

THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

A CHRISTIAN MONTHLY,

DEVOTED TO JEWISH INTERESTS.

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

EDITORS:

THE REV. WILLIAM C. DALAND, D. D.,
London, Eng.

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

"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:

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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.

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THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

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

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

הביטו אל־צִוֵּר חֲצַבְתֶּם
Isa. 51: 1. ואל־מִקְבַּת בּוֹר נִקְרַתֶּם

"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.

SINCE the Zionist movement has been so much before the world, and since the growth among mission workers for Israel of those views which were first advocated ten years ago by the *Eduth le Israel*, and have always been maintained by the PECULIAR PEOPLE, the question of the retention of the Sabbath by Jewish converts to Christianity on national grounds has been attracting the attention of thoughtful Christians. We venture to hope that this question may yet assume sufficient magnitude to compel, on the part of Gentile Christians as well, a thoughtful review of the attitude which they also sustain to this Divine institution.

FOR the casting away of the Sabbath by the Christian church and the introduction of the Christian resurrection festival of Sunday in its place, upon the supposed authority of Jesus or His Apostles, has always been an almost insuperable obstacle to the recognition of Jesus as the Messiah by the Jews. How can He be the Messiah and alter the Law of God? The coming of the Messiah is to bring the fulfilment of God's law. These are facts to be considered. It is easy to show the candid Jew, on the basis of

the authentic New Testament records, that Jesus never did alter the law or even suggest the abrogation of the Sabbath, that He came not to destroy it, but to fulfil it. But in the face of the clear facts as to Jesus' teaching is the other fact that Christians generally observe Sunday and not the Sabbath; and not only so, but the observance of Sunday is from the point of view of the Jew and his Christian teachers and companions almost the most patent evidence of his conversion. "If you become a Christian, the first thing you do is to cease observing the Sabbath and observe instead the 'Christian's Lord's-day.'" This is most appalling. Disciples of the Master, who profess to be devoted to His teachings and willingly obedient to the will of God through Him, not only cast aside the law of God and make for themselves a contrary law, but require others to do it. Such may be truly in the Kingdom of Heaven, but by our Saviour's words are of "the least" therein. Matt. 20: 19.

JOSEPH RABBINOWITSCH.

Our readers will be glad to read the following account of Joseph Rabbinowitsch, the Jewish Reformer in Bessarabia, from the German of the late Prof. Franz Delitzsch. In view of the present interest in the national movement among the Jews, a perusal of what that noble lover of Israel, who devoted the best of his life to the cause of Israel's salvation, wrote of Rabbinowitsch and his life will surely not be untimely.

INTRODUCTION.*

When Joseph Rabbinowitsch made his first visit to us in Leipzig, I asked him to give me a sketch of his life. In response to this request, he wrote at once two-thirds of the following Autobiography, written in Hebrew, which he uses as his proper mother tongue. He afterwards sent me the conclusion from Kischineff, which disappointed me

* From the German of Franz Delitzsch.

by the little that it told us of his conversion to the faith in Jesus Christ. In answer to the complaint I made on this account, when he visited us in Leipzig the second time, he told me that this was purposely done on his part. I give, then, this Autobiography here in a faithful German rendering, and, despite its defective conclusion, the biography is, I think, a valuable contribution toward our knowledge of a most remarkable movement. It is followed by two sermons, and an address translated from Russian, and a letter translated by myself from the original Hebrew, addressed by Rabbinowitsch to a North American Jewish Christian, who had expressed to him, through my mediation, his joyous sympathy with the movement, but had added an objection to what seemed to him a too familiar mode of speaking of our Blessed Lord as "Jesus our Brother," a term which surely finds its justification in such passages as Micah 2: 3, where the men of Judah are called the remnant of Messiah's Brethren, and Zech. 12: 10, where the mourning of repentant Israel over Him "Whom they pierced" is compared to the death wail over an only son. Even as we speak of the Glorified One by His Hebrew name of Jesus, so may a Jewish Christian call Him in an historical as well as a spiritual sense, his "Brother."

Rabbinowitsch has not yet been allowed to minister the Holy Sacraments, but preaches constantly in the Jewish dialect or "jargon" of Bessarabia. Among his hearers in Kischineff is one Jacob Wechsler, who possesses a peculiar facility in rendering this "jargon" into pure Hebrew, which we have followed in our translations.

Rabbinowitsch is, for us, a phenomenon full of hope for Israel's future conversion to Christ. His sermons, mostly founded on a double text, one-half taken from the Old Testament and skilfully combined with the other half taken from the New Testament, often suggest thoughts of very deep significance. The Christian spirit which breathes in them is throughout a reflex of the inspired

Word of the Gospel and Epistles, issuing from a Jewish heart. Though the formal Confession of the Faith which he has drawn up for Israel exhibits throughout a familiar acquaintance with and conformity to the Church's symbols, yet is it equally evident that the type adhered to in his ordinary teaching has a strong Jewish element, and is so far original that his methods both of thought and expression seem directly gathered, and in a really gifted way, from the New Testament and its Divine Apostolic Word.

One or two examples of this may be taken from a sermon which has for its subject "The Essence of Faith." Rabbinowitsch delights to represent the Holy Trinity as God, His Word, and His Spirit, or, as he in one place expresses it, Knowledge, the Knowing One, and the Known in an absolute sense.

God is for Him the Tri-une, not only as He manifests Himself in Revelation, but as He is in His own Essence. He is apart from the created universe, Subject, Object, and Predicate all in One, that is in Himself. The three Elements of Faith are for Rabbinowitsch not knowledge, assent, and assurance, but Repentance, Prayer, and Righteousness, with reference to the well-known Jewish maxim (into which he imports a deeper meaning), "Repentance, Prayer, and Righteousness deliver men from the Wrath to come."

Another example of his method of dealing with revealed truth is the use he makes, after Apostolic precedent, of a verse in the Psalter (Psa. 109: 3), which he applies directly to our Lord when speaking of Him as the Son of God, who upholdeth all things by the Word of His Power, and makes Heaven and Earth one in His Love—he goes on to represent Him as saying of Himself, "And I am Prayer"—*i. e.*, the Eternal Mediator and Intercessor who for that very reason is also the "Teacher sent from God."

Rabbinowitsch lives and moves in our Hebrew version of the New Testament, of which we may say without

boasting that it has found the proper and lasting Hebrew equivalents for many Greek terms (such as *mishpat-habanim* for "adoption of sons" and *tikkune ha-olam* for "Elements of the World.") To these and many other renderings like them Rabbinowitsch owes the suggestion and expression of some of his noblest thoughts.

It should be mentioned here that without any specific influence from, or even knowledge of, the so-called "Higher Criticism" of the Pentateuch, he concurs therewith in regarding the Priest Code, of the mid-books (Exodus, last chapters, Leviticus and Numbers) as a later addition to the original Mosaic (prophetical) Legislation contained in the mid-chapters of Exodus ("The Book of the Covenant"), and in Deuteronomy. He insists on the fact that it was from fanatical adherents of this later Priestly Legislation that the rejection of our Lord's Messiahship proceeded, and the bitter persecution which brought him to the Cross.

It is in logical accordance with this view that Rabbinowitsch regards the Talmud as having been down to the present day, a main source of all the misfortunes and unhappiness of his people, and so far rightly that it is the confusion made in the Talmud of Divine Revelation with Rabbinical traditions that has maintained Jewish national exclusiveness in its age-long hostility to the emancipating grace of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as "the end of the Law for Righteousness."

Yet Rabbinowitsch doubtless goes too far in his denunciations, for the Talmud itself, and its ally, the Midrash, certainly contain many Christian ideas and aspirations which are well worth developing, though as a whole they constitute a Chinese wall, which must be demolished before the Jewish problem can be rightly solved.

From the same point of view Rabbinowitsch attacks the Pharisaic observance of the Sabbath, while insisting on its retention by the Jewish community even after embracing Christ, as their great national remembrance of

their creation as God's people by the deliverance from Egypt. For a like reason he would retain Circumcision as a symbol of Jewish religious nationality. But with his essentially Pauline position in all other respects we cannot but hope that he may ultimately see his way to preserve the true nationality of his people, in combination with observance of the Christian's Lord's Day* and the abandonment of Circumcision.

The movement begun so auspiciously in Kischineff is for our apprehension a prelude of what, on a world-wide scale, may be part of the final development of Israel's vocation among the peoples.

A sudden universal conversion of the whole Jewish race is neither conceivable in itself nor foretold in prophecy. The spiritual revolution which we *may* hope for will be brought about by the pervading efforts of God-inspired individuals, who, as Hosea prophesied, will call Israel to repentance (Hosea 6: 1-3), and bid them seek their God and His Christ in the latter day. Hosea 3: 5. Individual converts whose hearts are touched will respond to this call and awake to new life, when the "blindness in part" shall pass away, and a new Judaic religious nationality of believers in Jesus as the true Messiah will open its eyes to the glorious world of faith and hope, to which Israel has continued blind so long. That time of the end will, as prophecy assures us, be one of sore disturbance and convulsion, and of far-reaching changes for the whole world.

Joseph Rabinowitsch appears to us as a morning

* It is difficult for us to see why it is at all to be desired that the Jew who embraces Christ should also observe the "Christian's Lord's Day." That day—by which is meant of course *Sunday*—is an ecclesiastical day, without the least Scriptural foundation, and cannot be required of any Christian on the basis of the New Testament. Moreover, its introduction as a weekly festival into the Christian scheme of days and its all but universal observance by Christians have been the chief reasons why the observance of the Sabbath has been all but lost, which fact has been a stumbling-block to Jews when they approach the considerations of the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth. When, therefore, a movement like the one now under consideration contemplates the recognition of the Sabbath by Christ-believing Jews, why mar its simplicity by a combination with what is utterly alien?—EDITORS OF THE P. P.

star in the spiritual firmament of his people's history. May he, in God's mercy, continue to shine with true light from Heaven!

One thing is certain. The Church's own history will not come to end till Israel shall be saved, and bring with its fulness new life to us also. To many, even Christian theologians affected by the mists of anti-Semitism, this expectation may seem chimerical. But surely it is blasphemy against the Gospel itself to deny its power to bring Israel as well as the Gentile world to Christ. If it took Israel a thousand years to turn from idolatry to belief in one God, shall we despair though millenniums pass ere they turn from hatred of Jesus to His Love? But when that day shall come, Israel born, like Saul of Tarsus, out of due time, will, like him, win fresh triumphs for the Gospel, and her "receiving" prove our "life." Rom. 11: 15.

The strange ingrained unchristian hatred of the Jew which besets us now will pass away. This may seem, and with man it is, impossible; but not with God, the Almighty, loving Father of us all.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JOSEPH RABBINOWITSCH.*

"So span-long hast Thou made my days, my life as nothing before Thee." Psa. 39: 6.

The day of my birth was the holy Sabbath, 23d (11th) September, 1837. My birthplace was Resina, on the Dniester, a small town in Bessarabia, where I spent the first ten years of my life. My father was David, son of Ephraim, son of Rabbi Wolf, of Orgeieff, in Bessarabia. Through them I am descended from Rabbi Israel, a learned commentator on the Talmud, who traced his descent from the primitive Gaonim. My mother's name was Esther Sarah. She was a daughter of Nathan Neta, whose fa-

* Abridged from the German of Franz Delitzsch.

ther was a disciple of the celebrated Zaddik Rabbi Jacob Simson of Schofatuvke.

I owed my early training to my maternal grandfather, Nathan Neta, of Resina, with whom my father then living at the village of Maschkowicz, near Orgeieff, placed me for education in my early childhood after my mother's death.

Nathan Neta was an excellent man, learned in the Law, and a strict adherent of the Bescht, (a form of Hebrew Chasidism) and its devout practices. He endeavored from the first to instil in my young mind his own love for Thora, Talmud, and religious books. He hardly left me out of his sight night or day (we shared the same bed), and took me with him three times every year when he went on pilgrimage to the learned Rabbi Salmina, of Raschkoff, son of Joseph, and the learned assembly of Chasidim (devout students) who met at his house. There he was proud to exhibit my early knowledge of Hebrew and the Holy Scriptures. I well remember how in my eighth year I repeated the whole Tractate Succoth, Mishna for Mishna, before the assembly at the Feast of Tabernacles, and how Zaddik warned my grandfather not to let me become too precocious. He was, indeed, unwearied in all the details of my education, interspersing his instructions with numerous anecdotes of miraculous occurrences, and of the fates and sayings of learned men. I had to learn and repeat every day some chapters out of one or another of the twenty-four books of our Bible. I had also to commit to memory Rashi's *Commentary on the Pentateuch*, and other books.

At six years old I could repeat the whole Song of Songs, and still remember how deeply even in childhood I was moved by Rashi's words in the Prologue to his *Exposition*, on how Solomon, filled with the Holy Ghost, prophesied in that book of Israel's repeated captivities, then still in the future, how they would bewail their former glory, and remember the loving kindness once vouch-

safed them by God above all the peoples of the earth, and would learn to say, "I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better with me than now."

In 1848 I was already in the second decade of my life, when, my grandfather being too old and feeble to continue the conduct of my education, my good father took me from Resina, and placed me at Orgeieff under the care of my widowed grandmother, Rebecca, who, as daughter and daughter-in-law of Rabbins, was commonly called the Rabbinerin (Rabbiness). Under her roof I studied the Talmud night and day for the next five years under very learned teachers, whom my excellent father paid most handsomely, quoting on that behalf an utterance of the Talmud that a man's requirements for the duties of life are all predetermined for him, but not the amount that he shall spend on enabling his children to study the Law, for which, too, special rewards will be vouchsafed him.

My chief teacher at that time was Rabbi Joseph, son of Akiba, who belonged to the Chasidic circle of the celebrated Zaddik R. Raphael, of Berschid. With him I read many difficult passages of the Gemara, the Sohar, and other books of the deepest Hebrew Mysticism, and among them the writings of the great Rabbi Pinchas, author of the Chasidic Masaim, founded on Psa. 34: 14, and Ex. 23: 7, "When a lie shall be abhorred as no less a sin than a breach of the Seventh Commandment then will manifest Himself Messiah the Son of David in His glory."

R. Pinchas labored diligently at that time with his disciple, R. Raphael to implant the mystic doctrines of their Chasidic school, and teach its devout observances among their youthful hearers at Orgeieff. All our striving then was through union with the Holy One and His Shekhina to reach the highest steps in spiritual knowledge. More than once have I risen at midnight to weep for the exile of the Divine Shekhina, and to implore the gift of His Spirit from the Holy One, who, as the Sohar says, walks at that hour with blessed souls in the Garden of Eden.

My mind at that time was entirely absorbed in Chasidic devotions, in meditations on the Eternal, and I took no pleasure in the amusements and occupations of my youthful companions.

It happened in my sixteenth year, on the Fast of the 17th Tammuz, 1853, that I was chastising myself at night-time, in penitential remembrance of the destruction of Jerusalem, which was followed by the Fall of the Second Temple, when a messenger of glad tidings appeared with the announcement of my espousals to Golde, daughter of Daniel, son of Elia, which had just taken place in the customary manner, with the breaking of costly vessels, in remembrance of the sack of the Holy City; and were to be followed at latest in three years' time by our marriage. The whole transaction had been accomplished for us by the fathers on either side, and I had but to bow and smile acquiescence to the congratulations which poured in upon me.

In those days the fire of Chasidic piety glowed on the altar of my heart, but a flood of other influences now came from Central Europe which tended rapidly to quench its fervor. An imperial ukase compelled all children of Hebrews to learn to speak and write the Russian language, and all teachers to read Moses Mendelsohn's translation of the Pentateuch with their pupils. A new spirit began to stir within me, and new ideas as to the real meaning of Law and Prophets served to infuse doubts in my mind as to the absolute sacro-sanctity of my Chasidic instructors, and the truth of their transcendental interpretations of Scripture. I began to read the modern Hebrew literature of the day, and gladly embraced new and more rational ideas and interpretations, under the influence of which the over-wrought fancies of former teachers began to fade in my mind like a dream when one awaketh. I was greatly helped toward this change by acquaintance and intercourse with a young man named Jechiel Zebi, son of Meir Herschensohn, who at that time had a high

reputation for Talmudic learning in Orgeieff. This new friend soon began to open my eyes as to the real nature of Kabbala and Sohar, and to show me that these were but a blinding veil for the minds of their Hebrew readers hiding from them the truth and the right interpretation of Holy Scripture. He imparted to me some of the conclusions which he had drawn from a scientific and historical study of Law and Prophets. I attached myself daily closer to this new friend, and we sat many hours together pursuing this, to me, new course of study. One day after a visit to Kischineff he brought back with him a little book which he said had been given him by a Christian Pastor as one which would show him what Jesus of Nazareth really taught. It was in fact a Hebrew New Testament printed in London. "Perhaps," added Herschensohn, "this was really the Messiah whom Moses and the Prophets foretold." He gave me the book which I have by me still. Other circumstances besides my intercourse with Herschensohn (whom my Chasidic teachers regarded as an "Epicurean" or Rationalist), led to a breach between me and my old way of thinking, and former teachers such as R. Joseph of Berschid, which compelled me to think of leaving Orgeieff. I retired to my father's house in the village of Maschcowicz, where he carried on his business. There I zealously pursued the study of a fresh set of old Jewish writers, of Maimonides, Albo, Gaon, which I had commenced in Orgeieff. I frankly proclaimed my new convictions that the whole Chasidic system of mystic Theology rested on self-deception, and was irreconcilable with sound reason. My father by no means discouraged me in pursuing this new mental development, and gave me every assistance that I needed.

The time at length arrived for my marriage with Golde, who was now (1856) seventeen years of age, and is still my faithful and beloved wife. We were united in holy matrimony on the 7th Tebeth, and I continued for eighteen months to reside with my father-in-law, Daniel

Goldenberg, at Orgeieff, and renewed my intimate intercourse with Herschensohn. I had hardly any other intimate friends there, though I daily attended prayers at the Beth-ha-Midrash.

After residing a year-and-a-half at my father-in-law's house, I hired one for myself in Orgeieff, and opened a small shop with the help of my wife's marriage portion of 800 silver roubles.

In 1859 our dawning prosperity was suddenly ruined by a fire which destroyed sixty-six houses in Orgeieff, and deprived me and my wife, with our infant son, of all our little property.

The next decade was a time of much bitter suffering and anxiety. Yet did my great losses and my consequent poverty exercise a wholesome influence on my mind, driving me to fresh studies and occupations. I had some acquaintance with law which I carefully improved, and soon became legal adviser to my countrymen, far and near. My advice and my advocacy were invoked on all sides, and God granted me good success. I became also a contributor to various Jewish newspapers, and well-known as a promoter of education and enlightenment among my people. Zederbaum, the founder of Jewish journalism in those parts, welcomed my co-operation. I established a school in Orgeieff for instruction in Talmud, Torah, and the Hebrew and Russian languages; the school did a good work and my endeavors on behalf of education were observed with favor in the highest government circles of Kischineff and Odessa. I became a member of the Society for Promoting Enlightenment among Jews in Russia; wealthy families in Kischineff and the neighborhood gave me employment, and a new era of prosperity began for me in 1866 with the formation of a large business in Orgeieff, for the sale of tea and sugar in the town and neighborhood, which I conducted with success. Moreover in 1869 I was elected to a post in the Landrath of the district of

Orgeieff, such as no Israelite had up to that time filled. So ended my third decade.

Anyone acquainted with the difficulties which beset the Israelite in Russia will understand my earnest desire, and endeavors for the advancement of my people which I then thought could be accomplished by education and enlightenment only. The spirit of the new time would soon, I trusted, set them free. The emancipation of so many thousands of serfs in Russia by the high-minded generosity of the Emperor Alexander II., and the emancipation of the negro slaves in the United States of America, which was effected by the great war between North and South, diffused a breeze of freedom and deliverance which I sucked in with avidity on my people's behalf, and awakened in me hopes that the nations of Europe would soon begin to see that their Jewish brother also is a man, and remember that the earth is given to the children of men.

But now came a great disappointment of my hopes based on the liberating power of mere intellectual enlightenment. The crushing blow inflicted upon France in 1870-71, showed me how little the highest advances in civilization may avail a great people in the day of adversity, and that such alone would not save Israel. Then again the horrible persecution which in 1871 broke out in Odessa greatly troubled me. I then found that education and enlightenment so far from shielding Jews from the rage of their enemies, made them and their nationality all the more odious to their Christian neighbors. The Jews of Odessa were the first to change costume, language, and proper names, in order to be more like their neighbors, who in their turn were the first to overwhelm with scorn and reproach, and to threaten them with destruction. In the third place, my work and official position as a member of the Landrath, taught me how little there was of sincerity behind the apparent friendship in which many Jews and Christians stood to one another.

I lost all spirit to continue my work at Orgeieff, sold

my large business there, settled all my accounts, and moved to Kischineff on 9th November, 1871, with my wife and children, four daughters and one son, who was already attending the gymnasium at Kischineff. I hired a flat in a good house in the midst of my own people and the center of the town, and intended at first to carry on a business in tea and sugar and other articles to be supplied from Odessa. But I heard an inner voice saying to me: "Leave trade and traffic; it will bring thee no blessing. Be an adviser and an advocate of thy oppressed people, and I will be with thee!" I obeyed what I felt was a divine call. I had a large circle of friends and acquaintance who gladly availed themselves of my legal knowledge and experience in various difficulties with the government and in the Courts of Justice, and were ready and willing to pay for my assistance. I bought a piece of land in a quiet part of the town on which I built a comfortable house, and moved my family into it in 1873, less by my youngest little daughter (Tikwa), who fell a victim to the cholera when it raged in Kischineff in 1872. I soon became a much sought and much visited personality. Many in sore need implored my help. Many widows and orphans told me among floods of tears, sad stories of oppression, and in too many cases I discovered that the oppressor himself was a son of Abraham. Moreover persons of wealth and position confided to me their private affairs, or consulted me on matters of municipal policy, in which I was ready to help them with no other payment than their grateful thanks. In this period I studied Holy Scripture at home, and also gave lessons in Hebrew and Russian. Our Jewish public worship I attended on Sabbath and Holy days only, and was always ready to give up the leisure hours of the Sabbath-day to the EXCEPTION of inquiring friends who came with questions of theological and scientific interest.

In those days it was ordered by Providence that the learned journalist, Alexander Zederbaum removed from

Kischineff to St. Petersburg, in order to publish his journal, *The Interpreter* (Ha-Melitz), in Hebrew and Russian, in the centre of Russian life and activity. He gladly invoked my assistance as a native of Kischineff in his new sphere, to act as reporter and correspondent, and as an earnest of Jewish liberties and the amelioration of our people's condition. He urged that now himself in a position to gather information and exercise influence at headquarters, the time was come for us both to make a combined effort to raise our people's moral and social position, and that I should set myself to write a series of papers and essays with this object in view, which might appear regularly in his journal at St. Petersburg.

I felt that this close appeal to my conscience must not be neglected, and was more zealous than ever in calling public attention to the low moral and intellectual condition of my compatriots in Bessarabia, and to their special needs. My efforts in this direction were not without effect.

About this time the cruel war broke out between Servia and Bulgaria on the one hand and Turkey on the other. The Emperor Alexander II. resolved to assist the two Slavonic States in their efforts to gain their national freedom by sending Russian troops across the Danube, and Kischineff was the head-quarters of this army in the south.

My own zeal on my people's behalf was naturally awakened, and hope renewed that the end of two milleniums of oppression might be approaching, but no help was forthcoming for Israel. When I heard how the notables of the Bulgarian people assembled themselves in the ancient Cathedral of Tirnova to thank the God of Heaven for deliverance from a tyranny of five hundred years, tears flowed from my eyes, and I exclaimed, "O Lord God of Israel, when shall it be Thy gracious will to raise the horn of Thy chosen people? When wilt Thou take to

Thyself Thy power and reign over Thy long-forsaken and shame-covered Zion?"

In 1878 I wrote a well-known pamphlet, entitled *Sabri maranan werabhanau—What think ye, our Lords and Rabbins?* which appeared in the Hebrew journal, *Morning Light (Haboke Or)*, and endeavored to show how the Rabbinate itself (*i. e.*, the body of the Jewish clergy) might be reformed and lifted up out of its present impotent condition as the first necessary antecedent of any real improvement in the state of the Jewish people, now lost in the mazes of poverty, ignorance, indolence, and unbelief, which must make the existence of true religion among them impossible. Many nights did I sit in consultation with the learned Dr. Levinton, anxiously inquiring how our people might be engaged of their own free will in agricultural pursuits, as the most useful and profitable of occupations, and so be raised out of their present miserable condition of hopeless, crushing poverty. With the consent of Government in Kischineff we called a large meeting of our principal citizens, and endeavored to establish a society for the assistance of poor people undertaking garden work, and I addressed the Jews generally in their own dialect, for the furtherance of the same cause, setting them a practical example in my own person and those of my two sons, David and Nathan, who worked with me daily in our own garden plot. With a like end in view for Russian Jews generally, I wrote frequently to Zederbaum's journal in St. Petersburg. At the same time I did my best to improve the synagogal service at Kischineff by providing a new and handsome House of Prayer, with a good choir, and by removing from the service all objectionable features. This I accomplished with a general concurrence. In such ways as these my activities on Israel's behalf, during this my fourth decade, were mainly practical. My conviction now was that the time for writing and theorizing was gone by—that what our people mainly needed was in the first place active, healthy

employment, which might take them out of their miserable trafficking in silks and satins, gold and silver rarities, embroideries, and the like—that even our boast to have first created and then ruled the mercantile system of the modern world was no longer maintainable; that, in fact, we are, and must remain, as the prophet Amos tells us, “a little one” among the nations. Amos 7: 2, 5. To thoughts like these I gave expression in an essay which appeared in Zederbaum’s journal, whose Hebrew title may be rendered, “Hasty Scribes and Boastful Traders.”

And so I enter on my present and fifth life’s decade, and the period of the movement toward Christianity among the Jews of Russia. Many events in its first years turned my mind to fresh problems on behalf of Israel. The death of the just, gentle, high-minded sovereign, Alexander II., was followed by the terrible persecutions which broke out in Jelisabitgrad, Warsaw, Kieff, Balta, and other places, and the flight or banishment of many thousand Jews to America and Palestine. These awful occurrences helped me at length to recognize Him of whom Moses and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, who said of Himself (John 18: 37), “To this end was I born and came into the world, that I may bear witness unto the Truth. Everyone that is of the Truth heareth My voice,” whom I now recognize as my Lord and my God.

Here I lay down my pen, and lifting up my eyes to Him who now sitteth on the right hand of the Majesty on high, I say to Him, “Wilt thou still be angry with us? Shall thy wrath burn like fire for ever? Wilt thou not turn again and quicken us, that thy people may rejoice in thee?” O that I might hear what God the Lord will say concerning us, that He would speak peace to His people and to His saints, so that they turn not again to folly! Yet is His salvation nigh to them that fear Him, that Glory may dwell in our land. Amen.

KISCHINEFF, 27 November, 1886.

חדשות הנעשות—NEWS—במחנה ישראל.

THERE are 3,500 pupils under instruction in the Hebrew Free Schools of New York City.

THE Hungarian minister of public worship has appointed Prof. Mark Aurel Stein (professor at the Lahore University) professor at the Royal Hungarian University at Budapest for Sanskrit.

A LARGE sum is to be expended on the erection of a new synagogue at Strasburg. The State gives 60,000 marks, the municipality 200,000 marks. There is further to be a loan of 350,000 marks, and the issue of 250,000 marks in shares.

THERE has been talk in some Continental papers lately of the existence of an anti-Semitic turbulent spirit in the Ionian Islands. A correspondent, writing lately from Corfu, states, on the contrary, that the excellent relations existing between all the inhabitants of the island have not been in the least disturbed.

DESPITE the large increase in the well-to-do Jewish population of New York there appears to be no marked increase in the number of regular synagogues, nor are existing shrines obliged to extend their accommodations. "Is the synagogue becoming superfluous as the club-house develops into lordlier proportions?" asks the *Jewish Messenger*.

REV. DR. JOSEPH H. HERTZ, of Syracuse, lectured Dec. 26 ult., in Philadelphia, on the subject, "A Mediæval Jewish Philosopher and His Works." The philosopher referred to was Bachya, known as the Jewish Thomas a Kempis. Dr. Hertz said that Bachya's greatest book, "The Duties

of the Heart," written in the year 1040, has been coming to the front lately as the most popular book of devotion in Jewish literature, and at the same time as the first and greatest ethical treatise. In the course of the lecture he said: "Bachya's book lived would mean the regeneration of society. For though the philosophical setting is scholastic and obsolete, its moral and ethical contents have permanent beauty and abiding force. Aside from the Bible, it is perhaps the noblest expression of Jewish spirit of all times."

IN view of the first report of the Vienna Society for Collecting and Preserving Artistic and Historic Monuments relating to the Jews, the idea of establishing a Jewish museum, in which all Jewish objects of interest shall be collected, is being revived. Recently a society was founded for a similar purpose to the Vienna one, which has a very representative committee, and it is thought that by the establishment of a branch society and an amalgamation of all the Germanic societies, a museum will finally be established. The catalogue in the first report contains twenty-one headings, with various subdivisions. It includes Bibliography, historical works and documents, grave-stones, portraits, plastic memorials, busts, medallions, metal and pottery work, Hebraica and Judaica, books by Jewish authors, publications by Jewish authors, and music.

A CORRESPONDENT from the Argentine to the *Jewish Press* of London pictures, under the heading of "Israel's Grave," the condition of the Jewish colonies, in the following manner:

"The very first glance at the colonies and at the unfortunate colonists reminds the visitor of a melancholy cemetery, wherein the dead are asleep in their narrow and dark castles. You see around you only depressed and sad figures, whose life and blood, joy and hope, have disap-

peared long ago from their lean and pale faces, never to return. The visitor is deafened with the heart-rending sighs—indicating starvation, distress and despair!

“The fields, too, are dark and melancholy; nowhere is a blade of grass noticeable; nothing blossoms, nothing grows; there is no whispering of leaves or branches; everything is void and chaotic. Whoever happens to visit here remains like a statue—motionless—at these frightful pictures of the dead.

“Until some months ago the colonists tilled these fields with the sweat of their brow. They worked like slaves in spite of the glowing heat. Their pale and delicate children helped them in driving the ox to plough in the anticipation of a fair harvest.”

“Alas!” cries the writer, “the locust appeared, and destroyed all the honest labor and hope.”

He concludes: “The whole colonization movement is shattered; it suffers great agony. The locust epidemic is the depth that swallows all labor, energy and hope of the past. There is still room for a tombstone to be reared here—a tombstone to bear the inscription: ‘Israel’s Grave.’”

THE RIVER OF MESSIANIC PROPHECY.

BY CH. TH. LUCKY.

(From the Hebrew, of *Ha-Eduth*.)

(Concluded from page 183.)

Also the prophet of the exiles, Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, the priest, in his wrath against Zedekiah the word of the Lord came to him and he cried: “Thou death-deserving, wicked one, prince of Israel, whose day is come at the time of the iniquity of the end, thus hath said the Lord, Remove the mitre and the crown . . . until he come whose right it is and I will give it him.”¹ “And I will appoint over them one Shepherd, my servant David, and He shall

¹ Ezekiel 21: 30-32. The mitre is for the head of the priest, the crown for the king. Both shall be given to Him whose right it is, and He is the Messiah.

feed them. I the Lord will be to them for a God, and my servant David shall be a prince in their midst."¹

Thus the voice of prophecy, the prophecy of the Kingdom of Heaven, became increasingly clear. And the prophet of the captivity saw yet other visions of God, the form of the Temple and its fashion and the glory of the God of Israel coming from the way of the east and His voice was as the voice of many waters. And if hitherto all is not clear as to what the words of the prophets signify, from the days when the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus to build to Him the Temple in Jerusalem, the light of the Messiah broke more clearly and the dawn arose from out of the thick darkness which was spread abroad over prophecy. For the prophets who returned from exile, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi spoke a clear declaration. Haggai said in the name of the Lord, "Yet one thing more, it is but little when I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all the nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory."² Afterwards he added yet to say, "The glory of this latter house shall

¹ Ezekiel 24: 23, 24. Concerning this scripture also the author of "The Citadel of David" says, "King Messiah of the seed of David."

² Haggai 2: 6, 7. There is no explanation of the commentators that is perfectly satisfactory. Neither Rashi nor the author of "The Citadel of David," who follows in the footsteps of Kimchi in every place, has found the right interpretation. For what is the glory with which the Lord was to fill this house? And what is the "desire of all nations?" According to the author of "The Citadel of David," who was contemporary with Kimchi, all nations shall come with their desire, *i. e.*, their wealth, their silver and their gold, and there would they be destroyed and their desirable things would be left for Israel, and this would be the glory of that house. But it is very difficult to explain it so. Are silver and gold all of the glory which the Lord will delight to give to His people? And wherein shall this house be greater than the first? Moreover, Abarbanel in his book, *Mashmia Yeshuah*, refuses these explanations. And he says that the Shekinah shall be in the house and will be its glory, and this declaration is right. Yet he says that this will be after the present bitter captivity, wherein we have continued these eighteen hundred years, whereas Haggai says, "in this house," "in this place." Thus the indication points to the house which Cyrus commanded to be built. Therefore there is no other way but to explain that the Messiah is the Desire of all nations and to Him shall they come, which is equivalent to saying, "And they shall come to the Desire of all nations." And through the Messiah it would be that the second Temple would be greater than the first. The greatness and the glory were to be His. Therefore the prophet spoke of the Messiah who was to come while yet the second Temple was not desolated. And the Messiah is the Peace, He is the Prince of Peace as Isaiah prophesied. Isa. 9: 5.

be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace."¹ Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, saw a Man, the Servant of the Lord—Branch was His name—and He was to build the Temple of the Lord.² And Malachi saw that suddenly the Lord would come, and the Messenger of the covenant, to His Temple, and that they [the sons of Levi] would offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.³ And before the coming of the great and the terrible day of the Lord the Lord would send Elijah and he would turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to the fathers.⁴

After the prophets ceased and their vision was sealed and the scribes arose in the room of the prophets hope for the Messiah was strong, great was the expectation of each day, and behold we see the whole synagogue, the

¹ Haggai 2: 9.

² Zech. 6: 12. Also here Rashi turns away his eyes from the Messiah. He says, "There are interpreters who explain this of the King Messiah, but the whole context speaks of the second house," and therefore he explains of Zerubbabel. Yet what is the meaning of מִתְחַתֵּי? Rashi, of blessed memory, explains, "Of the royal seed;" but it is hard to explain it so. The author of "The Citadel of David," of blessed memory, in like manner explains of Zerubbabel and says that Zerubbabel was called by the name "Branch" like to the name of the Messiah, מִתְחַתֵּי (he also explains) and from his seed would spring forth the King Messiah and He—the Branch who would spring from his seed—would build the Temple of the Lord in the coming age. Also this is very forced. Yet the author of "The Citadel of David" confesses that "my servant the Branch," Zech. 3: 8, is spoken of the Messiah. Not so Rashi, of blessed memory. And behold every one must acknowledge, after an impartial investigation, that this prophecy was spoken of the Messiah.

³ Malachi 3: 1-3. This prophecy is exceedingly clear. Here also Rashi and the author of "The Citadel of David," both of blessed memory, differ the one from the other. Rashi explains, "'The Lord' is the God of justice and the messenger of the covenant is the Avenger of the covenant." Yet who is the God of justice who shall suddenly come? The author of "The Citadel," of blessed memory, explains, "This Lord is the King Messiah and the messenger of the covenant is Elijah. Behold he cometh. When the Messiah shall come Elijah will have already come," etc. But this is right, that the Lord and the messenger of the covenant are one and He received a double designation in the fulness of the years. For the Lord, the Messiah, must needs be the messenger of the covenant both to renew the covenant of Sinai by the sacrifice of His blood and to purify the sons of Levi that they should present an offering in righteousness, the righteousness of the Messiah, for it was given to the Messiah to be unto us redemption and wisdom and sanctification and righteousness, as Saul the apostle said. 1 Cor. 1: 30.

⁴ This word is plain. Rashi, of blessed memory, does not comment upon it.

synagogue of Israel looking in expectancy to meet the Branch who should spring from Jesse's roots, that He might proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and comfort all that mourn in Zion. And the wise men of Israel, who were holy men who feared God and were full of the Spirit, described Him before the children of Israel and multiplied names for Him as David,¹ the son of David,² Messiah the Righteous,³ the King Messiah,⁴ the Messiah of Israel,⁵ the Messiah son of David, our Messiah,⁶ etc. And they said that the name of the Messiah was created before the creation of the world,⁷ that before the throne of the Lord stood a second throne and that the Messiah, the Son of David, sat upon it,⁸ and that the Spirit of the Messiah moved upon the waters at the time when God created the heavens and the earth,⁹ and many like expressions they used, for who can recount the words of the wise men of Israel, of blessed memory, pertaining to the Messiah?

Their words are faithful witnesses that they looked with expectancy to meet Him, for they descended into the depths of the knowledge of the prophets and seers and understood that to raise up the Kingdom of Heaven the Lord had appointed to send His Messiah, and that the Messiah would not prevail in war with sword or spear, but by the Spirit of the Lord who would rest upon Him.

And now behold this Jesus, the Son of Joseph, of Nazareth, son of David, the Branch from the roots of Jesse,

1 Midrash Rabbah, on Lam. This is in accordance with Scriptures in Ezekiel and elsewhere in the prophets, as "David my servant," etc.

2 *Sanhedrin* 51 a, etc.

3 Targum on Jer. 20: 5.

4 Targum of Jonathan, Gen. 49: 12.

5 *Ibid*, Micah 4: 8.

6 *Ibid*, Hosea 3: 5.

7 *Pesachim* 54 a, *Nedarim* 39 b.

8 *Chagigah* 14 a.

9 Midrash Rabba, Gen. 1.

behold He appeared in our Holy Land and performed wonders in Israel. The spirit of the people went out to Him, for He taught as one who had authority and not as the scribes. And His disciples were convinced that with Him was the fountain of life and that it was He whom the Lord sent to give salvation to this people and to every one who believes upon His name and there is no salvation in any other, and He poured out His soul unto death, and He bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors, and by His blood renewed the covenant which the Lord made with our fathers on Mount Sinai, and opened a door to all nations that the residue of mankind might seek the Lord. And now His name is honored in the eyes of all peoples, for the Lord hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name. He rules from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Almost all kings do Him homage; all nations serve Him, in Him are blessed and call Him blessed. All that the seers beheld is come to pass. Jesus, the son of Joseph, fulfills all. That which our prophets wrote our eyes plainly behold; also that which was not told unto us do we see, for the half of all that is for us in Jesus was not told.

THE PSALTER.—In the *Yishtabba'h*, recited every morning before the *Shema* occurs the expression: "who hath chosen psalmodic songs." This refers to the Book of Psalms, containing expressions of the feelings of human hearts in every condition of life, in every state of sorrow and joy, despair and victory, outpourings that find echo in the human breast. If there be need of a text-book to instruct us in expression of our aspirations, yearnings and desires, the Book of Psalms fulfils the requirements.—*The American Hebrew*.

THE Christian's light shining around is his highest testimonial.—*Selected*.

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.

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
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
All communications for the Editors should be addressed,

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

THE REV. DR. DALAND may be addressed,

1, Maryland Row, Wood Green,
London, N., England.

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