

Then came Moses, who established the Law, and handed down the Sacred Writings. After his time, during the Han Dynasty (B.C. 206 to A.D. 221), this religion entered China. In (A.D.) 1164, a synagogue was built at P'ien. In (A.D.) 1296, the old Temple was rebuilt, as a place in which the Sacred Writings might be deposited with veneration."

[According to their oral tradition, the Jews came to China from *Si Yih* (Western Regions), probably Persia, by Khorasan and Samarkand, during the first century of our era, in the reign of the Emperor Ming-ti (A.D. 58-75) of the Han Dynasty. They were at times confounded with the followers of religions of India, *T'ien Chu kiao*, and very often with the Mohammedans *Hwui-Hwui* or *Hwui-tzu*; the common name of their religion was *Tiao kin kiao*, "Extract Sinew Religion." However, three lapidary inscriptions, kept at Kaï-fung, give different dates for the arrival of the Jews in China: one dated 1489 (2nd year Hung Che, Ming Dynasty) says that seventy Jewish families arrived at P'ien liang (Kaï-fung) at the time of the Sung (A.D. 960-1278); one dated 1512 (7th year Chêng Têh) says that the Jewish religion was introduced into China under the Han Dynasty (B.C. 206-A.D. 221), and the last one dated 1663 (2nd year K'ang-hi) says that this religion was first preached in China under the Chau Dynasty (B.C. 1122-255); this will not bear discussion.

The synagogue, according to these inscriptions, was built in 1163, under the Sung Emperor Hiao; under the Yuen, in 1279, the rabbi rebuilt the ancient temple known as *T'ing Chen sse*, probably on the site of a ruined mosque; the synagogue was rebuilt in 1421 during the reign of Yung-lo; it was destroyed by an inundation of the Hwang-ho in 1642, and the Jews began to rebuild it once more in 1653.

The first knowledge Europeans had of a colony of Jews at K'ai-fung fu, in the Ho-nan province, was obtained through the Jesuit missionaries at Peking, at the beginning of the 17th century; the celebrated Matteo Ricci having received the visit of a young Jew, the Jesuits Aleni (1613), Gozani (1704), Gaubil and Domenge who made in 1721 two plans of the synagogue, visited Kaï-fung and brought back some documents. In 1850, a mission of enquiry was sent to that place by the *London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews*; the results of this mission were published at Shang-hai, in 1851, by Bishop G. Smith of Hongkong; fac-similes of the Hebrew manuscripts obtained at the synagogue of Kaï-fung were also printed at Shang-hai at the London Missionary Society's Press, in the same year. The Jewish merchants of London sent in 1760 to their brethren of Kaï-fung a letter written in Hebrew; a Jewish merchant of Vienna, J. L. Liebermann, visited the Kaï-fung colony in 1867. At the time of the T'ai-P'ing rising, the rebels marched against Kaï-fung in 1857, and with the rest of the population, the Jews were dispersed. (*J. Tobar, Insc. juives de Kai-fong-fou*, 1900; *Henri Cordier, Les Juifs en Chine*, and *Fung and Wagnall's Jewish Encyclopedia*.) Palladius writes (p. 38), "The Jews are mentioned for the first time in the *Yuen shi* (ch. xxxiii. p. 7), under the year 1329, on the occasion of the re-establishment of the law for the collection of taxes from dissidents. Mention of them is made again under the year 1354, ch. xliii. fol. 10, when on account of several insurrections in China, rich Mahometans and Jews were invited to the capital in order to join the army. In both cases they are named *Chu hu* (Djuhud)."—H. C.]

The synagogue at Kaifungfu has recently been demolished for the sake of its materials, by the survivors of the Jewish community themselves, who were too poor to repair it. The tablet that once adorned its entrance, bearing in gilt characters the name ESZLOYIH (Israel), has been appropriated by a mosque. The 300 or 400 survivors seem in danger of absorption into the Mahomedan or heathen population. The last Rabbi and possessor of the sacred tongue died some thirty or forty years ago, the worship has ceased, and their traditions have almost died away.

(*Cathay*, 225, 341, 497; *Ch. Rep.* XX. 436; *Dr. Martin*, in *J. N. China Br. R.A.S.* 1866, pp. 32-33.)