

Arthur Henry, born at Richmond, England, June 7, 1881.

John Maxwell, born at Richmond, England, Sept 17, 1882.

Jessie Rachel, born in Italy, Aug. 5, 1884.

William Abraham, born at Rome, Italy, June 8, 1888.

The family traditions of the Ben-Oliels claim affinity with the House of Jesse, of Bethlehem. Arthur is a Blue Coat boy, presented to Christ's hospital by one of my beloved wife's uncles shortly before God called him to rest.

Herbert is now in England. His only expressed desire is to be a medical missionary. His gentle, urbane nature, so desirable in the medical profession, would make him very acceptable to patients. We wait on the Lord to raise up friends that will help to give him the needful training for the Master's service and glory. His address is "The Ferns," Richmond, Surrey, England, care of Mr. A. Seeley.

Johnnie is now the little man helper of the household, and Willie the loved pet of everybody. They all talk the languages of the lands of their birth more or less, and are now learning vernacular Arabic—little polyglots! The God of my fathers bless them all.

JEWISH VISITORS.

The Jews of Jerusalem had heard how those of Jaffa used to come to my house to hear of Messiah and salvation freely and in the most friendly way, and in crowds of forty to eighty on Saturdays and holidays, and did not wait for me to go in search of them or to induce them to come. They came, and keep coming, in numbers, of their own accord and pleasure; and, considering the class and social and religious status of those who come, I think I am justified in describing it as unprecedented in this city of Jerusalem. I am speaking of the Sephardim—Spanish Jews—for my Jewish visitors are almost exclusively of that long-neglected section of the Jerusalem Jews. As one of the alter-ego of the chief rabbi told me in this very study, now they find a missionary with whom they can converse freely in their domestic vernacular and exchange thoughts in their beloved sacred tongue. Of course we receive them cordially—men and women, young or old, rich or poor, and show them the usual Eastern hospitalities; and when they come everything else has to give way—engagements, meals, etc.—till they choose to go. More, I am generally a prisoner indoors, lest anyone coming should be disappointed, for people in these parts think a short walk a great exertion, and would not try it again soon in uncertainty.

STATISTICS.

How many have been in this house and study it is impossible to tell or estimate. They come generally in groups of three, five or more. Sometimes ten or twelve together, seldom singly, and sure enough others follow and join them.

Since January last I have tried to keep an approximate memorandum of those who come on Saturdays and other special days and occasions, and I find that 378 have been in this study in not quite six months an average of about thirty three monthly. As many at least, probably more, called on other days, of which it is practically impossible to keep any record, nor an exact one at any time, for here is what happens frequently. A group is ushered into the study, and a discussion of some prophecy or doctrine begins. Then others come in and join, while some take leave and go away. My thoughts are occupied with something better and higher than counting heads; and at the close of the day I can remember the most prominent—rabbis, etc., while of many newcomers I do not know even the names, for I allow little time for mere palaver or empty etiquette, but at once introduce a subject for Scriptural examination.

REGULAR VISITORS.

Some groups come so regularly on Saturday that I know at what hour to expect them. With these I resume the discussion of any given subject at the point where we stopped the last time. To this class belong several young men of the most respectable and wealthy families—the Nabous and Daruchs—a young rabbi, a grand nephew of the chief rabbi, a wealthy Constantinople Jew, two or three small bankers, etc. Other Jews seem to avoid the hour when these are known to be here.

CONFESSORS OF FAITH.

Several of the earlier and most constant visitors—others would denominate them enquirers—confess faith in the Lord Jesus, not to me alone, but in the presence of other Jews; but shrink from the heavy cross they would have to bear—severance of family ties—they are all married—here they marry when still young, and some are fathers—persecution, ignorance, loss of occupation, etc.

BAPTISM.

Some are desirous of baptism, but at a distance from their families and friends, and this I object to on principle. It is far better they should wait till they have the courage of their convictions. In an article I sent this week to the *Independent* of New York I show ample reasons against hasty baptisms and the premature severance of the converts from the mass of the people, for then they necessarily cease to leaven it with Gospel truth, at least for some time after.

HARVEST DAY.

I am inclined to think that it is a short-sighted policy to labour mainly for immediate results. Should not the missionary be imbued with broader views and higher aspirations and hopes and, looking at the mass around him and the future before him, or his successors in the same field, endeavor

to permeate the masses with the Gospel, leading them to Jesus' feet, that they may learn of Him, in full and hopeful expectation of a glorious harvest day? Gleaning is good, but the harvest is better far, and I think the time is come, particularly among the Jews, for taking a broader view of duty and thinking more of the mass.

SERVICES FOR JEWS.

At the desire of several Jews, I commenced services for them, preaching on the Messianic prophecies; but, without the help of an assistant and a suitably fitted up room, I found it best to recur to the meeting in my study, with freedom to ask questions and raise objections.

AN ASSISTANT.

A generous lady in the United States, hearing of my great need of such an assistant, has contributed towards the employment of one, and I am on the look-out for a suitable person, maybe one of the converts when sufficiently instructed.

A FRIEND IN TROUBLE.

Many Jews come in their troubles for counsel and help. Recently the poor inmates of the Montefiori property were called upon to pay the house tax, and in default guards were stationed at the cisterns to prevent them drawing water, and they came to me. It was a most cruel proceeding. An elderly rabbi told me his tongue stuck to the roof of his mouth for thirst, from which old widows and children were also suffering terribly, for they were not allowed to fetch water either! After several conferences I offered to buy for them the water of a cistern near by, in the hope that, as my gift, they would be permitted to use it. However, providentially, means arrived, as in former years, to discharge the taxes, and their great trouble came to an end.

WATER.

Just now, and till the early rains, the greatest charity to the poor is to supply them with water. Would that I had means at my disposal to supply the poorest of the poor with that indispensable element of health and comfort.

RABBINIC INTERDICT.

Some weeks ago the rumour reached us that the rabbis had forbidden the Jewesses from attending sewing or other meetings at the houses of "the English"—the designation given to missionaries here, probably because the heads of the missions are Englishmen. I complained to several of my friendly rabbis, and they declared that it was not intended to apply to me. Some said: "You are one of us, it is against the Goyim (Gentile Christians). It gave me occasion to reprimand, and severely, the intolerant and persecuting spirit of Talmudism, and to warn them of the danger of alienating their only true friends—the Protestants of England and the United States. The number of Jewesses attending the sewing meeting fell off, but they were recovering fast when the usual short summer vacation arrived. Some of these Jewesses remarked: "The rabbis come to your house, and why should we not?"

THE ENGLISH SERVICES.

These public services, morning and evening, during the travellers' season—October 1 to May 31—are highly appreciated by all classes of non-conformists visiting Jerusalem, and are well attended by them. They are intended to be conducted by ministers of all denominations, and a printed notice at the hotels says: "Ministers of all evangelical Churches are cordially invited to take part in the services," but it happens that the majority arrive on Saturdays, and have not time to make themselves known before the close of morning worship, when I frequently discover that I have been preaching before several brother ministers of different lands, who readily, and many joyfully, esteeming it a high privilege, take, or share, the evening service. Thus it has been our happiness to hear the Word from many eloquent and leading men of the several Churches, whose names are treasured in our memories, and doubtless in the memories of all who worshipped with us.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The great, adorable Master made Himself known to His disciples in the breaking of bread, and His gracious presence has been with us as we sat at His table to commemorate His expiatory death for us on yonder Calvary, till He come again in glory and majesty, when "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives" (Zec. xiv. 4), which we so love to look at constantly. Eight times in 1890-91 and seven in 1891-92, have we had the inexpressible privilege—so it is felt to be by all—of sitting around His table in this, the City of Redemption, 191 persons in all, or an average of over twelve each time. They were indeed "happy times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," and a veritable Evangelical Alliance, for the communicants consisted of regular members of all Churches.

The brethren invariably insist on my presiding, but readily take part in the administration, some as elders, others reading, offering prayer, addressing words of exhortation and edification, giving out hymns, etc. On one occasion fourteen ministers were present, as also Lord Dalrymple, a Scotch elder.

THE MISSIONARY PRAYER-MEETING.

This is held, and an address given on mission work in the Holy Land, both among Jews and others, on Friday evenings, the evening of the Jewish Sabbath, but the attendance varies with the number of visitors in Jerusalem.

COLLECTIONS.

There is always one after the administration of the Lord's Supper, and this is for the poor Jews in Jerusalem. An olive-wood plate stands at the door for the free-will offerings of God's people, which is seldom passed round, and rarely, if at all, referred to.

FELLOWSHIP.

The notice at the hotels says: "The Rev. and Mrs. Ben-Oliel will be happy to welcome Christian travellers to tea at eight p.m. any evening in the week," and we frequently have the pleasure of holding fellowship with the excellent of the earth from all lands, who, we know, remember us and our work at the throne of grace when they get home.

INAGGRESSIVENESS.

Thus far I have discouraged those who have been in the habit of attending the Episcopal Christ Church from attaching themselves to my English services, telling them they are for non-Episcopal visitors only. I do not want to build on another's foundation.

THE PAMPHLET.

At the commencement of this mission a spirit of interference manifested itself, and, urged by friends, even Episcopalians, to defend myself, a pamphlet with the correspondence, etc., was printed and circulated. I am thankful to say it has had the desired effect, and peace has been secured effectually, and, I hope, permanently. The bishop and his family are, if possible, more friendly and urbane than before, and when I say that a few days since Mrs. Ben-Oliel and self attended, by invitation, the service and "At Home" of the marriage of one of the daughters of the Rev. A. H. Heik, and were cordially received, I think I need add no more on that unpleasant and regrettable incident. Not only as a Christian do I love peace with all men, for it is lovely *per se*, but as a member of the Evangelical Alliance I am bound in duty to cultivate and promote peace, concord, harmony and good-will. In the very pamphlet referred to above I wrote: "For my part I should deeply lament any accentuation or deepening of sectarianism. It would be most lamentable, for we are in presence of the Latin and other Churches, who constantly throw our unhappy divisions in our faces. Should we not rather strive to draw our ranks closer, and show to those errant Churches that, though divided ecclesiastically, we are heartily united in all the fundamental verities of the Gospel, and ready to work side by side, or together, for the good of perishing souls, Jews or others, and the advancement of God's glory and praise? It will certainly not be my fault if it be otherwise."

DAYS OF MOURNING.

I am taking advantage for writing these papers and clearing arrears of correspondence, etc., of the days of mourning among the Jews—from the first day of Ab to the ninth—the anniversary of the destruction of the Temple, during which visiting is rarely indulged in. These mourning days are followed by the weeks of consolation, when prophetic chapters of the restoration and future glory are read in the synagogues, the first being Isaiah xl.

"Comfort ye, comfort ye My people," saith your God. This is the great work we have to do among God's ancient people—to comfort them for their past and present terrible sufferings, even at the hands of so-called Christian nations, like Spain under the infamous Torquemada and Ferdinand and Isabella, and now Russia—the nasty, brutal bear of the north. They have need to be comforted by true, tender, generous Christian hearts, whose desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.

A. BEN-OLIEL.

Jerusalem, July 30, 1892.

(To be continued.)

THE DISCREPANCY.

MR. EDITOR,—I am not at all surprised that the census recently taken reports a quarter of a million more Presbyterians than are reported in our Church statistics. I do not see how it could be otherwise. The census reports all connected with Presbyterian families, old and young; whereas our statistics report only the number of families, communicants, and those attending Sabbath school and Bible classes. Now, we know that there are many belonging to Presbyterian families who are not communicants, and very many who do not attend religious classes. There is nothing strange in this. These classes are not a divine institution; attendance on them is not compulsory. Very many are too young to attend; and many consider themselves too old to attend, although they are not Church members. The missing quarter of a million are not to be sought for in desert places, but in Presbyterian families, many of which are rather loosely connected with the Church. Were the Church to include in its statistics all the members of all the families that call themselves Presbyterians, we would not have a missing quarter of a million to seek.

JOHN J. A. PROUDFOOT.

FROM an analysis by Principal Miller, of Madras Christian College, which is governed by the Free Church of Scotland, it appears that of 650 native graduates now living 100 are Christians, notwithstanding that of the general population from which the students are drawn Christians form less than an eighth.