

American Israelite

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ISAAC M. WINE, Editor. LEO WINE, Manager. Cincinnati, O., November 5, 1886.

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Complimentary and memorial resolutions of a lay nature whatsoever are published in the AMERICAN ISRAELITE only as paid matter, at a uniform charge of \$5.00 each. We are obliged to make this charge to keep an important matter of this kind from occupying an undue amount of space in our columns.

In answering any of the advertisements in this paper, our readers will confer a favor upon both the advertisers and the publishers by stating that they saw the advertisement in the AMERICAN ISRAELITE.

Mr. Emanuel Newman, one of our General Agents is now traveling in the South and West.

JERUSALEM counts 33,851 inhabitants, viz., 20,000 Jews, 8,831 Christians and 5,000 Mohammedans. The city is small, poor and dilapidated.

WANTED correspondents for the AMERICAN ISRAELITE and Deborah in London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Amsterdam, Rome, Warsaw and St. Petersburg. For terms apply to this office.

RABBI JOSEPH KRAUSKOPF, of Kansas City, will deliver a course of Friday evening lectures on "Evolution from the Theological Standpoint." The lectures will be published weekly in the AMERICAN ISRAELITE. The first of the course appears on this page, and we will publish all the others for the benefit of the public.

The Figaro, in Paris, in a biography of Mayerbeer and his wife, mentions the fact that Frederick William IV. King of Prussia, the brother and immediate predecessor of the Emperor of Germany, offered to Mayerbeer to assist him, if the great composer and his wife embrace Protestantism, which he refused to do, saying that he and his wife live and will die in the Jewish faith, as they actually did. The king, however, did not die a Christian, he died insane.

One of the Spanish grandees, Senor Ruiz de Penaranda, had the exceptional kindness to write a strong editorial in the Madrid Liberal, about the "Barbarism of the Nineteenth Century," referring to the Anti-Semitic Congress in Bucharest, which, he says, "has revived the barbarity of the Middle Ages." This is a slight mistake, however, there was nothing of the kind to be revived in Roumania which has never come out of the barbarity of the Middle Ages. The present cycle of Judaphobia began two decades ago in Roumania with the massacre of Jews and the pillage of their property, when our Government, moved by the piteous cries of horror, acceded to the Hon. Benj. F. Peixotto, our Consul-General to Bucharest. A short pliancy in that barbarous persecution ensued, when unfortunately the Berlin Congress of the great Powers declared the enfranchisement of the Jews a principle of justice, and made the independence of Roumania dependent on the acknowledgment and practical carrying into effect of that principle. Now the barbarity and treachery of Roumania became identified with its Government in all its branches, and that new epoch of a most dastardly and hypocritical legislation began to furnish the material for the executive and judiciary branches, to ruin and suffocate the Jews who were declared outlawed aliens, although born and raised in Roumania, where their ancestors are buried; and to encourage the mobs to continue the work of pillage and murder. The Anti-Semitic Congress is a mere succession of a series of unparalleled outrages, with brief pauses of lamentation between. Roumania is a Christian country and all governments of Europe, the

Turkish excepted, are Christians. All politics of those governments is a mutual deception, there is not a spark of honesty in it. Humanity and justice must be sub-ervient to selfish purposes, or they are gravely ignored. All Europe stands by as idle spectators, when the millions of Jews are maltreated and outraged in Russia and Roumania, wipe their mouths and say, I have done no wrong. Both the Christianity and the administration of justice are mere farces.

The Emperor of Germany sent a copy of the Talmud to the Rabbi of Fez, in Morocco, who, being Austrian Consul, did also sometimes look after German interests in that country. This copy of the Talmud being sent together with other books intended as a gift for the Emperor of Morocco by the Emperor of Germany, it was announced in newspapers that the German Emperor sent a copy of the Talmud to the Emperor of Morocco, and everybody was astonished who of the two Emperors was the best Talmudist. We decline to decide the grave question, fearing to offend the majesty, by the preference given to his competitor.

The Saturday Review in an article on "Stage Jews," gives a brief narration of the various pieces which have been produced on the stage, and in which Jews have prominently figured in a more or less favorable light, generally the latter. The writer, in summing up, observes: "Maltreated as the Israelite has almost uniformly been throughout the ages in real life, he has had in the main very little less of mercy served out in the mimic world of the stage. Like the dyer's hand the Jew has been condemned to what he was obliged to work in. It is the old story. I've beaten my dog so long that he must be mad, so chuck him in the river."

Dr. N. SELKOWITZ communicates to the Hamagid an abstract from the Egyptian calendar discovered lately in the ruins of Ombah in the Coptic language and hieroglyphic characters, about the New Year Days observed in Egypt in the day of the Pharaohs. Three New Year Days were observed annually among the ancient Egyptians. August the 30th was the New Year of Isis; September 6th was the New Year of Osiris; January 20th was the New Year of the Nile. The New Year of Isis, however, was the principal one; for the New Year of Osiris was devoted to lamentations over the dead. This seems to confirm the statement of Josephus, that the Tishri New Year, the first day of the seventh month, was established among the Hebrews in Egypt and accepted in the laws of Moses.

The burning political question of the day gives interest to a brief retrospect of the history of the Jews from the time of their settlement in the territories of the lower Danube, says the Jewish Chronicle. Fifteen centuries have elapsed since the Jews established themselves in those regions. They came over with the Roman Emperor Trajan into Roumania, whence they penetrated to Bulgaria, then called Moesia. Later on, when the Byzantine Emperors began to oppress the Jews in Constantinople, Thrace, Macedonia and Asia Minor, and to lay upon them heavy taxes, many of them fled over the Balkans to Bulgaria, where the suzerainty of these monarchs was not generally recognized, and there they associated themselves with their co-religionists, who had already settled in that country. When the Bulgarians of the Wolga made their way into the land named after them, they confirmed the Jews living there in the possession of the rights they then enjoyed. These rights were increased to such an extent that the Jews dwelling in the civilized Byzantine Empire actually envied their brethren in wild and uncultured Bulgaria. In the fourteenth century the Turks made themselves masters of Bulgaria, and their new rulers gave the Jewish communities to understand that they might continue to exercise their religious functions without fear of molestation, and to enjoy the same rights which had been conceded to them by the Bulgarians. For five centuries our co-religionists lived in tranquillity and contentment under the mild rule of the Sultans, but the creation of a semi independent principality of Bulgaria has made no

difference in their treatment. The Bulgarian Jews are, indeed, fortunate in having throughout been spared the bitter experiences resulting from persecution.

That friend who wishes to know the titles of books in which he can find the Minhagim or "Ritual customs of the Jews" completely, will please notice that quite a number of German books on this subject are extant; but in Hebrew or Rabbinical Hebrew we would direct him to the Lissner Tephillah, which contains a large number of ritual notes, or the שער הרהמים, printed Sklaw, 1748, Sepher Abudirahim, of which many editions exist, and Sepher Ham-manhig, lastly edited by Goldberg, and published by Karnek, Berlin, 1854.

In art and science there is no way of doing it any longer without the Jew. From the grand opera and the art salon down to the chess-board, from the highest seats of learning (the Cincinnati University excepted) down to the literary club, the Jew is everywhere. In fact the Hebrews were more successful even in science and art than in finances, which they are falsely supposed to govern. The latest fact in this connection is the International Meridian Conference which opened its sessions in Berlin, October 27th with representatives from all European countries, England excepted. Dr. Fuerster, of Berlin, was elected President. He represents the Observatory of Berlin. Dr. Struve representing the Russian, and Dr. Faye representing the French Observatory, were elected Vice Presidents. Dr. Hirsch, of Neuchatel, a veritable Jew, representing the Swiss Observatory, was elected Secretary to that grave body of mathematicians and astronomers. Instead of acknowledging this fact and giving the Jews credit for their successes in science and art, it affords food of envy and grudge to Anti-Semites, who argue, "the Jews take the bread out of our mouths," as though science and art were mere trades by which to satisfy the stomach; and as though success could be obtained without higher capacity, talent or genius, and without benefit to the human family. Justice to the Jew is a very rare thing in these days.

An Introduction.

Orthodox, Heterodox, Conservative, Radical, are the terms which have been invented in the controversies of this century to characterize and name the various parties taking part in the process of development within the pale of Judaism. The term "reformer" refers only to synagogal improvements, questions of form and formula, paraphernalia and discipline in the house of worship, at funerals, weddings and other sacred ceremonies which are performed by the officer or officers of the synagogue, and which exercise an influence on the language, outward appearance and social forms of the Israelite. All men taking no active part in this process of development are called indifferent.

The seventeenth, and especially the eighteenth century, brought to the surface new elements of civilization, in consequence of former inventions and discoveries which had become utilized and popularized. The principal inventions of prior dates were gunpowder and typography, and the chief discoveries were America and the Copernican system. These four factors closed the cycle of medieval conceptions and practices, gradually, of course, and not totally as yet, in state government and legislation, in church government and its dogmatism, in philosophy and science, in commerce and industry, in the fine arts and the spread of information and refinement of the tastes, in valuation of human claims and rights, all of which culminated in the eighteenth century in the humanitarian idea which is fundamental in all departments of civilization in that century and changed completely the aspect of society together with the social and political conceptions of the cultivated classes of the nation.

In Judaism the effects of those new elements of culture and progression were for a long time imperceptible, especially among the German-speaking Jews, who were the vast majority of the whole people scattered over the vast territory from the Ural Mountains and the Black Sea to the Atlantic Ocean.

By emigrations from Germany at different times, the Jews of Hungary, Poland, Russia and the Danubian principalities had been completely Germanized. The center of Jewish culture and learning was in Spain, Portugal and Southern France, with a few colonies in Naples and Sicily, Northern Africa and Southwestern Asia. When in 1492 the Jews were driven out of Spain, and then also from Portugal and Southern Italy, the center of Jewish culture and learning was destroyed, and the bulk of the people rapidly succumbed to the minutiae of the rabbinical practices, which isolated them mentally from the progress of the world and socially by the numerous outward distinctions of that practice; and to the mysticism and superstitions of the new Kabbalah, the practical Kabbalah, which then took its rise in the East and in Poland, and completely obscured the Jewish mind. Among the men of learning and letters most were influenced by the Kabbalah, which excluded them from scientific thought and social culture.

The anti-Kabbalistic doctors gradually submerged the mind in a new kind of Rabbinical dialectics called Pilpul and also Charifuth, a scholastic method of expounding the Talmud and Casuists, which was sagacious and attractive enough to captivate thinking minds, but took them entirely out of the routine of philosophy, science and social culture. The isolating effects of this decadence was most disastrously visible in the outward appearance of the Hebrews, in his religious forms and formulas and in his language, which remained the obsolete jargon, while the German was completely revolutionized and rejuvenated, and the Spanish underwent numerous changes. This was the case generally, more or less intensified in various localities by exceptional laws, religious prejudices, inherited wrongs and inveterate oppressions by Christian or Mohammedan masses. State and Church authorities. The exceptions to this general state of affairs, especially among the fugitives from Spain and Portugal, in Italy and Amsterdam, in Southern France and Turkey in Europe, and among a few Germanic Jews, were too few and too far apart to arrest the decadence or to change the statu quo, the peculiar spirit of the age. Therefore the Jews who were the honorable exceptions of the general spirit of and during the Middle Ages sank into profound darkness and spiritual impotence, when in the sixteenth, seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, the nations of Western Europe gradually rose to that higher state of culture which culminates in the humanism of the eighteenth century.

Therefore, speaking of "Reform," it must always be borne in mind that it never touched the principles, doctrines and precepts of Judaism. Its object always was and is now to lead the Israelite out of the obsolete and isolating forms forged for him in the past centuries, not by Moses and the Prophets, not even by the Talmud; and to give to him and his institutions, morally, politically and socially, the modern form of cultivated society. Therefore it is called "reform." This was considered necessary to reintroduce the Hebrew community into modern society and attach it to its interests, endeavors and liberal sentiments and thoughts; to remove from it the criticism and reproaches of the men of advanced culture and refined tastes; and to keep attached to the Jewish body and its religion those of its own denomination who by various causes advanced in culture and enlightenment beyond the largest number of their co-religionists. The reformer may be called conservative or radical, according to the measures which he proposes or the means which he applies to reach the above ends. In some respects every reformer is radical, in other respects every reformer is conservative, that depends very often on local circumstances and personal qualifications. The demands, thoughts and tastes differ essentially in various localities and communities. This, however, changes not the principle. No reformer can honestly maintain that he is not in some respects radical, and no radical can justly advance that he is not also conservative.

Inasmuch, however, as the form has no more in common with the

essence of Judaism, its principles, doctrines and precepts than the garment has in common with the man who wears it, it is entirely false to apply the terms orthodox or heterodox to persons within the pale of Judaism, because the one is opposed to reforms and the other favors them. Orthodoxy and heterodoxy, as the terms tell, refer to correct or incorrect faith, beliefs and not to forms. Orthodox is he who believes in the principles, doctrines and precepts of Judaism. Heterodox is he who is opposed to that standard of Judaism.

We want to settle this question; Who is orthodox? who is heterodox? We propose to explain this matter to the best of our knowledge in a series of essays on the theology of Judaism, to be published in this paper, to which this is our humble introduction.

Psalms Ninety-One.

Chapter ninety-one of Psalms (יִשְׁכַּח בְּסֵת עֵינַי) is recited at Jewish funerals, and this has been the custom for many centuries. The church adopted Psalm ninety in its funeral service. In our History of the Israelitish Nation (Albany 1854) we have attempted the proof that those two chapters were originally one. The first part, "A Prayer of Moses," expresses the complaint of Moses over the dying multitude in the wilderness, closing with the prayer: יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִשְׁכַּח עֵינַי. The second part is the expression of consolation and hope announced to the surviving and the dying.

A beautiful idea, quite original, was lately contributed to the Jewish Chronicle, by "Aliquis," which we consider worthy of reproduction. The gentleman says this:

"The use of Psalm xci., at funerals is attributed to Rabbi Aaron Berechiah, of Modena, in his celebrated work יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ written some 230 years ago. The public have ceased to use Psalm xxxiii., and have retained xci. for the superstitious reasons quoted. I propose to show that although there is no reference thereto in any work prior to that of Rabbi Aaron Berechiah, P-alm xci. was probably used at funerals in very early times, and that it has a wealth of significance and meaning, in this connection which render it, and it alone of all the Psalms, specially and strikingly appropriate.

There are doubtless many portions of the Bible arranged in dramatic or dialogue form. The best known is the commencement of the Book of Job, in which the scene is laid in heaven, and the dramatic persons are the Almighty and the Angelic Choir. The characters in the drama are here, however, distinctly mentioned. In the Song of Solomon, also written in dramatic form, the characters are not named, that is to say the words put by the author in the mouth of each character are not marked off and prefixed, as in modern writings, by the name of the speaker. Psalm xci. is another instance of such dramatic arrangement, the speakers being—1. The Soul, arraigned in Judgment; 2. The Angels; 3. The Almighty. It is necessary to premise that one of the difficulties connected with this Psalm is the abruptness of its commencement, so marked that, to tone it down, the last verse of the preceding Psalm has been superadded. Evidently something, say a name is wanting.

THE SUMMONING ANGEL: Let M. or N. dwell in the secret place of the Most High; let him abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

THE SOUL OF THE DECEASED: I declare to the Lord that He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.

THE ANGELS (addressing the Soul): Surely He will deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His arms, and under His wings shalt thou trust; His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flieth by day; nor of the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor of the destruction that walketh at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and a myriad at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

THE SOUL: For Thou, O Lord, art my refuge.

THE ANGELS (addressing the Soul): Thou hast made thy dwelling place on high; no evil shall befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thine habitation. For He shall give His Angels charge concerning thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under foot.

THE ALMIGHTY: Because he hath set His love upon me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high because he hath known my name, He shall call on me and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.

There is nothing, I venture to say, in the whole range of Biblical literature so superlatively grand as Psalm xci., when analyzed and arranged as above.

I would point out that what have

been considered insuperable difficulties in the Psalm are removed by this explanation. The change of person, from thou to I, becomes intelligible. The doubling of the last verse may be either choral, or used as a grand climax, by way of giving force and strength—a much more dignified interpretation than that offered by the Shimush Tehilim. Although my reading, that place is left at the beginning of the Psalm for the name of the deceased, is not in accordance with the commentators (Midrash Rabba, Numbers xii. and others), who translate thus: "The Most High shall dwell in secret, the Almighty shall abide in Shadow"—it is in perfect agreement with the Masoretic punctuation.

There must be many unexplored Biblical passages which would be rendered clear by recognizing their dialogistic character. The Book of Ecclesiastes, which the Sages wished to suppress because of its self contradiction, becomes a highly philosophical argument, in which the disputants wield pro and con consistently and coherently. I will point out one other well known instance, Gen. chap. xxi., where Abimelech and Pichol, captain of his host, visit Abraham, and the latter reproves the former because of a well of water which Abimelech's servants had stolen. And Abimelech said, 'I wot not who has done this thing, neither didst thou (addressing Pichol), tell me;' and Pichol excused himself, saying, 'I also heard nothing of it till to-day.' Only by supposing a dialogue of this nature is the triple negation intelligible."

Rabbi David Philipson, D. D.

On Wednesday last Rabbi David Philipson of Baltimore, was the guest of the Hebrew Union College. He was received by the President and introduced to the faculty convened in an extra session, which was attended also by the Rev. Raphael Benjamin, M. A., and all the students of the College. The President announced that the meeting had been called for the purpose of conferring the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon Rabbi David Philipson in obedience to the unanimous resolution of the faculty adopted September 6th at its regular meeting. The President asked the members of the faculty whether any one of them objects to the conferring of this collegiate degree upon the candidate. Each member of the faculty declared his consent, upon which the diploma was signed and sealed and recorded.

The President then declared that David Philipson was for eight years, 1875-83, a distinguished student of the Hebrew Union College, the High School and the University of Cincinnati; that his conduct and his learning, at the end of that period, entitled him to the collegiate degree of Rabbi in Israel, which degree was conferred on him in July, 1883; that he was then for one term a teacher in this College and Secretary of the faculty to January, 1883; that he was then called to the rabbinical office of the Har Sinai Congregation of Baltimore, where he has since discharged all rabbinical duties to the full satisfaction of that respected congregation and as many of his reverend colleagues as have come in contact with him, in confirmation of which they elected him secretary in various conferences; that he has proved himself an assiduous student of theology, philosophy, philology and history during the years of his absence from the College, with much success and originality; that he especially proved to the faculty an active spirit of research by his thesis on the edicts of the Christian Church concerning the Jews during the Middle Ages, which edicts he compiled, rendered, systematized and expounded in an able, objective and unprejudiced manner, scholarly and veraciously; that his conduct and deportment both in his sacred office and in private were always strictly honorable and becoming a Rabbi in Israel; that in consideration thereof the Faculty of the Hebrew Union College voted him the distinguishing degree of Doctor of Jewish Theology, which title the President, without any further ceremony except the kiss, and the delivering of the diploma, conferred on him amid the loud applause of the whole assembly. The Rev. Raphael Benjamin, M. A., and the Rev. Preceptor Davidson (Rabbis of two Cincinnati congregations) then made brief and eloquent speeches of congratulation, after which the session was declared closed.

Our young Doctor of Divinity—he is perhaps twenty-five years old—lectured and preached last Saturday and Sunday in St. Louis, and re-