

In that beautiful country, the town of Saphet, perched on the summit of one of the mountains that tower over the Sea of Galilee, at once commends itself as the most favourable point for the centre of a Jewish Mission. It is a place of peculiar interest to the traveller, as it is believed to be the very town to which Jesus pointed during his sermon on the mount, when he said, "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid."—(Matt. v.) But it is no less interesting to the Jewish missionary, for Saphet is one of the four cities regarded as holy by the Jews.—As you stand upon its lofty brow, the eye of the Christian turns towards the Land of Gennezareth, and the placid waters where the feet of the Saviour walked; but the eye of the Jewish devotee turns toward the white sepulchre of Marona, on the opposite side of the valley where rest the bones of several Jewish saints. They have a tradition that when the temple was destroyed, Jeremiah hid the ark in some cave of the hill of Saphet, and also that Messiah will be first revealed there.

Before the earthquake, on 1st January 1837, there were 7,000 Jews residing in Saphet. It is again gradually rising out of its ruins, and there are at present about 2,000 Jewish inhabitants. In six hours you can reach Tiberias, on the edge of the lake—another of the holy cities—containing 1500 Jews. There are also two villages on Mount Naphtali, where Jews reside. It is within a few days' journey of Tyre, Sidon, Acre, Khaifa, Bayroot, and Damascus—in each of which there are synagogues and Jews—so that it forms the centre of a most interesting field.

The climate of Saphet is peculiarly delightful, owing to its lofty situation. In one of the hottest days of July, we found the thermometer, in the shade, standing at 53° before dawn, at 64° by eight o'clock in the morning, and at 76° by noon.

We could not help feeling, that if the church of Scotland were privileged to establish a mission in Saphet, what an honor it would be to tread, as it were, in the very footsteps of the Saviour—to make the very same hills where he said, "Blessed are the peace-makers," resound with the gospel of peace. And if God should bless our efforts, would not the words of the prophet receive a second fulfilment,—“The land of Zabulon, and the land of Naphtalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.” Saphet would then be in reality “a city set on an hill, that cannot be hid.”

2. *Jassy and Bucarest.*—Wallachia and Moldavia are deeply interesting provinces to the Jewish missionary. *The number of Jews* is very great. In Bucarest there are about 3000, and in Jassy 20,000. In the single city of Jassy, there are more than in the whole of Palestine. On entering it, we almost thought

ourselves in a city of Israel. In six other towns of the provinces which we visited, we found great numbers. It is believed that the government would not be unfavorable to a Jewish mission. Any direct attempt at the conversion of the Greek population, would prove fatal to the mission. But if the missionary sought only the outcast Jews, there is reason to think he would be unmolested. There is a British consul in each of the capitals. The Bible is freely circulated in Wallachia. The Prince of Moldavia was favorable to its circulation in his dominion also; but the Greek priests would not permit it. The only thing to be feared is, that the light spreading to the native population, would excite the jealousy of the priesthood, who might bring in the arm of Russia to put down the mission. But it is our part to move forward in the path of duty, leaving future events in the hands of God.

The Jews are in a most interesting state of mind, particularly in Jassy. The far greater number are Polish Jews. They are steeped in the *greatest ignorance*. We are told, that among the thousands of Jassy, there were only a few individuals who could understand Hebrew grammatically. In the schools, we found that even the teachers could not translate the prayers in the Hebrew prayer-book. In this state of things, a secret society has arisen of educated Jews, who hate the Talmud. They live like Jews, but use every effort to undermine Judaism; they deplore the ignorance and superstition of their brethren; and though their own principles are far from being settled, they are earnestly panting after a change. During our stay in Jassy, we were visited by many of them whose confidence in the Talmud had been completely shaken—and who were eagerly asking for the New Testament and Christian Tracts.

This wonderful field has entirely been unoccupied. No missionary has ever been sent there with the words of eternal life. We found the Jews would not believe that we were christians,—for, said they, “No christians in this country love the Jews.” Add to this, that these provinces border upon Austrian Poland, that land of bigotry and the shadow of death—where no traveller dares to carry even an English Bible, and where no missionary would be allowed to remain. If the Moldavian Jews received the light of the gospel, they would easily spread it by means of their constant intercourse, even where the foot of the gospel messenger could not go.

One fact more may be stated,—that every Jew who arrives in these Provinces must bring a certificate, that he is able to earn a livelihood by some trade. If found unable, the authorities send him out of the province. The cheapness of the necessaries of life is very remarkable—and the resources of commerce great and unoccupied; so that an inquiring Jew, or a convert, could easily maintain himself even when cast off