



Portrait, 1882

Morgan & Scott-Lee, Phila.

Yours affly
J. M. Runtz

THE LIFE OF
JOHN WILKINSON
THE JEWISH MISSIONARY

BY HIS YOUNGEST SON

SAMUEL HINDS WILKINSON

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I Dedicate this Book

to

my Beloved Fellow-Labourers in the Jewish Mission Field, whether attached to any of the several Organizations or to none, in the intense desire and prayer that it may contribute with all of us to a higher standard of separation unto God, loving unity with one another, and devotion to the testimony of our Blessed Lord

Foreword

IN the preparation of this Biography it has been at once a labour of love and an inspiration to study the voluminous data available to me, all of which revealed the purity and power in the lives of both our sainted parents, which eventually attracted to them, from a wide circle of friends, an affection almost as deep as that of their own children.

My father's life is an illustration of the type that God's work among the Jews *demand*s: it *needs* such men of faith, honour, ability, love, and zeal as he: but his life is also an illustration of the type that God's work among the Jews, under its best conditions, *produces*. The peculiar requirements of this work, its special harmony with God's mind and purpose, its characteristic difficulties, become a school of grace and obedience to the Divine Will.

Certainly this ministry of witness and mercy to Israel, and on their behalf, brings a very special reward of blessing. Like all else, it may deteriorate to mere mechanical or hireling service: but given sanctified

motives, there is no work, we believe, so rich in its return of blessing to the worker himself as work among and for Israel.

It is my earnest prayer that this record of my beloved father's life and labours may greatly further a true, prayerful, and practical interest in Israel, and create in many hearts a desire, for the Lord's sake, to minister to the needs of the Jews, spiritual and material. And if my readers feel that the record is calculated to achieve that object, they can themselves help to realize the end in view by assisting in its wide sale and distribution.

And may "the God of peace Who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory for ever."

SAMUEL HINDS WILKINSON.

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THE LIFE OF JOHN WILKINSON

CHAPTER I

Children of Wold and Fen

DYKES and fens characterise a large portion of Lincolnshire—a sort of Holland in our North Sea isle. But plain as well as mountain has served the world and the Church with distinguished men. The Shire of Lincoln can claim among its sons John Foxe, the Martyrologist; William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Queen Elizabeth's great Minister of State; Sir Isaac Newton, greatest of natural philosophers; Sir John Franklin, Arctic explorer; Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Poet-Laureate of the Victorian Era; not to speak of Thomas Sutton, founder of the Charterhouse; Scott, the commentator; and Dr. Busby, headmaster of Westminster.

John Wesley, the great apostle, philanthropist, and *littérateur*, was also a Lincolnshire man. It is interesting that John Wesley and John Wilkinson kissed one and the same person. That person was the grandmother of John Wilkinson, who when a child was kissed by John Wesley, and when a grandmother by

her grandson, John Wilkinson. John Wilkinson was never ashamed of being a Lincolnshire man; nor had he reason to be.

Where the low country around the ancient city of Lincoln joins the range of chalk downs which extend from Barton-on-Humber in the north-west to Spilsby and Horncastle in the south-east, and which are known as the Lincolnshire Wolds, a small and charmingly picturesque village nestles sleepily within and upon the rising undulations. That village is Tealby; and around it our present story clings.

Tealby is about three and a half miles from Market Rasen, a station on the Great Central Railway. The village church is Early English. A large country seat, built in 1838 in the form of a mediæval castle, with moat and drawbridge, stands in the immediate vicinity; it is called Bayon's Manor, and with its noble park and ponds adds a stately beauty to the landscape. It is the property of the D'Eyncourt family, who have also built the present village school, a fine Gothic building, an ornament to the village.

John Wesley visited this village on at least three occasions. The first occasion, as stated in his *Journal*, was on Wednesday, 25th February 1747. Mr. Wesley says: "W. Fenwick begged I would call on the little flock at Tealby. Mr. B. (he said), the minister of the place, had preached against them with the utmost bitterness, had repelled them from the Lord's Table, and zealously endeavoured to stir up the whole town against them. I called there about seven, and began to talk with two or three that were in the house where we alighted. Presently the house was full from end to end. I stood up and declared, 'By grace are ye saved through faith.' Even at Honiton I did not find such a

blessing as here. Surely this day was the Scripture fulfilled, 'If ye be reproached for the sake of Christ happy are ye: for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.'"

His second visit to the village appears to have been after the lapse of over twenty-seven years. On 18th July 1774 he writes: "I went on to Tealby (from Brigg), and preached near the church to a multitude of plain, serious country people: very different from the wild, unbroken herd to whom I preached at Horncastle in the evening." The third visit was in 1780.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that John Wilkinson's immediate ancestors were Wesleyan Methodists. His grandparents on his mother's side, as also his parents, were distinguished for integrity of character, industrious habits, and deep piety. Their lives were so simple and real as never to suggest a doubt of their sincerity, either in the family circle or amongst the neighbours. Let us now peep into the lives of these simple-minded rustics who, while the great Napoleon was engaged in setting Europe ablaze, dwelt in the seclusion of their peaceful English village.

To Tealby came, in the year 1802, from Croxby—a village some nine miles to the north—a humble family. It consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Hinds and their four children—Joseph, then eight years of age; Michal, a little girl of five; William, three; and Peter Grantham, a babe in arms, named after his mother's brother, a sea captain. The family were accompanied by Mrs. Hinds' widowed father, then sixty-five years of age, Mr. Joseph Grantham. Their slender means yet enabled them to purchase two houses and some acres of land, and to settle in Tealby. The quiet life of this

humble family in the village of Tealby was not altogether shut off from the world of war and tumult as it was in those days.

One day in the year 1814 a visitor arrived at the home who had a romantic story to tell. This was Peter Grantham, brother to Mrs. Hinds, after whom her third son had been named. He had come there to see his old father, who was still alive and resident in his daughter Dinah's house. As the captain of a trading vessel, Peter Grantham had been going to and from Jamaica for many years. After a quick voyage from the West Indies in 1809 he sailed to Oporto for a cargo of wine. On his return he and his ship were captured in the Irish Channel by a French privateer, and Peter Grantham was imprisoned at Auxonne. Together with a fellow-prisoner, Captain Short of Grimsby, he managed to escape; but their guide sold them back again to the French authorities, who imprisoned them at Beethe with deserters. Whilst the prisoners were being marched up country, the English army having entered France, Peter and about thirty others escaped again. Each took a different route to avoid suspicion, and Peter, by walking at night through the long snowstorm of 1814, reached Auxonne, where he had been imprisoned at first. Not knowing the password into the city, he mingled with a crowd attending mass, and thus entered. At an inn he found the proprietress to be a person whom he knew. She befriended him with lodging, and nine shillings when he left. He left the city with his head bandaged to feign sickness, in a cart in which the sick were removed. That day he reached the English army, and drew money on his brother in Dublin. He reached Yarmouth on 17th February 1814, and as there was no railroad or direct means of travel, he walked by night

and day nearly all the way to Tealby, and arrived one day sooner than expected at the rustic village home.

Joseph, the eldest boy, could not rest in the quiet village; the sea was in his blood; and when fourteen years of age he was taken on board the ship of another sea-captain uncle, who traded with his vessel from Dublin. After this uncle had retired some time, and Joseph had served his apprenticeship, he became captain of the *Dublin* of Dublin. He was but twenty-two years when, on the usual voyage to the West Indies, the ship was driven by adverse winds into the Bay of Biscay, and wrecked on the French coast. The only way the crew thought to save their lives was to take to the long boat. Twelve of the men got into it. Joseph Hinds secured all his clothes, and was himself about to get in, when he remembered that a drunken member of the crew had been left in the cabin. He declared that he would go back and save him. The men said that if he did they would cut the rope and put off to shore. He said he would shoot the man who cut the rope; but when he was gone they did so. Coming on deck again, he saw the boat bottom upwards and the men in the water. Two of the men could swim; but one when he reached land found a keg of whisky, and drank so much that he died on the sands. Joseph Hinds, with others, climbed up the rigging, and were rescued by some French fishermen. Out of a crew of seventeen souls, eleven perished. The providential salvation of his life made little impression upon Joseph Hinds; he traded successfully to the time of his death in 1865.

The second child of the family, the daughter Michal, remained at home with her parents at Tealby. She has told us of herself in her own words, thus: "Whilst a

child I was very powerfully wrought on by the Spirit of God convincing me of sin; but as no one ever told me about believing, I got weary of seeking, and went on sinning and repenting till in April 1818 (at twenty-one years of age) I went to visit a relative at Louth at the time of the great Revival by the labours of G. Nicholson and one called 'Praying Johnny.' My friends had been just brought to God, and their sincere and simple prayers reached my heart. I yielded to the Spirit's influence, and at a band meeting in Louth Wesleyan Chapel vestry, whilst the minister and other friends were praying for me, I obtained peace."

Shortly afterwards Miss Michal Hinds made the acquaintance of Daniel Wilkinson of Covenham, a village near Louth. Daniel Wilkinson was a God-fearing young peasant farmer, with pious parents. The young pair were married on the 18th of May 1820.

William, the third child of the Hinds family, also became a sea captain. He traded in all parts of the world, never married, and died in 1857. The fourth child, brought as a baby from Croxby to Tealby, remained at home, and died in 1850. Five more children were born to the Hinds family after their settlement in Tealby: George, an invalid who died in early life; Mary, who married and lived in London, and died there, leaving two children; Christopher, who lived and died at Market Rasen, leaving a widow and three children; Ann, who passed away in Hull, when already a widow, in 1849; and Thomas, who became, like his brothers, a sea captain early in life residing till his death at Birkenhead.

The father, Mr. Hinds, passed away in 1835, after a long and severe illness, which he bore with great resignation; often repeating, "Oh, what a mighty change

shall Jesus' followers know." His widow survived him six years. She was a very consistent Christian, and appreciative of the means of grace. When living at Chapel Farm, two miles from Tealby, she attended the meeting at four o'clock on the Sunday morning, although always very weary on the Saturday evening. She also passed through many trials, which she bore patiently till her call came on the 23rd of March 1842.

We now go back to the eldest daughter of the family, Michal. In 1820, as we have seen, she became Mrs. Daniel Wilkinson.

Long years after, Mrs. Daniel Wilkinson (*née* Michal Hinds) wrote as follows, reviewing her married life: "We had our joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, sunshine and shade, and many deliverances the Lord wrought out for us. When we were first married we lived at a farm two miles from a place of worship, and our class meetings were at nine o'clock on Sunday morning. We always attended, except in sickness or very bad weather. After four years we came to live at Tealby, and fixed in business in the year 1824, remaining till 1847, when we removed to Covenham to a small farm. Here Daniel became afflicted, and was for several years unable to work; but the Lord was very good to us, having blessed us with dutiful and kind children, and in all his long affliction he never wanted for anything. He died in peace on 2nd February 1867, and his body lies in Covenham churchyard."

There were eleven children of this union. The two eldest were daughters; the third, a son, was named John. John Wilkinson wrote in later life: "On the testimony of my mother, which I have neither reason nor wish to controvert or doubt, I was born in the pretty little village of Tealby in Lincolnshire on the

sixth day of December 1824." The father desired to call the child Moses, but by the mother's wish he was named "John." Though the name Moses would have been more Jewish, yet the name of John appropriately suggested the mission of his life, to proclaim to the Jews, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

CHAPTER II

Boyhood and Youth

IN the year 1838, when the Tealby lad, John Wilkinson, was fourteen years of age, a wave of Revival blessing passed over the village. Old Christians were greatly quickened, and many notorious sinners were truly converted. Cottage prayer-meetings became common, and men and women, even the uneducated, prayed with amazing power and in well-chosen language. John Wilkinson became, among others, concerned about his soul's salvation. He longed to be a Christian. His father and mother—especially the mother—held him up before God in prayer. One Sunday evening that winter he sat at home with his mother, when one brought news that his sister was under deep conviction of sin, and seeking pardon. About ten o'clock the after-meeting was adjourned to their house, and continued till near midnight. That night John Wilkinson surrendered to the Lord Jesus, to be His servant for ever. No one seemed able to give him a clear and connected statement of the plan of salvation: but the surrender was made.

Some nights after, the lad was heard to be crying in his bedroom; and when his mother, whose sleep had been disturbed, came to inquire the cause, he said, "Mother, I am afraid there is not merit enough in the blood of Jesus to atone for my sin." The mother assured him that there was infinite merit in the blood that

flowed on Calvary's Cross, enough to outweigh the sins of all, including the worst. The lad became comforted and hopeful. He began to take delight in godly society and spiritual conversation, and to frequent the cottage prayer-meeting. Still it was not till somewhat late in the following year that he passed out of the realm of feeling into the full assurance of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The same year, 1839, the lad was apprenticed by his father for seven years to a draper in Market Rasen. Here, amid godless surroundings, habits of prayer and fidelity to God were formed. The master, however, took to drink, and became a bankrupt in 1840, thus cancelling the indentures. John Wilkinson then entered the service of Mrs. Bond, draper in the same town, and remained there nine years—four and a half as apprentice, and four and a half as assistant—from 1840 to 1849. Mrs. Bond was a truly godly woman, and had family prayers every morning. She came to ask her apprentice, John Wilkinson, to take part in prayer from time to time. As he did so, he was driven to seek grace to live during the day in harmony with the prayer of the morning before his shopfellows and others. Never did he knowingly tell a lie to sell anything; and as he became better known his word was trusted, confidence was strengthened, and character formed.

Thus in this quiet little country town, with business hours fully occupied and spiritual advantages fully enjoyed, the days and years passed happily along. Sometimes after ten o'clock on Saturday nights, when business was over, the young apprentice would walk alone to Tealby, across the fields and through a lonely wood, singing as he walked, to spend the Sunday with his parents in the dear old village. At other times he

would rise at four o'clock on a summer's morning, and walk over to spend the Sunday, reaching the village in time to attend the seven o'clock prayer-meeting.

During this period an incident occurred which should be recorded, as it was one of John Wilkinson's first lessons on the duty and privilege of consulting God about everything, and of expecting definite answers to prayer. This incident we will let Mr. Wilkinson tell himself :

'It was market day at Market Rasen, and the shop was full of customers the whole of the day. While laying out the silks in that department in the morning, I observed a length of black silk about sufficient for a dress. About five o'clock in the afternoon I found it had gone ; immediately I made inquiry all round whether anyone had sold it. No one had sold it. One assistant, who helped in serving on market days, said, " Why, I have just served a lady in that room, and she looked at the silks, and the missing piece was there when she entered ; she looked rather confused when she came downstairs, and stood sideways to the counter, holding her hand to her side, and in haste to leave the shop." Suspicion at once fell on her ; but she was gone, and nobody knew her beyond her name, which she had left to be written on her parcel of purchases, and which was to be sent to her hotel. She turned out to be a farmer's wife from some distance, whom her husband was driving through the town to attend the funeral of a deceased relative. Her purchases had reference to the funeral. Her parcel was taken by mistake to the wrong hotel.

'The lady returned to inquire after her parcel, as she

wished to get away. I ran, unknown to anyone, to the right hotel, to find their carriage and to examine it; but I found nothing in the carriage. In the meantime the lady was told of the missing silk, and asked if she had taken it by mistake. She was inflamed with anger, and threatened legal proceedings. She left the shop in order to inform her husband. They might now have got clear off, had they wished. I ran into one of the outbuildings and knelt in a retired place to ask God to clear the matter and bring all to the light. I returned into the shop to see how matters stood. The lady had just returned, accompanied by the wife of the hotel-keeper. I saw at once the meaning of this. The lady suspected evidently wanted a witness. Both ladies were shown into a private room. I ran for a constable—there were no police in those days. The constable, a tailor, was soon on the spot. In the private room were ladies only. The hotel-keeper's wife said, "If they suspected *me*, I would compel them to search me." The lady suspected said at once, "They may search me." Mrs. Bond and other ladies with her said, "Very well, we will." Dress and stays were unfastened—the lady cried, "I am fainting, give me brandy." It was not a *faint*, but a *feint*. The silk dropped from under her stays on to the floor. The husband offered £100. No, the constable was ready: the name and address were taken; the sentence at the trial was twelve months' imprisonment.'

It was during this time that Wesleyan ministers and others began to press upon the young Christian man of business the desirability of his doing public work for

God. The young man was very unwilling at first; but afterwards permitted his name to be put on the Methodist Plan as an exhorter, with the view to becoming a local preacher. When duly constituted local preacher, it became his duty to take the sole charge of the service wherever he was appointed. He had too high a sense of duty to neglect one appointment. On one occasion a severe fall on the Saturday evening left him so weak and disabled that he felt compelled to seek a substitute for the evening appointment of the following day. In this he failed, and therefore set off early to limp the six miles from Market Rasen to the village of Torrington. Preaching from the text, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," some four or six souls yielded to Christ in an after-meeting; and the preacher, gladdened and encouraged, trudged his six miles home again, God using the warm day and the exercise to restore health and fitness for business duty.

The young preacher never aimed at preaching eloquent or sensational sermons; he acquired early that characteristic which so marked his public utterances all through his life, of first mastering his subject till he was himself moved by its import, and then speaking neither *at*, nor *before*, his congregation, but *to* them, in conversational but clear and convincing language. John Wilkinson's discourses were always *messages*; and as he steeped himself in the Divine Oracles, they were *messages from God*: who can wonder, therefore, that a spell and power lay within them that riveted the attention, and left deep impressions upon the minds and memories of his hearers—impressions which often bore fruit after a long lapse of time?

CHAPTER III

The Call—College Days

WISHING for a wider sphere and enlarged experience, John Wilkinson moved in 1849 (at the age of twenty-five) to Grimsby, to a larger business establishment. Business hours were now, as before, fully occupied, and the week-ends were largely taken up in preaching over the extensive Grimsby circuit. The business necessitated a weekly visit to the town of Louth, and permitted of the renewal of an acquaintance with John Stephenson, who had formerly resided in Market Rasen. This friend was at that time a local preacher among the Methodists, but subsequently became a clergyman of the Church of England.

In one conversation John Stephenson unburdened himself to his friend John Wilkinson thus: "My mind is much exercised about the Christian ministry and the mission field, especially since I was requested to offer myself to the Methodist ministry and was refused. I have recently heard a deputation speak on behalf of the Jews, and had an interview with him on behalf of my brother." Then he asked John Wilkinson directly, "Is *your* mind quite at rest on the matter? Have you no misgiving about remaining in business? The deputation informed me that this Society wanted two or three godly young men who would devote themselves to the work of God among the Jews, and to whom they would give a

college training. What do you think of the Jewish field? Would you go to the Jews if I would?"

John Wilkinson replied, "You might be called of God, and not I; or I might be called, and not you; or, indeed, neither of us: but if God should call, and make that call clear, I would go to the Jews or anywhere else, with or without you. Though I have no special fitness for the Jewish field, and the Jews are a clever people, and, humanly speaking, I see almost insurmountable difficulties in such a mission; nevertheless, the very difficulties are a charm rather than a discouragement, for God has given me a temperament that welcomes difficulties; and in God's work, God's strength and wisdom are pledged to His servants, so that the strength guarantees victory, and the wisdom guarantees the best method of meeting and overcoming the difficulties. Besides, the meeting and overcoming difficulties, in the power of Christ, gives strength and firmness to Christian character; and offers fewer temptations than a life of ease and personal comfort."

Thus ended the conversation during the early weeks of 1851. The friends parted, nevermore to meet on earth. The visits to Louth ceased. The conversation might have passed from the memory like a thousand others. But it did not. The impression it had left deepened day by day, and drove John Wilkinson to prayer. Often had he told the Lord since his conversion that he would be anything, do anything, go anywhere, were he only sure of its being His will. As he prayed on, the impression deepened that God would have him become a missionary to the Jews. Under this deepening impression he wrote to the friend at Louth, simply to ask him for the address of the Society in London which had been mentioned in the memorable conversation.

This obtained, he wrote direct to the secretary of the Society—Mr. George Yonge—telling him his feelings, asking if young men were needed, and on what conditions. A kind reply was received, and John Wilkinson made his definite application to the Committee of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, to be accepted as a student in the Mission College.

The application was favourably considered. Though many applications had been received by the committee, that of John Wilkinson was considered as of special interest. The usual printed form of questions bearing on personal and theological matters was sent to the candidate. The replies to these, with testimonials from two Wesleyan ministers—Benjamin Frith and Thomas Eckersley—were satisfactory. He was accepted.

In June 1851, Mr. Wilkinson, accompanied by his brother, arrived in the metropolis for the first time in his life. The morning following his arrival he had to appear before the College tutors. This experience is best told in his own words:

‘On the forenoon of the day after our arrival I appeared at the College in Stamford Street, Blackfriars, and was received by Professor Davidson, the resident tutor, who was a Christian Jew; the Rev. Mr. Miller, tutor in Theology, was also present. Mr. Miller asked me the first and following question:

“Well, Mr. Wilkinson, do you expect to be a gentleman by becoming a missionary to the Jews?”

‘I understood by his tone the sense in which he used the term “gentleman”; so I replied, “Certainly not, if that means an easy and leisurely life: for I expect a

life of hard work. I have come here at the cost of many prayers and tears."

'Mr. Miller said, "I like you none the worse for that," and ran off to give his lecture to the students. Then Professor Davidson drew his chair a little nearer, and in a most kind and fatherly manner began to encourage me in the blessed work to which I was devoting my life; and told me some of the duties and privileges of the College course.'

Mr. Wilkinson's fellow-students were J. B. Ginsburg, C. D. Ginsburg, Julius Kessler, Isaac Salkinson, Mollis, Bramby, and Thompson. Five of them were Christian Jews, and the two last were Christian Gentiles. The Jews all went into mission work amongst their brethren; but the two Gentiles left the College in about a year—one to his farm, and the other to his merchandise. Subsequently Mr. Maxwell Ben Oliel entered the College. J. B. Ginsburg became a missionary of the London Jews' Society after working awhile with the British Society. Christian D. Ginsburg entered on mission work in Liverpool, and afterward gave himself to literature, and, as Dr. Ginsburg, has long been known as the author of many learned works. Mr. Kessler worked among Jews for awhile, and then amongst Gentiles in Madagascar; but returned to London and passed to an early grave. Isaac Salkinson entered on mission work under the British Society, left the Society and joined the Presbyterian Mission, then returned to the British Society, and remained with it to the end of his life. He translated into idiomatic Hebrew *The Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation, Paradise Lost*, and the New Testament. Maxwell Ben Oliel afterwards entered the Wesleyan College at Richmond, and subsequently a National

Church College, and became a pronounced Ritualistic Clergyman and head of the "Kilburn Mission to the Jews." He passed away in 1907. Mr. Wilkinson was the only Gentile who passed through the College course.

The course of study embraced Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Greek, Latin, Logic and Theology. By College law the lights in the students' rooms were to be extinguished at half-past ten at night. While observing this rule, John Wilkinson lengthened the day by rising in the morning at five o'clock in the winter and at four in the summer. The Resident Tutor apologised to him that he had no other room to give him but the one with a skylight. Mr. Wilkinson replied, "Please don't trouble about that, for it affords me a precious lesson—that all my light—natural, educational, and spiritual—is to come direct from above." To "endure hardness," the student purposely avoided warming fingers or toes at the fire during the first winter at College; and finding that he could study two hours a day longer on vegetable and farinaceous food, he gave up almost entirely the use of animal food for three years. Three times, however, in two years did he suffer from fever, and was once threatened with brain fever. By God's mercy he recovered, and again threw heart and mind into his work. He carefully wrote out the paradigms of Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac verbs; declensions of nouns; also Latin and Greek conjugations and inflections, and nailed them in order on the walls of his study. The reading of these on Saturday mornings usually occupied about six hours.

The Jewish missionary student soon discovered the tendency for spiritual life to become feeble when the mind is absorbed in study, even the study of the original languages of the Scriptures. To prevent this, and to

foster spiritual life and growth, he was led to adopt the plan of reading every morning on his knees some six or seven chapters of God's Word, praying the Holy Spirit to teach him the meaning thereof for food for practical life. In this way he read through the Bible in about six or seven months. His Sundays were partly spent in open-air preaching, and in visiting the poor and wretched in their homes, reading and praying with them where permitted.

Thus College days passed happily for two years, 1851-1853. The third-year men now left the College for the Mission field, leaving only three students, Mr. Kessler, Mr. Maxwell Ben Oriel, and Mr. John Wilkinson.

The College was now given up for lack of funds, and the remaining students sent down to Brentford and placed under the charge of the Rev. W. C. Yonge, a Congregational minister: Professor Davidson came down twice a week to give lessons, and Mr. Yonge instructed in Theology. John Wilkinson had passed his third year's examinations at the end of the second year of College, so had another year of agreeable study to look forward to, without the foreboding of examinations. Here in Brentford he established a weekly cottage prayer-meeting, visited the slums on Sundays for tract distribution and conversation, chiefly among bigoted Romanists, and formed a class of Christian young men to teach them Hebrew. His afternoon walks for recreation were usually along the banks of the Thames to Richmond; or in the Kew Gardens, where in 1853 he witnessed the planting of the two rows of trees that now form the noble avenue to the Pagoda. Kew Gardens remained his favourite resort on a free day to the end of his life, and many is the

walk which his children enjoyed with him in later years amid its sylvan scenery, while listening to the reminiscences of his old College days. It was here as a student he learned to love his Hebrew Psalter, which he read audibly as he walked, to familiarise his ear with the sound, as well as the eye with the form, of the words. The precious little volume, which was literally his life-long companion, now lies before the writer of these pages. It bears upon its flyleaf the note, "Presented by my fellow-student, Thompson, in 1853."

In the twenty years ending 29th December 1906, he tells us in another note on the inside of the cover, he had read it through a hundred times in the Hebrew and fourteen times in English, "How many times in the first thirty-three years I don't know."

The lad from the Lincolnshire village is now at the end of the period preparatory to his life work: and about to enter on the sphere which he accepted as the will of God for him. Whether in business, in College, or in his witness for the Lord Jesus, we have seen that he possesses sincerity and intensity of conviction; a secret source of power gained in communion with God in prayer; considerable ability; and great earnestness and determination. These qualities presage true success and blessing in any calling; and our story will show that they were experienced in the life of John Wilkinson, the Jewish missionary.

CHAPTER IV

Practical Mission Work Begun

IN 1854, John Wilkinson left Brentford and Kew, and, labouring under the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, took up mission work among the Jews in London. He lodged in Barnsbury, and walked to the city every day to seek the shops and dwellings of Jews. At this period there were no mission rooms in which Jews could be called together for meetings. The work consisted, therefore, almost exclusively of visiting the Jews in their houses and shops, and in speaking to them in the streets. Then, Jews were comparatively few; there was not an immense East-End Ghetto, nor were Jews accustomed to be approached by a Christian missionary, and they were therefore largely free from that prejudice which present-day aggressive mission work among them has produced by its very success. If in 1854 *general* prejudice among the Jews was less, and the work of the Christian missionary in visitation was therefore somewhat less trying, to-day, on the other hand, there is a large body of Jews in whom prejudice has broken down altogether, and who frequent Gospel meetings: there are also a variety of means which effectively bring Jews in numbers under Christian truth.

But amid the changed conditions may the spirit of

the pioneer never die out. The following journal records are at once an example and an inspiration :

‘1854, *May* 1. Messrs. J. & L. Lavy, clothiers, Strand. I met here with rather a rough reception. The master told me that his object was business and money, and beyond that he cared for little. I found at once that all the arguments I might adduce in proof of the Messiahship of Jesus would be of no avail. I spoke to him on the subject of human depravity and the necessity of a change of heart—called a “new heart” by Ezekiel and a “clean heart” by David. He denied the necessity or even the possibility of such a thing; however he accepted a couple of tracts, and allowed me the privilege to call upon him again.

‘Mr. Isaac, Strand. Here I met with the words, “I do nothing but for money, and unless you give me the same amount for taking your tract as you receive for giving it, I won’t have it, neither will I hear a word you have to say.” I was at a loss for a moment where to begin—how to treat my new acquaintance. I arrested the attention of the wife and partly that of the husband, when I said, “Man! you will soon be in eternity: you have a soul to save! Your selling clothes and getting money won’t last always. I shall call and see you again.”

‘Mr. Benjamin. This is an English Jew, a clothier in Wilderness Row, John Street, who at first seemed disinclined to hear or to speak anything on religious subjects. However, after I had assured him that I, and thousands of other Christians, felt deeply indebted to

the Jews for the Bible, the Saviour, and for some of the most extraordinary and successful preachers of the Gospel the world ever saw, he listened attentively to the claims of Jesus, and to an urgent appeal to examine carefully a matter on which his eternal interests depend. He gave me permission to call whenever I pleased. About ten minutes after, having occasion to pass his shop, I observed him diligently reading one of the tracts I had given him.

‘John Street, near Smithfield. A glass and china warehouse. Here I found a young Jewess, offered her a tract, which she gratefully accepted. After a little conversation had passed between us, her brother made his appearance. They both entered freely into conversation with me on the subject of religion in general, and of Christianity in particular. I found the young man on the threshold of infidelity. He said that he was honest enough to confess that he did not believe in religion at all. However, his attention appeared to be arrested when I told him that his selling glass and getting money would not last always, that the Great Day of Accounts would soon be here. In the course of conversation they appeared to confound vital Christianity with that “mass of corruption and dead men’s bones”—popery. This error I soon rectified, and also removed several objections which they raised against Christ’s Divinity. They showed me a very interesting picture intended to represent Abraham offering Isaac in one part of it, and in another part was a representation of Solomon with the sword in his hand about to

divide the infant in the presence of the two women. They assured me they would read the tracts, and should be glad to see me whenever I felt disposed to call. The young man promised to come and see me on Friday evening and bring his brother with him.

‘1854, *July* 4. To-day I had separate conversations with three Jews in the street, two of which were very short; but the third was protracted enough to give me time to show that the very features in Jesus to which the Jews object, must be the features by which the Messiah will be known, if the predictions of the Scriptures concerning Him are true. Their indifference to religion in general only gave place to earnestness in expression of hatred to Christianity.

‘1854, *May* 8. Mr. L., watchmaker, Wilmington Square. I was shown at once into the counting-house, but no sooner had I announced myself a Christian, and pressed home salvation only in Christ, than I was quickly shown the door, and threatened with violent ejection if I did not leave at once. I was a little discouraged, though inwardly rejoicing to be counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. He accepted a tract, which I prayed God would use to soften his prejudice and to save his soul.

‘Mr. C., tailor, Old Saffron Hill, Holborn. “You will not alter my opinion,” said Mr. C., “by anything you may say; you may as well try to convert those stones outside as try to convert any Jew.” Mr. C. walked out of his shop and paced the pavement, whilst his wife, who was in the room beyond the shop, made use of

rather violent language. They listened to Messianic passages for half an hour, and cooled down. The husband returned into the shop, and both husband and wife asked me into the room at the back, offered me a seat, and then a cup of tea. Over that cup of tea they wished me to explain how it was that I could bear so much abuse without loss of temper. They said, "At first we thought you were a Jew when you quoted Hebrew; but we soon found you were not, or you would have been very angry with us." I replied, "There was a time when I could have been as angry with you as any Jew, but God has wrought a change in me by His grace." They then listened most attentively to an account of my own conversion; but when I told them that I should, before going to bed, pray for them by name, I saw tears in the eyes of both wife and daughter. They said they would be glad to see me again.'

Anyone who has had experience of similar work amongst Jews or Gentiles, but specially among Jews, will realise how trying the daily experience must often have been to flesh and blood; how the long conversations, together with interruptions and rebuffs, would wear nerve and brain more than crowded meetings. Realising this, we endeavour to-day to put a greater variety of work into the missionary's life. But that was not possible in the middle of the last century; and the young missionary, in a sense, quite lonely in the great city, regularly pursued his labours for six or eight hours a day until the end of August 1854, during which time he had secured friendly access to some sixty

Jewish families, without any formal introduction and while simply proclaiming Christ. The Society with which he laboured now being in debt, the Committee requested him to visit both Jews and Christians in the provinces—to preach Christ to the Jews, and to seek to awaken interest among the Christians. Bristol was the first place, and has interest, therefore, as commencing those long years of provincial journeys which made Mr. Wilkinson and his Jewish cause so familiar to multitudes of Christians throughout the kingdom.

Upon his journey of 21st August 1854, we find this pathetic paragraph: "Left Paddington Station about 7 o'clock this morning, and arrived in Bristol about 7 o'clock p.m.¹ Secured apartments, took out and unpacked my luggage and retired to bed. Had no rest during the whole night; packed up and removed to more comfortable apartments the next morning." The first day of work was occupied in looking up ministers and friends through whom there might be a possibility of awakening interest in the good cause. His journal records reveal that the reception by these friends to the subject was little better than indifferent. Mr. Wilkinson's intense convictions and grasp of his theme, however, always compelled a certain amount of interest even from the most indifferent. Most had given little attention to the Jewish subject. Some were opposed to any effort to disturb the Jews in their faith. Some were too concerned with their own local affairs to give time or money to an outside enterprise. Perhaps the most encouraging paragraph in the first few pages is the following:

'Had a conversation with a young German Jew to-day in the street. According to his account, his father had embraced the Christian religion in Berlin

¹ Note the length of journey as compared with to-day.

and was now a member of a church. The young man, Scheunfeld, took out of his pocket a copy of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and read, "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." I then took out my Hebrew Bible and showed him that the Son referred to in the second psalm was the same as the Son referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews; and both referred to the Lord Jesus Christ. The young man appeared to be sincerely seeking rest of soul. . . . I gave him, too, a note to our resident secretary, in which I requested Mr. Yonge to refer him to one of our missionaries that he might not be lost sight of. He promised to attend Bridge Street Chapel on Sunday morning. I gave him a New Testament and a few tracts, and commended him to God.

'1854, *August* 31. To-day I classified the residences of Jews according to the streets; enclosed about 100 tracts—Hebrew and English—in fifty envelopes, and addressed them בן ישראל (son of Israel). Bills were also printed announcing to the Jews that on Saturday afternoons from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. they were kindly invited to my lodgings for conversation on Messianic portions of the Hebrew Scriptures. In the afternoon and evening of the same day I visited about fourteen houses and shops of the well-to-do Jews, distributing tracts and circulars. In one case I met with a very angry reception and speedily left. In another case the wife, Mrs. E., received me most kindly, her husband, only twenty-nine years of age, was in a rapid consumption, and away at

the seaside. She willingly listened to the Gospel, and admitted that, if Jesus were not the Messiah, He was one of the greatest wonders of the world ; for in the name of a crucified Jew all the kings and queens of the civilised world were taking shelter, even though eighteen hundred years had passed since that crucifixion took place.

‘1854, *Friday, September 1st.* Visited to-day six or seven shops of the higher class Jews. Tracts and circulars were kindly received in every case. I had an hour’s conversation with Mr. R., silversmith in a large way. He looked at the circular, read it, and then pleasantly asked, “Are you Mr. Wilkinson?” I replied, “I am, sir.” “Well,” said Mr. R., “I don’t mind conversing on the subject of Christianity with one who was born a Christian ; but I do object to converse with a converted Jew.” I quoted Messianic passages, and showed their fulfilment in Jesus of Nazareth. Mr. R. very pleasantly replied, “You see, somehow or other, the Jews don’t see exactly as you see in these matters ; and if I were in your place I should get out of patience with their stupidity. But,” continued he, “you must not be surprised that the Jews do not receive Christ, since it required a miracle to convert Saul of Tarsus eighteen hundred years ago. However,” said he, “if you will make bad Jews into good Christians, I wish you every success ; but don’t make good Jews into bad Christians.” He was remarkably pleasant, and permitted me to call another day. He is reported to have married a Gentile lady of Clifton, who added to his means £1000 a year, and is the treasurer of a Jewish fund

for relieving poor Jews, who otherwise might be induced to embrace Christianity.'

In Clifton Mr. Wilkinson found a very warm friend in Mrs. Luke, the authoress of *The Female Jesuit* and *The Spy in the Family*. It was at her house that he first learnt to address meetings in drawing-rooms, with the result that hundreds of happy drawing-room meetings have been held since then with evident tokens of the Divine blessing.

From Bristol Mr. Wilkinson crossed the Severn to Cardiff. The cholera had broken out, and numbers were dying daily. He found most of the various ministers of the town engaged in conducting funerals. After visiting the Jews, and giving one public address to a considerable number of Christians, he preached and held meetings at Devizes, Weston-super-Mare, and Keynsham. In Bath he spent about a fortnight visiting Jews at their houses and shops, as well as ministers and influential Christians. On Saturday, 8th October, he attended the synagogue service, being the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles.

'The Rabbi read the service in such an irreverent and even blundering manner that, to save the Rabbi's character, a respectable Jew went to the desk and wished to read for him, but the Rabbi would not permit this. I was afterwards told that this was done because of my presence. After the service I again went to the house of the two aged gentlemen, and was cordially welcomed. Now I found five gentlemen—the two brothers I had met before; Mr. H., the son-in-law of the elder one; and two others from London on some important business. Here I had the opportunity of

exposing the mere formality and irreverence of their synagogue worship, and also of showing from the Hebrew Scriptures that Jesus is their Messiah and their only Saviour. I lunched with them, gave them a copy of Dr. M'Caul's *Old Paths*, and, at their request, accompanied them to the afternoon service at the synagogue. On our way I took the arm of Mr. H., and enforced the doctrine of atonement for sin by the shedding of blood. It was a joy to my heart to have such an opportunity of preaching Christ to these wealthy Jews. After the service the small congregation gathered round me outside the synagogue, the Rabbi included, and took a kindly farewell by hearty handshaking, as I was about to leave Bath. They urged that I would soon come again.'

Mission work amongst the Jews was resumed in November 1854, and continued throughout that month. The year closed with a three weeks' stay at Brighton, the account of which was thus summarised:

'My labours during the past month have been chiefly, though not exclusively, devoted to the object of diffusing information and exciting sympathy among Christians. While pursuing those labours in Brighton, I was much encouraged by the warm sympathy of ministers in whose churches I gave addresses. The statement of facts, together with the fervent prayers of the ministers for blessing, seemed to awaken genuine interest in Israel, which we will trust may be permanent.'

CHAPTER V

Ordination and continued Work

MR. WILKINSON'S work for the British Society was now taking shape. Like every valuable worker in the vineyard of the Lord, he had not only undertaken the duties assigned to him, but was largely making his sphere by his own individuality. Visiting Brighton for three weeks in the close of 1854, he sought and gained entrance to some of the most respectable Jews of the town, engaging them in lengthy conversations on the subject of the Messiahship of Jesus and their own souls' condition, and could write at the close of this visit :

‘ Though we may not be permitted to see much fruit at present in the form of immediate conversion, yet we have encouragement in the fact that the Jews in numbers of instances will listen for an hour or two at a time to the plain exposition of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. God will most assuredly bless the prayerful, persevering efforts of His servants. I am fully persuaded that thousands of secret ones, dissatisfied with Judaism, are reading the New Testament and examining the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ. This state of things evidently indicates a shaking among the dry bones, and encourages the missionary to labour

more incessantly and to pray more fervently for the promised outpouring of the Holy Ghost.'

The visit to Brighton was also associated with the presentation of the Jewish cause to Christians, and Mr. Wilkinson received encouragement from a number of Christian ministers and friends.

Early in the year 1855 the Secretary of the British Society intimated to Mr. Wilkinson that as God had blessed his work in Bristol, Bath, and Brighton, the committee desired him to visit other large towns with the same two-fold object of preaching Christ to Jews and Jewish truth to Christians. It was at this point that the question of ordination arose. Mr. Wilkinson's views on this subject will be of interest to many.

'Some few pulpits having been refused to me in the towns already visited, simply because I was not ordained, I felt that my usefulness would be extended if I had ministerial status; and, besides, I should be eligible in the eyes of ministers and churches to administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Thought and feeling have much changed on this subject since forty years ago,¹ in myself as well as among Evangelical Christians generally; nevertheless the being set apart for the work of the Christian ministry I cannot regard as otherwise than Scriptural: and the use with such of the designation "Reverend" need not offend any enlightened though tender conscience. "Reverend" is never applied to the most distinguished Christians in the same sense as to God,

¹ Mr. Wilkinson wrote this note in 1895.

in that oft-quoted passage, "Holy and Reverend is His Name," any more than "Lord" is ever applied to one of our nobility in the same sense as to the Lord Jesus Christ.'

Mr. Wilkinson therefore applied to his committee for ordination, with a view to enlarged access and usefulness among Nonconformist churches. The ordination service was held in the Liverpool Road Wesleyan Chapel, Islington, on the evening of 6th February 1855.¹ Three Congregational and three Wesleyan ministers took part, and, but for the very short notice, ministers of other denominations would have joined them. There never was anything in Mr. Wilkinson of sectarianism, and it was fitting that his commendation to the churches should have been on the broadest basis. He never had a Bishop's ordination; but his heart was warm towards all godly minded men in the National Church, and many were the personal friendships he made with clergymen of the Church of England. His personal character, and the Mission he afterwards founded, came also to command the esteem and support of a large section of godly and evangelical churchmen.

The following certificate of ordination was given to him by Mr. George Yonge, the British Society's secretary, and dated from No. 1 Crescent Place, Blackfriars, the Society's office, on the site of which Ludgate Hill Station now stands.

"This is to certify that Mr. John Wilkinson was

¹ I think it may interest some to know that my ordination as the assistant of my father in the same work took place on 5th February 1897, in the Conference Hall, Mildmay Park, London.

—S. H. WILKINSON.

publicly set apart and ordained on the 6th of February 1855, as a missionary of the Gospel to the Jews: and he is hereby affectionately commended to the prayers and Christian fellowship of all who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours, as 'a Brother beloved in the Lord,' devoting his life to the spiritual good of Israel.

(Signed) "JOHN HALL.

W. H. RULE.

A. D. SALMON.

BENJAMIN HELLIER.

J. CLIFFORD HOOPER.

W. C. YONGE."

The Rev. Jabez Bunting, one of the most godly and distinguished Wesleyan ministers of his day, had intended to be present and take part in the service, but was prevented by a heavy snowstorm. He wrote, however, the following letter:

'30 MYDDLETON SQUARE, LONDON,

February 9th, 1855.

'DEAR SIR,—I was exceedingly sorry that the state of my health and the extreme severity of the weather on Tuesday evening prevented me from accomplishing my cherished purpose of being present on the occasion of your ordination. I wished very much to have taken that opportunity of evincing, so far as my present circumstances permit, my respect for yourself, for your labours, and for the British Society under whose auspices you go forth: as well as my deep interest in the cause of Jewish Evangelization to which you have so solemnly devoted your life. My earnest prayer is

that the best blessings of the "God of Abraham," the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may be vouchsafed to yourself and to your Society, and crown your truly Christian efforts with success.—I am, dear Sir, yours respectfully and affectionately,

'JABEZ BUNTING.

'The Rev. John Wilkinson.'

A few days after the ordination service Mr. Wilkinson was speeding north to Sheffield. Here, for eleven weeks, he prosecuted with untiring energy his twofold mission to Jews and Christians, visiting also Rotherham, Masbrough, Thorncliffe, and Attercliffe. Thence to Leeds, where he spent twelve weeks; thence to Halifax for seven weeks, visiting also Sowerby Bridge, Todmorden, and Hebden Bridge; thence to York for six weeks; to towns in Lincolnshire; to Manchester for eight weeks. Again numerous conversations with Jews were held and recorded; but the equally important and necessary witness to the Christian Churches concerning the whole Jewish question loomed up more largely than before, it would seem, as an indication of the special ministry that was to occupy his later years. Even then he could write:

'Although I find in many persons very strong prejudice against attempts to evangelize the Jews, yet I am happy to witness that prejudice weakening and in many cases destroyed, as information is given; and by-and-by I hope to witness the Christian Church awakening as from a dream of centuries to her duty respecting Israel; humbling herself before God on account of this duty having been so long neglected;

praying for Divine forgiveness and entering with ever increasing energy upon the faithful discharge of her duties in all their length and breadth in reference to an unsaved world; those duties arising out of that large-hearted commission of her great Spiritual Head, "Go ye out into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." In the meantime be it ours to labour, pray, and wait.'

After Manchester, Nottingham. Between these places Mr. Wilkinson attended the Annual Meeting of the Derby branch of the British Society, held in that town on 23rd January 1856. The Mayor presided over a meeting that was said to be the best ever held in Derby for such an object. Enthusiastic gatherings collected on the Sunday following at Pastor Stevenson's Church, and three hundred people remained to pray for the Jews. This greatly cheered Mr. Wilkinson's heart.

But it was at Nottingham that we see Mr. Wilkinson's devotion and zeal most markedly. Here a Jewish soul was won for Jesus, and Christian apathy turned into enthusiasm. When he arrived he found that interest in the Jews had almost died out. The local committees of the British Society were very dubious of re-awakening any sympathy with the Jewish cause. Mr. Wilkinson spent five weeks of incessant toil in this town. He pressed the committees into taking the large Mechanics' Hall for a general tea-meeting. He had laid the foundation of success in a number of public addresses in the Nonconformist churches. The tea-meeting was held; about five hundred sat down to tea, and eight hundred attended the meeting afterward, presided over by William Felkin, Esq., a local magistrate, and supported by many ministers.

It was at this memorable meeting that the Jewish soul, who, so far as we know, was the first that Mr. Wilkinson was privileged to lead to the Saviour, was laid hold of. His name was David Colman. Like many another, he came from Poland. How he came to find himself in this great tea-meeting we do not know. Possibly some Christian acquaintance had invited him to hear the Jewish missionary. He sat and listened to Mr. Wilkinson's story of a conversation with a learned Jew in London. As he heard Mr. Wilkinson quote portions of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah in Hebrew, his attention was arrested, and he sent up a message to the platform to ask him to come and speak with him. Said he: "I never saw or heard anything like this before in my life. The Christianity of this country must be different from that of Russia. Can I see you privately to-morrow to ask you some questions?"

The next day Mr. Wilkinson had a long interview with him, and met several of his difficulties. Correspondence followed, and after a few months David Colman became a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Mr. Wilkinson baptized him at Derby, and he was regarded by those who knew him as a true and humble follower of Jesus. After living long enough to be well tested, he passed by consumption to an early grave, leaving a young widow behind. Shortly before his departure he expressed a wish to see once more the man who had led him to Jesus. Mr. Wilkinson managed between one evening's meeting at Melbourne, near Derby, and the next evening's meeting at Bath, to fit in a visit to the dying Hebrew Christian, driving over early in the morning in a biting frost. He asked David Colman how it stood with his soul in the prospect of death. He said, "Don't be surprised if I

die while you are in the room; for the doctor tells me that when the disease reaches a certain point, I may die at once. But let me tell you, Jesus is more precious to me now I am ill than He was when I was well." He shortly after died in Christ.

Thus was the work commenced which was to occupy Mr. Wilkinson during the next twenty years. If the work in itself was all but unique at that period, the manner in which Mr. Wilkinson undertook it was *quite* unique. The young missionary preacher's natural love of overcoming difficulties was standing him in good stead; his fidelity, consistent character, happy and hopeful manner, natural abilities, and sanguine temperament, added to his strong convictions, were already beginning to tell in causing Christians to change their attitude towards the people which God calls "His peculiar treasure." The same qualities made him a persevering and efficient apostle to the Jewish people themselves. So intense and real was his concern for them, that it was not to be extinguished or even diminished by disappointing experiences. Of these he had many, as have all true workers among Israel, and perhaps all true workers for God everywhere; but he speaks little of them, lest they should damp the ardour of souls less resolute than he, but rather in the confidence of faith sets himself to expect great things, and to read the signs of their coming.

We have now come to March 1856. It is the time for Mr. Wilkinson to write his review of his work of the past twelve months to the secretary of his Society. As we read this review, we see not only the blessing of God upon his labours, but we recognise in the spirit of his words the qualities which under God's grace have contributed to that blessing.

‘You are aware that I have been in the provinces during the whole of the past twelve months, attempting to interest Christians of all denominations in the cause of Israel’s spiritual welfare; while at the same time, as far as practicable, I have preached the Gospel to the Jews residing in the towns I have visited. Sheffield, Leeds, Halifax, York, Waltham, and Great Grimsby, Manchester, Derby, Nottingham, Mansfield, Diss, together with several towns in the neighbourhood of each, I visited; and have attended upwards of two hundred and twenty engagements, including sermons, lectures, and addresses of a public character, and also those addresses which have been given to private gatherings of Christian friends. The long cherished prejudices of Christians are giving way, and an increased and increasing interest is manifested by the Christian Church in the Jewish people.

‘During the past year I have been privileged to hear fervent prayer offered on behalf of Israel by those who have been accustomed to forget the Jew. The results of sympathy awakened in the hearts of children are no less encouraging. In the towns named above I have had the pleasure of addressing, on the Lord’s day afternoons, about 18,000 children; and as the immediate results children have sent me the value of several dozens of New Testaments during the year, some bringing money to purchase the New Testament for Jews, whilst others have subscribed a halfpenny each, purchased the New Testament, and brought it to me. Only the other day, in connexion with the Louth Anniversary

services, a little boy about nine years of age said to his father, "Father, I think we ought to give something to send the Gospel to the Jews; I'll give half a crown, if you will." The father accepted the challenge, and they each placed half a crown in my hand. Other children brought four New Testaments, and others brought money to purchase five or six more.

'I have also witnessed many interesting cases of spontaneous practical sympathy on the part of adults during the past year, every form of current coin having been placed in my hand at one time or other. Although much of my time has been occupied in attending public meetings, I have, nevertheless, had many opportunities, which have been gladly embraced, of preaching the Gospel to the sons of Abraham, and of witnessing, as the result of God's blessing on the constant manifestation of Christian benevolence, the prejudices of the Jew against Christ and His Gospel happily removed.

'And is it not a cheering fact, sir, that, in proportion as the Church of Christ has manifested towards the Jews the spirit which alone the Gospel sanctions, the Jews have borne testimony that that Gospel is to the Jew as well as to the Gentile, "the power of God unto salvation"? It has often been asked by professing Christians, Has anything been done among the Jews? Are any Jews converted? The Jewish heart is so very hard, I don't think you will make much out with the Jews. It might be a sufficient answer to the Christian that the Word of God commands our efforts to save the Jews, even though we should not meet with all the

success we had wished and hoped for. We must bear in mind that not until very recently have any efforts been put forth by the Christian Church in a spirit of love and in an organised form for the conversion of the Jews. The conduct of Christian nations towards the Jew has for centuries been of the most cruel character, that conduct causing the Jew to hate the religion which appeared to sanction such cruelties. We are very much in danger of talking about Jewish hardness, and forgetting that professing Christendom is responsible to God to a very alarming extent for the hardness of the Jew. But, after all, what has been done, and during the short period of half a century, under circumstances so unfavourable? While the Jews about half a century ago blasphemed the name of Christ as a rule, I believe that is now an exception. They are now, as the result of God's blessing on a Christian spirit, not only speaking, but even eminent Rabbis are writing, in most respectful terms of Him.

'Another fact equally interesting is, that while the Jews about half a century ago would not so much as touch a New Testament, much more read it, they are now reading it by scores, hundreds, thousands. Only a few weeks ago I heard a Rabbi in the synagogue in one of our large provincial towns, say to the Jews what amounted to a recommendation to read the New Testament. The Rabbi, while reproving the Jews for holding conversation during the synagogue worship, said, "I fear you even transact business in the house of God,"—and such has been the case for centuries past.

“If you look into the New Testament you will find that the Founder of the Christian religion charged the Jews with a similar sin in His day. He said, ‘Ye have made the House of God a house of merchandise.’”

‘I believe that the New Testament is read by the Jewish people at present to an extent never known before during the age of Christianity. These facts taken together: the speaking and writing in respectful terms of Jesus of Nazareth, the reading of the New Testament by thousands, the thousands of confessors of Christ now living, besides the hundreds who have died in the triumph of the faith of the Gospel, during the short period above referred to—tell us, and the whole world, that we have not laboured in vain, and teach us to hope for much in connexion with earnest, prayerful, incessant toil during the next half-century. Any Christian taking a broad and correct view of what has already been accomplished, will, I think, be surprised, not that so little has been done, but that so much has been accomplished in so short a time and under circumstances so unfavourable. There are, no doubt, many secret believers in Jesus of the house of Israel who have not yet had the courage to make a public profession of faith.’

CHAPTER VI

Marriage

IN the diary for 1857 stands the following note :

‘1857, *Jan.* 1st. This day at 10.30 a.m. in the Brunswick Wesleyan Chapel, Sheffield, the Rev. Luke Tyerman officiating, I was united in the holy bond of marriage to Ann, second daughter of Mr. H. D. Wilkinson, electro-plater, of Clarendon Villas, Sheffield. The sun shone brilliantly, and the day was a happy one to all who shared in its festivities. God’s blessing was sought and secured.’

Mr. Wilkinson was singularly happy and blessed of God in his marriage union. He often told the story of how he met his beloved one. It was at Louth, in Lincolnshire, in the spring of 1856. He was giving a drawing-room address to a roomful of ladies. At the conclusion of the address the lady of the house asked him if he would like a hymn. She then called to a young lady seated at the farther end of the room, and said, “Miss Wilkinson, will you kindly come to the piano.” Mr. Wilkinson looked up to examine the lady who bore his own name, and, as he often said afterwards, “That was the fatal look.” A personal introduction followed, and after an engagement of nine months, John Wilkinson and Ann Wilkinson were married on New Year’s Day, 1857.

The couple were granted forty and a half years of sweet companionship before Mrs. Wilkinson was called home on the 28th of August 1897. So far as the writer's memory and knowledge go, it was their custom to the end to spend the minutes of transition from the old year into the new, upon their knees alone together.

To this union nine children were given, of whom four did not live. The five who were spared from the cradle live still, and it was their parents' joy to see them not only all converted to God, but gathered an unbroken family around their bedsides, as first the mother in 1897, and then the father in 1907, took leave of them for the little while, until "the day break and the shadows flee away."

Our precious mother was exceptionally endowed with gifts and graces, was cultured, possessed a sound judgment, an unselfish nature, warm affection, a passion for music, and was herself a sweet singer. Indeed, she was to the Jewish missionary for forty years all that God intended Eve to be to Adam, a true עזר כנגדי (help meet). In a confessedly difficult but most blessed sphere of service for Christ on earth—the mission to Israel—she was at all times his wise counsellor and his constant and efficient assistant.

She excelled in the writing of letters, and hundreds of tried and suffering Christians have treasured her comforting and sympathetic words, happily expressed in the simplest and most appropriate form. Her letters were not, as a rule, long; but they possessed that tone of genuineness and strong sympathy, that they spoke in almost every case, if not indeed in every case, to the heart. In the early days of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, Mrs. Wilkinson wrote personally to donors in

acknowledging their gifts—and this work, which was really a sacrifice to her, being carried on at the cost of much pain and fatigue, was a sort of Mission in itself—establishing a personal link of love with large numbers of fellow-believers, and ministering strength and comfort to multitudes of them.

I may be pardoned here for reciting the following incident. Shortly after mother's death, I was making a few purchases in an optician's shop in Edinburgh. I gave instructions for the goods to be sent, and handed the shop assistant my card. As he read the name, he said, "May I sympathise with you, Mr. Wilkinson, in the loss of your dear mother." Somewhat surprised, I asked him what he knew of her; and received the reply that having once sent a small donation to the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, he had received such a loving, motherly letter from her as made him realise that he could call her his friend, and feel the stronger for it. He said he should never part with the letter.

Our mother was a confirmed invalid and a great sufferer. A spinal complaint prevented much motion, and this, added to other afflictions, rendered her intensely weak and nervous. Yet, so far from being self-centred and occupied with her ailments, she was pre-eminently the possessor of

"A heart at leisure from itself
To soothe and sympathise";

and if never free entirely from pain or weakness, she was free in the sense that

"A life of self-renouncing love
Is the life of liberty."

How shall I speak of her—our sainted mother, so

weak, so gentle, so sympathetic? My thoughts go back to childhood's days. As the missionary's little family grew in numbers and stature, his limited stipend was not sufficient to meet its need; so mother conducted a small private school in the house for about six years. On Tuesdays she led a Bible class of ladies, first weekly, then monthly, till it was reluctantly relinquished some years before her death. All of the members looked up to her with affectionate esteem. What potent influence she wielded from her vantage-ground of weakness!

I venture to give here her outline notes of one of these Bible readings, which may, in its simple and sincere directness, bear a message still.

SERVICE

“And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?” (1 Chron. xxix. 5).

‘1. *Our Relationship to God*.—We are His children, friends, and servants. We cannot be His servants unless we are His children. The servant cannot serve two masters (Matt. vi. 24); is not greater than his Lord (John xiii. 13–17). We are also His children (John i. 12), and His friends (John xv. 13–15).

‘2. *Consecrate*: i.e., set apart for the Lord's use only, as the vessels of the Sanctuary; not for self-service any more than for Satan's service (read Dan. v. 1–8, etc.; 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20). Service may be active or passive, but it may not be limited so as only to give part of our time or our labour. Solomon was to *build* the temple, but he was also to *keep* the Lord's commandments (cf. Gal. i. 16 with Gal. v. 16).

'3. *No choice in our work.*—A priest and Levite each had his appointed work, and each tribe its appointed place in which to pitch its tents, as described in the first few chapters of the Book of Numbers; and, as in the building of the Temple, each man had his work appointed him (2 Chron. ii. 18), so we have our work appointed us by God (2 Tim. ii. 20, 21). Woman's work is chiefly domestic. She has the care of the body entrusted to her—to see to the health, food, and clothing of others. She has also the charge of the dwelling. But none the less is her work appointed her of God, otherwise the last chapter of Proverbs would never have been written, nor many directions in the Epistles. Willing work will be prompt (Gal. i. 16).

'4. *Association with Jesus.*—He was the Son of God; we are associated with Him as children (Rom. viii. 16, 17). He was the Servant of God (Isa. xlii. 1), and we are acknowledged by Him to be servants in the passage already referred to (John xiii. 13–17). He is our Example in service (John iv. 34; John vi. 38; John viii. 29; cf. 1 Pet. ii. 11–16).

'Let us thank God for the privilege of serving Him as did David (1 Chron. xxix. 10–13).'

A pencil note intimates that the Bible reading here outlined was given on 4th July 1875.

The following letters, though not in their chronological position in our story, come fittingly here, as illustrating the tender bond between man and wife, and the intertwining of the interests of home and children with those of the great ministry to the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God.

‘LONDON, *Wednesday* (no date).

‘MY PRECIOUS PET,—I read your letter over and over again this morning. I knew you would sympathise with me. It seems that Elizabeth's father is a backslider. I hope the present trial may drive him back to God. He went to see his son on Monday, and since then has laid the case so much to heart, that he is now poorly in bed. The mother, who has never been a Christian, is now anxious to become one. Poor Elizabeth has the burden of all their souls upon her.

‘Hope to take baby out this afternoon, with Mrs. Champ and Florry. I think of you more frequently than I can tell you, and look forward to your stay of some weeks at home with great comfort; God bless you, my precious one. Baby boy looks almost hardy again; he has a nice colour, and his eyes have regained their brightness, but he is still a little fretful. He did not rest well last night and I feel weary to-day, but hope to get some energy from air and exercise this afternoon.—Good-bye, my darling. Fond love from your devotedly affectionate and faithful wife,

‘ANN WILKINSON.’

The baby boy referred to being the first child of the union, we can say that the above letter was written about 1858.

‘79 MILDMAY ROAD, LONDON, N.

November 17, 1868.

‘MY DARLING,—I have heard from Mr. Gill this morning that Colchester is on the 16th, so have



MRS. WILKINSON.

written to Mrs. Firston to say you will give the address she asks for on Friday, 18th of December, at 7 o'clock. I hope you are persevering with your prescription. I shall be glad indeed when you are quite well. I don't know your address at Caistor, or whether you are going there, so shall send this to Horncastle. We are pretty well at home. Mrs. W. King called yesterday afternoon. Samuel came to me on Sunday and asked me to teach him to read, and in the evening he prayed that God would let him learn to read, so am beginning to teach him—shall take care he is not overdone. "Singing for Jesus," words and music, is published in the *Christian Times*; so I bought it on Saturday, and Henry has learned to play it without troubling me at all. I think I shall sing it to his playing.—Good-bye, precious. We all send our love. . . . Ever your own fond wife, ANN WILKINSON.'

'LONDON, *March 17, 1869.*

'MY DARLING HUSBAND,—The boys are coming home to dine to-day; they have a half-holiday in honour (or on occasion) of the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race. They are well; so are the little ones and grandmamma.

'You do not say what kind of a dress you have bought for me: I should like to have a description of it. It will be a comfort to me to know that there is a tidy dress ready, should I be spared to need it. I hope you had a good meeting at Bradford.—Your ever fond wife, ANN WILKINSON.'

'79 MILD MAY ROAD, LONDON, N.

March 11, 1872.

'MY PRECIOUS HUSBAND,— . . . Thank you very much for the postcard; it has quite cheered me. I trust you had a blessed day yesterday. I was very quiet most of the day—part of the afternoon was spent in Bible instruction, first to Ann and then to the boys. I also gave Samuel a short lesson in the evening. George did not come in the evening. The boys went to hear Gawin Kirkham at the Conference Hall. We have a dense fog to-day—bad enough for November; and a cold wind both yesterday and to-day, gives everything a wintry aspect. We are all nicely, and write in fond love. I took Alice Annie to the School of Art on Saturday; the master was anxious she should attend in the evening, and assured me that there was no crowding, and that there were no rude boys, so I am going to try.—I am, my precious, your ever fond wife,

ANN WILKINSON.'

'79 MILD MAY ROAD, LONDON, N.

May 8, 1874.

'MY PRECIOUS HUSBAND,—I have sent off the pamphlets—am thankful they are selling, as they are so instructive. The Jews were prayed for at the daily prayer-meeting this morning; it was a very hallowed meeting. The trams now run up Mildmay Park and part of the way up Green Lanes. When they run to Finsbury Park I hope I may sometimes go there. Samuel and friends went to school by the

new tram this morning. Henry went with the Maxtons to St. Paul's Cathedral last night; they were horrified to find it a dreadful exhibition of popery. I fear that it will yet be rampant in England; people do seem infatuated. Fond love, my precious one; also remember me to friends. I am, as ever, your own loving wife,

ANN WILKINSON.'

CHAPTER VII

In Season and Out of Season

(1857-1858)

THE Mosaic law permitted a newly married man to remain at home a year to cheer up his wife.

“When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business; but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken” (Deut. xxiv. 5).

Mr. Wilkinson had six months' partial respite from travelling at the beginning of his married life. But we need not say that it was not an idle six months. After a fortnight's honeymoon at Hastings (where addresses were given) there were visits to Derby, Gravesend, and Rugby; while the time in London was utilised for the visiting of the Cattle Market at Copenhagen Fields, where a number of Jewish cattle-dealers from Holland were to be found.

And now the missionary settles down again to his itinerant apostleship to Jew and Christian. In the latter part of 1857 and the early part of 1858, mission effort among the Jews in London was continued, and meetings held in various parts of the country with a view to stir up interest among Christians. Meetings were held in Ipswich, Manningtree, Long Melford,

Clare, Haverhill, Colchester, Chelmsford, Bath, Islington, Stoke Newington, Brighton, Kensington, Cardiff, Cowbridge, Bridgend, Cardigan, Newport, Haverfordwest, Pembroke, Pembroke Dock, Milford, Narberth, Carmarthen, Swansea, Mumbles, Merthyr Tydvil, Pontypool and amongst various denominations in London. Even then he could write :

‘Amongst adult Christians of various denominations a healthy Scriptural interest is evidently on the increase. Those portions of Scripture which refer to the certain conversion of Jews to the faith of Jesus; those which refer to the duty of Christians to labour and pray for that conversion; and those which refer to the influence of that conversion instrumentally upon the world, are being more closely studied: the natural result of which is a deeper concern for the conversion of Israel.’

We may not follow him through all the persistent effort of these years, which was much of the same character: pursued, however, as character ripened with a more thoughtful and serious earnestness. We note, however, that the addressing of large and enthusiastic gatherings of Christians on behalf of Israel, did not absorb all his zeal or strength, and we find him patiently following individual effort among the Jews, and not without fruit for his Master’s name and glory.

‘Though pleading the cause of Israel in the provinces has been attended with a considerable amount of mental and physical energy, I have always felt happy in the work, because of its being a work deeply interesting to my Lord and Saviour; and I have frequently realised

a cheering sense of my Saviour's presence and smile while labouring for Him. My whole desire is

“To spend and be spent for them
Who have not yet my Saviour known.”

‘And now as to my labours among God's ancient people themselves, I may say I have embraced every favourable opportunity of preaching the Gospel to them while passing through provincial towns in which they reside. I have distributed a goodly number of tracts and New Testaments, both in Hebrew and in English, and have been much pleased to witness the kindness with which they have been received, and the eagerness to become acquainted with their contents; and am fully persuaded that an extensive distribution of good tracts, especially amongst the young, would, by God's blessing, be followed by cheering results. I have recently adopted the following course: On Saturday, between the hours of morning and afternoon service, I go directly to the Jewish quarter, having previously filled my pockets with tracts enclosed in envelopes, addressed in Hebrew, “Son of Israel,” and distribute them amongst young men, at the same time addressing a few plain, pointed sentences relating to the salvation of the soul. On Saturdaylast I pursued such a course amongst about thirty—all young men up to twenty or twenty-five years of age, and about an equal number of English and Germans. Among the cases which have come under my notice during the past year, as commanding my confidence as to their sincerity, I may be permitted to mention two. One is a young Polish Jew

about twenty-five years of age. I met with him in Dalston while walking along the road, and having had a conversation with him, during which I was very favourably impressed, invited him to my house. He came, and told me he had been in England about four years. He told me he had deserted from the Russian service, and after having been exposed to many hardships and privations, he reached this country in safety, but with very little money and totally ignorant of the language; and that which aggravated his distress was the fact that his father is in comparatively easy, if not affluent, circumstances as an innkeeper in Poland, and willing to assist him, but cannot do so. He has a brother in New York; that brother having learnt that he had come to England, sent him three pounds and a ticket for a free passage to America. The money and the ticket were sent to the care of a Jew in Manchester, but of the kindness of his brother in America he knew nothing until informed in a letter from his father which he received while at Bradford. He immediately went off to Manchester, obtained the money and the ticket, returned to Bradford to pay some small arrears to a German family with whom he had been staying a few days; slept there that night, expecting to leave with a light heart on the following morning; but to his great disappointment and deep sorrow, both his money and his ticket were stolen from his box during the night, and, to use his own simple and touching words, he said, "I cried hard." He has written twice or three times to his brother since, to tell him about it; but having

received no reply, he feels sure his brother has either left New York or is dead. He then turned his attention to the business of a glazier to obtain an honest livelihood, and has had to labour hard under a delicate physical frame in order to accomplish it. I soon found myself in the company of one who loved the Word of God, and who possessed a considerable knowledge of the historical portions of it, but had not paid close attention to the prophecies. He sat with me two hours while I read portions of the Hebrew Scriptures, and expounded them to him, and manifested special interest in the 53rd of Isaiah. He now comes regularly for Christian instruction; and on Saturday last appeared amazingly interested in reading with me the defence of Stephen and the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. May the God of Israel overrule the wanderings of this son of Abraham to England, and the privations through which he has passed, for his spiritual welfare here and hereafter.

‘The other case to which I refer is, so far as I can judge, a case of decided conversion. He is a German Jew about twenty-eight years of age. I first met with him in the street, employed in the same calling as the one just referred to; had a friendly conversation with him, gave him tracts, and invited him to my house. He came, brought a friend with him, a youth about eighteen, and to both on several occasions I read and expounded the Hebrew Scriptures, in which they manifested a deep interest. The younger one left the country, but the elder still remained. However, I lost sight of him during a three months’ tour in the provinces; but, to

my surprise and pleasure, he entered my dwelling immediately on my return. I perceived at once that something agitated his mind, and he began to thank me for having spoken to him of the Lord Jesus Christ. He had had conversations with other Christians during my absence; and, having read the New Testament carefully, he said, "I am fully convinced of the Messiahship of Jesus. Before I read the New Testament you gave me I had not the idea that Jesus was the character described there; indeed, I thought Him an impostor, and English Christianity a sort of refined idolatry. I have been a blasphemer, but I did not know Jesus was the Messiah, or I would not have blasphemed His name"; and as the tears rolled quickly down his cheek, he asked, "Do you think there is any mercy for me?" I at once declared to him the glorious truth that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish." And further: "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him." We had prayer together on that and subsequent occasions, while he penitently sought the mercy of God in Jesus Christ. After an absence of several months again, and fearing I had entirely lost all trace of him, I, as by accident, met with him a few weeks ago at a temperance meeting. The moment he recognised me, he sprang to me to tell me what the Lord had done for his soul. After some conversation it was agreed that he should take tea with me on the following evening.

‘He then told me of all that he had been called upon to suffer for Christ’s sake. He said, “I have had letters from my father persuading me to go back again. I have had the persuasions and the curse of the Rabbis. I have had to give a writing of divorcement to my wife, for she would no longer live with me. The Jews tempted me with money when I almost wanted bread. However,” said he, “I have left all for Christ’s sake, and the God of Israel will provide.” He is now in a comfortable situation and gaining an honest livelihood. I was much pleased to hear him say: “I for a long time believed with my head that Jesus was the Messiah, before I felt in my heart that His precious blood had washed my sins away.” We prayed together before we separated, and my soul was much refreshed while this “Israelite indeed” expressed in beautiful simplicity and holy fervour his entire reliance on the Atonement made by Jesus Christ for the sins of the Jew and Gentile. Amid all discouragement I feel resolved prayerfully to make more vigorous and extended efforts in this glorious work, feeling at the same time, in reference to the past, we have cause “to thank God and take courage.”’

We must follow up the former of these two cases, for the young man referred to was not only the first Christian Jew baptized by Mr. Wilkinson, but became a man who, through hard struggle and a long life, adorned the doctrine of his Master and Saviour. His name was Abraham Weiss, and he outlived Mr. Wilkinson but a few weeks. The story of his definite conversion and baptism is best told in Mr. Wilkinson’s own words:

‘On making a few inquiries as to his personal history, as well as to the present state of his mind religiously, I found him to be a native of Austrian Poland; that he had been in England about four years, the principal part of which had been spent in London as an assistant in various Jewish hairdressers’ shops; that he had occasionally listened to the preaching of the Gospel in different Christian sanctuaries; that he had commenced reading the New Testament, and had even left his bed in the night in order that he might peruse its pages unobserved by his Jewish employer; that, when the secret was disclosed, his master dismissed him, declaring that he would not have a “Meshumed” (apostate) in his service; and that then he resolved, the Lord helping him, to know the truth and to embrace it, cost him what it might. In this spirit he found his way to my house, and entered upon a course of instruction, which has had frequent interruptions on my part on account of my journeys into the provinces, but am happy to say he was not neglected. My heart has often been cheered and my spirit refreshed whilst expounding the Scriptures and witnessing the progress of Divine truth both on his mind and heart. I regularly closed our interview with prayer, and latterly induced him to engage in that holy exercise before leaving my study, which practice he has continued to the present time. God, in His infinite mercy, having enabled him to trust in the atoning sacrifice of Christ for salvation, he earnestly desired Christian baptism, for which I made arrangements; and, on Tuesday evening, the 29th ult., admitted

him a member of the Christian Church by publicly administering the rite of baptism. The service was held in Liverpool Road Wesleyan Chapel, Islington, where a large congregation was assembled to witness the ceremony. The Rev. John Hartley, one of the ministers, announced the hymn commencing "Hail, thou once despised Jesus"; he then offered prayer, and read a portion of the 8th chapter of the Acts. After second singing I preached a short sermon, and then read to the congregation a condensed account of his personal history as relating to the way in which God had led him to acknowledge "the truth as it is in Jesus." That account was as follows:

"I am a native of Austria-Poland, and in the days of my boyhood had just those impressions of Christianity which my Jewish training and the superstitions and idolatries of the Church of Rome would naturally inspire. To have me placed where, as they supposed, I should be less exposed to the proselytising efforts of the papists, my parents sent me twenty-eight miles from home, and apprenticed me to a hairdresser. Having served my time of five years, I returned home, and was soon required by the Government to serve in the army; but my dear mother had rather I would leave my home and country. I accordingly left home, and obtained my first situation in Breslau, but did not remain a long time in consequence of my master—a professing Christian—requiring me to work on my Sabbath day. Having no passport, I was obliged to pass on to Hamburg, where I found some fellow-

countrymen, who advised me to go to England; but at the same time warned me against the missionaries who seek to convert the Jews to Christianity. By the kind providence of God I arrived in England in the year 1853. I obtained my first situation in Birmingham, and kept it six months. My next was here in London. Whilst having a walk one Sunday afternoon, a countryman of mine, a converted Israelite, met me and accosted me in the following manner: 'Oh, are you come to England? Will you come home with me? I have something to tell you.' I went with him directly to his house. He then began to talk to me about Christianity, and explained to me that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah for the Jews. I visited him on several occasions, and by his advice began to listen to the preaching of the Gospel in different Christian sanctuaries. Having heard and profited to some extent by the preaching of the Revs. R. H. Herschell, W. Landels, J. Rattenbury, and Dr. Weir, the last-mentioned minister sent me to the office of the 'British Society'; and Mr. Yonge, the secretary, commended me to the care of the Rev. John Wilkinson, who has kindly instructed me in Christianity during the last six or eight months. He directed my attention specially to the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, and very often when sitting in my room, after I had left my kind teacher, I thought over the words, 'He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.' This and other passages gave me trouble and

anguish of spirit; but I soon found that the New Testament was the key, and the only key, that could unlock the treasures of the Old. I was soon convinced of one important truth, 'that the despised Nazarene is indeed the Messiah'; but another and more important truth, which none but the Holy Spirit can demonstrate to the heart of the believer, 'that this same Jesus is my personal Saviour,' has since become my happy experience. To remove the prejudices of a Jew, and to give him saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, amounts to a miracle—it is the power of God that accomplishes the work. And now I rejoice to tell of the Saviour's love to me, the chief of sinners, and to speak of the mercy of God in bringing another of His ancient people out of the darkness and bondage of Judaism into the marvellous light and glorious liberty of the children of God.

"I feel concerned for my family connexions and for my brethren generally, especially for those in my native country—Austria-Poland—for they have no Philip to say to them, 'We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph'; neither have they anyone to ask them when they open the Bible, 'Understandest thou what thou readest?' May the Lord help me by His grace to adorn my Christian profession, by 'showing forth the praises of Him Who hath called me out of darkness into His marvellous light.'"

'Having read the above statement, I then proposed to the candidate the usual questions, to which he rendered satisfactory replies.

'I then at once baptized him, and engaged in prayer; after which the Rev. John Hartley gave a most appropriate address, couched in sentiments as kind as they were truly Christian. The congregation then sang "The God of Abraham praise," and Mr. Hartley closed with prayer this very solemn and impressive service.

'The young man is very industrious, and God is blessing him in his honest toil; but though the day is fully occupied in business, and he lives at a considerable distance from me, he comes to me frequently still for further instruction in the Word of God, and to join in mutual prayer. He has already distributed a goodly number of tracts among his brethren, and has frequently testified to them his faith in the Messiahship of Jesus. May the Lord preserve him by His grace unto life eternal!'

Mr. Wilkinson's tireless zeal and buoyant courage was conspicuous in the fact that the acceptance he found among Christians did not prevent him doing "spade work" in breaking up fresh ground among the Jews. Too many Christian missionaries yield to the temptation to give most attention to those who are most sympathetic. It is true that John Wilkinson's vivacious temperament, well-stored mind, easy flow of conversation, and strong winsome face, were valuable assets in personal work among promiscuous Jews. Others may not possess these qualities, may not always be able to acquire them: but at least we may emulate that intensity of conviction and fidelity to his life-work that characterised this really great man.

I question if there is a Christian missionary or

worker among the Jews to-day who could not learn something from the methods of discussions with Jews adopted by John Wilkinson: and I therefore place here some diary notes of his, which record the making of new Jewish acquaintances in street or shop.

‘Another Jew, an intelligent and kind-hearted man, entered very freely into conversation with me on the subject of religion. He belongs to the Reform Synagogue; appeared to be extensively acquainted not only with the history of his own people, but also with that of the Christian Church; manifested a considerable acquaintance with the leading doctrines and discipline of the principal sections of the Christian Church; denounced the Roman Church as essentially persecuting and idolatrous; condemned, in unmeasured terms, the Puseyite and Tractarian movements in the Established Church; wondered how those friends of Rome had the conscience to take large sums of money paid to them for supporting a Church which they were most effectually pulling down, and regarded the pure principles of Protestantism as Scriptural, and likely to command the respect of every enlightened Jew. May the light of the Holy Spirit be afforded him to guide him into “the truth which maketh free!” He accepted a New Testament and promised to read it, though he had read portions of it a long time since. In another family, composed of a father and mother of advanced years, and one son and daughter about thirty years of age, I had formerly spoken earnestly and left tracts. The daughter alone was frivolous, and avowed her preference

for the theatre and the dance; but on my last call frivolity on religious matters was gone, her mother had been called into eternity, and the brother and sister both said they should be glad to see me any Saturday afternoon, as they were entirely free at that time.

‘On calling at another house I found it closed. It used to be occupied by a Jew of seventy and his daughter. Many conversations have been held with them at their fireside, where I was always welcome after the first or second visit. On inquiry I found the old man had passed away, having lost his reason before he died. I found the daughter living in another part of London, living in one of the houses of her late father, and conducting a small shop on her own account. My sympathy was gratefully accepted, and most gladly did I embrace the opportunity of directing her to the never-failing source of comfort and blessing. She promised to read carefully the New Testament, and expressed the pleasure it would afford her to see me again. May this bereavement be sanctified to the salvation of her soul! This cause impressed the Saviour’s words on my heart more deeply than ever, “Work while it is day.”

‘Another is the case of one of the most hardened, bigoted blasphemers, Jew or Gentile, I have ever met with. He stormed almost to rage the first interview we had; since then his prejudices have been greatly softened, and he now speaks to me and of me in terms of the greatest respect, and welcomes me to his house. On my last visit his wife and children received me as an old friend. The eldest son and his mother appeared

deeply affected as I endeavoured to bring home to the conscience the absolute necessity of an atonement for sin, assuring them that though the sacrifices under the Levitical economy furnished them with that atonement, yet those sacrifices typified another victim, "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"; and, "that Christ is the end of the law (the Ceremonial Law) for righteousness to everyone that believeth." After expounding the 53rd of Isaiah, to which they paid the most earnest attention, I urged them as they valued their souls to embrace that Saviour who loved them so much as to die for them, and through whose merits salvation in all its freeness and fulness is offered to them in the inspired Word. May God bless the word thus spoken in His name!

'At another shop the husband with whom I have usually conversed was not within, so his wife freely conversed with me. She said, in course of conversation, "I am honest, I don't lie, I don't steal, I say my prayers; what need I more?" "What!" I asked, "do you expect eternal life on these grounds? To go further, how is it you keep open shop on the Saturday?" "Ah," said she, "that the landlord must account for, as he would not allow us to remain if we kept his shop closed on the Saturday." "But then, you don't close on Sunday either, and, depend upon it, God will not allow us to excuse ourselves after that fashion on the great reckoning day." She said, "My husband says his prayers in the shop on the Sabbath, here is his book" (producing from a drawer a well-worn Hebrew prayer book), "and we have the

Mezuzah on every door in the house." I entreated her to seek in earnest prayer the clean heart and the right spirit for which David so earnestly prayed, then would she be able to exclaim with David, "Blessed be God, who hath not turned away my prayer nor His mercy from me."

'Another said, "I don't approve of your conduct at all in talking to the Jews as you do. You disturb the minds of many Jews not well grounded in their faith, by telling them that they cannot now practise the Jewish religion, that they are neither Jews nor Christians; so that many weak-minded Jews say, Well, it is true, we have not our Temple, we have not our Priesthood; and thus you persuade him away from his religion. I have no respect for you whatever."

'I replied, "My dear sir, if you cannot approve my work, my conscience and the Bible do; and I would rather lose the approbation of the whole world than lose an approving conscience and the smile of God. The real question is, Is that which we tell the Jew true in the main? and if so, why may the Jew not embrace it, because it is true, and not simply because Christians persuaded him? We tell you what your conscience confirms when we say—you are without the comfort of true religion in this world, and you have no well-founded hope of happiness in the next. We shall still labour and pray that you may be brought to enjoy those rich spiritual blessings we ourselves enjoy." Another Jew, who was much excited on my first entering his shop, soon calmed down and entered freely into con-

versation. He invited me into the house, and fetched downstairs a large family Bible, composed of the Old and New Testaments, and said, as he took it out of its cover, "You see, I am not a bigoted Jew." I observed, "I like to see God's Word used with care, but *used*; this does not appear to have been used at all; now let me present you with a New Testament, such as you can carry in your pocket and read at any time when you have a few minutes to spare." He readily accepted one, and promised to read it, assuring me at the same time I must not dream of making him a Christian; and he looked considerably relieved when I told him I professed no power whatever to do so, I left that work entirely to the Holy Ghost.

'Another Jew in good circumstances said, "I must say I like your straightforwardness, and I admire your zeal. I believe you to be prompted by the best motives; but it is a mistake altogether—you will never convert Jews to Christianity; those whom you do convert are all foreigners and starving, and then when they do come to die they send for the Rabbi, say the 'Shema,' and die Jews." I related some cases of undoubted conversion, to whom such motives as those he imputed to all could not apply; and he said, "Well, God forbid that I should judge falsely; perhaps some may have been sincere cases." He accepted tracts and said he should be glad to see me at any time.

'Besides visiting from house to house and shop to shop during the week, on Saturdays I have visited the neighbourhood of Whitechapel, between the time of

leaving the morning synagogue service and dinner time, taking with me a large number of tracts, and was very quickly surrounded by Jews and Jewesses anxious to get a tract. On the following Saturday I took a larger number, and was soon again besieged by a crowd. I gave tracts only to those who, according to my judgment, were likely to appreciate them. During the distribution I heard a voice asking, "What are they you are giving away?" On looking around I saw a policeman standing near, who had no doubt been trying to make it all out without inquiry; but as many of the tracts were in Hebrew and German, he was obliged to inquire. I replied, "Policeman, they are religious tracts, the object and tendency of which are to make bad men good; and just in proportion as the people observe what I say to them and the tracts teach, we shall break up your profession." The officer appeared pleased with the remark, and the English manner in which it was made; and only interfered by rendering me assistance in the distribution of my tracts. A medical student followed me from the crowd to have a conversation alone, and I thus had the opportunity of faithfully preaching the Gospel to him. He has since written to me and visited me.

'Wending my way round other streets, I came in contact with a bigoted, worldly-minded Jew, who imputed the most unworthy motives to all who seek to convert the Jews, asking, "How much do you get for every tract you give away? It is your business, your profession." "How unkind and unjust to make such a

remark, taking the ground from under a man's feet by unwarrantable assertions. One comfort is, that our record is on high, and that truth is not less truth because people will not believe. Suppose you were starving to death, and I were to bring you half a crown to get bread, would it not be unkind of you to insinuate that I got five shillings for myself for every half-crown I gave to another? And suppose I did, would that make the half-crown of less value to you on that account?" "Oh no," he said, "not at all." "Well then, the salvation of the Gospel I offer to you is not affected in the slightest degree, either in its importance or absolute necessity, by the motive or circumstances under which it may be presented to you. You are a sinner, you know it, and God knows it; and God says, The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

'He softened down considerably, but appeared to wish to avoid the point of my remarks; so on seeing another Jew coming along the street, he said to me, "Now here is a clever fellow coming, I will introduce you to him—he is a wicked fellow, if you can do him any good it will be well." On his approach I offered him a tract, and kindly asked his acceptance of it; he took it, held it in his hand, and looking steadily at me asked, "What does it mean?" I replied, "I am a man whose heart God has touched with a feeling of love to my fellow-men, and I have left my home to come into the streets to speak solemnly and affectionately on matters which relate to God, the soul, and eternity." He said, "I must admire your zeal, but I am an infidel."

‘I drew a little closer to him and said, “I am very grieved to hear you make such a statement,” and entered into a close and earnest conversation with him, during which I contrasted the state of heart and future prospects of the professed infidel, though a learned man, with the state of heart and future prospects of the poor carman who possesses a knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, and a Scriptural hope of everlasting life in heaven, though an unlettered man. He said, “You have read me my history for years past. My father was a Jew, my mother a Christian; I was brought up partly Jew, partly Gentile, but am neither a Jew nor Christian, and am spiritually wretched.” Finding him possessed of some knowledge of Hebrew, I quoted and expounded the 53rd of Isaiah. He looked at me in amazement; the language itself appeared to produce a magical effect, and the truth seemed to take hold of his heart. He asked, “Who are you? where do you come from? If Christian ministers would come and seek us out like this, there would be fewer infidels than there are.” I gave him my name and address, and he gave me his own, promising if I would write to him or visit him, he would go to any part of London to hear me preach. On parting he said with emotion, “Sir, I regard my meeting with you as an era in my existence, and thank God and you for this conversation.”’

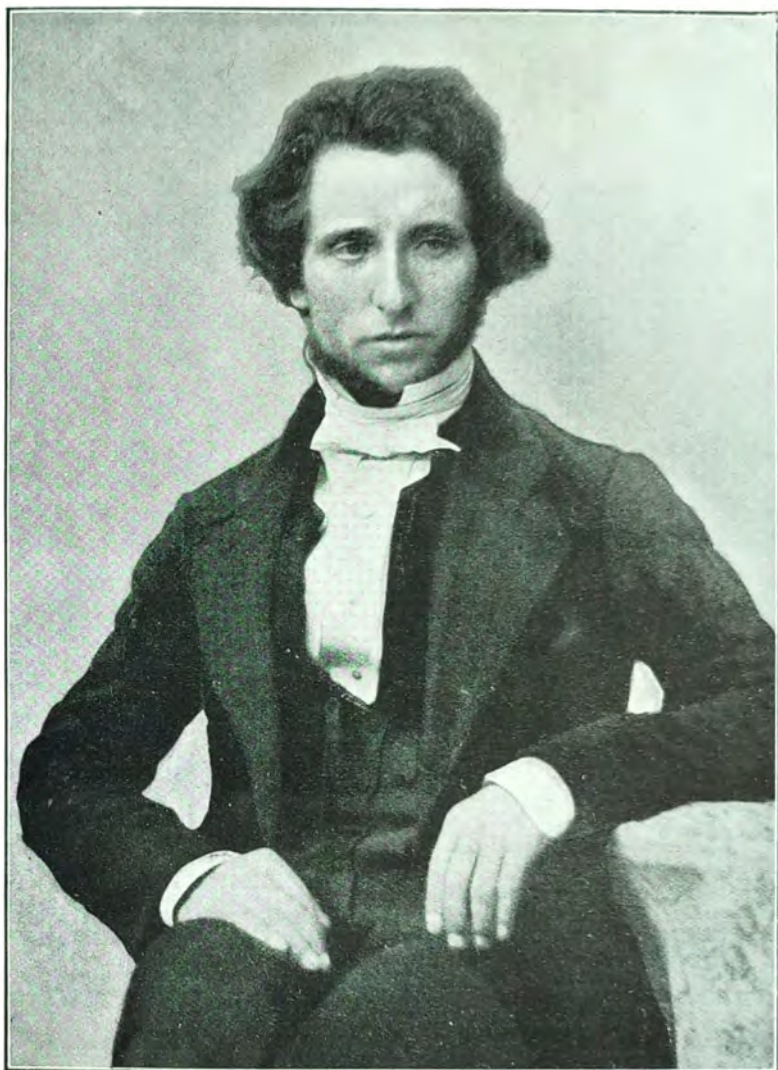
CHAPTER VIII

Eight Years of Toil

(1859-1867)

IT would obviously be out of place to record every detail of John Wilkinson's labours during the next eight years, seeing that they were of the character that has been already fully described. The first outstanding impression is the great number of places in the United Kingdom visited and the meetings held, evincing Mr. Wilkinson's great physical vitality and energy, tenacity of purpose, and untiring zeal. When we find him delivering twenty-six addresses in twenty-six days in nineteen different towns, we can understand that he could not give each audience fresh matter. But to have done so would not only have been unnecessary, it would have caused him to fail largely in his life's mission.

The insistence on one great but much neglected set of truths before ever-new gatherings of people led my dear father to intuitively memorise a great many admirable aphorisms and forms of expression, which he constantly repeated. So it came that, while he from his well stored mind had always something fresh to give, there was also much that had been given before, even in the same words. To this repetition my father attributed much of his success in presenting God's truth about Israel.



REV. JOHN WILKINSON

IN THE EARLY DAYS OF HIS MINISTRY.

"Sam," he once said to me, "you aim too much at giving fresh matter in your addresses; learn a lesson from your father: repeat, *repeat*, REPEAT, till the truth takes hold."

Mr. Wilkinson acquired another characteristic in these years of facing new congregations of people to present what was to them new and unpopular truth. No doubt this characteristic was natural to him, but it developed under the almost unique work which God had assigned him. I refer to his clear and sympathetic style of reasoning, always addressed *to*, never *at*, his audience, gaining at once their confidence and their mental assent. How many preachers and teachers systematically burke great and important questions for fear of being thought faddy; and how many others who have the courage to step off the beaten track, and declare their independent convictions, acquire the reputation of being faddists, because they lack the power to produce conviction in their hearers. No one has ever to my knowledge spoken of my father as a faddist or crank: the Jewish subject never so absorbed him as to narrow his sympathy with, or warp his judgement upon, a great variety of subjects. His mental range was wide, as all will testify who enjoyed his conversation; but the Jewish cause was his life-message. And as he fixed his eyes directly upon the eyes of the person he was addressing, or upon the faces of his public audience, he seldom failed to command their whole and undivided attention; or so to measure their cast of mind and attitude to Jewish truth as to carry them with him in his exposition of God's Word concerning Israel.

And here we light on another outstanding feature of John Wilkinson's long and unique ministry: his *forte* was exposition. Sometimes touching anecdote, often humour, very occasionally a word-picture or a flight of

rhetoric; but always his strongest line was the line of Scriptural argument.

And there is, again, another feature of his work, developed, if not gained, in the countless homes throughout the country, that he entered as guest in the course of his itinerations. Very often ministers or public men were invited to meet him; but not always have ministers the faculty, or even always the desire, of rescuing the conversation of the society in which they find themselves from unedifying jokes or personalities. My father studied the art of lifting the drawing-room or table talk to a higher level; and knew how, without monopolising the conversation, to make the house-party interested in the great questions of Israel's call and Israel's evangelization.

Having said so much, I must also add that my beloved father not only carried blessing into numerous home circles, but through these long years of indefatigable labour received much blessing from those whose guest he was. Here he, a man of humble origin and simple tastes, imbibed the influences of refinement and breeding, and learned how to retain the brightness of youth without losing the sense of the solemnity of life.

Each year of the eight from 1859 to 1867 was devoted partly to labour among Jews in London—by individual conversation in shop and street—and partly in travelling all over England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, the Isles of Man and Wight, preaching and lecturing, urging Christians to take interest in the salvation of Israel, and urging sinners to accept salvation in the Lord Jesus. About four months of each year were given to London, and the remaining eight months to travel. Mr. Wilkinson travelled thus about 10,000 miles a year, spoke in public sixteen to twenty hours a week, and

quite as much in private; he was received kindly by eight or ten evangelical denominations. In both departments—Jews and Christians—the work was laborious and unpopular, in some cases opposed by Christians; but it was felt to be a work dear to the heart of the Lord Jesus, and consequently the most blessed employment on the face of the earth.

It was not travelling in the interest of a Society, but rather in the interest of a cause under the auspices of a Society. Mr. Wilkinson's leading object was to arouse Scriptural interest in the Jews, by expounding the revealed purpose of God concerning them: leading Christians, by kindness, to discharge a debt of justice for wrongs inflicted on the Jews; to pay a debt of gratitude for priceless blessings received through the Jews; and to secure in the conversion of Jews the most religious and talented enemies of the Gospel as the most distinguished preachers and missionaries to the world. People were not pressed to give money; the cause, and not the voice, brought the pressure. Collections were in many cases very liberal, and donations and subscriptions followed; so that many thousands of pounds passed through Mr. Wilkinson's hands, as cheerful givers committed them to him "for Christ's sake." These sums he passed over to the headquarters of the British Society in London.

Here I pause to notice another feature of father's character. The handling of large sums of money in Christian and philanthropic enterprise sometimes leads, even among the best of people, to more or less carelessness in the keeping of accounts or in the carrying out of donors' wishes. Clearness and promptness, a fine sense of honour and stewardship, always marked Mr. Wilkinson's handling of money. All his diaried notes

and personal account books bear evidence of this. Made up years ago, they could be easily audited to-day. His periodical financial statements to his Society were as complete and lucid as his handwriting at that time was legible and bold.

Even then, the principle of spontaneous individual gift as prompted by the love of Jesus was taking hold. But Mr. Wilkinson had not yet seen that it was a more excellent way than that of collections and subscription lists. In one town a gentleman wrote as follows:

‘MR. WILKINSON, REVEREND SIR,—I am ashamed to say that the enclosed is the first pound I ever gave towards the spiritual life of the people to whom under God I owe the Book of Life. I am not rich, but believe it is given to One who returns unsought the good interest. I was a listener to your earnest words last night, and hope through coming days to be the possessor of *earnest feeling* towards the *man-degraded* but *God-honoured* Jew. Go on, go on, and may God speed the cause, is the prayer of a brother in Christian bonds.’

At the same place some three or four persons professed to trust in the Lord Jesus for salvation at an after meeting.

At the close of a meeting in Edinburgh a working man hastily left the building and returned almost breathless with five one pound Scotch notes.

“What name?” asked Mr. Wilkinson.

“No name,” the man replied—“it’s for the cause.”

In one small town in Cornwall a poor woman brought her little bag of pence, which contained the savings of a penny a week throughout the year. On the bag was written: “The Lord’s offering bag for the Jews; one

penny a week." In after years she made her penny three-halfpence a week, then twopence, then threepence, then fourpence, then fivepence, and the last time Mr. Wilkinson saw her she had twenty-six shillings in her bag—sixpence a week for the whole year, and living on parish relief!

First visits to places where no interest in the Jews existed often severely tried the missionary's faith; but blessing and encouragement from the Lord never failed.

At one town in Westmoreland, where a meeting was held, Mr. Wilkinson waited three quarters of an hour for an audience; then came in one old man of eighty years of age. After awhile two or three younger persons came, and the meeting was opened with a hymn and prayer. Mr. Wilkinson spoke for about an hour, and at the close there were ten persons present. He said, "We will have no collection; but if anyone would like to give a few pence as a freewill offering to the cause, they are free to do so." One girl gave two shillings and sixpence, another one shilling, in all about five or six shillings. Four nights after this, at another town, several hundreds attended, and £15 was given in one collection, besides a gold ring being put on the plate.

Thus in fair weather and foul, sowing beside all waters, neither over elated by success nor unduly depressed by apparent failure, the missionary plodded on. On 6th December 1862 the following entry stands in his diary:

'Thirty-eight years of age to-day. How rapidly the years roll away! O my God, help me to improve the time as it flies! I am Thine, Thy servant, Thy child; Thou art mine—my Lord, my Father, my Saviour. O blessed Lord Jesus, how sweet to work in Thy cause and Kingdom! Keep me near to Thee: help me to copy

Thine example: to keep Thy precepts: to breathe Thy spirit: to work for Thy glory: to resist temptation: to overcome the world; and make me perfect in that love which is the fulfilling of the law!’

During the following year, 1863 (6th July), Mr. Wilkinson addressed 1500 to 2000 people in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, the late C. H. Spurgeon being in the chair. His subject was, “The case of the Jew: is it hopeless or hopeful?” Mr. Spurgeon said, “If any man was ever sent by God to the Jews, surely our friend has been so sent, and we wish him God speed.” Before the Tabernacle was built, Mr. Wilkinson had preached for Mr. Spurgeon in the chapel in New Park Street. Mr. Spurgeon, it will be remembered, warmly commended my father’s work *Israel my Glory* towards the close of his life; and its chapter on the Passover gave him the subject-matter for one of his latest sermons, known as “The Shank-bone sermon.”

Another note in the journal of 1863 records an event of considerable importance to the writer of this volume. On the 26th of November, while preaching at Pembroke, Mr. Wilkinson received the telegram, “A fine boy last night. All well, thank God.”

The following remarkable case of Jewish conversion is from the diary of 1864. Mr. Wilkinson had many friends—life-long and intimate friends—in the town of Newark. On his arrival there to preach anniversary sermons, these friends informed him of a Jew of marked individuality, strong will, well versed in the Hebrew Bible and in Talmudical lore; indeed, a sort of typical Jew. Let me stand back for my father to complete the story in his inimitable way:

‘The friends also told me that this Jew had strongly

opposed, as unscriptural, the doctrine of the Trinity. He came; I saluted him in Hebrew with—"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One Jehovah."

'He said, "That is my creed!"

'I replied, "It is mine!"

"Then you are a Jew," said he.

"No, I am a Christian."

"But you believe in three Gods," said he.

"No, I believe in One only."

"But you believe in a Trinity."

"Yes, and so ought you, and so would you if you believed in the God of Israel as revealed in your Old Testament Scriptures."

'This led to hours of conversation at intervals on the Trinity, on the Deity of the Messiah, on the meaning of the Priesthood and sacrifices of the Mosaic law; and on the atoning sufferings of the Messiah as necessary to fulfil Scripture, and in order to render possible the salvation of sinners. He attended the services on Sunday and the meeting on Monday. We had a long walk and talk together on Monday morning. He came to see me on Tuesday morning before I left the town. We were just about to have family worship. We asked him if he had ever been present at family worship among Christians. "No," he replied. "Will you join us now?" He assented, only that he as a Jew must be permitted to stand, and not kneel, and that he must be allowed to cover his head with his skull-cap during prayer. We poured out our hearts to God in prayer for his conversion.

‘When we rose from our knees we found him betraying reluctantly great emotion. I grasped his hand and said, “I have got you in one eye, and another Jew in the other eye.”

“Who is the other?” he asked.

“Saul of Tarsus; and as long as my faith is strong in the reality of Saul’s conversion, I will never doubt the possibility of yours.”

‘He replied, “Impossible.”

“Not with God,” I said.

‘He indignantly replied, “If anyone should tell me that I should ever become a believer in the Nazarene, if it were not for courtesy’s sake I would spit in his face.”

“But you will not spit in mine, will you? even if you do, I will not return the compliment.”

‘He replied, “No, I will not, I believe you love the Jews; but you are a dangerous man on that account, and I will warn our people to keep clear of you.”

“And we will pray for you.”

‘Three or four of us in his presence took each other by the hand and pledged ourselves to each other, and in the presence of God, that we would daily pray for the conversion of this Jew. We separated. I returned to London. About three weeks after, on leaving my study, where I had been praying for him, I found on my breakfast table a letter from one of the Newark friends announcing the conversion of this Jew, and adding, “Glory be to God.” My heart also joined in praise to God.

‘He came to see me at several towns where I held

meetings, as at Lincoln, Grantham, and Boston, where he bore public testimony to his faith in Christ. I had him also for two or three days at my house in London, and publicly baptized him in Mildmay. Before his baptism he won a Jew for Christ, and it seemed that God was qualifying and preparing him for missionary work. I spoke to an excellent secretary on his behalf. The reply was, "No funds." My dear wife and I united in asking the Lord for £50 on his behalf, and I would send him to College until the Lord opened some sphere of service. A gentleman who had heard of this case called to see me, and, without my naming any sum, gave me a cheque for £50. We knelt and praised and prayed together. I took this as a token that I might send the Jew to College at once, and that God would supply all further need. The needs for College expenses, and for support of wife and two children, amounted in the course of two years to over £300. By voluntary offerings God sent in all, and, when I balanced accounts, I had seven or eight pounds over. Every penny of the balance I gladly gave to the husband in the interest of wife and children. He has ever since been a very able and useful missionary, and has won many Jewish and Gentile souls to Christ.'

In the diary of 1865 we find the following entries:

'*Sept. 13.* Married Maggie, my wife's sister, to Mr. Judson, of High Wycombe; and presided at their wedding breakfast at my own house. May the God of Israel shower blessings on the union.'

'Sept. 17. Attended the consecration of a private synagogue (Portuguese) at Spencer House, Essex Road : my little boy Henry taking part in the ceremony by holding a lighted candle and marching in procession.'

On 13th January 1866, Mr. Wilkinson, in the course of his unceasing travels, left London again for the south-west of England.

Thus stands the entry for that date :

'Left Paddington at 10 a.m., joined the 11.45 express at Swindon, due at Falmouth 10.45 p.m. In consequence of rain and a rapid thaw after the recent heavy fall of snow, the railway and fields were greatly flooded, especially below Bridgewater. Half a mile below Collumpton, the line was washed away. People ran up the line to the station, had danger signals hoisted a few minutes before our express train arrived, and our engine-driver succeeded in bringing the train to a stand—for a minute or two more and the train, which was going rapidly down a decline, would have been derailed. Thus God has "compassed us about with songs of deliverance." After waiting an hour we returned to Taunton. The town was flooded, and I could not get to the house of my friend, the Rev. S. Wilkinson; so went on to an hotel and ultimately found my way to Christian friends, and spent a quiet, thankful, and happy Sabbath. Left Taunton on Monday morning at 8.19 a.m. The damage below Collumpton had been repaired by a single line. The greatest danger, however, was within a mile of Exeter; here the line had been completely washed away, and we had to change and cross by planks.

Telegraph posts and wires were blown down in all directions, so that I could send no message up to London or down to Falmouth till I reached Truro, within half an hour's ride of Falmouth; but I arrived hours before the telegram was delivered. I found the friends in great anxiety, and the number at the meeting lessened by the uncertainty.'

In 1867, Mr. Yonge, secretary of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, passed away. Mr. Wilkinson had had much and close contact with him from the day of his acceptance as a candidate for missionary training, deeply respected him, and felt his loss greatly. On 16th August 1867 he writes:

'This morning I ran up from Deal to pay a last tribute of respect to dear Mr. Yonge's character and work, both as a devoted Christian and as the efficient and highly valued secretary of the British Jews' Society. He was interred to-day at one o'clock in the Kensal Green Cemetery. Present among others, T. Chambers, M.P.; Dr. Schulhof; Revs. Dr. Schwartz, Dr. Koppel, Dr. Ginsburg, Dr. Weir, John Gill, J. Wiplich, A. Matthews, Furst, Tucker, etc. etc.'

The closing weeks of 1867 were spent in busy ministry in Ireland. Dublin, Sligo, Drogheda, Belfast, Kingstown, Wicklow, Tullamore, Roscrea, Cork, and Athlone were visited, and many more friends won for Israel's cause. The graphic note under 13th December is as follows:

'Arrived about 8 p.m. in Cork, when half a dozen

carmen, like so many dogs, scrambled for my luggage and quarrelled fearfully.'

The early days of 1868 were given to Torquay, Kingsbridge, Plymouth, and other towns in the south-west. But now we come to a pause in the toil, through a longer journey than any heretofore.

CHAPTER IX

Palestine

(1868)

PALESTINE and the East now lie within the track of the holiday seeker and tourist. Thousands go every year. Descriptive accounts have become common — almost commonplace. But special circumstances, or the visit of some special personality, will still invest the story of travel in Palestine with all its original charm. Mr. Wilkinson's story is of that character. Firstly, his unique ministry on Israel's behalf makes his observations on the land of Israel of exceptional interest; secondly, he travelled with the first conducted party of tourists that (so far as we know) ever left this country for an Eastern tour. The world-famed tourist agency of Cook's was unborn. Mr. Henry Gaze of Southampton first conceived and carried out the idea of such a journey. The party left London in February 1868, and travelling *via* Paris crossed the Mont Cenis Pass to Switzerland and Italy, and sailed from Brindisi to Alexandria. Cairo and the Pyramids, Memphis and Suez, having been visited, they took boat to Jaffa. There was no Jerusalem-Jaffa railroad then; there were no carriage roads even, no European hotels, no carriages or other conveniences for travellers. Nevertheless the programme of places was as comprehensive

as in most modern tours. But we must not anticipate the story.

The party consisted of eleven gentlemen: Mr. Henry Gaze of Southampton, conductor; Rev. Mr. Sykes, M.A., of Headingley, near Leeds; — Andrews, Esq., London, — Greeves, Esq., London; Jas. Sutcliffe, Esq., Bacup; Jas. Wood, Esq., B.A., Southport (afterwards Mayor of Southport); James Omerod, Esq., Rochdale; Thomas Barlow, Esq., B.Sc., Bolton (now Sir Thomas Barlow, Physician to the King); Mr. John Ashworth, Rochdale; Mr. Smith, Heywood; Rev. John Wilkinson.

The following notes are from Mr. Wilkinson's diary of travel:

'February 5th, 1868. Left Ludgate Hill station at 7.30 a.m. this morning by the London, Chatham, and Dover line; had about one and a half hours on the sea, and was terribly sick, though the sea was not more than ordinarily rough. . . . We had refreshment at the Calais station, and created considerable amusement in making ourselves understood, one of our party insisting that everyone must necessarily be stupid who would not speak English.

'Friday, February 7th. The drizzling rain of yesterday passed away, and this morning opened in sunny splendour, which continued throughout the day as we journeyed from Paris to Maçon, 275 miles. . . .

'Saturday, 8th. Out of bed about 4.30 a.m.; a substantial breakfast, and off to the station. Maçon to Caloz, a distance of $73\frac{1}{2}$ miles; thence to St. Michel, another $73\frac{1}{2}$ miles, where we arrived about 2 o'clock, and prepared to leave by diligence about 3.40 for Susa, across Mont Cenis.

Having had our portmanteaux packed on the back part of our diligence, we took our places, some in the body of the conveyance, two or three others in the coupé with glass in front, and Mr. Sutcliffe, Mr. Wood, and I in the upper covered part behind the driver, the guard comfortably ensconcing himself in a corner by our side, packing himself snugly in furs and skins, with an air cushion and a pipe for his especial comfort. Three diligences, each with seven horses, started at the same time, and presented an imposing appearance.

‘We wound our way amongst mountains piled on mountains, covered with deep snow, which brought out into bold relief scenes of indescribable grandeur, under the soft and mellow light of a full moon. Tons of ice hanging gracefully over projecting rocks, presented a singularly beautiful appearance. Arriving at Lans le Bourg, the scene changed. Travellers and baggage must all be turned out and take to sledges and mules. We formed a picturesque group of five sledges in single file, each being drawn by one horse and five mules. The cold was so intense that some of us were glad to walk up rising ground; but as we descended the mountains we travelled at a fearful speed, but, by God’s blessing, in perfect safety. On arriving at a village a few miles from Susa, we again entered diligences, and arrived at Susa in safety about 4 a.m., and, after examination of luggage, at Turin at 7 a.m. on Sunday morning. We all regretted having to travel on any part of the Lord’s day, but we could not avoid it. . . . After rest and retirement we met at dinner at 4 o’clock, and had an

English service in one of our bedrooms at 7. . . . It is a matter of no small gratification that the gentlemen composing our party, though belonging to different denominations, are of one mind as to the propriety of regularly giving thanks at our meals, and observing family worship in the evening, when we have singing, reading, and prayer.'

From Turin, after a brief stay, the party travelled to Bologna, Ancona, and thence to Brindisi, whence they took ship to Alexandria. Very graphic and interesting notes were made on all these places, as well as on the sea passage. The next diary extract reproduced here describes the visit to the Pyramids from Cairo:

'*Saturday, February 22nd.* The picture of the party on donkeys was amusing; the donkeys ran very much where they liked, and, of course, occasionally too close to each other for the comfort of the rider. Several of us were thrown during the day, but no one hurt. On arriving at the Ghizeh Pyramids, the Sheikh, and nearly the entire village of men and boys, came out to offer their services, sell old coins, and worry for baksheesh. Four shillings each was paid to the Sheikh for the services of his people; the noise increased as we began to ascend, each one attended by three men, one pulling at each hand and one pushing from behind. The sun was intensely hot, and the strides of from 4 to 5 feet high made the ascent for short legs a very fatiguing one. A boy with a jar of water attended each gentleman, and wanted baksheesh each time he gave a drink.

'The men, to encourage us in the ascent, kept on saying,

"Good gentleman! Hurrah! Jack and Jill went up the hill," etc. I feared several times I must give it up, but on I went and succeeded. Mr. Sykes was the only one who turned back. On reaching the top we had a splendid view of the country for many miles distant. Some of us, like other foolish people, left our initials on the top, cut in the stone. On the summit we sang "Jesus shall reign," and "God save the Queen." The one we ascended was the Cheops, 32 feet square at the top, and is said to have taken 366,000 men twenty years to build.

'As we descended, the men kept on praising themselves as the best men, but I told them I would not give them a farthing till we got down. I went inside, but was almost suffocated with the dust and want of air, and was obliged to return. Then we had quite a scene; a regular yelling for baksheesh, which we could scarcely pacify, even though we ultimately gave each man about 6s., besides the 4s. which had already been paid. . . . We took our lunch under palm trees, and enjoyed the quiet shade and refreshment. . . . We rode off . . . miles of sand on one side of us, and on the other side vegetation by the overflowings of the Nile, passing also water-melon plantations and the thick broad-leaved tobacco plant.

'It was now 5 o'clock; we were several of us too tired to ride much farther, and walk we could not. We crawled along somehow or other, leading our donkeys, for four or five miles, calling at a little hamlet by the way-side for a drop of water, which we gladly drank from a filthy jar, the children, even big girls, being almost naked from head to foot. About 7 o'clock we reached a dirty

village, where about a hundred dogs greeted us with incessant barking, from the street, from the doorways, and from the housetops. Here we engaged two or three boatmen to take us down the Nile as far as old Cairo, about ten miles distant. On we walked through thousands of palm trees in the dark to the riverside; in a few minutes we were on board, donkeys and all. I threw myself down in the bottom of the boat, heedless of dirt or anything else. Several others followed my example. We covered ourselves with coats and rugs as well as we could, for the night was cold. . . . We ran aground two or three times, but ultimately reached old Cairo about 10.30 p.m.

We had now to remount our donkeys and ride three or four miles to our hotel. I had scarcely been lifted on my donkey, when I fell off with a crash and hurt my elbow. After this Tadros (the guide) kept close by my side and led the donkey till we reached the hotel, when Mr. Gaze and I had to be lifted off bodily and assisted into the house, and, after a cup of tea, assisted upstairs. I stayed indoors all Sunday, too tired and stiff to move out. This prevented my going to see Miss Whateley's school and visiting the Jews, which I had so earnestly desired. Spent the day in reading the Scriptures and prayer, in writing to my dear wife, and in the evening expounded the 11th chapter to the Romans, after which Mr. Wood informed me that he must become a subscriber to the Jewish cause. . . .

'On arriving at Suez . . . we saw the working in the construction of the Suez Canal. Some say it is a piece

of gigantic folly, and can never succeed ; others, that it must succeed, and will be one of the wonders of this age. We engaged a boat at once to go out on the Red Sea. Whilst in the water a boat four times as large as our own ran into our side, and we were amazed that we were not capsized. The side of our boat was somewhat broken, but by God's merciful care we were preserved from all harm beyond a little fright. We saw distinctly the two ranges of mountains which are supposed to have shut in Israel when the Egyptian hosts pursued them, and the waters were divided for their deliverance. Our minds were deeply impressed, as we seemed just in the presence of the miraculous. . . .

'Friday, February 28th. We arrived off Jaffa, and anchored about a mile from the shore. Immediately a number of boats, manned by wild Arabs, came out to meet us : the waves dashed them one against another. Bargains had to be made with these while they were shouting and yelling at each other, tumbling over each other's boats : a scene beyond description. At length terms were made, and gentlemen and luggage were literally tumbled off the steamer's side into the boat deep down below. I threw my things down pell-mell and jumped down, and was caught by two Arabs, whose strong arms I needed to support me. . . . The men now quietly set off, singing an Arab monotone, and dashed smartly on the crest of a large wave through a narrow passage between high rocks, and safely brought us to land. . . . An officer demanded our passports. Having shown him mine, he said to me, " Give me money." I gave him an

earnest look, but not a penny. . . . We walked along the main street of Jaffa to the outskirts of the town, where, on elevated ground belonging to the Vice-Consul, Mr. Kyatt, we pitched our tents for the night, and had our first experience of tent life. . . . Whilst dinner was preparing, we went off to see the house of Simon the Tanner, where Peter had lodged, and went on the top of the house where he had his remarkable vision. We climbed to the roof by steps inside the house. . . .

‘On Saturday morning, the 29th February, Mr. Kyatt took Mr. Wood and me into the synagogue which adjoined his house. The Jews had much less of order and reverence in their service than may be observed in England. We had not time to say much, as we were about starting for Jerusalem. Horses were rapidly selected, and I took one left by all, a most vicious beast. I was afraid he would throw me the first few minutes, and so I believe he would. Mr. Kyatt came on the scene to see us off, and I named the case to him. He saw to it at once, and the dragoman found me another, a quiet and safe, though not a very fast one. . . . About half-past nine o’clock we mounted our prancing steeds . . . and soon began our experience of Palestine roads: mud knee-deep for a considerable distance, after a three weeks’ rain. We halted beyond Ramleh, the ancient Arimathea, and had lunch under a shady tree near a Mohammedan burial-ground, the mountains of Ephraim before us. We had observed Lydda in the foreground on our left, and after a glorious sunset—one blaze of glory—we erected our tents for the night at Bab-el-

Wady, the entrance to a deep mountain gorge. Some wished to go on in the morning to Jerusalem; but we ultimately decided that whenever we had the entire control over our travelling, we would rest on the Sunday. God had so graciously prospered our way that we felt it would be ungrateful on our part not to rest and worship Him; and indeed some of us cherished a wholesome fear lest His blessing might be withdrawn. It cost us each £1 extra to stay, and we paid it.

'Sunday, March 1st, 1868. Holy service morning and evening. I expounded the 129th Psalm, and read the 121st and 122nd; Mr. Ashworth spoke in the evening from "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Our first Sunday in the Holy Land, spent among the quiet hills, was a happy Sabbath to us all, and we continued our journey with refreshed body and spirit.

'Monday, March 2nd. We struck our tents and marched on towards the Holy City. . . . We soon came on to Kuryet-el-Enab, or the ancient Kirjath-jearim, a substantial stone-built village on the hillside, on which rested the ark in the house of Abinadab twenty years, and from which David fetched it to Jerusalem. . . . We passed on to Kolonieh, and had our lunch under the shady olive trees close by. The little village of flat-roofed cottages is surrounded with terraced orchards and vineyards, the hill-tops rising high above them, and the dark belts of olives almost filling the deep glens below. Two or three patriarchal Jews and some youths, each with the Polish Jews' sidelocks hanging down the sides

of the face, were sitting under olive trees on the opposite side of the road. They had come out from Jerusalem to welcome to the Holy City a learned Rabbi from Russia. I had a little conversation with them. My expressions of love to Israel and my quotations and remarks on the 1st and 2nd Psalms were kindly received, till I began to quote the 53rd chapter of Isaiah; and then a shadow came over the old man's face, and the subject seemed as unwelcome as the doctrine of the Messiah's second coming is to many Christians.

' . . . Arrived before the Holy City, we found our tents already pitched on the north-west side, near to the large and magnificent Russian establishment . . . and on the ground on which the Assyrians encamped, and also the Roman armies under Titus, and near to which many believe was the site of Calvary. On first gazing upon the Holy City, a crowd of hallowed associations so filled the mind and impressed the heart that I could not refrain from weeping, and had to hastily rush behind my tent to give vent to my pent-up feelings in a loud sob, which was a positive relief. . . . We then ran down to the Holy Sepulchre, and hastily passed through the Latin, Greek, Armenian, Copt, and Chaldean parts. A great number of Russian pilgrims were there, who had come to spend Easter in Jerusalem. These pilgrims were engaged in the most idolatrous devotion—kissing pictures and crossing themselves. I retired to a corner of the building and offered silent prayer that the times of the Gentiles might soon close, and the

Saviour come again and purge out all these abominations practised in His Name. . . .

‘ . . . Our first night in Jerusalem was very bright. . . . The dogs barked and howled fearfully all night. I again and again left my tent to throw stones at them, which dispersed them only for a few minutes.

‘The next morning we were early astir, rode round by the Damascus gate, across the valley of Jehoshaphat, to the Church of the Ascension on Mount Olivet. . . . We then descended and entered the garden of Gethsemane. Eight old olive trees still stand in the garden. . . . Having taken flowers given us by the old monk in charge, we went down the valley to Absalom’s pillar, and each threw a stone, as do the Jews, into the hole in the upper part, to show contempt for filial disobedience. We then passed along the rugged valley to the fount of the Virgin, having the village of Siloah on our left; then on to the pool of Siloam, in which a man was enjoying the luxury of a bath, which he seemed to need. The morning was warm, and we envied him. We returned by the Tyropean valley, leaving the well of Joab at the junction of the valley of Jehoshaphat and Hinnom; then climbed to Mount Zion on the right by a steep winding and stony road, very difficult for our horses to ascend. We passed the Zion Gate, the Armenian burial-ground outside the gate, the Tomb of David, House of Caiaphas, and the “Upper Room.” Passing the south-west corner of the walls, and leaving the valley of Gihon, with its lower and upper pools, on our left, and the windmill and almshouses of Sir Moses

Montefiore, we returned by the Jaffa Gate to our tents for lunch.

' . . . We then passed on to the wailing place, and found one Jew from Austria plaintively reading his prayer-book. We spoke a few kind words to him as to the hope of Israel, which he took kindly. I kissed those stones, and offered silent prayer that the God of Israel would speedily appoint unto them that mourn in Zion—beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Some letters were in the niches between the stones, placed there by superstitious sons of Israel, and addressed to heaven on their behalf. Some of our party took them, but I felt I should respect the feelings of those who placed them there by leaving them untouched.

'Jericho and the Jordan. The mountains in some places seem to have been rent to their foundations by violent convulsions of nature, especially in the Wady-el-Kelt, whose deep gorges are accessible to none but eagles. . . . We reached our tents, having passed through the valley of Achor and the brook Cherith, and found ourselves encamped by ancient Jericho. The whole plain before us is well watered, and the shrubbery and jungle favour the hyena, the jackal, and the wild boar. We hastened off to bathe and to drink at the fountain of Elisha, and found it the sweetest water we had tasted in Palestine. . . . We fired pistols at night, and kept a light in our tents the night through; but though in a dangerous part, we were mercifully preserved unmolested, except for the jackal who obtruded

upon our slumbers by poking his nose under our tent. . . . We passed through beautiful foliage, and the birds were singing sweetly as we wended our way to the Jordan, and wondered not that Lot should have preferred this part of the country, though disapproving of his selfishness when treating with his generous uncle Abraham.

'The Jordan. Two or three bathed, but with great difficulty; for the heavy rains had swollen the river, and its waters were muddy and rapid, the banks also were deep mud. . . . I washed my hands and face in the sacred stream, and gathered a few twigs of the tamarisk.

'. . . We had lunch on the shores of the Dead Sea, and some bathed in its clear, buoyant but oily waters. . . . The mountains of Moab seemed to tower into the very sky. I tasted the water, and found it exceedingly bitter. . . . We now departed for Mar Saba, passing along mountain sides and deep glens, over most difficult and dangerous roads. We climbed one mountain side where we passed over a large piece of stone on the steep incline, and smooth almost as glass. My horse fell on his side, and I fell on the stone but was not hurt. In some parts we literally climbed stone stairs on the mountain side. We saw several clusters of Bedouin tents in the near and remote distance, but we were never molested. We met a small party of Americans, with two ladies, accompanied by the Sheikh himself, the father of our protector. We were delighted to see the ladies, and as we doffed our hats to them, I told them

how much the sight of a lady refreshed our eyes. They smiled approval of the sentiment and passed along. . . . About sunset we arrived amid the wild and magnificent scenery of Mar Saba. . . . The next day we visited the wonderful convent constructed in the solid rock ; saw valuable and gorgeous pictures from Russia ; the chapel, chapter house, and caves ; the tomb of St. Sabas ; heads of martyred saints ; the cells once occupied by John of Damascus, and Cyril, the biographer of Sabas ; and the rude grotto in which the saint spent many years of his life. It is the property of the Greek Church, and was founded by Sabas, who was born in 439 A.D.

'Bethlehem. We had pretty comfortable quarters in the convent, and every attention. . . . We were shown the Birthplace, the Manger, and St. Jerome's study and garden. . . . Bethlehem is beautifully situated, and is surrounded by mountains on whose slopes are terraces almost innumerable, of fig, olive, and vine, which constitute it one of the prettiest spots in all Palestine. . . . What wonderful interest attaches to Bethlehem ! Here Jacob buried Rachel. From this place Naomi, with her husband and two sons, fled, because of famine, to Moab, and having buried her husband and sons, returned again, bringing with her Ruth, her daughter-in-law, who becomes the great-grandmother of David. Here David and David's Lord were born.

'Sunday in Jerusalem. We most of us attended Christ Church on Mount Zion. Dr. Barclay read the liturgy, the Bishop and Mr. Fraenkel assisting. Then Mr. Fraenkel preached a most evangelical and effective

sermon from the words, "Sir, we would see Jesus," blending very nicely the first and second comings of our Lord. A collection was made on behalf of the Enquirers' Home. Three of our friends gave £5 each, and others gold, so that a good collection was made. After the morning service I presented my letters of introduction to the Bishop.

'Tuesday morning, March 10th. I felt much better this morning (from slight sunstroke and diarrhoea), and received in my bedroom at the hotel about forty deserving poor Jews, and gave £4 amongst them, and several copies of the 53rd chapter of Isaiah in Hebrew. They were very grateful. They took off their shoes at my bedroom door, seemed impressed with my expressions of love for their race, and kissed my hand with expressions of blessing on me and the gentleman who had kindly sent this aid for his Saviour's sake.

'I visited the Home of Industry, and found seven or eight Jews and three or four Arabs at work. I bought several olive-wood articles, and walked a little along the streets of the Holy City; saddened by its dirt and desolation and poverty, hoping for the speedy arrival of the day when the city shall be called *Jehovah Shammah*, The Lord is there.'

The journey up country followed, including Bethel, Shiloh, Shechem, Samaria, the Plain of Esdraelon (Megiddo), Nazareth, Tiberias, Cana of Galilee, Bethsaida, Capernaum, thence to the source of the Jordan, Cæsarea Philippi, Hermon, Damascus, and Beyrout, where the party left the Holy Land.

The home journey included Cyprus, Rhodes, Smyrna, the Piræus, Athens, Constantinople, Varna, Rustschuk, *via* the Danube to Vienna.

This comprehensive tour, completed within three months and extending over 7000 miles, was most successful, and set on foot similar undertakings. Mr. Wilkinson was never tired of reciting his experiences to friends, and in stirring them thereby to prayerful interest in the people, which, like the land, is desolate and neglected.

CHAPTER X

Another Seven Years of Toil

(1868-1875)

HARDLY is Mr. Wilkinson back from Palestine than we find him in harness again, travelling, visiting among Jews and Christians, preaching, lecturing, commending, rebuking, to further the interests of that great, all-important cause of which God had surely made him an apostle. We find that in the first twelve months after his return from the East, that is, from May 1868 to 31st March 1869, he visited 80 towns and cities in the provinces, about 20 districts of London and suburbs, delivered about 188 sermons and addresses, which were instrumental in gathering £870 for the work of his society. Beyond this sum we find gifts and promises amounting to about £1000 had been made him in respect of a Home and Orphanage which the Society contemplated founding.

As to "commending and rebuking," the following diary note is of interest :

'May 16, 1869. Heard Mr. Greeves in the morning and Mr. G. S. Rowe in the evening. The latter prayed for the Jews, but not the former. I commended the one and rebuked the other.'

His rebukes were always kind and tactful, and, we may believe, generally effective, as a reminder of the position the Covenant people occupy still in the heart of God.

The Society opened its Home and Orphanage in 1870. Mr. Wilkinson reports its opening in his personal diary with evident delight, and goes on with his persistent and laborious efforts. In the spring of 1871 we find that he had behind him twelve months of work comprising 185 sermons or addresses, 86 towns and cities in the provinces visited, 16 places in or about London, and about £1000 gathered in for the Society. The next year this was exceeded. From spring 1871 to spring 1872, Mr. Wilkinson delivered 205 sermons and addresses, visited 90 cities and towns in the country, and 16 places in or near London, travelled 9500 miles, and gathered in over £1000 again for the Society.

Amid these strenuous labours he found time to form many sweet and hallowed friendships, by which God was to minister to him in coming days of test and trial. We are disposed to think that, praying man as our dear father always was, these sacred ties of holy fellowship with some of God's choicest saints in the world was a necessary counterbalance to the pushful denominational Christian circles into which he was so much thrown. Prominent among these kindred spirits was the beloved William Pennefather—a near neighbour of Mr. Wilkinson—Vicar of St. Jude's, Mildmay Park, and founder of the Mildmay Conferences and Institutions.

The following letters illustrate the fellowship enjoyed :

‘ 68 MILD MAY PARK, *April* 11, 1869.

‘MY DEAR FRIEND,—The Lord has been mindful of us, and has blessed us in preserving to you and to His Church on earth your beloved wife. I was rejoiced to hear of her safety ; and though the baby lives not, it is an unspeakable mercy that *her* life is spared. I find I must ask you to postpone your meeting with Lord

Farnham until after his return from Norfolk—and your return from your next tour of meetings and sermons.

‘Let me know when you come back. It is always a great pleasure to me to have a little converse with you over the Word of God. . . . Give our love to your dear wife; and tell her we shall, by God’s help, bear her up by prayer. The Lord delights to hear the cry of His children. “Ask, and it shall be given you.” There is no doubt about it. Lord, increase our faith.—Ever affectionately yours,

WILLIAM PENNEFATHER.’

‘FARM ELMS, RICHMOND, S.W.,
June 24, 1869.

‘MY DEAR FRIEND,—A few persons will, please God, assemble at this house on Tuesday, the 6th of July, for special prayer—from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. There will be intervals for refreshment and for rest. London, and the mission field at home and abroad, will specially be brought before the Lord. May I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you amongst us?—Your affectionate brother in Christ.

WILLIAM PENNEFATHER.’

It was Mr. Pennefather who introduced his friend John Wilkinson to Lord Cavan, commencing a close friendship of many years between that Christian nobleman and his house and Mr. Wilkinson.

‘MY DEAR LORD CAVAN,—May I introduce to you dear Mr. Wilkinson, of the British Society for Evangelizing the Jews. He is a truly devoted servant of Christ . . . and a very intelligent Christian . . .—Believe me to remain, Ever yours most sincerely and obliged,

‘WILLIAM PENNEFATHER.’

Another of John Wilkinson's staunch friends was Gheyne Brady, the Continental evangelist and tract writer.

'11 HOLLES ST., CAVENDISH SQUARE,
October 30th, 1868.

'MY DEAR SIR,—Many, many thanks for the soul-stirring address the Lord enabled you to give us yesterday.

'The truths you brought forward from the Word of God respecting His ancient people Israel moved my soul to its inmost depths. Oh that I could carry the glorious Gospel to the Jews! But surely it needs power and full acquaintance with the Scriptures and a gift of reasoning ability, and also a knowledge of Hebrew, to enable anyone to deal with the Bible-reading Jew, with the learned Israelite.

'Where can I learn more about the work among the Jews? When can I witness the baptism of a Jew? What a sight! Does he give up the old name and take a Christian name? Are there any publications explaining more fully the truth of the God of Israel respecting His purposes towards the Jews?

'Excuse all this.

'The Lord bless the people Israel. May peace be upon Jerusalem. May Jehovah prosper the efforts of your Society, and your own labours, and those of your co-workers.

'Please apply the enclosed directly to the carrying of the Gospel to the Jews.—Yours sincerely in a full Christ.

CHEYNE BRADY.

'A Gentile sinner, saved by grace.'

Other close spiritual friendships formed about this period were with J. Denham Smith, Major Malan, and Stevenson Blackwood (afterward Sir Arthur Blackwood). To George Müller and Hudson Taylor we shall come later.

If anything could tear our dear father away from his absorbing and arduous labours, it was his native village. To the very end his love for the sweet spot was touching. A long diary note in August 1872 records a holiday visit paid to it with his two younger sons, John and Samuel.

‘Drove over to Tealby in the afternoon to see if we could find a congregation in the street, as it was the Feast Sunday; but all was quiet. . . . The village where I was born, and born again, possesses an undying interest.’

John Wilkinson laid no claim to poetic ability, though he wrote some very sweet hymns on the Jewish subject in his later life. This effusion, however, was evidently written early in life, and we may pardon its poetic shortcomings for the tender affection it expresses.

‘MY NATIVE VILLAGE

‘My village home	While o’er the stiles,
I love to roam,	Along for miles,
The place that gave me birth;	I quietly enjoy thee.
Its beauty fair	‘The cuckoo’s song,
The like is rare	Heard all day long,
In all this lovely earth.	Reminded me of spring.
‘My childhood days,	The thrush and lark,
My boyish ways,	From light till dark,
Thou bringest all before me;	Ceased not their song to sing.’

About this time Mr. Wilkinson's mind became impressed with the necessity of a small Home for Aged Christian Israelites. He appears to have written to the Rev. Dr. Stern of the London Jews' Society (the Abyssinian prisoner), to inquire whether such a Home was in existence or contemplation, and received the reply, "We sadly need one, but I feel that an appeal for such an object would not meet with a liberal response."

The story of this, the first institution John Wilkinson founded, is of interest. Paul Matthias, an aged proselyte, wretchedly poor, frequently called upon Mr. Wilkinson at 79 Mildmay Road, begging, when he could not sell his little stock of pens and pencils. Then poor Philipson, another proselyte, was thrown on the compassion of the Jewish missionary, who helped him with rent and other things.

Thus the thought entered his mind—could not, and ought not, something permanent be done for the poor old folks?

In July 1872 he put Matthias into an almshouse in Balls Pond Road, Dalston, paying 5s. 6d. a week for his rent and coals for two and a half years. Philipson was got into unoccupied houses rent free, and a Mr. Cunliffe, a banker, gave the old man, through Mr. Wilkinson, a pound a month. With these two on his hands, and praying for guidance, a Home for Aged Christian Israelites suggested itself.

Mr. Wilkinson had already asked his committee for £5 to furnish Matthias's room, and the answer was, "No funds for such a purpose." He then asked for bed and blankets from the Society's Home, as its furniture was about to be sold off and the Home broken up. The answer was, "Yes, if you will make yourself personally responsible for their value."

Somewhat baffled, Mr. Wilkinson asked God to help him, and to send him the needed funds.

In November 1872, Mr. Wilkinson drew out a circular and read it in MS. to his neighbour and friend, the Rev. William Pennefather. The two men prayed together over it, and Mr. Pennefather rose from his knees to write the first cheque for the purchase of a cottage. Thereafter Mr. Wilkinson mentioned the matter freely at meetings, and received as freewill, unsolicited offerings a sufficient sum to purchase and furnish. "The money," he states as a note in the account-book of the Home, "came in chiefly from Christians outside the Society's supporters, and was considered a separate and special matter."

The Society gave Mr. Wilkinson no encouragement, nor would they at first take the matter up. When the house (No. 34 Ferntower Road, Newington Green) was about to be purchased and furnished, and the first inmates installed, the committee demanded the absolute control of the money. This Mr. Wilkinson did not feel disposed to grant; but he offered them joint control with himself. This was accepted. Mr. Wilkinson subsequently offered the property to the Society, and signed a document that it belonged to the committee, with the only condition that the property must be devoted to the purpose for which it was given. Mr. Wilkinson remained the Honorary Superintendent till July 1876, when, after his severance from the Society, he relinquished it altogether to them.¹

¹ I feel great hesitation in introducing into my father's life story details that may be considered derogatory to the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, which, with a staff entirely different from that with which my father had to do, is pursuing an excellent work with excellent men. But these passages are necessary, not only to the completeness of the story, but to a

In 1875, while still with the British Society, Mr. Wilkinson received the following letter from the secretary :

‘LONDON, *October 22nd*, 1875.

‘MY DEAR SIR,—I presented the quarterly statement of the Aged Christian Home to the committee at their recent meeting, and they desire to express to you their gratification at the prosperous condition of the finances of the institution.—Yours very truly,

‘JOSIAH MILLER, *Secretary*.

‘The Rev. John Wilkinson.’

The parting with the Home which he had founded caused Mr. Wilkinson considerable pain, as will be seen by the following notes, which we find in the account-book of the Home, every entry of which, from November 1872 to July 1876, is in his own hand :

‘This Home which I was led to found for the Lord’s sake, and which I superintended to the entire satisfaction of the committee, has been taken out of my hands by the committee—who opposed the founding of such a Home ; who, as a committee, have not seen it since it was founded, and took it because they had the legal power to do so.’

‘*August 10*, 1876. The Honorary Superintendent records his gratitude to God for being permitted to found and to manage this useful institution ; and now, being allowed no longer to superintend the Home on conditions he can

true study of my father’s character. Whatever I omit, I cannot leave unchronicled these, his first steps of independent action in following the guidance of God. The details as given in this record in no way affect the Society as it exists at present.

accept, he reluctantly, at the call of the committee, resigns his position as Superintendent, praying the Lord's constant care on behalf of the dear old people, whose temporal and spiritual welfare it has been his constant desire, for the Master's sake, to promote.'

Mr. Wilkinson subsequently handed over the whole of the balance of moneys received by him up to January of 1877 for the Home, receiving the following undertaking from the Society:

'38 BLOOMSBURY SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,
January 22, 1877.

'On behalf of the committee of the British Society, I engage that the balance of moneys now in bankers' hands in favour of Aged Christian Jews' Home shall be exclusively used in the interest of that institution.

'WM. G. HABERSHON, *Treasurer of Committee.*'

And now, discarding chronological sequence, we must go back a few years.

The following note was made by Mr. Wilkinson in his diary for 6th May 1873:

'To-day dear Mr. Pennefather was interred in the churchyard at Ridge in Herts, near Barnet, between 4 and 5 p.m. Many carriages followed, and members of his flock and friends went by special train to Potter's Bar station, and crowds gathered round his grave. I knew him well and loved him much, and I and my dear wife joined the funeral procession. He sleeps in Jesus "until He come." His work was early and well done, so he was honoured by an early call home, whilst many

lazy ones, much older in years, are left behind to finish their work. "The memory of the just is blessed."

The year that closed with March 1874, included 168 services in 80 places, resulting in the gathering of over £1000 in collections, subscriptions, and donations to the Society's funds; the following year, 1874-75, 200 services in 104 places, with a still larger sum gathered. The summary of the year in the diary thus closes:

'For journeying mercies and blessing of every kind, all praise to God through Jesus.'

It was now that the first great evangelistic campaign of Messrs. Moody and Sankey was being held in London; and Mr. Wilkinson approached Mr. Moody with a view to arrange some special meetings for Jews; but Mr. Moody expressed himself averse to "sectional work." Mr. Wilkinson therefore invited a large number of ladies and gentlemen to undertake the distribution of leaflets in Hebrew and English, inviting Jews to the Moody meetings. Two meetings were held in No. 6 Room at Mildmay Conference Hall, before this band of workers set forth to the districts assigned them.

We are now in the last year of Mr. Wilkinson's twenty-five years' connexion with the British Society (1851-76). Let us linger over a few diary notes.

'1875, *April 25, Glasgow (continued)*. Morning, a little after 7 o'clock to the Drill Hall, Glasgow Green, and witnessed the most affecting sight of about 2000 or 3000 men, women, and children of the poorest and most wretched description taking tea and bread provided by loving hearts and hands. There was an efficient choir to sing Sankey's hymns. The Good Samaritan was the

subject, and there was a large picture at the back of the platform to illustrate the scene. I spoke about half an hour on the subject, and sang *יְהוָה יִלֵּךְ*.¹ Soup was being boiled in an adjoining room. I had a little, and a cup of tea, and walked back the two miles, solemnized, and delighted with what I had witnessed.'

'June 10. My wife and I attended the opening service at the Camberwell Green Hall, which was crowded half an hour before the service commenced. Seven or eight thousand present. Mr. Moody read Isaiah vi., and the parable of the talents. Mr. Sankey sang "Nothing but Leaves," and "Here am I, send me." Mr. Aitken and Mr. Spurgeon gave stirring addresses.'

In the summer of 1875 another family visit to Tealby occupies a large space in the journal.

'We took with us several hundreds of picture and other Gospel tracts: as also a large number of copies of *The Christian*, which were distributed freely all over the village. My wife and I gave a good portion of our time to house-to-house visitation and personal dealing with the people in the interest of their souls. There was much to sadden the spirit, and much to encourage earnest effort. We found several grown persons who could neither read nor write, and some on the verge of eternity utterly indifferent as to their spiritual state. At night we had a large gathering in the Methodist Chapel. Spoke a few minutes from "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," our

¹ Isaiah ix. 6 in Hebrew.

family choir singing some of Sankey's hymns. George King sang as a solo, "Here am I, send me"; and Henry sang "What shall the Harvest be?" The service was indeed a happy one. . . .

'11th. On Sunday morning at 7 o'clock we had a happy little prayer-meeting and Scripture reading in the Methodist Chapel; at 10.30 and 6.30 for public worship. The chapel was crowded, aisles filled, and many were outside. This was indeed a blessed day. . . .

'16th. This morning walked over to Walesby and distributed some picture tracts among children coming from school; had also an interesting conversation with a deaf man called Vesey, who was working as a day labourer for the clergyman. A former conversation with this man seemed very discouraging, but this seemed very hopeful. Had also a very earnest talk with an old man driving through Walesby from Swinhop, named W. Horton, who was evidently the worse for drink, but who seemed to take in the truth as it is in Jesus. After dinner, a young gentleman, preparing to become a Barrister, came to have a conversation with me, expressing his earnest desire to give up the world and live only to please God. I preached to him a full, free and present salvation, and expect to hear further from him. . . .

'*July 16.* In the afternoon we all went to Castle Farm, and had tea in the large new granary. Our host and hostess—Mr. and Mrs. Harrison, their governess and children—Mr. and Mrs. Tharrat and some other friends, together with our nine made the number twenty-four at

the table. The granary was beautifully decorated with evergreens and flowers. After reading the Scriptures and prayer, we had about an hour and a half's conference on the Lord's coming. This was a time of deep spiritual profit. . . .

'17th. This morning we are reminded that we are but sojourners. Our luggage must be packed, our bills paid, and our tents struck for "a day's march nearer home." The weather was beautifully fine for returning, as it was for our coming. The carrier took our luggage and two girls; Mr. Harrison took my wife, mother, and Lucy; Samuel rode with Mr. Wright and George; Henry, John, and I walked by the Willingham plantation, a most interesting walk through fields and wood, with everything around us to gratify eyes, nose, and ears. All nature fragrant and beautiful, and the birds singing delightfully. At Nottingham my dear mother left us for Manchester. We had a word and gave a few tracts to four or five poor handcuffed prisoners in the waiting-room. Arrived home in safety and health about 11 p.m., deeply thankful to our loving Father for His many mercies. On Friday evening Mr. Ingram (Tealby) confessed to me that he trusted in Jesus at the Sunday morning service, and had Jesus in his eye ever since. This confession filled *our* eyes with tears of gratitude and our hearts with joy. An old man named Drinkall said to me, "I don't know much, and I can't take much in; but I got hold of this at the meeting, that 'the debt's paid, that God does not want payment twice, and that God can't lie,' and I'm just trusting as

a poor sinner in Jesus only.' Another (the old man, Horton, of Swinhop) said, "I don't know who you are, but I have talked to many parsons and Methodists, but this is the straightest cut I have ever had in my life." He seemed to accept the truth, stopped again and called me to re-state the Gospel, and then drove off, saying, "I'll trust Him." Vesey, whom I first met when visiting old Drinkall, and who then said, "You need not talk to me about religion; I read my Bible, but it has no effect upon me, leave me alone," now gave me an attentive hearing at Walesby, and I have some hope of him. To God be all the praise! May many in Tealby be awakened and saved!

'The religious condition of the village is very low: the moral condition low: the social condition, poverty-stricken. Besides the farmers, who are mostly very kind-hearted men, the village is made up of very little tradesmen, scrambling for the smallest amount of business: day-labourers, farm servants and paupers who have seen better days. . . . Poor Tealby! May this my beloved natural and spiritual birthplace soon know better days! At present everything seems to be going back, except the church clock, and it stood still all the time we were in the village. But time flies though clocks stand.'

CHAPTER XI

A Crisis

(1875)

BEFORE me lies the copy of a letter couched in the following terms :

'79 MILD MAY ROAD, N.,
December 13, 1875.

'GENTLEMEN,—I wish most respectfully to request you to permit me to retire from the deputation work, in order to devote my entire attention to mission work among the Jews in London. Since my three years' course of study in the Society's College—1851 to 1854—with a view to direct mission work, my Hebrew studies have been continued, and practical work amongst the Jews as much as possible prosecuted. I commenced mission work among the Jews in London in 1854, and in six months gained friendly access with the Gospel of Christ to about sixty families. The Society's College had now been given up for lack of funds, and the Society's income going down, which then stood at about £3000 or £4000 a year, Mr. Yonge, at the request of the committee, asked me to visit Bristol. During six weeks' sojourn there I visited nearly all the Jews, and had many at my lodgings; and also preached and gave

addresses among the churches. The result, by God's blessing, was a quickened interest in Israel, which continues to this day. I then spent a fortnight in Bath in the same kind of work, and with cheering results.

'Three weeks in similar work at Brighton, twelve weeks in Sheffield and district, eleven weeks in Leeds, six in Halifax, six in York, eight in Manchester, brought me to the end of the year 1855. The Jews' Synagogue I usually attended on the Saturday in all towns where the Jews resided; I had numbers of Jews at my lodgings, at the same time pleading Israel's cause with Christians at all kinds of meetings. Indeed, I had fifty-two addresses and sermons in Manchester during the eight weeks I was there.

'While in Manchester, Mr. Yonge wrote to me asking me to devote all my time if possible to deputation work, expressing regret that the Society should lose my services as a *Missionary*. To that communication in 1855 I replied, I am a *Missionary* to the Jews, and intend to remain such; but as the Lord is greatly honouring me in my efforts in His strength to interest Christians in Israel, I will devote half my time to each sphere, *i.e.* six months in the year to deputation, and the other six to direct mission work. This arrangement has not been *formally* cancelled or altered during the twenty years which have since passed.

'During the twenty years I have travelled about 10,000 miles a year, and spoken in public about sixteen hours a week, preparing new subjects while in the rail, and at the same time continuing my Hebrew studies,

and Jewish mission work in and out of London. Besides all this, a mass of correspondence has not unnaturally been growing upon me. I am unspeakably thankful to the Lord for the health and strength continued all these years; but though still working with unabated energy, I feel the pressure on mind and body much more than I did a few years back. But diminished strength is not my only or indeed chief reason for wishing to relinquish deputation work.

‘It seems to me that a fair and full proportion of effort has been given to preaching *about* the Jews; we should have a larger proportion of effort in preaching *directly to* the Jews, and specially as the time of the Jews’ sojourn amongst us may soon terminate by restoration to Palestine. I long for greater spiritual results, and would like in connexion with kindred spirits to devise plans for reaching by Lectures, Bible-readings, etc., the middle and higher classes of Jews. I firmly believe that if our first and sole concern be to glorify Jesus in seeking the salvation of His brethren, we need not be anxious as to funds. “My God shall supply *all your need*, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus,” is quite sufficient to warrant this confidence.

‘May I here suggest the desirability of re-instituting our monthly prayer-meeting for Israel, when the friends of Israel generally could meet for praise and prayer. My time devoted to mission work in London, I should then have many opportunities of preaching and lecturing for the Society among the London churches, which are lamentably neglected, but which cannot

possibly be reached by Deputations when whole time is at the disposal of the Mission House.

‘Perhaps I may suggest, as a matter of convenience in re-adjusting matters in the Deputation department, that the present arrangement continue during half the next year. I pray for you and for myself, Divine guidance, my sole desire being simply to do His will and finish His work.

‘I am, Gentlemen, with Christian respect and brotherly affection, Yours in Jesus,

‘JOHN WILKINSON.

‘To the Committee of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews.

REV. J. MILLER, M.A., Secy.’

In this letter we have, in Mr. Wilkinson’s own words, the statement of the cause which led to his severance from the British Society. It is unnecessary to publish the correspondence that ensued either between Mr. Wilkinson and his committee or on the part of supporters of the British Society. It is sufficient to say that, on the 16th December 1875, the committee replied to the letter of Mr. Wilkinson which opens this chapter, declining to set him free from deputational work. On the 12th February 1876 Mr. Wilkinson sent in his resignation, and on the 17th received the following acknowledgment:

‘MY DEAR SIR,—I very much regret to have to inform you that at the committee meeting last night your resignation contained in your letter of the 12th was unanimously accepted. The committee fully appreciate the valuable services you have rendered for so long a

time, and only regret the steps you have taken by which you have separated yourself from the Society.'

I am most anxious to record this most important step in my father's life without bias, and my rule must be, "Least said, soonest mended." I therefore omit much contemporary correspondence which might be thought to beg the question by representing my father's action in the most favourable light and the Society's action in the least favourable. No one then or now disputes the honesty of Mr. Wilkinson's conviction and purpose. Far better than to analyse the mistakes made on either side is to recognise the over-ruling hand of God in greatly increasing the active witness of the Cross among Jews, and in bringing into being the Mildmay Mission to the Jews as an object lesson of dependence on Him. Mr. Wilkinson's resignation from the British Society meant to him the relinquishing of a salary of £350 a year while in middle life, and with a wife and five children. Nor were there any other Missions of the type of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews to form an example or a model. Others have followed the missionary's example; none went before. His action was a venture of faith in obedience to the call of his life; whatever his intentions were, no dream of a Mildmay Mission to the Jews in its present influence and extent entered his mind; whatever his mistakes were, God, who reads motives and honours faith, abundantly honoured His servant in the remaining thirty-one years of his career.

The connexion with the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews came to a close on the 31st of May 1876, and on that date we find the following entry in the missionary's diary:

' *May 31.* This is my last day's connexion with the British Society, under whose direction my work has been carried on for 25 years. In prospect of the near dissolution of Turkey and the probable restoration of the Jews, I wished to devote more time to preaching to the Jews all over our land. The committee were not willing, so I resigned, to do the work to the Lord alone, who will supply all my need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

"I'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come."

CHAPTER XII

The Mildmay Mission to the Jews

(1876-1877)

THE very next day—1st June 1876—was the birthday of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews. Mr.

Wilkinson's thought was to work in association with a Jewish Christian by personal effort among the Jews of London. The Jewish Christian was found in Mr. James Adler, a sweet spirited and scholarly young man, with missionary zeal.

What was actually being done for the evangelization of the Jews of London in 1876? The answer to that question is found in Mr. Wilkinson's journal notes. He made it his first business to inquire what was being done, and to examine its quality and scope before shaping his own course. It is evident here, as throughout his career, that he strove to preach the Gospel not where Christ was named, lest he should build upon another man's foundation; but it is also evident here as elsewhere that he valued the labours of others and rejoiced wherein Christ was preached, whether in pretence or in truth.

Here are the notes:

'June 15, 1876. Mr. Adler accompanied me to various places to see the work done among the Jews. We first went to the West and saw Mr. Cohen. His

"Home" has been given up, and he is able to do but little now in consequence of failing eyesight. We then returned to the East of London, and visited the British Society's Mission Room in Fieldgate Street. Mr. Lazarus has charge of this, and speaks to Jews on Saturdays. The Presbyterian Mission Hall in Whitechapel we also visited; here one meeting a week is held for Old Testament reading—Saturday. Mr. Ehrlich meets Jews in Princes Street Hall, Whitechapel, which is shared by the City Mission and the London Jews' Society. Mrs. Reynolds meets Jewesses and children in Brick Lane once a week. Mrs. Way meets 30 to 50 Jewesses in the Home of Industry on Thursdays at 3 o'clock. I addressed 35 Jewesses and sang בִּי יְיָ (Isaiah ix. 6); they stood and sang, "Come to the Saviour, make no delay," and I prayed with them in the name of Jesus. We dined with Mrs. Merry. We visited Mr. Stern at Cambridge Lodge Villas, Hackney, and also the Home for Wanderers adjoining.

'June 17. Visited Joseph's Mission Hall in Hackney Road, where he also carries on printing and picture-framing, etc., to give employment to inquirers and converts. May the Lord abundantly bless all these efforts to bless Israel!'

The newly formed work had already been linked on to the Mildmay Institutions. Hence its name "The *Mildmay* Mission to the Jews," denoting its attachment to the Mildmay Conference Hall; the name naturally remaining after the official attachment had ceased.

The following letter from Captain the Honourable

R. Moreton, the Superintendent of the Mildmay Conference Hall at that time, records the formation of the link with Mildmay :

‘CONFERENCE HALL, MILD MAY PARK,
LONDON, N., 5th June 1876.

‘DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—Mrs. Pennefather with myself having considered your letter and proposal to link your Mission to the Jews on to the Conference Hall, we hail with much gratitude to God and personal satisfaction this opportunity of manifesting our interest in Israel’s salvation, and therefore gladly accept your offer, and with much pleasure will receive all offerings for the Mission that the Lord’s people may be disposed to entrust to our care, and at your wish will keep and balance the accounts.

‘Praying the Lord’s blessing on yourself and the work,
—I am, yours affectionately in the Lord,

‘R. MORETON,

‘On behalf of Mrs. Pennefather and the Trustees.

This step was made known publicly for the first time at the Conference Hall.

‘June 16. Lecture on “Turkey’s Position, Russia’s Policy and Palestine’s Prospects,” with an account of my 25 years’ connexion with the British Society, and proposed Mission for the next three years in connexion with the Conference Hall. Captain the Hon. R. Moreton in the chair—large attendance.’

The first record of actual work stands thus in the diary :

‘June 25. Samuel accompanied me to Spitalfields and

Tenter ground, where we had some interesting conversations with Jews and Jewesses, to whom I read in the open air the 53rd of Isaiah and the 2nd Psalm in Hebrew. One intelligent young English Jew, who listened to the truth for one and a half hours, said he had got some things in his mind he would never get out, and would read his Bible more.

'July 9. Sunday morning, 10 to 2 o'clock, Mr. Chaffey, of Weston-super-Mare, John, and Samuel accompanied me into Spitalfields and Whitechapel to converse with Jews. With one we had a most earnest conversation, and he promised to come and see me and bring a friend with him. The Messiah first to suffer and then to reign, seemed to impress him.'

'We had a crowd in the Tenter grounds; indeed, two crowds, and then several small knots of Jews. Some were boisterous and angry, others respectful. I read in the open air part of the 53rd of Isaiah in Hebrew. We afterwards found a Jew in Whitechapel opposing; I took the audience out of his hands, and it grew six or ten times the size in a few minutes. The Lord bless our testimony for Jesus.'

Such was the work desired, which was now being undertaken by the zealous missionary. But equally important perhaps was the principle on which the Mission was founded, which was that of dependence on God for the supply of daily need. Mr. Wilkinson's personal and family needs were kindly guaranteed for three years by private friends. The immediate question was therefore the money required for carrying on the work. Mr. Wilkinson prayed definitely for £1000 a

year for three years. A printed circular was issued on the first of June 1876 :

‘THE MILD MAY MISSION TO THE JEWS

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF

THE REV. JOHN WILKINSON

‘To my beloved Christian Friends of all Evangelical Denominations throughout the United Kingdom :

‘As a very considerable proportion of those into whose hands this circular is intended to be placed have been the warm personal friends of the writer during many years of toil on Israel’s behalf, he ventures to adopt the friendly and familiar style of letter writing between old and dear friends. Let me then at once inform you what I have done ; why I have done it ; and then lay before you my plans for the future.

‘First, then, as to what I have done. I have been led to sever my connexion with the committee of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, under whose direction my efforts for Israel’s spiritual good have been sustained during five-and-twenty years.

‘Secondly, then, as to the reasons for taking such a step. The principal reason is this, and which was the one given to the committee — the refusal of the committee to permit me to relinquish mere Deputation work, and to *resume* Mission-work among the Jews in London, and also to attempt to awaken an interest in Israel among the London churches. Recent events in

Turkey seemed to indicate, apart from the study of unfulfilled prophecy, that the close of the "times of the Gentiles" and the restoration of Israel are events near at hand; and, if so, the time for testimony for Jesus to the Jews in our midst may be but short. We have 60,000 Jews in Great Britain—half of them in London, and the other half in provincial towns and cities. Some good work is attempted and done in London by many honoured brethren, who labour chiefly amongst the foreign poor in the East of London; nevertheless, it must be confessed, there is room and need for a much wider range in our testimony.

'As to the 30,000 Jews in the provinces, if we except Manchester, Birmingham, and Liverpool, no missionary labours amongst them, either as a resident or as an itinerating messenger of salvation. We rejoice to say that an occasional visit made by a missionary to the Jews in Leeds has been attended with blessing, and that a good Jewish Christian clergyman has made some successful efforts to reach his brethren residing in Hull. But beyond these places there are thousands of Jews in Bristol, Bath, Exeter, Cardiff, Newport, Swansea, Sheffield, Bradford, Wolverhampton, Leicester, Nottingham, Brighton, Portsmouth, Southampton, Plymouth, Middlesbro', Stockton, Hartlepool, North and South Shields, Sunderland, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Dublin, Belfast, etc. etc.'¹

¹ The circular gives the full text of Mr. Wilkinson's correspondence with the British Society, including his formal resignation. We have in Chapter XI. cited as much of this correspondence as

‘The full text of the communications on both sides is thus before you, and the issue is in the Lord’s hands. The committee, no doubt, feel perfectly justified in the course they have taken, and my own conscience fully approves the course I have taken. We must distinguish between a *Cause* and a *Society*; and also between a *Society* and a *committee*: and though separating from the committee, the Society will still have my sympathy and prayers in proportion to its devotedness to the cause of Israel’s salvation. To that sacred *Cause*, to which my life has been wholly consecrated, I now renew my devotion, and solicit your earnest and constant prayers.

‘And now as to what I propose doing in the future.

‘1st. I propose, during the next *three years*, to work amongst the Jews in London, by *house-to-house* visitation and by *public testimony*—in or out of doors—reading and expounding the Hebrew Scriptures concerning the Messiah. For this work it would be desirable to rent or purchase a room or hall in the East of London.

‘2nd. I propose a temporary Home for inquirers, to keep them near us till they find the Saviour, and if need be to help them to suitable employment.

‘3rd. I propose an itinerant Mission to the Jews located in the towns and cities of the United Kingdom.

‘4th. To overtake this work, I propose to seek, in prayerful dependence on the Lord’s guidance, some godly, earnest, converted Israelite, as a fellow-helper;

we deem it desirable to include in this volume, and therefore omit that portion of the circular.

and also, if the Lord will, some godly Bible-woman to work amongst Jewesses.

‘5. To preach, give lectures and addresses anywhere on matters affecting Israel’s national and spiritual interests, stipulating only that my travelling expenses be defrayed.

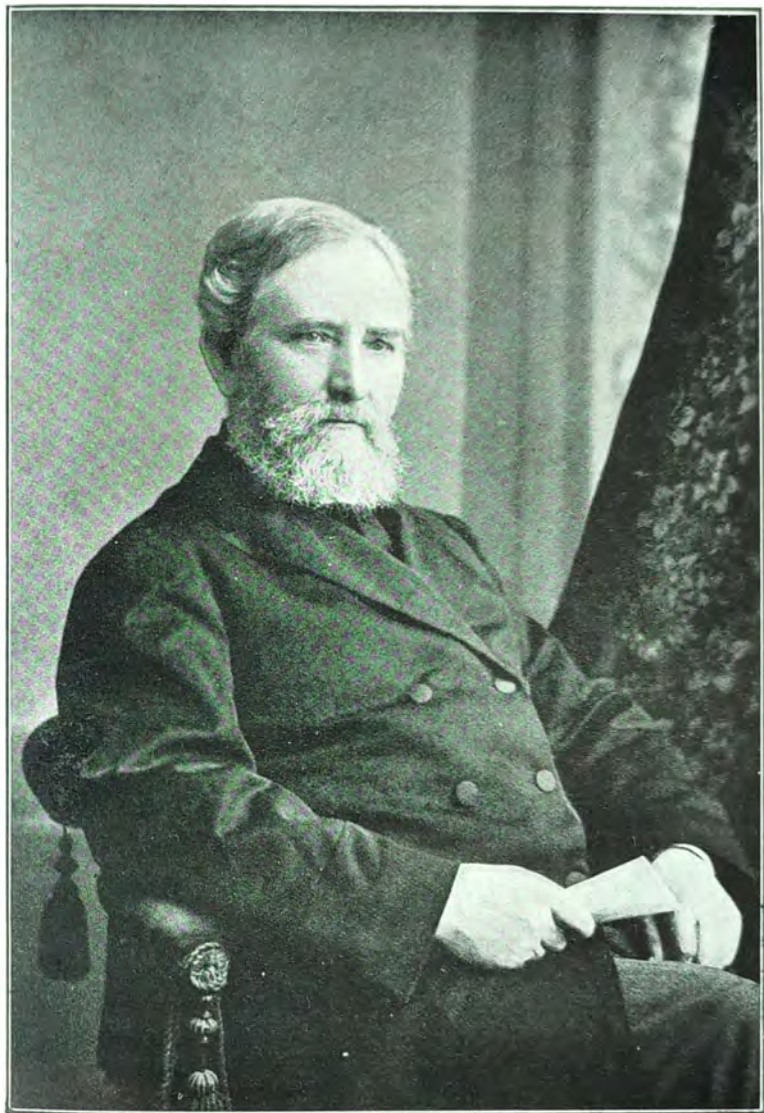
‘And now as to the expenses of this Mission, and how those expenses are to be met.

‘First of all, then, I have to thank the Lord, with a heart overflowing with gratitude, that my own *personal expenses* have been guaranteed during the next three years, by a few personal friends who warmly love Israel for their Master’s sake.

‘To meet the expenses of the Mission, as above proposed, I am asking the Lord to entrust to my stewardship the sum of £1000 a year. If this be for His glory, He will do it; and if not, He knows I would rather be without it. Our principle is—*Ask the Lord, and tell His people.*

‘Had we more of voluntary offering of service and substance to our blessed Lord, the offerer would get larger blessing, whilst much effort, time, and expense would be saved in collecting money for the Lord’s work.

‘I have now to state that I propose to link this mission to the work done in connexion with the Conference Hall, Mildmay Park. It was my high privilege to know and to love the late Rev. William Pennefather, the founder of the Mildmay Hall, its work and its Conferences. I have reason to know that he cherished a warm interest in Israel by his frequent



REV. JOHN WILKINSON

AT THE PERIOD OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE
MILDMAY MISSION TO THE JEWS.

requests for an address on Jewish matters, and especially for an address at several successive annual Conferences.

‘A Mildmay Mission to the Jews was a topic of frequent and serious conversation, not only between Mr. Pennefather and myself, but also with his excellent and beloved widow, even when I had not the remotest idea that the Lord might direct my steps thitherward.

‘The “Home for Aged Christian Israelites,” which the Lord enabled me to found, and of which I am the Hon. Superintendent, belongs legally to the “British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews,” and the committee have the power to take it out of my hands. They have kindly expressed a willingness to leave this Home under my superintendence, and I have expressed my willingness to continue my sole responsibility for its support and management, if I may be permitted to manage it uncontrolled by the committee, leaving the property in their hands as trustees, and sending to them an annual report.

‘This matter is still pending, and may not be decided before this letter is printed. Further information may be looked for in the columns of *The Christian*.

‘And now, beloved friends, I have to press home to myself and to you, two or three important and solemn considerations. The time is short. The restoration of Israel may be very near. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. There are 60,000 Jews in our country now, but they may not be here much longer. Do you think the conscience of the Christian Church in England is clear of the blood of these Jews? Let us

ask ourselves all round, "Is my conscience clear respecting them?" Has all been done that might and ought to have been done in bringing the Jews to Jesus?

'Oh that the words of our Lord may ever ring in our ears, "Occupy till I come." Oh, do not let us seek for reasons to excuse ourselves for neglecting the Jew; but let us consider his special claim on our loving and prayerful effort, in the recollection of what we owe to him, and of what the world is yet to receive of blessing through his instrumentality, and let us "go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

'Earnest prayer for the Jews, and for all seeking their welfare, is requested from all friends of Israel every *Saturday* morning.

'*Freewill offerings* for "The Mildmay Mission to the Jews" may be sent to Captain the Hon. R. Moreton Conference Hall, Mildmay Park, N.; to the Office of *The Christian*; or to John Wilkinson, 79 Mildmay Road, London, N.

'These offerings should be accompanied by a definite statement as to the intention of the donor, and with the donor's address, not for publication, but that the receipt may be acknowledged.

'*Objects*—1. The General Mission Work.

2. Home for Aged Christian Israelites.

3. The Poor—converted and unconverted, especially the sick and aged.

4. All kinds of second-hand clothes for men, women, and children.

“Serve now the Lord your God and His people Israel” (2 Chron. xxxv. 3).

‘I am, dear friends, your servant for Jesus’ sake,
‘JOHN WILKINSON.’

This was the “telling” of the Lord’s people, for the principle in the newly formed Mission was and always has been, “Ask the Lord, and tell His people.” If some are disposed to say that this is only another form of asking, we will let them have their way. It is not worth the time spent in argument. We could, however, tell a story, were it desirable to do so, of what this principle has meant in daily experience—sometimes of what men would call loss, sometimes also of ostracism and criticism; but we humbly believe also of much of the smile of God in preserving the Mission from its inception onward from the reproach of debt, as well as in prospering its efforts.

We have said that Mr. Wilkinson prayed definitely for £1000 a year for three years. The first year the £1000 was received in 365 days, *i.e.* it was only made complete on the last day of the year; the same experience took place the second year.

On the last day—31st May 1877—of the first year of the new Mission we find this entry in Mr. Wilkinson’s journal:

‘This is the last day of our first year’s Mission to the Jews from the Conference Hall. Twelve months ago we asked the Lord to entrust to our stewardship, in the interest of this Mission, the sum of £1000. The sum yesterday was £990 16s. 5d.; this morning a cheque came in, value £25 6s. 6d. This is indeed of the Lord, and we praise His holy name. A young Jew—Cohen—to whom we presented Christ in Hull, came to London by

steamer to-day, and wishes to give up all for Christ. Mr. Adler and I talked and prayed with him. We are truly thankful for His blessing so manifestly given on our first year's work.'

But we now return to record the progress of the work itself during the first year. A second assistant to Mr. Wilkinson was found in Mr. Halbmillion. How he came to join the new work of Mr. Wilkinson may be judged by the following letter from the late Dr. Stern, of the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews.

'3 CAMBRIDGE LODGE VILLAS, MARE STREET,
HACKNEY, *August 22nd.*

'MY DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—I am very glad that you have written to me in a candid, straightforward style about Mr. Halbmillion. If we missionaries were to imitate your example, it would lead to more confidence and mutual sympathy. I am quite willing to part with Mr. Halbmillion. He is a pious Christian man. Much learning he has not. What he knows, he is, however, most anxious to communicate to others. He has had the charge of the Wanderers' Home for the last three years and a half. During that time he always manifested great zeal in impressing others with the convictions he cherished himself. . . . You are mistaken in supposing that he is in the employ of the London Jews' Society. The latter has nothing to do with the Wanderers' Home and its management. It is supported by my own friends, and under the control of a distinct committee. The latter, I am sure will accede to Mr. Halbmillion's

request to leave his post, particularly as he has the prospect of realising his ardent desire of being engaged in direct missionary work.

‘With much regard and esteem, Ever yours truly,
‘HENRY D. STERN.’

Another temporary helper was found in Mr. Hertzberg, a student entering Harley College (then known as Mr. Grattan Guinness’ College). We come then to a decisive day in the story of the newly formed work, when it found its quarters at 36 Wellclose Square, those precious premises, full of sweet and bitter associations. Thus narrates Mr. Wilkinson the event in his private journal:

‘*July 16, 1876.* Mr. Adler, Mr. Halbmillion, and Mr. Hertzberg met me and my two sons this morning at 10.30 near the Spitalfields Church. I announced a hymn, “Hold the Fort,” and offered a short prayer, and was in a few minutes surrounded by a crowd of Jews—men, women, and children. I gave a short address in English, and Mr. Halbmillion one in German. We all engaged in conversation, and distributed tracts to eager recipients. We were shouted after, and took refuge for awhile in the Spitalfields Wesleyan Chapel,¹ and then went off to Whitechapel and Wellclose Square, and had long conversations with Jews, especially with Mr. Lebus, cabinet maker, who employs about forty hands. He said he dare not say that Christianity is not true. We returned weary, but happy for such opportunities

¹ The building is now a synagogue.

of testifying for Jesus. Mr. and Mrs. Borst, of 36 Wellclose Square, are zealous in Israel's cause. Mr. Borst is a German, and Mrs. Borst a Christian Jewess—both Wesleyans. I have engaged their room for meetings on Saturdays and Sundays and a Thursday evening prayer-meeting, and pray that we may have much blessing.'

The ground thus broken, we find much of Mr. Wilkinson's time occupied in instruction to and conversation with a number of young Jews who visited him at 79 Mildmay Road. A visit was also paid by Mr. Wilkinson to the offices of the *Jewish Chronicle* and the *Jewish World*, the two leading English Jewish newspapers. This quotation from the journal illustrates the attitude of representative Jews to Christian missions thirty years ago, an attitude which has not altered, though it has perhaps become intensified by the increase of effort put forward by Christians to reach the Jews with the saving truths of the Gospel. It also illustrates the fact that a frank and friendly approach to such Jews may do something to disarm that attitude of prejudice and animosity.

'July 26, 1876. Mr. Myers, publisher of the *Jewish Chronicle*, was bitterly angry with Christian Jews, whom he regarded as mere hirelings for seeking to get hold of Jewish children without the knowledge of their parents, and also for waylaying Jews in the streets and compelling them to converse on Christian doctrine. In answer to my complaint of the ungenerous attacks on Christianity, he replied that the wrongs of ages justified them.

'On entering the office of the *Jewish World*, Mr. Valentine, the publisher, first spoke to me, and then took me at my request into the private room of the editor, Mr. Rosenberg. I introduced myself as a conversionist, openly and earnestly desiring by all legitimate means to bring the Jews to Christ, and reminding them that they had honoured me occasionally in their columns. We had a long friendly and most interesting conversation for an hour or an hour and a half on Turkey, Russia, Palestine, conversion work, motives, means, etc.

"But why," asked the editor, "turn such special attention to us?"

"Because we owe more to you than to any other people. Besides, you own as Divine the documents from which we prove the Messiahship of Jesus; and, further, our command is 'to the Jew first,' and as you are a civilised and Old Testament believing people, if we get you to trust in Christ, you will greatly help in preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles."

'We spoke about Dr. McCaul's *Old Paths*, and Emanuel Deutsch's article on the Talmud. They said that many of the best things in the New Testament were found in heathen sacred books, from which they had been copied. They denounced Palestine Place, and Mrs. Reynolds' work among the Jewish children. I told them that I had long refused to admit the *Jewish World* into my house because of its low and often ungenerous language; but thought it had improved of late, so I was willing to read it. I had, indeed, got the impression that its conductors were abusive and infidel.

This was said in good part, and taken so. After a long and varied conversation, we shook hands most cordially, and the editor said he should be glad for me to drop in at any time, and he would come and spend an hour some evening at my house. I told him I would neither bribe nor intimidate any Jew to become a Christian, for I believed only in Holy Ghost conversions as genuine ones.

“Have you ever converted one Jew?”

“No; but the Lord has several, and I have baptized them. I shall preach Jesus to you, but will say no more than you are willing to listen to.”

“All right, I will come and see you, and we will have a talk,” said the editor. A cordial hand-shake and good-bye.’

A few days afterwards the following entry stands in the journal:

‘July 30, 1876. Sunday morning, 8 o’clock, gave an address to workers in the Conference Hall: “How to deal with the Jew, and with intelligent unbelievers generally.” *The ground of appeal*—the Word. *Mode of interpretation*—literal. *Manner of address*—by question, as Jesus and doctors. *To multitudes*—repent. *To disciples*—teaching Messianic predictions, Sceptre, Daniel’s weeks, 30 pieces of silver, ass and foal. *The Objection*—cruelties, idolatries, inconsistencies of nominal Christians. *Principle of sacrifice*—bring home sin and condemnation. Rev. Kübler and Hudson Taylor prayed. We specially commended Mr. Taylor to

the Lord's care on his departure in a few days for China.'

Though the "Home for Aged Christian Israelites" had been formally handed over to the British Society, Mr. Wilkinson's interest in the old people who were its inmates did not abate.

'*August 11, 1876.* Took the old folks from "Ebenezer" to-day on a trip to Epping Forest. Day remarkably fine. Forest quiet and beautiful. Mr. Hibbard kindly drove us in his van, and we took abundant provisions for dinner and tea. Mr. and Mrs. Philipson, Mr. and Mrs. Ahronson, Mrs. Rehder, Mr. and Mrs. Hibbard and two children, myself, wife, Henry, Florence, Samuel and Lucy. Between dinner and tea we sang Sankey's hymns, and after tea the doxology. I gave a short address on God's goodness to us, and offered prayer. We reached home in safety, having had a most enjoyable day.'

Copious entries of conversations with Jewish inquirers and fellow-missionaries fill dear father's graphic diary at this period. Here is another touch of family life:

'*August 17, 1876.* Left this morning at 10 o'clock for Liverpool and Southport with my dear son Henry, on his way to Singapore. Had a pleasant morning among our friends. Went to Liverpool by the 8.30 train; went on board the "tender" at 5 o'clock, and the *Agamemnon* sailed about 20 minutes before 6. Two other young men accompanied my son—Brown and Stephens. Henry went in good spirits. I had

prayer with him in his pretty little cabin. The Lord God of Israel bless him !'

The next day Mr. Wilkinson travelled home to London. On the day following we find him as busy as usual. The day's programme included conversation with seven callers—most of them inquirers; the conduct of the Gospel meeting at Wellclose Square; and a call on a family of Jews, and then a visit to Mr. William Booth. There was no Salvation Army then, and no "General" Booth. It was simply "The Christian Mission," and the premises which my father speaks of as "the Mission Hall" became afterwards the headquarters of the newly formed Salvation Army. To-day they form a shelter for workless men. I well remember accompanying my father to both the Mission premises and to Mr. Booth's house, fronting on Victoria Park.

'*August 19.* Hertzberg—conversation and prayer. Fraenkel, Heyman, Marks, Goldberg, Davis, and Sachs called. With Sachs I read the 4th chapter of Hebrews, and prayed. From 3 to 7 p.m. attended a meeting of Jews at Wellclose Square, and addressed them on the 2nd Psalm, and that Christianity was no new religion to Jews: it was a Jewish religion, and not like Mohammedanism.

'Called on Dr. Funkenstein and had an earnest talk on the Sceptre of Judah. He is writing a Commentary on the Pentateuch. I think both he and his wife secretly believe in Jesus. They will take tea with me on Friday next. Went to see the Mission Hall

in Whitechapel with a view to Saturday meetings, and also went to Victoria Park to see Mr. Booth or his secretary, Mr. Railton.'

Still another extract must we give from this descriptive and voluminous diary, the language as well as the subject-matter of which reveal so much of the man who has left us the record :

'*August 24.* A young Jew called for boots and other help, but I had little confidence in him. Hamburger, an intelligent young Jew with spectacles, called. Hertzberg spoke with him in German, and I gave him a trifle. Had prayer with Hertzberg. Had an earnest conversation with Lewis. From 3 to 4.30 p.m. visited Jews and Jewesses in the German Hospital. Halbmillion and Hertzberg accompanied me. I spoke with four Jewesses, three of whom could not read. One was a young mother, only eighteen years of age. I nursed two babies a little while. Had a most interesting conversation with a Mr. Hamburger, about fifty or sixty years of age, from Cardiff, suffering from paralysis. He spoke of Jesus as "our Saviour," and denounced the wickedness of the generation that rejected Christ. I pressed on his attention the doctrine of atonement from the 53rd of Isaiah, and the Divinity of Christ from the 2nd Psalm. He introduced me to Jews in another ward, and I was much interested in a young Jew from America, named Bloom. The Lord bless our testimony. Reading, conversation, and prayer with Sachs till nearly 9 o'clock.'

Does not the interested reader ask himself—"When did Mr. Wilkinson get his leisure for recreation of mind and body; when his time for reading and meditation on the Word of God?" It would seem as if every minute of these busy days was exhausted with energetic labour, and none left for repose of body, soul, and mind.

But there was, nevertheless, time left—or rather, time taken—for these most vitally necessary things. One of the strong sides of our father's character was seen in the way in which, by due economy of time, he secured regular and patient study of the Scriptures, regular bodily exercise—generally a daily constitutional—and a liberal share of his evenings for domestic relaxation with his wife and children. It was thus he preserved his vigour of body, cheerfulness of mind and disposition, and calm faith in God. Among my very wide Christian acquaintance of Christian ministers, evangelists, and teachers, I knew few, if any, who couple such devotion to the service of God with such wise regard for the interests of the whole man—social, physical, intellectual, spiritual—as did my beloved father. He was a patient and productive student, but never an unpractical recluse; he was a great walker, but never strained his powers of effort or endurance; his daily paper kept him *au courant* with all the happenings of the day, but they never absorbed him; he took the keenest enjoyment in the musical evenings of his wife and children or the game of bagatelle, yet was never a time-waster; he was conspicuously a man of prayer—yes, at times of prayer and fasting—yet there was nothing of austerity or asceticism about him. John Wilkinson was an illustration—all too infrequent among Christians—of a whole man, with each part of his nature fully and proportionately and whole-

somely developed. Surely here is an example and a warning to multitudes of Christians, either on the one hand overworked and feeble; or on the other, self-indulgent and fleshly.

Even in the first year of the newly formed Mildmay Mission to the Jews, we find the witness of the missionaries leading to the conversion of Jewish souls, and their confession of Christ by baptism. On 5th November 1876, Mr. Wilkinson baptized two young Jews, Adolf Gordon and Louis Dworkowitz, in Mildmay Conference Hall. "It was a happy and blessed service; and there were many Jews and Jewesses present." Again, on 10th December, in the same building, Joseph Steinberg confessed Jesus by baptism. The diary adds: "We had present a large number of Jews and Jewesses. May the Lord awaken and save others—many others." Another—Immergood by name—was baptized at Mildmay Park Wesleyan Chapel on the 17th December; and another—a deaf-and-dumb Jew—was baptized on Christmas Eve at the meeting for Deaf and Dumb at Mildmay—the questions being satisfactorily interpreted to him.

Love and zeal are inventive—other forms of effort were added to the persistent missionary witness to Jews, either at the Mission Room in Wellclose Square, or in streets or private houses. The Night School for Children was opened on 11th January 1877. Seeing that the school has been maintained for thirty years, and is being maintained to-day at the Central Hall in Philpot Street, East London, a special interest attaches to the circumstances and lines of its initiation. Thus speaks the diary:

'January 11, 1877. This evening we opened our Night School for children in Wellclose Square. The

children gathered in about 6.30 p.m., and the mothers of some were present. Though we had let it be known that we should not receive one child without the full consent of its parents, and also with the understanding that we should train it for Jesus, we commenced with thirty-one Jewish children present. Mr. Halbmillion, Mr. Adler, Miss Butcher, with her nephew and niece, Mr. and Mrs. Borst, besides two Jewish fathers and four or five Jewish mothers, were also present. I took down the names and ages of the children. I then offered a brief, simple prayer, and asked all to follow me in repeating the Lord's prayer; and all did so. I then read the 122nd Psalm, and the children repeated it after me line by line. We then sang "Hold the Fort," in which the children and mothers heartily joined. I then gave a brief and simple address on cleanliness, punctuality, truthfulness, obedience to parents, kindness to each other, and all to please God. We told them of the love of Jesus, and sang "Safe in the Arms of Jesus"; Prayer and Benediction. I then gave them, each one by name, an orange, and said a few kind words to each child. God bless them !'

Another branch of effort was the itinerant mission to the provinces. On 17th April, Mr. Wilkinson and Mr. Adler left London for Grimsby for the visitation of Jews. The next day's diary records :

'Had a long and interesting day for Jesus among the Jews. Some abused us, but most received us kindly and accepted tracts.'

Each subsequent day was filled with interesting

conversations or gatherings growing out of this visitation. There is only one break in the continuity of the diary record to state that on 23rd April 1877, "Russia declared war against Turkey, and at once crossed the Pruth into Roumania." Passing on to Hull, the missionaries continued the same ministry, attending synagogue, seeking Jews in streets, shops, and houses during the week, and preaching in Christian gatherings on the Sunday.

Home again in London in May, the usual work was proceeded with. Later in the month another worker was found in Mrs. Borst, who was "engaged to assist Miss Butcher in visiting German Jewesses." Dear Mrs. Borst laboured for nearly thirty years, before her ailing health compelled her retirement. Her daughter followed her (after training at Doric Lodge) as a mission worker in the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, till the close of 1907, when she left the Mission to be married to a Baptist missionary in China.

And again another form of effort and testimony, which was set on foot in the first year of the new Mission's existence, was the Sewing-Class for Jewesses. The work of the missionaries was mostly among men; ladies were needed to reach the women. Acting on the model of the class inaugurated by the late Mrs. Way (Philo-Judæan Society), a weekly Sewing-Class was commenced at Wellclose Square. The women were paid 6d. for two hours' work, the work being afterwards sold to them at cheap rates, thus assisting them in their poverty in two useful and non-pauperising ways. This formed a legitimate means of reaching them with the Gospel by means of addresses as they worked, or after they had finished. The Jewesses were very superstitious and ignorant, and at first it was difficult to get any to come. Prayer was offered for 25 till that number was obtained;

then for 50; then for 75; then for 100. In later years larger rooms than Wellclose Square had to be hired; and since the Central Hall was opened in 1892, the class has been held there, averaging between 275 and 300 women week by week, who under the guidance of Christian ladies have learnt the use of the needle, and—that which is most desired—the use of the all-powerful name of their Messiah, Jesus, in making their petitions heard in the ear of Jehovah.

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CHAPTER XIII

The Mildmay Mission to the Jews—*Contd.*

(1876–1877)

‘20 CARLTON STREET, HALIFAX,
October 7, 1876.

‘**M**Y DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—Go on and prosper. Be true to your motto. If the Lord be with you, you will not lack funds, and—what is far better—agency. Let the converted Israelites go everywhere “preaching the Word” (Acts viii. 4). They will do more spiritual work than technical agency. And mind, do not contract debts—even on plausible grounds. Temporal help associated with the invitations of the Gospel is, after all, a problematical affair.

‘Build, not hire, the accommodation required.—Yours
in the one Christ,

J. LOUTIT.

‘Rev. John Wilkinson.’

The friendship of the above correspondent, the late James Loutit of Halifax, was a great comfort and strength to Mr. Wilkinson in the early days of the new Mission. For the first fifteen years of the Mission Mr. Wilkinson, in spite of Mr. Loutit’s advice, had no thought of building. It was only as the various hired

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premises became insufficient and unsuitable for the growing work, that the thought of the Central Hall laid hold on him.

Another such staunch and strong friend was the late Henry Rowbotham of Pontefract. We have not Mr. Wilkinson's letters to Mr. Rowbotham, as he seldom copied his letters; but reading between the lines of the following communications from Mr. Rowbotham, there is a sweet savour of Christian friendship.

‘£300

‘Entirely at Mr. Wilkinson's disposal for Christian labour amongst the Jews in the name of

“Jesus.”

‘No other name to be mentioned.’

The above communication is undated. Possibly it was accompanied or quickly followed by this:

‘*March 28, 1876.*

‘MY DEAR CHRISTIAN BROTHER,—Many thanks for your kind letter. The Lord bless and guide you in your good work to which you have devoted your life. It is an honour from God to be prompted and able to help such a work. With hearty sympathy and humble prayer.—Affectionately yours in Christ Jesus.

‘HENRY ROWBOTHAM.’

‘(Private)

‘MARKET PLACE, PONTEFRACT,
June 19, 1876.

‘MY BELOVED BROTHER,—I am much obliged for your kind favour of 17th inst. with the enclosure, both of which I have read with great interest, and I should

have had pleasure in sending you something more for one of your objects, but through a sudden reverse on the Stock Exchange, and the failure of two or three clients, it has pleased the Lord in His goodness to me to take from me all the earnings of my life, £30,000, in a fortnight, and I am still far from paying my creditors. This great trial He has given me grace to bear. Unlike Job, he has left me wife, children, health, and dear Christian friends.

‘Do you ask whether I regret doing what I did for the poor Jews, when I was warranted in doing so? Oh no! I am deeply thankful that I have so much treasure laid up in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. I would not withdraw a penny from this blessed bank, whatever the future.

‘I only ask you, my dear brother, to pray for me that my faith fail not. I know it has been done in love to my soul. I shall not now have to pass through the eye of the needle to heaven.—With dearest love and best wishes for your work, Affectionately yours,

‘HENRY ROWBOTHAM.

‘Rev. John Wilkinson.

‘I am thankful to say I have arranged all with my creditors, only three in number.’

‘PONTEFRAC, *June 23rd*, 1876.

‘MY DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—Very many thanks for your comforting Christian letter. I was sure I should

have your sympathy and your prayers, and these alone induced me to open my mind to you ; but I fear I have trespassed too much upon your time for such a beautiful letter. Thanks for your noble offer for material help, but I do not need it. My creditors have accepted 5s. in the pound, and handsomely left me £2000 to £3000 to work upon if I get all in ; and my principal agent will execute the little business left, which will amply keep my family. I told them in my balance-sheet everything I had, to watches in our pockets, pigs in the sty, etc., and kept nothing back for wife and children, and put my all at their service. I now only ask the Lord if He pleases to let me live to pay the other 15s. in the pound, that will not be asked for ; and if I do all this, still what a bankrupt before God !—but *Jesus* has paid it all.

‘I was last night doing as my Saviour tells me in the beautiful meadows—beholding the fowls of the air and listening to their sweet singing, and taking the flowers in my hand to consider ; and oh, how sweet it was to meditate upon Matthew vi. 24–34. My business now is to stand still and see the salvation of God. How much I have to bless God for yet ! I was very much rebuked a few days ago. A poor disabled old soldier, who cannot walk a mile an hour, through a sunstroke, and who lives in a cellar near me by himself, asked me, as he does sometimes, to read and pray with him the following Sunday (knowing of my misfortune). I said I could do that ; but as he knew, I could not help him as usual, for I was poorer than he, not being able to pay my debts. He spoke to me on the Monday morning with

tears in his eyes, saying he had thought a good deal of what I said, but he could not see how I could be as poor as he was, for he had nothing in the house all Sunday, and was not able to raise a pound of bread until Monday morning. When I thought how I had fared, how ashamed I felt before God! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and *forget not* all His benefits!

‘With Christian love to your dear wife and self,
believe me, Yours in Jesus, HY. ROWBOTHAM.’

The Mission progressed. On 2nd July 1877, it held its first gathering of Jews, Jewesses, and Jewish children at the Conference Hall, Mildmay. About 150 sat down to tea in No. 4 room.

‘The deaconesses and orphans served most ably and kindly. Mrs. Pennefather came in to see us, and Miss Stubbs had tea with us. Play from 6 to 7. 7.15 to 8.15, meeting in the same room. Opened with singing *לְפָנֶיךָ יְיָ* by my own family. Then silent prayer. Then the Lord’s Prayer, in which the children joined. . . . Then the benediction according to Numbers vi., in Hebrew and English. . . . So closed this very happy day.’

Taking Mr. Adler with him, Mr. Wilkinson visited various provincial towns for the purpose of reaching the resident Jews. In Sunderland they had many rebuffs from Jews upon whom they called; but the copy of the 53rd of Isaiah placed in the window of their lodgings attracted a number, and often they were able to converse of things eternal with twenty or more Jews in one day. Occasionally there was encouraging response.

‘Last night a Jew called, and Adler talked to him;

he came again this morning about nine, and we set before him Christ and a free and present salvation. He seemed to see the way of life, and trusted in Jesus. We all three knelt and thanked our God. The Lord keep him !'

From time to time Mr. Wilkinson felt justified in baptizing Jews, on profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus as their Messiah and Saviour. The baptisms were sometimes arranged in Mildmay Conference Hall, generally at the close of a Sunday evening service, and sometimes in Mildmay Park Wesleyan Chapel. Mr. Wilkinson's method of baptism was by pouring. He thought and wrote strongly on the subject of baptism ; was a pædo-baptist and anti-immersionist by sincere conviction. But his attitude to those whose convictions were different on this subject is worthy of mention—and emulation. When I, his son, the writer of this volume, became his assistant in the leadership of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, having in the meantime seen it right to be baptized by immersion as a believer in the Lord Jesus, Mr. Wilkinson gave me the same liberty of judgement as he reserved for himself. It became—and is still—the custom in the Mission to let Jewish candidates for baptism choose their own mode, after independent study of the Scripture on that point.

Mr. Wilkinson made the baptismal service delightfully simple and impressive. He always addressed three questions to the candidate, requiring an audible answer. They were as follows :

"Question. Do you accept the Lord Jesus as the Messiah promised to our fathers ; and do you, as a poor sinner, trust only in Him for salvation ?

"Answer. Yes.

"Question. Do you wish to be baptized in His Name ?

Answer. I do.

Question. Why so?

Answer. Because the Lord Jesus Christ commands it."

These questions being answered, Mr. Wilkinson generally addressed the audience or witnesses with the further question: "On such a testimony can any man forbid water?" With the congregation standing, he poured a handful of water upon the head of the convert, and then called upon all to sing the hymn

"Ring the bells of heaven!
There is joy to-day,
For a soul returning from the wild."

It also became the custom to present the baptized person with a Bible, some Christian friend present being asked to hand it to the convert with a few words of counsel and comfort.

When, about 1872 or 1873, Mr. Wilkinson first mentioned at the Annual Mildmay Conference his desire to open a Home for Aged Christian Jews—before referred to—a doctor wrote to him offering his services gratuitously as medical attendant at the Home. As soon as the Home was opened, these services were gratefully accepted, and cheerfully given for some years.

In August 1877 this same doctor wrote again to Mr. Wilkinson with this request, "Will you and your wife join me and my wife in prayer that the Lord would direct me as to my future. I have had it laid on my heart to become a medical missionary." Mr. Wilkinson's reply was, "Yes, we will; and if the Lord should honour me by allowing me to establish a Medical Mission in the interest of His people Israel, and that you should be the first medical missionary, we will rejoice together." Mr. Wilkinson and this doctor afterwards met and had prayer together, asking God for £500

as a token that they were on the line of His will. Early in 1878 we find the following diary note :

‘1878, *March* 30. The Lord answered our prayers for some special token of His approval of our wish to establish a Medical Mission—cheque, value £50, sent from Birmingham.’

Soon £300 was sent in. Then special prayer was held at Mildmay for £200 more. Thus Mr. Wilkinson told the story :

‘A few weeks later I had to address a meeting in the suburbs of London. While praying in my study for blessing on the meeting, it was laid on my heart that there might be some present at the meeting able to give £200, and I prayed accordingly.

‘There was no collection, no freewill offerings at the door; but the announcement was made that if anyone would like to give anything, they might communicate with Mildmay. My wife and I hastened to the station, but lost the train by half a minute. Two ladies waited with us for the next half-hour train, and remarked :

“We have been much interested in your desire for a Medical Mission. It is so Christlike : our Lord was a Medical Missionary. You must have it. How much do you need ?”

“£500.”

“How much have you ?”

“£300.”

“We will give you the rest. Our blessed Lord is coming back again, and perhaps soon, and He must not find us too heavily weighted with gold when He comes.”

‘A short while after a cheque was put into my hands with these words: “Our love-token to our Lord Jesus.”’

Two years elapsed before the Medical Mission was actually opened in Hooper Square, Leman Street, in 1880. The beloved doctor mentioned above became its first medical missionary, according to Mr. Wilkinson’s expressed desire, and remains till now—1908—its Superintendent, beloved by all his co-labourers past and present, and by multitudes of Jews. Other devoted Christian medical men have taken part in it for longer or shorter periods—Drs. Marshall, Roberts, M’Crae, Rocha, Dobrashian, Clarke, Mackay, Hutchinson, Goldstein, Hitchings, Bergin, Benoly, Robinson, and Aspland. Many consecrated women have also ministered daily to poor sick Jews in connexion with it; and it has not wanted patients, for there has never been a time, we believe, when the number of applicants for treatment did not exceed the accommodation available. For now nearly thirty years it has prosecuted its ministry of mercy, bringing to the surface an immense amount of real and deep poverty and pain, but opening thousands of doors and ears to the Gospel message, and many hearts to receive salvation for time and eternity through Jesus Christ.

In April and May 1878, Mr. Wilkinson paid a missionary visit to Sweden. But this demands a chapter to itself.

May 31st, 1878, closed the second year’s existence of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews.

‘This morning our second £1000 for our second year was £25 short, but a cheque for £30 sent in by *The Christian* made it £5 8s. 9d. over the £1000. For this token of the Lord’s blessing, and of His personal superintendence of the Mission, we praise Him with all the heart.’

CHAPTER XIV

A Visit to Sweden

(1878)

MR. WILKINSON'S visit to Sweden, which occupied six weeks, was undertaken at the invitation of friends of Israel in that country with a view of strengthening their hands in their efforts to further Israel's cause. He was accompanied by the Rev. James Adler and his son Samuel (the writer of this volume), then fifteen years of age. The towns visited were Stockholm, Gothenburg, Upsala, Lund, Malmö, Jonköping, Norköping, Wilhelmsrö, and Wenselöf. Very large and enthusiastic meetings were held in most of these places, whilst the press notices, favourable and unfavourable, excited numbers of Jews to attend, giving wide opportunities of conversational as well as public witness to them. Mr. Wilkinson and his companions were overwhelmed with kindness and attention from friends in every place and on every hand. They also had the privilege of an introduction to the King. The following are notes from Mr. Wilkinson's diary :

' On the S.S. *Rollo*, en route from Hull to Gothenburg, April 13, 1878. About a dozen first-class passengers. We all enjoyed our breakfasts at 9 o'clock. I was asked to take the head of the table in the absence of the

Captain. I proposed we should in silence give thanks to God for our food. We had several Swedes in the hinder part of the steamer, to whom the steward was carrying beer; so after dinner, which, happily, we all enjoyed, we got out our parcel of *The British Workman* and distributed some in Norwegian and in German. The men received them with gratitude, and there was soon a long row of readers; one or two raised their hats and shook hands with me. . . . The opening of our parcel of *B. W.'s* gathered the passengers about us, and two Scotsmen manifested special interest: one was a Mr. Ferrier, a bookseller from Edinburgh, and the other a Mr. Boyes, a boot merchant. We were glad to recognise them as brethren in Christ.

'*April 14th.* Deeply thankful for a good night's rest. Rose at 8 o'clock. Breakfast at 9 o'clock. Asked the Captain—Captain Dosser—"Have you any service to-day?"

'Answer, "No, unless we have some clergyman on board, and he well enough and disposed to conduct one. You can have one if you wish."

"Thank you, Captain. I will conduct a short service from 11 to 12 o'clock."

'A notice was at once written out and placed in the saloon, and at about ten minutes to 11, one of the crew tinkled a big bell. We opened with silent prayer, then sang the 100th Psalm to the Old Hundredth tune from a book lent by Mr. Ferrier. After prayer and the Lord's Prayer, I expounded the first half of the 3rd chapter of John's Gospel, and closed with the Doxology, after prayer by Mr. Boyes and Mr. Adler. I closed at

11.55 with prayer and the benediction. The Captain, who was present, afterwards thanked me, and we paced the deck and had a long conversation for more than an hour on a variety of topics. The weather to-day is dull, but the sea beautifully calm. We enjoy walking, talking, food, sleep, indeed everything! At 4 p.m. we sighted the coast of Denmark.

'April 15th. Roused at 4.30 a.m. this morning, for we were into Gothenburg earlier than expected. Mr. Westerberg, my host in Gothenburg, sent a note on board at 6 o'clock to say he would call for us at 8 o'clock. Mr. Trouve entertained Mr. Adler. Mr. Trouve is pastor and editor of two periodicals. My host is an architect. Mr. Lindström met us at breakfast, and Dr. Nyström came in afterwards. . . . Our meeting to-night at 7.30 to 9 p.m. was attended by about 1500 persons; lobbies, aisles, staircases, and even the pulpit crowded—two women were in the pulpit. Dr. Nyström was my interpreter, and I expounded the priority of the Jewish claim, "first to the Jew." The Lord was with us, and I was greatly helped.

'April 16th. To-day we were out among the Jews, and had the 53rd of Isaiah in Hebrew placed in a window of the Mission Hall; numbers of Jews were looking at it, to whom we preached the Gospel. A cloud of smoke rose from the group, as they were nearly all smoking. . . . Another crowded meeting in the Mission Hall at 5.30; but it was about 6 before we began, for a crowd of Jews in the street kept Mr. Lindström, Dr. Nyström, Adler, and myself engaged in earnest conversation, which

resulted in their following us into the meeting. In the meantime the crowded congregation passed the time in song. Mr. Adler spoke about half an hour about his own conversion, in answer to those Jews and Christians who doubt the possibility of a Jew's conversion. I followed in the same strain, and spoke of all conversion as the work of the Holy Ghost, referring to Peter's sermon, as a sermon by a converted Jew which brought 3000 Jews to Jesus; then gave them an account of missions and results. . . .

'April 17th. Two hours spent this morning, 10 to 12 o'clock, with the Jews in the street first, and afterwards in the room adjoining the Mission Hall. Mr. Adler had the weight of the work out of doors and indoors, for he translated into German my address on the ground of our interest in the Jews, and the object of our mission to Sweden, urging them to come to Jesus as their Saviour. Samuel and I had then a walk on the rocks, commanding a good view of the town. The houses are mostly wooden, on a foundation of stone, and have many windows. After dinner, at 2.45 p.m., we had a drawing-room meeting at the Westerberg's. I expounded Romans xi. to the 25th verse. Mr. Westerberg translated. Hymn and prayer in Swedish. This was from 5 o'clock to 6.30. After tea we were off at once to the evening meeting from 7.30 to 9.30, held at the Workmen's Hall, which was packed. About 1600 were present—many of the more influential people in Gothenburg, including several Jews of the wealthier class. To our loving God be all the praise and glory! We went home to pack our

luggage for departure early to-morrow morning. The kindness of friends is almost overwhelming.

'April 18th. Called at 5.30 a.m. Breakfast at 6.15. Left our quarters in a fly and pair at 6.30, a little crowd of friends bidding farewell to us at the station. We left Gothenburg at 7 o'clock, and reached Stockholm a little before 10 p.m. Mrs. Lindström gave us a cordial welcome, and we are quite at home.

'We breakfasted (lunched?) and dined along the road. The country is undulating and rocky. We passed through pine forests all along, and observed many small and beautiful lakes. The journey was over new ground, and the weather, the company, and the scenery, made it simply charming. We had our cup of tea, a word of prayer, expressing gratitude to our loving God, and then enjoyed a sweet night's rest.

'April 19th. Good Friday. Stockholm. I preached in a synagogue which has been bought of the Jews for a Mission Hall. The initial words of the Decalogue in Hebrew were just over my head, and the words, "Unto my God will I call, and He will hear my voice from His sanctuary." The place was crammed, and people were coming away as we were going. I had to be pulled through the crowd. A gentleman said that we had 900 in a place intended only for 600. Some Jews were present. I spoke from Matthew xxvii. 37: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews," a text given me yesterday by Pastor Lindström on our journey. The following passages were referred to: Matthew ii. 2, John i. 11, "Came unto His own." Satan and disciples wished to

make Him King. Noblemen—far country—received from Ancient of Days (Dan. vii. 13). Without King (Hos. iii., iv., and v.; Acts ii. 29, 30; 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13; Luke i. 32; Acts i. 6; Mic. iv. 8; Isa. xxiv. 23; and Zech. xiv. 9). In the evening the place was crowded again. Mr. Adler spoke from “A bone of Him shall not be broken,” and “They shall look on Him Whom they pierced.” I said a few words on the part fulfilled and the part unfulfilled; the latter, the mourning, preceded by outpouring of Spirit and followed by fountain, etc. Many Jews present. Several came into the vestry. One knew Mr. Adler in Russia. Afterwards we had quite a congregation of them in the street. We gave them tracts, and appointed a meeting with them to-morrow.

‘*April 20th*, ’78. Had a pleasant walk this morning on the north-west side of the city, and got out into a fir-tree forest amongst rocks and moss and singing of birds. Returned about 2 o’clock for luncheon. 2.30 to 3.30 o’clock, went to the Mission Hall to meet Jews. Left Samuel with Mr. Adler there till 4.30. Had only seven Jews—one or two hoisterous ones. I met friends at dinner at 4 o’clock, and gave a drawing-room address 5.30 to 7 o’clock. Many stayed till 8 o’clock. Expounded Isaiah, and had great blessing. Mr. Lövenhjelm interpreted.

‘*April 25th*. Mr. Adler met the Jews this morning from 11 to 1 o’clock, and had twelve or fourteen, with whom he discussed Isaiah liii. and Daniel’s seventy weeks. My son Samuel, fifteen years of age, responded to a call to speak to seventy children. His subject was

"The cities of refuge"; Mrs. Anderson interpreted. In the evening, at 6 o'clock, I gave an address to another large audience in the Lutherska Missionshuset; subject, "Rejection of the Jewish nation; its causes, consequences, and duration." Colonel Broady interpreted. Mr. Adler spoke also about fifteen minutes.

'26th. Mr. Adler among the Jews in the forenoon, and in the evening we had a blessed meeting of about 1500 to 1800 persons in the large Baptist Chapel, when I spoke on the subject of "Israel's restoration in unbelief, and the time of Jacob's trouble." Dr. Nyström interpreted. Mr. Adler spoke about our itinerant mission to the Jews in England. Passing to-day a watchmaker's window in one of the squares, I observed the words "English spoken"; and thinking by the name and business combined it was a Jew's shop, I entered to speak of Jesus, and found the owner of the shop both amused and delighted, for he was an earnest Christian, and had been for four years a member of a church in London with whose pastor I was acquainted.

'27th. To-day being Saturday, Mr. Adler was again amongst the Jews, and I had another drawing-room meeting at Pastor Lindström's, and a blessed time we had as I expounded Zechariah viii.

'On Sunday, the 28th, we spoke at the University town of Upsala, where in Term time there are about 1500 law, medical, and divinity students. Mr. Adler addressed a large congregation in the forenoon. I gave an address at 12.30 in the College lecture hall, and had several students and professors present, and one or two Jews.

We opened with silent and vocal prayer, but had no singing. We had conversation and prayer in the afternoon with two godly students, one of whom had his mind exercised about a Mission to the Jews. In the evening there was a crowded anniversary meeting of the Y.M.C.A. from 5 to 8 o'clock, at which Mr. Adler and I both spoke, and then had a little sweet social fellowship with an aged missionary, Dr. Fjellstedt, who had laboured much in Turkey and in India, and is acquainted with about seventeen languages; and also with Dean Torèn, who rejoiced much, and embraced me on finding that I held the pre-millennial advent. Our visit to Upsala was a short but happy one. We returned to Stockholm early on Monday morning. Dean Torèn is translating the Bible into Swedish—a new translation from the original. He has been engaged on this work about fifteen years, and is now in Ezekiel.

'29th. Our meeting this evening was a large and happy one, held in the Bethlehem Church, where Mr. Scott, the Wesleyan missionary, commenced his mission in Sweden. Mr. Scott's name is still fragrant for zeal, wisdom, and success; for he was the honoured instrument of a great evangelical awakening in Sweden, which, carried on by the eminent Rosenius, has been the means of blessing to thousands; has called forth latent talent in the laity; and has led to the erection of large mission houses over the country, which are usually filled with eager listeners. In this Bethlehem Church this evening the Lord gave us power to speak on the subject of "The purpose of the present dispensation, and

the present duty of the Christian Church towards the Jews."

'The last day in April will always be a pleasant reminiscence to us. This morning we were received at the Royal palace, and introduced to His Majesty the King, who received us most graciously and shook hands with us. Mr. Berg, a member of the Upper House, kindly introduced us. We entered the palace about half-past ten in the forenoon. We were ushered into a large square anteroom with magnificent columns, chandeliers, mirrors, and ceiling. In this room were several officers brilliantly dressed, to two of whom—one an ex-Prime Minister—we were introduced.

'We waited nearly two hours for our turn, having inscribed our names on a sheet of paper which lay on a desk for those who wished to see the King. Our turn came, and we were called into a long and grand room which runs along the front of the palace. After waiting there a few moments, the Chamberlain called us forward and ushered us into another room—a small one—but into the very presence of the King. Mr. Berg introduced us to His Majesty in Swedish, telling him that we had come to interest the Swedes in the conversion of the Jews.

'The King replied, "I wish they were all converted."

'Mr. Berg said, "I told these gentlemen on our way to Upsala that our King was accessible to the humblest of his subjects; then Pastor Wilkinson said, 'I should like to see such a King.'"

'The King looked at Mr. Adler, and said, "You are a converted Jew?"

"Yes, your Majesty," replied Mr. Adler.

'The King said to my son, "Are you a Jew?"

'Mr. Berg replied, "No, this is Pastor Wilkinson's son."

'The King then said to me, "You are an Englishman?"

"Yes, your Majesty; and I wish to express to your Majesty how highly we appreciate your condescension in allowing us this honour."

'The King replied, "You over-estimate my conduct."

'I remarked that some one had said to me, "Why should you mind to see the King?" and I replied, "My Bible teaches me to 'fear God and honour the king';" and also "to pray for kings and for all in authority."

'The King replied, "Those in my position need prayer for them more than others do."

'I said, "It is so, your Majesty; the cares and responsibilities of monarchs are great. We shall earnestly pray that your Majesty's reign may be a long, peaceful, and happy one; and that when you are called to resign your crown to your successor, you may receive the crown of everlasting life."

'Tears stood in his eyes, and he bowed and said, "Thank you very much; God be with you."

'The King then shook hands with us all, gave my son a good Swedish pat on the back, and asked if this was our first visit to Sweden. We again thanked his Majesty for this mark of royal favour, and retired by the same way by which we entered. Our hearts pray, God save the King and Queen of Sweden!

‘During this day a sale of work was going on in the large room under the Baptist Chapel, in the interest of the Swedish Mission to Israel. We were announced to give an address in the evening on “Encouragements.” The meeting was at 7; the chapel was crowded long before. Mr. Adler greatly interested the people by an account of his own conversion and experience. I followed with the encouragements in the Three Certainties—first, Israel will be blessed; second, All who bless Israel will be blessed; and, third, Israel, when blessed, will be a blessing. The congregation sang in Swedish, “Dare to be a Daniel”; “Send me, send me”; and “Stand up, stand up for Jesus!” The singing would have been much more enjoyable if it had not been almost dolefully slow, though this may be only a matter of taste.

‘On Wednesday, 1st May, whilst Mr. Adler was busy with Jews at the Mission Hall (the old synagogue), Mrs. Tottie had gathered another full meeting in her drawing-room—all ladies, chiefly belonging to the Court. I spoke in English without an interpreter. The Lord gave me a message, and great freedom and blessing in delivering it. This meeting was from 11.30 to 1.30. Topics: Dispensations—Adamic, Patriarchal, Mosaic, Church, and Millennial; Relation of the Jew to the Divine purpose; Manner of preaching to the Jews; Ground of a sinner’s peace; Substitution; God’s estimate of the value of Christ’s work; “Not your own”; Separation; “Come out from the ungodly.” As I bowed adieu to run off to another engagement, several ladies rushed

to shake hands and to express thanks to the Lord, even with tears, for this happy meeting.

‘Mrs. Anderson and Mrs. Lindström then accompanied me to Mrs. Löwenhjelm’s Home for poor children, sixty-four in number. I addressed a few words to the boys on the subject of “Christ’s love to children,” and sang to them a little Hebrew song. They sang very sweetly “Whosoever will,” and “Come to the Saviour.” In the evening, from 6.30 to 8.30, I gave an address to a large drawing-room meeting, at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Löwenhjelm, in exposition of Zeph. iii.

‘*May 2.* Mrs. Tottie had kindly arranged to-day for my visiting the princess, the King’s sister, who is a sweet Christian; but her feeble state of health prevented the interview. She, however, sent her Christian compliments, expressing a hope that we should meet above. A baroness, who was at our yesterday’s meeting, wrote to Mrs. Tottie: “A thousand thanks, and again a thousand, for the meeting of yesterday”; stating that she and another lady had been giving a full account to their husbands, and now they wanted their husbands to hear. So we arranged for another meeting.

‘This evening we had our meeting in the Lutherska Missionshuset, at 6 o’clock; a full and blessed one. Many Jews were present. Subject, “God’s work among the Jews.”

‘*May 3.* This evening one of the most crowded and happy meetings held in Stockholm, in the Baptist Chapel, crammed with about 2500, who listened with breathless attention to an address on “The Second Coming

of Christ." Dr. Nyström interpreted. First, to be *expected*, because *promised*; second, *literal* because "in *like manner*"; third, *personal*, because "The Lord *Himself*"; fourth, *pre-millennial*, because to destroy Antichrist and to terminate war; fifth, *for* the saints as the *Church's hope*; and *with* His saints as the *world's dread*.

'The subjects being advertised and commented on in the daily press, though not always in a friendly spirit, sent numbers of Jews to our meetings, if only from motives of curiosity; and thus we had precious and favourable opportunities of dealing with Jewish consciences.

'*May 4.* This being Saturday, Mr. Adler was again busy with the Jews in pointing them to Christ, and I had another large drawing-room meeting at Pastor Lindström's, at 5.30 p.m. Mr. Anderson interpreted. Subject, "The interval between the first and second Advents of Christ; the gathering of the Church occasioned by the fall of the Jewish nation; partial blessing occasioned by calamity; universal blessing to be instrumentally caused by a restored and saved nation." This was followed by free conversation till 9 o'clock, after which a few friends had conversation and prayer to seek Divine guidance in establishing a Mission to the Jews in Sweden.

'*Friday, May 24, 1878.* On board the S.S. *Orlando* (Captain Watson). This morn we rose at 6 o'clock, packed our luggage, breakfasted at 8.30, then from 9.45

to 10.15 we gathered for praise and prayer. Mr. and Mrs. Westerberg, Pastor Lindström, Dr. Nyström, Mr. Adler, Samuel and I, composed our group. Mr. Westerberg read in Swedish the 121st Psalm, and I read it in English. I prayed in English, Pastor Lindström followed in Swedish, Mr. Adler in German, and Mr. Westerberg and Dr. Nyström in Swedish. We then walked down to the steamer, where Madame Ramsay, Captain Rinman, and others, were gathered to bid us farewell. The steamer lay off, so Pastor Lindström, Mr. Westerberg, Captain Rinman, and Markus, a converted Jew, accompanied us on to the steamer, and took final leave there. The morning is thick and rainy, and the wind seems rising; nevertheless, we trust ourselves wholly to the Lord, Whose Name we praise for His many, many mercies.'

CHAPTER XV

The Third Year of the Mission

(1878-1879)

‘*JUNE* 1st, 1878. The first day of our third year’s Mildmay Mission. Oh for whole-hearted consecration and abundant blessing on Israel this year!

‘*July* 1st, 1878. Afternoon—our Annual Tea-Meeting for Jews, Jewesses, and Jewish children, was held at the Conference Hall in Room No. 4. About 200 gathered. Mr. Hibbard kindly sent two vans to Wellclose Square at 3 p.m., and the children were in the Conference Hall grounds by 4 o’clock. The parents and others came by train. Skipping-ropes and balls were soon in full play. The children at intervals sang sweet hymns from *Sacred Songs and Solos*, as did also their mothers. We gathered for tea about 5 o’clock. The tables were beautifully adorned with flowers, as well as covered with substantial provisions. The deaconesses and other volunteers rendered loving service. . . . At 7 o’clock the meeting was commenced by silent and vocal prayer, the children repeating the Lord’s Prayer. Mr. Adler then read in Hebrew Isaiah iv.; Mr. Halb-million read the same in German, and I read and

expounded in English. Another hymn, and Captain Moreton prayed. The Rev. Mr. Hankin gave a sweet address on "Israel shall abide many days without a King . . . and without a sacrifice, etc.," showing that the Jewish and the Christian religions were alike based on sacrifice. Mr. Field also gave an address, and the children repeated passages of Scripture learnt in the Night School. They played again till 9 o'clock, when the vans were again filled for the return journey—the parents returning by train. The Lord gave us a fine day, notwithstanding the rain and storm on Sunday. Stones were thrown in Wellclose Square by angry Jews, but all escaped unhurt; to His Name be all the praise!

Later in the same month—July 1878—Mr. Wilkinson and Mr. Adler went to the north of England to evangelize the Jews. With varied receptions on the part of the Jews upon whom they called—sometimes civil, but as often bitter and abusive—they laboured for several days in Middlesbrough. After labouring the day through in visitation and chance conversation, a few Jews would be induced to come to their lodgings in the evening.

'Nine to a quarter past ten we had eleven Jews at once, and all paid respectful attention to our presentation of Christ as the true Messiah and only Saviour.'

The same faithful and apostolic work was continued at West Hartlepool. Here a circumstance arose which reveals Mr. Wilkinson's attitude in respect of Jewish

sensibilities, and which may well serve as an example to all engaged in work for God. One afternoon the following letter arrived :

‘SYNAGOGUE CHAMBERS, WHITBY STREET,
WEST HARTLEPOOL, *July 19, 1878.*

‘Rev. John Wilkinson and Mr. James Adler.

‘GENTLEMEN,—I am directed by the Wardens of the Jewish synagogue to inform you that they cannot permit you or anyone else posting bills on the Notice Board or any part of the synagogue, without their special permit.

‘Should you or any bill-poster disregard this notice, the Wardens will take the necessary legal proceedings to prevent a repetition of the same.—I am, Gentlemen, Yours respectfully,

‘J. F. MYERS, B.A.C.T., Hon. Sec., etc.,
West Hartlepool Hebrew Congregation.’

Mr. Wilkinson replied as follows :

‘73 SCARBOROUGH STREET, WEST HARTLEPOOL,
July 20, 1878.

‘DEAR SIR,—Yesterday a document came to hand purporting to possess official authority, forbidding the use of the synagogue notice board for our bills “without special permit,” and threatening legal proceedings in disregard of such warning. We at once supposed that the bill-sticker, who is employed by the printer and not by us, had in his simplicity and ignorance placed a bill on the “notice board of the synagogue,” so we went

at once to the synagogue to see and to apologise and explain. We were courteously received by the *Chazan* or *Schochet*—I do not know which—who told us that, so far as he knew, no bill had been placed on any part of the synagogue.

‘If his statement be correct, I think you will see that your warning and threat were premature and uncalled for. But should a bill have been so placed, it would have been done solely on the responsibility of the bill-sticker, of whom we have no knowledge—even in such a case we would gladly apologise; as the God of Israel knows, we have no wish to do otherwise than respect Jewish feeling, while conscientiously and faithfully urging on their unprejudiced attention the claims of Jesus to their acceptance as the promised Messiah and only Saviour. Jews and Gentiles have one short life to live here, and then eternity somewhere—where?—I am, with deep respect for your nation,
Faithfully yours, ‘J. WILKINSON.

‘J. F. Myers, Esq. B.A.C.T.’

Here is an illustration of the beautiful blending of fidelity to God and courtesy to man that always characterized Mr. Wilkinson. There are some over-zealous souls who would distribute tracts outside a synagogue as the worshippers leave, or conduct a street meeting at its doors. The instinct of true courtesy is a regard for the natural and proper feelings of others. “Be courteous,” “Honour all men,” are not incompatible with “Preach the Word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort.” But perhaps as against

these over-zealous souls, the greater number fail in the opposite direction and from too much consideration for the susceptibilities of others—say rather, too great a fear of coming into disfavour with others—sacrifice the principle of fidelity to the Gospel of which they have been made trustees. Mr. Wilkinson prayed and laboured to win Jewish children for Jesus; but we find that he would not accept a child in the Night School for Christian teaching except with the knowledge and permission of the child's parents. In the methods he was led to adopt in the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, we find a union of holy boldness in evangelistic enterprise with deep personal respect for the religious feelings of the Jews as well as for their parental and social rights. This we must ever emulate in continuing the work. It is impossible for any work to have the full and abiding blessing of God while it prosecutes its evangelization by methods which transgress Divine laws: and where judgements differ on such matters of conscience it is well to give attention to the views of those brethren who are *more*, rather than *less*, scrupulous.

‘The work at Hartlepool closed with a public meeting in the Athenæum. Passing on the next day to Sunderland, we deposited our luggage at Mrs. Rees’ house and went at once to the noon prayer-meeting, which was well attended. Expounded Isaiah iv. Dined with Mr. Longstaff, in company with Mr. Henry Moorhouse. . . . Meeting at Bethesda, 7 o’clock to 9. Large and influential meeting.’

After this special effort in the North, the work in London was once more resumed with the usual regularity

and vigour. The Saturday meetings at the Wellclose Square Mission Room were conducted by Mr. Wilkinson, and it is the writer's privilege to look back on an almost as regular attendance at these gatherings of Jews. The meetings were often very stormy, but Mr. Wilkinson managed them with infinite tact and patience. We never ejected anyone, so far as I remember, nor had we the means or strength to do so.

On the 23rd of September 1878, the diary contains the following note :

'September 23rd. Met the missionaries this morning, read journals, fixed our chapter for Saturday, and prayed together. Had earnest conversation with Rosenbluth—urged him to decide for Jesus.

'David Baron, from Hull, came to give himself to the Lord. . . . He is sent by Mr. Koenig. He came to see us at our hotel in George Street (Hull) in April of last year. The Lord make him a true convert.'

Thus we have the first mention of a name that is now widely known and esteemed in Christian circles, as one of the most beloved and gifted of living Jewish Christians.

The entry in the diary for October 16th describes a small prayer-meeting, but most fruitful in its issues, as the interest the late Miss Phillips took in the Jewish ladies of the Mildmay district ripened later into the Prayer Union for Israel.

'October 16th, 3 p.m. Prayer-meeting at Miss Phillips' to commend Miss Phillips, Mrs. Simpson, and Mrs. Noble, to the Lord on their commencing house-to-house

visitation among the Jews in Highbury, Mildmay, Canonbury, and Barnsbury. Mrs. Nachim has since joined Mrs. Noble, who will take the Barnsbury side, and the other two ladies, the Mildmay side. Present: Captain Chapman, Mr. Adler, myself and wife, Mrs. Pennefather, Miss Cooke, Mrs. Simpson, Mrs. Nachim, Miss Phillips, and another lady—ten in all. It was indeed a sweet hour of prayer.'

The two following days are also records of special interest.

'*Oct. 17th.* Noon meeting: Isaiah vii. 17 to viii. 18. Afternoon saw Mr. Gaze, and arranged to send through him £50 to Jerusalem for the purchase of olive wood, etc. At 7 o'clock examined David Baron as to his trust in Jesus, preparatory to baptism, and got him into the Night School at the Conference Hall. 9.30 p.m. had Dr. Funkenstein and his wife, and urged them to come to Jesus. He confessed the 53rd of Isaiah was a difficult chapter. Sometimes he wishes he had not so much light, for he is neither Jew nor Christian.

'*Oct. 18.* Letter from Sweden. Mrs. Tottie writes: "I have something very precious to tell you, that will gladden your heart. The other day I had a letter from Stockholm, telling of the blessed time there now—Lord Radstock working among the higher classes. One of these—a most attractive lady, belonging to the highest society and much sought after as a most elegant and refined lady of the world, married to a high officer in the Navy, has, since she heard Mr. Wilkinson at Mrs.

Tottie's drawing-room meeting, been in an awful state about her soul. And now, in these days she has found rest in the finished work of her Saviour and is now rejoicing in Jesus." Praise the Lord. This is the outcome of Second Advent truth.'

Later in the same month Mr. Wilkinson took part in the Missionary Conference in Glasgow, being the guest of Dr. Andrew Bonar. He returned to London on Saturday, November 2; and on Sunday, November 3, we find this entry in the journal:

'November 3rd. Conference Hall, evening address on the "Character and Mission of the Messiah." Isaiah ix. 6, 7. Lesson, Psalm ii. Text and lesson read in Hebrew. Jews of North London invited by posters and by advertisements in local papers. Many Jews were present—perhaps more than 100. The hall was crowded. I baptized, on their confession of faith in Christ, two young Jews—David Baron and Lewis Blaauw, the latter brought to Jesus at the "Strangers' Rest," and the former, the third convert from Hull, since our visit there in April of last year.'

Thus another year of life—strenuous but unhurried—ebbed away. The transition from the Old to the New year Mr. Wilkinson always spent with his wife alone and in prayer, till her death in 1897. Thus speaks the diary:

'December 31st, 1878. Attended this morning the Annual Prayer-Meeting of the China Inland Mission, from 11 to 12.30, then banked money for Mildmay

Mission to the Jews. Had a Watchnight as usual with my dear wife at home; the rest of the house went to places of worship. Surely goodness and mercy have followed us all our days. . . .'

And now the three years during which Mr. Wilkinson's personal support had been guaranteed were about to expire. For the future there was no human guarantee. Realising that it would be undignified to appoint himself a salary from the funds of the Mission he had founded, he determined to cast himself upon God. The same God Who had already set His seal to the new work by touching the hearts of His children in many places to spontaneously supply its needs, could provide for him and his family in the same way. At one time I think it was his desire, if not his prayer, that some wealthy friend might be led to bequeath him a sum which would supply his home necessities to the end of his life, setting him free to give undivided attention to his labours. But he soon saw that it would bring more glory to God and be better for himself to live the life of daily dependence on God, than to be put practically in a position of independence.

This is the first note on the subject that appears in the diary.

'1879, *January 14th.* Saw Captain Moreton and told him of what I had said in the Report of a personal character as to my future support—viz., that I proposed to receive what the Lord might dispose His people to send for personal use after the 31st of May next. He *entirely assented.*'

That God honoured this step of faith we need not say. Once only, in the many years that followed, was

there insufficient in hand at the beginning of the month to meet the month's household expenses. But before the month was many days old, the supply was in hand. It was Mr. Wilkinson's custom to accept only for personal use such gifts as were definitely so assigned; further, to apply from the sums received only such amount to personal and family necessities as was actually needed for that purpose: throwing over the overplus of unrequired money into the Lord's box. Thus he not only laid nothing by, but was never at any moment in a better position than if he had received a stipend commensurate with his family needs. This custom his son and successor—the writer of this volume—follows also. It has the great advantage on the one hand of preserving one from the temptation to hoard money or to be extravagant, and on the other hand of keeping one in the spirit of daily dependence on the faithfulness of our living God and Father.

The third year of the life of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews ran out therefore on the 31st May 1879. The regular meetings for Jews at 36 Wellclose Square all find record in the faithful journal. Almost every day is full of strenuous and useful service. In May we find Mr. Wilkinson searching in the East End for a suitable place for the new proposed Medical Mission. In the same month he baptizes, at Mildmay Park Wesleyan Chapel, Bertha Hyams, on her 24th birthday, a former domestic in the Rothschild family. Offers of money and a home were made to this convert, if she would remain a Jewess (in faith), but she refused.

I give the full journal record of the last day of the first three years of the Mission.

'1879, *May* 31. Wellclose Square, 3 p.m. Read and expounded Malachi iii. and iv. One Jew asked how

Christianity could be a religion of love when it condemned to all eternity all who did not believe in it. How can a Jew become a Christian when he is told to keep the law of Moses for ever? How can Jesus be the Messiah, when Elijah has not yet come? He then said, "If you offer the Jews the blood of Jesus to atone for their sins and also offer money, they will prefer the money. I came only for the Bible Reading; but most of these" pointing to the assembled Jews, "come for relief."

'The day closes our three years of work under the Mildmay Mission to the Jews. We are deeply grateful to the Lord Who has supplied all our needs. We asked him for £1000 a year, and this sum was sent in 365 days during our first year; the same for the second year; and in 363 days during the third year. This is besides the £200 special (for the Medical Mission) and the results of the Jerusalem sale.

"We will praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come."

CHAPTER XVI

Difficulties and Developments

(1879-1880)

DURING the latter part of 1879 a Jewish boy of 13 years of age, by name Moses Morris, became an attendant at the meetings at Wellclose Square. Mr. Wilkinson had frequent conversations with him, and always thought that the Lord had marked him out for Himself. Then the boy disappeared. After some weeks the news came that his father had apprenticed him to a tailor. Soon after the lad himself called upon Mr. Wilkinson in Mildmay Road with a sad tale of sorrow. He said he had been sent to a tailor in Church Street, Spitalfields, who had treated him cruelly, giving him kicks instead of food, locking him in a back room at night, where he slept on some straw on the floor. He ran away from his cruel master, who had sometimes kept him up at work till daylight broke. He ran home; but his father, a poor man, a teacher of Hebrew to a few Jewish boys—abused him, and cursed him, and told him to go and get his living somewhere.

Mr. Wilkinson gave him a New Testament, and prayed with him. The boy also prayed and thanked God for loving him and giving him Jesus to die for him, and said, "I do love You with all my heart." Mr. Wilkinson gave him food, and a shilling for food and

lodging, telling him to come again when that was done. He came again in a day or two, and accounted for his shilling in $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. breakfasts and 2d. dinners, etc. More food and another shilling were given him, and he was to see Mr. Wilkinson at Wellclose Square in a day or two. Poor boy, he came, but broken-hearted. He had been home, and his mother had asked him where he had slept the night before; he told her—at a lodging house.

“But where did you get the money?”

He told her—from Mr. Wilkinson.

“How much did you pay for the night?”

“Twopence-halfpenny.”

She said, “You must pay me the same, and you may sleep here.”

So the boy paid his mother $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., and when asleep his mother took all he had from his pockets. He cried and told his father, and asked for part back; but the father cursed him and told him he would get work quicker if he had no money, and once more he was turned into the streets—London streets! Mr. Wilkinson now arranged for Moses to have his lodging at one Christian’s house, and his food at another.

But this is where the troubles begin with a Jewish case. The brothers, hitherto indifferent to Moses’ fate, became suddenly zealous for his welfare. A few days after one of the brothers called on Mr. Wilkinson to fetch his little brother, showed the apprenticeship indentures, and threatened to take out a summons. The little fellow said he would not go. Mr. Wilkinson, however, persuaded him to go. But the lad said to his brother, “If I go with you and return to my Jewish master, I will work on Saturday, but not on Sunday; I believe in and love the Lord Jesus Christ, and I shall pray to God

in the Name of Jesus." The brother said he should not be interfered with. And so once more Moses disappeared.

Some days later, two elder brothers of Moses came to see Mr. Wilkinson at 79 Mildmay Road, to inquire if Moses were still in his care. Mr. Wilkinson told them that Moses had been there the week before to tell him of the cruelty he had suffered. His master had given him large pressing irons to work with, and when he could not use them, he abused him. The boy asked for other work that he could do, but the man would give him no other. He was sent home at twelve o'clock at night, and kept without dinner till four o'clock; so he went to the magistrate and was advised to take out a summons against his master. Mr. Wilkinson told the two Jews that they ought to protect their younger brother; but it seemed that all his relations had become his enemies because he believed in Jesus. "You justly complain," said Mr. Wilkinson, "of Christian persecution, and I condemn it as much as you do; but you know as well as I, that Jews can bitterly persecute their brethren who believe in Jesus." They looked condemned, and admitted the truth of the statement.

The case between boy and master was heard at Worship Street Police Court a few days later. Mr. Wilkinson attended the Court with Mr. Adler, and saw the boy in the lobby; also the father, two or three brothers, and the boy's master. One brother said to Mr. Wilkinson, "I suppose you want to be the boy's father; but that is his father"—pointing to the parent. Mr. Wilkinson replied, "I have nothing but kindly feeling toward you." After waiting three hours at the Court, the case was adjourned. Screaming was heard in the lobby. Mr. Wilkinson and Mr. Adler took a cab to Wellclose Square to see if the lad were there; but he

had not been, and they could but commit him to God in prayer.

The next day, however, he came to Mildmay Road. He said his brothers dragged him off from the Police Court, that he cried to the police to rescue him, but that they took no notice, so he thought he had better go with them quietly. They took him to a room at his father's, put him in a bed, covered his face with clothes, held their hands over his mouth so that he could neither breathe nor shout, till he could taste blood coming from his nostrils. They beat him with a stick, and made him promise that he would not go to the Wellclose Square Mission Room any more. But he made his escape nevertheless to Mr. Wilkinson. Mr. Wilkinson would not send him home again, so had Dr. Dixon to examine his body and asked Mr. Adler to find him a lodging. Mr. Borst, the good Christian German in charge of 36 Wellclose Square, had lent the boy a coat. This the brothers now brought back to him, and threatened Mr. and Mrs. Borst that if they took the boy in again they would smash their windows and knock the house down. Moses was their flesh and blood; and they would kill him rather than he should become a Christian, and Mr. Wilkinson must be careful what he did. Mr. Wilkinson now consulted a Christian barrister (the late Mr. Bleby) about the case.

Some days after, Mr. Morris, *Chazan* of St. John's Wood, another brother of Moses Morris, called at 79 Mildmay Road respecting his little brother, and asked Mr. Wilkinson to promise him that he would give him no more help, as the lad was disobedient and lazy. Mr. Wilkinson gave him a brief account of the case from the beginning, saying that the conduct of the relatives was a most discreditable piece of religious persecution; and that he could not, in the present state

of the case, deprive himself of his Christian and English liberty to relieve any case of distress on his own judgment. Mr. Wilkinson left, expressing regret that he had gained nothing by his visit.

The Police Court case came on again, but was once more adjourned. Moses went home with his brothers, who tormented him all the way to Whitechapel. In the night he contemplated escaping when all were asleep, but the key had been taken away. In the morning his master came to his father, and they wished him to go with the master to the Court, and to swear that Mr. Wilkinson had made him take out the summons and had kept him from his master; and then Mr. Wilkinson would have to pay £20. The boy said, "No, I will not swear that which is false." The father then went to the synagogue, and left the boy Moses in the care of one of the brothers, who frightened him by saying that he ought to have his bones broken, and be taken to a hospital, and then they could make him a Jew again. The father returned home and said to Moses' brother, "Take him to his master, and see if his master will go with you to Mr. Wilkinson's lawyer." When they got into Osborne Street, Whitechapel, the brother would not go, saying it was no use; so they went together to 1 Artillery Street to see an uncle, who shook hands with the boy and was kind to him, and held the brother in conversation in one room, till the boy had time to escape from another room. The boy escaped, and ran to Mildmay, fearful that he was followed by his brother. Mr. Wilkinson gave him eighteen-pence, and told him he must go and live where he chose till the case was settled. He left, pale and frightened.

The lawyer (Mr. Howard, introduced by Mr. Bleby) now advised the boy to drop the summons against his

master, as he had no witnesses on his side, and there were plenty against him, prepared to swear anything. Mr. Howard also counselled Mr. Wilkinson thus: "You must have nothing to do with harbouring the boy, or proceedings may be taken against you." Mr. Wilkinson replied, "Much as I may wish to serve and help the boy, I never did harbour him a single night in my house, nor can I, so long as his master has a claim upon him by the indentures and the father by parental right. All I have done hitherto is to give the poor boy a shilling or two now and then, to provide himself with food and lodging, pending the result of the summons against his master for cruelty, hoping that the result may be the cancelling of the indentures. This having failed, the boy must take his own course, committed to the care of his loving Saviour, Who will never leave nor forsake him."

Next morning Moses Morris called again at 79 Mildmay Road. Mr. Wilkinson told him the advice of the lawyer, and that he had better not go again to Wellclose Square, or call at 79 Mildmay Road, or write to him (Mr. Wilkinson); and then he (Mr. Wilkinson) could truthfully say, "I don't know where the boy is." The dear lad looked pale. Asked what Scripture reason he would give that Jesus was his Saviour, he replied by quoting in Hebrew, "All we like sheep have gone astray," and "Ho, every one that thirsteth." Mr. Wilkinson prayed with Moses, committed him to the Lord, gave him a few raisins with a kiss, and bade him good-bye. A few minutes later Moses' uncle came to look after him and to be his friend. It was this uncle who had aided him in his escape the previous Saturday. He seemed a quiet, honest working-man, a shoemaker, and, though not baptized, admitted the Messiahship of

Jesus, and said he trusted in Him for salvation. Mr. Morris said he had kept the brother in the room on Saturday till Moses had made his escape, and had since offered to take charge of the boy.

A few days later Mr. Wilkinson was called by letter to the office of Mr. Howard, the solicitor. There he was told this story.

A certain Mr. Boyd, who had seen the account of Moses Morris, as given in the daily papers, and who had been two or three times to the Mission Room at Well-close Square to inquire for the boy, had been to the lawyer and expressed a wish to have the boy. The lawyer, Mr. Howard, took the boy to Mr. Boyd, who asked the risks he would run in taking the boy. Mr. Howard told him, and he said, "I will take all risks." Mr. Boyd then called Mr. Howard into a private room and said—

"You have been candid with me, and I feel I must be candid with you. I am a Catholic, and if I take the boy, I shall send him to a priest to be educated for a Catholic priest."

Mr. Howard thanked him for his candour and objected to leave the boy. Mr. Boyd became somewhat roused in temper, and said, "The boy is as much mine as yours or Mr. Wilkinson's; and if he is willing, you have no right to interfere."

"True," said Mr. Howard; "but I was responsible for bringing him here, and I shall take the responsibility of taking him back."

Mr. Boyd said, "Let us call the boy and hear what he says."

It was agreed. Moses was called. Mr. Boyd said, "I will make a man of you, and do everything for you; but I am a Catholic."

Moses said, "I will serve you, and do everything I can to please you."

"Well," said Mr. Boyd, "but perhaps you will betray me and bring me into trouble. I cannot read your heart; you may wish to go back to the Jews."

Said Moses in reply, "You cannot read my heart, but God can."

"Well," said Mr. Boyd, "if I take you, I shall place you under the care of a priest."

"Do you mean a Roman priest?" asked Moses.

"Well, yes, that is what people call us," said Mr. Boyd.

"Then I would rather not," said the boy. "I would rather have nothing to do with a Roman priest."

"Oh," said Mr. Boyd, "but we worship the same Jesus as you do."

"Yes, but differently," said Moses; "and I would rather not go."

So ended the narrow escape from the clutches of Rome. Mr. Boyd had said to Mr. Howard, "If I take the boy and send him to a priest, you need not fear that his friends will ever find out where he is." Such is Rome!

On the Saturday following Mr. Wilkinson led the Gospel meeting at Wellclose Square as usual. Mr. Halbmillion, Mr. Baron, and Dr. Dixon also spoke. Mr. Wilkinson gave a brief account of Moses Morris. The mother of Moses was present with another woman, and came up after the meeting to speak to Mr. Wilkinson. They asked if Dr. Adler might come to see him. Mr. Wilkinson replied that of course Dr. Adler might come and make any inquiry, and he should have every courtesy shown him. As the missionaries left the meeting, they were shouted after, "Where is the boy of B: where is the boy of B?"

Subsequently Moses Morris and his kindly disposed

uncle called on Mr. Wilkinson. The lawyer had induced Moses to return to his relatives, and he was staying with the uncle. He had been to see his father and mother, who received him kindly. His brother, the *Chazan*, came over from St. John's Wood, written for by a sister. He was taken to a *Beth Hamidrash* to see Dr. Adler, junior, who appointed a meeting at his house in Finsbury Square in the afternoon. When there, the doctor asked the boy many questions, why he went to the Mission House, etc. Moses said that the Rabbi screamed at him, "You have done a wicked thing." The boy said he could not think so, for he had been brought to believe in the Lord Jesus, and that the Old Testament was full of the Lord Jesus. "Where?" asked Dr. Adler; and Moses replied, "In the 53rd of Isaiah." The doctor wished the boy to give him his hand, and swear before the Lord that he would not go to the Mission any more, but he refused. Once more committed to God in prayer, Mr. Wilkinson sent Moses home with his uncle, who told the brothers that if they beat the boy, he would summon them all.

But the uncle could not keep Moses always. He began to work again for his old master; but the cruelty and neglect were renewed, and Mr. Wilkinson could not refuse to help him from time to time. Moses bore much bitter persecution with patience.

On February 14th, 1880, Moses called for the last time at 79 Mildmay Road. Once more he poured out his story of petty cruelty in the missionary's ears. He had been turned out of bed by his brother, and, after a sleepless night, threatened by his father to be turned out if he did not go to synagogue. Mr. Wilkinson soothed him, and said his father did not perhaps mean it, he had spoken in anger; prayed with the lad and

persuaded him to go back, giving him a shilling to find a lodging in case he should be turned out. Mr. Wilkinson also advised him to go back to his master on Monday and offer his services, if allowed to rest on Sunday; if not, to ask the magistrate's advice. Mr. Wilkinson told him about the persecutions of Peter and Paul, and all that the prophets had to endure from unconverted Jews. The boy prayed, "O Heavenly Father, I thank You for taking care of me, though my father and my brothers persecute me. I shall still love You, and You will make all this trouble turn out for good. I wish to be a true follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Help me to bear all trouble with patience for Your sake. Bless my father and mother, brothers and sisters, and make them believe in the Lord Jesus as I do, that they may go to heaven."

And Moses Morris fades out of sight—as many such another case has done. His is an illustration of what falls sooner or later to the experience of every true-hearted witness for Jesus among the Jews. An apparently genuine work of grace—great and peculiar oppositions to it—an output of prayer, effort and heart-fibre—then, sometimes disappearance, sometimes disappointment. Those who look at the mere outward record of baptisms will never suffer quite as much as the worker who labours for the inward operation of grace. In the one case the record is made up, and very pretty it looks—so and so many baptisms into the Christian Church: what a successful work! In the other, there is often little to *show*, often a heart, aching though confident, a face smiling but tear-stained—and yet, here is a deeper work of God, a something that will shine brighter in the Eternal glory, when the grace that is called "overcoming" shall at last be recognised.

The Mildmay Medical Mission to the Jews was opened at Hooper Square, Leman Street, E., on 19th January 1880. A full and happy meeting of friends gathered. The diary says:

'I opened with silent and audible prayer: then read a few verses from Ezekiel xxxvi. and spoke on the authority, qualifications, and provision for the Lord's work. Mr. Hutchinson and Mr. Tod offered prayer, followed by Dr. Laseron and Mr. Halbmillion. I then gave a brief account of my personal call and work amongst Israel for nearly thirty years, and a history of the Mildmay Mission in general, together with an account of the origin and development of the Medical Mission, which had now ripened into full practice. Dr. Saunders then gave details of his work in St. Giles', which were of real and practical value; and stated that he had lacked for nothing since he had leaned only on the Lord, whilst he was in constant need when looking to a wealthy committee. Dr. Dixon and Mr. Mummery said a few touching and appropriate words, and Mr. Adler and Mr. Field prayed. I then pronounced the benediction. Cups of tea were handed round, and this happy meeting closed.'

The next day the Medical Mission was thrown open to Jewish patients. Dr. Dixon had five in-patients, and two cases to visit. Precious beginning! This one department now ministers to between 28,000 and 30,000 cases annually. Nor have the supplies yet failed since the keynote of leaning on the Lord only was set on the opening day.

About this time we find Mr. Wilkinson speaking

much to the students at the Missionary Training School known as Harley House, Bow; instructing them in truth about Israel, and answering their many interesting questions. The question of suitable training for men, either of Jewish or Gentile birth, who had the call of God to become missionaries to the Jews, had now already come up. Evidently Mr. Wilkinson had first thought of the Pastors' College at Newington as a College likely to provide much of value to the prospective Jewish missionary; for in 1879 he received the following from Charles H. Spurgeon:—

‘NIGHTINGALE LANE, BALHAM,
SURREY, Oct. 10, '79.

‘DEAR SIR,—I could not receive your friend, for we have all I can educate *now*. I may also add that we seek to educate men for pastorates over Baptist churches; and I suppose your friend would hardly come up to our idea. Mr. Guinness's is the place for him.—Yours heartily,

C. H. SPURGEON.’

To Mr. Guinness's Mr. Wilkinson accordingly turned. Among the Jewish Christians whom he placed there for training for their future sphere among Israel or the nations were David Baron, Henry Barnett, John Goldstein, Henry Goodman, and Solomon Ginsburg. At a later period candidates were also passed through the Bible Training Institute at Glasgow, and the Alliance Bible Training School at Berlin. But the need still remains for a small Training Institution, specifically for preparation for work amongst the Jews, of pronouncedly spiritual character, and with a curriculum embracing Hebrew, Aramaic, Yiddish, Jewish Literature, ancient and

modern, and the Worship of the Synagogue. I have the deepening impression that there could be no memorial to my beloved father's life and testimony for Israel that would be so suitable, so permanent, or so fruitful, as a Jewish Missionary Training School, established in London.

CHAPTER XVII

Progress and Extension

(1881-1884)

THE last note in the journal for 1880 is as follows :

‘Another year is gone ! Oh that each one as it flies rapidly away may be filled with loving, obedient service to our blessed Lord ! During the year have been privileged to give forty-one public addresses to Jews ; 204 services on Israel’s behalf among Christians, in sermons, lectures, drawing-room addresses, and Bible readings in town and country ; itinerant mission to Jews in Bath and Bristol ; and unnumbered conversations with individual Jews. Blessed Lord, accept these poor services to Thine own brethren for Thine own Name’s sake, and cover with Thy cleansing blood all imperfections and sins.’

In July of 1881, Mr. David Baron, having completed his course of training at Harley House, joined the Mission staff of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, which now numbered seventeen workers. Monthly reports of the work of the Mission were now given in *Service for the King*, the monthly magazine issued from the Mildmay Conference Hall, the first articles in 1881 being the story of Mr. Baron’s life and

conversion, told in his own words. In the same month (July 1881) Mr. Adler and Mr. Baron were sent by Mr. Wilkinson to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dundee, to preach Christ to the Jews. This was at the request of many Scottish friends of Israel. There was not only blessing on this, Mr. Baron's first missionary tour, in reaching eighty or ninety Jews in a day, but some interesting incidents which Mr. Wilkinson was fond of telling. Before the two brethren left London for Scotland, Mr. Wilkinson wrote them a cheque for £20, asking them to use it for their travelling and living expenses while away, as economically as possible, and to send for more when needed; but on no account to ask anyone for a donation or subscription. On the very day on which they left Edinburgh for Glasgow, before they reached Glasgow, a gentleman of that city, having heard of this intended mission, sent Mr. Wilkinson the sum of £20 in bank notes, asking to be allowed the privilege of aiding the mission to Scotland. When the missionaries left Edinburgh, their Christian landlady would not charge for their lodgings, and the godly cabman who drove them to the station likewise refused his fare. It is interesting to relate that after they had secured their lodgings in Edinburgh, they were told that the godly cabman referred to, with another friend of Israel, had been praying again and again in that same room, that the Lord would send some messengers to the Jews of Edinburgh. Later in the autumn of the same year, Mr. Baron was sent again to Glasgow to continue the work.

At the conclusion of the first year's work of the Medical Mission at Hooper Square, it had ministered to 5566 cases. The year 1881 showed a marked increase, indicating that this, the first Christian medical effort

among the Jews in London, had taken hold upon the people for whom it was set on foot.

A new need now presented itself—a workshop and temporary Home for Jewish Inquirers. Two vacant bedrooms at the Mission Room in Wellesloe Square had been furnished, and were occupied by two young men who were receiving instruction in the faith. Several others applied, some asking to be taught a trade.

Nor had this scheme been without tokens of God's approval. On 23rd April 1881, we find the following diary note:

‘This evening received a letter from a clergyman in the Isle of Wight, enclosing cheque value £50 towards the carpenter's shop. The word in my address which the Lord used was what some Christian ladies had said when giving £200: “Our Lord is coming, and perhaps soon, and He must not find us too heavily weighted down with gold when He comes.” To our faithful God be all the praise!’

It was towards the close of the year, however, before any definite step was taken.

‘*November 7th, 1881.* Met the missionaries at 10 a.m., read journals, and had prayer together.

‘We had long prayed for guidance as to a Home for Inquirers and a workshop. We first thought of a carpenter's shop, but we received no light in this direction. We then thought of bootmaking; but great difficulties presented themselves here. We then thought of printing, and as soon as we had fixed our thoughts on this branch, the Lord opened our way at once. About

12 o'clock to-day I went on to see Mr. Mathieson, to inquire in what relationship Mr. M'Cluer stood to the Conference Hall, with the idea of utilising him as our manager. Mr. Mathieson then said perhaps we might get a house on Newington Green at the corner of Mildmay Park. I went at once to look, and called on Mr. Hibbard, whose son told me they had No. 7 on the Green to sell for £700 freehold. I said, "Tell your father to lose no time in looking after it for me." Mr. Hibbard came down in the evening. He would try and get it for £650. He went that night to the city to see Mr. Hall, the owner. Another gentleman was at the door to see about the same house. Mr. Hibbard secured it for £675. It was then discovered that the tenant now occupying the house had a right by written agreement to take the house on a repairing lease after next June, when his first year's tenancy ceases. This was pointed out as effectually barring our purchase. Mr. Hall engaged to see the tenant and arrange with him, as he thought he would be glad to be relieved. This was done the next day, and we thanked our God for His guiding hand.'

The Mission had now—at the close of 1881—been five and a half years in existence. Its expenditure and income were both about £2000 a year. Mr. Wilkinson's personal and family needs were also being spontaneously met by some of the Lord's stewards. The Night School for Jewish Children was now established, and also the Sewing-Class for Jewesses. Between fifty and sixty Jewish women now regularly attended this weekly class, in which Christian ladies taught them the use of the needle; the Mission found the calico and materials, and

gave each woman sixpence for two hours' work. The garments were sold to them at a reduced price. The simple Gospel of Christ was proclaimed at every meeting to these poor unlettered ones, many being the strange remarks made and questions asked.

Much had also been done in itineration through the provinces for the definite purpose of preaching Christ to all accessible Jews. The plan was to engage lodgings in the Jewish quarter, place in the window the 53rd of Isaiah, and issue bills inviting Jews to come at stated times. In many cases the Jews came and filled the missionaries' rooms till late at night. All the towns on the east coast had thus been visited, the towns on the south coast, some parts of the west of England, and most of the towns in Scotland where Jews were located. It was through this instrumentality that Mr. David Baron, amongst others, was brought to Jesus. In his own words, "I had come simply from curiosity and a wish to argue and refute Mr. Wilkinson."

Then the Medical Mission, as we have seen, had developed its ministry to large and growing numbers of Jews in the East End of London. The first honorary dispenser was beloved Mr. Mummery; the first deaconess helper, Miss Marriott of Mildmay.

The regular Gospel meetings were continued at Wellclose Square; also a small Night School for Jewish men, to aid them in acquiring English.

As 1882 dawned, it was with the lurid light of Jewish persecution in Russia. It was the beginning of the modern recrudescence of anti-Jewish political and popular persecution, which has not yet died away. A meeting of protest was held at the Mansion House on 1st February 1882. Mr. Wilkinson wrote:

'We called attention in November last by a lecture at

the Conference Hall to the wrongs inflicted on the Jews in Russia and in Germany, and sent a collection of £12 to the sufferers. We pray the Lord may stir our entire country on Israel's behalf.'

Thus the Mildmay Mission to the Jews was identified from the very beginning with the work of Christian relief of oppressed Jews. Yet this "Social Wing" was surely a most essential part of testimony for Christ to Israel, and did not in any way detract from the spiritual aims of the work. To Mr. Wilkinson's eye these outbreaks indicated the commencement of the closing scenes of this age, and the shortness of the time for testimony to the Jews. To him the first instalment of the restoration of Israel to Palestine was very near. To us it is all but an accomplished fact. "In preaching Christ to Jews," he wrote at that time, "we fulfil a binding obligation as British Christians: but we do more, we also preach Christ to numbers of Jews rushing to our shores from the foreign oppressor."

It is striking to note that in 1882, as now, the anti-Jewish feeling ran highest in Russia, Roumania, and Morocco. The anti-Semitic movement in Germany—born in 1878, though the word was still unuttered—was also now striking root and spreading under the powerful eloquence of Stöcker and his following. So that Mr. Wilkinson had cause to say:

'The Jews in Russia, Roumania, Morocco, and Germany will probably be amongst the first to return; while those in Holland, France, the United States and Great Britain will be the last, on account of the freedom they enjoy, and the easy circumstances in which so many of them are placed. This will afford Christians

in England a little more time for discharging the imperative duty of testifying to the eighty or one hundred thousand Jews in our midst, that Jesus is the Messiah and only Saviour. Much needs to be done in a short time, and most Christians are sadly in arrears.

‘A police officer met me one Monday morning in the streets of St. Ives, Cornwall, and put half a sovereign into my hand and said, “I heard you preach three times yesterday, and got more light on the Bible and about the Jews than I ever got before. Please accept this.” “Thank you, officer; but can you afford this sum?” He quietly said, “I will, for I am in arrears to this cause.” May all who are in arrears respond to the promptings of Christ’s love and to the claims of Israel.’

The arrangements for the new Printing House and Home for Inquirers were not all plain sailing. The house that had been purchased could not be utilised as desired, and it became necessary to part with it—though this was done without loss. No. 49 Newington Green was then taken at a yearly rental. Mr. M’Cluer and his entire printing plant were taken over in October 1882, Hebrew type was purchased, and the Home was opened by praise and prayer on 7th November of that year. At 10 o’clock on the evening previous to the opening, a working man called on Mr. Wilkinson at 79 Mildmay Road, threw his old cap on the floor, and asked how much it would cost to keep and train a young Jew in the New Home for a year. “Thirty-five pounds,” was Mr. Wilkinson’s answer. He drew thirty-five new sovereigns from his pocket, filled his hand with them, and as the two knelt in prayer, the man said to God, “Of Thine own have I given Thee.”

The growth of the Medical Mission work necessitated larger premises and the help of a second medical man. After consultation with the Rev. James Stephens, of Highgate, Dr. Marshall's partial services were engaged. His services in the Mission for over four years were much valued, and we believe he looks back on the connexion with true pleasure and thanksgiving.

While God's guidance was being sought regarding new premises for the Medical Mission, another need became apparent—that of a Convalescent Home for the patients of the Medical Mission. The money for this was given in answer to prayer: but the Home was not opened till 5th February 1884. In the lawsuit in which the Mildmay Mission to the Jews was concerned in 1906 and 1907 with the Charity Commission, the question largely turned on whether the sum of £1166 6s. 7d., given by the late Mrs. Mullings to Mr. Wilkinson, was placed absolutely at his disposal, or given specifically to the establishment of the Convalescent Home.

In *God Answers Prayer* Mr. Wilkinson thus tells the story:

‘I well remember one Saturday evening, after returning from preaching to the Jews at the East End, and having rested awhile after tea, I resolved to visit a delicate lady in Mildmay, and try to minister a little comfort to her and pray with her. On taking leave of her, she said, “Wait a minute. I have heard that you desire a Convalescent Home for Jews?” “Yes,” I replied; “we are waiting on God about it.” The lady walked upstairs, and returning, put an envelope into my hand, stating, “You will find £500 inside towards this object.” During the next month I gave an address at

the residence of a nobleman in the country, and mentioned this fact, at the same time stating that we should wait on God for more before we attained our object.

'The next day a lady present at that meeting wrote a letter to the Countess, at whose house the meeting was held, stating that it had been laid on her heart to give £1000. The letter was sent to me in my room, and with the letter in my hand I knelt and praised the Lord. Some property in investments was sold out, and the amount realised was £1166 6s. 7d. The cheque for this exact amount was sent to me. The Home was purchased and furnished, and scores of Jews have under its roof received physical benefit and spiritual blessing. To God be all the glory!'

Letter from Mrs. Mullings to Mr. Wilkinson.

'STANTON, QUEEN'S ROAD, WESTON-SUPER-MARE,
January 16th, 1883.

'DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—I have just arranged with my bankers here (Messrs. Stuckeys) to sell the Railway Debenture and pay it, as you direct, to the London and Provincial Bank, Kingsland Road, N., to the account of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews; and I shall be glad to hear that you have received it safely.

'They say that it will produce nearly £1200—by referring to the papers. I forget exactly what he said: but I think within £10 or £20.

'I have just received the January dividend, and he said it would be better to sell it than to transfer it, as the expense in the latter case would have been double.

'I write in a hurry to save the post—and can only

repeat what I said before, that I am overwhelmed with the goodness of God in permitting me—less than the least of all—to contribute something to this noble work.

—With kindest regards, ever sincerely yours,

‘E. F. MULLINGS.’

‘THE LONDON AND PROVINCIAL BANK LIMITED,
560 KINGSLAND ROAD, LONDON, E.,

February 1st, 1883.

‘DEAR SIR,—I have this morning received for the credit of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, £1166 6s. 7d., per Stuckeys’ Banking Co., Weston.—Yours truly,

‘W. H. YOUNG.

‘Rev. J. Wilkinson, 79 Mildmay Road, N.’

In 1884 the Medical Mission recommenced its work in the new premises in Cannon Place, Whitechapel Road, which were taken at a rent of £60 a year, the 53rd of Isaiah and other texts being displayed in the windows as a silent but constant testimony to the passers-by. Four Jewish Christian missionaries were now fully engaged—Messrs. Adler, Baron, Halbmillion, and Barnett. A number of ladies also assisted in the various departments of Sewing-Class, Night Schools, and Medical Mission, a sweet and memorable figure amongst them being the late Mrs. Coley. Still another burden was laid upon Mr. Wilkinson’s broad and sympathetic heart, that of a Home for Destitute Jewish Children. In June 1884 he wrote :

“‘Ask the Lord and tell His people,” has been our principle from the beginning. We have one outstanding project unrealised, and about which we are seeking the Lord’s guidance, and that is a “Training Home and

Schools for Destitute Jewish Children," a work surely dear to the heart of our precious Lord. We would like to purchase a property in Mildmay, which, with furnishing and other expenses, would not cost less than £3000. The Lord has wonderfully cheered me during the last few days by disposing one of His stewards voluntarily to write to me and offer £1350. Another has given £50, and others a few smaller sums, making in all about £1450. We are full of hope that the Lord intends to honour us with this institution also. . . .

' . . . In the meantime we earnestly ask the constant prayers of the Lord's people, that whatsoever our hands find to do, we may do it with all our might, remembering that the "Coming of the Lord draweth nigh."'

Much of the character of John Wilkinson, as well as of the growth of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, the methods of its support, and the type of its supporters, may be gathered from the correspondence addressed to Mr. Wilkinson about this time.

From the late Rev. Dr. Horatius Bonar to Mr. Wilkinson, enclosing an original hymn :

' 10 PALMERSTON ROAD, GRANGE,
EDINBURGH, *October 26, 1882.*

' MY DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—I sat down last night and wrote a few verses for you, which I enclose. I hope they will serve your purpose. I enclose a piece on Egypt, of which you can make what use you like. . . .

' . . . My hands are full, but I did not like to refuse such a request as yours.—I am, Yours very truly,

' HORATIUS BONAR.'

From the late Rev. Dr. Andrew Bonar to Mr. Wilkinson:

‘GLASGOW, *November 8th*, 1881.

‘MY DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—Last night I was present with Mr. Baron at a most interesting meeting of Jews—fifteen in number—and could at once see that the stagnant waters had been stirred by Mr. B.’s visit. I am very thankful that he has been able to make an impression and a good beginning. Yours be the blessing from Israel’s true Aaron, Numbers vi. 24, 25, 26; and may I come in for a share as one that loves Israel.

‘ANDREW A. BONAR.’

From the same:

‘20 INDIA STREET, GLASGOW,
June 4, 1883.

‘MY DEAR BROTHER,—A friend has empowered me to send you £50 for the “Mildmay Mission to the Jews” at my suggestion. For we do owe your Mission much, inasmuch as you sent us such a labourer as Mr. Baron. Are you going to recall him to London?—Yours truly, dear brother—hoping soon to see you face to face,

‘ANDREW A. BONAR.’

From the same:

‘LISMORE, BY OBAN,
July 25, 1887.

‘MY DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—Mr. Miller has sent me the letter of our brother Rabinowitz—of which he has kept a copy—and I now return it to you. It is most interesting, and may well draw out our sympathies and prayers.

‘Beyond doubt, the Shepherd of Israel is gathering His

sheep—preparing for the day of Bozrah—Micah ii. 12, 13.
—Yours truly, dear brother, ANDREW A. BONAR.'

Another matter which came into prominence in the lawsuit already referred to, was the original trust deed of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews. By this deed Mr. Wilkinson passed over in 1885 the property of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews to trustees. Before doing this, he sought the advice of the late Mr. George Müller, of the Orphan Homes, Ashley Down, Bristol, and received the following reply:

‘NEW ORPHAN HOMES NO. 3, ASHLEY DOWN,
BRISTOL, *December 30th*, 1884.

‘MY DEAR BROTHER,—1. Seek for a *Christian* solicitor, a decided Christian, and one who is accustomed to *such kind* of business. If these two points are not combined I do not employ him.

‘2. I reserved to *myself* for my lifetime, the full power, though I had the property conveyed to eleven Christian gentlemen.

‘3. I also reserved to myself the power of appointing a successor.

‘4. I do not know that it would appear suitable that Mr. Wilkinson is one of the trustees.

‘5. The deed should be enrolled in Chancery, after all is completed.—Yours affectionately in our Lord,

‘GEORGE MÜLLER.’

From the late Mr. James Wright to Mr. Wilkinson:

‘NEW ORPHAN HOMES NO. 3, ASHLEY DOWN,
BRISTOL, *Feb. 4th*, 1885.

‘DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—I have the joy of sending you, with Mr. Müller’s and my own brotherly love, the

enclosed £10, as pecuniary help in your service for the Lord.—Believe me, Yours very truly,

‘JAMES WRIGHT.’

From the late Rev. Dr. James H. Brookes of St. Louis, Missouri, to Mr. Wilkinson :

‘ST. LOUIS, MO., *Feb. 12th*, 1885.

‘MY DEAR BROTHER,—It is in my heart to prepare something for publication on this side of the Atlantic about your work among the Jews. My hope is that it may awaken attention to this important Mission, and call forth at least a little practical help in carrying it forward. At all events it may serve to show that earnest and intelligent efforts are being made in the mother country to preach Jesus to God’s elect nation ; and this is more than is done in this boastful land of liberty, which furnishes freedom and a refuge to the Jews, and leaves him alone in his blind rejection of the Messiah.

‘May the Lord bestow bountifully according to your need, and give you great joy, in the sure anticipation of His word of approval at His coming. “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.”

‘With much love to dear Mr. Mathieson and his wife, and to Mrs. Wilkinson,—Yours in Him for Whom we wait,

JAMES H. BROOKES.’

From the late Miss Annie Macpherson to Mr. Wilkinson :

‘HOME OF INDUSTRY,
60 COMMERCIAL STREET, SPITALFIELDS, E.

‘DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—There is a stir in our neighbourhood among the Jews, and we have tried in our feeble way (having many other works in hand) to gather men on Saturdays, and have had twenty to thirty sometimes. Also, for a time we had Jewish children to learn to sing, etc. But I now write to ask if you will give us an address at our Workers’ Meeting, Wednesday, 15th, 7 to 8, to stir up Christians to much prayer for these many thousands of Jews around us.

‘I send a messenger to await your reply.’

From the late Dr. A. Moody Stuart to Mr. Wilkinson :

‘ANNAT, ERROL, PERTHSHIRE,
May 19th, 1886.

‘MY DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—It has given me the sincerest pleasure to hear that you are to address our Assembly on Friday evening. It is now a great many years since I heard you preach in St. Luke’s Church on the Jews, when I was deeply interested in your discourse. My own days of working and pleading for Israel are now past; but I feel myself a debtor to every man who takes an interest in God’s ancient people, and still more to one who, like yourself, has devoted his life to labour for their ingathering and salvation.

“Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion.” May the Lord Jesus Christ stand by you in pleading for His kinsmen according to the flesh.—Ever affectionately yours,
A. MOODY STUART.’

CHAPTER XVIII

Joseph Rabinowitz

(1884-1885)

THERE is surely a blending of human will and Divine power in that quality of faith which gets its wants supplied. "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." A wind-driven wave and a vacillating man represent unproductive effort and wasted strength. "Let not that man think that he shall receive *anything* of the Lord." A statement dreadful in its significance!

The Home for Jewish Children, that lay as a need on Mr. Wilkinson's heart, was not immediately given. There was a time of waiting, but no time-wasting, or wavering. Trial of faith is spoken of by some as if it were a calamity. Do they not see that our difficulties are God's opportunities? "We have seen," Mr. Wilkinson wrote at this time, "the Lord's hand in *prevention*, and we are full of confidence that we shall also see his hand in provision."

Gracious gift—to see God's hand. And with no other eye than the eye of faith. Here was another characteristic of dear father, which must not be unmentioned—his recognition of God in all circumstances—accidental and incidental. For some garden outing for his poor Jews he might desire fine weather—and pray for it.

Was it sunny? he saw God's love in the balmy sunshine. Cloudy? He noted that the heat had been graciously tempered. Windy? That the fog was dispersed and the roads dry. Wet? Well, the farmers wanted rain if we did not. Is this making the best of circumstances; or is *seeing* God's hand a different thing altogether?

So the Home for Jewish Children waited, and was not opened till 1885. Meantime a remarkable movement took place in South Russia, which entered much into Mr. Wilkinson's life and work.

The author of this movement was a Jewish lawyer, of high character, named Joseph Rabinowitz, who in 1882 was deeply moved by the persecution of his brethren in South Russia, and set out for Palestine in order to promote schemes for restoration. Apart from any missionary influence, he came back with his conceptions of Jesus Christ completely revolutionised; avowed his faith in Him as the true Messiah; traced the cause of the dispersion and sufferings of the Jews to their rejection of Jesus; and expressed his belief that restoration to Palestine depended upon an honest national acknowledgment of these facts. Rabinowitz formed a league called the "Sons of the New Covenant," for which he drew up twelve articles of faith, which, though embodying a tenacity to national rites and customs—such as circumcision, the Jewish Sabbath and the Passover feast, yet acknowledged the Messiahship and vicarious sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Kischinew, the capital of Bessarabia in South Russia, as the home of Joseph Rabinowitz, became the centre of the movement; which greatly stirred the Jewish mind.

Mr. Wilkinson watched this sign of life among the Jews with the deepest interest, and in the summer

of 1884 wrote a letter to Mr. Rabinowitz, with Christian salutations, asking for further news as to the origin, history, and position, of the movement. It elicited a reply—which quivers with the prophetic spirit, and is as full of point to-day as in 1884. I give some extracts from it:

‘HONOURED MR. JOHN WILKINSON,—

‘Your precious letter, together with the little book, *The Lord’s Work among the Jews*, has reached me. My heart delighted greatly in reading both, when I saw how great and strong is your heart’s love to the brethren after the flesh of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah; and how dear the salvation of Israel is in your eyes. . . .

‘. . . Beloved of God, I write to you that since my feet have trodden the holy city of Jerusalem, and I beheld the place where they pierced Him, the Lord has opened my eyes to see in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, concerning the salvation; and I have tasted a little of the *secret* (סוד, *sod*) which is still, to the great sorrow of my heart, hidden from the most of our Jewish brethren till now.

‘I now devote absolutely my person and my name to my cast off and backsliding people: to proclaim to them with a forehead of brass, in the power of God, the Gospel of the promise which was given to our forefathers, that this Man, Jesus of Nazareth, of the seed of David, Him God hath raised according to promise to be the Redeemer of Israel; and that only through the riches and wisdom of God, our forefathers, the men of

the promise, have gainsaid and rejected Him; in order that through their unbelief He might have mercy on the Gentiles who have found salvation. But now, as multitudes of Gentiles have been gathered in, the time has arrived for us and our Jewish brethren to return to the God of Israel and to our King; to be beloved before Him for our fathers' sakes, and to take possession of our inheritance, the inheritance of Jacob, to the fullest extent as lawful heirs, the sons of Abraham, disciples of Moses, and faithful servants of the house of David for ever. Our fulness will be our own riches and the riches of the Gentiles, according to the word of God through St. Paul, the first-born of repentant Israel, and the first of the first-fruits of the riches of the Gentiles.

‘Amongst my brethren and in the congregation I say plainly, Arise, shake off thy dust, put on thy beautiful garments, my people, through the son of Jesse—Jesus of Bethlehem; God will do great things with thee, Israel, and will also do great things for the nations of the earth (Psalm cxxvi. 2, 3). . . .

‘. . . There are many and great among our brethren of the house of Israel who are hoping and longing for that hour—the hour of the grace of God. In the name of all those in Russia who long for the salvation of Israel: my request to all the lovers of the Lord Jesus Christ, wherever they be, is that they be not silent. Let them take counsel together; let them talk over the subject together, until God has magnified to us also Himself, and His habitation, till all who see us shall say that

we are the seed that the Lord hath blessed.—An Israelite indeed.

JOSEPH BEN DAVID RABINOWITZ.'

Mr. Wilkinson's first desire on receiving this letter was to go over to Bessarabia with Mr. Adler and see Mr. Rabinowitz and his work on the spot, and possibly bring him back with him to London for testimony to the Jews. But, willing to stay or go, he sought the Lord's guidance. And God ordered differently.

Early in 1885 Mr. Wilkinson had personal interviews with the late Rev. Prebendary Reynolds, of the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews, and with the late Rev. Dr. Saphir, respecting Mr. Rabinowitz; and especially concerning two points: the advisability of his being immediately baptized, and the question of his personal support. There was a decided agreement that Mr. Rabinowitz should not be pressed into baptism, but left to his own judgement and conscience. For his personal support both Mr. Wilkinson and Dr. Saphir became channels of help to him, as gifts were entrusted to them by friends in England and Scotland.

Instead of Mr. Wilkinson going to Kischinew, or Mr. Rabinowitz coming to London, it was arranged for both to meet in Berlin in March 1885. "If the Lord will," wrote Mr. Wilkinson at the time, "I should like to get for his (Rabinowitz's) work about £500, and either take it or send it to Germany. I have proposed to meet Mr. Rabinowitz in either Leipzig or Berlin about the 12th of March, to look each other in the face and have conference and prayer together. . . . The Lord permitting, our beloved brother Adler will accompany me."

But before this journey and meeting took place, the waiting time for the Home for Jewish Children had come

to an end. Premises had been secured on Newington Green in January 1885, and were furnished and prepared for the opening on 20th February. The diary note on that date is as follows:

'February 20th, Cromwell Lodge: 27 Newington Green. Dedicated this house to-day to the Lord, by praise and prayer, as a Home and School for poor Jewish Children. Sixty or seventy friends present, and a very hallowed meeting we had. I presided and opened with silent and audible prayer. We sang during the meeting three hymns—one by Mrs. Pennefather, one by Dr. H. Bonar, and one by myself. Twelve engaged in prayer—amongst these were four Jews. We read a few verses from Matthew and Mark, on our Lord's interest in little children, and gave a brief account of the work, which called forth praise to God and prayer for further blessing.'

A few days later is the following entry:

'February 23rd. Received the missionaries at 10.30 a.m.; had prayer and conference together. Noon prayer-meeting. Read Esther iv. A good meeting.

'2.30. Went to Holloway about rustic houses for Children's Home and Convalescent Home.

'4. p.m. Met Dr. Dixon at Maw's, in Aldersgate Street, and had a truss fitted, on account of a slight rupture. I trust this may lead me to be more sympathetic with other sufferers.

'In the evening read the missionaries' journals and wrote letters.'



A FAMILY GROUP IN 1885.

Then amongst Jewish children at the East End a few days later :

' *March 5, 1885. "Robins" Tea.* Over two hundred children. Mr. Foster explained pictures of *Pilgrim's Progress*, shown by my son Samuel. It was a blessed meeting. One little child brought a halfpenny for the cause. One child said she prayed to Jesus to give her bread and make her rich.'

And on the 12th of March the journey to Berlin was undertaken. Mr. Wilkinson was accompanied by Dr. Dixon as well as the late Mr. James Adler. They arrived on the following (Friday) evening.

' Rabinowitz had already arrived and reported himself; but was not in our hotel—the Hotel de Rome, Unter den Linden—at the time of our arrival, but came in a few minutes afterwards, when there were loving greetings and warm embraces all round. In a few minutes we were settled in our respective rooms, then met in social converse at the tea-table, and afterwards in one of our bedrooms, for reading the Scriptures, conversation, and prayer. At our first evening I read Psalm ciii., then all four of us engaged in brief thanksgiving and prayer. We then had free conversation with Rabinowitz about himself, his family, and his work, till about 11 o'clock, when we bade each other good-night, and retired to rest.

' *Saturday morning, March 14.* After breakfast this morning we met in Rabinowitz's room for prayer at 10 o'clock. Rabinowitz read in Hebrew with deep

solemnity the 53rd of Isaiah, and I in English; and Dr. Dixon and Mr. Adler prayed. We afterwards arranged that our morning and evening readings should be a chapter in Hebrew read by one of our Jewish brethren, and the same chapter read in English either by Dr. Dixon or myself—two reading and the other two praying at each meeting time.

‘Rabinowitz is about 47 years of age, though he looks a little older. His wife—also a Jewess—is living, and they have three sons and three daughters. He was married about thirty years ago; and his eldest son is twenty-nine. This son, once an infidel, is now a believer in Jesus, resides in Odessa, and has an agency in some French company. One daughter is married, but her husband is still a doubter—his six children and wife are all believers. The youngest child is nine years old. Rabinowitz, after his arrival in Berlin, received a postcard from his eldest son, saying, “he hoped the only-begotten Son of God would be with him.”

‘A brother of R. was baptized by Dr. Ewald nearly thirty years ago.

‘Though not a regularly qualified solicitor, R. says he was licensed by the Government authorities to practise as a lawyer among his own people. And now, as a matter of course, all his clients have forsaken him, and if they had not, this Jewish Reform Movement occupies all his time and strength.

‘His mind was greatly exercised and agitated during and after the Russo-Turkish war, as to the temporal

well-being of his people. How could Jews be settled in Russia or Roumania, when houses could not be held in the name of a Jew? Pastor Faltin had once called his attention to the 105th Psalm, and it now came back to his mind with much force, especially verses 23-25: "Israel also came into Egypt, and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham. And He increased His people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies. He turned their heart to hate His people, to deal subtilly with His servants." Verse 42: "He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant." Rabinowitz thought, surely this is a parallel time of suffering and of promised deliverance. As yet, he thought of nothing beyond relief from suffering, and promoting the people's temporal welfare.

'The sad and desperate condition of his people led him to entertain the question of agricultural colonies, which, if successful, would partially relieve the distress. He thought of forming an agricultural colony in Bessarabia; but the Jews themselves would not encourage this. Those who were usurers and public-house keepers preferred to remain as they were; and the better-minded Jews were hindered. So this scheme fell through.

'He now resolved (1882) to go to Palestine. Arrived in Jerusalem, he gazed on the holy city, and received impressions, as by a light from heaven, that probably the sufferings of the Jews and the desolation of the land of Palestine were to be traced to the people's continued rejection of Christ, and that all the hopes of the nation centred in Jesus the Crucified One. He

returned home with his mind full of this new light. His wife at first opposed his views, because she did not understand them; but his children soon accepted them. He now began to regard the teachings of the New Testament as Divinely inspired, and the Lord Jesus Christ as the true Son of God—the Way, the Truth, and the Life. To know the Son, he says, is to know and to understand the Father; and for this reason he specially delights in the Gospel of John.

‘He says: “The Jews think they can understand the Son through the Father; but Jesus says, ‘No man cometh unto the Father but by Me.’ ‘He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.’”

‘In answer to the question—“When did you first definitely trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation?” he replied, “A year ago last *Rosh Hashana*,”¹ i.e. about a year and a half since. . . .

‘On arriving at our hotel in Berlin, I found a letter from the Rev. Mr. Hansig, Secretary of the Berlin Jewish Missionary Society, as follows: “My dear Sir, May I beg you to write to me to say on what day and at what hour it would be convenient for you to see me at the hotel. It is of importance to our Society that you should converse with me. I am, my dear Sir, (Rev.) F. Hansig, Secretary of the Berlin Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews.” To this I replied that it would afford me pleasure to receive him on the next evening, and that I should be most glad to

¹ Jewish New Year's Day (Autumn).

learn about the work of God amongst the Jews in Berlin. He called, and we had a friendly but brief interview; for I saw that he wished chiefly to see Mr. Rabinowitz. In reply to my question, as to the work the Society was carrying on amongst the Jews in Berlin, where there are over 60,000 Jews, his reply was that they had at present only one missionary and one colporteur, and that these occasionally visited other parts of Germany. They have no halls or meeting places for Jews; the work consists simply in speaking to individuals. Mr. Hansig was very anxious that Professor Strack, a member of their committee and editor of a periodical called *Nathanael*, should visit us. So we appointed Sunday evening at 7 o'clock for an interview. We found him a most intelligent Christian gentleman, and warmly interested in Israel. As we had another engagement at 8 p.m., we appointed another interview at 10 a.m. on Monday. He came at 10 o'clock and remained till 2.30 p.m.—about 1½ hours with me, and about 3 hours with Rabinowitz.

‘Professor Strack admitted that their Society was doing little or nothing in evangelizing the German Jews; and yet I saw he was hurt by the English Societies sending missionaries to the Jews in Protestant Germany. I urged him to arouse the German Christians to such a sense of their duty and privilege as fully to occupy the ground themselves, and leave no room for missionaries from other countries. In the meantime somebody must preach Christ to the Jews. I gave him a brief account of our Mildmay Mission to

the Jews, whose sole present object was to preach Christ to all the Jews in Great Britain, as nearest to us and towards whom British Christians were laid under primary and pressing obligation. We closed our pleasant interview with prayer for all missions to God's ancient people.'

On Sunday the four friends went to Professor Cassell's church, having an interview with him in the vestry afterwards. On Monday they met the late Dr. Ziemann.

'The Lord has been doing a blessed work through Dr. Ziemann's labours in Berlin, for which Christians cannot too much praise the Lord.

'We fancied we had a little taste of the *Judenhetze* (anti-Semitism) in our hotel at the table d'hôte; for when we entered the room at 4 o'clock we were at once hastily relegated to an *unfurnished* table in the corner of the large room. We said nothing, had a good dinner, but never entered the room again. On Sunday we dined at an earlier hour in our breakfast-room, and on Monday and Tuesday we dined elsewhere.'

Arriving at Leipzig on Tuesday evening:

'We had not been long in our hotel when a messenger arrived to announce that Professor Delitzsch would be with us about 8 p.m.

'This venerable and honoured scholar came, accompanied by two young men, Dr. Lhotzky and Mr. Faber, intelligent and zealous in Israel's cause. After salutations and introductions, Professor Delitzsch proceeded to read in

German some eight or nine theses respecting Rabinowitz and his work, which were to form the basis of our conference the next day. Mr. Adler was requested to make a rough translation of these by 10 the next morning, when we should meet for our first session. Dr. Dixon and Mr. Adler were up about 6 o'clock the next morning. Whilst they were translating, I was seeking Divine guidance in prayer; for some of these "theses" we could not possibly subscribe to, and the form in which they were drawn up had evidently pained the mind of Rabinowitz. I told Professor Delitzsch that it would give us the greatest pleasure if we found that we could with a good conscience agree with him on every point, and that it would give us corresponding pain if we could not see alike on every point: but even then we hoped to preserve mutual respect and brotherly love.'

In the subsequent sessions, joined by Professor Strack, who had arrived from Berlin, the following principles were agreed to:—

'1. Perfect and uncontrolled freedom should be preserved to Mr. Rabinowitz in conducting the movement; there should be no interference from any quarter as to doctrine or practice.

'2. That Rabinowitz's continued observance of the Passover, Circumcision, and the Jewish Sabbath, should not constitute a ground for refusing Christian sympathy and help, so long as he did not trust in these, but in Christ alone for salvation.

'3. That Rabinowitz may be baptized in any particular

Evangelical Church he pleases, and in any form; but that he should simply be regarded as a member of the Church of Christ, and not of the sect to which the person who may baptize him belongs.'

It was proposed that Mr. Wilkinson should baptize Rabinowitz; but he declined, fearing that many Christians might feel less interest in Rabinowitz if the person baptizing him and the mode of baptism did not meet their views, and he also thought baptism was premature just then.

'4. The existence of a Jewish Christian Church in Kischinew we cannot acknowledge, until Mr. Joseph Rabinowitz, his brother and their respective families, receive holy baptism, and thus become acknowledged members of the Church of Christ.'

It was also agreed to encourage the new community to support itself and its leader, while assisting it in the meantime. There were other points on which agreement was not reached; but, as Mr. Wilkinson says, all was conducted "with much animation, but with the best feeling throughout. Much prayer had been offered for God's guidance and blessing, and we felt He had answered our prayers."

'Rabinowitz saw us off at the Leipzig station, and gave us all a loving embrace with eyes filled with tears. Lame as he was on one foot, he ran along the platform to lengthen his last look. One of his last words with us was, "I have learnt one thing since we came together—I have learnt to pray."

After Mr. Wilkinson's return to England he received the following letter from Dr. Lhotzky:—

‘LEIPZIG, *March 22, 1885.*

‘HONOURED AND DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—I send you herewith the original “theses” to which I also add the altered resolution of the 18th of March. Rabinowitz left us on the same day for Berlin, where he will (D.V.) be baptized to-morrow by the American Presbyterian minister—Prof. Mead. I shall be present to represent Prof. Delitzsch and Mr. Faber, who are prevented from being present in person. It has been decided here that I should be sent for a few months to assist Pastor Faltin in his work at the Home for Converted Jews. Wherever I may meet Mr. Rabinowitz or his followers, I shall remember our conference, and shall seek to further among them an independent development.

‘Professor Delitzsch sends his kind regards to you, as does Mr. Faber. We are all glad for the brotherly exchange of views we mutually enjoyed. May the Lord grant His blessing to all His work among Israel, as well as among all nations.—Yours respectfully,

‘R. LEHOTZKY.’

CHAPTER XIX

The New Testament Movement

(1885-1887)

DURING this time the Mission work went steadily forward. Whenever in London, Mr. Wilkinson was always in charge of the weekly Gospel meeting for Jews at the Mission Room in Wellclose Square; the Sewing-Class progressed; the Medical Mission attracted increasing numbers; the Convalescent Home and Home for Young Men fulfilled their ministry; and the newly opened Home for Jewish Children had already a small family within it. The first two children admitted were both brought by their fathers on the day following that of the dedicatory service. They were a girl and a boy. The father of the girl was a Christian Jew, baptized by Mr. Wilkinson. The father of the boy was not a Christian. He was a strolling musician, a widower; and when asked by Mr. Wilkinson why he gave his boy into a Christian institution, to be trained for Christ, his reply was, "I heard you preach a few Sundays ago at Wellclose Square, when twenty-one Jews stood up to testify their belief in Jesus as the Messiah, and I felt then that I could trust you with my child." He was very fond of his boy, and gave him his parting charge with tears streaming down his cheeks. The father died a believing Christian. The boy passed through the

Home, was sent to Canada by Miss Macpherson, and is now leading a consistent Christian life as the head of a household.

Nor had itinerant work been neglected. Messrs. Baron and Barnett visited Leicester and Birmingham, and also paid a visit to the Russian frontier to witness of Christ to their relatives, visiting *en route* the Jews in Berlin, Posen, Gnesen, Thorn, Insterburg, Goldap, Dletzko, Königsberg, Dantzic, and other towns. Messrs. Adler and Halbmillion visited Hull and Grimsby, having much to tell of God's goodness to them in opening doors of entrance.

Letters from America and Canada were a great source of encouragement to Mr. Wilkinson at this time. Early in August 1885, the late Mr. George Needham, the evangelist, wrote to Mr. Wilkinson as follows:

‘MANCHESTER BY THE SEA, MASS., U.S.A.

‘BELOVED MR. WILKINSON,—Every year we have a Bible Study Conference, and this year we held it at Niagara. Dr. Brookes and others met, and about two hundred Christians of every sect. We had a glorious time. It has been our custom to receive voluntary offerings for undenominational missions, and we have usually sent those offerings to such missions as the China Inland Mission, or the Congo Mission. This year all our hearts turned to you and the Jewish work. Dr. Brookes and myself spoke of your work, and about £35 came from these dear Christians, many of whom were poor. You will receive it in a few days with an official letter from Dr. Brookes. Every Saturday my boys pray audibly for “dear Mr. Wilkinson and his meetings on this Jewish Sabbath.” God bless you,

dear brother, and all of dear Mildmay with your family.
Ever in best bonds, GEO. C. NEEDHAM.'

A few days after this he received the following from the Rev. H. M. Parsons :

‘TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA.

‘MY DEAR BROTHER,—At the request of the Rev. Dr. Brookes, of St. Louis, I forward you a draft for two hundred dollars, or £41, being a collection taken at the Believers’ Conference for Bible Study at Niagara-on-the Lake, Ontario, July 23–30 ; in behalf of your most worthy and excellent Mission.

‘With the deepest interest in your work, your brother
in the Lord, H. M. PARSONS.’

Then a few days later he received the following characteristic letter from the late beloved Dr. Brookes, whose writings and personal ministry have instructed and profited many ; and to whom, as we have seen, Mr. Wilkinson had been closely drawn.

‘NIAGARA, ONTARIO,
August 12, 1885.

‘MY DEAR BROTHER WILKINSON,—Before this reaches you, no doubt you will have received a contribution of £35 or a little more for your Mission among the Jews. It is the fruit of a collection taken in the Believers’ Meeting for Bible Study held in this village for a fortnight since. Although the amount is small, and will not go far towards the supply of your great and ever-recurring need, it is at least a manifestation of our personal respect and affection for you, and an expression

of practical sympathy with the blessed work in which you have been so long engaged.

‘The immense crowds that annually gather at Mildmay do not attend our Conferences on this side of the sea; and of those who come, very few possess ample financial means of serving the Lord. Hence, if the necessity of obtaining money for other purposes is taken into account, the collection of nearly two hundred dollars for the dispersed of Judah and the outcasts of Israel may be considered very good. It certainly betokens a sincere interest in their spiritual welfare, and a hearty appreciation of your efforts to win them to the Gospel and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

‘It will give you pleasure to know that in America a deeper concern than formerly is felt for the children of Abraham according to the flesh. Of course, this is largely confined to those who are “looking for that blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ”; for as a rule only they have any clear view of the future dignity of Israel. But few who have been taught by the Holy Spirit to wait for God’s Son from heaven fail to find their hearts stirred to quickened delight in anticipation of the wondrous blessings in store for the “everlasting nation.” They have read the unchanging precept and promise, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee”; and they covet the approval Jehovah bestows upon those who remember His ancient people.

‘They know upon the sure testimony of the abiding Word that, when the present age shall have run its

appointed course, our ascended Lord shall return, and build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, and build again the ruins thereof, and set it up, that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles. They do not forget that "He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel shall flower and blossom, and fill the face of the world with fruit." They are not unmindful of the inspired Scripture which says, "In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; and to Zion, let not thy hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love; He will joy over thee with singing. . . . At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth."

'The brethren here are in sympathy with the mind of our waiting and expectant Lord, and they share in His joy over restored Israel. Hence they esteem it a precious privilege to aid you, even to a limited extent, in your arduous labours among the Jews, and they have commissioned me to convey to you their fraternal salutations, together with the assurance of their continued remembrance of your name and toil before the throne where our High Priest intercedes.—Yours truly in Him,

JAMES H. BROOKES.'

The Mildmay Mission had now been in existence nearly ten years. It was the opening of the Eastern Question by the events of 1875 that had led Mr.

Wilkinson to found it in June 1876; believing, as he did, that Turkey's end and the opening up of Palestine to the Jews were comparatively near. And now the Eastern Question seemed to be about to advance another stage by the Revolution which broke out in the autumn of 1885 in Eastern Roumelia, and the invasion of Bulgaria by King Milan on the 14th of November, "rending the parchment of the Berlin Treaty."

To Mr. Wilkinson this was a call to still more extended witness to the scattered people. "We begin to long," he wrote, "to send missionaries to tell of Jesus and His love to tens of thousands of Jews in other countries unvisited by any messenger of Christ. We thank God for all that is done by others: there is room for more labourers. Should the Lord be pleased to pour a spirit of liberality on His Church in the interest of Israel, and this Mission should be favoured with abundant means, we should soon send some of our staff abroad, who are already saying, 'Here am I, send me.'"

What response there was to be to this we shall see.

It was at this time that Mr. Wilkinson made over the properties acquired by the Mission—the Convalescent Home, Home for Children, the plant at the Home for Young Men and at the Medical Mission—to a board of trustees, on the lines of the advice given to him by Mr. George Müller. The first trustees of the Mission were S. A. Blackwood, Esq., C.B. (afterwards Sir Arthur Blackwood), Messrs. Henry Carr, Samuel Field, John Griffin, James E. Mathieson, Benjamin Thomas, James Wood, and John Wilkinson. Most of these well-known men of God are home now: and still the Bridegroom tarries; but surely not much longer!

Two entries from the diary at the close of 1885 are of interest.

'Dec. 29, 1885. Went to the "Angel," to meet a gentleman who would give me something for the cause. I was to show a white pocket-handkerchief at 12.30 at the central lamp. I did so, and received £10.' . . .

'Dec. 31, 1885. Zion Chapel, Whitechapel. This evening we had our annual tea-meeting for our Night School and other Jewish children, altogether over 300. The best behaved of our school children received prizes given by our friend Mr. Field. Mr. Hutchinson and Mr. Daniells also addressed them. . . . The meeting was a most encouraging one. . . . May God bless the little ones to the salvation of many! . . . We returned home weary but thankful, and retired to rest, grateful for another year's loving toil in the service of our Divine Lord. Oh that we may be found occupying till He come!'

Eighteen hundred and eighty-six dawned. On the 4th of January the Annual Meetings for praise and prayer in connexion with the Mildmay Mission to the Jews were held at Mildmay Conference Hall, the late Mr. Denham Smith taking part in the morning meeting. Things in the East of Europe were still ominous. The sense of shortness of opportunity, of desire to reach a wider field of Jews abroad, lay still heavily upon the Jewish missionary's heart. It was at the evening gathering of this day of praise and prayer that he first publicly mentioned his desire to purchase and distribute 100,000 copies of the Hebrew New Testament among the Jews. "Just at this time also," he wrote the same month in *Service for the King*, "we have had translated into most beautiful idiomatic Hebrew the New Testa-

ment, which is being issued by the Trinitarian Bible Society. The first edition was cleared out in a month, and a second edition of 10,000 is now being printed in Vienna under Dr. Ginsburg's superintendence. . . . Now it is on my heart to send 100,000 of these Hebrew New Testaments to the Continent, with missionaries and colporteurs as needed, to distribute them and preach Christ. Is it too much to ask the Lord to move His people to send us £5000 for this work? Of course, we mean over and above the needs of the work already in hand at home."

Committing this matter to God, and telling it to God's people as opportunity offered, the Jewish missionary plodded on. From January to the close of March, the same round of busy work: meetings in the country, home again to the Saturday gathering of Jews at Wellclose Square, correspondence in the study, writing tracts and articles. Then the physical frame suddenly broke down. For ten days the patient lay in great weakness, and was prohibited all solid food. "During this time I had the medical attention of dear Dr. Dixon, the domestic comfort of my dear wife's ministry and that of her sister, and a sense of the presence and preciousness of my Lord."

The Lord had drawn His child into the quiet communion of the sick chamber before sending him a signal proof—more striking than any previous one—of His approval and love. A Mr. Russell, unknown personally to Mr. Wilkinson, and never seen by him or by any member of his family, had been impressed by the proposal of the 100,000 Hebrew New Testaments. He had been making his private inquiries as to the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, and being satisfied, told Mr. Mathieson, then the superintendent of Mildmay Con-

ference Hall, that he would undertake to make up whatever was necessary to complete the sum of £5000 to carry out the scheme. This was the news brought personally by Mr. Mathieson to the sickroom on the 30th of March 1886. Then in a day or two, while the patient still lay prostrate, came a cheque for £100 from a friend in Manchester; and then a notice of a subsequent £100 to the Mission. "My eyes were full of tears, and my heart of gratitude, for the faithful and tender love of my heavenly Father. It will take me all eternity to praise Him. I found much pleasure in reading eight times over the Apocalypse by St. John of our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh that this time of weakness may be so sanctified as to make me more like Him Who was made perfect through suffering!"

The patient was taken to Hastings to recuperate strength; but here he had a relapse. We cannot wonder, for he commenced his stay at Hastings by four meetings in the Y.W.C.A. and the Castle Hotel room. With mother by his side, eight more days were spent in bed. Had this been in 1906 instead of 1886, doubtless an operation would have been pronounced necessary. But it is a question whether Mr. Wilkinson would have submitted to it, so great was his horror of the knife, and his consequent suffering when his children were operated upon. By the grace of God, gentle means and a sound constitution restored him to health. "The Lord provided a most skilful doctor, Dr. Gamgee, who attended me without charge." It was during these days that the writer of this volume, who was looking after the correspondence in London in his father's absence, received a cheque for £3000 from Mr. Russell towards the Hebrew New Testaments. Mr. Russell had not withdrawn his promise to make up the £5000, but eager to see the

work commenced, he sent £3000 at once. The writer hurried away to Packington Street Post Office to send a telegram to Hastings. This was on 19th April. The diary states:

‘On 19th April received a telegram announcing receipt of £3000 for New Testament fund. A three years’ prayer answered.’

No wonder the patient recovered!

‘Numbers of dear friends sent messages of sympathy and inquiry. Alice Annie was with us for a week, and Samuel fetched us all home on Monday, the 10th of May. Praise the Lord for all His goodness.’

Of the beginnings of this work I cannot do better than to let father himself speak.

‘Mr. Salkinson was the first Jew to translate the New Testament into Hebrew. Other translations existed, in many respects excellent, and faithful to the grammar and the lexicon; but lacking in the spirit, style, and sweet flow of the Old Testament Hebrew idiom, of which Mr. Salkinson was a master, and perhaps had not his equal in Europe. He had, a few years before, translated the Epistle to the Romans, and had also translated into beautiful Hebrew poetry Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, which has been highly eulogised by competent critics.

‘This was the man, a Christian Jew, whom God raised up and prompted to give, as his life work to his own beloved people, a translation of the New Covenant into idiomatic Hebrew.

‘When far on towards completion, Mr. Salkinson came over from Vienna to London in the autumn of 1882 to

make arrangements for getting his work into print. He spent a day with me, and begged me to help him. I urged him to seek the aid of the British and Foreign Bible Society. He replied, "I have already done so, and they refuse it. Wilkinson, can't you help me?"

'After awhile I thought of the Trinitarian Bible Society, the secretary of which Society, the Rev. Dr. Bullinger, I knew well, though of the Society itself I knew little or nothing. I wrote to Dr. Bullinger at Walthamstow, and requested an interview.

'Through an oversight I received no reply to this request, though other matters were answered. The matter thus stood over till the 26th of December 1882. This being a holiday, I walked over for a constitutional, and laid the whole matter before Dr. Bullinger. His reply was, "It seems quite providential, for we have just had a legacy, and have been praying for guidance as to its use; lay the matter in writing before our committee, and they will probably take it up." This was done. Mr. Salkinson and the committee came to terms. Shortly after, however, and before the translation was finished, dear Salkinson was called to rest. The committee then secured the services of Dr. Ginsburg, a scholar of European reputation, and a fellow-student of mine and of Salkinson, 1851-53.

'Dr. Ginsburg laid aside other important matters and threw himself heartily into the unfinished work of his old friend. He edited the entire work, and conducted it through the press, besides translating the last fifteen chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.

‘The first edition of 2000 was exhausted in a month. This was issued in 1885. Scores of Jewish missionaries expressed in loud praise their appreciation of the translation. Three or four Gentiles and one or two Jews criticised it unfavourably. There were undoubtedly several errors, though none of a serious character. A thorough revision was called for, which engaged the attention of six Hebrew scholars during the latter months of 1885 and the former of 1886.

‘I had already acquainted myself with Rabinowitz and his movement in South Russia, and had formed his personal acquaintance in Berlin, where I invited him to meet me in March 1885. His conversion was effected through the instrumentality of a Hebrew New Testament. It was again and again pressed home to me—Why not a wide and free distribution of Hebrew New Testaments amongst the Jews throughout the world?

‘This was thought and prayed about till the matter took the form of 100,000 copies of the revised edition for free distribution. This number at one shilling each would cost £5000. The matter was first mentioned in public at our annual meetings for praise and prayer, held in the Conference Hall, Mildmay Park, on Monday, January 4, 1886. J. E. Mathieson, Esq., presided, and the Rev. J. Denham Smith gave an address. Some friends thought that we were going too fast, but we committed ourselves to nothing; we asked only for prayer for the guidance of our God in the matter. On February 1st, at a drawing-room meeting in Highgate,

a friend asked, "How soon do you expect light on this matter?" I replied, "During this spring."

'An account of the annual meetings, including a reference to this desire for 100,000 Hebrew New Testaments, appeared in the February number of *Service for the King*. This came under the eye of a gentleman who was led voluntarily to give a cheque for £3000. This came on April 19th, 1886, while I lay on a sickbed at Hastings. It was at the same time an answer to a prayer offered for three years, but without any definite object beyond the general good of Israel. The same friend who gave the £3000 gave a guarantee for all that might be short of the £5000, in order that we might make better terms with the printers in Vienna by ordering the 100,000 at once. The Trinitarian Bible Society ordered an edition of 110,000—100,000 for our Mission, and 10,000 additional for themselves. When the cheque for £3000 arrived, we had already in hand from other friends about £630. On the 27th of April 1886, the friend who gave the £3000 on the 19th of the same month, sent £120 more, which made the sum £3750.¹ This was deposited in the bank in the joint names of Dr. Bullinger and my own, until it should be required. To allow the work to proceed as rapidly as possible, the sum of £3750 was paid over to the Trinitarian Bible Society early in September 1886. On the 9th of October 1886, I received the first presentation copy by post direct from Vienna. The friend who gave

¹ The sum of £3750 paid for the 100,000, at the rate of ninepence each copy.

the £3000 and also the £120, kindly sent another cheque for £700 in April 1887. Other friends had voluntarily contributed to the amount of £1180, so that the £700 made up the £5000 as at first promised. The sum of £1250 was appropriated to aid the distribution of these Hebrew New Testaments throughout the world.

‘In the autumn of 1886, Messrs. Baron and Barnett were sent out by this Mission into north-east Prussia, taking one side of Pomerania on their outward journey, and the other side on their return. Full accounts of their arduous but blessed work were given in subsequent numbers of *Service for the King*.

‘In the spring of 1887 these same brethren were sent out to Austria proper, Hungary, Bohemia, and Galicia, with increasing encouragement, as testified by notes from their journals published in *Service for the King*, and in the *Quarterly Record* of the Trinitarian Bible Society. It was on this journey that they obtained at Leipzig the names and addresses of between two and three thousand rabbis.

‘Our brethren were authorized to spend the sum of £18 or £20 in postage, and 2237 Hebrew New Testaments were sent by post to as many Jewish rabbis.

‘While all this was going on abroad, and our hands pretty full with the growing work at home, we were earnestly praying that the Lord would open Russia, where nearly 4,000,000 of Jews are located, or about one-third of the Jewish population of the world. Mr. Mathieson and I had a very friendly interview with the Russian Ambassador, His Excellency Count Staal, who advised

us to put ourselves in communication with our own Ambassador in St. Petersburg. The Rev. Dr. Bullinger in the meantime sent copies of the New Testament to all the leading Censorships in the Russian Empire, and obtained permission to send them into the country. Scores of initial difficulties were in our way; but the Lord led us His way, and the difficulties were overcome. Our missionary, Mr. Adler, though twenty years in this country, was still a Russian subject, having never been released by that Government. We thought it better to pay arrears and renew his Russian passport, so that he might work as a Russian subject.

‘Dr. Althausen, a Christian Jew of St. Petersburg, a Russian subject, and wearing military honours, associated himself with Mr. Adler. His local knowledge, social influence, religious character, and true sympathy, were of the greatest service. Early in July 1887, Mr. Adler left London for St. Petersburg, followed by hundreds of prayers for guidance and blessing. Prayer was answered, doors were opened, local governors gave their consent, and, notwithstanding many difficulties, Mr. Adler and Dr. Althausen had about three months of blessed work together. In the course of their work they called on Pastor Gurland at Mitau. Pastor Gurland is an evangelical Lutheran minister, a Christian Israelite of great experience and influence, and Primarius of the district of Courland, with its 130 Lutheran pastors. Pastor Gurland was formerly a missionary to his Jewish brethren, but practical sympathy failing among his supporters, he subsided into a Lutheran pastorate.

When he heard from Mr. Adler how the Lord had raised up friends in England voluntarily to give means to purchase 100,000 Hebrew New Testaments to be freely distributed as love-gifts among His Jewish brethren, he seemed overwhelmed, his missionary fire and zeal were rekindled, and he longed to help in the work.

‘He sat down and wrote a stirring circular, and sent copies all over the Russian Empire.

‘We opened a dépôt at Wilna on March 29th, 1888; crowds of Jews of all classes came for the books, so that by the 7th of April 1250 copies were discriminately distributed. In a letter from our Mr. Adler, dated September 5th, 1888, he tells me that in the course of a few days nearly 3000 copies were distributed amongst the Jews in Minsk; and that this populous town and district were all astir, crowds eager to possess and read the book. We have the consent of the local Governor to open a dépôt at Minsk.¹

‘Besides the distribution of several thousands through the personal efforts of our missionaries in various parts of North Africa, Pomerania, Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Galicia, Roumania, and Russia, we have cheerfully responded to requests coming from missionaries of the London, British, and Presbyterian Societies, and from individual workers and from private individuals interested in Israel. Four requests were for six copies each; one for eight, one for ten, two for twelve, two for

¹ This was afterwards opened with marvellous success and blessing.

twenty, nine for twenty-five, two for thirty, one for forty, seven for fifty, eight for a hundred, one for one hundred and fifty, one for three hundred, seven for five hundred, two for one thousand, one for fifteen hundred (in three instalments of five hundred each), one for two thousand, and one for three thousand. The letters of thanks and of encouragement received from missionaries, and from other friends, bear one testimony that the work is of God.

‘For obvious reasons we withhold the names of those who have applied for and received copies to the extent above named.

‘Those copies have been distributed in London, Liverpool, Leeds, Glasgow, Belfast, Dundee, Paris, Marseilles, Rome, Constantinople, Adrianople, Salonica, Philippopolis, Prague, Lemberg, Dresden, Leipzig, Hamburg, Dantzig, Kornthal, Strasburg, Cologne, Gibraltar, Altona, Kischinew, Jerusalem, New York, Chicago, Jamaica, the Cape, Brazil, Melbourne, Singapore, and Burmah.

‘Altogether, between eighty and ninety thousand copies have been sent out into various parts of Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia.

‘We have a loud call for Judeo-Polish Scriptures. We have ordered twenty-five thousand copies of Gospels and Epistles. Our Mr. Adler has translated the Gospels of Matthew and John, and the Epistles to the Romans and to the Hebrews. The Trinitarian Bible Society are having them printed at Vienna, and we are already distributing them.

'We ask much prayer, for we have many opponents; but God is assuredly with us.'

In the summer of 1886, Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson spent a happy holiday in Switzerland. They were accompanied by the late Rev. Charles Graham, of Shepherd's Bush, and gathered quite a group of Christian friends about them in their hotel at Hospenthal, at the entrance to the St. Gothard Pass. How dear father enjoyed his long and lonely walks amid the magnificent mountains! For hours he would wander on, enraptured with the silent grandeur of Nature. But nearly every evening the Bible reading was held with the friends at the hotel. Here is one characteristic entry in the journal:

'*Aug. 7, 1886.* Climbed the Spitzbergen to-day, and was away from 10 to 7 o'clock. Visited lakes on the top, had a bathe in one. Read a Hebrew Psalm, had lunch; but in seeking a nearer way home lost my way, and feared I might have to stay on the mountain all night. I fell on my knees and asked the Lord for guidance, and received an impression, "Retrace your steps." I did so; but had a long climb, and then a long and steep descent. Reached the hotel about 7 o'clock, deeply thankful to God.'

Among the friends at the hotel during the month were Mr., Mrs., and Miss Cheyne Brady, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Haig, Mrs. Judson, Mrs. Brebner, Miss Morgan, and the Messrs. Weston.

Home again from this happy holiday on the Thursday, we find Mr. Wilkinson at Wellclose Square again on the Saturday.

'*Sept. 4, 1886.* Wellclose Square. Psalm ii. ex-

pounded, and Christ preached. About twenty present. Good meeting. Clancy, Baron, and Halbmillion also present.'

And so the days were "occupied" with the same energy and zeal: tired often *in* the work, as he used to say, but never tired *of* it.

On the 26th of December Mr. Joseph Rabinowitz arrived in London, and lodged with Mr. Adler.

'*Dec. 31st, 1886.* Banking and squaring accounts all day. Monthly prayer-meeting, 7 to 8.30 p.m. Psalm xxxiv. read and commented on. Rabinowitz with us, and gave a brief address. Mr. Adler interpreted. A good meeting. Another year, with all its mercies and shortcomings, has passed away. Receive, blessed Lord, my heart's gratitude for undeserved mercy, and cover with the merit of Jesus everything in service not glorifying to Thee. Oh that the coming year, should Jesus tarry, may be full of blessing!'

And so on through 1887, records of meetings, travelling, conversations, and schemes for reaching Jews with the message of salvation. Here and there a personal or family reflection.

'*Feb. 5, 1887.* My Samuel's wedding. A bright and happy day.

'*June 18, 1887.* Took my wife in a hansom cab from Broad Street to West End to see the preparations for the illuminations on the 21st, the day for celebrating our beloved Queen's Jubilee. Everywhere there are tokens of great and general rejoicing.

'Dec. 6, 1887. Another milestone of my life is reached to-day. Sixty-three years ago I was born in a cottage at Tealby, in Lincolnshire. About forty-eight years I have trusted in Jesus as my Saviour. I become less and less pleased with myself and my doings; but more and more pleased, yea satisfied, with my Lord and with His finished work. Thanks be to God for saving and keeping grace hitherto, and for promises, which cannot be broken, relating to the future. Oh for one constant, passionate desire to please my Lord in everything!'

And the closing reflection of the year was:

'Dec. 31, 1887. The past year has been full of work and full of mercies. Oh that each year may find me, not only nearer the end of the journey of life, but more like my Lord, more useful in His service, and more faithful in every good word and work.

'Perilous times are upon us, and evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse: may it be mine to watch and pray always, that I may be counted worthy to escape all these things that are coming on the earth, and to stand before the Son of Man!'

CHAPTER XX

The Central Hall

(1888-1890)

AT the close of 1887, Mr. Wilkinson wrote in *Service for the King*:

‘We have not as yet received an answer to our communications to the Russian Ambassador and to our own Ambassador at St. Petersburg. Should Russia be open to us, we expect a wide distribution of Hebrew New Testaments among the Jews in that empire. We continue in prayer.’

Russia *was* to open.

In the meantime Messrs. Baron and Barnett had been labouring in the various towns of North-east Prussia, and again in Austria, Hungary, Galicia, and Bohemia, sending home accounts of their work, which were of the deepest interest. Mr. Halbmillion was also sent to Morocco, to labour with Mr. Mercadier.

But Russia—great Russia!

As we read in Mr. Wilkinson’s own description of the beginnings of the New Testament movement, Mr. Adler was despatched early in 1887—his Russian passport put into order by the payment of a fine for every year of his absence—to Russia, where he became associated

with Dr. Althausen. Let us glance at his first letter home—or part of it.

‘HOTEL NISHKOWSKI (No. 22), WILNA,
July 20, 1887.

‘DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—It is with a heart full of gratitude to our Lord that I now begin to tell you what God is doing for us and we for Him; for my friend Dr. Althausen and I both feel that much prayer is being offered for us.

‘There were truly many and great difficulties in our way. But they are vanishing. Here direct “mission work” is not allowed. To give away a tract or a New Testament, one must have permission from the Chief of Police, and *must be a Russian subject*. The thought that I *must not* speak to a Jew or give away New Testaments before receiving permission from the authorities had an awful effect upon me. It filled my heart with sorrow, and I could during the first few days neither eat nor sleep. My thought day and night was—how and when to obtain the desired document.

‘Now I will tell you what the Lord has done for us, how wonderfully He has cleared difficulties out of the way, and how He is encouraging us. His blessed words, “I will never leave nor forsake you,” have been our constant experience; and I trust that by and by we shall find them even more richly fulfilled. We are now provided with documents of the highest authority, allowing us to sell and distribute the Holy Scriptures unhindered all over this enormous land, and can every-

where have the protection of the police. At all events, we cannot be stopped in our work by every petty official. We have the permission of the chief censor at St. Petersburg; we have *the sanction and blessing of the Holy Synod*; we have certificates from the Bible Society at St. Petersburg, by which we are not only allowed to sell and distribute the Word of God all over the Russian Empire, but authorised to receive contributions on its behalf; and last of all—and which is perhaps the most important thing—is the permission of the *Governor of Wilna*, whose district is larger than the whole of your dear country, and contains hundreds of thousands of Jews, among whom comparatively few, if any, have ever heard of salvation in Christ. The former three documents we obtained mostly through the efforts of my dear companion, Dr. Althausen, and that of the Governor of Wilna in the following remarkable way:

‘There is a missionary (designated “Pastor”), an old friend of mine, who introduced us to the Lutheran pastor, Mr. Brink, to whom I made the whole subject clear, and who took it up with warm interest. Mr. Brink went to the Governor, who is fortunately a very good Christian man, and a member of Pastor Brink’s church, and we laid before him the whole affair, together with our documents. The Governor at once gave his permission; but he remarked at the same time that he *could not grant it on any account to foreigners*.

‘Now the Lord has made it plain why I had to keep up my right of Russian nationality! Now I am glad to be a Russian subject. Now I see why the Lord

arranged that I should go with Dr. A., and not with any foreign missionary. Foreigners might do a little privately; but to do work privately in Russia is scarcely possible. Here people are expected to obtain authorisation for every step; one can never have too many documents or be too careful. For instance, visiting Mr. — in St. Petersburg, I sent in my card as Mildmay Missionary to the Jews; and he advised me to leave such cards at home! The same advice was given by several other friends. This will give you some idea of the difficulties with which we have to battle, even before we reach our brethren, and how much we need wisdom from above, and the prayers of God's children. I am called in my documents, *Chlen aktivni* (active member) of the Russian Bible Society; and this title I glory in! Is there a better employment than to give the Word of God, the Water of Life, to our poorer brethren?'

And so Russia was "opened" to the distribution of Scriptures to the Jews and the accompanying witness of the lip, and has never since been closed. Let this expression "opened" not be held to imply that no missionary witness had been carried on among Israel prior to 1887. The London Jews' Society had maintained a station in Warsaw for many years; and the British Jews' Society had also the Rev. George Friedmann and the beloved Dr. Frohwein at Wilna. But these efforts were more or less hampered with restrictions, and were local.

The opening has never since been closed. The development of the New Testament work in Russia, by

means of depôts in various cities and missionary journeys, has gone on ever since, and is still going on, with ever fresh tokens of blessing, and increasing opportunities of effective and fruitful witness for Jesus.

At the close of January 1888, Mr. Wilkinson was laid low with a severe attack of bronchitis, which kept him a prisoner in bed or in the house for three weeks, followed by a fortnight with mother at Hastings. I remember standing by the bedside in the well-known first floor room at 79 Mildmay Road—room of many earlier and later sacred and precious memories—as he unfolded to me for the first time his thought of a Central Hall. Wellclose Square was often crowded to excess, especially at the weekly Sewing-Class; the Medical Mission premises equally so; for special meetings rooms had to be borrowed or hired.

As he recovered he set pen to paper and ventilated the matter in *Service for the King*. Thus he wrote:

‘While writing this I am slowly recovering from an attack of bronchitis, which has kept me in bed and indoors together about three weeks. This has given me time and quiet at intervals to talk over with the Lord the interests of His work. One day the following thoughts passed through my mind. True, the Lord has done something through you on behalf of Israel, but has He got to the end of His power? Are you not in danger of “limiting the Holy One of Israel”? Is He not obliged sometimes to lay aside His servants by sickness to teach them His will, nay, even to take them home to make room for others of greater enterprise and faith? Why should you not allow ME to do all I can and am willing to do through you? I

replied, "And why not?" "Please, Lord, make Thy will clear; and by grace we will follow where Thou dost lead the way."

'We do not want a big thing for the glory of the Mildmay Mission; but we are willing to have as big a work as the Lord sees He can use through us for His glory. Then the above building scheme presented itself to my mind. I mentioned it to my wife, to my son, to Dr. Dixon and to others, and all seemed to think it a most desirable project.

'A rough estimate of the cost of ground and building would probably be about £10,000. The names of a few wealthy and liberal Christians came to mind; and I soon found myself praying that if this scheme was of the Lord, He would dispose some of His rich children to give for Christ's sake £1000 each. Of course, these names will not be mentioned to any but the Lord, who has the hearts of all in His possession. One thing we are certain about, that if this project be for the glory of God, and that He intends us to have it, He will find the money needed for it, and at the same time confer special honour on those whom He makes able and willing to give.'

During the year a circular was put out stating the need of the Central Hall. The first £1000 came from the gentleman at the head of the list of names upon Mr. Wilkinson's mind. Then came a conditional promise from another gentleman to give £1000 if £9000 was raised. Mr. Wilkinson would rather he had given it out and out to the Lord; he gave but £200 and passed

away. His family sent £100 as a memorial gift. Mr. Wilkinson had his answer as to the amount *promised*, though he really got but £300.

Of the story as to how the remainder came, the little booklet, *God Answers Prayer*, is the narrator.

Father's holiday in 1888 was spent at Chillingham, Northumberland, where the Earl and Countess of Tankerville placed a cottage at his disposal, with a servant to attend, and vegetables and milk supplied. The society of his wife and daughter, sometimes of Mr. Graham of Shepherd's Bush, and of the guests at the Castle, the walks, drives, and conversations with villagers, were a source of great joy to him. To the noble family itself he was made of definite blessing. I am not free to place the record here; but it is inscribed on more enduring material.

Back from country to town, from rest to the same strenuous work, in which, now at the age of sixty-four, we cannot find any trace of fatigue or senility, he could close another year by the following soliloquy:

'Dec. 31, 1888. . . . Another year of mercies bestowed on unworthiness; another year of blessing bestowed on work full of infirmities. How wonderful the love and patience of our God! How tender the compassion of Jesus! Oh for grace to know and do the will of Him I call Master and Lord! Oh for an ever intense longing for closer likeness to Christ! Oh for blessing on Israel! Oh for an awakening of the Church of Christ on Israel's behalf!'

In the following year, 1889, Mr. Wilkinson paid his first visit to the Keswick Convention.

'July 22, 1889. Keswick Convention. Kindly in-

vited by Mrs. Shaw, of Wolverhampton, who paid my travelling expenses, and kindly entertained me at her house in Lake Road. . . .

‘. . . The Holy Spirit was present (in the meetings) in searching, quickening, comforting, and sanctifying power. Mr. Brooke’s Bible Readings were specially profitable.

‘I resolved not to press in any way the Jewish subject, but to place it and myself absolutely in the hands of God, to be ready at a moment’s notice to speak, should He open the way.

‘I was first asked to open a meeting on Missions with prayer. Then on Saturday I was asked to speak ten minutes on the Jews. Then pressed to stay Sunday over, and speak at Friar’s Crag by the lake on Sunday afternoon. I did so, and had a large and blessed meeting. There were perhaps 400 people present. Reginald Radcliffe closed with prayer. Mr. Fowler, of Ireland, suggested a collection, but I said, *No*. Several pounds were given as offerings, and warm interest expressed. At 10 or 11 o’clock in the evening Mr. Wilson and Mr. Hopkins called to request me to speak on Tuesday morning at 7 o’clock: the prayer-meeting should be for Israel. I felt this to be the Lord’s call, and said, *Yes*.

‘*July 30. Tuesday morning, 7–8 a.m.* Prayer-meeting for Israel. I gave an exposition of Romans xi. There was a large attendance, and blessing. I went back to breakfast with more than £130 given that morning. I was asked to speak the same morning at 10.30 on the Second Advent of our Lord. I did so at

a large and blessed meeting, at which Mr. Grubb was the chief speaker. We had much sweet fellowship in private, for we had about a dozen friends in the house. I returned home after these two meetings by the 12.40 train, praising God for His clear guidance and evident blessing. About £500 was given as the result of God's blessing on these addresses. On the Saturday we were boating and singing on the lake, and on Monday had a drive to Ambleside. I praise God with a full heart for physical and social refreshment, and for real spiritual blessing. The teaching was Scriptural and practical and glorifying to God.'

This opened the way to Keswick, where Mr. Wilkinson was a regular attendant at the Conventions. During the first years a meeting, more or less informal, was always arranged for him to speak about Israel, and known as Mr. Wilkinson's Meeting. When this meeting came under the auspices of the Keswick Council they doubtless felt that other organisations would feel hurt if Mr. Wilkinson had such a prominent place; and the Jewish Missionary Meeting took on a different character, my father being granted a few minutes at a meeting where one or more "Societies" were represented. The representation of Societies and their good work is somewhat different, after all, from the presentation of God's plan and purpose in Israel; though the blessed doctrinal truths about the Jews are closely associated with practical work among them. Mr. Wilkinson seldom spoke of either without the other; it was his happy and almost unique characteristic to blend forceful exposition of Scripture with accounts of actual work.

The holiday this year was spent at Riber Castle,

Matlock. Here ten years previously Mr. Wilkinson had written the first chapter of *Israel my Glory*; and here, in 1889, he finished it, writing the preface and the concluding chapter, and posting them to the printers on the 28th of August. On the 29th he conducted the funeral of his sister-in-law, Mrs. Judson, at High Wycombe.

Israel my Glory was father's life-work. It expounds his life theme: it defines his special life mission. Of all he wrote, this is at once the outstanding and the most comprehensive message. Here again we have the doctrinal and the practical interwoven. He was not a writer of books—his life was far too energetic and practical. *Israel my Glory* is practically his only literary effort that can be called a *book*—the others were pamphlets, essays, tracts. Nor is it a large book—say 300 pages only. Yet there are few books on Scriptural themes, and no one book on Jewish themes, that have exerted so wide or deep an influence as *Israel my Glory*. It is, as the late Dr. Brookes said, "A key to the Scriptures."

Meantime, and all the time, the work went on at home and abroad. During 1889, Messrs. Adler, Barnett, Baron, and Halbmillion were engaged in mission journeys in Ireland, the north of England, and in Morocco and Russia. The work in Russia progressed more than satisfactorily—almost phenomenally. More permanent work was set on foot in Morocco by the sending out of Mr. Paul Dressler, who worked with Dr. Churcher, of the North Africa Mission. And still in the silence of his heart the Jewish missionary was waiting—waiting—for the new Central Hall.

The cause of Jewish Missions was greatly helped, and the hands of Mr. Wilkinson greatly strengthened in

God, by the Jewish Missionary Convention held at Mildmay Conference Hall in September and October 1889—called together by Mr. James E. Mathieson, the beloved superintendent at that time of the Mildmay Institutions.

So another year passed away. As the closing year of the last decade but one in the nineteenth century broke, thus speaks the diary :

‘Jan. 1, 1890. The thirty-third Anniversary of my wedding day. Thanks to our gracious God for preserving our lives, our health, our affection for each other, and our interest in His work among His beloved Israel. Our five children were with us during the evening.’

Preserving childlike simplicity in his personal walk with God, and intense enjoyment of the domestic and social side of life, John Wilkinson’s heart and great abilities were directed to a definite and fruitful presentation of Jesus to as many Jews as could be reached in every land. There was no land known to contain Jews but which came up for discussion from time to time. And as the distribution of the New Testament had solved the problem in many places, he addressed his attention to this, and projected his gaze forward as well as around. What when the 100,000 copies were exhausted? At the close of 1889 he had thus written in *Service for the King* :

‘This New Testament movement is evidently a great work of God in these latter days, and its influence is extending and deepening in various parts of the world, and especially in the Russian Empire. It is becoming a serious question as to whether the Church of Christ should not prosecute the work to the extent of at least

another 100,000 New Testaments. Will the Lord's wealthy stewards lay this matter to heart before the Lord Himself. Consider how short our time may be; how near may be our Lord's return; how glorious are our present opportunities; how weighty our responsibilities; how great our encouragements; how bright our prospects; and how certain our reward.'

So forward, trusting and toiling—neither failing: heart never quailing.

In the spring of 1890 Dr. Dixon and Mr. Baron were sent on a missionary tour to the East. But dear Halbmillion had passed away in Morocco: the first death in the Mildmay Mission to the Jews. The sum in hand for the new Central Hall now amounted to £6446 out of the necessary £10,000.

Mr. Wilkinson felt much Mr. Mathieson's resignation of the superintendentship of Mildmay at this time; though he found an equally staunch friend in his successor, Colonel J. F. Morton. The diary notes that

'Mr. Mathieson's firm, gentle, loving rule at Mildmay will long be remembered with devout gratitude to God. Our Jewish Mission had in him a warm, intelligent, loving, prayerful and practical friend, and I, a faithful friend and brother.'

A few days after, the journal says:

'*March* 31, 1890. Afternoon, Samuel went to look at the Scotch Church for sale in the East end.'

The Central Hall was already coming into view. The site proved favourable, being in a quiet but broad thoroughfare, between the two arteries of the East end of London, the Commercial and Whitechapel Roads.

The authorities asked £2000 for the old Church, which, as Mr. Wilkinson often said, "had been preached empty of all except the minister." It was declined at that price, and came into the market, but found no buyer, so was offered to Mr. Wilkinson again at £1000. He bought it. And on 30th July we find this diary entry :

'July 30, 1890. Met at 11 a.m. Mr. Pite, the architect, his son, Dr. Dixon, Mr. Adler, Mr. Clancy, and my son, at Philpot Street about a plan for our new Hall.'

Leaving this company to deliberate in the dusty old pews of a now defunct St. Andrew's Scotch Church—still vivid in the writer's memory—let us go back to the New Testament programme. We have read Mr. Wilkinson's remark at the close of 1889, as to the probable necessity of at least another 100,000. Since then the stock had fallen to the last few thousands, and the funds become exhausted. But at the foot of the journal notes for 28th June 1890 we find this entry :

'This morning about ten o'clock a lady called to inquire as to the desirability of continuing the distribution of the New Testament among the Jews; declined to give me her name, and pledged me to secrecy should I ever get to know it. May the Lord guide and dispose her to do what He wishes.'

And on 4th July :

'This morning I received a note from the Bank, Newington Green Branch, informing me that £5000 had been sent in from the Bank of England for this Mission. This is an answer to prayer offered for more than twelve months. I fell on my knees at once and praised

the Lord, and then went to tell my dear wife. This is to continue the New Testament distribution.'

And the sequel, as told by Mr. Wilkinson in *God Answers Prayer*:

'A few days after receiving the above £5000 I received a letter from the Scottish gentleman who aided so liberally in procuring and distributing our first 100,000 New Testaments, offering another £5000 on condition that I would employ more men, especially Christian Jews, and spend the money as wisely and quickly as possible. A friend of mine, in correspondence with this gentleman, had mentioned to him that I had received £5000 from an unknown lady, and he wrote to me as though he felt aggrieved, as if the work were passing out of his hands. He said: "I hear from Mr. M—— that you have received anonymously £5000 to continue New Testament work. I am interested in that work, and do not wish to give it up. If you will spend my money along with the other sum, and not put it by till the other is used, I will give another £5000.'

'I did not answer the letter for several days; but spent much time in prayer, asking the Lord for grace and wisdom, as a good steward, to use these voluntary offerings in a manner pleasing to Him. I then wrote accepting the responsibility as well as the offering, and a cheque for £5000 came at once. Thus I had £10,000 within a month. The lady who gave £5000 I had seen, but did not know who she was. The gentleman who gave the other £5000 I have never seen, nor have I ever seen a photograph of him.'

In June of this year, 1890, Mr. Wilkinson had taken part in the Gloucester Conference, called together by the much-beloved vicar of St. Nicholas, Gloucester, the Rev. J. J. Luce. After the concluding praise meeting he walked to the station with the late Mr. Reginald Radcliffe. These two men, of one heart for the work and will of God, disburdened themselves.

"Why is it," asked Mr. Wilkinson, "that Christians find it so difficult to appreciate God's purpose in and love for the Jew?"

Mr. Radcliffe replied: "We need more prayer that God would remove the veil from the minds of Christians respecting Israel's interests."

And so the thought of an All Day of Prayer for Israel was lodged in the Jewish missionary's mind.

The first All Day of Prayer for Israel was called by Mr. Wilkinson, to be held at Mildmay Conference Hall on Tuesday, 30th September 1890. Mr. Reginald Radcliffe and he travelled down together from Glasgow the day previous to be present at it. Mr. Wilkinson thought some might be disposed to fast during the day, but there was naturally perfect liberty as to this. Four meetings were held, the subjects respectively at each, of Mr. Wilkinson's own framing, being as follows:

1. The culpable neglect of the Jew by the Church of Christ. Confession and Thanksgiving.

2. Prayer that God may awaken in the Church of Christ an interest in the Jew, warranted by His Word.

3. Prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Jews all over the world.

4. Prayer for all missions to the Jews: that men and women engaged in this work may be filled with the Holy Spirit; and that modes of work may be such as are approved by the Word and Spirit of God.

In these gatherings the late Messrs. Eppstein, Theodore Meyer, Reginald Radcliffe, and Thornley Smith took part, besides Colonel Morton, Mr. Mathieson, Pastor William Fuller Gooch, Dr. Bullinger, and Mr. Nachim.

This prayer day has been observed annually since, of late years at the Central Hall of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews in Philpot Street. Only once during his lifetime was Mr. Wilkinson unavoidably absent through sickness. The meetings and the fellowship were seasons of intense joy to him, and of untold blessing to many of the Lord's people and to the work of God amongst the Jews; but there is still need for this annual institution to become a more generally recognized trysting-place for those whose hearts and flesh cry out after God in respect of the condition, spiritual and temporal, of His beloved Covenant people Israel.

CHAPTER XXI

Sunshine and Cloud

(1891-1897)

THE next six years show a record of scarcely abated labours and of steady growth in the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, especially in its efforts abroad. Mr. Wilkinson felt impelled to make some further attempt than the societies in Palestine could well do, for the amelioration of the condition of the many Jews then passing through Jaffa into Palestine. He wrote:

‘We have been led to take up this work in the Name of the Lord, and wish to do it for His glory, and will trust Him to move His people to send us voluntarily all we need. Our trustworthy, experienced and devoted brother, Baron, will (D.V.) take charge of the work. He will be accompanied by his wife, who speaks German and who desires to be useful to Jewesses. Our beloved Mr. Barnett, who has been Mr. Baron’s colleague on many journeys, will accompany them. Our friends will make Jaffa their headquarters, preach Christ to the immigrants, distribute New Testaments among them, relieve their temporal necessities according to the means

at their disposal; indeed, in every possible way they will help them for Christ's sake.'

Witness for Christ was also set on foot at this time in Smyrna, Breslau, Morocco, Brazil, and Australia; and in February 1891, Messrs. I. P. Thimann and Samuel Wilkinson left for a three months' missionary itineration in Pomerania, East and West Prussia, and Upper Silesia.

In 1891 the Russell legacy fell to the Mildmay Mission to the Jews.

'February 9th, 1891. Received to-day a remarkable and most interesting letter, announcing the death of dear Mr. Thomas Melville Russell, which took place on the 3rd instant at Bridge of Allan, and informing us of the large interest this Mission has in his will. We praise our God.'

The relatives, however, contested the will, which eventually involved litigation. In the handling of this important matter, greatly assisted by Mr. Mathieson, Mr. Wilkinson displayed once more his natural generosity of heart, restrained by his sense of responsibility as a steward; also his mental grasp and sound wisdom. The amount that finally came to the Mission from the legacy was £20,000, though the estate was valued at £60,000.

The note in the diary for 6th December 1891 runs thus :

'Dec. 6th, 1891. Sixty-seven years of age to-day. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. The years succeed each other rapidly, and life here will soon run out. Oh that Jesus may have it all! Oh to be more like Him, and to be more and more used by Him!'

As the Mission under Mr. Wilkinson's direction became more firmly established in its organisation and programme, we note that the material relief of oppressed or poverty-stricken Jews became a very definite and prominent part of it. The Sewing-Class, the Medical Mission, the Home for Inquirers, the assistance of numbers of individual persons and families, were distinctly philanthropic in character. Long experience in practical mission work among the Jews, and chiefly among the poor, including the sufferers from popular outbreaks in Russia and elsewhere, has enabled the writer to see the fallacies in the criticisms levelled at Christian relief of the Jewish poor. Some, fearful of bribery, would avoid temporal assistance altogether; such a course makes the proclamation of Gospel truth professional and un-Christlike. Others would perform the humanitarian work of relief, but dissociate it from the preaching of Christ; but that course surely is to be unfaithful to the stewardship of the mysteries of God and to a great opportunity. Others, in their zeal to prevent abuse, would over-organize charity till the personal touch of sympathy is organized out of it; again, others would make their doles in kind only, never in money, failing to see that a mechanical adherence to such a system may become a mockery to the poor. And so on.

The fact is, that there is no missionary field which so needs the accompaniment of practical sympathy with material need as the Jewish missionary field; and yet the facing of the task involves the faithful missionary in endless labours, difficulties, problems, dilemmas, risks, and mistakes, which lay him peculiarly open to the ready critic. But the task is there—and should not be shirked, but faced. John Wilkinson took up a decided

attitude in precept and practice as to the relief of the Jewish poor and distressed, and has not left us in any doubt thereupon.

In 1892 he wrote :

‘It is true we associate with all temporal relief the preaching of Christ as the sinner’s only hope, and also the sinner’s real Saviour. How can we as Christians be loyal to Christ and do otherwise? . . . Let the Lord Jesus have the credit of our sympathy. When Christians themselves directly minister to the needy Jew or Gentile, they are bound to do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. These sorrows of poor Israel are giving Christians large and splendid opportunities which constitute the measure of our responsibility. . . . Some say, “If you preach Christ while feeding the hungry, you make the Jew angry.” Well, what of that, if true? Only a few are angry, and the many listen, read, think, and some accept Christ. What about the angry ones? Well, even if they oppose or blaspheme, they don’t lose their meal, but are treated as kindly as the others. They are neither persecuted on the one hand, nor bribed on the other, to make a profession of faith in Christ.

‘Surely compassion for perishing souls should be even stronger than compassion for perishing bodies. Jesus said, “If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins.” Can we Christians really believe that, and yet in the ministry of temporal relief refuse or neglect to testify of Christ from a fear of making the Jews angry? Christ fed the hungry and healed the sick, but

also preached the Gospel. Can we be His loyal and true followers while refusing to do the same? We make these remarks in the presence of a philanthropic and humanitarian Christianity, which is becoming so common in our day; all very good in its proper place, but we may well dread a kind of Christianity in which Christ and His cross are left out, a Christianity which Jews and Gentiles will extol, and to the propagation of which even infidels will subscribe.'

The Member of Parliament for the borough of Islington, in which Mildmay Road is situated, was in 1892 Mr. Benjamin L. Cohen, afterwards Sir Benjamin Cohen. The following letter from him to Mr. Wilkinson shows that not all influential Jews were unmindful of his devotion to the welfare of their race:

'30 HYDE PARK GARDENS, W.,
July 5th, 1892.

'DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—I received on Saturday your kind letter of 22nd, and your book *Israel my Glory*. I thank you sincerely for both. The perusal of your work will afford me much interest and instruction during the vacation (if I get one).

'I hope it does not depend on whether "Home Rule" is pushed to the front if you see me again. My desire is, after the recess, and when Parliament is not sitting, to spend as much time as I can, and as my constituents will permit, in their society.

'And let me add that among them there is not one whose friendship and support I more value than yourself, not only because of your valuable support in my

election, but also because of the kind interest you have always taken in my community.—Yours faithfully,

‘BENJAMIN L. COHEN.

‘Rev. J. Wilkinson.’

The year 1892 was a year of a large immigration of Jews into London from Russia. Most arrived in deep distress. Mr. Herbert Levinsky was appointed to meet and board all immigrant-bearing ships at Tilbury, while a shelter was opened opposite the London Dock gates to feed the hungry on arrival. Of this shelter Mr. Henry Goodman took charge.

Meantime the new Central Hall was building, but with trying delays. It was only on the All Day of Prayer, 30th September 1892, that the writer received the key from the builder, giving formal possession, and telegraphed the fact to the praying souls at Mildmay, where, at Mr. Wilkinson's suggestion, the whole audience rose and sang “Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow.”

At last the opening day came, and the dedicatory services on the 2nd of November of the same year. It was a glad day for the Jewish missionary. Friends came up from many places to the three meetings, at which Messrs. Mathieson, Pite (architect), Grubb, Warszawiak, and Gooch took part, besides the Rev. Dr. Bullinger and Colonel Morton.

But the event of the day that most deserves mention was a slight incident in itself, but a great evidence of God's continued smile upon and zeal to the enterprise. It is best told in Mr. Wilkinson's own words from pp. 57-59 in *God Answers Prayer*:

‘A very interesting incident occurred on the day of the opening of the Hall, which we must not omit to

mention, for it clearly shows the hand of God in guidance and provision.

‘It is a rule with this Mission not to incur debt, and we mentioned our fear that the extras we knew the builder would have against us might be some five or six hundred pounds more than we had then in hand. We could not, however, get his account, and expressed a fear lest the Hall should remain unused until we knew what we had to pay, and could pay it. The third and last meeting came. We had just finished prayer before going to the platform, when a gentleman called me to a corner of the room and said :

“ You can go on with the use of the Hall, for I will pay the balance.”

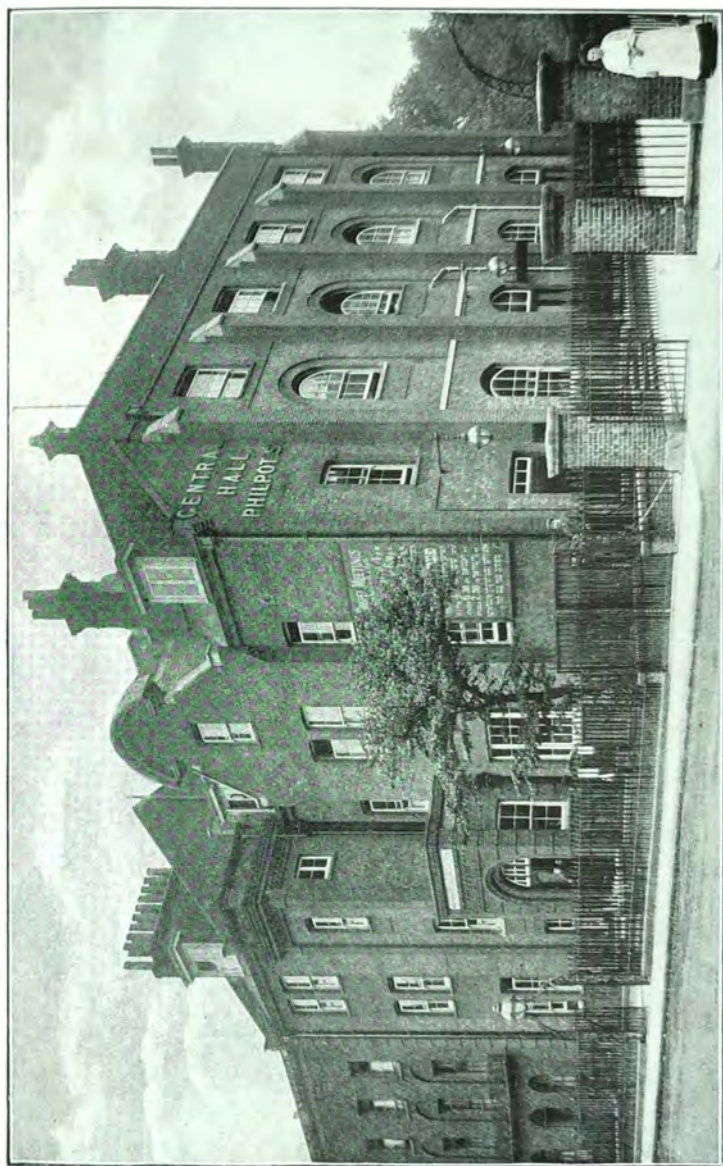
‘I said “Thank you ; but I do not know how much it will be.”

‘The gentleman observed, “Never mind.”

“ Well,” I said, “if you do not mind, I need not.”

‘The matter stood over for several weeks, and then came the builder’s bill, amounting to over £1100. In the meantime I had received a legacy of £800, and with the amount in hand I was able to pay the bill. I thought it right, honourably, to inform the gentleman that I really needed nothing from him, for I had enough in hand to pay the debt. He thanked me for telling him ; we had prayer together, and I returned home. I had not been in my study half an hour before the gentleman followed me, stating :

“ When you left my house this morning, the matter was pressed home to my mind thus : Did you not mentally



CENTRAL HALL.

give the Lord £600 on the evening of the opening of the Hall? Are you going to act like Ananias?"

'The gentleman had brought with him his cheque for £600. This was another lesson for us, that it was much wiser, safer, and more blessed to trust God for the management and provision for His own work, than to trust the wisdom of any man, or any number of men.

'The Hall, when a Christian church in a Christian country, was preached empty; but when converted into a hall for preaching Christ to the Jews, and very much enlarged, thousands of Jews were soon inside its walls. We had 43,000 attendances the first year; 44,000 the second year; 49,000 the third year; 55,000 the fourth year; and 60,000 the fifth year. This has been the average number ever since. We have never had one service for mere amusement. The Gospel is simply preached to men, women, and children, and many have been brought to confess faith in Christ.'

The work at the Central Hall commenced in a tempest of opposition. The first meetings, in which the Rev. George Grubb and Mr. Joseph Rabinowitz took part, were repeatedly broken up by a large band of Jewish socialists. The first three months of meetings at the Central Hall thus cost great nerve-strain to the workers, the writer included; but eventually, by patience and firmness, the victory was gained, and large and orderly gatherings of Jews and Jewesses listened to the Gospel. All sorts of gatherings are now held at the Hall, but we have not seen a violent opponent for years. At different times its platform has been occupied by Mr. Hermann Warszawiak, Mr. Joseph Rabinowitz, Mr. George Grubb,

Rabbi Lichtenstein, Mr. David Baron, Mr. Schönberger, Mr. George Soltau, Mr. Russell Hurditch, Mr. Charles Inglis, Mr. W. R. Lane, Mr. Wm. Thomson, Dr. Harry Guinness, Mr. James Mathieson, Rev. F. B. Meyer, Sir Andrew Wingate, Sir William Stirling, Sir Robert Anderson, Pastor Bieling, Mr. Louis Meyer, Mr. James Adler, Mr. Max Reich, Mr. Walter Campbell, Mr. R. C. Morgan, Mr. Albert Head, Mr. Frank White, Pastor Fuller Gooch, Dr. Robert McKilliam, Surgeon-General Partridge, Surgeon-General Whitla, Pastor Gurland, Mr. John S. Holden, Mr. Frank Challis, Mr. S. M'Cracken, and other well-known servants of God.

The beginning of 1893 found Mr. Wilkinson confined to the house by a severe cold. He could neither be present at the meetings for praise and prayer on the 2nd January at Mildmay, nor the annual tea-meetings for Jews, Jewesses, and Jewish children, held for the first time at the Central Hall. At these and other meetings we had to learn to take his place.

On the 12th of January Mrs. Pennefather entered into rest.

'Jan. 12, 1893. Beloved Mrs. Pennefather was released from suffering, and entered her eternal rest about 3 a.m. to-day. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." She was a most extraordinary woman for gifts, culture, and grace. Her influence and her loss will long be felt. It was my high privilege to have had her friendship for twenty-five years.'

That he held strong views on political questions will be seen by the following note. But father never intruded politics into God's work, nor dealt with them publicly; and it was only to his private journal that he confided this opinion.

'Feb. 4, 1893. Read Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill for Ireland as given in the House last night in his eighty-fourth year. One of the cleverest "confidence tricks" ever practised.'

On 16th March we find the note:

'March 16, 1893. Our dear son and Mr. Day left this evening for Germany with the prayers of many friends.'

The following note is also worthy of mention. It comes under 25th April:

'A lady complained that her gift of £50 nearly two years ago had not been spent as she wished; so I gave it her back, and she took it.'

Later in the year six workers left for regions beyond,—Dr. and Mrs. Rocha to visit the Jewish Colonies in South America; Messrs. Day and Malbert to South Africa; and Messrs. Dressler and Goldstein to the Levant.

'Oct. 9, 1893. Attended the funeral service of dear Sir Arthur Blackwood. . . . Sir Arthur was one of the noblest Christian gentlemen I ever knew. He was a manly, loyal Protestant, and a devoted, intelligent Christian. His loss to Mildmay and to the whole Christian Church will long be felt.'

Amid the constant succession of meetings, Mr. Wilkinson found time for another visit to his much-loved native village of Tealby. Seventy years had now passed since first he saw light in one of its humble cottages. On this occasion he called the villagers together to a great tea-meeting. "People left their work earlier, and the shopkeepers closed their shops earlier." After a hearty meal, the missionary told them the story of his con-

version, and the origin and growth of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews. Next day 130 village children were called together for a similar experience. The adults filed in again after tea, and the story was retold and continued, "followed by an earnest appeal for surrender to Christ."

In connexion with this visit the diary tells us that—

'I had one more jump from the high stone in the park, from which I have jumped occasionally during sixty years.'

And yet the aged missionary's youngest son, the writer of this volume, jumped from the stone but once, and then at the cost of a sprained ankle!

'Dec. 31, 1893. Another year has passed away, and I am being rapidly brought to the end of this life. Oh that my life may be filled up with work acceptable to the Lord, and that I may be found ready at a moment's notice to meet my blessed Lord in the air. May I myself and my work be covered by the cleansing blood; and may I ever rest in His work, which is *perfect* and finished.'

In response to an invitation from Dr. Niles of Boston, Mr. Wilkinson, accompanied by Mr. James Adler, sailed from Liverpool by the S.S. *Majestic* for the United States on the 4th of April 1894. They sailed from New York again on the 13th June, reaching Liverpool on the 20th. The diary notes of this journey, and all the work and conversations with which it was filled, are full of graphic interest and humour. The following extract describes our father's impressions of *one* side of American life, that of spectacular advertisement, which many

in England do their best to copy ; as well as reveals the character of the work and worker.

‘ *Boston, April 25, 1894.* Three weeks to-day since we left home: it seems three months. Though only thirteen days since we landed in New York, I have already given fifteen addresses, and dear Adler is full of work amongst the Jews.

‘ We had a lovely rain in the night, and again summer sunshine this morning. I had a walk in the public gardens among the flowers, after I had had a conversation and prayer with Miss Organ as to work among Jewesses in the settlement.

‘ . . . After awhile in comes Mr. W., another young man from the Methodist University Settlement, not aware that Mr. H. had called. Mr. W. had a very important project in his mind for the good of the Jewish cause and for the glory of God. It was this—“that the Rev. Dr. Wilkinson should make a trip through the Jewish quarter in company with reporters, who would sketch persons and report conversations to be given to a number of papers in the New England States, which would interest people in the Jews, and give an impetus to the work and bring subscriptions.” These men honestly thought this would glorify God. We honestly thought otherwise, and positively refused to be used *à la Baronne*.’

Back to the same round of happy work, often tired *in* it, but never tired *of* it. Sometimes laid up by throat trouble.

‘ *Dec. 10, 1894.* Here I have been for a week already,

coughing heavily night and day. I had to give up West Norwood on the 3rd, and Highgate on the 4th, and fear I must relinquish Gloucester Conference also this week. The Lord can do without me, even in the Jewish cause. God bless Adler, who supplies my place.'

Early in 1895, Dr. and Mrs. Rocha were commended to God for work in Morocco, and Messrs. Davidson and Goldstein for work in Bulgaria and Roumania.

But dear James Adler, who "supplies my place," was himself called home in October of 1895, after a brief illness in the Cottage Hospital, Mildmay. He was as humble, as scholarly, and as faithful to the Mission, to his friends, and the people among whom he laboured, as to the God whom he served. The fragrance of his memory is still fresh and sweet, as it comes down from those early years of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews to the present time.

We need not say that all the work at the Central Hall went on with unabated energy. Mrs. Coley was still in charge of the Jewesses' Sewing-Class, which had now swelled to 300 in attendance, which number was made the limit. One day in 1896—

'Mrs. Coley called to express her sorrow and indignation that some parcels of valuable clothing had been stolen from the Central Hall. We asked Mr. Clancy by telephone to call here in the evening. We had definite prayer that God would trouble the conscience of the thief or thieves, and compel them to restore them. The next day they were brought back, and prayer was turned to praise.'

In 1895 the magazine, *Trusting and Toiling on*

Israel's Behalf, was commenced. The first tidings of the Mission had been given as a monthly article in *Service for the King*, then as an occasional paper. Now the time had come for a monthly magazine. The writer of this volume was its editor from the first. The first article was from father's hand, and on Isaiah xliii. 21. As I have more than once referred to myself as the writer of this volume, I am impelled here to call attention to the combination of affection, wisdom, and appreciation with which my beloved father trained me to the work.

I joined the Mission in 1882, leaving business to do so. It was my father's plan to throw increasing responsibility upon me as the years advanced, knowing that would be the best natural stimulus to development of latent ability. He seldom interfered in a matter which he had once committed to me; he reposed perfect confidence in me. If occasionally he wisely criticised, he constantly expressed appreciation. It touches me deeply now to read these expressions of appreciation in his journal, and to recall the generous words he often spoke to me and of me. To others his descriptions of "my son Samuel" were *always* generous, and many are the places where I have found myself beloved for my father's sake. But of all that which came into our close relationship, his deep affection was the strongest feature. How his face lighted up as I came into his study! Or, maybe, hearing Sam's knock, he would hurry himself to the door.

Readers will pardon these references, but they are worthy of note, as showing how a father may bring the best possible out of a son. With a strong character and sound judgement such as his, one may well wonder why he should often defer to my view in many matters; but

so it was: this naturally attached me the more to him and to a loyal desire to carry out his wishes. Wherever we really disagreed, I willingly subordinated my judgement to his, and carried out his plans as if they had been my own. Not to the day of his death did I take any action in Mission affairs in which I did not feel that he, could he have given time and attention to it, would have acted in just the same way. So the relationship of father and son became blended in that of director and sub-director, and again in that of brotherhood in the Lord Jesus and companionship in counsel.

The work of the Mission progressed both at home and abroad: fresh work being undertaken in Persia, Arabia, and Bokhara; and Mr. Wilkinson's own travelling and meetings absorbed all his time and strength. We must confine ourselves to two domestic events in 1897: one, my ordination at Mildmay; the other, the crisis in our home and dear father's life—our beloved mother's death.

'Feb. 5, 1897. *Ordination Service.* A goodly company, and a solemn and blessed service. Colonel Morton presided and gave the object of the meeting, and expressed his high esteem for the candidates, especially for my son, whom he had known for years. The Rev. Dr. Gritton prayed, and I read 1 Tim. iv. and prayed, followed by Revs. Gooch, Nachim, and Sturges. The two candidates knelt, and Dr. Bullinger, Dr. Gritton, Fuller Gooch, Sturges, and Nachim, Col. Morton and J. W. laid hands on them; Dr. Bullinger commending them to the Lord in a brief prayer, and then gave the charge—a most beautiful, appropriate, Scriptural, and practical address, based on 2 Tim. ii. 15, and which was profitable for all. The benediction concluded this

memorable and happy service, which took place one day short of forty-two years after my own ordination in Islington. All my sons and daughters were present, and many other beloved friends cheered us with their presence.'

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'*Thursday, Aug. 26th, 1897.* We reached home (from Tealby) about 3.15. My beloved wife had been conveyed home the day before from Brentwood on an ambulance. I found her very feeble, and her mind clouded. She had a very restless night, and grew worse the next day.

'*Aug. 27, 1897.* I was in and out of her room during the day, but towards evening she changed for the worse, and the end seemed near. Our sons were sent for, and were with us all night, as well as our daughters and my wife's sister. Unconsciousness and loss of speech set in at 5 or 6 o'clock, and continued till the end (on the 28th), when my precious one peacefully fell asleep in Jesus about 10 minutes past 5 o'clock, just as the sun rose on the Saturday morning. I had a brief prayer at the bedside, recognising the hand of our loving Father, Whose ways and works are perfect. During the afternoon Mr. Hankin called and had prayer with us.

'*29th and 30th.* Sorrowful days, during which my beloved one, as to her body, lay in her bedroom in the cold grasp of death.'

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'We committed the body of my precious wife to the dust in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection

to eternal life. How difficult to realize that she is here no longer. It seems to me that I must find her in the next room, when I want to speak to her and consult her. The nearest to this is that I can speak to the Lord Jesus, and she is near to Him and in His safe keeping.'

CHAPTER XXII

Nearing the Homeland

1898-1906

‘*J*AN. 1, 1898. Forty-one years ago to-day, God gave to me as my lovely bride and helpmeet one of the most precious wives with which man was ever blest. We grew into each other’s views and sympathies as practically to lead one life. My loneliness without her cannot be described. But—He knows, and His way is perfect. This has been one of the saddest days of my life.’

Yes, they were sad days for John Wilkinson; but absorption of mind and activity in definite occupation may do much as a palliative for the keenest sorrow. Of all occupations, none is so blessedly soothing to a bereaved heart as the service of God and the ministry to one’s fellows; and of all departments of service for God, few surely so calculated to draw one into the counsels and plan of God as effort on behalf of His own beloved though hardened people. And this was Mr. Wilkinson’s relief for his aching heart. Meetings at Wimbledon, Reigate, Norwood, Bournemouth, Brentwood, Weybridge, Sydenham, Sunderland, Newcastle, Cardiff, Hastings, and

other places; conferences with and about Hermann Warszawiak; and direction of the affairs of the Mission—much more devolving upon his shoulders in this respect because of my absence at this time in South America—called into exercise all his powers of mind and body in the early months of 1898, while he lavished, if possible, more affection upon his children.

In the dear old village of Tealby he had now purchased a cottage, and made it over to his two daughters—Alice and Florence—to provide them with a roof when he should be gone. Here he had a little study, where he loved to spend a few days of retirement. A fortnight was thus spent in May 1899. Towards the end of it I cycled from London to join him. While driving with him in a trap the same afternoon as I arrived, the horse, in descending a hill, crossed its fore-legs and fell as if shot dead. Father, and Mr. Empson who was driving, both being in front, were thrown clean out. Mr. Empson was not hurt, and was quickly up; but father lay still—close to and partly upon the horse's hind-legs. Neither we nor he knew how much he was injured, but he would insist before moving, on repeating, "All things work together for good to them that love God." Somewhat impatient in our concern for him, we quickly carried him to the hedgeside and laid him there, when the horse immediately began to kick and struggle. It was only just in time. After some rest, it proved that no bone was broken; we lifted him to his feet, and he limped the two miles home to Tealby, shaken much, but full—as we all were—of praise to God.

For the village also he purchased a tent to hold some hundred people or so. This, erected in the garden of his cottage, served for Bible readings and Gospel meet-

ings during his short stays at the village. When the Tealby Fair was on, and various travelling shows attended, it was his custom to preach in the yard of the King's Head Inn, gathering 100 or more people together.

During all these years Mr. Wilkinson had never neglected the reading of the Psalms in Hebrew—besides his regular reading of the whole English Bible many times over. But now, as physical strength already began to decline, his delight in the Hebrew Psalter became more manifest. On the last day of 1899 we find this entry in the journal:

'Dec. 31, 1899. Since May last I have repeated in bed from memory the first six Psalms in Hebrew, and read usually three on the average every day all the year round. This keeps up my use of the Hebrew tongue, as well as giving me a refreshing drink at the fountain of living waters.'

The little well-worn Hebrew Psalter—precious keepsake—is now in my possession. It was for many years the Jewish missionary's constant companion. We have referred to it in speaking of his student days. On the flyleaves it bears the following:

'J. WILKINSON

1856

Presented by my fellow-student Thompson in 1853.

Read 100 times in 20 years—1886–1906—in Hebrew, and 14 in English. How many times in first 33 years I don't know.'

In the first days of 1900, Mr. Wilkinson took part in the Student Volunteer Missionary Conference, held in

the Examination Room Buildings on the Thames Embankment. But we more frequently find in the Diary now the entry :

‘Home—reading, resting, prayer.’

It is unnecessary to say that he had willing hands to do all that others *could* do for him in the carrying on of the work, either at home or through correspondence abroad, and the taking his place in public. Still, his natural energy and vigour would assert itself, as for instance when he alighted from a street-tram while in motion (March 1900) in coming home from his constitutional walk in Finsbury Park. But on this occasion he slipped and fell. A policeman helped him to his feet, and asked whether he should take him to the hospital. “No, thank you,” said the hale old gentleman, and limped home. But the bruises and stiffness that followed told him that his days of springing from travelling street-cars were over!

On the 3rd of May 1900, beloved Mr. G. H. C. MacGregor, well known as a Keswick speaker and the minister of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Notting Hill, was called home. A few days before he had been with Mr. Wilkinson at a Conference at Sunderland.

‘*May 16, 1900.* How little I thought sixteen days ago, when at the Sunderland Conference together, that he, so young and fresh and well, would be called home before me. We travelled together on the Monday, April 16, and had much conversation and Christian fellowship. I asked him if he had any definite thought as to the immediate experience of a saved soul on leaving the body; for some good people thought the soul as well as the body slept till the Resurrection. A “desire to depart and be with Christ,” “Absent from the body,

present with the Lord," and "To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise," seemed against a sleep. Our beloved friend now knows by experience.'

But in June of the same year our dear father was nearly over the borderland himself, being laid aside for many weeks with bronchitis, congestion of the left lung, and pleurisy. Much prayer was made for him in many places, and his life was graciously spared.

So, once more, he could raise his song of praise as a year closed.

'Dec. 31, 1900. The last day in the year and century. Praise the Lord for innumerable, though undeserved, mercies, bestowed not only during the past year, but all my life long.

'May my future days—many or few—be spent in the happy service of Him I love to call Lord and Master.'

The following year (1901) completed father's fifty years of service—including his College course—on behalf of Israel. A special meeting was held at the Conference Hall, Mildmay, on the afternoon of the 31st May. In this meeting, presided over by Mr. James E. Mathieson, addresses were given by Messrs. Fuller Gooch, Aaron Matthews, Frank White, James Neil, and Marcus Bergmann. Two illuminated addresses were handed to Mr. Wilkinson, and a cheque for £200.

It was hoped—by me and others—that dear father might have used this money to see the great field of Russian Jewry before he was called home; but it appears he could think of nothing better to do with it than to give it away. In response to the gift, he said:

'I take this as from the Lord, as though He had put

His hand out of a cloud and said, "Take that, My child." But do you know, dear friends—and there are many of them here to-day—you who have contributed towards this, do you know that the highest pleasure you are giving me in this, is the pleasure of giving it away, perhaps within a week, or nearly all? After I have just taken enough out of it for current bread and butter, the rest will go. But do you think that I think that a serious thing? No! I have no pleasure in receiving money but for passing it on. My home is *there*; my inheritance is *there*; and I think I shall enter upon my fortune when others perhaps become bankrupt. Words fail me to thank those dear friends who have so kindly contributed this, which I take as a gift from the Lord, and thank His servants; but I have just to say that I omitted to mention the beloved fellow-workers in this Mildmay Mission, male and female. I dare not trust myself to mention names, because I should miss out some, and they might be aggrieved. . . . I owe much more than I can tell in words, to the loving co-operation of our fellow-workers in this Mission. I do not know a Mission on the face of the earth in which more love to each other and more love of the work, and more of the prayerful spirit characterize every member of the staff. Praise God for that!'

The year 1901 was nevertheless beclouded by the serious illness of Mr. Wilkinson's eldest daughter. The suffering was continued into 1902, when on 2nd April Mr. Wilkinson wrote:

'My dear child still suffers. . . . None but God can

do anything to cure her; but she has everything that we can devise for her comfort.'

And yet his daughter, whose life was then despaired of, was given back to him, to minister to him on his own deathbed.

In June 1902 it was the writer's privilege to accompany his father for a fortnight to Switzerland. He revelled in the mountain scenery, and in the revival of the recollections of his visit to Hospenthal with dear mother, sixteen years before.

The autumn and winter of the year were as full of work as ever. All his sons and daughters and sons' wives gathered around his birthday table on 6th December.

'It was indeed a happy day to all to have my dear Alice again with us.'

And so the year closed.

'Another year has rolled away, with its joys and sorrows—but full of mercies and tokens of our Father's love and care. Oh that I had been more humble, more grateful, more obedient, and more useful in His blessed service. . . .

' . . . I am now in my seventy-ninth year, and in fair health, and delighting in my work; what cause for thanksgiving and praise!

'*August 19th, 1903.* John, Samuel, and I went to Southport to attend the funeral of my dear and only brother William. He was seventy-five years of age, a truly godly man, and ready for his home-call.'

Sickness again broke in, in September and October 1903. Bronchial attacks now found him weaker to resist

them. Still he got out of bed to drive to the Church House, Westminster, to read his paper on "Methods of work in Jewish Missions."

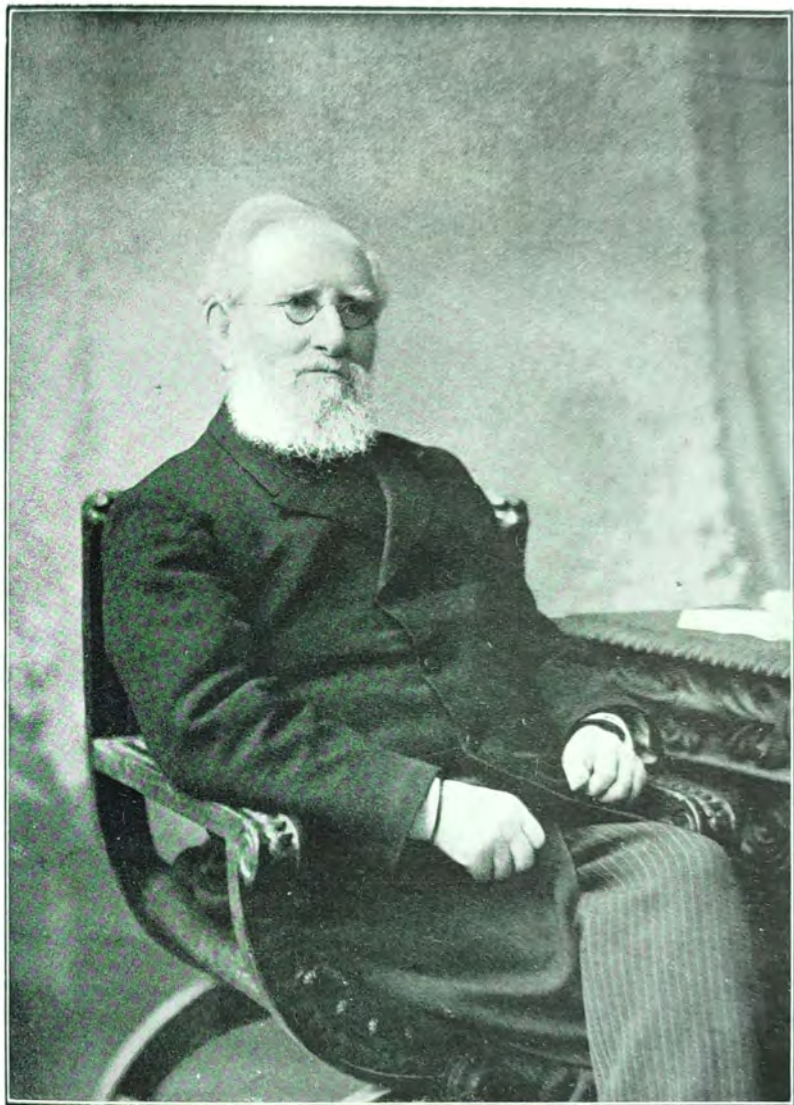
'Florry went with me in a close carriage, and I read my paper, but with weak and trembling legs.

'During this sickness, dear Quarrier and dear Mrs. Spurgeon have passed home, and poor Mabel Samuel has lost her first-born babe.'

Meetings and correspondence were continued during 1903 and 1904, but with decreasing vigour and increased susceptibility to throat trouble. His daughter Florry was his almost constant companion. He generally, when taking meetings in the country, arranged for a free day or two for rest before or after, or both. But when speaking, he spoke still with unabated energy and with the same clear ringing voice.

'*December 3rd, 1904.* Attended and took part in the funeral service of beloved Miss Annie Macpherson, held at the Home of Industry, Bethnal Green Road. Florry with me—room full. Dr. McKilliam gave the address and presided. It was indeed a representative gathering. She rests from her abundant labours, and her works follow her.

'*December 6th, 1904.* By God's preserving mercy I have reached my eightieth anniversary to-day. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of these years. I praise Him for His forbearance and patience with me. Florry went with me to Holloway in the forenoon, to the photographer; then dined and had tea at the Central Hall, received the congratulations



REV. JOHN WILKINSON

ON HIS 80TH BIRTHDAY.

of the workers, and prayed with them and addressed the three hundred Jewesses of the Sewing-Class. Home about seven o'clock. A happy day !'

And then as another year closed :

'I magnify the patience and forbearance of God with me another year, and praise Him for unnumbered yet undeserved mercies ; and for sparing me to pass my eightieth birthday and to possess fairly good health. I praise Him for His blessing on the Mission, and for the health and affection of my precious sons and daughters. "More like my Lord," and "Nearer, my God, to Thee," is my heart's cry.'

Another four weeks of bronchitis in February and March 1905, after a drawing-room meeting at his son John's house at Sutton ; but once more the strong constitution and the triumphant faith asserted themselves. He still maintained his constitutional walk when time permitted, and revelled in the flowers at Finsbury Park or Kew Gardens. As in March 1905 dear Colonel Morton left Mildmay, we find the note :

'It was a real wrench to many to lose so excellent a Christian man. May God go with him and bless him.'

In April the new Home of the Mission for young Christian Jews was opened.

'*April 14, 1905.* Presided to-day at Durham House, at the dedication of the house by praise and prayer. Samuel gave an account of God's guidance to the house, and of its purpose. Rev. Ellis gave an interesting address, and Mr. Jackson, the superintendent, and his

wife, were introduced. The rooms were full, and we had a blessed meeting.'

In May, another visit to beloved Tealby; and then meetings the same month at Hereford, Leominster, and Eastbourne.

At the Mildmay Conference Mr. Wilkinson was enraptured, as multitudes were, with the addresses of Dr. Pierson on "The Tenses of the Believer's Life—Past, Present, and Future." These addresses have since been published in a book.¹

The following simple incident in the midst of many public engagements and much important correspondence is surely full of interest :

'*July 4, 1905.* Correspondence, etc. Went out for half an hour to the Green (Newington Green). Saw a Jew sitting, and felt led to sit beside him. He spoke first, and said "A fine morning." We talked about Russia and her chastisement, and the Lord's chastisement of Israel. He had in his hand a very old Hebrew and Yiddish book; and when he found that I could read Hebrew and quote it from memory, and that I loved Israel, I had his confidence at once. I reminded him that Jews and Gentiles were sinners and needed forgiveness; that we could not stay here always, but must go and meet God; and quoted in Hebrew, "It is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul," and "All we like sheep have gone astray," etc. I gave him the address of my son at the Central Hall, Philpot Street, and he said he would

¹ Morgan & Scott Ltd., London.

go. May God bless this interview to the salvation of his soul. His name is Simon, and he has been thirty-five years under Dr. Adler as *Shochet*, and is now pensioned off. He is a Russian Jew.'

We pass over the intervening months of 1905. At the close we have the note:

'December 31, 1905. We have now reached the last day of another year of life and service down here. How rapidly life is passing away! Oh to be ever at our Lord's service, and doing only that which is pleasing to Him! Forty-nine years ago I left Mildmay Park for Sheffield, to be united in marriage to my beloved one, who was my true helpmeet (עזר כנגדי) for forty years and eight months.

'Whilst at family worship this morning, and praying for a safe journey home from Russia for my son, the servant left the room to open the door for him. He had his breakfast and dinner, and then went home. . . . Read to-day the thirteen chapters of Nehemiah, my Hebrew Psalms, and the chapters at worship. Oh that my memory were strengthened to retain what I read, and that the Lord would give me grace to practise what I know, to His praise and glory!'

And now we come to the last year of service on earth—I need not say it was a full one. It opened, however, with a bronchial attack in January, when our father at such seasons often spoke to us of his approaching end. The diary, too, speaking of dear mother in glory, says, "Through the mercy of God we shall soon see

each other again." We select a few entries from the journal of the year:

‘*March 1, 1906.* West Norwood Conference. Florry accompanied me in a close cab all the way. I spoke on “Christ as King of the Jews and King of Kings,” and then came back to bed. Remained in bedroom till March 6th.’

‘*March 10, 1906.* The trustees of the M. M. have signed a document, allowing an annuity of £25 each to my two daughters on my home call. Praise God for this provision.’

‘*April 9, 1906.* Correspondence, etc. An hour in Finsbury Park. Daffodils, hyacinths, primroses, tulips—lovely. Praise God for lovely flowers!’

‘*May 4–18, 1906.* Florry, Miss Baker, Vicary, and Kate accompanied me to my native village. Butters met us at Rasen, and we called and had prayer with Miss Barton. The village and country generally were clothed in spring green. The beauty and fragrance of flowers, the singing of the birds, the bracing air, gave intense pleasure, and called forth praise to God.’

‘*June 15, 1906.* Foundation-stones laid by Mr. Mathieson and myself for the two new Homes at Brentwood—Convalescent Home and Children’s Home. Samuel in the chair. A goodly number of workers and friends present. God gave us a favourable afternoon

and a happy meeting. His hand recognized in provision and guidance. Home in safety.'

July 7, 1906. Norwood. Florry and I dined with our dear friend Mrs. Geary, then attended the laying of the foundation-stone of good Fuller Gooch's new church. Lord Kinnaird laid the stone. Mr. Denny presided, and Mr. Mathieson offered the opening prayer. Mr. Gooch made a clear statement, and Mr. Douglas, Mr. Crouch, Captain Tottenham, Mr. Seagram, and I said a few words. God bless our brother.'

July 19, 1906. . . . Began the R. V. of the Bible, August 1st at Tealby, and finished it to-day. 1189 chapters in all, besides my daily readings in Hebrew and English, another more than 1189 in the year. May the Holy Spirit enable me to live *upon* and by this Holy Book.'

October 20, 1906. A red-letter day. My two daughters, my three sons, and their wives and children, twenty-one of us together, met in Holloway at the photographers at 2.50, and left at 3.45 for my house to take tea. The table was laid at 81, and with Auntie Alice and Lucy King, and Norman, her son, we numbered twenty-four. After tea we had Psalm cxlv. read, and sang "Glory to Thee, my God, this night," and had prayer. The Lord gave us a fine day, and no one was missing from sickness or other cause. We praise God for this most happy event. All seemed very happy.'

This was the last portrait taken of Mr. Wilkinson, and will be found reproduced on the opposite page.

On 6th December we get the birthday reflection for the last time.

'December 6, 1906. Eighty-two years of age to-day. Praise God for all the goodness and mercy which have followed me all the days of these years. With all my opportunities and experience and work in the Lord's service, I am still but a poor sinner saved by the grace of God, and trusting alone in the atoning and cleansing blood of my Lord.'

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'December 11, 1906. Florry and I, with Mr. Scudder and Samuel and John, were in the Law Courts, Chancery Lane, to-day, 11.15 to 4; Mr. Pridham, our solicitor, and Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Stamp, our Counsel, as to whether in the sale of Cromwell Lodge we were subject to the control of the Charity Commissioners. Counsel against us—Beaumont and Wheeler. Judge Kekewich gave judgement in our favour from 3.30 to 3.55. I then left for home, praising God for victory and answered prayer.'

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'December 25, 1906. This is my 83rd Christmas Day. Lucy and Norman King and Miss Meade and Auntie Alice with us. Dear Henry in St. Thomas's Hospital; but, praise God, he is doing well. We had a quiet, happy day.'



LAST PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN, WITH CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN.

(OCTOBER, 1906.)

'*December* 31, 1906. The last day of another year. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all my days. I am nothing in myself but a poor lost sinner. God loves sinners. Christ died for sinners. I trust the atoning value and cleansing efficacy of the precious blood of Christ. I am a great sinner, but the Lord Jesus is a real and great Saviour. Praise God for all His goodness to me and mine.'

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That is the last entry.

CHAPTER XXIII

Closing Scenes

(1907)

YES, that was the last entry in the faithful journal that has been our principal supply of the data for the story of a full and consecrated life. Its soliloquy fitly terminates the record. The end of all human lives must come—and then the review. No matter how regular, how prolonged the diary, sooner or later with more or less abruptness, the last entry will be made. Then the summation. Happy we as children, happy you dear readers as friends, to be able to survey the life of John Wilkinson with unmixed gratitude to God, and to be able to thank our God upon every remembrance of him.

On the 8th of January 1907, Mr. Wilkinson, as was his wont, when well enough, attended the Annual Tea for Jews at the Central Hall. But on this occasion, as he entered, several noticed a change in him. There was less of elasticity in the step, and of power in the voice. Instinctively there was a hush as he approached the platform. For the first time I did not relinquish the conduct of the meeting to him on his arrival. He felt, however, strong enough to say a few words, which were listened to in responsive silence. He had nothing prepared—what he said sprang from his heart, and was

based on the hymn we had been singing: "Come to the Saviour, make no delay." He drove this appeal home, referring to the need of coming at once, and the future joy or eternal loss that hung upon the decision. It would indeed be a joyful meeting, he said, when our hearts were pure and free, and we should gather with the Saviour in our eternal home: and in closing he said that he himself hoped to see the Saviour's face soon. Before the meeting closed, I was led to ask for definite decisions. Many hands were raised, and many dealt with afterwards. The solemn attention and hearty singing of the people were unparalleled in all previous experiences of these annual gatherings. This was felt by a lady present—not one of the regular staff of workers—who afterwards spontaneously wrote me the following letter:

'MY DEAR MR. WILKINSON,—We were so sorry to have to run away last evening without uniting in praise and prayer; but could you have heard all that we said to one another on our homeward journey, you would have realized how truly our *hearts* praised God for what our eyes had seen and our ears had heard of God's goodness to the beloved Mission.

'As one who has now occasionally been present for nearly ten years, I was very greatly struck with the marked change in tone, behaviour, and conversation. My interest was intense as I watched how God helped and enabled you to deal with such a large Jewish audience, and I felt indeed the power of God was present in blessing. To your dear and honoured father it must indeed have been a deep joy to see the fruit of his long, loving toil for and with Israel, and, as I looked

on him, again and again came the words, "Israel my Glory," and the refrain, so familiar now, "When by His grace I shall look on His face, that will be glory for me."

'I count it a very great privilege to have been present last evening, and from my heart praise God for all that such a Mission has, by God's grace, been enabled to accomplish.

'With kind regards, yours very sincerely, C. S. B.'

The next day my father got up as usual; we tried to make him keep his bed, but in vain. For several days he had barely strength enough to dress himself. Finally, too weak to stand, we laid him on his bed—the same bed and the same room in which mother had passed away ten years before—never to rise *from it* again. At this time I was in Scotland, addressing meetings, anticipating however an urgent call south. But I returned only after my work was done, and shall never forget the delight expressed in his face as I came to his bedside. On February 4th I wrote in *Trusting and Toiling* as follows:

'BRENTWOOD, February 4, 1907, 1 p.m.

'Friends will understand if for once I drop the usual form of *Current Notes* and write more as I feel. Our dear father is visibly sinking. When I last put pen to paper to write *Current Notes*, he was still enjoying that remarkable vigour which has characterized his old age. On January 8, he attended the Annual Tea for Jews and Jewesses at the Central Hall, and—as narrated elsewhere in this number—gave a short and affectionate invitation to those present "to come to the

Saviour." We observed his weakness. He went home to Mildmay in a cab. The next day my brother John and I with difficulty persuaded him to take to bed. After that he tried to rise and dress; but weakness drove him back to bed. Our dear sisters had an anxious time, fearing he would fall and hurt himself. He was attended by Dr. T. Miller Neatby, and a night nurse was called in. During the last few days he has sensibly declined. He cannot move himself. His grand face and head lie in sweet repose, like a classic statue, upon the pillow. He has no pain. He calmly rests, arousing at times to recognize and greet us, to smile and sleep again. Last Sunday week, January 27, propped by pillows, he joined in singing his favourite evening hymn :

“Glory to Thee, my God, this night
For all the blessings of the light.
Keep me, oh keep me, King of Kings,
Beneath Thine own Almighty wings.”

This last Sunday, February 3, it was sung to him, but he could no longer join in. Our sisters are his ministering angels.’

‘February 5, 1907, 10 p.m.

‘The whole family met in the old home to-day. Our father at times looked a little better, as a flush mounted to his face, and he smiled at a word or two of humour. At 5.30 p.m. Sir Thomas Barlow, physician to the King, arrived in his motor. He travelled with father to Palestine as a young man, many years ago, before his dignities were heaped upon him. He rallied father’s

memory upon old times, but the memory was too weak to follow. He met us afterwards most kindly, but could tell us little more than we already knew. He would take no fee from the children of his old friend.

‘Twenty years ago to-day, February 5, 1887, the whole family met in the old home when wife and I were made one by mutual troth; ten years ago to-day, February 5, 1897, the whole family were once again united in the old home, when I was set apart for God’s service by ordination; now to-day we have met again—two sisters and three brothers—to face the fact that our father is going to his long home, of which our happy home days on earth are but a foreshadowing.’

My brother John wrote at the same time the following word:—

‘Having just returned from one of several visits to my dear father on his sick-bed, and having heard from the lips of an eminent physician that the long and happy life is drawing to its close, I look back upon the many years of warm affection, of instruction, of precept and example, of help and guidance, and of interest in our spiritual and temporal welfare which my dear father has ever extended to us his children. And these reflections bring with them a profound thankfulness to our loving God for having given us such a father, and for having spared him in health and strength to so great an age.

‘As one who has not been directly connected with my dear father’s life work in the interest of God’s ancient

people, but who has from infancy been in constant and close contact with his firm faith in God, his enthusiasm in the Jewish cause, his knowledge and constant study of the Word of God, from the Bible lessons given to us as children to the more advanced expositions of Scripture, I have seen, as a great object lesson, the growth of the work with which God has entrusted him; have seen, as the result of his constant prayers and faith, the answers God has graciously sent; answers so direct, so opportune and so bountiful as to exclude all shadow of doubt as to their being a sign of His approval and blessing.

‘And now, although life’s partings, whenever they may come, are sad, we can look up and rejoice in the honour God has brought to His Name through my dear father’s work in His cause, and in the prospect of one day meeting together a family unbroken at His right hand.

JOHN WILKINSON, Jun.

‘COTTESMORE, SUTTON, SURREY, *February 5, 1907.*’

And our eldest brother wrote:

‘While our hearts are riven in watching by the bedside of our beloved father to see the powers of mind and body grow weaker and weaker, we his children have still the satisfaction of witnessing the smile lighting up his face when he sees us, and the privilege of seeing the dear face we love so much bearing the expression of contentment and freedom from pain. It was laid upon our hearts to-day that many dear friends in that

large circle who bear a deep affection for our father, and are unable to see him, might appreciate from us a few words enabling them perhaps to catch a glimpse into the sickroom, and of the one to whom, for his work's sake as well as for his dear self, they are, like ourselves, so tenderly attached. The Lord, we feel, is in the room night and day, tenderly supporting His faithful servant during the sinking of bodily powers, and speaking comfort to his heart; for do we not see this in his patience, and in the calmness and sweet restfulness of his expression? It seems to us sometimes that he does not even know of the approaching change. At other times his words show how near he feels he is to seeing the beloved Master's face in fulness of joy. Ah! who can picture that joyous meeting. Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!

'A little singing-bird, a great pet of my father's and kept in his room, burst into lovely song one morning, and my sister remarked:

"What a beautiful song your bird has, father."

'He replied with an appreciative smile, probably thinking of the happy song within his own heart, "I have a soul satisfied with the perfect work of Christ."

'My sister then said, "Yes, and that is what your face shows all the time, dear father."

'On one occasion he called Florry to him and said to her, "A very happy Eternity to you!"

'She replied, "And it is a very bright one for you, isn't it, father?"

‘His reply was not in words; but in a smile so full of happiness and glorious satisfaction as might have meant, “Yes, how could you ask it?”

‘He then said over the names of father, mother, and children, and was understood to say “all be there,” to which my sister replied:

“Yes, dear father, we intend all to be there.”

‘What followed was very much treasured by my sister Florry, who for years has been his companion, travelling with him to his engagements and looking after his personal comforts and safety. He took her hand in his and said to her:

“You and I have been much together below, and we’ll be above together.”

‘Another beautiful saying was when my sister Alice held some flowers for him to admire, saying to him:

“Aren’t they pretty flowers, father?”

‘He replied, “Yes, very pretty; but I like my living flowers best: you are my flowers.”

‘His speech is gradually failing, and he cannot always put into words the thoughts passing through his mind, nor can we always follow now what he says, the sentences being so short and disconnected. What we hear shows us that his thoughts are frequently upon travelling, or going out and meeting many well known and dear friends. We find that he fully understands us when we talk to him on homely matters, or on simple incidents in our daily life; and, may we say it, he is still able to appreciate our kisses and return them, and the

words, "God bless you, my darling boy," come faintly, but clearly.

'Last Sunday, my little boy, Arthur, asked me what did "His Church as His reward" mean? This is the last line in a hymn composed by my father, which we had sung at our evening worship. This question of my boy's and my explanation was related to my father, and it appeared to interest him very much. His face assumed the expression so well known to us when he desires to speak his own convictions or views on a subject of intense interest to him. But the words fell broken, and the dear voice failed. Speaking of this hymn, what a flood of thoughts arise within us at the words:

"By day and night we cry to Thee
As Thy remembrancers,
Oh, set the sons of Zion free,
And dry up all their tears!"

'The one whose heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel has been, like Paul's, that they might be saved, and whose deep affection for that people has been such that it might be said he shed his own tears that their tears might be dried, is now laid low; and his voice, lifted for a lifetime in Israel's cause, cannot, we fear, plead on earth again with her or for her. But in the hearts of His people will not God, in His unshakable purposes, cause this affection and this burning desire for His people to endure? Truly might it be said to us who remain, as by Latimer of old to Ridley: "Be of good cheer, Master Ridley, and play the man; for we shall this day, by God's grace, light such a candle in England

as shall *never be put out.*" Our prayers unite in the words of our dear father's hymn :

"Oh, gather soon the 'remnant' in
To realize forgiven sin,
Through Jesu's precious blood ;
Arouse Thy Church to work and pray,
To show Thy scattered ones the way,
Back home through Christ to God."

'HENRY DANIEL WILKINSON.

'196 BARCOMBE AVENUE, STREATHAM HILL, S.W.

February 5, 1907.'

The description of the last week of life is again given by our eldest brother, Henry :

'Our beloved father lingered until Tuesday, February 12th, exactly seven days after we penned the short accounts of his declining days, which appeared in the last issue of this paper. Very seldom during these last days did his lips move as if speaking to us ; but on one occasion when I asked him, "Dear father, are you comfortable and happy?" he replied, in the hearing of us all, "Unspeakably happy." Once he spoke to me at some length with earnest face, while I strained to catch the words ; but to my grief I was unable to understand a single word. It was hard not to be able to give the answer that he unquestionably was looking for. But a little later he spoke again, and my sisters told me they had distinguished the words, "My children, their wives, my grandchildren love me," and understood him to desire his love to all ; so this may have been the message which I missed. Sacred it was to all of us to feel our beloved father's blessing and undying affection clinging to us.

'We heard no more words after that, but had the satisfaction at times of seeing by his expression that he understood what we said to him, and appreciated our singing. All those hymns which he most loved we sang around his bed from day to day, excepting only, "Why that look of sadness?" a great favourite of his, but which we could not bring ourselves to sing. We sang also that old hymn, "My God, I am Thine," which first came to us from the Conferences held in Mr. Pennefather's day; "The sands of time are sinking," also reminiscent of that time; "Jesu, Lover of my soul," "For ever with the Lord," "Not all the blood of beasts, on Jewish altars slain," "Rock of Ages, cleft for me," "Jerusalem the golden," and "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel." We also sang in Hebrew the verse from Isaiah ix. 6, "Unto us a Child is born: unto us a Son is given."

'On Sunday, the 10th, my brother Samuel conducted family worship by the bedside, reading the 23rd Psalm. In the early hours of the following morning breathing became more laboured, and we feared the end was near; but a remarkable rally took place shortly afterwards, and dear father's face lighted up with intelligent recognition of all of us, his glance following any movement on our part. It was during this solemn time that we sang his favourite hymns, watching meanwhile his appreciative expression. All communication possible by earthly words had gone, but still there was the responsive glance in his eyes. It was at this hour that we sang, as well as our emotion permitted us, the

beautiful old hymn of our childhood, and dear to the hearts of both mother and father.

“Oh for the robes of whiteness,
Oh for the tearless eyes,
Oh for the glorious brightness
Of the unclouded skies.

Oh for the hour of seeing
My Saviour face to face,
The hope of ever being
In that sweet resting place!”

‘In the early hours of the following morning, Tuesday, February 12, breathing became more restricted and difficult, and at ten minutes to four our beloved father peacefully drew his last breath, and entered into that rest and joy which remains to the people of God. We fell on our knees, and Samuel led us in prayer.

“I shall sleep sound in Jesus ;
Filled with His likeness rise
To live and to adore Him,
To see Him with these eyes.
My kingly King in Zion
My presence doth command,
Where glory, glory dwelleth
In Immanuel’s Land.”’

CHAPTER XXIV

The Memorial Service at Mildmay

BY the kind consent of the Trustees and Superintendent of Mildmay to our request, a memorial service was held at the Conference Hall on Saturday the 16th of February, 1907. Nothing could have been more fitting. The day was fair. One last look at the dear features before they were imprisoned in the coffin, to emerge again only in their new and incorruptible form—then the proceedings took their arranged course. The small dwelling he had inhabited for forty years knew him no more. The cortège slowly advanced up Mildmay Road, crossed Mildmay Park, and entered the grounds of the Conference Hall; the coffin was carried into the Hall and placed in front of the platform covered with its wreaths, and we followed, to find a large audience standing.

The service having been opened by the singing of a hymn, the reading of Scripture (Rev. xxii.), and the offering up of prayer,

MR. JAMES E. MATHIESON rose and said :

“Dear Christian Friends, I feel encouraged, though with some sinkings of heart, to say a few words here on this very impressive occasion. I could not very well refuse to come and speak a word in remembrance of the twenty-five years of unclouded friendship which

I have enjoyed with our beloved, and now removed, friend, dear John Wilkinson.

"It is a very solemn thing to stand in the presence of death. Death is the great enemy of our race—one of the great enemies of our human race—and while some people, and some hymns, would lead us to believe that death is often a blessing in disguise, we cannot agree to that. And it is a solemn thing that the very last enemy of our race which God is to destroy is death. There is a natural shrinking of the human heart from death, and from the loss of beloved friends whose intimacy we have enjoyed for long, long years. I had the privilege of coming to reside in this place in the year 1880, and then I made the acquaintance, which ripened into friendship, of our dear friend, and I was glad to sit at his feet, and to learn many of the teachings of Holy Scripture with which I had been almost altogether unfamiliar, or very slightly familiar. He was really a great teacher, was John Wilkinson. He seemed to have a remarkable spiritual insight, and he brought forth out of the treasures, new and old, the substantial teaching concerning the Return of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, and another line of teaching which is inextricably bound up with this—God's great purposes concerning His people Israel.

"Now that persuasive voice is hushed, and we shall no more listen to those accents which held us and delighted us so often in the days that are past. On Thursday week I was privileged to see our dear friend lying in weakness in his sick-chamber. I spoke to him, and I prayed with him. There were the same clear eye and the same strong features as of yore, and the lips moved; but although I listened very carefully,

there was no voice. He was lying in great feebleness. I believe there was a short rally from this silence a few days after, and on Thursday of this week I went again to call, and to look upon the face of the dead. There were the same strong features, untouched by the hand of death as yet.

“I think that there was a wonderful mixture of strength and tenderness in our dear friend; and, as you all know, he was a man of great courage—a lion-hearted man with a lion-like face. And that courage that he displayed—where did he get it from? It was founded on faith in a living God. He had no doubts. He offered a prayer, and he expected an answer; and he got his answers in a most remarkable way. We think of dear George Müller when we talk of the men of faith of our generation; but John Wilkinson also was a man of faith, and he tried and tested God, and God answered His servant's faith and confidence by giving him wonderful answers. Death had no terrors for John Wilkinson. Death has no terrors for multitudes of people; but the reason there was no terror in death for John Wilkinson was that he had such a firm grasp of the blessed hope. He believed those truths which would win. He believed in those words in the 4th chapter of the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, that most precious chapter: ‘The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first.’ ‘The dead in Christ!’ I wonder are there some Christless souls here to-day? This promise is for those who are in Christ, found in Him, hid in Him, in Whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

“This ought to be a very solemnizing time for unconverted people. Dear friends, we are living in a day of

rebuke and blasphemy, and a great sword-bearer has fallen. We can ill spare the blessed men who are taken away from us, particularly at this time. Three such men have gone recently, all of the same age—Dr. Baedeker, of the Mission to Apostate Christendom in Europe; Dr. Paton, of the New Hebrides Mission to the Heathen; and now this beloved John Wilkinson. I think a great many people thought him a Jew, he was so fond of the Jews. And how are we to have those great gaps filled up? Oh, let us cry to God that He will send us men to take the places of those who have been removed from us. One is constrained to cry out, ‘Help, Lord: the godly man ceaseth; the faith faileth from among the children of men!’

“I will now ask an earlier friend than I of dear John Wilkinson, to speak to us, Captain the Hon. R. Moreton, my dear friend and my predecessor in the superintendence of this Hall.”

CAPTAIN THE HON. R. MORETON:

“I go back thirty-four years to my first acquaintance with dear John Wilkinson. I wrongly estimated him then: I used to say, ‘He has got Jew on the brain.’ But, after I knew him, I changed it from ‘Jew on the brain’ to ‘Jew on the heart.’ That was the secret of all dear John Wilkinson’s loving work for God’s ancient people, His present people, His future people, as dear Dr. Saphir used to say. I learned from many others, but I never learned from anyone else to understand somewhat of Jewish questions, and how to read the Scriptures with a view to the position of the Jew. I ceased then to jumble up Jewish truth and other truth; I was able in a measure to separate them, and to read that which belonged to the Jew and that which belonged to the

Gentiles; and I owe that to dear John Wilkinson. God blessed him to me as He blessed him to multitudes that he never knew anything about. I am thankful that I one day told him how much I owed him for his teaching about the Jews. I thanked him for it, his loving heart. It *was* a loving heart, it was a big heart, it overflowed with love. And we think of him as one of those three men that Mr. Mathieson has referred to—Dr. Baedeker, Dr. Paton, and John Wilkinson. These three men stood on this platform filled with love, love for their Lord, love for the work the Lord had put into their hands. They are now with the Lord. I have been trying to picture to myself what the greeting must have been when these three men came in together. How they must have been met at the golden gate, and taken in, and taken up! They are gone from us, those three men who have served their day and generation, and who have left behind a sweet savour of loving service. And who will fill the gaps? May a double portion of the Spirit of God that rested on John Wilkinson rest on those that will follow him in the work that he carried on in the name of the Lord! I commend them to your prayers, and to the Lord's loving-kindness and tender mercies.

“For years I never prayed for the Jew. I had not much love for him in my early days—I was like many others; but since meeting and hearing and learning from John Wilkinson, I reverently and humbly say that three times a day do I remember the Jew, and I owe that to the teaching of John Wilkinson. In the morning, at mid-day or in the afternoon, and at night, I never forget God's ancient people. Would that all the Church of God remembered them in prayer! Do so in future, if you do not already. It will not occupy much

time, but it will bring great blessing to you. May God bless this gathering! The sweet savour of our dear brother's loving voice, and word, and grip of the hand, and arm round one's neck many a time, remain with us! We commend you all, dear friends, you who have lost a father, to the love of the Spirit, and to His grace to keep you until one day when you shall be again reunited! Amen."

CAPTAIN TOTTENHAM:

"Before I say a few words, may I read one letter? It is from Lord Polwarth, one of the trustees of the Hall, who writes: 'I have received this morning the intimation of the home-going of dear old John Wilkinson. He was one of the fathers of Mildmay, and one of the pillars who sustained it by faith and prayer. The very mention of his name tends to strengthen faith and prayer, and his example to bid one trust in the living God. His love for, and devotion to, the Jewish people was truly beautiful. I regret that I cannot be at the Memorial Service, but would pay my little tribute to his memory in this brief note.'

"It is not my privilege to go so far back as my brothers who have already spoken. I think it was about ten or fifteen years ago that I first met our departed brother in a drawing-room meeting, about His Master's work. Afterwards I met him at various Conferences throughout the country, but perhaps principally at Keswick.

"We met there on the platform and off the platform, and there were two things that impressed themselves upon my own mind and heart. Both have been already mentioned; but I may mention them again—his love and his faith; his love to God, his love to 'my blessed

Lord,' as he used to like to call Him—and then his love to men; and perhaps specially of him it might be said, 'to the Jew first, but also to the Gentile.' And then the simplicity of the man impressed one. Ah, friends, we shall miss him here at Mildmay; we shall miss him at the coming Conference—he was always with us at the early 7 o'clock prayer-meeting, and always ready to lead us in prayer; we shall miss him on this platform at the Conference itself, where he has been for so many years, and also at the other services to which he used to come and help us by leading in prayer, and by his presence; we shall miss him in the streets—the hearty grip of the hand, as our brother has already said. But whilst we think of the missing here, let us also rejoice that we shall meet hereafter. We shall meet up there. But between the missing and the meeting there is something else, which has already been gently hinted at—the memory of him remains to us. It has been very beautifully put in the words of one of our own poets :

“‘You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will,
But the scent of the roses will cling round it still.’

“Truly the memory of the just is blessed, and he, being dead, yet speaketh.”

MR. MATHIESON :

“Before singing the next hymn—which was composed by John Wilkinson himself—I should like to tell you of a little incident which occurred many years ago. Dr. Hudson Taylor had just returned from one of his long periods of mission work in China, and on coming into this Hall he met John Wilkinson, who had also just entered the building; and they gave one another a salutation—a holy kiss. I remember that the incident

touched me very much at the time. Another little thing, perhaps, I may mention. Dear Hudson Taylor made his first gift of money every year, at the beginning of the year, to the Mildmay Mission to the Jews—'to the Jew first'—and conversely, our dear departed brother gave *his* first donation of money to the Gentile work—the work among the heathen. Let us sing this hymn, one of the compositions of Mr. Wilkinson."

After the singing of a hymn :

DR. HENRY SOLTAU said that a number of very kind letters had been received, out of which he would read a small selection.

Among those from whom communications had been received, and from which Dr. Soltau read passages were : The Staff of Workers of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews ; Rev. F. L. Denman, of the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews ; Rev. Isaac Levinson, of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews ; Rev. David Baron, "Hebrew Christian Testimony to Israel" ; Rev. H. O. Allbrook, Jewish Operative Home ; Professor Nicol, Church of Scotland Mission to the Jews ; Mrs. Finn, Society for Relief of Persecuted Jews ; Mr. Walter B. Sloan, China Inland Mission ; Sir Andrew Wingate, K.C.I.E. ; Rev. John Barraclough, St. Thomas's, Lambeth ; Mr. R. C. Morgan ; Rev. W. J. Mayne, M.A., Irish Branch, London Jews' Society ; Canon Fausset, of York ; Rev. John Sharp, Editorial Secretary, British and Foreign Bible Society ; Rev. W. H. Griffith Thomas, of Oxford ; Rev. F. B. Meyer, of Christ Church, Westminster ; Rev. Prebendary Webb Peploe, and Rev. Dr. A. T. Pierson.

Dr. Soltau concluded by saying that as Secretary of

the Medical Missionary Association he was able to testify that all the members of that Mission were very warmly attached to dear Mr. Wilkinson, and felt very deep sympathy with his family, and with the workers of the Mission to the Jews in their great loss.

After prayer had been offered by Mr. P. S. Badenoch,

REV. J. J. LUCE said :

“ ‘He loveth our nation.’ How many in Israel must have said, and thought, and felt, when they knew anything of our beloved departed friend, and of his work, ‘He loveth our nation!’ Yes, and he knew well how to impress that love upon others. I could take up the words of dear Captain Moreton, and word by word I could say just the same. For more than thirty years I have known and loved him! And oh, how much one has learnt from him! How many other Christians owe practically all the Biblical knowledge that they possess of God’s plan and purpose for Israel to dear John Wilkinson, and how many of us owe any intelligent interest we may have in the cause of Israel to our beloved brother! His love was so genuine and so deep. There was nothing perfunctory or formal about it. It was based upon a firm grip of the living Word of the living God. It sprang as from its source—I believe from the Holy Ghost Himself. No one, I think, could listen for any time to our beloved brother without realizing this. To him the fire had come which is kindled from Heaven itself. He loved his Lord; he knew that his Lord loved Israel, and he loved Israel too: and you know how practical was his love.

“The monument is something greater than the synagogue which that good centurion built, and to which they pointed so gratefully when they said, ‘He hath

built us a synagogue.' Is not the monument of our beloved brother's faith and love seen in this Mildmay Mission to the Jews, for which thousands have cause to bless the Lord to-day? And then you know quite well our beloved brother was endued very, very remarkably, very signally, with a marvellously comprehensive grip, with a cogent, powerful way of reasoning—with a gentle, and at the same time with a most forcible way of appealing to people. Oh, how we thank God for the remembrance of His grace in His beloved servant!

"May I just close by saying how heartily one re-echoes the desires and prayers that the work of the Mission may be carried on and carried forward now that our beloved leader has been removed. I know quite well—and we may thank God for it—how our brother was blessed with a band of workers—earnest, devoted, faithful, able workers—and how specially, if one may be allowed to say it, he was blessed in his family—in loyal, loving children, who have so ably seconded the efforts of their beloved father. May God bless them, and may God reward them for it; and may we all go away from this gathering, beloved, as we have been already exhorted to do, determined to find out the truth of those words which our beloved brother used to impress upon us so forcibly, and for which God has so greatly honoured him and his work—'To the Jew first.'"

MR. MATHIESON:

"Our friend, Sir Robert Anderson, has found it impossible to be here, and I will therefore ask our friend, Dr. McKilliam, to say a few words."

DR. MCKILLIAM:

"I think perhaps the impression which, by God's grace, our brother was enabled to leave upon my own

mind, from the very first time I knew him, was that of his wonderful love. It is about five-and-twenty years since I first met him. At that time I had just come from the far North of Scotland, and I was a stranger with hardly any acquaintances at all in England.

"I was asked to be present at the Believers' Meetings at Merrion Hall, Dublin. On the first occasion on which I was there, Mr. Wilkinson came up, like myself, to the platform, and on being introduced, he threw his arms round my neck and kissed me. Only one other servant of God did the same on a subsequent occasion at another meeting—dear Dr. Baedeker. It is a marvellous thing that those two men should have just done that on the occasions of which I speak, because of their association to-day in our thoughts as men of such large heart, as well as of great spiritual power. I felt surprised and a little perplexed. We Scotsmen—and as I have said, I came at that time, from the North of Scotland—do not quite expect that effusive manifestation of love; but I learned very soon to know that in dear Mr. Wilkinson's case, as well as in Dr. Baedeker's case, it was indeed true, real affection—a spiritual love which found this natural and spontaneous expression at their first meeting with one whom they wished to encourage in the work, and whom they wished to feel at home with themselves as God's children in sweet fellowship. And I have ever since then thanked God for those two men. I feel very strongly, too, that we have to thank God especially that the mantle for the work has descended indeed upon his beloved son, Mr. Samuel Wilkinson; and I am sure that if our beloved brother could speak to us from glory this morning, he would just commend his successor in the work, and all the fellow-workers, with great love to our hearts."

MR. MATHIESON:

"Will you all now breathe a silent prayer to God for the next speaker, Mr. Samuel Wilkinson, who becomes the Director of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, and who will need all our prayers and sympathy, especially on this sorrowing day."

REV. SAMUEL HINDS WILKINSON:

"My first duty, beloved friends, this morning, is to tender to you, in the names of my brothers John and Henry, and of my sisters, Alice and Florence, as well as on my own behalf, our very deepest thanks for your attendance here, and for all the sympathy which has been expressed to us in our affliction. First and foremost—if we might make any distinction—I would place our beloved, old-standing friend, Mr. James Mathieson. We do thank him with all our hearts for his presence with us this morning, and for all the sympathy that flows out of his heart, and brings comfort to ours. We thank, too, the beloved speakers, some of whom have come from a distance to pay the last tribute of respect to our beloved one. We thank, too, our beloved friend, Captain Tottenham, and the Trustees of this Hall, for their kind loan of the Hall, and for all the kindness associated with that loan. To me it would have been almost an unnatural thing if this blessed function had taken place anywhere else but in this building. We thank you, too, beloved friends, for all the scores of sympathetic letters which have been pouring in, post by post, and which will doubtless continue to do so for days to come, all of which have brought unspeakable comfort. And once more we thank all this great audience for your attendance this morning, which no doubt must have caused some inconvenience to many of you.

“Reference has been made to the future of the Mildmay Mission for Jews. There are other Missions, you know, besides this Mission. Some are larger in their scope, and in their income; some are better equipped with men of distinction and of parts, and of scholarship, and of experience; some are better equipped, perhaps, with premises in which to carry on their work. But I believe that the great outstanding feature of my beloved father's life, and on which the mark of his life will be impressed in future generations, is the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, and that in its testimony both to Jews and to Gentiles it stands as a visible record of God's faithfulness.

“Some reference has also been made to my following in my father's footsteps as Director of this Mission. I had no absolute knowledge—although I had an inkling—that I was to occupy this post, until my father's will was read the night before last. He had reserved to himself in the Trust Deed the right to nominate his successor, and, as I understand now, he nominated me, although the actual nomination itself is still under seal, and will not be opened until next week. The reason I mention this is in order to have an opportunity of saying to-day, in God's presence, in your presence, and in the presence of the sacred remains of my beloved father, that so far as lies in my power I will conduct that Mission on the same lines as it has been conducted hitherto—on the same lines of implicit trust in God, leaving all to Him, and looking to our supply of men, women, and means from day to day in the way that my beloved father did. We shall stand by the old theology: we want no new theology, but the old theology—a theology with a *Theos* in it, and with a *Logos* in it. We believe in the everlasting Sonship of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; we believe in His virgin birth; we believe

in His vicarious death and victorious Resurrection, and we believe that He is coming to this earth again. These are the truths we stand by; and if some people call them narrow, all I can say is that they were broad enough for my father, and they are broad enough for us.

"One could not undertake such a work as this—feeling, as one does, so unfitted for it—were it not for the splendid support that we receive from our staff of workers. My experience—which extends over some twenty-five years—has, of course, been confined principally to this Mission; but so far as I know anything of Missions, we have in the present staff, a staff second to none for devotion, for love, for zeal, and for true family feeling amongst one another.

"Now, beloved friends, most of whose faces I recognize this morning, you knew my beloved father as a teacher—as an inspiration—as an example—perhaps also as a friend. We knew him as a *father*; and no man ever filled out that blessed word 'father' with more meaning to his children than did our beloved one. Let me give you two incidents from many that recur to me of my childhood. I remember once, when I was a little fellow, some six or seven years of age, I became possessed of a new cart and horse, to wheel about the corridors and the stairs at home; and I was interested to know why this gift had come so suddenly, seeing that it was not my birthday, and that it was not Christmas-time. My mother explained to us that father had come down to her, having missed the sound of a child about the house—missed the child's voice—missed the noise of its toys—and he said to her: 'Are all our children getting too old to use toys?' I think some ministers, as they sit in their study, are anxious to have

their children quiet; but my father was never happy unless he could hear a child's voice.

"One more incident. One day, when I was a little fellow, I was gaily singing, and tripping downstairs, hand in hand with my father, when he slipped and fell. Had he continued to hold my hand, we should have fallen together; but he released my hand, gave me one push back that kept me upright, preserved my equilibrium, and placed me in safety, while at the same time it increased the force of his own fall, and he fell down the stair with his glasses on his eyes. As we grew up to manhood and womanhood, he was our guide, counsellor, and friend. My brothers, who were in business, always consulted him in their business affairs, and always found in him a shrewd, practical knowledge of business matters, for he had been a man of business himself; and throughout our lives we have all of us felt that we could give him our full trust in every time of difficulty.

"We lay him to rest on the Jewish Sabbath. He was accustomed to say that the difference between the Jewish and the Christian dispensation was expressed in the Sabbath. The Jew works all the week and rests at the end of the week, while the Christian enters into his rest first and goes forward to his work. The Sabbath is to the Jew a goal—to the Christian an inspiration. We lay our beloved father to rest on the Jewish Sabbath. He, having done his work, enters into his rest. Moses died, his eye not dimmed nor his natural force abated; and so our father was preserved in wonderful vigour to the end of his days, and his natural force was unspent to the last hours. Precious father! we would not, dearly as we love thee, call thee back again. Thy task is over. Brave old warrior, thou hast finished thy

course. The golden bowl that so often poured out its fulness in blessing to others is at last broken; but the Master's hands shall piece the broken fragments together, and fashion thereout a chaster chalice, to be at His right hand for evermore. Like a tree of the Lord, full of sap, thou hast been removed to flourish for evermore in the Gardens of Delight. The cloud that covers us to-day hardly hides the face of the Angel of the Everlasting Covenant. We watched thy noble brow droop with fatigue, and thine ardent features grow pale and immobile; the life that gave us life was breathed out breath by breath, and thou wert not, for God took thee. Yet say we not farewell; for across the gloom and darkness of the night we see the breaking of the dawn! And so

“ ‘Until the Easter glory lights the skies;
 Until the dead in Jesus shall arise,
 And He shall come, but not in lowly guise—
 Good night!’

‘Only good night! beloved—not farewell!
 A little while and all His saints shall dwell
 In hallowed union, indivisible—
 Good night!’”

PASTOR FRANK WHITE:

“The last time that I had the joy of looking into the face and taking the hand of one of my oldest and best beloved friends—and our friendship reaches back over thirty years—he read in my hearing these two verses from the first Psalm. My heart is full this morning, and I cannot trust myself to begin to speak to you in the five minutes allotted to me, until I have read this Scripture—God’s description of a ‘blessed’ man: ‘His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like

a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.' These words are very deeply impressed upon my heart this morning; and I know of no one to whom they are more applicable than to our beloved brother.

"In the 11th chapter of the First Book of Chronicles, mention is made of the many mighty ones who came to David to strengthen him in his kingdom; and it is said of them: 'These also are the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom and with all Israel to make him king, according to the word of the Lord concerning Israel.' The marginal reading for 'strengthened themselves with him' is '*they held strongly with him.*' Among David's mighty ones three appear to have taken the foremost rank. The specially honoured names of three of our David's mighty ones stand out before me this morning—George Müller, the friend of the orphan; Hudson Taylor, the Apostle to the Gentiles—the lover of China's millions; and John Wilkinson, the friend and lover of Israel.

"Our brother did not build a synagogue, as we have been reminded; but he lived, loved, laboured, and laid out all his powers of body, mind, and heart, to bring back Israel to their King. It has been well said that the best way to bring men to Christ is to bring Christ to men; and that was the method of our beloved friend. He sought to bring Israel to Christ by never, never losing an opportunity of bringing Christ to Israel. And now he rests from his labours, and his works follow him.

"In my fifty years of Christian experience I have often joined in singing that hymn, 'A day's march nearer home'; but the thought has never been more precious to me than it is to-day. John Newton's lines

exactly express my feelings at this moment, as I am sure they must yours :

“‘With pleasing grief and mournful joy
My spirit now is filled.’

“I mourn exceedingly for Israel’s loss, and for the Church’s loss, especially at such a critical time as this ; but, for our brother himself, I rejoice greatly : for has he not gone home ? ‘Where else should he go to ?’ as one said to Mr. Spurgeon once when referring to the death of a mutual friend. Yes, our dear brother has gone home ; and we are *going* home, beloved, we are marching on. We cannot join hands, and all go home together ; but one by one we are going home. Who will be the next ? Only let us walk with God all the while we are not at home—let us work for God, as he did ; let us live, and love, and pray, and believe, and we shall ‘see the glory of God.’ I do not think of our beloved friend as *fully* glorified ; for this, though with Christ, he waits till the vast cloud of witnesses gone before shall, with us who remain, be ‘caught up’ to meet the King at His coming, as it is written, they ‘without us’ shall ‘not be made perfect.’ I do not know about that ; but I know that we shall love one another as we have never loved yet, because then shall we see Him as He is, and be like Him. I pray with all my heart that there may not be one soul in this place this morning who shall be wanting there. Until then the best tribute we can pay to our beloved friend and brother’s memory is to imitate his faith—holding strongly *with the King*.

“‘Go fearless then my soul, with God,
Into another room ;
Thou who hast walked with Him here,
Go see thy God at home.”

MR. MATHIESON :

"Let us now join in praise. I believe it was only last year that the dear lady who composed this beautiful hymn fell asleep in Jesus. The words are supposed to be a sort of echo of the last words of the saintly Samuel Rutherford. I will read the first verse, and we shall sing the second and third."

The hymn sung was

"The sands of time are sinking,
The dawn of heaven breaks,"

that being one of the hymns sung at the dying bed of the beloved one by the members of his family.

After the singing of the hymn, and the closing prayer and benediction (led by Pastor Frank White) the audience dispersed, and the funeral cortège proceeded to Old Highgate Cemetery.

As we assembled an hour later around the open grave of our beloved mother, into which the new coffin was gently lowered, our beloved brother, Pastor William Fuller Gooch, after the usual committal, addressed us as follows :

"It is no common grave at which we stand to-day. The grave of a child of God is never common. It is a sacred spot in God's Acre. But this is more than the grave of a child of God. It is the grave of a faithful teacher, a devoted worker, a whole-hearted believer, and a powerful pleader with God. Our departed brother knew well the throne of grace, and was well known there. 'He had power with God, and prevailed.' It is with a deep and lasting affection for the departed one I stand here to-day, the first public act I am able to perform after nearly six months' enforced silence through

illness. It is nearly forty years since we first met, and a friendship then began which has ripened unbroken ever since. Mr. Wilkinson wanted me then to accept a post he was interested in seeing filled; but I was then ardently attached to denominational ties, and refused it as an unsectarian work rather harshly and with some degree of resentment of catholicity such as he pleaded for. I have learnt much since then, and can never forget the way in which his loving words pleaded for a larger heart. Those words altered much the trend of my life, as a then young minister of the Gospel.

"I am glad to bear this little bit of testimony to our dear friend's influence over others in drawing the hearts of God's true people more closely together. We who are here to-day part with him feeling that he was the property of the whole Church of Christ, and that no life has more contributed to the unity of true believers than our dear brother's life has contributed to it in the spirit and methods of his work. Firm to every conviction, loyal and brave in avowing his faith, and yet as tender and as childlike as the grace of God could make him. Am I wrong when I say that there is no verse in the Bible which better describes the spirit and character of his life, or the testimony that would come from this grave, were he to speak, than those words of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the fifteenth chapter: 'By the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, for I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was given me'? Dear Mr. Wilkinson loved grace; it was all grace with him: and my heart thrills as I recall how, for nearly forty years, as I have stood side by side with him in many different parts of

the country, he exalted grace, and showed that man was nothing, while God in Christ was all in all.

“Well, he has gone! A long life—a God-used, God-blessed life. It is over in one sense; but it is not over in another, for eternity—it has only just begun! Brethren and friends, before we close our gathering here, shall we not ask what shall be the result of our gathering around this sacred spot to-day? Shall we not pray that the result may be to increase our devotion to God and to man? Again I say it is not eulogy, it is not flattery; but was not our brother's life wholly consecrated and given up to the work? For more than fifty years he lived for the Jew, his one ambition and aim to lead the seed of Abraham to Christ. The work which he set himself to do was work which was despised and misunderstood when he undertook it, far more than it is now; but it was a work to which he was consistent and devoted all through. It was said of one of old what the Jew to-day may very well say of our beloved brother: ‘He loveth our nation’; and, better than building them a synagogue, he led them to their Saviour King.

“How he loved Israel! He had continual sorrow and heaviness in his heart when he thought of Jewish unbelief; but his heart's desire, and his prayer to God for Israel, was that they might be saved. And oh, how many a Jew has become a Christian through our brother's prayers and testimony, not only directly from himself, but through the many God has used him to stir up to diligence and interest in that behalf. His Scriptural methods of work, his testimony to dispensational truth, live to-day in multitudes. *Israel my Glory* has turned many of the rank and file, who understood nothing of such matters, to see light in reference to dispensational truths in God's light. Thank God that our brother's

life was what it was! Truly the grace of God bestowed upon him was not in vain. A worker who has long been called to her rest, when writing to a friend about a great bereavement, said: 'To love rightly we must turn our faces forward, and press forward, and not look backward morbidly for the footsteps in the dust of those beloved ones who travelled with us but yesterday. They themselves are not behind, but before; and we carry with us our tenderness and love, living and undiminished, towards them, to be completed when the round of this life is completed for us also.'

"Farewell, dear brother! Thy face has been to us oftentimes a joy to behold, when it has been lighted up with the gladness of thy happy faith. That face will be a glad vision for many of us for many a day, till we see the Face far more radiant than thine, in the light of which we shall dwell together for ever. Workers! God is taking away pillars, and God has brought us to a time when the pillars are needed, when they can ill be spared. Rise up! Let the remembrance of the departed fire our hearts with desire to emulate his zeal and follow in his steps. Let us be faithful, devoted, and whole-hearted, as he was—let the Jew have his right place in our hearts as well as the Gentile; and then the work our departed brother loved so well will still go on. God bless the beloved son who is here to-day facing the future work. May the father's mantle fall upon him, as did that of Elijah upon Elisha. And God bless all his fellow-workers! May the grace of God and the fulness of the Holy Spirit richly dwell in them all. The coming of our Lord is nigh, soon and for ever will be the breaking of Day. Let us be ready! Amen."

CHAPTER XXV

Personal Tributes

AMONG the many letters which poured in upon us during the first days of our bereavement, several were and are peculiarly precious and comforting to us. As wreaths laid on a grave, we lay some of these tributes on the headstone of this life-story. Some of the writers have themselves since entered into rest, notably Lord Overtoun and beloved Mr. Paynter.

LORD OVERTOUN:

‘No one could meet with your father without esteeming him and being deeply interested in the way in which he set forth the claims of Jews upon Christians, and interested them in the Old Testament Scriptures.’

LORD KINNAIRD:

‘Your father will indeed be greatly missed, and especially in connexion with his loving labours for the Jews.’

SIR ANDREW WINGATE:

‘May a double portion of your father’s spirit descend on you, will be the prayer of the many thousands who seek the welfare of the Mildmay Mission. God has in the most remarkable manner used your honoured father to rear up a mighty work in our midst, so full of real practical love, and so many-sided in its usefulness, that

it is not only winning Jewish hearts, but has done much to popularize Jewish mission work. On the human side, as we look forward, we see only a blank. How we shall miss the Bible Readings; the addresses, rich in recollection, kindling fresh confidence and enthusiasm; the helpful writings; the power of his prayers; the gracious welcome. But faith notes how gently he has been removed, so as not to shake the fabric he loved; and how he has been spared till you have grown into the control of operations and commanded universal confidence. And faith feels that the work will grow and prosper. For such a life we can only be full of thanksgiving. The grave has no power to hold it, either from exercising its influence in the world for the years to come, or from the presence of the Master he served so humbly and yet so well.'

SIR THOMAS BARLOW:

'Your father leaves a beautiful memory behind him. He was upright and straightforward, had a passion for his work, and was a man who inspired respect and veneration in all who knew him. I had known him since I was a youth, and shall never forget his high character and devotion.'

BARON NICOLAY, St. Petersburg:

'I need not tell you what an impression your dear father always made upon me, as one of the Patriarchs, with his constant testimony to God's faithfulness and goodness. It is a great privilege, I feel it deeply, to have met one of God's faithful servants such as he was.

You will continue his work with his example before you and his blessing on you : that is a rich inheritance.'

The COUNTESS ELISABETH VON GROEBEN :

'How much you will miss him, and how much he will be missed by many! But certainly you and those engaged in the work he has begun have much cause to thank the Lord who had set His seal to all those endeavours.'

The COUNTESS LYDIA VON GROEBEN :

'I am deeply grieved to think of the great sorrow and loss you are going through at this moment. How terribly you must feel it, after such a beautiful companionship in the highest work; and everything must constantly remind you, as you go on with that work. But I do believe that it is given to few on earth to be allowed to see such rich blessing on their dearest ones' work as it is given to you to see, day by day and hour by hour. I do ask our Lord to let you *feel* His blessing, and your dear, dear father's blessing, as you go on with his work and yours.'

The COUNTESS VON HAGEN :

'A valuable and blessed life has gone to rest, to His Master whom he preached with so much zeal and confessed so joyfully. For him it is rest in peace in Jesus' arms. But if you and your family were specially privileged in having such a father, leader, and teacher, the blank is the harder to bear. The loss of beloved parents is one we never quite get over in life, as I know by experience.'

The REV. CANON FAUSSETT :

‘Mrs. Faussett, and I in my eighty-sixth year, mourn his loss, but rejoice that he is gone to be with Christ, which is far better. He was attached to me and I to him for years in Christian affection. I believe, by the grace of God, that will last for ever.’

The REV. PREBENDARY H. W. WEBB PEPLOE :

‘I wish to express my strong personal admiration of his personal character and life, and to say that the one thing which always struck me about your father was his pure sincerity of heart and purpose as exhibited both by look and speech. I have seldom seen any man more single-eyed in his devotion to the work to which God had called him. You could not be in the company of your father without realizing that his whole life was consecrated to the work of saving the Jews; and God has really owned his work of faith and labour of love and his patience and hope.’

The REV. F. L. DENMAN, London Jews’ Society :

‘His was such a truly missionary spirit, so overflowing full of love to the Jews, that it will be very hard, humanly speaking, to fill his place. Who can count the hearts the Spirit of Christ in him filled with God’s love for the Jews! and now, that channel can no longer, with its persuasive, tender, gentle, loving voice, ever full and ever flowing, be used of God on earth to stir up the hearts of His children to pray for, to love and to work for, the salvation of the Jews. Yet the living

words he so often uttered will ever live, they cannot die. And for ourselves, what an example of loving enthusiasm he has left behind him for us to follow !’

The REV. W. W. POMEROY, London Jews’ Society :

‘ We shall all miss your beloved father. It was always a delight to meet him and speak with him, and to have a grasp of his hand. He was such a fearless champion for the truth, and one who loved the Word so strongly. Oh, that there were more like him !’

The REV. W. J. MAYNE, Irish branch, London Jews’ Society :

‘ All of us looked up to Mr. Wilkinson as a father in Israel. His splendid life work for the evangelization of God’s chosen race has been an inspiration to many a worker.’

The REV. H. E. FOX, Church Missionary Society :

‘ Both by his labours in person and by his pen he has been a faithful witness to the Church and to Israel of our one Lord.’

The REV. J. B. BARRACLOUGH, St. Thomas’ Vicarage, Lambeth :

‘ He always seemed to me to be one of the most saintly of men ; and if earth by his home call has one saint less, heaven has one glorified spirit more to join in its perfect service. Thank God for his consistent and holy life, and for his fifty-six years of faithful and earnest labours for Israel, whom he loved so much—labours that the God of Israel has so abundantly blessed.’

The REV. J. J. LUCE, M.A., St. Nicholas' Vicarage, Gloucester :

'The wrench is a sore one for those who loved him as I did, and for so many years. How I thank God for him, and for the privilege of his love and friendship! He was to me a true "master in Israel," and I owe my *intelligent* love for Israel almost entirely to him.'

The REV. A. D. SALMON, Bristol :

'For a large part of my long life I was acquainted with your highly esteemed father, first when he became a student in the Jewish Mission College, under the presidency of the saintly Brother Davidson, whom I knew well. Subsequently I, with other ministers, took part at his ordination at the City Road Wesleyan Chapel, London. I deeply appreciated his intense longing for the spiritual welfare of the seed of Abraham, and his earnest and constant effort to do what he could to achieve that object.'

The REV. F. PAYNTER, M.A., Guildford :

'Thank God for his beautiful life and service and testimony!'

The REV. JAMES NEIL, M.A., Hornsey :

'It is the close of a long and glorious life of service, for a true soldier of Christ has fallen in harness, has fought the good fight to the last, and laid hold on eternal life. His has been a unique service in the cause of Israel, the cause so dear to God, that of the poor sufferers beloved of his soul. Your dear father's tireless

zeal these fifty-six years has been blessed alike to Jew and Gentile ; and the object-lesson of trust in God he has shown throughout has strengthened the faith of many an onlooker. To hear him speak was always an inspiration to me, and I mourn that I shall never see his kindly, gentle face again this side the grave, or listen to his wonderfully lucid and persuasive advocacy—unsurpassed in our time—of the claims of Israel.'

PASTOR R. BIELING, Berlin :

'I made his acquaintance in 1903, and admired the mental vigour of his advocacy for the Mission. I can well imagine how much you will miss him, now that the burden of the work and responsibility rests wholly on your shoulders. I know too what it is to lose a father. The older one grows and the nearer one comes to one's father, no longer only the authority to whom one looked up as a child, but the friend with whom one discusses everything, the more painful is the loss. But God be thanked that we sorrow not as they that have no hope. The deep words of Kingsley are true, "We have loved, we love, we shall love." Love is too great for the narrow grave.'

THE REV. DR. A. T. PIERSON :

'In my opinion he approached very near to a model missionary. His singleness of purpose, faith, prayerfulness, devotion to his work, tact, clearness of conviction and utterance,—these, and not a few other qualifications, made him not only eminent but pre-eminent ; and withal, he was so quiet and unobtrusive, so charitable and

genial, that all who knew him will experience a great personal loss.

‘It is, however, a great comfort that he lived to so ripe an age, and in the possession of his faculties, and almost literally died in harness. His whole career is one to be envied; for we are bidden to “covet earnestly the best gifts.” We may all learn from his self-sacrificing life many precious lessons.’

THE REV. ISAAC LEVINSON, British Jews’ Society :

‘The whole Jewish Mission field has been bereft of a noble friend, an eloquent advocate, and a true lover of Israel.’

MR. WALTER B. SLOAN, China Inland Mission :

‘To him, under God, the Church owes a great debt of gratitude, for having brought to light so clearly the position of Israel in connexion with the salvation of the world and the coming of the Kingdom of God. His simple, strong, childlike faith has revealed to many a fresh vision of God’s faithfulness. In personal intercourse his genial warmth of heart and kindly humour have endeared him to all God’s people with whom he came into close contact.’

MR. B. BROOMHALL, Mildmay :

‘To know your dear father was to esteem and love him. His removal will leave a great blank, not only in this neighbourhood, but over a wide area. He was linked with the Mildmay Conference Hall by indelible association. For more than thirty years he has been at all its foremost gatherings a welcome presence, and on

numberless occasions has contributed by speech or prayer to the profit of all present. The great meetings at the Conference Hall without your dear father will, to many of us, seem something very different. You have a noble heritage, and to all of us the memory of your father will always be an inspiration.'

DR. WM. GAULD, M.A., Highbury :

'He is with the Saviour he loved so much, and served, by His grace, so nobly during these many years past. His works have not only gone before him, but he has left an enduring monument in the great work for the Jews of which he was the originator and director, under God's guidance and by His abounding blessing. I count it a great privilege to have known your father, and to have been in any wise associated with him at Mildmay. He was both an inspiration and a rebuke to me, as I thought of his exceeding fruitfulness and his whole-hearted devotion to it. His unfailing kindness both in word and act will ever remain a happy memory for me.'

DR. T. M. NEATBY, Highbury :

'I know it is a solace, when a dear one departs, to be able to reflect that he has departed in a ripe old age with a great many well-filled years behind him. But there is another side I sometimes think of—the longer we know those dear to us, the more, and not the less, we love them, and the greater must seem the loss. Surely no father ever deserved more love and veneration. To refer to his great services to the cause of Christ and of His Church seems almost selfishness ; for his praise is in

all the churches. But it is beautiful to be able to look back upon a father's life and to know that it was not only a blameless life, but one entirely devoted to the glory of God and the blessing of men.'

MR. G. S. WHEELER, Highbury :

'I love to recall his ways and speech, they were always suffused with love and gentleness. His prayer with me one afternoon in his little sanctum so breathed the spirit of a child nestling in the arms of a loving father, that it gave a sweetness to my future prayers I had not tasted before. How you and multitudes will miss him ; but the cords of love and service that bound your hearts together are not snapped, only lengthened, and now reach to Him who has your father safe in His care and keeping, where one day we shall meet to part no more. He was an Elijah amongst God's children of Israel.'

MR. W. A. PITE :

'One never heard or met your dear father without taking knowledge of him that "he had been with Jesus." I do not recall a more definitely helpful teacher, fully assured of what he experienced, and this quite apart from his most attractive personality and beautiful face and winning smile and words. In business, when I have met him, I have noted a firm decision in regard to the right and definite course to be adopted in the matter under discussion, which was very instructive.'

MR. WILLIAM GAUSSEN, Kilcullen, Ireland :

'As old friends and admirers of your venerated father, my wife and I tender to you and your family our warm

sympathy under the trial of separation for the "little while" from your loved and loving father. I must say the cloud was brightly lined with happy surroundings, as given in *Trusting and Toiling*, of which I would be grateful for two or three for friends. A *second* reason for writing is to make a suggestion that if friends and co-workers for Israel would put their love and esteem for the departed "man of God" into a *memorial*, in the form of carrying out some *scheme* that was on his heart for his people's good, I would have pleasure in contributing.'

MR. J. M. CLEAVER, Egypt General Mission :

'You will have the sympathy and prayers of thousands at this time; and I am sure it will be a special joy to you to feel that your dear father's faith has been and still remains a precious heritage to the whole Church. The word, "whose faith follow," comes to my soul as I think of him; and I am sure he being dead will yet speak the same message to many.'

MR. L. P. WERNER, German Y.M.C.A. :

'I always felt specially drawn to him on account of his whole-hearted devotion to the salvation of Israel, and of his entire reliance on God's direct help in the work.'

DR. JAMES MAXWELL, Bromley :

'To myself as to thousands, doubtless, of others, your father was perhaps the most expressive example of a man filled with the loving spirit of Christ. I rejoice that I had occasion to meet him often; but I never met

him without getting unspoken as well as spoken help. I have no doubt that he had times when, in defence of the truth, he had to be as strenuous and stern as any man; but that is not my association with his memory. It is rather with him as one who had the face of an angel.'

The REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A., formerly of Christ Church, Westminster:

'He first taught me to love "the Jew first," and to study dispensational truth in its true perspective. But his greatest gift to us all was his saintly character, his spotless name, and his face often shining like an angel's.'

The REV. A. R. KULDELL, Allegheny:

'I sympathize with you in your great loss; but I had almost said, I envy you. To have had such a father, to tread in his footsteps, to do his work and to follow his faith, to receive his honour and confidence from your fellow-man—this is a great privilege indeed.'

PASTOR D. H. DOLMAN, Wandsbek Mission House, Hamburg:

'I feel the loss greatly. It was through your dear father that I first acquired my love for Jewish mission work; and his life of simple childlike faith has always been an inspiration to me.'

MR. PETER RUDOLPH, Alexandria:

'Your dear father was a very old and sincere friend, whom I have known for over thirty-five years. He is a friend whom I can never replace.'

MR. D. C. JOSEPH, Haifa :

‘He was a father in Israel, and in an indirect way he was my personal spiritual father; for were it not for his love to Israel I could not have known of the life-giving Gospel. It was forty-eight years ago he preached in the Isle of Man, when he told the people, should they come in contact with a Jew, to speak kindly to him; and soon after, I visited the Isle of Man, and one did speak kind words—the kindest words which could be spoken: “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.” Thank God, since then I have passed from death to life. I praise God for your father’s love to us sons of Abraham.’

MR. H. LEVINSKY, Odessa :

‘In our meeting last night we praised God for the manifold graces, mercies, and blessings He bestowed upon your dear father during his many years of service for the Lord and His people Israel, and for the many Jewish souls the Lord has been pleased to save through his instrumentality.’

The REV. S. L. GINSBURG, Pernambuco Baptist Mission :

‘I, too, feel as if my earthly father had gone and left me. You cannot imagine how we who through him have been brought to the saving knowledge of Jesus loved him. We never ceased speaking about him to our little ones, and they too feel as if they had lost one of their own relatives. . . . Here in this neglected corner of the

world we, the product of his faith and love and labour, will try more than ever before to live and labour so that we may be judged worthy to meet him around the throne of glory in the presence of the blessed Master, Jesus.'

MR. MAX REICH, Highbury:

'He was used of God to extend a loving hand of help to me about twenty-three years ago, when a young convert of two or three weeks' standing, cast out by my friends and also by my employer on account of my conversion. But for your dear father, humanly speaking, I might have gone under. But he found me employment, and was a true friend to me.'

MR. ISAAC GOSTOMSKI, Canonbury:

'It was in connexion with the Mildmay Mission that my own dear father was brought to a knowledge of the love of God and the saving grace of the Lord Jesus, and I dread to think what Jewish darkness would have surrounded me now if it had not been for the great God-implanted love of your father for us Israelites. He was always interested, in a kind, fatherly way, in my welfare, spiritual and temporal, and I shall miss him.'

MR. JOHN BALE:

'Personally, I feel I have lost a dear friend. His happy face, his gentle manner, his kindly sympathy, his courteous consideration, always made his far too scanty visits to me here exceptionally pleasant times, which will ever be cherished as some of the happiest remembrances of past days.'

MISS OLLIVE, Mildmay:

‘It was a privilege to know him, and he was one of my most cherished friends. He always gave one the feeling that he lived in conscious and constant communion with his Lord, in a very special sense. I remember well the first time I heard him speak, soon after the Mission was begun. I was a young believer in those days, and shall never forget the impression his words made upon me. And during the years that have passed since then, again and again have I been helped by his childlike faith and his unflinching allegiance to his beloved Lord. He was the means of kindling a love for Israel, which only grows more and more strong as time goes on. He is an untold loss to the Church of God, as well as to the Jew.’

MR. J. M. NATORP:

‘Although I have not often had the privilege of coming in direct contact with your esteemed father, I have found it an encouragement to hear and read of his noble work of faith and labour of love on behalf of God’s ancient people. We Gentile Christians need a great deal of education with regard to God’s purposes with His covenant nation; and your Mission, apart from carrying out God’s thoughts of salvation for Israel, is a constant exhortation of our heavenly Father, addressed to His people in general, to love the Jews, and not to hate and persecute them. In the light of present-day anti-Semitism, and in the face of a good deal of antipathy and apathy amongst Gentile Christians, the life-work of

your father is a bold and courageous effort to which God has set His seal. I am happy that in a little way I am linked to your Mission, and that this lays the duty on my heart to pray for the Jews and your work in particular.'

MR. E. ASHBY, Bournemouth :

'The fellowship I have enjoyed with dear Mr. Wilkinson, and the help received from him, are among my brightest memories in my Christian experience.'

MR. J. TAYLOR, Middlesbrough :

'I never met Mr. John Wilkinson, but I knew him well. Thank God for the influence of his life and for his testimony to the power of prayer, and to God's faithfulness in answering prayer. I believe that He will answer the prayers of many who will (as I do) invoke His aid for the trying ordeals of these and coming days.'

MRS. HENSON, Rugby :

'I heard him speak once when I was fourteen, and he awoke a lifelong interest in the Jews.'

MRS. BIRNEY, Margate :

'His death, like his life, was a wonderful testimony of God's grace and power. I heard your father first speak in Bedford, and was greatly helped by his child-like faith in God and belief in prayer, and the wonderful answers he received. He was the first to arouse my interest in the work among the Jews, and I have prayed much for the Mission ever since.'

MISS VINING, Wimbledon :

‘The world and the Church seem suddenly and sadly poorer ; but “the Lord of Hosts is with us” for His own work, and the “Lord is at hand” for speedy reunion : so we have but to obey the injunction of which *he* so loved to remind us, “occupy till I come.”’

MRS. CROOK, Carshalton :

‘It seems to us inexplicable that the faithful ones should be taken, when there never was a time when God’s witnesses were more needed than in these awful days of declension. But He doeth all things well ; and it may be that your beloved father’s home-going may be the means of bringing into greater prominence his wonderful work of faith and labour of love. Iniquity so abounds that the love of many is waxing cold. Truly it is time for the Lord to work ; and I believe the time is close at hand when your dear father’s “heart’s desire” shall be fulfilled, and all Israel shall be saved.’

MRS. FINLAY, Belfast :

‘I always felt the better for even a handshake from him. He was the first person who ever made me understand the meaning of the word “guileless,” for his open countenance and steadfast look just reflected heaven itself.’

CHAPTER XXVI

A Review

THE life of John Wilkinson, the Missionary to the Jews, affords us a good example of the way in which grace operates upon a man. It is both sudden and gradual. Sudden at the moment of decision, when he crosses by a single step the thin frontier line between the empire of sin, self, Satan, and the world on the one side, and that of obedience to the will of God on the other. It is, again, restraining, moulding, and developing. It restrains personal ambition and the like; moulds other traits of character; and develops latent virtues. This is like the advance into the interior of the new country—the frontier being once crossed—and the change from the position of a traveller to that of a resident, who insensibly accommodates himself to the conditions of climate, customs, and language.

John Wilkinson would have succeeded, humanly speaking, in any walk of life. Had the frontier never been crossed and the new country of righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost never opened up before him, it is impossible to say where his ambitions would have led him to employ his splendid energies and abilities. But at the early age of fourteen the decision was made and grace began its work. What his ambitions became by the restraining power of grace we have seen in the soliloquies with which each year's journal closed its

record. "More likeness to Christ" was its prevailing aspiration. His tenacity of purpose, strength of will, clear grasp of mind, were henceforth submitted to the moulding and modifying influences of grace; while virtues that had otherwise remained uncultivated and unseen were roused into life and activity.

His was a large brain—approximating in circumference measurement to the late Mr. W. E. Gladstone's; but its conspicuous feature was that every organ in it was well developed. There was no approach to atrophy anywhere. His was also a great character; but it was singularly well proportioned. There was love intense, often touchingly demonstrated; but tempered with sound sense and keen discernment. There was commanding ability; but coupled with great appreciation of the productions of others. There was the enthusiasm of the specialist for the Jewish question, to which his whole life and labours were devoted; but a wide range of knowledge of, and interest in, other subjects. A hard worker—never an *over*-worker; with considerable leisure, but never lazy; a lover of home and family, yet a great traveller; riding nothing to death; using, not abusing, all the faculties of mind and body—his was a life splendidly illustrating the sound development of the *whole* man, and all under the direct influence of the grace of God.

For it *was* grace that made him what he was. It is but the outward manifestation we have described—the inward springs were hidden—with Christ in God. For all that he *was* and did we must find the reason *there*. It made his splendid head the servant of his loving heart. None surely in modern days ever saw or put the all-important Jewish question more clearly and convincingly; but none certainly could put it more lovingly or

persuasively. He was pre-eminent both as a watchman to and on behalf of Israel, and also as one whose winning love begat love in others; so that the inscription that stands upon his tombstone in Highgate Old Cemetery fittingly couples the descriptions of two prophets of the Captivity and applies them to him.

THE FAMILY GRAVE OF JOHN AND ANN WILKINSON

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
ANN WILKINSON

WIFE OF JOHN WILKINSON (MILDMAY MISSION TO THE JEWS)

Who peacefully fell asleep in Jesus on Saturday,
28th August 1897, aged 71 years

שִׂישׁוּ אִמָּה קָשׁוּשׁ קִלְהִתְחַאֲצֵלִים אֶלֶיָּהּ :

"Rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her."—Isa. lxi. 10

ALSO OF
JOHN WILKINSON

FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR OF THE MILDMAY MISSION TO THE JEWS

Who peacefully yielded up his spirit to God on
12th February 1907, aged 82 years

נִצָּח לְבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל :

"A watchman unto the house of Israel."—Ezek. iii. 17

אִישׁ־הַבְּרִיּוֹת :

"A man greatly beloved."—Dan. x. 11

"Who through faith wrought righteousness, obtained promises."—
Heb. xi. 33

"And by it he, being dead, yet speaketh."—Heb. xi. 4

May we not say that the clear, sincere, intellectual grasp that he possessed of Israel's past, present, and future is best seen in his really wonderful book, *Israel my Glory*; and that the throbings of his heart towards

the Jew in flesh and blood have found their best expression in the institution that he founded, the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, with its dual ministry to soul and body. The book gives us the *head*; the work, the *heart*.

This mutual sympathy of heart and head produced a sweet simplicity of mind and utterance, best seen perhaps in some of his own aphorisms:

"Do not scold people out of error; but love them into truth."

"The line of obedience is the line of blessing; the line of plan is the line of power."

"We are God's sheep; but not to be sheepish."

"Be childlike; but not childish."

"The best gifts come from above (James i. 17); therefore *look up*."

"Things do not occur because they were predicted; but they were predicted because they *would* occur."

"We are to feed the sheep; not to amuse the goats."¹

"*Ask* the Lord and *tell* His people."

"The condition for a full blessing is to *ask* (Matt. vii. 7); for an overflowing blessing is to *give*" (Luke vi. 38).

He was simple in his personal habits and wants, generous in his gifts to and consideration of others. He could appreciate the comforts of wealthy homes to which he was often invited; but they never *spoilt* him. Many a counterfoil of his old cheque-books bears simply the words, "Treasure in heaven," as £10 or more was paid over to some God-honouring object.

Above all, he was faithful. Fidelity characterized his stewardship, both to God and man. He would say that he did not aspire to be greeted with the words, "Well done, good and *successful* servant"; but by "good and *faithful* servant." It was this sense of fidelity to God

¹ This may not have originally been his.

that made him a *Jewish* missionary. It was to please *God*, not *man*, that he accepted and discharged this entrustment.

Cheerful, never flippant; humorous, never frivolous; gentle, never effeminate; studious, not a recluse; holy, never sentimental; wise, never wily; faithful, never harsh. Never once has the writer—who saw him perhaps more than anyone else, with one exception, in the last ten years of his life—seen him in a pique or an unpleasant mood, a fit of hastiness, or temper, or depression, or morbidity. The sunshine his—the sunshine of his Father's smile. He reflected its beams; they reached out to others—and their warmth is on us still. Precious memory! Precious reunion, and certain as precious!

CHAPTER XXVII

The Future

WE have the deepening impression that the age of grace in which we live is rapidly nearing its close, and our day of opportunity becoming shorter. "Occupy till I come" was the word of the nobleman in the parable to his servants to whom he delivered certain moneys for them to turn to good account during his absence. They became stewards of their masters' property, which they were to use both faithfully and sagaciously for his benefit. "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." What are these mysteries of God with which we have been entrusted, and in regard to which we are bound to fidelity? "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the Word of reconciliation."

This, then, must be the purpose and object of the *Mildmay Mission* to the Jews: to bear testimony to as many Jews as it can reach by all wise and legitimate means, to the *Eternal Sonship* of the Lord Jesus Christ; to the gifts of pardon and *Eternal Life* on the basis of His mediatorial work; and to the promise of the *Spirit of Life* in Christ Jesus, which makes us free from the law of sin and death.



GROUP OF WORKERS AT CENTRAL HALL.

It is our earnest desire that this Mission may be so conducted under the guidance of God the Holy Spirit, as to be an instrument which God may with delight and honour to Himself employ, to the blessing of multitudes of His own people, as long as it is His will to do so, perhaps till our Lord Jesus come again: and that it may therefore be a channel through which God's redeemed and sanctified children may discharge their stewardship respecting the ministry of "the word of reconciliation" to the Jews.

Every branch of the Mission is being maintained as before in simple dependence on God for daily guidance and for the supply of means to carry them on through His children. The work at the Central Hall in East London includes a Medical Mission, which averages attendances of nearly 30,000 Jews and Jewesses every year, representing 5000 to 6000 separate individuals; the Sewing-Class for Jewesses has an average attendance of 275 women weekly; the Night School for Jewish Children; the classes for elder boys and girls; the adult school; the Sunday school; the various Gospel meetings, indoor and outdoor, special and regular; the visitation of the poor in their homes and the conversations with individuals and groups in the streets, may be safely estimated to reach an aggregate of 30,000, representing another 5000 to 6000 individuals.

This wide and organized testimony for Jesus to the Jews affords the privilege of ministry in His name to a great mass of suffering and poverty. Material relief goes out daily in the form of medicine, bandages, food, clothing, milk, pensions to the sick and aged, grants for emigration, etc., all given freely and in the Name of our blessed Lord, Who said, "Freely ye have received, freely give."

The circulation of the New Testament and of a variety of suitable Gospel tracts (including a monthly Yiddish magazine), is being carried on by grants to other missions or by missionary brethren of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews. Over 1,300,000 whole New Testaments, or portions thereof, have been distributed during the last twenty years.

Centres of missionary itinerations and testimony are established at various places in Russia, Morocco, and elsewhere. Russia, after twenty years of patient labour, has opened doors of witness in many places, and a great land lies before us, calling, as it were, by its much greater relative darkness, need and readiness for the Word of Life, for us to pray the Lord of the harvest to thrust forth Himself—through this Mission as His instrument, if He will—many more labourers into this harvest field.

The Mission does not aim simply at securing a large number of baptisms; but rather at wide and faithful witness to the *many*, and at the leading of *individual* souls, with whom God's Spirit is at work, to a saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, resulting in change of heart and life, as the product of regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

God has given us in answer to prayer a consecrated band of men and women both at home and abroad; and in response to our humble desire to please Him in all things, and dependent but confident cry to Him for the money necessary to carry on and extend the work, He is pleased to move His servants in many places to consecrate their substance, spontaneously and without appeal from us, to His work in this Mission.

Our needs in respect of the maintenance of the work under present conditions amount to about £12,000 a

year: or nearly £40 a day, excluding Sundays. Our loving Father, knowing our abhorrence of debt, based upon His own Word (Prov. xxii. 7; Rom. xiii. 8), has graciously preserved us therefrom, from the beginning down to the present time. And for the future we cast ourselves confidently upon Him, earnestly desiring to be kept daily cleansed in motive and act, so that we may never, by His grace, forfeit His smile of approval.

I follow my late beloved father's mode as regards the supply of my own personal and family needs. Giving all my time and strength to the direction of this work, I take no salary from the Mission funds, but appropriate to "personal use" such gifts as are so *definitely* specified; counting it a privilege to hand back to the Lord's work, or His needy children, everything over and above my actual needs, so that there may be no temptation to lay up for me or mine, treasure upon earth, but rather to let both treasure and heart's affections be in things above.

This is the solemn bequeathment from the man of God, John Wilkinson—to carry on the work of God to which he set his hand in founding and forming: but, still more, it is a solemn entrustment from Him Whose we are and Whom we serve; the Commission applies to us with the same compulsion of love as it did to the departed one, who fulfilled his share, but who could not fulfil ours.

Brethren, pray for us, that in the little while that remains we may redeem the time, buy up every opportunity, being supplied by Divine grace with all the necessary ability and sanity of mind and body, stability of purpose, boldness, humility, love, zeal, and fidelity, to do the whole will of God in respect of witness to Israel, that we may "save some of them"; "for if the

casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?"

The Mildmay Mission to the Jews is not the only institution for the ministry of the Gospel to the Jews; there are many similar organizations, which we hold in high esteem for their works' sake, and for which we both praise and pray: may the bond of love be strengthened between us all, and may we in humility serve one another. "Knowledge puffeth up; but love buildeth up."

Beloved friends, readers of these lines, who own allegiance to the ever-blessed Son of God, through whom alone we have peace with, and access to, God the Father, and whose dear Face, with its Jewish features, we shall soon *really* behold; once marred for *our* sakes, then clothed in the glory in which we, by grace, shall share: have we done all we can do to discharge our trusteeship in respect of His brethren of Israel? We owe *them* the debt of gratitude for all they have brought us instrumentally of spiritual truth and blessing; we owe *them* the debt of reparation for all they have suffered and are still suffering at the hands of those who profess and call themselves Christians; but, above all, beloved friends, we owe *Him* obedience, grateful and full, in bearing His witness to Jerusalem, Judæa, Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. "Go, tell *My brethren*"—let the words come to us as from Himself: "Be not afraid: go tell *My brethren*." Let us *do it*; forwarding the message by every means He has put within our powers, for the coming day of manifestation is *reality*, not *dream*: and what has been *done* and not neglected, will call forth the words from Him—from HIM: "Inasmuch as ye have *done* it unto one of the

least of these, *My brethren*, ye have done it unto Me."

The permanent centre of the work of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews is at the Central Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road, London, E. All gifts of money to sustain or extend the work at home and abroad should be kindly forwarded to Mr. Samuel Hinds Wilkinson at this address; and gifts of clothing, new or second-hand, for the poor, be addressed to Dr. Dixon (if designed for use in the Medical Mission) or to Miss Hammond (if for use among the many poor with whom the general missionary work brings the workers in contact). "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly nor of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

"SERVE NOW
THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND HIS PEOPLE
ISRAEL"
(2 CHRON. XXXV. 3)

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