

## Selections.

**KARAITES IN THE CRIMEA.**—A correspondent of the *Record* gives some very interesting information concerning the Karaim in the Crimea. From this it would seem not only these Jews have been in that country ever since the capture of Samaria by Shalmanezzer, but also that the very name *Crimea* is derived from their own name *Kuraim* :—

"Of these there are about 10,000 in the Crimea, or about 2,000 families. Their head-quarters is Tchoufut Kaleh, a most singular spot, about two or three miles from Baktschi Serai, perched impreguably on the top of a lofty rock, like an eagle's nest indeed.—There for ages they dwell in security and in considerable numbers, but now only about 100 families reside permanently on the rock; as the rest have gradually dispersed themselves for the purposes of trade over the whole of the Crimea, and reside in Eupatoria, Simpheropol, Karasou Bazar, and other towns. The chief trade of Sebastopol was in their hands, and they have reaped a golden harvest in our camps. These people are a kind of Protestant Jews, rejecting all the traditions of the other races, and receiving not merely the law of Moses, but the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures, to which they exclusively adhere. Their name means *Readers*," and not *Scripturists*," as stated incorrectly by Mr. Soymour, Mr. Oliphant, and others. They say that they came to this land not as a separate sect, but that the separation afterwards took place in the reign of Chanan the Prince, in the time of the second temple, when they began to be called Karaim. They say that they came originally here in the time of Shalmanezzer, being a part of those who were carried away captive by that monarch in the reign of Hosea, King of Israel, as mentioned in 2 Kings xvii. It would be a matter of some interest to inquire when, in our books of history or geography, the name of *CRIM Tartary* first appears. It seems to me that it is more than probable these Jews gave the name in question to the country and its population. They have always evidently been a people of importance here under the various dynasties that have held sway in the Crimea. At present, they enjoy much consideration from the Russian Government, and I saw in the synagogue at Tchoufut Kaleh a very massive silver sagon presented in 1847, by the Czarina (of Nicholas) to them. The name of the present Rabbi of these people is "Chacan Salomon Abrahamson Bayin," son of the former Rabbi. He is a very enlightened man, and both he and his father seem to have "entertained doubts"—that is, they have been really convinced in their minds that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah. Their burial place is called the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and is said to contain 40,000 tombstones, irrespectively of the myriads of unnamed dead which crowd its precincts. My original object in visiting these people was to make enquiry relative to an ancient manuscript of the Scriptures, which I understood to be possessed by them.—The Rabbi informed the Rev. Mr. Stern, who was of our party, that an iron chest had been dug up about four years since from under the ark of the synagogue, in which, amongst other things, this manuscript was found, being a very ancient copy of the Prophets and Hagiographa from Isaiah to Chronicles. It had evidently been buried there for security in troublous times, and forgotten for ages. At present, the manuscript is at Odessa, for the purpose of being transcribed and printed; and he has promised us the first copy of it. He also says that it is not his own property, but that of the Community; and they are desirous to sell it if it be valuable. This is the authentic information about this manuscript, concerning which some erroneous statements may probably appear at home, as many persons who do not understand Hebrew or manuscripts have been lately to Tchoufut Kaleh, and returned, declaring they had seen this manuscript, whereas it was only the synagogue roll of the law which had been exhibited to them. There is no synagogue roll or other manuscript at Tchoufut Kaleh of older date than about 500 years: and, with the exception of that above mentioned, there is nothing of value.

"But the people themselves are the objects of real interest. They are intelligent, unprejudiced, active, and bear a high reputation for probity in their dealings. They eagerly purchased the Hebrew books which Mr. Stern had with him, including New Testaments, tracts, and the English Liturgy (in Hebrew). I regretted much that we had not been previously possessed of the requisite information, or I have no doubt but that many thousand copies of Bibles, New Testaments, Prayer Books, and tracts could have been sold to these Jews at Baktschi Serai, Tchoufut

Serai, and Simpheropol. Mr. Stern, in dealing with the Jews, proceeds on the opposite principle to that pursued by Mr. Matheson. He never gives, but always sells books to the Jews, as he thinks they only value what they have to pay for. And, at all events, their paying freely for Hebrew New Testaments is a clear proof that they do value them. But, whether gratuitously or for price, I am glad to see the Word of truth here disseminated. It is like a refreshing shower on a very thirsty soil.

I had forgotten to mention that the Rabbi at Tchoufut Kaleh showed Mr. Stern a Hebrew document of antiquity, of which the following is an extract:—"I, Jehudi, the son of Moses, the son of Jehuiah, the mighty, a man of Naphtali, of the family of Shilmi, who was carried captive in the captivity of Hosea, the King of Israel, with the tribe of Simeon, together with other tribes of Israel, who were carried away captive by the Prince Shalmanezzer from Samaria. They were carried to Halah; to Habor (which is Cabool), to Gozon (which is Goza), and to Kheroussus. Kheroussus was built by the father of Cyrus, and afterwards destroyed, and again rebuilt and called Krim, and the rock of the Jews in Krim is a fortification."

**RELIGIOUS MATTERS IN TURKEY.**—The clauses of the Hatti-scheriff of the 18th of February, which promises liberty and ecclesiastical reform to the Christians of the Ottoman Empire, seem to be rapidly passing from the recollection of the Mahometan authorities, except where by a little ingenuity they can be made available as instruments of annoyance to the unhappy Greeks.

"The emeutes in the provinces are winked at, and the murders and excesses left without the least redress. Even the Pasha who seduced and murdered a poor Christian girl some time since, and under English and French pressure was arrested, has been set at liberty. In the meantime the troops of the Allies are withdrawn, and the Porte is occupied in throwing dust into the eyes of the French, flattering their vanity by concessions of a small but not unimportant kind, to the Christianity of the Latin rite, "under the protection of France."

"The papers announced a few days since that the Sultan had presented to the French Emperor the site of the house in Jerusalem where St. Anne gave birth to the Virgin Mary, or (in the words of the enthusiastic journals,) where "the mystery of the Immaculate Conception was consummated." This has caused a great outcry, however, in more orthodox quarters; to call the sanctuary of St. Anne at Jerusalem the cradle of the Queen of Heaven is an irreligious invasion of the most sacred tradition. It is not quite clear that St. Mary was born at Nazareth? Was it not in the very house which also received the mystery of the Incarnation? Was not that house miraculously carried through the air by angels' hands, and having first found rest awhile in Dalmatia, was it not, as all the world knows, placed at Loretto, where it now stands? As for the building called St. Anne's Church (continue these wise men,) we may honor it for its contiguity to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and as the place where St. Joachim and St. Anne breathed their last breath, but piety forbids us to go farther! Not that we may underrate the generosity of the great Sultan Abdul Medjid, in giving this holy place to "France and the Catholic Church." It is at least another result of the triumphs of the Crimea.

"The Porte has also granted a church to the Latins at Belgrade, the little capital of Servia, to the great annoyance of the Greeks.

"The poor Greeks of Hungary, commonly known as the Non-united, have recently been induced in considerable numbers to submit to Rome. Szamlak, near to Arad, is the scene of this somewhat mournful event, which took place last month.

Sir Cylind Eardley, in a letter to the *Times*, gives the following cases of persecution of Christians:

"1. Yani Sava, a wealthy Greek, and a resident of Magnesia, in the government of Smyrna, about two years and a half ago became a Protestant, and was thenceforth hated and oppressed by the Greeks. Four months since (about midsummer, 1856) he was suddenly seized, while following his lawful avocations; chained, sent under escort to Smyrna, and thrown for several days into the same prison with murderers. He was confined for two and a half months, and then exiled to Gallipoli. Upon his appealing to the Porte, after a pretended examination of the case, he was abused, and his temporary banishment turned into a perpetual one. An order of the Porte was sent to Gallipoli to have him registered there as one of the

inhabitants of the place. His property at and about Magnesia, which is very large, is now to be sold by his enemies, and bought by his enemies; and he, in all probability, will be entirely ruined. And all this has been done, not only in the face of the Hatti-scheriff, but in spite of the efforts and representations of the Ambassador of England and of another gentleman of high standing, done 'with a high hand and a bold front on the part of the Turkish officials.' Three Turks, also belonging to Magnesia, are sharing his exile; their names are Izzett Effendi, Mohmed Effendi, and Hassam Aga. The first was known to have read the New Testament, though he never had professed belief in Christ; the second was an officer before whom the sale and purchase of mosque property is effected; the third was the owner of a quarry. All three were known to hold occasional intercourse with Yani Sava, and this was their only fault. Yani Sava himself sought a final interview with Ali Pacha; and the substance of the answer which he obtained was this:—"The Pacha (of Smyrna) says you are a bad man, and you say no. Shall I disbelieve a Pacha and believe you? Your matter is finished, and you may go. You have left your former Church, and they are justly irritated against you. If you want to change your religion, you ought to be willing to suffer in consequence of it.

"2. An Armenian girl, sixteen years of age, was recently brought from Kemak, near Erzingyan, to Kharpoor, by the Turkish authorities. It is declared by them that she there became a Moslem, while she, on the contrary, declares that she never has been, is not, and never will be a Moslem, though they cut her in inch pieces." After endeavoring in vain by coercive means to make her confess that she was a Moslem, she is now detained in prison on the capital charge of being an apostate from the faith of Mahomet. There have been many such cases in this region during the last eighteen months, in most of which the Turks have succeeded in accomplishing their iniquitous purpose, while a few have escaped by stratagem and bribes. But such cases are apparently becoming more and more fanatical, and unless the representatives of Christian Powers at the Porte interest themselves especially in this and similar cases, so frequently occurring, the Christian subjects of the Sultan must continue to suffer as they have done, and the Hatti-scheriff will prove a dead letter. As to the girl above mentioned, notwithstanding all the efforts made with the Government at Constantinople, with their own Hatti-scheriff staring them in the face, and the foreign ambassadors around them, nothing has been accomplished, and the girl remains in confinement, and none of her friends, priests, or teachers are permitted to see her."

**CONDITION OF THE PAPAL STATES.**—The *Siecle* in reply to the eccentricities of the *Constitutionnel*, thus describes the Papal dominions:—"We must judge the tree by its fruits, and Governments by the results of their administration. Now, what do we behold in the Papal States? Crimes against property and person are more frequent there than in any other country of Europe; manufactories are there in a state of infancy; credit is null, and misery abounds; whilst the Roman campagna, with the exception of a few farms which are well kept up, is lying in waste. In the Roman States the administration of justice is denounced on all sides; it offers security to neither life nor property; a species of terror reigns of the population; government is carried on by means of spies—a system which is facilitated by the religious orders. Every liberty, and above all the liberty of conscience, is oppressed at Rome more than any other spot. The public administration coins money by means of indulgences and dispensations. In what other country do we meet an administration like that of the Dicasteri at Rome, which sells matrimonial dispensations, the absolution from certain oaths, the permission to keep and to read certain prohibited books, the permission to wear a wig during the Holy Communion, the indulgence of St. Bridget, &c.?"

## Correspondence.

## COLONIAL CHURCH AND SCHOOL SOCIETY

The Ninth Annual meeting of the Halifax Auxiliary Association in aid of the above Society, was held at Temperance Hall, on Monday evening, the 22nd Decr. inst.

There was a goodly number of gentlemen on the platform, but the attendance in the body of the Hall was very scanty, owing to the weather. From the same cause the annual sermons had been postponed.