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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

"That thou givest they gather."

Once more the "Harvest Home" rings through the land,
And rich and poor take up the pleasing strain;
For God has opened wide his bounteous hand,
And satisfied his creature's wants again.
"Give us," we prayed, "this day our daily bread."
"Seedtime and harvest shall not fail," he said.

And eagerly the busy hands have stored
Into the garner, for the winter's need,
God's gracious gifts. His name be e'er adored;
He is the Friend of the distressed indeed:
And, as we gather what he scattereth,
His lofty praises shall employ our breath.

All that he gives is good; he knoweth well
The daily wants that force our anxious cries;
And, with more love than words of ours can tell,
He pours his blessings from the azure skies.
O, who can speak his Father's love to all
Who in their day of grief upon him call.

The yellow corn—the graceful harvest sheaf!
We thank thee, Father, that thou weariest not;
Thy day of mercies is not short or brief,
And we, thy humble ones, are not forgot:
Help us to praise thee for thy boundless love;
Help us to sing thy praise, all praise above.

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

Selections.

From the Baptist Magazine.

The Nestorians.

BY CHARLES MARSHALL.

CONTINUED.

There noble Missions.

By the sixth century the Nestorians had formed very numerous and influential Christian churches "in all parts of Persia, in India, in Armenia, in Arabia, in Syria, and in other countries;" they had traversed the wild Steppes of Tartary and had planted the standard of the cross among their fierce tribes; they had penetrated to the very east of Asia, by their God leaping over China's great wall, and winning great mandarins to the faith. In glad remembrance of the ancient splendour of this noble church, may Christians now help together by their prayers that such days may again dawn upon Nestoria!

In the seventh century arose the fatal delusion of Mohammedanism, and the horns of the crescent began to push against the Christian churches; but the Nestorians continued their missionary efforts during this century, and during the eighth, and ninth, and tenth, and indeed right on to, at least, the fifteenth century. No church can unroll such a splendid scroll of the past. In the tenth century they began to be treated with more severity by the Moslem powers, but were yet shown some favour in consequence of the help they afforded by their skill in languages, their knowledge of medicine, and their great ability in supervising business concerns. In his summary of the thirteenth century, Mosheim writes, "Nestorian Christians were scattered over all Northern Asia and China." In the year 1289 it is declared by Corvino, a Popish agent, that the Nestorians "were so very powerful in China that they would not allow Christians of any other denomination to erect churches, nor to publish their own peculiar doctrines." During these centuries the Nestorians had founded Christian churches, not only in the many countries already named, but likewise in Turkestan, Malabar, Ceylon, the Spice Islands, and in many districts throughout Asia.

But fierce persecution had begun to rage against them, and many churches had been drowned in blood and at length in 1380 the furious Tamerlane unsheathed his sword, and carried it victorious, reeking with gore, through almost all Asia, everywhere destroying the Christian name. Still, as late as 1502 the Nestorian patriarch sent out four bishops to superintend the Chinese churches; so that we perceive that the Gospel light did not pale in the East till the very century in which, by the hand of Luther, the torch, lit with fire from heaven, was brandished high in the midst of the nations in the West.

Present Condition.

A small remnant of the Nestorians is alone left. Doubtless some scattered flocks may yet be found hidden away in obscure districts in various countries; and there are the Christians of St. Thomas in India of Nestorian origin; but all these, with the great body still preserved in Northern Persia, form but an inconsiderable remnant as compared with their numbers in former times. It is even surprising that any should survive, surrounded on all sides as they have been by relentless persecutors. But He who gave the *Vaidois* their impregnable fortress of Alpine bulwarks which has secured them against all the might of the Pope, "the worst Turk of all," has bestowed upon the Nestorian Church a similar retreat of sweet vales and pasturage embosomed in rocky fastnesses which they have held securely against all foes. In this mountainous region about 100,000 are now to be found, poor indeed, but peaceful, industrious, and free. Beside these "independent tribes" there are some 30,000 scattered on the fertile vales and hills of the district of Oromiah, and on the sunny shores of the lake of that name. These suffer more from the Moslems than their brethren in the mountains; but of them all it may be said they are like wheat ground between two heavy mill-stones, the fierce predatory Kurd tribes and the cruel exacting Moslems of Persia. Another body of Nestorians, now termed the Chaldaic, has been gained over by the untiring agents of Rome, and number about 40,000, who live under the jurisdiction of a patriarch of their own.

The Nestorians are frugal industrious honest, and their manners are truly patriarchal. To live amongst them is to go back 4,000 years in the world's history. Grant, one of their beloved American missionaries, relates that a late patriarch, named Abraham, sent a trusty steward with mules laden with presents, silks, jewels, &c., to find a wife for his younger brother Isaac, who "took her, and she became his wife, and he loved her." It is the custom there, as of old, for the father, or elder son if the father is dead, to select wives for the sons in the family, and husbands for the daughters. Here, a man does not quite invariably succeed in finding a wife exactly to suit himself: how onerous and difficult the task of finding wives and husbands for others!

Other examples might be given of their primitive simplicity. The crumbs and pieces of bread left at one meal are brought out at the next wrapped in the skin which serves as a cloth, because the Master said, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." The doorways of their ancient meeting-houses are very low and small, to remind them that "strait is the gate and narrow the way that leadeth unto life." They reverence the sign of the cross, but pay it no idolatrous regard. Indeed, they still merit the honourable title that has often been given them, "The Protestants of Asia." They abhor all worship of saints and angels, detest image worship, suffer no paintings in their churches, repudiate the fiction of purgatory, reject the confessional, and celebrate the Lord's Supper in a simple manner "in remembrance" of Him who loved them and gave himself for them.

Still the fires of zeal and love only smoulder on the altars where they once burned so brightly. Vital godliness appears to have decreased, and dependence is too much placed in the externals of religion. Miserable exchange, when the people are fed on empty husks, instead of on the fine wheat! But God has graciously visited the people lately with most refreshing showers of revival grace.

The American Board of Missions have sent Messrs. Perkins, Grant, Stoddart and others amongst them, whose labors have been greatly blessed. The following question has been frequently asked concerning these interesting people:—

Are they Descendants of Israel?

The ten tribes carried into captivity, called often the lost tribes, have been so frequently found, only to be lost again, that we must be permitted to regard with considerable suspicion any fresh discoveries of them. The

Tartars were once thought to be the lost tribes; the gipsies were almost proved to be; the aboriginal Americans had much said for them, more still, perhaps, on behalf of the claims of the Mexicans; the Peruvians, the Kalmucs, and, if we mistake not, the English and Welsh, have found some to believe that they are the missing tribes. Indeed they have been found in all parts of the earth by philosophers, whose theories, however, have soon foundered.

But certainly a strong case can be made out for the Nestorians. To Azahel Grant's interesting work we refer the reader for a clear and forcible statement of their claims, contenting ourselves here with a very brief summary. 1. The ten tribes were removed by Shalmaneser to the very district in which the Nestorians are found. 2. History does not record any return from this captivity. 3. Universally they affirm that they are "Beni Israel," sons of Israel. 4. The Jews scattered amongst them allow that they have a common origin, and regretfully state that the Nestorians were converted in the early ages of Christianity. 5. They speak the same language as the Jews of these countries, who are doubtless descendants; for the most part at least, of the captive tribes. 6. Many of their ceremonies are eminently Jewish, and might be almost described out of Leviticus. They slay a sheep or bullock as a thank-offering, giving the right shoulder to the presbyter and the remainder to the poor or to their friends. They build their places of worship with three divisions: a place for their meetings; a "sanctuary," into which only the presbyter or bishop may enter fasting; and a "most holy," into which none enter. The nearest relative is the avenger of blood and the churches take the place of the cities of refuge. 7. Their physiognomy is so truly Jewish, that the two peoples cannot be distinguished.

And why should we be startled by the probability that many of Israel's race instead of few have been followers of their King? Did not Paul write, "so now also there is a remnant according to the election of grace"? And this he says significantly, immediately after he had mentioned that God had reserved to himself 7,000 faithful ones while Elijah's mean thought was that he alone was left. James, too, wrote to the twelve tribes, not two, scattered abroad, and addressed them as "dearly beloved brethren." Evidently then, there were great numbers of the tribes of Israel converted to the Lord in this early time. May the set time speedily arrive when the Lord shall gather to himself all the dispersed of Israel and of Judah, and take to himself his great power and reign!

Their Language.

It may be interesting to know that the lips of the God-man uttered many words of their tongue, the Syriac. Thus when he named *Simon Bar-jona*, son of a pigeon (simorous creature), *Cephas*, a stone, immovable when built on the rock, he used their word; again, when he spoke to the deaf "*Ephphatha*," he opened; and when he cried in awful agony on the bloody tree, "*Lama sabachthani*!" *Raca* and *Corban* are Syriac words. The Spirit, too, teaches the new-born soul to cry, "*Abba*," Father. Paul concludes a tremendous curse with one of their words: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema *marana'ha*." And one last instance let us note, when the Lord took the dead maiden by the hand and said, "*Talitha cumi*." Oh that he may now take this sleeping church by the hand and again repeat the words, "Maiden, I say unto thee, arise." And may she again stand forth in heavenly beauty, and testify for Christ in the midst of the darkness of the East!

The Distress in Lancashire.

We learned by the last mail that the numbers receiving help from the Union and various relief funds, in some of the principal towns, were as follow:—

Town	Population	Receiving relief
Preston	80,000	23,500
Blackburn	56,000	30,000
Wigan	37,000	10,000
Ashton	35,000	15,900
Rochdale	35,000	10,000

It is computed that, to afford even the small relief of two shillings per week to each person, 30,000*l.* per week, above the amount raised by poor-rates, will be required.

The sufferers have shown great reluctance to burden any public fund, have withdrawn and expended all their savings from savings banks, have sold their furniture, and exhausted their scanty means to the last extreme before seeking, or, rather, accepting relief.—Public order and good conduct have reigned amidst the utmost distress.

The following letter, from the Earl of Shaftesbury to the editor of *The British Workman*, bespeaks the heart and pen from which it proceeds:—

Spa, Sept. 5, 1862.

"Let me request of you to urge on the numerous, intelligent, and warm-hearted readers of *The British Workman*, those, I mean, who by God's blessing, are in the receipt of fair wages, to set apart, week by week, some few pence to be added to the fund in aid of our suffering brethren in Lancashire.

"Those noble fellows have behaved, and they continue to behave, most admirably. There is no violence, no sedition—all is as they are an honour to Old England and we ought to support them by every means in our power, by our prayers and our contributions by them to a mysterious Providence. tributions.

"The record of their privations is terrible—in numberless instances the saving of years cherished as the deposits against sickness and old age, have been expended to sustain life—and whenever trade shall revive and these good men return to work, they will have though no longer young, to begin the world again, with diminished strength, and but a short time before them.

"Your readers will feel a sympathy with these heroic men, in their desire and their efforts to keep clear of poor-law relief. Some, however, must accept it; and in accepting it, they accept cheerfully the duty of doing something in return—but it is painful to see the kind of labour to which they are exposed, and the inconsiderate manner in which they are confounded with paupers, who are such by their own vices, or their own folly.

"I shall, perhaps, be excused for coming forward on behalf of the Lancashire operatives, my long-tried friends, whom I have known and loved for so many years.

Your obedient servant,

SHAFTESBURY."

The City of London Relief Committee lately held a meeting at the Mansion-house, the Lord Mayor acting as chairman, and resolved, after careful consideration of information, furnished by local relief committees and from other sources, to send additional grants of money to places in the distressed districts, amounting in the whole to 3,100*l.* This makes the total sum sent down to the districts by the London Committee about 33,300*l.* Mr. Pickering, the cashier reported that the subscriptions sent to the Lord Mayor up to that time amounted in the whole to 59,728*l.* of which about 44,200*l.* had been received during the last week.

To about 80 relief committees in all, in so many places, the Lord Mayor's committee have sent grants of money, adapted to the urgency of each case, from time to time; to some of them again and again. The starving people in those places have thus come to rely them for furnishing regularly a considerable part of the means by which they hope to live, and this consideration has long weighed upon the London Committee in apportioning the funds placed at their disposal by the public for the relief of the prevailing distress.

At a meeting of the Manchester Central Relief Fund, the very important report of the Executive Committee was read from which it appeared that the recipients of relief are rapidly increasing, and the committee fear that the indigence will extend until from 380,000 to 400,000 persons will require to be assisted by parochial or other funds. The Committee acknowledge with gratitude that they have now at their disposal a sum of 129,000*l.*, a munificent amount, contributed entirely by voluntary subscriptions, and still increasing. The donations specially mentioned in the report and at the meeting were, from the colony of Victoria, 5,000*l.*; from Halim Pasha, bro-