

THE FUTURE OF THE JEWS.

THE annexed extracts from an article published in the *Spectator* (English) appear in the April 7th issue of the *Millennial Star*. Owing to the significance of the facts stated, as a sign of the times, they are reported here:

"In a quiet way, and without attracting the least attention in this country, the western half of Asia Minor has become, in the course of a single generation, the objective point of two immigration movements that can hardly fail to exercise a marked effect upon the future of that portion of the Turkish dominions. In the North the Greeks are rapidly colonizing the historical region lying to the south-west of the Sea of Marmora, the Moslem as rapidly receding from them, and in the South the Jews are steadily gaining a footing in the Syrian villayet, and, what is more noteworthy, are in increasing numbers devoting themselves to the cultivation of the soil. Of course the influx of these people in Asiatic Turkey is not on anything like the big scale to which the western world has become accustomed. Still the movements referred to, notably that of the Greeks, have attained larger dimensions than is generally supposed or believed here. And as, apart from the historic interest attached to them, both have a present and practical significance, a few facts relating to the Greek settlements in the north, together with a few figures showing the progress of the Jewish colonies in the south, gathered in the course of a personal visit to them, may not be without value just now."

After giving facts and figures relating to the Greek settlements, the article continues: "The immigration of the Jews in the Syrian villayet has been numerically much smaller, though relatively far more rapid, than that of the Greeks in the north of Asiatic Turkey. They are at present over 35,000 in number in the ten cities for which figures are available—Jerusalem, Saphet, Tiberias, Jaffa, Hebron, Sidon, Haifa, Arco, Sichen or Nablous, and Gaza. But this includes the multitude forming isolated and small communities all over the country now, as well as of the Jewish colonies of whom more presently. The total, including these, will certainly exceed 40,000; it will indeed be likely to approach 45,000. But even the former figure shows a notable growth in a single generation, for it represented a four-fold increase, since the number of Jews in Palestine was certainly not more than 10,000 or 11,000 twenty-five years ago, and this immigration of Jews is likely to go on in the future at a constantly augmenting rate."

"But the mere increase of Jewish settlers in Southern Syria, would, in our opinion, hardly be worth noticing, great as it comparatively is. The significant and noteworthy fact is, that the Jews are beginning to cultivate the soil. The Jewish colonies there have long passed the tentative state

and are an established success. The men show themselves capable farmers, for they do their own field work, and their produce for last year was such as to beat anything grown by the picked German settlers located near Jaffa. A list of these colonies, which are all the creation of the last ten years, taken in conjunction with the figures before given, showing the increase in the number of Jewish immigrants, will enable people to form a fair idea of the proportions the movement is assuming, always remembering that it is only the growth, practically speaking, of the last decade, and that up to recently the Turkish government did all it could to hinder the formation of Jewish settlements in the south of Syria, while western Jews have also cold-shouldered them as much as they could."

"The first and largest of the Jewish colonies is that known as Pet-hach Tikveh—the 'Gate of Hope.' It comprises 330 persons settled on 14,000 'donums' of land—each donum is about 900 square metres. They include 101 actual field laborers, have about 170 head of cattle, and a suitable proportion of horses and other live stock. They own vineyards, planted with nearly 50,000 vines, at present, and olive gardens containing about 1600 trees, besides fruit trees of other kinds. The next important colony is the 'Zichron L'Jacob'—'Memorial of Jacob'—near Samaria. It comprises 10,000 'donums' of land. On it are 550 souls of whom 160 are field hands. They have 260 head of cattle and have planted up to date 30,000 vines. Next comes the 'Rishon L'Zion'—'First of Zion,' a colony that is going in for viniculture on a very big scale and with great success. The settlers here are only 160 in number, but they have a greater proportion of adults and nearly all are actual laborers. Their vineyards contain over 500,000 vines in bearing now, besides nurseries of young canes for extending the plantations. They have 3,000 olive trees and the same number of almond trees, and over a hundred head of cattle. The Jews in this colony have given evidence of first-rate capacity as vine growers and farmers."

"The next colony in point of size is that known as 'Mozkereth Baltha'—'Memorial of the House' near Eckron. Its extent is about 5,000 'donums,' the number of settlers 181. They go in rather extensively for mulberry growing, with an eye, it may be presumed, to silk culture. They have already plantations containing 15,000 trees and the number is steadily being increased, and they have 130 head of cattle."

"Then follows the settlement of 'Rosh Pinah'—'The Chief Corner Stone'—with an area of 3,600 'donums' and 178 colonists. These devote themselves rather largely to vine growing, but also to other branches of mixed husbandry. So that while they possess nearly 250,000 vines, 3000 olive trees, 2500 fruit trees, and 3000 citrons, they own likewise 110 head of cattle, 50 sheep—rather an unusual thing hereabouts—and 110 goats."

"The next largest colony is that of 'Gadera,' about 3,600 'donums' in extent and 82 settlers. They have only made a start and have recently begun planting and field work; it is therefore too early to give any further details of their present condition and prospect. After this we have the settlement of 'Yesod Ma'aleh' of about 2400 'donums' with 31 colonists, who have only just succeeded in establishing themselves, and the more important colony 'Nabalath Reuben'—the 'Inheritance of Reuben.'—This is also one of the Jewish agricultural centres which shows signs of marked progress and capacity on the part of the people located there. It covers an area of 1500 'donums,' but the manner in which every inch of ground is being turned to account by the colonists there argues well for the future prosperity of these Jewish farmers. They go in for vine culture but most largely for fruit growing. They had planted up to last year 30,000 vines and over 6000 fruit trees. The last of the Jewish colonies is the small settlement 'Yehudieh,' where about 60 persons have located themselves on some 1600 'donums' of land. They are working on a small scale, but had more than a year ago already planted 2000 vines and some 250 fig trees."

"These are so far the principal settlements of the 'Children of Israel' in the land of their fathers. But individual farmers may also be found in fair numbers throughout Palestine, where not twenty years ago the idea of a Jewish agriculturist or farmer would have provoked nothing but laughter, and it may be pointed out that these colonies owe their existence to no charity, for excepting we believe in one case, the settlers have received no help of any kind. They are the spontaneous outcome of the desire felt by large numbers of Jews in Eastern Europe to return once more to the land of their ancestors in the capacity of husbandmen, the only capacity in which, as they understand, they can ever take root in the soil. They are the men of the better class of Jews; the mere circumstance of devoting themselves to agricultural work shows that they are far different to the peddling huckster who, in the eyes of many people in Western Europe, passes for the typical Jew. They are of the tough and hard shell type to which Judaism owes such strength and permanence as it has ever possessed, the kind of Hebrew, who, having put his hand to the plow, will not leave it again."

"The spectacle of the Jew, after an absence of two thousand years, ploughing again the soil of Palestine is like the return of the Greek to the region of the five rivers in Asia Minor, full of historic suggestiveness on which it would be easy to dilate. But our object has been to draw attention to facts and figures relating to two movements in Asiatic Turkey, which in our opinion are not without much present interest and future significance."