

solely. We must, in this reliance, use Him evermore as our Prophet, Priest, and King. We must venture upon His promises just as Israel ought to have ventured upon the promises of Him who had redeemed them, though He *tried* their power to do so by the terrors of the wilderness and by the giants of Canaan.

Thus to rely is faith; faith is personal confidence in the Lord in His promise. And such faith is not only, as it is, the empty hand which receives Divine blessings in detail. It is the empty arms which clasp always that comprehensive blessing, the presence of "the living God" in Christ, and which so make sure of a secret of peace, of rest, of decision, of strength, of deep-sighted and tranquil thought upon "things which differ," which is of infinite importance in a time of confusion and debate in the Christian Church.

So, for our safety and for our usefulness, let us first afresh "consider Him." And then let us afresh "take heed" that with "a good heart of faith" we draw to and abide in union with the "considered" Christ, close to the living God.

H. C. G. MOULE.



### ART. III.—TO WHAT EXTENT HAS CHRISTIANITY INFLUENCED LIBERAL JEWS?—I.

TWO great movements are abroad in the Jewish world to-day—"Zionism" and "Reformation," the one the very antithesis to the other. The one is a conservative force, reverting to the original conception of Judaism, and endeavouring to renew its youth; the other is altogether of a liberal and rationalizing tendency. The one is *constructive*, seeking to build on the old foundations, and to repair the desolations of many generations; the other is *destructive*, and would reduce Judaism to a mere religious persuasion. Zionism aims at re-creating the old Jewish nationality, and establishing a Jewish Church and State in Palestine; neo-Judaism seeks to destroy the possibility of such a contingency. Zionists are Jews first—Jews racially and religiously—and, in a very secondary sense, members of the various nations amongst whom they dwell. Neo-Jews, on the contrary, are first Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, or Americans, as the case may be, and Jews only by profession of religion, the distinctive features of which they are whittling away to a vanishing-point, by liberalizing creed, services, and customs.

The *raison d'être* of each of these remarkable movements is

one and the same—namely, the desire to escape the consequences of the *Juden-hetze*, or anti-Semitic crusade, which threatens Jews, in one form or another, throughout the world. Anti-Semitism is no new thing; it existed in Egypt and Babylon, Greece and Rome before the Christian era; it has flourished in every European country since that time. In the present great Jewish district in Central Europe, practically coterminous with the ancient kingdom of Poland, which in its partitioned state is still the home of the Jews, anti-Semitism takes a very tangible form, being both political and religious. Here are to be found seven millions of the 11,210,415 souls which, according to the *Jewish Year-Book* for 1900-1901, make up the total Jewish population of the world. They are all of the old orthodox type, practically untouched by the Reform movement, and with decidedly Zionistic tendencies:

In countries where Jews are under no legal disabilities and restrictions imposed by State or Church, as in Germany, England, and America, there is a pronounced tendency to abandon some of the distinctive features of Judaism, and to allow the claims of the Mosaic law to sit very lightly upon them. They are becoming latitudinarian in creed and lax in practice.<sup>1</sup> The reason is probably this: The Jews are still subject to social ostracism which is galling in the extreme. Hence the growing desire to break down the "aloofness" which has been thrust upon them, and which is the result of their own "aloofness" of days gone by. The Jews of the Liberal or Reform party think this can best be done by assimilation to the peoples with whom they dwell. Roughly speaking, neo-Judaism numbers now about one and a half million adherents in Germany, England, and America.

This Reform movement which is spreading so fast to-day had its origin in Germany. Although Jews regard Maimonides of the twelfth century as the author of Reformed Judaism, its real commencement must be placed six centuries later, in the time of Moses Mendelssohn (1729-85), who was really the first to raise his people from the degradation in which they lay, and to enable them to lift up their heads again. To him, primarily, the rejuvenescence which we see now going on was due. In him the old proverb, "From Moses to Moses there arose not a Moses," received a fresh fulfilment. Moses Mendel—or, as he came to be called, Mendelssohn—was born at Dessau, in 1729. In early years he drank in the spirit of Moses Maimonides. He learnt pure German, and with it culture. Notwithstanding the disadvantages of poverty and

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<sup>1</sup> See article in *Standard* of November 5, 1900.

deformity, he made rapid way. His friendship with Lessing, who made him the hero in his "Nathan the Wise," made the Jew, as he really was, and not as prejudice had distorted him, known to the Christian. Lessing, moreover, started Mendelssohn on his literary career, in which he achieved immortal renown. His "Jerusalem," published in 1783, in which he sketched the religious and national aspect of Judaism, was an "epoch-making" work, and the first stone in the structure of Reformed Judaism. To quote Lady Magnus: "As we read the story of the wise and liberal philosopher, who broke through the barriers and let in the light of learning, and of social countenance, on medieval benighted Judaism, we shall see that the very children of the emancipator were dazzled by the unaccustomed rays, that his sons wavered, and his daughters apostatized, and that in the third generation—only the third—the fetters which degraded were called degrading, and were altogether cast off, and the grandchildren of Moses Mendelssohn, the typical Jew, were Jews no longer."<sup>1</sup>

Mendelssohn, the composer, grandson of Moses, and Neander, the Hebrew-Christian historian, conferred lustre on the Christian name.

Liberal Judaism in the beginning of the century gave two well-known names, Ludwig Börne and Heinrich Heine, to the Church, who were followed by Edward Gans, the leader of the young Israel party, and numerous others, so that "up to the year 1823 there were no less than 1,236 conversions in Berlin, comprising half of the members of the community, and in other parts of Prussia there were 1,382."<sup>2</sup> This circumstance led to the formation in Berlin of the "Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews." Later on arose a new school of Jewish reform, whose adherents, according to Graetz, "were nearer to the Church than to the Synagogue,"<sup>3</sup> and whose views were set forth in a publication entitled "The Complaints of a Jew" (1837).

The present-day Jewish press is not silent concerning the leakage of Jews to the Church. Thus, Herr Emil Lehman, one of the chief exponents of Liberal Judaism in Germany, speaks of the wasting away of the ranks of the Synagogue. "It cannot be denied that Jewish baptisms are of very frequent occurrence in these days among our co-religionists, who are pre-eminent for mental culture, affluence, and propriety of conduct."<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, many of the religious leaders in

<sup>1</sup> "Outlines of Jewish History," p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> Graetz, "History of the Jews," vol. v., p. 627.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 674.

<sup>4</sup> Arnold White, "The Modern Jew," p. 248.

Germany are hostile to Christianity, notably Dr. Abraham Geiger, late chief Rabbi of the Jewish congregation of Berlin, and one of the chief exponents of Reformed Judaism.

The seedling, raised on German soil, was in course of time transplanted to freer and more fertilizing surroundings, and has now developed into a great tree. The Reformed Jews of Germany have been left far behind by the Reformed Congregations in America, to whom practically all the 1,145,000 Jews of that country belong. Their views were well brought to the front in the "World's Parliament of Religions," held in Chicago in the year 1893, and are preserved in printed form, which may be considered as the most perfect and exhaustive presentation of Reformed Judaism extant.

A perusal of the various papers by men "selected from among the best and ripest scholars in the United States,"<sup>1</sup> and of whom Rabbi Isaac M. Wise, of Cincinnati, was the most eminent, shows that Judaism, whether intentionally or otherwise, has been profoundly influenced by the tenets and practice of Christianity, in whose midst it leads a flourishing existence.

We may take the paper by Dr. Gottheil on "The Development of Religious Ideas in Judaism since Moses Mendelssohn" (pp. 26-34) as an example of our contention. He gives a *résumé* of the most essential changes to which Judaism has been subject under the influence of "Reform principles," and which constitute, it is true a "development," and in a Christian direction.

The first change is a much wider conception of the nature of God, His unity and His Fatherhood. Formerly these great ideas were conceived of in their *exclusive* relations, and served to keep Jews separated and estranged from other religions. Now they are regarded in their *inclusive* light. "Faith in the one Father in heaven," said Dr. Gottheil, "imposes upon us the obligation to bring all His human children into the bond of one common brotherhood." This, however, is an aspiration of Christianity, and reads not like the words of Moses and the Prophets, but of the Founder of Christianity—"One is your Father, which is in heaven" (St. Matt. xxiii. 9), and of St. Paul, "One God and Father of all" (Eph. iv. 6). These all-embracing truths of Christianity are by Reformed Jews preferred to the restricted tribal and national aspirations of the old Judaism. Reformed Judaism, in short, has abandoned the tribal God for the universal God. Thus writes one of the leaders of the Reform party in

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<sup>1</sup> "Judaism at the World's Parliament of Religions," Introduction, p. viii.

England: "If Judaism is really a tribal faith—so that it can only be a merely family religion, suited for me and my son, and perhaps for my grandson, but not for the outsider—then indeed it is an anachronism, and scarcely worth preserving except in a museum of religious curiosities. The idea of a religion whose limits are bounded by, and conterminous with, a race, belongs to antiquity; it is out of date and out of count to-day."<sup>1</sup> In other words, Reformed Judaism has thrown over the Jewish for the Christian conception of God. And, to return to the words of Dr. Gottheil, "Rituals intended exclusively to keep the Jew apart from his environments we abandon for that very reason." And so we see Reformed Jews giving up the seventh day observance of the Sabbath for the first, the practice of circumcision, the separation of the sexes in the synagogue, the habit of standing in prayer—all of which practices serve to keep them apart and openly distinguish them from Christians.

Again, admission is made that the idea of a "chosen people" does not denote superiority of race or descent, least of all favouritism and preference, which is still the essence of orthodox Judaism, but merely that "of a people commissioned to do a certain work amongst men."<sup>2</sup> Reformed Judaism does not hold to an arbitrary election, but to the selection of the fittest, which is altogether the Christian conception of election. "I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (St. John xv. 16).

Again, the laying aside of all nationality and even raciality, which Reformed Jews are eager to do, is certainly borrowed from the Christian conception of there being "neither Jew nor Greek" in the kingdom of God. "Our nation," said Dr. Gottheil, "is that nation of which we form a part, and with the destinies of which we are identified, to the exclusion of all others. Israel is a religious community only; even the feeling of identity of race is weakening."<sup>3</sup> And so Rabbi Silberman said, "We form an independent religious community. . . . Jew is not to be used parallel with German, Englishman, American, but with Christian, Catholic, Protestant, Buddhist, Mohammedan, or Atheist."<sup>4</sup> "Restoration to Palestine forms no part of our prayers," went on Dr. Gotthiel, "neither does the lost sacrificial service connected with that hope. The adoption of the word 'Temple' for our modern houses of prayer, in preference to synagogue, is one of the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Claude Montefiore in *Jewish Quarterly Review*, vol. vi., p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> "Judaism at the World's Parliament of Religions," p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 287.

landmarks of the new era. It is a public avowal, and, as it were, official declaration, that our final separation from Palestine and Jerusalem has deprived us of nothing we cannot have wherever we gather together for the worship of the one and only true God and the study of His will.<sup>1</sup> All this breathes the same sentiment as the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, "Ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father . . . the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (St. John iv. 21, 23).

The Reformed Jew rejects the idea of a personal Messiah, whilst eagerly accepting the condition of things which He has brought to pass, when he says: "Messiah means progress, means betterment all around, means peace, means redeeming of the fallen, means equality of rights and goodwill toward all men, means, in short, the best which the best minds could ever think of as *not* too good for the humblest brother or sister—how far is he in this hope and faith from the hope and faith of the best Christian?"<sup>2</sup>

With this, Reformed Jews speak very reverently of the Founder of Christianity, a fact which shows that the New Testament has made a deep impression upon them. Dr. Kohler claims Jesus and His Apostles as Jews in life and teaching, quotes "the beautiful words of the Son of Man," and speaks of Christ as a "great personality, standing, unlike any other, midway between heaven and earth, equally near to God and to man. . . . Jesus, the helper of the poor, the friend of the sinner, the brother of every fellow-sufferer, the comforter of every sorrow-laden one, the healer of the sick, the uplifter of the fallen, the lover of man, and the redeemer of woman, won the heart of mankind by storm . . . mounted the world's throne to be the earth's great King."<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Kohler recently gave a lecture on "The New Testament in the Light of Judaism," during which he said: "It is Jesus as a man, as an ideal of humanity, that is now held up for adoration and emulation by Christian theology, in spite of the Trinitarian dogma. . . . Should we, then, as Jews, not also gladly and proudly own Him as one of our noblest of men, and accord to Him the proper position in our own history?"<sup>4</sup>

Miss Josephine Lazarus, in her paper at the Chicago Conference, said: "The Jew must change his attitude before the world, and come into spiritual fellowship with those around

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<sup>1</sup> "Judaism at the World's Parliament of Religions," p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> "The Jewish Exponent," quoted in "Justice to the Jew," p. 266.

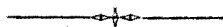
him. John, Paul, Jesus Himself—we can claim them all for our own. We do not want ‘missions’ to convert us.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Gottheil, a Rabbi in New York, already quoted, is a good example of the attitude of modern Jews towards Christianity. In a series of lectures on “Jesus and the Jews,” he maintained that the Jews neither accepted nor rejected Jesus as the Messiah, but that He was loved and respected, and spoke in the highest terms of His followers, who were far more zealous in maintaining the authority of the Bible than the Jews themselves.<sup>2</sup>

It may indeed be said that such sentiments as I have quoted indicate a development in Judaism, and that Neo-Judaism is in reality disintegrating Judaism. The reformed synagogues that eliminate from their doctrine and worship all that is peculiarly Hebrew are becoming nothing more than way-stations on the road to Christianity, or on the well-trodden slope that leads to freethinking.<sup>3</sup>

W. T. GIDNEY.

(*To be continued.*)



#### ART. IV.—IS THE CHURCH A FAILING CAUSE?

THE publication by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge of the new “Year-Book of the Church” offers to every one of its readers the material for an inquiry into the present condition of the Church. The statistics, compiled with so much care and labour under the direction of Canon Burnside, are, we may assume, got together for this very purpose. The parochial incumbents who spend no little time and trouble in preparing the returns from which these statistics are constructed may also be expected to work with the common advantage of the Church before their eyes. And yet it must be confessed that the use made of the labours, both of the clergy who furnish the figures and of the editor who has them digested, is inadequate and unsatisfactory. Only two Church newspapers, as a rule, examine the statistics with any care, or endeavour to draw any inferences from them. The rest seem content to print summaries, and draw attention to a few sets of figures which suggest prosperity. It may, of course, be due to a settled conviction that statistics are of no

<sup>1</sup> “Judaism at the World’s Parliament of Religions,” p. 303.

<sup>2</sup> “Justice to the Jew,” p. 261.

<sup>3</sup> *Church Quarterly Review*, April, 1897, and Beaulieu, “Israel among the Nations,” p. 141.