

General Articles.

THE TEN LOST JEWISH TRIBES.

From the Caledonian Mercury.

The following paragraph, which lately appeared in a German paper, under the head of *Leipsic*, is calculated to lead to some interesting inquiries:—

"After having seen, some years past, merchants from Tiflis, Persia, and Armenia, among the visitors at our fair, we have had, for the first time, two traders from Bucharina, with shawls which are there manufactured of the finest wool of the goats of Thibet and Cashmere, by the Jewish families who form a third part of the population. In Bucharina, (formerly the capital of Sogdiana) the Jews have been very numerous ever since the Babylonian captivity, and are there as remarkable for their industry and manufactures, as they are in England for their money transactions. It was not till last year that the Russian Government succeeded in extending its diplomatic mission far into Bucharina. The above traders exchanged their shawls for coarse and fine woollen cloths of such colors as are most esteemed in the East."

Much interest has been excited by the information which this paragraph conveys, and which is equally novel and important. In none of the Geographical Works which we have consulted, do we find the least hint as to the existence in Bucharina of such a body of Jews as that here mentioned, amounting to one-third of the whole population; but as the fact can no longer be doubted, the next point of inquiry which presents itself is, whence have they proceeded, and how have they come to establish themselves in a region so remote from their original country? This question, we think, can only be answered by supposing that these persons are the descendants of the long lost Ten Tribes, concerning the fate of which theologians, historians, and antiquaries, have been alike puzzled; and, however wild this hypothesis may at first appear, there are not wanting circumstances to render it far from being improbable. In the 17th chapter of the Second Book of Kings, it is said, "In the ninth year of Hoshea, the King of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Helah and in Harbor, by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes;" and in the subsequent verses, as well as in the writing of the Prophets, it is said, that the Lord then "put away Israel out of his sight, and carried them away into the land of Assyria, unto this day." In the Apocrypha, 2d, Esdras, viii., it is said, that the Ten Tribes were carried beyond the river, (Euphrates,) and so they were brought into another land, when they took counsel together, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind dwelt; that they entered in at the narrow passage of the river Euphrates when the springs of the flood were stayed, and "went through the country a great journey, even in a year and a half," and it is added, that "there they will remain, until the latter time, when they will come forth again." The country beyond Bucharina was unknown to the ancients; and it is, we believe, generally admitted, that the river Gozen, mentioned in the Book of Kings, is the same as the Ganges, which has its rise in those very countries in which the Jews reside, of whom the *Leipsic* account speaks. The distance which these two merchants must have travelled, cannot, therefore, be less than three thousand miles; and there can be little doubt that the Jews, whom they represent as a third part of the population of the country, are descendants of the Ten Tribes of Israel, settled by the river Gozen.

The great plain of central Asia, forming four principal sides, viz. Little Bucharina, Thibet, Mongaola, and Mantcheous, contains a surface of 150,000 square miles and a population of 20,000,000. This vast country is still very little known. The greatest traits of its gigantic formation, compose, for the most part, all that we are certain of. It is an immense plain of an excessive elevation, intersected with barren rocks, and vast deserts of black and almost moving sand. It is supported on all sides by mountains of granite, whose elevated summits determine the different climates of the great continent of Asia; and form the division of its waters. From its exterior flow all the great rivers of that part of the world. In the interior are a quantity of rivers, having little declivity, or no issue, which are lost in the sands, or perhaps feed stagnant

waters. In the southern chains are countries, populous, rich, and civilized; Little Bucharina, Great and Little Thibet. The people of the north are shepherds and wanderers.—Their riches consist in their herds. Their habitations are tents, and towns, and camps, which are transported according to the want of pasturage.—The Bucharians enjoy the right of trading to all parts of Asia, and the Thibetians cultivate the earth to advantage. The ancients had only a confused idea of Central Asia. "The inhabitants of the country," as we learn from great authority, "are in a high state of civilization; possessing all the useful manufactures, and lofty houses built with stone. The Chinese reckon (but this is evidently an exaggeration) that Thibet alone contains 33,000,000 of persons. The merchants of Cashmere, on their way to Yarkand, in Little Bucharina, pass through Little Thibet. This country is scarcely known to European Geographers." The immense plain of Central Asia is hemmed in, and almost inaccessible by mountain ranges of the greatest elevation, which surround it on all sides, except China; and when the watchful jealousy of the Government of the Celestial Empire is considered, it will scarcely be wondered at that the vast region in question is so little known.

Such is the country which the newly discovered Jews are said to inhabit in such numbers. The following facts may perhaps serve to throw some additional light on this interesting subject.

In the year 1822, a Mr. Sargon, who, if we mistake not, was one of the agents to the London Society, communicated to England some interesting accounts of the number of persons resident at Bombay, Cannamora, and their vicinity, who are evidently descendants of the Jews, calling themselves Beni-Israel, and bearing almost uniformly, Jewish names, but with Persian terminations. This gentleman feeling very desirous of obtaining all possible knowledge of their condition, undertook a mission for this purpose to Cannamora; and the result of his inquiries was, a conviction that they were not Jews of the one tribe and a half, being of a different race to the white and black Jews at Cochin, and consequently that they were a remnant of the long lost Ten Tribes. This gentleman also concluded, from the information he obtained respecting the Beni-Israel, that they existed in great numbers in the countries between Cochin and Bombay, the north of Persia, among the hordes of Tartary, and in Cashmere, the very countries in which, according to the paragraph in the German paper, they exist in such numbers. So far, then, these accounts confirm each other, and there is every probability that the Beni-Israel, resident on the west of the Indian peninsula; had originally proceeded from Bucharina. It will therefore be interesting to know something of their moral and religious character. The following particulars are collected from Mr. Sargon's accounts. 1. In dress and manners they resemble the natives, and are not to be distinguished from them except by attentive observations and enquiry. 2. They have Hebrew names of the same kind, and with the local termination as the Sepoys in the 9th regiment Bombay Native Infantry. 3. Some of them read the Hebrew, and they have a faint tradition of the cause of their original exodus from Egypt. 4. Their common language is the Hindoo. 5. They keep idols, and worship, and use idolatrous ceremonies intermixed with Hebrew. 6. They circumcise their own children. 7. They observe the Kippor, or great expiation-day of the Hebrews, but not the Sabbath or any feast or fast days. 8. They call themselves *Gorah Jehudi*, or White Jews; and they term the Black Jews *Gollah Jehudi*. 9. They speak of the Arabian Jews as their brethren, but do not acknowledge the European Jews as such, because they are of a fairer complexion than themselves. 10. They use on all occasions, and under the most trivial circumstances, the usual Jewish prayer,—“Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.” 11. They have no cohen, (priest) levite, or kasi, among them, under those terms; but they have a kasi, (reader) who performs prayers and conducts their religious ceremonies; and they appear to have elders and a chief in each community, who determine in their religious concerns. 12. They expect the Messiah, and that they will one day return to Jerusalem. They think that the time of his appearance will soon arrive, at which they much rejoice, believing that at Jerusalem they will see their God, worship him only, and be despised no more.

These particulars, we should presume, can scarce-

ly fail to prove interesting, both in moral and religious, as well as in a geographical point of view. The number of the scattered members of the tribe of Judah and the half-tribe of Benjamin, rather exceed than fall short of five millions. Now if to this number be added the many other millions to be found in the different countries of the East, what an immense power would be brought into action were the spirit of nationality once roused, or any extraordinary event to occur, which should induce them to unite in claiming possession of that land which was given to them for an "heritage for ever," and to which, in every other clime of the earth, their fondest hopes and their dearest aspirations never cease to turn!

MONOMANIA.

A French daily paper, devoted almost exclusively to medical and surgical reports, (*La Clinique*), contains the account of the recent trial at Angouleme of a man named Jean Fort, charged with the wilful murder of his mother.

This case, it seems, has been brought forward in the *Clinique* in support of the arguments of Drs. Gall, Georget, and others, who, from careful and long experience, have declared that the monomania of homicide is found frequently in persons who in every other respect are not only free from mental alienation, but who also sometimes display great intellectual powers, and, but for the longing to shed human blood, which in them is unconquerable, might be considered mild and humane members of society, their general conduct being usually correct, and, during the absence of the paroxysms, decidedly benevolent.

The description given by Gall, Georget, Esquirol, and other eminent surgeons and physicians of the Monomaniac, is as follows:—"When the monomaniac has accomplished his object, he no longer thinks of any thing else. He has destroyed life; his end is attained. After the murder he is calm, and does not attempt to conceal himself. Sometimes even, full of satisfaction with the deed that he has committed, he avows and delivers himself up to justice. If he is taken, however, against his will, he is morose and melancholy; he uses no dissimulation or artifice, and reveals with calmness and candour the minutest details of the murder."

Opposed to the doctrines of this party, by which monomania is declared a mental failing, over which the object of it has no controul—the development of the passion being greater than the corrective powers of the mind—are some of the principal surgeons of the French metropolis, who deny, first the correctness of the facts, as stated by their opponents, and then comment on the bad example and danger of allowing monomaniacs to escape without punishment.

As cases of real or pretended monomania are now become frequent in France, particularly in the south, which appears to be as fertile in the production of crime as of the gifts of nature, the discussion excites great interest in Paris, and is kept up by the new facts, of which the opposing parties daily avail themselves. The following case seems to support the doctrine of Gall in a strong degree. The murderer, in his calmness during the perpetration of his horrible purpose, and after its completion, resembles much the unfortunate man who was tried at Cork for the murder of his crew. On that occasion a strong effort was made to convict the prisoner of wilful murder, against the concurrent testimony of the medical witnesses, who deposed to his monomania in the most positive and decided manner. The general correctness of the prisoner—the total freedom from mental imbecility, and even great powers of intellect in the ordinary affairs of life, were clearly deposed to; but the horrible disease (for it is a disease) of monomania was evident, and it is extraordinary that there should be persons who had been well educated who would doubt its existence.

Jean Forte, the monomaniac tried at Angouleme, is described in the account of the trial as an object of disgust, from the appearance of his face, which was covered with an ulcer which had nearly destroyed his nose; and instances of his having used threats of destruction to many persons, some of whom, perhaps, had ridiculed him on his appearance, were related in evidence. On one occasion he had been seen attempting the life of his mother, and, when disturbed, he exclaimed "Well, if I do not kill you to-day, I can do it to-morrow." At another time he attempted to destroy a young child, after having said to it, "I will kill you, you little rogue;