

ליהודים היתה אורה :

17A

AN

ADDRESS ON THE POSITION

IN

THE JEWS IN BRITAIN,

WITH REFERENCE TO

THEIR LITERARY, POLITICAL, CIVIL, AND
RELIGIOUS CONDITION.

BY MOSES SAMUEL,

OF LIVERPOOL.

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AN ADDRESS TO THE JEWS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BRETHREN,

HAVING seen in the "Voice of Jacob," No. 65, February 2nd, a Letter from M.,* addressed to Sir Moses Montefiore, upon the position of the English Jews; I most respectfully beg to lay before you my opinion upon the subject which that letter endeavours to unfold, as interesting to yourselves, and gratifying to those who have your welfare at heart. Some years have elapsed since I put pen to paper for the purpose of appearing in print in relation to your spiritual and temporal state, a serious illness having for a long time deprived me of the will and of the means of addressing you; but having, with the blessing of God, recovered my health, and as the age in which we live is teeming with events extraordinary and interesting, I shall require but little apology in addressing you at present. I must first draw your attention to the gratifying accounts from abroad.

Mark the contrast between the pursuits of English and foreign Israelites—what are they doing in Leipzig, Prague, Lemberg, Brody, Berlin, and Hamburgh? Lay before our unfortunately neglected, yet knowledge-seeking Hebrews, the heart-cheering account of the exhumation of the splendid works of our poets and philosophers, which had been mouldering in manuscript for centuries in public and private libraries.

Behold our foreign brethren, as it were, raising to life a Jewish Shakespeare, in the works of Moses Luzzato,† a prince of poets, a name scarcely known here, whose genius soared aloft in majestic metre, rivalling all who before him, had launched into the higher regions of thought, and had chained their conceptions to expressions of sublimity in the sacred language.

Let us catch a spark from the poetic fire of his lately dis-

* On going to press, I learned, and have permission to state, that the talented writer of the letter is Mr. Mears Lawson, of Bristol.

† In coupling his name with that of our immortal English bard, it is not for the quantity and degree of his writings, but for the high rank which he holds amongst Jewish poets.

covered work, מגדל עוז "Migdol Oz," and deplore the long neglect of Israel, to seek his mouldering bones, and revivify them by the press.

His drama לישורים תהלה "Layshorim Tehilla," his לשון למודים "Leshon Limudim," or Biblical Rhetoric, and some other works long known and admired, have procured for him a renown for the classic beauties of his language; but this Hebrew poetic effusion מגדל עוז has raised a "strong tower," immortal to his genius and mental excellence.* He flourished in 1750. His biography, attached to the work, is written by S. Luzzato and M. Letteris; as well as a most beautiful dissertation in Latin, upon our best modern Hebrew poets and their works.

Give us a translation of that superb sacred drama by a living author, Nachman Fishman, lately published at Lemberg, at the expence of the highly gifted and respected Joshua Schlesinger; "The Fall of Sisera, and Israel's Success through Barak and Deborah." The introduction is written by Jacob Budak. In the first act of the fifth scene; the poet gives the soliloquy of the mother of Sisera, on the report of her son's death, a few lines of which may not prove unacceptable:—

הָהָהּ מִלְחָמָה אֲכַזְרָהּ! תְּשׁוּקָה נִוְרָאָה!
 לֵהֵב עֵז לְךָ • אֶת נִשְׁגָּבָה • נִפְלְאָה •
 עַל כַּנְפֵי דַמְיוֹן תִּדְרָכֵנִי • בְּאַבְרוֹתָיו תִּדְאֵנִי
 רַחֲבֵי לֵב אֲנֹשׁ • בְּחַיִּיךָ שׂוֹא תִמְלֵאנִי;
 מִשְׁאוֹת שָׂא וּמְדוּחִים • בְּרֶשֶׁת וּשְׁבָכָה
 תִּכְרְשֵׁי לְרַגְלֵי • עַד תִּוְבִילֵיהֶן הַבְּכָא;
 מָה יֵשׁ לְכִי? אֲשֶׁר אֶת כָּל תְּמִשׁוּכֵי
 תִּלְכְּדֵי לֵב נְבִיר־מַחֲשַׁבֹתָיו תִּחְפּוּכֵי?

Not being able to write poetry, or in any way to do justice to the lofty thoughts of the author, I shall attempt to give the

* He was a native of Padua. Livy, the Roman historian, was also born and buried in this celebrated city. A copious biography of Luzzato is given in the *Kerem Chemed* for 1838, by Joseph Almantzi, well worthy the perusal of every lover of learning.

translation in prose, leaving it to poetic genius, to give the beauties, the graces, and the fire of the original.

“Tyrant war, mighty desire, fiercely burning, exalted!—rendered wonderful! Riding upon imagination’s wings, taking a lofty flight, thou fillest the hero’s expanded heart with vain—visionary schemes! With deceitful allurements thou spreadest a net for his feet, till thou bringest him to destruction. Wherein exists thy art to attract—to entrap the heart of man—to overturn his soul?”

The writer of the introduction, makes the following remark upon this beautiful apostrophe:—

מה גדול תקפו של השיר הזה! היוצא מקרב לב
אשה קשת רוח • מלאה חרון וכעס על רוע מצבה • כי
לא תדע ולא תשמע שום דבר מבנה אשר ירד למלחמה •
ולכן מתלוננת וצועקת מרה על תשוקת כל אנשי חיל
לצאת על שדי המלחמת • אף אם יצלתו וינצתו
במלחמתם —

“How forcible is this poetic effusion! excited by the feelings of a broken-hearted woman, in the fulness of grief, lamenting her fate, not having before known, or heard any thing of her son, who had gone to war! thus bitterly reprehending the fondness of valiant men for entering the field of battle, notwithstanding their success and their conquests.”

The translator of the “Idyllia,” of Bion and Moschus,* says in his preface, page 18, “They will go down hand in hand to future ages, as long as the beautiful language in which they wrote shall continue to be understood; as long as there are hearts that can feel, or there is taste that can appreciate the graces of pure writing.”

I trust the same will be said of Luzzato and Fishman. I hope that some of our literati will be induced to give us translations of the works of these poets, as well as of the “Hakoloth Yachdolun” of Rumenali; of the “Meluchoth Shaul”† of Efrathi; the

* Two Greek Poets

† This sacred drama, “The Monarchy of Saul,” is a splendid piece of Hebrew writing. The description of the madness of Saul; the solemn heart-stirring prayer of old Kish, in blessing his grand-children under the nuptial canopy, show the elevated style and exalted thoughts of the poet.

ארבע כוסות "Arba Cosuth" of Poppenheim, &c. &c. In speaking of the laudable efforts of our brethren abroad, I beg to inform you of the discovery of some works of that eminent grammarian and illustrious commentator, Aben Ezra,* in manuscript; one of which, שפת יתר "Sefas Jeser," was brought to light in Presburg, by Mordecai Bislechis, of Brody, with a beautiful introductory address, by the able scholar and philanthropist, M. Letteris, in 1838; in which he gives a delightful image of the destruction of Pompeii, buried for 1700 years, and its discovery some years since; to which he compares, in extraordinary fine language, the discoveries in the present age of the mental treasures of some of our illustrious authors. He says:—

הנה כן עוד משכיות חמדה ואבני חפץ אבדו מאתנו .
לא יזכרו עוד ולא יפקדו ולא יעלו על לב . אף כי יקרו
מפז ומפנינים . ובכתב אופיר לא יסולאו . הלא המה
אנשי שם חכמי לב אשר הראו חכמתם ובינתם לעיני
העמים : ספרי חכמי ישראל אשר לא יצאו עוד לאור בעט
ברזל ועופרת . ואם לא פצתה הארץ את פיה לבלוע
צבי תפארתם . הלא בבתי עקד ספרים . כבבתי כלאים
החבאו . ולא אלינו נגה אורם . לכן זה היום עשה ה'
נגילה ונשמחה בו . כי העיר את לב איש יקר ונכבד .
אשר הקדיש הונו ורכושו ושלום ביתו . להיות נעונד
בארצות נכריות ; אך למען הוציא יקר מזולל . ואבני
קדש מכף אנשים לא ידעו ערכם . ה'ה אהב חכמה ותופש
תורה . היקר מ' מרדכי ללב ביסלויכים . איש בראדי .
סגלות יקרות אין על עפר משלם . כבר יצאו על ידו
לאור בדפוס המפואר של אנטאן די שמיד בעיר המעטירה
פרעסבורג . וכו' . ועוד ידו נשויה להוציא לאור ספרים
חדשים לא שערום אבותינו . כי עודם בכתובים

"Some of the most delightful and brilliant works of the imagination having been lost (without having left a trace of

*His "Annet Shabbath," upon Jewish astronomy, one of his lately discovered works, is given in the "Kerem Chemed" for 1839. The reader will learn that the principles upon which Herschel the celebrated astronomer founded his system of prognosticating the weather, by the observations of the quarterly changes, of the moon may also be seen in this work of Aben Ezra, who lived in the twelfth century.

their existence, although more precious than gold or precious stones) of our men of renown, who had manifested their wisdom to surrounding nations; being the productions of the wise men of Israel, which had never been published; and although no earthquake had swallowed up their beauty and their glory, yet have they been imprisoned in libraries, so that their light had never shone upon us until now, that the Almighty has caused it to be a day of rejoicing for us, in having roused the heart of a respected philanthropist, who has *consecrated his wealth and forgone the comforts of home to wander abroad* in search of that which is most estimable, to obtain works in our holy tongue from those unconscious of their worth; the lover of wisdom and of the law, the highly gifted Mordecai Bislechis, from Brody, by whose means some incomparable works have already been brought to light, by the famous press of Anton Schmidt, in Presburg; and who is desirous to give to the world other works unknown to our ancestors, being in manuscript," etc.

See the money thus expended abroad by our worthy brethren, to promote and promulgate knowledge and truth for the benefit of our people; in bringing to light the long-hidden treasures of Hebrew and Rabbinical learning, to gladden the hearts of the studious and the pious, and to confirm the opinions of the great (long departed) upon our holy faith, the foundation of the superstructure of our revered sages. Here we see Jarchi, Maimonides, Aben Ezra, and other renowned fathers of Israel, as it were, rising from their slumbers to illuminate again our literary hemisphere, and, conscious of some petty struggles in our camp, wafting through space to dispel darkness and self-sufficiency, and to solve doubt. At the very appearance of the symptoms of secession, they manifest their angelic sceptres to collect our partially-divided sheep into one fold in unity and brotherly love.

The present Samuel Luzzato thus writes to Goldenberg in 1841; the editor of *כרם חמד* "Kerem Chemed" at the end of one of his esteemed contributions, page 48, after telling him of some valuable manuscripts in his possession, grammatical and rhetorical treatises, dialectics, comments, etc.; his noble spirit is thus manifested:—

ומכל הספרים היקרים האלה • הנני מוכן ומזומן •
 אם יחנני ה' בריאות ושלוה • לשלוח אליך לקושים, ככל
 הפצך • לטעת אותם בכרמך הנחמד לכבוד המחברים
 ז"ל • ולשמח נפש כל אהבי לשון הקדש; כבר שלחתי
 פעמים הרבה לגדולי חכמי הדור ולצעיריהם • לקושים
 ארוכים כמה שבידי • וממה שביד אהבי ורעי • בלא
 כסף ובלא מחיר • כי לדעתי כך היא חובתנו • וכך
 יפה לנו לעשות • קיו מן המפרכסות זו את זו • ומי
 יתן והיה לבבי זה לכל, החכמים המפוזרים בארבע
 כנפות הארץ —

“From all these precious books I am ready and willing, if
 the Almighty spare my health and strength, to send you as
 many extracts as you desire; to plant them in your vineyard
 for the glory of the authors, of blessed memory, as well as for
 the delight of all the lovers of the sacred language. I have
 already frequently sent copious extracts to eminent, as well
 as to less renowned men, from those works in my possession,
 as well as in the possession of my friends, gratuitously; for I
 think such is our duty, leading as it does to a greater mutual
 excitement, and inducing a harmony of feeling in so doing. ^U
 that such a feeling may influence all the wise, scattered through
 the four corners of the earth!”—Astounding liberality! כמותו
 ירבה בישראל

The editor, in his preface to the same magazine for 1841,
 says:—

• תקותי כי לא יארכו הימים ימי השלוה ואמת •
 וחכמי וגדולי ישראל יתנו יד זה לזה • ויעשו כלם אגרה
 אחת להאיר עיני בני דורם במושכלות • ולהוציא לאור
 תעלומות חכמה • לבלתי היות עוד עם ישראל למשל
 ולשנינה בפי הגוים

“I hope that those happy days are not far distant—the
returning days of truth and peace, when the wise and the great
 of Israel, will go hand in hand, and combine to enlighten their
 brethren in all that is conducive to the refinement of mind,
 and to usher forth works, illustrating what may be obscure,
 that Israel may not be ‘a proverb and a bye-word in the
 mouths of Gentiles.’”

I hope shortly to see this Jewish and philanthropic feeling, manifested amongst our brethren in Great Britain; that Jewish orthodox periodicals will be properly patronised with money and talent. I heed not who may be your editors, and whether of weekly, monthly, or quarterly journals.—Encourage them! By increasing the matter with versatile talent, seeking for, and finding some, who may aid in your glorious cause of *true reform* and *earnest regeneration*, you will increase the interest in your publications; and by increasing the consumption, you will have to offer them at low prices. Happy days, when the sons and daughters of Judah, after prayers and a comfortable repast on sabbath, forgetting all trouble and anxiety, will read their *own* periodicals; the composition of their *own* flock, breathing feeling in every line responded to by every Jewish heart.

Hebrew poetry, Hebrew biography, Hebrew learned controversy, Jewish history, pieces of Talmud copiously explained in good plain English, for the aid of students struggling with and stumbling over apparent obscurities, will, I hope, be comprised in our Jewish periodicals.

The time may come, when some of our thoughts upon *literature* in such periodicals, may be thought worthy of being extracted; translated into Hebrew or German, and inserted in the כרם חמד "Kerem Chemed," the בכורי העתים "Bikkuri Haithim," "The Orient," and into other esteemed works; so that the improvement, as well as the utility of the Anglo-Jewish press, will be made manifest.

A bond of unity must be made between our literary and influential men at home, and if possible, abroad; to combine genius, talent, zeal, and pecuniary means for our national good.

Your merchants, loan-contractors, stock-brokers, men of independent property as well as tradesmen, will, I trust, exert themselves to bring about a national *literary* change: to encourage Jewish learning, and to *support*, whilst they *enrich*, their national institutions. Shall we remain indolent whilst others are making a rapid march in science? Shall we neglect the cultivation of mental excellence, whilst light shines all around us? In the Augustan age in which the illustrious

Mendelssohn lived, the erudite commentator Wesel, the critically grammatical and philosophical Eichel, Joel Brill, Baruch Lindo, Itsac Satnav, David Friedländer and others, who formed a galaxy of Jewish genius in Berlin in the latter part of the last century, furnished, besides their many much admired works, a Hebrew magazine with their contributions; thus moulding the Jewish mind in wisdom and science, giving a zest for Jewish literature, venerating and illustrating the works of our Rabbins; but they were not required to defend them, when there was no attack, *even in that renowned age of Jewish philosophy.*

Heaven grant us in England such philanthropists as Joshua Schlesinger of Lemberg, and Mordecai Bislechis of Brody, mentioned before, to patronise our literature, to devote even a trifling fractional part of their income in procuring new editions of the useful works of our best writers; to aid in publishing good elementary books, cheap, and therefore easily obtained, for the proper grammatical understanding of the Chaldaic and Syriac languages, by which years of toil over the Talmud, to the exclusion of other knowledge, will be saved.

The letter of M. in the "Voice of Jacob" is highly conceived and beautifully expressed, and I hope, may lead to some good. Our co-religionists in Britain are well inclined, blessed with ample means, charitable, honoured for their intrinsic worth, in proportion to its national importance; highly respected by their Christian neighbours, and now struggling for their own good; not fomenting dissensions from motives of strife, but bewildered with the abundance of choice in the modes of reform. They are all excited to make a noble stand—to build colleges, to endow schools, to rear scholars worthy of such Anglo-Jewish institutions:—for the priesthood and for the counting-house; for the exchange and for the shop; for the laboratory of science, and for the admiration of a surrounding world. There is no split in the camp of Israel!

Our periodicals must be enriched with good Hebrew type, no expense must be spared; the poet's unparalleled effusion in Hebrew and the translator's attempt, to transfer its spirit into our vernacular tongue, must be placed side by side. The

useful scriptural comments of Abarbanel, Mendelssohn, Wesel, Landau, etc., must also be inserted in the original, with a plain, almost literal, flowing, easily-comprehended translation. Insert statistical contributions from all Jewish congregations; in short, get all to enrich your miscellanies to amuse and improve your readers.

I wish I could contribute my quota of humble talent to such a noble cause; but I am prevented taking a part in it at present, owing to my being engaged in an elaborate work of fifteen hundred pages; the prospectus of which, comprising forty pages, will, I hope, with God's blessing, be published in three or four months.

I congratulate you upon the symptoms of literary reform amongst us, in the publication of some good and useful works; one of which is an excellent translation by Lindo, of the "Conciliator" of Manasseh Ben Israel.

Continue to give us elegant extracts from all the Hebrew and Latin works of this champion of our nation, who procured our re-establishment in this land of freedom, and partially destroyed by his splendid and learned writings, much of the pre-existing prejudices, which had banished our forefathers from its shores. All our knowledge of the arts and sciences, will tend to the great object—the confirmation of our holy faith. If we study mathematics, we shall easily comprehend the Talmud of פאה כלאים סנה; if we learn astronomy, we shall properly understand the Talmud of ראש השנה, together with Maimonides upon קדוש החדש "Kiddush Hachodash," also the old and new Cozri; and if we shall have obtained a thoroughly *grammatical* knowledge of the Hebrew language, we shall have laid the foundation* for all human learning. In a little time, you, my countrymen, may also be imbued with the noble feeling, manifested by the Jews in Leipzig, Prague, Brody, Berlin, Hamburg, etc., to search into the valuable public and private libraries of Great Britain, for the probably long-hidden manuscripts of our great luminaries, and to enrich the republic of letters, by bringing those invaluable treasures to light.

What would our noble-minded Christian friends expend, in

* Which will be illustrated in my forthcoming work.

producing to the learned world, some of the lost books of Livy, Sallust, and Cicero? Money would be of the least consideration.

Cultivate, therefore, Jewish talent; give a spur to genius; encourage the sermons of your eloquent preachers; patronise the works of your living authors, lest others, struggling only in their conceptions, dare not attempt to produce anything, for fear of ruining themselves by the publication. Advance the great cause of the Anglo-Jewish press; let your editors be recompensed for their endeavours to enlighten your minds, in directing your application to your sacred, national language; in displaying all that is precious in your Divine charter, and in teaching you to aspire, to that purity and excellence for which you were once eminently distinguished above nations.

I have hitherto only considered one division of my subject; for in the outset of this address, I requested you to mark the contrast between the pursuits of foreign and British Israelites. I have only given one section of the contrast: I directed your attention to the spiritual position of the Hebrews in some parts abroad, I implored you to follow their footsteps if you wished to ameliorate your condition; but I must now speak of your present position in this country, for I humbly conceive, that our spiritual and worldly state are so mysteriously interwoven, that it is difficult to separate them.

Permit me, now, to refer you to the well-written letter of M. of February 2nd, addressed to our British champion and philanthropist, Sir Moses Montefiore, wherein he makes the following beautiful remark:—

“At what period soever, sir, we take up our own history, we might find matter for wonder and astonishment, if wonder and astonishment did not yield to deeper emotions; not to go back to the nobler periods of our existence—not to raise the veil which already partially falls over intermediate times, our present state is equally worthy of investigation with the past, and may repay such investigation, if not with the vain qualification of philosophic curiosity, yet with the substantial benefit of present and future amelioration.”

I concur with the above remark, so eloquently and so philosophically stated; but I regret to differ from him when he

proceeds immediately to 'a less philosophical consideration. He says:—

“But I think that he indeed must be a *bold* man, who can say, that the social position in which we now stand is desirable, as I trust ultimately to prove, that he is a *misjudging* one who deems it incapable of improvement. That social position will be in future times one of the *scandal wonders* of this age,” etc. “I trust that this third and ultimate stage of the disorder has not arrived; that we are in the second is indisputable; if it be not so, upon what principle can it be explained, that at this moment, in the middle of the nineteenth century, when the prejudices of ages seem to have crumbled to the dust, when the mere passive power of time alone, would seem to have effected their overthrow,” etc. “That yet at this moment, we *alone* remain to illustrate by our position, what those prejudices were; to show, that even time leaves something untouched amidst the ruins which he makes, and to prove to Wisdom and Justice that their work is incomplete! I can imagine, sir, that the future historian of this country, the impartial Hume or Gibbon of his day, in recounting the events of this period—after he shall have dilated with a glowing pen and honest pride—upon the glorious deeds of his countrymen, in arts and arms—on extended empire and beneficial legislation, etc.—will turn with a sigh to some of the darker shades of the picture, etc. that such was the inconsistency or inequality of human nature; the mere fact of being born to the inheritance of some religious opinions, was not only a disqualification for the exercise of political functions, but that it precluded the individual from the full development of the social feelings; and that to be a Jew was presumptive evidence of a deficiency in mental, moral, and political worth.”

The writer then states, “In concluding these somewhat melancholy anticipations of history, I must advert, on the other hand, to the wise and good men of all religious persuasions, of different political parties, who discountenance these prejudices; whose more generous sympathy demands our gratitude, whilst it points the way to happier times. If such be the general view to be taken of our position, it does not destroy its truth candidly to add, that many of us have found in

individual intercourse with our Christian fellow-countrymen, exceptions to the rule, where mutual knowledge has become the foundation of mutual esteem."

When the philosophic eye takes a survey of Jewish affairs throughout the world, it penetrates deeply into causes and effects; so that we dare not rashly pronounce a sentence of condemnation upon the "workings of time," or upon the inscrutable decrees of "*wisdom and justice.*"

The world at large is our home; we change our residences, according to the caprice and prerogatives of kingdoms; sometimes driven by force, at other times befriended with indulgence. Some governments, following the light of religion, of policy, and of justice, hold up to their own people the best example of elevating human nature, in their kind treatment of their Jewish subjects; whilst others, blinded with superstition, lost, as it were, in a wilderness of mental sleep, and seized with the terror of fanatic renown, are awakened by the thunder of an enlightened world, proclaim aloud, upon seeing their cruelties towards us, that all Israel are one family, protected by one God; and, therefore, entitled to the respect of the laws of humanity.

The philosophy, the religion, the history, and the pursuits of the Hebrew nation, are now more studied than at any other period, since the rise of Christianity. Every British Parliamentary session in which the subject of Jewish emancipation has been discussed, has more strongly riveted our claim in the hearts of all liberal-minded men, and it is slowly approximating to its hoped-for consummation.

When, until of late, could we have obtained the interference of governments, great, powerful, and enlightened? One solitary individual, Sir Moses Montefiore, an ambassador of peace, seeing the burning yet not consumed bush in the East, throws around him the mantle of truth, and with credentials of nationality, backed with the influence of the British government, repairs to the spot, and pulls off his shoes as did our legislator in Horeb, that is, he put away all human suggestions: the subject was sacred, the finger of God was there. "He who made a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters," enabled him to redeem his people from the hand of the persecutor, and from

the scorn of obloquy, to pave the way for their toleration, and to wipe the stain of injustice from their governors.

Thus, from evil cometh good, as may be seen by the treatment of the Jews in Jerusalem at present. In the "Times," of February 16th, we read of the gross ill usage which an Israelite there received for passing before the church of the holy sepulchre, from a band of Christian fanatics, who left him for dead on the spot.

The French consul, Lentivy, having been informed of the occurrence, immediately forwarded a dispatch to the Pasha, who had the parties arrested; a measure which excited an extraordinary sensation among the Christian population, who adduced, in extenuation of the offence, the existence of a usage, precluding Jews from visiting the vicinity of the church. The priors of the Greek and Latin convents, interfered in behalf of their co-religionists; but Lentivy would admit of no excuse, and Haider Pasha fully concurred in the opinion of the consul; but the priors, having pledged themselves that such an outrage should not recur, Lentivy consented to the prisoners being released, after a few days' confinement, and their paying the expences of their victim's illness. The Pasha, moreover, issued orders, forbidding Christians, under the severest penalties, from ill treating Israelites, who should pass before the church of the holy sepulchre.

Such has been the effect of the acquittal of the Jews from blame in Rhodes and in Damascus. Their moral worth is respected in the East. The Ancona persecution is stopped in the bud, and if there be at present any incipient symptoms of oppression in other places, it is hoped, by Divine power, speedily to die away. "For the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance; He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, he instructed him; he kept him as the apple of his eye" (Deut. xxxii. 9, 10).

I will now, then, respectfully ask the writer of the anonymous letter, M. in the *Voice of Jacob*, whether "the social position in which we now stand in England, is *not* desirable"? advancing daily—although I acknowledge, "that he would be a misjudging one who deems it incapable of improvement." Dare I say, "that this position will be one of the scandal wonders of the age"?

Can I with truth affirm that "we are in the second stage of the disorder," an imaginary disorder? We may at this moment (I allow) "*alone* remain to illustrate by our position what those prejudices were" once against us, and how they are gradually vanishing away. How the sun of liberty is dawning upon us, and may, with God's will, soon arrive at its meridian; the genius, the integrity, and the philanthropy of Hebrews being made manifest, must shake the prejudices of the world; they will be considered as men and as fellow-citizens.

Can we, captives of Judah, say with the able writer M. that we remain "*to prove* to wisdom and justice that their work is incomplete"? Remember the words of the prophet, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed" (Isaiah liv. 10). Wisdom and justice are working for us in Britain; the future impartial Humes and Gibbons of their day, with honest pride will exult in recording their country's treatment to Judah since the commencement of the nineteenth century, the much-boasted-of period, when the philanthropist, Abraham Goldsmid, glittered in the Jewish horizon; when institutions were raised for the infirm and the aged, and for the instruction of youth; when David Levy (an Englishman) was excited and encouraged to defend our faith openly and boldly, and to promulgate learning and truth. When these historians of future days shall, with glowing pen, recount the many Jewish charitable societies which have lifted up their heads in Britain, and how many liberal Christians have aided with their contributions every thing tending to a glorious cause; how this feeling was reciprocal, and how the tears of Judah dropped for Christian misery wherever found, accompanied with sympathy and donations—when they will tell posterity that you can legally possess freehold—that you have had a Hebrew knight, sheriff, and high sheriff: that you are becoming literary; that you glory in *your own* Anglo-Jewish press; that you usher forth newspapers and learned periodicals, and encourage Jewish genius, which are all partially encouraged by our Christian friends; that you are, it is true, disqualified as yet from the exercise of high

political functions, sitting in Parliament, and a few other privileges and rights of Britons; to obtain which, you are occasionally petitioning without noise and pomp; raising no envy, and creating no jealousy; that such petitions were also sent from Christians themselves from many large towns, defended by many great and distinguished men in both Houses; and, above all, that you have the good feeling and good wishes and assistance, of the major part of the inhabitants of Britain! can I then agree with the very able literary correspondent of the *Voice of Jacob*, M. "that to be a Jew in the nineteenth century" would be recorded by some future Gibbon or Hume, "as presumptive evidence of a deficiency in *mental, moral, and political worth!*" Forbid it, Truth!

I may shortly have another opportunity of addressing you upon your position in Britain, when I shall make some philosophical observations upon your political state, and the reasons of your apparent apathy in the great cause of our emancipation, as well as some remarks upon a famous speech of Lord Lyndhurst against it, made in the House of Lords some few years back. I will then give you the origin of honours in our Synagogue, their use and abuse; also some particulars about Jewish finance, etc. etc. as well as some interesting letters written to eminent men, and replied to, in the early stages and struggles of lecturing in our Synagogue. I shall then give you an account of a manuscript essay upon Jewish reform, entrusted only to two gentlemen* nine years ago. The time was not then fitted for carrying out these reforms; but many of the good measures which have since been adopted have partly emanated from this source, "The Essay on Jewish Reform," not yet published.

I have only taken an active part in aiding to establish English lectures in the Synagogue, but I beg to be particularly understood, that any thing I or any other person may respectfully propose to you, cannot and ought not to obtain your sanction without the full concurrence of your "Beth Din" or ecclesiastical authority; to which the greatest courtesy, respect, and submission, must be shown.

* Since that time, one of these gentlemen departed this life. I have not the manuscript in my possession, only a fragment of a copy of it: at present it would be valuable to me.

It will be necessary for me, to give you a short history of the introduction of lectures, into our Synagogue in Liverpool. They had much to struggle with, but ultimately succeeded, by the persevering efforts of a few individuals here, as well as by the talents and exertions of the Rev. D. M. Isaacs, our present pastor.

Years have gone by, since this subject became mooted here. A letter was sent to the congregation by a gentleman, earnestly calling their attention to this necessary appendage to our worship, which had been adopted in all countries—by all sects, to enlighten the minds of their communities in a language that they understood, and the good that would result from their introduction into our Synagogue.

There was, at that time, an unaccountable superstitious prejudice against the English language being used in the Synagogue, although the lectures given by Jews in all parts of the world were either in Spanish, Portuguese, or German; and the writer of this letter combated all the objections that could be brought against preaching in our vernacular tongue, as our flock was principally composed of those who only understood English; and he judiciously asked, could morality be inculcated without instruction? and could instruction be conveyed in an unknown language? A young man at that time was invited to give five or six lectures in the year. Three or four years went on: the Rev. M. Nathan, now of Jamaica (the author of a very excellent sermon lately published), being at that time secretary to the Liverpool congregation, lectured for six or seven years at the rate of six per year, improving as he went on. The very system gained much attraction, and laid the foundation of that excellent mode of conveying instruction in our places of worship, in many parts of the world, where the English language is spoken. The Rev. Mr. Nathan, by his fertile mind, zeal, and talent, opened a path in Jamaica, for his flock to arrive at the knowledge of truth. He has established a Hebrew school, and is now engaged in ushering forth a Jewish magazine.

The Hebrew residents in Liverpool saw light, were convinced of the utility and importance of having a minister of truth, and elected the Rev. D. M. Isaacs, to the regular appointment of lecturer. The good that he has done can be gathered from his example being followed in other towns.

Some few have said that his language is too lofty—an admirable fault in a self-taught preacher, constantly employed in studying the lofty expressions and sublime thoughts of our Divine records in the original, in becoming familiarised with the best eloquence of the best books of our Hebrew writers.

ומי יתן כל עם ה' נביאים כי יתן ה' את רוחו עליהם

But it is very easy, if necessary, to lower the fire, to lessen the beauties of sublimity, and to accommodate style to the capacities of hearers; but I firmly believe, that in following the humble advice I have given in this letter, the superior eloquence of a popular preacher will not be considered a fault with us, any more than it is with our judicious, talent-admiring Christian friends in this country.

How few do we meet with like him capable of preaching *extempore* for more than an hour appropriately, and in elegant language, without tiring his audience?

Scarcely had he been elected lecturer, than he opened the eyes of his community to the value of Hebrew education, as well as to the want of a school for the poor. He exerted himself nobly, and he triumphed: his voice reached different places; others became zealous to carry out the same views, and now some large provincial towns in England join Liverpool in proclaiming the liberality and good sense of their members, in bestowing upon the poor and the rich that which will be the best of blessings to them; and the success which has already attended the schools which they have established.

Monday, March 15th, was a day of rejoicing for the Israelites of Liverpool. The consecration of the new Synagogue—on which occasion I was present, and heard the Rev. Dr. Raphall preach a beautiful sermon. A few years ago he visited Liverpool, and gave a course of lectures upon Hebrew poetry, and I regret that I did not then hear him. As the occasion which gave rise to the erecting of the new Synagogue, was extraordinary, so was his lecture; and so also was the delightful scene to all who witnessed it.

At some future period, I shall enter at large into the history*

* I shall give you an interesting account from the book "Jochasin," of the ordination of the ראש גלות "head of the captivity" in Babylon, and his lecturing on the Sabbath.

of lecturing, the best and easiest mode of training young men to the pulpit, and what is essential to their study; at the same time showing the difference to be observed between Jewish and Christian lecturers; and I hope the time is not far distant, when this efficacious method, so lately introduced amongst us, will be followed in every place of worship, in every congregation throughout Britain, and tend to the spiritual welfare of our people.

Liverpool has also given rise to but I will be silent, and not stir up the temporary dissensions of the sons of Judah. Give good, sterling, substantial, sound, and philosophical Hebrew and Rabbinical learning, and I declare, there never can be dissensions in Israel.

Thus has Liverpool held out the inspiring wand, that stirred up minds to scatter the knowledge of our faith in various parts of the earth. The Rev. S. M. Isaacs, of America, having, whilst in London, marked the successful career and spiritual influence of his reverend brother in Liverpool, was, a few years ago, induced to take charge of a flock in New York, to preach to thousands, with great effect and much good, the word of the God of Israel. Our brethren in Birmingham, having seen the necessity of English lectures and their successful influence in Liverpool, with heart and soul determined to ameliorate their spiritual condition, and elected the Rev. Dr. Raphall to the office of pastor. He was editor of the *Hebrew Review*, and is a highly talented man. Much praise is due to him for the great good effected by his eloquence, his learning, his zeal, his counsel, and his influence in Birmingham.

Manchester having also, a few years back, witnessed the proud and noble stand its neighbouring town Liverpool had taken in the regeneration of its Hebrew people, soon followed its example, and engaged the first of regularly appointed lecturers, the Rev. D. M. Isaacs, of Liverpool, to dispense the benefits of religious and moral instruction, to its Jewish population, once every fortnight. Owing to the increase of labour in Liverpool, the Rev. Mr. Isaacs was compelled to resign his charge in Manchester, which is now without a lecturer. I have thus spoken of Liverpool as it merits; and nothing could have raised my esteem for the editor of the *Voice of Jacob* more,

than his prudence in not inserting in his paper *ex parte* statements tending to foment the rage of a party spirit in this town, and in not suffering even the appeals of both sides at once to find room in his columns, but, as he very judiciously observes in his number 65, February 2nd, "The price of our advocacy, or co-operation, is, that the congregations enter into such preliminary and precautionary reciprocal engagements, as may secure the interests of religion, of the poor, and of conventional decorum, from the possible future partisanship of rival officials, or the jealousy of their constituents.

"Our London readers, especially, will understand how expedient it is to restrict the limits within that (which has not inaptly been termed 'shoolism') which shall be allowed the opportunity of conflict with the common interests of Israel as a religious community. We are now informed that no mutual understanding of such a character has been come to by the two congregations; and, therefore, so far as our formal recommendation has any weight with those who do and can assist the struggles of rising Synagogues, we deem it a duty to suspend it, either until the needful precautions have been secured, or in order to be instrumental to the securing of them."

The above is the most sensible remark which a Jewish editor could have penned; and as I have in this address, to the best of my power, advocated the Anglo-Jewish press, I hope all future editors of our periodicals will follow Mr. Franklin's example, and endeavour to heal the wounds of Israel. The cloud passes—sunshine follows, **וּתְכַרְתֵּם אֶת הָאֹהֶל וְדִיָּה אֶחָד** "and couple the tent together that it may be one" (Exodus xxvi.-11). Under the guidance of such editors, we may say, in the words of Solomon, Eccles. xii. 11, **דְּבַר חֲכָמִים כְּדֹרְבָנוֹת** "The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of collections;" that is, when the goading words are *words* of the *wise*, spurring on to peace and harmony, to precautionary conditions, and good-will, as the Divine writer says, Eccles. ix. 17, **דְּבַר חֲכָמִים בְּנֹחַת נִשְׁמָעִים** "The words of the wise men are heard in quiet," lulling the swell of passion, and the contention of parties; commotions in Israel, which are, as it

were, from yesterday—their brotherly love a surrounding world and a history of three thousand years can testify; then will the collectors of these wise sayings be “as nails fastened,” the views of editors will be preserved, their stability will be respected; no partiality will move them; all may pin their faith upon their well-sifted communications; and pursuing a Scriptural figure, **כִּי עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם יוֹלִיךְ אֶת הַקּוֹל. וּבַעַל הַכְּנָפִים יַגִּיד דְּבַר** (Eccles. x. 20), “For the bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.” That is, the pen of the writer, and the powerful press, will declare to millions, the laudable attempt making for the *regeneration*, the *spiritual improvement*, and as a consequence, the worldly *amelioration* of British Israelites.

A few days since, I received by post from Amsterdam, a pamphlet in Hebrew, entitled **אֵמֶת מֵאֶרֶץ** “Emeth Me-aretz,” “truth from the land,” containing an interesting account of the reconciliation between the pious and learned Rabbi, Hirsch Lehren, in Amsterdam, and some learned men in the Holy Land; after some little dissension which had existed there; which happy reconciliation was effected by the interference and counsel of two illustrious Englishmen, Baron Rothschild and Sir Moses Montefiore. Should any learned gentleman give another edition of this pamphlet, or make judicious extracts from it, with an English translation, he would do a service to the cause of Jewish learning, piety, and charity, in rousing our brethren to aid in supporting a remnant of Judah in the Holy Land, and in impressing a feeling of sympathy for Zion, remembering the words of the Psalmist, **אִם אֲשַׁכַּח יְרוּשָׁלַיִם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי** “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, my right hand shall forget its cunning.” It may not be considered presumptuous in me, if I should advise such translator to preface his pamphlet with an English version of Mendelssohn’s metrical translation of that most beautiful elegy, composed by Rabbi Jehuda Halevi beginning **צִיּוֹן הֲלֵא תִשְׁאַלִי** *Zion halo tishali*, “Zion, shouldst thou enquire.”

I have proved the excellence of lectures in English to burst the barriers of superstition in the pursuit of truth and reason, and have shewn the great desire in other provincial towns to carry out the noble views of Liverpool and Birmingham. Ports-

mouth being in want of a reader, advertises that one able to give English lectures would be desirable. The Metropolis itself has made this an essential qualification in the new Rabbin, or High Priest, not yet elected.

All that is good, has possibly, in some degree, emanated from Liverpool; I, therefore, give every credit to the editor of the *Voice of Jacob* for his reserve, and admire his moderation in not aiding the mischievous promulgation of exciting words, arising probably from misunderstanding, misconstruction, or misconception; because in the abstract consideration, *unparalleled Jewish brotherly affection*, can never be doubted.

Fathers of Israel! bear with me, if I am too bold in giving advice—the advice of peace. One domestic affliction, one heart-stirring illness has followed the other. I feel a consolation in imparting light—rational—national light. Worldly joy can no longer be mine, when it cannot be shared with me by the beloved partner of my life, snatched from me by an all-wise Providence. In the leisure hours of melancholy, I am relieved by my pen. I glory in defending our faith, and engaged in that, I must give vent to my feelings—I must defend my people.

I prefer writing for the benefit of the house of Israel, to the bewildering uncertainty of trade; and I trust that my forthcoming work, mentioned before, will enable me to accomplish this wish.

I have given you the true and cheering account of your present position in Britain; I have shown you in what you have progressed during the last forty-five years, and what is necessary for your further advancement. I have not spoken of the improvements in Liverpool, in the tone of congregational aggrandisement, and have not converted that which is the birth of accident, to the triumph of self-sufficiency. I have not lessened my deference to other towns, especially to the Metropolis, wherein is centred all that is necessary to render its Jewish population wise; I have only held up to view the effect of example, the rapid spread of *useful* reforms to other congregations; and shown the possibility of equal or superior benefits, that may result from your mighty co-operation, in a city famed for its wealth, its learning, and its philanthropy—the capital of England!

If English lectures originating in Liverpool, have been introduced into other congregations; if the finance system of assessment attempted there, proving beneficial, has been in part, or in the whole, acted upon in other places,—you still may glory in an Anglo-Jewish press, in the issuing of learned and useful works, in concentrating the talent of our people, in establishing a college, in forming literary societies, in carrying out every desired well-understood reform; and above all, in showing to Liverpool, well constituted as it is, well provided as it is with every thing tending to its welfare, that no congregation can prosper without unity and peace.

I know that you will submit with deference, to your lecturers in all that is doctrinal,* yet in every thing relating to discipline and management of congregational duty, you yourselves will be the best judges,—ever courteous to submit the adoption of any material change in your measures to the consideration of your metropolitan ecclesiastical tribunal. Your provincial lecturers will not aggrandise to themselves the power of judging you, yet be unwilling to be judged by you, but they will be so constituted, only to instruct you; and yet I hope that they will bow to the judgment of a discerning and religious Jewish public. God alone is the Judge of the heart; the motives of action cannot be penetrated by man. You may be pleased in hearing lecturers now and then declare, in their pulpits, that they will not bend to the aristocracy of wealth; but hearing them continually using this insipid yet exciting expression, must induce us to think, that it is not concordant to the spirit of peace and good feeling necessary to exist between pastor and flock. Thanks to God, we have no aristocracy of wealth amongst us! I mean wealth so constituted in the house of Israel, as to form an aristocracy, much more one which cramps and stunts the prolific powers of genius, talent, and truth. We live in a free country, and, thank heaven! we are born free agents. I heard a gentleman beautifully describe that freedom was light: so, if, in our daily prayers, we bless God for having created light, and as the freedom of the mind is light, can any one, in treat-

* In my next Address, I will give you an appropriate quotation from the Talmud of "Jebamoth, 12th Perek," מצות הליצה רנו מימני יא אתו לנבי רבי.

ing upon this subject, introduce a bewildering, exploded doctrine, and declare that we ought not to thank God for having made us free agents?

I intend in some future remarks upon the art of lecturing, to enter fully upon this subject, taking our sages for my warriors, and strengthening my views with extracts from Manasseh Ben Israel's work, "De Creatione."

I cannot conclude this letter upon our position in England, without adverting to the great desire manifested by some of our Christian friends to regenerate us according to their views—to convert us to their faith. I cannot but suppose that this proceeds from a good feeling, engendered by a conviction in their own minds of the truth of their doctrine, and a positive injunction contained in their charter, to preach up their mode of salvation to every soul throughout the earth.

Avoid polemics if you can; but if you are forced into the arena of controversy, argue mildly and patiently. Seventeen years have elapsed since I published my Address * to the missionaries; I regret that it was too harsh, and that it did not contain a little more argumentative learning. In the days of Mendelssohn there were no missionary societies. Israel was not attempted to be seduced from the faith of Abraham; otherwise he probably would have girded up his loins, and stood forth the champion of his people. Lavater had, unknown to him, suddenly challenged him in print to refute "Bonnet's Evidences of Christianity," and made use of Mendelssohn's private opinion, casually communicated to him in conversation, which produced that extraordinary reply to Lavater, which astonished and delighted Jews and Christians, containing his reasons for not meddling in polemics; but we live amongst a stirring, an enlightened people, the Christians of Great Britain. Our entire silence when questioned upon religion would be construed into ignorance, whilst a pushing, meddling, provoking fulness of zeal for controversy, would savour of presumption. If then you are prudently induced to hold a controversy with your Christian friends, remember this

* This was translated into Italian by the late S. Bonfil, and was circulated through Italy.

humble advice:—Be firstly grounded in the sacred language, upon a knowledge of which all argument hinges; understand well the writings of Maimonides, Abarbanel, Albo, Mendelssohn, Wesel, etc. Be pretty well acquainted with ecclesiastical history, as well as with the controversial writings of Trinitarians and Unitarians; take care that your opponents have, in some degree, part of those means suiting them for theological disputation—you will then possibly reach the highest degree of logical reasoning—you may *improve*, but you will not *convert* each other. It would take up one hundred pages to do justice to this interesting subject, “our present position in England.” I have only given a sketch of the various subjects tending to the elucidation of our “position.”

I perceive that Mr. Hoga, and a few other seceders from our faith, still manifest a clinging desire to some of the essentials of our sacred religion; and it is amusing to see them following in the footsteps of the Rev. J. Oxlee, as may be seen in his letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, attacking some of the tenets of Christianity. When the awful Damascus affair took place, three years since, I must acknowledge that these mistaken and unfortunate apostates thundered forth a declaration against the base persecution, and, prompted by a Jewish feeling—not extinct through baptism—with might and zeal, tore to pieces every vestige of the accusation against their former brethren. See the Jewish expositor of that period. Hoga thus speaks of the nation from whence he sprung:—

“And indeed, with all their faults, there is in them a heart entirely devoted to Him, with an attachment and love stronger than death. There are still among Jews, many thousands who have made a covenant with their eyes, who meditate in the law of God day and night, cleave to him with all their heart, and are ready to be burnt alive for his love. O! if Christians would know a little better the true and genuine character of the Jews, then they might understand, that even now, ‘Israel is holy to the Lord as his first-fruit, and all who eat him shall be guilty in his judgment, and every one who shows him kindness shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.’”

These are not, thank heaven, such apostates as we read of in the *Anglia Judaica*, breeding mischief against the sons of Judea, and vituperating their holy religion.

The *Anglia Judaica*, an old work, giving the history of the Jews from their first settlement in Britain, all the acts of parliament against them, and their many heavy persecutions and banishments, down to their re-admission under Cromwell, might possibly be new-modelled and our history be carried on to the present time. Tovey, the author, had a great prejudice against the Jews, expressed himself too violently, said much which could not be verified, and much that requires refutation.

If we have not a great number of British Jews well versed in Hebrew literature, we are not to be blamed; our ancestors were perhaps not so eager for what might not have been considered profitable learning. Those who came to England under Cromwell, or soon after, were influenced by the desire of enriching themselves;—plain elementary Hebrew education was given to their children: more was not required. But let me tell you, that you had great men living in England eight hundred years ago. The sayings of the wise men of Norwich and of York are quoted in some of the additions made by the expounders of the Talmud.

I hope we shall again see our children grow up in wisdom and divine knowledge; that our dissensions will cease; that our troubled communities will be calmed to peace; that our literary position will equal that of our continental brethren; that the manuscripts of our learned men will not be withheld from publication, either by design or by neglect; that our lecturers may proclaim truth throughout our land, that Jerusalem may not be lost sight of, that our temporal condition—though not our chief aim—may be so ameliorated, as to enable us to dispense joy and benefit to our co-religionists throughout the world; believing as I do, that the Jews will take the lead in all that is learned, in all that is excellent, in all that is beneficent, and that it may again be said of them—
 רק עם חכם ונבון הגוי הגדול הזה
 "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."

MOSES SAMUEL.