

Appropos, there are various ideas as to this as well as regarding the birth of Christ. For instance the birth of Christ is placed at anno mundi 3618 by some, and there are 140 different opinions. The other extreme places it at 6484 anno mundi (see Fabricii Bibliog. Antiquary, chap 7. p. 187.) The Jews placed the birth of Christ in A.M. 3760, the Masous in 4000, the Mizraim rite and many Christians in A. M. 4004, to which add 1890 (the present new year), and we have yet 110 years for the completion of 6000 years, or the advent. No concordance anywhere! Well might we believe that "neither the day nor the hour is known to any man, etc."

As it is intended in this letter to deal exclusively with the Jews let us first see

WHO ARE THE JEWS?

People generally suppose them to be the descendants of one tribe only—that of Judah, but in reality they are the descendants of the kingdom of Judah. Rehoboam and Jereboam, in fulfilment of prophecy, became leaders—one of all the ten tribes and one of the two tribes, namely Judah and Benjamin, and note the added words, "and the remnants of the people;" that is, the remnants of the various tribes which dwelt in Judea, who were all reckoned to the kingdom of Judah. [I am sorry not to be able to indicate the passages to the reader, as I was robbed of my bible and other things by Bedoin Arabs while traveling in Palestine.]

The ten tribes, called the kingdom of Israel, were carried into Babylon, and later the kingdom of Judah too, where those of Judah mingled with the Babylonian Israelites. In the restoration under Cyrus many of the Jews or Israelites of various tribes returned to the Holy Land, though, perhaps, in no particular tribal order. Still, we know that several of the tribes are mentioned in the New Testament, which tribes were the forefathers of our modern Jews.

In Luke II., 36, we read of the tribe of Aser. Joseph was a descendant of David, Paul of Benjamin, and James, in his epistle, chapter i, 1, writes to the twelve tribes.

I have travelled through many of the agricultural districts of the Jews, who are now settling in Palestine under the auspices of the "Alliance Israelite Universelle" (Universal Israelitish Union), of which the reader has probably heard within the last few years.

OBJECTS OF JEWISH COLONIZATION.

To one who has lived some months in Palestine, and traveled from colony to colony, lived in them by night and day, attended their labors on farm and vineyard, visited synagogues, schools, dances, feasts of marriage, and excursions, and spent some Sabbaths in their midst, it becomes quite obvious that the Jewish colonists do not know the real motive of their gathering. They do not realize that they are being acted upon by the spirit of gathering, nor in the opportunity they now embrace of redeeming

their inheritance do they see a sign of the times. One says: With the assistance Baron Rothschild (or the Alliance) gives me, I can live here as well as elsewhere; they buy me and my sons free from military service, my children are taught Arabic, French and Hebrew, etc. Others, less selfish, as is generally the case, claim only the privilege of living emancipated from the persecution which meets them all over, except perhaps in England and the United States. The most enthusiastic, for instance, a Rabbi considered by his flock particularly religious, nay, fanatical, claims that the Jews will never have a Temple, Priesthood or worship in truth until Messiah comes, as all will have departed from God by that time, which he quotes from the Talmud. "We wish," said he, "to re-establish Hebrew as our national tongue, become a free nation, perhaps a kingdom, and, as much as we shall be able, enforce the Law of Moses upon all who shall dwell in our kingdom. This is our object and what the Alliance is working for exclusively."

COLONIZATION METHODS.

As we find in the motives of Jewish colonization an apparent lack of that powerful principle of action which we call faith, it would not be just or charitable to compare the efforts put forth by unbelieving Jews to those made by the Latter-day Saints in accordance with the commandments or doctrines of Jesus Christ under the direction of the holy Priesthood. The Latter-day Saints have tasted of the sure mercies of God, but the Jews would fain rebel today and consequently remain shorn of many mercies; but even to shorn lambs, a proverb says, the wind blows milder, and so it seems, for the Jews are building up colonies upon principles of stability building better than they are aware, and in a manner to furnish work and homes for their offspring, while "Gentile" colonies—American, German, Egyptian, Maronite, etc., start at a great expense and are hardly settled when disintegration sets in and their progeny are forced to go to pastures new or return to the parent country. The Jews are settling to stay.

It is true they have gardens, vineyards, orchards and olive groves. They do not intend, as in Utah, to raise a little of everything for family use, but rather, as in California, South America and Australia, farm for trade and commerce. Where grain grows poorly they are now planting American vines, upon which they will graft French and Spanish cuttings, with a view of establishing a trade in raisins, wine, etc. At their head are eminent statesmen, diplomats and financiers. If these would not suffice to bring about prosperous methods in the colonies, being guided as they doubtless are by the same spirit which moved upon the farmers of the American Republic, then—even then—we know that the Jews will succeed, even though through vicissitudes, for the prophecies will not fail, nor will the word of the Lord come to naught.

THE COLONIES.

A few years ago Baron Charles de Rothschild, of Paris, and other influential Israelites, concluded to try how a colony would succeed. Forty families or so were settled in a sandy waste, and some water for irrigation was secured from a deep well by having it raised in buckets by men and oxen. It was called "Mikweh Petakh" (in Hebrew, "The Door of Hope") and proved a success. Then others, making a dozen, were established, all having Hebrew names, as Zichron Jacob (remembering Jacob), Rosh Pinah, etc. An agricultural school was established, millions were spent, artesian water was obtained in some instances, and flourishing colonies of hundreds of families now exist. The Hubbi Arz Zion (admirers of Zion) and other societies in America, Europe and Asia co-operate with the Alliance. Jews of any religious notion who are willing to work with their hands—even those who out of disaffection for Judaism have affiliated with "Christians" or been baptized—are invited to redeem the "inheritance of Jacob." On each colony, a committee called the administration receives them, provides implements, food, funds, and drugs. Disappointed settlers are rarely heard of, but if such be found they are returned free of cost to their former homes—England, Russia, etc., as the case may be.

Those who remain three years become full-fledged "colonists" and enjoy greater advantages. The Jews have coins of their own, marked in Hebrew, which are current in all Palestine among Jew or Gentile.

COLONIAL LIFE, ETC.

Where practicable the settlers have wagons or ox teams. When these cannot as yet be thought of, they labor under greater disadvantages, but are building wagon roads. The Jews, as the reader understands, necessarily shirks manual labor somewhat, so they make use as much as possible of Arabs for the most menial or painful labor; but one of the wise stipulations upon which they enjoy colonial rights is that they themselves must work at gardening, fencing, planting trees, vines, etc., a stated but not excessive number of hours a day. By this process they are gradually weaned into taking an interest in the work, and are prospering finely. They are also required to observe the Sabbath (seventh day). Beyond responding to the chants and prayers at the synagogue they are not restricted in their religious notions, which are very diversified, and of which I may say a few words later on. In the mornings they are up early watering their cattle and gardens. Their stock—oxen, goats, and sheep—are herded by Arabs. From 11 a. m. to 3 p. m. they "take it easy," and in the afternoon resume their labors. In the colonies they speak Jew-German or Arabic, which latter they learn rapidly because of its affinity to Hebrew, with which they are all somewhat acquainted. In the evening they sometimes