

BRITISH - ISRAELISM EXAMINED

by

Samuel Hinds Wilkinson

*A point-by-point Examination
of the British-Israel position*

London :

John Bale, Sons & Danielsson, Ltd.

Oxford House, 83-91, Great Titchfield Street, W.1

*The Mildmay Mission to the Jews Bookstore
Central Hall, Philpot Street, E.1*

1923

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FOREWORD.

By the REV. E. L. LANGSTON, M.A.

THE Rev. S. H. Wilkinson has done the whole Church of God in Great Britain a real service in making such a lucid and exhaustive examination of the claims of the British-Israel theory.

This book is of all the more value, in view of the fact that large numbers of earnest men and women of God are being drawn into the British-Israel net, imagining that our land and Empire is under the special protection of God, because we are supposed to be descendants of the ten tribes of the House of Israel.

In these days when the Bible is being dealt with very critically by scholars, surely it is a thousand pities that those of us who believe in its inspiration, historicity and authority, should be beguiled and led astray by this strange theory, which on close, careful investigation, has not one substantial fact to stand upon, whether the investigation be in the

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realm of Scriptural inspiration or historical facts; from beginning to end it is pure conjecture, built up upon coincidences.

It is perfectly amazing to think that such a movement could have developed and extended as it has done, upon so flimsy a foundation. I would, therefore, very earnestly commend Mr. Wilkinson's close study of the whole situation to every servant of God. It is a book which every Christian should both read and circulate.

His motive in writing, as is very evident when we read the book, is not because he wishes to thrust himself into the midst of a controversy; but on the contrary, it is his love for the truth of the Word of God that compels him to write as he does. We are most thankful to note also the spirit in which he writes. Nothing could be saner, fairer and more Christian than the way he takes up dispassionately point by point and proves to the hilt the position for which he contends.

Perhaps many of us who agree with Mr. Wilkinson's attitude have rather smiled at some of the deductions of our British-Israel friends, and looked upon them as more or less harmless delusions, and therefore not worth debating. The movement has now developed to such an extent that it really must be taken seriously, and I look

upon this work as one of the first real attempts to expose the weakness of the whole theory.

I feel sure that this calm, quiet, reasoned examination, carried out in such a thoroughly brotherly and Christian spirit cannot but help to be the means of opening the eyes of many who have been led astray by the fascination of the British-Israel theory.

Christian men and women to-day must be very careful lest they are side-tracked by the devil, who appears to-day everywhere as an "angel of light," from the great objective of the Church, viz., heralding the Gospel to all the nations, and gathering in from amongst them the election according to Grace. The aim and function of the Church is to gather out a people unto God from amongst all nations, and when the last soul has been gathered in, the Church enters into its glorious heritage; and it is not till Christ Himself comes to this earth, and is manifested as the Messiah, and His Kingdom is established, with its centre in Jerusalem, that Israel enters into the fulness of their possessions, and becomes "a holy nation," "priests of the Lord," and "ministers of our God." Then, and not till then does Israel find favour with God.

As far as one knows, there is not one text in the whole of the Scriptures that implies or teaches that Israel can be blessed apart from the Promised Land,

with their promised Messiah and King ruling over them.

We would, therefore, very earnestly ask everybody to study very closely the claims of the British-Israel theory, in the light of the investigations contained in Mr. Wilkinson's book, and by careful examination to see whether the theory has any warrant at all.

PREFACE.

THE Examination of the view now held by many, that the ancient ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel has been rediscovered in the modern British Empire and people has already appeared in print in the form of a series of Articles in the pages of TRUSTING AND TOILING, the well known monthly magazine of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews. It was only after very grave consideration that articles on so controversial a subject were permitted to occupy space in a missionary journal, when that space was so needed for other matter. But the doubt as to the wisdom of the policy has been long since dispelled. The articles have awakened widespread response and interest both from those attached as from those opposed to British-Israelism. Almost equally wide has been the expression of desire that the Examination should be published in the more permanent form of a bound volume. Hence the book; now placed at the disposal of that large

section of fellow believers whose desire it is to weigh up evidence and to hear both sides fairly and fully presented before forming decisions which may have the gravest effect on the whole of life and ministry.

SAMUEL HINDS WILKINSON.

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British-Israelism Examined.

CHAPTER I.

“Prove all things.”—I THESS. v. 21.

INTRODUCTION.

BRITISH-ISRAELISM is no longer in the stage of crude assumption and childish reasoning; it has developed a considerable literature, some of it very able; and has indeed established a very plausible *prima facie* case.

It deserves therefore as well as demands examination: and the purpose of this work is to present a point-by-point scrutiny of the arguments and propositions by which the British-Israel theory is supported: a scrutiny prosecuted only under a strong sense of duty to Divine truth and to fellow-believers: and with as much of respect and esteem for those who have embraced the British-Israel view as for those who resist it or who are waiting for further light upon it.

The examination is also we trust carried out under a true sense of proportion in regard to Divine

truth and Christian duty. A subject such as British-Israelism may easily be over-emphasized even in and by an examination such as this. For were the British-Israel position a true one it would still not be the whole nor even the most important part of truth nor of Christian duty. In a very large number of cases exponents of British-Israelism place the subject in a position of undue prominence. Were the adherents of British-Israelism right in their convictions, were British-Israelism a proved fact, even *then* it should not be permitted to obsess the mind, to fill out the horizon of vision, to obscure and suppress truths of much deeper importance, to absorb energy and thought that are required with greater urgency elsewhere. But if it be not proven true; if it be at the best debatable ground, then is there not an overwhelming menace to spiritual equilibrium and balance, both to the individual and to the Christian Church, in the fact that a matter such as this, non-vital, fanciful, fascinating, plausible, absorbing, can find such wide acceptance?

The subject of British-Israelism while by no means of fundamental importance in itself, can indeed, by the influences it exerts, bring fundamental truths into danger. We believe it does. If British-Israel attachés are not disposed to *deny* fundamental truths they appear to be more disposed than they are conscious of, to permit their appre-

hension of and insistence on them to subside. The supposed identity of the British race with the lost ten tribes of Israel represents to them such a vindication of the truth of God's Word, such a new and potent revelation of Divine purposes that it often becomes their outstanding theme of conversation, if not their obsession. Here lies the subtle snare of British-Israelism.

At first British-Israel writers seemed to challenge denial and disproof of their proposition : and such denial and disproof was undertaken by some, notably by the late John Wilkinson, more recently by David Baron, Arthur Payne and others. None of these responses to the challenge of British-Israelism, excellent as they were, seemed, however, to apply critical examination, point by point to the arguments employed in British-Israel literature. Then there seemed to come the time when British-Israelism assumed itself to be established and beyond the power of denial or disproof. The position therefore is reversed. If British-Israelism no longer issues a challenge the challenge must be offered to British-Israelism. It must be called upon to produce proofs which will stand the light of examination and show themselves to be sound in exegesis, based on reliable sources of information and conformable not to one section only, but to the whole of such available data as is calculated to

throw light on the history and present condition and location of the former ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel.

The main theses which the present work seeks to establish in regard to British-Israelism are therefore :—

(1) The correspondences traced by British-Israelites between prophetic descriptions of Israel and actual phenomena in the history and present condition of Great Britain and America are based in some cases on incorrect interpretations of prophetic phraseology and in others on the unreliable method of similarity in nomenclature.

(2) There is lack of authentic evidence of the alleged migration of the whole or part of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel from the territory to which they were deported in 721 B.C., through Europe and beyond in a westerly direction.

(3) If Great Britain or America or both are in the enjoyment of the material and spiritual prosperity which was promised to Israel and Ephraim, then the fact that they are in enjoyment of such blessing under circumstances and in a time and place other than those in which Israel's enjoyment of promised blessings is to be experienced, furnishes strong

evidence that neither Great Britain nor America can be identical with Israel.

(4) If search for the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel be justifiable and profitable, then there is evidence in favour of the proposition that the present inhabitants of the districts to which the Israel people were deported are the descendants of the same : and this evidence, if not conclusive, is at least more scientific, more reasonable and better established than that by which the identity between Great Britain and Israel is supported.

(5) The popularity of the British-Israel position in certain quarters and the rapidity with which it spreads here and there do not in themselves supply confirmation of its truth.

(6) The Divine Origin and the plenary Inspiration of Scripture and the ultimate literal fulfilment of all its outstanding predictions are not dependent upon the establishment of identity between Israel and Great Britain.

(7) The extent of British Dominions and the general beneficence of British government, the composite character of British subjects, and the widespread missionary operations carried on by associations of believing Christian people within

the British Empire, while they form very striking phenomena and seem to some to justify the quest for some reference, direct or indirect, to Great Britain in prophetic scripture, do not, nevertheless compel the conclusion that Great Britain is identical with Israel.

The influence which produces conviction in so many minds that the British race have been identified with the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel, seems to be overwhelming when the arguments are arrayed *en masse*. It is the sober, careful investigation of them *singly, one by one*, which reveals their insufficiency as proofs.

(8) *The Bible*.—The passages of Scripture quoted by British-Israel advocates to show that Israel must be a great people, peculiarly blessed and possessing the gates of her enemies (and therefore—say they—Great Britain), refer to Israel *in millennial days when restored to the land and when formally reunited to Judah*. If any people can be found to correspond in any way to such predictions while being out of the clearly defined land of promise and not in union with Judah, that people *ipso facto* cannot be Israel. Britain, therefore, even were her present condition in correspondence with that promised to Israel (which we deny) could not be Israel, since Britain is not in the land promised, nor formally united to Judah.

The prophecy of the restoration of Israel and Judah given in Isa. xi. is indisputably future. Yet it is there seen that the outcasts of Israel are to be gathered from *Assyria* as well as from the four corners of the earth. Jews are literally in the four corners of the earth : the emphasis laid on Israel and Assyria indicates that the ten-tribed kingdom is to be gathered home from that territory. History says that the ten tribes were taken into Assyria : prophecy says that they are to be brought back again in a day still future, from Assyria. The plain inference is that they are there.

(9) *History*.—The scraps of unreliable historical data put forth by British-Israel advocates to show that the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel, migrated from the district to which they had been carried captive, to Europe, developing into Saxons and Norseman and peopling England are hardly worth notice. That skythic tribes from the same districts made incursions into Europe and formed perhaps the ethnographic origin of the Saxon races is plausible ; but that Hebrews were merged with them is impossible, both on ethnographic grounds and because there was not sufficient time to effect such an absorption.

Nevertheless, the subject of possible migration is dealt with in the examination.

(10) *Stubborn Facts*.—Bible history shows that large sections of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel returned to Palestine with Judah under the edict of Cyrus; tradition confirms it. Nevertheless the residue, if not the bulk of the ten-tribed Kingdom remained on the other side of the Euphrates and were there located by Josephus (A.D. 90). Sound investigation as to their whereabouts if it be required at all must begin at this point.

SECTION I.—EXEGESIS.

CHAPTER II.

"Read not to contradict and confute, but to weigh and consider."—BACON.

THE APPOINTED PLACE.

THERE is so much of prophetic Scripture which associates the fulfilment of promised blessing to Israel with the restoration to the Covenant-granted land, and with the reunion of the separated kingdoms of Israel and Judah, that it is justifiable inference to say that there can be no enjoyment on the part of Israel of the fulness of blessing as defined and guaranteed by Divine Counsel and declaration, except as and when the above conditions are realized. It is in "Mine Holy mountain" (Ezek. xx. 40), and "in the land" (*idem*) that all the house of Israel shall be accepted. It is when Israel is gathered from the North Country and from the coasts of the earth by Him Who scattered them (Jerem. xxxi. 10, *et seq.*) that genuine repentance is to be manifested (*idem*), and as a consequence reconciliation is to be effected and the material blessings bestowed (*idem*). The raising up of the tabernacle of David is associated (Amos ix. 11, *et seq.*) with restoration from captivity and a final and full

replanting of the people of Israel upon "their land which I have given them."

Now there is no doubt and no dispute as to where this land is situated. The terms under which it was granted to the great progenitor of the race and the definition of its frontiers (Gen. xv. 18, &c.) place the matter, in the case of those who accept the plenary inspiration and literal interpretation of Scripture, altogether outside discussion. The land in question is bounded on the west by the Mediterranean Sea, on the east by the Euphrates river (Gen. xv. 18), and on the north by the "entering in unto Hamath," and on the south by "the River of Egypt" (1 Kings viii. 65 ; 2 Chron. vii. 8, &c.). And if the ultimate fulfilment of God's purposes of grace for Israel is to be accomplished in connection with restoration to the said land and with true national repentance, it seems equally clear that the period of repentance and of restoration is the same as that of the personal and public manifestation of the Lord Jesus Christ. "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory" (Psa. cii. 16). A grouping together of the many Scriptures which bear on the future of Israel reveal a close connection between the *Return* of the Lord Jesus, the *Repentance* of Israel as they behold Him, the *Reconciliation* between God and the nation, the *Regathering* from the four corners of the earth, and

the *Realization* in the land and with Jerusalem as its theocratic, governmental centre, of all outstanding promises of material and spiritual prosperity.

But if this be recognized, it would appear at once to exclude the possibility of Great Britain or America, or both, being identifiable with Israel, for Great Britain and America are enjoying material prosperity before the Advent of the Lord, before any national act of repentance resulting in complete and individual conversion, before being "regathered" to the land promised or being formally reunited with the two-tribed kingdom of Judah by a sacred and indissoluble bond (Ezek. xxxvii. 22); and therefore it would seem to follow that to whatever cause the material blessings enjoyed by Great Britain and America be attributable, they can in no case be accounted for on the ground that either or both of these great peoples are the descendants of Israel.

The answer of the exponents of the British Israel view is that of the "Appointed place" (2 Sam. vii. 10). We shall now endeavour to state this argument before submitting it to examination. We desire to state it fully and fairly, without pointing ridicule, direct or indirect at it, or premature criticism. We go to those printed statements which have been represented to us as the most authoritative utterances of the British-Israel School in order

to obtain first-hand knowledge of how the argument of the "appointed place" is employed as proof or confirmation of the thesis that conspicuously prosperous nations while in a condition far removed from national repentance and while far distant from the land of promise, and while still as yet the Lord has not been manifested, are identical with a people who, under these conditions—and under these conditions only—are to recover true national status and recognition and prosperity.

We turn therefore to British-Israel literature. In "British-Israel Truth," by Denis Hanan, D.D., and H. Aldersmith, M.B., on page 89, we find the following :—

"Again the Lord made a distinct promise to David by Nathan that He would appoint a place for His people Israel, and plant them that they should dwell in a place of their own, and move no more, and be no more afflicted by their enemies (2 Sam. vii. 10). The 'appointed place' could not possibly have been Palestine, for the promise, through the prophet Nathan, was made to King David in Jerusalem, and it referred to some other place, and a future time. The sequence of these events is plain. The people forming the house of Israel were cast out of their land for their iniquities and idolatries. They were divorced and ceased to be God's people. They were to become, and did become, wanderers among the nations.

Then they were to be gathered out from among those nations into the 'wilderness of the people.' 'Therefore behold I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her' (Hosea ii. 14), which was the place appointed by God where they were to be planted in a place of their own, to 'dwell alone,' and move no more, for this place is to be their headquarters. Here, dwelling alone, their enemies are to no longer harass them. In this place they renounce idolatry, and enter into the bond of the new Covenant, or in other words, the House of Israel become Christians. As Jeremiah says, 'Thus saith the Lord, the people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness, even Israel' (xxxix. 2); (note Jeremiah always distinguishes Israel from Judah!) Here it is also that they '*renew their strength*' (Isa. xli. 1)."

Here then is the argument of the "appointed place" stated. We have quoted the whole section in which it occurs in order that we may not lay ourselves open to the criticism of having wrenched isolated passages from their context. We find little or no independent reference to the "appointed place" in other British-Israel literature: though this may be due to our imperfect search, as few of the books before us are provided with an index. The book from which we have taken the quotation is however a standard book on the subject and far more complete than others. It has one more

important paragraph on "the appointed place," page 91, which must be examined later. Appendix B of the same book also refers in its addendum to the "appointed place" thus :—

"Furthermore these words were spoken to David at the time that his kingdom had been established and yet they contemplated a place which was yet to be prepared. This is no modern gloss. The Latin version of the Chaldee paraphrase is very suggestive . . . 'And I will appoint a place prepared before Me for My people Israel, and will establish them, and they shall abide in their own places, and shall not be alarmed any more, and the sons of the wicked shall not proceed to afflict them as of old.' It is evident, even apart from the use of the future tense, that the place appointed before God could not have been understood to be identical with the land of Canaan, when the Chaldee paraphrase was written."

Before examining the statements here quoted, let us note fairly and carefully their meaning and purpose. They do not deny that the land of promise is Israel's possession by title and to be ultimately Israel's habitation : but it is proposed that in the meantime—i.e., before restoration to the true land of promise takes place—a further territorial grant is to be made to the same people, during their occupation of which they are to enjoy security and material prosperity and phenomenal increase of

population : it must follow therefore in the proposition itself that as the British Empire and the United States of America are claimed to be Ephraim-Israel and to be now residing in the "appointed place," that the said place must be coterminous with the territories ruled over by the said Powers and therefore comprise widely scattered sections of the globe, approaching in extent one quarter of its habitable surface.

Now to examine. We divide our scrutiny into three heads : Exegesis, Reasonability, Harmony with the whole body of Scripture.

(a) *Exegesis*.—It is to be noted that verse 10 of 2 Sam. vii. (the verse in which the phrase "appoint a place" occurs) uses in the Hebrew the same tense-forms of verb as are found throughout the whole review of Nathan to Dāvid, of which it forms a part. The form most frequently adopted throughout is that of the perfect, preceded by the copulative *vav*. Whether this copulative is merely *conjunctive* or whether it be *conversive* is a matter which competent translators must decide. In the former case it would express completed action : in the latter it would require to be translated by a future tense. The A.V. and R.V. translators have rendered the same Hebrew form in verse 9, "And I *have made thee* a great name," treating in that case the *vav* as *conjunctive*, while in the following phrase (verse 10)

they treat the *vav* as *conversive* and translate it into the future: "Moreover *I will* appoint, &c."¹ The *right* of translators to exercise their judgment in dealing with a language so loose in its forms of speech as is Hebrew, must be conceded: but the *reason* in this particular case for changing the tense is not so clear. Our own conviction is that the whole statement of Nathan down to the point at the close of verse 11, where he enters upon definite promise and prediction, is review and should be translated in the past tense. As part of the recital of that which God had already accomplished on Israel's behalf, verse 10 should read, "And I have appointed a place for My people Israel and have

¹ The "Speaker's Commentary" says, "There is no change of tense nor does the sense admit of it. It should be, *and I have appointed a place, &c., and have planted them, &c.*"

Young's "Literal Translation of the Old Testament" renders 2 Sam. vii. 10, in the past tense. In my revision of the Yiddish Old Testament I have, following Dr. Bernstein's MSS., done the same.

It should be noted that the utterance of faith and thanksgiving with which David responds to Nathan's prophecy is expressed for the most part in the future: sometimes indeed in the true future as in verse 27, "saying, I will build thee a house," but there is no further specific mention of an "appointed place" for Israel. The appointed place was a grant already made (Gen. xv. 18, &c.), and Israel had already been planted within it: and though if apostate they could be and would be under the terms of the Covenant, deprived of the enjoyment and possession of it, their ultimate recovery of it and permanent residence upon it, were and are assured. S. H. W.

planted them that they may dwell in their own place and they shall move no more." But even if the use of the future in the English translation be justified, it is still I think, when the dubieties of the language are considered, asking far too much of our conscientious exegesis of Scripture, to accept the passage as a definite prediction of a definite place other than the promised land which Israel are to possess for ever. The language is too doubtful to establish such a proposition.

(b) *Reasonability*.—To our own minds, justifiably or otherwise, the proposition is essentially unreasonable. In the light of the original and irrevocable grant of a defined territory to which Israel hold an inviolable title and which one day unquestionably they are to possess and enjoy without fear of further dislocation, we for our part cannot recognize the reason for another appointed place out of which also the people is "to move no more," nor that such nor any "appointed place," could be correspondent to the widely scattered British Empire, subject as it is to constant alteration and expansion.

(c) *Harmony with the whole body of Scripture*.—We fail indeed again to discern the harmony between the conception of an "appointed place," other than the Promised Land, as the theatre of material prosperity for Israel ; and the whole body

of Scripture which consistently and with almost painful insistence describes Israel as either being in their own land or in the land of their enemies. God has promised to build Israel and Judah as at the first (Jerem. xxxiii. 7), but it is by causing the captivity of both houses to return. He has promised them (Zeph. iii.) security, joy, praise, fame, the final realization of all His oft-repeated promises, but it is "when I turn back your captivity before your eyes." He has said that in His holy mountain in the mountain of the height of Israel . . . all the house of Israel shall serve Him *in the land*, but it is when they are brought out from among the people and gathered out of the countries where they have been scattered (Ezek. xx. 40, 41). Israel, therefore, as these and numerous scriptures certify, can only be in one of two places—either in their own land or in the lands of other nations. We must be pardoned for failing to accept the thesis of an "appointed place," other than the land of original promise; for it is surely excusable if we find ourselves unable to reconcile it with the whole body of Scripture.

Before we have finished with the "appointed place" we must examine the "wilderness" passages in Hosea ii. 14 and in Jerem. xxxi. 2, and also the passages referring to the "isles of the sea." The present chapter will not afford space for that, so that we must postpone that subsection to the next,

which will then make our examination of the "appointed place" complete and leave us free to pass on to the other main arguments of British-Israelism.

The method of our examination is therefore already evident: it is not merely to find fault or level criticism or point ridicule. It is to take the Scriptures quoted and the arguments advanced by the leaders of British-Israelism and to submit them one by one to careful and courteous examination: exposing clearly the reasons which prevent us for our part from accepting them as proof of the identity between Britain and Israel, and to do this with no prejudice or bitterness against the theory itself and a thousand times less towards those who hold it. Could we hold the British-Israel view as they do, we would hold it gladly and thankfully. So far, we cannot. Plausible as it is, ably presented as it is, it yet, in our judgment, when subjected to the only form of analysis which is scientific and satisfactory, that namely of careful point-by-point examination, is found to be an unproven hypothesis.

CHAPTER III.

"The only question which any wise man can ask himself, and which any honest man will ask himself, is whether a doctrine is true or false."—HUXLEY.

THE APPOINTED PLACE (*continued*).

Before our examination of the "appointed place" can be considered complete, it must take cognizance of the fact that the advocates of British-Israelism not only declare that Israel is, prior to its return to the land of promise to have a special grant of territory elsewhere in which the nation is to enjoy material prosperity and overflowing population, but they affirm also that this territory or "appointed place" can be located. The principal and most authoritative passage in which this affirmation is made is found in "British-Israel Truth," page 91, and runs thus :—

"The location of '*the appointed place*' is also indicated in Scripture. Isaiah addresses Israel with '*islands of the sea*' (Isa. xi. 11, xxiv. 15, see also xlii. 4, 10). '*Listen, O isles unto me: and hearken, ye peoples, from far*' (xlix. 1). '*Attend unto me, O my people: and give ear unto me, O my nation The isles shall wait for me*' (li. 5). '*Surely the isles shall wait for me*' (lx. 9). Hosea also informs us that the '*House of Israel*' will return

from the '*west*,' for it is written:—'The children shall come trembling from the West. They shall come trembling as a bird out of Egypt.' The context proves that this passage refers to Ephraim-Israel, at the final return (Hosea xi. 10, see page 98). Jeremiah addresses the House of Israel in the '*North country*,' and says: 'In those days (*i.e.*, 'the latter days,' see page 52) the House of Judah shall walk to the House of Israel, and they shall come together out of the *land of the North* to the Land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers (Jerem. iii. 18). 'Therefore, behold the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, As the Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, As the Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the House of Israel (see contrast with the 'House of Judah' in the 6th verse) out of the *north country*, and from all the countries whither I had driven them: and they shall dwell in their own land' (xxiii. 7, 8). 'Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout for the chief of the nations. . . . I will bring them from the *north country* and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth' (xxx. 7, 8; see also verse 10, R.V.).

"Now these passages, without question, refer to the 'House of Israel,' and to it shortly before the final re-union and return to Palestine.

"In Jerem. xxxi. 10, we read these words:—'Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it *in the isles afar off*: and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him.' '*The isles afar off*' (Isa. lxvi. 19). The Rev. M. S.

Bergmann, a Christian Missionary to the Jews in the East of London, and himself a Jew by birth, wrote as follows upon this question : 'I have no hesitation in saying that Great Britain is meant by "the isles afar off" mentioned by [the prophets. This has been the opinion of many ancient and modern Jewish theologians.' Rabbi David Kimchi, who wrote a very useful comment on the Old Testament, as far back as A.D. 1220, says that the 'islands of the sea' of Isaiah xi. 11 belonged (in the past) to the Roman Empire. It is an undisputed fact and matter of history that the Romans were in possession of these British isles. The late Rev. Dr. Margoliouth held, in common with many other Hebrews, that these 'isles' were supposed to have been Britannia, Scotia and Hibernia."

We have made this long quotation, following exactly the italics and the stops : in order that, as before, the authoritative British-Israel position may be fully and fairly confronted. That which the foregoing statement declares in effect is this : that the "appointed place" which Israel (as it is asserted) is to occupy before return to the land of promise can be located : that the terms "isles of the sea," "isles afar off" taken in conjunction with the term "west" of Hosea xi. 10 and "north" of Jerem. iii. 18 and xxiii. 7, 8, and xxxi. 7, 8, indicate Great Britain as that place : and that while Kimchi shows that the "islands of the sea" of Isaiah xi. 11 were islands belonging in past times to the Roman Empire, Mr. Bergmann affirms that the Romans

were in possession of the British Isles and Margoliouth and others held that the isles were "Britannia, Scotia and Hibernia."

Such the thesis. In passing, Mr. Bergmann's "undisputed fact" that the Romans were in possession of the British isles might indeed be disputed. History shows no record of the Romans having subdued Hibernia or North Caledonia. But let that pass. The main proposition making the first demand upon reverent and honest examination concerns the terms "isles of the sea" and "isles afar off." Do these terms refer to the British Isles? Can they legitimately be so interpreted?

In reply to these questions, it should be noted first of all that the Hebrew word יָם, translated "isles," occurs thirty-six times in O.T. Scripture: that its radical sense is that of habitable land as opposed to water: that its general reference is therefore to maritime districts or lands lying near the seashore: and that only the circumstances of its use will show whether such lands lie on continents or islands.

For instance, in Isaiah xx. 6, the word appears to refer to the Mediterranean seaboard. So also in Isaiah xxiii. 2 and 6. In Ezek. xxvii. 7 it doubtless indicates the coasts of Greece and Asia Minor. On the other hand, in Jerem. xlvii. 4, the word stands for an island—the island namely of Caphtor or Crete: and in Ezek. xxvii. 6 and Jerem. ii. 10, for

the island of Chittim or Cyprus. The safest *general* application of the word seems to be that of lands separated from Palestine by water.¹ The word therefore can by no means be specifically attached to the British Islands, or any islands, though it would not necessarily exclude those or any other.

It is then the circumstances under which the word is used and the context of the passage where it occurs that must determine, whether it may be translated "island" and whether its geographical position can be defined. We look therefore at the first passage noted in the quoted statement now under examination: Isaiah xi. 11. That scripture is a clear prediction of restoration: and if—as we think—it refers not only to the restoration after Babylonian captivity but to the full and final restoration which is still future, then it is surely evident that the countries enumerated—Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar and Hamath—are not the specific or only lands from which Israel is to be gathered, seeing that the immediate context declares that both Israel and Judah are to be gathered from the four corners of the earth. These countries then as applied to a future restoration are

¹ Henderson says: "Most frequently it is employed to denote the maritime countries situated on the Mediterranean, including Greece, Italy, and other regions in the remote west from Palestine."

general and descriptive rather than precise ; and on the same principle the term coastlands or "islands of the sea" must cover all regions lying remote from Palestine in a westerly direction. Any argument, therefore, built upon identification between "islands of the sea" and Great Britain is built only upon speculation, not on justifiable exegesis.

"North and West."

Still less if possible can the expressions "North" or "West" be accepted as designative of Great Britain. They define only points of the compass, and doubtless include Great Britain as they must include also very much larger regions. It is noteworthy that the term "North" is used of Israel's traditional enemies, Assyria and Babylonia (Isa. xiv. 31 ; Jerem. i. 13 and 14 ; iv. 6, &c., &c.), not so much on account of their geographical relationship to Israel's territory (for Babylonia lay in the same latitude as Palestine, and Nineveh was not 5° to the North of Jerusalem) but because these great Powers when advancing against Palestine attacked and entered from the North. Similarly it may be that the future return of Israel, effected from the North *via* Adana, Aleppo, and Beyrout, and from the West *via* Egypt and the newly-constructed port of Haifa, will thus conform to the prophecy. But this, while possible, even probable, is not proved

fact any more than is the reference of North and West to Great Britain. Fulfilment alone will decide. It should not be forgotten, however, that the greatest mass of Jews in the world (eleven millions out of fourteen millions) are at present located in the continent of Europe, which lies both North and West of the land of promise.

Wilderness.

Finally (for this subsection) the "Wilderness" passages. They are found in Jerem. xxxi. 2 : Ezek. xx. 35, 36 ; and Hosea ii. 14. It is affirmed ("British-Israel Truth," p. 87) that these passages are to be read together with Isaiah xlii. 11, Ezek. xi. 16, and other Scriptures, and that they therefore indicate a definite territory in which Israel is to be converted and prosper, prior to its return to the land of promise.

We cannot so read them. Jerem. xxxi. 2, forms part of clear restoration promise : the mention of Samaria, Mount Ephraim, Zion and Ramah, in the context permits of no other interpretation. The use of the term *wilderness* seems here to indicate a state rather than a district (e.g., Isaiah xxxii. 16, Jerem. ii. 31). For the original and predominant sense of wilderness was and is always that of the journey from Egypt to Canaan, and of the conditions of that desert-theatre wherein special tokens of Divine

judgment, protection and guidance were given. The word therefore became figurative of a time and place of grace and long-suffering, as well as of chastisement and training; and symbolic both of sterility and of deliverance. To apply the term to such an Empire as that of Great Britain, or such a territory as the British Isles, is to fail to recognize in the term the essential reasons for its employment in prophetic Scripture. The term wilderness as used in Ezek. xx. 35 has a similar meaning. It is here the "desert of the peoples" and was doubtless again selected to recall to the minds of the Israelites the chastisements inflicted on their forefathers when traversing the Arabian desert. Its first prophetic reference is doubtless to the wilderness between Babylon and Judæa, and which the returning captives from Babylon were to cross. Its final fulfilment cannot yet be fully accomplished. The outstanding feature in the use of the term in this passage is that of judgment and purging; and the entry into the bond of the Covenant indicates a fresh enforcement of the terms and obligations of Divine Law by rigorous discipline. To interpret it as suggesting conversion to Christianity or as a place or period of Divine favour and material prosperity is to disregard its character and context.

"Wilderness," however, in Hosea ii. 14, is used directly in connection with promises of Divine

favour, and messages of comfort. The mention of the valley of Achor in the immediate context sufficiently defines the district to which "wilderness" here refers. Achor lay in the vicinity of Jericho and within the southern end of the arid West Jordan plain. Yet it was in itself (Isaiah lxxv. 10) fertile : and therefore a fit figure of emancipation or of a door of hope from wilderness conditions. To attach the word "wilderness" as here employed to a large and prosperous territory, outside Palestine and contiguous to no desert region, is to miss the force of the figure and of the prophecy which in all its sequence is seen to be millennial and final.

The result, therefore, of our examination of the thesis that "Israel" is granted an "appointed place" wherein *before* its return to Palestine it is to experience growth, greatness and prosperity, and that this territory is to be identified with the British Isles, is that, having directed careful attention to the Scriptures cited and the arguments advanced to support it, we find ourselves unable to accept it. We say this humbly, honestly, courteously : with no disturbance of our love for all fellow-servants of our common Lord and Master who think otherwise, even though we are obliged to differ with their view on this particular matter. Nor does our conclusion bind any others than ourselves : nor even prejudice the further quotation and arguments of British-Israelism still to be examined.

CHAPTER IV.

“And there was given *Him* dominion.”—DANIEL vii. 14.

A MARITIME NATION.

WE have searched the British-Israel literature (chiefly non-indexed) before us to discover what references are made to this section of the subject. We have only found one direct and definite affirmation that Israel was predicted to become a maritime nation, and that affirmation is made in “British-Israel Truth,” and will be found on p. 93.

It runs thus :—

“On the third occasion that Balaam blessed Israel, he prophesied : ‘His seed shall be in many waters’ (Num. xxiv. 7). This prophecy tells us that, when Israel’s kingdom is exalted, and the nation in great prosperity, their ‘seed shall be in many waters.’ The indication here appears unmistakably to point to the maritime extension of the House of Israel in the ‘latter days’ : for it must be distinctly borne in mind that all these prophecies, relating to Israel *under blessing* can, and do, only refer either to the ‘latter days’ or the millennium. But it is evident from the whole scope and tenour of Balaam’s thrice reiterated promise of blessing, and the warlike advance of Israel, that it relates to the ‘latter days,’ and not to the millennium (see Num. xxiii. 20, 22, 24 : xxiv. 3, 9, 14—‘in the latter days’).

"Israel therefore must now (see ch. iii.) be a great maritime power, both imperial and commercial. As previously pointed out, the Lord promised to David and his seed that he would 'set his hand also on the sea and his right hand on the rivers. . . . I will also make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth' (Psa. lxxxix. 25, 27). These two prophecies support and confirm one another, and it does not require us to prove the immense pre-eminence of this nation's naval war power, nor the enormous magnitude of her commercial marine."

This, then, is the authoritative statement of the proposition that Israel was to become a maritime power before the Lord's return or the millennial era. It is seen to be supported by two Scriptures—Num. xxiv. 7 and Psa. lxxxix. 25. It is for us to apply critical and careful examination to these Scriptures to ascertain whether they will bear the construction that is put upon them.

Two preliminary notes only; the first is, that we cannot deal in this section with the significance of the term "latter days." Much of the British-Israel position rests on the question of the time to which this term refers. In the quotation now under examination and in many other places, it is asserted or implied that the term "latter days" is specifically pre-millennial. Could this assertion be proved, it would of course strengthen every other British-Israel argument; if unproved, then *ipso facto* much

of the British-Israel position falls of itself. In its proper place we shall submit therefore the term "latter days" to the same examination as that applied to the other pillars of the British-Israel structure; for the present we must leave it in abeyance. The second note is that the deduction drawn from the two passages now under consideration is a very ponderous one. Even were the British-Israel interpretation of the passages justified (and that is the point now to be investigated) even then, it would be a serious thing to make two Scriptures of the general and poetic character of the majestic utterance of Ethan (possibly Jeduthum) and the sublime song of Balaam to carry the weight of the statement that Israel was to become a great imperial and commercial maritime empire.

But now to the examination itself. We deal first with Numbers xxiv. 7. The passage is part of the parable of Balaam, and the mention of water that occurs twice within it will be found in the Hebrew to be the word מַיִם, *waters*, and not יַמִּים, *seas*. On the use of the מַיִם, *mayim*, waters, it is to be noted that except for the first references in Genesis i. when the seas received their name (יַמִּים), it is almost in every occurrence indicative of fresh water; the very few exceptions being apparently for poetry's sake or to avoid tautology. *Mayim*, therefore, can-

not in the passage before us refer to *seas* : had *seas* been the meaning intended and had the prophecy been a literal description of a great future maritime empire, the word *yamin* would unquestionably have been employed.

And the context requires the interpretation of fresh water springs and floods, not of seas and over-land territories. The picture drawn is that of tents pitched in valleys and gardens by the river's side, of aloes and cedars beside flowing waters, of buckets filled and refilled to irrigate land : there is no suggestion, direct or indirect, of oceans and shipping. The "Speaker's Commentary" remarks on the passage :

"Balaam's native soil was ordinarily irrigated by water fetched from the neighbouring Euphrates and carried in buckets suspended from the two ends of a pole. Water in the East is the first essential of all fertility. Thus the metaphor would import that Israel should have his own exuberant and unfailing channels of blessing and plenty . . . in many waters, i.e., enjoy the benefit of various and copious waters."

This to our mind is the only reasonable and intelligent interpretation of Numbers xxiv. 7.

We now turn to the other passage cited, viz., Psalm lxxxix. 25. This highly poetic reference to the imperial dominion promised to David is in full harmony with the prediction concerning Solomon :

"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Psalm lxxii. 8). In both cases the Psalmist gives a bold and graphic description of a wide extent of territory. In both cases we believe that although the primary fulfilment was realized in Solomon's reign, the ultimate and plenary fulfilment will be realized only in the reign of the Lord Jesus over this earth in millennial days. So read and so understood, Psalm lxxxix. 25 falls into line with a great volume of prophetic Scripture referring to David's throne and kingdom and the future millennial theocracy. But if read to indicate a great maritime power, developing *before* the return of the Lord and *before* the restoration of Israel and Judah to the land of Covenant and promise, it to our mind falls out of harmony with all other predictive Scriptures on the same subject. The prophecy of Psalm lxxxix. 25 is a prophecy to David, to be realized at a time of repentance and prayer and faith (verse 26) and by the establishment of an everlasting seed and an enduring throne (vv. 29 and 36). The only possible exegesis of this passage is that provided in Luke i. 32, 33. The correspondence is exact: there can be no reasonable doubt that the New Testament passage takes up 2 Samuel vii. 11, Psalm cxxxii. 11, Isaiah ix. 6, 7, and all the other Old Testament predictions concerning the kingdom,

Psalms lxxii. 8 and lxxxix. 25 among them : and exposes Jesus as the Seed of David through Whom every kingdom promise is to find its full and final realization. The result therefore of our examination of the thesis that Israel was to become a great maritime power *before* millennial days, and that therefore it is found to be identical with Great Britain—seeing that Great Britain corresponds to that description—is this : that examination of the two passages cited to support the said thesis shows them to be incapable of bearing that construction. There is no Scripture which can legitimately be so interpreted as to assure maritime power to Israel before the Messiah's return and the Restoration to the promised land. Hence, so far as maritime power is concerned, Britain is not proved to be Israel. This does not disprove British-Israelism *in toto* ; many other arguments and Scriptures have yet to be examined ; but so far as we have gone the British-Israel position is seen to be supported only by arguments and interpretations which will not bear the light of careful and unbiassed analysis.

CHAPTER V.

“And yet for all that when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away.”—LEV. xxvi. 44.

PERPETUITY OF EXISTENCE.

The British-Israel position finds much support from the fact that the seed of Israel is guaranteed perpetuity of existence. It is argued that this guarantee necessitates the presence in the world to-day of an “Israelitish nation” and that Great Britain corresponds with that description. It is once more our duty to quote from British-Israel literature. We need to see exactly what is argued and claimed in reference to this section of the subject in British-Israel handbooks : and then to submit the arguments and claims to careful examination, as courteous on our part in tone as it should be honest and thorough in method.

We quote first from “British-Israel Truth,” p. 66 :—

“If those ordinances (the ‘sun,’ ‘moon’ and ‘stars’) depart from before Me, saith the Lord, *then* the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever. Jerem. xxxi. 35, 36.

“Hence, according to God’s word, *an Israelitish nation* is not to cease as long as the sun gives light,

and must therefore be existing at the present time!"

We quote also from "Abraham's Great and Mighty Nation," by D. A. Onslow, J.P., A.K.C., President of the Imperial British-Israel Association, page 13:—

" 'Thus saith the Lord, Which giveth the sun for a light by day and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night: which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar: the Lord of Hosts is His name. If those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever.' 'Thus saith the Lord, If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord.' The passages just read would puzzle the most confirmed spiritualiser to make them mean anything but that the Lord intends *the nation of Israel* to continue *a nation* for ever. It is perfectly evident that this must be so, if David's Kingdom was to exist for ever 'as the days of heaven.' "

We further quote from "Israel Redivivus," by F. C. Danvers, K.C.C., F.R.S.S., Member of Council and Honorary Treasurer of the British-Israel Association, page 83:—

"It is important to observe, however, that the nation was not to be destroyed for ever, as it is written, 'Nevertheless in those days, saith the Lord, I will not make a full end of you.' (Jerem.

v. 18.) This would indeed have been impossible for 'Thus saith the Lord, Which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waters thereof roar, the Lord of Hosts is His name. If those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever.'"

As far as the writers quoted stand for a *literal* interpretation of Jerem. xxxi. 35 and 36, as opposed to a spiritual or figurative one we are entirely with them. That scripture seems undeniably to demand a simple and literal interpretation and to establish the fact that the seed of Israel is to be preserved as a recognizable, national entity in perpetuity; recognizable because, were it a nation in secret and unrecognized, its existence would not be demonstrative of God's purpose nor analogous to that of the sun, moon and stars: a *national* entity because ^{וְיָ}, the word here employed cannot be otherwise rendered than by *people* or *nation*. We cannot so well follow the writer of the second quotation when he associates the prediction of the establishment of David's throne "as the days of heaven" with the general assurance concerning the seed of Israel in Jerem. xxxi. 35, 36. It is by no means clear we repeat that Psalm lxxxix. 29, is a prophecy, the fulfilment of which is coterminous with that of

Jerem. xxxi. 35, 36. The word of Psalm lxxxix. 29, is part of a group of prophecies whose plenary realization is future and millennial and which can only commence after the Lord's return : whereas the statement of Jerem. xxxi. 35, 36, is a general declaration with no *terminus a quo* or *ad quem* and justifies the assurance that there must be now and always a nation representing the "seed of Israel"; in and by whom the said declaration is demonstrated and verified.

It is true that the statement of Jerem. xxxi. 35, 36, guaranteeing to the seed of Israel perpetuity of existence stands in close contact with millennial promises, that of the New Covenant in particular (vv. 31-33) which when realized will produce a knowledge of God in the nation so complete that it shall touch every individual unit and obviate the necessity of human rebuke, warning or teaching; and will carry with it a full pardon for the whole past record of sin and iniquity; hence the assurance of perpetuity of existence has obviously a reference to that still future period. For the fulfilment of the terms of the New Covenant must of necessity be future. No nation, neither the Jewish nor any other shows any correspondence at all with the description given. But although the guarantee of perpetuity of existence to the seed of Israel stands associated with millennial promise and therefore

covers the millennial age, it is impossible to *confine* it to that age. The plain, simple, honest interpretation of Jerem. xxxi. 35 and 36 compels the conclusion that the seed of Israel is to be preserved from its birth onward, despite all apostasies, judgments, vicissitudes of fortune and threats of extinction: to be preserved *now* in order to the fulfilment in millennial times of every good thing promised to the same people.

But the guarantee of perpetuity of existence as given in Jerem. xxxi, 35 and 36, must nevertheless be very carefully distinguished from *throne* and *kingdom* prophecies. The initial promise to David of an enduring throne and a son of his own direct line to occupy it receives its plenary fulfilment in the Lord Jesus Christ of whom Solomon was but a type. The clear promise to David recorded in 2 Sam. vii, received an instalment of its fulfilment in his immediate progeny Solomon, while its final and full realization can only be in the Lord Jesus and His millennial reign. This interpretation of the said promise is sufficiently confirmed by the statement of the angel Gabriel to the virgin mother of our Lord when he declared of Him, that "the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His Kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke i. 32, 33). The promise to David there-

fore of a throne and kingdom and royal Son, all to be established for ever, was not to be *immediately* realized: there was a gap *before* the birth of the Lord Jesus, for the lineal descendants of David had *not* been in undisputed, uninterrupted possession of the throne of David for a long period before Christ: nor was the promise fully realized *at* the coming of our Lord to earth: for He never occupied David's throne, was rejected by the competent authorities and left the fulfilment of all the throne and kingdom prophecies outstanding till His second coming in glory, which is an event still future. He is David's Son none the less; He is King of Israel, *de jure*, even during His temporary absence in Heaven: there is not a man wanting to David to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; for that Man has presented Himself, has filed His claim, has had it Divinely attested; and has only departed for the far country in order that He may *receive* for Himself the kingdom and return. There is *postponement* of the royal investment but no *abrogation* of the royal rights. The full realization of *throne* and *kingdom* prophecies stands therefore in abeyance until the return of the Lord Jesus to earth.

The guarantee of perpetuity of existence to Israel demands however a *present* fulfilment. It is as necessary for Israel to be *preserved* on earth as a nation through every century of human history and

through every turn of fortune as it is for the Lord to *live* in Heaven until He returns to establish David's throne and Kingdom. The fulfilment of the throne and kingdom prophecies cannot ultimately be effected, unless in the meantime, the unrecognized king is preserved (as Jehoshaphat was in the temple at Jerusalem) *in the heavenly temple* and his people be preserved as a distinct nationality *on earth* until He rejoins them.

Thus, the confusion between prophecies dealing with a future throne and kingdom and those supplying a guarantee of perpetuity of existence in the meantime and throughout, can only lead to wrong conclusions. We affirm as a point of exegesis that the two are not to be confounded: they are mutually dependent but distinct in character: if throne and kingdom prophecies are to be fulfilled *now*, then the Divine fulfilment in and through Christ, the only rightful king, is ignored: if Israel's perpetuity of existence be projected *into the future*, it provides a possibility of the people ceasing to exist now, and *ipso facto* of a vitiation of the future blessing promised. The confusion grows. But a careful distinction of the two sets of predictions, their context and their character, obviates confusion from the beginning and onward.

As regards the question of interpretation therefore we are led to the conclusion that, although the

statement in Jerem. xxxi. 35, 36, guaranteeing perpetuity of existence to the seed of Israel, stands in association with certain promises which await the Lord's return for their fulfilment, yet the statement itself is applicable to the whole period of human history ; uttered about six centuries before the time of Christ, it covers from that time backward to the birth and call of the seed of Jacob afterwards called Israel : and forward as a Divine undertaking to the very end of time, in order to and as an assurance of the realization of the whole of God's original purpose in the said seed of Israel ; but that the statement cannot legitimately be linked together with and made complementary to such prophecies as those in Psalm lxxxix. where David's throne and seed are to endure for ever and as the days of heaven, since these latter belong to a group, the fulfilment of which can only be realized in and by the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of David (Dan. ii. 44 ; vii. 14, 27 : Micah iv. 7 : Luke i. 32, 33).

This view is confirmed by the reiteration of the guarantee in the verses which immediately follow Jerem. xxxi. 35, 36. If the seed of Israel are not to be cast off for all that they have done, it is clearly implied that their grave national sins, though involving equally grave national judgments do not and cannot imperil their national existence. It is

not only in the millennial age therefore but throughout their entire history, that the seed of Israel are to be preserved, as a recognizable national entity, but it is in the millennial age *only* that full kingdom dignity is to be restored.

This being so, we are fully entitled to look for a fulfilment of the guarantee of perpetuity of existence in these very days. The statement covers the present time, the seed of Israel must therefore be in existence, they must be identifiable, they must remain in existence whatever happens until such time in a future age when all the predictions concerning them have been realized in the fullest manner.

If so, where is the seed of Israel to be found? We reply, firstly, in the Jewish race. And why? Because that race indisputably is of the direct seed of Israel, in whole or part; because that race is of clear and recognizable Semitic stock; because its history is notoriously striking and exceptional, and its preservation no less than miraculous; because, although suffering all the judgments consequent upon its breaches of the Sinaitic law and covenant and therefore deprived temporally of land, of government, of king or throne, of temple and priest and ephod and sacrifice, it still remains a separate national entity, more easily identified than any other by its strong racial type; because in spite of

wide scattering among other nations and remarkable adaptation to the life and habits of those nations, the said racial type is ineradicable and as strongly marked as on ancient monuments; because, while the Jewish race derives its name from Judah and represents mainly the two-tribed kingdom formed after the division made at the time of Rehoboam, yet it evidently includes a strong representation of the other tribes (2 Chron. xi. 14-17, and xv. 9, and xix. 8, and xxiii. 2, and xxxiv. 9, and xxxv. 17, 18; Ezra ii. 70, and vii. 28, also vi. 16, 17 and viii. 35); because psychologically, physically, mentally, the race known as Jews exhibit as clearly as in their history an exceptional origin and a unique faculty of national survival.

In a word, the correspondence is so complete, the traditions of the Jews themselves so reliable, the confirmations of identity so numerous that it is difficult to see what immediate necessity there is to look for any nation, other than the Jewish nation, whose history, condition, traditions and aspirations entitle them to be called the seed of Israel. The Jewish race answers to Bible description at every point both in curse and scattering, aspirations and prospects. It is rapidly qualifying, despite all the disabilities imposed upon it to fill the position which, after its national conversion, is assigned to it in a multitude of Scriptures. It has long been

recognized by scholarly and devout minds as the outstanding visible, historical proof of the truth and Divine origin of the Bible ; and *that* because of the complete correspondence between the statements of the one and the story and state of the other. With deep respect for those who arrive at a different conclusion, we submit that the ground is so fully covered by the Jewish people as answering to the guarantee given of perpetuity of existence that attempts to look for any other people as the seed of Israel are beside the mark. This is not to say that the Jewish people are the *whole* seed of Irsael, nor that they may not be and doubtless are a representation of the ancient ten-tribed kingdom which shall be revealed in God's good time and reunited formally with Judah ; it is intended rather to intimate that in our opinion and for the reasons here given, such a representation of the ten tribes cannot be, any more than are the Jews, in present possession of throne or kingdom, land or political status ; that there can indeed be no "Israelitish nation" in existence to-day that does not fall under the clear descriptions of Hosea iii, 4 and Rom. xi, 25, which Scriptures as clearly exclude the British Empire as they describe the Jewish race.

CHAPTER VI.

"One day is with the Lord as a thousand years."—2 PETER iii, 8.

"THE LATTER DAYS."

DEUTER. xxxi. 29.

It is our first duty to ascertain the interpretation put upon the phrase "The Latter Days" by those who authoritatively present British-Israelism as well as the deductions which they draw from and the theses which they base upon such interpretation : then to submit both interpretation and the propositions which stand or fall by it to careful and honest examination.

In turning to British-Israel literature, we find only two definite statements designed to fix the meaning of "The Latter Days." They are, however, authoritative. One is in "Abraham's Great and Mighty Nation," by D. A. Onslow, J.P., A.K.C., President of the Imperial British-Israel Association, a brochure published in 1913, by R. Banks and Son, 5, Racquet Court, E.C.4. The quotation we make is taken from p. 11 and runs as follows :—

"The Latter Days.

"To what period of Israel's history can all this possibly apply? It is obvious—or should be to those who 'have eyes to see and ears to hear' and

a clear open-minded understanding to discern—that Balaam’s prophecy can only apply to the time of their history after Christ had taken away their sins, and cast them behind His back. Balaam declares this plain enough to the King of Moab, for this is what he told Balak when the King’s anger was kindled against him : ‘ Spake I not also to thy messengers which thou sentest unto me, saying : If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of my own mind : but what the Lord saith, that will I speak ? And now, behold, I go unto my people : come *therefore* and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days ’ (Num. xxiv. 12-14). It is therefore in the ‘ latter days ’ and during that period and before the Millennial reign of our Lord—before His second Advent—that Israel is to be in the condition Balaam’s prophecy foretold. Now what is plain beyond contradiction is that the Jews have never, since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, been in a condition to respond to this wonderful picture of Israel blessed, given to Balaam by the Lord God Almighty, and yet we are at the close of the ‘ latter days ’ ! That we are at the close of the ‘ latter ’ or ‘ last days,’ will scarcely be disputed by any student of prophecy, for most of them are looking for the immediate return of our Blessed Lord in Glory, and to commence His Millennial reign on David’s throne. As we also believe this : we firmly maintain that Balaam’s prophecy—which relates to the ‘ latter days ’ and not to the Millennium—must have long been in course of fulfilment.”

The other quotation from British-Israel literature which it is also desirable to quote in full, in order fully and fairly to confront the position now under examination, is taken from "British-Israel Truth," by Denis Hanan, D.D., and H. Aldersmith, M.B., re-published in 1920 by the Imperial British-Israel Association, 14, Fetter Lane, E.C.4. It is found in three passages on pp. 37, 45, 46, 47.

On p. 37 we read :—

"Now the phrase 'the last' or 'the latter days' undoubtedly refers to the Christian dispensation (see next chapter)."

Turning to the next chapter we read :—

"Now the phrase 'the last' or 'the latter days' refers to the Christian dispensation! It is one of the most settled points of scripture interpretation. In the New Testament it is 'God . . . hath in these *last days* spoken unto us by His Son (Heb. i. 2). Christ was manifest in these last times for you' (1 Pet. i. 20). 'Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in "the latter times" some shall depart from the faith' (1 Tim. iv. 1). 'This know that in the last days perilous times shall come' (2 Tim. iii. 1). 'Mockers in "*the last time*"' (Jude 18). 'Little children it is *the last time*' (1 John ii. 18 R.V.).

"From these passages it is evident that this period is said by the Apostles to refer to the then commencing Christian dispensation—not to a time anterior to it—and certainly not to the millennial reign of Christ, when there will be no departing from the faith and 'perilous times.' See also Acts

ii. 17, where the time then present was called by St. Peter, ‘*the last days*.’

“Then, the passages in the Old Testament prove the same point: ‘God . . . hath made known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days’ (Dan. ii. 28). ‘Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days’ (x. 14). Here, again, ‘the latter days’ undoubtedly refer to a time after the captivity—viz., to the times of the Gentiles,’ the well-known period of the image of Daniel.

“In Numbers xxiv. 14, 17, ‘the latter days’ are mentioned; and here it evidently refers to the Christian dispensation, for it is written: ‘There shall come forth a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel.’ Again, in Deut. iv. 27, 31: ‘The Lord shall scatter you among the peoples . . . But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him . . . in the latter days thou shalt return unto the Lord thy God . . . He will not fail thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which He swore unto them.’ In the third chapter of Hosea it is said, the children of Israel ‘shall come with fear unto the Lord, and to His goodness in the latter days.’

“The ‘latter days’ extend up to the time of the reunion of the two houses, and the invasion of Gog: ‘And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains’ (Isa. ii. 2). Again, in Ezekiel we read: ‘After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years . . . and thou shalt come up against My people Israel, as a cloud

to cover the land: it shall come to pass in the latter days' (Ezek. xxxviii. 8, 16).

"Hence, it is an evident fact, that this period refers to a time subsequent to the captivity of the Ten Tribes; that it extends up to the Second Advent of Christ; and that the Christian dispensation, and the times of the image of Daniel, are expressly said to be '*the latter*' or '*the last days*.'"

These are the main and the fullest statements on the "Latter Days" to be found in British-Israel literature, and they are here quoted accurately and *in extenso* in order that no point may be missed. One minor reference only, beyond the foregoing, need be quoted. It occurs on p. 47 of the same volume and runs:—

"Some of the predictions spoken by the prophets concerning the House of Israel in the latter days are inconsistent with Millennial times when all war is to cease. The references from Scripture to support this are: Deut. xxxiii. 17; Numb. xxiv. 8, 9, 14, 18; Isaiah xli. 8 and 12, liv. 15, 17; Micah v."

We believe that we present a fair and true summary of these statements when we say that by those attached to British-Israelism the phrases "last days" and "latter days" are interpreted as applicable specifically to the present period of time, i.e., the Christian dispensation, and that upon that interpretation of the phrases the thesis is based that as Israel must be enjoying "latter day" blessings *now*,

therefore Israel must be identified with Great Britain.

We take the interpretation first. If it can be shown that the term “latter days” defines the present age, then considerable confirmation is given to the British-Israel position; if the term “latter days” cannot be so interpreted, then the British-Israel argument is correspondingly weakened. It will not even then be fully disproved, there will be other points left to examine point by point; but it will be deprived of support from the phrase “latter days.”

The words themselves and their intrinsic significance require first to be studied. The specific Hebrew formula is בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים, *Be'acharith hayomim*. *Acharith* is from *Achar*, later, after, hinder: and the literal translation of the phrase is “in the afterward of the days,” i.e., “in after days” or “in days future.” *Acharith* can be and is indifferently applied to the near and distant future. Thus the “expected end” of Jerem. xxix. 11 is literally “an afterward and a hope”: “thine end” of Jerem. xxxi. 17 is “thine afterward”: “the end” of the upright man in Psalm xxxvii. 37 is “the afterward”: reward and expectation in Prov. xxiv. 14 are “afterward and hope,” and “last end” of Jerem. xii. 4 is “afterward,” *Acharith* being used in every case. Nothing can be determined from the Hebrew as to

the precise period of realization: that which is to transpire is to do so "in days to come," in days, that is, to follow those in which the statement was made.

The question of interpretation involves also the *use* of the term. Not merely its intrinsic meaning but its *usus loquendi* must be considered. The precise phrase itself—latter or last days—occurs in fourteen places in the Old Testament. These must be considered apart from the use of the corresponding phrase in the New Testament, for while not denying that the significance may be in general the same, the New Testament term was uttered in another dispensation and to another class of people. Nor is ἔσχατος synonymous with אַחֲרִית. ὑστεριος may be.

The fourteen occurrences of the phrase "latter days," in the Hebrew Bible, are: 1: Gen. xlix. 1, where it defines the period of Israel's history anterior to the Christian dispensation: 2: Numbers xxiv. 14, where it indicates the time of Messianic and Millennial victories: 3: Deut. iv. 30, where it can only refer to the period of Israel's scattering: 4: Deut. xxxi. 29, to a period of future judgment: 5: Isaiah ii. 2, to exclusively Millennial days: 6: Jerem. xxiii. 20, to a period of repentance and conversion: 7: Jerem. xxx. 24, *idem*: 8: Jerem. xlviii. 47, to the time of Moab's restoration: 9: Jerem.

xlix. 39, to the time of Persia's restoration : 10 : Ezek. xxxviii. 16, to the time of Gog's attack on the land of Israel : 11 : Dan. ii. 28, to the whole period of the four Gentile kingdoms foreshadowed in Nebuchadnezzar's dream : 12 : Dan. x. 14, to the period of the kingdoms of Persia and Greece, with further prophetic reference, doubtless to the close of Gentile times : 13 : Hosea iii. 5, to the period of Israel's national conversion ; 14 : Micah iv. 1, referring to the same time of the establishment of the centre of spiritual worship in Jerusalem.

The references to “latter years” and “latter end” may be omitted, although they would confirm the obvious fact, as above demonstrated, that the phrase “latter days” is used in general of days future, and does not in itself define any specific period or dispensation. It is for the context sometimes, and more often for the fulfilment itself to determine the precise point of time when the prediction is to be realized. *Per se* the phrase, “in the latter days,” cannot by any sound method of interpretation be made to mean more than “days future,” i.e., a time still future when the predictive statement was made. Doubtless it may in certain cases include the present dispensation ; but to attach it as a phrase to this dispensation only, and to make it, so to say, a technical expression for the present age, is not fair or full interpretation.

We need only refer briefly to the citations made in "British-Israel Truth" of the similar term in the New Testament. "Last days" in Hebrews i. 2 sets the time of the Lord Jesus and the Revelation of God through Him in contrast with the earlier and varied revelations through the Old Testament prophets. As a term "these last days" as used in Hebrews i. 2, covers the Christian dispensation and doubtless beyond. In 1 Peter i. 20 the significance is similar. In 1 Timothy iv. 1 the reference is specially to the close of the present dispensation; for as in 2 Timothy iii. 1, it is a warning that is issued. So in 1 John ii. 18, and Jude xviii the Antichrist apostasy then incipient is forecasted. It is only in Acts ii. 17 that there seems to be any real identity between the use of the term in the New and Old Testaments; here the phenomena of Pentecost are linked with Joel's prediction of the afterward of blessing material, spiritual and universal, because they were an anticipation in miniature of complete and final restoration blessing. So far as the Pentecost age witnessed the fulfilment of the terms of the prophecy, it was but as a *terminus a quo*. Neither that age nor the whole Christian dispensation could see a prediction wholly fulfilled which included the final siege of Jerusalem, its Divine deliverance, the restored fertility of the land of Israel and the independence and security of the people in the same.

The phrase “last days” is therefore no more in the New Testament than in the Old determinative of the Christian dispensation. And if the British-Israel position depends upon an interpretation which should assume it to be so, then we submit, the British-Israel position has, as regards the term “latter days” no standing ground, seeing that examination of that phrase shows it to be a general term and not attachable to any particular period of time. It may indeed indicate any period future, from the time of utterance to the end of all time.

CHAPTER VII.

“Every tub must stand upon its own bottom.”—BUNYAN.

THE “FULNESS OF NATIONS.”

GENESIS xlviii. 19.

WE have now arrived at a section of the subject upon which the adherents of British-Israelism lay great emphasis and importance: we think the term “fulness of nations” may almost be called the main buttress of the British-Israel position: it demands, therefore, the most careful scrutiny without any diminution of Christian courtesy or consideration towards British-Israelites.

Our plan must be as heretofore, first to quote authoritative British-Israel statements on the term in question: then to examine their purport by re-stating fairly and honestly that which they express and involve, then to study the Scriptural basis of the said statements, and finally to decide whether, in regard to the particular term, the British-Israel interpretation and position is tenable.

For the statements of authoritative British-Israel writers we turn first to “British-Israel Truth” by Denis Hanan, D.D., and H. Aldersmith, M.B., and published by the authority of the British-Israel

Association in 1920. This book, it must be said again, comprehends almost every argument to be found in British-Israel Literature. On page 42 thereof we find this statement :—

" . . . his seed shall become a multitude of nations,' or as the margin says, ' a *fulness* of nations ' —Hebrew *Goyim* " (18, 19).

" The true meaning of the Hebrew word '*Goyim*,' translated '*nations*,' is a vital key-point to determine, as the birthright blessing given by Israel to Ephraim was that his *lineal* seed should become ' a *fulness* of *Goyim*.' This Hebrew word '*Goyim* ' ('nations'), in the plural, is never used in Scripture to denote 'Tribes'; but is applied to the Gentile nations dispossessed by the Hebrews, and to all nations who were outside the Law, commonly called the 'Heathen,' or the 'Gentiles'; and as Ten-tribed Israel was divorced from the Law (which is explained further on) they became to the Jews as *Gentiles*.¹

" Hence the first objection, brought forward by those who know but little of the literature of British-Israel Truth, is that the Anglo-Saxon race are 'Gentiles!' No doubt they are so-called 'Gentiles,' and most assuredly they could not be the 'outcast'

¹ " The Hebrew word *Goyim*, 'nations,' which is applied to the nations of Canaan dispossessed by the Hebrews, and then also to the surrounding nations among whom the people of Israel were afterwards dispersed, acquired in later times a moral significance, which is represented in the Authorized Version by the rendering '*heathen* ' or '*Gentiles* ' " (Preface, Revised Version, p. vii.). See Appendix C.

and 'lost' House of Israel, if they were not known as Gentiles. So few are aware of the true meaning of the word, and think the term 'Gentiles,' or more strictly 'Nations,' is only used in the Bible of those who are not of the lineal seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; forgetting that their literal seed were to become 'a company of Goyim,' or Gentile nations, even the 'fulness of the nations,' in 'the latter days.' "

Still more is claimed on pp. 55, 56, of the book.

"The children of thy bereavement shall say in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell" (Isaiah xlix. 19, 20).

"These passages refer to the lineal seed of Abraham, yet not to 'Judah,' but to the 'out-cast' 'House of Israel,' called 'Israel' by Isaiah. The 'King of Israel,' in vii. 1, is not the king of 'The Church,' but the king of the literal 'House of Israel'; thus 'Israel,' also, in these chapters does not refer to 'The Church,' but to the lineal seed of Abraham, even to Ephraim-Israel.

"The last quotation proves that the multiplication takes place before the return to Palestine, as the land is said to be too small for the inhabitants, and the children of the bereavement say, 'The place is too strait for me.' This is St. Paul's 'pleroma of the Gentiles'—Rom. xi. 25—which he calls '*a mystery*.' This '*mystery*' is the re-gathering into Zion of exiled Israelites, ostensibly as converted *Gentiles*—Goyim!

"The fact that Ephraim-Israel should become a company of *Gentilized*, yet *Christian* nations, is a '*mystery*' indeed!

"*Fifthly* : The blessing of multitudinous seed—'a company of peoples'—promised to Jacob's literal seed, must be headed up by Ephraim's '*fulness of Goyim*.' For it is very evident this '*fulness of Gentiles*'—the limit of the multitudinousness determined by God, as the point at which certain promises should be fulfilled—must be brought to pass before the return to Palestine, and the national conversion of the Jews. 'For,' St. Paul says, in Romans xi. 25, 'I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this *mystery*, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening *in part* hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles (*Gr.* "nations") be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved.'

"There is no other '*fulness of the Gentiles*' mentioned in the Bible but Ephraim's promised '*fulness*' in Genesis xlviii. 19. And it is most important to be understood, and borne in mind by all, that the Greek '*plerôma tôn ethnôn*'—*Plerôma*, that which fills up—used by St. Paul, in this passage, was a literal translation and quotation of the Hebrew, '*m'lo ha-Goyim*' (Genesis xlviii. 19); and that the Greek word '*ἔθνη*' commonly translated '*Gentiles*,' is more strictly rendered '*Nations*' (see margin, Matt. iv. 15). Hence, the passage in Romans should be translated: 'Until the fulness of the Nations be come in;' which is identically the same as the former passage (in Gen. xlviii.); 'His seed—Ephraim's—shall become a fulness of nations.' This is the way it is rendered in the Sp. Com. on Isaiah x. 22, where it is said: 'Ephraim' (the Ten-tribed kingdom) is '*to become the fulness of the nations*' (vol. v., p. 106)."

Finally the interpretation set forth in the above quotations is declared to be fulfilled in Great Britain (p. 88 of same volume).

“It was foretold by Jacob of Ephraim that his seed should become the ‘*fulness of the Gentiles*’ (see p. 59). What race can compare with the British in this respect? As Gentiles (see p. 42) there is no race that is filling up the world with nations as the British are doing at this day. It is this fact, coupled with their amazing wealth, which excites the envy and jealousy of other less favoured races. Great Britain is rapidly becoming ‘*the fulness of the nations.*’ ”

The term “fulness of nations” is cited in other British-Israel literature, and always interpreted and applied as above, though never with the same definiteness nor completeness. Having these quotations under review, we have all we need for examination. The British-Israel position may fairly be summarized thus :—

(1) That the term מלא הגוים “fulness of nations” indicates a federation of Gentile peoples.

(2) That the seed of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) is therefore to become Gentilized.

(3) That this phenomenon is to take place before Millennial days.

(4) That the “fulness of the Gentiles” in Romans xi. 25 refers to the same people as the “fulness of nations” in Gen. xlviii. 19.

(5) That Great Britain is to be identified with

Ephraim because it is "filling up the world with nations."

This is the British-Israel position, reproduced honestly and with sufficient fulness, to justify fair examination. At this point our examination begins. And first (as stated) we must deal with the interpretation.

We would ask very careful attention to the original phrase מלא-הגוים found in Genesis xlviii. 19. The first word *M'lo* is rightly translated fulness and is used elsewhere for a *cupful*, *handful*, *the fulness thereof* as referring to liquid, grain or inhabitants of territory. In its present connection it is evidently to be understood in the same sense as the "multitude of nations" of Genesis xxxv. 11, where the original קהל גוים *Kahal Goyim* (*lit.* a congregation of peoples) indicates a large group of nations.

It is, however, the second word *Goyim* which is vital. The first quotation above definitely states that this word is applied to Gentile nations and to all nations outside the Law.

The fact is, however, the root word גוי while often used of non-Israelite peoples, is by no means exclusively so used. It is employed in a number of passages set out below,¹ specifically of Israel.

¹ The passages in which the word *Goy*, nation, is specifically referred to Israel are : Genesis xii. 2 ; xviii. 18 ; xlv. 3.

In the plural form גוֹיִם it is frequently used in a universal sense, including Israel with other nations.¹ It is safe to say that it should not be translated "heathen" or "Gentiles" unless the context requires that restricted sense.

We submit then that to introduce the conception of Gentile nations into Gen. xlviii. 19 is unjustifiable: to interpret the phrase as "Gentilized nations" is gratuitous falsification; and to treat these unwarranted translations as the main foundation of a theory such as British-Israelism is puerile.

The term *M'lo Hagoyim*, fulness of nations, let

Exodus xix. 6; xxxii. 10; xxxiii. 13. Numbers xiv. 12. Deuteronomy iv. 7, 8, 34; ix. 14; xxvi. 5; xxxii. 28. Joshua iii. 17; iv. 1; v. 6, 8; x. 13. Judges ii. 20. Psalms xliii. 1; lxxxiii. 4; cvi. 5. Isaiah i. 4; ix. 2; xiv. 32; xviii. 2, 7; xxvi. 2, 15; xlix. 7; lviii. 2; lx. 22; lxvi. 8. Jeremiah v. 9, 29; vii. 28; ix. 8; xii. 17; xxxi. 36; xxxiii. 24. Ezekiel xxxvi. 13, 14, 15; xxxvii. 22. Micah iv. 7. Zephaniah ii. 1, 9. Haggai ii. 14. Malachi iii. 9. In all, 49 out of about 116 cases where the word is used in the singular.

¹ As *Goyim*, the plural form of the word for nations, occurs in the Old Testament about 440 times, it would occupy too much space to give references. A large proportion of the occurrences evidently indicate nations in the universal sense, as, e.g., 2 Samuel xxii. 44; Psalm xxii. 28; Isaiah x. 7; Jeremiah iv. 2. In such occurrences Israel is included. In Ezekiel ii. 3 Israel is exclusively referred to, as in the two nations of Ezekiel xxxvii. 22. While, therefore, in many cases *Goyim* indicates nations other than Israel and contradistinguished from Israel, it is not the uniform use of the word either in singular or plural.

us make it clear, does not exclude Gentile peoples, and we understand the phrase as used in Gen. xlviii. 19 to convey the promise of the seed of Abraham by faith among Gentile peoples which with Israel are to participate in blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant. For Abraham was not only the progenitor of Israel but to be also the father of a multitude of nations, and this promise is seen by the inspired interpretation in Rom. iv. 16, 17 to apply, not to his natural descendants, but to the much greater seed of faith. By this authoritative exegesis which we apprehend to be the only tenable one, the British-Israel foundation is seen to be false.

The second point to be examined under this section is the statement of the British-Israel authority that the fulness of nations in Gen. xlviii. 19 and the fulness of the Gentiles in Rom. xi. 25, being identical expressions refer to the same group of people.

That the expressions are identical we do not deny: but that fact does not compel their reference to the same group of people. It is surely absurd to use identity of term or title as an argument for identity of meaning when in all languages titles and terms are frequently invested with several meanings. "Son of Man," for instance, is in general a title of our Lord, but it is also frequently

used of Ezekiel and once of Daniel.¹ "Anointed" (Messiah) is a recognized title of the Lord, but is also applied to Israel, to David and even (in Isaiah xlv. 1) to the heathen king Cyrus. In modern English the term "general" may define a domestic servant, a military rank, a London omnibus or the broad basis of a discussion. The *context, connection, circumstances*, decide the meaning of the word: not the sense in which, under different conditions perhaps, it was used before. This is obvious.

Examining the two passages, Gen. xlviii. 19 and Rom. xi. 25 in this light, we have in the former case God Almighty uttering to the Patriarch Abraham a comprehensive promise of seed, by natural descent and by faith, the fulfilment of which, commenced then, can only be fully exhausted in the millennial age: in the latter case we have the Apostle Paul defining to Gentile believers the time limit of Israel's temporary blindness during the present age. The circumstances, connection and context of the two utterances are wholly different: the meaning of the term "fulness of nations" in the two passages is wholly different. In Genesis xlviii. 19 the term as seen describes Abraham's seed by physical generation and by faith in the most comprehensive sense: in Rom. xi. 25 the term indicates the outgathered

¹ It is indeed used in a sense strikingly opposite to the Divine title in Psalm cxlvi. 3.

company of Gentile believers during the present age. The British-Israel position, based on identity of meaning, rests here also upon a superficial and erroneous exegesis of Scripture. The whole British-Israel question is not yet fully discussed: our examination is not yet complete: it has only passed another point: but up to this point we have found nothing in the British-Israel position which will stand the light of honest, intelligent and careful scrutiny.

In further reference to the word (גוי *Goy*) *Nation*, its use when applied to the people of Israel is of special significance.

For instance, in the first and fundamental Covenant promise in Gen. xii. 2, "And I will make of thee a great nation" (גוי גדול), the same word *Goy* is used.

In Gen. xvii. 4, "for a father of many nations (המון גוים) [a multitude of nations] have I made thee," as well as in the following verse, the same expression *Goyim* is made use of. Also in the next verse again, "I will make nations of thee," *Goyim* is used, also in the promise concerning Sarah in the 16th verse, "she shall become nations." In Gen. xviii. 18, "Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, (*Goy*) and all the nations of the earth (*Goyim*) shall be blessed in him." Here the same Hebrew word is used in the same passage to

describe both the elect people (the channel of blessing), and the other nations of the earth in contradistinction therefrom (the recipients of the blessing).

The promise to Hagar concerning Ishmael in Gen. xxi. 13 and 18 uses the same word *Goy*. In Gen. xxxv. 11, we have the record of God's confirmation of Covenant promises to Jacob "a nation and a company of nations (גוי וקהל גוים) shall be of thee," the words used for nation and nations being *Goy* and *Goyim*. In Exodus xix. 6, God speaks to Moses of the Israel people thus: "Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (גוי קדוש), using the word *Goy* expressly of that people; as indeed is the case in Exodus xxxii. 10 and xxxiii. 13.

Again, after Israel's fall, God speaks of her through the prophet Isaiah (i. 4) in these terms, "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity," using in the first instance *Goy*, in the second *Am* of one and the same nation, and that nation Israel.

Unless one is enamoured of the British-Israel theory and determined to uphold it all hazards, it must be evident to all that the word "*Goyim*" cannot be used as evidence of the seed of Joseph becoming "Gentilized." The said theory depends for proof upon the word *Goyim* being a specific designation of Gentile peoples, whereas it is used also frequently of Israel, and particularly so in the group of Covenant promises to which the text

belongs. There is therefore *no proof whatever* that the word *Goyim* in this passage, "fulness of nations," implies Gentile peoples, or Gentilized peoples, or even so-called Gentile peoples. None whatever. On the contrary, the word here, as in other similar cases, refers to (Ephraim a leading tribe in) the Israel people, who so far from becoming Gentilized are to remain separate from all other peoples to the end of time.

But what then does the plural mean in "fulness of nations"? What is the significance of the promise to Abraham that he was to be the father of a "multitude of *nations*;" to Jacob, that from him was to be a nation and a "company of *nations*;" and to Ephraim, that his seed should become a "fulness of *nations*"?

First of all, recognition must be made of Eastern idiom. The Hebrew (and indeed the Greek) constantly use the plural to clothe an expression with the idea of overpowering greatness or magnitude and this idiom is called the "plural of majesty." In many cases where such a plural is found in the Hebrew text, our English translators (both of A.V. and R.V.) render it by a singular, sometimes, but not consistently, adding the word "great" to give the force in the English singular that exists in the Hebrew plural. Were all such uses of the plural in Hebrew to be expounded without regard to their

idiomatic sense, strange vagaries could be "proved" from Scripture.

Moreover the greatness here foretold to an elect nation is to be associated with the possession of a land (Gen. xvii. 1-8; Gen. xxxv. 11 and 12; Gen. xlviii. 4). That land, though held under tribute in the time of Solomon, has never yet been possessed by the seed of Abraham up to the Covenanted limits. It was a fulfilment, no doubt, of the promises both as to greatness and possession when "Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and making merry: and Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines and unto the border of Egypt" (1 Kings iv. 20, 21), but certainly not complete, full or final; its evanescence proved that. And the message of the prophets confirms it, the completion of the old Covenant promises stands over till Israel is re-gathered, re-united in their own land, neither to wander nor sorrow any more, but with changed heart to worship their King Messiah and their God. The greatness, political, spiritual and numerical of this people will doubtless then be more than worthy of the vivid picture language of their Eastern prophets; for words surely fail to describe the glory of the kingdom, the city or the people, when once the Lord Jesus is crowned on this earth as rightful King over His people.

In that still future age there will be a strong spiritual bond between restored Israel and other nations who are to come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and over whom the peaceful dominion of Christ will extend; and it is therefore quite within the scope of the promise that Israel's fulness or completion will be realized in this way. As Abraham's faithfulness made him the father of many nations beyond his natural seed, shall not his seed, spiritually as well as nationally restored, draw nations into its holy bond, to be its spiritual progeny, and to share its blessing?

CHAPTER VIII.

“He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.”—PROVERBS xviii. 13.

ISRAEL AND JUDAH.

IT is very often said both in speech and print by adherents of the British-Israel position, that others (that is those who are not British-Israelites) do not distinguish between Israel and Judah, that they use the words interchangeably when they should be clearly differentiated, and that in consequence they bring confusion into their reading of those parts of the Word of God which deal with the present and future of the chosen people.

Quotations from British-Israel writers are on this point quite unnecessary, seeing that first of all the issue is a clear one, and secondly, the attitude of British-Israelites on the point is equally clear.

One quotation therefore only :—

“The distinction between Israel and Judah is absolute. The history of the two peoples is not confused in the Bible: and yet infinite perplexity is caused by the common and perpetual error of speaking and writing of the Jews as if they represented the Northern kingdom.

“Many forget that the term ‘Jew’ does not mean Israelite, but is only an abbreviation of the word ‘Judahite,’ and simply signifies a descendant of the man ‘Judah,’ and then a member of the ‘House of Judah.’

“Is is simply marvellous to see how blind some writers on Biblical subjects are as to the real meaning of the word ‘Jew.’

“‘Jew,’ ‘Israel,’ and the ‘House of Israel,’ are mixed up in a most confusing way, and employed as if they always referred to one and the same people.”—*British-Israel Truth*.

Our present section of the examination therefore concerns the use of terms. Is the habit of speaking of the Jews as Israel erroneous and misleading? Is the recognition of the fulfilment of Israel prophecies in the Jewish people based on a fallacy? Such is the issue. If satisfactory replies to these questions can be furnished, the ground, so far as this point is concerned, will have been sufficiently covered.

A word preliminary. We do not think that the bulk of those who do not accept the British-Israel position are necessarily in a state of confusion as to the distinction between Israel and Judah. So far as the temporary division of the covenant people into two separate entities is concerned, we believe that most intelligent students of Scripture fully recognize the distinction. Nor can we see that there is any logical contradiction between a recognition on the

one hand of the fact that the prophecies of judgment on Israel are being conspicuously fulfilled in the Jewish people, and that there is therefore no obligation to search elsewhere for any other outstanding or well-defined nation to complete the picture, and a recognition on the other hand that in view of a future predicted formal re-union of the two sections of the covenant people it is reasonable to suppose that somewhere on the earth to-day and most probably in the very districts where they were last heard of in authentic history, there must be descendants of the Northern ten-tribed kingdom, representative thereof.

Now to examine. It will not be denied that the original constitution of the Covenant people was that of twelve tribes, the names of which are supplied and which include Judah and Benjamin. Israel was not the name of one of the tribes: it was the name of the father of the twelve men who became the heads of the tribes named after them. Israel on that account became the title for a twelve-tribed people of which Judah was one. Judah was therefore an integral part of Israel: descendants of Judah were as much Israelites as descendants of Issachar or Zebulun: for the greater includes the less: if of Judah, therefore *ipso facto* of Israel: just as, if men are Canadians or Scotch therefore they are British. If the word Israel be used in this

its original and generic sense, it is perfectly legitimate to describe Jews as Israel.

That there are differences in the dignity and of promised blessing conferred upon the several tribes of Israel as set out specially in Jacob's dying utterance (Genesis xlix), and Moses' swan song (Deut. xxxiii.) does not alter the fact that each and every tribe was integrally a part of Israel.

But there came the rupture. In 975 B.C. ten tribes revolted under Jeroboam, who became their first king: a northern kingdom occupying Samaria and composed of ten tribes only took for the time being and doubtless by reason of its predominance in numbers the title of Israel. The other two tribes of Judah and Benjamin—with Levi—occupied Judæa and adopted the name of Judah. Thus at this point the title Israel assumes a restricted sense: it indicates for the time being not the whole twelve-tribed people as it did originally and will do again finally: but only ten tribes thereof.

Thus therefore the term Israel possesses two senses in Scripture: it may comprehend the entire Covenant people composed of twelve tribes, Judah included: it may also indicate that "Israel" which rebelled against the house of David and split the Covenant people into two distinct portions, by Divine arrangement ("this thing is from Me," 1 Kings xii. 24) and for a specific time ("I will for

this afflict the seed of David but not for ever," 1 Kings xi. 39. "Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together and appoint themselves one head," Hosea i. 11).

The former or full sense of the title Israel is employed for the most part in the Pentateuch, the Psalms, the New Testament and the historical books dealing with the period previous to the division : the latter or restricted use is found chiefly in the prophets. But the context or the period of history in question supplies the necessary light as to which sense is intended in each case. Thus for instance in the passage : "Thus the Lord saved Israel out of the hands of the Egyptians : and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore," the term Israel connotes a complete, twelve-tribed people. So also in this : "And what one nation in the earth is like thy people even like Israel." And this : "Behold He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." And these : "He hath helped his servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy." "Blindness in part is happened to Israel." "And so all Israel shall be saved." "Names written thereon which are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel." We do not think that the obvious sense of the term Israel in such passages as comprehending the whole covenant people will be questioned by any (British-Israelite or other).

And on the other hand the restricted and temporary sense of the term Israel is evident in such Scriptures as "And Judah was put to the worse before Israel." "Though thou Israel play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend": "Jeroboam shall die by the sword and Israel shall surely be led away captive." "In those days the house of Judah shall walk with (or to) the house of Israel." Sometimes instead of the term Israel, the name of the dominant tribe Ephraim is used to describe the ten-tribed kingdom while temporarily detached from the remaining two tribes. But whatever term is used, there will be little difficulty experienced by the careful reader of Scripture in deciding whether the reference be to a part of Israel in a temporary condition of detachment although sustaining the national title for the time being or whether when the title Israel occur, it be intended to signify the whole of the twelve component tribes. It need hardly be said that the latter sense is the predominant one, the one more frequently used, the one the significance of which is never entirely lost sight of; while the restricted sense will disappear entirely as God's purposes of blessing for the race ripen into fulfilment.

Nevertheless the division still obtains. The two portions of the nation have not as yet been formally re-united. Are we not compelled therefore when using the term Israel to employ it in its restricted

sense as applicable still to the ten-tribed kingdom only in contradistinction from Judah ?

No, we are not so to use it. To use the term Israel in the sense that British-Israelites would have us use it as indicating only the ten tribes would not be to avoid confusion of thought and of interpretation of Scripture but to introduce it.

For we are living in the New Testament dispensation with a truer survey of the whole of God's plan and purpose in the Covenant people than that which any section of the Old Testament period permitted. With all of prophecy open before us, with all of spiritual apprehension that grace has brought us, it would be at best pedantic and at worst God-dishonouring, to insist on a meaning of the title which is soon for ever to pass away, which perpetuates the consequences of sin and judgment instead of everlasting and triumphant grace, and which departs from the precedent set by New Testament writers and the Lord Himself.

It is true also and should not be forgotten, that after the original rupture between the two parts of the nation, large numbers of Israel rejoined Judah. "Out of all the tribes of Israel" they came to sacrifice at Jerusalem, "so they strengthened the kingdom of Judah." This happened more than once, until there must have been a large representation of the whole Covenant people included in Judah. It is true again, and should not be lost

sight of, that at the time of Jewish restoration from Babylon, the Israel tribes were as free to return as the Judah tribes, seeing that Persia, Assyria and Babylon were then under one Government: that they must have done so, seeing that the returned captives are actually described as "all Israel," with sacrifices offered for the whole twelve tribes. It is a reasonable deduction from these two historical facts that after the captivity period Judah had become by reason of accretions from the other tribes both on religious and political grounds, representative of the whole race: a deduction which does not exclude the existence of other portions of the ten-tribed kingdom, still detached from Judah and only to be reunited to them in the end-time. Nevertheless these considerations, though of importance and significance, are not fundamental.

The fundamental basis for justifiable interchange (as emphasis may require) of the terms Jews and Israel is this :—

(1) That the Jews are integrally a part of Israel in the original plan of God and its ultimate realization.

(2) That the New Testament conception of God's counsels comprehends the whole scheme of grace rather than temporary periods of judgment.

(3) That the Jewish race as forming part of true Israel, and as being in composition so representative

of the whole Covenant people, exhibit to-day in its every feature such conformity to that group of judgments that were predicted for the whole race, that the intelligent student of Scripture is left under no obligation in order to meet the requirements of prophecy to search the world for any other representation of the ten-tribed kingdom even though such a representation must doubtless exist.

Finally, though the Jews be not *actually* the whole of Israel, they are so undeniably an integral part of Israel, so provedly *representative* of the whole, that it is justifiable and correct to speak of them as Israel. Mr. David Baron, for instance, has as much right to entitle the useful organization over which he so ably presides, "The Hebrew Christian Testimony to *Israel*," as John Wilkinson had to call another institution labouring amongst exactly the same people, "The Mildmay Mission to the *Jews*."

This conclusion carries with it the further one that wherever the remainder of the ten-tribed kingdom may be (and we strongly incline to the view that they are to be looked for and recognized in the districts where authentic history last located them), they must, of necessity, be under all the still unre-moved judgments predicted upon Israel, and therefore in a condition the very opposite of that prestige and power which Great Britain at present enjoys and exercises.

CHAPTER IX.

"It will cost you far less time and trouble to avoid errors than to retrieve them."—SECKER.

LO-AMMI.

WE reach now another important argument by which it is sought to establish the thesis that the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel, divorced temporarily from Judah in 976 B.C. has been brought into the enjoyment of great material and political power during the Christian era, and is to be identified with Great Britain. The *Lo-ammi* argument as employed by exponents of British-Israelism is one that cannot be ignored by those who seek carefully to examine that position. We propose in submitting this point to examination to follow our usual custom of first quoting in full authoritative British-Israel statements on the point in question ; next honestly presenting the issue ; and finally applying such tests as shall decide whether the argument as employed to support British-Israelism is valid.

The best, fullest and most representative and authoritative statement on *Lo-ammi* is to be found in British-Israel literature is that made on p. 48, *et seq.*, of "British-Israel Truth." We present it in full.

"Hosea represents the idolatry of the Ten-tribed House. The fate of the Kingdom of Ephraim is represented in the figure of the names of the three children 'Jezreel,' 'Lo-ruhamah,' and 'Lo-ammi.' As it is written: 'Call his name Jezreel.' The significance of this word is, God sows or disperses, i.e., a scattered people. Again, I 'will cause the Kingdom of the House of Israel to cease.' Secondly, we read—'Call her name Lo-ruhamah (margin, "that is, that hath not obtained mercy")': for I will no more have mercy upon the House of Israel, that I should in any wise pardon them. But I will have mercy upon the House of Judah.' Here, mercy is promised to 'Judah,' as a time when 'Israel' was not to have mercy. (This was fulfilled to the Jews on their restoration, after the Babylonian captivity.) As the House of Israel did not listen to God's messages, the prophet said: 'Call his name Lo-ammi (margin, "that is, *not My people*") for ye are not My people, and I will not be your God' (Hosea i. 4 9).

"For Israel to become 'Lo-ammi,' or not God's people, and not to be known as the covenant people of God, could only be effected by sending them out of the Holy Land, and causing them to entirely lose their identity as Israel. Thus, in time, they were even to forget that they were Abraham's seed; they were to be lost both to themselves and to other nations. This picture describes God's utter repudiation or *divorce* of the Ten-tribed House; in fact, their *Gentilization*! They were to be nothing better than the heathen—'not My people,' but it was only for a time, for immediately afterwards follows a most important and remarkable passage

—one that at once settles the false theory that the House of Israel is to return to the Holy Land few in number:—

“ ‘ Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be *as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered* ; and it shall come to pass that, in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not My people, it shall be said unto them, ye are the sons of the living God. And the children of Judah, and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint themselves one head, and shall go up from the land : for great shall be the day of Jezreel ’—the ‘ scattered ’ or ‘ sown ’ people, i.e., Ephraim-Israel of v. 4 (Hosea i. 10).

“ This ‘ land,’ as the ‘ Speaker’s Commentary ’ remarks, is not Palestine, but the land of their exile. Hence, according to the prophet Hosea, the House of Israel is to become ‘ as the sand of the sea ’ for number, and to be called ‘ the sons of the living God ’ before the reunion with the House of Judah, and the restoration to Palestine.

“ ‘ Thus—in the words of Bishop Titcomb—it appears that, although the Ten-Tribes were never to be restored to their old covenant, but were to be cast out into captivity as heathen, yet they should find God in that captivity and be restored to Him by some other means—that is, through the new covenant, within which they should obtain salvation, but only as Christian believers, not because they were Israelites after the flesh.’

“ In the second chapter a remarkable description of the ‘ *outcast* ’ condition of the Ten Tribes is to be found. ‘ Plead with your mother, plead ; for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband ’ (Jer. iii. 8 ;

Isa. l. 1). Then follows a description of the 'cast-out,' or "divorced" state; but, suddenly, in verse 14, the language changes. Note especially, *it is before the return to Palestine!* 'Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her . . . and she shall make answer (margin, "sing") there, as in the days of her youth . . . and it shall be at that day, saith the Lord, that thou shall call me Ishi (margin, "that is, my husband" . . . And they shall answer Jezreel (margin, "that is *Whom God soweth*," see chap. i. 4, 11). And I will sow her unto Me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her (Lo-ruhamah) that had not obtained mercy; I will say to them (Lo-ammi) which were not My people: Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God' (14-23).

"The majority of Bible students appear to overlook the fact that the terms used for the conversion of the Ten-tribed House, before the return to Palestine, by Hosea, are the very words St. Paul uses in the 9th of Romans, as descriptive of the calling of '*the Gentiles*' to whom he writes! 'As he saith also in Hosea, I will call that My people, which was not My people, and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall be, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not My people, there they shall be called sons of the living God' (25-26).

"Therefore, if Hosea predicted the redemption of the Ten-tribed House in words which St. Paul applied to the conversion of '*the Gentiles*,' what other conclusion can be drawn than that Ephraim-Israel was to reappear in the Christian Dispensation

as apparently Gentile, and not to be known as of Israelitish origin?

"St. Peter wrote to '*the elect*' or 'the Sojourners of the Dispersion,' and these 'elect,' or the chosen covenant people of God, must have been Israelites of the Ten-tribed House—the Jews—who 'according to the foreknowledge of God,' were *again* to be 'the people of God,' as we see in chap. ii. 9, 10, for '*Jezreel*' (Hosea i.) is the exact equivalent of the '*Diaspora*' of St. Peter. These 'Sojourners of the Dispersion' were acknowledged by the Jews to be Abraham's lineal, yet Gentilized, seed, for they said: 'Will He go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?' or, as in the A.V., 'Will He go to the dispersed among the Gentiles and teach the Gentiles?' (John vii. 35).

"In the second chapter, St. Peter applies this prophecy of Hosea—concerning the future of the Ten Tribes—to show that the promise of being 'the sons of God' was then coming into effect: 'But ye *are an elect race*, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light,' which *in times past were no people* (Lo-ammi), *but now are the people of God*: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.' Here, then is the inspired testimony of St. Peter that those who had not obtained mercy under the old covenant, were then, in the commencement of the latter days, to obtain mercy and to become *once more* the people of God in

¹See Matthew iv. 13-16, and Isaiah ix. 1-3, referring to Ephraim-Israel.

the new covenant, made with the House of Israel, over eighteen centuries since.

"This is the re-marriage of the 'divorced wife,' and it is to be in the Christian Dispensation, and before the return and the reunion with Judah. Hence we read in Hosea ii. 14, 16, that while in the so-called 'wilderness'—*not Palestine* where they were to be allured, the Ten Tribes were to call the Lord 'Ishi,' or 'my husband,' again. Also in Jeremiah iii. 14, where the Lord says, *before the return*, 'I am a husband unto you.' When Isaiah liv. is consulted, the same truth will be found. The 'divorced,' 'desolate,' 'wife of youth' is to be re-married, and forget the shame of her youth in the latter days; while separate from Judah, and hence before the final return to the Holy Land.

"Hosea finishes his prophecy, concerning Ephraim-Israel, in these remarkable words: 'I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for Mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread . . . *Ephraim* shall say, 'What have I to do any more with idols? . . . From me is thy fruit found' (xiv.).

"Is not this like the promises given by Jacob to the 'House of Joseph,' and to happen to it in 'the latter days.'"

From the same authority pp. 71 and 72.

"The people referred to by Hosea were unquestionably the House of Israel in contrast with the House of Judah; and that they were the same that St. Peter addressed in apostolic times is evi-

dent, because, quoting from Exod. xix. 5, 6, he calls them 'an elect race,' 'a royal priesthood,' 'a holy nation,' 'a peculiar people,' and then says 'that ye may show forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; which in times past were no people (*Lo-ammi*), but now are the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy' (1 Peter ii. 9, 10).

"This passage, compared with Hosea ii. 23, and Isaiah ix. 2, 3, proves that the prophecy of Hosea was being fulfilled in the conversion of these Gentilized Israelites to Christianity; in their having *then* obtained the mercy, from which they had been excluded by their divorce from the Mosaic covenant, when they became not God's people."

We have now to summarize the British-Israel position in order to present the issue which calls for examination: and then to examine it.

The British-Israel position as above authoratively set forth maintains that:—

(1) The Northern Kingdom of Israel, deported to Assyria in 721 B.C., was on account of its apostasies to be so divorced from God as to merit the name *Lo-ammi*—not my people.

(2) That this name implies the "Gentilization" of the Ten-tribed Kingdom.

(3) That before restoration to Palestine and before reunion with Judah, the descendants of the Ten-

tribed Kingdom are to experience the fulfilment of the promise of Hosea i. 10, and become a host innumerable as the sand and to be called the sons of the living God ; that Jeremiah iii., by its transition from curse to blessing confirms this : and that Hosea ii., in the same way indicates that the Ten-tribed Kingdom is to reappear in the Christian Dispensation as apparently Gentile and therefore with its Israelitish origin unrecognized.

(4) That the fact that St. Peter in 1 Peter ii. 9, 10, applies Hosea i. 9, 10 and ii. 23 to the conversion of Gentiles is to be understood as introducing a Gentilized posterity of the Ten-tribed Kingdom into the blessings promised to them in the said prophecies.

If the above theses are tenable the inference is that the descendants of the Ten-tribed Kingdom are to be identified with the British Empire.

Now for examination. While it is true that the prophet Hosea wrote mainly to and concerning the Northern or Ten-tribed Kingdom, it is, we hold, a false conception to make the prediction of temporary divorce from God apply only to that section of the people. The setting aside of Israel as a whole Twelve-tribed people and the substitution of another people to occupy their position during the period of Israel's disownment by God was intimated (Deut. xxxii. 21) long before the people were divided

into two portions. It may be justly said to fall within the terms of the Sinaitic covenant in the breach of which Judah and Jerusalem were equally involved with the Ten-tribed Kingdom both before and after the division. Idolatry being treated as spiritual adultery, Judah's participation therein was described as worse than that of Samaria, the Northern kingdom (Ezek. xvi. 51). Nor can the term *Lo-ammi*—not My people, whether applied to Israel, Judah or to complete Israel as comprising both, be interpreted as "Gentilization." That would be to make Israel cease from being a nation in the sense of losing those specific marks of nationality which consist in physiognomy, traditions, survival of habit and language and which would falsify Jerem. xxxi. 37. Disownment does not imply metamorphosis. Divorce does not involve disappearance.

The light needed for a true comprehension of the phrase *Lo-ammi* is surely afforded by the inspired New Testament writers. St. Peter in a general epistle, addressed to the whole community of believers as such, and therefore composed both of believing Jews and believing Gentiles, directly informs them that they as an outgathered community who were, before their entry into grace, not a people as such, are now as units from many sources incorporated into a new nationality, heavenly in its calling and citizenship, and to be called the

people of God : while St. Paul, writing in Romans xi., not to the whole Church as such, but specially to the Gentile section of it, describes Israel as having not obtained that which he sought for : except only the elect of that people with which election, believing Gentiles had been made partakers ; and this definitely, and in order to provoke Israel to jealousy. The newly-formed people, whose displacement of Israel for a time is to form God's retaliatory judgment of Israel's idolatries are not Israel themselves restored (which would be confusion), but the believing Church of Christ now temporarily occupying that position as God's witnesses and ministers which Israel should have occupied had not their own apostasy disqualified them.

That the Church of Christ as a whole has in its heart failed to rise to its privilege and responsibility : that the Gentile branches, wild by nature, grafted into a good Israel olive tree are themselves urged to take heed lest they also be broken off : that all Israel is yet to be saved by the road of true repentance and faith and made to blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit : all these considerations, so far from weakening or contradicting, in effect confirm and establish the fact that Israel is still set aside : that the true Church of the Lord Jesus still represents potentially the people of God who, throughout this Dispensation,

are intended to effect that witness of God which was originally committed to Israel: and by their exhibition of Divine grace so to provoke Israel to jealousy as to turn, at least in part, Israel's curse into blessing by saving some of them: until the time when the Church having been removed to its heavenly sphere, the Lord having returned to earth, having been recognized and worshipped and enthroned by a repentant Israel, the nation shall realize and discharge the function originally assigned them of world-wide witness which, accompanied by Holy Ghost demonstration and power, shall save all nations.

When it be further recognized that this cannot eventuate till the Lord comes, till Israel and Judah are both regathered and reunited into one people, truths which a multitude of Scriptures, each throwing light on the others, either definitely or inferentially declare; then it becomes clear that to describe Israel as "Gentilized," to antedate Israel's blessing by separating it from its concomitant and contributory events is to be guilty, whether honestly or not, of a grave confusion of terms, misinterpretation of Scripture and distortion of history. Israel, wherever its scattered remnants may be, is not the British Empire.

CHAPTER X.

Qui nimium probat nihil probat.

THE GATES.

WE have here another pillar of the British-Israel position. That God promised to Abraham's seed the possession of the "gate" of his enemies seems to be regarded by most, if not all, British-Israelites as conclusive proof that Great Britain constitutes the seed of Abraham. For the word "gates" has found its way into almost every argument uttered or written in favour of British-Israelism, and always on the assumption that the word "gate" indicates a seaport or strategic position, and that, consequently, because the British Empire holds such valuable coaling stations as Gibraltar, Port Said, Aden, Singapore and the Falkland Islands, the British Empire must, of necessity, be in possession of the "gates," and must therefore be Israel.

For the statement of a British-Israel authority, at once the most careful and clear-minded that we know of on this subject, we turn to "British-Israel Truth," p. 84. There, speaking of Great Britain, the writer says :—

“One of the peculiar characteristics of this nation—which may be said to be unique—is the possession of great strategic positions in different parts of the world, dominating her enemies’ lands. These strategic positions in a wonderful manner respond to the Scripture term ‘gate,’ as used in Gen. xxii. 17, and xxiv. 60. In the first passage the Lord swore by Himself to Abraham that his seed should possess ‘*the gate of his enemies.*’

“The late Bishop Patrick, commenting on this passage, wrote as follows: ‘These gates are cities, consequently the country; for the gates being taken, the cities are entered, and the cities surrendered, the country is conquered.’

“It is to be observed here that Bishop Patrick uses the word in the plural, whereas in Genesis it is called ‘the gate of his enemies.’ We think the Bishop is unquestionably right in his rendering, for as Israel would have many enemies in all lands, the idea of there being only one gate for them to possess is unreasonable. Moreover, this promise to Abraham is connected with the time when his after-seed should be greatly blessed, and multiplied ‘as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore.’ Previous chapters have shown that the blessing and multiplying of Abraham’s seed is to be during the latter end of this dispensation; and it is therefore *now* that Israel is to be found possessing ‘the gate of his enemies.’”

In addressing ourselves to the examination of this authoritative statement, we must confine our attention at present to the word “gate” and its

significance and the question of its application to Great Britain. The other statement of the writer that "previous chapters have shown that the blessing and multiplying of Abraham's seed is to be during the latter end of this dispensation," is one that we have already submitted to examination and found untenable.

We address ourselves therefore to the word "gate" or "gates" in order to ascertain :—

(1) To whom the promise of the possession of "gate" was given.

(2) What was and is the significance of the term.

(3) Whether the valuable ports and coaling stations which Great Britain possesses in various parts of the world show correspondence with the promise of "the gate."

Under the first of these heads, it should be carefully noted that the promise given to Abraham on Mount Moriah by the Angel of the Lord from Heaven, "thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies" was uttered at a period of time long anterior to the division of the Israel people into two kingdoms. It refers therefore not to a section of Abraham's seed but to all, i.e., to the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, the whole twelve tribes of Israel, including Judah and Benjamin and Levi. The repetition of the words of the promise as a blessing on the progeny of Rebekah, the wife of Isaac (Gen. xxiv. 60), confirms this.

This, we submit, is incontrovertible. But if it be true (and who can deny it?) that the promise of the "gate" was to be fulfilled to the whole seed of Abraham, then it is unreasonable to endeavour to discover signs of its fulfilment in a portion of the seed at a time when another portion is in a state of separation and curse. The only sound basis for fulfilment is that of a re-united people, qualified both by restoration to their land and true conversion to God to possess the "gate" of their enemies. In other words, there can be no true fulfilment of the promise of the "gate" before the millennial era. It is *then* and then only that "Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely": and until that period of time be introduced by the return of the Lord from heaven and the establishment of His kingdom, there can be no question of political dominance for Israel as distinguished from Judah.

Secondly, as to the significance of the term "gate." Let us note first that the Hebrew of Genesis xxii. 17, and xxiv. 60, is *sha'ar*, the singular for *gate*. The same word is employed 338 times in the Scriptures. Its general meaning is that of the gate of a city, but by metonymy it indicates also the city itself or the people resident within it. To all who know something of Eastern life and the functions of the "gate" as the town hall and law courts and central press bureau of the city into

which it leads, there will be no doubt as to the graphic force of the term, which is tantamount to our phrase "key to the position," which we employ figuratively to indicate the place of power and dominance. The "gate" of enemies therefore connotes control.

The word certainly never means a seaport. Nor could it even figuratively convey that conception to a people like Israel, who were essentially pastoral in their pursuits and who never fought a sea-battle. Their coastline indeed had no seaport and where the word "port" occurs in Scripture (as specially in Nehemiah) it is used in its old English sense of gate or door, with no suggestion of a maritime harbour.

But some argue, even though there may have been no thought of "seaport" in the word "sha'ar" and no such conception in the minds of the people of Israel to whom the promise of the "gate" was given, may not such a figurative meaning have been, nevertheless, in the mind of God when He caused the word to be employed? We cannot and do not deny the possibility of this. Indeed to possess the key-positions of control over all potential enemies and these possibly at wide distances apart, it would almost of necessity include not merely inland capital cities but also maritime stations. There may be more therefore in the intentions of

the Most High than was conveyed by the etymological meaning of the word "gate" or in the impression it produced on the minds of those who used it. But if so, then because the less is included in the greater, the possession of maritime ports must be associated with and subordinate to an undisputed world dominance, exercised for universal blessing. For in Abraham's seed all the families of the earth are to be blessed : and it is the remnant of Israel for whom praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame is to be secured ; and that at the time when the Lord will have mercy on Jacob and choose Israel and set them in their own land : and when they shall take them captives whose captives they were : and rule over their oppressors. The purport of a whole group of prophecies referring to the restoration period is as clear as is the time, place and people at and in and to which such prophecies are to be fulfilled : and no other application is possible than that of complete Israel in the millennial age.

Thirdly. Do the valuable maritime possessions and coaling stations of Great Britain correspond to the prophecy of the "gate" ?

(a) Certainly not in the *time* of fulfilment : for that is clearly millennial, being concomitant with many other predictions, similar in character and provably millennial in fulfilment.

(b) Certainly not as regards the *people* to whom the promise of the "gates" was made, for it was made to a twelve-tribed Israel which no one has yet claimed Great Britain to be.

(c) Certainly not as regards the *character* of the gates. Seaports are not in the promise.

(d) Further, to prove correspondence between the "gate" promised to Abraham's seed and the seaports held by Great Britain it would be necessary to show that each of the maritime stations scattered throughout the world and forming part of the British Empire is an enemy's "gate"; that is, the key position to enemy territory and used for the purpose of dictatorship over enemy affairs. The responsible statesmen of Great Britain would be the first, on her behalf, to repudiate such a conception of world-dominance. Israel is to have world-headship for beneficial purposes, in a coming day: to-day, Great Britain, remarkable phenomenon of world-power though she may be, and conspicuous example of Divine favour, follows the policy of "non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries," and takes her place in the comity of nations not as the "head" and "above only" (Deut. xxviii. 13) but as neighbour and friend, making treaties on equal terms and for mutual advantage. There is no true correspondence. It is not for us to cast ridicule on the effort to establish such

correspondence : nor to assign motives to those who recognize the Israel of Divine choice and promise in Great Britain. We owe them all love and esteem rather than criticism. All we have the right to say is that having given careful attention to the arguments and bases of their theses, we find, so far, that not one of them will stand the light of examination. Externally plausible and captivating, they are internally and radically unsound.

CHAPTER XI.

"Circumspectly."—EPHESIANS v. 15.

THE STONE KINGDOM.

IT appears to be the contention of most of the British-Israel school that the fifth kingdom of Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a colossal image is to be recognized in the British Empire.

The process of argument by which British-Israelites reach this conclusion first affirms that reunited Israel and Judah, reinstated in Palestine, are the ultimate fulfilment of the prophetic dream mentioned.

So far we think there should be no dispute. Surely when all the prophetic descriptions of the Millennial Reign of our Lord are focussed together, when Israel's restored condition during the same Millennial era is envisaged, when the position of all Gentile kings and kingdoms are seen during the same age to be subservient to that of Israel, there can be no doubt but that the present period of time is to close by the collapse of Gentile world-dominance, the return of the Lord from heaven, the final and full restoration and conversion of a complete

twelve-tribed Israel and the establishment of the everlasting kingdom promised to David.

The real point at issue, therefore, is not whether the fifth kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's image, is to ultimately fulfilled in the Millennial age, in a restored and reunited Israel and in the personal reign of the Lord Jesus Christ over the earth ; but as to whether, this being so, there is any ground for the recognition of such a condition of things in the British Empire.

Of direct argument on the point we find but little. Although we have collected all the available British-Israel literature that has been brought before our notice, we can discover but one serious attempt to prove the thesis that Great Britain is the fifth or stone Kingdom of the Nebuchadnezzar image. Our failure may perhaps be due to the fact that but few of the British-Israel publications are comprehensive and indexed. The one indexed volume is "British-Israel Truth" from which we have so often been compelled to quote since it seems generally to contain all that others have to say. But "British-Israel Truth" presents no direct argument to connect the Stone Kingdom with the British Empire. It gives the summation of its remarks on the Stone Kingdom in these words :—

"What is this kingdom of the mountain, that is to stand 'for ever?' It undoubtedly is not Christ

Himself, for He is to reign over it! Daniel tells us concerning this kingdom, that 'the sovereignty thereof' shall 'not be left to *another people*,' but that it shall be given 'to the people of the saints of the Most High;' and be 'an everlasting kingdom.' This kingdom of the mountain, which is to stand 'for ever,' is no new power, but is formed by the expansion of the stone kingdom itself. Ezekiel informs us that, after the re-union of the 'two sticks,' or the two Houses of Israel and Judah in Palestine, the Israelites will become 'one nation in the land,' that they shall be divided no more, that Christ shall reign over them, and that they 'shall dwell in the land . . . *for ever*, when God's sanctuary shall be in the midst of them *for evermore*.'"—"British-Israel Truth," *Twelfth Edition*, p. 67.

Thus the standard work on British-Israelism does not even affirm the identity of the Stone Kingdom with the British Empire. But it evidently assumes and accepts such identity, else the reference to the Stone Kingdom in the volume would be entirely out of place. When, for instance, the writers of the said volume (p. 66) insist that the "Stone Kingdom is not our Lord" for "the 'Stone' is a Kingdom," it can only, we think, be meant to imply that Great Britain is that Kingdom.

The only direct affirmation of the identity of the fifth Kingdom of Daniel ii. with the British Empire which is at the same time supported by argument,

and which we can find at present in British-Israel literature is the following :—

“63 Q. What great facts identify Britain with the Stone Kingdom of Daniel ii. ?

“A. (1) The history and advance of its races have been concurrent with, but contrary to, that of the four Anti-Christian and Anti-Israelite Monarchies as designed to checkmate and neutralize their policy.

“(2) It is avowedly founded on Christianity, the Bible and the Sabbath, and manifestly ruled by a Special Providence from the first.

“(3) The British races, Church and Nation, have been used by God to counteract or break in pieces idolatry and tyranny, especially in the Roman papacy. This was markedly the case even in the period of their nominal union with Rome—that Union resembling Samson’s with Delilah.

“(4) It has now, as the present age is nearing its close, every providential sign of permanency, and of becoming ‘the Mountain Kingdom filling the whole earth.’”—“A British-Israel Catechism,” by the Rev. Robert Douglas, M.A. Second Edition, p. 20.

This is all therefore that we have to submit to examination. Mere assumptions are outside the sphere of sober and reverent thought.

We are called upon then in the first paragraph of the above quotation to note that the history and advance of the races composing the British Empire have been concurrent with, but contrary to, that of the four kingdoms represented in the Nebuchad-

nezzar image. This argument is in its turn based upon the prophetic statement that the God of Heaven was to set up a Kingdom "in the days of these Kings."

Two questions require answer. (1) Does the establishment of the Stone Kingdom "in the days of these kings," require that its component races shall be concurrent with and contrary to the said Kings? Is it not to be understood in the light of the parallel prophecy in Daniel vii. as following on the taking way of Antichrist's dominion? Is not the ten-horned kingdom and the other horn which arises after the ten horns and subdues three and challenges Diety, the final representation of all Gentile imperial domination?

The other question (2) is this: If the races which when merged together became the British Empire were co-existent with the four great Empires of the prophecy, could that in any case identify Great Britain with the fifth Kingdom? The progenitors of all modern kingdoms were equally under some name or other co-existent with the four ancient kingdoms. The union of races which constituted Great Britain an Empire cannot be said to have commenced earlier than the thirteenth century.

Neither, therefore, does Scripture demand, nor the British Empire supply an existence of the fifth kingdom concurrent with, but contrary to the four

monarchies symbolized in the Nebuchadnezzar image.

We are asked in the second paragraph of the quotation to observe that the British Empire is avowedly founded on Christianity, the Bible and the Sabbath, and manifestly ruled by a special providence from the first. In the broad sense all this is true, although there are counterbalancing facts which it is unnecessary to present. The vital question is—do these features, more or less characteristic of the British Empire, in any way identify it with the kingdom which the God of Heaven shall set up and which is to break in pieces and consume “all these kingdoms” and to stand for ever? Granted all of the wonderful story of grace and long-suffering which God has exercised towards Great Britain and her colonies and populations, Christian and non-Christian, granted all of the pardon and preservation she has experienced in spite of her grave national sins, is there aught in the British Empire’s character and conduct which so completely differentiates her from other powers as to entitle her, and her alone, to be described as set up by the God of Heaven and as to be guaranteed perpetuity of existence? Obviously not. The distinctions between Great Britain and other kingdoms which may be drawn in favour of the former are purely of degree and not of essential qualities. There is no sin, however gross,

found in humanity which is not present somewhere or another in the British Empire. But the *method* by which the theocratic kingdom is to be established is radically different from that of the formation of the British Empire : the outstanding features of the Divinely-established kingdom as regards its territory (Zech. xiv. 4 and 9), its monarch (Luke i. 32), its capital (Isaiah xxiv. 23), its fertility (Isaiah lv. 13, &c.), its well-built cities (Isaiah lxi. 4), its land laws (Isaiah lxxv. 21, 22), its absence of sedition (Ezek. xx. 38), and its undisputed supremacy (Micah v. 8), are when set together seen to be so unique, as to entirely disqualify Great Britain or any other present-day power from establishing a claim to identity therewith.

The third paragraph in the quotation we may pass. It may be dismissed as being manifestedly untrue. Idolatry and tyranny, even in the Roman papacy, have not been broken in pieces by Great Britain or any other power or party. They exist still, largely within Great Britain herself.

The final paragraph deserves fuller attention : it is asserted that at this the closing period of the present age, Britain has every sign of permanency. We have to say that the remarkable deliverance of Great Britain out of and through the Great War at a time when she seemed to many thoughtful students of ethnology to be showing signs of decline and decay, is an exhibition of Divine grace which we cannot

wholly explain : but even that deliverance has brought with it no definite sign or token or guarantee of permanency. What God's purposes are for our dear land and Empire we cannot say ; but to build hopes of permanency upon an identification of Great Britain with the Israel of promise and the coming Kingdom of Righteousness is to mar the picture of the restored earth which prophetic Scripture depicts ; to rob Bible descriptions of that Kingdom of their full meaning ; to ignore a hundred hard facts in Great Britain's story and present condition ; and to rear a superstructure of vain and pleasant imaginings upon a false and flimsy foundation.

We hold this firmly and state it frankly ; nevertheless many of those who differ from the conclusions here set out are our brethren and sisters in the Lord, and therefore beloved : it is the British-Israel *position* we are bringing under examination, not British-Israelites individually or collectively : and we trust they will accept as a mark of respect to and esteem for them, the fact that their request for a full and honest examination of the British-Israel position is finding on our part, however imperfectly, a response.

SECTION II.—HISTORY.

CHAPTER XII.

"Wisdom is oft-times nearer when we stoop than when we soar."—WORDSWORTH.

JOSEPHUS AND THE LOCATION OF THE TEN TRIBES

THIS series of studies have now dealt with the various arguments by which British-Israelites seek to show from the Scriptures that the British Empire corresponds with the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel. We have, after careful and we trust courteous examination, demonstrated that not one of these arguments either fairly represents the scriptural statement which it seeks to interpret, or provides a satisfactory explanation or fulfilment thereof. In other words, our examination shows the British-Israel position to be untenable so far as its reference to Scripture is concerned. We have presented this refutation of British-Israel exegesis in restrained language—indeed, we have been criticized by some for a too mild and gentle attitude—but none the less, we submit, has it been demonstrated by sober analysis and counter-argument that the theory of the identification of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel with the British Empire (or the British and American peoples) is utterly opposed to sound and consistent

interpretation of the Scriptures. The theory, made up of skilful argument and copious quotations of Scripture is, as a whole, overwhelmingly specious and plausible; but not one of its component parts will bear the light of drastic and honest examination. Only by shifting rapidly from point to point, before any one point has been thoroughly examined, can that fatal "impression" of truth be created which to so many is truth itself. Faithful and thorough examination of the British-Israel theory, point by point, inevitably discloses its falsity. This is not mere dogmatic, *ex parte* statement: it is the summation of the examination presented in the previous articles of the series.

So much, therefore, for the *Scriptural* aspect of the subject. In the next articles of the series, we address ourselves to a scrutiny of the *historical* side of the question. For if the British people (or the British and American peoples) be the descendants and representatives of the ten-tribed Kingdom that was deported to Assyria in 721 B.C., then it is evident that there must have been at some period subsequent to that date a transference of the people from Assyria to the countries where their descendants are said to have been discovered. The ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel cannot be in its entirety in two places at the same time. It was undeniably located in Assyria in 721 B.C.; in 1922 A.D. it is alleged to be resident

in the British Isles and elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere. During that period of 2643 years, the people must therefore, as a whole, have migrated from Assyria and established themselves in English-speaking countries. Even should such a migration have taken place in stages and at different epochs, there would nevertheless be some reliable historical record of the fact. It is the obligation of British-Israel adherents to present the historical data: it is the purpose of the present examination to sift and weigh such historical data as is presented, and to decide how far it goes to support the British-Israel position.

Down to the first century A.D. there should be no difference of view as to the location of the remnants of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel. When it is granted (as it *should* be in the light of the frequent occurrence of the word Israel as the description of the restored people in Ezra and Nehemiah), that a large number of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel returned to Judæa after their captivity in Assyria, it must be recognized that a large number also remained in Persia. This is directly stated by Josephus (Art. b xi, cv. § 2), in these words: "*But then the entire body of the people of Israel remained in that country; wherefore there are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans: while the ten tribes are beyond Euphrates till now, and are*

an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers."

It is true that there is a passage in the Apocrypha (Esdras xiii. 40 to 46), which states that the ten tribes left the multitude of the heathen and went forth into a further country where never mankind dwelt, that they might there keep their law. "*And (it is stated) they entered into Euphrates by the narrow passages of the river.*" This statement if it refers to a migration later than the partial return to Judæa, clearly contradicts Josephus. If the tribes crossed the Euphrates westward as here implied, then they were no longer on the other side of the Euphrates. But Josephus, writing centuries later, states that "*the ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates till now and are an immense multitude.*" The framing of the statement leaves no room for a migration of the body of the people between the restoration to Judæa and the first century of the Christian era.

Hence the attempt to identify the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel with the Scythians who crossed the Araxes, penetrated the Caucasus, skirted the Black Sea, and migrated into Europe is not history but conjecture. This identification, however, is directly asserted in "British-Israel Truth," p. 115, *et seq.* Once more with greater boldness and less justification, Josephus is contradicted.

It is to the authority of Du Chaillu that British-

Israelite writers chiefly appeal for substantiation of the theory that the Norse progenitors of the English-speaking races came from the region of the Black Sea. This unproved hypothesis is placed together with the conjectural identification of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel with the Scythians in order to frame an argument something like this: The ten-tribed Kingdom are stated in the Apocrypha to have migrated westward to a region called Arsareth. This must have been the river and town of Sareth in the Carpathians. The Scythians were in the same district at the same date: therefore the two are identical. Sharon Turner has suggested that the Saxons were migrants into N.W. Europe from the Asiatic side of the Araxes. Paul du Chaillu sets out a "fairly continuous history" which represents the progenitors of the English-speaking people as having migrated from the shores of the Black Sea. Therefore the Scythians were Israel, the Norsemen were the Scythians, the British Empire was peopled from Scandinavia, and—the British are Israel.

Such is the essential argument. We have not tried to make it look ridiculous. Stripped of verbosity and laboured explanation, its own inherent weakness does that.

It remains only to be said that Du Chaillu, though an intrepid African traveller and gifted writer, had no reputation as a historian. Sharon Turner's "History

of the Anglo-Saxons," his *magnum opus*, has considerable merit, but not great authority. Neither of these writers however identify the British race with the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel: their position, whatever be its value, is that the progenitors of the British people were originally migratory Scythians. For the conjecture that the Scythians were the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel, we have only the opinions of some modern and partisan British-Israelites: and these in direct contradiction to the pronouncement of that reliable historian Josephus.

Of authentic history, therefore, to establish the identity between the British Empire and the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel, there is none.

Yet if ever historical data were required it is here. For we are faced with the proposition that an Oriental, swarthy, pastoral, Semitic race, who had no prowess on the sea, is to be identified with a blue-eyed, fair-haired, maritime race of daring Norsemen who attacked and subdued the coasts of Britain and Ireland. Such a proposition could only be sustained by the solidest historical authority. In the absence thereof it is untenable.

But surely there must be some sound and scientific evidence as to what became of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel. There is. We propose to conclude this section of the examination by presenting the same in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

"But facts are chiefs that winna ding
An' downa be disputed."—BURNS.

EVIDENCE AS TO THE PRESENT LOCATION OF THE
DESCENDANTS OF THE TEN-TRIBED KINGDOM
OF ISRAEL.

WE have now reached the point at which it is suitable to submit such positive evidence as there may be concerning the present location of the descendants of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel.

Let us first pass in review the ground already covered. We have examined the statements made on the authority of recognized leaders of the British-Israel movement and on each cardinal point of the position they seek to establish. We have found their exegesis of Scripture unreliable and erroneous, and the conclusions they draw to be therefore entirely untenable. We do not make this strong statement *before* but *after* our careful examination on the leading points at issue has been carried out; nor do we make it even now with any tone of triumph or personal prejudice. Purely on the ground of honest investigation and in the interests

of truth and right judgment, do we affirm that British-Israelism when examined as it has now been, is found to present no evidence of the truth of its position that careful students of Scripture and history should be asked to accept.

Then if the British Empire be not Israel, where are the descendants of the ten-tribed kingdom to be found?

There is no obligation to answer this question. If it be difficult or even impossible to discover the whereabouts of the descendants of the ten-tribed kingdom, that does not afford logical proof of their identity with the British Empire. Nevertheless it is a reasonable inquiry; and if there be no disposition to go farther than reliable evidence affords justification for, it is wise to examine such credible testimony as exists if only to be safeguarded against leaping to false conclusions or following wild and unproved suggestions.

Let us clear the ground again. It is a commonplace of Bible history that after the deportation of the ten-tribed kingdom to Assyria in 721 B.C., there were still larger numbers of the said ten-tribed kingdom left in Canaan, multitudes of whom united with Judah in the celebration of national festivals and the general worship of God, contributing liberally of their substance thereto.¹ Thus it would

¹ 2 Chron. xxxi. 6, xxxiv. 9, and xxxv. 17, 18.

appear that numbers of Israelites (i.e., of the Northern or ten-tribed Kingdom) mingled with Judah.

Again, at the time of the restoration from Babylon 536 B.C., it is evident that political changes had made Assyria and Babylon to be included in the Medo-Persian Empire, and that the members of the ten-tribed Kingdom were as free to return to Jerusalem as was Judah. And from the striking facts that those who remained in Persia after the restoration period are called Jews,¹ and those who returned to Judæa are frequently called Israel,² it is evident that multitudes of the descendants of the ten-tribed Kingdom availed themselves of the opportunity and became merged with Judah in restoration in the same way as many Jews remained behind in Persia became incorporated with the descendants of the ten-tribed Israel Kingdom.

This is a fair reading of history : but it must also be recollected that Josephus in the first century of our era declared the entire body of the people of Israel to have remained in the country of their captivity and the ten tribes to be still beyond the Euphrates. There is no vital discrepancy however anywhere : and on one point there is absolute unanimity, viz., that no migration of the ten-tribed

¹ See the Book of Esther throughout.

² Ezra ii. 70, vi. 16 and 17, vii. 28, viii. 35.

Kingdom of Israel other than that of their number who participated in the restoration to Judæa in 536 had taken place before the first century, A.D.

No one will surely dispute the wisdom of commencing the search for anything lost, in the place where it was last known to be : if so, it is reasonable to ask if there be any trace of the descendants of the ten-tribed Kingdom in the territory that was once comprised in the ancient Kingdom of Persia, i.e., in the territory that lies between the Euphrates on the west and the Indus on the east.¹

It cannot be denied that there *is* such trace ; and that it is supported by evidence at once more direct, more scientific and careful and first-hand than any which has so far been submitted to establish the identity between the ancient ten-tribed Kingdom and the British Empire. We have indeed good evidence to support the reasonable proposition that the bulk of the descendants of the ten tribes are still where history last located them ; while we have no reliable evidence to support the position that Israel is to be identified with Britain, at a time when such identity would falsify Scripture.

The evidence available was admirably condensed and presented to a meeting of the Indian Section of

¹ The Persian Empire extended as far west as Asia Minor but in the light of Josephus' statement we commence our search east of the Euphrates.

the Society of Arts in a paper read by Colonel Sir Thomas H. Holdich, R.E., K.C.M.G., K.C.I.E., C.B., D.Sc., on January 18, 1917, and afterwards published *in extenso* in the Journal of the said Society,¹ for February 2, 1917.

We give here only seven extracts.

(1) *On the absence of evidence of migration.*

"There is nothing whatever to show that at this time (about the year A.D. 70, nearly eight hundred years after their captivity) they were anywhere but in the position assigned to them by the early chronicles, i.e., beyond the Euphrates. Still less can we discover evidence that they had migrated in a body to steppe regions beyond the Black Sea and had become incorporated with the Skythic tribes who had then spread into Europe."

(2) *No absorption of the descendants of the ten tribes into the Skythic hordes who overran Europe.*

"A few words about these Skythic nomads may be interesting in view of certain fantastic theories (accepted by thousands in this country) that they absorbed the Israelites, or that, in some inexplicable manner, the Israelites became Skyths. When the Greeks began to colonize on the north coasts of the Black Sea, about the time that Samaria fell, they encountered these steppe nomads as they gradually

¹ We had the privilege by invitation of attending the said Session of the Society of Arts and had thereby our impression of the soundness and thoroughness of the arguments employed greatly intensified.—S. H. W.

extended trade eastwards by a route into Central Asia which crossed the steppes from the Don to the Ural (about Orenburg), and then carried traffic south-westward to regions between the Jaxastes and the Oxus beyond the Aral Sea. From the Don to the Ural the route mainly traversed the country of a kindred people called Sarmatians, but on the Oxus and between the rivers Skyths again prevailed. Thus they were to be found at intervals in regions extending from the Oxus to the Black Sea, and, indeed, it seems probable that they were still further west. They appear to have been first mentioned by Hesiod about 800 B.C., and by the time of the Captivity, 721 B.C., a good deal was known about them, as appears from the writings of Herodotus. They seem to have occupied all Wallachia, and the Dniester was Skythic as far as the Greeks knew it. They were an immense and widespread people, and with them certain European peoples trace an ethnographic connection based (with some probability) on the similarity of the name Sakai with Saxon, and the known direction and extent of the Skythic irruption into Europe. The Skythic hordes invaded Medea and overran Western Asia about one hundred years after the Captivity, and, after extending their raids into Palestine, they finally destroyed Nineveh. Then, if ever, the Skyths and the Israelites met. But we know that the Skyths retired northward again and that the Israelites were still an immense multitude beyond the Euphrates many centuries after the tragedy of Nineveh's fall. There was no absorption then, and it is inconceivable that it should have occurred after the days of Josephus and the destruction of Jerusalem."

(3) *Then where are the ten tribes?*

"But, having arrived at the conclusion that the legal descendants of the house of Israel are not to be found in Saxony (and still less amongst the Anglo-Saxons of Britain), and having expressed the view that a strong and virile race of people described as a great multitude in the first century of our era (and still to be found beyond the Euphrates) must have been practically indestructible, and believing, as I do, in the vitality of the Hebraic race of Israel as much as in that of the Jew, where are we to look for these descendants and inheritors of the promises made to Israel? This, indeed, is one of the greatest and most interesting of the ethnological problems of the world. I cannot pretend to offer any opinion of equal value to those of the many Biblical scientists who have investigated it. I can only humbly suggest that we might begin our investigations in those identical regions beyond the Euphrates (a definition which might apply to all the East between the Tigris and the Indus), starting with those districts to which historical evidence points as to their habitat after being carried away captive from Samaria: and the country which suggests itself first is Armenia."

(4) *Armenia.*

"We need look no farther for the racial impress and hereditary characteristics of Captive Israel. Most of the Armenians I have met might have come fresh from Samaria, and their conversion to Islam and to Christianity has done little or nothing to modify the ingrained Hebrew type."

(5) *The Ben-i-Israel.*

“As for the field which presents such thorny problems to European politicians now, and which will inevitably in the not distant future be subject to the impress of action, political, military and commercial, which will frame new pages of history—the lands which lie between the Tigris and the Indus, and the right of way across them—I have endeavoured to show you that at one end of it lies Armenia and the hills beyond the Euphrates, and at the other the land of a strong and self-contained people who believe themselves to be Ben-i-Israel. In Armenia it seems to me are still to be found the evidences of Hebraic survival which might easily be traced to the lost tribes of 1800 years ago. The Armenians may be but the dregs of a once great people and anything but pure in lineage, but the Hebrew characteristics are still predominant.”

(6) *Afghanistan.*

“Assyria, in the days of Sargon, was therefore the empire consolidated by Tiglath Pileser, and it is interesting to note of what that empire consisted in those early days. It was evidently an extension of previous empires which had included Asia Minor, and reached from the Mediterranean to the Caspian and the Persian Gulf, and there seems to be historical evidence that Tiglath Pileser carried Assyrian commerce, if not Assyrian arms, as far east as Herat, Seistan and Kandahar, and even to the Indian borderland. Whether these remote provinces were ever an integral part of the empire may be doubtful, but it is probable that in the days

of the Israelite captivity Assyrians knew their way well enough to Ariana (or Herat), and there is a curious tradition floating in the mists surrounding the early dawn of history that their commercial ventures extended still farther east.

"Amongst the Semitic races the Hebraic cast of feature and character is perhaps the most familiar and the most unchangeable of all, and no one can deny that the Durani Afghan—the true Ben-i-Israel—possesses it in a very marked degree. I once received a letter from the late Lord Roberts, who had read something that I had written on this subject, in which he said: 'I am so glad that you think the Afghans are Jews. I have always been sure of it myself.' As a matter of fact, I never thought that they were *Jews*, or said so; but the distinction between the Jew and the Israelite is one that is often missed. The Afghan hates the Yahudi—or Jew—and it is on record that Afghan authorities have even safeguarded Christians against the enmity of Jews in Kabul. Lord Roberts was impressed with the Hebraic personality of the Afghan, just as indeed has been every observer who has come into contact with him."

(7) *On the stamp of heredity.*

"Indeed, the stamp of heredity appears to be indestructible. The Ethiopian has not changed his skin, nor the Mongul his obliquity; neither have the Semitic people of Western Asia lost their physical appearance which the sculptures of Nineveh have recorded."

To summarize. If the evidence here cited be

reliable, then it is proved that in pre-captivity and restoration periods a considerable number of the ten tribes had become absorbed into Judah : that the main body of the ten tribes nevertheless remained after the restoration period in the countries over which Persia held sway : that there is no proof whatever of their having moved therefrom and good reason to believe that they remained : and that in the corresponding territory of to-day large sections of the population show clear sign of descent from the said ten tribes.

CHAPTER XIV.

“Let him go on blest stars, 'tis meet he fall
 Whose blindfold judgment hath no guide at all.”—
 MACHEN.

THE COMPOSITION OF THE ANGLO-SAXON RACE AND
 THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

WE start in this section from the already demonstrated fact that there is no historical proof whatever that the descendants of the ancient ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel made, after the restoration period, any mass movement from the districts to which they had been deported, while there is on the other hand very striking evidence, based on racial impress and hereditary characteristics, that whatever remains of the said ten-tribed Kingdom is to be found in the regions where reliable historical data left them, viz., in the territories beyond the Euphrates river, and specially between the Tigris and the Indus.

This being the point that we have reached, all possibility of identity between the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel and the British race is already excluded. Enough, indeed, of honest and careful examination both on Scriptural and historical grounds, has been applied (we humbly suggest) to

show that British-Israelism is a proposition outside the realm of consistent Bible exegesis or credible history.

But it seems necessary nevertheless to go further, if only to corroborate the results of the examination: seeing that we have not yet disposed of all the leading arguments presented by the British-Israel school of thought.

The question then that falls to be examined under the present heading is this: though proof of *migration* to Great Britain be missing, is there nevertheless any evidence of *arrival*; in other words do races that form the population of the United Kingdom exhibit signs of containing such elements as might correspond to the descendants of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel; or are the ethnological types found in Great Britain such as show them to be descended from sources quite distinct from the ancient ten-tribed Kingdom?

Put simply, as our *last* section was historical, *this* section is ethnological. Is the British type Semitic in origin or Japhetic? The answer to this question involves some brief survey of the composition of the Anglo-Saxon race.

It must be admitted at once that the ethnological origins of the races forming the population of Great Britain lie in considerable obscurity. Whether we deal with the Ancient Britons, the Celts, the Romans,

the Saxons, the Norsemen or the Normans, we have little but comparative philology to guide us. We are safe, however, when all the linguistic data are before us, in tracing the languages of these races to a common Aryan source. And these linguistic monuments point to Central Asia as the primitive seat of the Aryan race. They point also to successive migrations of the Aryan race westward at a remote period of history, doubtless long anterior to the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. Though these Indo-Germanic tribes, the original basis alike of Celtic and Anglo-Saxon stock, were oriental like Israel, their traceable history is none the less entirely distinct. When Israel was still a compact, pure-blooded, independent race, the Aryan race had already scattered and disintegrated into Persians, Armenians, Greeks, Romans, Slavs, Celts and Goths.

What, then, is the British-Israel claim in regard to the race question? The affirmations made in "A British-Israel Catechism," by the Rev. R. Douglas, M.A. (Nisbet and Co.) (undated), include the following:—

"How do the various British races claim an Eastern origin?"

"A. (1) The ancient British Triads trace the Cymry to 'Hav or Defrobani,' 'where Constantinople now stands.' (Davies' Celtic Researches, 165). 'The Celts have an unvarying tradition of having come from the East.'

"(2) Plutarch, in his *Life of Caius Marius*, not only implies the fact, but describes the large annual emigration of the '*Celts and Teutons*' or '*Celto-Scyths*' through Asia Minor into Europe, having, as he says, '*gradually opened for themselves a way through the greater part of the European Continent.*'

"(3) The identity of the Cymry with the Cimmerii of Herodotus, who were driven Westward by the Scyths about 630 B.C. is generally admitted; and the connection of both with the *Beth-Khumri* Israelites of the Assyrian obelisk in the British Museum is highly probable. Their identity with the migration of the ten tribes to the Crimean Arsereth described in 2 Esdras xiii, appears evident.

"(4) The Anglo-Saxons are clearly traced by Sharon Turner and others to the district 'East of the Araxes in Asia,' one of the regions of the Israelites' exile.

"(5) Du Chaillu traces the Vikings to the shores of the 'Black Sea' (Ch. i). See '*Viking Age of the English People.*'"

And "*The Lost Tribes of Israel,*" by the late Reader Harris, K.C., (*P.L. Publishing Company*) 1918, states:—

"It seems, therefore, that the lost tribes or a large proportion of them moved from Media to the shores of the Black Sea about the commencement of the Christian era, where they remained for centuries. From thence they moved northwards and some went into Scandinavia and others went to Western Europe. The people whom we call Saxons were not natives of England but captured it from the Ancient Britons and had themselves come from the shores of the Black Sea.

“On arrival in England the Saxons divided the country into various sections, of which many were called after their own name, and which names we use to-day. For instance, Sussex meant South Saxon; Essex, East Saxon; Wessex, West Saxon; Middlesex, Middle Saxon. The word ‘Saxon’ is traced to ‘Sac’s sons, or sons of Isaac, and is claimed to be a fulfilment of Genesis xxi, 12, where we have the prophecy:—

“‘*In Isaac shall thy seed be called.*’

“The Normans, who conquered the Saxons in the eleventh century, were not Frenchmen, but Northmen, people from Scandinavia, to whom a hundred years before, the French King had ceded a portion of his dominions, which was called after them, namely, Normandy. These Northmen are believed to be part of the tribe of Benjamin. They were very remarkable people. Lord Macaulay says:—

“‘The Northmen were the foremost race of Christendom. Their valour, their ferocity, made them conspicuous from the Black Sea to the Atlantic Ocean.’

“They are believed to be descended from Benjamin, because of their character, which was the character of that tribe, and also because the Norman standard was a wolf, which also was the standard of the tribe of Benjamin.

“‘*Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf*’ (Gen. xlix. 27).”

Now to examine:—

(1) It is evident that the statements above quoted either ignore or reject recognized historical data.

Indeed the writer of "A British-Israel Catechism" dismisses the Japhetic origin of Aryan peoples as unreasonable.

(2) The citation of *Paul du Chaillu* and *Sharon Turner* introduces two names possessing no reputation as competent historians.

(3) The hypothesis of British-Israelism that the ten tribes moved to the Crimean Arsereth before the Christian era contradicts Josephus, the veracious historian who locates them as beyond the Euphrates in 90 A.D.

(4) On historical grounds, therefore, British-Israelism is compelled either to go too far or not far enough. If it make the whole Aryan race to be Semitic and identify it with the ten tribes, then it causes it to people Europe, long before the Israel race was free to migrate and while the latter was still quartered East of the Euphrates; if again it make only the Saxon race to be Israel, then the invasion of England by Saxons, Angles and Jutes by no means affected all the elements of the British race, which is a mixture of Celt and Norse and French, as well as Saxon.

(5) The British-Israel thesis is again obliged to ignore ethnological data. Neither the Gaels of Scotland nor the Celts nor the Saxons, nor the

Scandinavians nor the French—all forming elements of the British population—exhibit any outstanding marks of the strong, Semitic type familiar to Ancient Inscriptions and still surviving in recognized Semitic peoples.

(6) The British-Israel theory is unable to present any proofs of common traditions or common language between the composite population of Great Britain and the pure-blooded stock of the ancient ten-tribed Kingdom. The coincidences of “British” showing similarity with “Brith Ish” and “Britannia” with “Brith-Ania” and Saxon with “Isaac’s sons,” are exceptional and inconclusive.

(7) In fact, there is naught in procurable or observable data to lead us to any other conclusions concerning the origins and composition of the Anglo-Saxon race than those which are affirmed by credible and accepted historical authorities. The British-Israel theory may and will still be nursed and prized by those whose minds are already made up or biassed, and who do not recognize the need for sober and careful and full examination: but to others, who see the necessity of collecting and sifting evidence before passing judgment, British-Israelism will always remain a hypothesis—if not indeed actually disproved—yet in the realm of plausible, pleasant but unproven theory.

CHAPTER XV.

“Understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm.”—1 TIMOTHY i. 7.

THE IRISH LEGEND AND THE CORONATION STONE.

UNDER this section we are face to face with assertions rather than arguments : which assertions are meant to confirm—for in no case, even if accurate, could they prove—the hypothesis that Great Britain represents the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel. The assertions include statements that the Irish language has a Hebrew origin : that the prophet Jeremiah took charge of the daughter of Zedekiah at the time of Nebuchadnezzar’s conquest of Jerusalem, that he brought her to Ireland, married her to one Eochaid, became himself the patron saint of Ireland ; that he further had charge of the Ark of the Covenant and Jacob’s pillow : that the latter was afterwards brought to England after the battle of Dunbar by Edward I : and that all English monarchs since, except Mary, have been crowned upon it.

It must be our aim in submitting these assertions to examination to ascertain whether the assertions are based on any reliable historical data and are therefore worthy of credence ; and even if they were

so established, what confirmation they can justly be held to afford to the British-Israel position.

The clearest and fullest presentation of these assertions in British-Israel literature that we can find, is in the chapter entitled "Jeremiah and St. Patrick," being Discourse xx in the book called "The Lost Ten Tribes," written by the Rev. Dr. Joseph Wild, and published by Robert Banks and Son, of Crane Court, Fleet Street, London, 1879.

It would be impossible of course to quote the whole chapter: and unjust perhaps to the writer and to British-Israelism to quote only a section of it. Moreover we cannot discover in it any quotations from historical sources that may be submitted to examination. In the light of the fact, that after the murder of Gedaliah (Jerem. xli. 2) Jeremiah accompanied many of his nation to Tahpanes, the border city of Egypt, where, according to tradition, he died a martyr's death, we submit that intelligent people should not be asked to accept the speculation that the legend of a strange man called Ollam-Folla who appeared in Ireland in 580 B.C. is "proof" that the aged prophet Jeremiah after a full and long life of ministry and hardship, emigrated to Ireland. Wild as the proposition is, we should be obliged, were there any historical support to it, to give it full attention. There is none.

As regards the stone which Jacob used for a

pillow, it is true apparently that there is a tradition that it was brought to Ireland and thence removed to Scotland, remaining at Scone till in 1296 Edward I carried it to Westminster and that it now occupies the space beneath the Coronation chair. On the other hand, Skene (1869) asserts that the Coronation stone was originally quarried from the rocks near Scone.

As regards the daughter or daughters of Zedekiah, the last King of Judah, who saw his sons slain at Riblah before his own eyes were thrust out and he was taken in brazen fetters to Babylon, they appear to have been taken charge of by Ishmael at Mizpah at the instance of Nebuchadnezzar and as prisoners to have been subsequently removed to the country of the Ammonites: but Ishmael's prisoners were recovered by Johanan and therefore doubtless the daughters of Zedekiah among them. They afterwards seem (Jerem. xli. 17) to have dwelt at Chimham which is by Bethlehem, prior to departure for Egypt where they finally settled with Jeremiah at Tahpanes (Jerem. xliii. 5-7). There is no historical record of their having ever migrated from thence. We cannot prove that they did not subsequently come to Ireland, for there is no historical evidence which can be submitted to examination: we must therefore leave those who are capable of accepting unprovable and unsupported assertions, however

grotesque and improbable they may be, in possession of the field.

But now, even were these baseless assertions sustained by reliable historical evidence, even were it, that is, historically proven that the prophet Jeremiah came in the closing years of his life to Ireland bringing the King's daughters and Jacob's pillow and the Ark of the Covenant with him : even were it proven that the Coronation stone on which the Coronation chair at Westminster rests be that on which Jacob's head rested at Bethel, what would follow : how would such phenomena, if they could be shown to have occurred, support the theory that the British Empire represents the remnant of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel ?

So far as we can see, not at all. Even if one or both of Zedekiah's daughters were married into the line of British kings, that would not make the latter direct descendants of David, either by natural generation or legal right ; even if the so-called "Coronation Stone" be actually the ancient pillow of Jacob, that extremely interesting coincidence would not make Britain to be Israel, nor British kings the Lord's anointed, nor the most far-flung Empire in history, heterogeneous in its populations, to be the pure-blooded stock of Abraham, resident within their Covenant land.

Doubtless our esteemed friends who hold British-

Israelism, would say that the assertions of Jeremiah's emigration to Ireland are not vital to their scheme. We agree that it could not possibly stand by them, for they are entirely unproved and even were they proved, they would bring little or no real advantage to the British-Israel position.

It is for that reason that we have from the commencement of this examination taken up in article after article the pleas and claims of British-Israelism, point by point, position by position, more or less in order of their importance. We have not discovered till now anything that will stand the light of careful examination or carry conviction to an unbiassed and logical mind. And if not, then surely the Irish legend and the theory of the Coronation Stone, in the absence of valid evidence, may be dismissed.

SECTION III.—CORRESPONDENCES.

CHAPTER XVI.

"There be few, very few, that will own themselves in a mistake though all the world see them to be in downright nonsense."—SWIFT.

MARITIME POWER AND POLITICAL PRESTIGE.

WE now address ourselves to the third and final section of our exhaustive examination of the British-Israel theory, viz., that of *Correspondences*. The first section dealt with the SCRIPTURAL aspect of the question at issue in which our task was to examine the passages on which the British-Israel theory is based, and test the exegesis of these as set forth by British-Israel writers: the second section dealt with the HISTORICAL side of the position and we addressed ourselves to the investigation of the historical *data* which British-Israel authorities present or fail to present: the third section, commencing with the present chapter deals with the CORRESPONDENCES said to exist between the promises made to Israel and the present condition of the British Empire.

It must be evident at once that the present section is not so much a fresh field of examination as a re-survey of much that has been already discussed.

But it is now viewed from another angle. The question is this : Is Great Britain and is the British Empire occupying the position, possessing the power and prestige, discharging the functions, inhabiting the territory, exerting the influence and adopting the attitude which are in the whole body of prophetic description assigned to the Israel people ? Is there, that is, a true correspondence between the Israel *in picture* as seen in the Scriptures and the British Empire *in fact* as seen by our eyes ?

Now when in our first section we examined the Scriptures themselves, we believe that we established the fact that the prophecies concerning Israel required in their entirety and in order to their fulfilment a people quite distinct from the British Empire. We saw that the only appointed place for the Scriptural Israel was the land of promise : that the only time for a fulfilment of the predicted blessing was after the Lord's Return to earth : that predictions such as Hosea iii. 4 and Romans xi. 25 dealing with the intermediate time before blessing sets in, fitly describe the Jewish race and the whole twelve-tribed kingdom and exclude the British race . that the phrase "fulness of nations" as forming a part of the original promise to Abraham, while it does not exclude Gentile peoples, is not to be understood otherwise than in Roman iv. 16 and 17

and cannot justify the hypothesis that a composite race like the British peoples trace their physical descent from Abraham: that Judah and Israel cannot be fundamentally separated, for while Judah and the Jews may not be the whole of Israel, they are nevertheless an integral part of it. These considerations then drawn directly from the Scriptures appear to destroy any apparent correspondence between the promises granted to Israel and the position of the British Empire: the ground, therefore, has been traversed: the British-Israel theory seen to be untenable by those who base their convictions on sober and careful analysis. Why then approach it again?

Because the British-Israel school emphasizes so insistently the maritime power and the political prestige of Great Britain that many minds are overwhelmed by it and are disposed to think that such a remarkable phenomenon as the British Empire demands as it were a place in prophetic Scripture: that if they have difficulties in finding the references to it those difficulties are overborne by the fact of an Empire so prosperous and so unique in many aspects of its history and progress as to compel the view that it must be the special recipient of Divine favour and therefore presumably Israel. Exegesis, even the most sober and thorough may be at fault: here in the British Empire is a gigantic phenomenon demanding explanation: what other

explanation can be given than that it is in some remarkable way correspondent to Israel?

Such is the attitude of many minds : and it is necessary therefore to examine the subject of British-Israelism from this angle as well as from the preceding ones, even though it be logically to retrace our steps.

We cannot and do not deny the quite remarkable character of the British race and Empire. Despite much that might be said to discount the beneficence of its influence and power, it is nevertheless and from every aspect, an outstanding ethnological and political phenomenon, arresting attention and challenging study and explanation. But this fact does not render it necessary that it should be directly dealt with in prophetic Scripture. Nations other than Israel which come up for mention in Scripture are found to be not only in contact with Israel, but generally occupying territory contiguous to that of Israel. They then appear under the names of the territories lying adjacent to Canaan. The King of the North controls forces operating to the North of Palestine : Egypt or the King of the South are the terms defining a power menacing restored Israel from the south : such is the habit and method of prophecy : and Great Britain may conceivably even yet fall under one of these or some similar prophetic description. But the fact remains that whatever part Great Britain may take in the fulfilment of the

Divine programme, it cannot be Israel itself, for were it Israel, it would be Israel prosperous at the wrong time, in the wrong place and under wrong conditions. There is no prosperity promised to Israel except that which is associated with national conversion and repatriation and theocratic government. The whole body of prophetic Scripture, read in its context and accepted in its entirety establishes this. Great Britain's maritime power and political prestige, exercised and enjoyed as they are under conditions other than those in which Israel is to exercise and enjoy power and prestige, disqualify her from any claim to be Israel. An instrument of God doubtless, partly consciously, mainly unconsciously, is Great Britain and doubtless raised up and equipped for the purpose of being a temporary but efficient trustee and custodian of Palestine and a participant in the furthering of the Divine purpose in many other respects. But Israel she cannot be if all the terms, conditions, descriptions and time-periods of God's inspired Word are allowed to stand as the final authority by which to determine the special features in every age of that people which God formed for Himself, the seed of Abraham His friend, now scattered and peeled, now without king or prince or ephod or sacrifice, but ultimately to blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit.

CHAPTER XVII.

“The common witte, the first of wittes all
Is to discern all things in general.”—HAWES.

PALESTINE.

IT must be kept in mind that we are in the section of our examination which deals with *Correspondences*: that this section is not of the same importance as those already dealt with, viz., *Scriptural* and *Historical*: but that it must nevertheless be carefully discussed if the whole of the arguments put forth by the adherents of British-Israelism are to receive the attention which they demand and deserve.

This then is the third chapter in the third section of the Examination: and the subject of *Palestine* comes up for treatment in this section because it is presented by British-Israel authorities as confirming, if not proving, their thesis that the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel is to be recognized in the British Empire and the English-speaking races.

That there is confusion in the minds of some British-Israel writers between Palestine and the promised land, that they fail, that is, to distinguish between Palestine (ancient Philistia) and the whole

of the territory promised by God to Abraham's seed, is unfortunate ; but does not vitally affect the present examination. The land actually promised to Israel is vastly more extensive than Palestine : its frontiers were defined at the time the original Covenant was made. The name Palestine was never applied to the whole country : nor has the whole territory ever yet been actually possessed.¹

Palestine, therefore, is not the right title to employ when dealing with the restoration of Israel. But we must let that pass. British-Israelites *do* sometimes so use the title, as when on p. 120 of "The Lost Ten Tribes," Dr. Joseph Wild writes :—

"Thus gradually will Israel-England open up Palestine for Christian settlement."

Again an outstanding authority, Dr. Aldersmith, writes in "The Fulness of the Nations," page 151.

"Again enquire of any man of the world what maritime nation will probably occupy Palestine, give protection to the Jews and also (as 'the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof') have to withstand Russia over the final settlement of the burning 'Eastern Question.' His answer will give the present name of the lost 'House of Israel'—*viz.*, Great Britain."

Let us clear the ground. We are in perfect agreement with the British-Israel position as regards the literal return of the Jews to Palestine and also

¹ The whole country was held under tribute of course in the time of David and Solomon.

with the equally literal return of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel, wherever it may be, to the land of promise. We stand for literality in the interpretation of prophetic Scripture as much as do British-Israelites. We have never accepted any figurative interpretation.

There is no disagreement then on the *method* of interpretation: there is no dispute as to the fact that in order to the fulfilment of Ezek. xxxvii. and other Scriptures, Judah and Israel are to be formally reunited in the land itself and reconstituted into one people, never more to be divided. We are, therefore, more than ready to admit that there must of necessity be on the planet to-day a representative remnant of the ten-tribed Kingdom, Divinely preserved, in order to be gathered to the land of promise and to be reunited to Judah.

The real and only point at issue is this: does Great Britain or the British Empire or race, do the English speaking races as a whole exhibit such correspondences with the prophetic pictures of the ten-tribed Israel Kingdom as to justify the assumption that that ten-tribed Kingdom is identifiable with the British Empire?

This question has formed the objective of our inquiry throughout and our treatment of it has already, we submit, demonstrated that up to this point no valid evidence or argument has been presented to justify such an assumption.

But now in relation to Palestine.

Is it not a fact that Great Britain has already assumed control of Palestine; is it not a fact that Great Britain may be said to have officially espoused the cause of the Jews and of their national aspirations? Are not these facts, if not direct proof, at least strong confirmation that Great Britain is the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel, and that events are moving towards the fusion of Great Britain and the Jews as the fulfilment of the prophecy of the reuniting of Israel and Judah?

No. These things may make the British-Israel position more plausible to those influenced by it, they may stereotype an obsession, they may—*indeed they do*—cause some British-Israelites to mention that their case is proven and that all further argument is vain.

But they do not and cannot alter facts. The facts are these. Great Britain is politically, *not nationally*, the temporary trustee of Palestine. Great Britain holds that trusteeship by virtue of a temporary mandate entrusted to her by certain other Gentile powers. Great Britain is as much pledged to retire from Palestine when her trusteeship is discharged as she is to fulfil the terms of the trusteeship during its operation. Great Britain has no intention or desire of occupying or annexing Palestine: the British race has no intention or desire to migrate from British territory to Palestine.

We need not deal with the fact that a very large proportion of the British population are entirely averse even to the present temporary control of Palestine by Great Britain, that they desire the expense such control entails to be terminated and the troops it requires to be released. That fact matters little. Great Britain will doubtless discharge her obligations, both in exercising all her temporary rights under the mandate and in withdrawal when the mandate expires.

Here then is no point of correspondence with the regathering of a world-wide scattered people: kings acting as their nursing fathers, queens as their nursing mothers, carrying their daughters on their shoulders, expediting and assisting a process of repatriation.

That God employs instruments is a matter of history and experience: that God is, in this age, evidently employing Great Britain as an instrument for the deliverance and custody of Palestine is fact. That very fact, apart from all that has gone before, excludes the possibility of Great Britain being the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel: for if the janitor be but janitor, he cannot be heir: and if the caretaker be but the caretaker, he cannot be owner: and if a resident from outside be called in to act as temporary custodian, he is excluded from claiming the right of the legal and prospective tenant.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A goodly apple rotten at the heart : O what a goodly outside falsehood hath !—SHAKESPEARE, *MERCHANT OF VENICE*, ACT I, SCENE 3.

BRITISH SABBATH-KEEPING.

CONTINUING our examination of the correspondences which the exponents of British-Israelism present in support of their contention that the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel, deported to Assyria in the distant past, has been re-discovered in the British race of to-day, we find ourselves compelled to analyse the assertion that the British people observes the Sabbath, and that therefore they “possess the ‘sign of the Sabbath’ given only to Israel.”

As we noted in the last chapter of the series, we have already submitted to examination those points pressed by the British-Israel school which have to do with *Scripture* or *History*. We are now dealing purely with the question of *Correspondences*: and the issue before us is therefore this: (1) Does Great Britain keep the Sabbath Day? (2) Does Great Britain keep the Christian Sabbath or any Sabbath?

First, let us listen to the claim of correspondence presented by a leading writer on British-Israelism.

In "The Fulness of the Nations," by Dr. Aldersmith, on p. 162 of the second edition occurs this statement:—

"18. Observing the Sabbath, thus showing that they possess the 'sign of the Sabbath' given only to Israel as a sign between the Lord and the children of Israel for ever, for a perpetual covenant (Exod. xxxi. 13, 16, 17; Ezek. xx. 12, 20)."

Again on p. 177 of the same edition of the same work the following paragraph is found:—

"Can a nation be found that *nationally* keeps *the Sabbath*?—for that is a sign of great importance, as we read in Exodus xxxi. 16:—'Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. *It is a sign* between Me and the children of Israel *for ever*.' See, also Ezekiel xx. 12 —'Moreover, also, I gave them my Sabbaths, *to be a sign between Me and them*' (see p. 175). Surely the answer is Great Britain."

Again on page 175 of the same is a further connected reference to the same point.

"But 'Israel' was to 'dwell alone' as an isolated and peculiar people, by their distinctive religious observances. They kept the *Sabbath day*! Thus we might expect the House of Israel, in this dispensation of the latter days, not to be reckoned as part of the ordinary nations, but to be marked by social customs, and especially by religious observances—i.e., as a Christian people in the New Covenant—and to be marked as a Christian nation by features of isolation and separation from other

kingdoms, pursuing its own policy, fulfilling its own peculiar destiny, and having the great sign promised to the seed of Israel *for ever*, that they should keep the Sabbath day (see p. 177)."

There is therefore no question but that the claim put forward by the British-Israel school is this : Israel kept the Sabbath day : Great Britain keeps the Sabbath day : *ergo*, Great Britain is Israel.

If it be said that no British-Israel teacher would rest his case on this point alone ; that the question of correspondence in Sabbath-keeping is but confirmatory of much else : we reply the main arguments of British - Israelism have already been submitted to examination in these pages and found (we submit) untenable. The question of the correspondence of Sabbath-keeping cannot, therefore, find support from challengeable statements. It must, like all other arguments, stand on its own basis or it cannot stand at all. Unproven positions obtain no strength from leaning against other unproven positions. Each position must be independently provable and proven if the whole structure of which each is a part is to stand. This principle we have applied throughout and apply here. We ask therefore :—

(1) Does Great Britain keep the Sabbath Day ?

In finding an honest reply to this question, as to whether the Sabbath day is the first or the seventh there need be no confusion if terms be carefully

defined. It is as justifiable to call the first day of the week the Christian Sabbath as it is to call the sixth day of the week the Mohammedan Sabbath; yet none would maintain that either of these is the literal, Divinely-appointed seventh-day Sabbath. In former cases the word indicates only a Day of Rest (שבת to cease to do, to rest): in the latter case it indicates also a specific and sanctified day, the seventh of the week and no other, the observance of which was made a statute of observance¹ as the "Sabbath of the Lord":² the profanation of which involved penalties.³ It was in this latter aspect alone that the Sabbath was made a sign between God and Israel for ever and a perpetual Covenant.⁴

Therefore when we ask: "Does Great Britain keep the Sabbath?" in order to see whether in this respect, Great Britain exhibits a correspondence with Israel, we are in effect not asking whether Great Britain keeps one day in seven as a Day of Rest but whether Great Britain recognizes the Divinely-appointed Seventh Day and its Covenant significance and submits to the obligations and penalties imposed in respect of it. This is the only sense of the word "Sabbath" that can bear reference to possible correspondence between Great Britain and Israel.

¹ Exod. xx. 9—11. ² Lev. xxiii. 3. ³ Num. xv. 32—36.

⁴ Exod. xxxi. 12—17.

There can be but one answer to such a question. Great Britain has never kept the Covenant Sabbath, does not keep it, has no intention of ever keeping it. That small section of British populations who form by regenerative birth a part of the Church of God on earth, do keep and keep most Scripturally the Sabbath in its spiritual significance, for "there remaineth therefore the keeping of a Sabbath (σαββατισμὸς) to the people of God."¹ To this numerical minority within the British nation, the first day of the week, has, as to the true Church everywhere and always, a blessed, antitypical, spiritual Sabbath-meaning. But even to this inner circle of true believers and disciples, the first day of the week, with all its New Testament import and holy association, can never be the Israel-Covenant seventh-day Sabbath: how much less can this Sabbath of Divine sign and ordinance be recognized or observed by Great Britain as such, by Great Britain, that is, in her *national* capacity? It is not so. Great Britain does not keep the Sabbath of the Israel Covenant, the Sabbath of Divine ordination and sanctification.

Then we ask (2): Does Great Britain keep the Christian Sabbath—or any Sabbath? Stripping the word Sabbath of its Covenant sense, waiving for the time being the fact that the Sabbath of God (the

¹ Heb. iv. 9.

Sabbath of the Lord ¹⁾ was the Divinely-ordained seventh day of the week and no other, may we stretch a point and ask, "If not the holy convocation of God's appointment, does Great Britain at least, keep any Sabbath at all? does she for instance observe Sunday as a Sabbath or Day of Rest?"

It is a painful necessity to answer No. Great Britain as such keeps no Sabbath. The restraints and traditions which lay upon the British people in larger measure than other civilized peoples, and which caused a general stoppage of commerce and labour on the Sunday and for many years a church-going habit, are rapidly disappearing. The influences of the Great War have accelerated the progress towards a godless Sunday. Granted, trade and industry are still largely suspended on the Sunday; but the release from toil is used less and less for rest and worship, more and more for unhealthy and godless excitement. The great metropolis of the Empire, east and west of it alike, can now vie with any Continental city for amusement, distraction, indulgence and debauchery. The provinces follow suit, town follows city and village town. The safeguarding barriers which public sentiment once set around the Sunday have given way. Exceptions but prove the rule. Great Britain does not even keep the Lord's Day, the first of the week.

¹ Lev. xxiii. 3.

It remains only to be impressed that even if Great Britain did as a national act and in obedience to Divine command observe the Sunday, this could not constitute a true correspondence between Great Britain and Israel. Even then, it would be but outward conformity to a New Testament-sanctioned custom of the Christian Church ; in no respect would it be a possession of the " sign of the Sabbath," by a keeping of that definite day which God appointed for Israel to observe throughout their generations for a perpetual Covenant.

There is therefore, when examined, found to be no correspondence in this respect between Great Britain and Israel. We have advanced another stage in our systematic, point-by-point examination of the British-Israel position. We are as determined as ever to keep this study of the question free from the casting of ridicule upon those who think differently from ourselves, free above all from the language of coarse contempt. Those who hold the British-Israel theory are worthy of all courtesy, and on our part it shall be shown them ; nevertheless we are now in a position of growing strength to affirm that there is not one argument presented by them to establish their thesis, which will bear the light of honest examination.

CHAPTER XIX.

Simplex vigilia veri.

BRITISH NOMENCLATURE AND NATIONAL TOKENS.

To conclude that section of our examination which deals with correspondences we have only to analyse those claims of the British-Israel position which are based upon coincidences between names or tokens. So far as we can see, such coincidences are not presented by the more authoritative British-Israel exponents as a proof of identity between the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel and the Anglo-Saxon race. Nevertheless the coincidences need to be examined, seeing that they influence many minds in the direction of British-Israelism.

But even if the recognized leaders and exponents of the British-Israel position (possibly for the good reason that they see more clearly than others that mere coincidences may, under certain circumstances, be *confirmatory*, but can never be *absolute* proof) do not press the fact of certain coincidences between British nomenclature and national tokens and those of ten-tribed Israel, yet even *they*, in presenting their case, do not wholly omit mention of matters in which there appears to be coincidence of

national token or symbol. Thus, on page 162 of "The Fulness of the Nations," by H. Aldersmith, M.B.Lond., F.R.C.S. (an authority which we have frequently quoted, seeing that this work is the most exhaustive and the only indexed treatise on the British-Israel position that we have seen), the writer says :—

"Ephraim-Israel was to be unconquerable as a military power, their national emblems being the lion and the unicorn (Micah v. 8, Num. xxiii. 24, xxiv. 9, Deut. xxxiii. 17, Gen. xlix. 9, Isaiah liv. 15-17)."

It is necessary, therefore, to submit this statement to examination before we pass on to the question of similarity in nomenclature.

And first with regard to the passages to which our attention is called. Micah v. 8 declares that the "remnant of Jacob" will be among the Gentiles "as a lion" among the beasts of the forest. The context shows the fulfilment of this prediction to be associated with a reuniting of the two-tribed and ten-tribed kingdoms, the presence of a returned Lord Messiah and the blessing of Gentile peoples. It is therefore millennial, and can have no reference to a Gentile Power in the present age of Grace.

Numbers xxiii. 24, presenting Balaam's general prophecy, describes Jacob and Israel as a great lion and as a young lion. So also Num. xxiv. 9. Deut. xxxiii. 17, in reciting Moses' swan song represents

Joseph's glory as the "firstling of his bullock and his horns" as "the horns of unicorns." Under the figure of a rhinoceros the tribe of Joseph is exhibited as the instrument whereby Israel's invading enemies are pressed back and scattered.

In Gen. xlix. 9, on the other hand, it is *Judah* that is described as a lion's whelp : for the figure of a lion is as applicable to Judah as to Israel when occasion demands it. Isaiah liv. 17 applies to restored, saved, fully blessed Israel made impregnable against hostile attack and immune from every calumny and injustice.

Thus for one reason in one case, for another reason in another, none of the Scriptures, the references of which are here adduced, can be made to apply to Great Britain.

That the British Empire uses a representation of a lion as part of its national emblem is extremely interesting : but if this fact is to be invested with argumentative force in order to prove identity with or origin from the ten tribes, it could also be used as proof that Great Britain is Judah (Gen. xlix. 9), Gad (Deut. xxxiii. 20), Assyria (Jerem. iv. 7), Jehovah Himself (Hosea xiii. 7), the Lord Jesus (Rev. v. 5), Satan (1 Peter v. 8), and twelve-tribed Israel (Num. xxiv. 9). We submit that the only escape from this *reductio ad absurdum* is to treat the use of the lion in connection with Israel as

purely figurative and illustrative, and the fact of the presence of a lion on Great Britain's escutcheon as mere coincidence.

The fabulous animal appearing in the Royal Arms of Great Britain and called the unicorn is probably based on the bison and was adopted by James I at the union of the Crowns. It is mentioned by Greek and Roman authors as a native of India, but the spiral horned heraldic figure of Britain suggests also the sea monster called Narwhal or Monodon. In any case the conception is entirely distinct from that of the רֵאֵם (*Reēm*) of Scripture.

We now proceed to similarity in nomenclature. It is said by some British-Israel attachés that there is significance in the name Britannia seeing that the Hebrew בְּרִית (*Berith*) means covenant and אֲנִיָּה (*Ania*) a ship: and in British, seeing that בְּרִית (*Berith*) means covenant and אִישׁ (*Ish*), man. Other similar and ingenious coincidences have been discovered. We dare not ridicule such a line of argument for it evidently impresses many reverent minds. But if such coincidences are to be accepted as confirmatory proof that ten-tribed Israel is to be recognized in modern Britain, then unquestionably by a little further ingenuity, it could be proved that Great Britain is synonymous with any nation in Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia or America, for there are no two languages, however distinct in

origin that do not exhibit remarkable coincidences either of structure or sound. It is the fundamental and characteristic similarity of two languages that makes them cognate: exceptional coincidences have no argumentative value, except sometimes as regards the origin of a particular idea. Thus *Hallelujah* and *Amen*, common to many languages, are of Hebrew origin: so in the English term *riff-raff* from עֶרֶב רַב (*Erev rav*), the evening crowd. But if the rich vocabulary which the English language has clearly derived from the Greek, Latin, Saxon and Norman French tongues does not and cannot establish identity of race with the peoples that originally used these languages, it is obvious that a very few unscientific and chance coincidences between English and Hebrew cannot contribute any support to the hypothesis that the British race is of Israelitish origin. British-Israelism breaks down everywhere when carefully examined point by point: it breaks down here.

CHAPTER XX.

“Who ever knew truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?”—MILTON.

GENERAL SURVEY OF THE BRITISH-ISRAEL POSITION.

THE British-Israel hypothesis is a phenomenon of the last fifty years or so, and those who have introduced and supported it are for the most part found in Christian circles of the Anglo-Saxon race. It purports to have discovered the identity of the British Empire and people with the posterity of the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel deported to Assyria in 721 B.C. It supports this proposition by its interpretation of Scripture, by certain historical writers, and by the presence of a number of correspondences in habit and language. Set out altogether, the cumulative force of such support upon those who have neither time or disposition to analyse it, is very great: and when it is reinforced by the undoubted fact that British-Israel attachés follow a literal interpretation of the Scriptures and that there are found among them some very estimable and honest fellow-believers, the alleged identity is not only to many minds irresistible, but is hailed

by them as a fresh and overwhelming demonstration of the eternal truth of God's Word.

The writings and printed statements put forth by the British-Israel school to prove their hypothesis and to propagate it, are in some cases puerile, in others careful and erudite. They cannot and should not be met by a mere denial, still less by ridicule. Nor should the whole British-Israel position be ignored as a fad beneath notice. Nor should it again be accepted without careful examination.

It demands inquiry—honest and careful inquiry : for if it were true, it would present us with some new and difficult questions, such as :—

How comes it that the Israel race is enjoying millennial blessing in the British Isles instead of in the one land given to it by everlasting covenant ?

How comes it that the prosperity promised to Israel is being enjoyed during the absence of the Messiah-King Whose return and enthronement was predicted as the essential preliminary to the said prosperity ?

How comes it that the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel, all of pure Semitic stock, has developed Gentile types of physique, feature, temperament and character, in particular the well-marked features of Anglo-Saxon stock ?

How comes it that the ten-tribed Israel is enjoying promised prosperity while still detached from

the descendants of Judah and with some mutual prejudice still evident ?

How comes it that the Israel race has migrated *in toto* from its historically well-defined Asiatic place of sojourn to an island in the North Sea without such migration being noticed by the more reliable chroniclers of human history ?

How comes it that the Israel race has found a home other than its true home : a language other than its own language : an anticipation of realized blessing before the essential conditions of blessing are present : that it is prospered while still in the mass unrepentant and godless : that its ratio of population increase is beginning to decline when, if the period of blessing had arrived, it should be leaping upwards ?

These questions and others would constitute an ever-present and insoluble problem, were the British-Israel position a true one or were we to accept it as true. It is said that the recognition of its truth would supply confirmation of the Authenticity of the divine Word, but would it not rather tend ultimately to undermine the Authenticity of God's Word by placing the divine oracles on a weak and doubtful basis instead of on the firm and reliable foundation on which they stand, independently of the British-Israel theory ?

On the other hand if the British-Israel theory be

untenable, then we are surely confronted by the following consideration.

Out of a series of plausible interpretations and coincidences strung together in such a manner as to carry to many minds conviction of the identity of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel with the British Empire and race, a comparatively modern error has been launched, calculated to engross attention which could be more obediently and usefully employed in the evangelization of the world, and also to disturb the spiritual balance of a multitude of God's dear children in Christ Jesus.

The issues therefore involved in the truth or untruth of British-Israelism are solemn ones. They cannot be ignored. That being so, it is a mistake to treat British-Israelism as a harmless fad, to pass it over with contempt or ridicule as unworthy of serious attention.

It must be examined. It must be honestly, carefully, and as far as possible publicly examined. If we reject it, we must supply cogent reasons for doing so : we must set out those reasons in courteous language free from sneer or unnecessary exposure of ignorance.

That has been the task we have set ourselves in the work now reaching its conclusion. The names or reputations of certain British-Israel authorities do not frighten us. Our appeal is to the Scriptures,

to a rational and consistent interpretation of them, to a well-balanced reading of history, to a wise judgment on the arguments and data presented or that bear upon the question.

Nor does it alarm us that British-Israelism is spreading. The rapid advance and acceptance of a hypothesis is of little or no value as evidence of its truth. In an age of new cults such as the present, that rapidity of advance and acceptance which characterizes British-Israelism is, if evidence at all, even better evidence of its error than of its truth.

In any case we do not rely upon such evidence as this. That British-Israelism has secured a very large number of adherents, that some of them are very tenacious of their conviction and very assiduous and argumentative in propagating it, proves nothing as regards the tenability of the British-Israel position. Some exponents of the British-Israel theory recognize Ephraim in the British race and Manasseh in the United States of America. This cannot strengthen the British-Israel position; it weakens it. The examination pursued in these pages contests the hypothesis that ten-tribed Israel can enjoy restoration blessing before the time and conditions of restoration have arrived. The greater then the number, power, variety, or the more varied the origin of the population which British-Israelism seeks to identify with ten-tribed Israel in this age,

the more impossible does the hypothesis of identity become of acceptance.

We hold then the British-Israel position to be an erroneous conception, however honestly held, however plausible, still erroneous. And *if* error, it must lead to further error ; *if* error, it is dangerous, and to be not only forsaken but resisted.

CHAPTER XXI.

“Very many men presume : and they, commonly, who have the least reason.”—JEREMY TAYLOR.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

FIRST, let us survey the ground traversed in the examination of the British-Israel position now completed. Each one of the foundation arguments employed by the exponents of the British-Israel theory has been in turn submitted to examination. If there are other arguments than those we have dealt with then they cannot be of major importance, for they have had no prominence in British-Israel literature. If there be other literature seeking to establish British-Israelism than that we have seen, at least our repeated requests that it might be brought to our notice has elicited no response. That is *prima facie* evidence that we have had all the evidence before us before sifting it out and measuring its value. Under three sections, that of Scriptural exegesis, that of historical data, and that of correspondences, we have brought the whole British-Israel position under careful scrutiny. It demanded and deserved it—it has had it. And the only possible, logical, rational or Scriptural result

of such a scrutiny has been clearly exposed and expressed. We are justified *now* far more than at first in declaring our conviction that British-Israelism, plausible and popular as it may be—and *is*—will not and cannot stand the light of careful, unbiassed, unprepossessed, unobsessed examination.

The *nature* of the inquiry which we have undertaken and completed demands a word. It has been point by point; for nothing is so weak in argument as to slip off to point two before point one is fully disposed of. We are often told that the force of the arguments employed to support British-Israelism is cumulative, which is little better than an admission of the fact that no one of such arguments has sufficient force to stand alone. If the strength of a chain be no greater than that of its weakest link, how can that chain be strong which is composed entirely of weak links? The reliance on the cumulative force of the arguments employed to establish British-Israel theories is tantamount to a replacement of reason and the right-dividing of the Word of Truth by a jugglery of arguments so adroitly interchanged that the unwary receive the impression of proof.

The *tone* of our examination may likewise merit mention. In the earlier of its stages we were repeatedly criticized by those who, like ourselves, cannot accept British-Israelism, for handling the

matter "with kid gloves." On the other hand, many who disagreed with our position expressed appreciation of the tone in which the examination was conducted. If something perhaps has been lost by the absence of sledge-hammer blows and strong denunciation or ridicule, more has been gained—ininitely more. If we have sought personal victory may our weapons perish! It is sad that so many followers of the Lamb seem yet to forget that, important as great doctrinal issues may be, they can never be quite so important as the possession and manifestation of the love of Christ.

We have sought in particular to avoid reference to the trivialities of the subject or the incidental statements of individuals. We mean, for instance, such as these: A godly vicar's wife receiving from me a negative reply to her question as to whether I recognized Great Britain to be Israel, exclaimed: "But then, you know, General Booth had a Jewish nose!" From another to whom I had applied for some reliable historical data for the migration of the Israel tribes from beyond the Euphrates to Europe, I received the reply, "You see there could be no historical record, for they came over in twos and threes." An exponent of British-Israelism of some repute, when I challenged him with Josephus' location of the ten tribes "on the other side of the Euphrates" in the first century of our era, that is to say, at a date much later than when, according to British-Israelism, they

had migrated west, gave me in print the following astounding answer : "That if the main north-westerly course of the Euphrates were to be continued by an imaginary line it would bring Great Britain to be, from the standpoint of Josephus, on the *other* side of the Euphrates." Another British-Israelite with whom I crossed the Atlantic told me that if I would only accept British-Israelism my Bible would become a new book. To which I responded that I preferred to stand to the old. Incidents such as these prove nothing and have been designedly omitted.

Finally the *object* of the examination has not been to alter the views of British-Israelism attachés.

Convince a man against his will
He's of the same opinion still.

When I told a godly couple that it was on the ground, not of prejudice, but of careful examination that I was unable to accept British-Israelism, and asked them for that which had convinced them of its truth, I received the reply, "*We feel* it in our spirits." It would be, speaking generally, a most undesirable and unedifying thing to enter into discussion with British-Israelite champions. It is not for us to embark on a crusade to disprove British-Israelism. It is for those who propagate British-Israelism to prove it.

They have sought to do so ; they are still seeking to do so, persistently, plausibly, ambitiously ; and as they do so, it becomes competent for us to examine

the arguments and data by which they seek to prove and establish their thesis. Competent, did I say? It is more than mere title or justification. It becomes an *obligation* upon all who love the Lord and His Word, and His Israel, who desire clarity and not confusion, truth and not fancy, who would follow the main track of obedience rather than side-tracks of suggestion—it becomes an obligation imposed upon such to examine the arguments that the British-Israel movement relies upon to establish itself.

That and that alone is the purpose of this examination. It has been undertaken in the interests of those who desire to survey, not *one side* only but *all* of the evidence before they form their judgment. It demonstrates the fact that British-Israelism must not be “taken for granted,” but must, as in the sight of God and with the honest desire to be faithful to His Word and purpose, be carefully examined; and not accepted unless and until its imperfect interpretation of Scripture, its lack of reliable historical evidence and its discovery of correspondences in coincidences can be called valid proof.

A final word may be permitted. Is British-Israelism part of the great commission to the Church of Christ? Is it part of the faith which was once delivered unto the saints? Has it been “received of the Lord” in the same manner as was

that message of the Cross that Paul preached ? Is it not an absorption likely to occupy many minds to such an extent as to pervert the Gospel of Christ ? Does it really extol Christ or degrade Him to represent Him as complacently lavishing blessing in fulfilment of promise on a composite modern nation which, excepting a small minority of its population ignores and rejects Him ?

The present state of the world calls for faithful witness as never before ; *witness not web-spinning ; testimony not theory ; witness to a Saviour not a shibboleth ;* it demands that the Christian should *exhibit Christ* rather than *evolve identities*. Nay, the Lord Himself, first of all demands it. "A true witness delivereth souls."

One who was a true witness and who kept a true balance, thus summed up his life's ministry :—

"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying *none other things* than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come ; that Christ should suffer and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead and should show light unto the people and unto the Gentiles."

But this man could not have handed in such a report had he not throughout lived up to his resolve :—

"For I determined *not to know anything* among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

APPENDIX I.

SHARON TURNER AND PAUL DU CHAILLU.

THE historical authorities usually quoted by British-Israel exponents are Sharon Turner's "History of the Anglo-Saxons," and Paul du Chaillu's "The Viking Age." We do not know of any other ever suggested as an historical authority in favour of the migration to the West.

Sharon Turner is out of print. His book was written between 1799 and 1805. We have no copy. So we take the word of an Anglo-Israel writer as to what Sharon Turner says.

"All is myth. One author has, however, dared to lift the veil. Sharon Turner *had indeed suggested* that the Saxon folk had migrated into North-West Europe from the Asiatic side of the Araxes during the seventh (B.C.) and subsequent centuries. But it has been reserved to M. Paul du Chaillu, who has recently investigated the records of the North, *to establish the point.*"¹

As Sharon Turner only "suggested" a migration, we need not worry that we do not possess his book to refer to. Even were his suggestion much less vague, a suggestion is not proof and we need not waste time.

The italics are ours. The above quotation is from page 157 of "The Fulness of the Nations," by Dr. H. Aldersmith, and the page is headed "The historical proof."

We turn rather to the historian who has "established the point." Fortunately he is obtainable. His reference to the migration is as follows :—

"The mythological literature of the North bears evidence of a belief prevalent among the people, that their ancestors migrated at a remote period from the shores of the Black Sea, through South-Western Russia, to the shores of the Baltic. This belief seems to be supported by a variety of evidence. Herodotus describes a people on the Tanais, the Budini, as being blue-eyed and yellow-haired, with houses built of wood, his description of the walls reminding one of the characteristics of the Danavirki. . . . When we appeal to archæology, we find in the neighbourhood of the Black Sea, near to the old Greek Settlement, graves similar to those of the North, containing ornaments and other relics also remarkably like those found in the ancient graves of Scandinavia. The Runes of the North remind us strikingly of the characters of Archaic Greek. . . . The reader will be struck by the similarity of the customs of the Norsemen with those of the ancient Greeks, as recorded by Homer and Herodotus." ¹

Supposing these conjectures to be right, we still see nothing to bear upon the transference of a race from beyond the Euphrates ; and least of all does M. Paul du Chaillu seem to have had such a thought in his mind, for he calmly identifies our Norse forefathers with the pre-Homeric Greeks long before David's time.

¹ Pages 25 and 26.

APPENDIX II.

POSITIVE ARGUMENTS AGAINST BRITISH-ISRAELISM.

As the present work is occupied chiefly with the examination of arguments employed to support the British-Israel theory, it contains little of positive evidence or argument against that theory. We think it well therefore to reproduce the following letter from Mr. Thomas D. Stockdale of Glasgow, to a British-Israel acquaintance of his, seeing that it presents in lucid language certain cogent reasons of a more direct nature for the non-acceptance of British-Israelism.

“GLASGOW, W.

“*February 19, 1917.*

“I have been thinking over our conversation of a few nights ago on the supposed identity of the British nation with the ‘lost’ Tribes of Israel. I cannot claim any special knowledge of the subject, nor have I studied it at all deeply, but I would submit the following suggestions for your consideration :—

“(1) The term ‘lost’ as applied to the present geographical position of Israel is not a Scriptural one. It has been imported into the question by those who claim to have discovered their identity. The Scriptural expression is ‘scattered,’ and the

Word of God assures us that 'He who scattered Israel will gather him,' Jeremiah xxxi. 10. Until that time comes we can safely leave the matter in God's hands.

"(2) The following passages make the identity of Israel with the British nation impossible. 'For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days' (Hosea iii. 4, 5).

"It is impossible to reconcile the theory of the identity of Israel with Britain with this statement; and note—Israel is to continue in the condition here described until they 'return and seek the Lord their God,' which they have never yet done. Again in Numbers xxiii. 9, it is predicted of Israel, 'The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.' Is this in any way applicable to the present condition of the British nation? and if not, where does the identification come in? But I will take up the points you advanced one by one, and tell you how they strike me in the light of the Word of God.

"I.—You assert that if the number of 'Israel' (and in this case I take it that you use the term 'Israel' as including both Judah and Israel) known to exist in the present day is only some 14,000,000, then the promise made to Abraham in Genesis xxii. 17, 'I will multiply thy seed as the stars of Heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore,' fails of fulfilment, the Word of God is laid

open to question, and an opportunity is afforded for the enemies of the truth to attack its veracity ; and you suggest that a way out of the difficulty is to identify the British nation with its great Colonies and dependencies and its people overflowing to the ends of the earth, with the lost tribes of Israel.

“ Those who speak thus overlook three very important facts :—

“(1) That so far from the promise having failed, Moses declares that in his lifetime it had received a fulfilment. ‘ The Lord your God hath multiplied you, and behold ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude ’ (Deut. i. 10).

“(2) From the beginning the Word of God declared that the natural prosperity, and increase of Israel, was contingent on their obedience ; and in Leviticus xxvi. 22, the very condition in which they are now found is foretold. God says : ‘ If ye walk contrary unto Me, and will not hearken unto Me, I will make you few in number.’ So that their present condition, instead of militating against the truth of Scripture, is an evidence of its veracity and trustworthiness.

“(3) In Jeremiah xxxiii. 22, we are told that when they are brought back to their own land and their allegiance to God, the promise to Abraham shall have its true and final fulfilment. ‘ As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the seed of David my servant.’ Verse 7 of the chapter shows that this is to be when the Lord causes the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and He builds them as at the first. No, my dear friend, we do not require to invent methods

of getting God out of what we conceive to be a difficulty, but we can leave Him to vindicate His own truth, and to work out his own purposes, in His own way, and we can rest assured that no word which He has spoken will fall to the ground.

“II.—It is suggested that if Israel is at the present time in a position of inferiority and subservience among the nations of the earth, then the further promise given to Abraham, ‘Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies,’ has not been fulfilled, and that the way out of the difficulty is to recognize the promise as fulfilled in the position which Britain now holds amongst the nations of the world. Here, again, I submit that those who advocate this theory entirely overlook, and leave out of their consideration, the fact that Israel is now in a state of disobedience to God, and there is not a single promise in the Word of God which sets before them victory over their enemies, if they are disobedient and rebel against God. On the contrary, in the chapter from which I have already quoted (Leviticus xxvi.) God says—‘But if ye will not hearken unto Me, and will not do all these commandments . . . I will set My face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies, and they that hate you shall reign over you, and ye shall flee when none pursueth you’ (Lev. xxvi. 14, 17); and this is to go on until their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they accept of the punishment of their iniquity (verse 41), which they have never yet done. Thus I submit that if they now, whilst in their rebellion and unbelief, ‘possessed the gate of their enemies,’ it would not be a fulfilment of the Word of God, but a contradiction of it.

"But this promise, like the other, has been, and will be, fulfilled to the letter. Joshua declared before he died, that 'not one thing had failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you' (Joshua xxiii. 14). And in the days of Solomon this promise of God had been fulfilled to such an extent that we read that 'He reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the borders of Egypt,' 2 Chron. ix. 26. He so possessed 'the gate of his enemies' that there was 'neither evil nor adversary occurrent,' 1 Kings v. 4. But Joshua warned them thus: 'If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then He will turn and do you hurt, and consume you after that He has done you good,' Joshua xxiv. 20.

"But again in the glorious future, when Israel shall have turned to the Lord, and are dwelling in safety in their own land, and are what God has always designed them to be, the chief of nations, this promise will be abundantly fulfilled. Then the 'sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet, and they shall call thee The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel,' Isaiah lx. 14.

"Thus because Israel is now 'scattered and peeled,' and a 'byeword among all the nations' we are not to conclude that they are always to remain so, but they shall yet 'possess the gate of their enemies' in a way which was not realized even in their palmiest days under Solomon.

"III.—I have never before heard it suggested that

the British nation is that nation designated by our Lord in Matt. xxi. 43, 'The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.' Dr. Bullinger, in his 'Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament,' says on the Greek word there translated 'nation,' that it signifies 'multitude of people, living under common institutions—the Gentile nations as distinct from Israel.' I do not believe that in this 'dispensation of grace' any one nation has precedence over another in the favour of God; such an idea is contradicted by the declaration of Peter to Cornelius: 'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, He that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him.' (Acts x. 34, 35). No, the Kingdom of God is not bestowed in any exclusive sense on Britain or any other nation, but is preached among all nations for obedience to the faith, and in Christ Jesus, 'there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all' (Col. iii. 11).

"IV.—The legend regarding the visit of Jeremiah to Ireland, and the 'Coronation Stone,' is unworthy of serious consideration from those who are students of the Word of God, and may be relegated to the same category as that other legend of the visit of Pilate's staircase to Rome. 'To the law, and to the testimony, if they speak out according to this word, it is because there is no light in them' (Isaiah viii. 20). Let us stand by that which is written. As far as we can learn from the Word of God Jeremiah never left the

land of Palestine except when he was carried down into Egypt against his will, and no room is left in the narrative for a visit to Ireland.

"Pardon me for troubling you at this length, but I do feel that in these days when every error that is promulgated whereby the unwary are turned aside from their steadfastness is built up on isolated texts of Scripture, taken from their context, and used in a way quite foreign to the whole tenor of the Word of God, we shall do well to remember that when our Lord was attacked by Satan under the specious plea, 'It is written,' He met the temptation by the assertion 'It is written again;' thus we must know, not only texts but their context, lest we 'turn away our ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables' (2 Tim. iv. 4).

"Yours very truly,

"THOMAS D. STOCKDALE."

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