation," or a nation set apart for a particular purpose. A task extremely arduous, but one of surpassing glory, is here assigned to them. For if it mean anything, it means their investment with the functions of religious teachers to the whole world. In other words they were to be Heaven's agents for restoring mankind to that high moral and spiritual level from which it had been hurled by sin and corruption. Such a mission, indeed, accounts for the unheard of fact (Deut. 4: 32) that Israel heard "the voice of God speaking out of the midst of fire," and yet lived. The results aimed at, and the objects kept in view, are of sufficient importance to justify God's wonderful condescension to the people of Israel. All this is obvious to the thoughtful student of the Bible. But nearly four thousand years have already passed since that event took place, and if Judaism is the only result produced by it, then the revelation on Mount Sinai has proved useless and therefore unaccountable. For the Gentiles of to-day, though endowed with deeper moral preceptions and susceptibilities than their heathen forefathers, are, for that very reason, in a worse state of spiritual darkness. For however absurd it is to imagine that moral enlightenment can exist in combination with spiritual darkness, it is, nevertheless, a fact that they cling to what the Jews designate an idolatrous worship, although at the same time they profess to be guided by the teaching of God of Israel. And as for Judaism itself, does it not indirectly deny its own divine origin, when it admits the possibility of securing God's favor without it? For if the idolatrous Christian and the followers of Mahomet and of Confucius can find acceptance with God, in spite of their creeds, where was the need of God's revealing His will to Israel?

Such is the inextricable confusion in which those Jews

involve themselves, who reject the Gospel as the only admissible realization of Israel's mission, and the only possible vindication of the truth of Moses and the Prophets. Their opposition to it would be at least intelligible, if it were of Jewish and not of Gentile origin. They might be loth to resign their national pre-eminence and their superior privileges into the hands of other nations. As God's "peculiar treasure" above all people, they might resent the proposal to yield this glorious distinction to aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. But "salvation is of the Jews," and it is to them that the Gentiles are indebted for their assurance of it. What, then, can be more glorious to the Jewish name than the victories achieved by a few Israelites over the proudest nations of ancient and modern times? That the humble followers of the despised Carpenter should have prevailed against the intellectual pride of the Greeks and the political power of the Romans is certainly an event unparalleled in the history of the world, and reflects eternal honor upon the Jews. Here we have, as in the regular course of Nature, the most stupendous results, springing from causes so inadequate that nothing short of Almighty power could have operated effectually through them. Surely, the Hebrew messengers of the Cross, and not their brethren of the Synagogue, have verified the Divine election of Israel, and established their claim to the priestly office, to be the primary religious teachers of the whole world.

For eighteen centuries countless millions of the human race, whatever their errors may have been, have invariably decided their religious controversies by appeals to the written documents, or the traditional instruction, alleged to have come down from Jewish writers, Paul, Peter and John. And at this moment it is Jesus Christ, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, who sways the hearts and minds of the most enlightened nations on the face of the globe. Their power and the beneficence of their rule rise in proportion as they are permeated by His Spirit, and as they irradiate the light

which they receive from Him. By Him and His Jewish disciples the world has been taught to venerate the name of Hebrew patriarchs and prophets, to value the Jewish Scriptures as the most precious charter of all their temporal and eternal privileges, and to offer up daily prayers and supplications to the God of Abraham. They, and not the opponents of the Gospel, have demonstrated to the world in a manner that cannot be gainsaid, that Israel has been entrusted by God with a mission to the human race, the fruits of which are seen in the religious aspect of a large proportion of the globe, and still continue to spread even to the furthest isles.

(To be continued.)

#### AN OLD SYNAGOGUE.

The first synagogue built in England, after the re-admission of the Jews in the time of the commonwealth, was erected during the reign of Queen Anne. Sir Francis Montefiore, in the *Strand Magazine*, a London publication, has an interesting article on this venerable edifice. He says it was built for the congregation by a Quaker, who, when his work was completed, restored the money which he had made out of his contract, he being, as he said, "unwilling to make any profit out of a temple erected to the glory of God." (That was certainly a practical way to show the sincerity of his religious convictions, but we fear his example has not met with such favor as to be generally followed by contractors since his day). For a good many years it was the only synagogue in London, and it must have been a quaint old place to worship in even in that early day, though it is still the chief place of worship of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews of the metropolis, and has lost none of the features that made it a conspicuous place when Isaac Disraeli was one of its worshipers and little Benjamin, his son, afterward the real ruler of England for so many years, learned the Hebrew alphabet within its precincts, and within whose vestry room is kept the reg-

ister that records his birth and that of the other members of the congregation since its formation. What a roll that must be! In the lists are found names that are now a part of history, and many of the great money kings of the world of the past two hundred and fifty years are there inscribed.

The synagogue is situated behind a row of buildings in Bevis Marks and is enclosed on three sides with a court yard. It is a perfectly plain old building from without, but within is very imposing in appearance. Within the seats are round the walls, and these are only occupied by the male portion of the worshipers. The women sit by themselves in a gallery which runs round three sides of the building. It is the only place of worship in England not lighted by gas or lamps or electricity. Large wax candles, which are especially manufactured for it, are used, and these are fitted into old brass chandeliers of a curious make that came from Holland and have been in the synagogue ever since it was built. No instrumental music has ever been heard within its walls, and the choir, which stands behind a large circular desk in the center of the temple, is unaccompanied by other sounds than those of nature. The congregation guards with jealous care this old temple of glory, and we hope it will forever remain as it is now, a structure sacred to the worship of the true God—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.—*American Israelite*.

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AN interesting fact has come out in connection with the Jaffa-Jerusalem Railway: Turkey gave the concession. France found the capital. Belgium furnished half the rails and coal. England found the other half. Poland and Switzerland sent engineers and laborers. Egypt and the Soudan and Algiers sent laborers. Greece furnished the cooks. The United States shares with Germany the man who first surveyed the road, while Philadelphia supplied the engines! The nations may yet unite in doing much more important work in restoring the Jews to Palestine.—*Things to Come*.

## 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.

הברית החדשה.

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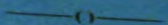
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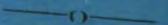
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