

Brown Meets the Chinese Jews

Visit to Ancient Home of Lost Tribe in Kaifeng-Fu, Honan Province, Results in Thrilling Tale

By DAVID A. BROWN

BISHOP WHITE, speaking Chinese, introduced my interpreter, who in turn told them of me and what my mission in China was. He explained to them of my great interest in the Chinese Jews, and that an organization with which I was associated had in their possession many of the original scrolls and books that formerly belonged to their Synagogue.

Before I could ask a question, Mr. Ai, who had evidently been selected as the spokesman, stated that they were greatly interested in my coming, for they had read of me through the Chinese press and, now that they had been told of my friendship for the Chinese people, they hoped that more would result from my visit than from previous visitors many years back. No Jew had visited them for eight years, and the last one had made them many promises but, they said, these promises had not been kept.

I then asked what it was they wanted, and Mr. Ai answered: "We need a school for our children, that they may learn who they are and why they are different from the other Chinese. We know we are Jews, and that we came here many centuries ago; that we once had a synagogue and a rabbi, but we have lost all knowledge of this, and are anxious that our children shall walk in the footsteps of those ancient people from whom we have sprung."

I asked whether, if their synagogue were rebuilt and a school established with proper teachers, and an attempt made to bring them back to their ancient Jewish faith, there would be an enthusiastic response. It seemed to me that they all responded in the affirmative at once. Mr. Ai was quite emphatic in stating that a congregation of over two hundred souls could be gotten together in time. The widow Shih asked several questions: first, had I been to Palestine? She seemed greatly pleased when I told her that I had been there twice. She then asked whether I knew the Bible

in Hebrew, and I confessed that I did not, but stated that the Bible is available in English, as well as in many other languages, even in Chinese.

THIS WOMAN, once started, turned out to be a find, even for Bishop White, who had never met her before. She said her interest in the Jews was that the Jews had a Bible, and she was sorry that the Chinese Jews had lost their Bible. Her people, meaning her husband and her husband's family, had lived near the synagogue for a very long time. Her father-in-law, who had died in his eightieth year and has been dead for over forty years, had told her much

about the synagogue and Jewish worship. She could still remember that he told her of the location of the stone tablets. Originally two tablets had stood in the doorway of the synagogue, and another of the stone tablets stood outside the second door on the east. The synagogue had no galleries, but men and women were separated. The men and women were dressed in long white gowns; the men wore a sort of turban around their heads which fell to the ground.

The entrance to the synagogue faced east, but when the congregants worshipped, they faced the west. On the anniversary of the death of an ancestor, they burned incense and made special offerings before a tablet in the house. When a death occurred, the body was clothed in a simple cloth, placed in a coffin, and buried in the earth.

I ASKED the widow Shih about the ritual bath, and she said her father-in-law had told her that, preparatory to the ceremony in connection with the anniversary of a death, the person conducting the service bathed in a large wooden tub.

I asked Mr. Ai what their religion was at present. He stated that as a body they had no religion; but, when asked of what faith they are, they claim to be Jews. To distinguish themselves from others, they still call themselves Tiao-Chin-Chiao which, translated into English, means "Pluck sinew religion." This has reference to the manner in which the orthodox Jews prepare their meats. By others, Mr. Ai says, they are called Chiao-Ching-Chiai which, translated, means, "A Scripture Religion." The street that leads to the synagogue was called Chiao-Ching-Chiai - Hunting which means "small street."

I asked Mr. Ai, whom they recognized as the head of the Jewish Chinese in Kaifeng-Fu, and he replied that at present they had no leader. But in the event that a school and synagogue were projected, they would get together and elect a chief man with full power to represent them.

Mr. Chang volunteered the information that he was born in Long Ming, in the south of Hopeh Province, and that he was brought to Kaifeng when very young, and that it was only through his father's inquiries about the Jews that he found out his father was a Jew.

I INQUIRED as to their present occupations, and Mr. Ai said he was a painter; Mr. Chang a carpenter; Mr. Li a post-office clerk; Mr. Chao the owner of a small tea and candy shop; the husband of widow Shih had been a teacher, and her son is a teacher in a Chinese school. She volunteered the information that the Shih family were all scholars, dating back over two hundred years. There was another widow Shih present, whose husband had conducted a small business and whose unmarried daughter was a teacher.

THAT Jews had settled in other parts of China cannot be questioned, for many writers have mentioned Jews as living in Ningpo, Hangchow, Peking and Nanking. Sennedo, a Roman Catholic missionary, writes of Jews in four cities, especially of a visit to Nanking in the 17th century, remarking that the Jewish colony there was in the process of breaking up. Father Ricci, who discovered these Chinese Jews, reported Hangchow as having a large Jewish community. A Synagogue existed in Chinkiang, and there is evidence of a large Jewish colony in Canton.

It is reported that the largest settlement of Jews must have been in Chang-an, the capital of the Empire during the Tang Dynasty. This account of the Jews in Chang-an states that there were as many as four synagogues at one time, and a fifth was being built during the reign of Cheng-kwan in 630 A.D.

China at this time was at the height of its civilization, and the Jews ranked high in political and social status. Chang-an, now called Sian-Fu, in the province of Shensi, was one of the cities I visited, and I regret that I had not heard of this large settlement, for at that time, as guest of the Governor of that province, I should have had easy access to such records as they might have of these Jews.

The last discovery of any considerable number of Jews in China was made in 1899 by Col. Lehman of the German Army, stationed at Tsingtao, who reported about five hundred Jews in Tang-Chwang, about one hundred miles south-west of Kaifeng-Fu. He writes that the men were engaged in the silk trade and were, on the whole, well-to-do.

SCANNING the records closely, I found no mention of a Jewish cemetery. Evidently the many writers who have dealt with this subject have missed this important point. I discussed this omission with Bishop W. C. White while at Kaifeng, and he told me of a tradition that had been handed down from father to son in the Chao family, of a cemetery just outside the west gate of the walled city of Kaifeng-Fu. This cemetery was destroyed by the flood in 1642, which wiped out the city and destroyed the synagogue. The Chao say the cemetery was never used after that. At present, there is no Jewish cemetery.

My visit to the Chinese Jews in Kaifeng-Fu, in November of 1932, completes this all too brief record of the Jews in Kaifeng from the time of their discovery in 1605 to the present date. As far as the records disclose, I am the only American Jew who has ever visited them, although it is possible that other Jews from America have done so, but no record has been made of it.

The story of my visit and contacts with this remnant of an ancient Jewish settlement has been told in detail in the several articles which have already appeared.

Extracts from series of articles on the Jews of Kaifeng,
published in the New York journal "American Hebrew" in 1933

been—during the first brush of war—one of the most pugnacious. He is a man of Shántung, and now looks to returning to the bosom of his family. The reputation in which he stands, as a scholar, is high. He is spoken of as having been very just, prompt, and efficient in the administration of his office; and his removal from its functions is much regretted by the people. Ever since his return to Ningpo, after the conclusion of the treaty at Nanking, whither he and Shú had previously been summoned by their excellencies the imperial commissioners, he has conducted himself toward the English with uniform deference and courtesy; and, in losing him, they are deprived of the services of an enlightened friend.

While we were sitting in the táutái's audience-room, Lí Jilin, the successor of Shú entered. He also is a native of the province of Shántung. He does not appear to be above 33 years of age, and is considered one of the most fortunate men of his day. It is his literary acquirements that have gained him favor at court, for,—at the early age of 19, he took the second literary degree, and was immediately after appointed to the chief office in Funghwá, a district in the department of Ningpo, not more than 20 miles distant from this city. When the English attacked the defenses at Chápú, he held office at that port, but happily for him, he was absent on a tour of inspection, or he too might have shared the fate of Luh and Shú. He has but lately arrived in this city, and is now administering for the department. He had seen sir Henry Pottinger, Mr. Morrison, and Mr. Thom, during their last visit to Ningpo, and appeared *au fait* on many recent events. His intelligent conversation and unassumed kindness give great hope that he will follow up the liberal views of his predecessor, and become of essential service to those foreigners who may visit this commercial mart.

January 10th. The Mohammedan priest, named on the 15th of last month, brought with him a follower of the prophet, who had recently come to town. This stranger gives very distinct information of a class of religionists in Káifung fú 開封府, the capital of Honán, his native province, who from his description resemble the Jews. He says, they refrain from eating 'the sinew which is upon the hollow of the thigh,' and they do not touch the blood of animals. He recognized the Hebrew letters as those used in their sacred writings, and could trace, in the sound of Hebrew characters, a connection with words which he had heard them utter. The testimony of this individual precisely coincides with the brief notices published by Dr. Morrison, and with some of the lengthened details laid down in Grosier's History of China, vol. IV., chap. 11.

Extract from paper by Rev. William Charles Milne
and published in the "Chinese Repository" in 1844,

in Deuteronomy xxxiii. 4, which in Nos. 2, 4, and 9, and also in the old one, has a dot over each letter according to our printed Bible; but Nos. 5 and 12 are without this. The *enlarged* and *diminished* letters found in our editions are not preserved in any of these. From an examination of some parts, and a comparison with the Samaritan, we are induced to think that these will only be another testimony to the accuracy of our received text; variations there are in many places, but they are in general merely the omission or addition of a *vau* or *jod*, which neither affects the sense nor reading; and these variations are not uniform in the different rolls.

* A more uncommon reading is found in the Song of Moses, Deuteronomy, xxxii. 25, where, instead of the word כֶּרֶב *kherēb*, "sword," there is כֶּלֶב *kheleb*; this is uniform throughout all five, and seems to indicate that all have been copied from the same original; while, if that original copy was written by a Chinese scribe, there is little difficulty in accounting for the interchange. In the ancient copy we have the word עֵד *ead* redundant in the 23d verse of 7th chapter of Genesis; but this error has been noticed at some former period, for a line is drawn round the word to direct attention to it. Most of the rolls are profusely disfigured by errors, blots, erasures, and corrections; Nos. 4 and 12 especially, which have nearly as many corrections as columns; in some instances, these are made by cutting off the surface of the skin, in others by an attempt to wash out the writing, and in others again there is a white composition rubbed over the surface to conceal the writing; but in these two last cases, the original letters are generally still clearly legible through the corrections. Making allowance for these, we believe the Jews at K'ai-fung fü, whatever else may be laid to their charge, will be found to have been faithful guardians of the Oracles of God.

The Smaller Manuscripts.

"In addition to the rolls above described, there are fifty-seven other manuscripts, the greater number of them similar to those of which *fac-similes* have already been printed. They are small, written chiefly on thick paper formed by pasting several sheets together, and evidently with less care than that bestowed on the complete copies of the Law. Lines are indented to form a guide in writing as in the rolls, and there is always an odd number of lines in a page. Of the fifty-three sections of the Law, thirty-three of these lesser MSS. contain one each, and there are seven or eight duplicates. This enumeration, however, includes the six sections brought at the beginning of the year. They have the points and accents, the system differing little from that pursued in Europe. Some of these sections, whose faded silk covers and tattered appearance show them to be the oldest, have notes appended to them giving their dates, the names of the writers, auditors or witnesses, and of the Rabbis in whose time they lived. Persian would seem to have been the mother tongue of those who wrote these notes. Several words from that language are introduced in Hebrew characters—and are some of them by no means easy to be identified. The Roman Catholic Missionaries who formerly visited the Synagogue transcribed some similar notes. Translations of them by European scholars are found in Mr. Finn's work on the Jews in China, and in a note to the Prolegomena in Bagster's Polyglott Bible. If these renderings are correct, the note at the end of section I. of the Pentateuch should read, "Our Lord and Rabbi, being the Rabbi Jacob, son of the Rabbi Abishai, the Sheloh (this word is translated by the above authorities "liable to err;" it is more probably the name of some office). The Sheloh being the Rabbi Shadal, son of the Rabbi Jacob, son of the Rabbi Abishai, the Sheloh. Written by (or heard by) Rabbi Akibah, son of Aaron, son of Ezra. Presented by Abram, son of Aaron.

Extract from "A Narrative of a Motion of Inquiry"
published in the "Chinese Repository" in 1851,

at an estimate of about a thousand souls. This result is in accord with a contemporaneous report of the Portuguese, Pater Gozani, who visited K'ai-fung in 1704 on direct instructions from Rome and who writes that a number of Jewish families (he means, of course, clans) was then reduced to 7 and that the local population amounted to about 1,000. By 1850 the number of Jews in K'ai-fung had diminished to about 200 individuals, but the 7 clan names were still recorded by the Protestant delegates.

The last statistical information I was able to obtain came in a letter of *Li Kin-sheng*, a Chinese Jew then about fifty-two years old who died in 1903, addressed to the Shanghai Society for the Rescue of Chinese Jews and dated April 5, 1901. Li wrote that at that time there were about 50 families in existence of the names *Kao, Li, Chao, Chi, Kin, and Chang*, numbering about 250 souls. None of them, he said, could write or read Hebrew; none observed the Mosaic Law. The Sabbath was not kept. They were scattered about all over the city, some employed in government offices as junior assistants, others keeping small shops, and the sole distinction between them and the other Chinese being that they did not worship idols and did abstain from pork.

I have referred above to an interview of the Jesuit Matteo Ricci with a Jew in 1605. Pelliot⁴ has devoted a special notice to this Jew. This Jew of whom Ricci gives only his family name *Ai* had come to Peking to obtain an official post. Ricci reports that this man, who was about sixty years old, told him that because he had followed the career of one of the Chinese litterati he had been expelled from the synagogue by the archpriest who is their chief, and had almost been excommunicated, and that he would have easily abandoned his religion if he had been able to obtain the Doctor's degree as the Musulmans do, who if successful in obtaining the Doctor's degree no longer have fear of their Mollahs and abandon their religion. Now Pelliot has identified this interlocutor of Ricci with a certain *Ai T'ien* whose name he traced in the Chinese Gazetteer of K'ai-fung fu as having obtained the degree of licentiate in 1573 and as having reached the position of district magistrate (*chi-hien*). The fact that the name of a Jewish official is traceable in a local gazetteer is interesting in itself and also encouraging in raising hopes to find more Jewish names in Chinese records. But Pelliot's identification of this *Ai T'ien* with the Mr. Ai of Ricci is not conclusive, for he has overlooked a very important fact, and this is that the said *Ai T'ien* is the author and donor of an Orthodox Jewish inscription tablet to the synagogue of K'ai-fung,⁵ and this document signs himself as a disciple of the Jewish religion. Ricci asserts that this Jew, according to his story, had from childhood

4) Le Juif Ngai, informateur du P. Mathieu Ricci. *T'oung Pao*, XX, (1920-21)

5) Tobar, op. cit., p. 28, No. XV.

NOTES ON THE JEWS IN CHINA.

[Translated from a portion of a Hebrew Letter addressed by Mr. J. L. Liebermann to his father in Bielitz, Austrian Galicia, and published in the Annual Report of the Anglo-Jewish Association.]

When I set out on my travels you desired me to inquire into the condition of our Jewish brethren in different parts of the world, and with this wish I resolved to comply as well as I possibly could. You asked me to ascertain what traces might be discovered respecting the Ten Tribes, concerning whom many fabulous accounts have been circulated. I visited Abyssinia, passed through Arabia, Bokhara, touched Cabul and Candahar, and came to China. The Jews whom I met in the several countries principally followed the ritual of the Sephardim; in some instances that of the Ashkenazim. I also came into contact with Jews from Cochim. All of them adhere to Judaism according to the rabbinical teachings, and are extremely strict in their observances.

The Jews residing in Arabia have to endure unbearable hardships from the followers of Islam, and are, as a rule, in a most destitute condition. The same is the case with the Jews in Persia. Persecution and ignorance go hand in hand. The Jews of Yemen are very much given to the study of mysticism (Kabbala). They are easily recognised as Jews by their long pendant ringlets. Young and old walk about in tattered raiment, and wear the fringed garment in the public thoroughfares. The Jews in Bokhara maintain that their country is the one designated in the Bible as Balah and Habor. They are subjected to very heavy burdens and to cruel treatment. As in other Mohammedan countries, they are obliged to wear a distinguishing head-dress. Their language is identical with their Mohammedan fellow subjects. They are polygamists.

In the mountains of Candahar the people mention traditions that they came from Samaria as descendants of the Ten Tribes before the First Temple had been destroyed. They were permitted to settle there under the condition that they should subdue the mountain tribes, with which condition they complied. Many hundred years ago this population was subjected by rulers of Persia, and was compelled to embrace the Mohammedan religion. They maintain that they are descendants of the tribe of Ephraim, and they have preserved certain brazen vessels which are said to bear Samaritan inscriptions. I have seen some of those vessels. They are inscribed with square characters, which differ very materially from those in use amongst us, and have a resemblance to the writing employed in some amulets.

Jews immigrated into Cochim from Europe about four hundred years ago, and became possessed of numerous black slaves of both sexes. In the course of time they manumitted their slaves, who became rigorously attached to the Jewish religion. The descendants of those slaves increased very largely, and received some instruction in Judaism from European Jews arriving in Cochim. Many of the black Jews have joined the British army, in which they are regarded as valuable and faithful soldiers.

When I reached China, I found it extremely difficult to acquire the language of the country, for as I went about trading, I perceived that in nearly every city there was a considerable difference in the dialect. Hence it occurs that Chinese themselves, on arriving from remote localities, are sometimes compelled to hold written instead of oral converse. I assumed the garb of the natives, and plaited my hair in the Chinese fashion. Thus I travelled from place to place, and was always on the alert to obtain some intelligence about the Jews in that country. I had placed myself under British protection, and was therefore supplied with a permit to visit the interior of the country. Although I had been furnished with such a document my safety was often endangered owing to the existence of feuds in different districts. Sometimes I was regarded as a spy, and had many miraculous escapes. I was on some occasions fortunate enough to receive letters of protection from the leaders of the hostile parties.

In July, 1867, I came to the city of Kae-fung-foo in the district of Ho-nan, six hours distant from the river Ho-fung-fo (which means the Golden River). Here I found Jews who are termed Kae-fung-fo (which means "taking out the sinew from the flesh"). This city is very populous, and its inhabitants profess Mohammedanism. Followers of Christianity are also to be found there. All are dressed alike, speak alike, and conform to the habits prevailing in China, both as regards the head-dress and other externals. I was told that prior to the invasion of China by the Manchoes, the style of dress and the general customs were quite different. Kae-fung-fo is a very ancient city, surrounded by strong walls, and was at one time the Imperial residence. When I came there the guards at the gate would not permit me to pass until they had seen that my papers were in order. In betaking myself to the "foreigners' inn," I was guarded right and left, in front and behind, by armed men, until I reached my destination, for the inhabitants of the place behave fiercely and cruelly towards Europeans. Many missionaries, both of the Catholic and the Protestant religion, who visited this place, had, I was told, never returned without being exposed to serious insult. On the first day I invited some men of Israelite descent, and who are known as Taou-kin-kedou. I asked them how they and their families were called, and it appeared to me that their names were like those of Jews, only that they were pronounced very corruptly. I inquired what religion they followed, and they told me that they professed the religion of Moses. When I asked them the name of the God they worshipped, they told me "Ye-cho-ah-sha" (Jehovah), a pronunciation which apparently has been adopted to avoid a profane utterance of the ineffable name. I then asked them whether they had a Scroll of the Law of Moses. They told me: "We need to have several sefarim (scrolls), but foreigners who came here, and of whom we did not know whether they were Israelites or not, took them from us, alleging that they merely wished to inspect them, and that they would return them to us. But when they once had possession of them they kept them." It seemed to me that these Scrolls were purchased for a very high price from the poor of that town. If any one of these people should still have a Scroll of the Law he would not be willing to show it to a stranger. I was informed that two hundred of their families had removed to Peking, and had taken with them three Scrolls. It was mentioned to me by some of my informants that in this town they had formerly a very fine synagogue, which was built on the model of the Temple in Jerusalem, and had existed for several centuries. In a certain part of the synagogue court, they used to burn incense by day and by night. A part of that building was called Bethel (the House of God). Only Cohanim (descendants of Aaron) officiated there on Sabbath, Festivals and New Moons. Men, women, and children used regularly to assemble in the synagogue on days of the New Moons. Here the Jews made votive offerings, burnt incense, and chanted hymns and religious songs, which were accompanied by the beating of drums and by other instruments. On such occasions the Jews feasted and made merry, distributed gifts among the poor, and suspended at the doors and windows of their houses, as also at those of the synagogue, lime and purple streamers of silk. On the nights of New Moons and Festivals every Israelite's house was illuminated.

Between the years 1840 and 1850, the synagogue was completely ruined. Since then it had never been repaired, because the majority of those descendants of the Israelites are poor, and also because they do not feel the need of a synagogue, since they have forgotten the Law and its commandments. When the last of their elders died, the knowledge of the Scriptures completely ceased among them. By order of the Government, Scrolls of the Law were exhibited in the open market place, and an advertisement in Chinese was inscribed by the side, offering a reward and a leading position to anyone who would be able to explain the wording of the Scroll. Also the Jews made similar offers in other places, but to no avail. This caused them to despair of their synagogue, which was completely abandoned, and of which not one stone was left on the other. They were ordered not to adopt another religion before the arrival of persons who could read the Law, and who might re-introduce amongst them the knowledge now fallen into oblivion.

I visited the site of their ancient synagogue and found nothing but stones, which were traces of the entrance-yard. The avenue appeared to have been about 15 ells in length by 4 ells in width. The foundation was covered with refuse, and evidently consisted of stone. The stone lintel contained a Chinese inscription in large characters. The words were "li-fa su-se Taou-kin-kedou" (which means "the House of God and the religion of those who extract the sinew from the flesh"). The place occupied by the synagogue is a wretched spot, covered with mire and pools of water. Here I saw a stone pillar, 3 ells in length by 1 ell in width, with a Chinese inscription, stating that persons who friends of the Israelite religion should not enter this place. I asked my Jewish friends from whence their ancestors had come to settle here. They could only say that their fathers came from the West, and had been exiled from their land "because they had rebelled against the will of the Almighty." They declared: "We are the sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and are descended from the tribe of Asher." Many hundred years ago, so they said, their fathers had come in seven families, in addition to some who had no pedigrees. Four hundred, more or less, were in that town; in Peking there were about two hundred families, and in Hansho and near Ningpo, as also in other places, many were likewise scattered. The ravages of war had carried off many Jews. Some of them had held high military posts and Government offices. Through following a military career and through being scattered, the majority of the Jews had become so entirely ignorant of their religion that they abandoned its tenets. Yet their descendants still abstained from eating swine-flesh and any meat killed by a stranger. They abstained from the use of blood, and the eating of anything impure of beasts, birds and fishes. They also refrained from intermarrying with persons of other creeds. They still had a burial-ground of their own.

I inquired whether they had records or ancient writings bequeathed to them by their ancestors, and offered to buy any of their relics. They told me that they had nothing left but a stone-tablet, which had been attached to the wall of the synagogue, and that it was inscribed with characters which none of them could read. I urged them to let me see the stone, but they could not permit me to accompany them to its hiding-place, lest it might become known to the inhabitants. Besides, I could not leave the house without being surrounded by a countless mob of men, women and children. The populace shouted and exclaimed "wooh wo ne e-o" (which means "the ghost of a stranger"). I dared not show myself anywhere, and my landlord begged me to quit his house, in which I could no longer be safe. I never returned to part with my weapons, and only began to think how I could escape from this dangerous place. Meanwhile, the native Jews brought me the stone to which I have referred, and which was about 32 inches in length, 16 inches in width, and 8 inches thick. It was black in colour, and had a Hebrew inscription in two vertical lines. The first line contained the words (Deut. viii. 2), וְיָדַעְתָּ כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד. The second line had the following words: וְיָדַעְתָּ כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד.

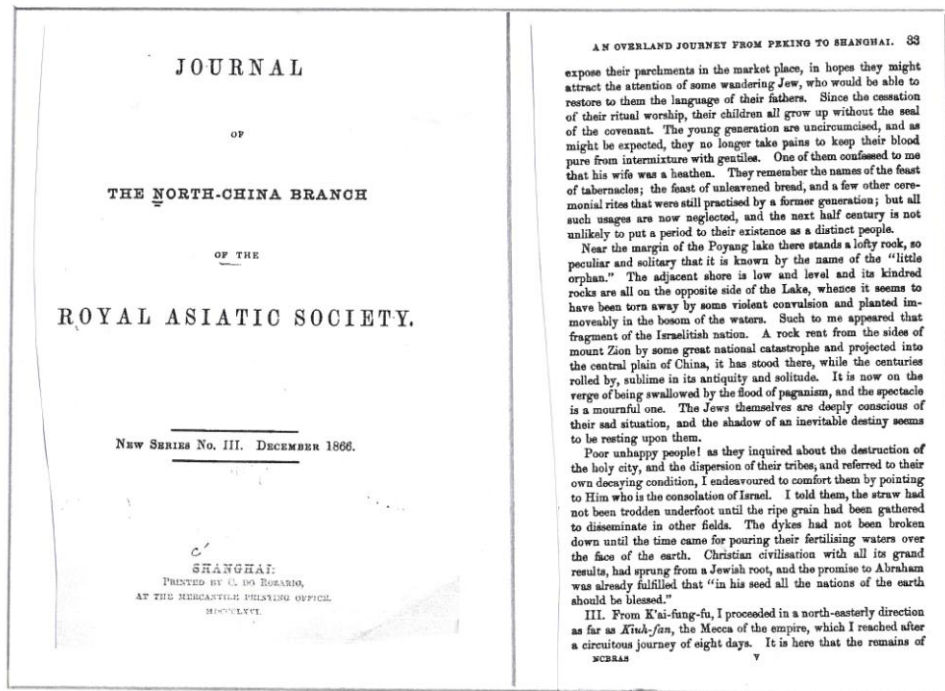
They mentioned to me that in the synagogue, according to the traditions of their ancestors, there was a golden bell, on which was inscribed in Hebrew characters the time when the synagogue was built, the place where they came from, why they had come thither, and some other matters unknown to them. The Mohammedans of the place had stolen this bell, and also the books which were originally in the synagogue. It was stated that the Mohammedans still conceal those books in their mosque. Upon hearing this statement I paid a visit to the Mohammedan Mollahs at their mosque, and made inquiries on the matters here mentioned, but only after a long entreaty they showed me a manuscript, which was about 8 inches both in length and in breadth. The paper was very thick, and the writing was in ancient Hebrew characters. It contained the second portion of the Book of Exodus (i.e. vi. 3 to end of ix.), with the vowel points and the tonic accents. I hurriedly looked through the several pages and found יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד instead of יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד, and דָּבַר instead of דָּבַר. At the end of the MS. there was an epigraph in two lines—וְיָדַעְתָּ כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד. ("Dune according to a vow of R. Pinchas, the teacher, the son of Israel, the son of Joshua, the son of Benjamin"). In the second line were the equivalents for "Holy to the Lord," and lower down, "For Thy salvation I have waited, O Lord."

I asked them whether they had any other works of the Israelites, but their reply was evasive. They wished me to come again, and I knew that my visits were welcome, for I could give them information about their holy places of Mecca and Medina. Unfortunately, I had no other opportunity of conversing with them. The chief of the town ordered me to leave forthwith. Before quitting the place, I asked the descendants of the Israelites whether they were desirous of studying the Jewish religion, and they solemnly affirmed that they were most eager to do so. I promised that I would convey this information to my brother Jews in Europe. I suggested that they should petition the Government for permission to receive a foreign teacher, who should bring them back to their ancient religion, or that they should give me a document which I would take with me to Europe in order that my brethren should come to their aid in procuring for them useful instruction. An aged man replied that the Government would unquestionably interpose extreme difficulties if European Jews came to act as teachers amongst them. He said: "Nearly all of us are poor and engaged in menial labour. It would, therefore, not be practicable to afford us all the instruction that is needful. Besides this, it is to be feared that the presence of Europeans would have no other effect than that of exciting suspicion." Some of the men proposed that they themselves would go to Europe; others that they would send their children to be educated in Europe.

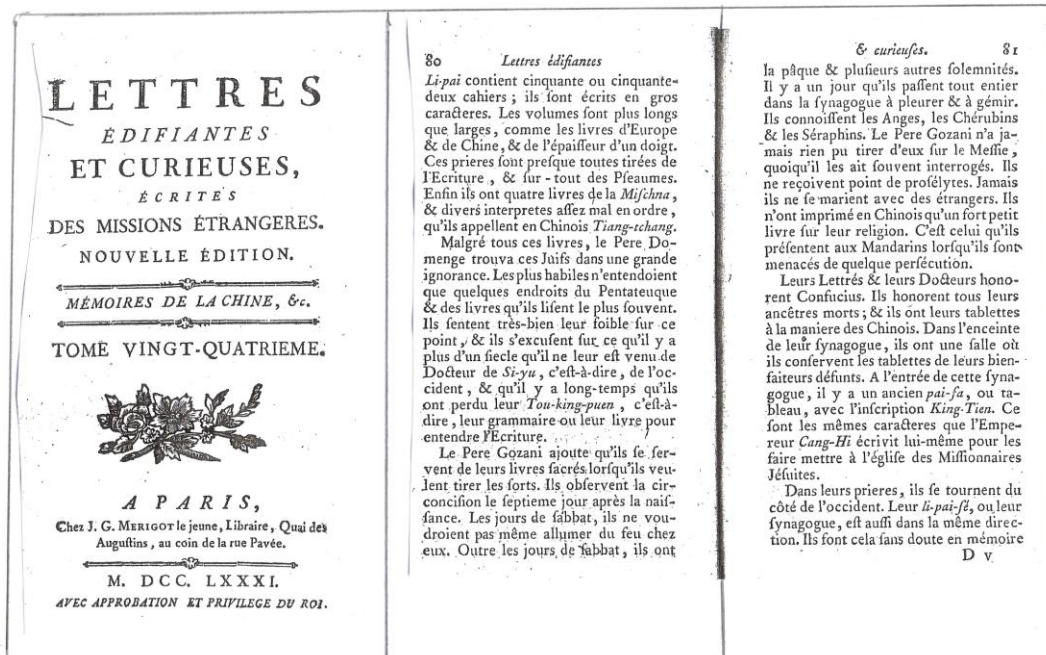
J. Finn, in his "Orphan Colony of Jews in China" (p. 60) gives the name of the Temple as "Taou-kin-kedou." The spelling of Chinese names in Mr. Liebermann's letter probably contains numerous corrections, especially as the Hebrew characters are not adapted for the spelling of Chinese words.—A. Lowy.

The writer says that he could not make out the meaning of this line, which seems to imply that the inscription was written on the fourth of Sabbath by me, Solomon, on the day (1867) etc. Mr. Finn quotes the same line, but his copy contains more corrupt than that given by Mr. Liebermann.—A. Lowy.

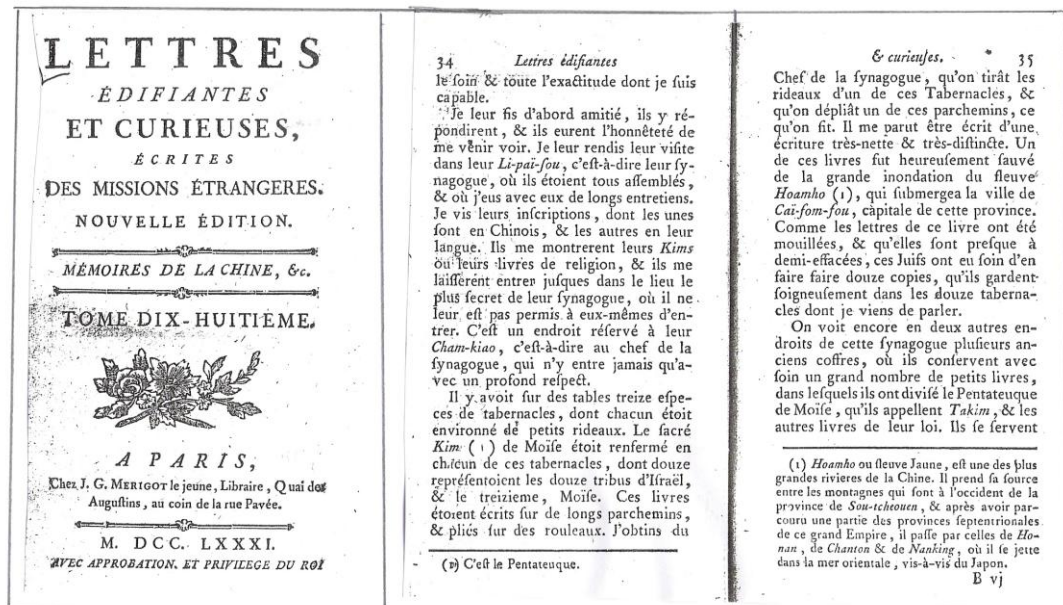
Part of an article by J. L. Liebermann, which appeared in the London "Jewish Chronicle" in 1879.



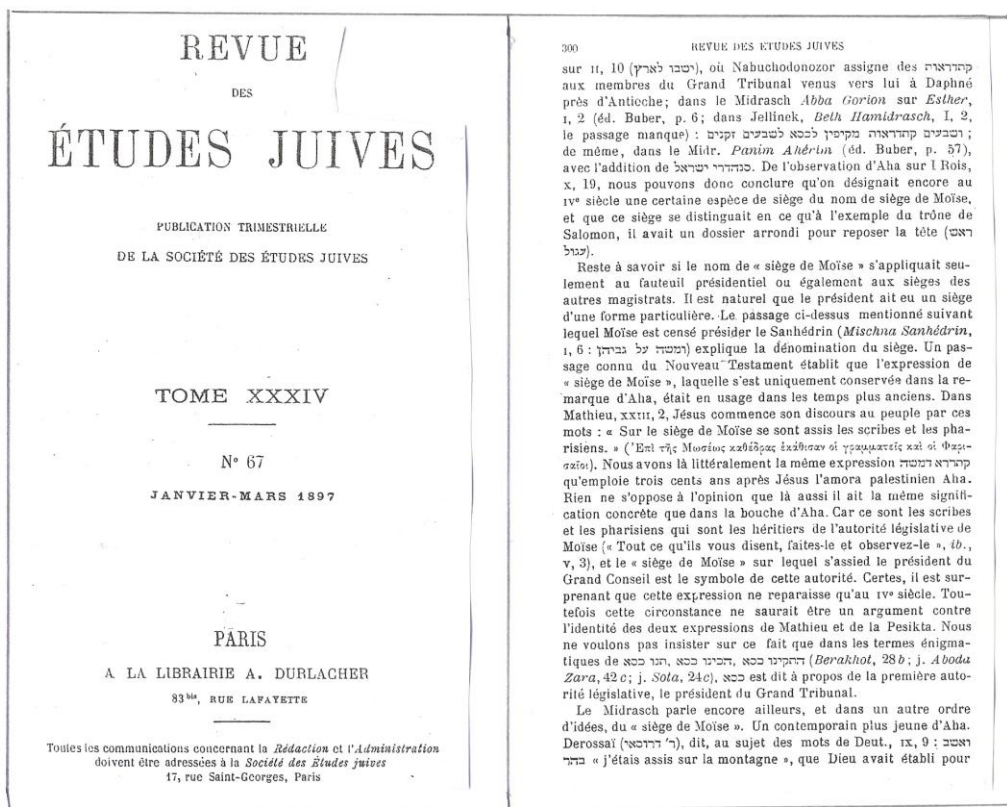
Extract of an account by Rev. W. A. P. Martin of
a journey made within China in 1866



Extract of letter written by Jean-Paul Gozani and published in Paris in 1781



Extract from the the Memoir of Gabriel Brotier published in Paris in 1781



Extract from article by Wilhelm Bacher
on the "Chair of Moses" published in 1897