

the keys of heaven and of hell, and the power of working miracles at will by Cabalistic means.

We have said little of other European Jews than those of Poland and Germany, for with them are the great and leading interests of the people, whether their religious or political existence be considered. The Jews in France are perhaps from thirty to forty thousand; they abound chiefly at Metz, along the Rhine, and at Marseilles and Bordeaux. In Bonaparte's time they were imagined to amount to at least twice that number; but it may be inferred from the report of the proceedings of his Sanhedrim,† how large a proportion of them came from his German and Italian provinces. They are relieved from civil restraints and disabilities in France, and in the Netherlands also. The Jews in Holland, of both German and Portuguese origin, are numerous; the latter are said to have taken refuge there when the United Provinces asserted their independence of Spain; they have a splendid synagogue at Amsterdam. Infidelity is supposed to have made more progress amongst them than amongst the German Jews in Holland. The Italian Jews are chiefly at Leghorn and Genoa; and there are four thousand of them at Rome. In speaking of the religion of the Jews, it is not necessary to particularize those who assumed the mask of Christianity under terror of the Inquisition, although much has been said of their wealth and numbers, and of the high offices they have held in Spain, and especially in Portugal. But it is curious to see in a very distant quarter, a like simulation produced amongst them by like causes. There are at Salonica thirty synagogues and about twenty-five thousand professed Jews; and a body of Israelites have been lately discovered there who really adhering to the faith of their fathers, have externally embraced Mahomedanism.

The Barbary Jews are a very fine people; but the handsomest Jews are said to be those of Mesopotamia. That province may also boast of an Arab chief who bears the name of the Patriarch Job, is rich in sheep and camels, and oxen, and asses, abounds in hospitality, and believes that he descends from him; he is also famed for his justice. The Jews at Constantinople, forty thousand in number, and in the parts of European Turkey on and near the Mediterranean, speak Spanish, and appear to descend from Israelites driven from Spain by persecution. The Bible Society are now printing at Cosiu the New Testament, in Jewish-Spanish, for their benefit.

In truth, little appears to be known of the state of the Jews during some hundreds of years after the destruction of Jerusalem. The first body of learned Jews which drew attention after that disastrous event was that settled in Spain; and from it all Jewish learning descends. As in accomplishment of the prophecy, the Jew is found over the whole surface of the globe; he has been long established in China, which abhors the foreigner; and in Abyssinia, which it is almost as difficult to reach as to quit. The early Judaism of that country, and in former days the history of the powerful colony of Jews established in its heart, which at one time actually reigned over the kingdom are matters so curious that we regret that we can do no more than advert to them: we must say the same as to the evidence existing of Jewish rites having extended themselves very far southward along the eastern coast of Africa; the numerous Jews of Barbary; and the black and white Jews, who have been established for ages, more or less remote, on the Malabar coast. It may be here observed, that all the Israelites hitherto discovered appear to be descendants of those who held the kingdom of Judah.

When the existence of the Jews in the European states is considered in a political view, in order that we may determine what conduct should be observed towards them by the several governments, it is evident that we have but one of two things to do, either to drive them out, which no statesman in his sense would dream of at this day, or endeavour to render them sound, enlightened, efficient, and, as far as possible, integral members of the several bodies politic; in other words, to identify their feelings and interests with those of the Christian citizens, and qualify them by suitable education to

discharge fitly their respective duties, whether public or private. But when we come to reflect on the means to be adopted for the improvement of their present condition, and the remedy of those inconveniences which that condition inflicts on the states where they reside, we are lost in difficulties. If the discordant and painful position of the Jews amongst us, and the prejudicial effects of the mode of their existence, as a crude, unalloyed, heterogeneous mass, arise from their Judaism, and from their refusal to adopt the religion of Christendom, then every rule of sound policy urges us to promote, by means of persuasion and as far as we can, the reception of the gospel by them.—Civil enactments, with reference to this peculiar people, require much deliberation. We may harm both them and ourselves by hasty and injudicious attempts to benefit them. But worldly wisdom, as well as charity, demands that we shall, in our several codes and systems, abolish whatsoever can be fairly held to prejudice the interests and to wound the feelings of those domesticated strangers, unless under a positive state-necessity, so that we may not, through injustice and impolicy, continue to keep up feelings under which they must be at the least foreign to our interests. On the other hand, to give all the rights and privileges of citizens to them, whilst holding to Judaism, would be to bind ourselves wholly to those who cannot so bind themselves to us; to confer on them a strength which might be turned against ourselves; and to compel them of course to contract reciprocal obligations, which their highest duties—in their view—national, political, and religious, must force them to violate at such a call as they shall believe to be that of their promised deliverer.

We have reasoned on these matters on general principles; politically, the question affects us here far less than it does many other nations. The Jews in Great Britain and Ireland are not supposed to be more than from ten to twelve thousand, very many of whom are foreigners and migratory.

When we speak of the conversion of the Jews as a thing which is a desideratum for the European governments, nothing can be farther from our intentions than to suggest, that they should mix in it directly; we are well aware that it could not be usefully even attempted by them,—for this among other reasons,—that their so doing would excite extreme mistrust and jealousy: they should, undoubtedly, however, view such attempts, if prudently made, with favour and good will, and endeavour to lead them by advice and encouragement. But if political wisdom urges us to encourage, by all prudent and charitable means, the promotion of Christianity amongst the Jews, our religion summons us to the same duty with a far more powerful voice. What can show more strongly that inveteracy of uncharitableness towards the Jews, which has grown out of long indulgence in the feeling, than the dis-favour accompanying the attempt to convert them? There are even many who will contribute to the support of missions to distant nations, to which we owe no atonement, and yet withhold their aid from those whose aim is to give the gospel to the Israelites who dwell in our cities, and who have so long been trodden down under our feet. That very degraded moral state, which gives the Jew his strongest claim to our assistance; is urged as a reason why it should be withheld from him as one past help and amendment! He is vilified for blindness, perverseness, obstinacy, if he adheres to the faith of his fathers; and he is vituperated as insincere and interested, if he abandons it to profess our own!

IMPROVEMENT OF THE MIND.

No man is obliged to learn and know every thing; this can neither be sought nor required, for it is utterly impossible; yet all persons are under some obligation to improve their own understanding; otherwise it will be a barren desert, or a forest overgrown with weeds and brambles. Universal ignorance or infinite errors will overspread the mind, which is utterly neglected, and lies without any cultivation.

Skill in the sciences is indeed the business and profession but of a small part of mankind; but there are many others placed in such an exalted rank in the world, as allows them much leisure and large opportunities to cultivate their reason, and to beautify and enrich their minds with various knowledge.

Every the lower orders of men have particular callings in life, wherein they ought to acquire a just degree of skill, and this is not to be done well without thinking and reasoning about them.

The common duties and benefits of society, which belong to every man living, as we are social creatures, and even our native and necessary relations to a family, a neighbourhood, or a government, oblige all persons whatsoever to use their reasoning powers upon a thousand occasions; every hour of life calls for some regular exercise of our judgment as to times and things, persons and actions: without a prudent and discreet determination in matters before us, we shall be plunged into perpetual errors in our conduct. Now that which should always be practised, must at some time be learnt.

Besides, every son and daughter of Adam has a most important concern in the affairs of a life to come, and therefore it is a matter of the highest moment for every one to understand, to judge, and to reason rightly about the things of religion. It is in vain for any to say, we have no leisure or time for it. The daily intervals of time, and vacancies from necessary labour, together with the one day us seven in the Christian world, allows sufficient time for this, if men would but apply themselves to it with half as much zeal and diligence as they do to the trifles and amusements of this life, and it would turn to infinitely better account.

Thus it appears to be the necessary duty and the interest of every person living to improve his understanding, to inform his judgment, to treasure up useful knowledge, and to acquire the skill of reasoning, as far as his station, capacity, and circumstances, furnish him with proper means for it. Our mistakes in judgment may plunge us into much folly and guilt in practice. By acting without thought or reason, we dishonour the God that made us reasonable creatures, we often become injurious to our neighbours, kindred, or friends and we bring sin and misery upon ourselves: for we are accountable to God our judge for every part of our irregular and mistaken conduct, where he hath given us sufficient advantages to guard against those mistakes.

VARIETY OF FLOWERS.

We cannot but be struck with astonishment, when we consider the prodigious number of flowers produced in spring, summer, and autumn. But the variety amongst this numerous tribe is, perhaps, still more surprising. Certainly, nothing but a Divine Power could cause such numbers to grow; while this power must have been united with wisdom equally great, to produce such infinite variety. If they had all been perfectly alike, the sameness would have fatigued the senses; and if summer produced no fruit or flowers but such as spring affords, we should soon be weary of contemplating them, and of bestowing on them the care and cultivation which they require.

It is, therefore, a proof of the divine goodness that the productions of the vegetable kingdom are so agreeably diversified, and that such novelty of charms is added to their other perfections. This variety does not only extend to whole tribes of plants, but also to individuals. The carnation differs from the rose, the rose from the tulip, the tulip from the auricula, and the auricula from the lily; but each carnation, rose, tulip, lily, and auricula, has also its own particular beauty and character. Every one has something peculiar to itself.—There are not two flowers of the same species perfectly alike in form and shades. Take a view of a bed of flowers in a parterre; some are of an extraordinary size, and seem to reign over the rest, others are of a middling rank; some bear their stately heads above the height of man, others creep upon the ground; some exhibit the most dazzling colours, others are simple and make no show; some perfume the air with exquisite odours, whilst others only please the sight with their beautiful tints. The variations in flowers are not less remarkable in the different seasons of the year. In spring, when men leave the cities, in order to go and view the productions which a bountiful Creator grants for their subsistence, they see the blossoms in full splendor and beauty. Towards summer, when the attention is particularly led to sowing seeds, thousands of flowers present themselves to the sight, and form a beautiful scene. They succeed one another regularly, and in the order designed. When winter at last arrives, it brings other plants with it, which,

† Bonaparte attempted by the construction of an assembly which he called the Great Sanhedrim, so to bend an inflexible religion to his purposes, as to derive from it the means of leading and uniting to the state those whose complete union with any Gentile state is rendered impossible by that very religion.