

Jews in Jerusalem and throughout Palestine; and I noticed the flag-staffs over the door, indicative of his official position, and when he goes out of doors he is preceded by two kavasses in uniform.

PRAYERS AGAINST THE LOCUSTS.

The rabbi, we found, was in the great synagogue of the Sephardim, where God was being entreated to avert the terrible calamity and devouring scourge of the locusts, which are already spread over the land, sending up the prices of provisions and causing dismay among the poor Jews who are so numerous, alas! in the Holy City. I anticipate hard times. This mission house is likely to be constantly besieged by the poor and destitute. Must the missionary shut his bowels of compassion from them? If not, and the Master's tender words: "Give ye them to eat," are to be obeyed, it can only be through the charity and commiseration of any Christian benevolent readers.

THE SYNAGOGUE.

We went to the synagogue. It was crammed and crowded with Jewish boys from the schools, their teachers and elderly pious men. They were chanting the psalms, the boys rather vociferously, and rocking their bodies as usual when reading the Scriptures. I noticed how few, even of the boys, had books in their hands—they were reciting from memory, in the original Hebrew, of course. The chief and other rabbis were sitting on the raised, central, wooden platform, from whence the hazan directs the public services, and the law is read from the sacredly-kept parchment rolls.

Isaac stood at the entrance, but I walked in and around between the crowded benches, looking at the affecting scene of some thousand souls or more, and I saw many eyes of the elders bathed in tears. I was surprised, as I moved softly about, to notice one and another raising his body from the seat, as they do in saluting any passing rabbi, and some squeezing themselves to make room for me to sit. And I did sit down between two venerable men and joined in reciting the psalm they were then chanting. All of a sudden there was a pause and perfect silence, and the chief rabbi read a psalm in a pathetic, tremulous voice, shaking one's nerves by the way he pronounced the sacred name, Adonai—"God" literally "my Lord"—rather "my Lords," in grammatical strictness. On leaving I was treated with similar marks of respect.

Isaac was struck by it and the friendly salutations I received through the streets, remarking: "The Jews of Jerusalem appear to know you and to treat you with as much respect as those of Jaffa did!" So it is, and it is wholly of the Lord, for I have done nothing to merit it. The special assembly was to go on as usual till the close of the daily evening service, and as I could not speak to the principal rabbi, I deemed it best to defer calling on the other.

THE CHIEF RABBI.

In the afternoon of the 8th I called on both, Isaac with me. I had the previous day left my Hebrew visiting card at the Sephardi's; so he had time to learn all about me. He, however, received me politely and affably, offering me a seat by his side on the "divan," while Isaac was offered a chair at a respectful distance. Rabbi Mair Panijel is a venerable man of about ninety years, rather stout, of a benevolent countenance and of refined manners, but suffers from heaviness of hearing. His son stood by and repeated in his ear any of my words he failed to catch. I told him of the remarkable meeting between Jews and Christians at Chicago, showing him the supplements of the daily *Inter Ocean* with a full account of them, of the glorious outcome—the memorial to the President—and showed the *Interior*, giving a full account of its presentation and the text of it, and of my proposal of a whole day of prayer for the Jews and their land. He listened attentively and with deep interest. The facts, he said, were wholly new to him, and he admitted that they were "beshoratoba"—good tidings. The idea of a whole day of prayer seemed to impress him much. He demurred, however, that the restoration of the people and the land will be markedly visible by the hand of God. "Yes," I rejoined, "but God employs human instrumentalities for the accomplishment of His purposes of love and mercy. He brought our forefathers out of the Egyptian bondage by the hand of Moses," etc. He agreed, and expressed the hope that all this also may prove to be of God for the deliverance of the captivity and dispersion. The interview lasted fully half an hour. I was offered the customary hospitalities—sweets and then coffee. At the outset he said he knew my family name; that the Ben-Oliels had always been very liberal to the rabbis and poor of Jerusalem. Altogether it was pleasant and encouraging. He studiously avoided touching on any point of controversy. I began the conversation in Hebrew, but after a while he took to Judeo-Spanish, which he spoke fluently and well. I understood that his son would return my visit; he himself very seldom goes beyond the synagogue hard by.

I called also on the Ashkenazi chief rabbi, also an elderly man, sleek and slender, full of life and of evidently an excitable temperament. I gave him the good news—wholly new to him also, and conversed of the terrible oppression of the Jews in Russia, etc., but he seemed more serious to know who and what I am, what family I had, etc. He was urbane and chatty, came down several steps to see me off, and asked me to go in and see his synagogue, adjoining his residence, which I did, though I have been more than once in it. It is spacious and handsome, with a lofty cupola, one of the prominent structures in Jerusalem.

The day—May 8—was an eventful one to this mission. That the two chief rabbis should receive me—a Hebrew missionary—so affably, in presence of their families, dis-

ciples, etc., and give me each fully half an hour, conversing freely and in a friendly spirit—with the Ashkenazi rabbi entirely in Hebrew—is an event worthy of record and full of bright hope for my humble labours among my brethren in the city of the great King of Israel.

AMERICAN CONSUL, JERUSALEM.

Yet another friendly act of the Government of the United States towards the Jews of the Holy Land. The Rev. Dr. W. Butler, of Newton Centre, Mass., informs me, through my dear friend, the Rev. T. T. N. Hull, of Dalkey, Ireland, of the happy appointment of a new consul to Jerusalem, and it is none other than the Rev. Dr. Selah Merrill, author of a well-known work on Palestine, "East of the Jordan." He was the U. S. Consul here formerly, and it is well known that he takes a kindly interest in the Jews. I infer that he was nominated after the presentation of the memorial. Dr. Butler kindly proposed to make me known to Dr. Merrill, "who," he says, "is a Congregational minister of considerable ability and true piety"—just the kind of consul wanted in Jerusalem. As a dissenter he will, of course, attend the English services in the "upper room" of this mission, and perhaps also share those services with me occasionally. His presence and Christian influence will greatly strengthen my hands.

I told the Sephardi chief rabbi of Dr. Merrill's appointment. He remembered him, and was glad to hear of it. It is well known that the present ambassador of the United States at Constantinople is a Jew, who would assuredly rejoice and be glad to promote the restitution of Palestine to his own people.

These are facts of high import to the Jews and their land, and of deep interest to prophetic students and believers in the inspiration of the Bible. I cannot do better than then conclude with the Old Testament exhortation with which I commenced this paper: And blessed be His glorious name forever, and let the whole earth be filled with His glory.

A. BEN OLIEL.

Jerusalem, May 9, 1891.

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF GENERAL EXAMINATIONS OF 1891.

THE EXAMINATION PLAN.—A year ago the American Institute of Sacred Literature announced a curriculum of examinations. One of these, viz., the examination upon the Gospel of Luke, was introduced, through a thousand special examiners, into every state in the Union, in Canada and many foreign countries. Hundreds of people are now eagerly looking for the announcements for 1891.

The purpose of the plan was to arouse an interest in more systematic Bible study by offering the incentive and rewards which are commonly offered for meritorious work in educational lines. This purpose was accomplished so far as it was possible to accomplish it in so short a time and under the financial and other limitations of an undenominational institution. A deeper interest in Bible study was aroused in many localities, and students have taken up more systematic plans of Bible work.

The institute, in accordance with the policy already adopted, offers to any person, or group of persons, an examination upon any Biblical topic, and will award certificates bearing the seal of the Institute to all whose work warrants such recognition.

By this means a minister, a Bible teacher, or a non-professional Bible student, having completed the study of a certain Biblical subject, may be provided with a set of comprehensive and suggestive questions which will show him whether or not he has grasped (a) the essential facts of the subject under consideration, (b) its value as history; (c) its value as literature, (d) its fundamental teachings; (e) its relation to the Bible as a whole.

THE EXAMINATIONS.—Certain examinations will be offered each year and a special effort made to secure persons to take them.

These will be of two classes, viz.: (1) general examinations, which cover topics of current interest to all Bible workers, (2) special examinations on subjects of peculiar interest to special classes of students. The particulars of these will be announced in September.

Two general examinations will be offered in 1891 upon the following subjects: (1) The Gospel of John; (2) the Life of the Christ based upon the Four Gospels.

The first of these is especially desirable, in view of the fact that the International Sunday School lessons take up the study of this Gospel in July, 1891.

The second is offered primarily for the benefit of those who are engaged in a study of the Life of the Christ, based upon the four Gospels.

FOUR GRADES OF GENERAL EXAMINATIONS.—Although the Institute in its teaching deals largely with ministers, Bible teachers and Bible classes, these examinations are so graded as to be adapted to (1) individuals, (2) Bible classes, (3) Sunday schools, (4) church congregations.

Four grades of the examination will be prepared: (1) The Advanced grade for ministers, theological students, and persons who have done close and critical work; (2) The Progressive grade, for the members of adult Bible classes who have done a less amount of work upon the subject; (3) The Intermediate grade for Bible classes, the members of which are fifteen to twenty years of age; (4) the Elementary grade for those who are ten to fifteen years of age. Persons who belong to none of these classes may choose from the four grades. Care should be taken to select a proper grade.

PREPARATION FOR THE EXAMINATION.—1. For the examination on the Gospel of John there will be required (1) a reasonable knowledge of the teachings of Jesus; (2) the history, manners and customs of His times; (3) the particular view of Jesus' life given by John; (4) the book of John as a literary production, its purpose, style and peculiarities.

2. For the examination on the Life of the Christ familiarity will be expected with (1) the details of the life of Jesus; (2) the history, customs and manners of His times; (3) the teachings of Jesus and the great purpose of His work; (4) the practical and doctrinal teachings suggested by His life and work.

Careful study of the Sunday School lessons with the usual helps ought to be a sufficient preparation for these tests. Thorough study by any method whatever will prepare a student to answer the first two grades of the questions.

SPECIAL HELP.—Groups of persons who wish to do more thorough work in order to fit them to take the highest grade of examination will do well to place themselves under the direction of the Institute as a Bible club, organized for systematic, comprehensive, inductive study. Individuals who wish to make such thorough preparation should take up one of the correspondence courses outlined in the Prospectus of the Institute. Groups or individuals enrolling for these examinations will be supplied, free of charge, with examination direction sheets, containing (1) general suggestions as to methods of work; (2) titles of helps and valuable books of reference; (3) an outline of the Gospel of John; (4) an outline of the Life of Christ.

A series of inductive studies upon each of these subjects is published and can be procured through the Institute. For specimen copies of studies in these courses, and for an examination direction sheet, intended to show the steps to be taken by the student in preparation for such examination study so as to do thorough work, address with stamp as above.

TIME.—The general examination on the Gospel of John and the Life of the Christ will be given January 15, 1892, in all parts of the world. When another day in the same week is more convenient it will be so arranged. The examination can be held in the morning, afternoon or evening, but must continue only two hours.

PLACES.—Arrangements have already been made for holding these examinations in one thousand localities. Wherever, in any place which can be reached by mail, there is one person who desires to take such an examination, a special examiner will be appointed.

SPECIAL EXAMINERS.—One thousand special examiners have already been appointed. This number will be greatly increased during the year. These examiners will have charge of the Institute examinations in the immediate locality in which they reside. They will conduct the examinations and forward the papers to the office of the Institute. The special examiner or his assistant will receive enrolments and examination fees from the group under his care. Should several examiners live in close proximity, they will divide their field as they prefer. The Institute urges all who are special examiners, immediately upon receiving their appointments, to seek out other special examiners in their vicinity, and so make it possible to work effectively and harmoniously and to promote a spirit of fellowship in the cause. They are also requested to send to the Principal the names of persons in their city or county who would be suitable examiners, in order that such persons may be solicited.

INDIVIDUAL EXAMINEES.—Individuals who desire to take one of these examinations will forward, to the Principal of Schools at the earliest possible date, their names, fees, and the grade of the examination desired (this may be altered at any time before December 1, 1891). Each individual must at the same time send the name of his minister, Sunday school superintendent, or of some other suitable person, so that in case no special examiner has been appointed for his locality, such a one may be solicited. Special application blanks for this purpose will be furnished to all individual examinees. Those to whom this plan is new are urged to decide immediately to try one of these examinations. There need be no fear of catch questions or of unforeseen difficulties. The questions aim to be simple, helpful, stimulating and inspiring.

THE METHOD OF CONDUCTING THE EXAMINATION.—At such place as may be indicated by the special examiner applicants will meet. The papers containing the printed questions (according to the grades selected) will be placed in their hands. The answers must be written in ink, on one side of the paper, as legibly as possible, the writer's name being clearly inscribed at the top of each page. Two hours only will be allowed. At the end of that time, those examined will place their answers in the hands of the examiner, who will at once forward them to the Principal of Schools.

CERTIFICATES.—Each set of answers will be submitted for examination to an instructor, appointed by the Directors of the Institute. The answers will be graded on the basis of ten. All papers having a grade of seven will entitle the writer to a certificate. Papers graded from 7 to 8.5 will receive B or second-class certificates, papers from 8.5 to 10 will receive A or first-class certificates.

The individual results of these examinations are not made public, but are known only to the examiners, the examinees and the Institute instructors.

FEE.—For each person taking this examination, whether singly or in a group, a fee of fifty cents will be charged. Individual examinees will pay this fee directly to the Institute. Groups will forward fees through the Special examiner in charge. It will easily be seen that the work proposed is one attended with great expense to the Institute. There will be the cost of (1) general advertising, (2) correspondence with persons desiring the examination, (3) correspondence with special examiners, (4) printing of examination papers, (5) mailing of examination papers, (6) salaries of competent to inspect the examination papers, (7) printing of certificates, (8) mailing of certificates. In view of all this expense, the fee will, it is believed, be regarded as very low. It is not supposed that the fees will pay all the costs of the examinations.

Attention is called to the following points:—

1. Questions on any points not covered by this statement will be gladly answered, but please read carefully the statement in order to be certain that your question is not already answered. 2. All applications with fees must be received, if from the United States or Canada, before December 1; if from foreign countries, before November 1. 3. Do not wait until November before deciding that you will take the examination or before enrolment. The fact of having enrolled will be a powerful incentive to the prosecution of the work. Send immediately two two-cent stamps for the questions on the Gospel of Luke, that you may see just what difficulties are to be expected. 4. Fees paid before September 1 will be returned to the sender, if called for, if ill health should compel the student to give up the work of preparation for the examination; but no fee will be returned after December 1.

Address all enquiries to the Principal of Schools, William R. Harper, New Haven, Conn.