

## JERUSALEM.

The following are extracts of interesting letters from Jerusalem, by Charles A. Minor, as found in the *Presbyterian*, of Philadelphia, U. S.

"But I wish to speak of the present state of its inhabitants—especially the children of its ancient possessors, the Jews. If you could witness the reality of their sufferings—their abject poverty, and extreme helplessness, being without means of employment, and considering their great anxiety to learn and help themselves whenever the least opportunity is offered them, your most tender feelings would be touched, and your strongest energies engaged, to send without delay to their aid; especially were you duly to consider the feasible and permanent nature of their relief, and future enlightenment in the knowledge of the truth, afforded by their being employed, under Christian example, in tilling the soil of their fathers, and particularly at the present time. A great change has recently taken place in the feelings of those who reside in Jerusalem; they have given up their strong prejudices, and disregarding a law of the Talmud, which forbade them to labour in the soil, and having their minds opened to the benefits of agriculture, and seeing the safety which Mr. Meshullam and ourselves reside in the open country, and also stimulated by the fact of our coming from our distant land to instruct and assist them, they have come out to Artos during the last month in large numbers, with letters of recommendation and entreaty from different Rabbis, begging (in some cases with tears) for employment for themselves, and also for scores of their poor brethren. On being informed by Mr. Meshullam that we were unable to employ at present but very few, they again came out, requesting permission to write an appeal in Hebrew, which large numbers would sign before any authority expressive of their great desire, and pledging themselves to engage in cultivation, and desired us to send it to our friends abroad, to assist with funds, in order that we may obtain sufficient land, implements, &c., to enable large numbers at once to proceed in the happy work of rearing 'their own vine and fig tree' in their own land.

"It is a well known fact, that numbers in the holy city have their minds partially enlightened through the secret reading of the gospel; and it is undoubted that this class compose those most anxious to escape from the bondage and charity-support of the Rabbis to the freedom of self-maintenance in a country life. Some may question their willingness and ability to labour; but all we have yet employed have proved industrious and desirous to learn, and are often men of intelligence, and, in all cases, willing to accept the lowest wages. From Mr. Meshullam's experience of the capabilities of the soil, he is convinced, that were only a moderate capital invested in securing land and erecting cheap dwellings, and the first expenses defrayed, any number, according to the extent of land employed, might be sustained from the products of their own industry.

"Providence has opened the way, for, during the last few years, great obstacles have been removed. The wildest Arab tribes are on the most complete terms of friendship, and will now assist rather than hinder.—The rains have fallen in quantities unknown before, causing a great and permanent increase of water, while now springs have appeared in places entirely desert before; and the roaming Bedouin sheiks earnestly desire cultivation around.

"The present favourable state of affairs in this land, together with the recent change in the feelings of the Jews, form to the friends of Israel a most interesting and important 'sign of the times.' See the heart of the Jewish world stirred to seek and accept aid from and under the direction of Christians. It calls loudly at the hand of every believer—'through whose mercy they obtain mercy'—to render the aid which they so much need. But we submit their own appeal to the people of Christ; and must leave the responsibility of their case with them, only reminding them that suffering numbers wait with patient hope for the result. In the meantime, we shall devote the feeble means in our power to encourage and assist them.

"The health of our little number, with one exception, has been remarkably good, and all are surprised to find the climate here far more pleasant and healthy than they had anticipated. Although engaged in toils and trials, yet their hearts are daily rejoiced with the rare evidences before them that the promised day of blessing is dawning on this land, and on its ancient people; and their only and fervent desire is, that while the Lord is now hastening it 'in his time,' all his people may be co-workers together with him."

"Jerusalem and the country round about it, are surely improving—the former being built, and the latter cultivated. There is a great increase of planting trees and vines, and inclosing the fields, especially by the Greek native Church, under the direction, and with millions of Russian money. The Emperor of Russia is determined to pre-occupy and own the land of Judea; and the Greeks (as his own people are called) are our greatest opposers, and intrigue, in every possible way, to obtain Artos from Meshullam and his Arabs. But God still keeps it strangely in Meshullam's hands, and under his power, notwithstanding his and our poverty; as it is by far the most favourable and cultivated spot in Judea. All classes envy us, and desire to get it; and the English Consul, with the English State Church Mission, seem determined, at all costs, to buy Meshullam out of his possession, and thus compel us to abandon our vantage ground (as they did in former years, with the mission under the direction of the American Board of Foreign Missions,) because we are Americans; and prefer to worship the Lord in Christian love, and have declined their prayer-book formulary. We love God, and all Christians

of every denomination—and their attempts to fence off all but their own name, are manifested in various ways. I will mention one instance which has just occurred.

"Meshullam has just returned from Jerusalem, hearing that Mr. Finn, the British Consul, had received letters from England, with money, in answer to the Jewish petition which he sent in Meshullam's name; but he only lets Meshullam a part of their contents, and retains the money in his own hands. He read a part of a letter to him, stating that a gentleman deceased, had left £1000 (\$5000) to the one who first began agriculture here; but it was from an Episcopalian, and it seems that the trustees had received word from here of Meshullam's insubordination to the State Church; and Mr. Finn, who has just set up to buy and cultivate some land (without water) near Jerusalem, and has not succeeded in raising much, is trying to get that also for his own effort, and to-day (October 5th) Miss Williams and I are helping Meshullam to write a counter-statement to England for it.

"The most encouraging feature is the great and constant influx of Jews returning to the land of their fathers. Fifteen hundred arrived in Jerusalem last week; and they come from far and near, to see us—many of them very poor, seeking for employment and bread; and though we cannot give them work, (for want of means to take any more than we have) they cannot go away hungry. Truly the field here is 'white for the harvest'; for the widest effort of Christian missionary enterprise, and Israel's sons are looking voluntarily for succour from Christian hands.—O where are the lovers of Israel now? The door is wide open—the Sultan's latest firman extends full toleration and protection to ALL Protestants; and still Judah's cry, through Meshullam, goes a begging."

We may remark, in this connection, that the subject of restoring the land of Judea to its pristine beauty and fruitfulness, is, at the present time, attracting much attention in Europe, as well as in the United States. This fact has been referred to in our correspondence. The example of Meshullam has proved contagious, and although, when at an early day, we expressed our interest in it, we presumed it would, for many years, be but a limited experiment, we are now of the opinion that great results are to flow from it. Even the Jews themselves are becoming interested in it. The *London Jewish Chronicle*, which is a journal conducted by Jews, is earnestly directing attention to it, and, as appears from the following extract, a Jewish Association has already been formed in London to promote the object:—

"At a numerous meeting of gentlemen interested in the cause of the Holy Land, the following resolutions were unanimously agreed to, viz:

"That a Society be established for the purpose of planting Jewish Colonies in Palestine for industrial purposes.

"That the Society be called 'The Association for Encouraging Jewish Settlements in Palestine.'

"That the gentlemen now present do form themselves into a Provisional Committee, for the purposes of the Association, until a General Meeting of the Donors and Subscribers.

"That a Sub-Committee be appointed, for the purpose of preparing details to be embodied in an address, to be issued to the public, containing the objects and aims of the Association.

"That M. R. Lovenson, Esq., of No. 18 Queen Square, be Honorary Treasurer, and Solomon Sequerra, Esq., of No. 9 Bury Street, Leadenhall Street, be Honorary Secretary, to whom all communications and donations of the friends to the cause are requested to be forwarded."

## IRELAND'S MISSION FIELD.

By JOHN EDGAR, D.D., *Professor of Divinity, and Honorary Secretary of Missions for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.*

## IRELAND'S EARLY DAYS.

Ireland is, at least, an interesting field. Its early history is proverbially obscure, but at whatever date Druidical superstition gave way to the religion of Christ, that religion continued to reign over Ireland, in comparative purity, long after the rest of Europe had become a slave of Rome.

There was once a day in Ireland when the Book of God was free; when, under the ministry of the pious Culdees, the mass, and purgatory, and prayers for the dead, and the obliquity of the clergy, and such-like lies in hypocrisy, were all unknown. Gradually, however, corruption spread, and, at length, the last of the western churches which preserved independence was conquered and enslaved. In 1155, Pope Adrian made a present of Ireland to Henry II., on condition of its being subjected entirely to the dominion and religion of the Man of Sin. Thus, by force and fraud, unhappy Ireland fell; and in one short century, under the withering curse of Rome, her purity and her glory were no more.

## IRISH PRIESTS—AS THEY WERE, AND AS THEY ARE.

There is a remarkable similarity between the condition to which Ireland then sank, and that in which she is still. The Roman Pontiff was permitted to fill the influential offices in the Church, and not unfrequently in the State, with his obsequious adherents. The prelates, entirely subservient to the Pope, and devoted to their own selfish interests, were enemies to the Government which protected them, and rebels in the land which bore them. They claimed exemption from taxation and arrest for debt; they pardoned felons or commuted their crimes for money; and, on one occasion, they threatened to dispose the clergy and