

does not suffer her to exercise the faculties which God has given. It teaches that to study the law of God is no part of a woman's duty, and that to teach his daughters the word of God is no part of a father's obligation. 'Women and slaves are exempt from the study of the law.' 'A woman who learns the law has a reward, but it is not equal to the reward which the man has, because she is not commanded to do so. But though the woman has a reward, the wise men have commanded that no man should teach his daughter the law, for this reason, that the greater number of women have not a mind fitted for study, but pervert the words of the law on account of the poverty of their intellect. 'Every one who teaches his daughter the law, is considered as guilty as if he taught her transgression. But this applies to the oral law. As to the written law, if he has taught her, he is not to be considered as having taught her transgression.' The Jews thank God every morning, in their public prayers, that he has not made them either a heathen, a slave, or a woman!

"One very important part of a Jewess's religious duties is to visit the burial-ground and pray over the graves. One of her books of devotion contains prayers to be said over the grave of a rabbi, a father, a mother, paternal and maternal grandfather, adult children and infants, a brother, a sister, husband, wife, friends, acquaintances, &c. We give one of these prayers as a specimen.

"PRAYER TO BE SAID OVER THE GRAVE OF A PATRILINIAL GRANDFATHER.

"Peace be upon thee, my father's father. In peace may thy bones rest in this world, and thy soul in the other world. Mayest thou ascend to the high heavens under the wings of God. To-day I went forth and to-day am I come to the place where thou art laid, thou that wert in our family a godly lord, and the best amongst us. Thou hast been a pleasant branch in our family. Thou didst watch over us in thy life, and now thou shalt serve again in thy death, and be our intercessor before God, a good messenger and a good advocate in the midst of our brethren. Order my prayer aright before the Almighty God, that he may make an end of long continued wrath, and not destroy us from the world * * * * *

"Command the holy angels to watch over us from this time forth for ever. Give me children, and sons-in-law, who will be learned men, that our eyes may be enlightened and that our eyes may see Jerusalem and Zion the habitation of palaces. And mayest thou rest and arise in the resurrection of the dead, to enjoy the pleasures of the world to come, and of Leviathan and other delights. Amen.'"

A very remarkable instance of the belief of the Polish Jewess in the efficacy of prayers to the dead occurred very recently. The Jewess of whom it is related has a Christian husband; but this has in no degree lessened her prejudices against Christianity, and she retains, as the following

statement from one of our missionaries shows, her profession of "the Jews' religion:"—

"This evening a gentleman was with me, from whom I learnt that Mrs. — is seriously thinking of bringing back her husband now in England to Judaism. Her bitter feelings against the Christian faith, have been apparent for some time; but I had hardly thought her to be so superstitious as she really is. Last week an old Jew died here, who in his former years had been a rabbi, and was reported to be a great Zaddik (righteous man, i. e., pharisee). As the Jews put all their confidence in such men, she had wished to give him, before his death, a letter to her father-in-law, that on his arrival in the other world he might deliver it to him. This letter was to contain a statement of his son, her husband, having embraced the Christian religion, and a humble petition that he, i. e., the father, would use his influence and authority to bring back his son to Judaism. One thing, however, prevented her putting this plan into execution, and that was, that the said rabbi, who was to carry the letter, and her father-in-law, had lived in great enmity with each other; she therefore feared that he would not deliver her petition to her father-in-law, and thus abstained from what she considered to be the most eligible mode of proceeding.

"But she has now another plan, which is, to go to the grave of her father-in-law, and with a great variety of superstitious ceremonies, to implore his interference on behalf of his baptized son. It is, however, known that her father-in-law, before he died, ordered among other things, that no female should ever tread upon his grave, except (I think) his own daughter; and as it is doubtful whether she, as a daughter-in-law, might not perhaps be included in the privilege, she will undergo particular bathings, and then go to the grave, hoping to meet a willing ear, more especially at the time of the year when the Jews go to the graves of their relations and famous rabbies.

"Mrs. — is no doubt encouraged in her plan by the circumstance of her having some time ago, when one of her children was ill, made use of similar means; for as her child was restored, she ascribes its recovery to her superstitious practices."

Who can read such statements, and not pity the daughters of Israel? "In life," in many parts of the world, "they rank with slaves and children. Death is held up to them as an object of terror, and after death their utmost hope is, that the wanderings of their souls may not be protracted, and that the fires of hell may prepare them for Paradise, one of the joys of which is to feast upon salted Leviathan."

Ought we not to pray and to exert ourselves to the utmost, that light and truth may go forth and visit those dark dwellings, where error and superstition and unhappiness so fearfully reign?

Our young readers may well praise and adore the good-