

THE GOSPEL AMONG THE JEWS.

BY M. A. B. HOWARD, LE ROY, N. Y.

Some time ago a celebration was held in Germany of an unique kind. It was the fiftieth anniversary of Professor Delitzsch's Hebrew translation of the New Testament. Those who are accustomed to think of the Hebrew as a dead language may wonder that such a celebration should take place ; but the wonder ceases with a knowledge of the remarkable history of this volume.

The Jewish population of the world is estimated at between six and a half and seven millions, and of this number over five millions are found in Russia, the Black Sea region, and Southwestern Asia. For all these Oriental Jews the Hebrew is not only the literary language, but in a more or less perverted form is also spoken by them ; and in order to find readers among this people a book must be printed in Hebrew. It is interesting to note the following books as among those which have thus appeared in Hebrew Garb : " Pilgrim's Progress," " Paradise Lost," " Faust," the Koran, portions of Shakespeare, and Eber's " Joshua."

In the Jewish schools of Jerusalem and other parts of Palestine Hebrew is the language used. Both scientific and religious periodicals are published in this language. In Jerusalem two papers are regularly issued. In view of these facts it is evident that the New Testament in Hebrew must be one of the most efficient means for the evangelization of the Jews. There are two translations, one by Professor Delitzsch, already alluded to, and the other by Dr. Salkinson. " These have had a circulation exceeding the most noted work of fiction."

The tenth edition of Delitzsch's version has been published, and over 200,000 copies of Salkinson's have appeared. " One hundred thousand copies were paid for by a wealthy Scotchman, to be used for missionary purposes." These are mainly used in Northern Africa, while of Delitzsch's translation, between 60,000 and 70,000 have gone to the Jews of South-eastern Europe. This volume has also found readers from Stockholm to the extreme eastern border of Siberia. Since 1887 hundreds of copies have been placed in the hands of emigrants in Liverpool and in New York, and still the supply is not equal to the demand.

It has been said that the work of removing obstructions and doing preparatory work is greater in Jewish than in any other mission enterprise, owing to the fact that the Jews for centuries have drawn their spiritual food from their traditional literature. Experience has proved not only that in order to reach this people one must be thoroughly versed in that vast amount of Jewish literature known as the traditional, but that the work must be done through the Hebrew language. Hence Delitzsch's New Testament stands first among the efficient means for Gospel work among them ; but there are other agencies also at work. In the year 1864 Professor Delitzsch began publishing a quarterly called *Seed Sown in*