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"SPEAK UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, THAT THEY GO FORWARD."—Exodus xiv., 15.

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Religious Intelligence.

CHANGES IN CHINA.—A GREAT FIRE FROM A LITTLE SPARK.

Not very many years ago I was working in his father's little shop, as a carpenter, in Newcastle. One might have thought, to see him, he would have remained a carpenter all his days, and known about little else than the making of a window, flooring a room, or fitting up a cupboard—just as most boys would have done, had they been in his place. He had not been long at school—but he was diligent when there—and now, when obliged to work hard with hammer and plane, there was little time for self-improvement. But by knowing the Saviour, he learned to "redeem the time;" and spare moments, wasted by others in idleness and fun, were spent by him in learning Latin and Greek, sitting on a log of wood, among the shavings and sawdust of his father's workshop.

Years passed away. Many school boys had grown up to be men; some, idle when scholars, were getting slowly on, and dunces were found to be dunces still. Some had gone to sea, because too wild and careless to live on land, and had found out, when too late, that wise men still think there is nothing like a rod for the back of a fool. But our young carpenter is far away, living in a strange-looking little room, in a town on the borders of China. He is not a carpenter now, but a man of extensive learning—a missionary of the cross, sent out there by a Society in London. It was no easy task he had undertaken; for he was the only Protestant missionary in all that immense empire; he was not able to preach to the people in their own tongue, and even if he had, the Government would not have allowed him. They would not permit him to go farther in the country, and it was only by stealth he could live where he was. But, from a boy, he had learned to overcome difficulties; and he was not to be baffled now. For a long time he had often to hide himself all the day, and only venture out at night. At length by great perseverance, he mastered the strange, difficult, Chinese language, translated the whole Bible into it; and wrote a large dictionary for the use of other missionaries who might come after him.

At last the Bible being translated into Chinese, chapters of it were printed off and given to the people. But they would not believe it.—Some tore them up, threw them away; others burnt them in the fire; and some even mocked the missionaries as fanatics and fools. But God had not forgotten them; for, after a time, the clouds began to break, and streaks of daylight to appear. A man, called Leang Afa, was employed in printing the Scriptures; and although a wicked idolater at first, he was eventually brought to a knowledge of the Saviour. He became a new man, changed by the spirit of God; and so precious was the Saviour to him, so happy did he feel as one of the Lord's freemen, that he longed to make known the blessed Gospel to his Heathen countrymen. He soon became a good missionary himself, wrote tracts and printed them, and then went from place to place, scattering "the good seed of the Word."

But some police-men, hearing what he was doing, seized all his printing-blocks and tracts, and threw poor Afa into prison. The missionaries tried to get him out, and although they paid a fine for his freedom, his cruel persecutors would not let him go until he received thirty strokes on the back with a bamboo cane, covering it with wounds and blood. But all this did not discourage him; God blessed his labours, first in the conversion of his wife, and then of some of his friends. In 1834 Afa and three of his friends went to the examination of a Chinese school at a place called Canton. They stood before the door of the Hall and gave a tract to every one who would take it. They gave away ten thousand. But, poor men, they soon had to suffer for this. One of them was killed, another was cruelly beaten, and Afa was glad to make his escape. Their work was not in vain—no one can tell even yet how much good was done; a spark was let fall that day which God was afterwards to blow up into a great flame. Many of the tracts were, no doubt, soon destroyed, but not all. One student took his home. He read it carefully, and it left a deep impression on his mind. He wished to know more about God and about Jesus. Long afterwards he met with a missionary, who gave him further instruction. He went home, and, like Afa, began to teach his friends. They too, believed, and gave up their idols. Others joined them, until there was a large company. But soon they were persecuted, forbidden to pray to Jesus, or speak to others in his name.—Some were beheaded, others put in prison, and all so cruelly treated that at last they were forced to defend themselves. They fought, and conquered; and from one place to another they have gone making war against their cruel oppressors, breaking down the Heathen temple, and casting the idols into the sea! They pray to God, many of them believe in Jesus, and they have printed,—the only portion of the Bible, we fear, that they have,—the first twenty-eight chapters of Genesis; and some other good books they have themselves written. It is expected they will soon turn the king from his throne, and, if God gives them light, destroy the idolatry of China, and proclaim her to be free!

You see how wonderful are the ways of God; how great things He can bring out of small beginnings! And all this we can trace back to the poor carpenter-boy, Robert—afterwards Dr.—Morrison.

Now, this is the reason why we wish, at once, to send so many Bibles to China. These people cannot succeed without the Bible—China will never be free without it—souls will never be saved. But send them this glorious Bible, this "Lamp and light," and the darkness of that land will flee, their dumb idols it "will utterly abolish;" and the voice of joy and rejoicing shall be heard in the tabernacles of the righteous. Is not this worth an effort!—a noble, vigorous effort? Surely it is. And it is an effort in which all may join—the youngest boy or the oldest man. With a field so wide before us,—teeming with dark, imprisoned souls, seeking light and liberty,—they must have Heathen hearts, cold as the dumb idols, who would not pray, and give, and gather, to help on a work so glorious! Reader have you done all you can, or is it not possible to add a little more to what you have already done!—*English Pres. Mess.*

THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

As everything relating to the Jewish people, who have been so remarkable for their peculiar calamities, will be of interest to many of our readers, we will subjoin a schedule of their present numerical force, compiled with considerable labor and care from the different journals and records at our command, setting forth the number of the Hebrew population in the world, together with the authorities from whose data we arrive at the total estimate:—

Under the dominion of the Grand Seigneur.....	2,800,000
State of Barbary.....	1,000,000
In Poland, before the Partition, 1775.....	2,600,000
In Russia, comprehending Moldavia and Wallachia	2,500,000
In different States in Germany.....	1,500,000
In Holland and Belgium.....	400,000
In Sweden and Denmark.....	50,000
In France.....	200,000
In Great Britain and her dependencies.....	220,000
In the Italian States.....	500,000
In the United States.....	60,000