

Missionary Intelligence.

LONDON SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY AMONGST THE JEWS.

ANNUAL LETTER OF THE BISHOP OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND IN JERUSALEM.

Samuel, by Divine permission, Bishop of the United Church of England and Ireland at Jerusalem, to all the brethren, who, in every place, call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; and, especially, to those whose hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they may be saved:—*grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied.*

I am encouraged, as I am pressed by the sense of our manifold wants, enhanced by the signs of the times, again to invite you, beloved brethren, to unite with us on the 21st of January, 1854, in prayer to our God, that he may forgive us all our sins and shortcomings, heal all our spiritual diseases, pour his Holy Spirit upon us in a rich measure, and bless and prosper the work intrusted to our hands, that Israel may be led by our instrumentality "to seek the Lord their God and David their King," that Jerusalem may be made "a praise in the earth," and that the glory of the Lord may be revealed in the eyes of all nations.

Nor would I neglect to invite you on that occasion, and always to bless and to praise the Lord with us, for his loving-kindness to us individually and collectively, for the measure of success which He has granted to our feeble endeavours, for the protection and peace which we have hitherto enjoyed in the midst of anarchy; yea, also, for the chastisements with which He has visited some of us: and, above all, for the great mercy and long-suffering wherewith He bears with us, his unworthy servants.

It has again been our lot to pass through good report and evil report; but while I humbly confess our manifold shortcomings, our need of more spirituality in our whole life and conversation, and of more zeal in the cause of Him, whose footsteps we are called to follow, of more love to Him, who has loved us unto the death, and of deeper active compassion for our benighted fellow-men, both Jews and Gentiles, yet I am bound to say that our earnest desire and strenuous endeavour is to regulate both our life and ministry by the infallible Word of God. I speak of myself and fellow-labourers of the Jews, and the Church Missionary Societies, and the beloved brother, the faithful minister of the German portion of our community. We may commit mistakes in the manner in which we endeavour to discharge our duty, and in the means which we employ: we may be, and we have been occasionally, deceived by cunning Jews and by godless Greeks; but yet, dear brethren, I beseech you never to give credence to any report, whatever its source may be, or the amount of its extravagance, which pre-supposes on our part a wilful relinquishment of the Word of God as our guide in all things. Such reports have been spread during this year: but we humbly leave the issue of such matters with the Lord.

As to a kind of Protest lately circulated in England by some persons holding offices in the Church of England, addressed to the Patriarchs and Bishops of the Eastern Churches, I think that I may safely leave it in the hands of Him whom we serve. Still I confess that that protest has deeply humbled me, by reminding me of my weakness, and of how little I have done towards training the poor ignorant deluded members of the Greek, and Latin, and other Churches from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God. At the same time, I hope I shall always, by the grace of God, act in such a way as to give me cause to rejoice when thus blamed or slandered.

There is scarcely any new feature worth mentioning, either in the general character of the Jews here, or in our relations with them. There are still many Jews to whom we have no access; many, especially the rabbis, who still entertain a deep aversion and hatred to Christ and Christianity, as well as to the Missionaries: and yet, upon the whole, the prejudices of the mass are being gradually softened; an imperfect knowledge of the truths of Christianity is insensibly spreading: and it is surprising to discover how many Jews there are who seem to be intellectually convinced that Jesus is the Messiah, or, as they more readily express it, that Christianity is at least as good as Judaism: attachment to relatives, the habit of dead forms, and the love of sin, prevent them from making any good progress. We have had a good many of this kind for months under regular instruction without any apparent benefit. Sometimes on discovering their hypocrisy

and wickedness, we feel it our duty to separate altogether from them; at other times they themselves, seeing that they do not ameliorate their condition by their connexion with us, return to the Jews: now and then they go to the Roman Catholics, in hope of some temporal advantages: but I believe they do not gain much by the change, even in a temporal point of view. They get their food and lodging, as with us, as long as they go tolerably well. This is the least which can be done for inquirers, as long as they are supposed to be sincere: considering that from the moment they are known to enquire after the truth of Christianity, they are all, almost without exception, so absolutely destitute of all things, that they must be fed gratuitously, or starve.

By means of our temporary intercourse with several individuals of the class, we have been led to see, much deeper than before, into the abyss of depravity and moral degradation, into which many of the Jews are almost hopelessly sunk: and yet what else can be expected from sinners, who are taught from their youth deliberately to persevere in the rejection of a Saviour, whose grace alone can deliver from the power as well as the guilt of sin?

Conclusion next week.

Fontho's Department.

THE MATCH GIRL.

FROM THE BARON'S LITTLE DAUGHTER.

LITTLE Gretchen, little Gretchen
Wanders up and down the street,
The snow is on her yellow hair,
The frost is at her feet.

The rows of long dark houses
Without look cold and damp,
By the struggling of the moonbeam,
By the flicker of the lamp.

The clouds ride fast as horses,
The wind is from the north,
But no one cares for Gretchen,
And no one looketh forth.

Within those dark damp houses,
Are merry faces bright,
And happy hearts are watching out
The old year's latest night.

The board is spread with plenty,
Where the smiling kindred meet,
But the frost is on the pavement,
And the beggars in the street.

With the little box of matches,
She could not sell all day,
And the thin, thin tattered mantle
The wind blows every way;

She clingeth to the railing,
She shivers in the gloom,—
There are parents sitting snugly
By firelight in the room;

And groups of busy children
Withdrawing just the tips
Of rosy fingers pressed in vain
Against their bursting lips,
With grave and earnest faces,
Are whispering each other,
Of presents for the new year, made
For father or for mother.

But no one talks to Gretchen,
And no one hears her speak,
No breath of little whisperers
Comes warmly to her cheek.

No little arms are round her,
Ah me! that there should be,
With so much happiness on earth,
So much of misery!

Sure they of many blessings,
Should scatter blessings round,
As laden boughs in Autumn sing
Their ripe fruits to the ground.

And the best love man can offer
To the God of love, be sure,
Is kindness to His little ones,
And bounty to His poor.

Little Gretchen, little Gretchen
Goes coldly on her way;
There's no one looketh out at her,
There's no one bids her stay.

Her home is cold and desolate,
No smile, no food, no fire,
But children clamorous for bread,
And an impatient sire.

So she sits down in an angle,
Where two great houses meet,
And she curlteth up beneath her,
For warmth her little feet.

And she looketh on the cold wall,
And on the colder sky,
And wonders if the little stars,
Are bright fires up on high.

She heard a clock strike slowly,
Up in a far church tower,
With such a sad and solemn tone,
Telling the midnight hour.

Then all the bells together,
Their merry music poured;
They were ringing in the feast,
The Circumcision of the Lord.

And she thought as she sat lonely,
And listened to the chime,
Of wondrous things that she had loved
To hear in olden time.

And she remembered her of tales
Her mother used to tell,
And of the cradle songs she sang,
When summer's twilight fell:

Of good men and of angels,
And of the Holy Child,
Who was cradled in a manger,
When winter was most wild;

Who was poor, and cold, and hungry,
And desolate and lone;
And she thought the song had told her,
He was ever with His Own.

And all the poor and hungry,
And forsaken ones are His:
"How good of Him to look on me,
In such a place as this!"—

Colder it grows, and colder,
But she does not feel it now,
For the pressure at her heart,
And the weight upon her brow.

But she struck one little match
On the wall so cold and bare,
That she might look around her,
And see if He was there.

The single match has kindled,
And by the light it threw,
It seemed to little Gretchen,
The wall was rent in two:

And she could see the room within,
The room all warm and bright,
With the fire-glow red and dusky,
And the tapers all alight.

And there were kindred gathered
Round the table richly spread,
With heaps of goodly viands,
Red wine, and pleasant bread.

She could smell the fragrant savor,
She could hear what they did say,
Then all was darkness once again,
The match had burnt away.

She struck another hastily,
And now she seemed to see,
Within the same warm chamber,
A glorious Christmas tree;

The branches were all laden,
With such things as children prize,
Bright gifts for boy and maiden,
She saw them with her eyes.

And she almost seemed to touch them,
And to join the welcome shout;
When darkness fell around her,
For the little match was out.

Another, yet another she
Has tried, they will not light,
Till all her little store she took,
And struck with all her might.

And the whole miserable place,
Was lighted with the glare,
And lo, there hung a little Child,
Before her in the air.

There were blood-drops on His forehead,
And a spear-wound in His side,
And cruel nail-prints in His feet,
And in His hands spread wide.

And He looked upon her gently,
And she felt that He had known
Pain, hunger, cold, and sorrow,
Ay, equal to her own.

And He pointed to the laden board,
And to the Christmas tree,
Then up to the cold sky, and said,
"Will Gretchen come with Me?"

The poor child felt her pulses fall,
She felt her eye-balls swim;
And a ringing sound was in her ears,
Like her dead mother's hymn.

And she folded both her thin white hands,
And turned from that bright board,
And from the golden gifts, and said,
"With Thee, with Thee, O Lord."

The chilly winter morning
Breaks up in the dull skies,
On the city wrapped in vapor,
On the spot where Gretchen lies.

The night was wild and stormy,
The morn. is cold and grey,
And good church bells are ringing
Christ's Circumcision day.