

CHRISTIANITY AMONGST THE JEWS.

(From the Liverpool Mercury, Oct. 16th.)

Last evening the annual meeting of the Liverpool Auxiliary of the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews, was held in the College, Shaw-street. There was a large attendance. The Rev. Dr. M'Neile presided; and amongst those present were the Venerable Archdeacon of Lincoln, the Rev. W. F. J. Raye, M.A.; and the Revs. C. H. Banning, secretary of the metropolitan association; J. H. Brühl, missionary at Bagdad; Dr. Hodgins, W. Rawson, Dr. Lowe, J. R. Connor, W. V. Hobson, Whalley, Wilfred Leveson, J. W. Bardsley, E. Smith, J. K. F. Ralph, A. Colvile, N. B. S. Mathias, D. J. Hirsch, R. Dandy, H. Sutton, W. R. Hunt, R. Hughes, Dr. Taylor, A. Ford, J. Dunkley, H. Woodward; Messrs. H. J. Webster and J. Banning; and Drs. H. Taylor, Lewtas, J. Hakes, and E. Batty.

The proceedings having been opened with prayer,

The Rev. Chairman said — My friends, we are assembled, as you are all aware, on behalf of the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews, animated by the same breath of divine love which made the first man a living soul. Jews are fallen creatures as we are, shipwrecked in Adam, and ever since conceived in sin and born in iniquity. Jews are redeemed creatures as we are. The Son of God, himself a Jew according to the flesh, gave himself to be a propitiation for their sins, as for the sins of the whole world. Jews may be saved as we are. The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth—to the Jew first, and afterwards to the Gentile. On this simple ground alone we might be content to rest our appeal for the sympathy and generosity of Christians for the support of this our society. From the gentlemen who have kindly undertaken to address you this evening, you will doubtless hear interesting statements in detail of the prin-

ciples of this society. It has been at work now for above half a century, and some who are sceptical as to its success, challenge us to point out results of the work. What has been done? In answer to this, I wish you to consider the impossibility of estimating the success of this society in the same way that we estimate the success of a missionary society to the heathen. Converts from heathenism have no Christian congregations around them, and therefore they are formed into congregations themselves, large or small, as the case may be, and can be pointed out; the number of communicants in each can be told; and thus statistical tables can be supplied of the success of a mission in a heathen land. But the Jews have no land; they are scattered in all lands. Converts from the Jews find a nominal Christian congregation in their immediate neighborhood; they join it, are merged into it, and are lost sight of as converts. They cannot, therefore, be pointed out to the notice of the public; but they are not on that account the less real, neither do they escape the loving notice and cherishing care of the great Head of the Church. (Hear, hear.) To give some little idea, however, of the results that have followed, I may tell you that in London alone there are above 2000 creditable professors of Christianity who were once deemed Jews (applause); that about 90 Jewish converts have been or are clergymen of the Church of England; and that during a succession of years some hundreds of Jewish children have been receiving Christian instruction in schools in Palestine-place, in the parish of Hackney. Plain and practical, however, as these results are, we are not content with them in our advocacy of this peculiar people—wonderful from their beginning hitherto, and to be still more wonderful in their latter end. Objections have been urged against our work on the ground of its com-

parative insignificance, because there are but about 6,000,000 Jews in the world, and there are 600,000,000 heathens. Now, we are well pleased to deal with this objection, because it compels us to take an additional and deeper view of our subject. If the relative importance of the two missions were to be judged of by numbers only, then we must frankly confess that our society and our work would shrink into the diminutive proportion of one per cent. But that is not the case. The great object in view is to bring the whole human race to the saving knowledge of God. Now, by the word of God, our only saving guide and standard, we are plainly assured that the only approach towards this that can be made by missionaries from Christian churches, is the calling of an elect people out of the Gentiles, and that the wholesale work of what St. Paul calls life from the dead to the world is reserved for Jewish instrumentality after the fulness of the Gentile election shall have been brought in, and when the law shall go forth from Sinai, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. (Applause.) Salvation in its individual aspect began with the Jews. They had the pre-eminence; and when salvation shall assume national dimensions, the Jews shall again have pre-eminence. Priority of time in the councils of God invest the Jews with superiority of value. Therefore, we do not estimate by numbers only, and therefore not only by all the zeal you have for the six millions of Jews, but by all the anxiety you entertain and all the fervor you cultivate in your own hearts towards the 600 millions of heathen, we invite you to aim at the six millions, for they must come first. You will perceive the force of this argument that I have been using upon the truth of divine prophecy. One of the recent attempts made by sceptical philosophy has been to eliminate what is called the predictive element from the prophetic Scriptures, thereby reducing the Books of the Prophets to nothing more than the moral instruction which they conveyed to their contemporaries, and denying that they contained actual predictions of future events. Our simplest answer is a reference to

the New Testament, which declares again and again the fulfilment, after the lapse of centuries, of predictions contained in the Old. They are one, the work of one Author, who knew the end from the beginning; and they stand or fall together—they must stand or fall together. The Jews, then, are themselves, this moment, standing witnesses for God and for the truth of the prophecies of the Scriptures. They are witnesses for Him in this way—that they are at this moment, just what Moses and the Prophets said they would be, scattered, without a home, without a country, without a government, a by-word, a reproach, and a proverb among all nations. And yet they have not sunk into that entire apostacy which their fathers thought of doing at one period of their history. It came into their minds, when cast away from their God, to become as the heathen themselves, to serve wood and stone; but the Prophet Ezekiel was instructed to tell them that that which came into their minds should not be at all; and that which came into their minds has not been at all. (Hear, hear.) They cannot imitate their neighbors, whether heathens or Greeks or Romans, in setting pictures or images in their places of worship, and kneeling down to say their prayers before them. (Applause.) The Jews have not sunk to such degradation as that: they have not so defiled the name of the living God. They are, then, witnesses for God, as he said they should be. They are witnesses in their position in the world, witnesses against infidelity; and in their practice of worship, they are witnesses against idolatry. Look at this for a moment. They are, I say, in their position in the world, witnesses against unbelief. They are standing witnesses against those disciples of modern thought, as they are pompously called, some of whom write and teach of nature as if she had made herself and managed herself—as if there was in God no power to correct, no power to sustain, no power to alter. These philosophers represent us as in a uniform, stern, iron necessity, without an intelligent or living head. Others, I think, whilst admitting that there is a God, and that he has given

a revelation to man, nevertheless maintain that man's reason, man's mind, man's sense of right, man's perception of what ought to be, man's verifying faculty, must be the final judge of what it was suitable and proper for God to reveal, and what must not be received upon any evidence as if it came from God. These philosophers appeal with readiness to argument drawn, and hastily drawn, from fossils dug out of the bowels of the earth; but they are not so ready to appeal to God's own phenomena on the face of the earth. Here are his own witnesses. How can these gentlemen account for the present state of the Jews? Deny the history of the Bible, and account for the present state of the Jews, after so many centuries of dispersion, if you can. Why, you have the evidence of the truth of the Bible in this very town as you walk the streets. Go forth on the last day of the week. Why are those shops shut? They who possess those shops are as keen to gain money as other men. They are as unwilling to lose their day of business as other men. Why do they shut their shops on the last day of the week? On the first day of the week their shops are shut in deference to the law of our land; but why are they shut on the last day of the week? Because they are keeping the Jewish Sabbath; and in so doing they are testifying before your eyes to the truth of the whole history of the Bible. (Applause.) And you might see more if you watched when the Feast of Tabernacles is kept. I read this very day an account of the keeping of the Feast of Tabernacles on the 24th and 25th of last month, in London, where, notwithstanding the severity of the weather and the pouring rain, the Jews assembled and lived actually out of doors, under very scanty canvas that did not keep the rain from them, keeping the Feast of Tabernacles; and the services were presided over by Dr. Alder, the chief rabbi. They are witnesses in your streets, testimonies against infidelity, standing witnesses for the truth of the word of God. Now, some of you here are acquainted with this particular branch of the subject; and the reason I have for saying so is this: I do not

know how many of our Scripture readers may happen to be in this room at this time, but you are aware that the candidates for our admirable Scripture Readers' Society all undergo an examination before they are appointed. It is a part of my privilege to examine them all, and I invariably ask them what they are able to point to in the way of evidence, if they should happen to meet with a man who should happen to deny the inspiration of the Bible. "An ignorant man, to whom it is in vain to appeal to ancient history, too ignorant to appreciate the fulfilment of prophecy—is there anything that you can point him to in his own town, before his own eyes, in attestation of the truth of the word of God?" and those men who are going about as Scripture readers are all, as far as I know, well acquainted with this argument, and they are all prepared to point the sceptic to the Jew in the street, and the closed Jewish window on Saturday evening; and they are doing good thereby. But the Jews are also by their practice in worship, witnesses for God against idolatry—and not the idolatry of the heathen world only, but the idolatry of Christendom; for marvellous it is, and a standing proof of the utter ruin of mankind—after the deluge had done its work, and the human race had been almost exterminated, the human character was not reclaimed. No sooner did men multiply on the earth, than they all became idolaters; and no sooner was Christianity established on the earth, than it became corrupted by idolatry. The whole face of Christendom is corrupted by idolatry. What an utter proof of the incorrigible character of man's alienation from God! The fair face of Christianity is corrupt, the name of God is dishonored, and the religion of Christ is caricatured. The fantastic dresses and attitudes of old paganism, and the abolished ceremonies and types of abrogated Judaism, are all imported to give a caricature to Christianity; and the result is a direct violation of that second commandment from Mount Sinai which the Jews have been kept from violating, for they do not bow down to wood and stone. (Applause.) Look forward, then, upon the sure word of

prophecy. We anticipate a future for them more wonderful than either the past or present. My friends, this is the crowning point. And thus it is we invest our subject with a magnitude and a majesty in comparison with which the great subjects of the great men of this generation dwindle into comparative insignificance. Our statesmen and our agitators are big with the greatness of Parliamentary reform. Continental statesmen and monarchs are big with the greatness of the unification of Germany, the unification of Italy, the driving of Austria back upon her eastern boundary, the ominous quiescence of France, the insurrection of the Greeks against the Turks, the Eastern question looming in the distance in all its significance, and seeming to shadow forth and beckon at last to England to interfere for the independence of Egypt. These are the gods of European idolatry; these are the topics of cabinet councils; and yet these, all of them, are but as bursting bubbles on the stream of time, compared with that merging of all nationalities, that unification of the whole world under the King of the Jews, the sceptre of righteousness, when all kings shall do him service, when all nations shall bow before him, the one King over the whole earth, and the name honor—the name that is above every name, the glorious name Jesus Christ. (Applause.)

The Rev. Dr. Hodgins, the secretary to the Liverpool auxiliary to the society, then read the financial statement. Before doing so, Dr. Hodgins read a letter from the Earl of Shaftesbury, the president of the society, regretting his inability to attend the meeting. Few things, his lordship wrote, had given him more pleasure than to aid the Jewish cause in the town of Liverpool, but this year it was simply impossible for him to do so, as his engagements were heavy in the extreme. He hoped to be able to be present at the next anniversary. From the treasurer's statement of accounts, it appeared that the total receipts during the year were £829 19s. 8d., of which £790 8s. 9d. had been remitted to the parent society, the balance of £39 10s. 11d. being paid in the expenses of the auxiliary. Last year

the total receipts amounted to only £632 8s. 11d., so that there had been a gratifying increase of £197 18s. 9d. (Applause.) As showing the progress the society had made, so far as it had been represented in churches in Liverpool during the past three years, he might mention that in the year 1864 23 sermons were preached in the society's behalf, in the year 1865 the number increased to 34, and this year the number was 42, but two of these must be deducted, as they come within the coming year.

The Venerable Archdeacon of Lincoln, the Rev. W. F. J. Raye, M.A., said he was afraid that prejudices still existed in regard to the good work they were met to promote. The very fact that prejudices exist struck home to the heart of a minister of Christ, and one connected with such a highly favored branch of the church as the Church of England. (Applause.) Among the causes of the unwillingness which was found to take part in that work, there was a certain lurking antipathy towards the Jewish race. When the Jewish multitude cried, "His blood be on us and on our children," they little foresaw how that cry would revert upon them and their posterity. Having referred to the sentiments entertained towards the Jews in past ages, he asked—What should have been the sentiments of Christians towards the Jews? They should have been met by kindness, by returning good for evil. They knew that the Christian could persecute the Jew. Had any change now taken place in the mind of the Jew towards Jesus and his followers, and had any change taken place in the mind of the Christian towards the Jew? God be thanked, a great change had taken place in the mind of the Jew towards the Christian, certainly in such a country as this. The Jew loves where once he feared, and trusts where once he suspected. He admired Christians even while he thought, in his blindness, that they were the victims of an imposture. Some change had certainly taken place in the mind of the Jew towards Jesus. A kindlier intercourse with Christians had given to the Jew a juster knowledge of Jesus and his doctrine. The circulation of the

Scriptures, translated into the Hebrew language especially for his benefit, had given him an insight into the history of the Savior. Christians had indeed cause to be thankful for such a chance: but was it sufficient? He urged that it was not, and that their aim should be to bring the Jew to look upon Jesus as his Redeemer and his Messiah. (Applause.) Last year the society printed 10,000 copies of the Old Testament in the Hebrew, and nearly 5000 were issued from its depôts. Though in Constantinople alone 80 per cent. of the Jews were provided with copies of the Holy Scriptures, they were informed that not more than 20 per cent. could understand the Scriptures in their own tongue, so as to read them with fluency; and therefore it was important that the Scriptures should be circulated among the Jews, not only in the Hebrew, but in those languages which are spoken in the various countries through which they are scattered. The society which that audience supported supplied the Jews with copies of the Scriptures in those various languages. Two thousand copies of the New Testament, translated into the Hebrew, were printed by the society last year, and it was a very remarkable feature that the Jews in every part of the world showed a readiness to read the New Testament, especially when it was offered to them in their own language. The society's missionaries at Constantinople found, in the course of one year, between 200 and 300 Jews who were more or less acquainted with the New Testament. (Applause.)

The Rev. C. H. Banning, the metropolitan association secretary, was next called upon, and gave an interesting account of the operations of the society at home and abroad. Since they last met in that hall, he said, some of the doors of the Jewish mission had been closed. Bagdad and Abyssinia had both been closed, and he thought, with the lessons of the last few years, the conclusion would be come to that it would not be right that European agencies should be employed any more in the latter country. Referring to the misfortune which had befallen the missionaries in Abyssinia, he said that in May last they were informed that

the missionaries had been released from their captivity; but recent tidings had filled them with sorrow. These missionaries were again in captivity, and a few days ago he read a letter from Mr. Sterne to his wife, speaking of the anxiety of the party with regard to their future, whilst at the same time they asserted their continued confidence in God. Mr. Fladd, who had recently come from Abyssinia, had returned on Tuesday last with a letter and presents from the Queen, and it was hoped his mission to restore the captives to liberty might be attended with success. The society had done a great work in the past, and was doing a great work in the present. It had 33 missionary stations in England, on the continent of Europe, in Asia, and Africa; and engaged in these 134 missionary agents. Some 28 of the seed of Abraham were engaged in spiritual work in the metropolis, of whom six were Scripture readers and city missionaries; seven Christian Jews are engaged as missionaries to their brethren; eight were in different Nonconformist churches, and some eight were engaged as clergymen of the Church of England. Alluding to the foreign work of the society, he said the great German field was occupied by some 40 missionaries. The recent German war had had a deleterious influence on the Jewish mission, but it had also had its advantages, as when the time of trial had come, Jews had gone to the missionaries to seek to know something of those pleasures and joys which the world could not give or take away. There was another phase in which they must regard the war, and that was, it had increased the openings for missionary enterprise. Venice, a year ago, was comparatively closed to missionary enterprise; but it was now Italian, and not Austrian, and wherever the Italian kingdom was extended, there was a fresh entrance for the missionaries. They could scarcely go to a town or village in Germany, where Jews resided, but they would find some Christian proselytes; and he thought those were tokens that God was blessing their work. With reference to the work of the society in the north of Europe and in France, he pointed out that it lacked

the means to send a sufficient number of missionaries to these countries, and asked that it might be assisted.

A collection was then made, after which

The Rev. J. H. Bruhl, a missionary

recently returned from Bagdad, gave an account of his labors in that part of the world ; and at the conclusion of his speech, the benediction was pronounced and the meeting terminated.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1866.

THE JEWISH FUTURE.

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We publish, in this number of the STAR, the proceedings of a meeting, held on the 15th inst. by the Liverpool Auxiliary of the London Society for the promotion of Christianity amongst the Jews. Great exertions, during the last half century, have been made to Christianize the Jews. Both the Old and New Testaments have been published in Hebrew, and in the various modern languages of the nations among whom the Jews reside. Missionaries have been sent by the society into many places. The result is, that a few thousand have turned away from the religion of their ancestors, and embraced what is called Christianity. It is said, that these converts now believe that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah. However corrupt modern Christianity may be, it is certainly a good thing to place within the reach of the Jew, the New Testament as well as the Old ; it is also a blessing to the Jew to be convinced that the person whom their fathers crucified was indeed the great Prophet, so clearly foretold by Moses. It would also prove a great blessing to the Jew, if he would strictly observe the great moral precepts, so forcibly portrayed in the ancient Gospel. But while the Jew, by his faith in the true Messiah, and by his repentance, ameliorates his condition, he blindly suffers himself to be duped by the perverted corrupt systems of modern Christianity. When his heart is penitent, and the glorious light of the New Testament begins to shine upon his pathway, and the unspeakable blessings of the Gospel begin to look desirable, he looks around, in vain, for Prophets, Revelators, and inspired men, with all the miraculous gifts which characterized New Testament Christianity ; but finding no such religion in Christendom, he is flattered, deceived, and hypocritically told, that all these blessings of Christianity are unnecessary,—that it is impious to expect such Gospel gifts in these days. The poor Jew finally is bewildered, and left to doubt the religion of the New Testament, and