

Sept. 13th.—Left for Naumur at half-past 6, A. M.; arrived there in the afternoon. The mail for Arlon leaves at midnight. I went, therefore, in search of more Jewish families. There are only very few here. Misses A. keep a shop in ——— Street. Introduced myself by buying a few articles I needed. Saw there the representatives of three generations,—grandmother, mother, and daughters. The sons are officers in the Belgian army, young men of great talent, I am told; all, however, profoundly ignorant of religion—of all religion. "We believe in God," they said. What do you believe of Him? "He gives us temporal mercies, and will take us to rest in heaven when we die." They all live in the constant violation of the Mosaic laws respecting the Sabbath, meats, and drinks. A Jewish lieutenant was present. There are thirty-two modes of interpreting the Scriptures, he observed; which do you mean to adopt? It is not difficult to meet such absurdities; but what a revolting contempt of religion do they not disclose? They promised me to accept and read a French Bible. If I go to the Continent again, I will endeavour to obtain a good supply of Bibles for distribution. I had given away most of my tracts before I reached Brussels, though I carried many. One I gave to Prince Doria, an Italian nobleman, on board of the boat to Ostend. I shall often remember our conversation. I think he will.

I did not succeed in seeing any other Jewish family. I cannot trace a single missionary or Christian labourer here. Romanism wears no mask except its schools and charities. I asked a little boy in the street, "Do you love Christ?" "Yes!" "Why so?" "Because He has bought us." "Do you pray to the Virgin Mary?" "Certainly!" "Do you not know that our Saviour is the only Mediator between God and us, that He loves us, and invites us directly to Himself?" "Yes; but we should not have had a Saviour, if He had not been born of the holy Virgin." "Do you ever read the Bible?" "The Bible?—what is that?" "The New Testament then?" "Testament—Je ne sais pas, monsieur!" So much for their schools; and to the indiscriminate charity which they dole out to withdraw the public eye from the immense treasures they consume, I attribute, in great measure at least, that stupendous pauperism which now threatens all the institutions of Europe. I went to the nunnery; thinking that I might perhaps speak a word of instruction and warning to some of these unhappy creatures. The nun who opened the door, a rosy girl of 18 or 20, begged me not to come in just then, as the house was quite full. What is their object? The streets are swarming with priests. I spoke with a Belgian priest, who is an Englishman by birth. The Jews live close by, and know it all. They call this the Christian religion; "as bad as a Christian" is an old adage among them.

The Naumur Gazette of that very day contained an article, which began with the following words:—"The clergy swim in hypocrisy and falsehood as the fish do in water." I took the paper with me. I mention this, because I should like to impress our friends with the duty, if possible, of caring for the lost sheep of the house of Israel in Popish countries.

The mail left at half past 12, P. M. It was full. In point of comfort, one had better stay at home than travel in a Belgian mail in a rainy night—cooped up with half a dozen smoking and chattering walloons. But there is something solemn to me in this brief—the world would say accidental—contact with human beings. At this moment they are within the sphere of my influence—in the next we shall have met and parted to meet no more until we stand before God disembodied. Does any one believe that the Christian, in the path of duty, as I know I then was, is so placed by chance? Can any one, under such circumstances, be silent with impunity? I am sure it cannot be.

It is not difficult to lead the conversation to religion. I did so, and heard what I expected, the most curious mixture of superstition and infidelity. One athletic creature, with a voice like thunder, out-talked us all. I endeavoured to discriminate between true religion and false, but he condemned all Christians without pity. Our Saviour, he maintained, was a good man, but no more. A few expressions betrayed his creed to me. I pointed my remarks

accordingly. In the afternoon we were alone. You are an Israelite? I asked him. Yes! Strange coincidence! he was the brother of the lieutenant with whom I had conversed the previous evening. We travelled together for some time. He yielded many things. Whether he will receive Christ or not I may perhaps not learn on this side of eternity; but henceforth his position is changed, for he has heard the Gospel.

(To be continued in our next.)

[From the same for February.]

The Jewish Chapel in Halkin Street, having undergone great alterations, by the completion of which it has been rendered a commodious place of worship, was reopened on Saturday, 25th of last December. The devotional services were conducted by the Rev. Dr. Cumming, and a sermon preached by the Rev. Mr. Brown, Moderator of the Presbytery of London. The audience was serious and attentive, and appeared much interested in the sacred duties to which they were called. Since that time the Rev. Mr. Douglas has been regularly officiating there, twice on the Lord's Day, and once during the course of the week, besides holding frequent meetings for affording instruction to Jews who were desirous to obtain a knowledge of the Christian faith, and giving counsel, warning, and encouragement to those who seem already persuaded that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah promised to the fathers, but who are not yet prepared openly to confess Him before men. May the Lord pour out His Spirit in rich abundance upon our pious and devoted missionary, and cause his work of faith and labour of love to become the instruments of leading many of his kinsfolk according to the flesh not only to the knowledge, but to the love and obedience of the truth as it is in Jesus.

The Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland appear to be untiring in their exertions to procure a supply of labourers for the vineyard in the Provinces; and, if they have not proved so successful as is to be desired, the fault certainly cannot be laid at their door. We have been favoured in advance of the usual publication of the *Missionary Record* with a few extracts from that publication. One of these is a spirit-stirring appeal to the probationers and students of Divinity, which, we trust, will not remain long unanswered:—

The Colonial Committee would direct the attention, more especially of probationers and of students of Divinity in our halls, to the statements furnished from time to time in the *Record*, descriptive of the great amount of spiritual destitution existing in the Colonies, and especially to the notice taken of this in the Address which appears in the first page of this number. The applications made to the Committee are more numerous than ever; it is with the utmost pain, and with the most vivid perception of the evil consequences resulting from delay, that they are compelled to say in answer to the prayer of such petitions, that they have not yet labourers to send forth, and that our countrymen abroad must still remain destitute of ordinances. Surely it cannot be that the missionary spirit is so low amongst us that

none will offer their services to a cause so interesting; or that inaction at home is preferred to the discharge of the duties of the ministry amongst our expatriated brethren. What difficulties are presented which an ambassador of Christ, who feels the call to be strong, and desires extensive usefulness, should not be willing to meet? Do not thousands, for the sake of improving their fortunes, and advancing their worldly interests, submit to the like? And should not at least an equal degree of willingness and zeal be manifested by those who profess to have at heart the eternal well-being of others? Have all our presbyteries sufficiently weighed the importance of this, and used their endeavours to second the efforts of the Colonial Committee by bringing the matter under the notice of such licentiates and students within their bounds as seem best qualified for the work? They may effect, and have in past times done, much to strengthen the hands of the Committee, who will gladly receive from them communications upon the subject referred to, and are persuaded that there are not a few of those now studying for the ministry, or engaged in preaching the Gospel, on whom such influence may be beneficially brought to bear. "The field is the world."—"Go and teach all nations." And have not those a strong claim on our regard who supplicate us so earnestly to provide for themselves and their children the means of spiritual improvement and religious training?

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March 29, 1848.	

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