

THE MISSION FIELD. MISSIONS TO THE JEWS.

The Rev. Johnstone Vicars, the indefatigable Secretary of the Toronto Branch of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews, has issued a circular to the clergy of the several Canadian Dioceses, requesting that special collections on behalf of that Society be taken up on Good Friday. Mr. Vicars' appeal is approved and supported by the Metropolitan and other Bishops of this Ecclesiastical Province. Mr. Vicars has also kindly sent us the January and February numbers of *The Jewish Intelligencer*, the monthly record of the above-named Society. We doubt not that many of the readers of the GUARDIAN are already familiar with the magazine, and know the objects aimed at by the Society and the work done. But we think it cannot be amiss to furnish the following extracts from the magazine, and will hope hereafter to refer to particulars of the work in different quarters of the field occupied by the Society. This work amongst the Jews is one which is becoming of increasing interest from day to day:—

ITS ORIGIN AND OBJECT.—Established 1809. It is distinctively a Church of England institution, and purely missionary.

ITS FIELD OF LABOR is "the world," its missionaries being stationed in the great cities and towns containing Israelites representing various nationalities, and gathered from all places of their dispersion. The number of Jews in the world may approximately be set down at about ten millions. Of these, upwards of three millions are in the Russian empire, now partially open to Jewish missionary effort. In Austria there are nearly a million, and about half a million in the northern parts of Germany. Much of this ground the Society has long occupied, and it has also stations in England, Austria, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Persia, Russia, Turkey, the Danubian Principalities, Asia Minor, Syria and North Africa. While in Jerusalem a special effort through the means of the Hospital to seek the welfare of Israel has been greatly blessed.

SOME OF THE MEANS used by the Society to accomplish its end are as follows:—

The circulation of the Word of God.—The greatest work of the Society has been the putting into the hands of the Jews their own Scriptures, together with a Hebrew translation of the New Testament. In 1809, a Hebrew Bible cost some guineas: a Jew can now purchase a copy at any of the Society's Stations for one shilling and sixpence. Since 1823, 155,392 entire copies of the Old Testament, and 388,931 parts of the same, have been circulated. Since 1817, 195,177 copies of Hebrew New Testaments and portions thereof, have been sold or distributed gratis. Formerly, Jews would not accept copies of the New Testament as a gift: now they readily purchase them in every part of the missionary field. Thousands of Jews are acquainted with its contents.

The Liturgy of the Church of England was translated into Hebrew

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in 1837. It has done much to vindicate Christianity from the charge of idolatry brought against it; 20,044 copies have been circulated.

Controversial works, books and tracts are indispensable, and have been most useful: 4,241,828 books and tracts have been circulated since 1809.

Education.—The Society supports a number of schools at London, Bucharest, Constantinople, Damascus, Jerusalem, Mogador and Tunis, &c. A large number of Jewish children are receiving daily instruction in these schools, and in all their youthful minds the seed of the Word is patiently being sown.

Evangelization.—The Society employs 146 agents, 93 of whom are believing Israelites. 25 of these agents are ordained; 31 are lay missionaries, medical missionaries, 43 school-teachers, 47 Scripture-readers, colporteurs, &c. The number of stations is 38. Of these, 4 are in England, 24 upon the Continent of Europe, 6 (of which 3 are in the Holy Land) in Asia, and 4 in Africa.

Local and Industrial Institutions.—At Jerusalem there are several important auxiliaries to the Mission. The Boys' and Girls' School, and the Institution for Jewesses, founded by the late Miss C. Cooper; the hospital, where the Jew is made practically to understand the power of Christian love and benevolence; and the House of Industry, where the convert is put in the way of gaining his livelihood by the exercise of an honest calling. In London, two kindred institutions, though supported independently of the Society, are very helpful to its work. The Wanderers' Home, under the supervision and control of the Rev. Dr. Stern, and supported by voluntary contributions, where inquirers have a humble shelter, whilst quietly studying the Holy Scriptures; and the Operative Jewish Converts' Institution, governed by an independent committee, and supported by voluntary contributions, its object being, as its name implies, identical with that of the House of Industry at Jerusalem. It is engaged chiefly in teaching proselytes and inquirers, whilst under Christian instruction and training, the trades of printing and book-binding.

RESULTS.—These may be considered under two heads: DIRECT and INDIRECT.

By DIRECT RESULTS we mean *known baptisms*. Of these, in every mission sufficiently long established, we have many; thus 360 Israelites were baptized at Warsaw, before that Mission was broken up (re-opened in 1876); and the baptismal register of the Society's Chapel in Palestine Place contains, down to the end of 1883, the names of 792 adults and 801 children of the seed of Abraham, whilst numbers have been baptized in parishes throughout London and other parts of England.

The most diligent search could only discover thirty-five Christian Israelites in England at the beginning of this century. Since that time more than a hundred Jews have been ordained as clergymen of the Church of England. Our missionaries estimate that there are now 3,000 Christian Israelites in England.

No estimate can be formed of the number of Jews who, after having received Christian instruction at the hands of the Society's missionaries, are baptized by clergymen of English and Continental Churches. Such Christian Jews are lost sight of as converts and fruits of the Mission. In one way or another, according to a recent writer, as many as 1,500 Jews leave the Synagogue for the Church of Christ every year. Many of these converts occupy high and important positions as Pastors, Professors in Universities, Physicians, Lawyers, School-masters, Journalists, Consuls, Military Officers, and Governors of various Public Establishments.

INDIRECT RESULTS.—In addition to conversions, a striking change has come over the feelings and convictions of the Jews subsequent to, and in no small degree consequent upon, missionary work amongst them. The decay of many ancient prejudices and superstitions, the improved character of the Synagogue service, the feeling of confidence frequently evidenced in the motives of our missionaries, the acquaintance with the New Testament, the frequent acknowledgment that Jesus was a great reformer, and that His religion has its mission to fulfil, the desire to possess the Old Testament, the intellectual conviction of many that their system is unsatisfactory, and that Christianity has established its claim to be heard—these are a few out of many indications of a change, the results and importance of which none can fully estimate.

The Church Guardian

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER.

NON-PARTISAN! INDEPENDENT
Is published every Wednesday
in the interests of the Church of
England in Canada, and in Rupert's
Land and the North-West, with
correspondents in the different
Dioceses.

OFFICE,

190 St. James St., Montreal.

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